



ADDENDUM

IUCN Evaluations of Nominations of Natural and Mixed Properties to the World Heritage List

IUCN Report for the World Heritage Committee, 38th Session
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ADDENDUM

IUCN Evaluations of Nominations of Natural and Mixed Properties to the World Heritage List

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY TABLE OF IUCN EVALUATIONS TO THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE																
State Party	Name of the property (ID number)	Note	Meets one or more natural criteria				Meets conditions of integrity				Meets protection and management requirements			Further mission required	IUCN Recommendation	
			Criterion (vii)	Criterion (viii)	Criterion (ix)	Criterion (x)	Integrity	Boundaries	Threats addressed	Justification of serial approach	Protection status	Management	Buffer zone/ Protection in surrounding area			
Paragraphs of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention			77	77	77	77	78, 87-95	99-102	78, 98	137	78, 1324	78, 108-118, 1324, 135	103-107			
India	Great Himalayan National Park Conservation Area (1406 Rev)	Referred nomination	-	-	-	yes	yes	yes	yes	-	yes	yes	yes	no	I	
Philippines	Mount Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary (1403 Rev)	Referred nomination	-	-	-	yes	yes	yes	yes	-	yes	yes	yes	no	I	

KEYS

yes met
 part partially met
 no not met
 - not applicable

I inscribe / approve
 N I non inscribe
 R refer
 D defer

A. NATURAL PROPERTIES

A2. REFERRED NOMINATIONS OF NATURAL PROPERTIES

ASIA / PACIFIC

**GREAT HIMALAYAN NATIONAL PARK
CONSERVATION AREA**

INDIA



WORLD HERITAGE NOMINATION – IUCN TECHNICAL EVALUATION

GREAT HIMALAYAN NATIONAL PARK CONSERVATION AREA (INDIA) – ID No. 1406 Rev

IUCN RECOMMENDATION TO WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE: To inscribe the property under natural criterion (x).

Key paragraphs of Operational Guidelines:

Paragraph 77: Property meets natural criterion.

Paragraph 78: Property meets conditions of integrity and protection and management requirements.

Background note: The Great Himalayan National Park (GHNP) was nominated in 2012 and considered by the World Heritage Committee at its 37th Session in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 2013. IUCN recalls the Committee's decision (Decision 37COM 8B.11) to refer the nomination back to the State Party to allow it to address a number of issues related to the need to add the Tirthan and Sainj Wildlife Sanctuaries to the nominated area; strengthen engagement with local communities; undertake additional comparative analysis to confirm the values of the property within the Western Himalayas; and continue longer term plans to progressively increase the size of the property through the addition of other areas within the wider ecological complex.

The State Party of India submitted a response to Decision 37COM 8B.11 in September 2013 which provides information in relation to the issues raised as well as revised maps showing the expanded nomination. The evaluation below draws upon the previous assessment taking into account re-submitted material. The Committee's attention is drawn to the previous evaluation (WHC13/37.COM/INF.8B2) in order to avoid repeating information.

1. DOCUMENTATION

a) Date nomination received by IUCN: Original nomination received on 25 March 2012. Revised version after 37COM referral decision received on 22 November 2013.

b) Additional information officially requested from and provided by the State Party: Supplementary information on the original nomination was requested from the State Party on 20 December 2012. The information was received on 11 February 2013 and was considered in IUCN's 2013 evaluation report. No additional information has been requested over and above this.

c) Additional literature consulted: Various sources listed in the nomination, and in the earlier IUCN evaluation report.

d) Consultations: The IUCN representative from the 2012 field visit, in addition to earlier consultees.

e) Field visit: Original field mission undertaken by Graeme Worboys, 03-16 October 2012.

f) Date of IUCN approval of this report: March 2014

2. SUMMARY OF NATURAL VALUES

The State Party has advised in September 2013 of two proposed changes to the original nomination of GHNP. The first concerns redefinition of the boundaries of the nominated property to include two adjacent wildlife sanctuaries, namely the Tirthan Wildlife Sanctuary and the Sainj Wildlife Sanctuary (WLS). The second

concerns removal of the request to consider the nominated property under criterion (vii). The additional information therefore focuses on biodiversity values pertinent to criterion (x).

The enlarged nominated property now covers 90,540 hectares. This comprises the 75,440 ha GHNP which is a formerly declared national park (equivalent to IUCN Protected Area Management Category II) plus the 9,000 ha Sainj WLS plus the Tirthan WLS of 6,100 ha. Together these comprise the Great Himalayan National Park Conservation Area (GHNPCA). The buffer zone of 26,560 ha remains unchanged from the original nomination. Wildlife sanctuaries in India are equivalent to IUCN Category IV protected areas. The State Party advises that, whilst the two WLSs have been added to the nominated area, they are undergoing the process of formal designation to be incorporated within GHNP, in other words conversion from wildlife sanctuary to national park status.

Additional information provided by the State Party concentrates on the values of the nominated property compared with Nanda Devi and Valley of the Flowers National Parks in accordance with the Committee's request. The values description provided in the previous nomination is noted as relevant for the enlarged property as well.

Additional material also highlights the values of the nominated property with respect to global warming. It notes the importance of GHNPCA's diversity of intact habitats related to elevational range which will become increasingly important because of the impact of global warming. Climate change will force flora and fauna to find refuge as temperature and precipitation tolerances shift.

3. COMPARISONS WITH OTHER AREAS

The re-submitted nomination is requested for consideration under criterion (x) alone.

The State Party has clarified earlier confusion by confirming that the comparative analysis previously tended was based on the enlarged property (GHNP plus the two WLSs). Additional information therefore refers predominantly to the comparison with Nanda Devi and the Valley of the Flowers National Parks (ND/VF). IUCN's previous evaluation noted that GHNP was most closely compared with ND/VF which is inscribed under criterion (vii) reflecting the presence of India's second highest mountain, (Nanda Devi West) at 7,817 metres; spectacular features including glaciers, moraines, alpine meadows, a high altitude Himalayan Valley (the Valley of the Flowers), a deep gorge; and the area's remote wilderness character. These attributes are similar to many of GHNPCA's values, but the mountains are higher, glaciers are bigger and there is the presence of a large and aesthetic high mountain valley.

The climate and environments of the Himalayas are not uniform, with wet conditions in the east and drier conditions in the west. Distinctly different assemblages of plants and animals have consequently evolved for the Eastern and Western Himalaya and both areas have been recognised for their special conservation status. The Western Himalaya includes part of Conservation International's Himalayan Hotspot; WWF's Western Himalayan Temperate Forest Global 200 Ecoregion; the Tibetan Plateau Steppe Global 200 Ecoregion and part of Birdlife International's "Western Himalaya" Endemic Bird Area (EBA 128). The additional comparative analysis confirms that the nominated property possesses values which match or surpass those of ND/VF, furthermore that the nominated property is now contiguous and has greater potential for expansion adding to its ecological viability. The greater elevational range in the nominated property compared to ND/VF is also argued as contributing to its distinctive values. The State Party also point to the fact that DN/VF is 80% covered with snow, ice and rock, whereas the nominated property has larger areas of forested cover.

A more detailed comparative table of species is provided to argue conclusions related to the high concentration of species within the nominated property when compared with ND/VF. However, IUCN notes that these conclusions need to be considered in light of the fact that the much larger ND/VF Biosphere Reserve area has been used to analyse species densities. The table notes the area of ND/VF as 640,700 ha when the World Heritage area at 71,183 ha is approximately ten times smaller. It is not clear if the species data provided relate to the smaller World Heritage site but it appears to reinforce that the values of these two areas in the Western Himalayas share much in common.

In terms of integrity comparisons it is noted that ND/VF consists of two separate parts in different catchments with no ecological connectivity. This is contrasted to

the new nomination which is now a single contiguous area with opportunities for future expansion across the wider ecosystem complex.

The additional information submitted highlights of the nominated property's values with respect to buffering climate change. Whilst this is true in the case of conservation of Western Himalayan species, it is a typical feature of many high mountain ecosystems with a reasonable elevational range and diversity of habitats.

The additional comparative analysis confirms that the nominated property includes more transitional biotic elements between the Palearctic and Indomalayan Realms than the ND/VF site. Furthermore, that ecoregional variation across the Himalayas, demonstrates that the nominated property shows distinct differences with the ND/VF site which has a more eastern faunal and floral composition, and lacks the lower altitude zones which are considered to make the nominated property important.

4. INTEGRITY, PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT

4.1 Protection

The two additions, Tirthan and Sainj WLSs, do not enjoy the same levels of strict protection as the 1999 declared GHNP which is a national park. National parks under the Indian Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 provide for strict protection without human disturbance. Tirthan and Sainj WLSs are designated in recognition of their ecological and zoological significance and are subject to wildlife management objectives. However, the newly nominated property as well as the buffer zone is managed as a single unit and is subject to a single management plan overseen by a single Director.

Sainj WLS includes 120 inhabitants, whilst Tirthan WLS is free of inhabitants but is subject to traditional grazing. The State Party advises that the process of conversion from WLS to national park is underway and essentially irreversible. IUCN is of the view that despite the lower protective status of the two WLSs there is sufficient protection to ensure World Heritage values are conserved and any shortcomings in protective status is outweighed by the integrity benefits of a larger contiguous nominated area with a more ecologically sound boundary.

IUCN considers the legal protection status of the nominated property meets the requirements set out in the Operational Guidelines.

4.2 Boundaries

The boundaries of the nominated property have been significantly improved through the addition of the two WLSs. The property is now contiguous and has been enlarged by approximately 20% in area. The addition of valley bottom areas within the WLSs adds valuable lower elevation habitats within the Sainj and Tirthan River Valleys, providing for more complete protection

of water catchment areas. A large part of the southern aspect of the Sainj River Valley formerly excluded from nomination is now incorporated and is a more complete habitat protection for notable species such as Western Tragopan, Musk Deer and others.

The nominated property has a buffer zone only along its south-western side (the 26,560 ha Ecozone) reflecting the areas of greatest human population pressure. The property is, however, afforded good protection in the north, east and south due to the rugged and difficult to access high mountains. The larger ecological complex of protected lands ensures this acts as an effective buffer to the nominated area. In fact the larger ecological complex represents the single largest area of formal protection for the entire Himalayas after Jigme Dorji National Park in Bhutan.

IUCN considers that the boundaries of the nominated property meet the requirements of the Operational Guidelines.

4.3 Management

The management emphasis within the two WLSs, which have been included within the nomination, is on mitigating the impacts of the three small villages within Sainj WLS and on regulating shepherds to minimize the grazing impacts of sheep and other livestock within Tirthan WLS. IUCN has concerns regarding the extent and long term impacts of grazing and recommends the phasing out of this use as soon as possible and in line with established processes of negotiated transition from WLS to national park. This should also be fully consistent with India's established legal processes to resolve community rights issues.

The State Party has also advised that GHNP is now participating in a management effectiveness evaluation (MEE) programme consistent with the IUCN MEE Framework. IUCN welcomes this advice noting the benefits of such a comprehensive approach to improving management at all stages of the management cycle.

IUCN considers the management of nominated property meets the requirements of the Operational Guidelines.

4.4 Community

As noted in IUCN's previous evaluation, the management of the park has taken notable steps to work with the community over many years. Updated information from the State Party has highlighted further advances in this regard.

The State Party advises of its ongoing commitment to work with local people who will be affected by changes to the protection status of the two WLSs. Programmes are in place to formally compensate affected people, to provide for alternative livelihoods and to accommodate input to park management decision-making. It is noted that demand for access and use rights to the two WLSs is in excess of the numbers of people with traditional rights, due in part to more recent migration

into the region. This requires an assessment of the legitimacy of such claims. IUCN recognizes that these are sensitive processes that require time and careful management to ensure transparency, equity and the recognition of legitimate claims. Legal processes in India guide these processes and IUCN is advised they are underway, however a timeframe has not been provided as to when such process might be finalised such that both WLS will become national parks.

IUCN welcomes the findings of MEE processes completed in 2007 which point to improved, more positive perceptions of local people toward the park. This has resulted from sustained effort to address threats and work with communities to settle rights and provide fair compensation. IUCN welcomes these ongoing efforts whilst noting that some concerns remain related to empowering stakeholder in management decision making beyond advisory roles.

4.5 Threats

The range of threats noted in IUCN's previous evaluation persists, although the reconfigured and enlarged property results in a more robust conservation unit, more resilient to impacts. Ongoing monitoring of threats and particular attention to uses within the adjoining populated Ecozone buffer zone will be needed.

The addition of the two WLSs has improved the overall integrity of the nomination; however it opens up concerns regarding traditional grazing in Tirthan WLS and small human settlements in Sainj WLS. Both these aspects are being actively managed, a process that will need to be maintained. As noted above grazing within Tirthan WLS should be prohibited as soon as legal transition to national park status can be completed.

In summary, IUCN considers the addition of Sainj and Tirthan Wildlife Sanctuaries and the resultant reconfiguration of the boundaries of the nominated property have greatly improved integrity. IUCN considers that the nominated property meets the overall conditions of integrity and protection and management as outlined in the Operational Guidelines.

5. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

None.

6. APPLICATION OF THE CRITERIA

The **Great Himalayan National Park Conservation Area** (GHNP/CA) has been nominated under criterion (x).

Criterion (x): Biodiversity and threatened species

GHNP/CA is of significance for the conservation of Western Himalayan biodiversity. It is located in steep Himalayan mountain environments at the junction of the Indo-Malayan and Palearctic Biogeographic

Realms and protects important biodiversity within the “Western Himalayan Temperate Forests” globally significant ecoregion. GHNPCA also protects part of Conservation International’s Himalaya “biodiversity hot spot” and is part of the Birdlife International’s Western Himalaya Endemic Bird Area. The Park is home to 805 vascular plant species, 192 species of lichen, 12 species of liverworts and 25 species of mosses. Some 58% of its angiosperms are endemic to the Western Himalayas. The Park also protects some 31 species of mammals, 209 birds, 9 amphibians, 12 reptiles and 125 insects. The nominated property provides habitat for 4 globally threatened mammals, 3 globally threatened birds and a large number of medicinal plants. The enlarged area of this nomination to include the Sainj and Tirthan Wildlife Sanctuaries has significantly enhanced the value of the property for biodiversity conservation, as a contiguous highly protected area that will allow the effective conservation management of important habitats and endangered species such as the Western Tragopan and the Musk Deer.

IUCN considers that the nominated property meets this criterion.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

IUCN recommends that the World Heritage Committee adopt the following draft decision:

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Documents WHC-14/38.COM/8B and WHC-14/38.COM/INF.8B2;

2. Inscribes the **Great Himalayan National Park Conservation Area (India)** on the World Heritage List under natural criterion (x).

3. Adopts the following Statement of Outstanding Universal Value:

Brief synthesis

The Great Himalayan National Park Conservation Area (GHNPCA) is located in the western part of the Himalayan Mountains in the northern Indian State of Himachal Pradesh. The 90,540 ha property includes the upper mountain glacial and snow melt water source origins of the westerly flowing Jiwa Nal, Sainj and Tirthan Rivers and the north-westerly flowing Parvati River which are all headwater tributaries to the River Beas and subsequently, the Indus River. The property includes an elevational range from high alpine peaks of over 6,000m a.s.l to riverine forest at altitudes below 2,000m a.s.l. GHNPCA encompasses the catchments of water supplies which are vital to millions of downstream users.

The property lies within the ecologically distinct Western Himalayas at the junction between two of the world’s major biogeographic realms, the Palearctic and Indomalayan Realms. Displaying biotic elements from both these realms, GHNPCA protects the monsoon affected forests and alpine meadows of the Himalayan

front ranges which sustain a unique biota comprised of many distinct altitude-sensitive ecosystems. The property is home to many plants and animals endemic to the region. GHNPCA displays distinct broadleaf and conifer forest types forming mosaics of habitat across steep valley side landscapes. It is a compact, natural and biodiverse protected area system that includes 25 forest types and an associated rich assemblage of fauna species.

GHNPCA is at the core of a larger area of surrounding protected areas which form an island of undisturbed environments in the greater Western Himalayan landscape. The diversity of species present is rich; however it is the abundance and health of individual species’ populations supported by healthy ecosystem processes where the GHNPCA demonstrates its outstanding significance for biodiversity conservation.

Criteria

Criterion (x)

GHNPCA is located within the globally significant “Western Himalayan Temperate Forests” ecoregion. The property also protects part of Conservation International’s Himalaya “biodiversity hot spot” and is part of the Birdlife International’s Western Himalaya Endemic Bird Area. GHNPCA is home to 805 vascular plant species, 192 species of lichen, 12 species of liverworts and 25 species of mosses. Some 58% of its angiosperms are endemic to the Western Himalayas. The property also protects some 31 species of mammals, 209 birds, 9 amphibians, 12 reptiles and 125 insects. GHNPCA provides habitat for 4 globally threatened mammals, 3 globally threatened birds and a large number of medicinal plants. The protection of lower altitude valleys provides for more complete protection and management of important habitats and endangered species such as the Western Tragopan and the Musk Deer.

Integrity

The property is of a sufficient size to ensure the natural functioning of ecological processes. Its rugged topography and inaccessibility together with its location within a much larger ecological complex of protected areas ensures its integrity. The altitudinal range within the property together with its diversity of habitat types provide a buffer to climate change impacts and the needs of altitude sensitive plants and animals to find refuge from climate variability.

A 26,560 ha buffer zone known as an Ecozone is defined along the south-western side of the property. This buffer zone coincides with the areas of greatest human pressure and is managed in sympathy with the core values of the GHNPCA. The property is further buffered by high mountain systems to the north-west which include several national parks and wildlife sanctuaries. These areas also offer scope to progressively increase the size of the World Heritage property.

Human settlement related threats pose the greatest concern and include agriculture, localised poaching, traditional grazing, human-wildlife conflicts and

hydropower development. Tourism impact is minimal and trekking routes are closely regulated.

Protection and management requirements

The property is subject to sound legal protection, however, this needs to be strengthened to ensure consistent high level protection across all areas. This pertains to the transition of some areas from wildlife sanctuary to national park status. Tirthan and Sainj Wildlife Sanctuaries are designated in recognition of their ecological and zoological significance and are subject to wildlife management objectives, and a higher level of strict protection is provided to GHNP which is a national park. National parks under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 provide for strict protection without human disturbance.

The property's boundaries are considered appropriate and an effective management regime is in place including an overall management plan and adequate resourcing. The property has a buffer zone along its south-western side which corresponds to the 26,560 ha Ecozone, the area of greatest human population pressure. Continued attention is required to manage sensitive community development issues in this buffer zone and in some parts of the property itself.

The sensitive resolution of access and use rights by communities is needed to bolster protection as is fostering alternative livelihoods which are sympathetic to the conservation of the area. Local communities are engaged in management decisions; however more work is needed to fully empower communities and continue to build a strong sense of support and stewardship for the GHNP.

Included within the property is the Sainj Wildlife Sanctuary with 120 inhabitants and the Tirthan Wildlife Sanctuary, which is uninhabited but currently subject to traditional grazing. The inclusion of these two Wildlife Sanctuaries supports the integrity of the nomination; however, it opens up concerns regarding the impacts of grazing and human settlements. Both these aspects are being actively managed, a process that will need to be maintained. The extent and impacts of high pasture grazing in the Tirthan area of the property needs to be assessed and grazing phased out as soon as practicable. Other impacts

arising from small human settlements within the Sainj area of the property also need to be addressed as soon as practicable.

4. Requests the State Party to:

- a) expedite, in accordance with legislated processes, the resolution of community rights based issues with respect to local communities and indigenous peoples in the Tirthan and Sainj Wildlife Sanctuaries, including in relation to the phasing out of grazing in the Tirthan Wildlife Sanctuary;
- b) expedite the formal designation of Tirthan and Sainj Wildlife Sanctuaries as national parks to improve their legal protection and advise the Committee of an estimated timeframe for this to occur;
- c) continue, in consultation with communities and stakeholders, longer term plans to progressively increase the size of the property, in order to increase integrity and better provide for the conservation of wide-ranging species, through extensions of other surrounding protected areas potentially including the Rupi Bhabha Wildlife Sanctuary, Pin Valley National Park, Khirganga National Park and the Kanawar Wildlife Sanctuary.

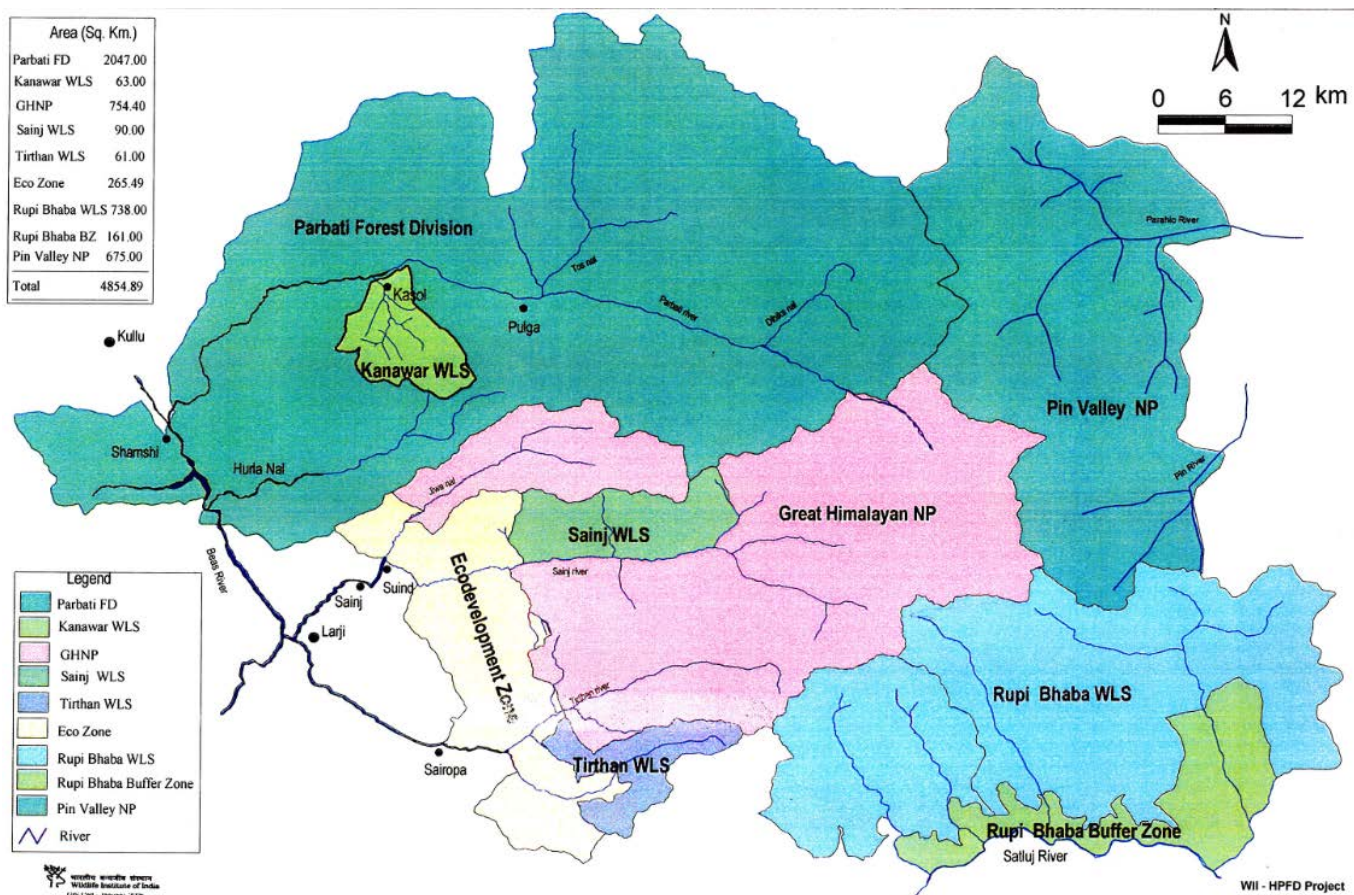
5. Recommends relevant States Parties, including Pakistan, India, China, Nepal and Bhutan, to consider undertaking a regional comparative study with the support of the IUCN and other partners such as the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) to fully assess the scope of ecosystems within the Himalayas and adjacent mountain regions with a view to identifying potential World Heritage candidate areas and boundary configurations in this region, including potential serial nominations/extensions.

6. Commends the State Party and the range of stakeholders in the nominated property for their efficient and effective action to address concerns related to the property's integrity, protection and management, as previously raised by the World Heritage Committee.

Map 1: Nominated property and buffer zone



Map 2: Great Himalayan Conservation Landscape



ASIA / PACIFIC

MOUNT HAMIGUITAN RANGE WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

PHILIPPINES



WORLD HERITAGE NOMINATION – IUCN TECHNICAL EVALUATION

MOUNT HAMIGUITAN RANGE WILDLIFE SANCTUARY (PHILIPPINES) – ID No. 1403 Rev

IUCN RECOMMENDATION TO WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE: To inscribe the property under natural criterion (x).

Key paragraphs of Operational Guidelines:

Paragraph 77: Nominated property meets natural criterion.

Paragraph 78: Nominated property meets conditions of integrity and protection and management requirements.

Background note: The Mount Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary (MHRWS) was nominated in 2012 and considered by the World Heritage Committee at its 37th Session in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 2013. IUCN recalls the Committee's decision at that time (Decision 37COM 8B.12) to refer the nomination back to the State Party of the Philippines to allow it to address a number of issues related to the need to resolve outstanding indigenous peoples' land claims; implement the envisaged expansion of the site and revise its buffer zone; to prepare a plan to manage anticipated tourism impact; and to develop and implement a monitoring and research programme on potential climate change impact.

The State Party submitted a response to Decision 37COM 8B.12 in January 2014 which provides updates on measures taken to address the issues raised above as well as revised maps showing the expanded nomination. The evaluation below draws upon the previous IUCN assessment taking into account re-submitted material. The Committee's attention is drawn to the previous evaluation (WHC-13/37.COM/INF.8B2) in order to avoid repeating information.

1. DOCUMENTATION

a) Date nomination received by IUCN: Original nomination received on 25 March 2012. Revised version after 37COM referral decision received on 13 January 2014.

b) Additional information officially requested from and provided by the State Party: Supplementary information on the original nomination was requested from the State Party on 20 December 2012 with information received on 28 February 2013 and considered in IUCN's 2013 evaluation report. No additional information has been requested over and above this.

c) Additional literature consulted: Various sources listed in the nomination, and in the earlier IUCN evaluation report.

d) Consultations: The IUCN representative from the 2012 field visit, in addition to earlier consultees.

e) Field visit: Original field mission undertaken by Naomi Doak, 06-15 October 2012.

f) Date of IUCN approval of this report: March 2014

2. SUMMARY OF NATURAL VALUES

IUCN notes that the resubmitted nomination for Mount Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary (MHRWS) includes a significantly expanded nominated area of 16,923 hectares (ha) which now encompasses additional values, most particularly areas of significant

Philippine Eagle nesting habitat to the south of the originally nominated area. Recalling its 2013 evaluation of MHRWS (WHC-13/37.COM/INF.8B2), IUCN had concluded that *"the nominated property has the potential to meet this criterion [criterion (x)] subject to integrity issues being addressed"*. As such the issues requested to be addressed did not include the need to provide substantial additional justification or evidence to support the site's claim under criterion (x). IUCN nevertheless welcomes the significant expansion of the property's nominated area and the values which it has added to the property, in particular those additional areas of Philippine Eagle nesting habitat. The expanded area significantly improves integrity and strengthens the case for criterion (x). The State Party has also amended the buffer zone of the MHRWS significantly increasing its area from 784 ha to 9,730 ha.

IUCN would also like to recall the fact that the rainforests of southern Mindanao Island have long been noted as having potential World Heritage quality; however, given the fragmented nature and high local endemism levels of the remaining lowland and mountain forests on Mindanao, their full range of biodiversity values cannot be represented by a single site. It is therefore not surprising that the Philippine Tentative List includes several other forest sites on Mindanao: Mount Apo, Mount Malindang Range and Mount Matutum. These mountains/mountain ranges share many species but each also supports a number of unique site-endemic species. IUCN encourages the State Party of the Philippines to consider future nominations of suitable areas on Mindanao which fall within the biologically significant Philippines

Biodiversity Hotspot and the Mount Kitanglad Centre of Plant Diversity.

3. COMPARISONS WITH OTHER AREAS

As noted above the focus of issues raised by the Committee concerned matters of integrity, protection and management rather than values. The values of the nominated property have been strengthened through the expansion of the nominated area; however, no additional comparative analysis is warranted beyond that covered in the existing nomination, and IUCN's earlier evaluation.

4. INTEGRITY, PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT

4.1 Protection

The State Party has provided documentary evidence of the formal and legal declaration of the enlarged MHRWS, extending the level of protection that was discussed in IUCN's earlier nomination. Additional areas to the south of the former MHRWS have been afforded protection as a Wildlife Sanctuary through a series of protective measures jointly implemented by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the Province of Davao Oriental as well as Mati City, San Isidro Municipality and Governor Generoso local governments.

IUCN maintains its previous conclusions that the protection status of the nominated property meets the requirements set out in the Operational Guidelines.

4.2 Boundaries

The boundaries of the nominated property have significantly increased the areas of habitat for endangered species, including the addition of important nesting areas for the Philippine Eagle. The resubmitted nomination increases the area originally submitted in 2012 from 6,350 ha to 16,923 ha, a 2.5 times increase. The expanded MHRWS provides a contiguous extension of the original Wildlife Sanctuary to incorporate additional forested areas to the south. In so doing, it provides for a larger, better configured and more resilient system.

IUCN welcomes this formalisation of the proposals which were already well advanced at the time of the last Committee meeting, noting that the resubmitted nominated property has, in fact, further increased in size over and above the expansion proposed at the time of the 37th Session of the World Heritage Committee.

The resubmitted buffer zone represents a greatly improved design which will assist in buffering the nominated property from impacts.

IUCN considers that the boundaries of the nominated property meet the requirements of the Operational Guidelines.

4.3 Management

IUCN recalls its concerns related to the potential for visitor and tourism impact on this ecologically fragile site. Whilst visitation to the site is currently restricted to management, scientific research and monitoring purposes, it is planned to establish tourism access to the site in future. The State Party has reaffirmed that no broader public visitation will take place until a trail management plan is formulated. A very well-prepared Visitor and Tourism Development and Management Plan for MHRWS has been submitted. The plan is comprehensive and strategic, adopting a market based approach to understanding potential visitor demand. Measures are outlined to ensure the protection of the property's values within a five year timetable with budgets specified.

IUCN considers the management of nominated property meets the requirements of the Operational Guidelines.

4.4 Community

Serious concerns were raised in IUCN's previous evaluation concerning approximately 30,000 ha of unresolved land claims by indigenous people which partially overlapped the property as nominated at the time. These claims also overlapped with the areas of the proposed expansion to the south. The State Party has confirmed the resolution of all land claims and rights issues related to the nominated area. Written commitments of support have been provided together with the Memorandum of Agreement signed between the Davao Provincial Government and Indigenous representatives confirming that outstanding claim issues have been resolved, thus ensuring the long term protection of the property. Work is ongoing through the National Commission for Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) to manage relationships with affected local communities and indigenous peoples. IUCN welcomes the commitment to follow establish rights negotiation procedures to sensitively ensure the protection of Outstanding Universal Value whilst accommodating the needs of local people.

4.5 Threats

Climate change impact was previously identified as a potentially significant threat to the elevation sensitive vegetation of the MHRWS. IUCN therefore welcomes the MHRWS Monitoring & Assessment Programme for Climate Change Adaptation, which the State Party has submitted. The programme aims to better understand the impacts of climate change on the property's ecological processes, species and abiotic elements. It also attempts to factor in anticipated impacts from visitation and represents a well-developed, science based strategy to combat the potentially unknown impacts of climate variability. The programme details realistic methodologies and a series of pilot projects to test the approaches. It also recognises the potential for climate change impact on the vertical zonation of the site's vegetation communities.

In summary, IUCN appreciates the rapid advances made by the State Party and considers that the nominated property meets the overall conditions of integrity and protection and management as outlined in the Operational Guidelines.

5. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

None.

6. APPLICATION OF THE CRITERIA

The **Mount Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary** (MHRWS) has been nominated under criterion (x).

Criterion (x): Biodiversity and threatened species

MHRWS represents a complete, substantially intact and highly diverse mountain ecosystem, in a significant biogeographic region of the Philippines. Its diversity of plants and animals include globally threatened species as well as a large number of endemic species including those species that exist only in the Philippines, only in Mindanao and only in the nominated property. The fragile tropical “bonsai” forest that crowns the MHRWS epitomizes nature’s bid to survive in adverse conditions. As a result of its semi-isolation and its varied habitat types growing in dissimilar soil and climate conditions, its biodiversity has shown a significantly high level of endemism that has led scientists to believe that there may be more globally unique species waiting to be discovered in the area.

The combination of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems within the boundaries of the property and the large number of species inhabiting each makes the MHRWS home to a total of 1,380 species with 341 Philippine endemics that include critically endangered species such as the iconic Philippine Eagle (*Pithecophaga jefferyi*) and the Philippine Cockatoo (*Cacatua haematuropygia*), as well as the trees *Shorea polysperma*, *Shorea astylosa*, and the orchid *Paphiopedilum adductum*. Its high level of endemism is well exemplified by the proportion of its amphibian (75% endemic) and reptile (84% endemic) species.

MHRWS exhibits segmentation of terrestrial habitats according to elevation. In the lower elevations the agro-ecosystem and remnants of dipterocarp forests house some 246 plant species including significant numbers of endemics such as the globally threatened dipterocarps of the genus *Shorea*. The dipterocarp forest ecosystem at 420-920 m asl is characterized by the presence of large trees and is home to 418 plant and 146 animal species, which include threatened species such as the Mindanao Bleeding-heart dove (*Gallicolumba crinigera*) and Philippine warty pig (*Sus philippensis*). At higher elevations the montane forest ecosystem exhibits numerous species of mosses, lichens and epiphytes. This ecosystem type houses 105 animal species representing all the animal groups found in MHRWS as well as the relatively recently discovered rat species, Hamiguitan hairy-tailed rat (*Batomys hamiguitan*). The fourth ecosystem type is

the typical mossy forest ecosystem characterized by thick mosses covering roots and tree trunks it provides habitat for the Philippine pygmy fruit bat, (*Haplonycteris fischeri*) and the threatened Pointed-snouted tree frog (*Philautus acutirostris*). At the topmost (1160-1200 m asl) is the mossy-pygmy forest ecosystem, adding a unique natural tropical bonsai forest layer to the property. It is the only known habitat in the world of the pitcher plant (*Nepenthes hamiguitanensis*) and the Delias butterfly (*Delias magsadana*).

IUCN considers that the nominated property meets this criterion.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

IUCN recommends that the World Heritage Committee adopt the following draft decision:

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Documents WHC-14/38.COM/8B and WHC-14/38.COM/INF.8B2;
2. Inscribes the **Mount Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary (Philippines)** on the World Heritage List under natural criteria (x).
3. Adopts the following Statement of Outstanding of Outstanding Universal Value:

Brief synthesis

Forming a north-south running mountain ridge along the Pujada Peninsula in the southeastern part of the Eastern Mindanao Biodiversity Corridor, the Mount Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary (MHRWS) has an elevation range of 75-1,637 m above sea level, and provides critical habitat for a range of plant and animal species. The property showcases terrestrial and aquatic habitats and the species that they host at a series of different elevations are responding to highly dissimilar soil and climate conditions. MHRWS provides a sanctuary to a host of globally threatened and endemic flora and fauna species, eight of which are found nowhere else except Mount Hamiguitan. These include critically endangered trees, plants and the iconic Philippine Eagle and Philippine Cockatoo.

Criteria

Criterion (x)

MHRWS represents a complete, substantially intact and highly diverse mountain ecosystem, in a significant biogeographic region of the Philippines. Its diversity of plants and animals include globally threatened species as well as a large number of endemic species including those species that exist only in the Philippines, only in Mindanao and only in the nominated property. The fragile tropical “bonsai” forest that crowns the MHRWS epitomizes nature’s bid to survive in adverse conditions. As a result of its semi-isolation and its varied habitat types growing in dissimilar soil and climate conditions, its biodiversity has shown a significantly high level of endemism that has led scientists to believe that there may be more

globally unique species waiting to be discovered in the area.

The combination of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems within the boundaries of the property and the large number of species inhabiting each makes the MHRWS home to a total of 1,380 species with 341 Philippine endemics that include critically endangered species such as the iconic Philippine Eagle (*Pithecophaga jefferyi*) and the Philippine Cockatoo (*Cacatua haematuropygia*), as well as the trees *Shorea polysperma*, *Shorea astylosa*, and the orchid *Paphiopedilum adductum*. Its high level of endemism is well exemplified by the proportion of its amphibian (75% endemic) and reptile (84% endemic) species.

MHRWS exhibits segmentation of terrestrial habitats according to elevation. In the lower elevations the agro-ecosystem and remnants of dipterocarp forests house some 246 plant species including significant numbers of endemics such as the globally threatened dipterocarps of the genus *Shorea*. The dipterocarp forest ecosystem at 420-920 m asl is characterized by the presence of large trees and is home to 418 plant and 146 animal species, which include threatened species such as the Mindanao Bleeding-heart dove (*Gallinula crinigera*) and Philippine warty pig (*Sus philippensis*). At higher elevations the montane forest ecosystem exhibits numerous species of mosses, lichens and epiphytes. This ecosystem type houses 105 animal species representing all the animal groups found in MHRWS as well as the relatively recently discovered rat species, Hamiguitan hairy-tailed rat (*Batomys hamiguitan*). The fourth ecosystem type is the typical mossy forest ecosystem characterized by thick mosses covering roots and tree trunks; it provides habitat for the Philippine pygmy fruit bat, (*Haplonycteris fischeri*) and the threatened Pointed-snouted tree frog (*Philautus acutirostris*). At the topmost (1160-1200 m asl) is the mossy-pygmy forest ecosystem, adding a unique natural tropical bonsai forest layer to the property. It is the only known habitat in the world of the pitcher plant (*Nepenthes hamiguitanensis*) and the Delias butterfly (*Delias magsadana*).

Integrity

The property is substantially intact and of adequate size to provide for the conservation of its biodiversity and other natural resources. It remains well preserved and intact as evidenced by the results of studies and ongoing monitoring. MHRWS protects typical mountain ecosystems of the biogeographic region and include the agro-ecosystem, dipterocarp, montane, mossy, and mossy-pygmy forests. These ecosystems harbour an assemblage of endemic, rare and economically important flora and fauna. The level of vegetative cover indicates that the property is in relatively pristine condition with its surface area covered by a mix of closed and open canopy forest and smaller areas of brush land. The terrestrial and aquatic habitats are well preserved and a number of globally threatened and endemic species rely on or occur within the MHRWS. MHRWS's marked vertical zonation of vegetation and associated habitats makes it particularly vulnerable to climate change impact.

Protection and management requirements

The property straddles two municipalities and one city: San Isidro Municipality, Governor Generoso Municipality and the City of Mati, in the Province of Davao Oriental, and totals an area of 16,923 ha with a buffer zone of 9,729 ha. The MHRWS is protected through several protected area regulations and is a component of the Philippines' National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS). Several layers of national and provincial legislation and policies serve to protect the property and guide management. Apart from delineating the boundaries of the property, these laws prohibit incompatible activities such as logging, mining, exploration or surveying for energy resources inside the property. Responsibility for enforcement is shared by both the national and local government agencies in partnership with other stakeholders.

The protection of MHRWS is further strengthened by the engagement with and involvement of local and indigenous communities living in its periphery in the management of the property. Their lifestyles and spiritual beliefs are based on respect for the environment and its biodiversity and they have, over time, subtly molded their way of life to ensure the sustainable use of their resources. At the same time, the harsh conditions of the mountain range serve as a deterrent for other human settlements that do not conform to a similarly symbiotic lifestyle. Threats in and around the property include illegal collection of wildlife, mining, development pressures, potential pressures and impacts from tourism and climate change. Management authorities have implemented a monitoring and research programme to anticipate climate change effects on the biota and try to mitigate consequent impacts. Ongoing monitoring will be needed to predict and respond to such impacts.

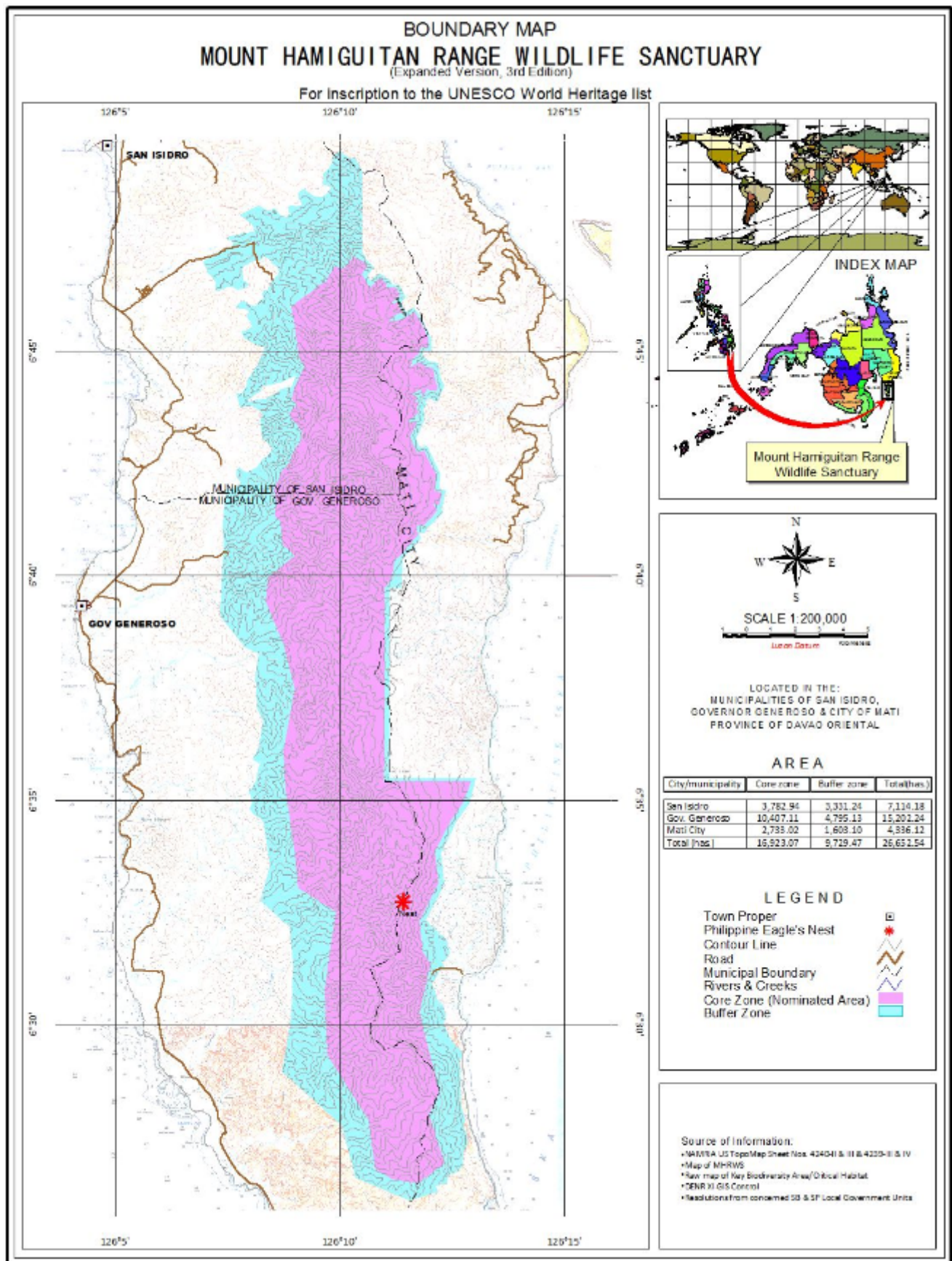
The Mount Hamiguitan Protected Area Management Board (PAMB) oversees protection and management of the property according to the approved MHRWS Management Plan of 2011. The Protected Area Superintendents Office (PASO) implements the activities set down in the plan as well as the policies and directives issued by the PAMB. Together with the "Bantay Gubat" personnel from the three municipalities with territorial jurisdiction over the nominated property, the PASO conducts regular monitoring and patrol activities over the core and buffer zones. A five year visitor and tourism management plan is in place to ensure the effective management of use, and should be kept updated. The municipalities overlapping the property have aligned their tourism and development plans to the Management Plan of MHRWS, helping to ensure that the importance of protection of the property will be given the necessary recognition and consideration and that development will not hamper or detract from the conservation and protection of the biodiversity of MHRWS.

4. Commends the State Party and the range of stakeholders in the nominated property for their efficient and effective action to address concerns related to the property's integrity, protection and management, as previously raised by the World Heritage Committee.

5. Encourages the State Party to continue efforts to work collaboratively with local communities and indigenous peoples on the management of the property and to ensure the equitable access and sharing of benefits, including those that may accrue from tourism.

6. Further encourages the State Party, in consultation with communities and other stakeholders, to consider the possible further nomination of serial extensions to the property to include other protected areas with highly significant biodiversity values on Mindanao, provided that these areas meet the integrity, protection and management requirements for inclusion on the World Heritage List.

Map 1: Nominated property and buffer zone



A. NATURAL PROPERTIES

A.3 MINOR BOUNDARY MODIFICATIONS OF NATURAL PROPERTIES

LATIN AMERICA / CARIBBEAN

DARIEN NATIONAL PARK

PANAMA

WORLD HERITAGE MINOR BOUNDARY MODIFICATION PROPOSAL – IUCN TECHNICAL EVALUATION

DARIEN NATIONAL PARK (PANAMA) – ID No. 159 Bis

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Darien National Park was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1981, under natural criteria (vii), (ix) and (x). The property has an area of c. 579,000 ha according to the World Heritage Centre's website, and has a common boundary with Los Katíos National Park World Heritage property in Colombia. The property has had little consideration from the World Heritage Committee since inscription, but benefits from a new retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value approved in 2013.

2. SUMMARY OF PROPOSED BOUNDARY MODIFICATION

The proposed modification would add an area of approximately 31,628ha to the existing property, resulting in a new area of 610,628ha. This represents an increase of c.5.4% in the total area of the property.

The proposal is based on "Indicative Plan for Darien Zoning" (Plan Indicativo de Ordenamiento Territorial de Darién in the Spanish language letter) and also refers to the 2004 management plan for Darien National Park and additional documents listed in a brief bibliography.

The proposal is to add three areas contiguous with the property, and comprising northward extensions in the central and western parts of the property. These areas are all stated to be both "fragile" and highly valuable but otherwise are not described in great detail in the proposal:

1. Punta Garachiné, a peninsula reaching into the Pacific harboring a rare tropical dry forest;
2. A strip of the western flank of Pirre Mountain (Cerro Pirre);
3. The eastern flank of Pirre Mountain (Cerro Pirre).

3. IMPACT ON OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE

IUCN has consulted reviewers in its network regarding the proposal, and considered it via the IUCN World Heritage Panel. It appears that the proposal is clearly to be welcomed as a proactive addition of areas of high conservation significance to the property, with some additional attributes not already represented inside its boundaries. The dry forest that would be added is of particular conservation importance, and a scarce kind of forest type in Panama and through the Pacific coast of Central America. The proposal thus reinforces the integrity of the property, under at least criteria (ix) and (x), and would not entail a substantial

reconfiguration of the property, nor any fundamental change in its Outstanding Universal Value. No areas are proposed for excision from the property.

The documentation submitted raises a number of points of clarification required from the State Party to ensure that the additional area is clear and appropriate:

- a) The mapping provided is relatively limited and at a large scale, so the areas that are proposed for addition are not fully clear, and their boundaries are not defined at the level specified in the Operational Guidelines.
- b) Whilst the added value of the new areas is clear in general terms, it would be of value to secure more detailed information on the values, integrity and protection and management of the property as whole with the relevant additions, as well as the new areas to be added.
- c) Darien is particularly noted as the first protected area in Central America which included conservation and management of cultural resources in its management objectives. It is stated but not specified that the additions would have to be based on consultation with local communities. It would be important to ensure that the proposals have included appropriate consultation and involvement of local and indigenous communities. In further discussion with the State Party and World Heritage Centre, the State Party has provided information that consultation has taken place, as well as the documentation of the participants at two consultation meetings.
- d) The proposal notes that at the national level, the additions would have to be formalized through an "amendment" (modificación) of Executive Order 21 (dated 07 August 1980 and declaring Darien National Park). It is further stated that such amendment would be formalized "after June 2013", but the formalization is not confirmed in the proposal. In further discussion with the State Party and the World Heritage Centre, the State Party confirms the approval process is already well advanced and the Executive Decree will be adopted shortly. The State Party will send the Decree as soon as it is approved.

Provided the decree is approved, and the above information is provided, IUCN considers that the boundary modification could be approved through the minor boundary modification process; however given the need for the above clarifications, IUCN recommends that the Committee refer the proposal back to the State Party for the above further clarifications.

4. OTHER COMMENTS

Although beyond the specific scope of the minor boundary modification proposal, IUCN notes that the revision of the boundaries could also provide an opportunity for the State Party to further consider the opportunities to reflect on other means to also revise boundaries to increase protection and management effectiveness, including the options to:

- a) establish a buffer zone for the property, taking advantage of relevant processes conducted post inscription (designation of a biosphere reserve and land-use planning at the level of Darien Province);
- b) consider possible additions of marine areas adjoining coastal sections of the property;
- c) use the opportunity of the improvement of the property boundaries to consider options to also maximise synergy with Los Katíos National Park (Colombia), considering the transboundary setting and shared boundary of these two properties.

5. RECOMMENDATION

IUCN recommends that the World Heritage Committee adopt the following draft decision:

The World Heritage Committee,

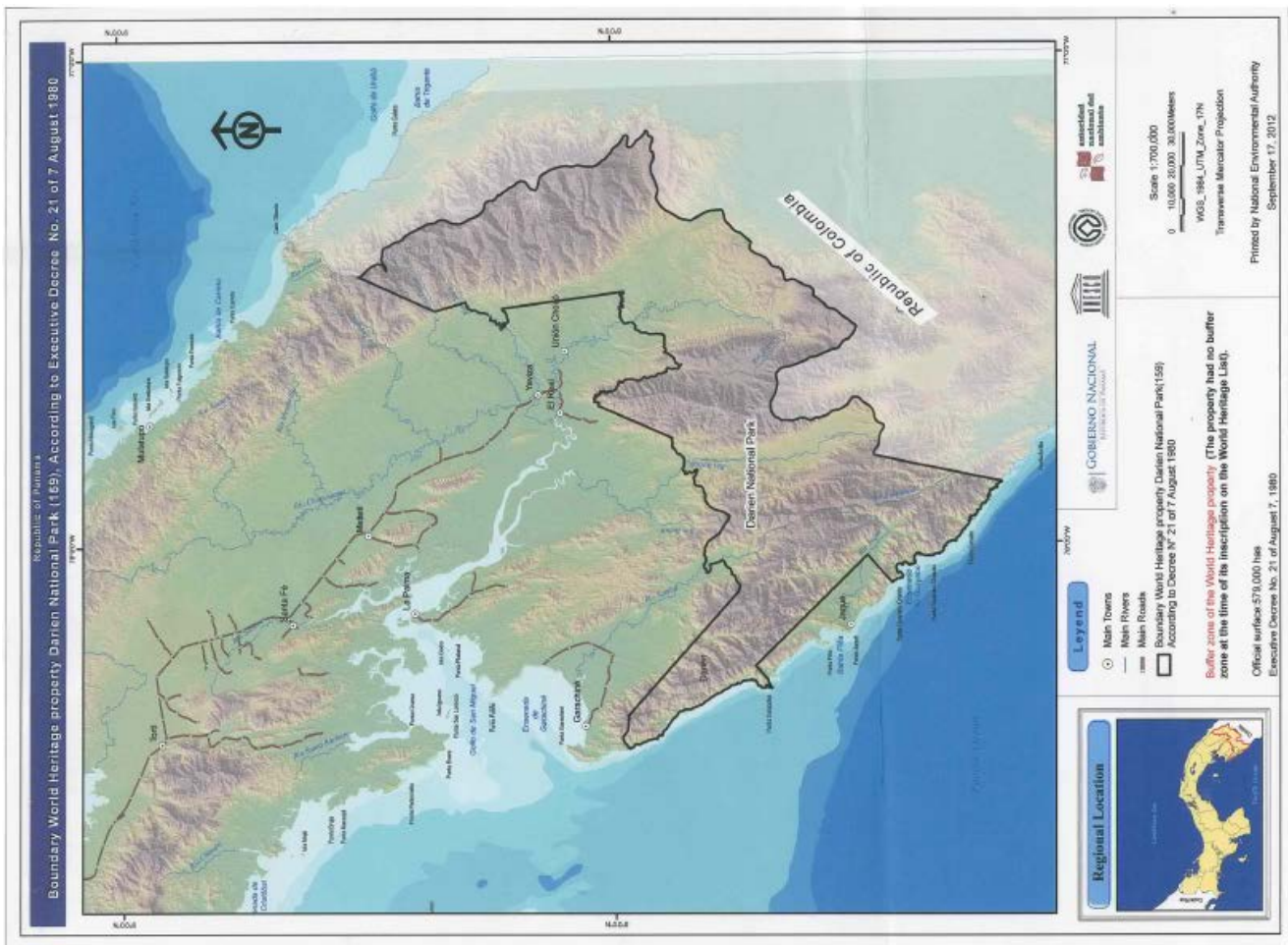
1. Having examined Documents WHC-14/38.COM/8B and WHC-14/38.COM/INF.8B2;

2. Refers the minor boundary modification of **Darien National Park (Panama)** back to the State Party, to allow the State Party to:

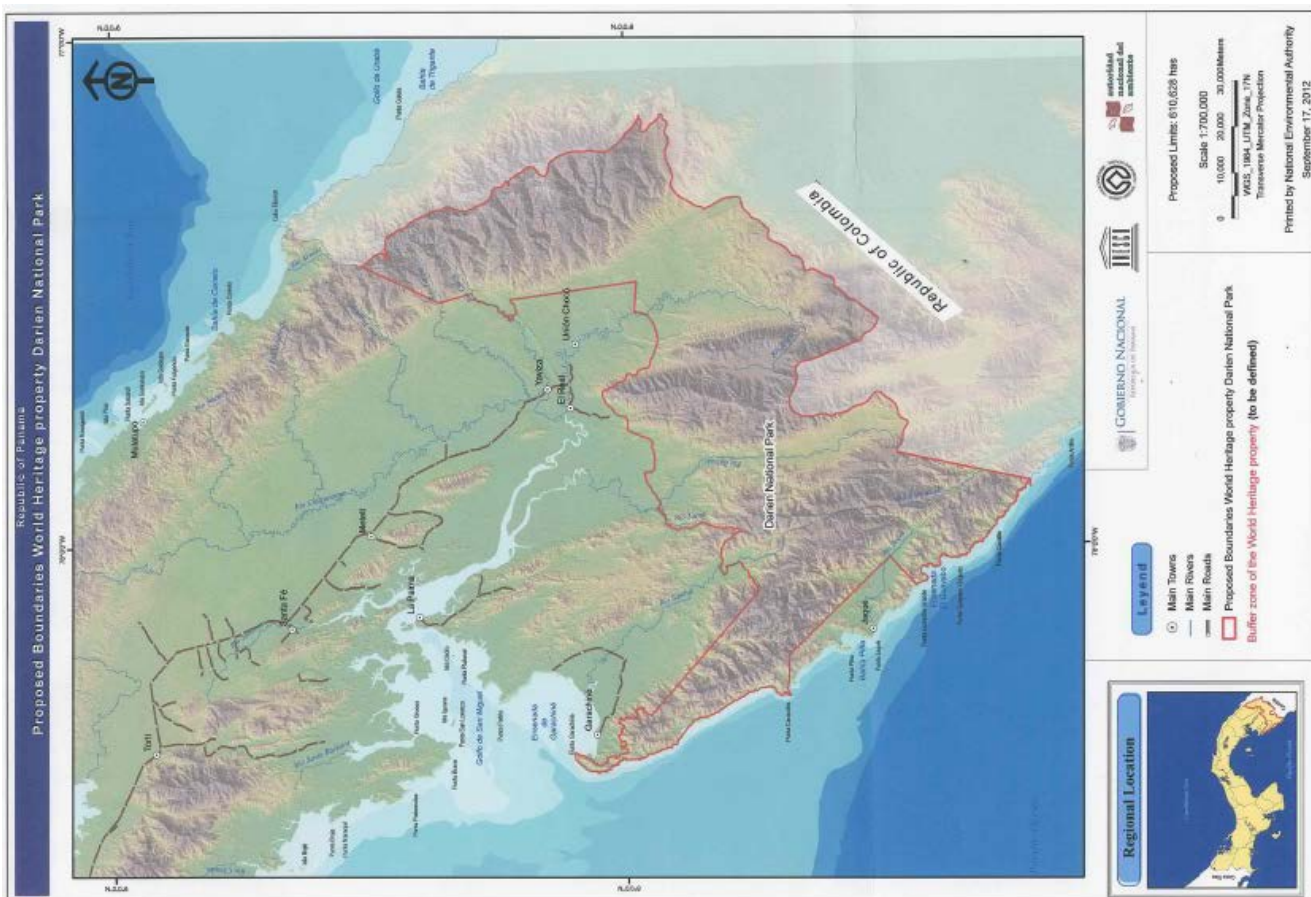
- a) provide a large scale map indicating the precise boundaries of the new additions to the property, and their relationship to the existing boundary of the property;
- b) provide a specific and concise statement on the key values in each of the new areas proposed for addition to the property, and how they will be managed, together with details of the management plan for the property on its revised boundary;
- c) confirm the necessary legal decrees referred to in the proposal, to enable protection of the property, have been formally approved;
- d) confirm, and provide supporting information, on the necessary consultation with indigenous and local peoples in support of the proposed addition of the new areas to the property.

3. Encourages the State Party of Panama, with the support of IUCN and the World Heritage Centre, to consider further options to strengthen the protection and management of the property, taking account of the IUCN evaluation of the minor boundary modification, and in consultation with the State Party of Colombia on matters related to transboundary confirmation with the adjacent World Heritage property of Los Katíos National Park.

Map 1: Existing property's boundaries



Map 2: Proposed minor boundary modification



B. MIXED PROPERTIES

B2. MINOR BOUNDARY MODIFICATIONS OF MIXED PROPERTIES

ASIA / PACIFIC

TASMANIAN WILDERNESS

AUSTRALIA

WORLD HERITAGE MINOR BOUNDARY MODIFICATION PROPOSAL – IUCN TECHNICAL EVALUATION

TASMANIAN WILDERNESS (AUSTRALIA) – ID No. 181 sexes

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Tasmanian Wilderness, Australia, is a mixed property. Initially inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1982 (Decision **CONF 015 VIII.20**), the property was subsequently extended in 1989 (Decision **CONF 004 XV.A**). Boundary modifications were made with the support of both IUCN and ICOMOS (decisions **34COM 7B.38** and **36COM 8B.45**) to add areas to the property.

The World Heritage Committee had also previously noted the potential for additional areas to be included in the property, and in **32COM 7B.41** at point 5, the Committee noted that it:

Reiterates its request to the State Party to consider, at its own discretion, extension of the property to include appropriate areas of tall eucalyptus forest, having regard to the advice of IUCN; and also further requests the State Party to consider, at its own discretion, extension of the property to include appropriate cultural sites reflecting the wider context of Aboriginal land-use practices, and the possibility of re-nominating the property as a cultural landscape.

This request was reiterated in decisions **34COM 7B.38** and most recently in **36COM 8B.45**.

A further boundary modification was approved by the Committee, at the request of the State Party of Australia at the 37th Session of the Committee (decision **37COM 8B.44**). This included fourteen areas adjoining the property, located along the northern and eastern boundary of the property, encompassing extensive stands of tall eucalypt forest, associated rainforest, significant karst and glacial landforms as well as alpine and sub-alpine environments. The total measured area of the additional areas included through the most recent boundary modification was 172,500ha. The total area inscribed in total is 1,584,460 ha.

The below evaluation by IUCN relates to the natural values which are cited as the basis of the proposed boundary modification, and the cultural values will be considered by ICOMOS.

2. SUMMARY OF PROPOSED BOUNDARY MODIFICATION

The proposal for the minor boundary modification by the State Party that has now been submitted is for a 4.7% reduction in the area of the property, through a removal of 74,039 ha, all of which is located in the

areas that were added to the property in 2013, at the request of the State Party. This figure represents a removal of 43% of the area that was included in the property in 2013.

The proposal for the modification is very short, being only 9 pages in length. In terms of the values of the property, the justification given for excluding areas is to “remove a number of areas in the extension approved by the Committee in June 2013 that contain pine and eucalypt plantations and previously logged forest. The Australian Government considers these areas detract from the Outstanding Universal Value of the property and its overall integrity and that the assessment work that included such areas in the property did not sufficiently take this in to account.” The areas proposed for removal are listed in 13 blocks, and the State Party provides a one-line justification for each removal in Table 2 of the proposal documentation.

3. IMPACT ON OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE

IUCN has reviewed the proposal, and also considered the past documentation available on the property including the two technical documents that were submitted by the State Party in support of the inclusion of the same areas in 2013 (the State Party submitted two illustrated reports to support the previous proposal, being documents of 28 and 54 pages respectively).

In addition IUCN received review information submitted in both 2013, and in 2014, and a number of representations made to IUCN regarding the proposal from stakeholders. IUCN has also considered the proposal in relation to the long history of consideration of the property by the World Heritage Committee, and the Committee’s past decisions and recommendations, and IUCN’s past advice.

IUCN notes that the new proposal would impact negatively on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property. This is made clear in the State Party’s documentation which states that the proposal “has resulted in the loss of some attributes”, and speaks of “minimising the impact on the integrity and coherence of the boundary”. These statements lead to a clear conclusion that the proposal could not be entertained as a minor boundary modification, since such a modification should not impact on Outstanding Universal Value.

In detail, the scale of the negative impact cannot be fully documented from the submission by the State Party, as it contains no detailed justifications or explanations of the impact, and the main table providing justification contains simple statements that

the 13 areas proposed for removal either “contain logged/degraded areas” or “contain plantations and logged/degraded areas”. No mapping or more specific analysis regarding the natural and cultural values of these areas is provided, nor the extent or location of previously logged areas or plantations.

This relatively scant information contrasts with the much more extensive justification provided previously by the State Party, in support of the inclusion of these same areas at the previous session of the World Heritage Committee in 2013. This included specific documentation of the natural values that would be included through the previous modification, and how integrity would be positively reinforced. The fact that there were some recovering previously logged areas was also fully noted in the previous submission, and plantations and their restoration were also specifically mentioned. The previously logged areas were set in a mosaic of surrounding areas that clearly carried significant attributes related to the natural World Heritage criteria. Thus the essential issue of the inclusion of these areas, and the importance of restoration of the limited logging and plantation areas that were included was considered by the Committee, and by IUCN in framing its previous advice. IUCN was also able to confirm the natural values present in these areas, and how these contributed to the integrity of the property.

Different detailed analyses of the newly proposed excisions reach similar conclusions regarding the issues of inclusion of logged areas and plantations. These suggest that little of the area proposed for excision corresponds to plantation or previous logging. c.85% of the area proposed for excision is natural forest - c.45% being old growth forest (c.30,000ha). Only 10% of the area is regenerating from logging since 1960 and only c.4% of the area is regarded as having been heavily disturbed. Only 8ha of forest plantation (0.01%) appears to be included in the areas proposed for excision. Of this plantation, only one sliver is recently cleared pine plantation, possibly due to a mapping error that could be readily clarified.

The proposed excisions would reduce integrity of key natural attributes of the property, notably tall-eucalypt forest connectivity on the eastern boundary of the property. Whilst a detailed evaluation of the proposed boundaries would need improved mapping, the proposals also appear to reinstate threats that have previously been noted as being of concern by the World Heritage Committee, such as increasing the potential for adjoining logging to impact the property, or create additional risks in relation to fire management. The boundaries as drawn appear also to be somewhat arbitrary in their configuration to natural features, and so do not appear appropriate in relation to providing effective protection of the property. No specific information is provided in relation to the configuration of boundaries.

The Committee also may wish to note concerns raised by the Australian Senate, who passed a motion on 12th February 2014 requesting that the Committee reject

the modification, and concerns raised by NGOs, and the reported concerns of the Forest Industries Association of Tasmania on the impact of the proposed modification on the agreement that underpinned the previous boundary modification as a long term solution.

In conclusion, IUCN is required to advise the Committee if the proposed modification can be accepted or not as a minor boundary modification. To be acceptable the boundary modification should be one that “has not a significant impact on the extent of the property nor affects its Outstanding Universal Value.”

In terms of size IUCN considers that the proposal as an excision of c.5% of the property is significant due the reduction of the extent of the property that would result.

In terms of Outstanding Universal Value, under natural criteria, IUCN considers it is significant, and that the proposed excisions would:

- a) remove attributes that were justified as contributing to Outstanding Universal Value by the previous boundary modification, including large areas of natural old growth forests;
- b) reduce the integrity of the property through loss of habitat connectivity on its eastern edge, increasing threats adjacent to the property boundary, and adopting property boundaries that do not provide adequate protection and management to the property. The proposal may also not have the support of key stakeholders who have been supportive of the boundary as previously defined.

To the extent that the proposals would remove previously logged forests and plantations, IUCN notes that these occupy only c.10% of the area proposed for removal, and that these areas were explicitly identified for restoration in the previous boundary modification, considered by IUCN in its advice, and thus have been taken account of in the Committee’s previous determination of the boundary.

IUCN further notes boundary modifications, whether minor or significant, should maintain or strengthen the recognition and protection of Outstanding Universal Value, and a simple excision of inscribed areas from a World Heritage property cannot achieve this goal. The type of change proposed in this case clearly cannot, on principle, be considered appropriate for approval via the minor boundary modification process.

IUCN recommends that should the State Party wish to recommend further boundary modifications to the property, they should ensure that these strengthen the integrity and protection and management of the property. Prior discussion with the World Heritage Centre, IUCN and ICOMOS, in line with the principles of the upstream process may be relevant, in this eventuality.

If the State Party considers there are very small areas, such as the reported small area of pine plantation included as a possible cadastral error in boundary mapping that should be clarified, these matters can be considered with the World Heritage Centre to advise on the appropriate procedures.

For the above reasons IUCN considers that the present proposal is clearly inappropriate for consideration as a minor boundary modification, and should not be approved by the World Heritage Committee.

4. OTHER COMMENTS

None.

5. RECOMMENDATION

IUCN recommends that the World Heritage Committee adopt the following draft decision:

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Documents WHC-14/38.COM/8B and WHC-14/38.COM/INF.8B2;
2. Recalling its previous decisions on the Tasmanian Wilderness (Australia), including **32COM 7B.41**, **34COM 7B.38**, **36 COM 8B.45** and **37 COM 8B.44**;
3. Does not approve the proposed minor modification of the boundaries of the **Tasmanian Wilderness (Australia)**.

Map 1: World Heritage property and proposed minor boundary modification



Source: Australian Government, Department of the Environment