

WORLD HERITAGE NOMINATION - IUCN SUMMARY

509: VICTORIA FALLS/MOSI-OA-TUNYA

Summary prepared IUCN (April 1989) based on the original nomination submitted by the governments of Zambia and Zimbabwe. This original and all documents presented in support of this nomination will be available for consultation at the meetings of the Bureau and the Committee.

1. LOCATION

The site includes the Victoria Falls (or Mosi-Oa-Tunya), and the surrounding lands within the Mosi-Oa-Tunya National Park in Zambia, and the Victoria Falls and Zambezi National Parks in Zimbabwe, a total of 65,180ha. The Mosi-Oa-Tunya National Park (6,880ha) lies within the Livingstone District of Southern Province (Zambia), and the Victoria Falls (1,900ha) and Zambezi (56,400ha) National Parks within the Hwange District of Matabeleland North Province (Zimbabwe). 17°56'S, 25°55'E

2. JURIDICIAL DATA

The whole site is in public ownership, with responsibility vested in the Department of National Parks and Wildlife within Zambia, and the Department of National Parks and Wild Life Management within Zimbabwe. Protection within Zambia is assured through the provisions of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1968, and in Zimbabwe through the Parks and Wild Life Act 1975. While in Zimbabwe the Department of National Parks and Wild Life Management remains the administrative agency, in Zambia the administrative authority is the Livingstone District Council under the terms of the Decentralization Act 1980.

3. IDENTIFICATION

The falls are the most significant feature within the nominated area, and when the Zambezi is in full flood they form the largest curtain of falling water in the world. At this time over 500 million litres of water per minute go over the falls, which are 1708m wide, and drop 99m at Rainbow Falls in Zambia. At low water flow can be reduced to around 10 million litres/minute, and the river is divided into a series of braided channels that descend in many separate falls. The parks also contain the Zambezi river for some 5km below the falls, and over 35km above the falls.

Below the falls the river enters a narrow series of basaltic gorges. Since the uplifting of the Makgadikgadi Pan area some two million years ago, the Zambezi River has been cutting through the basalt, exploiting weak fissures, and forming a series of retreating gorges. Seven previous waterfalls occupied the gorges below the present falls, and the Devil's Cataract in Zimbabwe is the starting point for a further retreat. Above the falls the river is considerably wider, and contains a number of islands. While the river lies on basalt, most of the area above the falls is Kalahari sands, which form undulating country in the remainder of the area (mainly Zambezi National Park), with two extensive vlei systems draining towards the river below the falls.

The riverine 'rainforest' within the waterfall splash zone is of particular interest. It is a fragile ecosystem of discontinuous forest on sandy alluvium, dependent upon maintenance of abundant water and high humidity resulting from the spray plume. Typical Kalahari woodland covers much of the sand sheet

between the open grassed v^lges in the Zambezi National Park, while a mixed scrub community has developed on the basalt areas giving way to riparian vegetation along streams, at springs, and especially along the Zambezi. Mopane woodland has developed in valleys where the underlying basalt has been exposed. Approximately 30 species of large mammal have been recorded within the parks, over 400 species of bird, 65 species of reptile, and 21 species of amphibian. The falls form a geographical barrier between the distinctive fish faunas of the upper and middle Zambezi River, and 84 species have been taken from the river above the falls, 39 species below.

Stone artefacts of Homo habilis from 3 million years ago have been found near the falls, as have stone tools indicating prolonged occupation of the area in the Middle Stone Age (50,000 years ago). Weapons, adornments and digging tools indicate the presence of hunter-gathering communities in the Late Stone Age (from 10,000 to 2000 years ago), displaced about 2000 years ago by farmers using iron tools, who kept livestock and lived in villages.

4. STATE OF PRESERVATION/CONSERVATION

The immediate vicinity of the falls area is well preserved, the railway/road bridge being the primary artificial visual intrusion and generally considered to be well sited and designed. Development is fairly low key, and kept to footpaths and other means of access. While there is no danger of catastrophic change in the national parks, there has long been a gradual deterioration of the environment in Mosi-Oa-Tunya.

The Victoria Falls and Zambezi National Parks are managed in accordance with the national parks policy and regulations, and there is a specific policy document for the Victoria Falls-Matetsi complex. Killing, disturbance or removal of or damage to wildlife is prohibited (although fishing without licence is allowed), and livestock and domestic animals are excluded. Management policy gives high priority to maintenance of healthy riparian habitats, optimal conditions for game, and reasonable stability of the various ecosystems. The principal objective guiding management of the Mosi-Oa-Tunya National Park is to conserve the falls area in its natural state. Mosi-Oa-Tunya is not regarded as a major area for wildlife conservation, although the policy is that wildlife should be protected and visible to tourists insofar as is possible.

5. JUSTIFICATION FOR INCLUSION ON THE WORLD HERITAGE LIST

The nomination, as presented by the governments of Zambia and Zimbabwe, provides the following justification for designation as a World Heritage property:

b) Natural property

iii) Superlative natural formations. The Victoria Falls or Mosi-Oa-Tunya is the world's greatest sheet of falling water, with a river some 2km wide falling into and flowing through a series of narrow gorges. A small patch of rainforest has become established opposite the falls, and is supported by spray.

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509: CHUTES VICTORIA/MOSI-OA-TUNYA (ZAMBIE/ZIMBABWE)

Résumé préparé par l'UICN (avril 1989) d'après la désignation d'origine soumise par les gouvernements de la Zambie et du Zimbabwe. L'original et tous les documents présentés à l'appui de cette désignation seront disponibles pour consultation aux réunions du bureau et du comité.

1. SITUATION

Le site désigné inclut les chutes Victoria (ou Mosi-Oa-Tunya), et les terres avoisinantes, à l'intérieur du Parc national de Mosy-Oa-Tunya, en Zambie, ainsi que le Parc national des chutes Victoria et celui du Zambèze, au Zimbabwe, soit une superficie totale de 65.180 ha. Le Parc national de Mosi-Oa-Tunya (6800 ha) est situé dans le district de Livingstone de la Province méridionale (Zambie) et le Parc national des chutes Victoria (1900ha), et celui du Zambèze (56.400 ha), dans le district de Hwange de la province septentrionale du Matabeleland (Zimbabwe). 17°56'S, 25°55E.

2. DONNEES JURIDIQUES

L'ensemble du site proposé est propriété publique, et dépend du "Department of National Parks and Wildlife" (département des Parcs nationaux et de la Faune), en Zambie, et du "Department of National Parks and Wild Life Management" (département des Parcs Nationaux et de la Gestion de la Faune), au Zimbabwe. La protection de la zone située sur territoire zambien relève du "National Parks and Wild Life Act 1968" (Loi de 1968 sur les Parcs nationaux et la Faune). Alors qu'au Zimbabwe, le Département des Parcs nationaux et de la Gestion de la Faune demeure le service administratif responsable, en Zambie, l'autorité administrative est le Livingstone District Council (Conseil du district de Livingstone), aux termes du "Decentralization Act 1980" (Loi de 1980 sur la Décentralisation).

3. IDENTIFICATION

Les chutes Victoria sont le trait dominant du site désigné, et lorsque le Zambèze atteint son niveau maximum, elles forment le plus grand rideau de caracte du monde. Les chutes ont alors un débit de plus de 500 millions de litres d'eau par minute, une largeur de 1708m et une dénivellation de 99m à Rainbow Falls, en Zambie. En période de basses eaux, le débit peut tomber à quelque 10 millions de litres/minute, et le fleuve se divise alors en une série de bras anastomosés, aboutissant à de nombreuses chutes séparées. Ces parcs englobent aussi le fleuve Zambèze, sur une distance de quelque 5km en aval des chutes et de 35 km en amont.

En aval des chutes, le fleuve s'engage dans une série de gorges basaltiques étroites. Depuis le soulèvement de la zone de la cuvette de Makgadikgadi, il y a quelque 2 millions d'années, le Zambèze a creusé son lit dans le basalte, exploitant les moindres fissures et formant une série de gorges de retrait. Il existait autrefois sept chutes dans les gorges en aval des chutes actuelles, et la cataracte de Devil, au Zimbabwe, est le point de départ d'un nouveau retrait. En amont des chutes, le fleuve est nettement plus large et comporte plusieurs îles. Alors que le lit du Zambèze est basaltique, la plus grande partie de la région située en amont des chutes est constituée de sables du Kalahari, formant un paysage ondulé dans le reste du site (notamment dans le Parc national du Zambèze), avec deux réseaux étendus de "vlei" (marécage), en direction du fleuve, en aval des chutes.

La "forêt humide" riveraine, située à l'intérieur de la zone "d'embruns", présente un intérêt particulier. Il s'agit d'un écosystème fragile de forêt discontinue sur des alluvions sableux, qui prospère grâce à la présence permanente d'eau et de vapeur d'eau en abondance. Les étendues boisées typiques du Kalahari couvrent la plus grande partie de la couche sableuse, entre des vliès herbeux ouverts dans le Parc national du Zambèze, alors qu'une communauté arbustive mixte s'est développée sur les terres basaltiques, cédant la place à une végétation ripicole, le long des cours d'eau et près des sources, tout particulièrement le long du Zambèze. Des bois de mopane se sont développés dans les vallées où le basalte affleure. On a enregistré une trentaine d'espèces de grands mammifères dans le parc, plus de 400 espèces d'oiseaux, 65 espèces de reptiles et 21 espèces d'amphibiens. Les chutes forment une barrière géographique entre la faune ichtyologique du cours moyen du Zambèze et celle du cours supérieur: 84 espèces de poissons ont été répertoriées dans le fleuve en amont des chutes et 39, en aval.

Des objets en pierre taillée remontant à Homo habilis, il y a 3 millions d'années, ont été retrouvés près des chutes, de même que des outils servant à creuser la terre, indiquant une occupation prolongée de la région durant la période moyenne de l'âge de la pierre (il y a 50.000 ans). Armes, ornements et outils indiquent la présence de communautés de chasseurs-cueilleurs durant la période la plus récente de l'âge de pierre (il y a 10.000 à 2000 ans), chassés il y environ 2000 ans par des fermiers qui utilisaient des outils en fer, élevaient du bétail et vivaient dans des villages.

4. ETAT DE PRESERVATION/CONSERVATION

La voisinage immédiat des chutes est dans un état de conservation satisfaisant, le pont ferroviaire/routier qui constitue la principale intrusion visuelle étant généralement considéré comme bien situé et bien conçu. La mise en valeur du site est peu importante et se limite aux sentiers et autres voies d'accès. Bien qu'il n'existe pas de danger de changement catastrophique dans ces parcs nationaux, on constate depuis longtemps une détérioration graduelle de l'environnement à Mosi-Oa-Tunya.

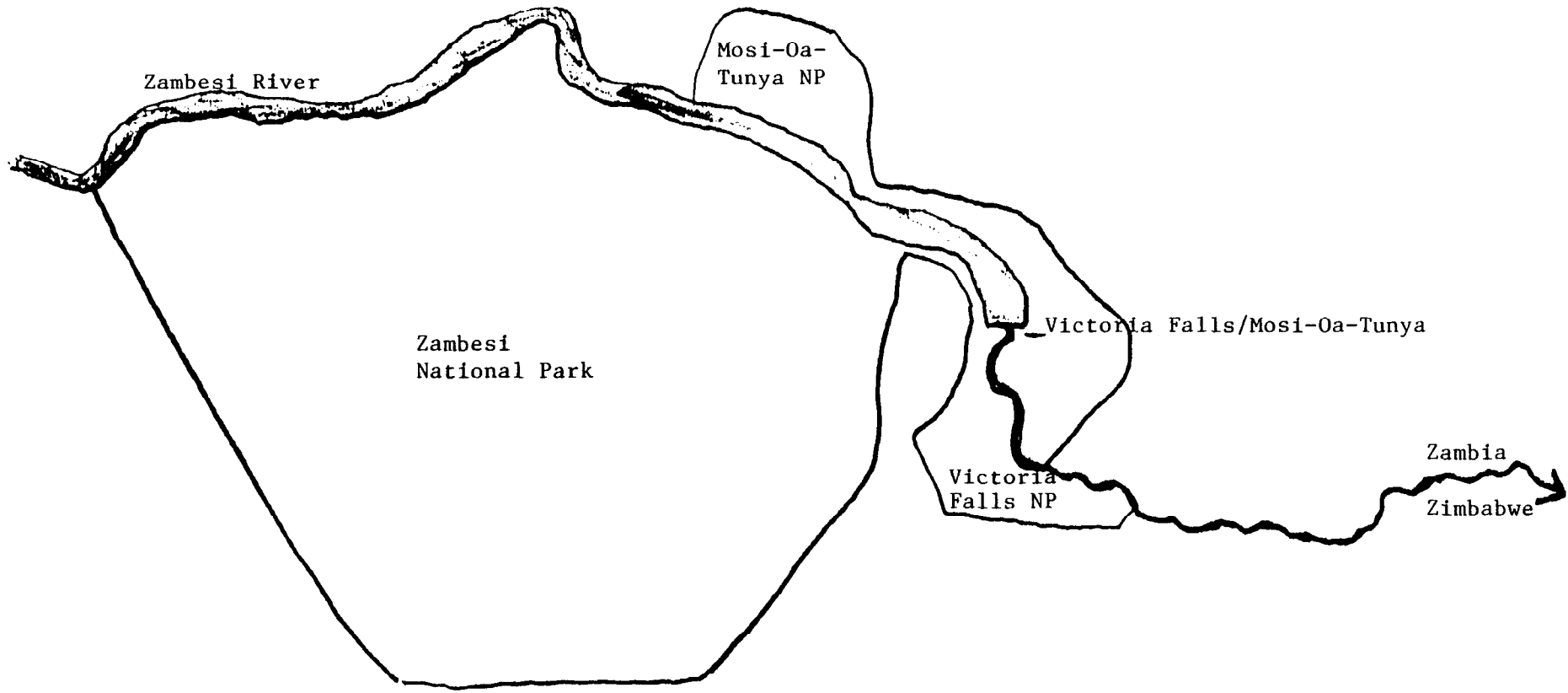
Le Parc national des chutes Victoria et celui du Zambèze sont gérés conformément à la politique et aux règlements applicables aux parcs nationaux; il existe un document de politique spécifique applicable au complexe chutes Victoria-Matetsi. Il est interdit de tuer, déranger, déplacer les espèces sauvages ou de leur causer des dommages (la pêche étant néanmoins autorisée sans permis); la présence d'animaux domestiques et de bétail est interdite. La politique de gestion accorde un rang de priorité élevé au maintien d'habitats ripicoles sains, de conditions de vie optimales pour le gibier, et d'une stabilité raisonnable des différents écosystèmes. L'objectif principal de la gestion du parc national de Mosi-Oa-Tunya est de conserver la région des chutes dans son état naturel. Mosi-Oa-Tunya n'est pas considérée comme une zone d'importance majeure pour la conservation de la faune sauvage, bien que la politique prévoie que la faune sauvage doive être protégée et visible pour les visiteurs dans la mesure du possible.

5. RAISONS JUSTIFIANT LA DESIGNATION POUR LA LISTE DU PATRIMOINE MONDIAL

Pour justifier la désignation de Mosi-Oa-Tunya en tant que bien du patrimoine mondial, les gouvernements de la Zambie et du Zimbabwe ont donné les raisons suivantes:

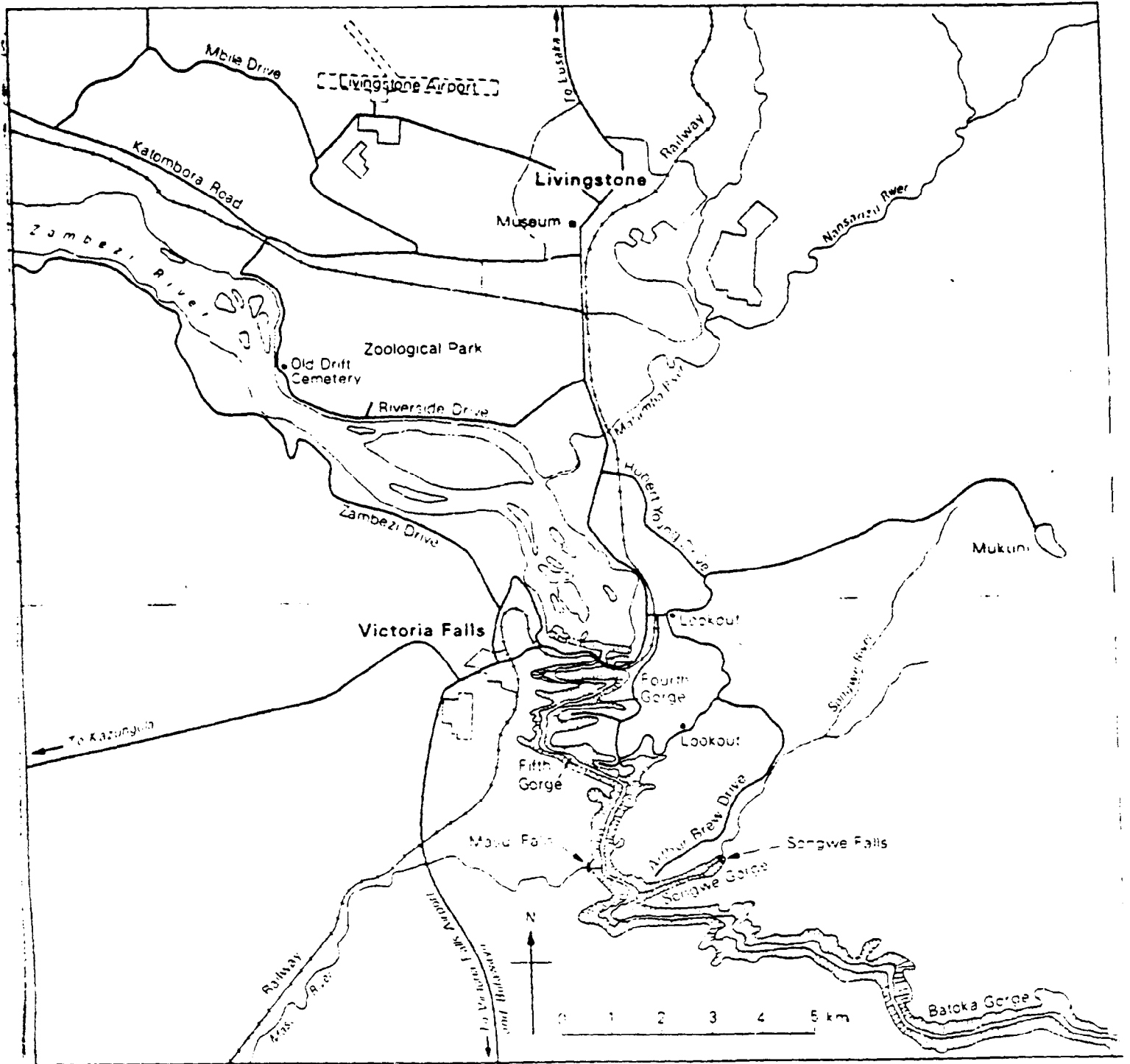
b) Bien naturel

iii) Formations naturelles exceptionnelles. Les chutes Victoria ou Mosi-Oa-Tunya forment la plus vaste cataracte du monde, avec un fleuve de près de 2km de large tombant dans une série de gorges étroites qu'il traverse. Une petite parcelle de forêt humide s'est établie en face des chutes, entretenue par la vapeur d'eau.



Scale 1:250,000

Victoria Falls/Mosi-Oa-Tunya World Heritage Nominated Area



WORLD HERITAGE NOMINATION - IUCN TECHNICAL EVALUATION

509 VICTORIA FALLS/MOSI-OA-TUNYA (ZAMBIA/ZIMBABWE)

1. DOCUMENTATION

- i) IUCN data sheets for Victoria Falls, Zambesi, and Mosi-Oa-Tunya National Parks
- ii) Additional literature consulted: IUCN/UNEP 1987. Review of the Protected Areas System of the African Realm
- iii) Consultations: G. Child, IUCN Southern Africa Regional Office
- iv) Site Visit: J. Thorsell, J. McNeely. 1983

2. COMPARISON WITH OTHER AREAS

Within the two biogeographical provinces in which the nominated property falls, there are some 140 protected areas covering 24 million hectares. The three national parks nominated do not themselves stand out in terms of their overall conservation importance in Africa. But it is the singular feature of the Victoria Falls that is the focus of this nomination. The falls are truly one of the most spectacular in the world in terms of their scale and scenic setting. They form a curtain of falling water that is 1708 m wide and 99 m high. By comparison, the Iguazu falls World Heritage site in Argentina/Brazil extends over 2700 m and is 80 m high. There are many other falls which are higher (eg. Angel in Venezuela at 980 m, Mardalsfoss in Norway at 655 m, and Sutherland in New Zealand at 580 m) and the annual water flow at the Boyoma Falls in Zaire is greater than the Zambesi. A distinction of the Victoria Falls is the series of narrow gorges which follow a zig-zag course below the Falls. In terms of their dramatic visual and scenic impact and their natural setting, the Victoria Falls are the most impressive on the African continent and are an equal match to those found at Iguazu.

3. INTEGRITY

Discussion of integrity is best divided in two parts: the immediate area of the Falls and the surrounding national parks. Firstly, conservation efforts to maintain the natural setting of the immediate Falls area go back to legislation enacted on both sides in the mid-1930s. This resolute action has largely kept the natural spectacle intact with the exception of the railway and road bridge across the second gorge. On the Zambian side, a channel has been cut into the river bed of the Zambesi to supply water for electricity generation. The water diverted from the main channel during the dry season is evident in the relatively low flow over the Zambian side of the Falls that is noticeable during this period. The other impacts of this activity are visual in the form of powerlines and some scattered buildings. Another intrusive element are several customs and immigration buildings whose visibility could be lessened through some careful landscaping. Otherwise, developments around the Falls have been limited to footpaths with major hotels and urban developments kept at a judicious distance.

The three parks surrounding the site act as a natural buffer to the Falls. Zimbabwe's Victoria Falls National Park includes the western half of the Falls and extends down through the main gorges. It is well protected with no serious management problems. Above the Falls, on the south side of the Zambesi River, is the Zambesi National Park. Except for a narrow riverine strip along the Zambesi, this park extends inland to encompass a rolling woodland containing typical African wildlife such as elephant, wildebeest and giraffe. This park is also well-managed.

Zambia's Mosi-Oa-Tunya National Park comprises the left bank of the river as well as the eastern half of the Falls and extends down through the fifth gorge. This park has been severely impacted by cattle grazing and encroachment of small scale cultivation and numerous buildings. Zambia's Department of National Park and Wildlife has worked with IUCN to prepare a management plan to address these problems but resources are not available to implement the recommendations.

In summary, the natural qualities of the immediate Falls area have been largely kept intact. There have been pressures to commercialise the area but these have largely been resisted. The nearby towns of Victoria Falls and Livingstone have been located at a sufficient distance and do not directly impinge on the visual spectacle of the Falls. The only major problem relating to integrity of the falls area is the need for strengthening the management of the Mosi-Oa-Tunya National Park to restore several inconsistent features and to ensure it functions as an adequate buffer.

4. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

As the Victoria Falls/Mosi-Oa-Tunya are shared by two countries, it is being nominated as a single site by both State Parties. This is an initiative to be commended and it is hoped that such cooperation will be extended in future to include the formation of a permanent joint Zambian/Zimbabwean World Heritage liaison committee.

5. EVALUATION

The Victoria Falls/Mosi-Oa-Tunya site is one of the world's most spectacular waterfalls and still exists in a natural condition only partially affected by man. The site clearly meets natural criterion (iii) as a superlative natural feature. It also meets criterion (ii) as an exceptional example of significant on-going geological processes. The Falls and associated gorges are an outstanding example of river capture and the erosive forces of water that are continuing to sculpture the hard basalts. The site does not meet criterion (iv) as it is not a particularly important habitat for species. Although one species (the Taita falcon) is scarce, it is not regarded as threatened.

The only questionable aspect of the nomination relates to the boundaries of the site and the inclusion of the three adjacent parks. The focus of the property's values is clearly on the Falls and the downstream gorges. This suggests that all of the Victoria Falls National Park, the southern half of Mosi-Oa-Tunya, and a small portion of the riverine strip of Zambesi National Park should define the limits. The rest of the parks area acts to protect a portion of the watershed of the Falls but, extending 35 km from the Falls themselves, bears little functional relationship. There are some practical considerations such as uniformity of law and existing land classification but the extent of the values which are clearly of World Heritage calibre is more in the order of 6000 ha rather than the 65,180 ha area nominated. The true function of the total area is to act as a buffer zone to the core feature as suggested in Operational Guidelines (paragraph 17).

6. RECOMMENDATION

Victoria Falls/Mosi-Oa-Tunya should be inscribed on the World Heritage list as the site of the falls, the gorges below them and the more immediate areas surrounding them meets criteria (ii) and (iii). The Government of Zambia and Zimbabwe deserve to be commended in demonstrating their commitment to cooperating in management of the site through the joint nomination.

In the light of this, the Bureau has recommended the inscription of the site and requested the States Parties concerned to reduce the limits of the nominated property to include the Victoria Falls National Park, the southern half of Mosi-oa-Tunya National Park, and a small portion of the riverine strip of Zambesi National Park in order to better concentrate on core features of the Falls area and the downstream gorges.

At time of writing, the States Parties have not responded to this request.

2602J October 1989



ZAMBIA

NAME Victoria Falls/Mosi-Oa-Tunya National Park

MANAGEMENT CATEGORY II (National Park)
X (World Heritage Site)

BIOGEOGRAPHICAL PROVINCE 3.07.04 (Miombo Woodland/savanna)

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION Along the Zambezi River on the southern border with Zimbabwe, between the Sinde River and the Songwe Gorge. The park is bounded by the river, the Dambwa Forest Reserve to the north, the municipal area of Livingstone to the east, and trust land to the south. Livingstone District, Southern Province. 17°56'S, 25°55'E

DATE AND HISTORY OF ESTABLISHMENT The Victoria Falls Reserve Preservation Ordinance of 1934 established the Victoria Falls Executive Committee to be responsible for the preservation of the falls area. In 1948 the National Monuments Commission established a Victoria Falls Conservancy Committee, and extended the protected area downstream to Songwe Gorge (confirmed in legislation in 1949). In 1953 the colonial Governor formed the Victoria Falls Trust, which had responsibility for the area until the national park was declared on 25 February 1972 by Statutory Instrument No. 44 (when the area came under the jurisdiction of the National Parks and Wildlife Service). There are six national monuments within the park, including the falls. Designated as a World Heritage site in 1989.

AREA 6,880ha. Contiguous to Victoria Falls and Zambezi national parks in Zimbabwe, which are themselves contiguous to the Matetsi-Kazuma Pan-Hwange (Wankie) complex. The complex of conservation areas in Zimbabwe covers over 1,846,700ha excluding forest reserves. The park also abuts Dambwa Forest Reserve in Zambia. (Note that many authoritative sources give the area of the park as 6,600ha.)

LAND TENURE Government

ALTITUDE 833m-915m (at the top of the falls)

PHYSICAL FEATURES The park comprises the left bank of the Zambezi River above Victoria Falls, the eastern half of the falls themselves, and a series of deep gorges below the falls. The falls are the most significant feature of the park, and when the Zambezi is in full flood (usually February or March) they form the largest curtain of falling water in the world. During these months, over 500 million litres of water per minute go over the falls, which are 1708m wide, and drop 99m at Rainbow Falls in Zambia. At low water in November flow can be reduced to around 10 million litres/minute, and the river is divided into a series of braided channels that descend in many separate falls.

Below the falls the river enters a narrow series of gorges which represent locations successively occupied by the falls earlier in their history. Since the uplifting of the Makgadikgadi Pan area some two million years

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ago, the Zambezi River has been cutting through the basalt, exploiting weak fissures, and forming a series of retreating gorges. Seven previous waterfalls occupied the seven gorges below the present falls, and Devil's Cataract in Zimbabwe is the starting point for cutting back to a new waterfall that will eventually leave the present lip high above the river in the gorge below.

CLIMATE Annual rainfall is 600mm-700mm, but the spray thrown up by the falls is partly responsible for sustaining the 'rainforest' opposite the falls. Mean annual temperature is 20°C.

VEGETATION The predominant vegetation is mopane Colophospermum mopane forest with small areas of teak and miombo woodland, and a narrow band of riverine forest along the Zambezi. The riverine 'rainforest' within the waterfall splash zone is of particular interest, a fragile ecosystem of discontinuous forest on sandy alluvium, dependent upon maintenance of abundant water and high humidity resulting from the spray plume. Tree species within this forest include Acacia nigrescens, Azelia quanzensis, ebony Diospyros mespiliformis, ivory palm Hyphaene ventricosa, muchiningi Mimusops zeyheri, African olive Olea africana, date palm Phoenix reclinata, waterbroom Syzygium guineense barotsense, muskili Trichilia emetica, and Cape and strangler figs Ficus spp. Herbaceous species include Sebaea pentandra, Lobelia kirkii and Gladiolus unguiculatus, while the dense fern growth includes Cheilanthes farinosa.

FAUNA Several herds of elephant Loxodonta africana (T) occur in Zambezi National Park, occasionally crossing to the islands and Zambian mainland during the dry season when water levels are low. There are small herds of buffalo Syncerus caffer and wildebeeste Connochaetes taurinus, as well as zebra Equus burchelli, warthog Phacochoerus aethiopicus, giraffe Giraffa camelopardalis and bushpig Potamochoerus porcus, and schools of Hippopotamus amphibius are frequent above the falls. Klipspringer Oreotragus oreotragus can be seen in the gorges below the falls. Vervet monkey Cercopithecus aethiops and chacma baboon Papio ursinus are common. Lion Panthera leo and leopard P. pardus are occasionally seen. Taita falcon Falco fasciinucha (scarce but widespread in eastern and central Africa) breeds in the gorges, as do black stork Ciconia nigra, black eagle Aquila verreauxi, peregrine falcon Falco peregrinus and augur buzzard Buteo rufofuscatus augur. Victoria Falls forms a geographical barrier between the distinct fish faunas of the upper and middle Zambezi River. Thirty-nine species of fish have been recorded from the waters below the falls, including butter barbel, eastern bottlenose, chessa Distichodus schenga and nkupe, and eighty-four from the waters above the falls, including African mottled eel, tigerfish Hydrocynus vittatus, Kafue pike and silver barbel.

CULTURAL HERITAGE Stone artefacts of Homo habilis from 3 million years ago have been found near the falls, as have stone tools indicating prolonged occupation of the area in the Middle Stone Age (50,000 years ago). Weapons, adornments and digging tools indicate the presence of hunter-gathering communities in the Late Stone Age (from 10,000 to 2,000 years ago), displaced about 2,000 years ago by farmers using iron tools, who kept livestock and lived in villages.

Infobase produced by WCMC, January 1992

LOCAL HUMAN POPULATION Ethnic composition of the people living in the falls area outside the parks is a mixture of recent immigrants and long-term occupants. The Tonga people have been living in the area for at least seven centuries, latterly with Subiya, Leya, Toka and Totela (and with smaller numbers of Nanzwa, Yeyi and Mbukushu). More recent immigrants included Lozi, Kololo, Ndebele and English language speakers.

VISITORS AND VISITOR FACILITIES This is one of the most frequently visited national parks in Zambia. Facilities include an hotel, two restaurants, a non-catering camp (70 beds) and a camping ground. The park is 11km from Livingstone, where further tourist facilities are available, and which is accessible by road, rail and air. There is a series of footpaths in the falls area, including to Knife Edge Bridge, and a field museum which displays some of the archaeological excavation.

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND FACILITIES Apart from the archaeological museum there are no research facilities within the park, although facilities are available at Livingstone Museum in nearby Livingstone.

CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT The principal objective guiding management of the park is to conserve the falls area in its natural state. Mosi-Oa-Tunya is not regarded as a major area for wildlife conservation, although the policy is that wildlife should be protected and visible to tourists insofar as is possible. In the 1970s there was a 1,000ha fenced zoological park up-river from the falls, containing both exotic and native species. However, this was closed to the public in 1981. The remaining area is protected by law against hunting, and destruction of vegetation or geomorphological features. In keeping with the primary objective, development in the immediate vicinity of the falls themselves is largely restricted to the provision of footpaths, and to Knife Edge Bridge. The management plan drawn up for the park under the auspices of the National Conservation Committee, sets the overall management objectives of the park, and specific priorities for five identified zones. However, although the plan has been approved in principle, the financial and administrative resources required for its implementation are not available at present.

MANAGEMENT PROBLEMS There has been quite a range of development within the park, much before its establishment. Buildings include an hotel and other leisure facilities (lodge, chalets, boat club, field museum, and a curio sellers shelter), the HEP station and ancillary works, housing for national parks and ZESCO staff, and certain old homesteads and villages. Some of the development associated with the power generation facilities is particularly intrusive. The railway line and road between Livingstone and Kazungula run through the park above the falls, and the road and rail links between Zambia and Zimbabwe bisect the park, and then cross the river in a spectacular bridge over the second gorge (Falls Bridge). Zambian customs and immigration services have facilities within the park. Cattle grazing has become well established within the park boundaries, and there is gradual encroachment of small-scale cultivation of maize and sorghum. The town of Livingstone is expanding rapidly, and local people and businesses are not currently motivated towards nature conservation. The situation is

perhaps exacerbated by insufficient funds and manpower available to the park authorities. The 'rainforest' is vulnerable to disturbance by trampling, which allows penetration by ruderal species such as Lantana camara, and when grossly disturbed the forest cannot regenerate easily, giving way to xeric scrub.

STAFF No current information

BUDGET No current information

LOCAL ADMINISTRATION Wildlife Ranger, PO Box 60174, Livingstone. Under the terms of the Decentralization Act (1980), administrative responsibility is vested in Livingstone District Council (PO Box 60048, Livingstone), although management is undertaken by the Department of National Parks and Wildlife. The National Monuments Commission (PO Box 60124, Livingstone) has responsibility for archaeological and historical monuments.

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DATE 1984, revised April 1989

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509: CHUTES VICTORIA/MOSI-OA-TUNYA (ZAMBIE/ZIMBABWE)

1. DOCUMENTATION

- (i) Fiches de données de l'UICN pour les parcs nationaux des Chutes Victoria, du Zambèze et de Mosi-Oa-Tunya
- (ii) Littérature consultée: UICN/PNUE 1987. Etude sur les réseaux d'aires protégées du domaine africain
- iii) Consultations: G. Child, Bureau régional de l'UICN pour l'Afrique australe
- iv) Visite du site: J. Thorsell, J. McNeely, 1983

2. COMPARAISON AVEC D'AUTRES AIRES

Dans les deux provinces biogéographiques dans lesquelles se situe le site désigné se trouvent environ 140 aires protégées couvrant 24 millions d'hectares. Les trois parcs nationaux désignés ne se distinguent pas, en tant que tels, en termes d'importance globale pour la conservation en Afrique. Mais c'est le phénomène unique des chutes Victoria qui représente l'élément central de cette désignation. Ces chutes sont véritablement parmi les plus spectaculaires du monde, que ce soit par leurs dimensions ou pour leur cadre naturel. Elles forment un rideau de cataracte de 1708m de large et 99m de haut. A titre de comparaison, le bien du patrimoine mondial des chutes de l'Iguazu/Iguaçu (Argentine/Brésil) a une longueur de 2700m et une hauteur de 80m. Il existe de nombreuses autres plus hautes, ailleurs dans le monde (p.ex. Angel, au Venezuela: 980m; Mardalsfoss, en Norvège: 655m, et Sutherland, en Nouvelle-Zélande: 580m) et le débit annuel des chutes Voyoma, au Zaïre dépasse celui du Zambèze. Trait distinctif des chutes Victoria: la série de gorges étroites suivant un parcours en zigzag en aval des chutes. Quant à la vision spectaculaire qu'offrent les chutes et leur cadre naturel, on peut dire qu'elle est de loin la plus impressionnante de tout le continent africain et n'a rien à envier aux chutes de l'Iguaçu.

3. INTEGRITE

Pour examiner les conditions d'intégrité du site désigné, il convient de le diviser en deux parties: les abords immédiats des chutes et les parcs nationaux avoisinants. Premièrement, les efforts de législation destinés à maintenir le cadre naturel de la zone contiguë aux chutes remontent à la législation adoptée des deux côtés au milieu des années 30. Cette action vigoureuse a permis de conserver un paysage en grande partie intact, à l'exception du pont ferroviaire et routier qui traverse la deuxième gorge. Du côté zambien, un canal a été creusé dans le lit du Zambèze afin de fournir de l'eau pour la production d'électricité. La quantité d'eau dérivée par le canal principal en saison sèche se mesure au débit relativement faible du côté zambien des chutes à cette période de l'année. Cette activité comporte d'autres impacts visibles, notamment des lignes électriques et plusieurs bâtiments éparpillés. Autre intrusion: plusieurs bâtiments des douanes et de l'immigration qui mériteraient d'être mieux intégrés au paysage. Sinon, le développement de la zone entourant les chutes s'est limité à la construction de sentiers pédestres, les hôtels et autres aménagements urbains ayant été maintenus à bonne distance.

Les trois parcs entourant le site servent de zone tampon naturelle. Le Parc national des chutes Victoria, au Zimbabwe, englobe la moitié occidentale des chutes et s'étend à travers les principales gorges. Il est bien protégé et ne connaît pas de problèmes de gestion sérieux. En amont des chutes, au sud du fleuve Zambèze, se trouve le Parc national du Zambèze. A l'exception d'une bande riveraine étroite le long du Zambèze, le parc s'étend vers l'intérieur et englobe un zone boisée ondulante qui abrite une faune typiquement africaine, notamment des éléphants, des gnous et des girafes. Ce parc est, lui aussi, convenablement géré.

Le Parc national de Mosi-Oa-Tunya, en Zambie, comprend le rive gauche du fleuve ainsi que la moitié orientale des chutes, et s'étend à travers la cinquième gorge. Ce parc a subi un grave impact dû au pâturage et à l'empiètement de l'agriculture à petite échelle, ainsi que de nombreux bâtiments. Le Département des Parcs nationaux et de la Faune a travaillé avec l'UICN à la préparation d'un plan de gestion destiné à résoudre ces problèmes, mais les recommandations ne peuvent être mises en pratiques, faute de ressources financières.

En résumé, les traits naturel de la zone située aux abords immédiats des chutes sont demeurés en grande partie intacts. Les pressions visant à commercialier la région se sont heurtées à une vive résistance. Les villes voisines de Victoria Falls et Livingstone sont suffisamment éloignées et n'ont pas d'impact direct sur la beauté spectaculaire des chutes. Le seul problème majeur d'intégrité de la région des chutes est la nécessité de renforcer la gestion du Parc national de Mosi-Oa-Tunya, afin de restaurer plusieurs traits inconsistants et d'assurer son fonctionnement en tant que zone tampon.

4. COMMENTAIRES ADDITIONNELS

Etant donné que le site chutes Victoria/Mosi-Oa-Tunya est partagé par deux pays, il est désigné comme un site unique par les deux Etats parties. Il s'agit d'une initiative louable et on peut espérer qu'une telle coopération se développera pour aboutir à la création d'un comité de liaison zambien/zimbabwéen conjoint pour le patrimoine mondial.

5. EVALUATION

Le site désigné est l'une des chutes les plus spectaculaires du monde, et se trouve encore dans des conditions naturelles affectées seulement partiellement par l'homme. Il satisfait sans conteste au critère (i) de bien naturel, étant un trait naturel exceptionnel. Il répond également au critère (ii) en tant qu'exemple exceptionnel de processus géologiques importants en cours. Les chutes et les gorges qui leur sont associées sont une exemple remarquable de capture d'un cours d'eau et la force érosive de l'eau continue à sculpter les basaltes durs. Le site ne répond pas au critère (i), ne constituant pas d'habitat particulièrement important pour des espèces animales ou végétales. Une espèce (le faucon Taita) rare y est présente, mais elle n'est pas considérée comme menacée.

Le seul aspect peu clair de la désignation à trait au bornage du site et à l'inclusion des trois parcs adjacents. les élément les plus précieux de ce site sont sans conteste, les chutes et les gorges situées en aval. Cela suggère que l'ensemble du Parc national des chutes Victoria, la moitié méridionale de Mosi-Oa-Tunya, et une petite portion de la bande riveraine du Parc national du Zambèze devraient définir les limites du site. Le reste de la superficie des parcs sert à protéger une portion du bassin d'alimentation des chutes, mais s'étendant jusqu'à 35km des chutes elles-mêmes, leur rapport fonctionnel est limité. Certaines considérations pratiques sont à relever, notamment

l'uniformité des lois et la classification foncière existante, mais les éléments clairement du calibre du patrimoine mondial représentent une superficie de l'ordre de 6000 ha plutôt que de 65.180 ha (site désigné). La véritable fonction de l'aire totale est de servir de zone tampon au noyau du parc , comme le suggèrent les Directives opérationnelles (paragraphe 17.)

6. RECOMMANDATION

Victoria Falls/Mosi-Oa-Tunya devrait être inscrit sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial, car le site des chutes répond aux critères (ii) et (iii). Les gouvernements de la Zambie et du Zimbabwe ont pris une initiative louable démontrant leur engagement à coopérer à la gestion du site en présentant une désignation conjointe.

A la lumière de ce qui précède, le Bureau a recommandé l'inscription du site et demandé aux Parties concernées de réduire la superficie du bien désigné afin qu'il comprenne le Parc national des chutes Victoria, la partie méridionale du Parc national de Mosi-Oa-Tunya et une petite portion de la bande riveraine du Parc national du Zambèze pour que le bien soit davantage axé sur les éléments centraux de la région des chutes et des gorges d'aval.

Au moment de la rédaction de ce rapport, les Etats Parties n'avaient pas répondu à cette demande.

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