

UNESCO

**WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION
WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE**

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EVALUATIONS OF CULTURAL PROPERTIES

Prepared by the
International Council on Monuments and Sites
(ICOMOS)

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2007

WORLD HERITAGE LIST

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Lopé-Okanda (Gabon)

No 1147 rev

*Official name as proposed
by the State Party:*

Ecosystem and Relict
Cultural Landscape of Lopé-
Okanda

Location:

Ogoué-Ivindo and Ogoué-
Lolo provinces

Brief description:

Just below the Equator and to the north of Central Africa's dense rain forests, the east-west Middle Ogooué Valley has been an important route for trade, cultural migrations and settlement, since pre-historic times. The river valley, with its hills rising above the vegetation, is now emerging as an important archaeological centre for Central Africa with extensive remains of Neolithic and Iron Age sites and large numbers of petroglyphs, both associated with the spread of Bantu peoples from the southern Sahara into central, east and southern Africa.

The River Ogooué forms the northern boundary of the Lopé-Okanda National Park. Related archaeological sites are found spread along river valleys running north-south in the park.

Category of property:

In terms of the categories of cultural property set out in Article 1 of the 1972 World Heritage Convention, this is a *site*. Part of the site can be considered as a *relict cultural landscape*.

[Note: The property is nominated as a mixed property. Its evaluation under the natural criteria is carried out by IUCN].

1. BASIC DATA

Included in the Tentative List: 18 April 2003

International Assistance from the World Heritage Fund for preparing the nomination: 12 February 2002

*Date received by
the World Heritage Centre:* 28 January 2003

Background:

At the 29th session of the World Heritage Committee in Durban, the nomination was referred back to the State Party (Decision 29 COM 8B.17) "to allow it to address the potential of the property as a cultural landscape and to provide:

a) Information on the enlargement of the nominated property to reflect a coherent group of archaeological and rock art sites that extend to both sides of the River Ogooué;

b) an inventory of archaeological and rock art sites; and

c) a map of the archaeological and rock art sites, clarifying appropriate boundaries;

Further requests the State Party to continue to increase management capacity at the property to effectively address integrity requirements, and to confirm the long-term management, planning and staffing arrangements, to ensure the overall sustainable management of the property, including the relationship of its cultural and natural values.

Congratulates the State Party on its efforts to secure international support for the management of Lopé National Park and commends the support provided to date by the European Union, through the ECOFAC (Ecosystèmes forestiers d'Afrique Centrale) programme, and relevant NGOs, in particular the Wildlife Conservation Society;

Welcomes the State Party's development of an improved Tentative List and recommends that, with the assistance of the advisory bodies, the position of the nominated property is confirmed in relation to other potential World Heritage properties in Gabon. In relation to natural values this should include the examination of possibilities for serial and transboundary nominations;

Invites the State Party to submit an international assistance request in relation to support the work required to provide the information requested above."

A revised nomination was submitted on 30 January 2006 together with a Management Plan.

At the 30th session in Vilnius, the nomination was again referred back to the State Party to allow it to provide:

a) A smaller area nominated for its cultural value based on a more detailed analysis of archaeological sites and petroglyphs and their relationship with each other and the river corridor;

b) A detailed list of cultural sites, detailing for archaeological sites their type and age, if known, and whether they have been excavated, and for rock art sites the number of images, if known, within each site or if not an approximate number to provide a record of what might be inscribed on the World Heritage List;

c) A detailed map of cultural sites, so that their precise location is known;

d) How archaeological expertise will be provided to take forward the actions in the management plan;"

The World Heritage Committee also considered that any nomination of cultural sites should encompass the River

Ogooue valley and further tributaries if the significances of the archaeological sites can be justified.

A revised nomination was submitted by the State Party in January 2007 together with a revised Management Plan for 2006-2011, a more detailed comparative analysis, and a detailed, descriptive inventory of the archaeological sites together with maps and photographs.

Consultations: ICOMOS has consulted its International Scientific Committees on Historic Gardens – Cultural Landscapes, on Archaeological Heritage Management and on Rock Art.

Literature consulted (selection):

Dr Richard Oslisly has published extensively in journals since 1987 on his studies of Neolithic and Iron Age archaeology and rock art undertaken in the River Ogooue valley and elsewhere in west-central Africa. A recent summary is in:

Weber, William, White, Lee J. T., Vedder, Amy, and Naughton-Treves, Lisa, *African Rain Forest Ecology and Conservation: An Interdisciplinary Perspective*, New Haven and London 2001.

Technical Evaluation Mission: A joint ICOMOS/IUCN mission visited the site from 20 September to 1st October 2004. This mission visited the National Park which was then the extent of the nominated area.

As at the 30th session the nomination was referred back, rather than deferred, it has not been possible for ICOMOS to arrange a mission to the property to view the enlarged area around the River Ogooué to the north which is included in the current nomination. This extended area encompasses the key archaeological sites along the river valley. For these areas, ICOMOS has only been able to undertake a desk evaluation, in consultation with the expert who carried out the previous mission. ICOMOS is not therefore in a position to comment on the adequacy of the boundaries, the conservation of the sites, or their access arrangements.

Additional information requested and received from the State Party: None

Date of ICOMOS approval of this report: 20 April 07

2. THE PROPERTY

Description

Situated 300 km southeast of Libreville, the nominated site covers 511,991 hectares of which 491,291 hectares corresponds with the boundaries of the Parc National de Lopé-Okanda and the remainder covers four historic ensembles, three (Doda, Mokékou and Elarmékora) to the north of the Park, of which two are contiguous with the Park, while the third is detached to the north-west, and the fourth, (Mount Iboundji) is detached from the park to the south-east.

The nomination is thus a serial nomination of three parts. The enlargement proposed in the revised nomination consists of the four historic ensembles

A buffer zone encompasses a band 5 km wider than the Park, and historic ensembles and a corridor to Mount Iboundji.

The National Park is bordered to the north by the River Ogooué, which runs parallel to Equator and falls in a series of rapids towards Libreville, on the Atlantic coast. To the south lies the Chaillu Massif, characterised by dense, evergreen rain forest, rugged terrain and a complex network of watercourses. It extends some 120 km to the south. The Park is bordered to the east and west by two tributaries of the Ogooué River, the Offoué and the Mingoué.

The Ogooué River valley is an island of open savannah and gallery forests that covers about 1,000 sq km. The gentle hills either side of the river rise up above the vegetation and seem since pre-historic times to have provided a way from the coast to the interior, that avoided the dense tropical forests which would have been a hostile environment for pre-historic man. This open landscape appears to be the result of almost uninterrupted human action since the Stone Age: bush fires creating the savannah vegetation that then made the area attractive to further settlers. Even today the main road to the interior follows the ridges along the valley. Waves of peoples have passed through this area, and have left extensive and comparatively well preserved remains of habitation sites around hilltops, caves and shelters, evidence of iron-working and a remarkable collection of some 1,800 petroglyphs. Most of these sites have been discovered in the past twenty-three years. The picture that is emerging from their study is that the middle Ogooué valley, particularly around the confluence of the Mpassa and Lebombi Rivers, was an epicentre for pre-historic trade and migrations, and a crucial passage for Bantu peoples, agriculturalists from just south of the Sahara, who migrated south-east to central, east and southern Africa. Within this valley the three nominated areas encompass the greatest concentration of archaeological and rock art sites

Sub-Saharan Africa is extremely rich in archaeological remains. These include the geological sites in eastern Africa and the rock paintings in east, central and southern Africa. Known sites, and those on the World Heritage and Tentative lists, tend to reflect open or lightly forested landscapes rather than dense forest. Little information has emerged relating to early settlement in the dense rainforest landscapes of Central Africa, long considered to be hostile to early human settlement. The recent work in central Gabon has begun to change that picture and provides considerable evidence to show how early man made use of corridors around the great swamps of the Congo basin and established early settlements of substantial size on hills along the River Ogooué.

The cultural sites in this nomination lie mainly in this band of savannah land along the middle Ogooué River, at the north of the nominated property and also near rivers and streams draining into the River Ogooué from the forests to the south. They consist of:

- Early Stone Age sites
- Middle Stone Age and Late Stone Age sites
- Neolithic sites
- Early Iron Age sites
- Petroglyphs
- Late Iron Age sites
- Mount Iboundji

These are considered separately:

- Early Stone Age sites (400,000-120,000 BP):

The dense evergreen forests are difficult to navigate. Elephants choose to use paths over hills, which give glimpses out of the forest. It seems early man did the same: many of the early remains are found on hilltops, still followed by tracks and roads.

There are numerous early Stone Age sites in the valley including the oldest Stone Age tools in Africa discovered on a terrace of the river at Elarmékora.

- Middle Stone Age (120,000-12,000 BP) and Late Stone Age (12,000-4,500 BP) sites

The Middle Stone Age is not so far represented in the valley. In the Late Stone Age, the climate became warmer and humans began using more sophisticated technology to produce small stone tools from microliths and to hunt with bows and arrows. Remains from this period, reflecting what is called the Tshitolian industry, are plentiful and have also been found along the Congo River on the Teke Plateau, in the Kinshasa plain and in the Niara valley.

In the Ogooué valley, tool workings are found on hilltops and in shelters and caves. On the hilltops large areas of stone fragments, where tools were fashioned, appear as eroded areas and can be picked up from aerial photographs. A site at Lopé has produced some detailed stratigraphy and analysis of the charcoal layers reveal the type of landscape that these Late Stone Age people lived in. Their surroundings were an open landscape of forest savannah mosaic; they chose to live on hilltops, they hunted with bows and arrows, used wood from the high forest for their fires, and are likely to have fed off plants from the nearby high forest.

- Neolithic sites (4,500-2,000 BP)

The Stone Age remains seem to indicate a gradually evolving, sedentary population. By contrast, the remains of cultures that appeared in the Neolithic and Iron Ages reflect a series of waves of migrations through the area, which resulted in comparatively large settlements.

The Upper Holocene period (3,500-2,000 BP) saw a migration of Bantu peoples from the grassy highlands along the Nigeria-Cameroon border. They seem to follow two main routes. The first went directly east towards the Great Lakes of East Africa and then south; the second route was to the southeast and it then split into two. The first followed a narrow band of savannah along the Atlantic coast, while the second made use of the high

ground and savannah of the Ogooué valley to traverse the equatorial forests.

The Neolithic peoples made polished stone axes and pottery. It is possible that the technique evolved in situ but their sudden widespread appearance in 4,500 BP indicates that they were probably brought to the area. The earliest known sites in the valley are in the Massossou mountains. Two Okanda sites are dated to 4,500 and 3,560 BP.

There are many finds of polished axes made from amphibolite, a rock from the middle of the valley. These not only occur locally but in other parts of Gabon, testifying to the extent of trade at this time.

These Neolithic peoples also inhabited the hilltops, living in small settlements and levelling a platform around which rubbish pits were dug. One of these pits at Otoumbi has provided evidence of their way of life. As well as pottery, stone axes, grooved and pitted stones (for cracking nuts), and a pestle, the pit contained charcoal from household fires, bones of small mammals and palm nuts. They probably lived off forest resources: as yet there is no evidence that they practised agriculture.

Neolithic sites are scattered along the valley from Epona and Otoumbi in the west to Ogooué in the east.

- Early Iron Age sites (2,600-1,900 BP)

In west and central Africa, iron working developed in the Mandara Mountains, on the borders of Nigeria and the Cameroon, and in the area around Yaoundé in the south of Cameroon around 2,600 BP.

Iron working appears in the Ogooué valley between 2,600 and 2,500 BP in two sites at Otoumbi and Lopé. Between 2,300 and 2,100 BP it considerably expanded to other sites in the valley at Otoumbi, Okanda and Lindili. The new peoples, with their superior iron tools, seem to have completely displaced the Neolithic peoples.

The Iron Age peoples also lived on hilltops but in much larger settlements, with furnaces nearby, and there were more of them: twenty sites have been found dating from between 2,300 and 1,800 BP. Evidence of grain, *Canarium schweinfurthi*, and nuts including palm nuts have been found, together with evidence of primitive arboriculture in the form of palm oil plantations.

The pottery of these people was completely different from Neolithic pottery: bell-shaped containers, some very large, were decorated with concentric circles below their handles. This decoration is similar to that found on nearby rock engravings and suggests that the two were contemporary.

- Petroglyphs:

Over 1,600 petroglyphs have so far been found along the valley and a few to the south. They are found on ovoid boulders and flat outcrops and were made using iron tools to peck small cup-like depressions in the hard sandstone quartzite rock.

Along the Ogooué valley, the engravings are found in clusters at Doda, Ibombil, Kongo Boumba, Lindili, Epona

and Elarmékora. These sites basically fall into two groups: around Otoumbi in the west and around Lopé-Okanda in the east. The iconography of their images show strong resemblances with the patterns found on Iron Age pottery (and also to body scarification patterns still used today). 67% of the images show circles or concentric circles, while overall 75% depict geometric forms. Only 8% reveal animal images and these are reptiles or small quadrupeds. Large mammals such as elephants and antelopes, which are present in rock art in the Sahara and east and southern Africa, are not found. A very small group of images, 6.4%, show weapons and tools. Of particular relevance are depictions of throwing knives: in central Africa these are weapons associated with Bantu peoples. Such knives are still in use in the National Park.

The sites are near Iron Age settlement sites and, if the two are connected, the engravings would seem to date from between 2,300 and 1,400 BP.

The rock engravings are clustered together in large groups:

- o Elarmékora: 140 images in five groups
 - o Epona: 410 images
 - o Kongo-Boumba: 280 images in 5 groups
 - o Lindili: 20 images
- Late Iron Age sites (1,900-150 BP):

Between 1,900 and 1,800 BP a new wave of people moved into the valley displacing the previous peoples. They stayed for around 400 years before moving on further south. Remains of their furnaces show how they spread out around from Otoumbi along both sides of the valley and onto ridges in the forest to the south. Charcoal deposits reveal the first evidence of slash and burn agriculture in the forest areas.

For reasons not yet known, the valley was abandoned between 1,400 and 800 BP. The 600-year absence of people would doubtless have led to changes in the vegetation of the valley.

Ancestors of the present Okanda population begun to arrive in the valley between the 14th or 15th centuries BP. Again they lived in hilltop settlements. Carbon dates from their pottery have confirmed historical and linguistic studies. Their Lopé pottery has been found uniformly spread over 1,500 square kilometres of the valley. Perhaps they made use of skills in running the rapids in dugout canoes, as recorded in the 19th century, to traverse their long territory.

Remains have also been found of settlements further south into the forest dating to between the 14th and 19th centuries, which reflect a different tradition of iron smelting. It seems that during this time, two different cultures co-existed, the Lopé peoples in the savannah and the Lélédi tradition around the Lélédi Valley of the forest.

In the 20th century villages were moved to the outskirts of the forest alongside the main road and railway along the river Ogooué valley.

- Mount Iboundji

No details are given of the cultural attributes of this site which is described as a sanctuary.

History and Development

Much of the early history has been covered above. Archaeological exploration of the area begun in 1987 and is still continuing.

The savannah belt, which has attracted people in large numbers over the past several millennia, is also where people live today. Several language groups are now present in the area such as Okandais, Simba et Pouvi, Makina, Akélé, Mbahouin, Saké and Massango.

During the 19th and 20th centuries, with the arrival of colonial rule, settlements were re-grouped from small hamlets for each family into larger villages and towns. In 1967 the Route Nationale 3 was constructed along the valley to aid exploitation of the forests. All the main settlements are now along this road.

In 1976, a railway was constructed by a consortium, Eurotrag, between Libreville on the coast and Franceville in the forest. This was to facilitate the exploitation of manganese and logs. It led to the creation of new settlements around the Ayem and Lopé stations.

Today around 2,000 people live inside the nominated area in six small villages, three along the Ogooué valley: Boléko, (Lopé) Kongoboumba, and Kazamabika, and three to the south along the Offoué tributary of the River, Makoghé, Badondé, and Mikongo, together with two villages Ramba and Massenguélani, of mixed Bantu and Pygmy peoples. The main six villages are designated as development zones – where encouragement will be given to developing markets for local produce and ecotourism.

In the buffer zone is Aschouka. A tourist camp has been developed at Lopé, the station for Boléko.

Lopé-Okanda was designated as a reserve in 1946. In 2002 it was re-designated as a National Park.

3. OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE, INTEGRITY AND AUTHENTICITY

Integrity and Authenticity

Integrity

The integrity of the cultural sites lies mainly in their relationship to one another along the River Ogooué Valley - the corridor which facilitated waves of migrations. More of this corridor has been nominated with the 2006 and 2007 revised nominations. Within the National Park, apart from a cluster of sites along the corridor, subsidiary and on the whole later archaeological sites fan out along the lesser river valleys within the forest. These form the edges of the major picture that emerges along the River Ogooué valley. Overall the integrity of the cultural sites can now be discerned, although it would be desirable if at some point in the future that part of the river valley between the north-west corner of the National Park and the historic ensemble

to the north-west could be included so that the river corridor as a whole was protected.

Authenticity

The authenticity of the archaeological sites and rock art site does not seem to be in doubt. However there is a need for consolidation of the excavated sites to be carried out to ensure that they are not eroded by natural or human processes.

Comparative analysis

A more detailed comparative analysis has been provided with the latest revised nomination. This compares first of all the nominated archaeological sites along the River Ogooué with other cultural sites in Gabon. This reveals that there are no comparators for the petroglyph sites and that the dates for iron working in the nominated property of around 7th century BC are much earlier than other evidence from several sites in Gabon.

Considering comparators with sites in neighbouring countries of Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Congo, and Zambia, it is stated that the Late Stone Age finds testify to a significant widening of the Tshitolién culture showing a diffusion of this industry to the north-west of Atlantic Central Africa. The Ogooué sites thus present its most western occurrence. The Maboué site is said to have produced the oldest date for microlithic industry in Central Africa. There is a concentration of Acheulean Stone Age sites in the Ogooué river valley and it is also the case that the River Ogooué iron working dates are much earlier than the 4th-3rd century BC dates found at sites in neighbouring countries.

For the petroglyphs, comparisons are made with other World Heritage sites in Africa such as in Tsolido (Botswana), Mapungubwe (South Africa), and Tassili Ajjer (Algeria), although no details are given of other sites in the same geo-cultural region such as Bidzar (Cameroon), Calola, Bambala and Capelo in upper Zambezi (Angola), Kwili (Lower Congo); Mpatou, Lengo, Bambali, and Bangassou (Central African Republic) which were all known before the discovery of the petroglyphs in the Ogooué valley in the 1980s.

Although it is stated that Lope is a 'cross-roads' which has seen the passing of several groups of populations, more could have been made of the extraordinary number of substantial Neolithic and Iron Age sites, of the persistence of settlement in one place, and of the strong association of the areas with early Bantu migrations, as well as of the relationship between the rock art and Iron Age settlements.

Finally the comparative analysis considers other cultural World Heritage sites elsewhere in the world alongside the rock art.

In the comparative analysis of natural qualities, it is emphasised that the open savannah of the river valley is a reflection of the use of fire and human control of the vegetation over tens of thousand of years.

In conclusion, the information now provided underlines the significance of the ensemble of sites along the river

valley and the evidence they present for a succession of waves of people, for permanent settlement based on the exploitation of forest resources, for the migration of Bantu peoples and languages, and the creation of a substantial corpus of rock art. This in turn emphasises the need to encompass this river valley passage as a cultural landscape that also reflects the creation of an open grassland landscape through the control of vegetation over many millennia. The boundaries of the site need to reflect this holistic ensemble.

What cannot be sustained is the significance of the whole of the nominated site in cultural terms: the cultural significance is confined to the northern Ogooué valley and does not extend to the whole of the National Park.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that the Lopé-Okanda river valley is significant cultural landscape that reflects the impact of successive early phases of settlement, iron-working, agriculture and far-reaching migrations of people to central and southern Africa.

Justification of Outstanding Universal Value

The State Party justifies the outstanding universal value of the property for the following attributes:

The Lopé-Okanda Park:

- Is as an open-air museum for the evolution of technology and creative expression by the regions' predecessors.
- Displays remarkable evidence for settlement stretching over 400,000 years from the Palaeolithic, through the Neolithic and Iron Age, to the present day Bantu and Pygmy peoples.
- Has a great concentration of archaeological sites suggesting long and intensive human activity
- Provides the oldest dates for the extension of the Tshitolién culture towards the Atlantic.
- Has revealed evidence of the early domestication of plants and animals and the use of forest resources
- Includes in the River Ogooué, one of the principle transportation routes for diffusion of Bantu people and languages to Central and Southern Africa

Criteria under which this inscription is proposed:

The property is nominated under criteria iii and iv.

Criterion iii: The State Party justifies this criterion for the rich archaeological ensembles of the middle stretches of the River Ogooué Valley which demonstrate 400,000 years of almost continuous history. The archaeological sites have revealed the earliest date for the extension of Tshitolién culture towards the Atlantic, as well as detailed evidence

for the early use of forest produce, cultivation of crops and the domestication of animals.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion is justified, subject to satisfactory definition of boundaries (see below)

Criterion iv: The State Party justifies this criterion on the basis that the property is an open-air museum of rock engravings and the overall archaeological sites in the valley of the River Ogooué testify to the succession of many civilisations and could be the witness to the first stages of the diffusion of Bantu people and the dispersion of languages from the north-west towards Angola.

ICOMOS considers that the collection of Neolithic and Iron Age sites together with the rock art remains appear to reflect a major migration route of Bantu and other peoples from West Africa along the River Ogooué valley to the north of the dense evergreen Congo forests and to central east and southern Africa, that has shaped the development of the whole of sub-Saharan Africa. The subsidiary remains within the forest provide evidence for the development of forest communities and their relationship with present day peoples.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion is justified subject to satisfactory definition of boundaries (see below)

ICOMOS considers that Outstanding Universal Value has been justified and that the property as nominated appears to satisfy criterion iii and iv, but both are subject to a satisfactory site assessment of the boundaries.

4. FACTORS AFFECTING THE PROPERTY

Climate change

The fragile nature of the savannah area around the river valley could be adversely affected by changes in climate that either brought drier or much wetter weather.

Development pressures

The Lopé-Okanda Park is in a region where the population density is very low. There is pressure from illegal hunting and logging but these do not seem to impact on the archaeological sites.

The biggest threat to the areas is the inability of the local population to make a living from the surrounding forest. The ECOFAC project had as its aim to promote local sustainable development, which would encourage people to live in the area and make a reasonable living out of local resources. This initiative is now being taken forward by the management plan.

Tourism pressures

Currently the number of visitors is extremely low – less than 10 per year it is said, and there are therefore no visitor pressures on the site. However if visitor numbers were to rise, as is hoped, then there would be a need for some means of controlling access to the very large number of archaeological and rock art sites in order to avoid damage.

This too is being addressed by the management plan. Visitor facilities have already been created at Lopé (a private hotel) as part of the ECOFAC ecotourism initiative.

5. PROTECTION, CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT

Boundaries of the nominated property and buffer zone

As no mission has been possible to the cultural zones to the north of the National Park, it is not possible for ICOMOS to comment on whether the boundaries are adequate to encompass the archaeological sites along the river valley.

ICOMOS considers that the boundaries of the core and buffer zone in theory appear to be adequate but has not been able to verify this on the ground.

Ownership

The National Park is in State ownership. The ownership of the cultural zones to the north of the park is not stated.

Protection

Legal provision

La Réserve de la Lopé was the first protected area in Gabon, designated on 26 September 1946. In 2002 the area was re-designated as the Lopé-Okanda National Park, along with 12 other national parks in Gabon. A Decree of 17 January 2006 defined the limits of Historic Ensembles around the key archaeological and rock art sites outside the national park and also the sanctuary of Mount Iboudji.

ICOMOS considers that the protective measures for the property are adequate to protect the cultural attributes of the landscape

Conservation

History of Conservation

Many of the sites have been excavated. What is not detailed is what kind of post-excavation consolidation has been carried out.

Present state of conservation

The current state of conservation of the archaeological sites is detailed for each of them. The archaeological sites in the savannah are said to be in the open air and most subject to erosion over time. A few with exposed stones are clearly vulnerable to people and animals. In the forest some sites are said to be damaged or overgrown by trees. Many of the rock art sites are away from areas of habitation and little visited. ICOMOS has not been able to visit the sites in the extended areas.

Active Conservation measures

Currently there are no active conservation measures undertaken on the archaeological sites. Many of the sites are remote and this remoteness is said to provide good

protection. It would appear that over time consolidation and remedial work will be needed.

ICOMOS recommends that preventive conservation measures and remedial work for the archaeological sites should be strengthened when staff are appointed with appropriate training.

Management

Management structures and processes, including traditional management processes

In 2002 it was announced that a *Conseil national des parcs nationaux* (CNPN) would be created with a permanent secretariat, which would liaise with NGOs. A Law to create a national agency for the national parks is awaiting adoption by the new government which was set up in January 2007. It is anticipated that this will be approved during 2007. The Lopé-Okanda Park does not have a management committee. However, a *Comité scientifique de suivi du site de Lopé-Okanda* and a *Commission du site* are in the process of being established.

Currently the Park comes under the authority of the *Direction de la faune et de la chasse* (DFC), under the *Ministère de l'Économie forestière et de la Pêche*, which is charged with protection of the environment and nature. In practice, day-to-day management is carried out by the *Brigade de faune*, based in Lopé.

In 1992, the ECOFAC (*Conservation et utilisation rationnelle des écosystèmes forestiers en Afrique Centrale*) project was established, funded by European Development funds. This aimed to encourage sustainable development of the local resources and promote ecotourism. It employs 50 people. ECOFAC is part of a wider regional initiative that covers Parks in Congo, Cameroon, Central African Republic and Equatorial Guinea.

In 2004 ECOFAC produced a *Plan d'Aménagement de la Lopé*, in order to facilitate the controlled exploitation of forest resources, this plan proposes zones of exploitation around the six villages and around Ayem station (in the west) and Aschouka in the buffer zone. The plan envisages the development of tourist trails around the archaeological sites, the training of archaeological guides, the creation of accommodation for visitors, and the development of an ecomuseum at Lopé.

This plan formed the basis for a National Park Management Plan which was completed in January 2006 after a process of consultation with local communities and key partners, and adopted in August 2006.

The plan sets out a vision for the Park, objectives, constraints and opportunities and actions under the headings of ecology, tourism, cultural resources, community development, infrastructure and administration of the Park and implications for the private sector. Although titled a Park plan, the text covers the historic zones outside the Park.

The fourth phase of the ECOFAC project was launched in 2006.

Resources, including staffing levels, expertise and training

The Ministry provides 3,000 euros per annum for salaries and ongoing costs. ECOFAC has invested 4.75 million Euros since 1992, which equates to around 450,000 Euros per annum.

For the 4th ECOFAC phase it is envisaged that 3.5 million euros will be provided. For the natural side of the Park's work resources are also supplied by the Wildlife Conservation Society and the London Zoological Society which contribute to staffing in the Park. For the cultural landscape and archaeological sites, there are still no trained or specialist staff. However the Ministry of Culture is in talks with the Ministry for Forestry Economics for the assignment of one cultural conservator to work on the cultural sites.

ICOMOS recommends that high priority should be given to putting in place one or more staff with appropriate training for archaeological sites and cultural landscapes.

6. MONITORING

Documentation

A detailed inventory has been provided by the State Party with the latest revision of the nomination. This gives map references and descriptions for all sites and photographs for some. This inventory provides a base-line for future monitoring work on the archaeological and rock art sites.

Monitoring

Periodic monitoring of archaeological sites, based on photographic documentation is envisaged

7. CONCLUSIONS

The detailed inventory and comparative analysis provided with the revised nomination allows a much greater understanding and appreciation of the significance of the River Ogooue in Neolithic and Iron Age times for settlement and as a migration route for the spread of people and languages. The enlarged areas to the north of the Park would appear to encompass the main archaeological and rock art sites. As the nomination was referred, ICOMOS has limited time for assessment, and it has not been possible for a mission to visit the sites outside of the National Park, not visited during the first joint mission. The advice of the expert who carried out the last mission is that a further mission of one week would be needed.

Although ICOMOS considers from a desk evaluation that the nominated property could demonstrate outstanding universal value and satisfy the criteria, if the boundaries are satisfactory, it has not been possible to determine whether the boundaries put forward are satisfactory. Nor has it been possible to verify the state of conservation of the archaeological sites and how preventive management and remedial work will be put in place. ICOMOS would like to recommend that it carries out a mission after the 31st session of the Committee and reports back to the 32nd session.

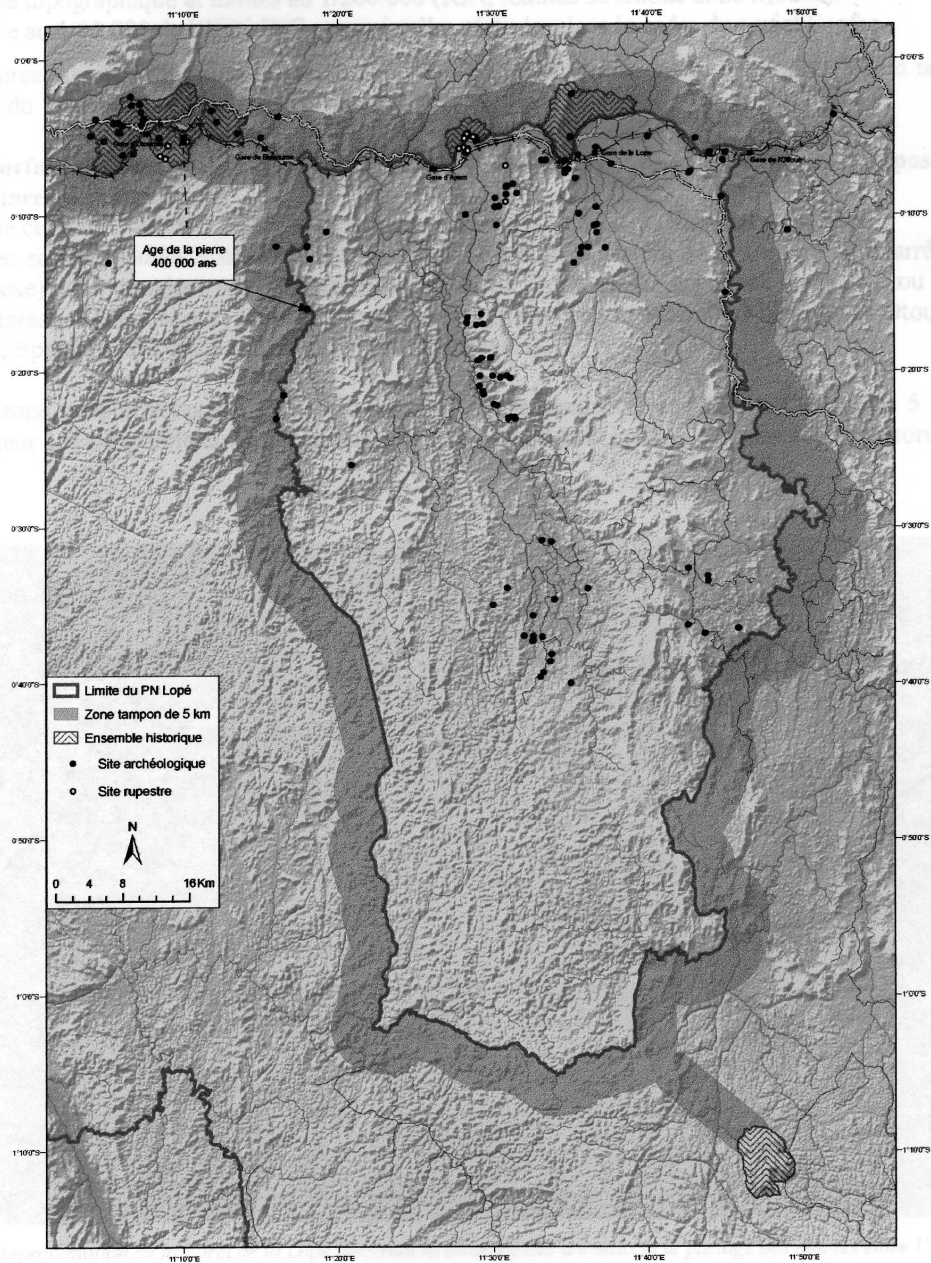
Recommendation with respect to inscription

ICOMOS recommends that the nomination of the Ecosystem and Relict Cultural Landscape of Lopé-Okanda, Republic of Gabon, be deferred in order to allow ICOMOS to carry out a mission to the site to consider boundaries and conservation arrangements. Such a deferral would not necessitate the State Party presenting a new nomination in 2008, as the existing nomination could be considered at the 32nd session of the Committee, in the light of the findings of the mission.

ICOMOS further recommends that high priority should be given to putting in place one or more staff with appropriate training for archaeological sites and cultural landscapes

ICOMOS also recommends that the preventive conservation measures and remedial work for the archaeological sites should be strengthened when staff are appointed with appropriate training

Localisation du bien au centre du pays sur la carte générale du Gabon
d. Localisation précise sur la carte et indication des coordonnées géographiques à la seconde près
 Latitude : 0° 00' N et 01° 20' S ; Longitude : 11° 05' E et 11° 55' E



Map showing the revised boundaries of the nominated property



Savannah areas bordering the River Ogooue



Petroglyphs at Kongo Boumba site

Royal Palaces of Abomey (Benin)

No 323

3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

ICOMOS recommends that the defined buffer zone for the Royal Palaces of Abomey, Benin, be approved.

1. BASIC DATA

State Party: Benin

Name of property: Royal Palaces of Abomey

Location: Province of Zou

Inscription: 1985, Inscribed on the World Heritage List in danger in 1985

Brief Description:

From 1625 to 1900, twelve kings succeeded one another at the head of the powerful Kingdom of Abomey. With the exception of King Akaba, who had his own separate enclosure, they all had their palaces built within the same cob-wall area, in keeping with previous palaces as regards the use of space and materials. The royal palaces of Abomey are a unique reminder of this vanished kingdom.

2. ISSUES RAISED

Background

The property has been on the Danger list since its inscription as a result of the serious state of deterioration of the palaces following a tornado in 1984; and of restoration work carried out without respect for the authenticity of materials, volumes and the colours of buildings.

As part of agreed corrective measures, the Committee at its 28 Session (COM15A.14) required the State Party to put in place a clearly defined buffer zone to protect the integrity of the property.

Modification

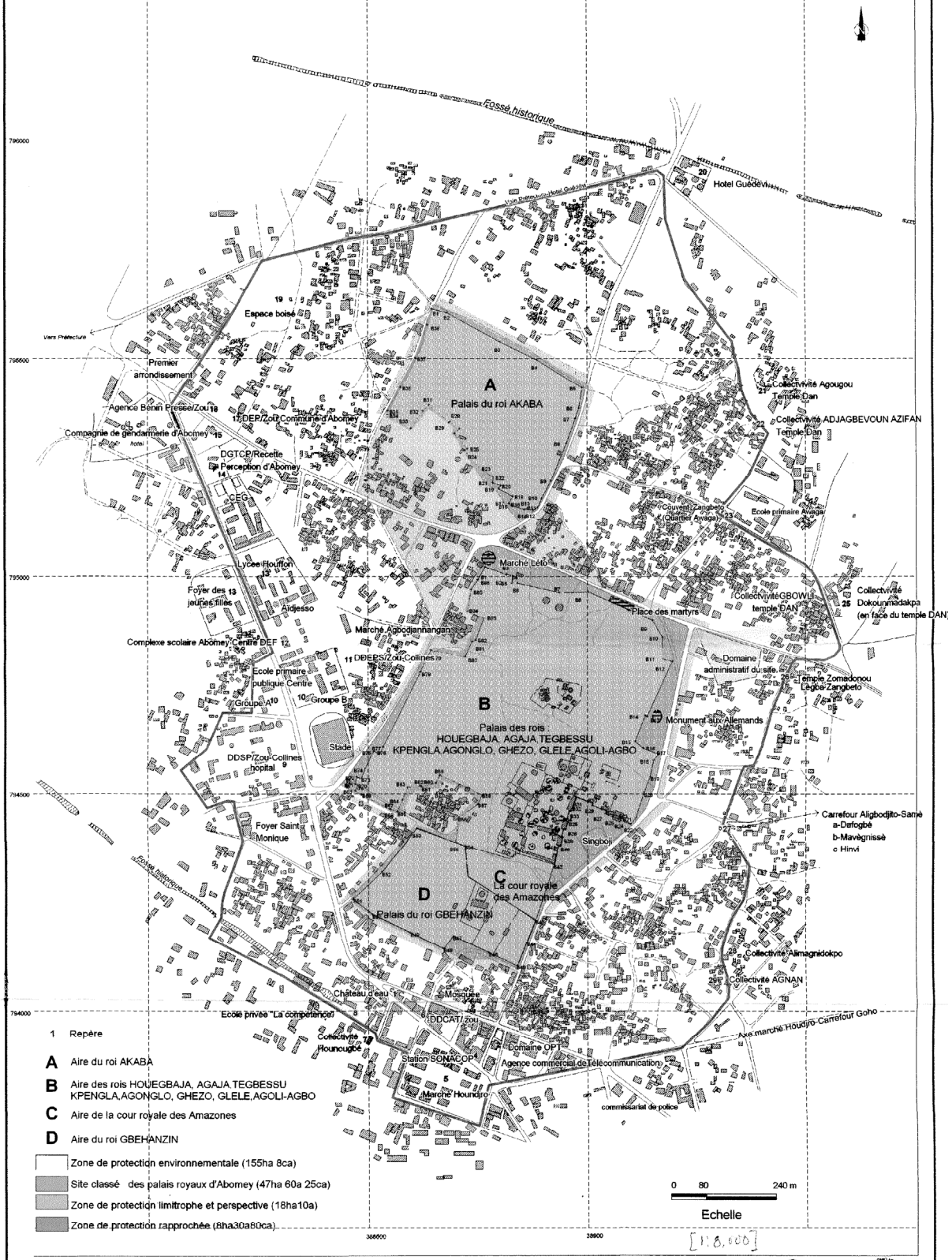
A buffer zone has now been put in place for the property. This extends up to 200 m from the inscribed boundary. It is divided into three discrete zones with differing levels of restrictions. The whole buffer zone is subject to a local by-law 2006-N°4/013/MCA/SG-SAG of 5 July 2006 which controls planning in the zone.

On 31 January 2007, the State Party submitted descriptions of the buffer zone, of its zones and of the restrictive measures in place. A map was also submitted.

From 19 to 24 February 2007, a joint ICOMOS–UNESCO Reactive Monitoring Mission visited the property and had the opportunity to view the buffer zone.

ICOMOS considers that what has been put in place is of adequate size and provides adequate protection for the integrity of the inscribed property.

REPUBLIQUE DU BENIN
 SITE CLASSE DES PALAIS ROYAUX D'ABOMEY
 ZONE TAMPON DE PROTECTION DU SITE CLASSE DES PALAIS ROYAUX D'ABOMEY



LEVÉ ET DRESSÉ : FÉVRIER 2006
 Réalisation: Aimé GONCALVES, Architecte du Patrimoine



Map showing the boundaries of the suggested buffer zone

Island of Saint-Louis (Senegal)

No 956

1. BASIC DATA

State Party: Senegal

Name of property: Island of Saint-Louis

Location: Region of Saint Louis

Inscription: 2000

Brief Description:

Founded as a French colonial settlement in the 17th century, Saint-Louis was urbanised in the mid-19th century. It was the capital of Senegal from 1872 to 1957 and played an important cultural and economic role in the whole of West Africa. The location of the town on an island at the mouth of the Senegal River, its regular town plan, the system of quays, and the characteristic colonial architecture give Saint-Louis its distinctive appearance and identity.

2. ISSUES RAISED

Background

At its 30th Session (30 COM 7B.37) the World Heritage Committee invited the State Party to determine the boundaries of the property and redefine the buffer zone to include the Barbarie Tongue, in accordance with the guidelines of the SEP (*Safeguarding and Enhancement Plan*). This was in response to observations by the joint UNESCO – ICOMOS mission of 24 to 28 April 2006 which noted how the lack of clarity of the delimitation of boundaries of the property and its buffer zone made it difficult to set regulations.

Modification

On 26 January 2007 the State Party submitted details of the delineation of the property and asked for approval for an extension of the buffer zone.

At the time the property was inscribed, the State Party had agreed with ICOMOS recommendations that the whole island should be inscribed and that the buffer zone should consist of ‘two arms of the river’.

The State Party has now confirmed that the whole island, including beaches and quays and the Faidherbe Bridge, is considered to be the inscribed area. This is set out in an Annex to the report which consists of an annotated satellite view of the property.

Further the State Party proposes a revision and extension of the buffer zone. This will now be divided into three zones, and cover both banks of the river, the two channels in

between and some of the sea beyond the western river bank. Zone 1 covers the Barbary Tongue (the thin peninsula separating the river from the sea) and part of the sea; zone 2 covers land on the east bank of the river; Zone 3 covers the river and its banks to the north and south of the island.

These zones are annotated on a satellite map.

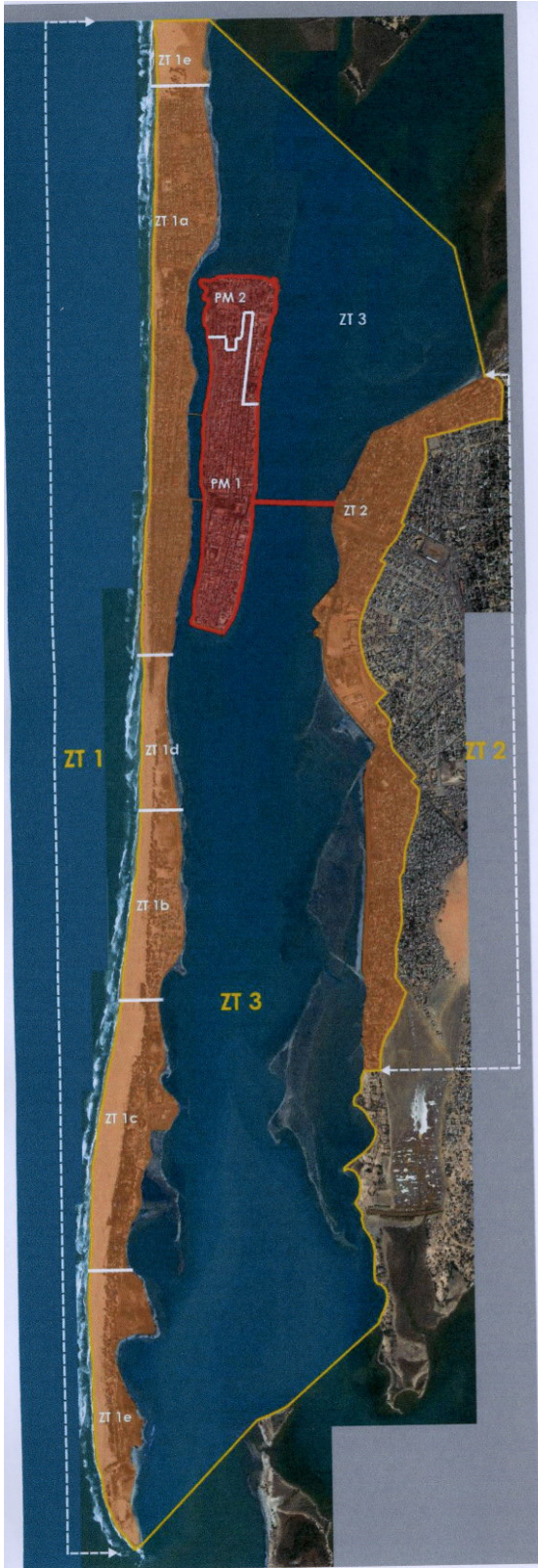
The boundary of the property is in line with the original intentions of the nomination; the proposed boundaries of the buffer zone provide adequate protection for the island property.

The documentation provided by the State Party needs to be augmented to establish precise mapped boundaries and areas. Details also need to be provided as to the protection arrangements in place for the buffer zones.

3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

ICOMOS recommends that the confirmed delineation of the inscribed property of the Island of Saint-Louis (Senegal) be approved.

Further recommends that the State Party be invited to provide detailed maps and areas for the proposed buffer zones as well as details of protective arrangements.



- PM** : Périmètre de la zone centrale du bien inscrit sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial.
- ZT** : Périmètre de la zone de protection (zone tampon étendue)

Etabli en septembre 2006

Ile de Saint-Louis du Sénégal

Bien inscrit sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial
N° C 956

ANNEXE 2

**Plan du périmètre et des zones protégés
(clarification du périmètre de la zone
centrale et proposition d'une extension de la
zone tampon)**

Auteurs :
Elisabeth Blanc (architecte DPLG, France), Alain Coulon (architecte-urbaniste de l'Etat, France),
Suzanne Hirschi (architecte DPLG, France), Chérazade Nafa (architecte DPLG, France), Marie-
Noël Tournoux (chargée de mission Convention France-UNESCO), et Delphine Deleneuille et
Clément Verfallie (étudiants architectes).

Annotated satellite view showing the boundaries of the property

The Potala Palace, Lhasa (China)

No 707ter

1. BASIC DATA

State Party: China

Name of property: Historic Ensemble of the Potala Palace, Lhasa

Location: Province, autonomous region and municipality directly under the central government of Lhasa, Tibet Autonomous Region

Inscription: 1994, 2000, 2001

Brief Description:

The Potala Palace, winter palace of the Dalai Lama since the 7th century, symbolizes Tibetan Buddhism and its central role in the traditional administration of Tibet. The complex, comprising the White and Red Palaces with their ancillary buildings, is built on Red Mountain in the centre of Lhasa Valley, at an altitude of 3,700m. Also founded in the 7th century, the Jokhang Temple Monastery is an exceptional Buddhist religious complex. Norbulingka, the Dalai Lama's former summer palace, constructed in the 18th century, is a masterpiece of Tibetan art. The beauty and originality of the architecture of these three sites, their rich ornamentation and harmonious integration in a striking landscape, add to their historic and religious interest.

2. ISSUES RAISED

Background

At its 29th Session in Durban (29COM 7B.50), in order to strengthen the protection of the Potala Palace, the Committee requested the State Party to evaluate and possibly redefine the buffer zones pertaining to the Potala Palace, Jokhang Temple and Norbulingka and submit detailed maps indicating the World Heritage boundary and protective buffer zones to the World Heritage Centre for the examination by the Committee at its 31st session (2007).

In 1994 the Potala Palace was inscribed; in 2000 and 2001 first the Jokhang Temple and then the Norbulingka were added. At the time of inscription the buffer zone for the Potala Palace was not mentioned; the Jokhang Temple was said to have a buffer zone of 7.5 ha and a further wider protective zone of 130 ha; and Norbulingka was said to have a construction control zone of 200 m from its surrounding wall.

The protective buffer zones were different in the World Heritage extension nomination files from those mentioned in the National Periodic Report (2003). In the light of

these uncertainties, the last mission to Lhasa in 2005 recommended the following:

Jokhang Temple: the buffer zone should encompass the whole circle of Lingkhör Kora and the new boundaries of the buffer zone could be therefore demarcated as East: Lingkhör East Road; South: Jiangsu Road; West: Duosenge North Rd and South Road; North: Lingkhör Beilu, amounting to a total area of 1.3 square kilometers of the historic centre.

Norbulingka: the western and southern sides of the core zone are being rapidly redeveloped. Since the size of these areas is considerable, height control should be enforced to protect the green landscape of the property.

The mission also recommended that the overall zoning delineation for the three World Heritage sites in Lhasa be drawn up on a single map so as to avoid any possible misunderstanding about the boundary of each site of the property.

Furthermore, since the development pressure in the historic centre of Lhasa is increasing, an extension of the buffer zone for the three sites should be seriously considered in order to protect the traditional urban fabric, while taking into consideration the heritage values of the surrounding landscape and environment.

Modification

As part of its State of Conservation Report, dated 13th January 2007, the State Party reported that experts from the Bureau of Cultural Relics of Tibet, the Department of Construction of Tibet, and the government of Lhasa have appraised the buffer zones of Potala Palace, Jokhang Temple, Norbulingka and the proposed landscape projects around the Jokhang Temple and Norbulingka. This has led to the re-definition of the buffer zones and their approval by the government of the autonomous region.

The State Party has provided location maps for three new buffer zones and descriptions of their extent. The maps provided are however not to scale and no coordinates or areas have been submitted. Only for Norbulingka are distances given: the buffer zone extends from the inscribed property 150 m east, 200 m south, 200 m west and 200 m north. In the case of Jokhang Temple the description given does not allow judgement to be made as to whether this was what the mission recommended.

The buffer zones put forward appear to have increased the protected zone around the Potala Palace and, slightly, around Jokhang Temple. In the case of Norbulingka, there seems to have been a slight decrease.

No information has been provided as to the restrictions in force in the buffer zones and therefore whether height restrictions are in place around the Norbulingka.

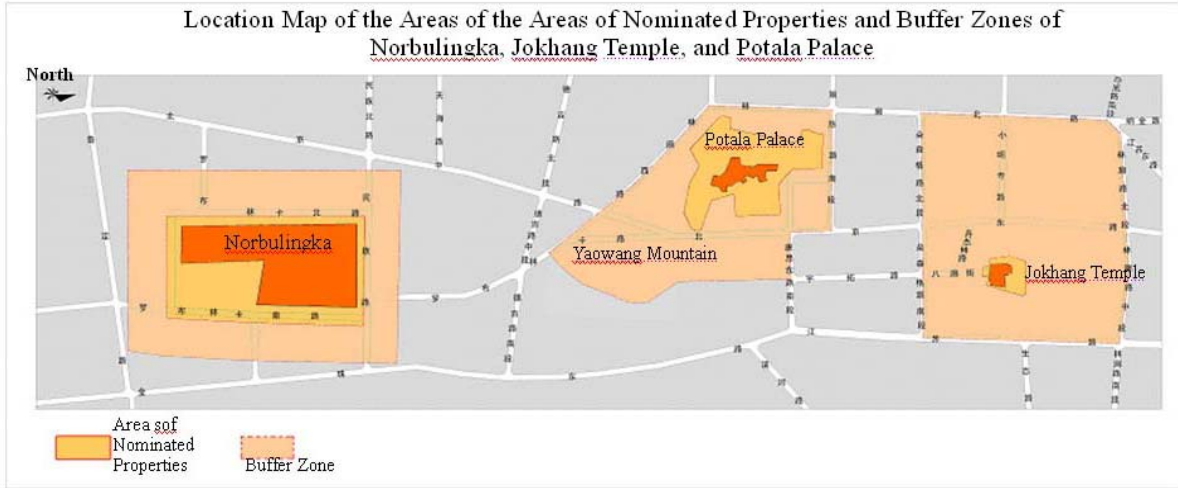
Although the information submitted has clarified some aspects of the buffer zones, ICOMOS does not consider that sufficient information has been provided.

3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

ICOMOS recommends that the State Party be requested to supplement the information provided on the proposed buffer zones for the three properties by providing:

- Areas and coordinates of the three buffer zones
- Details of the protective policies in place
- Rationale for the suggested buffer zones and whether consideration was given to enlarging the area protected

to allow the proposals to be considered at the 32nd session in 2008.



Map showing the boundaries of the suggested buffer zones

Bam and its Cultural Landscape (Iran)

No 1208

1. BASIC DATA

State Party: Islamic Republic of Iran
Name of property: Bam and its Cultural Landscape
Location: Kerman Province, Bam District
Inscription: 2004 ; World Heritage List in Danger (2004)

Brief Description

Bam is situated in a desert environment on the southern edge of the Iranian high plateau. The origins of Bam can be traced back to the Achaemenid period (6th to 4th cent. BC). Its heyday was from the 7th to 11th centuries, being at the crossroads of important trade routes and known for the production of silk and cotton garments. The existence of life in the oasis was based on the underground irrigation canals, the *qanāts*, of which Bam has preserved some of the earliest evidence in Iran. The Citadel of Bam (Arg-e Bam) is the most representative example of a fortified medieval town built in vernacular technique using mud layers (*chineh*).

2. ISSUES RAISED

Background

At its 30th Session, the World Heritage Committee urged the State Party to accelerate efforts to clearly redefine the World Heritage protective zones which fully reflect the Outstanding Universal Value of Bam and its Cultural Landscape (30COM 7A.25)

Modification

The State Party has submitted slightly modified boundaries for the core zone together with an extension to the buffer zone. The revised boundaries have been redefined to reflect not only the criteria for which the property was inscribed, but also new information obtained through research in the past three years.

A minor extension is proposed to the core zone in the northern boundary near Qalaeh Dokhtar. This should provide extra protection for Qalaeh Dokhtar in the light of increasing informal settlement in the vicinity.

The buffer zone has been extended to the south and west. This revision means that the buffer zone now surrounds the core zone and encloses the whole of Bagh Chemak, (the garden of Chemak, an integral part of the cultural landscape) rather than as before cutting through it.

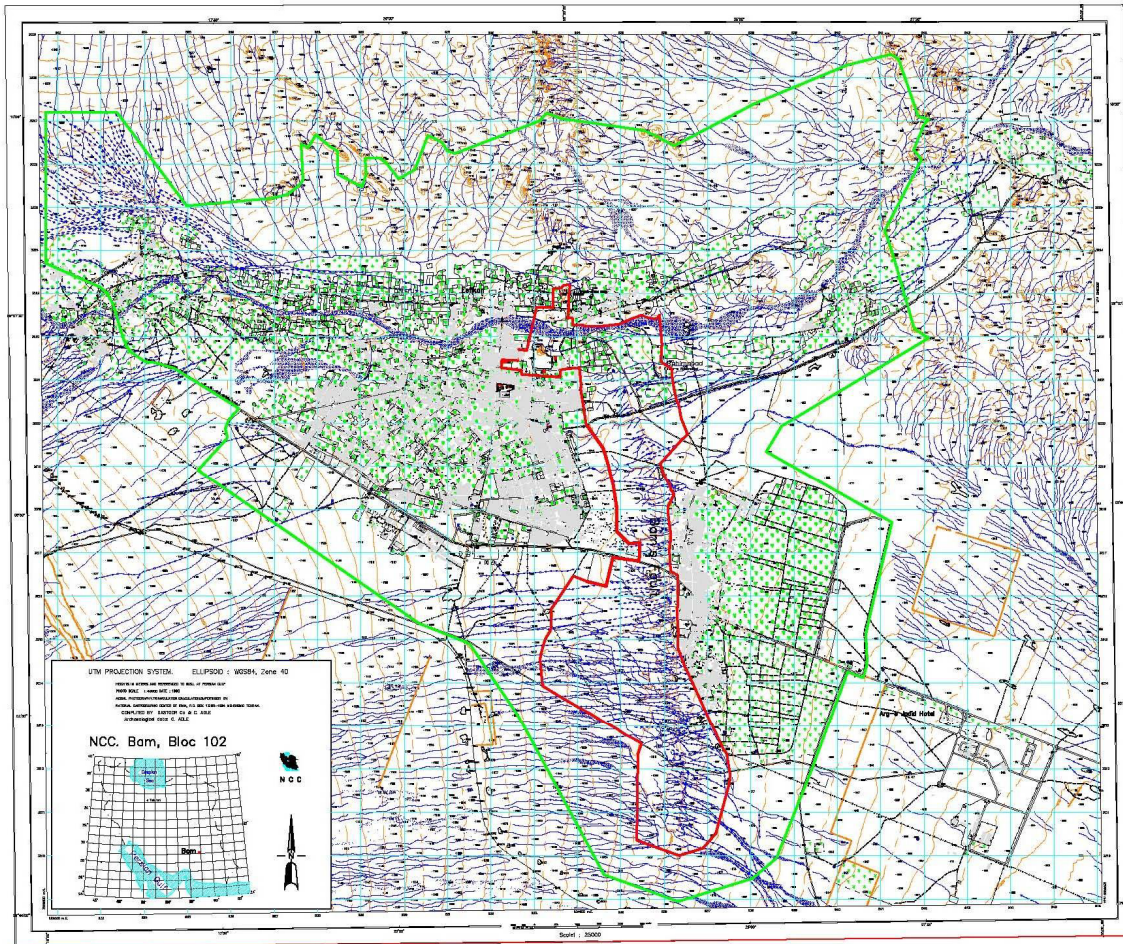
The protection afforded by the enlarged buffer zone is equivalent to that in place for the former smaller buffer zone.

The new delineations have been put in place following the involvement of ICHHTO (Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization) and UNESCO experts in January 2007, as part of the development of the comprehensive management plan.

ICOMOS considers that the modification to the core zone is very minor and a logical and beneficial extension to provide extra protection. It does not alter the justification for inscription. ICOMOS further considers that the enlarged buffer zone provides much greater protection for the integrity of the property.

3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

ICOMOS recommends that the revised boundaries of the core and buffer zones of Bam and its Cultural Landscape, Islamic Republic of Iran, be approved.



Map of Bam and its protection zones
(last edited 14 June 2004, V 2.1)

Legend

- Line of WPA's suggested core zone
 - Limits of site buffer zone 1
 - Limits of site buffer zone 2
 - Suggested sensitive limits of the Landscape
- The legend also includes a comprehensive list of symbols for various geographical features such as roads, rivers, and land use types, each represented by a unique color, line style, or pattern.

Map showing the proposed boundaries of the core and buffer zones

Volubilis (Marocco)

No 836

1. BASIC DATA

State Party: Marocco

Name of property: Archaeological Site of Volubilis

Location: Wilaya de Meknès - Province Meknès
El Menzeh Meulay-Idriss Zerhoun

Inscription: 1997

Brief Description:

The Mauritanian capital, founded in the 3rd century BC, became an important outpost of the Roman Empire and was graced with many fine buildings. Extensive remains of these survive in the archaeological site, located in a fertile agricultural area. Volubilis was later briefly to become the capital of Idris I, founder of the Idrisid dynasty, who is buried at nearby Moulay Idris.

2. ISSUES RAISED

Background

At its 30th session (Decision 30 COM 7B.55), the Committee urged the State Party, 'as requested in Decision 29 COM 7B.100, paragraph 5, to define a buffer zone to ensure the protection of the archaeological site limits, taking into consideration the surrounding landscape in its entirety, in particular the agricultural plain to the west of the property, which is inseparable from its historical origins'.

Modification

As part of its State of Conservation report submitted in January 2007, the State Party reports that a buffer zone of 10 metres exists around the inscribed site. The Report also describes a much larger zone of protection around the inscribed site which encloses the town of Moulay Idriss as well as the ruins of Volubilis, the valley between, and the valley to the west of Volubilis.

The State Party proposes that the existing zone of protection should become the buffer zone. Although the proposed zone is a protection zone, and it is understood that this zone is well policed, it is not clear from the documentation available what specific protection is applied to this zone, particularly as it encloses the developing town of Moulay Idriss.

Furthermore the supplied map (scale 1:1,000) does not provide details of the precise area covered.

ICOMOS considers that further information is needed before a decision can be made on this proposed buffer zone.

3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

ICOMOS recommends that a decision on the proposed buffer zone for the Archaeological Site of Volubilis (Marocco) is referred back to the State Party in order to allow it to provide more details on the area of the zone and the protective policies in place.

Butrint (Albania)

No 570 bis

1. BASIC DATA

State Party: Albania

Name of property: Butrint

Location: District of Sarandë, County of Vlorë

Inscription: 1992, 1999

Brief Description:

Inhabited since prehistoric times, Butrint has been the site of a Greek colony, a Roman city and a bishopric. Following a period of prosperity under Byzantine administration, then a brief occupation by the Venetians, the city was abandoned in the late Middle Ages after marshes formed in the area. The present archaeological site is a repository of ruins representing each period in the city's development.

2. ISSUES RAISED

Background

At its 30th session (30COM 7B.75) the World Heritage Committee noted with satisfaction that the State Party had expanded the area of Butrint National Park and thereupon the buffer zone of the World Heritage property and requested the State Party to submit the relevant documents including maps of the revised buffer zone of the World Heritage property in accordance with chapter III.I of the *Operational Guidelines*.

Modification

The State Party has submitted details of the boundary and zoning of the National Park which was established in 2000 and enlarged in 2005. The Park is said to act as a buffer zone. The Park originally extended to 2900 ha and its extension to 8591 ha was approved by Ministers in 2005; no information has been provided as to whether the extension has yet been formally gazetted.

The inscribed property of 16 ha lies within the Park. The Park is divided into four zones. A map has been provided of these four zones:

- Core zone A: 3980 ha - with strongest protection - this includes the World Heritage property.
- Core zone B: 592 ha - Recreation Zone
- Core zone C: 3081 ha - Traditional Use Zone

- Core zone D: 938 ha - Sustainable use zone - with least protection and which act as buffer zones for the neighbouring urban areas

The extension to the Park was mostly in zones B, C and D.

The Park encompasses several villages within zones C and D and some of these, such as Ksamil, are growing rapidly without apparent satisfactory controls. A Management Plan for the National Park has been prepared but has yet to be formally approved and supported by stakeholders. Currently resources to manage and patrol such a large area are few: only four rangers patrol the Park and they have no transport. Involvement of the local communities who live within the Park and managing development in its extensive area are clearly challenges.

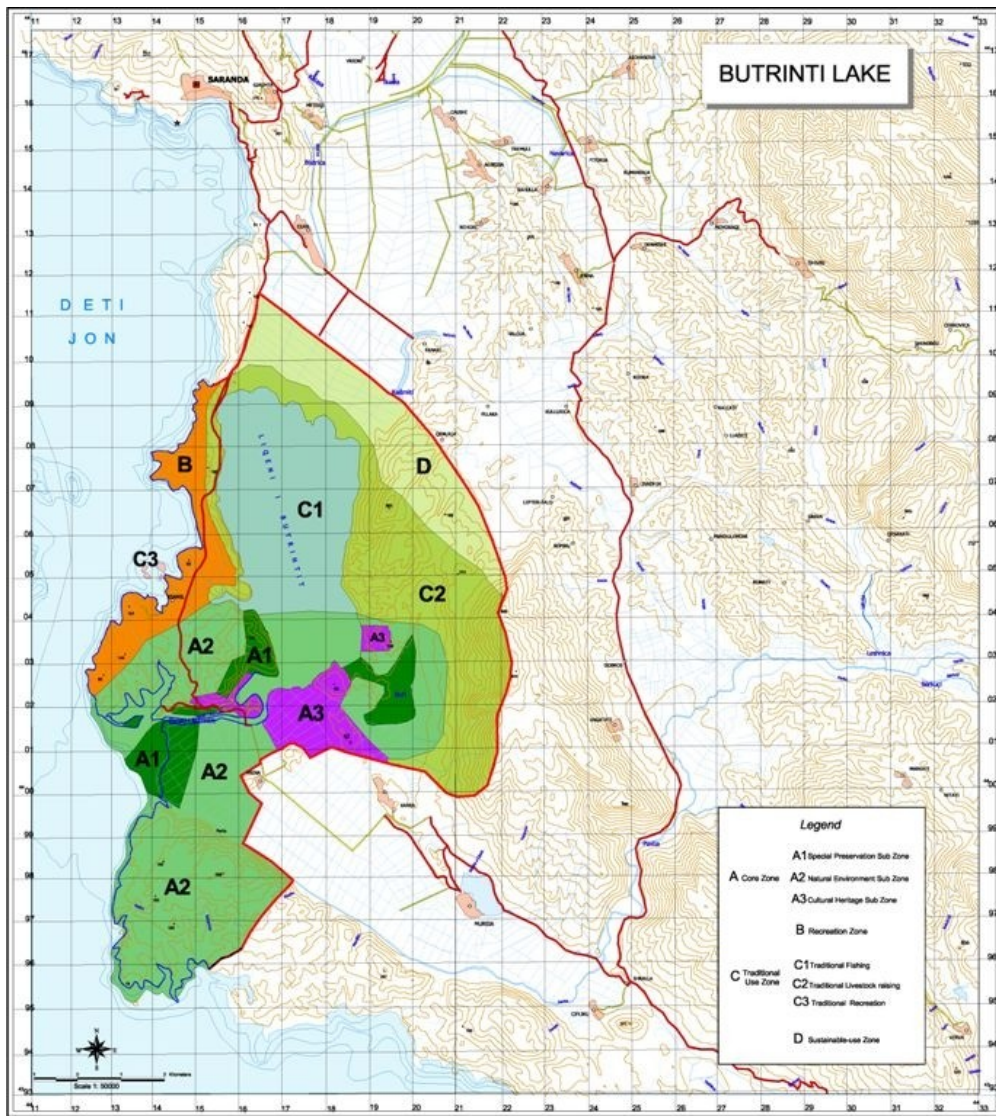
ICOMOS considers that the extension to the National Park and its formal acceptance as a buffer zone for the inscribed property is to be welcomed as a means of protecting not only the natural heritage of the wetlands surrounding the archaeological site, but also its wider setting. However the effectiveness of the new buffer zone and the constraints imposed on its various zones should be monitored. In particular, the boundaries of the villages should be made clear to the citizens and respected.

Confirmation is need of the formal gazetment of the extension to the National Park.

3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

ICOMOS recommends that the Butrint National Park as a buffer zone for Butrint (Albania) be approved.

ICOMOS recommends also that the State Party be requested to provide documentation on the formal gazetment of the enlarged National Park.



Map showing the boundaries of the revised buffer zone

Piazza del Duomo, Pisa (Italy)

No 395

1. BASIC DATA

State Party: Italy

Name of property: Piazza del Duomo, Pisa

Location: City and Province of Pisa, Tuscany

Inscription: 1987

Brief Description:

Standing in a large green expanse, Piazza del Duomo houses a group of monuments known the world over. These four masterpieces of medieval architecture – the cathedral, the baptistery, the campanile (the 'Leaning Tower') and the cemetery – had a great influence on monumental art in Italy from the 11th to the 14th century.

2. ISSUES RAISED

Background

The State Party considers that the original nomination and subsequent inscription did not fully recognise the value of the Piazza del Duomo as a spatial composition, formed by precise artistic and ideological concepts. Instead it states that it focused exclusively on four medieval monuments, Cathedral, Baptistery, Campanile (the 'Leaning Tower of Pisa') and Campo Santo.

Modifications

- Boundaries

In the light of recent research and study on visual axes, the State Party now proposes that the inscribed area is enlarged by 1.3 ha to include all three visual axes:

- i) The approach from the south along the Via Santa Maria to the Duomo;
- ii) The subsequent eastern approach through a second gate opened in the 15th century by the Florentines, which radically changed the perception of the square shifting the first views from the Cathedral to the new Archbishop's Palace, symbol of new political power;
- iii) The 19th century approach, also from the east, along a new street the Via Torelli focused on the campanile.

To encompass these three axes, the proposed extensions include a portion of Via Santa Maria, traced in the 11th century to frame the view of the new Cathedral's apse and

transept, the square in front of the Archbishop's Palace, as well as the city walls facing the square and the buildings that delineate the square, and part of the Via Torelli (now Via Maffi).

All of the main buildings in the proposed extension as well as the walls and the buildings facing the square are already protected for their artistic and historical interest, being designated in 1994, and 2006 respectively.

ICOMOS commends the Party for proposing these sensitive additions to the boundaries of the inscribed property which enhance the justification for inscription of the property.

- Buffer zone

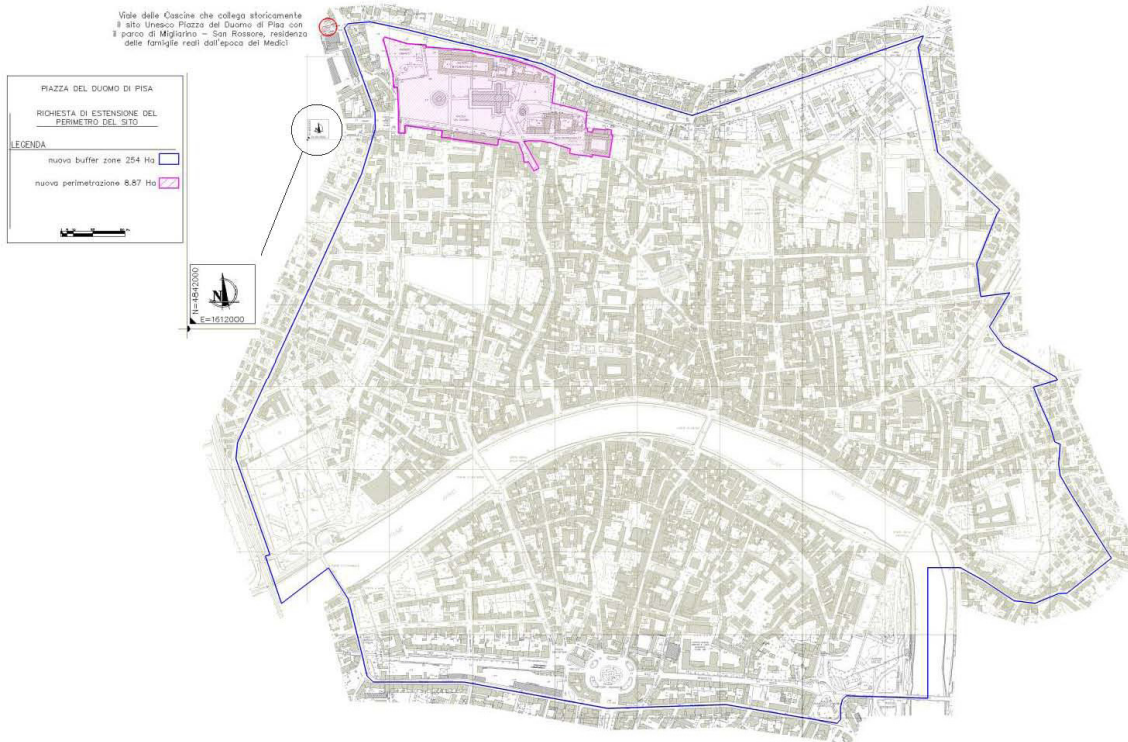
As at the time of inscription, no buffer zone was proposed, the State Party proposes to adopt the limits of the protected historic city centre as the buffer zone. This area is mainly to the south and east of the inscribed property and encompasses 245.1 ha.

ICOMOS considers that this extra protection is welcome but suggests that the State Party might wish to consider extending protection in the form of a buffer zone to the north and west of the property.

3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

ICOMOS recommends that the minor modification to the boundaries of the Piazza del Duomo di Pisa (Italy), and the proposed buffer zone be approved.

ICOMOS also recommends that the State Party consider putting in place further protection to the north and west of the inscribed property.



Map showing the proposed minor modification to the boundaries of the core zone and the suggested boundaries of the buffer zone

Oviedo (Spain)

No 312 bis

1. BASIC DATA

<i>State Party:</i>	Spain
<i>Name of property:</i>	Monuments of Oviedo and the Kingdom of Asturias
<i>Location:</i>	Province and Autonomous Community of Asturias
<i>Inscription:</i>	1985, 1998

Brief Description:

In the 9th century the flame of Christianity was kept alive in the Iberian peninsula in the tiny Kingdom of the Asturias. Here an innovative pre-Romanesque architectural style was created that was to play a significant role in the development of the religious architecture of the peninsula. Its highest achievements can be seen in the churches of Santa María del Naranco, San Miguel de Lillo, Santa Cristina de Lena, the Cámara Santa and San Julián de los Prados, in and around the ancient capital city of Oviedo. Associated with them is the remarkable contemporary hydraulic engineering structure known as La Foncalada.

2. ISSUES RAISED

Background

The inscribed property consists of a group of churches, in and around Oviedo, dating from the 9th century, and a contemporary hydraulic structure associated with them. The first nomination in 1985 was of three churches, two close to Oviedo, San Miguel de Lillo and Santa María del Naranco, and one 37 km to the south, Santa Chritina de Lena. In 1998 the State Party nominated an extension which covered the whole area within the 13th century enceinte of Oviedo together with two monuments outside (but within the present-day urban area of Oviedo) – the Basilica of San Julián de los Prados and La Foncalada.

ICOMOS considered that the addition of the entire historic centre, with its buildings largely dating from the 15th century and later, to the existing group of pre-Romanesque churches would have changed completely the thrust of the nomination. Furthermore it did not consider that the whole historic centre demonstrated outstanding universal value. Of the structures in the area proposed, it considered that only the Cámara Santa and the Basilica of San Julián would be appropriate as extensions to the existing group of churches, along with La Foncalada, which is a relatively minor monument, but of considerable archaeological interest.

The three monuments, two churches and the hydraulic structure were added to the inscribed property in 1998.

At the time of inscription, no buffer zones were delineated.

Modification

In a letter to the World Heritage Centre of 29 January 2007, the State Party says that while other pre-Romanesque monuments of Oviedo have been inscribed, the Church of San Salvador de Valdediós has been forgotten as a result of an administrative error. Although not formally requesting the inclusion of this church, it is suggested that it should be included in the inscribed site. A paper entitled Buffer Zone Demarcation for the church was submitted with the letter.

The church sits in a valley approximately 30 km to the east of Oviedo and the Pilgrimage route of Santiago de Compostela passes the eastern edge of the site.

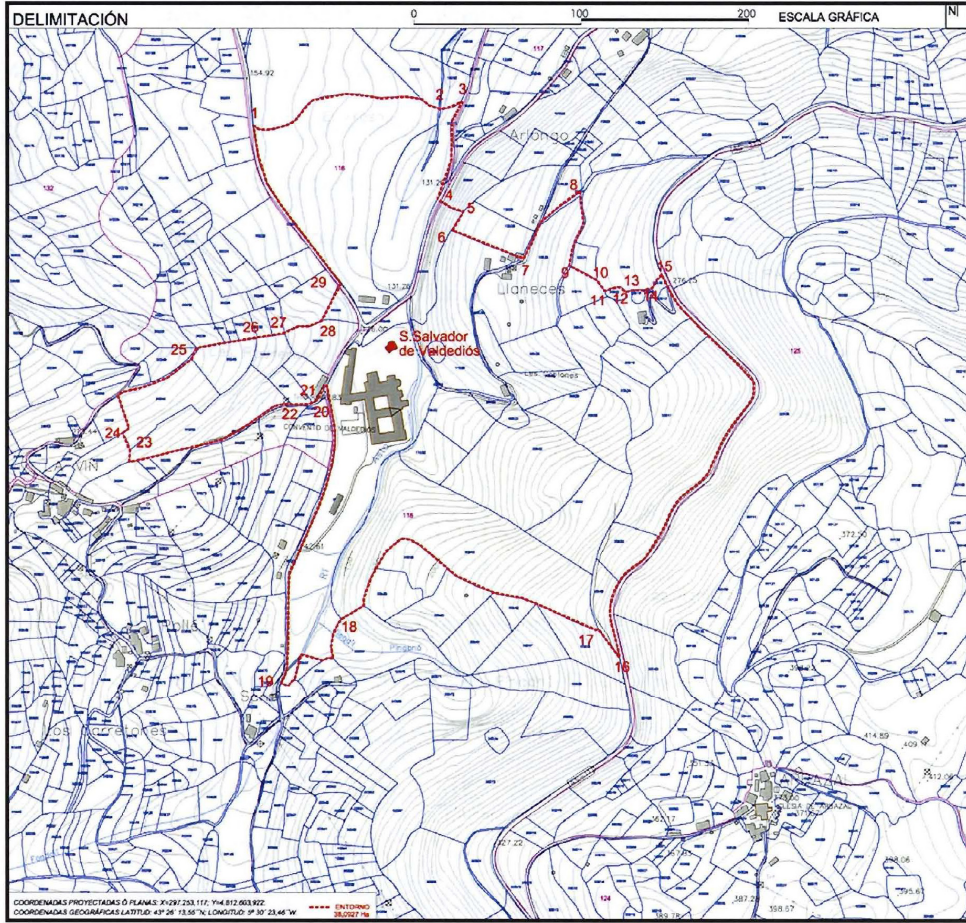
At the time of the extension of the site in 1998, the only further churches that were considered were those in Oviedo that had been put forward as part of the wider Oviedo extension. Nevertheless at the time of the ICOMOS Mission it was understood that several other pre-Romanesque churches existed in the hinterland of Oviedo, of which one was San Salvador de Valdediós. These were mentioned in the bibliography submitted with the nomination. ICOMOS considered that the first three churches inscribed were a testimony to the distinctive role of the small Christian kingdom of the Asturias at the time of the splendours of the caliphate of Cordoba, and that maybe others could be added. It recommended the inclusion of two in the nominated extension of Oviedo.

Before further churches are considered in the hinterland of Oviedo, ICOMOS considers that a detailed comparative analysis needs to be undertaken of the existing pre-Romanesque churches – seven were highlighted in 1998 – and reasons provided as to why San Salvador de Valdediós should be inscribed in preference to others.

Until a formal request has been made to consider the possible inscription of this church, it is inappropriate to consider the delineation of a buffer zone.

3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

ICOMOS recommends that if the State Party wishes the San Salvador de Valdediós Church to be considered for inscription, it should be encouraged to undertake a comparative evaluation of the pre-Romanesque churches in the hinterland of Oviedo and submit this with a formal request for the Committee to consider a further extension of the serial property of the Monuments of Oviedo and the Kingdom of the Asturias (Spain).



Map showing the boundaries of the suggested extension of the core zone

Ávila (Spain)

No 348 rev

1. BASIC DATA

<i>State Party:</i>	Spain
<i>Name of property:</i>	Old Town of Ávila with its Extra Muros Churches
<i>Location:</i>	Province of Ávila, Autonomous Community of Castile-Leon
<i>Inscription:</i>	1985

Brief Description:

Founded in the 11th century to protect the Spanish territories from the Moors, this 'City of Saints and Stones', the birthplace of St Teresa and the burial place of the Grand Inquisitor Torquemada, has kept its medieval austerity. This purity of form can still be seen in the Gothic cathedral and the fortifications which, with their 82 semicircular towers and nine gates, are the most complete in Spain

2. ISSUES RAISED

Background

At its 30th Session (Decision 30 COM 7B. 79) the World Heritage Committee noted that the State Party had reported that it had designated a buffer zone, and requested the State Party to submit detailed maps presenting the boundaries of the property and its buffer zones, and ICOMOS to review the boundaries of the property once the boundary modifications have been presented. The Committee further requested the State Party to provide the World Heritage Centre with a progress report on the legal status and the implementation of the protection zones by 1 February 2006 for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 30th session (2006).

Modification

The State Party has submitted an approval for a minor modification which includes the extension of the inscribed property and the establishment of a buffer zone. These two elements are considered separately.

- Extension of the core zone

The inscribed property includes the walled town of Ávila and four extra muros Romanesque churches, San Segundo, San Andrés, San Vicente and San Pedro. These were included on the recommendations of ICOMOS.

The State Party is now suggesting that the inscribed area is somewhat arbitrary in relation to the extra muros churches included within the boundary and that there are other

churches 'of the same period with the same urban connotations and artistic value which, for no reason having to do with their value or significance, were not included in the candidacy (and were therefore left out of the declaration as well).' The State Party suggests that a further three Romanesque churches (the churches of San Nicolás, Santa María de la Cabeza and San Martín), and three convents from the 15th and 16th centuries (the convents of La Encarnación and San José and the Real Monasterio de Santo Tomás), should be added to the inscribed area. Brief details are given of all six monuments but no photographs have been provided, as well as a map of the enlarged core zone.

ICOMOS considers that the three churches and three convents, although not of outstanding universal value in their own right, should be incorporated into the inscribed area as being part of the overall distinctive urban fabric, pattern and ensemble for which the site was originally inscribed.

- Buffer Zone

At the time of inscription a buffer zone was not established. The vulnerability of one of the extra mural churches was demonstrated by developments in the Plaza of Santa Teresa between the town walls and the extra mural church of San Pedro. This was discussed by the Committee at its 27th, 28th, 29th and 30th sessions. As a result of concerns for the setting of the extra mural churches, at its 29th session, the Committee requested an updated report on the designation of buffer zones, in the context of the Periodic Reporting exercise.

The State Party is now proposing a buffer zone that encompasses the old town, the four extra mural churches which were part of the original inscription and the six further churches now being suggested as part of the extension to the core zone. A map of this proposed buffer zone has been provided.

ICOMOS considers that the proposed buffer zone and the protective legislation applying to it, will enhance the protection of the inscribed property and the proposed additions to the property. Nevertheless the irregular boundary of the buffer zone and the fact that part of the inscribed property still remains with little protection of its immediate setting makes it difficult to understand the rationale for the boundary of the proposed buffer zone. Given that the town is on a high mound and that there are views out from it, there is a need to protect the most important views to and from the town. There is no mention of this approach in the documentation submitted with the buffer zone.

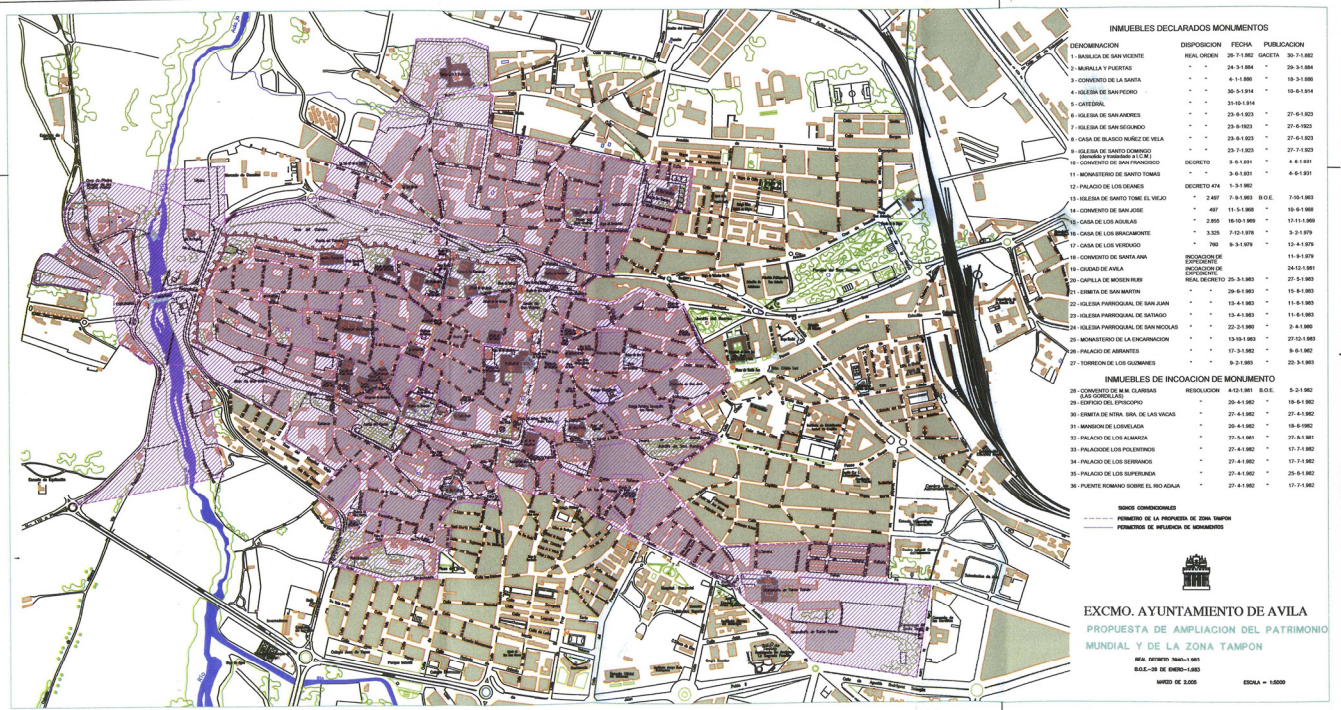
ICOMOS considers that the State Party should explain the rationale behind the proposed boundary of the buffer zone and how key views to and from the property might be protected.

3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

ICOMOS recommends in principle the approval of the extension of the boundary of the Old Town of Ávila with its extra muros churches (Spain), but considers that final

approval for this extension should be give at the same time as an adequate buffer zone is approved.

ICOMOS considers that further justification for the protection of the setting of the town and its extra muros churches and views to and from it should be provided.



Map showing the minor modification to the boundaries of the core zone and the proposed buffer zone

Rock Drawings in Valcamonica (Italy)

No 94

1. BASIC DATA

State Party: Italy

Name of property: Rock Drawings of Valcamonica

Location: Province of Brescia, Lombardy

Inscription: 1979

Brief Description:

Valcamonica, situated in the Lombardy plain, has one of the world's greatest collections of prehistoric petroglyphs – more than 140,000 symbols and figures carved in the rock over a period of 8,000 years and depicting themes connected with agriculture, navigation, war and magic.

2. ISSUES RAISED

Background

At the time of inscription, no Statement of Significance was proposed.

A draft Statement of Significance was proposed in the 2005 Periodic Report for Italy.

The property was inscribed on the basis of criteria iii and vi for which justifications were given in the ICOMOS evaluation.

Modification

- Statement of Significance

The State Party is now proposing a Statement of Significance for the property which enlarges on that suggested in 2005 Periodic Report.

A Statement of Significance should be based on the assessment in the ICOMOS evaluation, and the justification for the criteria agreed by the Committee at the time of inscription or extension.

The State Party proposes the following:

Valle Camonica's rock art, which consists of over 140,000 figurations engraved on about 2,400 rocks distributed on both sides of the entire valley, constitutes a unique example of this kind of manifestation of human thought.

The number, duration and variety of the incisions, and their relationship with important archaeological sites, are factors which determine the exceptional value of this assemblage. Furthermore, the continuation of the practice of engraving for a period of more than 8,000 years, from the

Epipaleolithic until the Roman and Mediaeval periods, and in some cases until modern times, serves to emphasize the local character of this extraordinary expression of human creativity and spirituality through the millennia.

ICOMOS suggests minor modifications to this statement – see below.

3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

ICOMOS recommends that the following Statement of Outstanding Universal Value for the Rock Drawings of Valcamonica be approved:

Valle Camonica's rock art, which consists of over 140,000 engravings on about 2,400 rocks distributed on both sides of an entire valley, constitutes an exceptional example of this kind of manifestation of human thought.

The number, duration and variety of the engravings, representing navigation, dance, war, ploughing etc, and their relationship with contemporary archaeological sites, contribute to the exceptional value of this assemblage. Furthermore, the apparent continuation of the practice of engraving for a period of more than 8,000 years, from the Epipaleolithic until the Roman and Mediaeval periods, and in some cases until modern times, links this extraordinary expression of human creativity to present day communities.

Criterion iii: The rock drawings of Valcamonica stretch back over the 8 thousand years which precede our present era. It is unnecessary to accent the conspicuously invaluable nature of human renderings which are of so great an antiquity.

Criterion vi: The rock drawings of Valcamonica constitute an extraordinary figurative documentation of prehistoric customs and mentality. The systematic interpretation, typological classification, and the chronological study of these configurations in stone have brought about a considerable contribution to the fields of prehistory, sociology and ethnology.

Historic Centre of Rome (Holy See, Italy)

No 91 bis

1. BASIC DATA

State Party: Holy See, Italy

Name of property: Historic Centre of Rome, the Properties of the Holy See in that City Enjoying Extraterritorial Rights and San Paolo Fuori le Mura

Location: Province of Roma, Lazio region (IT) / Vatican City State (VA)

Inscription: 1980, 1990

Brief Description:

Founded, according to legend, by Romulus and Remus in 753 B.C., Rome was first the centre of the Roman Republic, then of the Roman Empire, and it became the capital of the Christian world in the 4th century. The World Heritage site, extended in 1990 to the walls of Urban VIII, includes some of the major monuments of antiquity such as the Forums, the Mausoleum of Augustus, the Mausoleum of Hadrian, the Pantheon, Trajan's Column and the Column of Marcus Aurelius, as well as the religious and public buildings of papal Rome

2. ISSUES RAISED

Background

As a follow-up to the Periodic Reporting process for Europe, the State Party has submitted a Statement of Significance for the property as one was not agreed at the time of inscription, or extension, and has also submitted the boundaries of a Buffer Zone which previously did not exist.

Modification

- Statement of Significance

The State Party proposes the following:

Since the date of its foundation, which is traditionally set in the year 753 BC, Rome's history has always been connected with the history of all of humanity. First as a capital of an empire that ruled the Mediterranean world for centuries, and later as a capital of the Christian world, the city of Rome has always played, and still plays, an important role in both religion and culture.

The historic centre of Rome is unique in its extension and in the multi millenary stratification forming a heritage that is exceptional both as a whole and in its single monuments.

It is difficult, in fact, to find another city that has such a large concentration of aesthetic creations of all ages, whose influence on the evolution of art and architecture has been so important.

Criterion i: The 'Historic centre of Rome, St Paul's Outside the Walls, and extraterritorial properties of the Holy See' comprise a series of structures of incomparable artistic significance, produced over almost three millennia of history: from the monuments of antiquity (such as the Colosseum, the Pantheon, and the Forums), to the fortifications developed down through the centuries (such as the city walls and Castel Sant'Angelo) to the urban projects of the Renaissance and Baroque ages up to modern times (such as the Sistine plan areas, Piazza Navona, and Piazza di Spagna), to the civil and religious buildings with the richness of their sculptural and pictorial decorations (such as Palazzo della Cancelleria, Palazzo Farnese, St Mary Major Basilica, and St Paul's Outside the Walls Basilica). Many of the greatest artists of all times have produced their greatest masterpieces in Rome.

Criterion ii: The works present in Rome have had a decisive influence down the centuries on developments of architecture, technology, urban planning and monumental and decorative arts almost everywhere in the world. The creations of the Romans in the fields of architecture, painting, and sculpture not only influenced all the known territories in the ancient age, but were the model for the subsequent phases of the Renaissance, Baroque, and Neoclassical arts which spread through the entire the Western World. The standard-setting role played by Rome's classical buildings, churches, and palazzo, as well as by the sculptural and pictorial creations that have enriched the city's architecture and urban spaces, is well known. In particular, Baroque art, which could spread throughout the European continent and to large territories of other continents, was born in Rome.

Criterion iii: The value of the archaeological sites in Rome, the centre of the Classical civilisation that takes its name from the city itself, is universally recognised. It has maintained an extraordinary quantity of monumental remains from the Classical age, in an excellent state of preservation, bearing witness to the various phases of development that cover a millennium of history.

Criterion iv: Rome is a unique example of the succession of various different moments of Western civilisation. The entire fabric of the ancient city, and often of the single buildings as well, bears witness to the sequence of 28 centuries of historic ages and the overlapping of succeeding architectural languages. This complex and clear diversity of styles merges together in the urban landscape, forming a uniform and strongly characteristic image.

Criterion vi: For over two thousand years, Rome has been a secular and religious "dual capital". As the center of the power of an empire that extended throughout all of the territories of the world as it was known then, Rome's name is associated with a civilisation that spread all over the globe, shared by a large number of different populations. Rome is also directly and tangibly associated with the history of the Christian religion since its origins. The memory of the events of the first centuries after Christ, lived as the root of Roman identity, and the continuing devotion to the martyrs and saints of that period, continue

to give significance in the contemporary world to a large number of tangible structures such as catacombs, *domus ecclesiae*, churches and palazzo, scattered throughout the urban fabric.

A Statement of Significance should be based on the assessment in the ICOMOS evaluation, and the justification for the criteria agreed by the Committee at the time of inscription or extension. The Justification for the criteria should normally remain as agreed by the Committee.

In 1980, at the time of inscription, the justification for inscription was not spelt out. In 1990 the justification for the criteria did not encompass the extent of the property inscribed, as it focused on the monuments added to the original inscription, as follows:

Criterion i: The extra territorial properties enumerated above comprise a series of unique artistic achievements to wit: at Santa Maria Maggiore, there are the mosaic décor of the atrium, the nave, the triumphal arch and the choir, and a suite of masterpieces from the 5th, 12th and 13th centuries; at St John Lateran and at St Paul's Outside the Wall, there are the marble cloisters by the Vassellatti, perfect expressions of the Gregorian reform's legacy of the ideal of community life, constructions richly ornamented in the image of a heavenly Jerusalem

Criterion ii: The extra-territorial properties proposed for inclusion in the World Heritage list exerted considerable influence in the development of architecture and monumental arts throughout the centuries in a large part of the Christian world. The normative role of the great basilicas in the transmission of a structure which had been inherited from the Roman world is known, but one must also recognise the probable role played by the octagonal baptistry in St John Lateran, built under Constantine and re-built in the 5th century in the adoption of this type of edifice in the Occident. Lastly the derivational influence in Europe and elsewhere of great masterpieces of Baroque religious art – the Sistine and Pauline Chapels of Santa Maria Maggiore, the interior and façade of St John Lateran – is highly complex due to the missionary policy followed by the church in the new worlds.

Criterion iv: Santa Maria Maggiore and St John Lateran despite successive embellishments and restorations, and St Paul's Outside the wall, despite its 19th century rehabilitation, constitute remarkable examples of great early Christian basilicas built in Rome during the 4th and 5th centuries.

Criterion vi: St Paul's Outside the Wall, a basilica begun in 386 on the site of the *cella memoriae* of St Paul is, on the same basis of the Vatican's St Peter's, directly and tangibly associated with the origins of the Christian religion.

ICOMOS therefore considers that it is appropriate and necessary to provide justification for the agreed criteria for the whole property.

ICOMOS recommends that slight modifications to the proposed Statement of Significance and to the justification for criterion i, ii, iii and vi, as well as re-drafting of criterion iv be made, as set out below in the Recommendations.

- Buffer Zone

The State Party is proposing a buffer zone which will surround the inscribed property and extends to 1346 ha.

This area will be protected by Rome's new master plan (Piano Regolatore Generale) and it includes many important historic parks and monuments from various periods such as Villa Borghese, Villa Doria Pamphilj, Villa Giulia, portions of the Roman consular roads, remains of ancient aqueducts, the underground basilica at Porta Maggiore, the palazzina of Pius IV, the church of Sant'Andrea designed by Vignola, as well as examples of industrial archaeology such as the papal arsenal at Porta Portese and the former Peroni Brewery, now a museum of contemporary art.

3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

- Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

ICOMOS recommends that the following Statement of Outstanding Universal Value for the Historic Centre of Rome, the Properties of the Holy See in that City Enjoying Extraterritorial Rights and San Paolo Fuori le Mura (Holy See, Italy) be approved:

Since the date of its foundation, which is traditionally set in the year 753BC, Rome's history has always been connected with the history of a wide part of humanity. First as a capital of an empire that ruled the Mediterranean world for centuries, and later as a capital of the Christian world, and it still retains today essential religious and cultural importance.

The historic centre of Rome is outstanding as a whole, as a concentration of aesthetic creations over almost three millennia, in its individual monuments and in its exceptional influence on the evolution of art and architecture over a large part of the world. Classical Roman architecture not only influenced known territories in ancient times, but was the model for the later Renaissance, Baroque and Neoclassical architecture and town planning, and its associated art and sculpture, which spread through the Western World. Rome is directly and tangibly associated with the history of the Christian religion almost since its origins and this is widely reflected in its urban fabric.

Criterion i: The 'Historic centre of Rome, St Paul's Outside the Walls, and extraterritorial properties of the Holy See' comprise a series of structures of incomparable artistic significance, produced over almost three millennia of history: from the monuments of antiquity (such as the Colosseum, the Pantheon, and the Forums), to the civil, religious and urban projects of the Renaissance and Baroque ages (such as the Sistine plan areas, Piazza Navona, Piazza di Spagna, Palazzo della Cancelleria, Palazzo Farnese, St Mary Major Basilica, and St Paul's Outside the Walls Basilica). Many of the greatest artists of the western world have produced their greatest masterpieces to adorn buildings in Rome.

Criterion ii: The buildings of Rome have had a decisive influence down the centuries on developments in architecture, urban planning and monumental and

decorative arts over a large part of the world. Classical Roman architecture not only influenced known territories in ancient times, but was the model for later Renaissance, Baroque and Neoclassical architecture and town planning, and its associated art and sculpture, which spread through the Western World.

Criterion iii: The archaeological sites in Rome, the centre of the Classical civilisation that takes its name from the city itself, encompass an extraordinary quantity of monumental remains from the Classical age, in an excellent state of preservation, which bear witness to the one of the largest empires the world has known over the millennium it flourished.

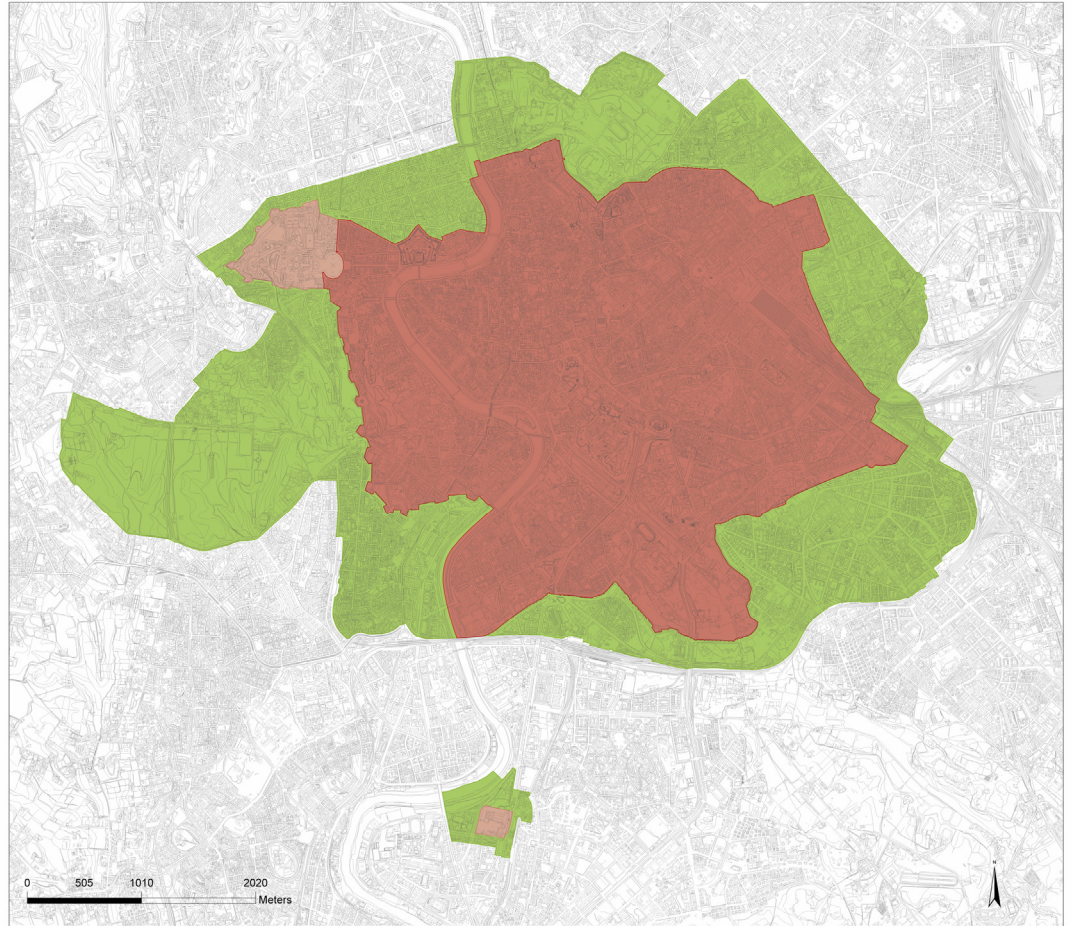
Criterion iv: The entire fabric of the city, and also individual buildings as well, reflect decisive periods in human history connected to the rise, dominance and decline of the Roman Empire and the birth of the Renaissance and Baroque cultural movements, all of which had a profound influence on the Western World.

Criterion vi: Rome is directly and tangibly associated with the history of the Christian religion almost since its origins. The memory of the events of the first centuries after Christ, became the root of Roman identity, and the continuing devotion to martyrs and saints of that period, are reflected in the large number of structures such as catacombs, *domus ecclesiae*, churches and palazzo, scattered through the urban fabric.

- Buffer Zone

ICOMOS recommends that the buffer zone for the Historic Centre of Rome, the Properties of the Holy See in that City Enjoying Extraterritorial Rights and San Paolo Fuori le Mura (Holy See, Italy) be approved.

Legend
■ W.H.C. Site Italian Property (ha 1441,890)
■ W.H.C. Site Holy See Property (ha 58,644)
■ Buffer Zone (ha 1346,010)
Total ha 2846,544
1:10000
1998



Map showing the boundaries of the proposed buffer zone

Mont Saint-Michel and its Bay (France)

No 80

1. BASIC DATA

State Party: France

Name of property: Mont-Saint-Michel and its Bay

Location: Departements of La Manche and of Ille-et-Vilaine, Regions of Basse-Normandie and Bretagne

Inscription: 1979

Brief Description:

Perched on a rocky islet in the midst of vast sandbanks exposed to powerful tides between Normandy and Brittany stand the 'Wonder of the West', a Gothic-style Benedictine abbey dedicated to the archangel St Michael, and the village that grew up in the shadow of its great walls. Built between the 11th and 16th centuries, the abbey is a technical and artistic *tour de force*, having had to adapt to the problems posed by this unique natural site.

2. ISSUES RAISED

Background

As part of the Periodic Reporting process for Europe, the State Party identified the need to put in place appropriate buffer zones for eight inscribed properties, of which this is one.

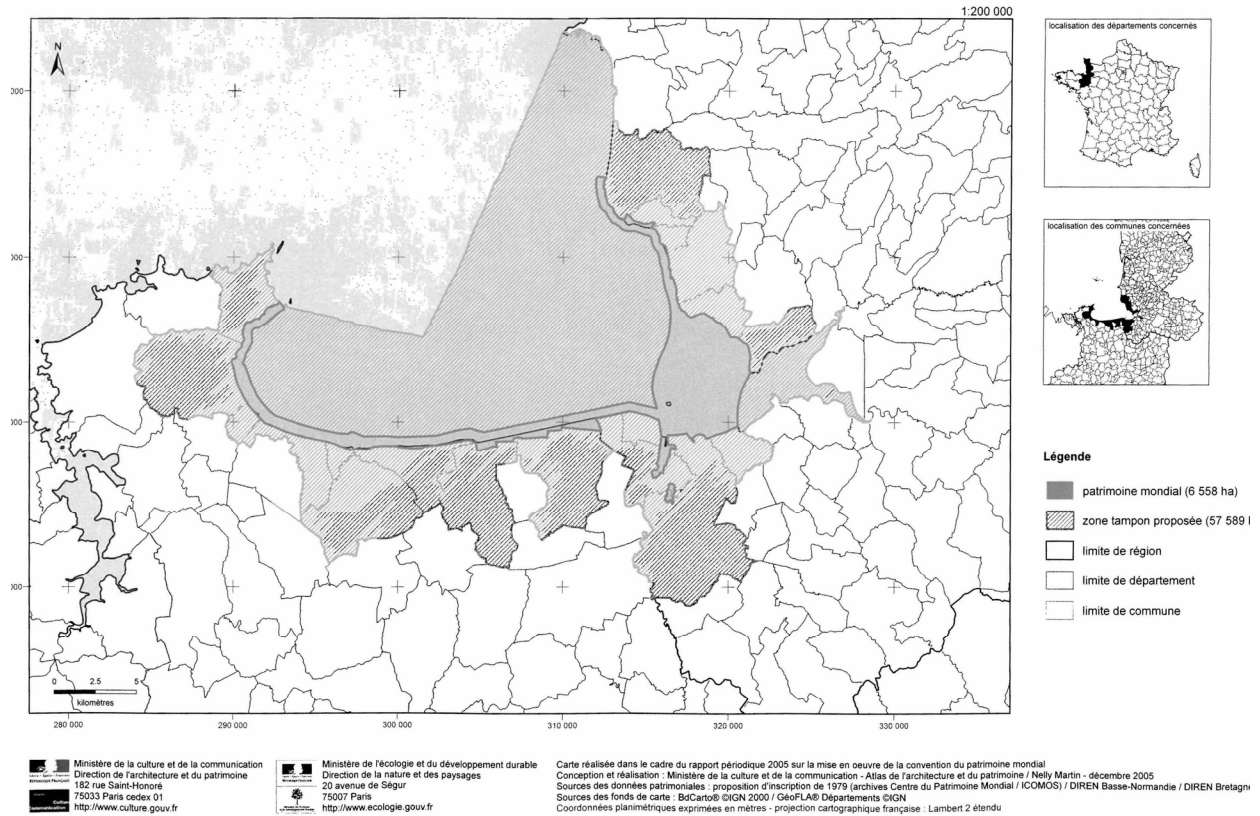
Modification

In the Periodic Report the State party acknowledged that the existing buffer zone was inadequate and now proposes a much enlarged zone which includes part of the bay, a Ramsar site, and the communes abutting the inscribed property. Within this buffer zone the areas immediately next to the main part of the inscribed property, that is the island Benedictine abbey, (as opposed to the narrow shore line either side) are either site *classé*, site *inscrit* or part of the Ramsar site.

3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

ICOMOS recommends that the buffer zone for Mont-Saint-Michel and its Bay (France) be approved.

080 - Le Mont Saint-Michel et sa baie : proposition d'une zone tampon



Map showing the boundaries of the proposed buffer zone

Palace and Park of Versailles (France)

No 83

3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

ICOMOS recommends that the buffer zone for the Palace and Park of Versailles (France) be approved.

1. BASIC DATA

State Party: France

Name of property: Palace and Park of Versailles

Location: Département of Yvelines, Region Ile-de-France

Inscription: 1979

Brief Description:

The Palace of Versailles was the principal residence of the French kings from the time of Louis XIV to Louis XVI. Embellished by several generations of architects, sculptors, decorators and landscape architects, it provided Europe with a model of the ideal royal residence for over a century.

2. ISSUES RAISED

Background

As part of the Periodic Reporting process for Europe, the State Party identified the need to put in place appropriate buffer zones for eight inscribed properties, of which this is one.

At the time of inscription the property had no buffer zone.

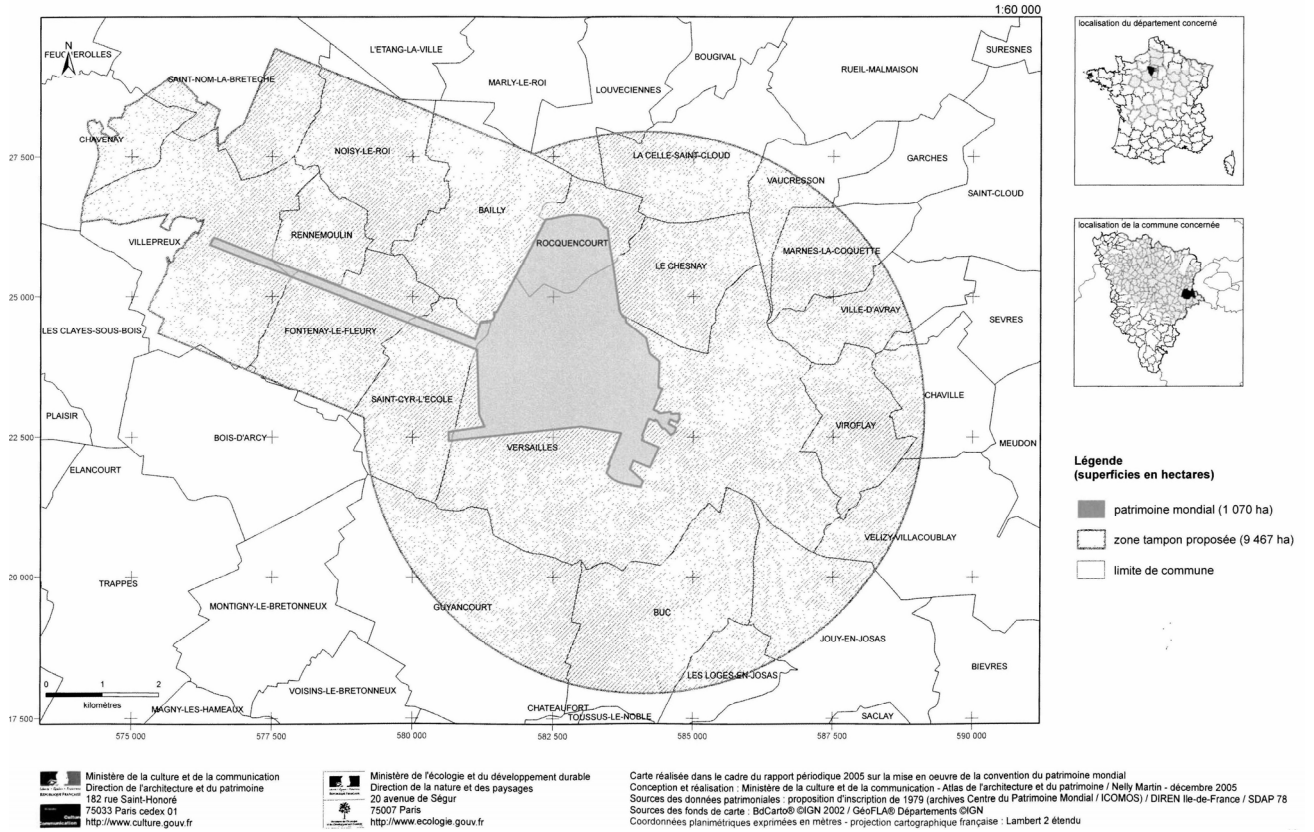
Modification

The State Party is now proposing a large buffer zone surrounding the whole inscribed site. The inscribed site consists of the area enclosing the Palace and its formal gardens together with a thin strip around the view from the end of the Grand Canal. The proposed Buffer Zone extends to a radius of 5000m from the central of the main inscribed property and to 2000m and 3000m approximately either side of the view corridor. At the far end of this corridor, the buffer zone extends to approximately 500m.

The proposed buffer zones encompass the urban areas to the south-west, south, east and north-east of the property and the open farmland to the north, north-west and west. The non-urban areas are protected site classes.



083 - Palais et parc de Versailles : proposition d'une zone tampon



Map showing the boundaries of the proposed buffer zone

Vézelay, Church and Hill (France)

No 84

1. BASIC DATA

State Party: France

Name of property: Vézelay, Church and Hill

Location: Departement of Yonne, Bourgogne
Region

Inscription: 1979

Brief Description:

Shortly after its foundation in the 9th century, the Benedictine abbey of Vézelay acquired the relics of St Mary Magdalene and since then it has been an important place of pilgrimage. St Bernard preached the Second Crusade there in 1146 and Richard the Lion-Hearted and Philip II Augustus met there to leave for the Third Crusade in 1190. With its sculpted capitals and portal, the Madeleine of Vézelay – a 12th-century monastic church – is a masterpiece of Burgundian Romanesque art and architecture.

2. ISSUES RAISED

Background

As part of the Periodic Reporting process for Europe, the State Party identified the need to put in place appropriate buffer zones for eight inscribed properties, of which this is one.

At the time of inscription there was no buffer zone.

Modification

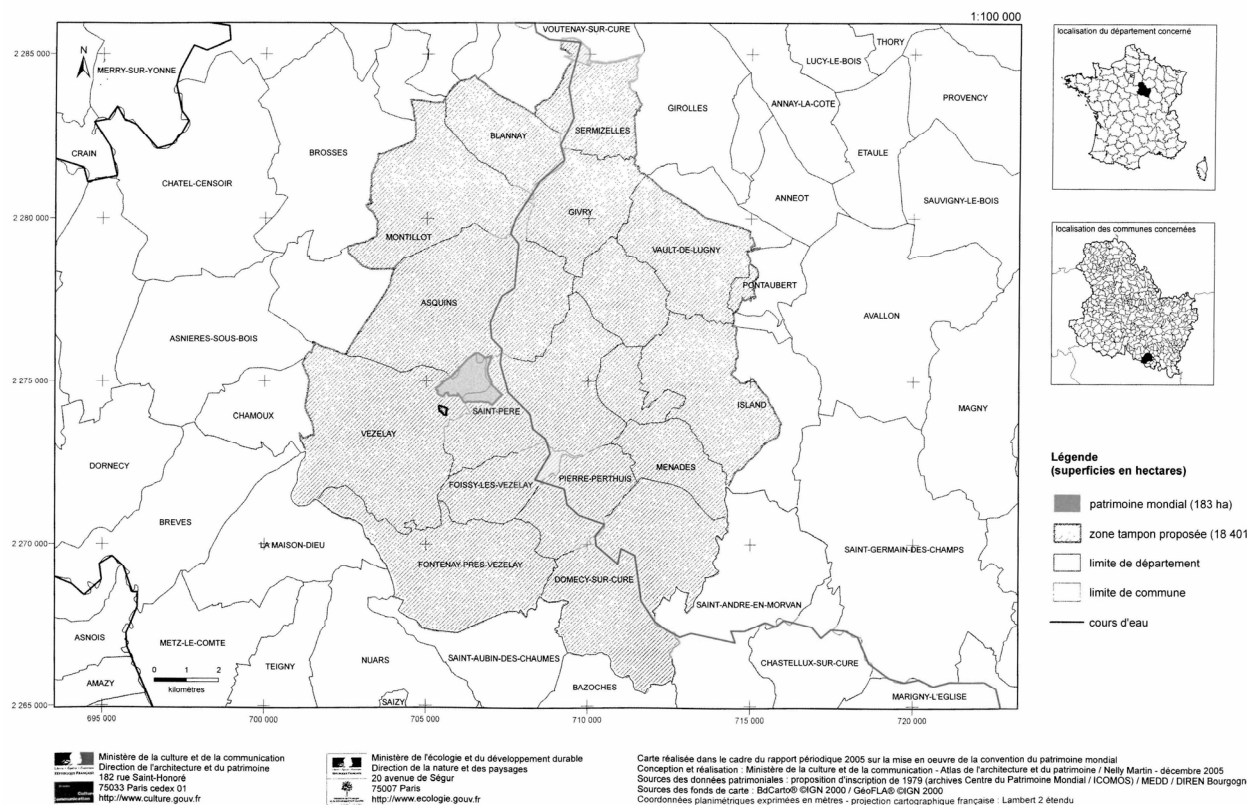
The State Party now proposes a large buffer zone of 18,401 ha, which coincides with an area protected for the majority as a site *classé*, and for the rest as a site *inscrit*.

3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

ICOMOS recommends that the buffer zone for Vézelay, Church and Hill (France) be approved.



084 - Basilique et colline de Vézelay : proposition d'une zone tampon



Map showing the boundaries of the proposed buffer zone

Orange (France)

No 163

1. BASIC DATA

State Party: France

Name of property: Roman theatre and its Surroundings and the “Triumphal Arch” of Orange

Location: Departement of Vaucluse, Region of Provence-Alpes-Côte-d’Azur

Inscription: 1981

Brief Description:

Situated in the Rhone valley, the ancient theatre of Orange, with its 103-m-long facade, is one of the best preserved of all the great Roman theatres. Built between 10 and 25 AD, the Roman arch is one of the most beautiful and interesting surviving examples of a provincial triumphal arch from the reign of Augustus. It is decorated with low reliefs commemorating the establishment of the Pax Romana.

2. ISSUES RAISED

Background

As part of the Periodic Reporting process for Europe, the State Party identified the need to put in place appropriate buffer zones for eight inscribed properties, of which this is one.

At the time of inscription there was no buffer Zone. The property lies in the urban area of Orange.

Modification

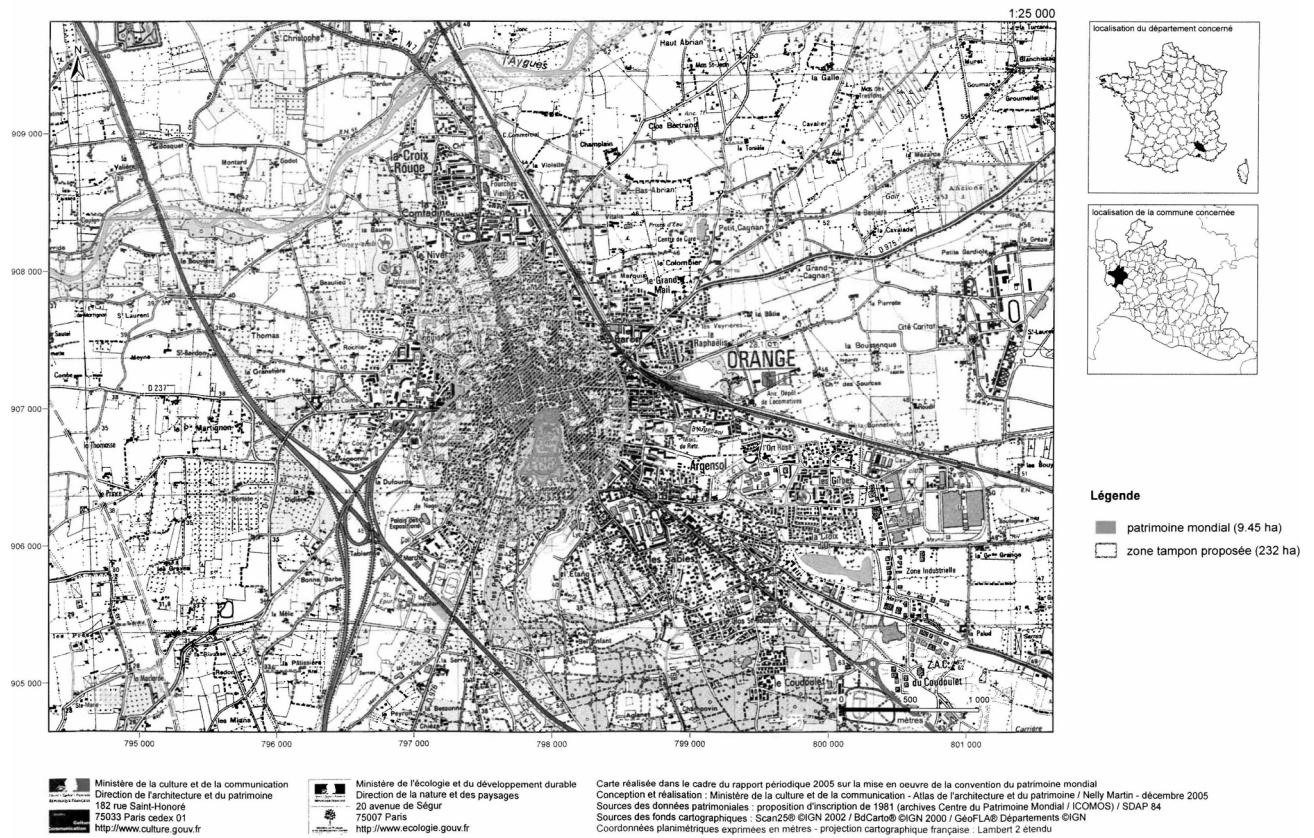
The State Party proposes a buffer zone with an approximate radius of 500 m around the inscribed area. This large area will encompass the heart of the city. Of this, a small area around the inscribed site is protected as a site *classé*. The 500 m radius equates to the zone of protection around historic monuments.

3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

ICOMOS recommends that the buffer zone for the Roman theatre and its Surroundings and the “Triumphal Arch” of Orange (France) be approved.



163 - Théâtre antique et ses abords et « Arc de Triomphe » d'Orange : proposition d'une zone tampon



Map showing the boundaries of the proposed buffer zone

Cistercian Abbey of Fontenay (France)

No 165

1. BASIC DATA

State Party: France

Name of property: Cistercian Abbey of Fontenay

Location: Departement of Côte d'Or, Bourgogne
Region

Inscription: 1981

Brief Description:

This stark Burgundian monastery was founded by St Bernard in 1119. With its church, cloister, refectory, sleeping quarters, bakery and ironworks, it is an excellent illustration of the ideal of self-sufficiency as practised by the earliest communities of Cistercian monks.

2. ISSUES RAISED

Background:

As part of the Periodic Reporting process for Europe, the State Party identified the need to put in place appropriate buffer zones for eight inscribed properties, of which this is one.

At the time of inscription there was no buffer zone. The boundaries were tightly drawn around the monastery complex and did not encompass any of its landscape hinterland. ICOMOS recommended that the inscription should cover the surrounding valley of Egrevies.

Modification:

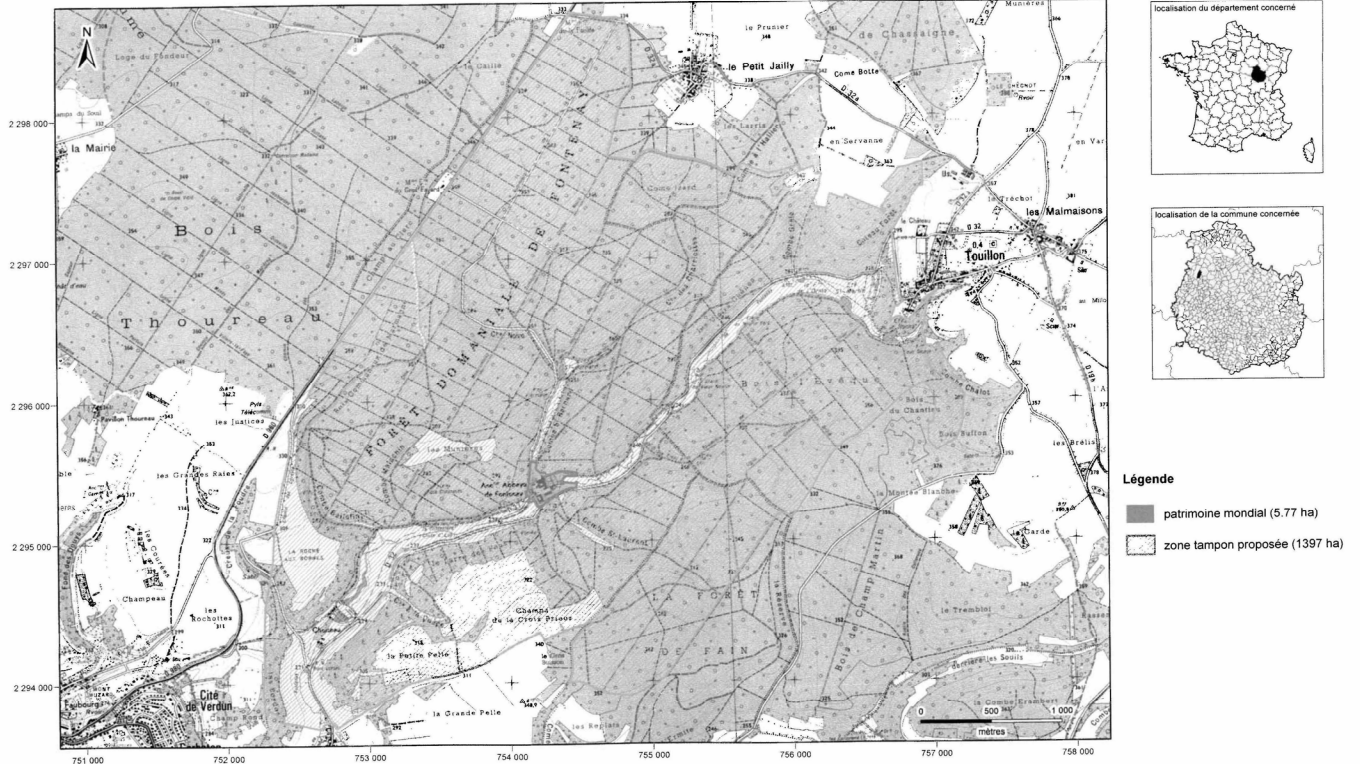
The State Party is proposing a large buffer zone of 1397 ha surrounding the inscribed site on all sides. This extends to the immediate visual hinterland and will protect long views and re-unite the monastery with part of what was its economic base. Approximately 90% of the area is a site *classé* and the remainder a site *inscrit*.

3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

ICOMOS recommends that the buffer zone for the Cistercian Abbey of Fontenay (France) be approved.

165 - Abbaye cistercienne de Fontenay : proposition d'une zone tampon

1:25 000



Map showing the boundaries of the proposed buffer zone

Abbey Church of Saint-Savin sur Gartempe (France)

No 230

1. BASIC DATA

State Party: France

Name of property: Abbey Church of Saint-Savin sur Gartempe

Location: Departement of Vienne, Poitou-Charentes Region

Inscription: 1983

Brief Description:

Known as the 'Romanesque Sistine Chapel', the Abbey-Church of Saint-Savin contains many beautiful 11th and 12th century murals which are still in a remarkable state of preservation.

2. ISSUES RAISED

Background

As part of the Periodic Reporting process for Europe, the State Party identified the need to put in place appropriate buffer zones for eight inscribed properties, of which this is one.

At the time of inscription there was no buffer zone. Only the Abbey Church, which sites in the centre of Saint-Savin-les-Loges was included in the boundary.

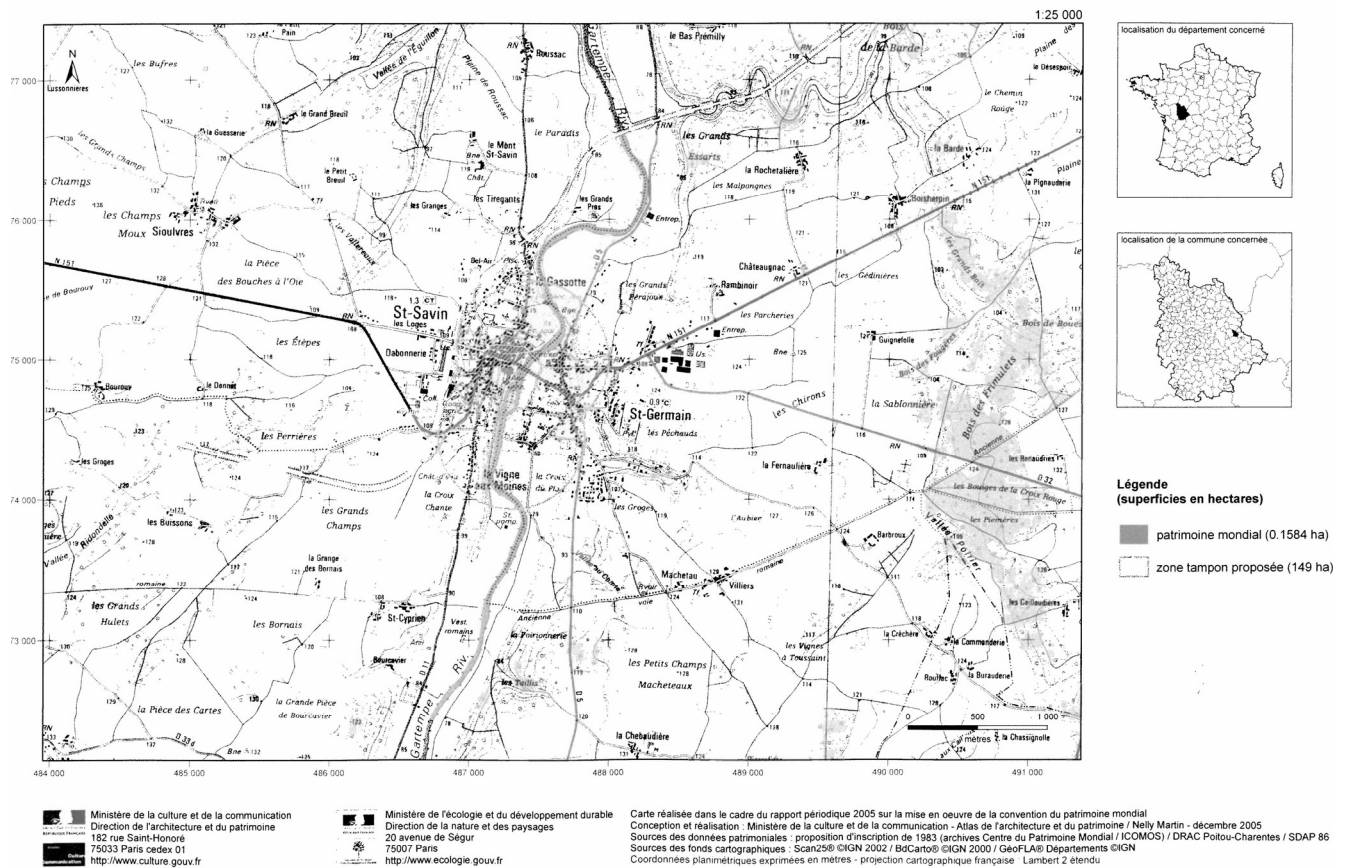
Modification

The State Party is now proposing a buffer zone of 149 ha which will encompass the whole of St-Savin les Loges and the neighbouring settlement of St-Germain. This is approximately a radius of 500m from the centre of the Abbey Church and thus equates to the protection zone for historic monuments. Within this and encompassing approximately 30% is a further zone of protection, ZPPAUP (*Zone de protection du patrimoine architectural, urbain et paysager*), relating to zones of protection for urban and rural architectural heritage.

3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

ICOMOS recommends that the buffer zone for the Abbey Church of Saint-Savin sur Gartempe (France) be approved.

230 - Eglise de Saint-Savin sur Gartempe : proposition d'une zone tampon



Map showing the boundaries of the proposed buffer zone

Pont du Gard (France)

No 344

1. BASIC DATA

State Party: France

Name of property: Pont du Gard

Location: Vers-Pont-du-Gard, Département of Gard, Languedoc-Roussillon Region

Inscription: 1985

Brief Description:

The Pont du Gard was built shortly before the Christian era to allow the aqueduct of Nîmes (which is almost 50 km long) to cross the Gard river. The Roman architects and hydraulic engineers who designed this bridge, which stands almost 50 m high and is on three levels – the longest measuring 275 m – created a technical as well as an artistic masterpiece

2. ISSUES RAISED

Background

As part of the Periodic Reporting process for Europe, the State Party identified the need to put in place appropriate buffer zones for eight inscribed properties, of which this is one.

At the time of inscription there was no buffer zone; only the aqueduct was inscribed. The Committee drew the attention of the French authorities to the importance of strictly protecting the site's surroundings.

Modification

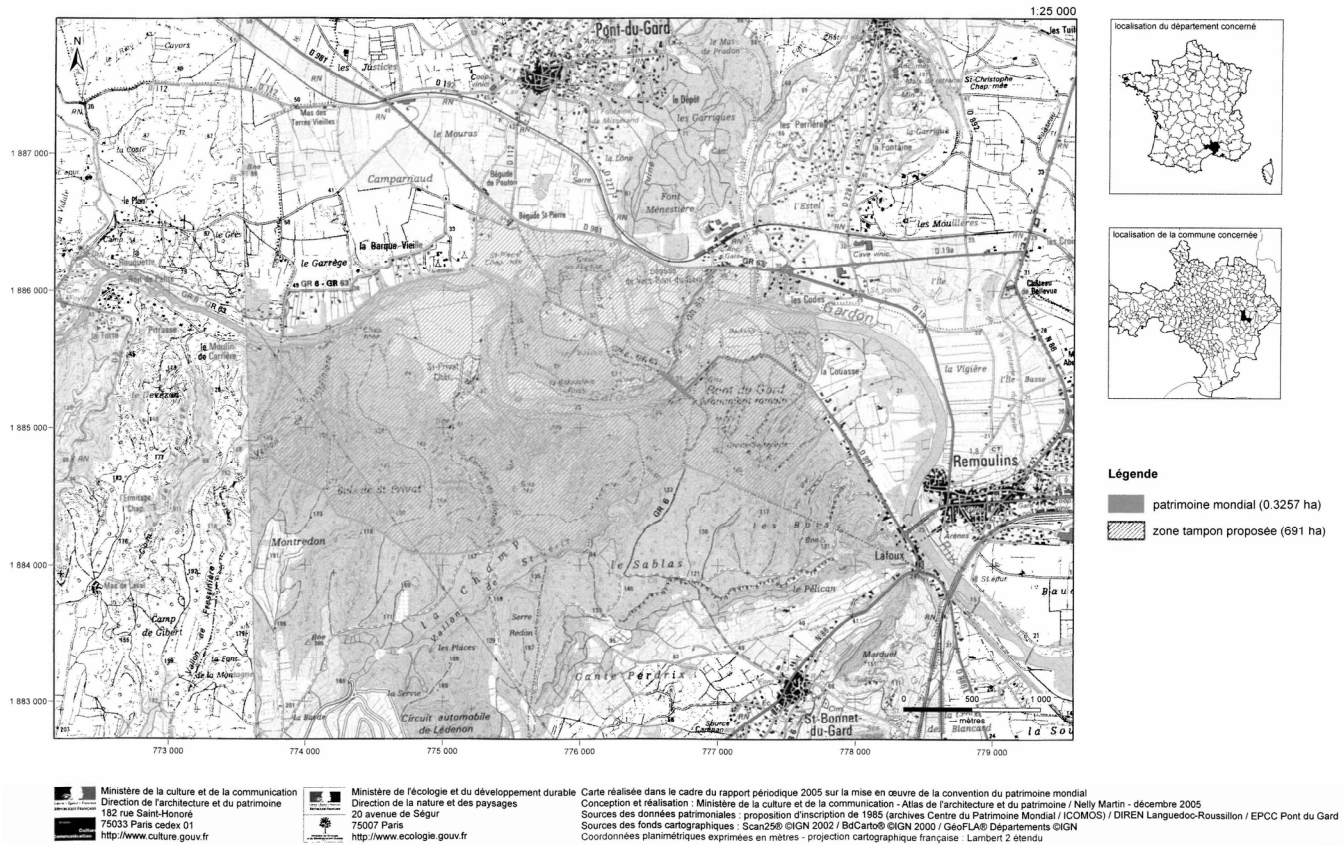
A Buffer zone of 691ha is now proposed by the State Party to protect the setting of the aqueduct. The area of the buffer zone coincides with a site *classé*.

3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

ICOMOS recommends that the buffer zone for the Pont du Gard (France) be approved.



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Map showing the boundaries of the proposed buffer zone

Strasbourg – Grande Île (France)

No 495

1. BASIC DATA

State Party: France

Name of property: Strasbourg – Grande Île

Location: Département of Bas-Rhin, Alsace
Region

Inscription: 1988

Brief Description:

Surrounded by two arms of the River Ill, the Grande Île (Big Island) is the historic centre of the Alsatian capital. It has an outstanding complex of monuments within a fairly small area. The cathedral, the four ancient churches and the Palais Rohan – former residence of the prince-bishops – far from appearing as isolated monuments, form a district that is characteristic of a medieval town and illustrates Strasbourg's evolution from the 15th to the 18th century.

2. ISSUES RAISED

Background

As part of the Periodic Reporting process for Europe, the State Party identified the need to put in place appropriate buffer zones for eight inscribed properties, of which this is one.

At the time of inscription, there was no buffer zone.

Modification

The State Party is now proposing a small buffer zone of 94 ha, surrounding the inscribed property, apart from an area in the south-west. The area does not have other designations, such as site *classé* or *inscrit*.

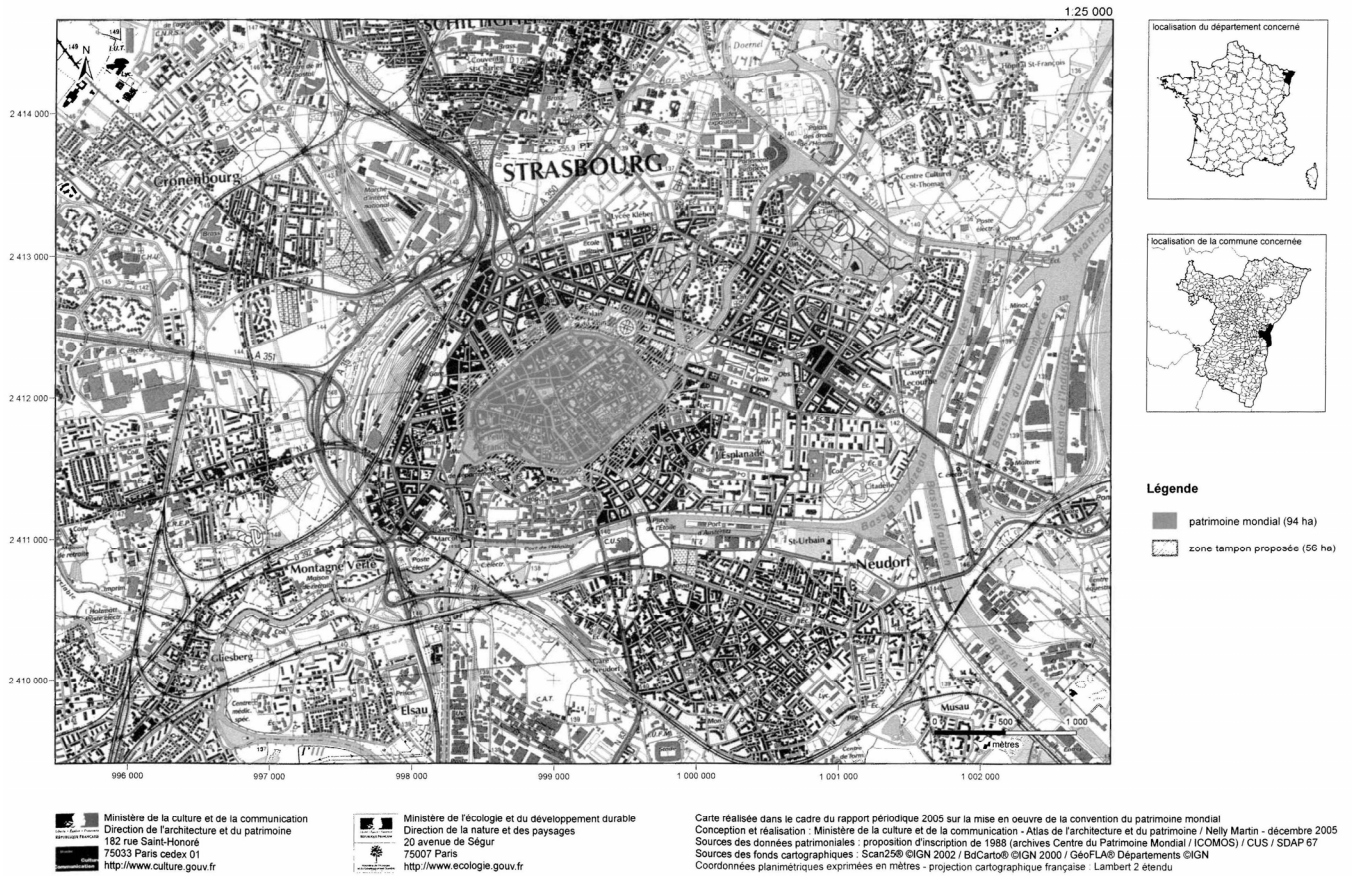
In places the proposed buffer zone is only one building deep and does not protect adequately the inscribed area in terms of protection against threats of urban development which might affect its setting.

3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

ICOMOS recommends that the State Party reconsider the buffer zone for Strasbourg- Grande Île (France) in order to delineate an area which gives more effective protection to the inscribed property and its setting.



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Map showing the boundaries of the proposed buffer zone