

JOINT REPORT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN, THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC AND THE
REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN
on the implementation of the recommendations of the World Heritage Centre
(Decision: 42 COM 7B.69; Property: Western Tien-Shan)

Background

Western Tien-Shan is a natural heritage site jointly nominated for the World Cultural and Natural Heritage List by the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic and the Republic of Uzbekistan. In 2016 Western Tien-Shan was successfully inscribed into the World Heritage List during the 40th session of the World Heritage Committee (Decision 40 COM 8B.9), which took place in Istanbul, Turkey from 10 to 20 July, on the basis of criterion (x).

Decision: 42 COM 7B.69

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/18/42.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decision **40 COM 8B.9**, adopted at its 40th session (Istanbul/UNESCO, 2016),
3. Regretting that the State Party of Kyrgyzstan did not submit a report on the state of conservation of the Kyrgyz components of the property, recalls that for transboundary properties, States Parties should submit a joint report, rather than individual reports on their national components, and strongly encourages all three States Parties involved in this serial transnational property to submit joint reports in the future;
4. Noting the elaboration of a trilateral Memorandum of Cooperation on protection and management of the property and the delay in signing it, urges all three States Parties to complete the signing of the Memorandum as soon as possible, and requests them to expedite the actions required for its operationalization, particularly with regards to the establishment of a joint steering committee which would assume coordinating functions;
5. Reiterates its request to the States Parties to work in consultation with IUCN to build capacity on transnational management of the property;
6. Notes the information provided by the State Party of Uzbekistan regarding the decrees adopted for the management of the Bashkizilsay and Maydantal areas of the Chatkal Biosphere Reserve component of the property, and requests the State Party to clarify the role of the Uzbekistan National Railway Company in the protection of the property, and to provide more detailed information regarding the changes in the management system resulting from these decrees, and their possible impacts on the conservation of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property;
7. Also noting the information provided by the State Party of Kazakhstan regarding the revision of the boundaries on the Sayram-Ugam component of the property, expresses its concern that some of the proposed boundary changes would exclude a significant area of the property, to be instead included in its buffer zone, and also recalls that changes to the boundaries should only be proposed with the aim of enhancing representation and protection of the property's OUV;
8. Also reiterates its request to the States Parties to review and rationalize the boundaries of the components of the property and their buffer zones to ensure that they fully correspond to criterion (x), follow ecological principles and address connectivity, exclude areas originally included for their paleontological values and to develop, as a matter of priority, a joint proposal for a significant boundary modification in accordance with Paragraph 165 of the *Operational Guidelines*, and encourages the States Parties to seek further advice from IUCN on the proposal before submitting it;
9. Encourages the States Parties to consider as part of the boundary modification process, the potential of the property to also meet criterion (ix), in addition to criterion (x);

10. Further requests the States Parties to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2019**, a joint updated report on the state of conservation of the entire property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 44th session in 2020.

REPORT

Following the request to submit the State of Conservation report, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic and the Republic of Uzbekistan are presenting the joint report to provide answers/comments on the specific requests given in Decision: 42 COM 7B.69.

Noting the elaboration of a trilateral Memorandum of Cooperation on protection and management of the property and the delay in signing it, urges all three States Parties to complete the signing of the Memorandum as soon as possible, and requests them to expedite the actions required for its operationalization, particularly with regards to the establishment of a joint steering committee which would assume coordinating functions;

For the demonstrating of countries' commitment to ensuring an adequate system for managing and protecting for components of natural heritage sites, a draft of Memorandum of Understanding has been developed between the Committee for Forestry and Wildlife of the Ministry of Agriculture of Kazakhstan, the State Agency for Environmental Protection and Forestry under the Government of Kyrgyzstan and the State Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Ecology and Protection of the environment for the management and protection of the UNESCO World Natural Heritage serial transboundary site "Western Tien-Shan". This MoU reflects the intentions of the parties to ensure the protection of the specially protected natural territories of the transboundary property "Western Tien-Shan". The abovementioned document was signed by representatives of all three countries in February 2019 and is provided in Appendix A.

The implementation of activities listed in the Memorandum is ongoing, now at the stage of the establishment of a regional working group to coordinate the improvement of management and protection mechanisms, as well as annual monitoring of the conservation status of the objects of the nomination and so on.

Reiterates its request to the States Parties to work in consultation with IUCN to build capacity on transnational management of the property;

In 2018-2019 there were three regional meetings implemented by IUCN ECARO and the IUCN World Heritage Programme in the frames of the project "Achieving Excellence in the Nomination and Management of World Heritage in Central Asia", held in Bishkek (June 19-20, 2018 and October 10-12, 2019) and Tashkent (November 26-28, 2018) dedicated to identifying possible nominations for the inscription in the World Heritage List. Issues and threats to managing the Western Tien-Shan Property were discussed at these meetings.

Another meeting – a regional capacity development workshop "Management of natural World Heritage sites in Central Asia" – was held in Almaty on April 23-24, 2019 in the frames of the same project. One of the goals of the workshop was to present the assessment results of the World Heritage sites' management effectiveness. This work was carried out for Central Asian natural WH sites based on the methodology developed by IUCN. The results were presented for Tajik National Park, Saryarka – Steppe and Lakes of Northern Kazakhstan, and Western Tien Shan. The latter was given special attention because of the transboundary nature of the site. The discussion of the results was very fruitful and the workshop served as a platform for the

representatives of State Parties to discuss the current issues of the site, as well as the details of further cooperation.

The meeting brought together state authorities, protected areas' administration and other stakeholders (non-governmental organizations, academia, etc.) to foster discussion of the problems for World Heritage sites' management in the region and possible solutions for them. The objectives of the workshop included providing knowledge of the key principles of World Heritage sites' management; improving the capacity of site managers and experts for effective World Heritage management; and networking and exchange of knowledge among workshop participants and international experts.

Notes the information provided by the State Party of Uzbekistan regarding the decrees adopted for the management of the Bashkizilsay and Maydantal areas of the Chatkal Biosphere Reserve component of the property, and requests the State Party to clarify the role of the Uzbekistan National Railway Company in the protection of the property, and to provide more detailed information regarding the changes in the management system resulting from these decrees, and their possible impacts on the conservation of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property;

A number of actions have been taken to improve the management system of the Chatkal State Biosphere Zapovednik during the 2016-2019, including the following:

1) According to the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. P-4765, 20.12.2016 "On measures for the further development of the Ugam-Chatkal National Park", the Bashkizilsay part of Chatkal State Biosphere Zapovednik was given under management of "Uzbekistan Temir Yollari" National Railway Company for the organization of the separate reserve (Zakaznik), but with reservation of borders of this site and strongly protected regime.

2) According to the Decree of the President No. PD-2966 of 11/05/2017 "On the organization of activities of the State Committee of Forestry of the Republic of Uzbekistan" Ugam-Chatkal National Park and Chatkal State Biosphere Zapovednik (Maydantal site) were transferred to the system of the State Committee of Forestry.

3) However, the presence on the territory of the zakaznik with strict protection regime (Bashkizilsay) contributed to the emergence of contradictions with respect to existing national legislation. Due to the fact, a decision was subsequently made to reorganize the preserve (zakaznik) into a biosphere reserve.

By the Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated May 16, 2018 No. 367, the Ugam-Chatkal State Biosphere Reserve was established on the basis of the reserve under the supervision of "Uzbekistan Temir Yollari" National Railway Company.

4) By the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PP-4247 dated 03/20/2019. Chatkal State Biosphere Zapovednik has been transferred to the system of the State Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Ecology and Environmental Protection.

5) In framework of the UNDP/GEF/State Committee for Ecology and environment protection project "Sustainable Natural Resource Use and Forest Management in Key Mountainous Areas Important for Globally Significant Biodiversity" (2017-2021), it is carrying out organization a buffer zone of the Chatkal State Biosphere Zapovednik and its further development.

6) In present time in framework of the UNDP/GEF/State Ecology Committee project "Sustainable Natural Resource Use and Forest Management in Key Mountainous Areas Important for Globally Significant Biodiversity" Sustainable Development Management Plans of Chatkal State Biosphere Zapovednik and Ugam-Chatkal State Biosphere Reserve for 2017-2021 are being developed.

So, Chatkal State Biosphere Zapovednik is managed by the State Committee for Ecology and Environment Protection. Ugam-Chatkal State Biosphere Reserve is managed by “Uzbekistan Temir Yollari” National Railway Company. The general activity of these protected areas is controlled by the State Committee for Ecology and Environment Protection. No construction is planned on the territory of the buffer zone around the Bashkizilsay site and other activities that could affect the universal outstanding value of the property. Currently, the Maydantal site is surrounded by the territory of Ugam-Chatkal State National Natural Park, where the corresponding protection regime is in force. In the future, in agreement with the administration of the park, part of its territory is planned to organize a buffer zone for the Maydantal site.

Concerning the possible impact of Uzbekistan National Railway Company on the outstanding universal value of the property, it is expected to have positive influence:

- the protection regime stays as strict as it was before, ensuring adequate protection,
- there is additional material-technical base provided by the new management body,
- the budget funding is intended to stay, but will be supplemented by Uzbekistan Temir Yollari JSC own funds. Now the national budget allocates 353 825 000 Uzbek sums (about 40,000 USD), covering staff wages, while the funds of Uzbekistan Temir Yollari JSC are 8 265 748 000 sums (about 900,000 USD).

Also noting the information provided by the State Party of Kazakhstan regarding the revision of the boundaries on the Sayram-Ugam component of the property, expresses its concern that some of the proposed boundary changes would exclude a significant area of the property, to be instead included in its buffer zone, and also recalls that changes to the boundaries should only be proposed with the aim of enhancing representation and protection of the property’s OUV;

The borders of components situated on the territory of Sayram-Ugam National Nature Park were reconsidered, as provided in the previous SOC report in 2018. The areas of limited economic use were proposed for inclusion into the buffer zone of the property. Some other technical mistakes of the borders of the property were also fixed.

After exclusion of the areas of limited economic use from the territory of the property and their inclusion into the buffer zone, the territory of the Sayram-Ugam National Nature Park encloses the area of 88,425 hectares and the territory of its buffer zone – 87,628 hectares. The total territory of this component or the management/ land use type didn’t change. Also, the safeguarding of the outstanding universal value of the property didn’t change as well, since the land use regime of this territory didn’t change from strict protection to limited economic use, it was always of limited economic use and incorrectly put into the core zone category.

Also reiterates its request to the States Parties to review and rationalize the boundaries of the components of the property and their buffer zones to ensure that they fully correspond to criterion (x), follow ecological principles and address connectivity, exclude areas originally included for their paleontological values and to develop, as a matter of priority, a joint proposal for a significant boundary modification in accordance with Paragraph 165 of the Operational Guidelines, and encourages the States Parties to seek further advice from IUCN on the proposal before submitting it;

Encourages the States Parties to consider as part of the boundary modification process, the potential of the property to also meet criterion (ix), in addition to criterion (x);

The corresponding documents for joint proposal for boundary modification following the recommendations are being developed. The revision of the property to also meet criterion (ix) is being discussed by the Member States.

Appendix A. The signed Memorandum of Understanding

MEMORANDUM

between the State Agency for Environmental Protection and Forestry under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Forestry and Wildlife Committee of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the State Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Ecology and Environmental Protection on the management and protection of the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Western Tien Shan

The Forestry and Wildlife Committee of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic Of Kazakhstan, the State Agency for Environmental Protection and Forestry under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, and the State Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Ecology and Environmental Protection, hereinafter referred to as "the Parties",

based on friendly relations existing between states of the Parties and interests in further expansion and deepening of cooperation in the field of protection of biological resources and objects of nature,

conscious that every generation of people must ensure the conservation of natural resources and objects of nature of global significance for transmission to the future generation,

guided by the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage adopted in 1972 and the Treaty on Eternal Friendship between the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic and the Republic of Uzbekistan

in order to create effective mechanisms for the management and protection of the trans-boundary serial site of Western Tien Shan, included to the UNESCO World Heritage Site,

have agreed as follows:

Article 1

In accordance with the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972), Guidance on the Implementation of the Convention, national legislation of their states in the field of environmental protection and protected natural areas, the Parties agree on the need to protect components of the trans-boundary serial site of Western Tien Shan to ensure their preservation within the territories of their states and authorities.

The Parties shall develop cooperation on issues related to the components of the trans-boundary serial site of Western Tien Shan, through consultations based on the principles of equality, mutual benefit and partnership.

The list of protected natural areas, which are components of the trans-boundary serial site of Western Tien Shan, is attached to this Memorandum (Annex 1) and is its integral part.

Article 2

In order to coordinate efforts to protect the trans-boundary serial site of Western Tien Shan within the territories of its states and authorities, the Parties agree on the need to establish the Regional Committee composed of representatives of the responsible authorities and scientific organizations of the Parties.

By the agreement of the parties, additional experts from each Party may be included in the Regional Committee. All decisions of the Regional Committee shall be taken by consensus.

Article 3

Meetings of the Regional Committee shall be held by agreement of the Parties to discuss issues related to the improvement of national control mechanisms for the management and protection of the trans-boundary serial site of Western Tien Shan.

If necessary, the organization of teleconferences between members of the Regional Committee is envisaged.

The Parties independently monitor the state of preservation of components of the trans-boundary serial site of Western Tien Shan within the territories of their states on an annual basis and inform each other about the monitoring results.

Article 4

The Parties agreed that each Party independently develops and adopts plans and programs for the protection, improvement of the management system and conservation of components of the trans-boundary serial site of Western Tien Shan at the national level, based on the results of monitoring the state of sites within the territories of its states.

The Regional Committee organizes a system for collecting monitoring data on the trans-boundary serial site of Western Tien Shan, experience exchange, and develops general five-year Framework Plan on the Management of the trans-boundary serial site of Western Tien Shan, approved by the Parties. It shall be based on the national management plans for its constituent components - protected natural areas

Article 5

In case of a serious negative impact on components of the trans-boundary serial site of Western Tien Shan, the Parties shall inform UNESCO World Heritage Center. If necessary, additional meetings of the Regional Committee can be held to take joint measures to eliminate negative consequences of an impact

Article 6

Within the framework of the trans-boundary serial site of Western Tien Shan, the Parties welcome experience exchange, as well as consulting and technical assistance in the management,

conservation and use of components of the object provided by specialists and scientists in the field of Biology, Nature Management, Tourism, Management and Use of Natural Heritage.

Article 7

In order to preserve components of the trans-boundary serial site of Western Tien Shan, the Parties intend to enhance the level of international exchange and cooperation through the implementation of joint educational and environmental programs, exhibitions, scientific investigations and works in the field of management of the components of the object in accordance with the national legislation of the Parties.

Article 8

The Parties support publicity in promoting the trans-boundary serial nomination of Western Tien Shan among the broad local and international community by posting materials in media and Internet resources, as well as by publishing in scientific publications in accordance with the national legislation of the Parties.

Article 9

The Parties welcome the assistance in providing necessary financial support to the components of the trans-boundary serial site of Western Tien Shan by interested donors and sponsoring organizations for managing and preserving the components of the object.

Article 10

The terms and procedure for the implementation of certain provisions of this Memorandum are determined by the attached Action Plan (Annex 2), which is an integral part of the Memorandum. The provisions of this Memorandum shall not affect the rights and obligations of the Parties arising from other international treaties to which the Parties or their States are parties.

Article 11

By mutual agreement of the Parties, this Memorandum may be amended and supplemented by separate Protocols, which shall be an integral part of this Memorandum.

Any disputes that may arise between the Parties related to the protection and management of the trans-boundary serial site of Western Tien Shan, as well as the application and interpretation of this Memorandum, shall be resolved through consultations and negotiations.

Article 12

The Agreement shall enter into force from the date it is signed and shall be valid during a period of five years. The term of the Agreement shall be extended automatically for further five-year periods, if none of the Parties notifies its intention to terminate this Memorandum in writing through diplomatic channels at least six months before the expiry of the Memorandum.

Done in three original copies in Russian, in _____,
_____ 2018, all texts are equally authentic.

Three copies in English serve as an informal translation of the Memorandum to inform international organizations.

The State Agency for Environmental Protection and Forestry under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic

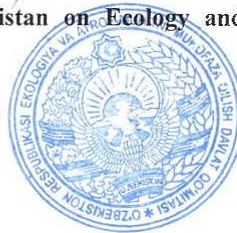


The Forestry and Wildlife Committee of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan



The State Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Ecology and Environmental Protection

Handwritten signature in blue ink.



Annex 1

to the Memorandum between the State Agency for Environmental Protection and Forestry under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Forestry and Wildlife Committee of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the State Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Ecology and Environmental Protection on the management and protection of the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Western Tien Shan

List of components of
the trans-boundary serial site of Western Tien Shan

The Republic of Kazakhstan				
№	Name of the site	Area, hectares		
		Site	Buffer zone	
1.	Karatau State Nature Reserve	34 300	17 490	
2.	Aksu-Zhabagly State Nature Reserve, including:	131 934	25 800	
	a) Aksu-Zhabagly State Nature Reserve – main part	131704	25800	
	b) Aksu-Zhabagly State Nature Reserve - paleontological site of Karabastau	100	-	
	в) Aksu-Zhabagly State Nature Reserve - paleontological site of Aulie	130	-	
3.	Sairam-Ugam State National Nature Park, including:	149 053	27 000	
	a) Sairam-Ugam State National Nature Park – Boraldaitau site	26971	4900	
	b) Sairam-Ugam State National Nature Park – Irsu-Daubaba site	45509	8200	
	в) Sairam-Ugam State National Nature Park -Sairam-Ugam site	76573	13900	
The Kyrgyz Republic				
№	Name of the site	Area, hectares		
		Total	Core zone	Buffer zone
1.	Sary-Chelek Biosphere Reserve	23 868	17903,8	2081,0
2.	Besh-Aral State Nature Reserve	112 463,2	83 053,7	13 990,3
				Secured territory
				3889,2
				15 419,3

3.	Padysha-Ata State Nature Reserve	30 556,4	12 364,8	2 514,7	15 676,9
The Republic of Uzbekistan					
№	Name of the site	Area, hectares			
		Site	Buffer zone		
1.	Chatkal State Biosphere Reserve, Maidantal site	24 706,0	-		
2.	Ugam-Chatkal Biosphere Reserve, Bashkizilsai site	11 018,0	-		

Annex 2

to the Memorandum between the State Agency for Environmental Protection and Forestry under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Forestry and Wildlife Committee of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the State Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Ecology and Environmental Protection on the management and protection of the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Western Tien Shan

ACTION PLAN for the implementation of the Memorandum on the management and protection of the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Western Tien Shan, 2018-2022

№	Action	Term	Expected Result	Responsible
1	Creation of the Regional Committee	November 2018	Adjustment and approval of the composition of the Regional Committee by the Parties	The Parties
2	Meeting of the Regional Committee	December 2018-February 2019, by agreement	The first meeting of the committee, election of the chairman and secretary, development of projects of Regulations of work of the Committee and the Work Plan for 2019-2020 with the tasks and deadlines for implementation, discussion of the structure of the five-year Framework Management Plan for the Western Tien-Shan site and the possibilities of creating an object monitoring system	The Parties
3	Finalization and coordination of the Regulations of work of the Committee and the Work Plan for 2019-2023, the structure of the Framework Management Plan of the object and structure of the object monitoring system	March 2019	The Regulations, the Work Plan and the structure of the Management Framework Plan and the site monitoring system shall be finalized and agreed by the Parties	Chairman and members of the Regional Committee
4	Teleconference of the Regional Committee	August 2019	Summarizing, working on documents, informing about the state of the components of the object, work planning on the Framework Management Plan and preparing a report for the World Heritage Center on the implementation of the	Chairman of the Regional Committee and the Parties

			recommendations of WHC resolutions	
5	Preparation of the report on the implementation of the recommendations of the WHC resolution	November 2019	The report on all items of the resolution's recommendations is prepared and sent to the WHC	The Parties
6	Creation of the Framework Management Plan for the object and finalization of the object monitoring system	December 2019	The Framework Management Plan is developed, the monitoring system is finalized in technical details and ready for implementation	Chairman of the Regional Committee and the Parties
7	Meeting of the Regional Committee	January 2020	Summarizing the results of the work for the year, coordinating the Framework Management Plan, approving the monitoring system, informing about the state of the components of the sites	Chairman of the Regional Committee and the Parties
2019-2022 гг.				
8	Work in accordance with the Framework Management Plan	Permanently	The object is steadily managed and effectively preserved, information and experience exchange between the Parties is established, as well as with WHC, IUCN, other concerned national and international organizations	The Parties
9	Meeting of the Regional Committee	Annually in January-February		Chairman of the Regional Committee and the Parties
10	Teleconference of the Regional Committee	Annually in August		Chairman of the Regional Committee and the Parties