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UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC  
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CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF  
THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

World Heritage Committee

Thirty-fourth session

Brasilia, Brazil

25 July - 3 August 2010

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

**Selous Game Reserve (United Republic of Tanzania) (N 199)**

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List

1982

Criteria

(ix) (x)

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

N/A

Previous Committee Decisions

31 COM 7B.3; 32 COM 7B.3; 33 COM 7B.8

International Assistance

N/A

UNESCO extra-budgetary funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

World Heritage Centre / IUCN monitoring mission, November 2007 ; World Heritage Centre/ IUCN monitoring mission, November 2008.

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- a) Proposed cattle driving route;
- b) Poaching;

- c) Hunting;
- d) Insufficient funding;
- e) Mineral and hydrocarbon prospecting and mining;
- f) Tourism management and development; and
- g) Potential and proposed dam development.

Illustrative material

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/199>

Current conservation issues

On 25 February 2010, the State Party submitted a detailed report on the state of conservation of Selous Game Reserve (SGR), which provides information on the different recommendations included in Decision **33 COM 7B.8**. The report provides an update on the status of funding for the property, mineral and hydrocarbon prospecting, potential and proposed dam developments, anti-poaching measures, hunting, and tourism management and development, but does not acknowledge the reported increases in poaching. The report also notes that a new Wildlife Act n° 5 has come into force in 2009 and refers to some of the new provisions in the report.

a) *Increases in poaching*

The State Party report recalls that regular wildlife censuses have been conducted in the Selous Mikumi Ecosystem in previous years and that available data show that populations are stable. It notes that a dry season wildlife census was conducted in August 2009 by Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute and that the report will be provided as soon as it is available. However a publicly available report submitted by the Panel of Experts to the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) on the status of elephants and ivory poaching in Tanzania provides some figures of this survey. The report notes a decline of the total elephant population in the country, attributed largely to the downward trend in the Selous-Mikumi ecosystem. A dramatic loss of approximately 31,500 elephants is reported from the ecosystem between 2006-2009 (from 74900 to 43500). The CITES Panel of Experts expresses its concern over this decline and concludes that based on the proportion of elephant mortality attributed to illegal killing (a reliable poaching threat indicator) which jumped from 18% in 2004 to 63% in 2009, the illegal killing of elephants is not only significant, but has also been increasing.

This confirms the conclusion of the 2008 World Heritage Centre / IUCN monitoring mission, which highlighted reports indicating that poaching pressure was on the increase, in particular elephant poaching and noted the need for the State Party to react decisively to indications of increasing poaching pressure in order to avoid a future negative impact on the elephant populations. While the recent Tanzanian elephant census report notes that the 44% decline of Selous' elephant population between 2006-2009 could be due to elephant migration to Niassa Game Reserve in Mozambique, the World Heritage Centre and IUCN consider that the minor levels of in-migration observed in particular in the southern part of Niassa cannot explain the dramatic decline of Selous' elephant population. According to information received, the increase observed in Niassa Reserve seems more related to development pressures to the south of the Reserve.

The State Party notes that enhancement of SGR's capacity to carry out anti-poaching activities is foreseen in the implementation of the new Wildlife Act No 5 of 2009, and that it intends to prepare a proposal to request technical and financial support from the IUCN Species Survival Commission to assist with the new area in 2010.

The World Heritage Centre and IUCN are extremely concerned about the dramatic decrease in the elephant population which seems to be due to an increase in poaching and a result of an apparent breakdown of anti-poaching activities in the property, which is in part due to insufficient funding. The World Heritage Centre and IUCN consider that without decisive and immediate action on the part of the State Party to halt poaching, poaching

levels in SGR, which contains one of Africa's largest elephant populations, might further increase. The World Heritage Centre considers that the State Party should urgently enhance SGR's capacity to carry out anti-poaching activities.

b) *Management of the property*

The State Party reports that under the new Wildlife Act the Wildlife Division will be transformed into a new autonomous Wildlife Authority and that the accrued revenue for all game reserves will be reinstated, including SGR, which will significantly increase the availability of financial resources to manage the property. It is not clear from the report when this will be implemented. While SGR currently has 365 Scouts, the State Party highlights that it will take considerable resources and time to attain 2000 Game Scouts it estimates necessary to effectively patrol and manage the 50,000 sq. km of the property. The State Party notes that it will seek financial and technical support from the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to: conduct an independent evaluation of the implementation of the General Management Plan; and convene a workshop to discuss the implementation of the recommendations of the 2007 and 2008 reactive monitoring missions as requested by Decision **33 COM 7B.8**.

The World Heritage Centre and IUCN welcome the restoration of accrued revenue for the property, as well as the creation of the new autonomous Wildlife Authority. These are significant steps towards reinstating effective management following the interruption of the Revenue Retention Scheme since 2004. They consider that the new revenue accrual scheme should be designed along the same lines as the Revenue Retention Scheme, and that at least 50% of the revenues accrued from tourism and hunting are retained by SGR management. World Heritage Centre and IUCN welcome also the intention of the State Party to undertake an independent evaluation of the management plan and convene a workshop on implementing the recommendations of the 2007 and 2008 monitoring missions.

c) *Mineral and hydrocarbon prospecting and mining*

The State Party acknowledges the incompatibility of mineral exploration, mining, oil exploration and exploitation with inscription on the World Heritage List. However, the revised Wildlife Act now allows exploration and extraction of oil and gas in game reserves, including the property, as long as the prospector undertakes an Environmental Impact Assessment. The report confirms that uranium mining potential is being assessed within and around the property and that a prospecting license has been issued to MANTRA Resources. However, no uranium mining activity is currently being undertaken. Moreover, no oil exploration is taking place within the property. The State Party notes that it has not as yet issued any permits to allow uranium mining or oil exploration within the property and confirms that it will comply with Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines* before executing any such permits.

World Heritage Centre and IUCN remain seriously concerned with the on-going uranium exploration and in particular the existing proposal for hydrocarbon prospecting within SGR. They reiterate the clear policy position of the World Heritage Committee that mineral exploration, mining and oil exploration are incompatible with World Heritage status. Moreover, they are concerned that these activities could now be legally possible within the Property as a result of the new Wildlife Act of 2009. They note that the new Wildlife Act has weakened the legal provisions for protection that were in place at the time of inscription of the property, and they consider that the current legal protection is not sufficient for a World Heritage property. The World Heritage Centre and IUCN reiterate the conclusion of the 2008 mission that the impacts of oil exploration would impact large areas in the property and recall that oil exploration in the 1980's also coincided with a sharp increase in poaching and a dramatic decline in wildlife populations, in particular elephants.

d) *Potential and proposed dam developments – Kidunda and Stiegler's Gorge dams*

The State Party confirmed the information gathered by the 2008 monitoring mission that the proposed Kidunda dam, which is intended to meet increasing water demand in Dar-es-Salaam, is 12km outside the property boundary, and that the dam's capacity has been reduced. The current design would result in 4 to 5 km<sup>2</sup> of SGR being inundated. The State Party report notes that a Steering Committee is being created to review the project, including experts from the Wildlife Department and SGR and that a second EIA is foreseen in February 2010.

With respect to plans for a hydroelectric dam in Stieger's Gorge within the property, the State Party notes that in spite of an earlier feasibility study in 1970 which considered that it would be uneconomical and therefore should not go ahead the Ministry of Energy has included it in the National Power System Master Plan (PSPM) 2009-2033 as an important infrastructure project for meeting long term power demand in Tanzania. Feasibility studies in the Rufiji River Basin are currently being prepared.

The World Heritage Centre and IUCN note that the revised plans for the Kikunda dam could also have significant negative impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value of SGR as it will affect Gonabis, which is an important area for many of Selous' large mammals. They also reiterate the conclusion of the 2008 mission that a dam in Stiegler's Gorge would have serious impacts on the values and integrity of the property. The State Party is urged to ensure that the on-going or planned impact assessments will evaluate the impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value and details in line with paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines* are submitted to World Heritage Centre before a final decision on the dam projects is taken.

e) *Hunting*

The State Party reports on the 2007 and 2008 mission recommendations to regulate hunting. The State Party considers that a transparent system is in place through the Reviewed Wildlife Act No. 5 of 2009 and Tourist Hunting Regulations of 2002; transparency is currently exercised in the quota setting; and SGR is in the process of developing an integrated database which will allow the linkage of information and reports within the property.

The World Heritage Centre and IUCN consider that while the new wildlife act sets out a clear procedure for the attribution of hunting blocks, the system still lacks transparency. Hunting blocks are allocated by the Minister based on the advice of the Hunting Block Allocation Advisory Committee, but there are no clear criteria to guide the allocation. The Wildlife Act also does not prescribe a methodology for setting the hunting quota. The State Party report, while noting that wildlife census data are taken into consideration in the process of setting the quota, did not explain how this scientific information is used. The World Heritage Centre and IUCN welcome the commitment of the State Party to develop an integrated database linking monitoring systems, and reiterate the recommendation of the Committee to use this as a basis for wildlife management.

f) *Tourism management and development*

The State Party notes that SGR does not have a detailed Tourism Plan with a clear vision for both consumptive and non-consumptive tourism and that a proposal is currently being prepared to request technical support from the World Heritage Centre to assist in developing a Tourism Plan. The State Party further notes that it is developing camps in the northern area of the property (10 currently exist with another 10 under construction), and that it intends to expand photographic tourism south of the northern sector.

The World Heritage Centre and IUCN note that the number of lodges in the northern area of Selous is now much higher than specified for in the Management Plan. They are concerned that Selous may be developing mass tourism infrastructure prior to formulating a clear and sustainable vision for both consumptive and non-consumptive tourism. A Tourism Plan should be prepared as quickly as possible with the assistance of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN in order to avoid any potential impacts of increased tourism on the property's values and integrity.

The World Heritage Centre and IUCN are also concerned by the significant increase in threats to the values and integrity of SGR and consider that a coordinated approach is necessary to address these, in collaboration with local and international NGOs and other stakeholders. They are specially concerned by the dramatic results of the elephant survey and the indications of a strong increase in poaching and express the hope that the creation of the autonomous Wildlife Authority and the announced restoration of the revenue retention mechanism will create the necessary momentum to address this issue seriously.

The World Heritage Committee should encourage the State Party to take full advantage of the proposed workshop to consider the 2007 and 2008 mission recommendations, and use this as an opportunity to support the elaboration of an anti-poaching programme. It is also clear that the new Wildlife Act is weakening the legal protection of the property and that under the new provision uranium, oil and gas exploration and exploitation activities are permitted. The State Party should make a specific exception on this provision for SGR as a World Heritage property and reiterates the Decision by the World Heritage Committee at its 33rd session (Seville, 2009) that any decision to go forward with oil exploration inside the property would constitute a clear case for inscribing on the List of World Heritage in Danger.



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

**WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE**

**Thirty-fourth session**

**Brasilia, Brazil**

**25 July – 3 August 2010**

**Item 20 of the Agenda:**

**REPORT OF THE DECISIONS  
ADOPTED  
BY THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE  
AT ITS 34TH SESSION (BRASILIA, 2010)**

**Selous Game Reserve (United Republic of Tanzania) (N 199)**

**Decision: 34 COM 7B.3**

The World Heritage Committee;

1. Having examined Document WHC-10/34.COM/7B,
2. Recalling Decision **33 COM 7B.8**, adopted at its 33rd session (Seville, 2009),
3. Expresses its serious concern about the results of the 2009 elephant survey, which shows a decline of the elephant population in the Selous-Mikumi Ecosystem by 44% between 2006 and 2009 and an increase in the proportion of illegally killed elephants;
4. Urges the State Party to take immediate and decisive action to halt the upsurge in poaching of elephants as well as other wildlife, which risks seriously degrading the Outstanding Universal Value of the property;
5. Also expresses its utmost concern about the weakening of the legal protection of the property by the 2009 Wildlife Act, which allows for the prospection and mining of oil, gas and uranium inside Game Reserves and reiterates that any decision to go forward with oil exploration inside the property would constitute a clear case for inscribing Selous Game Reserve on the List of World Heritage in Danger;
6. Also urges the State Party to enact specific legislation to prohibit the prospection and mining of oil, gas and uranium inside the Selous Game Reserve on the basis of its status as a World Heritage property;
7. Reiterates its request to the State Party to inform the World Heritage Centre of all planned activities within and in the vicinity of the property which could impact its Outstanding Universal Value, including dam and mining and provide an Environmental Impact assessment before taking a decision on these projects;

8. Welcomes the State Party's decision to create an autonomous Wildlife Authority and to reinstate revenue accrual which should over time significantly increase the property's human and financial resources;
9. Further urges the State Party to continue to implement the recommendations of the 2007 and 2008 monitoring missions, as detailed in its Decision **33 COM 7B.8**;
10. Also welcomes the intention of the State Party to convene a workshop on implementing the recommendations of the 2007 and 2008 monitoring missions, and requests the State Party to use this opportunity to ensure the implementation of a full and effective set of actions, including support the elaboration of an anti-poaching programme, in collaboration with local and international NGOs and other stakeholders;
11. Also requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2011**, a detailed report on the state of conservation of the property, including information on progress in addressing poaching and in implementing the recommendations of the 2007 and 2008 monitoring missions, as well as information on the current status of the impact assessments for the Kidunda and Stiegler's Gorge dam projects and on the legal protection status of the property, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 35th session in 2011.