

World Heritage 40 COM

WHC/16/40.COM/7A.Add

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

WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Fortieth session

Istanbul, Turkey 10-20 July 2016

Item 7A of the Provisional Agenda: State of conservation of the properties inscribed on the
List of World Heritage in Danger

Doc. contains the decision taken on Selous Game Reserve

<http://whc.unesco.org/archive/2016/whc16-40com-7AAdd-en.pdf>

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See Document WHC/16/40.COM/7A.Add.2

47. Selous Game Reserve (United Republic of Tanzania) (N 199bis)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1982

Criteria (ix)(x)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2014-present

Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

Poaching and the ensuing dramatic declines in elephant populations, and the effects thereof on the ecosystem

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger

Drafted

Corrective measures identified

Not yet identified

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Not yet identified

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/199/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 3 (from 1984-1999) Total amount approved: USD 67,980 For details, see page

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

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

June 2007, November 2008 and December 2013: Joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring missions.

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Significant decline of wildlife populations due to poaching
- Insufficient funding and management
- Mineral and hydrocarbon prospecting and mining
- Tourism management and development
- Proposed dam development

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- Operationalizing the uranium mining project
- Lack of disaster preparedness
- Need for buffer zone
- Need for increased involvement of local communities
- Alien invasive species

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/199/>

Current conservation issues

On 26 February 2016, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/199/documents>, which reports progress in addressing conservation issues previously raised by the Committee as follows:

- No mining permits were issued in the property, while recalling the legal possibility of prospecting or mining of oil, gas or uranium in all Tanzanian game reserves since 2009;
- Mobilization of significant support from multilateral, bilateral and NGO sources;
- Increased capacity and efforts in combating poaching resulting in a stabilization of the situation in the property;
- Efforts to enhance coordination among governmental agencies, including through the creation of a multi-agency task force to fight environmental and wildlife crimes;
- Increased bilateral efforts, including an agreement on the transboundary Niassa-Selous Ecosystem signed with Mozambique, as well as efforts to address illegal wildlife trade involving China, in addition to ongoing regional coordination;
- Establishment of the Tanzania Wildlife Authority (TAWA) in October 2015;
- Ongoing stakeholder consultations on the possible addition of new areas to the property at its western boundary and on the creation of a buffer zone;
- Appointment of an inter-ministerial team to monitor the Mkuju River Project (MRP) uranium mine and efforts to establish baselines for water monitoring;
- Confirmation that Uranium One envisages In-Situ Leaching (ISL) at MRP and that no approval for ISL has been granted so far. As for disaster preparedness, reference is made to previously provided information contained in an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) for MRP;
- Brazilian construction company Odebrecht has been nominated exclusively to develop the Stiegler's Gorge Dam project. The company has appointed a local consulting firm to produce an Environment Impact Assessment (EIA), jointly with an international expert to be identified. The EIA is reported to start soon and to be submitted to the World Heritage Centre upon completion;
- Submission of the EIA for the proposed Kidunda Dam to the National Environment Management Council (NEMC) for final processing and subsequent sharing with the World Heritage Centre;

Follow-up to all recommendations of the 2013 Reactive Monitoring mission is ongoing, including the elaboration of a proposal for the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), which was submitted to the World Heritage Centre on 16 May 2016.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

The inauguration of TAWA and the increased overall capacity, including additional external support, represent opportunities to improve the management of the property and its surroundings. It will be critically important to effectively operationalize TAWA without delay and to ensure coordination among partners. Despite signs that the dramatic past decline of elephants could be halted, a cautious interpretation of the survey data continues to be necessary, as specified in the 2013 mission report. While efforts to cooperate with destination countries of illegal wildlife products indicate an increasingly sophisticated response, much still needs to be done to resolve the poaching crisis in order to achieve a doubling of elephant and buffalo populations as proposed in the DSOCR. Studies are ongoing to fill data gaps on State of conservation of the properties WHC/16/40.COM/7A.Add, p. 72 inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

the elephant population and to enable the determination, by 2017, of a proposed timeframe for achieving the DSOCR. It should be recalled that the 2013 mission concluded that in addition to elephant, black rhinoceros has also been severely affected by poaching, and that it recommended that the DSOCR should include clear indicators for both elephant and rhino. It is understood that the current availability of data on the black rhinoceros population in the property does not permit the definition in the DSOCR of a clear indicator for its recovery, and it is therefore recommended that the Committee request the State Party to undertake an analysis of the current situation of the black rhinoceros, in order to estimate the number of rhino left in the property, to inform the response required to secure it, and to update the DSOCR accordingly. It is also recommended that the Committee urge again (Decision **39 COM 7A.14**) the State Party to develop and implement a comprehensive emergency Action Plan with the objective of halting poaching within the Larger Selous Ecosystem within 12 months, as originally recommended by the 2013 mission.

The appointment of an inter-ministerial team and reported water monitoring related to the Mkuju River Project uranium mine are welcome. It is important to recall the Committee's request (Decision **38 COM 7B.95**) to conduct independent quantitative and qualitative water monitoring, to undertake a new EIA in case of the application of ISL and to ensure disaster preparedness. More detailed information is needed on progress made in that regard and on the overall project status in order to assess whether these Committee requests have been adequately implemented.

Since 2012 (Decision **36 COM 8B.43**), the Committee has been requesting the State Party to not engage in any mining activities inside the property, a commitment which was confirmed by the State Party in 2015. Yet the public cadaster of the Ministry of Energy and Minerals (<http://portal.mem.go.tz/map/>) indicates a major overlap between the property and mining prospecting licenses, a concern raised already by the 2013 mission, some of which have been granted for commodities other than those permitted under the Wildlife Conservation Act No. 5 of 2009 (such as graphite). As many as eight new applications have been lodged in 2016. Licenses adjacent to the property raise further concerns about the Larger Selous Ecosystem, in particular the Selous-Niassa Corridor.

It should be recalled that the Committee, at its 36th (Saint Petersburg, 2012) and 37th (Phnom Penh, 2013) sessions, expressed its utmost concern that the Stiegler's Gorge project, if approved, could cause serious and irreversible damage to the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), and that the 2013 mission recommended the State Party to, clarify unambiguously and in writing the current status of planning and decision-making regarding the project. However, such clarification has not yet been provided. The status of the Kidunda dam project also remains unclear, with a reported major change in its design from a water retention dam to a combined retention dam/hydropower project, which caused delays in the preparation of an ESIA.

It is recommended that the Committee reiterate its request (Decision **37 COM 7B.7**) to the State Party to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in order to comprehensively identify the cumulative impacts of mining, the Stiegler's Gorge and Kidunda dams, agriculture and associated infrastructure, such as road building, both within the property as well as in important wildlife corridors and dispersal areas that are critical for maintaining the OUV of the property.

The scale of the threats facing the property requires significant additional efforts to be adequately addressed. As human pressure increases, an integrated vision and approach beyond the administrative boundaries of the property with opportunities for local communities to participate in decision-making and benefit-sharing, including in Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs), become more urgent, yet little progress is reported in that regard.

As the State Party is reportedly making progress towards addressing the threat from poaching, the mining and proposed dam developments are considered to represent significant additional threats to its OUV. It is therefore recommended that the Committee request the State Party to invite an IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to evaluate progress in combating poaching and to assess the current status and likely impacts of the proposed ISL at the Mkuju River Uranium Mine, the Stiegler's Gorge and Kidunda dam projects, and prospecting licenses overlapping with and adjacent to the property.

Finally, it is recommended that the Committee retain the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger. State of conservation of the properties WHC/16/40.COM/7A.Add, p. 73 inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

Decision: 40 COM 7A.47

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/16/40.COM/7A.Add,

2. Recalling Decisions **36 COM 8B.43**, **37 COM 7B.7**, **38 COM 7B.95**, and **39 COM 7A.14**, adopted at its 36th (Saint Petersburg, 2012), 37th (Phnom Penh, 2013), 38th (Doha, 2014) and 39th (Bonn, 2015) sessions respectively,

3. Commends the State Party and its international partners for their efforts in addressing the poaching crisis and encourages all involved to consolidate and coordinate these efforts;

4. Acknowledges the progress made by the State Party to establish the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), noting that further studies are ongoing to address gaps in elephant population data and to enable the establishment of a proposed timeframe for its implementation;

5. Requests the State Party to undertake an analysis of the current situation of black rhinoceros to estimate the number of rhino left in the property, to inform the response required to secure this population, and to revise the DSOCR accordingly, and also requests the State Party to submit, by **1 December 2017** an updated proposal for the DSOCR, for adoption by the Committee at its 42nd session in 2018;

6. Urges again the State Party to develop and implement a comprehensive Emergency Action Plan with the objective of halting poaching within the Larger Selous Ecosystem within 12 months, as originally recommended by the 2013 mission;

7. Welcomes the establishment of the Tanzania Wildlife Authority (TAWA) and its inauguration in October 2015, and also urges the State Party to ensure its timely and effective operationalization, as well as adequate and reliable resourcing;

8. Also commends the States Parties of Tanzania, Mozambique and China for the formalization of agreements on the transboundary Niassa-Selous Ecosystem and on wildlife crime prevention, respectively, and strongly encourages all involved States Parties to report to the World Heritage Centre on the activities carried out in the framework of these agreements;

9. Reiterates its utmost concern about:

a) the ongoing lack of clarity in terms of the extraction method, water monitoring and disaster preparedness as regards the Mkuju River Project (MRP),

b) the ongoing Stiegler's Gorge dam project despite a high likelihood of serious and irreversible damage to the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property,

c) the lack of submission of a complete Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) on the Kidunda dam project, which seems to have been extended in its scope and therefore could have a higher impact on the integrity of the property,

d) the legal possibility of mineral exploration and exploitation in the property and the overlapping mining and prospecting licenses, despite the commitment made by the State Party to not engage in any mining activity within the property, in line

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with the established position of the Committee that mining and oil and gas exploration and exploitation are incompatible with World Heritage status,

e) the lack of reported progress in creating opportunities for local communities to participate in decision-making and benefit-sharing, including in Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs);

10. Reiterates its request to the State Party to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to comprehensively identify the cumulative impacts of mining, the potential Stiegler's Gorge and planned Kidunda dam projects, agriculture and associated infrastructure, such as road building, both within the property as well as in important wildlife corridors and dispersal areas that are critical for maintaining the OUV of the property, and further urges the State Party to abandon any plans for the different development projects which are incompatible with the World Heritage status of the property;

11. Also requests the State Party to invite an IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to the property, in order to evaluate progress in combating poaching, and to assess the current status and likely impacts of the proposed In Situ Leaching at the Mkuju River Uranium Mine, the Stiegler's Gorge and Kidunda dam projects, and prospecting licenses overlapping with and adjacent to the property, as well as any other development that might impact the OUV of the property;

*12. Requests furthermore the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2017**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property, on the implementation of the above and on the 2013 mission recommendations, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 41st session in 2017;*

13. Decides to retain Selous Game Reserve (United Republic of Tanzania) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

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See also: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/soc/?action=list&pattern=Selous+Game+Reserve>