

**CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF
THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE**

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION
OF THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE**

**Forty-seventh session
UNESCO, Paris
6 – 16 July 2025**

**Item 7B of the Provisional Agenda:
State of conservation of properties inscribed
on the of World Heritage List**

Summary

This document contains information on the state of conservation of properties inscribed on the World Heritage List. The World Heritage Committee is requested to review the reports on the state of conservation of properties contained in this document. The full reports of Reactive Monitoring missions requested by the World Heritage Committee are available at the following Web address in their original language: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/sessions/47COM/documents>

All previous state of conservation reports will be available through the World Heritage State of conservation Information System at the following Web address: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/soc>

Decision required: The World Heritage Committee may wish to adopt the draft Decision presented at the end of each state of conservation report.

Note: For each section, the reports are presented in the English alphabetical order of States Parties.

TABLE OF CONTENT

I. STATE OF CONSERVATION REPORTS	2
NATURAL PROPERTIES	2
ASIA AND PACIFIC	2
8. Western Tien-Shan (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan)	2
15. Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex (Thailand)	6
EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA	11
18. Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe (Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, France, Germany, Italy, North Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Ukraine).....	11
19. Białowieża Forest (Belarus, Poland).....	15
22. Wadden Sea (Denmark, Germany, Kingdom of the Netherlands).....	16
30. Western Caucasus (Russian Federation).....	19
31. Doñana National Park (Spain)	23
ARAB STATES.....	24
53. Socotra Archipelago (Yemen)	24
MIXED PROPERTIES	25
EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA	25
55. Laponian Area (Sweden)	25
AFRICA	26
60. Ngorongoro Conservation Area (United Republic of Tanzania)	26
ARAB STATES.....	27
61. The Ahwar of Southern Iraq: Refuge of Biodiversity and the Relict Landscape of the Mesopotamian Cities (Iraq).....	27
CULTURAL PROPERTIES	33
ASIA AND PACIFIC	33
65. Historic Centre of Macao (China).....	33
EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA	37
94. Historic Centres of Berat and Gjirokastra (Albania).....	37
98. Cultural Landscape of Khinalig People and “Köç Yolu” Transhumance Route (Azerbaijan)	41
101. Ancient City of Nessebar (Bulgaria).....	41
102. Old City of Dubrovnik (Croatia)	45
105. Paris, Banks of the Seine (France)	46
111. Budapest, including the Banks of the Danube, the Buda Castle Quarter and Andrassy Avenue (Hungary).....	49
115. Natural and Culturo-Historical Region of Kotor (Montenegro).....	53
122. Sanctuary of Bom Jesus do Monte in Braga (Portugal).....	58
123. Cultural and Historic Ensemble of the Solovetsky Islands (Russian Federation).....	61
128. Arslantepe Mound (Türkiye).....	64
130. Göbekli Tepe (Türkiye).....	64
135. Palace of Westminster and Westminster Abbey including Saint Margaret’s Church (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)	68

I. STATE OF CONSERVATION REPORTS

NATURAL PROPERTIES

ASIA AND PACIFIC

8. Western Tien-Shan (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2016

Criteria (x)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1490/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 1 (from 2008-2008)

Total amount approved: USD 30,000

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1490/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

September 2024: joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Management systems / Management Plan (Need to finalize the transboundary management framework for the property; Need to further develop collaboration between the States Parties in the framework of a tripartite Memorandum for management of the property; Need to review and rationalize the boundaries of the component parts of the property and their buffer zones to ensure that they fully correspond to Criterion (x))
- Human resources (Lack of capacity on transnational management)

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1490/>

Current conservation issues

On 1 March 2024, the World Heritage Centre transmitted to the States Parties third-party concerns regarding development projects, including gold mining and associated infrastructure development in the 'Besh-Aral State Nature Reserve (SNR) – Shandalash area' in Kyrgyzstan, and the proposed and ongoing construction of hydropower dams in the Chatkal River basin in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan and on the Ugam River in the Sairam-Ugam State National Nature Park (SNNP) in Kazakhstan. A joint response was received on 10 July 2024.

On 14 March 2024, the State Party of Kazakhstan notified the World Heritage Centre of the planned construction of a cascade of hydroelectric power stations on the Ugam River ('Ugam Hydro Project'), part of which was reported to be located within a component part within the Sairam-Ugam SNNP. A Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) of the project was submitted to the World Heritage Centre on 13 September 2024.

From 16 to 25 September 2024, a joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to the property was undertaken. The States Parties provided additional information and clarification requested

by the mission team on 7, 8 and 19 November 2024 respectively. The mission report is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1490/documents/>.

On 29 November 2024, the States Parties submitted a joint report on the state of conservation of the property, an executive summary of which is available at

<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1490/documents/>. The full report is summarized as follows:

- The Regional Management Plan for the property for 2024-2028 (annexed), developed with the support of the IUCN Eastern Europe and Central Asia Regional Office, was adopted by the joint Regional Committee at its sixth meeting in September 2024;
- A joint boundary clarification proposal has been prepared to correct ‘technical mistakes’ that occurred at the time of inscription, including for the three component parts of the Sairam-Ugam SNNP (Boraldaitau, Irsu-Daubabin, and Sairam-Ugam areas) in Kazakhstan, and the Besh-Aral SNR and Padysha-Ata SNR component parts in Kyrgyzstan, for submission to the World Heritage Centre;
- The State Party of Kazakhstan plans to extend the territory of the Sairam-Ugam SNNP to include an area of 10,000 ha, which is critically important habitat for the Menzbier’s Marmot and currently belongs to the regional government, also to be included in the buffer zone of the Sairam-Ugam Area component part;
- The management of the Bashkizilsay Area component part, part of the Chatkal State Biosphere Nature Reserve (SBNR) at the time of inscription, was transferred to the Uzbekistan National Railway JSC in December 2016 to attract more funding, and later included in the Ugam-Chatkal State Biosphere Reserve established in May 2018. There were no changes to the boundary nor the protection regime of the component part. Information on the protection regimes is provided;
- A joint analysis of monitoring data for the species identified as attributes of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property collected between 2016 and 2023 using varied methods shows most species populations to be stable or increasing. It will serve as a baseline for future joint monitoring of attributes that will be established with harmonized monitoring under the Regional Management Plan;
- The ‘Chatkal Ecological Corridor’ connecting the Sary-Chelek SBNR and Padysha-Ata SNR component parts was established by the State Party of Kyrgyzstan in February 2024;
- The States Parties reported planned and ongoing development projects in their respective territories:
 - *Kazakhstan*: Ugam Hydro Project and Kaskasu Ski Resort Project, both planned in the buffer zone of the Sairam-Ugam Area component part,
 - *Kyrgyzstan*: Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Kyrgyz Republic dated 30 May 2023 granted two geological exploration licenses for Naiza-Tugai and Arab gold deposits within the ‘Besh-Aral SNR – main part’ component part, in an area of 200 ha, which was ‘withdrawn’ from the territory of the Besh-Aral SNR for a road renovation based on Government Decree No. 124 dated 3 March 2023 (annexed). A Cross-Departmental Committee was established to investigate the issue following an appeal by the National Academy of Sciences and the Ministry of Natural Resources, Ecology and Technical Supervision that the decree did not align with national legislation. No final decision has been made regarding the construction of hydroelectric power stations on the Chatkal River,
 - *Uzbekistan*: Lower Chatkal and Upper Pskem Hydropower Plant Projects (HPP) under implementation will not impact the OUV of the component parts.

From 28 to 29 April 2025, a capacity building workshop for the property was organized in Almaty in the framework of the UNESCO/Republic of Korea Funds-in-Trust project “*Enhancing Transnational Cooperation and Fostering Peace: Natural and Mixed World Heritage in Asia*”, with engagement of international experts covering topics including joint wildlife monitoring, transnational governance and regional impact assessments, followed by a Regional Committee meeting for the property on 30 April 2025.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

Significant efforts and progress made by the three States Parties to strengthen transnational management of the property through the Regional Committee, including the adoption of the Regional

Management Plan for the property for 2024-2028, are noted with appreciation. The States Parties are encouraged to continue such efforts, to reinforce joint governance mechanisms, including sustainable financing to enhance coordination as recommended by the 2024 Reactive Monitoring mission.

The States Parties' joint effort to prepare a boundary clarification is appreciated, and the States Parties are requested to revise the proposal, in line with the technical requirements outlined in the mission report, before submission to the World Heritage Centre.

In addition to the boundary clarification, the States Parties are requested to finalize, as a matter of priority, the Statement of OUV (SOUV) of the property, based on the best available data and knowledge as recommended by the mission. In this regard, the joint study undertaken by the States Parties on species identified as the attributes of the property's OUV, which indicates stable or increasing population trends for most species, are welcomed. Recalling the importance of systematic data collection incorporating standardized methodologies, it is positive that the aforementioned study will inform future coordinated monitoring under the Regional Management Plan, and the States Parties are encouraged to develop and implement integrated monitoring and reporting for the entire serial transnational property, while also undertaking additional research to identify and map critical habitats of key species supporting the property's OUV beyond those currently listed in the provisional SOUV as recommended by the mission.

The intention of the State Party of Kazakhstan to include the 10,000 ha of critical habitat for the Menzbier's Marmot in the Sairam-Ugam SNNP, as well as the establishment of 'Chatkal Ecological Corridor' in Kyrgyzstan which connects two component parts of the property are welcomed, in view of reinforcing ecological integrity of the property. The States Parties are encouraged to consider, in preparing a joint Significant Boundary Modification proposal, potential extension to include additional areas in the property or its buffer zone to fully correspond to criterion (x) and enhance connectivity, in particular integration of the habitat for the Menzbier's Marmot, a key attribute of the property's OUV, in the World Heritage property as recommended by the mission.

The confirmation by the State Party of Uzbekistan that no change has been made to the boundary and protection regime of the Bashkizilsay Area component part following the transfer of its management to the Uzbekistan National Railway JSC is noted with appreciation.

The 2024 mission reviewed all the aforementioned planned and ongoing development projects reported by the States Parties, and identified existing and potential impacts on the property's OUV for the projects in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, as well as potential cumulative impacts of multiple plans for the construction of hydroelectric dams in and around the property. The States Parties are requested to fully address the mission recommendations regarding the respective projects in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan (Recommendations 6-10), while ensuring that potential impacts of any development projects and activities planned within or in the wider setting of the property which may impact on its OUV are subject to an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment in line with the *Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context*, to avoid any negative impact on the property's OUV, including integrity. In light of the multiple plans for the hydroelectric dam construction, the States Parties are also requested to develop a consolidated list and map of ongoing and planned hydroelectric power projects within or in the wider setting of the property, for submission to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN, to assess the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment.

Recalling the Committee's position that mining is considered incompatible with World Heritage status (Decision **37 COM 7**), it is of utmost concern that the two geological exploration licenses have been granted for the area within the 'Besh-Aral SNR – main part' component part, shortly after the area was excluded from the Besh-Aral SNR for a road renovation. The State Party of Kyrgyzstan is requested to immediately halt all activities related to gold mining and undertake rehabilitation of any degraded areas as recommended by the mission.

The workshop of April 2025 is welcomed, and it is encouraged that such capacity building initiatives continue to strengthen transnational conservation, management, monitoring and governance, while helping address the mission recommendations. The World Heritage Centre and IUCN remain available to provide technical advice to support ongoing joint efforts by the three States Parties.

Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.8

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.4,
2. Recalling Decisions **44 COM 7B.95** and **45 COM 7B.85** adopted at its extended 44th (Fuzhou/online, 2021) and extended 45th (Riyadh, 2023) sessions respectively,
3. Takes note of the 2024 joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to the property and its recommendations;
4. Notes with appreciation significant efforts and progress made by the three States Parties to strengthen transnational management of the property through the Regional Committee, including the adoption of the Regional Management Plan for the property for 2024-2028, and encourages the States Parties to continue such efforts, to reinforce joint governance mechanisms, including sustainable financing to enhance coordination as recommended by the 2024 Reactive Monitoring mission;
5. Appreciates the States Parties' joint effort to prepare a boundary clarification, and requests them to revise the proposal, in line with the technical requirements outlined in the mission report, before submission to the World Heritage Centre;
6. Also requests the States Parties to finalize, as a matter of priority, the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (SOUV) of the property, based on the best available data and knowledge as recommended by the mission;
7. Welcomes a joint study undertaken by the States Parties on species currently identified as the attributes of the property's OUV and that population trends since the time of inscription are reported as stable or increasing for most species, recalls the importance of systematic data collection incorporating standardized methodologies across the property, also encourages the States Parties, in line with the mission recommendations, to:
 - a) Develop and implement integrated monitoring and reporting for the entire serial transnational property,
 - b) Undertake additional research to identify and map critical habitats of key species supporting the property's OUV, beyond those currently listed in the provisional SOUV;
8. Also welcomes the proposed inclusion of the critical habitat for the Menzbier's Marmot in the Sairam-Ugam State National Nature Park (SNNP) by the State Party of Kazakhstan, and the establishment of 'Chatkal Ecological Corridor' connecting two component parts of the property by the State Party of Kyrgyzstan, further encourages the States Parties to consider, in preparing a joint Significant Boundary Modification proposal, a potential extension to include additional areas in the property or its buffer zone to fully correspond to criterion (x) and enhance connectivity, in particular, integration of the aforementioned habitat for Menzbier's Marmot, a key attribute of the property's OUV, in the World Heritage property;
9. Also notes with appreciation confirmation by the State Party of Uzbekistan that no change has been made to the boundary and protection regime of the Bashkizilsay Area component part following the transfer of its management to the Uzbekistan National Railway JSC;

10. Expresses its concern that the 2024 mission identified existing and potential impacts of planned and ongoing development projects in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, as well as multiple plans for the construction of hydroelectric dams in and around the property, and further requests the States Parties, in order to avoid any direct, indirect and cumulative impacts on the property's OUV, to:
 - a) Fully address mission recommendations on the respective projects in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan (Recommendations 6-7: gold mining in and around Besh-Aral State Nature Reserve (SNR), 8: construction of a dam on the Chatkal River, 9: Ugam Hydro Project in Sairam-Ugam SNNP, and 10: Kaskasu Ski Resort Project in Sairam-Ugam SNNP),
 - b) Ensure that potential impacts of any development projects and activities planned within or in the wider setting of the property which may impact on its OUV are subject to an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment in line with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context,
 - c) Develop a consolidated list and map of ongoing and planned hydroelectric power projects within or in the wider setting of the property, for submission to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN, to assess the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment;
11. Also recalling the Committee's position that mining is incompatible with World Heritage status, expresses its utmost concern that two geological exploration licenses have been granted for the area within the 'Besh-Aral SNR – main part' component part, requests furthermore the State Party of Kyrgyzstan to immediately halt all activities related to gold mining and undertake rehabilitation of any degraded areas in line with the mission recommendations;
12. Further welcomes the capacity building workshop organized in April 2025 with support of the UNESCO/Republic of Korea Funds-in-Trust, and encourages furthermore that such initiatives continue to strengthen transnational conservation, management, monitoring and governance, and to help address the mission recommendations;
13. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2026**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 49th session.

15. Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex (Thailand)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2021

Criteria (x)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1461/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1461/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

November 2022: IUCN Advisory mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Management systems/ management plan (Revision of the boundaries of the property in dialogue between the State Party of Thailand and Myanmar resulting in a considerably reduced area inscribed compared to the initial nomination; Concerns for the conditions for integrity and requirements for management and protection, including community involvement);
- Governance (Rights and livelihood concerns regarding Karen communities within the property)

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1461/>

Current conservation issues

On 29 November 2024, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, an executive summary of which is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1461/documents/>. The full report is summarized as follows:

- The 2022 IUCN Advisory mission recommendations are being implemented to safeguard, protect and maintain the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) (summary of actions appended and covered in following points);
- The State Party reiterates its commitment to collaborate with Myanmar on transboundary management regarding the Taninthayi Forest Corridor (in Myanmar) and advance cooperative efforts along the shared border. In 2024, the Department of National Parks and Wildlife and Plant Conservation (DNP) expressed its intention to the Myanmar authorities to enhance various transboundary cooperation activities;
- The area located between the inscribed property and the border with Myanmar (which was part of the original nomination) remains legally protected as a protected area under national law;
- Public participation is incorporated in management processes such as the designation of protected areas, preparation of management plans, and addressing land-use and livelihood issues in accordance with traditional community ways of life under the 2019 National Park Act and the 2019 Wild Animal Conservation and Protection Act. Communities are permitted to exploit natural resources for subsistence under the National Park Act, and participatory processes are also included in legislation drafting and establishment of multi-stakeholder Protected Area Committees (PAC);
- In September 2023, DNP issued an order to establish the PAC for the property (KKFC-PAC), with representatives from nine groups to provide advice on conservation and management related matters. Two meetings have covered matters including preparation of the Management Plan and buffer zones for the property;
- The State Party considers that it has consistently addressed issues related to the Karen community in Ban Bang Kloy, with a focus on improving quality of life in an effective, tangible, and sustainable manner. Efforts have been expedited to resolve conflicts and foster peaceful coexistence. Three working groups have been established to focus on investigating and resolving issues in the community with consideration for the well-being of the community, comprised of various government agencies, the Karen Community, KKFC-PAC, and experts;
- No authorisation has been granted for the construction of the Nong Ta Dang (Purakam) Dam or Reservoir project within the Mae Nam Phachi Wildlife Sanctuary (MNPWS) adjacent to the property. DNP has informed relevant authorities of the Committee's concerns. Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) guidelines will be considered prior to any further actions, should the project proceed;
- The corridor area between Kui Buri National Park (KBNP) and KKNP is designated as a forest reserve (KBFR) and an army reserve zone. Incorporation of parts of the forest reserve into KBNP is underway and the army reserve zone remains strictly protected by military authorities with

restricted access. Discussions with military authorities are underway with a view to coordinating collaborative conservation and inter-agency cooperation is being explored;

- A working group has been appointed to determine and formalise a buffer zone for the property and is working towards the collaborative submission of a boundary modification. A network of communities in the buffer zone is planned to encourage participation;
- An overview of other conservation actions with partners are provided e.g., tiger and Siamese crocodile conservation, human-elephant conflict mitigation, and protection of KBNP;
- Progress in responding to other Advisory mission recommendations include measures to address spread of wildlife disease, a joint meeting of the three natural World Heritage properties in Thailand, and actions to restore ecological connectivity between KKFC and the Thungyai-Huai Kha Khaeng Wildlife Sanctuaries and the Western Forest Complex.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

The progress in implementing the 2022 Advisory mission recommendations and Committee decisions is appreciated, including the State Party's commitment to transboundary cooperation with Myanmar, expediting efforts to resolve issues regarding the Karen community in Ban Bang Kloy, national level protection of the area between the property and the international border, establishing a PAC for the property, and initiating a process to formalize a buffer zone. Efforts should be continued towards the implementation of all mission recommendations.

Recalling the importance of strengthening transboundary conservation along the border with Myanmar, the State Party's ongoing commitment to engage in transboundary conservation with Myanmar, and its proposal to establish cooperation initiatives such as guidelines for transboundary management, knowledge exchange and capacity building, are welcomed and should be implemented. Recalling also the conservation importance of the area between the property and the Myanmar border, the State Party's commitment to ensure the continued protection of this area under national legislation is noted and should be continued.

The 2022 mission already noted the dual designation of the KBFR, however the State Party has not clarified the exact implication of this area in terms of its management regime. In this regard, it is welcomed that the process to expand KBNP to include a part of the KBFR, is underway. The State Party should ensure this process is undertaken in full consultation with all stakeholders and rightsholders, and clarification should also be provided on the options for the remaining part of the KBFR, recalling past Committee requests to consolidate its protection status and management system building upon scenarios identified in the nomination. Noting also that the State Party report on patrolling effort refers to KKFC, as including only three national parks and one wildlife sanctuary (without reference to the KBFR), future reporting should clearly reflect the KBFR as part of the inscribed property, and related management activities.

Confirmation of public participation in management processes related to the property, such as preparation of Management Plans, formalisation of a buffer zone, and addressing land-use and livelihood issues, is appreciated. The recent establishment of a PAC for the whole property, is noted positively and should further support participatory processes. Overall, it remains important that the State Party ensure enhanced participatory management and governance arrangements through meaningful participation of local communities. It is also positive that the KKFC-PAC is progressing the preparation of a Management Plan and defining buffer zones for the property, which should continue to be finalised, while also coordinating with PACs for the other natural World Heritage properties.

Regarding the Karen community in Ban Bang Kloy, efforts are being implemented to resolve conflicts and foster peaceful coexistence, including through the establishment of three working groups with the inclusion of government representatives, community members, and experts. The State Party should continue working closely, and in full consultation, with the affected communities to address longstanding conflicts following a rights-based approach in line with relevant international norms, and in consultation with relevant stakeholders.

It is noted that no authorisation has been granted for construction of the proposed dam within MNPWS and that impact assessment guidelines will be considered should the project proceed. It is recalled that the sanctuary is located adjacent to the property in an area that was included in the nomination but not inscribed, and remains key for its integrity, and that the Committee expressed its utmost concern that the dam is likely to negatively impact the OUV and may further amplify the difficult relationship with local communities. Thus, it remains essential that any potential impacts would need to be fully assessed in line with the *Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context*, prior to any possible decision to proceed further with this project.

It is positive that the formalisation of a buffer zone for the property is underway and this process should be continued towards the planned submission of a formal boundary modification. The reported conservation actions with partners, and measures to address other mission recommendations are also further encouraged.

Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.15

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.4,*
2. *Recalling Decisions **39 COM 8B.5, 40 COM 8B.11, 43 COM 8B.5, 44 COM 8B.7 and 45 COM 7B.88**, adopted at its 39th (Bonn, 2015), 40th (Istanbul/UNESCO, 2016), 43rd (Baku, 2019), extended 44th (Fuzhou/online, 2021) and extended 45th (Riyadh, 2023) sessions respectively,*
3. *Notes with appreciation the reported progress on implementation of the 2022 IUCN Advisory mission recommendations, as outlined in following paragraphs, and requests the State Party to continue towards addressing all recommendations;*
4. *Welcomes the State Party's continued commitment to transboundary conservation and the reported proposal to initiate cooperation activities with Myanmar, and continues to encourage the State Party to progress opportunities to collaborate with Myanmar in transboundary conservation and management of the highly significant nature conservation values of the region, with a view to considering a future extension of the property;*
5. *Notes with appreciation the confirmation that the area located between the property and the Myanmar border remains legally protected as a protected area under national law, and requests the State Party to continue effective protection of this area given its important conservation value, including in terms of connectivity with intact forest areas in Myanmar, to protect the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property;*
6. *Recalling its concern regarding the unclear protection status of the Kui Buri Forest Reserve (KBFR) and the Army Reserve Zone, a critically important ecological corridor between the Kui Buri (KBNP) and Kaeng Krachan National Parks (KKNP) within the property, welcomes that efforts are underway to expand KBNP to include part of the KBFR, and requests the State Party to provide clarification on the options for the remaining part of the KBFR, to ensure that reporting and management accurately reflects the KBFR as part of the inscribed property, and to continue efforts towards consolidating the protection status of this area and management system building upon scenarios identified in the nomination dossier, in full consultation with all stakeholders and rightsholders;*
7. *Takes note that participatory processes are incorporated into policy and management frameworks and implemented through the individual Protected Area Committees (PAC), welcomes the establishment of a PAC for the property (KKFC-PAC), and requests the State Party to continue enhancing participatory management and governance arrangements enabled by the new legislation in place since 2019, including through meaningful participation of local communities;*
8. *Notes with appreciation that the development of a Management Plan for the property is under discussion, and requests the State Party to finalise it for the entire property, including the KBFR, involving all stakeholders and rightsholders;*

9. Welcomes the continued State Party's focus on engagement with the Karen community in Ban Bang Kloy and the expedited efforts to resolve conflicts and foster peaceful coexistence, including establishment of working groups, and requests the State Party to continue working closely, and in full consultation, with the affected communities to address the longstanding conflicts, following a rights-based approach;
10. Takes note that no authorisation has been granted for the construction of the Nong Ta Dang (Purakam) Dam or Reservoir project within the Mae Nam Phachi Wildlife Sanctuary (MNPWS) and that impact assessment guidelines will be considered should the project proceed and, recalling its utmost concern that the dam is likely to negatively impact on the OUV given that the MNPWS is located adjacent to the property, and in an area initially nominated as part of the property and key for its integrity, and may further amplify the difficult relationship with the local communities, requests the State Party to ensure that potential environmental and social impacts of the project are fully assessed in line with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context, including to consider a no-project option, prior to making any decision that would be difficult to reverse;
11. Notes with appreciation the appointment of a working group to establish a buffer zone for the property, and reiterates its request to the State Party to continue its efforts to formalize a buffer zone tailored to the local situation around the property through the Minor Boundary Modification procedure as soon as possible;
12. Notes with appreciation the various other conservation measures and partnerships underway within the property and encourages the State Party to continue such measures;
13. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2026**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 49th session.

EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA

18. Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe (Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, France, Germany, Italy, North Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Ukraine)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2007

Criteria (ix)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1133/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1133/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

October 2014: Joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to Slovakia; October 2018: Joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Advisory mission to Slovakia; November 2019: Joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to Albania and Romania

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Management systems/management plan (lack of integrated Management Plan, lack of legal protection from logging, and inadequate management of logging in the Slovak part of the property)
- Inappropriate boundary configuration of some parts of the property
- Management and institutional factors (lack of transnational research and monitoring plans, need for capacity building)
- Forestry / wood production

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1133/>

Current conservation issues

On 13 December 2023 and on 9 January 2025, in response to Decisions **44 COM 8B.32**, **45 COM 7B.20**, and **45 COM 8B.56**, the States Parties submitted joint reports on the state of conservation of the property. These are available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1133/documents/> and report the following:

- A permanent secretariat for the property has been established, funded and staffed by Austria, Belgium and Slovakia;
- The *Guidance document on buffer zone management and buffer zone zonation* was adopted in 2023, following an IUCN technical review (April 2022) and a workshop with representatives of the States Parties, the World Heritage Centre and IUCN. The document includes a detailed assessment of potential threats and capacity of the buffer zones for threat abatement, with a critical review of the current buffer zone configuration;
- Albania reported that incidents of illegal logging in 2023 have been legally addressed. The existing hydropower plant has no impact on the property or its buffer zone, fire-fighting equipment has been delivered (though aerial access is considered more effective), and efforts are underway to improve on-the-ground markings and enhance technical and human capacities. In response to

concerns over amendments to Law No. 81/2017 “On Protected Areas”, Albania stated the amendments are intended to balance environmental protection with socio-economic development, to ensure compliance with strict environmental regulations, and may lead to a minor boundary modification;

- Austria reported test drilling for gas at a location 2.3km from the boundary of the property, with no anticipated impact on the property;
- Belgium plans to enlarge its component parts through a minor boundary modification. A Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for a road infrastructure proposal was submitted to the World Heritage Centre;
- Romania submitted an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the upgrading of the Cerna Belareca Hydroelectric Plant (CBHP), stating that dismantling the plant would cause greater impact than completing the remaining 20% of the work. It confirmed that no further deforestation will occur and that all forestry activities are suspended until a revised management plan for Domogled-Valea Cernei National Park (DVCNP) is issued in 2025. This plan is expected to expand the non-intervention regime to approximately 74% of the component. In response to Committee Decision **45 COM 7B.20**, which urged the State Party consideration of an alternative route for National Road 66A, Romania reported that one alternative was assessed but found unsuitable, although further details are not provided. The State Party is considering a boundary modification to exclude the remaining 26% of the component in order to proceed with the road upgrade;
- Slovakia has updated its Forest Management Plans (FMPs) to ensure a non-intervention regime within the property. The Integrated Management Plan (IMP) for Poloniny National Park will be completed following a revision of the park’s zonation, to be effective from 2025, aligning management with the property’s conservation objectives. The Joint Management Committee (JMC) has requested clarification from the Slovak authorities regarding third-party concerns that the new zonation could reduce the park’s area to one-third of its current extent;
- Ukraine reports a significant discrepancy between the current mapped area of component parts and the areas mapped at the time of inscription. It also refers to different threats and disruptive effects resulting from the ongoing war, including missile strikes, the increased demand for firewood from the local population or the planned forest clearing along the borders with Poland and Slovakia. A Minor Boundary Modification is being considered to enable wood harvesting;
- Austria, Germany, Italy and Spain have reported actions to address forestry interventions in buffer zones; fires in Bulgaria, Italy and Slovenia have reportedly had no significant impact on the property; Croatia indicates that the extension recommended in Decision **45 COM 8B.56** is not necessary, as the small areas excluded remain protected under national legislation and the new Management Plan;
- All State Parties have provided updates on the implementation of the recommendations from previous missions.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

The establishment of a permanent secretariat for the property is welcome, and the States Parties are encouraged to contribute to its funding and staffing. While the adoption of the *Guidance document on buffer zone management and buffer zone zonation (Guidance document)* is noted, it is regrettable that only a limited number of the recommendations from the 2022 IUCN Technical Review have been incorporated. For example, a more restrictive list of permitted activities has not been considered, and the process for updating FMPs is protracted. It is therefore recommended that the advice from the technical review be followed closely, with the update of FMPs accelerated and the phasing out of impactful forestry interventions expedited.

The States Parties are commended for the rigorous and systematic review of the effectiveness of the buffer zone boundaries. However, several Management Plans continue to permit major forestry interventions within buffer zones, and occasionally within the property itself, which may adversely affect the property’s Outstanding Universal Value (OUV). In line with the new *Guidance document*, such activities and permits should be phased out as soon as possible. The States Parties should explore options for boundary modifications (extensions) where the configuration of buffer zones has been assessed as “limited” or “critical”. Prior to this, a clear scientific rationale is required to define the thresholds used in the assessment; specifically, the hectareage bands used to determine “high”,

“moderate”, “low” sensitivity to degradation; the methods by which threat potential categories per landcover group and impact points were established; how impact points relate to threat potential, and how buffer zone capacity break levels were defined. The scientific rationale should be subject to independent peer review by experts in primary forest conservation and revised as necessary. This review should also evaluate cases where threat ratings have been changed. Subsequently, the latest 2024 CORINE Landcover dataset should be applied, including an analysis of land cover change trends before and since inscription.

The assurances provided by Albania regarding changes to protected area legislation are noted, but any proposed development should be subject to rigorous EIAs, developed in accordance with the *Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context*. Activities that may negatively impact the OUV of the property should not be permitted. The State Party of Albania should provide detailed information on the amended law and clarify its concrete implications for the protection of the property. It should continue to manage the property and its buffer zone by avoiding activities and taking measures to mitigate environmental risks that could negatively affect the property.

While test drilling for gas in the vicinity of the property in Austria is not expected to affect the property, the potential impacts should be assessed in line with the aforementioned Guidance and Toolkit given the close proximity to the property boundary, prior to making any irreversible decisions regarding further drilling.

Belgium's proposal to extend its component parts via a Minor Boundary Modification is welcomed. The State Party is advised not to proceed with any road infrastructure projects in the buffer zone that may adversely impact the integrity of the property. The submitted HIA contains limited detail on the nature and extent of the reported negative impacts on the buffer zone, making it difficult to verify the justification of the “negligible” impact rating. The assessment also omits potential impacts from anticipated increases in vehicle traffic.

While Romania's EIA for the upgrade of the CBHP acknowledges the property's World Heritage status, it is regrettable that impacts on the attributes underpinning its OUV were not specifically assessed. Considerable activities are still being planned such as construction of access roads and various dam infrastructures. Appropriate mitigation measures, along with an independently verified monitoring plan, are required to address any impacts on these attributes. The revision of the Management Plan for Domogled-Valea Cernei National Park, expanding the area of non-intervention, is noted. Recalling the 2019 mission recommendations and Committee Decision **44 COM 7B.99**, which urged the State Party of Romania to abandon plans to upgrade the National Road 66A inside and/or nearby the property due to potential impacts on the OUV, it is recommended that the Committee reiterates its concerns on this matter.

Slovakia's update of FMPs to ensure non-intervention management within the property is appreciated. The State Party of Slovakia should also address the third-party concerns regarding the risks associated with the proposed re-zoning of the Poloniny National Park and submit the planned zonation and boundaries to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN.

The reported discrepancy in the mapped size of the Ukrainian component parts is concerning and requires clarification. The State Party of Ukraine should also clarify any active or planned logging within the boundaries of the property, particularly in light of the reported increase in fuelwood demand. The planned logging along national borders, especially in the context of the ongoing war, is of significant concern as it would impact ecological connectivity between the Polish, Slovak and Ukrainian component parts. Further detailed information on logging activities and expected impacts, especially on ecological connectivity and edge effects in accordance with the *Guidance document*, should be provided.

The reported marginal impact of fires on the integrity of forest ecosystems is encouraging. In addition, important measures are being taken to strengthen the property's protection: States Parties, including Austria, Germany and Spain are actively working to phase out forestry interventions in buffer zones, in particular that the non-intervention areas included in the buffer zones of the Italian component parts constitute preferred areas for new strictly protected areas, and mission recommendations are being implemented. It is recommended that these States Parties provide mapped evidence of the forestry intervention phase-out, using the situation at the time of inscription as a baseline.

Noting Croatia's position that the extension recommended in Decision **45 COM 8B.56** is unnecessary as the small, excised areas are protected nationally through Paklenica National Park, it is recommended that the boundaries of the buffer zone be aligned with those of the national park. However, given the review of buffer zone boundary effectiveness and potential extensions in line with

Decision **44 COM 8B.32**, and the consideration of multiple boundary modifications, the States Parties are strongly recommended to develop and submit a single, strategic, significant boundary modification. While the proposed inclusion of additional old-growth areas is welcomed, concern remains that some of the envisaged modifications also involve removing areas from the property and buffer zones to accommodate other uses. Boundary modifications should enhance the integrity and protection of OUV, consistent with the property's Integrated Management System objective "to maintain and expand the existing, ecologically connected complex of primeval and natural beech forests".

Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.18

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.4,
2. Recalling Decisions **37 COM 7B.26**, **38 COM 7B.75**, **39 COM 7B.19**, **41 COM 7B.4**, **41 COM 8B.7**, **42 COM 7B.71**, **43 COM 7B.13**, **44 COM 7B.99**, **44 COM 8B.32**, **45 COM 7B.20** and **45 COM 8B.56** adopted at its 37th (Phnom Penh, 2013), 38th (Doha, 2014), 39th (Bonn, 2015), 41st (Krakow, 2017), 42nd (Manama, 2018), 43rd (Baku, 2019), extended 44th (Fuzhou/online, 2021) and extended 45th (Riyadh, 2023) sessions respectively,
3. Welcomes the establishment of a permanent secretariat for the property, commends the States Parties of Austria, Belgium and Slovakia for providing funding and staffing for it, and encourages all other States Parties of the transnational property to also contribute to its funding and staffing;
4. Notes again with serious concern that major forestry interventions, such as shelterwood cutting and clear-cutting, which impact forest habitats and disturb natural processes, continue to be authorised in several buffer zones and, in some cases, within the property, urges the States Parties to suspend the practices, phase out related permits, and expedite the updating of Forest Management Plans;
5. Strongly encourages the States Parties to consider the 2022 IUCN technical review in the implementation of the Guidance document on buffer zone management and buffer zone zonation;
6. Requests the State Party of Albania to provide further information on the amendments to Law No 81/2017 "On Protected Areas", including their impact on the protection of the property, and to continue ensuring that activities that may negatively affect the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property are not permitted, while taking appropriate measures to effectively address possible environmental risks;
7. Also requests the State Party of Austria to prepare an Environmental Impact Assessment in accordance with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context, should any further drilling for gas near the property be considered;
8. Further requests the State Party of Romania to identify and implement an independently audited environmental management and monitoring plan to mitigate the impacts of the Cerna Belareca Hydroelectric Plant (CBHP) on the property's OUV, and urges again the State Party to abandon plans to upgrade the national road 66A inside and/or in close proximity to the property, due to its potential adverse impact on the property's OUV, and to explore appropriate alternatives;

9. Requests furthermore the State Party of Slovakia to urgently clarify third party concerns regarding the zonation plan for the Poloniny National Park and to submit the planned zonation and the park boundaries to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN prior to their approval;
10. Requests moreover the State Party of Croatia to align the buffer zone boundaries with those of Paklenica National Park to ensure full and enhanced protection;
11. Also notes with serious concern the reported threat posed by the ongoing war to the component parts of the property in Ukraine, resulting in management challenges and increasing land and resource use pressures, and requests moreover the State Party of Ukraine to provide more detailed information on current and potential impacts of the war, land transformation and resource use, particularly within transboundary landscapes, which may disrupt ecological connectivity;
12. Further notes with concern the discrepancy between the reported size and configuration of component parts in Ukraine and what was approved by the Committee at the time of inscription, and requests furthermore the State Party of Ukraine to clarify the boundaries and protection status of its components as inscribed,
13. Also welcomes the progress made in phasing out forestry interventions in the buffer zones and component parts of the property, which may negatively affect natural processes in beech forest ecosystems and the property's OUV, and requests moreover the States Parties of Austria, Bulgaria, Germany, Italy and Spain to submit detailed information on progress made and measures implemented, using the situation at the time of inscription as a baseline;
14. Further welcomes the review of buffer zone boundary effectiveness, and requests the States Parties to submit additional information on the study, including the thresholds and methodologies applied, to conduct an independent peer review of the study and its methods, and to complement it based on the review's recommendations, incorporating an analysis of land cover change since inscription, using the 2024 CORINE Landcover dataset;
15. Also strongly encourages the States Parties to develop and submit a single, coordinated request for a significant boundary modification, to include additional - and not to remove - relevant old-growth and corridor areas, strategically considering all individual proposals for boundary modifications, with the aim of enhancing the property's OUV, consistent with the integrity requirements outlined in the Operational Guidelines, also taking into account Decision **44 COM 8B.32** and the findings of the updated review of buffer zone boundaries effectiveness;
16. Finally requests the States Parties to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2026**, an updated joint report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 49th session.

19. Białowieża Forest (Belarus, Poland)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.5

22. Wadden Sea (Denmark, Germany, Kingdom of the Netherlands)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2009

Criteria (viii)(ix)(x)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1314/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 1 (from 1991-1991)

Total amount approved: USD 5,000

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1314/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

N/A

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Fishing/collecting aquatic resources
- Water infrastructure
- Marine transport infrastructure
- Buildings and development/major visitor accommodation and associated infrastructure
- Climate change and severe weather events
- Non-renewable energy facilities, renewable energy facilities, major linear utilities

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1314/>

Current conservation issues

On 14 February 2025, the States Parties submitted a joint state of conservation report, which is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1314/documents/>. Progress on a number of conservation issues identified by the Committee in its previous decisions is presented as follows:

- The joint strategic management of the property, including climate change resilience, is guided by trilateral policies and structures such as the Strategic Integrated Management Plan (SIMP), the Wilhelmshaven Declaration, the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (2014), and the Wadden Sea Quality Status Report, which includes a 2024 report on climate change). The trilateral Climate Change Adaptation Strategy is currently under revision;
- Whilst the property lacks a designated buffer zone, legislative protection regimes extending beyond its boundaries are in place, including those under the EU Natura 2000 Directives. Environmental assessments are integrated into the decision-making processes in all three countries; nevertheless, the automatic integration of assessments specifically addressing the potential impact of proposed changes on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property has not yet been standardised;
- The Kingdom of the Netherlands has adopted legislation, effective from 1 May 2024, prohibiting the issuance of new permits for gas and salt extraction under the Wadden Sea, while allowing existing operations to continue. The government intends to prevent extraction in the Ternaard gas field and has initiated discussions with the operator to abandon extraction plans, as there is currently insufficient legal basis to refuse the application. Recent research findings confirm that the assumptions underlying the most recent 'hand on tap' monitoring system remain valid;
- Regarding the GEMS gas development, directional drilling and natural gas production in the German sector of the North Sea has been approved but remains subject to a court ruling following a lawsuit against the approval. In the Dutch sector, permits for an extraction platform and associated drilling works have been granted. In both cases, the planned activities are not expected to have an adverse impact on the property;

- The government of Schleswig-Holstein (Germany) has reached an agreement with Wintershall DEA to cease all oil extraction activities by 2041. Until then, no new licences will be issued for the development of additional oil drilling fields in the area, and a pending application for a new permit has been withdrawn;
- As part of the trilateral 'LANDing offshore energy while mitigating Impact on the Coastal Environment' (LANICE) project, a joint strategic approach is being developed for offshore energy production, aimed at mitigating impacts on the coastal environment and ensuring better integration of World Heritage consideration into offshore energy infrastructure planning;
- Impact assessments have been conducted for the PAWOZ-Eemshaven Programme (Kingdom of the Netherlands), covering both electric cables and a hydrogen pipeline, and several routing options have been identified. A decision is expected in July 2025;
- A joint Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) addressing potential impacts on the OUV of the property, including cumulative impacts, is currently under development;
- The States Parties' report provides a list of recent activities and initiatives that may affect the property's OUV; furthermore, the States Parties have indicated plans to develop national restoration programmes over the next two years, in accordance with the EU Nature Restoration Regulation.

On 19 December 2024, following IUCN's previous assessment that the non-technical summary of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the proposed Power-to-X (Hoest) Facility in Esbjerg was insufficient, the State Party of Denmark submitted a supplementary document for review.

Following various exchanges between the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat, the World Heritage Centre and IUCN, a draft scoping report for a joint SEA was submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review on 31 March 2025.

On 12 June 2025, the World Heritage Centre transmitted to the States Parties third-party information regarding ongoing projects within and around the property, along with their comments on the States Parties' report.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

It is noted positively that the States Parties continue their tripartite collaboration under the SIMP for the joint management of the property, addressing key challenges including extractive activities (oil, salt, and gas), fishing, shipping and port operations, the need for expanded renewable energy infrastructure, and climate change. While there have been several encouraging developments, such as the decision to phase out oil extraction in relation to Wintershall Dea and the intention to prevent extraction at the Ternaard gas field, ongoing and emerging challenges persist. Notably, the absence of a definitive resolution regarding the Ternaard site, alongside various planned infrastructure projects within the property, including cables and a hydrogen pipeline, pose potential risks.

It is noted that the GEMS gas development outside the property has been approved on the basis that it will have no impact on the OUV. It is critical that any such operations proceed only if they do not adversely impact the property's OUV. A range of other development initiatives are contributing to increasing pressures, all of which must be considered within the broader context of the accelerating impacts of climate change on the property. Despite updates on various extraction projects and ongoing discussions with operators aimed at abandoning further projects or terminating activities, concerns persist, as extractive activities remain a significant potential threat to the property's OUV. The States Parties should therefore continue to seek legally binding, long-term solutions to ensure that extractive activities do not negatively impact on the OUV of the property.

The updated sea level rise projections should inform climate adaptation measures and the ongoing SEA and be systematically integrated into impact assessments and spatial planning to ensure the long-term resilience of the property's OUV. In this context, the regular monitoring and data collection concerning climate change impacts are commendable, and the ongoing development of a joint 'Climate Change Adaptation Strategy' is particularly welcome.

The States Parties are encouraged to continue implementing programmes aimed at maintaining the hydrological and ecological processes within the property, thereby supporting the protection of the attributes that convey its OUV and mitigating the negative impacts of both climate change and

anthropogenic activities. The pending SEA should duly address these concerns appropriately at a strategic level.

Whilst acknowledging that various legislative frameworks, such as the EU Directives, provide protection for the area in the vicinity of the property, it is recommended that the States Parties be encouraged to formalise a joint buffer zone under the World Heritage Convention to provide an added coordinated layer of protection.

It is welcomed that the States Parties are adopting a joint strategic approach to onshore and offshore renewable energy and transition infrastructure, exemplified by the trilateral LANICE project. This approach should be maintained with the objective of identifying solutions that ensure the protection of the property's OUV. In this context, the State Party of the Kingdom of the Netherlands should be requested to submit the results of the impact assessment for the PAWOZ-Eemshaven Programme to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN before any irreversible decisions are taken.

Regarding the proposed Power-to-X (Hoest) project, the submitted documentation addresses impacts, including cumulative impacts, on the property's OUV. The report concludes that the project will have insignificant or no impact on the OUV, that all elements will remain intact during both the construction and operation phases, and that the project would not contribute to seabed subsidence. Noting that the full EIA is not available in a working language of the Committee, the State Party should ensure that the project only be approved if there would be no negative impact on the OUV.

While the updated information concerning the pending joint SEA is noted, the slow progress on the SEA is nevertheless a cause for concern. Although a scoping report for the requested SEA has been submitted and will be reviewed by IUCN, the timely completion of the SEA should be urgently prioritised to effectively assess and address the cumulative impacts of the various pressures on the property's OUV and to guide future decision-making.

Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.22

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.4,*
2. *Recalling Decisions **45 COM 7B.23** and **46 COM 7B.51**, adopted at its extended 45th (Riyadh, 2023) and 46th (New Delhi, 2024) sessions respectively,*
3. *Appreciates the States Parties' continued tripartite efforts to jointly manage the property and address key challenges;*
4. *Welcomes the regular monitoring and data collection related to the impacts of climate change, the development of a joint 'Climate Change Adaptation Strategy', and activities aimed at preserving the underlying values and attributes of the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), and encourages the States Parties to continue implementing programmes to maintain the property's hydrological and ecological processes necessary for preserving the underlying values and attributes of the property's OUV, while mitigating the negative impacts of both climate change and anthropogenic activities;*
5. *Acknowledges that separate legislative frameworks, such as the EU Directives, provide protection for the area in the vicinity of the property, and also encourages the States Parties to formalise a joint buffer zone to provide an additional coordinated layer of protection for the property;*
6. *Notes the updated information relating to various extraction projects and also appreciates the efforts of the relevant States Parties in reaching agreement with project proponents and operators to abandon further projects or cease activities;*

7. Strongly requests the States Parties to continue to find legally binding, long-term solutions to ensure extractive activities do not adversely impact on the property's OUV, and requests the States Parties to continue to provide updates on individual projects in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;
8. Also welcomes the States Parties' implementation of a joint strategic approach to the construction of onshore and offshore renewable energy and transition infrastructure, and further encourages the States Parties to continue these efforts to secure solutions that ensure the protection of the property's OUV;
9. Also requests the State Party of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to submit additional information on the PAWOZ-Eemshaven Programme to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN, including the results of an impact assessment, prior to any irreversible decisions being taken;
10. Reiterates its previous request to the States Parties to ensure that impact assessment procedures are conducted for all relevant planned and proposed activities and developments within and around the property, in accordance with Paragraph 118bis of the Operational Guidelines;
11. Also notes the submission of the scoping report for the pending joint Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), expresses concern regarding delays in this process, and further requests that the States Parties continue to prioritise the completion of the SEA to fully assess potential cumulative impacts on the OUV of the property, taking into account IUCN recommendations and comments on the scoping study and in dialogue with the World Heritage Centre and IUCN;
12. Finally requests the States Parties to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2026**, a joint updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 48th session.

30. Western Caucasus (Russian Federation)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1999

Criteria (ix)(x)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/900/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/900/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

April 2008, May 2010, September 2012 and September 2024: joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring missions; November 2016: IUCN Advisory mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Management systems/ management plan (lack of Management Plan)
- Legal framework (weakening of conservation controls and laws)
- Impacts of tourism / visitor / recreation (impacts of proposed tourism infrastructure development, major visitor accommodation and associated infrastructure)
- Ground transport infrastructure (road construction)
- Illegal activities (deforestation)

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/900/>

Current conservation issues

On 31 January 2025, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/900/documents/>, providing the following information:

- The development of the Lagonaki resort project is ongoing, including hotels, restaurants, health centres and communal facilities, as well as ski slopes, passenger ropeways and operational facilities. The resort will be situated within the Lagonaki biosphere polygon of the Caucasus State Nature Biosphere Reserve (CSNBR), where recreational activities are permitted under a special usage regime;
- In 2020, the CSNBR conducted a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the resort's potential impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property. The assessment concluded that the project complies with existing environmental legislation and includes necessary mitigation measures;
- Design and survey work is currently underway, including Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs), such as for groundwater, alongside the development of environmental protection measures. Once complete, the full project documentation will be submitted to the Federal Service for Supervision of Natural Resources for official environmental review;
- The State Party confirms that, should plans proceed for a new highway and railway connecting the North Caucasus to the Black Sea and potentially crossing the property, the relevant procedures under the Convention will be followed;
- No formal documentation has been submitted to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment in relation to a proposed 13 km tunnel through the property, intended to link Arkhyz and Krasnaya Polyana;
- The unpaved road from the Vodopadny tract to the Lunnaya Polyana tract is designated solely for fire protection and conservation purposes. It is part of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment's approved long-term planning and is not intended to facilitate access to the Biosphere Centre at Lunnaya Polyana. According to the State Party, the road poses no adverse impact on the OUV of the property;
- In 2023, new national regulations were introduced to guide recreational activities in protected areas. Future assessments will determine the carrying capacity of the CSNBR for recreational use;
- The regional nature parks and protected areas in the Republic of Adygea, including Bolshoi Thach, Gornaya Adygeya, Verkhovye Tsitsa River and Buiny Ridge, are managed by State institutions under the Department of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources of Adygea. These areas are governed by approved planning documents, with funding and oversight provided by the Republic of Adygea;
- The CSNBR remains a federally protected area under the authority of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation and is managed by the Caucasus Reserve Institution. The management structure remains unchanged, and in 2023, 65 state inspectors were assigned to patrol the reserve.

A joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to the property took place from 15 to 21 September 2024, the report for which is available at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/900/documents/>.

On 2 June 2025, the State Party provided information on the implementation of the most urgent recommendations of the Reactive Monitoring mission, which are being analysed.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

The 2024 Reactive Monitoring mission to the property concluded that, whilst the property remains in stable condition, growing pressures from socio-economic activities, tourism and infrastructure development underscore the urgent need for strengthened coordinated management and sustainable regional development strategies to ensure the long-term safeguarding of the property's OUV without requiring the inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

The information provided by the State Party regarding the governance and regulatory frameworks of the regional nature parks is noted. However, it remains unclear whether the reclassification of the Mountain Adygea Nature Park and the Upper Tsitsa River Nature Park has resulted in any changes to their legal protection status or management arrangements, compared to the natural monuments they replaced. The Committee may wish to request the State Party to submit detailed information to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN, including official documentation on the boundaries, zoning and regulations of these reclassified parks, along with high-resolution maps, in order to facilitate a comparison with the protection levels that existed at the time of inscription. Furthermore, noting that the mission was informed by third-party sources of boundary changes to the Bolshoi Thach Nature Park in 2023, the Committee could urge the State Party to clarify whether such changes have occurred. If confirmed, the State Party should ensure that the legal protection and management regime of the affected areas is restored to at least the level in place at the time of inscription.

Despite the confirmation that the CSNBR remains under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation, the State Party did not provide detailed information regarding changes to the legal protection, delineation of buffer zones, or ongoing conservation efforts. In line with the recommendation of the 2024 mission, the State Party could be requested to reverse any weakening of legal protection resulting from the establishment of the Biosphere Polygon and to ensure that all areas of the property conform fully with the requirements of the Operational Guidelines and previous Committee decisions. The Committee may also request that the northern buffer zone of the CSNBR be restored to its original boundaries, legal status and management regime by 31 December 2025. The ongoing process to establish a buffer zone around the entire property should also be expedited and finalised in line with paragraphs 103–107 of the Operational Guidelines. To support this process, the Committee may encourage the State Party to invite an Advisory mission to the property, to assist in clarifying boundaries and finalising the buffer zone designation, in consultation with regional and local authorities. A high-resolution map clearly indicating all proposed boundaries and zoning should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review prior to formal adoption.

It is highly concerning that further concrete steps towards the implementation of the Lagonaki mountain all-season resort are advancing, considering the State Party's 2022 report indicating that a decision to proceed with construction would only be taken following approval by the Committee. In this regard, the Committee has consistently stated that the construction of large infrastructure within the property, including on the Lagonaki Plateau, would constitute an ascertained threat to its OUV, which could have deleterious effects on its inherent characteristics and, in conformity with Paragraph 180 of the Operational Guidelines, fulfil the conditions for inclusion on the List of World Heritage in Danger. The Committee has therefore consistently urged the State Party not to proceed with this proposal and to halt all preparatory activities at the Lagonaki Plateau.

The absence of details regarding the proposed 13 km tunnel between Arkhyz and Krasnaya Polyana, which would partially fall within the property, remains a matter of concern. The Committee could reiterate its request for the State Party to provide full clarification on this proposal. Noting that the 2024 mission was also informed of a possible Lagonaki-Sochi road, the Committee may wish to request the State Party to submit detailed information on this project as well. Moreover, in light of the mission's findings, the construction of the Lagonaki-Guzerypl road should be immediately halted. An EIA, prepared in accordance with the *Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context*, should be completed and submitted to the World Heritage Centre and for review by IUCN before any further work is undertaken. With regards to the fire road leading to the Lunnaya Polyana Biosphere Centre, the lack of a submitted EIA or any reference to such an assessment raises concerns about the basis for the conclusion that the road has no impact on the property's OUV. The State Party could be requested to provide further details, including an EIA, and to clarify the exact location, function and current usage of the Biosphere Centre. Any future upgrades or expansions of this facility should not proceed without the prior submission of detailed project documentation and impact assessments to the Committee.

While noting the information that new regulations were introduced in 2023 to guide recreational activities within protected areas, and that future assessments will determine the recreational capacity of the CSNBR, the Committee may recall its repeated requests for the development of a SEA. In this regard,

the recommendation of the 2024 mission to update the relevant legal frameworks is also noted, in order to ensure that cumulative impact assessments are effectively integrated into regional planning processes.

Overall, it is essential that the boundaries are clarified and legal protection of the property are improved, in line with previous Committee requests and the Operational Guidelines. Infrastructure projects must only be considered following thorough assessment, in accordance with the *Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context*, and within the framework of a strategic approach to tourism development. Invasive species control efforts must also be further advanced, including in cooperation with the IUCN SSC Invasive Species Specialist Group. The State Party must urgently provide comprehensive clarifications on all concerns raised by the Committee and addressed during the 2024 mission. This includes detailed information regarding boundaries, zoning, and legal regulation of key uses and activities within various components of the property, in order to avoid threats which could have deleterious effects on the property's inherent characteristics, in conformity with Paragraph 180 of the Operational Guidelines.

Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.30

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.4,
2. Recalling Decision **46 COM 7B.54**, adopted at its 46th session (New Delhi, 2024),
3. Expresses its utmost concern over the weakening legal protection of important areas of the property, and requests the State Party to:
 - a) Provide the World Heritage Centre and IUCN with detailed information on the boundaries, zoning, and regulations of the Mountain Adygea Nature Park and the Upper Tsitsa River Nature Park, along with high-resolution maps,
 - b) Clarify the boundaries of the Bolshoi Thach Nature Park and restore its legal protection and management regime to at least the levels that existed at the time of inscription,
 - c) Reverse the weakening of the legal protection of the Caucasus State Nature Biosphere Reserve (CSNBR) resulting from the establishment of the Biosphere Polygon,
 - d) Restore the northern buffer zone of the CSNBR to its original boundaries, legal status and management regime by **31 December 2025**, and submit a high-resolution map to the World Heritage Centre for review, prior to any decisions regarding the area's use;
4. Also requests the State Party to finalise the ongoing process of establishing a buffer zone around the entire property, in consultation with regional and local authorities, and to submit a high-resolution map to the World Heritage Centre for review prior to its formal adoption;
5. Recalls that the construction of large-scale infrastructure within the property, including on the Lagonaki Plateau, would represent a threat which could have deleterious effects on the property's inherent characteristics, in conformity with Paragraph 180 of the Operational Guidelines, hence meeting the conditions for inclusion on the List of World Heritage in Danger, notes with utmost concern the continued advancement towards the development of the Lagonaki mountain all-season resort, and strongly urges the State Party to immediately cease all works at Lagonaki Plateau and to not proceed with the construction of the resort within the property;

6. Further requests the State Party to adopt a strategic approach to sustainable socio-economic development that is compatible with the preservation of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, including by conducting a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), and to update relevant legal frameworks to ensure cumulative impact assessments inform strategic regional planning and development;
7. Notes with concern the various proposed development and ongoing operation of linear infrastructure within the property, and urges the State Party to:
 - a) Immediately halt the construction of the Lagonaki-Guzerypl road and submit an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), in line with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context, to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN prior to any further work,
 - b) Provide detailed information on the proposed Lagonaki-Sochi road, the Arkyz-Krasnaya Polyana railway and highway, and any other planned transport infrastructure with potential negative impacts on the OUV of the property,
 - c) Submit an EIA for the fire road leading to the Lunnaya Polyana Biosphere Centre, clarifying how it was determined that the road would have no impact on the OUV of the property,
 - d) Clarify the location and usage of the Lunnaya Polyana Biosphere Centre and refrain from undertaking any future upgrades or expansions without prior submission of detailed plans and impact assessments to the World Heritage Centre;
8. Requests furthermore the State Party to pursue and foster invasive species control programmes, including in cooperation with the IUCN SSC Invasive Species Specialist Group;
9. Takes note of the conclusions of the 2024 World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to the property and further requests the State Party to implement all of the recommendations of the mission in a timely manner;
10. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2026**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 48th session, **considering that the urgent conservation needs of this property require a broad mobilization to preserve its OUV, including the possible inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger.**

31. Doñana National Park (Spain)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.5

ARAB STATES

53. Socotra Archipelago (Yemen)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.5

MIXED PROPERTIES

EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA

55. Laponian Area (Sweden)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.5

AFRICA

60. Ngorongoro Conservation Area (United Republic of Tanzania)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.5

ARAB STATES

61. The Ahwar of Southern Iraq: Refuge of Biodiversity and the Relict Landscape of the Mesopotamian Cities (Iraq)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2016

Criteria (iii)(v)(ix)(x)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1481/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1481/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

2017: Heritage Emergency Fund – support to Iraqi World Heritage properties: USD 100,000

Previous monitoring missions

March 2024: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Legal Framework
- Need to conduct further studies regarding minimum water flows, to confirm the biodiversity within the property and its surrounding landscapes
- Incomplete designation of all the components of the property as legally protected areas
- Need to regulate oil and gas concessions, and other potentially impacting activities in the buffer zones of the property
- Highly unstable conservation conditions of the archaeological sites
- Need for a detailed master plan/road map that ensures the conservation of the property on a sustainable basis
- Need for an effective implementation of the consolidated management plan

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1481/>

Current conservation issues

On 14 January 2025, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, which is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1481/documents/>, and reports the following progress:

- Visitor management actions at Ur include the installation of surveillance cameras and audio system, walkways, and mobile restrooms. At Eridu, works focused on the primary path for visitors;
- At Uruk, the Iraqi-German Joint Mission excavated a trench in the great courtyard and another across the Shatt al-Nil, and carried out magnetometer and earth resistivity tomography surveys. At Eridu the University of Sapienza carried out a variety of survey work, as well as digging a trench to examine the Temenos wall;
- An additional area, encompassing Al-Daqaqah, was added to the archaeological site of Ur (approximately 90 hectares);
- The update of the Integrated Management Plan (IMP) for the property is underway, in collaboration with the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage (ARC-WH). Stakeholder consultations and an assessment of threats and factors related to the natural values (draft report appended) have been undertaken. Steps have been taken to review of the management plans (MP) for the archaeological sites;

- The aforementioned assessment intends to enhance monitoring capacity and provide a clear framework for conservation management. Relative threat levels are identified for the Central Marshes (most affected), Western Hammar and Hawizeh Marshes (moderate pressure), and Eastern Hammar Marshes (least threatened). Threats from most to least significant: climate change (impact on water resources), overexploitation of natural resources, invasive species (notably tilapia), pollution;
- Water scarcity continues into its fifth consecutive year, with water supply to the marshland components hinging primarily on water inflows from upstream countries. The crisis is compounded by the negative impacts of increased irrigation projects and construction of small and large dams in these countries. Climate change has further contributed to a decline in water inflows from the primary water sources (Tigris and Euphrates rivers) with a detrimental impact on the reduction of flooded areas;
- The Strategic Study for Water and Land Resources (SSWLR), which remains the roadmap to mitigate effects of water scarcity by determining water allocations across sectors in Iraq, is being updated (over 2-3 years) to incorporate climate change, enable drought and flood management strategies, set water quotas for the property, as well as examine impacts of water policies and irrigation in upstream countries, and identify mitigation and solutions;
- Measures to mitigate water scarcity include transboundary collaboration with Iran, a national plan for water resource encroachment, equitable water distribution plans, maintenance of waterways, technical meetings, water discharge monitoring, and projects to enhance water security of local indigenous communities. Sufficient water supply has been secured for the marshes including through connecting waterways to deep ponds, resulting in an expansion of flooded areas compared to previous years. Technical and scientific studies have been undertaken and conferences held;
- Various transboundary water management cooperation activities continue including with the States Parties of Türkiye, Islamic Republic of Iran and Syria, as well as regionally;
- Regarding the concerns over hydrological projects in upstream countries considered to directly impact water availability in Iraq, the State Party proposes the World Heritage Committee hold a technical session between Iraq and upstream countries to discuss current and future projects and impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property;
- Activities to address illegal fishing in the property include monitoring, awareness raising, legal provisions and enforcement, patrolling and prohibiting illegal fishing methods;
- It is reiterated that no oil exploration or exploitation is permitted within the property and only outside the boundaries if there is no risk to the property. Monitoring and evaluation of oil projects adjacent to the property is continued, to avoid issues and mitigate potential pollution;
- Development of a comprehensive tourism plan for the property remains underway, including drafting workshops and mapping. The draft guidelines for regulating eco-tourism in the marshland components were submitted by the Ministry of Environment to the State Council for review and approval. The tourism project in Al-Chibayish ("Tourist City" project) has been halted;
- Implementation of activities, in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in the framework of a project to enhance climate resilience of Marshlands communities, protect biodiversity and ecosystems by promoting laws and regulations centred on women's rights, raising awareness, shifting livelihoods from overfishing and illegal fishing practices, and establishing healthy habitats to restore biodiversity and wildlife.

The report of the 2024 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission report will be available at the above link.

Following third party reports of potential oil exploration in the Huwaizah marshes component of the property, on 16 May 2025, the World Heritage Centre requested information from the State Party in line with paragraphs 172 and 174 of the Operational Guidelines.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies

The progress reported on the update of the IMP for the property is positive, including stakeholder consultations, an assessment of threats and factors to the natural values, and a review of MPs for the archaeological sites. The assessment of threats to the natural values allows the identification of key

threats and related management priorities to protect the OUV, including to inform the finalization of the IMP and long-term monitoring measures for the property. It is recommended to continue to prioritise finalising the IMP and to submit this to the World Heritage Centre.

Although it is noted that the cultural components are being considered in the update of the IMP and their management plans are being reviewed, no updated information has been provided on maintenance and conservation actions at the cultural components to mitigate further erosion and collapse of vulnerable archaeological remains. Long-term and planned conservation of the archaeological sites is needed, along with their documentation, and assessment of overall risks and mitigation strategies.

It would be useful to understand more about the extension of the Ur archaeological site and whether the State Party considers Al-Daqdaqah to be part of the World Heritage property. If so, a boundary modification should be requested as outlined in the Operational Guidelines, in particular, annex 11. In light of the update to the IMP.

It is of utmost concern that water scarcity continues into its fifth consecutive year. It is noted that this is linked to a range of factors, including the downstream impacts of upstream irrigation projects and dam construction, as well as climate change impacts on the primary water sources of the property. Continued and increased transboundary cooperation remains essential, and the ongoing implementation of measures with neighbouring States Parties, such as water cooperation agreements, are noted and should be continued, to assure adequate water management that provides sufficient water supply necessary for the long-term conservation of the attributes of OUV. Building on the ongoing transboundary technical cooperation with the States Parties located upstream of the property, it is suggested that the World Heritage Centre, in collaboration with the Advisory Bodies, organise a technical meeting with the State Party and relevant stakeholders to consider how the OUV of the property may be safeguarded through sustained waterflow and collaboration.

Within this wider regional context of water scarcity, mitigation of the ongoing impact of water scarcity on the marshland components, through the national SSWLR remains crucial. In this regard, it is highly positive that the mitigation measures that are being implemented have secured a sufficient water supply for the marshes compared to previous years. It is also positive that the SSWLR is being updated, and among all sectors considered in this study, it will address the needs of the marshland components of the property, and set the necessary water quota to sustain its OUV. Noting that this update is anticipated to take several years, it is recommended that the State Party ensure that the measures to assure adequate water supply are maintained to maintain the OUV whilst the plan is being updated, and to expedite the review process, where possible.

The continued implementation of technical and scientific studies including the assessment of threats to natural values, is appreciated, as are the various measures to address illegal fishing in the property. The State Party's reiterated position that no oil activities are permitted within the property, and outside the boundaries only when they do not pose a risk, is acknowledged. However, the third-party reports of potential oil exploration within the Huwaizah component of the property are of utmost concern, and would clearly be incompatible with World Heritage status. In this regard, it is also highlighted that oil infrastructure near Huwaizah was identified as a threat in the assessment of threats to natural values. Furthermore, the requested overview of oil and gas developments in the vicinity of the property, and related impact assessments, remain pending. It is therefore recommended that the State Party provide a detailed response to the concerns regarding oil exploration within the property, as well as the requested overview, and ensure there are no oil activities within the property, or outside the boundaries that would negatively impact the OUV, and that this issue is reflected in the update of the IMP.

The various efforts to develop a comprehensive tourism plan for the property are noted with appreciation and should be finalised. It is also noted that the tourism project in Al-Chibayish has been halted, and the various projects underway regarding women and local livelihoods are appreciated.

It is recommended that a new mission be undertaken in 2027 to assess the progress achieved in the implementation of mitigation measures to address water scarcity and ensure the sufficient long term water supply to the property; assess the overall state of conservation of the property; and to re-evaluate whether the property faces deleterious effects on its inherent characteristics, in conformity with Paragraph 180 of the Operational Guidelines, and hence, meets the criteria for its inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.61

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.4,
2. Recalling Decisions **44 COM 7B.73**, **45 COM 7B.31** and **46 COM 7B.49** adopted at its extended 44th (Fuzhou/online, 2021), extended 45th (Riyadh, 2023) and 46th (New Delhi, 2024) sessions respectively,
3. Notes with appreciation the progress on updating the Integrated Management Plan (IMP) for the property, and requests the State Party to finalise the IMP and updated management plans for each component, as a matter of priority, in full consultation with stakeholders including local communities, prioritizing conservation of vulnerable archaeological remains at Ur, Uruk and Eridu, and informed by the assessment of threats and factors related to the natural values of the property, and to submit this to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;
4. Notes with significant concern that water scarcity in the property has continued for a fifth consecutive year, and recalls again that significant fluctuations in water flows may pose a major threat to the property and non-fulfilment of minimum water requirements could represent a potential danger to the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, in accordance with Paragraph 180 of the Operational Guidelines;
5. Welcomes that measures continue to be implemented to mitigate water scarcity within the property, and expresses its appreciation that such measures have secured a sufficient water supply to the marshes compared to previous years, and also requests the State Party to:
 - a) Continue to urgently implement management measures that demonstrate that adequate flows to the property are ensured in the short and long-term as a matter of utmost priority,
 - b) Complete the update of the Strategic Study for Water and Land Resources (SSWLR), which will address the needs of the natural components of the property, among all sectors considered in this study, and set the necessary water quota to sustain the property's OUV, and to submit the parts of the study pertaining to the property to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies,
 - c) Ensure that the previously requested basin-wide Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), in line with the principles of the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context;
6. Also notes with appreciation that transboundary cooperation with States Parties located upstream of the property is continuing in relation to ensuring water security for the property, and further requests the State Party to continue these efforts towards ensuring long-term sustainable transboundary water management measures, and that transboundary cooperation remains a matter of priority to ensure effective water management that is informed by science and can guarantee minimum water supplies to sustain the OUV of the property;
7. Requests furthermore the World Heritage Centre, in collaboration with the Advisory Bodies, to organise a technical meeting with the State Party and other relevant stakeholders to consider how the OUV of the property may be safeguarded through sustained waterflow and transboundary collaboration, building on the ongoing

transboundary technical cooperation with the States Parties located upstream of the property;

8. Recalls the commitment of the State Party to ensure legal protection for the marshland components within its national legal framework, and also takes note of various measures to address illegal fishing, and reiterates its request to the State Party to provide an update on the amendments to the Wildlife Protection Law to ensure broader effective protection of the property, and to continue strengthening its monitoring, legal protection, enforcement and management capacity to control illegal activities such as bird hunting and overfishing;
9. Also recalling its significant concern over the continued vulnerability of the marsh components and the related natural values of the property to oil and gas developments, also welcomes the State Party's continued commitment to ensure that oil activities outside the property do not damage the property;
10. Notes with utmost concern, however, the third-party reports of oil exploration within the Huwaizah marshes component of the property, also recalls that extractive activities are incompatible with World Heritage status, and urges the State Party to provide clarification on this as a matter of priority, and to not proceed with any such activity;
11. Notes with concern that the location of various oil activities in relation to the boundaries remains unclear, and that the State Party report on the assessments of threats to the natural values identifies oil infrastructure as a threat, and therefore requests the State Party to ensure that the protection of the property from extractive activities is reflected in the update of IMP, and also reiterates its request to the State Party to:
 - a) Ensure that any proposed extractive activities that may impact on the OUV are assessed for their potential impacts in line with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context, prior to taking any decisions to approve such projects, and not to approve any project that would have an adverse impact on the OUV,
 - b) Continue monitoring existing extractive activities in the vicinity of the property, report on any potential or actual impacts on OUV as previously requested, and immediately address any negative impacts and undertake remediation activities as required,
 - c) Provide an overview of oil and gas developments in the vicinity of the property, including the assessment of potential impacts on the OUV of the property in line with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context,
 - d) Extend its commitment to a permanent ban on all extractive industries within the property, including gas, and ensuring no negative impacts on the OUV from activities beyond the boundaries;
12. Further takes note of the efforts underway to develop an overall tourism management plan (TMP) for the property and that the tourism project in Al-Chibayish has been halted, and requests moreover the State Party to provide an update on the draft guidelines for regulating eco-tourism in the marshland components and to finalise the TMP for the property;
13. Further welcomes the ongoing activities to engage with local communities in management issues, and also encourages the State Party to continue engagement, in order to ensure the full and effective participation of the local communities in the governance and management of the property, including matters concerning hunting and

fishing, water usage, rights-based approaches to management and for the application of traditional ecological knowledge to any planned new constructions;

14. *Further considers that a new Reactive Monitoring mission in 2027 would allow the assessment of progress achieved towards implementing the above, including to re-evaluate whether the property then meets the criteria for its inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger;*
15. *Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2026**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 49th session.*

CULTURAL PROPERTIES

ASIA AND PACIFIC

65. Historic Centre of Macao (China)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2005

Criteria (ii)(iii)(iv)(vi)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1110/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1110/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

January 2009: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Housing (Including high-rise buildings; Potential visual impact of new developments)
- Land conversion (Land reclamation)
- Management systems / Management Plan (Inadequacy of the current management systems; Lack of Management Plan)

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1110/>

Current conservation issues

On 16 November 2024, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, which is available (without annexes) at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1110/documents/>. Progress in response to previous Decisions of the Committee is presented in this report, as follows:

- The *Administrative Regulation No. 4/2024 – Protection and Management Plan of the Historic Centre of Macao* (hereafter 'Management Plan') entered into force on 1 June 2024, and incorporates technical advice from ICOMOS. The Management Plan will be reviewed regularly to serve as an institutional framework and effective management tool for the property, and will be aligned with the upcoming detailed zoning plans;
- The Macao Special Administrative Region (SAR) Government is actively undertaking Heritage Impact Assessments (HIA) on proposed actions that could potentially impact the property, in line with the *Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context*. A statutory requirement for HIAs has been incorporated into the Management Plan;
- The construction permit and project license for the building project at 18-20 Calçada de Gaio were approved in February 2023. The HIA and the urban design study of the area around Avenida do Dr. Rodrigo Rodrigues, with consideration of the visual corridors of the Guia Lighthouse, has been completed following public consultation;
- *Administrative Regulation No. 8/2024 – Detailed Urban Development Plan for the Eastern District 2*, which involves the New Urban Zone Area A, has been approved for implementation,

and the *Urban Planning Study of the New Urban Zone B* has been launched and includes detailed zoning plans. Both documents are publicly available;

- The construction of the Light Rail Transit (LRT) East Line is underway and expected to be completed in 2028, with underground stations and an undersea tunnel provided to avoid potential impacts on the “hill-sea-city” visual connections. The preliminary design of the LRT East Line is annexed to the report;
- The proposed flyover (‘A-B Bridge’) project connecting the New Urban Zone Areas A and B, and located outside the component parts of the property and their buffer zones, is in the planning and design phase, which is taking into consideration the “hill-sea-city” landscape setting of the property;
- The ‘Macao World Heritage Monitoring Centre’ has been in operation since November 2022, based on the Plan for the Early Monitoring System for the monitoring of the property (‘Monitoring Plan’), providing a systematic, automated heritage monitoring system integrated with the national platform;
- A new ‘Macao World Heritage Museum’ is proposed in the buffer zone of the property to enhance heritage interpretation and presentation, with a building design which would not negatively impact the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property.

On 23 September 2024, the State Party transmitted to the World Heritage Centre a document titled: *‘Reply regarding the Administrative Regulation for the “Protection and Management Plan of the Historic Centre of Macao” and the Heritage Impact Assessment and Urban Design Study of the area around Avenida do Dr. Rodrigo Rodrigues’* dated March 2024.

In a letter dated 17 October 2024, the World Heritage Centre requested the State Party to verify third-party information regarding the planned construction of the ‘A-B Bridge’, and the state of conservation of historic buildings within the ‘protection zone of the Historic Centre of Macao’. The State Party submitted a response concerning the ‘A-B Bridge’, consistent with the content of its state of conservation report, on 16 November 2024.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

Continued commitments and efforts by the State Party and the Macao SAR Government to implement previous Committee’s requests and ICOMOS technical advice, and various initiatives reported to improve heritage conservation, monitoring, interpretation and presentation are noted with appreciation.

It is regrettable that the final draft of the Management Plan for the property was not shared with the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies prior to its adoption and implementation as requested by the Committee in Decision **45 COM 7B.154**. However, it is welcome that the Management Plan has been finalized in line with the technical advice of ICOMOS, providing a holistic framework and effective tool for the conservation and management of the property. The Management Plan provides a legal basis for conducting HIAs in line with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context, and is being reviewed by ICOMOS. The State Party should continue to inform the World Heritage Centre of any proposed actions in the property, its buffer zones and wider setting that may negatively impact on attributes which support the property’s OUV, before any irreversible decisions are made, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines.

The State Party’s updates and clarifications about planned and ongoing development in the New Urban Zone Areas, including the LRT East Line project (connecting the New Urban Zone Areas A and E) as well as the flyover (‘A-B Bridge’) project (connecting the New Urban Zone Areas A and B) are noted. The State Party has previously provided information on the development of the New Urban Zone, and it would be appropriate to request that the key management and planning documents for the New Urban Zone Areas also be submitted for review by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies. Although it is acknowledged that the LRT East Line project is reported to have been designed to avoid potential impacts on the “hill-sea-city” visual connections, with the majority of the work underground except entrances/exits of some stations in Area A, it would nevertheless be appropriate to request the State Party to submit detailed documentation including the HIA for the project for review by the Advisory Bodies, in conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines. While noting that planning of the flyover (‘A-B Bridge’) project also takes into consideration the “hill-sea-city” landscape setting of the property, given that a section of the project may breach the height control specified in “Zone 1” in Chief Executive Order No. 83/2008, the State Party should also undertake a comprehensive HIA and submit

detailed project documentation to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies, even though the height control only applies to buildings.

The building project at 18-20 Calçada de Gaio with modified design is now approved, and it is noted that the *Heritage Impact Assessment and Urban Design Study of the area around Avenida do Dr. Rodrigo Rodrigues* has been completed. However, the document submitted by the State Party provides only a summary, but not the HIA and Urban Design Study itself, despite the request by the Committee in Decision **45 COM 7B.154** that a draft of this study be submitted for review before being finalised and implemented. It would therefore be appropriate to request that this final study be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies. Detailed information provided on the systematic and integrated monitoring of the property through the implementation of the Monitoring Plan and operated by the Macao World Heritage Monitoring Centre is welcome. The State Party should be encouraged to continue its efforts to inform the management in a timely and effective manner.

Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.65

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.4,*
2. *Recalling Decision **45 COM 7B.154**, adopted at its extended 45th (Riyadh, 2023) session,*
3. *Appreciates continued efforts by the State Party and the Macao Special Administrative Region Government supporting heritage conservation, monitoring, interpretation and presentation of the property;*
4. *Regrets that the final draft of the Administrative Regulation No. 4/2024 – Protection and Management Plan of the Historic Centre of Macao (Management Plan) for the property was not shared with the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies prior to its adoption and implementation as requested by the Committee, but welcomes that the Management Plan was finalized in line with the technical advice of ICOMOS, providing a holistic framework and effective tool for the conservation and management of the property, and notes that the final Management Plan is subject to technical review by ICOMOS;*
5. *Also welcomes that the Management Plan provides a legal basis for conducting Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) in line with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context, and requests the State Party to continue informing the World Heritage Centre of any proposed actions in the property, its buffer zones and wider setting that may negatively impact attributes which support the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, before any irreversible decisions are made, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;*
6. *Also notes that the building project at 18-20 Calçada de Gaio with modified design has been approved, and also requests the State Party to submit the HIA and Urban Design Study of the area around Avenida do Dr. Rodrigo Rodrigues to the World Heritage Centre for review by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies;*
7. *Further requests that the State Party submit key management and planning documents including the Detailed Urban Development Plan for the Eastern District 2, incorporating the New Urban Zone Area A, and the Urban Planning Study of the New Urban Zone B, for review by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies;*

8. Takes note of information provided on the Light Rail Transit (LRT) East Line project (connecting the New Urban Zone Areas A and E), which is under construction, but nevertheless requests furthermore the State Party to submit detailed documentation, including the HIA for the project, for review by the Advisory Bodies, in conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;
9. Also takes note of the planned flyover ('A-B Bridge') project (connecting the New Urban Zone Areas A and B), requests moreover the State Party to undertake a comprehensive HIA following the methodology of the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context, and to submit the HIA and detailed project documentation to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies, prior to any irreversible decisions about the project;
10. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2026**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for review by the Advisory Bodies.

EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA

94. Historic Centres of Berat and Gjirokastra (Albania)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2005

Criteria (iii)(iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/569/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 4 (from 2002-2018)

Total amount approved: USD 80,416

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/569/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 1,367,014 is provided by the Albanian Government within the framework of the project 933ALB4000 "Safeguarding and restoration of selected monuments within the World Heritage site of the Old City of Gjirokastra – Albania"

Previous monitoring missions

November 2012: ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; April 2016: ICOMOS Advisory mission; December 2021: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Ground transport infrastructure (planned by-pass road project and conversion of the bazaar into a pedestrian area in Gjirokastra)
- Housing
- Illegal activities (illegal construction dating from the late 1990s and later on)
- High impact research/monitoring activities (lack of specific monitoring indicators)
- Governance (lack of detailed tourism development plan and lack of programme of archaeological excavations)
- Management activities (e.g. restoration work at the Berat Castle)
- Management System/Management Plan
- Other factors (lack of adequate firefighting arrangements in the historic urban zones)

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/569/>

Current conservation issues

On 30 January 2025, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, which is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/document/219167>. Progress is reported as follows:

- Institutional changes have occurred. The Committee for the Coordination of the Management Plan of the Historic Centres of Gjirokastra and Berat has thus far played only a formal role in management. The forthcoming Integrated Management Plan (IMP) is expected to clarify the Committee's roles and responsibilities, particularly following recent institutional restructuring;
- While a legal requirement for the establishment of a Management Plan has been introduced as a central tool for heritage management, this measure alone has proven insufficient to consolidate effective planning and implementation practices;
- Efforts to finalise the IMP resumed in June 2024. The updated Terms of Reference (ToRs) reflect a more holistic and forward-looking approach, incorporating earlier drafts, recommendations from ICCROM and ICOMOS, and an analysis of emerging challenges such as tourism, urban development, and population decline;

- The revised ToRs were approved in November 2024 and included in the State Party's report. In December 2024, a contract was signed with the Polytechnic University of Tirana (UPT) to complete the drafting of the IMP within 12 months. This partnership brings access to multidisciplinary expertise and supports a comprehensive, interdisciplinary methodology. A pre-final draft of the IMP is expected to be submitted to the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies in autumn 2025;
- Information is provided on heritage interventions, including restoration proposals adapting buildings for tourism. Projections suggest that, if current trends continue, 40%–50% of the historic centres and buffer zones of the inscribed components may face transformation pressures within the next decade. This trend poses a potential threat to the property's authenticity which the IMP will aim to address;
- In response to the Committee's request for a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for the Gjirokastra bypass road and to assess individual and cumulative impacts of infrastructure and development projects, the State Party confirms these assessments will be undertaken within the IMP development process. Legal reforms are underway to make HIAs mandatory for development projects. Meanwhile, all development proposals must include an HIA. Dialogue with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies is ongoing;
- Continued enforcement against unauthorised construction is reported, including the application of zoning regulations, fines, and demolition of illegal structures within the property.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies acknowledge the positive steps undertaken by the State Party to improve the property's management and safeguard its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), notably the renewed efforts to develop and finalise the long-overdue IMP, pending since 2018. Given the urgent need for a comprehensive and long-term management framework, it is essential to effectively address complex challenges facing the property, including urban development pressures, tourism growth, and demographic changes and to strengthen governance following recent institutional restructuring. It remains important to establish a clearly defined future management structure, ensuring that the IMP fully integrates all relevant planning tools and to strengthen the role of the Ministry of Economy, Culture and Innovation (MECI), the National Institute for Cultural Heritage (NICH), and local authorities in the management of the property. The Committee may wish to reiterate the need to clarify how the IMP will coordinate and harmonise existing instruments to ensure coherence, avoid duplication, and allocate adequate resources for its implementation. Clarifying the role and responsibilities of the Coordination Committee within the revised governance framework is also recommended.

The initiative to integrate HIAs into national legal and decision-making processes is welcomed. However, it remains critical that previously requested HIAs—particularly for the Gjirokastra bypass and other infrastructure and development projects within or around the property, including under the Integrated Urban and Tourism Development (PIUTD) project—be undertaken to assess individual and cumulative impacts on the property's OUV. Consistent application of HIAs is essential for preserving the property's OUV amid growing development pressures. The Committee may wish to reiterate its request that the State Party submit detailed information on all development projects to the World Heritage Centre for review prior to irreversible decisions, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines. It may also wish to restate that HIAs are essential for projects that concern OUV as per Paragraph 118bis and that HIAs should be prepared following the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context until such processes are embedded in national systems.

The State Party has not reported on recommendations from the ICOMOS Technical Review concerning the "Gjirokastra Castle Sustainable Management and Tourism Valorisation Masterplan" (Component 2 of the PIUTD). The Committee may invite the State Party to provide an update in response to ICOMOS' comments regarding museum interventions, technical and architectural specifications, the state of conservation of the castle, and the 2022 Environmental and Social Impact Assessment.

Concerns are noted regarding the project "Enhancing Touristic Attractivity of Berati Castle." The submission reveals potential negative impacts on OUV, lacks a comprehensive HIA, and fails to address authenticity, integrity, and key attribute mapping. For the Shkëmbi Road construction and Osum River protection works, ICOMOS recommends halting decisions or works until HIAs – along with detailed Visual Impact Assessments and mitigation measures – are completed. An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is also urgently needed for the riverbed works to address broader environmental risk.

The Committee may express concern over limited progress in implementing the 2021 Reactive Monitoring mission's recommendations and urge their full implementation.

The State Party's enforcement of zoning regulations and actions against unauthorised construction are noted. However, anticipated transformation pressures within historic centres and buffer zones continue to threaten authenticity. The Committee may encourage strategies to mitigate such pressures, ensure all interventions align with OUV preservation, and request regular updates on interventions and enforcement effectiveness.

No progress has been reported on the development of an integrated urban conservation and development tool, as requested in Decisions **45 COM 7B.51** and **46 COM 7B.2**. The Committee may invite the State Party to align this tool with the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape.

The Committee may note its interest in receiving further updates on the development of the IMP and the integration of HIA processes and recall that the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies remain available to provide technical support as needed to assist the State Party.

Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.94

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.4,
2. Recalling Decisions **39 COM 7B.75**, **41 COM 7B.40**, **43 COM 7B.79**, **44 COM 7B.151**, **45 COM 7B.51** and **46 COM 7B.2**, adopted at its 39th (Bonn, 2015), 41st (Krakow, 2017), 43rd (Baku, 2019), extended 44th (Fuzhou/online, 2021), extended 45th (Riyadh, 2023) and 46th (New Delhi, 2024) sessions respectively,
3. Notes with appreciation the State Party's efforts to resume the development and finalisation of the Integrated Management Plan (IMP) for the property and encourages continued strengthening of the role of the Ministry of Economy, Culture and Innovation (MECI), the National Institute for Cultural Heritage (NICH), and local authorities in the management of the property, particularly in applying the IMP and integrating Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) into planning processes;
4. Notes with concern that some of the recommendations of the 2021 Reactive Monitoring mission remain unaddressed, and reiterates its request to the State Party to ensure their full and timely implementation;
5. Requests the State Party to:
 - a) As a matter of priority, finalise the IMP within the proposed timeframe, incorporating previous recommendations from the Advisory Bodies and actively involving local authorities, while addressing emerging challenges such as tourism pressure, urban development, and demographic change, and submit by **1 December 2025** the pre-final draft of the IMP, including a detailed implementation timeline, to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies,
 - b) Clarify how existing planning tools and regulatory frameworks will be harmonised with the IMP to ensure coherence and avoid duplication,
 - c) Ensure the inclusion of robust strategies within the IMP to mitigate transformation pressures in the property components and their buffer zones, and to ensure that all interventions contribute to the maintenance of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property,

- d) *Ensure adequate resources for implementation and clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Coordination Committee in the context of the changed institutional arrangements;*
6. *Also notes the State Party's ongoing efforts to integrate Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) into the legal and administrative frameworks, and reiterates its request that HIAs be conducted to assess both specific and cumulative impacts of development projects already implemented or planned, including the Gjirokastra bypass road and other infrastructure and development projects within or in the wider setting of the property, notably those under the Integrated urban and Tourism development (PIUTD);*
7. *Also notes with concern that no updated information has been provided on the 'Gjirokastra Castle Sustainable Management and Tourism Valorisation Masterplan' and invites the State Party to follow up on the ICOMOS comments and recommendations concerning the proposed museum interventions, technical and architectural specifications, the state of conservation of the Gjirokastra Castle, and the 2022 Environmental and Social Impact Assessment report;*
8. *Further notes with concern that several projects, including the project 'Enhancing Touristic Attractivity of Berat Castle by Improving Touristic Accessibility', may negatively impact the property's OUV and urges the State Party to fully implement the recommendations of the ICOMOS Technical Reviews, including to:*
 - a) *Suspend any further decisions or work on both the Shkëmbi Road and Osum River projects until comprehensive HIAs, which include detailed Visual Impact Assessments and appropriate mitigation measures, have been carried out,*
 - b) *Undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) as a matter of urgency for the Osum River riverbank protection works;*
9. *Further reiterates its request to the State Party to develop an integrated urban conservation and development tool, to support the diversification of development plans for the property and promote a resilient and sustainable economic future, and recommends that such tool be aligned with the principles of the UNESCO 2011 Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape;*
10. *Furthermore reiterates its request that the State Party submit details of any development projects that may affect the property to the World Heritage Centre for review prior to any irreversible decision, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, and ensure that HIAs are carried out in accordance with Paragraph 118bis of the Operational Guidelines and the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context;*
11. *Acknowledges the State Party's efforts to limit unauthorised construction activities within the property and reiterates its request furthermore to the State Party to strengthen enforcement measures and provide regular updates on the status of interventions and the effectiveness of actions taken to protect heritage assets;*
12. *Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2026**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 48th session.*

98. Cultural Landscape of Khinalig People and “Köç Yolu” Transhumance Route (Azerbaijan)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.5

101. Ancient City of Nessebar (Bulgaria)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1983

Criteria (iii)(iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/217/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 3 (from 1991-2024)

Total amount approved: USD 21,290

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/217/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

November 2010, October 2018 and January 2023: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring missions; November 2012: ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; November 2015: ICOMOS Advisory mission; November 2017: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/UNESCO Scientific and Technical Advisory Body (STAB - 2001 Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage) Advisory mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Urban development pressure (housing)
- Illegal constructions
- Impacts of tourism/visitor/recreation
- Management systems/management plan (lack of a Management Plan)
- Lack of an urban master plan and a conservation master plan of monuments and archaeological sites
- Marine transport infrastructure

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/217/>

Current conservation issues

On 29 November 2024, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, which is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/217/documents>. Further documents were transmitted to the World Heritage Centre in March 2025. Progress in a number of conservation and management issues is presented in those documents, as follows:

- The High-Level Inter-Institutional Commission and its Expert Working Group have increased efforts to address the property's conservation issues, resulting in:
 - Revision of the 'Vision for the Future of the Property for the period 2025-2044', complemented by an Implementation Roadmap, following ICOMOS comments,
 - Approval, in 2023, of the Cultural Heritage Strategy for Nessebar Municipality 2023-2032 (CHS 2023-2032), excluding the property itself, for which a separate section will be developed following the adoption of 'The Vision',

- Completion of an updated identification and assessment of conservation of the attributes conveying the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), following ICOMOS comments,
- Finalisation of the draft Conservation and Management Plan (CMP) for the property;
- The expert staff of the Ministry of Culture, the National Institute for Immovable Cultural Heritage and the Centre for Underwater Archaeology have been increased;
- A Public Council for the Protection of Cultural Heritage (PCPCH) was established in 2024 at Nessebar Municipality as an advisory and coordination body, with two meetings held;
- Protection regimes for the property were updated in November 2023, following approval of the Minor Boundary Modification proposal;
- The 'Necropolis of Messambria – Mesembria' was designated a heritage site of national importance in 2024. In this context, alternative locations for the primary school and sports hall originally planned on its territory, as well as an extension of the archaeological museum, are under consideration;
- The Integrated Development Plan for Nessebar Municipality (IDP 2021-2027) was updated and adopted in September 2024;
- Terms of Reference for a new General Development Plan for Nessebar Municipality, with a horizon of 2040, were agreed by the Ministry of Culture in November 2024;
- An inventory of building permits from 2011 to 2024 was compiled, showing that 91 permits were issued, none for new constructions. Between 2023 and 2024, 21 projects were received, 14 granted consent, two consented with requirements, two refused consent, and four await ministerial opinion;
- Eighteen illegal structures have been removed, seven in 2023 and three in 2024; inspections conducted in 2023 and 2024 detected some unlawful situations;
- The spaces adjacent to five churches have been rehabilitated and made accessible. The Church of St. John Aliturgetos was restored; other conservation projects for medieval churches are underway;
- Geodetic, photogrammetric and 3D documentation covering the entire property was undertaken. In 2023, a Geographic Information System (GIS) was prepared and is being complemented with information from databases and other sources;
- Documentation of archaeological sites and the ship graffiti continues, alongside research on underwater archaeology;
- Traffic regulations for the summer seasons of 2023 and 2024 were approved, including pass-access only, timeslots for temporary accommodation, and checkpoint-scheduled access for commercial activities;
- A survey on awareness levels about the property and its OUV among younger generations was carried out.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The State Party has made significant progress in a number of the Committee's requests and previous missions' recommendations, such as (i) Preparing the Vision for the Future of the Property and its Implementation Roadmap following ICOMOS review; (ii) Updating the documentation and assessment of the attributes conveying the property's OUV; (iii) Finalising the draft CMP; (iv) Adopting the CHS 2023-2032 and the revised IDP 2021-2027; (v) Updating protection regimes; (vi) Designating the Necropolis Messambria-Mesembria as a heritage site of national importance; and (vii) Rehabilitating spaces around several medieval churches and approving funding for two emergency conservation interventions.

The revised Vision, Implementation Roadmap, assessment of attributes and draft CMP shared in March 2025 are welcomed. These documents will undergo detailed review by ICOMOS, in line with the closer consultations and collaboration established throughout 2024. The analysis of the values and attributes of OUV is particularly informative, demonstrating thorough work that merits careful review. At this stage, the Committee may wish to note that the proposed strand of OUV, "Submerged fortifications and

harbours – evidence of historical adaptation of the residents to the retreating coastline” identify additional attributes reflecting “an outstanding testimony of multilayered cultural and historical heritage [...] where many civilisations left their tangible traces,” as already acknowledged in the property’s Statement of OUV. This should remain central to conservation efforts in addressing the challenges highlighted by the 2023 Reactive Monitoring Mission. It is moreover recommended that the Committee request the State Party to finalise these documents in line with ICOMOS’s recommendations.

The interventions and projects addressing the conservation needs of the medieval churches and their immediate surroundings represent a positive step towards enhancing the property’s integrity and are encouraged to continue.

The decision to seek an alternative location for the primary school originally planned in the Necropolis territory, alongside considerations for expanding the Archaeological Museum, are welcomed as important measures preserving and valorising key archaeological remains that shed light on the property’s stratified history and support its OUV. The Committee may encourage the State Party to explore the feasibility of extending the Archaeological Museum and to keep it informed of progress.

The removal of illegal constructions is crucial to improving the property’s integrity and should be sustained.

Several important recommendations remain outstanding and need to be fulfilled. The General Development Plan (GDP) for Nessebar Municipality, which the Committee requested the State Party to develop, approve and enforce as a matter of urgency, was deemed outdated, and the process for developing a new plan has just begun. Although Terms of Reference were approved in November 2024, no clear timeline for completion has been provided. In the interim, strict safeguarding measures must be applied to the property, its buffer zone and wider setting to prevent developments that could negatively impact the attributes underpinning the property’s OUV. The new GDP should also undergo a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) based on the *Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context*.

The restoration of the historic urban landscape and coastal zone of the peninsula, a key recommendation of the 2023 Reactive Monitoring mission, is among the Roadmap objectives. However, a dedicated plan, including actions for parking areas, the Marina and the Port Terminal, is still lacking. A recovery plan for these areas is recommended as a priority within the draft CMP. Regarding traffic and parking, although efforts to improve regulation are noted, the Committee’s earlier recommendations have not yet been fully addressed. The Committee may therefore wish to recommend to the State Party to confine the visitors’ cars parking to the mainland and establish an eco-friendly public transport system to access the property. The State Party should also strictly regulate access and parking for residents and reserve specific parking areas for fishing port activities.

It is concerning that the State Party does not consider the recommendation made in Decision **45 COM 8B.70** regarding the long-term relocation of the Nessebar Port Terminal outside the property to be applicable, citing the 35-year concession granted in 2015 and the existence of the Port Terminal at the time of inscription in 1983. While it may not have been seen as problematic at that time, substantial socio-economic changes have since occurred, notably the sharp growth of cruise tourism over the past two decades, which has been shown to negatively affect several other World Heritage properties. The permitted vessel size at the terminal – up to 160 metres – was already considered excessive, with potentially adverse visual effects on the property’s integrity and its capacity to manage large numbers of cruise visitors. With the recent inclusion of underwater archaeological vestiges around the peninsula within the property boundaries, these must be fully considered in conservation and management actions, including maritime navigation. The Committee is therefore advised to reiterate its previous recommendations and also recommend to the State Party to explore short- and medium-term solutions for the recovery and reorganisation of the Marina and Port Terminal facilities, in ways that support the safeguarding of the property’s OUV attributes. These efforts should align with a long-term objective of relocating both facilities outside the peninsula. In this regard, the State Party may be encouraged to invite an ICOMOS Advisory mission to provide detailed guidance on addressing this matter in line with the overall protection and safeguarding of the property.

Given the number of overlapping plans and strategies concerning the property, it is crucial that, once adopted, the revised Vision for the Future of the Property and its Implementation Roadmap are fully integrated into existing documents, notably the CHS 2023-2032 and the IDP 2021-2027, as well as those in preparation, such as the GDP and the related Detailed Development Plan.

The progress outlined above demonstrates the State Party's renewed commitment to the long-term safeguarding of the property, which the Committee may wish to acknowledge. However, tangible improvements in the property remain limited. Continued, concerted efforts are essential to ensure that all recommendations are progressively implemented, the state of conservation of the property is improved beyond the situation observed during the 2023 Reactive Monitoring mission, existing negative impacts are addressed, and potential threats are prevented. The finalisation, adoption and enforcement of key planning instruments, such as the CMP, the GDP and the DDP, remain urgent priorities. In this context, the Committee may wish to request that a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission be invited to visit the property in summer 2026. The purpose of this mission would be to assess progress made in improving the property's state of conservation and in implementing the Committee's previous decisions as well as to provide up-to-date, on-site information into the ongoing threats that may continue to have deleterious effects on the inherent characteristics of the property, in accordance with Paragraph 179 of the Operational Guidelines, thereby informing the Committee's deliberations at its 49th session.

Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.101

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.4,
2. Recalling Decisions **41 COM 7B.43**, **45 COM 7B.179** and **45 COM 8B.70**, adopted at its 41st (Krakow, 2017) and its extended 45th (Riyadh, 2023) sessions respectively,
3. Welcomes the significant progress made by the State Party in addressing the Committee's requests and mission recommendations, in particular the completion of the assessment of the attributes underlying the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, the Vision for the Future of the Ancient City of Nessebar and its Implementation Roadmap, and the draft Conservation and Management Plan (CMP), and requests the State Party to finalise these documents in accordance with ICOMOS recommendations by **1 February 2026**;
4. Notes that additional attributes should be identified based on the adopted Statement of OUV, which should remain central to conservation efforts in addressing the challenges highlighted by the 2023 Reactive Monitoring mission;
5. Recommends that the Vision for the Future of the Ancient City of Nessebar and its Implementation Roadmap, once finalised and adopted, be fully integrated into all key planning instruments for the protection and management of the property, including the CMP, the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) for Nessebar Municipality 2021-2027, and the Cultural Heritage Strategy for Nessebar Municipality 2023-2032;
6. Also requests that a recovery plan for the historic urban landscape and coastal zone of the peninsula be developed as a matter of urgency and incorporated into the CMP as a priority action;
7. Urges the State Party to accelerate the development and adoption of the General Development Plan (GDP) for Nessebar Municipality, given its importance for regulating development in the buffer zone and wider setting, and further requests that strict interim safeguarding measures be applied to the property, the buffer zone and the wider setting during the GDP's elaboration to avoid negative impacts on the attributes of OUV;
8. Further recommends that the draft GDP be subject to a Heritage Impact Assessment in accordance with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage

Context, to assess whether its provisions may have negative impacts on the property's OUV and its underlying attributes;

9. Acknowledges the efforts undertaken to conserve the medieval churches within the property and encourages the State Party to implement the approved and funded conservation projects promptly, and to prioritise interventions for other churches in need of attention;
10. Also welcomes the decision not to proceed with the proposed primary school and sports facility within the Necropolis of Messambria-Mesembria, further encourages the State Party to explore the feasibility of extending the Archaeological Museum to support the conservation and presentation of the Necropolis, invites it to keep the Committee informed of the progress in this regard and reiterates its recommendation to formally propose a minor boundary modification for the buffer zone of the property to include the area of the necropolis and strengthen its protection;
11. Expresses its concern regarding the potential impact of the Nessebar Port Terminal and Marina on the state of conservation of the property, including its underwater cultural heritage, reiterates its previous recommendations on the matter, particularly the need to consider the long-term relocation of the Port Terminal and Marina facilities outside the peninsula and the visibility area of the property, recommends to the State Party to identify short- and medium-term solutions for the rehabilitation of the Marina and the Port Terminal areas, ensuring their uses are compatible with the safeguarding of the attributes underlying the property's OUV, and encourages the State Party to invite an ICOMOS Advisory mission to assess these matters in detail and provide guidance in line with the objective of the property's protection and conservation;
12. Further invites the State Party to develop a sustainable and eco-friendly traffic interchange system on the mainland to enable visitor access to the peninsula via public transport, to restrict parking for visitors to the mainland, and to regulate parking within the Ancient City for residents and fishing port users only;
13. Requests furthermore the State Party to continue implementing the outstanding recommendations of the 2023 Reactive Monitoring mission;
14. Requests moreover the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to the property in the summer of 2026 to assess the progress made in improving its state of conservation and in implementing the Committee's previous decisions, and to provide up-to-date, on-site information on the ongoing threats that may continue to have deleterious effects on the inherent characteristics of the property, in accordance with Paragraph 179 of the Operational Guidelines, for consideration at its 49th session;
15. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2026**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 49th session.

102. Old City of Dubrovnik (Croatia)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.5

105. Paris, Banks of the Seine (France)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1991

Criteria (i)(ii)(iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/600/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/600/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

March 2022: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Project of new buildings within the historic setting (*issue resolved*)
- Fire at Notre-Dame de Paris Cathedral on 15 April 2019
- Redevelopments of the grounds of Notre-Dame de Paris Cathedral
- Redevelopments of the Place de la Concorde
- Integrated management plan for the property
- Installations for the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/600/>

Current conservation issues

On 31 January 2025, the State Party submitted the report on the state of conservation of the property, available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/600/documents/>. The report provides information on the implementation of Decision **46 COM 7B.7**, as follows:

- The Notre-Dame de Paris Cathedral was reopened to the public on 7 and 8 December 2024. While worshippers and visitors have resumed attendance from 15 December 2024 onwards, the first restoration phase is scheduled for completion in spring 2025. Restoration works on the exterior are planned to continue from mid-2025, following the priorities previously identified;
- The mandate of the public body responsible for the conservation and restoration of the Cathedral (*L'établissement public chargé de la conservation et de la restauration de la Cathédrale Notre-Dame de Paris* - EP RNDP) extends until 2028; subsequently, the Île-de-France Regional Directorate for Cultural Affairs (*Direction régionale des affaires culturelles d'Île-de-France* – DRAC) will assume responsibility for the remaining restoration works;
- Enhancements to fire safety include the introduction of new measures and a review of operational systems. Among the new measures are the continuous 24/7 presence of specially trained personnel in the fire safety control room, and the implementation of a Global Safety Organisation Plan;
- Plans for the installation of contemporary stained-glass windows in six chapels of the cathedral, have been proposed, despite opposition and an unfavourable opinion from the National Commission for Heritage and Architecture (Commission nationale du patrimoine et de l'architecture – CNPA) in July 2024. In December 2024, a group comprising artist Claire Tabouret and the Simon-Marq stained-glass studio, selected through a competition, was commissioned by EP RNDP to undertake the creation of the stained-glass windows. To date, a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) has not been conducted;
- The establishment of the Notre-Dame Museum, announced in 2023 and intended to be housed within the Hôtel-Dieu, has not yet commenced due to funding shortfalls;

- In 2023, the CNPA approved the project to redevelop and revitalise the four-ha area around the cathedral, and design studies were subsequently undertaken. The project was submitted for administrative authorisation (2023-2024), with works scheduled to take place between 2025 and 2028;
- Work on the Management Plan for the property commenced in autumn 2024; and a working group comprising representatives from the Paris City Council and governmental departments was established to develop an operational framework of guidelines for the next 10 years. The new Risk Prevention and Management Plan will be incorporated into this document;
- Installations associated with the 2024 Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games were dismantled in late 2024 with minimal incidents reported, indicating no adverse effects on the property;
- A redevelopment project for the Place de la Concorde was initiated by the Paris City Council in February 2024. A multidisciplinary expert commission formulated 12 recommendations for the project. Public consultations were held in April and May 2024, and the CNPA endorsed the initiative by supporting the commission's recommendations. An HIA is scheduled for 2025 and will be submitted to the World Heritage Centre.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The fire protection project for Notre-Dame de Paris Cathedral adopts a comprehensive approach addressing both accidental and intentional fire risks. The fire detection and control system is strategically designed to encompass a broad spectrum of hazards, employing various detection and extinguishing technologies to mitigate potential damage. ICOMOS positively reviewed the project and recommended installing the water reservoir and generator underground within purpose-built spaces. It also suggested protecting the timber structures with an impregnating product, as a complementary measure, to make them less flammable. The arrangements for the cathedral's new fire defence and safety project, following revision and reinforcement of the fire safety control room with specially trained personnel, appear to provide an adequate level of fire monitoring, detection and defence within the building.

The liturgical arrangement project submitted by the State Party was reviewed by ICOMOS, which concluded that the interior layout and its furnishings cannot be considered attributes of the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), despite their important functional role.

The project to create contemporary stained-glass windows, intended to commemorate the period of the fire and restoration, is ongoing despite some public opposition and “an unfavourable opinion”, as stated in the State Party's report, from the CNPA. The new designs are planned for installation in 2026, with the 19th-century stained-glass windows proposed for relocation to a museum for display. In its Decision **46 COM 7B.7**, the World Heritage Committee stated that such a project should be subject to a HIA, based on the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context. This assessment should take into account the logic underlying the reconstruction/restoration intervention, as well as seek consensus among the various stakeholders. The Committee is therefore advised to reiterate its request for a rigorous, thorough, and independent HIA of the project.

It is regrettable that the State Party has not provided detailed information regarding the project to redevelop and revitalise the four-ha area around the cathedral. The Committee is advised to request that the project documentation be submitted for review by the Advisory Bodies.

The creation of the Cathedral Museum at the Hôtel-Dieu, together with the proposals for the archaeological museum, constitutes a key element in the rehabilitation of the Notre-Dame area. However, the State Party has reported no significant progress on this matter.

The State Party confirmed that the development of the Integrated Management Plan for the property was launched in autumn 2024. The establishment of a working group, comprising representatives from the Paris municipality and governmental departments, reflects a collaborative approach to developing an operational framework of guidelines for the forthcoming decade. The inclusion of the new Risk Prevention and Management Plan within this document demonstrates a proactive stance towards mitigating potential threats. Given the scale of the work to be carried out, the City of Paris, which is responsible for the project, plans to commission an external company. It is essential that municipal and state representatives continue to be closely involved in the process to maintain accountability and alignment with public and regulatory interests. The Management Plan, after submission to the World Heritage Centre, will then be approved by the Regional Prefect and incorporated into the local planning regulations in accordance with relevant articles of the Heritage Code. The Committee may wish to

encourage the State Party to expedite the process for preparing the Management Plan and to share the final draft with the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies.

With regard to the redevelopment of the Place de la Concorde, designs proposals were anticipated in early 2025, following a competition, and Heritage and Environmental Impact Assessments are planned to be prepared and submitted to the World Heritage Centre. Construction is scheduled to commence in late 2026 or early 2027. The Committee is therefore advised to request the State Party to submit detailed design and technical documentation, alongside the HIA, conducted in accordance with the *Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context* to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies prior to any final decisions, ensuring compliance with paragraphs 118bis and 172 of the Operational Guidelines.

While a full overview of the measures taken to dismantle the installations and facilities put in place on the occasion of the Olympic Games has not been provided in the State Party's report, as requested by the Committee in its Decision **46 COM 7B.7**, it is noted that the State Party confirms that these installations were dismantled in late 2024 with no adverse effects on the property.

Finally, the Committee may wish to reiterate its recommendation that the State Party continue and enhance its dialogue with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies in relation to the restoration work of the Cathedral and its grounds, the redevelopment of the Place de la Concorde, as well as other parts of the Avenue des Champs-Élysées within the boundaries of the property.

Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.105

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.4,*
2. *Recalling Decisions **46 COM 7B.7** and **46 COM 8B.39** adopted at its 46th session (New Delhi, 2024),*
3. *Commends the State Party for the reopening of the Notre-Dame de Paris Cathedral in December 2024, and requests the State Party to keep the World Heritage Centre regularly informed about progress in ongoing conservation and restoration works, and to submit documentation for forthcoming conservation projects for review by the Advisory Bodies;*
4. *Notes that, despite “an unfavourable opinion”, as stated in the report of the State Party, from the National Commission for Heritage and Architecture, the project to create contemporary stained-glass windows to mark the period of the fire and restoration, intended to be installed in six chapels on the south aisle of the cathedral in place of the existing 19th-century stained-glass windows, has progressed;*
5. *Recalls that such a project should be the subject of a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) based on the *Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context*, taking into account the logic adopted by the reconstruction/restoration intervention, and a consensus among the various stakeholders, and therefore further requests that a thorough and independent HIA be carried out and transmitted, alongside full project details, to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;*
6. *Also notes with satisfaction that the development of the Management Plan for the property has commenced, encourages the State Party to build upon the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape in this process, and reiterates its request to the State Party to submit the integrated Management Plan, including the new Risk Prevention and Management Plan included, to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies prior to its adoption;*

7. Takes note of the recommendations developed by the multidisciplinary commission established to guide the redevelopment of the Place de la Concorde, as well as the technical studies and reports produced, and also requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre additional information on the project development and documentation, including the related HIA undertaken based on the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context, as soon as available for review by the Advisory Bodies before making any decisions that would be difficult to reverse;
8. Regrets that no further advanced and detailed documentation concerning the redevelopment and revitalisation of the Île de la Cité and the Notre-Dame de Paris Cathedral grounds was submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies before its administrative authorisation, requests that detailed project documentation be transmitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, and requests furthermore that works do not begin prior to such review;
9. Further encourages the State Party to continue and enhance its dialogue with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies in relation to the restoration work of the Cathedral and its grounds, the redevelopment of the Place de la Concorde, as well as other parts of the Avenue des Champs-Élysées within the boundaries of the property;
10. Also takes note of the State Party's confirmation of the dismantling of the installations and facilities put in place on the occasion of the Olympic Games, in late 2024, with no adverse effects on the property;
11. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2026**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 48th session.

111. Budapest, including the Banks of the Danube, the Buda Castle Quarter and Andrassy Avenue (Hungary)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1987

Criteria (ii)(iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/400/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/400/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount provided: 800 million HUF (ca. 2.7 million EUR) EU support for the "Street of Culture" project

Previous monitoring missions

March 2005: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory mission; November 2007 and February 2018: ICOMOS Advisory missions; February 2013 and April 2019: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS

Reactive Monitoring missions; February 2025: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Large scale reconstruction
- Building heights and regulations
- Demolition and inappropriate development in the buffer zone known as the 'Jewish Quarter'
- Inappropriate use of public areas and street amenities
- Lack of conservation of residential housing within the property
- Effects arising from use of transportation infrastructure (increased traffic volume)
- Management Systems/Management Plan
- Legal framework
- Identity, social cohesion, changes in local population and community
- Housing

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/400/>

Current conservation issues

On 31 January 2025, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, the summary of which is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/400/documents>. The report responds to the issues raised by the Committee in its Decision **46 COM 7B.8**, as follows:

- The finalisation of the draft Management Plan for the property remains a priority for the National Heritage Protection and Development Non-profit Ltd., which was appointed as the Management Body for the property in 2023. The State Party reaffirms its commitment to continuing dialogue under the ICOMOS advisory assistance process initiated in 2022;
- Throughout 2024, several steps were taken towards the preparation of the Management Plan, including the collection of background documentation, development of monitoring tools, and establishment of a joint cooperation platform among relevant stakeholders;
- In 2024, the World Heritage Unit was transferred to the Deputy State Secretariat for Architectural Strategy within the Ministry of Construction and Transport; coordination continues with the World Heritage Department and other bodies responsible for monument protection; the Deputy State Secretariat for Architectural Strategy also oversees the operation of the National Council of Architectural Design;
- Amendments to the 2011 'Law Act on World Heritage' and Government Decree 335/2019 have been initiated to, amongst others, enhance the protection of a property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) within key planning and management frameworks;
- Regarding the National Hauszmann Programme (NHP), the development of the Buda Castle District has been carried out under the oversight of Várkapitányság Non-profit Zrt., applying scientific rigour and a focus on authenticity, including the use of archival photographs and available original plans and drawings.

A joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission to the property took place from 3 to 7 February 2025. Its purpose was to assess the overall state of conservation and management of the property, including potential negative impacts of the continuation of the NHP works on the property's OUV, and evaluate progress made in relation to the recommendations of the 2019 Reactive Monitoring mission and subsequent decisions of the Committee. The mission report is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/400/documents/>.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The State Party's report provides limited detail regarding the overall state of conservation of the property and offers scant information on the implementation of the NHP. However, the February 2025 Reactive Monitoring mission enabled a first-hand assessment of the state of conservation of the property, in light of the Committee's increasing concerns regarding the lack of detailed documentation related to the NHP.

The mission observed that several major projects under the NHP have been completed, including the reconstruction of St Stephen's Hall, the Main Guard House, Stöckl Stairway, Riding Hall, Karakash Pasha Tower, the former Ministry of Finance building and the former Hungarian Red Cross

Headquarters. Other projects are currently underway, notably the North Wing of the Buda Castle Palace, Archduke Joseph's Palace and the Royal Defence Headquarters. Additional works are planned, including the reconstruction of a grand reception hall in the southern wing of the Buda Castle Palace and the redesign of its dome and roof silhouette to recreate the original Hauszmann architectural vision.

For several years, works under the NHP have continued, despite the Committee's repeated requests to suspend further interventions until full project documentation was submitted, including a justification for the proposed reconstruction based on documentary evidence and a clearly defined methodological approach. The State Party, in the framework of the Reactive Monitoring mission, has reiterated its justification for the programme's extensive reconstructions, which rests on two main arguments: (i) the reinstatement of buildings destroyed during the 1945 siege of Buda that were never rebuilt (such as Archduke Joseph's Palace); and (ii) the removal of post-war and 1970s-era modernist interventions, which are now considered to lack architectural value, in order to recover the historic appearance of structures as they existed prior to WWII. This rationale was framed with selective references to the Riga and Krakow Charters (2000) and the Warsaw Recommendation on Recovery and Reconstruction of Cultural Heritage (2018). This justification was suggested first in 2021 and was not supported by the Committee as it considered that if the entire NHP is carried out, and the construction of the post-war regime is reversed, this could create an illusion that does not correspond to historical reality.

The mission considered that the scale and pace of implementation of the NHP and its large-scale reconstructions, many of which only relate to facades, are matters of serious concern, as is the lack of participatory planning processes, the limited transparency and the absence of timely notification to the World Heritage Committee, as required under Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines. The mission concluded that, with respect to the impact on the property's OUV, including its authenticity, several aspects of the ongoing and proposed reconstruction works could prove extremely damaging if the NHP and other similar reconstruction initiatives within the property continue unchecked. However, the mission noted that, thus far, the interventions carried out under the NHP have not resulted in a significant loss of authenticity, and that the property does not currently face threats that have deleterious effects on the inherent characteristics of the property, in conformity with Paragraph 179 of the Operational Guidelines.

In this context, the State Party should be urged to ensure that, in order to minimise further potential negative impacts on OUV, the need for full demolition and reconstruction of long-lost buildings within future phases of the NHP is carefully reassessed. Priority should be given to more sustainable solutions, including the adaptive reuse of existing and currently vacant structures. Furthermore, the State Party should be requested to submit to the World Heritage Centre detailed plans and Heritage Impact Assessments (HIA) for all components of the NHP that have not yet commenced. These should be prepared in accordance with the *Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context*, to enable review by the Advisory Bodies and to facilitate expert advice on mitigating potential negative impacts on the property's OUV, with particular attention to its authenticity and integrity, especially within the Buda Castle Quarter.

Regarding the Citadel project, it is recommended that the Committee request the State Party to suspend any further work until an HIA has been submitted to the World Heritage Centre and reviewed by the Advisory Bodies in order to ensure that the project does not negatively impact the attributes conveying the OUV of the property.

The State Party's intention to continue to avail the expertise of ICOMOS in the development and overdue finalisation of the Management Plan is welcomed. It is further recommended that the World Heritage Committee reiterate its request to the State Party for the prompt submission of a draft Management Plan, without waiting for the completion of any regulatory amendments to the national legislation.

In light of the regrettable lack of communication by the State Party concerning several significant past and ongoing projects, it is also recommended that the World Heritage Committee remind again the State Party of its obligation, as stipulated in Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, to notify the Committee, through the World Heritage Centre, prior to making any decisions that would be difficult to reverse, of its intention to undertake or authorise, in an area protected by the Convention, major restorations or new constructions that could impact adversely the OUV of the property.

In conclusion, the state of conservation of the property remains fragile and is subject to a number of critical challenges. Without a reconsideration of the current large-scale reconstruction approach, there is a risk that cumulative impacts may ultimately have deleterious effects on the inherent characteristics of the property, in conformity with Paragraph 179 of the Operational Guidelines, which may warrant its inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.111

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.4,
2. Recalling Decisions **45 COM 7B.56** and **46 COM 7B.8** adopted at its extended 45th (Riyadh, 2023) and 46th (New Delhi, 2024) sessions respectively,
3. Welcomes the State Party's intention to continue to avail the expertise of ICOMOS in the further development and overdue finalisation of the Management Plan for the property, and reiterates its request to the State Party to submit a draft Management Plan to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies at the earliest opportunity, without awaiting the adoption of regulatory amendments to the national legislation;
4. Regrets that, despite the Committee's repeated requests to halt works under the National Hauszmann Programme (NHP) to allow for dialogue on potential modifications, extensive works have continued, and considers that the scale and pace of implementation of the NHP and its large scale reconstructions, many of which only relate to facades, are matters of serious concern, and that several aspects of the ongoing and proposed reconstruction works could prove extremely damaging if the NHP and other similar reconstruction initiatives within the property continue unchecked;
5. Urges the State Party to ensure that, in order to minimise further potential negative impacts on the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), the need for full demolition and reconstruction of long-lost buildings within the NHP be reassessed in favour of more sustainable solutions, including the adaptive reuse of existing and currently vacant structures;
6. Requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre detailed plans and Heritage Impact Assessments (HIA), prepared in accordance with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context, for all components of the NHP yet to commence, to enable review by the Advisory Bodies and facilitate expert advice on mitigating potential negative impacts on the property's OUV, with particular attention to its authenticity and integrity, especially within the Buda Castle Quarter;
7. Requests furthermore the State Party to suspend all further work on the Citadel project until an HIA for the project has been submitted to the World Heritage Centre and reviewed by the Advisory Bodies, to ensure no negative impact on the attributes conveying the OUV of the property;
8. Takes note moreover of the conclusions of the 2025 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission to the property and also requests the State Party to implement its recommendations in order to improve the state of conservation of the property and strengthen its management system;
9. Recalls the provisions of Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, stressing the obligation to inform the Committee, through the World Heritage Centre, prior to making decisions that are difficult to reverse, of the intention to undertake or authorise, in an area protected by the Convention, major restorations or new constructions that could impact adversely on the OUV of the property;
10. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2026**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the

implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 48th session.

115. Natural and Culturo-Historical Region of Kotor (Montenegro)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1979

Criteria (i)(ii)(iii)(iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 1979-2003

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/125/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 2 (from 1979-1982)

Total amount approved: USD 70,000

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/125/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

2003: joint World Heritage Centre / ICOMOS mission; January 2006: Management Planning Course; February 2008: joint World Heritage Centre / ICOMOS mission; March 2013: ICOMOS Advisory mission; October-November 2018: joint World Heritage Centre / ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; February 2025: joint UNESCO / ICOMOS Advisory mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Lack of Management System/Management Plan
- Inadequate legal framework
- Building and development (accelerated urban development and urban pressure)
- Ground transportation infrastructure (proposed major bridge at Verige and other proposed development projects)
- Major visitor accommodation and associated infrastructure
- Land conversion
- Society's valuing of heritage
- Changes in traditional ways of life and knowledge system
- Impacts of tourism/visitor/recreation
- Earthquake damage (issue resolved)
- Lack of buffer zone (issue resolved)

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/125/>

Current conservation issues

On 31 January 2025, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/125/documents/>, which presents the following progress:

- A Director of the Administration for the Protection of Cultural Properties was appointed for a five-year term at the end of 2024. In the same year, the State Party appointed the Council for the Management of the region of Kotor, which is responsible for the development and implementation of the property's management plan. Activities in this regard have progressed and will be finalised once the formal legal conditions are in place, following the imminent establishment of the local government after the 2024 elections;
- The Ministry of Culture and Media is funding an interdisciplinary study programme in conservation and restoration at the University of Montenegro;

- A study on the Protection of Cultural Properties is being incorporated into the new Spatial Plan of Montenegro, which is currently under preparation and informed by a Strategic Environmental Assessment. This national spatial plan will provide the framework for all local planning documents, including the Spatial Urban Plan for Kotor. It will also be complemented by the Detailed Urban Plan for Lepetani and the Urban Plan for the Lepetani Tourist Zone;
- The absence of binding national guidelines and cross-sectoral coordination has led to limited uptake and inconsistent quality of Heritage Impact Assessments (HIA), undermining their preventive and planning roles, especially given the Committee's emphasis on assessing direct, indirect, and cumulative development impacts on the property;
- The preparation of the Management Plan has been underway since 2019. It will include a chapter on disaster risk reduction, based on the national Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy for 2025-2030 and its Action Plan (2025-2026), which includes protection measures for the Kotor region. The Management Plan will also contain a chapter on tourism management, based on the 'Sustainability Study of Kotor as a Tourist Destination,' as the State Party is committed to finding an alternative to cruise ships docking in Kotor Bay;
- A buffer zone study, aimed at defining areas in and around the property where an impact assessment should be required for potential projects, is expected to start soon. The Study for Protection of Cultural Properties reflects the State Party's opposition to the proposed location of the Verige bridge; however, no decision has yet been made regarding the selection of the corridor for the fast traffic route through the property;
- The Administration for the Protection of Cultural Properties has issued an opinion that planning documents need to be aligned with the Study for the Protection of Cultural Properties, and that HIAs must be prepared before proposals for a hotel complex on the site of the former Fjord Hotel and the Jugooceantija building can be considered;
- The construction of proposed quarries and all related activities have been halted.

The State Party invited a joint UNESCO/ICOMOS Advisory mission to the property, which took place from 26 to 28 February 2025. The purpose of the mission was to assess the effectiveness of legal, spatial planning, and management tools in ensuring a strategic and sustainable approach to development, particularly in light of the cumulative impacts of ongoing and planned projects. The mission report will be available at the above link.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

Limited progress has been made in addressing the recommendations made by the Committee in its previous Decision (**46 COM 7B.11**). This includes the preparation of the Study on the Protection of Cultural Properties, the Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction and its Action Plan, the Report on the Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment (SEIA) for the Spatial Plan of Montenegro until 2040, as well as the suspension of construction activities for the proposed quarries.

The continued lack of qualified expertise reported by the State Party remains a significant concern. Furthermore, the buffer zone study, which is intended to delineate areas in and around the property where impact assessments will be required for development projects, and the revision of the Management Plan have yet to be completed, despite the State Party's efforts in recent years.

Concerns regarding delays in the preparation of these documents, along with the submission of over twenty HIAs to the World Heritage Centre for review since the lifting of the construction moratorium in 2020, reflecting a significant lack of effective management of the property, are compounded by the property's extreme fragility, its pronounced vulnerability to overexploitation, and serious failings in its management. The key challenge in conserving and protecting the property is to redress the balance between economic pressures, particularly from tourism development and leisure activities, and the preservation of the property. This challenge is further complicated by long-standing spatial planning objectives, inconsistencies between regulations, laws and planning tools.

In order to safeguard the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, it is essential to establish a temporary moratorium on new construction and building permits within the property and its buffer zone. This moratorium should remain in place until an effective management model is developed. This will require the harmonisation of legal, administrative and institutional policies and planning frameworks at national, regional and local levels. Key actions include addressing persistent gaps in enforcement, coordination and adaptive planning; finalising the revised Management Plan; and suspending all

projects until a comprehensive assessment of their cumulative impacts is undertaken, including those individually positively evaluated by HIAs since 2023, the inconsistent quality of which is recognised by the State Party. Accordingly, the Committee may wish to request the State Party to adopt a new moratorium while working towards the implementation of an integrated, inter-municipal spatial vision and a binding, integrated urban planning and management framework. This process should include amending the Laws on the Protection of Cultural Property and the Natural and Cultural-Historical Region of Kotor to integrate heritage protection tools and procedures into spatial planning instruments. It should also require that cumulative impacts are considered either independently or within individual HIAs and Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs).

Furthermore, the Spatial Urban Plan of Kotor and other relevant urban planning instruments within municipalities covering the areas in the property and its buffer zone should be revised to include monitoring indicators, specific protection overlays, and enforceable, heritage-sensitive zoning provisions. These revised plans would benefit from proportionate SEIA as a means of ensuring that planning policy fully reflects the State Party's commitment to World Heritage protection. The State Party should be invited to submit all documents related to the proposed management model, including those from all relevant municipalities, to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies prior to their official adoption.

The adoption of a Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy and its Action Plan, as well as the preparation of the Sustainability Study for Kotor as a Tourist Destination, are noted. The State Party's commitment to finding an alternative location for cruise ships docking in the Kotor Bay is also welcomed. The inclusion of dedicated chapters on disaster risk reduction and tourism management in the Management Plan represents a positive development. However, the Committee may wish to request that the State Party adopt a specific Sustainable Tourism Management Plan for the World Heritage property, to be integrated within the Management Plan. This should be supported by a Strategic Environmental Assessment applied to all municipal and regional tourism strategies to ensure a proactive and integrated sustainable management of tourism, with a focus on safeguarding of the property's OUV, and an alternative to cruise ship docking in the Kotor Bay. The State Party should submit the Strategy and its Action Plan to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies.

The development of a comprehensive Buffer Zone study, defining areas in and around the property where impact assessments should be required for potential projects, should start as soon as possible. This study should clearly identify and map areas of high sensitivity to visual, structural and contextual impacts in order to safeguard the property's OUV. Its boundaries should be incorporated into all local planning instruments to ensure consistency between national and local zoning maps.

The State Party's negative position on the location of the Verige bridge is noted, as well is the pending decision on the selection of the corridor for the fast traffic route through the property. The State Party is invited to provide clear information on the final decision for this project and any proposed alternative solutions, as well as on plans for the conversion, construction and/or renovation of a hotel complex on the site of the former Fjord Hotel and the Jugooceantija building. The State Party should be requested to submit all relevant documentation, including HIAs, as appropriate, before any irreversible decision being made.

The suspension of construction of the proposed quarries and all related activities is welcomed. The Committee may wish to request the State Party to permanently cease ongoing and planned extraction and expansions of concessions within the property and its buffer zone, and to define strict no-extraction zones and implement a mitigation strategy to address reclamation issues and ensure ongoing environmental monitoring.

Overall, several challenges remain in addressing the Committee's previous requests, including the completion of the Management Plan, the buffer zone study, and the establishment of comprehensive strategies for disaster risk reduction and tourism management. Continued development pressures, coupled with gaps in enforcement and coordination, may expose the property to threats that could adversely affect its inherent characteristics, in accordance with Paragraph 179 of the Operational Guidelines.

Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.115

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.4,
2. Recalling Decision **46 COM 7B.11**, adopted at its 46th session (New Delhi, 2024),
3. Welcomes the invitation and facilitation by the State Party of the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory mission to the property, as requested in its previous decision;
4. Requests the State Party to implement a new moratorium on all new construction and development within the property and its buffer zone until legal, administrative, and institutional policies and planning frameworks are harmonised and adjusted, at national, regional, and local levels to ensure effective protection of the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) and its proactive, efficient management, as follows:
 - a) Undertake an audit of the practical application of the 2010, 2013, 2018, and 2019 laws, and considering amendments to relevant legislation to include specific and clear provisions on the integration of heritage protection tools and procedures into spatial planning instruments and plans,
 - b) Require cumulative impact assessments alongside, or integrated into, individual Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) and Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs), and institutionalise mid-term cumulative impact assessments (e.g., every three years) that analyse and compare actual development with projected growth scenarios and adjust planning controls accordingly,
 - c) Amend the Spatial Urban Plan of Kotor and other relevant urban planning instruments of municipalities with territories within the property and its buffer zone to include monitoring indicators, specific protective overlays, and enforceable, heritage-sensitive zoning provisions,
 - d) Complete the revision of the Management Plan in parallel with the recommended updates to national legislation, municipal spatial urban plans, and all territorial planning and management tools,
 - e) Suspending all projects, including those individually positively evaluated by HIAs since 2023, and assess their cumulative impact,
 - f) Ensure that the Kotor section of the new Spatial Plan of Montenegro fully integrates World Heritage considerations, particularly the protection of OUV,
 - g) Carry out Strategic Environmental Assessments for any policy, plan or programme that could affect the property, particularly to support the development of a sustainable tourism development strategy centred on safeguarding the property's OUV;

and invites the State Party to submit all the above documents related to the management model of the property to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies prior to their formal adoption;

5. Urges the State Party to expedite the finalisation of the revised draft Management Plan with a view to making it a fully operational tool for the effective management of the entire World Heritage property and its buffer zone, and also requests the State Party to submit the final draft to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies at the earliest opportunity and prior to its formal adoption, as well as the Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy and its Action Plan, and to ensure appropriate incorporation of the

recommendations of the 2018 and 2025 missions, addressing in particular the following issues:

- a) *Development issues in accordance with the updated legal frameworks, spatial, and territorial planning tools of all municipalities with territories within the property and its buffer zone,*
 - b) *Protection and conservation of tangible and intangible attributes that convey the property's OUV and other heritage values,*
 - c) *Establishment of effective and fully operational monitoring mechanisms for the supervision and control of conservation and restoration interventions on historic buildings, in particular developing context-specific conservation and restoration guidelines for historic buildings in Perast and all other historical settlements within the property;*
 - d) *Disaster risk reduction measures following the adoption of a Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy and its Action Plan,*
 - e) *Sustainable Tourism Management specific to World Heritage,*
 - f) *Alternative solutions to cruise ships docking in the Kotor Bay;*
6. Reiterates its request to the State Party to submit at the earliest opportunity the following documents to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies before any irreversible decisions are taken:
- a) *The comprehensive Buffer Zone study, delineating areas in and around the property where impact assessments should be required for potential projects, identifying and mapping areas of high sensitivity to visual, structural, and contextual impacts in order to protect the property's OUV, and integrating these into all local planning instruments to ensure consistency between national and local zoning maps,*
 - b) *The final decision on the Verige bridge project and proposed alternative solutions, including an HIA, before any irreversible decisions are taken,*
 - c) *The detailed spatial plan under preparation for the conversion and construction of a hotel complex on the site of the former Fjord Hotel and Jugooceantija building and/or any other relevant information regarding renovation proposals, while urgently completing the legal protection process for the "Jugooceanija" building and ensuring its complete institutional and physical protection;*
7. Welcomes the halting of quarrying activities and further requests the State Party to permanently halt quarrying, planned extraction, and concession expansion within the property and its buffer zone, to establish strict no-extraction zones, and to develop a mitigation strategy to limit potential harm to the property's OUV, addressing issues of reclamation and environmental monitoring;
8. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2026**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 48th session, **considering that the urgent conservation needs of this property require reinforced management and broad mobilization, including the possible inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger.**

122. Sanctuary of Bom Jesus do Monte in Braga (Portugal)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2019

Criteria (iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1590/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1590/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

N/A

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Management System/Management Plan (improve the documentation, update and supplement the Management Plan, improve the Action Plan, visitor management, improve institutional links between stakeholders)
- Legal framework (classify the whole site as a National Monument)
- Low impact research/monitoring activities (develop additional monitoring indicators and improve the documentation related to heritage elements)
- Buildings and development (remove the terrace bar - resolved)

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1590/>

Current conservation issues

On 24 January 2025, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, which is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1590/documents/>. The report presents the progress made by the State Party on a number of conservations issues raised by the Committee at the time of the inscription and at its 46th session (Decision **46 COM 7B. 13**), as follows:

- The inventory of the heritage elements of the property is ongoing. The collection, which will be available for consultation on site and partially online, is to be regularly updated and promoted, supported by the recruitment of a dedicated team. Completion is expected by May 2025;
- Conservation work on the park and woodland has continued. A partnership with the University of Minho will support the development of forest monitoring indicators, beginning with a biodiversity study involving local communities. Further studies are planned;
- The Braga Master Plan is currently under public consultation and is expected to be submitted to the competent authorities for final approval in the first half of 2025;
- The 'Intermunicipal Sacromontes Programme' remains in place and involves the coordination of the Municipal Forest Fire Defence Plans of the municipalities of Braga and Guimarães. (The plan for Guimarães could not be reviewed due to an inactive link.) The Municipality of Braga has developed a Strategic Plan for the Prevention of Rural Fires (PEPIR), annexed to the report and focused on protecting the property and its surroundings;
- Of the several actions planned in 2020, three have been implemented: the demolition of the terrace bar, the installation of signage, and the creation and signposting of the nature walk. Four additional actions have been rescheduled, with revised dates of implementation ranging from May 2025 to June 2026. The rehabilitation of the Casa dos Correios and the establishment of an Interpretation Centre are awaiting funding, which is anticipated in April 2025;

- Due to a lack of public funding, the Confraternity of Bom Jesus do Monte has independently financed the demolition of the terrace bar and the signage works;
- No major construction works have been carried out since 2023, and as such, no Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) have been undertaken;
- Following the recent renewal of the Confraternity's working team, the outline of a conservation plan is expected in the last quarter of 2025;
- A team of three specialists from the Catholic University of Portugal is preparing a Tourism Management Plan, which is expected to be completed by October 2025.

Various monitoring systems are being integrated into the conservation plan, the Tourism Management Plan, the PEPIR, and the Master Plan.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The continued work on the inventory and archiving of the property's heritage elements is noted with appreciation. However, the Committee may wish to express concern that this task remains incomplete five years after the property's inscription, suggesting a need for strengthened coordination and prioritisation. The ongoing conservation efforts in the park and woodland areas, which have contributed to maintaining an adequate state of conservation, are also welcomed. The development of forest monitoring indicators represents a positive step towards more systematic management and should be further encouraged.

The development of a Master Plan is welcomed. However, the absence of detailed information regarding specific monitoring mechanisms for developments that may impact on the property is noted. The Committee may wish to request the State Party to submit the Master Plan to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies prior to its final adoption.

The implementation of the 'Intermunicipal Sacromontes Programme' and the preparation of the PEPIR are welcomed as important measures to mitigate fire risk. While the PEPIR adopts a landscape-scale approach to protecting the property and outlines several strategic actions implemented by the Municipality, it does not establish a clear link with the Municipal Forest Fire Defence Plans. The PEPIR would benefit from the inclusion of a detailed Action Plan, incorporating a defined timetable, concrete measures, and identification of the responsible implementing units, to support the timely and coordinated implementation of the proposed strategies.

The demolition of the terrace bar, which has been requested by the Committee since the time of inscription, is welcomed, along with the implementation of two additional actions. The reprogramming of several key interventions – including the rehabilitation of the post office (Casa dos Correios) and the establishment of an Interpretation Centre, the rehabilitation of the funicular stop, the conservation and restoration of the exteriors of the three chapels of the Terreiro dos Evangelistas, and the rehabilitation of the Portico area – is also noted with appreciation. The Committee may wish to invite the State Party to ensure the timely completion of these actions in accordance with the revised timeline provided, and to submit further details, including a clear schedule, for the rehabilitation of the Casa dos Correios and the creation of the Interpretation Centre, which are to be financed under the European Regional Development Fund.

The establishment of teams to support the development of a Conservation Plan, a Tourism Management Plan, and an overall monitoring system is welcomed. However, as noted in the Committee's most recent decision, the projected timeframe of three to five years to establish a fully operational working team within the Confraternity is considered excessive. To ensure the effective implementation of the recommendations made at the time of inscription and in subsequent Committee decisions, it is essential that the Confraternity and the State Party collaborate actively and seek technical expertise from relevant public institutions and authorities. This collaboration should prioritise the timely revision and update of the Management Plan. The revised plan should incorporate a detailed Conservation Plan; a well-developed and integrated Tourism Management Plan; the findings of the vegetation study, particularly with regard to the management and long-term sustainability of tree heritage; and a more robust and effective monitoring system. Such a system should enable regular reporting on the state of conservation works, the condition of the park and woodland, the impact of visitation, and potential threats such as urban development and forest fires.

The Committee may wish to recall that HIAs for proposed developments within the property, including assessments of potential cumulative impacts, must be systematically carried out and submitted to the

World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies, in accordance with Paragraph 118bis of the Operational Guidelines.

Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.122

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.4,
2. Recalling Decisions **43 COM 8B.31**, **44 COM 7B.158** and **46 COM 7B.13**, adopted at its 43rd (Baku, 2019), extended 44th (Fuzhou/online, 2021) and 46th (New Delhi, 2024) sessions respectively,
3. Takes note of the progress made in the implementation of previous requests, including those made at the time of inscription, welcomes the additional funding secured, the removal of the terrace bar, the improved signage and establishment of the nature walk, as well as the reprogramming of the rehabilitation of the Post Office (Casa dos Correios) and creation of the Interpretation Centre, the rehabilitation of the funicular stop, the conservation and restoration of the exteriors of the three chapels of the Terreiro dos Evangelistas, and the rehabilitation of the Portico area, and requests the State Party to ensure the timely implementation of these actions in accordance with the revised timeline provided;
4. Also requests the State Party to expedite its efforts to:
 - a) Complete the inventory of the heritage elements of the property,
 - b) Continue developing additional monitoring indicators to address the state of conservation of the park and woodland,
 - c) Finalise the Braga Master Plan, including a monitoring mechanism for urban developments that may have an impact on the property, its buffer zone and wider setting, and submit it to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies prior to its formal adoption,
 - d) Continue to monitor closely the threat of fire through the implementation of the 'Intermunicipal Sacromontes Programme', the Municipal Forest Fire Defence Plans of the Municipalities of Braga and Guimarães, and the Strategic Plan for the Prevention of Rural Fires (PEPIR), which should be strengthened with an action plan, a clear timetable, defined measures and identified implementing entities,
 - e) Provide further information on the timeline and specific details regarding the rehabilitation of the Casa dos Correios and the creation of the Interpretation centre,
 - f) Continue updating the Management Plan to include:
 - (i) The detailed Conservation Plan, as a basis for a well-planned and long-term conservation approach,
 - (ii) A Tourism Management Plan that includes actions, time schedules and dedicated resources,
 - (iii) The results of the vegetation study to present, manage and sustain the vegetation, particularly the tree heritage, as an important element of the property that supplements its landscape attributes,
 - (iv) A revised and more effective monitoring system by ensuring regular reporting on conservation work, the state of the park and wood, the impact of visitation and the threat of urban expansion/development and forest fires;

5. *Calls upon the State Party to make every effort to mobilise the necessary expertise and, if needed, to identify additional and/or alternative sources of funding to expedite the implementation of the activities and actions foreseen since the time of inscription of the property;*
6. *Recalls that in accordance with paragraphs 118bis and 172 of the Operational Guidelines, the State Party is required to submit detailed information for all proposed developments that may affect the property and ensure that these are subject to Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs), including their potential cumulative impacts, in line with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context, and to submit all relevant documentation to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies prior to any decision being taken;*
7. *Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2026**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 49th session.*

123. Cultural and Historic Ensemble of the Solovetsky Islands (Russian Federation)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1992

Criteria (iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/632/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/632/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

August 2013: joint World Heritage Centre/ICCROM/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; July 2015: ICOMOS Advisory mission; April 2018: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Management systems / management plan (lack of finalised Master Plan / Development Strategy)
- Legal framework (lack of appropriate legal measures and rules for conservation, restoration, management and use of World Heritage properties of religious interest)
- Poor state of conservation of the monastic irrigation system
- Inappropriate location of the planned Museum Complex (*issue resolved*)
- Air transport infrastructure (*issue resolved*)
- Interpretative and visitation facilities (*issue resolved*)

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/632/>

Current conservation issues

On 28 November 2024, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, an executive summary of which is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/632/documents/>. Progress on a number of conservation issues is reported as follows:

- The Ministry of Culture has approved the designation of the Solovetsky archipelago as a Cultural Heritage Site of Federal Significance (SRHI), recognising its religious and historic interest. The SRHI encompasses the entire territory of the Solovetsky archipelago, as well as a three-nautical-miles area around it. To ensure the protection of both the SRHI and also the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, urban planning and other regulations will be developed;
- The Ministry of Culture is developing an updated draft of the comprehensive Concept for the Development of the Solovetsky Archipelago with the purpose of preserving the spiritual, historical, cultural and natural potential of the SRHI;
- The SRHI and its associated planning instruments will form the basis for the consistent finalisation of the Concept, the Management Plan and amendments to the Solovetsky Settlement Master Plan (Development Strategy). This work will be coordinated by the Foundation for Preservation and Development of the Solovetsky Archipelago;
- A Service for the Maintenance, Repair and Restoration of Cultural Heritage Sites has been established under licence from the Ministry of Culture and includes qualified restoration specialists. It directly manages conservation projects and reviews and approves proposals submitted by developers. Grants provided by the Ministry of Culture are supporting restoration work on approximately 155 sites, with over 150 additional sites included in future plans;
- Plans have been made to revitalise historic landscape structures, including the monastic road network, the extensive hydrological systems and the cultural landscape;
- The archipelago's cultural heritage is the subject of ongoing research, and a 'retrospective inventory' of the attributes underpinning the property's OUV is currently being undertaken;
- Research has commenced on the restoration of the ruined Preobrazhenskaya Hotel, near the Monastery, with a focus on the restoration of its external façade. The project will be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review;
- Planning is underway for the celebration in 2029 of the 600th anniversary of the foundation of the first monastic settlement on the Solovetsky archipelago, which will include a wide range of educational and museum activities both at the property and in the mainland town of Arkhangelsk.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

Since the 2018 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission, the State Party has made substantial progress towards adopting a holistic and integrated approach to the conservation and restoration of the buildings and cultural landscape that constitute the property, as well as to development that supports and enhances the cultural and natural attributes conveying its OUV. This is evident in the extensive and integrated set of guiding documents for the protection, conservation and management of the property currently being finalised, extensive surveys of key aspects of the landscape, enhanced protection measures and a shift in focus in the amended Settlement Plan, towards the conservation, optimal use and rationalisation of existing structures, limiting physical expansion and prioritising the stewardship of the existing cultural fabric.

The recently approved designation of the Solovetsky archipelago as a Cultural Heritage Site of Federal Significance (SRHI), along with associated planning and regulatory measures, will serve as the foundation for the revision and harmonisation of the Concept for the Development of the Solovetsky Archipelago (approved in 2018), with the revised Management Plan of the property and the Solovetsky Settlement Master Plan (Development Strategy). The reported submission of the revised Development Strategy to the Ministry of Culture on 26 April 2024 indicates forward momentum; however, the fact that it has yet to be received by the World Heritage Centre may point to potential delays in the formal review process.

These proposed revisions intend to ensure greater coherence across key planning documents by aligning them with the overarching objective of the conservation of the property and the preservation of

its OUV. Notably, the clarification that ‘development’ refers to sustainable, context-sensitive interventions – rather than major infrastructure projects – represents an important step in reconciling development pressures with heritage conservation objectives. The emphasis on the integrated management of the monastic cultural landscape, encompassing agriculture, forestry, transport infrastructure, and hydrological systems, demonstrates a broadened understanding of the property’s OUV.

The inclusion in the revised 2018 Concept of the idea of ‘reconstruction (restoration) of “lost” monastic structures and sites and territories associated with former economic activities’ suggests an effort to recover and interpret layers of historical meaning that have been eroded over time. It would be helpful to have more details of such proposals and the evidence on which they are based.

The scale and scope of ongoing restoration works reflect the State Party’s strong commitment to the conservation of the property, with some 155 sites currently benefiting from national grant funding, and a further 150 sites identified for inclusions in future restoration plans. In parallel, a major restoration programme targeting the historic hydrological systems – dating from the 16th and 19th centuries – is underway. This programme addresses 20 local systems with 351 lakes and 100 canals. Efforts have also commenced to formally register the component parts of the property, marking progress toward enhanced legal and administrative protection.

In terms of infrastructure development, a project involving the installation of two antennae to improve radio and internet connectivity was submitted, accompanied by a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA). The visual analysis indicated that the proposed location in woodland would have minimal impact on key attributes of OUV.

The State Party indicates its commitment to providing, as appropriate, detailed information on major projects – alongside HIAs for review by the Advisory Bodies, such as for the renovation of the Preobrazhenskaya Hotel. However, no information has been provided regarding the future of the proposed museum, leaving its status uncertain.

Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.123

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.4,*
2. *Recalling Decision 45 COM 7B.197, adopted at its extended 45th session (Riyadh, 2023),*
3. *Welcomes the substantial progress made in responding to the need for a holistic and integrated approach to the conservation and restoration of the buildings and cultural landscape of the property, as well as for development that supports and enhances the cultural and natural attributes conveying its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), as identified by the 2018 Reactive Monitoring mission;*
4. *Notes that an extensive integrated set of guiding documents for the protection, conservation and management of the property is currently being finalised, and that the legally defined Cultural Heritage Site of Federal Significance, approved for the property and its setting, together with the associated regulations for its implementation, will form the basis for the revision and harmonisation of the Concept for the Development of the Solovetsky Archipelago with the revised Management Plan for the property and the Solovetsky Settlement Master Plan (Development Strategy);*
5. *Also notes the clarification that ‘development’ within the Concept for the Development of the Solovetsky Archipelago refers not to major infrastructure projects, but to sustainable development that respects the property’s OUV and local values, and that the Solovetsky Settlement Master Plan (Development Strategy) will be amended accordingly to prioritise the conservation, optimal use and rationalisation of existing structures over further territorial expansion;*
6. *Requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies and prior to their approval:*

- a) *An updated Concept for the Development of the Solovetsky Archipelago, including clarification regarding the potential reconstruction (restoration) of “lost” monastic structures and sites associated with historic economic activities,*
 - b) *An updated Management Plan for the property,*
 - c) *The Solovetsky Settlement Master Plan (Development Strategy);*
7. *Also welcomes the major conservation programme being undertaken by the Service for Maintenance, Repair and Restoration of Cultural Heritage Sites, established by the Ministry of Culture, and the initiation of a restoration programme for the historic hydrological systems on the main island;*
 8. *Further welcomes the State Party’s commitment to submit details of major projects, such as the Preobrazhenskaya Hotel restoration project currently under study, together with associated Heritage Impact Assessments, to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;*
 9. *Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2026**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 49th session.*

128. Arslantepe Mound (Türkiye)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.5

130. Göbekli Tepe (Türkiye)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2018

Criteria (i)(ii)(iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1572/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1572/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

N/A

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Development of the management plan
- Developments around the property that may have an effect on the landscape and visual integrity and archaeological potential of the property
- Proposed railway line to the south of the property

- Visual impact of the irrigation zone to the south-east and quarry to the west of the property
- Need to strengthen the protection measures for the buffer zone

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1572/>

Current conservation issues

On 2 December 2024, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, a summary of which is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1572/documents/>. Reported progress includes the following:

- The process to revise the Management Plan, which expired in January 2022, was discussed in September 2024 by both the Advisory Board and Coordination and Audit Board. It was decided that the revised document would include a Conservation Plan, a risk preparedness plan, and tourism management programmes. Implementation will require an updated condition assessment along with revised action plans, goals, and objectives;
- The Conservation Plan is also due to be updated. In the interim, conservation principles aligned with international practices and standards have been defined. Despite the absence of a full conservation plan, several routine conservation works were implemented, including vegetation clearance, removal of accumulated soil, protection of structures using geotextiles, and emergency stabilisation of walls at risk of collapse;
- Measures were implemented to mitigate potential risks from natural hazards, including covering archaeological trenches with geotextiles, supporting unstable walls with wire fencing, placing a water tank on site, and providing staff with information on risk management. Following the flood event in Şanlıurfa in March 2023, no damage to the property was observed. A comprehensive risk preparedness plan will be developed as part of the Management Plan revision;
- Excavations and restoration works on the site continued in 2024;
- Archaeological investigations in the buffer zone also progressed, with the aim of enhancing understanding of the wider cultural landscape of Göbekli Tepe. Although no additional monumental settlements were identified, the studies provided insights into the evolution of the wider cultural landscape around the site since the Palaeolithic and further research should continue;
- Maintenance and repair works were undertaken on the paved access road and walkways, and wire fencing along the boundaries was reinforced and renewed;
- A draft Visitor Management Plan was prepared by the Şanlıurfa Tourism Development Corporation. This draft, annexed to the State Party's report, is currently under review by the Göbekli Tepe Management Plan Advisory Board and the Coordination and Audit Board;
- The State Party reports that, once finalised, the revised railway project – planned to pass approximately 4.5 km from the property – will be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review, with impact assessments undertaken if required;
- Regarding the irrigation channel, limestone heaps from construction have been removed, with further visual mitigation measures planned. The discussed limestone quarry west of the property is not considered visually intrusive due to its scale and location, and a proposed new quarry was rejected by the Şanlıurfa Regional Council for the Conservation of Cultural Properties.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies welcome the conservation principles adopted and the efforts made to maintain, stabilise, and care for the property, as well as the measures taken to mitigate natural risks and the continuation of the archaeological surveys within the buffer zone. It is advisable that the Committee reiterate its request to the State Party to prepare a full Conservation Plan to guide long-term conservation efforts, along with a risk assessment and preparedness plan. Continued archaeological research should also be encouraged as a basis for reassessing the statutory protection status of the buffer zone.

The State Party's intention to revise the management plan and develop additional planning tools for the conservation of the property is noted. However, it is regrettable that no significant progress appears to have been made since the last Committee Decision in 2023. As the previous management plan expired in 2022, it is essential that the review process be prioritised to provide an effective framework for

conservation, disaster risk preparedness, and visitor management. Since the process also involves establishing baseline data and monitoring protocols, these will be critical for effective monitoring and adaptive management. The Committee may wish to reiterate its recommendation to the State Party to expedite the review process, consider using the Enhancing Our Heritage 2.0 toolkit as a practical resource, and submit the revised plan to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies prior to adoption.

While the establishment of conservation principles is acknowledged, it is important that conservation actions be limited to urgent stabilisation of areas at risk of collapse or preventive maintenance until a comprehensive conservation and management framework is in place. Similarly, archaeological research in the property should be confined to investigations that directly support emergency interventions.

The submitted Visitor Management Plan is well-structured, employing a systematic methodology, and drawing on stakeholder consultations. It would benefit from mechanisms to help ensure the effective engagement of diverse interest groups, particularly local communities, in decision-making and implementation. The Plan offers valuable insights into local community interests and participation, but there appear to be significant gaps in their integration into conservation and management. The Plan provides a clear assessment of visitor trends, noting a substantial increase to over 500,000 in 2022, while also recognising that recent events, including earthquakes, have caused fluctuations. Current infrastructure seems insufficient to meet rising demand. While the Plan includes socioeconomic surveys, focus groups and carrying capacity calculations, some underlying data dates back to 2019 and could be updated. The Plan proposes balanced recommendations for tourism and conservation, and includes an Action Plan with identified priorities, responsible parties, timelines, and potential funding sources. However, a clearly costed budget is not included. Priority actions should include the addition of a full Disaster Risk Management Plan, a comprehensive Accessibility Plan, a detailed framework for the proposed Visitor Monitoring and Evaluation programme, and the operation of a real-time monitoring programme. The plan should be prioritised and integrated into the forthcoming revision of the management plan and its associated programmes, thereby providing a basis for adaptive management and enhanced community engagement.

The revised railway line project, now expected to pass approximately 4.5 km from the property (initially 2.5 km), is noted, along with the State Party's to submit the necessary documentation to the World Heritage Centre for review. The Committee may wish to emphasise that, in line with its Decision **45 COM 7B.203**, such documentation including Heritage and/or Environmental Impact Assessments (HIAs/EIAs) should be submitted in advance of any decisions being made, to allow adequate time for thorough review and to avoid potential irreversible impacts on the property.

The implementation of visual mitigation measures for the irrigation channel, as well as the planned additional works, are welcomed. The discontinuation of the use of the existing quarry and the cancellation of plans for a new one are also noted positively. The Committee may wish to reiterate its request for the continuation of visual mitigation measures to further reduce the impact of the irrigation channel and to urge the State Party to formally abandon any future use of the existing quarry and to prevent the establishment of new quarrying activities in the vicinity of the property.

Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.130

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.4,*
2. *Recalling Decision **45 COM 7B.203**, adopted at the extended 45th session (Riyadh, 2023),*
3. *Acknowledges the State Party's intention to revise the Management Plan and related planning tools for the conservation of the property, and urges the State Party to limit further archaeological excavations and interventions in the property to urgent measures necessary for stabilising areas at risk of collapse and preventive maintenance, pending the finalisation and adoption of a comprehensive Conservation Plan and revised Management Plan;*

4. Reiterates its request to the State Party to continue archaeological survey work as a basis for reassessing the level of statutory protection afforded to the buffer zone;
5. Welcomes the submission of a well-structured Visitor Management Plan, invites the State Party to consider the recommendations and conclusions of the forthcoming ICOMOS Technical Review, and recommends to the State Party to:
 - a) Update the Plan's data during its review, particularly regarding the socio-economic survey of households and the results of focus groups reflecting local communities' interests and expectations,
 - b) Ensure a more accurate reflection of the current local context and the evolving needs of both residents and visitors,
 - c) Include mechanisms to ensure the effective engagement of diverse interest groups, particularly local communities, and
 - d) Include a full Disaster Risk Management Plan, a comprehensive Accessibility Plan, a detailed framework for the proposed Visitor Monitoring and Evaluation programme and the operation of a real-time monitoring programme;
6. Reiterates its recommendation to the State Party to make use of the Enhancing Our Heritage 2.0 toolkit in the revision of the Management Plan, and stresses the urgency of expediting this process, particularly given that the previous Management Plan expired in 2022, and requests that the revised Management Plan should:
 - a) Include a full Conservation Plan as the basis of a long-term conservation strategy, a disaster risk assessment and preparedness plan, and provisions for preventive maintenance, while integrating relevant elements of the Visitor Management Plan, including infrastructure and services to address the combined needs of conservation and increased tourism,
 - b) Provide a clearly costed implementation framework for all plans, specifying required resources and funding sources, to ensure the sustained delivery of the proposed actions,
 - c) Include a participation framework to enable the involvement of local communities in the management and conservation of the property, thereby supporting both the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) and the sustainable development of those communities,
 - d) Establish the baseline data and monitoring protocols, which are critical for adaptive management and evidence-based decision-making;
 - e) Include a visitor monitoring and evaluation component to guide sustainable tourism strategies;
7. Also requests to the State Party to submit the revised Management Plan, including an updated Visitor Management Plan, to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies and prior to its adoption;
8. Further requests the State Party to submit all relevant documentation including Heritage and/or Environmental Impact Assessments (HIAs/EIAs), as per the request of Decision **45 COM 7B.203**, regarding the revised railway line project to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies well in advance of any decisions, to allow sufficient time for the review before any potentially irreversible actions are taken;
9. Also reiterates its request to the State Party to continue implementing amelioration measures to reduce the visual impact of the irrigation channel within the management area and south-east of the property, and requests furthermore to the State Party to

formally abandon any future use of the existing quarry and prevent the establishment of new quarries;

10. *Notes the State Party's confirmation that no major developments are currently planned, and reminds the State Party of its obligation to inform the World Heritage Centre in due course of any intention to undertake or authorise any such developments that may affect the OUV of the property and that such projects should be accompanied by HIAs, in accordance with paragraphs 172 and 118bis of the Operational Guidelines, respectively, prior to any decisions being made that could be difficult to reverse;*
11. *Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 December 2026, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 49th session.*

135. Palace of Westminster and Westminster Abbey including Saint Margaret's Church (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1987

Criteria (i)(ii)(iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/426/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/426/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

November 2006: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission;

December 2011: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission;

February 2017: joint ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Interpretative and visitation facilities (Construction proposals in the immediate vicinity of the property that could have an adverse impact on the setting, related vistas and integrity of the property)
- Development/Housing (Continuous pressure for high-rise development that threatens the property's visual integrity in the absence of a comprehensive visual impact assessment.)
- Conservation works (possible impact of the Restoration and Renewal project for the Palace of Westminster)
- Management System/Management Plan (Lack of coordination within the management system, absence of an approved management plan, and insufficient protection of the property's immediate surroundings due to the absence of an adequate buffer zone.)
- Governance (Inadequate protection of OUV by existing legal and planning provisions)

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/426/> and <https://whc.unesco.org/en/soc/4462/>

Current conservation issues

On 29 November 2024, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/426/documents/>. Progress on conservation issues previously raised by the Committee is presented as follows:

- The relevant local authorities continue to collaborate, with the 2017 ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission report remaining a key reference in shaping policy approaches for the property;
- The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill has been adopted; it establishes a statutory duty to give special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing a World Heritage property or its setting when exercising planning functions. The relevant provision (Section 102) is not yet in force;
- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have been implemented under the London Plan, and the first Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) is accessible via a provided link. The Greater London Authority (GLA) aims to adopt a new London Plan by 2027;
- Updates to the Management Plan are ongoing, with public consultation focusing on identifying the attributes of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property;
- The London View Management Framework is under review to support the development of the new London Plan, including the use of digital models to assess changes in the historic environment;
- Planning applications for the extension of Evelina Children's Hospital (Guy's and St. Thomas' Hospital) and the Royal Street site have been approved, on the basis that wider public benefits would outweigh the harm caused. Both sites are subject to policies requiring further Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) for future development proposals;
- A strategy for the Restoration and Renewal project of the Palace of Westminster has not yet been determined. The State Party intends to submit a framework outlining the approach to an impact assessment of this project to the World Heritage Centre in 2025;
- While conservation work at the Palace of Westminster is ongoing, no decision has been made on the Parliament Square Streetscape Project, which will be subject to an HIA. Further information will be submitted to the World Heritage Centre as appropriate;
- The State Party reaffirms its commitment to the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre in Victoria Tower Gardens. The Holocaust Memorial Bill is under consideration by the upper parliamentary chamber, and the project remains subject to regular planning procedures;
- Temporary permission for the Education Centre at the Palace of Westminster has been extended until the end of 2030, with no further extension foreseen;
- A five-yearly inspection for the Abbey, St Margaret's Church, and associated precinct buildings is underway. The Abbey is undertaking measures to reduce its environmental footprint, including insulation improvements and planning for net-zero emissions;
- The State Party intends to notify the World Heritage Centre in due course regarding the London View Management Framework, the new London Plan, the updated Westminster World Heritage Site Management Plan, and related Site Allocation HIAs under the Westminster City Plan.

On 28 November 2024, the State Party submitted additional information under Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, noting that while the Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital remains committed to expanding the children's hospital, it is currently reassessing its options due to major financial and national health service changes. Further details were also provided on the approval of the Royal Street site development, confirming that permission has been granted but not yet implemented. In response to a Paragraph 174 letter from the World Heritage Centre dated 2 April 2024 regarding high-rise developments with potential impacts on several World Heritage properties in London, the State Party clarified in a letter dated 29 November 2024 that none of these projects are considered to affect the World Heritage property 'Palace of Westminster and Westminster Abbey including Saint Margaret's Church'.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The State Party's continued efforts to strengthen the protection of World Heritage properties and their settings are acknowledged. The inclusion of the wider setting of World Heritage properties in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act represents a positive development; however, the timeline for its implementation remains uncertain. Of concern is the exemption granted to Neighbourhood Development Orders and Street Vote Development Orders, which limits the application of the statutory duty to give special regard to World Heritage settings within these national planning mechanisms.

The ongoing review of the London View Management Framework to support the development of a new London Plan, alongside the use of 3D digital modelling to assess cumulative impacts, is appropriate. Progress in updating the Management Plan and identifying the attributes of underlying the property's OUV is noted, and the State Party's commitment to submit these and other relevant documents to the World Heritage Centre for review is welcome.

The publication of the first Annual Monitoring Report (AMR 19) on the London Plan's KPI 11: Heritage, though not submitted as requested in Decision **45 COM 7B.205**, is a useful initial step. The report notes 85 development approvals involving harm to heritage and five with benefits. While these figures do not yet reveal clear trends, they underscore the need to consider World Heritage-specific indicators in future versions of the London Plan.

Ongoing conservation and inspection work at key buildings within the property, including the Abbey, is noted, as is the development of environmental sustainability strategies. It is essential that HIAs, aligned with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context, are systematically applied to inform decisions and support the maintenance of the property's OUV. The State Party's proposal to develop a framework for conducting HIAs of the complex Restoration and Renewal project of the Palace of Westminster is supported.

In its 2016 state of conservation report, the State Party first informed the Committee of its intent to develop the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre in the Victoria Tower Gardens, in the immediate setting of the property. The Committee has previously recognised the value of a Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre but has urged the State Party to consider alternative locations or designs given the sensitivities of Victoria Tower Gardens, directly adjacent to the property (Decisions **43 COM 7B.94** (2019), **44 COM 7B.161** (2021), and **45 COM 7B.205** (2023)). The Committee may therefore wish to express serious concern that the Holocaust Memorial Bill, currently under consideration in the House of Lords, seeks to advance the project in this location, apparently without regard to prior decisions. Planning permission will still be required, but the State Party has not indicated any intent to modify the project should the Bill be passed.

The Committee may also wish to reiterate its concern at the approval of the Evelina Children's Hospital and Royal Street developments. Despite adverse findings from two ICOMOS Technical Reviews (2022) and the Committee's clear request not to approve the projects (Decision **45 COM 7B.205**), permissions were granted. These decisions were justified on the basis of significant public health and life sciences benefits, deemed to outweigh the harm to OUV. While the Site Allocations Development Plan Document under the Lambeth Local Plan was updated to address building maximum heights and cumulative impacts, no detailed assessment has been conducted on the heritage assets south of the property, within its immediate setting in relation to OUV. Delays in the Master Plan's progress, due in part to the complex ownership of the two sites, further complicate strategic oversight. The Committee may note that while a hyperlink was provided by the State Party in its state of conservation report to a 2023 HIA, this study focused on volume and urban massing, without sufficiently addressing cumulation and the relationship to OUV. The Committee may therefore wish to reiterate its concerns regarding these developments and the underlying approach. Development within the setting of inscribed properties should respect OUV, as well as delivering necessary benefits and contributing to sustainable development. As set out in the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context, the impact on OUV cannot be offset by other benefits.

In this regard, the reference in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act to the 'desirability of preserving or enhancing' World Heritage properties or their settings, while helpful, should call for the Committee to recall that the responsibility for the protection, conservation, presentation and transmission of World Heritage properties and their OUV is vested in the State Party to the utmost of its own resources, in line with Article 4 of the Convention. Greater clarity is needed regarding how domestic planning processes incorporate the Committee's determination of potential impact on OUV, as recent decisions suggest these are not always respected. The increasing number of high-rise buildings within the setting of several World Heritage properties in London remains a cause for concern. This trend poses a potential

threat to their OUV, including Westminster's, and appears to reflect persistent challenges in effectively managing and controlling such developments under existing legal and planning frameworks. The State Party requested an ICOMOS Technical Review of the forthcoming City Plan 2040 for the City of London, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines. The resulting review, transmitted to the State Party in July 2025, concluded that a fundamental revision of the Plan is required. Although the City of London lies directly adjacent the City of Westminster, the City Plan 2040 includes no policy provisions aimed at preventing adverse impacts on the wider setting of the 'Palace of Westminster and Westminster Abbey including Saint Margaret's Church', which is likely to lead to negative impacts on this property, highlighting challenges in integrating protection and management on a larger urban level.

The State Party's confirmation of the continued use of the 2017 Reactive Monitoring mission report as a point of reference is welcomed. The Committee may wish to request an update on the implementation status of its 23 recommendations, to enable a more comprehensive assessment of the state of conservation of the property.

Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.135

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.4,*
2. *Recalling Decisions **43 COM 7B.94**, **44 COM 7B.161** and **45 COM 7B.205**, adopted at its 43rd session (Baku, 2019), extended 44th (Fuzhou/online, 2021) and extended 45th (Riyadh, 2023) sessions respectively,*
3. *Welcomes the reported progress in updating the Management Plan, reviewing the London View Management Framework and the London Plan, and the State Party's commitment to the submission of these and other forthcoming plans and documents to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies before their adoption and encourages the State Party to expedite the identification of the attributes that contribute to the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property and the finalisation of the draft Management Plan;*
4. *Notes the ongoing periodic inspections and conservation activities, as well as the efforts to reduce the environmental impact of the operations of the buildings within the property and recommends that impact assessment procedures be applied to deliver project options that are fully aligned with the maintenance of the property's OUV;*
5. *Also welcomes the proposal to develop a framework for Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) for the Restoration and Renewal project of the Palace of Westminster and the State Party's commitment to submit it the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies, as well the intention to keep the World Heritage Centre informed of the Parliament Square Streetscape Project should the proposals progress beyond the concept stage;*
6. *Reiterates its strong support for the concept of a Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre in London, but recalls again its serious concerns that the proposed location in the Victoria Tower Gardens and its current design would have a significant adverse impact on the OUV of the property, and therefore, urges the State Party to refrain from enabling the current proposal to proceed at this site, and, should the Holocaust Memorial Bill be adopted, to identify alternative, less impactful designs and submit these to the World Heritage Centre for review by ICOMOS prior to any further planning applications by the local authorities;*

7. Further notes that the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act only refers to 'the desirability of preserving or enhancing' a World Heritage property or its setting, and provides for exemptions of certain planning mechanisms from these provisions, and requests the State Party to ensure that the obligation of maintaining the OUV of World Heritage properties, including the contribution of their settings, is appropriately embedded in national and local planning and legal frameworks, including through a revision of the City Plan 2040 for the City of London;
8. Further encourages the State Party to augment the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) under the London Plan by including indicators specific to World Heritage properties and their settings, and to uphold its monitoring efforts;
9. Regrets that approval has been granted for the Royal Street site development contrary to the Committee's previous requests, and further requests the State Party to reconsider the approval in light of its potential impact on OUV, or to explore and submit alternative designs that significantly reduce visual impacts to the World Heritage Centre for review by ICOMOS;
10. Also regrets that the Committee's decisions were not taken into account in the approval process of the Evelina Children's Hospital expansion, further notes that the hospital is reassessing its plans due to evolving financial and service-related factors, and also encourages the State Party to ensure that any revised proposals give full consideration to the property's OUV and are submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies before any further irreversible decisions are made;
11. Reiterates its request for a detailed study of the assets of the area south of the property in its immediate setting and their relationship to its OUV, and further urges the State Party to refrain from further planning or project approvals in this area until such studies have been submitted to the World Heritage Centre and reviewed by the Advisory Bodies, and recalls that that adverse impacts on OUV cannot be offset by other benefits, in line with established HIA guidance in World Heritage contexts;
12. Further requests the State Party to provide an update with details on the implementation of the 23 recommendations from the 2017 mission in its next report on the state of conservation of the property;
13. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2026**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 48th session.