



الطبيعة والتراث العالمي في الدول العربية

TABE'A II Report

Enhancing Regional Capacities for World Heritage

Tarek Abulhawa, Haifaa Abdulhalim, Elena Osipova, Tricia Cummings



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization
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Arab Regional Centre for
World Heritage (ARC-WH)
under the auspices of UNESCO
المركز الإقليمي العربي
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Preface

The Arab States Region continues to face tremendous challenges in regard to achieving anticipated goals for the conservation of their natural and cultural heritage. Political instabilities, socio-economic transformations and global changes are exerting tremendous pressure on the region's ability to invest the needed resources to safeguard the World Heritage sites within the region, and contribute effectively to the implementation of the World Heritage Convention.

Despite these constraints, the IUCN World Heritage Programme, in partnership with the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage (ARC-WH), continues to provide support and advice to the countries of the region and has been able to make commendable progress on accomplishing the objectives of the regional strategy for World Heritage.

Since the TABE'A I report in 2011, the programme partners were able to achieve on-the-ground results under several thematic areas of work, including building regional capacities for the implementation of the various components of the World Heritage Convention.

This includes the organization and undertaking of a large number of regional training activities which were based on needs identified by the beneficiary parties, in addition to numerous bilateral efforts, events and initiatives taken with individual States Parties and partner organizations.

Further, the programme witnessed the inclusion of a large number of new potential sites on the national tentative lists with one successful addition to the World Heritage List, represented by Wadi Rum Protected Area in Jordan, and several others which are currently being discussed and evaluated.

Furthermore, the programme was able to build the nucleus for an Arabic-speaking regional network of experts and practitioners in the field of World Heritage, which will lead the future development of the programme.

This TABE'A II report documents the progress made on the above programme, and adopts a set of recommendations to further enhance its effectiveness and better promote the conservation of the region's heritage while maintaining good hope for the region's stability in the near future, thus allowing for more progress towards the long-term sustainability of the area and its people and future generations.



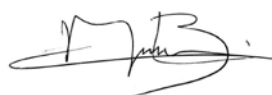
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A final thank you is extended to the IUCN Regional Office for West Asia, represented by Fadi Al Shraideh and his dedicated team, IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation represented by Antonio Troya and Mohamed Lemine Ould Baba, Head of IUCN Mauritania Programme.

List of acronyms

ARC-WH	Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage
ASEZA	Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority
CI	Conservation International
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EPA	Environment Protection Authority
FIBA	Fondation Internationale du Banc d'Arguin
GCA	Global Comparative Analysis
GEF	Global Environment Facility
ICOMOS	International Council on Monuments and Sites
INAT	Institut National Agronomique de Tunisie
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IUCN-Med	IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation
IUCN-ROWA	IUCN Regional Office for West Asia
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OPNT	Office du Parc National du Tassili
OUV	Outstanding Universal Value
PA	Protected Area
PNBA	Parc National du Banc d'Arguin
PSSA	Particular Sensitive Sea Area
RSCN	Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SGBP	Socotra Governance and Biodiversity Project
SOC	State of Conservation
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNEP-WCMC	UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WH	World Heritage
WRPA	Wadi Rum Protected Area
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

1 Introduction

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) is one of the three Advisory Bodies to the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (World Heritage Convention). Since 1972, the year of the adoption of the Convention, IUCN has been providing technical assistance to the Convention implementation across all its constituencies, including the World Heritage Committee, the World Heritage Centre, the States Parties as well as other national, regional and international stakeholders and interest groups. Specifically, IUCN's role comprises:

- Evaluating all natural and mixed sites nominated for inscription on the World Heritage List, and also advising the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS – the Advisory Body on cultural sites) on nominations of cultural landscapes;
- Monitoring the state of conservation of existing natural World Heritage sites through its worldwide network of specialists and member organizations;
- Undertaking training and capacity building for site managers, governments, scientists and local communities; and
- Promoting practical on-the-ground conservation actions in natural World Heritage sites.



TABE'A – which means nature in Arabic – is the regional programme for natural World Heritage for the Arab States Region.¹ The programme was launched by IUCN in 2008 in response to the pressing regional need to enhance the Natural Heritage conservation in the Arab Region which is under-represented on the World Heritage List. The programme was managed by the IUCN World Heritage Programme in partnership with the IUCN Regional Office for West Asia (IUCN ROWA) and the IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation (IUCN Med) in the period between 2008 and 2011.

The World Heritage Convention is a prestigious global treaty which represents a great motivation for States Parties from the region to engage strongly in its implementation due to its high visibility and credibility worldwide. The TABE'A programme, as a tailored regional initiative, was very successful in triggering such motivation and using it in achieving global targets represented by the establishment of a representative and sustained World Heritage Network from the region which contributes to the global map while at the same time working to ensure that such a network of regional World Heritage sites is effectively managed and continuously monitored through sound regional capacities and progressing collaboration frameworks.

In 2013, IUCN signed a new cooperation agreement with the UNESCO Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage in Bahrain (ARC-WH), a Category 2 Centre under the auspices of UNESCO established to support regional World Heritage efforts. The regional programme is currently hosted in the ARC-WH and is implemented in close coordination with IUCN WH Programme, IUCN ROWA and IUCN Med.

The key strategic goal of the TABE'A programme is to facilitate the establishment and long-term conservation of a representative regional network of Natural World Heritage Properties which in turn contribute effectively to the global strategy of the World Heritage Convention. The programme adopts a set of mid-term objectives as follows:

- Build the institutional and technical capacities of the national and local authorities dealing with natural heritage in the region and encourage their regional, sub-regional and transboundary cooperation, in addition to the establishment of a regional Arabic-speaking network of natural heritage experts and practitioners;
- Promote the World Heritage Convention and its principles, and encourage States Parties to adopt its implementation as an integral component of their national agendas and strategies;
- Help ensure the conservation and management effectiveness of all World Heritage properties within the Arab Region and reinforce the World Heritage Convention as a tool for nature conservation and environmental sustainability;
- Actively respond to emerging national and regional challenges facing the long-term conservation of natural heritage particularly in regard to conflict areas and heritage in danger;
- Support the identification and nomination of potential World Heritage sites to achieve a credible, representative and balanced World Heritage List;
- Contribute to the enhancement of regional and national stakeholders and, in particular, local communities' involvement in the planning and management of World Heritage properties through applying international best practices related to good governance and rights-based approaches.

In addition to its primary role, and based on the decisions of the World Heritage Committee in 2008 and onwards, IUCN has been involved in the 'upstream process' which provides a proactive approach to support States Parties and regions on the implementation of the Convention in terms of Tentative List development and harmonization, potential site nomination, management effectiveness, knowledge sharing, monitoring, as well regional and international cooperation. The upstream process related to natural heritage was first tested in the Arab Region in the Republic of Iraq and represents a new testing for an enhanced role of the advisory bodies in the support of the implementation of the Convention. The current strategy of the IUCN's Regional World Heritage Programme reflects very strongly on the adoption and implementation of the upstream process especially noting the limited regional capacities and the snowballing challenges facing nature conservation in general and the World Heritage in particular.

To achieve this ambitious strategy and stemming from their value-driven principles of participation and collaboration, in 2014, IUCN and ARC-WH entered into a collaborative agreement aiming at the enhancement of the Regional Natural World Heritage programme. The partnership seeks to jointly promote IUCN's and ARC-WH's shared interests in the conservation of Natural World Heritage and the equitable and ecologically sustainable use of natural resources. Specifically, the two partners agreed to jointly develop and implement the TABE'A programme for the Arab Region. The partnership includes the secondment of the IUCN regional coordinator to be primarily based and hosted at ARC-WH in Bahrain and the implementation of a shared two-year programme (2014–2016) as a testing phase for what is intended to become a long-term partnership. The two organizations shared the adoption of key principles for the partnership including complementarity and reciprocal support, mutual benefits and recognition, and shared contribution and responsibility.

¹ According to the UNESCO regional classification, the Arab States Region includes 19 countries as follows (alphabetically): Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

This partnership agreement represents a prime development for the Regional World Heritage Programme for the Arab States for this reporting period. In particular, the partnership achieved a series of strategic and operational added values, as follows:

- Created a platform for concrete coordination and cooperation by IUCN and ARC-WH which are two key institutions working in the Arab Region world heritage field;
- Established a shared vision, strategy and programme of work for the conservation of world heritage in the region while systematically avoiding duplication of efforts and wasting of valuable human and financial resources;
- Unified the entities addressing World Heritage in the region in regard to States Parties and other stakeholders, while ensuring transparent exchange of information and collective learning;
- Reinforced IUCN's role as an Advisory Body and as part of the upstream process while integrating natural and cultural heritage through the mandate of the ARC-WH;
- Demonstrated a good practice for regionally driven World Heritage programmes, building on regional capacities, intrinsic knowledge and cultural identity.

The TABE'A report is a key IUCN knowledge product which documents the progress of the TABE'A programme over time. It is primarily associated with the IUCN World Heritage Outlook developed by IUCN and piloted in the Arab Region. The report also provides an update on the rapidly developing upstream process.

One of the key contributions of the TABE'A programme since its inception is its success in drawing regional attention and mobilizing regional effort and collaboration to achieve the shared goals through a well structured and carefully designed upstream process through which the joint programme would provide advice and support to the Region's States Parties to enhance their World Heritage Programmes while collaborating at the regional level.

The first documentation of the activities and results of this developing upstream process was undertaken in the TABE'A I report, published in 2011 by IUCN. The report was a turning point in the development process of the TABE'A programme as it eloquently presented the first consolidated report on the status of world heritage from the Arab region. It could be argued that the main theme of the first TABE'A report was 'setting the baseline' for world heritage in the Arab States. The report echoed far, regionally and globally, and was very well received by all concerned parties. It represented the first snapshot of the region's effort toward implementing the Convention on the natural heritage front. The report included the first set of Conservation Outlook Assessments for the then five existing natural and mixed World Heritage sites in the region, as well as an analysis of the region's potential natural heritage sites included in the Tentative Lists. It represented a pilot for a future, more extensive documentation, on the state of conservation of all natural and mixed World Heritage sites.

As part of this integrated approach to the Regional World Heritage Programme, the TABE'A II report addresses the strategic questions: how to maintain and build on the momentum achieved through the first report, while ensuring an added value to the region's strategy on the conservation of natural heritage? And, how can the IUCN World Heritage Programme better serve the region's priorities related to World Heritage while effectively responding to national, sub-regional and regional needs and priorities simultaneously?

The TABE'A II report – at hand – represents the second more detailed analysis of the Arab Region's World Heritage Programme based on the baseline established in the first report, as well as of the progress achieved since then. The primary focus of TABE'A is examining the approaches, strategies and results of the concerted efforts by IUCN and its partners on building the regional capacities for World Heritage with the attempt to extract lessons and provide outlook for future learning, improvement and effectiveness. Specifically, the TABE'A II report:

- Provides a strategic update on the State of Conservation of the Natural World Heritage properties in the Arab Region based on the various assessment tools used by IUCN including the IUCN World Heritage Outlook. This includes a detailed assessment on Wadi Rum Protected Area which joined the World Heritage List in 2011 and which therefore was not included in the TABE'A I report.
- Further analyses the national Tentative Lists of the States Parties in the region in light of developments related to global priorities and thematic studies as well as national strategies and action plans. It also examines the regional trends, approaches and initiatives adopted for the enhancement of the Tentative Lists, and their harmonization.
- Presents a selection of key case studies, success stories, challenges and lessons learnt undertaken by the IUCN Regional World Heritage Programme and its partners on the implementation of the Convention in light of regional and national needs and priorities.
- Provides a set of specific recommendations targeting the multiple layers related to world heritage in the Arab Region including regional capacity building, national support programmes, property-level conservation and management effectiveness, and potential sites for tentative listing and nomination.

2 State of conservation of natural World Heritage sites in the Arab States

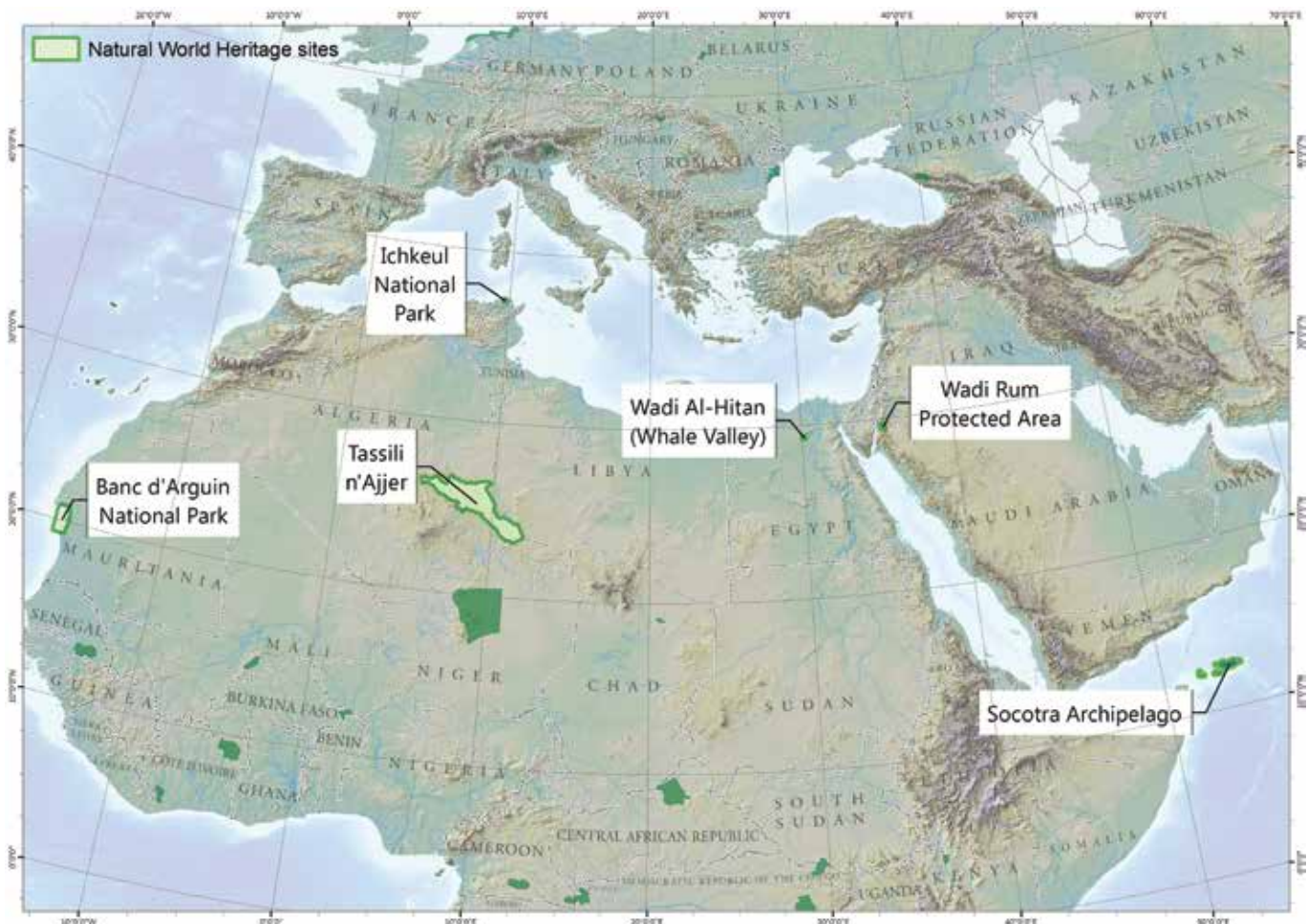
2.1 Brief recap from TABE'A I: Key findings, recommendations and responses

This section details updates for the World Heritage sites in the Arab States Region since the TABE'A I report, based on a literature review; and regarding conservation status and current management, with an intended focus on capacity building. It proved difficult, however, to highlight capacity building, as there seems to be relatively little on-going in that regard, at least as far as the literature is concerned.

Material for this section was gathered from the best available information in a range of sources including: IUCN/UNESCO-WHC State of Conservation Reports, IUCN/UNESCO-WHC Mission Reports, IUCN Conservation Outlook Assessments, World Heritage Committee (WHC) decisions, scientific articles, action plans, project documents, and other available publications. A brief description of the main monitoring tools is provided in Section 2.2.

The Arab region contains four natural and two mixed World Heritage sites which are shown on the map below.

Figure 1. Natural and mixed World Heritage sites in the Arab States



In the TABE'AI report, it was also concluded that although pressures, threats and management challenges differ from site to site, there are a number of common themes and activities at the regional level that can contribute to improving the management of existing World Heritage sites in the Arab region, and extending the instrument of the Convention to new properties. The report included the following general conclusions and recommendations on the State of Conservation front:

- Acknowledging management progress that has been made, there is still a need that management authority should be assigned to independent, permanent, effective institutions that are located on-site, adequately funded and equipped. Further, since most sites are essentially protected areas, there is a need for the application of best practice in protected area management and the integration of the sites with national protected area systems. Achieving sustainable finance for sites is a critical issue.

Key responses from IUCN and ARC-WH since 2011

- Technical support visits and missions were undertaken by the regional programme to sites which are under pressure and require specific guidance and support. These include Socotra Archipelago (Yemen) and Banc d'Arguin National Park (Mauritania).
- A regional training seminar/workshop specifically addressed management effectiveness for World Heritage sites.
- A bilateral support programme provided support to the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) in Yemen on the development of a conservation strategy for Socotra Archipelago.
- Key knowledge documents were translated into Arabic, including the resource manual on management of World Heritage sites.
- Specific effort was given to the Wadi Rum management through providing technical guidance and support, in particular in regard to enhancing coordination with the Department of Antiquities, responsible for the management of cultural heritage in the site.

- There is still room for intensified participation and benefit sharing for stakeholders, regarding conservation management and sustainable use of natural resources.

Key responses from IUCN and ARC-WH since 2011

- The Rights-based Approaches (RBA) and World Heritage initiative developed by the ICOMOS and IUCN partnership represents an important step towards addressing local communities' participation and stakeholders' benefit sharing in World Heritage sites.
- Other specific inputs of the regional programme included testing of a support programme related to local honey producers in Socotra Archipelago and sustainable tourism development in Wadi Rum Protected Area.

- Many sites (particularly larger sites) are subject to multiple interventions from a wide range of government agencies and other entities. There is a need to mainstream conservation across all institutions that are involved in the management of the sites and to agree on a strong mandate for formal management authorities.

Key responses from IUCN and ARC-WH since 2011

- The regional programme adopts a regional approach in promoting inter-institutional coordination and collaboration on World Heritage. In particular, this includes promoting the National World Heritage Committees concept.
- Specific bilateral efforts are being given to support improved governance for Wadi Rum and Socotra.

- A considerable body of experience concerning most aspects of management has been accumulated in the Arab States, offering an opportunity for mutual learning and exchange of best practice experience between management authorities at the regional level.

Key responses from IUCN and ARC-WH since 2011

- The regional capacity-building programme on World Heritage is a primary strategic direction of the regional programme. More than ten co-learning, participative training and knowledge development activities and events have been organized so far.
- One key initiative is related to the establishment of the Regional Network for World Heritage experts and practitioners.

2.2 Overview of key assessment tools used in the TABE'A II Report

The primary tools used to assess the status of World Heritage sites are: State of Conservation (SOC) Reports, the IUCN World Heritage Outlook, and periodic reporting. This section includes a description of each, followed by a brief recap on the most recent periodic reporting cycle for the Arab Region (2010).

The IUCN World Heritage Outlook

The IUCN World Heritage Outlook is the first comprehensive global assessment of the conservation prospects for natural World Heritage. The purpose of the World Heritage Outlook is to track the status of all natural World Heritage sites (for mixed sites, only natural values are taken into consideration), recognize excellence in their conservation and identify actions needed to protect these exceptional sites. The IUCN World Heritage Outlook assesses sites through Conservation Outlook Assessments.

IUCN Conservation Outlook Assessments are a projection of the potential for a site to conserve its values. This projection is based on desk-based assessments of 1) the state and trend of values, 2) the threats affecting those values, and 3) the effectiveness of protection and management. There is also an assessment of benefits to communities living within and outside of the site.

The conservation outlook for a site is rated according to the following categories and criteria:

Good: The site's values are in good condition and are likely to be maintained for the foreseeable future, provided that current conservation measures are maintained.

Low Concern: While some concerns exist, with minor additional conservation measures the site's values are likely to be essentially maintained over the long term.

Significant Concern: The site's values are threatened and/or may be showing signs of deterioration. Significant additional conservation measures are needed to maintain and/or restore values over the medium to long term.

Critical: The site's values are severely threatened and/or deteriorating. Immediate large-scale additional conservation measures are needed to maintain and/or restore the site's values over the short to medium term or the values may be lost.

Data Deficient: Available evidence is insufficient to draw a conclusion.

The IUCN World Heritage Outlook assesses the current status of values on a four-value scale from 'Good' to 'Critical'. Pressures and potential threats are assessed on a four-value scale from 'Very Low Threat' to 'Very High Threat'. Protection and management are assessed on a four-value scale from 'Highly Effective' to 'Serious Concern'.*

Conservation Outlook Assessments are intended to be independent, accurate, transparent and repeatable. Assessments are based on analysis of information from a wide range of sources, including consultation feedback via IUCN members, experts and partners. GIS and remote-sensing tools may be used, but aside from these, no new research is undertaken. Site visits are not involved and assessments are not intended to replace site-based monitoring and evaluation systems. Conservation Outlook Assessments will be reviewed every three years, unless new important information on a particular site becomes available earlier.

For each site listed below, the current status of values, the pressures and potential threats to those values, and the site's protection and management were compared as assessed in the IUCN World Heritage Outlook in 2014 to the values noted in the TABE'A I report in 2011.

Each Conservation Outlook table below also provides additional information for each site which is relevant to the period of time after the TABE'A I report was written, or which had not been included in it.

State of Conservation (SOC) reports

Once a site is inscribed on the World Heritage List, the State Party must ensure that effective measures are taken for its protection, conservation and presentation. To ensure that all possible measures are taken to prevent the deletion of any property from the World Heritage List, the World Heritage Committee adopted the process of reactive monitoring.

* The names of categories used in the IUCN World Heritage Outlook slightly differ from those used in the TABE'A I report

Reactive monitoring is ‘the reporting by the World Heritage Centre, other sectors of UNESCO and the Advisory Bodies to the World Heritage Committee on the State of Conservation of specific World Heritage properties that are under threat’. Information reported by States Parties regarding restorations or constructions that may affect a property’s Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), information from sources other than the State Party that a property has seriously deteriorated, and comments from the State Party and Advisory Bodies, are brought to the attention of the Committee in the form of a State of Conservation Report.

State of Conservation reports summarize a site’s current condition and conservation trends, recommend actions needed to address key threats, and include a draft decision for consideration by the World Heritage Committee. IUCN consults a wide range of stakeholders during this process and this consultation process is indispensable to ensuring that the most accurate information is presented for consideration by the World Heritage Committee.

Properties to be reported upon are selected according to the following considerations:

- Properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger;
- Properties inscribed on the World Heritage List for which state of conservation reports and/or reactive monitoring missions were requested by the World Heritage Committee at previous sessions;
- Properties which have come under threat since the last session of the World Heritage Committee and which require urgent actions in addition to the consultations and discussions which normally take place between the State Party, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies in order to address the threat;
- Properties where, upon inscription, follow-up was requested by the World Heritage Committee.

Periodic Reporting

Every six years, States Parties are invited to submit to the World Heritage Committee a periodic report on the application of the World Heritage Convention, including the State of Conservation of the World Heritage properties located on its territories.

Periodic reporting serves four main purposes:

- To provide an assessment of the application of the World Heritage Convention by the State Party;
- To provide an assessment as to whether the OUV of the properties inscribed on the World Heritage List is being maintained over time;
- To provide up-to-date information about the World Heritage properties to record the changing circumstances and state of conservation of the properties; and
- To provide a mechanism for regional cooperation and exchange of information and experiences between States Parties concerning the implementation of the Convention and World Heritage conservation.

Table 1. The various monitoring tools used

Assessment tool	Conducted by:	How often	Type of site	Notes
IUCN World Heritage Outlook	IUCN	Every three years (unless new information becomes available) for all natural and mixed sites	Natural and mixed only	Includes information from other tools and a wide range of sources
Reactive monitoring/SOC	SOC reports are prepared by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies for consideration by the Committee	As needed or required by WHC	Natural and cultural	
Periodic Reporting	State Party	Every six years	Natural and cultural	Contains limited information

Periodic Reporting cycles

The World Heritage Committee has a regional approach to Periodic Reporting. The final result of each regional strategy is a Regional State of the World Heritage Report. The Committee examines these regional reports according to a pre-established schedule, which is based on a six-year cycle. The first Periodic Reporting Cycle occurred from 2000–2006, with 2000 being the year for Arab States. Periodic Reporting Cycle II is from 2008–2015, with 2008 being the year for Arab States. According to this Cycle, the next Periodic Reporting year for the Arab States should be 2017 (after a reflection year in 2016).

2010 Periodic Report for the Arab Region

The report on the second Periodic Reporting Cycle for the Arab Region provides information on data provided by the Arab States Parties on the implementation of the World Heritage Convention at the national level, as well as data provided on each of the WH properties in the region. It also includes sub-regional action plans, intended to serve as a platform for the establishment of a Regional Programme for the forthcoming years.

Since the first Cycle of Periodic Reporting, there have been several World Heritage successes in the region, including new nomination files submitted and new properties inscribed on the World Heritage List. Despite these successes, however, the Arab States remain largely under-represented in terms of natural properties and transboundary nominations, thereby not adequately reflecting the diversity of heritage in the Arab region on the World Heritage List.

Overall, the report concluded the following for the Arab Region:²

- There is a lack of financial and human resources.

Developments since TABE'A I

- ARC-WH was instrumental in financing the TABE'A programme since its establishment.
- The TABE'A programme under IUCN and ARC-WH agreement financed a comprehensive regional capacity-building programme.
- An additional number of bilateral initiatives were also financed by the regional programme. This included activities in Iraq, Jordan, Mauritania and Yemen.

- There is a need for increased cooperation between various departments at the national and local levels.

Developments since TABE'A I

- National support programmes on World Heritage governance and coordination were supported in Jordan, Mauritania and Yemen.

- There is a need for inventories, the modernization of national lists, and the idea of discussing Tentative Lists at the regional level.

Developments since TABE'A I

- Specific regional workshops were held to discuss the national inventories and Tentative List harmonization at the regional level.
- A set of regional factsheets were developed on Desert Landscapes and Marine Biodiversity.

- There is a need for increased training and the maintaining of professional networks.

Developments since TABE'A I

- One main initiative which commenced in 2012 and is still under development is the establishment of an Arabic Speaking Regional Network on World Heritage. The mandate, structure and governance of the network are currently under development jointly by the TABE'A Programme and the newly established WCPA Specialist Group on World Heritage.

- There is a need to consider with utmost importance the involvement of local communities as much as possible in World Heritage processes.

Developments since TABE'A I

- The RBA initiative is a key development under this heading. At the international workshop on RBA, the Arab States Region was represented with a case study from Jordan and the workshop report was translated into Arabic.

- There is a need for awareness and capacity building as well as the gathering and dissemination of information on World Heritage in Arabic (for which the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage (ARC-WH) in Bahrain was asked to take an active role).

Developments since TABE'A I

- Several international publications, manuals and best practice guidelines were translated into Arabic to provide wider regional access and learning. These include:
 - Enhancing Our Heritage Toolkit (in progress, due mid-2015);
 - Thematic factsheets;
 - Specialized publication on Ahwar of Southern Iraq case study;
 - Specialized translation of the RBA workshop report.

² These recommendations included both cultural and natural World Heritage sites. The key responses included in this report are limited to those addressing the natural sites as relates to the mandates of IUCN WHP and ARC-WH.

- There is a priority need to focus more actively on presenting nominations of natural sites in the Arab region, and to encourage transboundary nominations in the future.

Developments since TABE'A I

- Concerted efforts were undertaken to encourage States Parties to nominate sites for inscription on the World Heritage List, including marine sites in the Red Sea Region and the Arabian Gulf Region.
- Further technical support was provided as part of the upstream process for Iraq (Ahwar), Jordan (Wadi Rum), and currently for Egypt, Tunisia and UAE.

The following were indicated as priority actions: ³

- Development of inventories (Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Sudan and Syria).

Developments since TABE'A I

- A comprehensive capacity-building programme was implemented between 2010 and 2014 on World Heritage Convention implementation.
- A specific project is being implemented for Bahrain on natural heritage conservation.
- A specific project is being implemented for Mauritania on valuing natural and cultural heritage including parts on local community development.

- Enforcement of legal regulations (Bahrain, Egypt and Syria).

Developments since TABE'A I

- All three States Parties were strongly represented at the regional workshop on law enforcement and World Heritage legislation in 2013, with Egypt taking a leading role.

- Coordination between legal instruments (Jordan, Morocco, Oman, Sudan, Syria and Tunisia).

Developments since TABE'A I

- Four of the six States Parties were strongly represented at the regional workshop on law enforcement and World Heritage legal instruments in 2013. Invitations were also extended to all States Parties in the Arab States Region.

- National strategy in conservation (Bahrain, Kuwait, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman and Syria).

Developments since TABE'A I

- See the note on the Bahrain project above.

- Capacity building in conservation (Iraq, Kuwait, Morocco and Sudan).

Developments since TABE'A I

- More than ten regional capacity-building and training activities were implemented by the programme since 2012.
- One particular programme is the comprehensive capacity-building programme implemented for Iraq between 2010 and 2014 on World Heritage Convention implementation as part of the upstream process.

- Training (Egypt and Tunisia).

Developments since TABE'A I

- Egypt and Tunisia have been taking a leading role in implementation of the regional capacity-building programme based on their long established experience on the Convention.

- Increase staff (Lebanon).

Developments since TABE'A I

- A current proposal of a support programme to the Lebanese Ministry of Environment for a national capacity-building programme.

- Establish the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage (Bahrain).

Developments since TABE'A I

- The successful establishment of the ARC-WH in Bahrain is the most important achievement of the UNESCO regional programme with advisory support from IUCN.

³ These actions covered both cultural and natural World Heritage Sites and all States Parties. The key developments included in this report are limited to those addressing the natural Sites as relates to the mandates of IUCN WHP and ARC-WH.

2.3 Update on the state of conservation of listed natural properties

Ichkeul National Park, Tunisia

► Inscribed as a natural site in 1980, criterion (x)

Lake Ichkeul is the last great freshwater lake of a chain that once stretched the length of North Africa. Characterised by a very specific hydrological functioning based on a double seasonal alternance of water levels and salinity, the lake and the surrounding marshes constitute an indispensable stop-over for the hundreds of thousands of migratory birds that winter at Ichkeul (whc.unesco.org).

Other values

Ichkeul is one of the four top wintering sites for Palaearctic waterfowl in the western Mediterranean (UNEP, 2012), is located inside one of WWF's global 200 priority ecoregions (WWF, 2013), belongs to CI's Mediterranean Biodiversity Hotspot (CI, 2013), is a Ramsar site (Wetlands International, 2013), and is an Important Bird Area (Birdlife International, 2013).



The UNESCO reporting trend shows frequent reporting for Ichkeul, with a peak occurring from 2008–2010, sharply declining thereafter. Since TABE'A I, no SOC reports have been released. The last SOC report was for 2010, and the current Conservation Outlook Assessment was released in 2014.

Regarding the conservation outlook, since the first TABE'A report the overall outlook has changed from "Good but Vulnerable" to of "Significant Concern". Although the situation continues to improve, it is still too early to say that the values of the site have fully recovered and therefore, overall, the outlook for the site has been assessed as of significant concern.

As stated in the previous conservation outlook, the hydrological status of the property has improved over the last ten years but the recovery of its values could be reversed by a series of low-precipitation seasons. Ichkeul had actually been included on the List of World Heritage in Danger (from 1996 to 2006) due to increased salinity and a subsequent vegetation shift to halophytes and reduction in waterbird numbers, all caused by the construction of three dams which cut off almost all the inflow of fresh water. Abundant rainfall (2002–2006) in addition to input of water from the Tinja sluice (since 2002) and restoration of the Joumine River (in 2008) consequently reversed this, however, since the sustainable development of the ecosystem cannot mainly rely on favourable weather, there remains an urgent need to mainstream conservation of the Park and strengthen the institutional setup, local support, and management.

The Conservation Outlook summary:

Conservation outlook	Assessment at time of TABE'A I	Current assessment	Current summary
State and trend of values	Low concern	High concern	There was a crisis for the Park's values from 1990s due to reduced water supply, but there has been a partial recovery since 2004 due to increased precipitation and improved hydrological management. This recovery could be reversed, however, by a series of low-precipitation seasons, or a relaxation of the current hydrological management regime.
Pressures and potential threats	High threat	High threat	The greatest pressure has been insufficient water supply and its effects due to dam construction. Secondary and potential threats continue to be poaching, agricultural encroachment and unsustainable grazing. Climate change is likely to aggravate existing pressures in the future, but potential impacts are unclear.
Protection and management	Some concern	Some concern	Hydrological management efforts have contributed to recovery since 2004, but there is still no sufficiently broad consensus, adequate institutional setup, or strong local support for sustainable long-term management.

Capacity building

A capacity-building project concerning integrated management of water resources began in 2009 as part of a Wetlands International programme to engage civil society through participatory management and dialogue.

Tunisia is one of four countries targeted for an IUCN capacity-building project aimed at improving the management and governance of PAs and key biodiversity areas in the Mediterranean region. The main objectives in Tunisia are:

- Improving knowledge of the ecosystem service values of Ichkeul;
- Strengthening conservation policies in Ichkeul through effective involvement of civil society organizations;
- Developing the socio-economic services of Ichkeul to promote the wellbeing of local communities; and
- Promoting communication and awareness of Ichkeul conservation.

The IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation (IUCN-Med) will set up a dialogue framework between stakeholders, and collaboration agreements will be signed aimed at monitoring project activities, ensuring involvement of partners in training activities, and validating different products elaborated in the project framework. The project is scheduled from September 2013–September 2015 and has a budget of US\$392,502 (iucn.org, Feb 2014).

Wetlands International works in Ichkeul with a local partner, the Institut National Agronomique de Tunisie (INAT). Through a local multi-stakeholder water dialogue, the capacity-building project builds a consensus on best water allocations for sustainable long-term water resource management. Scientific knowledge is transferred through training interest groups on the importance of ecosystem functioning and interdependence on different water users (wetlands.org, no date).

Additional notes

Protection and management

General	A draft five-year participatory management plan was finalized in 2008, but complex responsibilities, inter-institutional conflicts and lack of mainstreaming remain a challenge to the management (UNEP-WCMC, 2012). Further, there has been noted a lack of effectiveness in management in the past, with key issues being lack of autonomy and authority. There has reportedly been progress in this regard (in 2010), but recent information is not available (Conservation Outlook).
Local people/stakeholders	Local people have reportedly felt disenfranchised after the creation of the Park because of loss of economic opportunities and livelihoods. Poor communication and little involvement with farmers around the Park was noted in 2008, but community livelihood projects and public outreach campaigns were implemented until 2010 (IUCN, 2010), and an Agenda 21 process for participative environmental management was initiated in 2008 (SOC Report, 2010).
Tourism	Some tourism facilities were rehabilitated in 2009, but tourism management was considered weak in 2008. The site has considerable, yet underused potential for nature-based tourism, such as birding tours (Conservation Outlook). The 2014 Conservation Outlook Assessment notes that restoration of Lake Ichkeul resulted in the doubling of tourists since 2005. Its promotion as a tourist destination helped raise awareness of the value of lake ecosystems and importance of wise wetland use. New sources of income were also generated for Park management and conservation, and the establishment of basic training and credit schemes increased the involvement of local communities in tourism activities. Further, recent discussions with the national focal point indicate an on-going initiative on the rehabilitation of the traditional bath 'Hamman' which enjoys special spiritual and social significance (iucn.org, 2013).
Education/interpretation	A number of education and interpretation activities were reported to take place in 2010 (SOC Report, 2010).

Pressures and threats

Sedimentation	High sedimentation rates have been observed for the past 30 years (Trabelsi <i>et al.</i> , 2012). Sedimentation is a natural process, but is exacerbated by dams, and could eventually lead to the drying-up of the lake (Conservation Outlook).
Resource use	Three new dams had been proposed, and in 2006 the Tunisian water authorities agreed these would provide water to the property, rather than to agriculture. There is no further information on this (SOC Report, 2010).

An example of good practice

Sixteen years after inscription as a World Heritage Site, Ichkeul was placed on the List of World Heritage in Danger in 1996. In 1998, IUCN revealed that the salinity of the lake had reached an excessive level, and the chances of restoration would decrease very quickly. Its characteristic as the last freshwater lake of a chain that once extended across North Africa was threatened, and could be lost as a sanctuary to hundreds of thousands of migratory birds. Subsequently, the Tunisian authorities took action and redirected water to the lake and stopped using lake water for agriculture. This allowed for a reduction in salinity, and the Park was taken off the List of sites in danger in 2006 (Unesco.org, Jan 2015).

Tassili n'Ajjer, Algeria

► Inscribed as a mixed site in 1982, criteria (i) (iii) (vi) (viii)

Tassili n'Ajjer is a vast plateau in south-east Algeria at the borders of Libya, Niger and Mali, covering an area of 72,000 km². The exceptional density of paintings and engravings, and the presence of many prehistoric vestiges, are remarkable testimonies to Prehistory. The site is also of great geological and aesthetic interest: the panorama of geological formations with 'rock forests' of eroded sandstone resembles a strange lunar landscape (whc.unesco.org).

Tassili n'Ajjer is the eighth largest World Heritage Site, making Algeria eighth on the list of countries with the largest natural World Heritage coverage.

Biodiversity values

Tassili n'Ajjer is potentially one of the prime sites for desert biodiversity conservation worldwide, with deep valleys that form a centre of relict Mediterranean as well as Sudano-Decan and Saharo-Sindien vegetation and flora, and a centre of plant diversity (GEF, 2011).

The site includes 73 endemic species (including the globally endangered Saharan Cypress with 240 specimens remaining), the globally vulnerable Cheetah, and 14 regionally endemic bird species (GEF, 2011). It is an Important Bird Area (BirdLife International, 2013) and comprises three Ramsar sites (Wetlands International, 2013).



The UNESCO reporting trend shows no reporting for Tassili n'Ajjer. There have been no SOC reports released since the site's inscription as a World Heritage Site, but there is one mission report from 2010 published on the UNESCO website.

Regarding the conservation outlook, the overall outlook has changed from 'Good Overall' to 'Good with Some Concerns'. As before, the site's World Heritage values remain stable, but there are significant wider conservation concerns related to other biodiversity values. There is little information available, and there may be a need to continue developing the management system of the site, and to strengthen its governance by including representatives from government departments dealing with protected areas (the site is currently managed by the Ministry of Culture).

The Conservation Outlook summary:

Conservation outlook	Assessment at time of TABE'A I	Current assessment	Current summary
State and trend of values	Low concern	Low concern	The geomorphological values of the site were well-preserved at time of inscription due to the remoteness of the area, and little information has become available since. Some natural values not covered by World Heritage inscription have been degraded.
Pressures and potential threats	Low threat	High threat	There are limited pressures caused by visitor damage and littering. Threats to additional biodiversity values from unsustainable resource use (poaching, wood collection, grazing, etc.), disturbance, and climate change are considered significant and growing.
Protection and management	Data deficient	Some concern	The legal and policy framework was improved until 2010, but immense size and low staff complement and qualification remain a challenge. There is a GEF programme on strengthening biodiversity management. The protection of the site may be sufficient to control the limited current pressures on its geomorphological values but the same is probably not true for the protection of additional biodiversity values.

Capacity building

Most staff members have cultural/archaeological backgrounds, and lack natural heritage skills and knowledge (in particular in relation to site geology), so improvement is needed of staff training and qualification level (GEF, 2011).

Additional notes

Protection and management

General	The exceptionally large size of the site ensures maintenance of geological integrity, ecosystems and biodiversity, but makes it difficult to manage effectively (IUCN, 2010). There are rangers/wardens controlling a few key access points, but they are mainly untrained. Enforcement capacity has been deemed excellent by the State Party (UNESCO, 2010) but considered a barrier by other analyses (GEF, 2011). There is no management plan (has been in preparation since 1987), so management is based on annual plans (UNESCO, 2010). A biodiversity action plan for the Tassili Ahaggar region was developed for 2011–2017, but implementation status is unclear (GEF, 2011).
Local people/stakeholders	Local stakeholders are intensely involved in management, according to the State Party (UNESCO 2010), but a need to strengthen procedures for collaborative management with the locals has also been reported (GEF, 2011).
Tourism	Visitor numbers were showing some increase, however remaining low (7,600 in 2009) (IUCN, 2010). This is possibly due to the political instability in the region especially the wars in Libya and Mali across the border. Tourists should be issued permits and be accompanied by a guide, and efforts for sustainable tourism were underway in 2010 (UNESCO, 2010).
Research and monitoring	Monitoring helped develop the site's action plan (UNESCO, 2010) but there is no effective monitoring system for geomorphological values (IUCN, 2010).
Education/interpretation	There is no effective interpretation of World Heritage status (UNESCO, 2010), and there is a noted need for improvement of education and interpretation (GEF, 2011).
Finance	The Park is financially independent (UNESCO, 2010).
Legal framework	There is a lack of coordination between ministries and Wilayah level, with significant barriers to the integration of World Heritage, particularly biodiversity management, into national and Wilayah-level planning (GEF, 2011).

Pressures and threats

Hunting	Hunting pressure has brought several populations (<i>i.e.</i> , Cheetah and Slender-horned Gazelle) to the brink of extinction, and caused the previously present Addax and Scimitar-horned Oryx to become extinct (GEF, 2011). This could be attributed to the location of the Tassili n'Ajjer in a remote border region between two countries, thus making hunting control a very challenging assignment.
Unsustainable resource use	Unsustainable commercial collection of several species for charcoal and medicinal purposes occurs (GEF, 2011), and aridification may lead to the extinction of the Saharan Cypress (UNEP-WCMC, 2011), although there is no detailed information for this.

Banc d'Arguin National Park, Mauritania

► Inscribed as a natural site in 1989, criteria (ix) (x)

The Banc d'Arguin is one of the most important zones in the world for nesting birds and Palearctic migratory waders. Located along the Atlantic coast, this Park is formed of sand dunes, areas of coastal swamps, small islands and shallow coastal waters. The austerity of the desert and the biodiversity of the marine area results in a land and seascape of exceptional contrasting natural value (whc.unesco.org).

Other values

The site is an Important Bird Area (BirdLife International, 2013), belongs to a WWF 200 priority marine ecoregion (WWF, 2013), and is a Ramsar site (Wetlands International, 2013).



The UNESCO reporting trend shows frequent reporting for Banc d'Arguin, with a peak occurring from 2005–2011. Since TABE'A I, one SOC report was released in 2013, and in 2014 a mission report and a SOC report were released.

Regarding the Conservation Outlook, since TABE'A I, due to better monitoring and documentation, new information has become available. The marine and avian values of the site remain relatively well preserved and the protection and management framework is strong; however, the overall outlook has changed from 'Uncertain' to of 'Significant Concern' due mostly to challenges not only within, but outside its boundaries, principally from unsustainable fisheries and increasing industrial activities. Further, the new city at Chami, located just outside the Park border, and some new infrastructure inside the Park at Mamghar, including a new road that leads through the property, are of significant concern, especially considering that EIAs were not available for these at the time of construction. Overall, the 2014 Mission concluded that the OUV of the Property has been preserved in part thanks to its isolation. However, because the Park region is undergoing rapid changes, it will be important to assess individual impacts of infrastructure projects in addition to their cumulative impacts.

The Conservation Outlook summary:

Conservation outlook	Assessment at time of TABE'A I	Current assessment	Current summary
State and trend of values	High concern	Low concern but deteriorating	Values continue to remain under pressure, and overall status appears to be deteriorating despite intensive management efforts. There has been good follow-up regarding fish landing, but fish stocks and the importance of the park as a nursery are not well documented.
Pressures and potential threats	High threat	High threat	Unsustainable fishing continues to be the main pressure. Fishing inside the park has steeply increased, but still seems stable and well controlled, despite the concern of increasing commercialization of artisanal fishing. Oil spills from sea and land remain a threat, with insufficient spill risk management capacity in place, and nearby mining activities to expand in near future. Increases in flooding related to climate change negatively affect the coast and species breeding there, and new urban development outside the Park's east boundary could put pressure on terrestrial ecosystems.
Protection and management	Some concern	Some concern	Legislative, institutional and financial frameworks continue to be strong, but wider protection of surrounding seas still needs to be developed, particularly regarding unsustainable fishing and increasing hydrocarbon shipping and exploration. There is also a need for improvement in management effectiveness and the capacity of the Park to raise funding.

Capacity building

A project which began in 2009 helped build local capacity for ornithological tourism in Banc d'Arguin. Close to 20 local Imraguen individuals participated in an intensive language training and guiding course headed by Wetlands International (wetlands.org, 2014).

Additional notes

Protection and management

General	A management effectiveness evaluation that was carried out in 2013 revealed effectiveness of management to be between "good" and "medium", depending on the management aspect evaluated, but the management plan is suffering from a low level of implementation (2014 Mission Report). One important aspect which would have a significant impact on the property management is the location of the management station which is not within the site itself where day-to-day supervision is needed and not in the capital where most decisions are taken.
Local people/stakeholders	There are generally good relations between local Imraguen people and Park administration, although the 2014 Mission noted a feeling of distrust between the two. Further, there has not been a single consultation meeting – essential to participatory management – since 2013 (2014 Mission Report).
Education/interpretation	Village camps were constructed in 2008 to promote ecotourism, but they, as well as educational youth centres and interpretation panels, are now falling into disrepair due to lack of maintenance (2014 Mission Report).
Finance	The site was doing well financially for a long period thanks to long-lasting support from the Fondation Internationale du Banc d'Arguin (FIBA). Nonetheless, constraints related to the sustainable financing of the site seem to have increased recently as the FIBA programme seems to have recently been deactivated and no other clear sources of funding adopted as a replacement. This coincides with little evidence of government commitment to sufficient long-term financing of the property.
Other	<p>A twinning arrangement has been organized between Banc d'Arguin and Wadden Sea of the Netherlands/Germany in order to increase the comparison of scientific information from these crucial bird reservoirs. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed in February 2014 which aims for closer cooperation on migratory bird protection, a draft action plan was set up for 2014–2016, and there is a new research station planned in Banc d'Arguin (unesco.org and waddensea-secretariat.org, 2014).</p> <p>Banc d'Arguin has been identified for possible designation as a Particular Sensitive Sea Area (PSSA) under the International Maritime Organization. A study confirmed an increase in the considered risk of ships trading through or nearby the site, necessitating the designation (Knapp <i>et al.</i>).</p>

Pressures and threats

Fishing	<p>It is of significant concern that there is an increasing number of non-Imraguen fishermen (who have had exclusive fisheries access since 2000) in the Park, as well as an increase in the targeting of threatened ray and shark species (2014 Mission Report).</p> <p>A study of Banc d'Arguin reported that restrictive measures on fishing leads to greater species diversity in the Protected Area, with more large species and a higher number of predators. Further, on the outside edges of the restricted zone, commercial catches are 25% higher as compared to further from it. Thus, marine PAs have a significant economic impact on fishing yields. However, fishing gains outside the area only compensate in volume for loss of activity within, albeit considering a higher market value due to an increase in rarer species. This information is helpful when considering compensation for losses to fisherman (Science Daily, 2012)</p>
Mining	There are plans (currently subject to EIA) to further develop mining outside but near to the Park, with potentially serious impacts related to pollution, water use, habitat destruction, and other negative impacts on marine life (2014 Mission Report).
Pollution	Surveys have revealed a high concentration of cadmium in the marine waters, as well as an unacceptable amount of plastic and other waste (including micro-filament fishing nets) (2014 Mission Report). The impacts of such concentrations are not yet assessed nor addressed, hence it would be very difficult to establish a position in regard to the implications on the World Heritage values of the site.
Development projects	There is an increasing number of development projects (subject to EIA) within and outside the Park, including the planned construction of a high-voltage electricity line which could have negative impacts on the bird populations (2014 Mission Report).
Decline of the Monk Seal population	In the previous Conservation Outlook, pressures on the Monk Seal were repeatedly stated, but the current Outlook only mentions a small population of 150 seals located outside the property, and that potential threats were identified in 2008 but have not yet been assessed. The UNEP Action Plan for the Monk Seal (no date, but seems to be very old – late 1980s or early 1990s) states that the population had declined rapidly and drastically, and that protection should be a priority target by 1995. Informal communication with local authorities indicates the possibility of the inclusion of the Monk Seal protected areas in the Property in the future.

An example of good practice

The collaboratively developed management system of the Park, including the participation of the local Imraguen fishermen, and the current management plan, are examples of a strong management framework that might be applicable elsewhere. The PNBA Trust Fund is another useful example of an approach to sustainable financing of natural World Heritage Properties. Further, the maritime surveillance scheme is the most effective in the region.

Wadi Al-Hitan (Whale Valley), Egypt

➡ Inscribed as a natural site in 2005, criterion (viii)

The globally important fossils of Wadi Al-Hitan (Whale Valley), in the Western Desert of Egypt, provide dramatic evidence of one of the iconic stories of evolution: the emergence of whales as ocean-going mammals from their previous life as land-based animals (whc.unesco.org).



The UNESCO reporting trend shows good reporting for Wadi Al-Hitan, with a peak occurring between 2010 and 2012. The latest SOC is from 2010.

Regarding the Conservation Outlook, it has remained the same since TABE'A I, and stands at "Good". An appropriate management framework remains in place but still could be further strengthened. There remains an unresolved issue to include the site of Gebel Qatrani, if the matter of sustainable finance could be resolved.

The Conservation Outlook summary:

Conservation outlook	Assessment at time of TABE'A I	Current assessment	Current summary
State and trend of values	Low concern	Good	Status of fossils remains very good. There remains some weathering and limited impact of damage/removal by visitors.
Pressures and potential threats	Low threat	Low threat	The main threat is still posed by theft and damage from increasing visitor numbers, although there is a new potential threat from illegal mining operations.
Protection and management	Adequate	Mostly effective	There is a strong framework for protection, although financing and resource allocation remain a challenge.

Additional notes

Protection and management

General	<p>The management system is effective overall, with a separate management plan in preparation for Wadi Al-Hitan in 2011, as the site is managed under the Wadi Al-Rayan Protected Area (Conservation Outlook, 2014).</p> <p>An extension of the buffer zone has been recommended, in addition to a potential added value of the inclusion of Gebel Qatrani and Gebel Abiad. The State Party has mentioned that this is indeed a long-term goal, but provided no further information (IUCN, 2010).</p>
Tourism	<p>There was a threefold increase in annual visitor numbers to about 12,000 between 2005 and 2008, although there remains a low threat of impact to the whale skeletons (IUCN, 2010).</p> <p>Tourism is restricted to pre-arranged tours along prescribed trails (UNEP-WCMC, 2011).</p>
Local people/stakeholders	<p>There is an effective relationship with local people, who benefit from jobs in guarding, management and tourism. Fifteen families benefit from 28 conservation jobs in this area with few other sources of income (Conservation Outlook, 2014).</p>
Research and monitoring	<p>There has been strong scientific interest since the 1980s, with more fossils expected to be discovered in the future (UNEP-WCMC, 2011). There is a highly effective monitoring system in place.</p>
Finance	<p>There is some financing concern, with funding unclear after 2008 (UNEP-WCMC, 2011), and limited resources (electricity, water, vehicles, <i>etc.</i>) still a challenge to management effectiveness (El-Hennawy <i>et al.</i>, 2010). Secure long-term funding needs to be established (IUCN, 2010).</p>
Other	<p>One of Wadi Al-Hitan's skeletons, <i>Basilosaurus isis</i>, was sent to the University of Michigan, USA, and its replica is now suspended from the ceiling of the University of Michigan Exhibit Museum of Natural History in the whale evolution exhibit that opened in April 2011 (redorbit.com, 2011).</p>

Pressures and threats

Unofficial tracks and off-road driving	<p>There are some unofficial tracks leading through fossil sites, with a destruction case documented in 2007, but off-road driving has almost stopped (IUCN, 2010). Logistics are challenging due to the site's remote location (UNEP-WCMC, 2011).</p>
Illegal quarries	<p>There have been reports of unsuccessful attempts to establish illegal quarries. This may continue to pose a threat, although specific information is not available (Conservation Outlook, 2014)</p>

An example of good practice

There has been significant investment in well designed visitor and interpretation facilities at Wadi Al-Hitan, which have not only made the site more attractive and informative for tourists, but also contributed greatly to the reduction of unregulated access and the potential resulting negative impacts. The development of adequate visitor management and site interpretation infrastructure and material are essential to secure the much needed support for the site protection by all stakeholders including decision makers, local communities and visitors. Every World Heritage Site needs to have a well established user-friendly interpretation facility as an integral part of its management system and investment plan.

Socotra Archipelago, Yemen

► Inscribed as a natural site in 2008, criterion (x)

Socotra Archipelago, in the northwest Indian Ocean near the Gulf of Aden, is 250 km long and comprises four islands and two rocky islets which appear as a prolongation of the Horn of Africa. The site is of universal importance because of its biodiversity with rich and distinct flora and fauna: 37% of Socotra's 825 plant species, 90% of its reptile species and 95% of its land snail species do not occur anywhere else in the world. The site also supports globally significant populations of land and sea birds (192 bird species, 44 of which breed on the islands while 85 are regular migrants), including a number of threatened species. The marine life of Socotra is also very diverse, with 253 species of reef-building corals, 730 species of coastal fish and 300 species of crab, lobster and shrimp (whc.unesco.org).

Other biodiversity values

Socotra hosts six endemic and globally threatened bird species and 11 endemic subspecies (BirdLife International, 2013) in addition to endemic reptile and plant species. It also has 19 Important Bird Areas (BirdLife International, 2013), is part of the CI global biodiversity hotspot (CI, 2013), is a Ramsar site (Wetlands International, 2013), and a WWF Global 200 priority eco-region (WWF, 2013).



Socotra – along with Wadi Rum Protected Area – is looked at in more detail in the TABE'A II report as it is one of the two latest sites inscribed on the World Heritage List and is particularly under increasing pressure due to the political crisis currently taking place in the Republic of Yemen.

As the property was only inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2008, UNESCO reporting has been limited; however, there is a fairly large amount of information from other sources. Since TABE'A I, a mission report and a SOC report were released in 2013.

Regarding the Conservation Outlook, the overall outlook has changed from 'Uncertain' to of 'Significant Concern' due to new information that became available since 2011. There is much at stake in Socotra, as before due to rapid development, and now because of the country's political crisis. Current and potential threats to the site are increasing rapidly. Unsustainable road construction is the main threat to conservation status, as it leads to destruction of the immediate vicinity as well as the areas where material is sourced. Roads lead to erosion and landslides, facilitate propagation of introduced species, and ease access for illegal activities.

Presently, construction has been reduced in light of a construction decree, economic constraints, and political instability. However, there is no guarantee that this problem will not resume in the future, in which case, it could pose a serious threat to the OUV of the property. Further, the excessively large road network established so far has almost no maintenance system or allocated budget thus its deterioration due to natural factors such as monsoon rains and floods is very likely to exert significant impacts on the Archipelago's terrestrial and marine ecosystems and other natural and cultural values.

The Conservation Outlook summary:

Conservation outlook	Assessment at time of TABE'A I	Current assessment	Current summary
State and trend of values	Low concern	High concern	As before, the status of some values, particularly ecosystems and endemic flora continues to deteriorate, and further deterioration is predicted. The conservation status of reptiles and invertebrates is still data deficient.
Pressures and potential threats	High threat	High threat	Infrastructure development, tourism and unsustainable management continue to affect the island. Future threats include uncertainty of the political climate, invasive species and climate change.
Protection and management	Significant concern	Some concern	There have been institutional arrangements to facilitate the process of the implementation of management and conservation measures effectively, but they should be improved to deal with rapidly increasing pressures. In addition to previous priority issues, schemes to promote sustainable natural resource use where possible should be added.

Capacity building

EPA staff have received considerable capacity-building support, but practical application is not necessarily effective (Conservation Outlook, 2014), and there has been a reduction of staff (by 75% since 2008) after the discontinuation of the UNDP Socotra Conservation and Development Programme. Ultimately, the capacity of EPA to manage the site is limited (human and financial resource wise), and there has been no concrete progress made towards the establishment of an independent authority mandated to oversee management and protection (SOC Report, 2013).

According to a Fauna and Flora International case study, the capacity of the Socotra-based conservation institution has increased dramatically since it began modern conservation methods, after Socotra had been traditionally conserved by locals for millennia. Its personnel are generally respected, largely because their roles include assisting local communities with development initiatives underlining the importance of integrating conservation and development at the onset of conservation (Scholte et al., 2010).

A training workshop in waste management was held in March 2011 in Hadibo. It was keenly attended by Socotris working in tourism, who feel that uncontrolled pollution of Socotra not only harms nature, but also their business (socotraproject.org, Jan 2015).

A capacity-building workshop was conducted (no date available) to emphasize the importance of mainstreaming gender into local governance, decision making, and biodiversity conservation, and included practical training on preparation of administrative plans (socotraproject.org, Jan 2015).

Additional notes

Protection and management

General	<p>A seven-day workshop was organized by IUCN with ARC-WH and EPA in December 2013 with the objective to assess management effectiveness, formulate strategies, and recommend management policies (www.iucn.org, Feb 2014).</p> <p>The Property's management plan has not been reviewed or developed in response to its inscription on the World Heritage list (SOC Report, 2013).</p> <p>There is an unclear responsibility for Conservation and Zoning Plan implementation, with no archipelago-wide conservation authority, resulting in a major obstacle to conservation enforcement. Further, the buffer zones lack adequate regulations and management systems needed to act as shock absorbers (Abulhawa <i>et al.</i>, 2013).</p> <p>The turtle monitoring and protection team, with the help of public security, caught a group of men who killed a Loggerhead turtle on 31 May 2011 (socotraproject.org, 2011).</p> <p>There has been increased water demand, biocide pollution, exotic plant import, and habitat loss due to home-garden projects. In fact, 87 exotic plant species have been found, including several invasive species (Van Damme <i>et al.</i>, 2011).</p>
Tourism	<p>Despite current low overall tourism numbers, lack of tourism development planning and concentration of tourists at high natural value sites pose risks (Abulhawa <i>et al.</i>, 2013).</p> <p>Potential economic benefits of sustainable tourism are not clearly understood among local stakeholders, despite the fact that there is a potential for a significant number of jobs as its result.</p>
Local people/stakeholders	<p>There is insufficient mainstreaming of sustainable development among all stakeholders, creating an obstacle to effective conservation management. Local stakeholders, who have been stewards and managers of the area for centuries, do not benefit sufficiently (Abulhawa <i>et al.</i>, 2013).</p> <p>After re-opening of the Socotra Governance and Biodiversity Project (SGBP), the first board meeting was held 4 September 2013 in the EPA office in Sana'a. Project goals were presented and participants discussed the necessity of involving NGOs.</p>
Research and monitoring	<p>There has been ad-hoc observation of the conservation status, but there is currently no systematic monitoring planned (Abulhawa <i>et al.</i>, 2013).</p> <p>There has been an overall 25% increase in macro-waste production estimated until 2015 (Van Damme <i>et al.</i>, 2011).</p>
Education and interpretation	<p>Education and interpretation activities and materials are virtually missing, in addition to no communication of World Heritage status of the site (Conservation Outlook, 2014).</p>
Finance	<p>There is no sustainable financing strategy in place, financing is largely donor-dependent, and long-term financing from the State Party or elsewhere is not secured (Conservation Outlook, 2014).</p>

Pressures and threats

Increase in infrastructure development, water/timber demand, accelerated breakdown of traditional land management, and increased risk of invasive species all pose risks (Abulhawa *et al.*, 2013).

Grazing	<p>Grazing and fodder use appear unsustainable and threaten native flora, and are considered to be key factors negatively impacting conservation. Excessive grazing levels are evident on the Property, although no studies are available to assess level of impact. Further, there is insufficient cooperation with traditional pastoralists to jointly develop a sustainable grazing regime. In any case, little can be done to address grazing challenges at the current stage of economic and social circumstances due to the socio-economic sensitivity of grazing for locals (Abulhawa <i>et al.</i>, 2013).</p>
Fishing	<p>Fishing and collection of aquatic resources are continuous threats. This is amplified by an increase in security problems in the Indian Ocean and limited law enforcement capacities of Socotra authorities to respond (Abulhawa <i>et al.</i>, 2013).</p>
Invasive alien species	<p>Export of native species and import of alien specimens could threaten the OUV of the Property. There are currently no effective controls in place at the airport or ports, and the EPA has limited capacity to enforce such controls (SOC Report, 2013).</p> <p>All mammal and freshwater fish species are alien, although not threatening to values, but two introduced reptiles are displacing endemic species (Van Damme <i>et al.</i>, 2011).</p>
Illegal resource use	<p>Illegal hunting of sea turtles, sea cucumbers, lobsters and shark fins, in addition to collection of endemic plants and reptiles for international trade has been reported (Van Damme <i>et al.</i>, 2011).</p>
Charcoal production	<p>An increasing concern is related to the establishment of a large charcoal production unit near Socotra Airport for export to the Gulf countries and elsewhere. This represents a serious precedent and, if not addressed promptly and firmly, could lead to another major source of impact on the island's endemic tree species, associated fauna and environmental pollution (IUCN, 2015).</p>
Qat cultivation	<p>There is a possibility of Qat cultivation in the future, and considering examples of other island ecosystems, this is considered a very high potential threat (Conservation Outlook, 2014).</p>

Learning from other lessons

The World Heritage Convention is an instrument for action in preserving threatened sites. By recognizing the OUV of a site, States Parties commit to protect it. If a site is in danger, this commitment can lead to actions to address the situation, and has led to successful restorations.

The construction of roads can be a significant threat to the OUV and it is important to consider lessons learned from other sites with similar challenges.

A success story in this light involves the Giza Pyramids, part of the Memphis and its Necropolis cultural World Heritage Site in Egypt. The pyramids were threatened in 1995 by a highway project near Cairo which would have seriously damaged the values of the archaeological site. Negotiations with the Egyptian government resulted in a number of alternative solutions which replaced the disputed project, and thus maintained the OUV (unesco.org, Jan 2015).

After Yemen's protests began in January 2011, Western countries warned their citizens to avoid travel to Yemen and began to evacuate those already there. Biologists thus worried that conservation in Socotra would come under threat since it depends largely on international support. Further, the decline in eco-tourism could lead locals to look for other income sources, perhaps leading to over-grazing and unsustainable exploitation of plant resources.

Political crises have had an environmental impact in Yemen in the past. For instance, after the unification of North and South Yemen in 1990, the most extensive Juniper woodland in Yemen, which had formed a boundary between the north and south, was rapidly felled (Yahia, 2011).

Wadi Rum Protected Area, Jordan

► Inscribed as a mixed site in 2011, criteria (iii) (v) (vii)

The 74,000-hectare property, inscribed as a mixed natural and cultural site, is situated in southern Jordan, near the border with Saudi Arabia. It features a varied desert landscape consisting of a range of narrow gorges, natural arches, towering cliffs, ramps, massive landslides and caverns. Petroglyphs, inscriptions and archaeological remains in the site testify to 12,000 years of human occupation and interaction with the natural environment (whc.unesco.org).

Other biodiversity values

Wadi Rum contains a number of globally important fauna species, and two plants endemic to Jordan. Further, the Arabian Oryx is being reintroduced after becoming nationally extinct due to hunting. It is also an Important Bird Area (BirdLife International, 1999).



Wadi Rum – along with Socotra Archipelago – is looked at in more detail in the TABE'A II report as it is the latest site inscribed on the World Heritage List in the Arab States region and is particularly in need of the highest possible support and advice.

Wadi Rum had not yet been inscribed as a World Heritage Site in time to be included in TABE'A I, but since, there has been a mission report and a SOC report from 2014.

Regarding the Conservation Outlook, it is predominantly positive, with only low-level threats to the scenic World Heritage values, and so is overall 'Good with Some Concerns'. A new draft management plan is awaiting approval, but has been recommended to be further revised. The latest unofficial report confirms that the management plan has been revised and is currently in the final stages of approval by the governing authority (ASEZA, 2015).

The main concern in relation to the management plan is its implementation, which has been lacking in some areas. Further, there are some concerns over sustainable visitor management, especially given the likelihood of growing visitor numbers. The potential for increased infrastructure to support a growing tourism industry also needs to be carefully managed. A successful future for Wadi Rum is dependent on the ability to balance conservation, sustainable tourism, and the maintenance of traditional livelihoods to specifically and equitably benefit the local Bedouin communities.

The Conservation Outlook summary:

Conservation outlook	Assessment at time of TABE'A I	Current assessment	Current summary
State and trend of values	N/A	Low concern	Available information indicates that the current trend of “good conservation” is stable. Low population density and lack of development impacts have helped maintain a relatively pristine and authentic condition. There are no major construction projects looming that might affect the exceptional scenic beauty of the site.
Pressures and potential threats	N/A	Low threat	Due to its remoteness and desert/mountainous nature, much of Wadi Rum has been largely inaccessible or subject to subsistence usage until relatively recently and, as such, naturally protected. There is some illegal hunting, permitted subsistence wood fuel collection, and pastoral grazing by local communities, but these are currently thought to be within sustainable limits. There are no viable mineral resources known here, hence, no mining threat. Unsustainable use of the fossil aquifer under the site does not directly impact it, but has potential to impact local communities living in and around the PA. The greatest current and potential threat is represented by tourism, with unregulated off-road driving, construction of illegal campsites, and self-guided tourists causing vegetation damage and threatening the site's integrity. It is foreseen that tourism will further increase after World Heritage inscription. There is also the potential for climate change impacts on flora and fauna dependent on the elevated mountainous areas.
Protection and management	N/A	Mostly effective	Protection and management has significantly benefited from support by NGOs, international aid, and the national government for the past few decades. The legal and governance framework is strong, staff levels and financial resources are good, and there is a modern and well equipped visitor centre and administration building. Wadi Rum has a good first management plan, but implementation is lacking in some areas due to staff capacity, particularly regarding technical knowledge of natural and heritage management. Finalization of the new draft management plan and ensuring sufficient capacity to implement it is a priority, especially in light of growing visitor numbers and associated pressures.

Capacity building

Many local Bedouin benefit from employment, but staff capacity and capabilities could be further improved, especially in administration.

Capacity building for natural heritage staff is supported by IUCN-ROWA, RSCN and ARC-WH, but cultural heritage staff are not included in this. A joint programme with the UNESCO Jordan office is currently trying to address this shortcoming.

Additional notes

Protection and management

General	<p>There are several cases of building outside the formal boundary of Rum Village, however, PA management have limited capacity to tackle encroachment, as enforcement lies with another department at ASEZA headquarters. It is important to establish in this report that Rum Village and its access road are both located within the World Heritage Site.</p> <p>Ranger patrols include compliance and enforcement work, although there is little information on ranger capacity or effectiveness of compliance.</p>
Tourism	<p>As of 2010, Wadi Rum had 300,000 visitors a year, with visitation likely to increase as a result of WH status. This projection has recently been dramatically reduced due to the current instabilities in the region. Most of the tourists utilize off-road tours which threaten the fragile desert. This threat is recognized in management planning, but interventions appear to have had limited success to date.</p> <p>Pressure for tourism-related infrastructure could be expected to increase as visitor numbers grow. The 2014 mission noted as many as 30 illegal camps.</p>
Local people/stakeholders	<p>Local communities are heavily involved in the planning and management of the site and were well involved in management plan development, and locals benefit from jobs working with the PA or independently with tourism, and from handicraft industries.</p>
Research and monitoring	<p>There are some difficulties implementing research recommendations of the management plan, in addition to some concerns on how to use research programme results in the decision-making process.</p> <p>There is no integrated monitoring programme in place, so monitoring of WH values is informal, which is considered to be adequate. However, it is likely that conservation objectives for biodiversity values and their management would benefit from being more evidence-based.</p>
Education/interpretation	<p>There is no proper interpretation, communication or promotion of the World Heritage property as a whole. The site visitor centre does not present adequately the World Heritage values of the site as it was constructed long before its enlisting by UNESCO, which highlights the need to upgrade the centre and other on-site interpretation facilities and materials. There are site-based education programmes on-going via school clubs and school visits that focus on raising environmental awareness.</p>
Finance	<p>Funding is considered to be adequate, but there is no update on the security of aid contributions and national funding allocations especially in regard to no-operating allocation such as research and monitoring, and tourism/interpretation facilities development. Presently, additional funding is available from a UNDP/GEF project and from USAID, and entry fees to the PA go to site management. Also, a development fund has been established (in 2001) with the intent to ensure financial and institutional sustainability.</p>
Legal framework	<p>Most of Jordan's protected areas are managed by the NGO, RSCN, but Wadi Rum's management authority sits with ASEZA. This raises questions about consistency of management as well as issues of capacity and an appropriate focus on heritage management. Further, a National Protected Areas Management Effectiveness Report notes weak synchronization between national law and ASEZA regulation. PA staff have no legal authority once outside the boundary of the PA, and hence should have a mandate from national law to control inappropriate land-use activities around the PA boundary. The 2014 mission also noted a lack of coordination between departments and between regional and national institutions. In this regard, a memorandum of understanding (MoU 2014–2016) was prepared between the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities/ Department of Antiquities and ASEZA to be signed in May 2014.</p>

Pressures and threats

Hunting	<p>Hunting is illegal in Wadi Rum, but low-level subsistence hunting is a long established tradition with local Bedouin. There are infrequent cases of hunting, particularly of Ibex, but the extent and consequent impact is unknown.</p>
Grazing	<p>Grazing is permitted by locals, with the highest use occurring in the west of the PA in spring. High-intensity grazing can be a threat to the site's values, but monitoring indicates that livestock numbers are reducing as local communities transfer to a tourism-based economy.</p>
Wood harvesting	<p>Harvesting of wood primarily occurs now for use by the local tourism industry, but is considered a very low threat. Wood collection is not permitted in 83% of the PA.</p>
Climate change	<p>The isolated pockets of flora and fauna located in the elevated mountain environments may be impacted by climate change, having severe consequences as they have no alternative habitats, but there is limited baseline data available on this.</p>
Waste management	<p>There is currently no management of human waste for Rum Village, and untreated waste threatens the integrity of the site. However, management of this is beyond the jurisdiction of Wadi Rum staff, but lies with ASEZA, who state that a regional/ special plan has been prepared which includes improving waste management.</p>

An example of good practice

The collaboratively developed management plan of the Protected Area, including the participation of the local people, is an example of a strong management framework that might be applicable elsewhere. Nationally, Wadi Rum Protected Area is considered to be the best example of protected area management in Jordan in terms of legal and regulatory systems, human and financial resource investment, and participative management.

Conclusions for all sites

For most of the sites, additional information has become available since the TABE'A I report and, therefore, their overall Conservation Outlook has been assessed slightly differently.

In general, the sites that include water resources (Banc d'Arguin, Ichkeul and Socotra) as heritage values are under the greatest pressure and they are all considered to have conservation statuses that are of 'Significant Concern'. This is mainly due to unsustainable resource use and construction of roads. The remaining three sites (Tassili n'Ajjer, Wadi Hitan and Wadi Rum) share 'good' conservation statuses, possibly due to the fact that all three are very remote and therefore less affected by human activity, at least as was the case in the past.

Arabian Oryx Sanctuary, Oman

► Inscribed in 1994, criterion (x), **delisted in 2007**

The Arabian Oryx Sanctuary in Oman was the first World Heritage Site to be delisted, and is one of only two.

The Sanctuary is a unique desert ecosystem that hosted (at time of inscription) several endemic plants, important mammal species such as Nubian Ibex, Arabian wolves, Honey badgers, Caracals, Arabian Gazelle, and the first free-ranging herd of Arabian Oryx since the global extinction of its species in the wild in 1972. It is also the only wild breeding site in Arabia of the endangered Houbara Bustard.

In 1996, the Oryx population at the site was 450, but due to poaching and habitat degradation, it subsequently dwindled to 65 with only four breeding pairs, rendering its future viability uncertain. Finally, in 2007, the World Heritage Committee deleted the Property from the World Heritage List due to the State Party's unilateral decision to reduce the size of the PA by 90% to allow hydrocarbon prospection, contrary to the Operational Guidelines of the Convention, and thus destroying the property's OUV (unesco.org, Jan 2015).

It is difficult to find much information as to the fate of the Sanctuary after removal from the List. One report stated that by 2002, the free herd had been almost poached out, but a fenced herd remained. By 2010, the development of nearby oil reserves had begun to compromise the natural integrity of the site. A main problem, it seems, is that although benefits from the Oryx project were evenly spread among the local stakeholders, the oil companies offer far higher wages to employees, and rich foreign collectors pay high prices for poached animals (UNEP, 2010).

Another report affirmed that, in 2011, the free herd had 50 individuals, but with no females, leaving no possibility of future breeding. However, the fenced herd had grown to 380 animals, and once its population reaches 500, females will begin to be released to the wild. Unfortunately, it is difficult to be optimistic about the success of the wild herd considering the degraded state of their habitat. On a positive note, a biologist who spent some time at the site said that the herd is closely monitored by rangers who camp near the Oryx to detect poaching and live capture, suggesting that the management team is motivated to protect the herd (Zafar, 2011).

3 Update on the World Heritage Tentative Lists

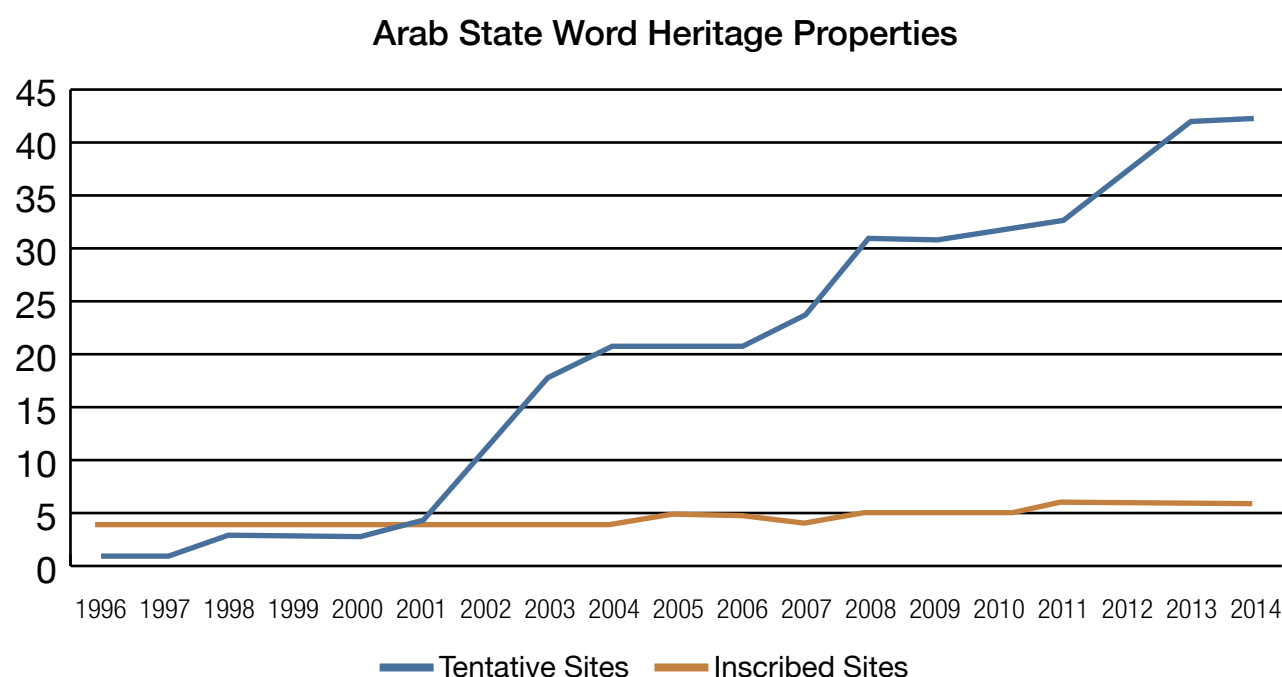
3.1 Brief recap from TABE'A I: Key findings, recommendations and responses

Tentative Lists (TLs) of States Parties are an essential and mandatory first step towards the nomination and ultimate inscription of new World Heritage sites, and are an inventory of those properties which States Parties intend to submit for inscription in the next five to ten years (WHC Operational Guidelines, 2013).

At the time of the TABE'A I Report (2011), there were 35 natural and mixed sites included in the Tentative Lists of 12 Arab States. Currently (2015), there are 43 natural and mixed sites in the TLs of 14 Arab States (three added in 2012, five added in 2013). In the same amount of time, one site has become a new World Heritage Site (Wadi Rum in Jordan) and two are being considered for inscription. Thus, as before, while the number of sites on the Tentative Lists of Arab States has continued to grow steadily over the last 19 years, the number of inscribed sites has only slightly increased (see Figure 2). It therefore appears that the Tentative List process still needs further support and improvement in supporting new nominations from the Arab States. A table detailing specifics of each site can be found in Annex 1.



Figure 2. Comparison between Tentative List update with WH inscription



Source: World Heritage Centre

Key recommendations included in the TABE'A I report in regard to Tentative Lists are summarized below along with associated developments and responses taken by IUCN and its partners.

- Revise and update Tentative List entries. This should involve the prioritization of sites that are likely to meet OUV requirements, and the rationalization of TLs to remove sites that do not have this potential. To facilitate this, there is a need for capacity building, in partnership with the UNESCO WHC, the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) and ICOMOS. There may also be an opportunity to build on the work that has been done by ICCROM through the capacity-building programme Architectural-Archaeological Tangible Heritage in the Arab Region (ATHAR).

Key responses from IUCN and ARC-WH since 2011

- Two regional capacity-building workshops addressing WH nominations and TL preparation for the Arab States took place in 2013.
- The translation into Arabic of the Global Marine Thematic Study was undertaken in 2014.
- Two thematic factsheets on Desert Landscapes and Marine Biodiversity were developed including recommendations on potential WH sites in the region.
- Another thematic study on the Red Sea is under preparation with proposed potential sites from the Arab States.

- Strengthen the national consultation, planning and inventory process preceding the listing of sites on the Tentative List by involving local stakeholders and resource users, municipalities and regional government, NGOs, all relevant government institutions and the business sector. Conduct a participatory analysis of appropriate management options prior to inclusion of sites on the List.

Key responses from IUCN and ARC-WH since 2011

- One of the focus areas of the programme revolves around encouraging the States Parties from the Region to establish their multi-stakeholder national committees as well as assigning their national focal points for World Heritage. Several countries have established their national platforms with the most recent (April 2015) being Mauritania who officially announced the establishment of its committee (IUCN WH Programme Coordinator, 2015).

- Use the guidance available from thematic IUCN studies and other sources to conduct a gap analysis of additional sites of potential OUV. Communicate and collaborate with States Parties to jointly identify the best examples of geological features, ecosystems, biodiversity and other outstanding values typical of the Arab region for prioritization.

Key responses from IUCN and ARC-WH since 2011

- See previous notes above.

- Use the methodological advice offered by recent UNESCO and IUCN manuals on OUV and the nomination process to guide the entire pre-nomination and nomination process. Early consideration of criteria, integrity and management/protection requirements will ensure that resources are focused on those sites that have the highest potential for inscription.

Key responses from IUCN and ARC-WH since 2011

- The upstream process has been an important highlight of the regional programme strategy in the Arab States Region. Specific attention has been drawn to early consideration of criteria, integrity and management issues for the re-nomination and nomination processes. The Iraq case represents a good practice example. See following sections.
- Two regional workshops addressed the OUV and Global Comparative Analysis (GCA) concepts and applications in 2013 and 2015 respectively.

- Collaborate to jointly establish marine sites in the Seas shared by Arab States. Collaborate to establish transboundary sites including transboundary serial sites.

Key responses from IUCN and ARC-WH since 2011

- The regional programme has been engaged with relevant States Parties to facilitate sub-regional dialogue on transboundary cooperation on marine biodiversity. This includes Bahrain's support of the marine mammal survey in the Arabian Gulf and the multilateral discussions on a sub-regional initiative on a transboundary marine World Heritage programme.
- Also see previous notes on the marine thematic study including the Red Sea.

As part of the TABE'A II report for 2015, and in order to improve the Tentative List process, it is important to examine any progress that States Parties have made regarding their TLs. Further, decision WHC-35COM/10C calls for 'harmonization of inventories and Tentative Lists (identification of gaps) in the Arab Region'. Therefore, possible gaps in what types of sites have been presented must be identified.

3.2 Progress in updating Tentative Lists

Because Tentative Lists are an inventory of properties which States Parties intend to submit for inscription in the next five to ten years, States Parties should ideally regularly examine their Tentative Lists to identify sites that have real potential to be proposed for nomination to the World Heritage List. If a tentative site lacks this potential, its listing should be improved, or eliminated from the Tentative List. Simply continuing to add sites to the Tentative List without attempting to move forward with nominations is ineffective.

Table 2 below shows each Arab State's activity regarding its Tentative List. Countries with no recent activity (more than five years since last update) have been highlighted in red. Particular note should be taken of Algeria, Mauritania, Lebanon, and Yemen, with 12, 13, 18, and 12 years of inactivity, respectively. These four countries also added all of their tentative sites in one year, with no subsequent updates. Further, only Libya (as part of the Arab States Regions as defined by UNESCO) has no Tentative List activity at all. It is important to keep in mind that the table only shows additions, and not whether a State has deemed a tentative site to be lacking in World Heritage qualifications, thus removing it from the List.

Table 2. Arab States' activities regarding their Tentative Lists

No	Country	Last addition	Natural/ mixed sites	Total tentative sites	Notes
1	Algeria	2002	1	6	All sites added in same year
2	Bahrain	2008	1	5	Sites added in 2001, 2008
3	Egypt	2010	9	32	Sites added in 1994, 2002, 2003, 2008, 2010
4	Iraq	2014	2	11	Sites added in 2000, 2003, 2010, 2011, 2014
5	Jordan	2007	3	15	Sites added in 2001, 2004, 2007
6	Kuwait	2014	0	2	Sites added in 2013, 2014
7	Lebanon	1996	1	9	All sites added in same year
8	Libya	n/a	0	0	-
9	Mauritania	2001	0	3	All sites added in same year
10	Morocco	2013	4	12	Sites added in 1995, 1998, 2011, 2013
11	Oman	2014	5	8	Sites added in 1988, 2013, 2014
12	Palestine	2013	2	13	Sites added in 2012, 2013
13	Qatar	2008	1	1	All sites added in same year
14	KSA	2012	0	1	All sites added in same year
15	Sudan	2004	3	6	Sites added in 1994, 2004
16	Syria	2011	0	12	Sites added in 1999, 2011
17	Tunisia	2012	4	10	Sites added in 2008, 2012
18	UAE	2014	2	7	Sites added in 2012, 2014
19	Yemen	2002	5	10	All sites added in same year

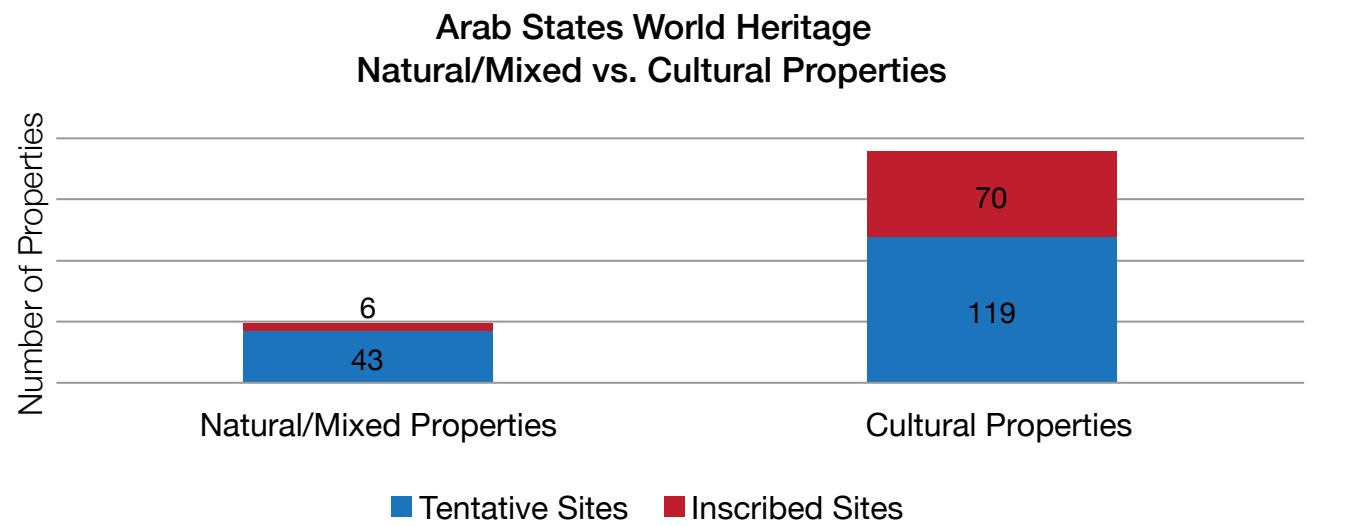
3.2.1 Gaps in types of tentative sites as part of the Global Strategy

In 1994, the World Heritage Committee launched the Global Strategy. Twenty-two years after the adoption of the 1972 Convention, the World Heritage List lacked balance in the type of inscribed properties and in the geographical areas of the world that were represented. The vast majority of World Heritage sites were cultural properties (as opposed to natural or mixed), and most were located in developed regions of the world, notably Europe. The Global Strategy was thus adopted to ensure that the World Heritage List better reflected the full spectrum of our world's treasures.

Currently, 21 years following the Global Strategy, natural and mixed sites inscribed on the World Heritage List cover almost all regions and habitats of the world, with a relatively balanced distribution. However, there are still major gaps for natural areas such as tropical/temperate grasslands, savannas, lake systems, tundra and polar systems, cold winter deserts and the marine environment lately.

It is crucial to the Global Strategy that countries are encouraged to become States Parties to the Convention, and that they prepare Tentative Lists and nominations of properties from categories and regions that are currently not well represented on the World Heritage List. In this regard, there are five Arab Member States that have no natural or mixed sites on their Tentative Lists: Kuwait, Libya, Mauritania, Saudi Arabia and Syria. Further, there remains a lack of balance in types of Arab World Heritage properties, both inscribed and tentative, with the vast majority being cultural as opposed to natural or mixed, as shown in Figure 3 (for specific values of each country, see Annex 2).

Figure 3. Number of tentative sites vs inscribed sites



Source: World Heritage Centre

Gaps as identified by the World Heritage Global Strategy

As stated above, there are still major gaps for natural areas such as tropical/temperate grasslands and savannas, lake systems, tundra and polar systems, cold winter deserts and marine. Sites that are already on a Tentative List and contain these habitats may be given priority to be presented for nomination, provided they also show strong position on elements of integrity and protection. Any Arab country or sub-region that contains one of these habitats may consider creating a tentative site for proposal individually or jointly.

There are several Arab tentative sites that contain these habitats:

Tropical grasslands and savannas:

- Dinder National Park (Sudan, 2004)

Lake systems:

- Bird Migration Routes (Egypt, 2003)
- Southern and Smaller Oases, the Western Desert (Egypt, 2003)
- The Ahwar of Southern Iraq (Iraq, the nomination was submitted in 2014 but a field evaluation mission is pending)

Marine ecosystems:

- The Gulf Hawar Islands (Bahrain, 2001)
- Khor Al Udaid (Qatar, 2008)
- Sir Bu Nair (United Arab Emirates, 2012)
- Red Sea and Gulf of Aden:
 - Northeast Red Sea: Ras Mohammed (Egypt, 2002)
 - Sanganeb National Park (Sudan, 2004)
 - Southern Red Sea (Sudan, Saudi Arabia and Yemen)
 - Desert Wadis (Egypt, 2003)
 - Yemen:
 - Belhaf/Burum coastal area (2002)
 - Sharma/Jethmun coastal area (2002)
- Ras al Had Turtle Reserve and the Heritage Site Ras Al Jinz (Oman, 2013)
- Al Dimaniyyat Islands Proposed Natural Reserve (2013)
- Al Hallaniyyat Islands Proposed Natural Reserve (2013)
- Bar Al Hakman Proposed Natural Reserve (2013)
- Mediterranean area:
 - Wadi Gaza coastal wetland (Palestine, 2012)
 - Palm Islands (Lebanon, 1996)
 - Parc national de Dakhla (Morocco, 1998)
 - Oasis de Gebes (Tunisia, 2008)

There are several Arab regions that contain under-represented habitats, but do not have sites included on a Tentative List:

Tropical grasslands and savannas

- Sudd-Sahelian Savanna (Sudan) (see later, under 'Sites as identified by IUCN thematic studies').

Temperate grasslands and savannas:

- Al Hajar Al Gharbi Montane Woodlands (Oman)
- Middle East Steppe (Iraq, Syria)

Note: Information for these suggestions was gathered from Tentative List descriptions in the UNESCO website, some of which are not well detailed. Thus, they may be erroneous.

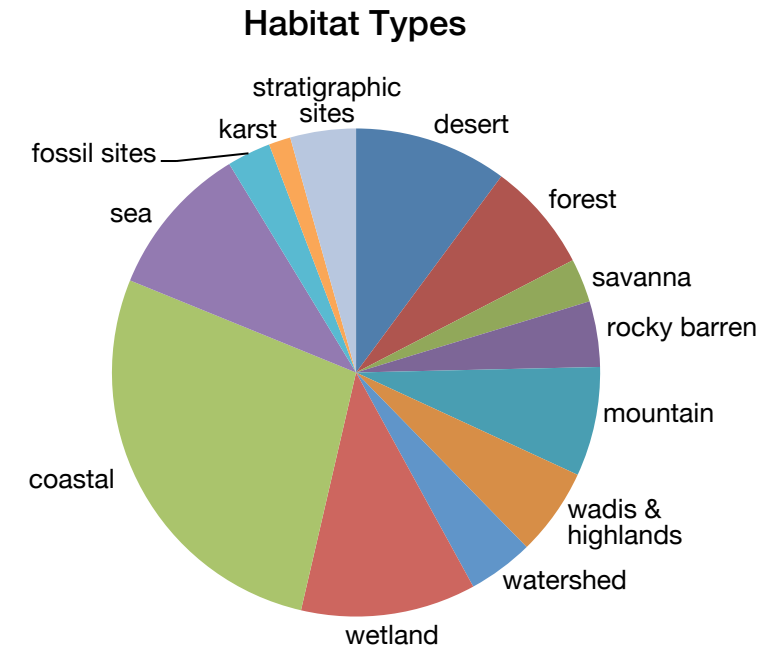
3.2.2 Gaps as identified by examination of current tentative sites

By examining types of sites already on the Tentative List, gaps can be identified that may be used to assist States Parties in determining which areas should become tentative sites in the future. For details of each site, see Annex 1.

By habitat type

Sites from the Tentative Lists were categorized according to habitats types (Figure 4). Habitat types were adapted from the IUCN/SSC First-level Habitats listed in "Geological World Heritage" (Dingwall *et al.*, 2005). The 13 habitat types are: desert, forest, savanna, rocky barren, mountain, wadis and highlands, watershed, wetland (includes marshes, lakes, rivers, *etc.*), coastal/intertidal, sea, fossil sites, karst (caves) and stratigraphic sites (showing rock sequences).

Figure 4. By-habitat distribution of tentative sites in the Arab States



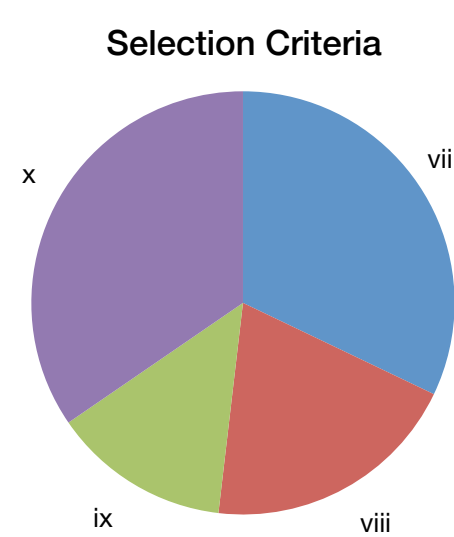
By OUV criteria

To be included on the World Heritage List, sites must first meet at least one out of ten selection criteria.

Criteria vii, viii, ix and x correspond to natural properties. These are:

- vii** Contains superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty
- viii** Represents major stages of earth's history, including the record of life, on-going geological processes, or geomorphic or physiographic features
- ix** Represents significant on-going ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of ecosystems and natural communities
- x** Contains significant natural habitats for *in-situ* conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species

Figure 5. Distribution of tentative sites in Arab States by OUV criteria



3.2.3 Sites identified in IUCN thematic studies

IUCN has produced a number of studies on various categories of potential natural World Heritage sites. Studies pertaining to the Arab Region were mentioned in the TABE'A I Report, with a few promising natural or mixed World Heritage sites and a Desert Landscape factsheet and Marine factsheet under preparation. The first regional marine thematic study is under development for the Red Sea (expected publication late 2015). The sites or areas from these thematic studies are presented below, including description of any progress made leading to their inscription on the World Heritage List.

Desert landscape sites

Chott el Jerid (Tunisia): This is the largest salt pan of the Sahara Desert. The Site was added to Tunisia's Tentative List in 2008, but no further actions have been undertaken since then. Recent informal communications with the State Party indicate its intention to initiate the process of nomination in the near future.

Sabkha (United Arab Emirates): "Sabkha" is simply the Arabic word for salt flat, or marshland. In UAE, they form along the coast of the Arabian Gulf, and in the south, where there are patterns of high drifting barchan (crescent shaped, formed by wind action) dunes alternating with sabkha salt flats (this also occurs in the Empty Quarter of Saudi Arabia). The two sites on the UAE Tentative List do not contain sabkhas.

Regarding sabkhas: In the khor-lagoon-sabkha model (discussed by Al-Farraj, 2005), an initial rise in sea level floods coastal areas and creates shallow water features. If the features silt up, or the land rises, or the sea level falls, then the trapped water evaporates, leaving a flat salt pan, or sabkha. If the coastal region has irregular topography, then the flooding creates large independent creeks, or khors (shallow, subtidal flats or tidal inlets). As sediment begins to accumulate, the khors become more shallow and form a lagoon, or intertidal flat. The lagoons continue to fill until the lagoon floor is exposed at low tide, and the sabkha begins to form.

This model is perfectly illustrated in **Khor Al-Adaid Nature Reserve (Qatar, 2008)**. The Reserve features large mobile barchan dunes, a tidal embayment system, inland and coastal sabkhas, recently discovered "salt hummocks", stony deserts, elevated mesas and rocky outcrops. The unique lagoon hosts coral communities (see 'Coral reefs and mangroves' below), and is important for some endangered marine species, particularly turtles and dugongs. The Reserve is pristine and relatively undisturbed, and is of sufficient size for conservation to remain viable.

Other sites on Tentative Lists with sabkha features include:

Lagune de Khnifiss (Morocco, 1998): features a lagoon that is open to the sea on one end and ends in a sabkha on the other end.

Bar al Hakman Proposed Nature Reserve (Oman, 2013): is a peninsula composed of gravel plains, coastal and inland salt sabkhas, large mudflats and some salt-water lagoons. There are five tidal inlets (khors), including the largest khor in Oman. The peninsula is bordered by a bay which contains a mangrove-fringed island, unique coral reef structures (see 'Coral reefs and mangroves' below), and the richest and most extensive seagrass beds in Oman. The Reserve is also the densest nesting area for nearly all species of sea turtles worldwide, and is a major staging and wintering area for migratory birds.

Great Desert Landscapes (Egypt, 2003): one site here, the Qattara Depression, forms one of the most significant geomorphological features of the NW desert of Egypt. Common here are cones, towers, mushrooms, plateau-like hills, sinkholes and caves. Over large areas of the floor of the Depression, the bedrock is covered by wind-blown sand, moist sand sheets with adhesion ripples, sabkhas and sediments.

(Please see Annex 1, for more details on each).

Wetland and/or marine sites

Red Sea (Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and Yemen): According to the IUCN/SSC Global Habitat Analysis and WWF's Global 200 Ecoregions, nominations from the Red Sea area should receive priority.

Egypt: Ras Mohammed was added to the Tentative List of Egypt in 2002, and is in the Red Sea. The site is a declared protected area, and nomination for WH inscription was presented and deferred in 2003 (WHC decision 27COM/8C.5) (see 'Sites proposed by the States Parties for inscription to the World Heritage List' below, for details on deferral).

Jordan: Has no tentative sites in the Red Sea, however, the deferral of the nomination of Ras Mohammed (Egypt) suggested the inclusion of adjoining protected marine areas in the coastal zone of the Gulf of Aqaba. Consideration of integrity conditions is important.

Saudi Arabia: Has no tentative sites in the Red Sea.

Sudan: Sanganeb Marine National Park and Dugonab Bay is on the Red Sea. The nomination for WH inscription was submitted in 2014 and is pending decision in June 2015 (see 'Sites proposed by States Parties for inscription to the World Heritage List' below, for details).

Yemen: Has no tentative sites in the Red Sea.

Sudd-Sahelian Savanna

This region is a WWF Global 200 ecoregion and, according to WWF, is a critical/endangered habitat. The Savanna is known as one of the world's largest wetlands (5 million hectares) of swamps, floodplain, over 100 bird and mammal species, and food and papyrus production.

The Sudd: considered to be nearly impassable either overland or by watercraft, and in the late 1970s, construction began on the Jonglei Canal, which was planned to bypass the Sudd. The project, which would have drained the swamplands of the Sudd for agricultural use, was held up because of disruptions arising from the civil war in South Sudan. When peace was restored in 2000, speculation grew about a restart of the project, and in 2008, Sudan and Egypt agreed to restart the project to finish the canal in 24 years.

There are complex environmental and social issues involved in the undertaking of this project, including the collapse of fisheries, drying of grazing lands, a drop in ground-water levels and a reduction of rainfall in the region, in fact, the draining of the Sudd is likely to trigger massive environmental effects (Kaushik, 2012). Thus, it is crucial to ensure its conservation.

There is no tentative site submitted from this area. Dinder National Park is the closest site, but is located to the northwest of the Savanna.

Coral reefs and mangroves

Although not mentioned in the TABE'A I Report, marine sites containing coral and mangrove ecosystems are also in danger of degradation, primarily due to overexploitation (Smith and Jakubowska, 2000). Coral and mangrove habitats of the Arab Region are small in comparison to other World Heritage sites (*i.e.*, The Great Barrier Reef, Australia for coral and Kakadu National Park, Australia for mangroves), but when combined with other criteria, can help build a strong case for inscription. There are several Arab tentative sites with these ecosystems.

Coral reefs

These include: Hawar Islands Reserve (Bahrain, 2001, nomination deferred in 2004); Ras Mohammed (Egypt, 2002, nomination deferred in 2003); Mountain Chains (Egypt, 2003); Al Dimaniyyat Island Nature Reserve (Oman, 2013); Al Hallaniyat Islands Proposed Nature Reserve (Oman, 2013); Bar al Hakman Proposed Nature Reserve (Oman, 2013); Ras al Had Turtle Reserve and the Heritage Site of Ras al Jinz (Oman, 2013); Khor Al-Adaid Natural Reserve (Qatar, 2008); Sanganeb Marine National Park and Dugonab Bay (Sudan, 2004, under consideration for inscription); and Balhaf/Burum Coastal Area (Yemen, 2002).

Mangroves

These include: Desert Wadis (Egypt, 2003); Mountain Chains (Egypt, 2003); Bar al Hakman Proposed Nature Reserve (Oman, 2013); Ras al Had Turtle Reserve and the Heritage Site of Ras al Jinz (Oman, 2013).

(Please see Annex 1, for details on each).

Cave and karst sites

Karst systems are relatively well represented on the World Heritage List and, as such, IUCN considers that there is limited scope for recommending further karst nominations to the List. It is recommended that further karst nominations should only be promoted

where: (i) there is a very clear basis for identifying major and distinctive features of OUV by comparative analysis; and (ii) the basis for claiming OUV is a significant and distinctive feature of demonstrable and widespread significance, and not one of many narrow and specialized features.

However, representation of karst World Heritage sites is particularly poor in the Middle East and in arid and semi-arid environments.

Great Desert Landscapes (Egypt): The site was submitted to Egypt's Tentative List in 2003, but no further actions have been undertaken since then. In actuality, three component sites are included in this serial tentative site:

- **Qattara Depression:** Located in the northern part of the Western Desert, it is the largest natural closed depression of the Eastern Sahara. Sinkholes and caves are common here, and it also contains sabkhas (see above).
- **Great Sand Sea:** Also located in the Western Desert, between Siwa Oasis in the north and Gilf Kebir Plateau in the south. It is one of the largest unbroken masses of sand dune areas in the world.
- **Wadi Sannur:** Located in the Eastern Desert, it contains Wadi Sannur Cave which is the largest subterranean chamber in Egypt, with a characteristic crescent shape that may be unique in the world.

The tentative site description of the Great Desert Landscapes is detailed, but covers a very broad, disjointed area, and contains no OUV statement. It is important to note that cave/karst features alone would not justify OUV here.

Parc naturel de Talassemtane (Morocco): The site was submitted to Morocco's Tentative List in 1998, then no further actions. This site is proposed under criteria (ix) and (x), but according to IUCN's thematic study it also has potential for criterion (viii).

3.2.4 Submitted nominations (including deferred ones)

Sites proposed by the States Parties for inscription to the World Heritage List:

Hawar Islands Reserve (Bahrain)

2001: Added to Tentative List.

2002: Nomination for WH inscription presented and deferred in 2004 (WHC decision 28COM/14B.4).

Proposing nomination had been difficult in the past because the islands had been the subject of an ownership dispute between Bahrain and Qatar. This was subsequently resolved in favour of Bahrain by the International Court of Justice in 2001. Following this, Bahrain formulated a strategy for inscription of the area on the World Heritage List – including the production of a Master Plan – and the site was proposed for inscription in 2002.

However, at the 28th WHC session in Suzhou in 2004, IUCN recommended that the nomination be deferred. Consequently, due to some integrity issues, WHC decision 28COM/14B.4 deferred the nomination to allow the State Party to consider an appropriate extension and reconsider the proposal as a transboundary marine site covering the Gulf of Salwah, thus involving Bahrain, Qatar and Saudi Arabia (UNESCO, 2004; Tanner, 2009) (www.hawar-islands.com includes further information).

Some steps have already been taken and there are several regional efforts for protection and conservation for the dugong and seagrass beds under the Convention on the Conservation of Wildlife and their Natural Habitats in the Countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. Also significant steps have been taken by the Bahraini and Qatari authorities to consider the Gulf of Salwa as a potential transboundary WH site. Several meetings were conducted last year to explore this option.

Ras Mohammed (Egypt)

2002: Added to Tentative List.

2002: Nomination for WH inscription presented and deferred in 2003 (WHC decision 27COM/8C.5).

Nomination was deferred by the World Heritage Committee to allow the State Party to consider extending the boundaries of the nomination to include the eastern portion of the Ras Mohammed National Park as well as appropriate sectors of the adjoining protected marine areas in the coastal zone of the Gulf of Aqaba in Jordan.

The Ahwar of Southern Iraq (Iraq)

The Ahwar represents a remarkable story of the on-going restoration of a unique wetland ecosystem that was almost totally destroyed by dams and diversions by the turn of the century. The continuing recovery since 2003 of the Ahwar Marshes is an inspirational and important development.

2003: Added to Tentative List.

2009: IUCN ROWA and ARC-WH trained stakeholders (mainly represented by the government sector) in preparing nomination files.

2014: Complete nomination for inscription as a mixed site (under criteria ix and x for natural heritage) was presented; however, the field visit had to be postponed, and the nomination will be discussed by the Committee in June 2016 (40COM).

The site is a large wetland system in an extremely hot and arid environment with globally significant ecological succession processes, seasonal bird migrations and speciation in a relatively recent ecosystem. It is an area of high species diversity relative to the young age of the ecosystem, with a number of endemic and restricted range species and numerous populations of threatened species, especially birds. However, additional studies are needed to better understand the presence and status of mammals and plants on the site, particularly, the occurrence and status of endemic and globally threatened plants and overall plant diversity, and whether the Bunn's Bandicoot Rat is still present.

Water supply is certainly a crucial issue for the integrity of this site. The State Party has committed to maintaining a sufficient water budget to ensure that the Ahwar reaches 75% of its 1973 extent, and also expects a significant increase in water inflow by the end of the decade. These points require confirmation, as recovery of the Marshes since 2003 is only partial and it is essential that minimum levels can be met to ensure and maintain a functional ecosystem and that the boundaries of the site are appropriate to maintain a sufficient area of habitat. Similarly, potential impacts from oil and gas concessions in the buffer zone are a serious concern and the level of risk to the Marshes should be characterized in sufficient detail.

Sanganeb Marine National Park and Dungonab Bay (Sudan)

1983: Sanganeb Atoll was presented for nomination, and the Committee recommended resubmission with additional areas and improvements to protection and management.

2004: Added to Tentative List.

2012: Sanganeb Marine National Park and Dungonab Bay nomination for inscription was presented and deemed incomplete by WHC in 2014.

2014: Nomination for inscription (under criteria (vii), (viii), (ix) and (x)) was presented again and is pending decision in June 2015 (39COM).

The area contains a largely pristine marine ecosystem, a highly diverse system of colourful coral reefs, mangroves, seagrass beds, beaches, intertidal areas, and islands, and hosts perhaps the most important population of Dugong on the coast of Africa.

The marine environment of the site is very diverse and contributes to regional and global coral growth and reef development, and there are high levels of endemism. However, there seems to be little evidence linking on-going processes with the evolution of the ecosystem.

It is also home to important and endangered species, including Green turtles and Hawksbill turtles.

The management of the site spans both national and State-level government organizations, however there is currently no common management plan for the site, with two separate management plans for the two components, although the management authorities consider developing a common management plan if inscribed on the WH List. Therefore, it may be beneficial to develop an overall management framework for the whole property that promotes the effective involvement of all actors, including the local communities.

Enforcement responsibilities are shared between national and local governments in partnerships with local stakeholders. Overall, while the level and degree of threats remain low, resources and capacity of management are low and could hinder on-going effective management of the site, particularly in the face of increasing tourism levels and future coastal development. Also, it seems that the Sudanese government is committed to the protection of its coastal waters, but there are concerns over Sudan's current political turmoil and state of insecurity which could affect the capacity to effectively protect the site.

Note on information collection for this literature review

Finding sufficient information for the Arab Region often proved to be difficult. Many of the tentative sites examined for this report contained missing information, or sparsely or poorly written descriptions, which would benefit from an update. Further, there was usually nothing written about current management or protection. There was also no information that shows if a State Party has updated its Tentative List by removing any tentative sites; only additions can be found.

4 The IUCN/ARC WH upstream process in the Arab States

4.1 The rationale for the upstream process

The TABE'A programme represents a flagship programme for IUCN in the Arab Region. The emerging programme was able, in only a few years, and through a unique partnership with the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage (ARC-WH) in Bahrain, to contribute substantially to IUCN's global vision and strategy and activate Arab States' regional effort on the topic of World Heritage, which was not sufficiently addressed or recognized in regional plans and initiatives beforehand.

The basic rationale for the process is based on the following points:

- The upstream process represents a strategic direction and approach adopted by the World Heritage Convention as part of the global strategy. The need for such a process was initiated by the States Parties as they vary in their capacities (mainly institutional, technical and human-resource related) to adequately achieve their satisfactory engagement and contribution to the implementation of the Convention.



- The process takes the relationship between IUCN and the States Parties beyond the conventional ‘advisory body’ role associated mainly with the nomination process. Through this process IUCN could work more constructively and proactively with States Parties for better implementation of the Convention while linking it to national priorities and constraints. This includes the enhancement of national and regional Tentative Lists, and site-related assessment and evaluation. As a result, it is anticipated that the States Parties will look more positively on their relationship to IUCN, thus allowing for a more constructive dialogue and cooperation.
- The process allows for an improved utilization of time and resources dedicated to implementation of the World Heritage Convention. States Parties would receive advice at an early stage on their selection of potential World Heritage sites prior to nomination as well as advice and support on integrity, management and protection issues after inscription but prior to risks related to site-related reporting or even inclusion in the World Heritage List in Danger.
- The process allows IUCN, ARC-WH and their partners as well as other interested entities to share information, collaborate on the ground and avoid unnecessary overlaps or conflicts in communicating, supporting or working with States Parties. This is particularly important for programmes and intervention undertaken by the World Heritage Centre, other UNESCO Category 2 Centres as well as other UN agencies interested and active on the World Heritage field.
- Despite all the positive aspects listed above, the upstream process could also fall under the risk of over-expectations by the States Parties, associated with possible confusion over IUCN’s role as an Advisory Body to the World Heritage Committee. Such clarification of roles (and their associated modalities of engagement) needs to be confirmed throughout the upstream process. The process must never be perceived as a shortcut or up-front guarantee for sites being included on the World Heritage List.

In this report, two components of the upstream process are reported upon:

- A selected number of site, State Party or theme-based case studies through IUCN and ARC-WH were engaged. These include:
 - The case study for upstream support for the Ahwar of Southern Iraq.
 - The case study for upstream support for the Wadi Rum Protected Area.
 - The case study on the Rights-based Approaches and their linkages to the World Heritage Programme.
- A selected number of regional capacity-building and training activities which were organized jointly by IUCN and ARC-WH in response to the various needs identified through the various reporting processes. In particular those requested by States Parties during the periodic reporting process, national focal point meetings and the regional assessments undertaken by the programme partners. This will include four examples undertaken during the reporting period:
 - The regional training on the nomination dossier preparation and OUV Statement development, at ARC-WH Bahrain, 2013.
 - The regional training on World Heritage management effectiveness, using the ‘Enhancing Our Heritage’ Toolkit, at ARC-WH Bahrain, 2013.
 - The regional training on the legal frameworks and law enforcement for World Heritage, at ARC-WH Bahrain, 2014.
 - The regional training course on Global Comparative Analysis, at ARC-WH Bahrain, 2015.

4.2 The Ahwar of Southern Iraq

(Extracted from the Ahwar case study document, Chaterlard and Abulhawa, 2014)

In January 2014, Iraq as a State Party to the 1972 World Heritage Convention nominated The Ahwar of Southern Iraq: Refuge of Biodiversity and Relict Landscape of the Mesopotamian Cities, a mixed serial property, for inscription on the World Heritage List. This was the first attempt by an Arab State at nominating a property both mixed and serial, and the first time Iraq had nominated a natural property.

As importantly, the nomination presents a rare example where national preparation teams benefited from an intensive training and capacity-building programme, and where a high level of collaboration and coordination between natural and cultural heritage specialists was attained. It also gave IUCN, as an Advisory Body to the World Heritage Committee, the opportunity to provide extensive upstream advisory guidance to a State Party to the 1972 Convention for the preparation of a nomination, in accordance with Decision 33 COM 14.A2 para. 14 of 2009 by the World Heritage Committee.

Last but not least, the nomination preparation was conceived primarily as a tool to raise awareness among Iraqi decision-makers and heritage professionals of the considerable efforts required to protect and conserve the historical, cultural, biological and hydrological values of the nominated property.

Challenges

In its early stages, the preparation of the nomination dossier faced several challenges relating mainly to the following issues:

- The poor status of Iraq's natural and cultural heritage in a country affected by recurrent conflicts and an unstable political situation;
- An institutional setup characterized by unclear authority over cultural and natural heritage and no established national governance system for World Heritage;
- A general lack of awareness among decision makers and the public about the World Heritage Convention and other conventions supporting natural and cultural heritage protection;
- The limited technical capacity of the members of the national teams appointed to prepare the nomination dossier;
- The paucity of up-to-date studies on the proposed property;
- Erratic funding entailing several adjustments to the preparation schedule and approaches;
- Lack of security in the country which affected several aspects of the nomination preparation.

Process followed

The following steps led to the successful completion of the nomination dossier:

- The establishment of a strategic partnership between national institutions and international organizations on the basis of a shared vision for the conservation of a heritage site with a potential OUV;
- Through this partnership, the mobilization of international funding for the nomination preparation;
- Efforts to raise the awareness of the country's political decision makers about the World Heritage Convention to ensure their support and buy-in for the nomination;
- The setting up of a national umbrella organization (Steering Committee) for the nomination preparation;
- As part of IUCN's role in the upstream process, the preparation of a feasibility study on the natural values of the proposed property;
- On the basis of the study results, the development by several international and regional organizations within the World Heritage system of a training and capacity-building programme covering all aspects of the World Heritage Convention, nomination process, dossier preparation and management planning, together with the preparation of background studies on the cultural components of the proposed property;
- The establishment by the State Party of national natural and cultural heritage preparation teams charged with the preparation of the nomination dossier and accountable to the Steering Committee;

- The adoption of a training and mentoring methodology including the use of Arabic as the main language, the involvement of regional and international experts, a two-track preparation schedule for the natural and cultural components, together with joint working sessions;
- A comprehensive revision and expansion of the description of the proposed property on the Tentative List of Iraq which was used as a blueprint for the nomination dossier;
- The endorsement of the final nomination dossier by concerned national authorities.

Key achievements

Besides the finalization and successful submission of the nomination dossier, the nomination process resulted in several important outcomes contributing to reinforcing the capacities of Iraq to implement the World Heritage Convention, namely:

- The creation of a national coordination and communication mechanism represented by the inter-ministerial National Steering Committee overseeing the preparation of the nomination dossier and the development of a management system to conserve the natural and cultural values of the proposed property;
- The designation and establishment of Iraq's first national park in one of the components of the nominated property alongside the development of a management framework for all the components of the property on the basis of World Heritage requirements;
- The establishment of a strategic partnership between the Steering Committee and the main national environmental NGO active in the Ahwar, or Marshlands, region;
- The allocation of national and provincial funds for the conservation and management of the cultural components of the property;
- The creation of a National Committee for World Heritage for both nature and culture, among the first of its kind in the Arab region, with a mandate to unify and coordinate national efforts related to the World Heritage programme, address issues in existing World Heritage properties in the country and those the State Party intends to nominate for inscription;
- A 14-member national team fully aware of the requirements and mechanisms of the World Heritage programme and system, and able to update Iraq's Tentative List, prepare nomination dossiers, and advise on conservation and management issues for properties already inscribed on the World Heritage List or which Iraq plans to nominate;
- An enhanced awareness about the World Heritage Convention among Iraqi decision makers, natural and cultural heritage professionals in government and civil society, and a large section of the Iraqi public thanks to the publicity given to the nomination since the inception of the process;
- The demonstration that international conventions are of relevance to meet national goals in matters of heritage conservation, and the inclusion of the World Heritage Convention and other conventions (Ramsar, CBD, *etc.*) in sectoral strategies including plans to revise relevant legislation;
- Finally, a clearer and more constructive role for the Advisory Bodies, World Heritage Centre (WHC) and ARC-WH in enhancing the national World Heritage programme of Iraq with the provision of first-hand advice and guidance based on global trends and best practices aligned with national specificity and priorities.

Lessons learned

The preparation of the nomination of The Ahwar of Southern Iraq: Refuge of Biodiversity and Relict Landscape of the Mesopotamian Cities could form part of the best practice guidelines for the upstream process for which a systematization of the role of the Advisory Bodies and other World Heritage actors, such as the WHC, is still in its early development stage. Lessons learned in the context of the experience described in this report can be summarized as follows:

1: The choice of appropriate methodology

The pedagogical methodology for providing upstream advice and guidance to States Parties engaged in nominating a property for World Heritage inscription is still experimental, and based on a learning-by-doing approach that will necessarily be adapted to each context. On the basis of the experience described in this report, the following advice can be offered for similar undertakings:

- The upstream guidance is best supported by such strategic tools as the Operational Guidelines of the World Heritage Convention, World Heritage thematic studies prepared by the Advisory Bodies, dossier preparation manuals, and other official World Heritage documents;
- There is a clear added value to involve in the process a regional Category 2 centre dedicated to World Heritage. As part of its mandate and under the WHC Building Strategy, such a partner can help identify and mobilize supporting regional experts, offer the necessary logistical and financial assistance for meetings and workshops, and provide a learning environment adjusted to local linguistic and cultural specificities;
- In the case of a mixed nomination, it would be appropriate that both IUCN and ICOMOS engage with the upstream process in a coordinated manner to ensure an equivalent level of technical and capacity development input for the natural and cultural components of a nomination.

2: Stakeholder Involvement

The scope of involvement of different organizations of the World Heritage system in the upstream process varies according to internal policies. At times, however, these organizations' involvement carries a potential for a conflict of roles and interests. This is particularly the case for the Advisory Bodies and the WHC. This is why:

- The upstream process should be conceived and presented as a mere technical tool – amongst other technical, institutional and policy tools – supporting States Parties in implementing the World Heritage Convention;
- Each organization should clearly define the scope of their involvement in the process, prepare guidelines for experts involved, and make this scope known to the State Party and other partners early on;
- The roles of experts evaluating nomination dossiers on behalf of the Advisory Bodies and that of advisers and trainers in the framework of the upstream process need to be clearly separated and allocated to different people. One way of ensuring the necessary level of transparency is to include in the nomination dossier the names of all experts involved at one stage or another in providing advice and guidance.

3: Collaboration among Advisory Bodies

The positive relations established between the organizations involved in the upstream process and the State Party may deteriorate if a nomination is evaluated negatively by the Advisory Bodies and/or if the decision by the World Heritage Committee is not to inscribe the proposed property or even to defer or refer the nomination. This is why:

- Organizations involved in the upstream process should ensure that they carefully manage a State Party's expectations. In particular, they should refrain from any commitment or indication that their involvement will increase the chances of a nominated property to be inscribed on the World Heritage List. Rather, they should keep alerting the State Party to the scope of the task ahead, the stringency of World Heritage requirements, and the independence of the evaluation process;
- They should clearly state that their advice is not prescriptive. Whatever decision a State Party makes regarding their advice, this State Party remains fully responsible for developing the content of a nomination dossier and for the final product;
- Involved organizations should keep reminding States Parties that the ultimate focus of a nomination is to enhance the conservation of a property, and that neither referral nor deferral of a nomination should be taken as rebukes but as opportunities to improve the dossier and the property's conservation.

4.3 Wadi Rum Protected Area

(based on various mission reports, by Abulhawa *et al.*, 2013–2014)

At its 35th session in 2011, the World Heritage Committee inscribed Wadi Rum Protected Area on the World Heritage List as a mixed site on criteria (iii), (v) and (vii). Upon inscription, the Committee requested the State Party to invite the WHC and the Advisory Bodies to undertake a field mission to the site to evaluate the State Party's response and follow up on a set of recommendations made by the Committee at the time of inscription. The planned timing of the mission was in late 2013 and took place in May 2014.

Considering that Wadi Rum was the most recent site to be inscribed from the Arab States Region, and the limited experience and capacities of the site management authority in the field of world heritage, IUCN and ARC-WH, in cooperation with the UNESCO Amman office, adopted a joint technical support programme targeting the site team of Wadi Rum as well as the concerned units at the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA). The process included two site-based missions (including field visits, staff workshops and stakeholder meetings). Two missions were organized before and after the World Heritage Centre Field Mission in October 2013 and December 2014. The missions had the following objectives:

- Share and assess progress made so far on the implementation of the recommendations set forth by the World Heritage Committee to the local authority;
- Provide needed advice on the requirements for the Advisory Bodies for the WHC field mission, and discuss the State Party's readiness for the organization of such a mission;
- Particular focus was given to the development of a specific action plan for the activation of the implementation of the new site management plan; and
- Follow up on the results of the WHC field mission and the necessary actions needed for the implementation of its recommendations.

Key stakeholders took part in the two missions including the site management team from ASEZA, the Department of Antiquities (DOA) team from the Ministry of Tourism, the IUCN Regional WH Programme and ARC-WH team, and the UNESCO Amman office team.

Key issues and challenges facing the satisfactory implementation of the World Heritage Convention requirements by the management authority and the State Party as identified by the partners are as follows:

Political, these include:

- The instability of the political conditions in the country and the region with priority given to maintaining civic peace and avoidance of local conflicts especially when it comes to the enhancement of the site-related law enforcement related to tourism management and other human activities;
- The unpredictable change (however, possibly temporary) in the legal and institutional autonomy of ASEZA *i.e.*, being re-associated with central government rather than an independent special economic zone, which strongly reflects on its ability to take decisions and allocate resources;
- Several legal deficiencies associated with the current by-law and legislative framework governing WRPA have been increasingly problematic, showing an urgent need for revision and development.

Economic, these include:

- Conservation programmes in Jordan as a whole and in ASEZA in particular rank very low on the list of government resource allocation and investment;
- Government spending on Wadi Rum merely covers operational costs with minimal capital spending on any development activities (WRPA WH as an obvious case);
- The severe deterioration of the local economy as a result of the political instability (*e.g.*, the sudden decrease in tourism visitation numbers to less than 50% compared to the average during the last decade) reduces the local authority's capacity and ability to effectively implement the site management plan;
- The decline in tourism proceeds also reflects negatively on the ability of the site management to negotiate for an improved budget allocation by ASEZA.

Social, these include:

- The increased levels of local conflicts over scarce resources especially in regard to tourism (e.g., Wadi Rum village development issues such as land tenure and allocation);
- The increased levels of poverty affected by increased inflation and unemployment rates;
- The strong dependence of the social factors on local and economic factors with the latter being the main driver for local constraints.

Technical, these include:

- The limited experience of the site management and technical team in the World Heritage programme implementation;
- The lack of specialized personnel in key technical competencies related to world heritage and the site's OUV, namely geology and geomorphology and the cultural heritage related to calligraphy and epigraphy all in terms of baseline research, monitoring and conservation;
- The limited communication capacities in terms of technical and language skills.

The capacity-building process resulted in the adoption of a series of actions and measures all aimed at enhancing the site's ability to effectively address the World Heritage Convention requirements and the Committee recommendations. Specifically, the partners agreed to address the following:

- Securing the written adoption of the integrated management plan, primarily by ASEZA and at the national level;
- Clarifying the institutional roles in Wadi Rum, especially in regard to law enforcement and monitoring;
- Eliminating all sources of conflict of interest related to the planning and management of Wadi Rum;
- Starting the management of the site from the buffer zone inwards with the urgent development of special by-laws and regulations for the buffer zone;
- Developing and adopting special regulations for the growth of Rum Village;
- Restructuring the visitor management programme and including specific actions related to improved marketing and promotion;
- Prohibiting all uncontrolled excavations while adopting a specific protocol for scientific research based on a proper database and supported by an effective long-term monitoring programme;
- Adopting a proactive management programme based on proper risk assessment;
- Building the local teams' capacities in law enforcement, advocacy, public awareness, and monitoring;
- Installing site-based coordination mechanisms and stakeholder engagement platforms including the reactivation of the site management committee.

Specific recommendations related to the WHC monitoring report were as follows:

Recommendation 1 on institutional coordination:

- The prompt activation of the ASEZA/DOA MoU;
- The immediate nomination of focal points from both ASEZA and DOA;
- The adoption of a clear coordination mechanism for the MoU implementation;
- The critical need to convene a strategic meeting with high-level officials from ASEZA and DOA to adopt a clear strategy and programme of work for Wadi Rum;
- The preparation of bimonthly reports by the coordination group for submission to decision makers;
- The implementation of a media plan to gain public and political support for Wadi Rum.

Recommendation 2 on site-related documentation and inventories:

- The workshop participants agreed on the good progress made on this recommendation;
- The finalization of the establishment of the site-based documentation unit;
- The linking of the documentation programme to the cultural and natural values databases.

Recommendation 3 on database development:

- The immediate adoption of a detailed plan of action for the database development;
- The effective implementation of the MoU (see also Recommendation 1 above).

Recommendation 4 on the management plan:

- The prompt adoption of a 2015 workplan;
- The adoption of an executive programme for the integrated management plan (five years);
- The need for a partial review of the cultural component of the management plan.

Recommendations 5 and 6 on the monitoring system:

- Develop and adopt the site monitoring system right after the completion of the inventory;
- Initiate site monitoring in 2016;
- Recruit and deploy a site DOA representative;
- Implement community led monitoring of archaeological sites.

Recommendations 7–9 on tourism management and law enforcement:

- The establishment of a stakeholder working group on the issue of illegal camps;
- The preparation of a proposal for access control to the site in regard to tourism;
- The development of a sound alternative for the illegal camps;
- The adoption of a stakeholders' dialogue on the tourism programme including an updated analysis of stakeholders, revision of access points, and visitor orientation;
- The preparation of a clear set of roles for the Ministry of Tourism on site and in the buffer zone;
- The division of a field patrol system for the buffer zone;
- The reactivation of site management with particular focus on tourism development and visitor management.

4.4 Rights-based approaches in World Heritage

(Based on publications and case studies developed by ICOMOS and partners, by Larsen *et al.*, 2014)

In 2014, a three-day international workshop on Rights-based Approaches (RBA) and World Heritage was organized in Oslo, Norway. The workshop was organized by ICOMOS Norway with support from the Norwegian Government and in cooperation with IUCN. The Arab Region was represented by one expert in the workshop who presented a case study on Wadi Rum Protected Area.

The workshop came as part of the Advisory Bodies cooperation on the 'Our Common Goal' initiative under the 'Building Capacity to Support Rights-based Approaches in the World Heritage Convention: Learning from Practice' project. The goal was to promote the application of "good practice" approaches to rights and their enabling conditions in relation to World Heritage, and to develop and recommend possible tools that would assist work in the nomination and state of conservation processes, as well as the overall work of the Advisory Bodies, to ensure rights issues are appropriately considered within the various components of the World Heritage Convention. Central questions in the workshop activity included:

- What are the emerging lessons on how rights are addressed in different World Heritage sites?
- What are the enabling conditions and specific opportunities for strengthening RBA?
- What are the opportunities for Advisory Body action to support and facilitate effective RBA?

The following is an extract from the report on the regional case study on Wadi Rum:

Lesson from the Arab Region Addressing the complexity of rights: Wadi Rum, Jordan

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2011, Wadi Rum is Jordan's largest protected area and features several advances and specific challenges with rights-based approaches. Decentralized bodies with decision-making authority over resource management have been developed along with legal and management frameworks that take into account community concerns. Conflicts of interest, enforcement challenges and political uncertainty nevertheless pose specific challenges in terms of securing effective capacity building, balanced representation and decision making. The case study recommends reviewing governance systems and investing in leadership and capacity building on a basis of community engagement and rights-based approaches.

Based on the case study by Tarek Abulhawa, 2014.

The workshop was attended by over 30 international experts worldwide representing the different disciplines and geographical areas related to World Heritage. A special document (project report) was developed on the initiative entitled: ***Building Capacity to Support Rights-based Approaches in the World Heritage Convention: Learning From Practice.***

The workshop report was translated into Arabic by IUCN and ARC-WH in cooperation with the regional expert attending the workshop as a contribution to the regional knowledge related to the integration of RBA into the regional World Heritage Programme with the aim of providing extended access to the valuable publication by the wider conservation community across the region.

Addressing RBA in a regional context such as the Arab Region – with all its political and socio-economic challenges – might be an important tool for promoting more inclusive approaches to heritage conservation and sustainable development.

4.5 The regional training programme on World Heritage

Today, many nations of the world invest extensive time, human and financial resources to achieve high recognition of their heritage by other nations and countries. Substantial investment in capacity building and training is made throughout the world by Regions and States Parties with the aim of enhancing their engagement in the implementation of the World Heritage Convention.

In 2013, and as part of their joint programme, the regional programme of IUCN on World Heritage and ARC-WH in Bahrain undertook a regional training needs assessment with the aim of identifying and responding to priority capacity-building needs and requirements needed to enhance the region's capability to implement the World Heritage Convention. As a result of the assessment, a series of regional training activities were organized addressing the priorities identified by the regional stakeholders and target groups. The five top priorities included in the capacity-building programme were:

- Improving the national Tentative Lists in response to global gaps, regional priorities and national readiness. This included conducting a strategic review of the region's Tentative Lists in terms of OUV orientation, comprehensiveness, representation and respective national technical capacities. Further, a regional cooperation framework was discussed on Tentative List harmonization and strategic alignment towards regional priority themes and geographic areas.
- Enhancing the effectiveness of the management of the World Heritage sites in the region. This included the development of a regional framework for a regional monitoring system for natural World Heritage to be fully aligned with global processes and guidelines. Further, a regional capacity-building programme on World Heritage management and monitoring responsive to national priorities and specificities was discussed and its implementation promoted.
- Strengthening regional capacities on effective law enforcement for World Heritage. This component included the development of a framework for a regional advocacy programme geared towards policy makers for enhancing regional World Heritage. In addition, a framework for a regional publication on World Heritage governance, regulatory arrangements and effective law enforcement tools and mechanisms was discussed and promoted.
- Consolidating regional understanding and application of the Global Comparative Analysis as a key component of the preparation of the new nomination dossiers. Particular focus was given to exploring cross-border cooperation on World Heritage leading to achieving stronger cases for OUV for Natural Heritage.
- Promoting regional cooperation, communication, knowledge sharing and shared learning on World Heritage. The primary focus here is the establishment of a regional learning network of professionals, experts and practitioners in World Heritage embraced by the IUCN/ARC-WH partnership.

To achieve the above results, four regional workshops were organized by IUCN and ARC-WH in the period 2013–2015. Each of the training activities addressed one of the anticipated results of the regional training programme while the fifth result, relating to the promotion of regional cooperation and shared learning (including the establishment of the regional network of World Heritage experts and practitioners), was a cross-cutting theme in all of the four regional workshops held.

The following summarizes the framework adopted for each of the four workshops along with their key results and recommendation. A note on the regional expert network is also included at the end of this section. All workshops adopted a unified approach for their implementation based on:

- The deployment of regional expertise to facilitate regional discussion and co-learning on management effectiveness application and monitoring;
- The adoption of a participative methodology merging the facilitation role of international/regional experts with direct national and regional technical inputs;
- The application of a mentoring/coaching and co-learning approach between trainers and participants.

Workshop on Tentative Lists, OUVs and nomination dossiers

Date and location: 1–5 September 2013 at ARC-WH Bahrain

Participants: Eighteen regional participants from 11 countries:
Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Oman, Tunisia and Yemen.

Objectives:

- Assess regional capacities on the preparation of effective and nationally/regionally harmonized Tentative Lists and their linkages to the nomination process;
- Develop and adopt an OUV-driven tentative listing on the Arab region based on global trends, priorities and best practices;
- Adopt a hands-on regional capacity-building programme on Tentative Lists and nomination processes through bilateral linkages and applied expert training;
- Undertake a practical exercise on OUV-driven tentative development for select countries;
- Agree on a regionally led Tentative List effectiveness programme.

Key results:

- Introduced a theoretical review of Tentative Lists in light of global guidelines of UNESCO and IUCN;
- Presented a selection of national approaches to Tentative Lists;
- Undertook a rapid self-assessment of Tentative List effectiveness in terms of strategic linkage and alignment with nomination dossier development and harmony at the nation and regional levels;
- Presented global trends, approaches and best practices on OUVs and Tentative Lists and their relationship to nomination dossier development;
- Introduced best practices on writing OUV statements, highlighting the regional perspective;
- Presented a selection of best practices on writing Tentative List statements;
- Applied good practice guidelines on OUV statements in the region – selected countries;
- Executed an applied exercise on OUV statement development for the selected sites;
- Applied good practices on Tentative List statements in the region – selected countries;
- Executed an applied exercise on Tentative List statement development;
- Identified national and regional priorities for capacity building on OUVs, Tentative Lists and nomination dossiers including a proposal for regional capacity-building on nomination-centred OUV and Tentative Lists;
- Discussed and agreed on a medium-term plan for an IUCN/ARCWH facilitated regional cooperation programme on Tentative List effectiveness and harmonization.

Workshop on management effectiveness of World Heritage properties

Date and location: 7–11 September 2013 at ARC-WH Bahrain

Participants: Sixteen regional participants from 10 countries:
Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Oman, Syria, Tunisia, UAE and Yemen.

Objectives:

- Introduce the concepts and applications of management effectiveness (ME) for natural heritage;
- Assess regional knowledge and experience on management effectiveness;
- Introduce ME tools for natural World Heritage and its relationship to protected areas;
- Undertake a hands-on application of Enhancing our Heritage (EoH) tools for the region;
- Introduce IUCN's Conservation Outlook Assessment;
- Facilitate regional cooperation, networking and knowledge sharing on ME application and monitoring.

Key results:

- Introduced ME principles and theories;
- Explained relevance of management effectiveness to the World Heritage Convention at UNESCO with focus on the EoH toolkit;
- Explained relevance of ME to World Heritage programme at IUCN;
- Presented regional ME experiences for protected areas and World Heritage sites;
- Identified regional capacity gaps and priorities;
- Introduced the ME tools of IUCN's Conservation Outlook Assessment and presented examples of best practices;
- Discussed global trends and lessons learned from the ME-related programmes;
- Facilitated an applied exercise on the ME tools on select countries;
- Brainstormed on the relevance and usefulness of the ME tools in Arab national/regional contexts;
- Identified capacity-building priorities on ME for the Arab region;
- Developed and adopted a regional framework for cooperation, communication and coordination on natural World Heritage;
- Developed an IUCN/ARCWH action plan for regional capacity building and collaboration on ME and natural World Heritage.

Workshop on building regional capacities for effective law enforcement for world heritage

Date and location: 23–25 November 2013 at ARC-WH Bahrain

Participants: *Ten regional experts and practitioners from Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Libya, Tunisia and Yemen.*

Objectives:

- Assess regional capacities on World Heritage governance, legislative and law enforcement frameworks;
- Introduce international and regional best practices and lessons learned on effective law enforcement in World Heritage sites and protected areas;
- Undertake a rapid assessment of law enforcement frameworks, mechanisms and tools for existing World Heritage sites using internationally accepted guidelines and tools;
- Devise a regional action plan for enhancing regional cooperation and national capacities on law enforcement and World Heritage.

Key results:

- Presented global frameworks for law enforcement in protected areas and World Heritage sites;
- Introduced IUCN global programme on law enforcement and lessons learned and best practices;
- Undertook a regional SWOT analysis on governance, legislative and law enforcement frameworks for World Heritage sites/protected areas;
- Presented national experiences on law enforcement arrangements (success stories/challenges) in relationship to World Heritage;
- Presented and discussed an IUCN site-based technical tool on law enforcement then applied the tool on a selected number of sites;
- Discussed regional priorities for law enforcement and World Heritage;
- Adopted a regional action plan/set of recommendations for the IUCN and ARC-WH for regional capacity building, networking and cooperation.

Workshop on developing Global Comparative Analysis for world heritage

Date and location: 23–26 February 2015 at ARC-WH Bahrain

Participants: Eleven regional experts and practitioners from Jordan, Lebanon, Mauritania, Oman, Qatar, Syria, Tunisia and UAE.

Objectives:

- Equip participants with necessary skills and knowledge to avoid common problems and successfully develop a Global Comparative Analysis.
- Introduce the advanced concepts, procedures, and sources of information associated with the preparation of GCAs;
- Introduce how to compile relevant scientific data and information to support robust comparisons;
- Introduce UNEP-WCMC methodology in *Comparative Analysis Methodology for World Heritage Nominations under Biodiversity Criteria* (used as a main reference);
- Enable participants to tackle challenges together and debate issues that are relevant to their particular context.

Key results:

- Presented an overview on the value-based approach including a recap on the concepts of values and attributes;
- Discussed the OUV as the underlying argument to a potential nomination;
- Analyzed the criteria for the assessment of the OUV;
- Introduced the concepts of GCA starting with the overall principle including comparative analysis of serial nominations;
- Discussed the common problems and misunderstandings related to the GCA.
- Elaborated the linkages between the GCA and site integrity;
- Presented, discussed and analyzed tools for GCA under all natural criteria;
- Explained the role of UNEP-WCMC in GCAs relating to criteria (ix) and (x);
- Discussed the WCMC methodology on GCA including strengths and weaknesses;
- Executed a practical exercise on data collection for GCA including Global Biogeographic Classifications, Conservation Priorities, and the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA);
- Executed a practical exercise on representation and priority screening including exploring data visually, and site identification using queries;
- Executed a practical exercise on species richness including exploring the IUCN Red List and evaluating species for sites;
- Conducted a three-case-study exercise by the trainees using real-life examples from the region;
- Identified regional capacity requirements on GCAs and adopted a regional action plan for their fulfilment.

4.6 Notes on the establishment of the Regional Network of Experts and Practitioners for Natural World Heritage

One of the anonymously agreed-upon recommendations resulting from most of the regional capacity-building activities in regard to enhancing the region's ability to implement the World Heritage Convention was the urgent need to establish an effective Regional Network for Arabic Speaking Experts and Practitioners. The idea was well received by IUCN and ARC-WH who expressed readiness to embrace the initiative as a strategic objective and a priority measure.

The rationale of the establishment of the regional network was based on the following perceptions:

- The regional capacity-building activities resulted in a substantial investment in the region's capacities in terms of human resources. Dozens of regional experts and practitioners were beneficiaries of the multi-year programme, and a significant number of them showed both interest and competence to contribute to the regional strategy for World Heritage.
- Recognition of the equal importance of the organization of regional capacity-building activities and the one-to-one national coaching on GCA development.
- The complexity of GCA processes requires improved criteria and procedures for the selection of participating experts and practitioners. National technical experts should be involved alongside the official focal point and formal representatives thus achieving the foreseen balance of decision making and technical competency.
- The theoretical introduction of concepts and procedures require more intensive follow-up at the country or site levels. This can be achieved through the development of technical mentoring/coaching processes supported by the regional programme.
- The TABE'A programme should utilize its competitive advantage in adopting a 'One Language' approach to the regional World Heritage Programme. The expansion of the use of the Arabic language supported by an Arabic-speaking network of experts and practitioners as well as adequately developed knowledge products would allow a clearer impact on the region's capacity and ability to implement the World Heritage Convention.
- It is imperative to adopt a strong peer (Arab to Arab) support process in training, coaching and mentoring. This can be reinforced by the qualification of the anticipated regional network of experts and practitioners on advanced 'Training of Trainers' programme to support their theoretical and technical competencies.

After several deliberations and discussions, it was agreed that the foreseen network would be best developed under the emerging WCPA Specialist Group on World Heritage. Despite the strong institutional intention, the pace of the development of the global specialist group has been rather slow hence impacting the progress made on the consolidation of the regional network. Currently, the activation of the regional network is still pending the mobilization of the WCPA programme.

5 Conclusions and recommendations

This section summarizes the key conclusions on the various elements presented, analyzed and discussed in the TABE'A II report. The approach adopted for this section is based on introducing one strategic conclusion on each of the report headings followed by a number of practical and action oriented recommendations with the aim of giving a set of applicable ideas and suggestions for the programme managers' consideration, taking into account the mandates and competencies of involved institutions and their associated human and financial resources.

The IUCN/ARC-WH partnership on the TABE'A Programme

The success of the TABE'A Programme is mainly attributed to this very effective partnership between the IUCN World Heritage Programme and the IUCN ROWA with the ARC-WH as a UNESCO Category 2 Centre. The dedication of the technical and management teams at both organizations allowed for an outstanding case of mutual complementarity based on a unified vision, a clear set of strategic objectives, and a pragmatic regional plan of action which is needs-driven and well matched to available resources. This report recommends:

- The continuation of the institutional partnership beyond the current agreement timeframe. The continuation, however, should be based on a thorough independent evaluation of the first phase of the partnership including elements related to decision-making structures, communication, reporting and monitoring.



- The physical secondment of the IUCN regional coordinator to the ARC-WH is highly encouraged to be continued provided that coordination modalities with IUCN Global WH Programme and IUCN ROWA are fine-tuned to focus more on strategic direction, technical backstopping and knowledge sharing and less on administrative procedures and institutional bureaucracies.
- For the upcoming phase of the partnership to focus on a strategic goal related to emerging regional priorities such as building regional capacities on conservation under crisis and political instabilities.

The TABE'A report process and results

The TABE'A report has proven to be an effective tool providing a strategic synthesis and update on the Arab Region's World Heritage Programme. The objective, methodologies and processes adopted for the preparation of the report were evidently successful in reflecting on the region's status while involving a wide spectrum of stakeholders and interest groups. This report recommends that:

- A States Parties' and key stakeholders' assessment on the quality, approach, process and frequency of the TABE'A report is undertaken right after the distribution of the current report and well before the start of the preparation of TABE'A III.
- The current TABE'A report to be translated into Arabic and French to allow for wider regional and international access and utilization.
- The recommendations of the TABE'A reports to be transformed into regionally adopted plans thus to be part of the regional programme on World Heritage.

Key state of conservation assessment tools

The IUCN World Heritage Outlook which consists of Conservation Outlook Assessments prepared for each natural and mixed World Heritage site, supported by the results of the State of Conservation reports, the Periodic Reporting, and the Monitoring Mission reports collectively establish a strong set of monitoring tools for World Heritage in the region. It is important for all States Parties, stakeholders and interested organizations to acknowledge the collective importance of the assessment tools. This report recommends:

- The TABE'A report to continue reporting on all the assessment tools to generate a consolidated framework for the assessment of the World Heritage Status in the region.
- A desktop comparative assessment on the effectiveness of the various tools in supporting the regional implementation of the Convention with emphasis on their utilization as joint learning and knowledge-sharing instruments in addition to their function as monitoring tools.

Ichkeul National Park, Tunisia

The overall status of the site remains similar to that established in the TABE'A I report, however, with a concern related to the status and trend of the site values moving from 'Low Concern' in 2012 to High Concern in 2015 based on the conclusion that while the situation continued to improve the full recovery of the site's values still could not be confirmed. This report recommends:

- Documenting the case study of Ichkeul based on the successes and lessons learned from removing the site from the World Heritage List in Danger;
- Undertaking a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) at a basin-wide scale addressing the water regime and its associated ecosystem functions and services with particular focus on World Heritage-related values and attributes;
- Conducting a capacity needs assessment for the national teams associated with the site on the implementation of the result of the SEA. This could include supporting the State Party on the preparation and implementation of stakeholders' dialogue processes, tourism planning and visitor management, local community development, and management effectiveness of protected areas.

Tassili n'Ajjer Park, Algeria

The overall assessment of the state of conservation for Tassili remains very similar to that of the TABE'A I report. There has been a slight improvement on the availability of data on the massive site; however, well below the level anticipated by the programme. This report recommends:

- Adopting a more effective communication framework with the State Party with the aim to enhance its ability to achieve adequate levels of knowledge on the various values and attributes of the sites especially considering its large size;
- Considering and assessing the feasibility of undertaking an SEA approach built around the site's natural values, uses and governance. This could be linked to a tailored training programme for national staff and decision makers. Such training would also be offered to staff dedicated to the management and monitoring of natural values, noting that currently such human resources are not in place;
- Establishing a natural values monitoring programme including not only those values for which the site was inscribed on the World Heritage List under criteria (vii) and (viii), but also the site's important biodiversity values, needs to be a strategic priority for the next reporting period.

Banc d'Arguin National Park, Mauritania

The state of conservation of the Mauritanian site has been better documented thanks to improved monitoring and documentation supported by continuing strong legal and institutional frameworks. Pressures from existing and potential threats remain high with continuing concern over management and protection. This report recommends:

- Supporting the acceleration of the inclusion of the Monk Seal Protected Areas into the World Heritage Site along with their respective management and conservation plans and resources;
- Developing and adopting a sustainable fisheries programme reinforcing traditional practices and knowledge embraced by the Imraguen fishermen;
- Adopting an agreed long-term financing strategy for the site linked to a clear business model. Such a strategy would include building national and local capacities on project development, resource planning, fundraising and auditing.

Wadi Al-Hitan (Whale Valley), Egypt

The conservation status of the Whale Valley remains good with a high level of stability compared to the TABE'A I assessment. The successful and early involvement of local stakeholders in the site conservation was instrumental in maintaining its values even during the current times of political and socio-economic stresses in the country. This report recommends:

- Preparing a detailed case study – nationally led – on the lessons learned from engaging local stakeholders in World Heritage Site conservation. This could include a regional activity held on site aimed at sharing regional knowledge and facilitating peer coaching and shared learning;
- Supporting the expansion of scientific research related to the site values including the provision of formal and informal training of local human resources;
- Providing technical advice and backstopping on the establishment of the site buffer zone. This could be done including the involvement of other regional experts and practitioners.

Socotra Archipelago, Yemen

This document reports with high concern on the state of conservation for Socotra. Socotra is currently going through some critical conditions associated with the political turmoil in the country. Priority should be given in this to maintaining communication and contact with the local authorities and stakeholders with the aim of providing all possible moral and technical support to help the site go through the current crisis with the least possible impacts. This report recommends:

- A direct and continuous line of communication needs to be established with the site management team to help voice their concerns and needs at the regional and international levels;
- A set of specific crisis management measures should be discussed with the site team including advocating the supply of liquefied gas which seems to be of top priority at the moment to avoid the catastrophic impacts of wood collection on the site's trees;
- A post-crisis plan to be discussed as a matter of priority. This should include addressing the priority capacity-building needs for site access control and monitoring.

Wadi Rum Protected Area, Jordan

Wadi Rum is the new entrant to the TABE'A reporting system. This report represents the baseline for the site in future assessments and establishes a good status of the site's conservation. Nonetheless, Wadi Rum is facing increasing challenges related to the regional instability and is suffering from a growing trend in decreasing tourism numbers thus leading to increasing site challenges related to its management effectiveness, financial stability, and local community support to its long-term sustainability. Despite its hardships, the site remains highly accessible to regional support and advice. This report recommends:

- Adopting a site support programme geared towards promoting its improved governance through encouraging stronger inter-institutional dialogue and cooperation;
- Providing on-going strategic and technical advice to the motivated site management team on lobbying the local and national authorities to maintain and expand their support in terms of financial allocations, staffing and law enforcement;
- Supporting the acceleration of the recruitment and training of the site's natural and cultural heritage human resources in addition to the development and implementation of the anticipated integrated monitoring programme.

The Regional World Heritage Tentative Lists and priority nominations

Regional progress on the update and harmonization of the Tentative List is rather modest and lacks the needed systematic approach. This report revealed the high discrepancies related to the national, sub-regional and regional approaches to Tentative Lists. It is evident the processes remain driven by a set of goals mostly related to nationally driven motivations with unclear associations with the Convention's goals and guidelines. It is clearly established here that achieving successful nominations must be based on a more upstream approach starting with site evaluations at the local and national levels. This report recommends:

- Preparing a regionally tailored set of resource manuals oriented towards the value-based approach to site assessments including OUVs and GCAs. These resource documents need to be based on regional cases and examples which are relevant and applicable to all targeted States Parties;
- Giving priority to Libya on the development and adoption of its first Tentative List. This could be tentatively customized to the current conditions of the country but mostly planned for a post-crisis support programme;
- Finalizing and disseminating the set of regional fact sheets related to the desert landscapes and marine biodiversity (and possibly others) with the aim of filling the global gap with the best possible site from the region;
- Supporting a set of regional (three) case studies on priority nominations, one at the sub-regional and two at the national level. This could include giving priority to the Arabian Gulf and the Red Sea.

The upstream process

The upstream process represents good practice as recognized by UNESCO globally. The upstream process in the region was advantaged by the constructive collaboration between the regional partners supported by strong institutional will, competent staff and efficient resource management, in addition to the successful mobilization of regional and international expertise and competencies. This report recommends:

- Adopting the upstream process as the core of the regional strategy for World Heritage with particular focus on shared learning and knowledge sharing (including the Arab Expert Network) at the regional level, cross-border cooperation and Tentative List harmonization on the sub-regional level, and priority gaps nominations and management effectiveness at the national level;
- Adopting a regional initiative on the rights-based approaches to world heritage linking it to traditional knowledge and local participation in good governance;
- Investing more resources in the establishment and development of the regional network for Arabic Speaking Experts and Practitioners for World Heritage, including its governance structure and capacity building.

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- <whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5386/> (Oasis de Gabès)
- <whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/1180/> (Aire du Dragonnier)
- <whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5839/> (Al Dimaniyyat Islands)
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<whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5833/> (Bar al Hakman)

<whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/1809/> (Bird Migration Routes)

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<whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/1183/> (Parc national de Dakhla)

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Annexes

Annex 1. Details of natural or mixed sites from Tentative Lists for each Arab State

N	Country	Site name	Date of submission	Category	WH criteria	Habitat theme* {special interest**}	Short description	Shortcomings of submission***
1	Algeria	Parc des Aures avec les établissements oasiens des gorges du Rhoufi et d'El Kantara	30/12/2002	Mixed	vii, x	-	-	No OUV statement
2	Bahrain	Hawar Islands Reserve	07/11/2001	Natural	vii, ix	Coastal, sea {coral reef}	Untouched wilderness, unique natural beauty, migratory waders, coral reefs, herds of endangered sea cows	Nomination submitted, WHC decision 28COM/14B.4 (2004) deferred approval
3	Egypt	Ras Mohammed	22/01/2002	Natural	vii, viii, ix, x	Coastal, fossil site {coral reef}	Variety of marine, coastal and terrestrial habitats including coral reef ecosystem	Nomination submitted, WHC decision 27COM/8C.5 (2003) deferred approval
		Bird Migration Routes	12/06/2003	Natural	vii, x	Wetland, coastal {lake system}	Islands, scrubland, lagoons, lakes, salt marshes, important to bird migration	No OUV statement, is actually five unconnected sites
		Desert Wadis	12/06/2003	Natural	vii, viii, ix, x	Watershed, coastal {mangroves}	Old watershed, rich delta, hyperarid wadi	No OUV statement, is actually three unconnected sites
		Gebel Qatrani Area, Lake Qaroun Nature Reserve	10/02/2003	Mixed	Not specified	Fossil site	Fossil ancestors of monkeys, terrestrial and marshland mammals found here in quarries	No OUV statement or selection criteria specified, seems better suited as cultural WH site
		Great Desert Landscapes	12/06/2003	Natural	vii, viii, ix	Rocky barren, desert, karst {sabkhas}	Largest natural closed depression of Sahara, an unbroken mass of sand dune, silica glass field, largest natural cave in Egypt	No OUV statement, is actually three unconnected sites
		Mountain Chains	12/06/2003	Natural	vii, viii, ix, x	Mountain, watershed, coastal, desert {coral reefs, mangroves}	Mountains rich in plant diversity, mist oases, salt marshes, contains Elba National Park	No OUV statement, is actually five unconnected sites
		Southern and Smaller Oases, the Western Desert	12/06/2003	Natural	vii, viii, ix, x	Wetland (including saline), desert	Desert oases with some endemic and rare plants, small lakes	No OUV statement, is actually five unconnected sites
		Dababiya	24/07/2008	Natural	viii	Stratigraphic site	Paleocene/eocene boundary stratotype, declared protected area	No shortcomings
		Helwan Observatory	3/11/2010	Mixed	vii	Unclear	Historical observatory, fascinating landscape	Seems better suited as cultural WH site

4	Iraq	The Ahwar of Southern Iraq	29/10/2003	Mixed	ix, x	Wetland	Marshlands that formed a series of interconnected permanent marshes and lakes	Nomination proposal submitted Jan 2014, pending decision June 2016
		Amedy City	02/02/2011	Mixed	vii, viii	Mountain, stratigraphic site	Exceptional natural beauty, spectacular geological properties	No shortcomings
5	Jordan	Azraq	11/05/2007	Mixed	x	Wetland	Unique wetland in heart of arid desert	No OUV statement
		Dana Biosphere Reserve	11/05/2007	Mixed	vii, viii, x	Wadis and highlands, stratigraphic site	Mountains, wadis, vast biological diversity, significant geological processes	No OUV statement
		Mujib Nature Reserve	11/05/2007	Natural	vii, viii	Watershed, wetland	Dramatic change in altitude, several rivers, many different habitats	No OUV statement
6	Kuwait	No properties						
7	Lebanon	Parc naturel de l'Ile des Palmiers	01/07/1996	Natural	Not specified	Coastal, sea	Islands, haven for marine turtles and monk seal, designated as protected area in 1995	Very brief, no OUV statement or selection criteria specified
8	Libya	No properties						
9	Mauritania	No properties						
10	Morocco	Aire du Dragonnier Ajgal	12/10/1998	Natural	vii, viii, ix, x	-	-	Very brief, no OUV statement
		Lagune de Khnifiss	12/10/1998	Natural	vii, x	Coastal/ intertidal {sabhka}	Lagoon open to the sea, sabkha	Very brief, no OUV statement
		Parc national de Dakhla	12/10/1998	Natural	x	-	-	Very brief, no OUV statement, no geographical location
		Parc naturel de Talassentane	12/10/1998	Natural	vii, x	Forest	Designated as national park in 2004	Very brief, no OUV statement

11	Oman	Al Dimaniyyat Islands Nature Reserve	23/05/2013	Natural	x	Coastal, sea {coral reef}	Archipelago, nine islands, vital breeding/nesting area for marine birds, migrants, endangered turtles, designated as nature reserve in 1996	No shortcomings
		Al Hallaniyyat Islands Proposed Nature Reserve	23/05/2013	Natural	x	Coastal, rocky barren, sea {coral reef}	Island habitats vital to survival of birds, marine turtles, corals, reef fishes, marine organisms	No shortcomings
		Bar al Hakman Proposed Nature Reserve	23/05/2013	Natural	x	Coastal, sea {sabkhas, mangroves, coral reefs}	Mudflats, beaches, mangroves, coral islands, shallow and deep seas, wintering grounds of migratory birds	No shortcomings
		Ras al Had Turtle Reserve and the Heritage Site of Ras al Jinz	23/05/2013	Mixed	x	Coastal {mangroves, coral reefs}	One of the world's few remaining populations of the Green Turtle, designated as nature reserve in 1996	No shortcomings
		Smahan's Mountain Nature Reserve	23/05/2013	Natural	vii, x	Wadis and highlands, coastal	High botanical endemism, only location in Arabia of African Tree, refuge for rare or endangered species, designated as nature reserve in 1997	No shortcomings
12	Palestine	Umm Al-Rihan Forest	02/04/2012	Natural	x	Forest	Largest remaining natural forest in West Bank, important migratory bird area, important for wild genetic resources of grains and fruit trees	No shortcomings
		Wadi Gaza Coastal Wetlands	02/04/2012	Natural	x	Coastal, wetland, wadis	One of the most important coastal wetlands of Eastern Mediterranean Basin, rich biological diversity	No shortcomings
		WHC decision 12/36.COM/11 (May 2012) requested that the WHC and ICOMOS undertake a mission to assess the state of conservation of the main sites listed in the inventory and Tentative List of Palestine.						
13	Qatar	Khor Al-Adaid Natural Reserve	18/03/2008	Natural	vii, viii	Coastal, rocky barren, desert, wadis and highlands {sabkhas, coral reefs}	Large mobile dunes reaching the sea coast, large tidal embayment, in arid tropical environment	No shortcomings
14	Saudi Arabia	No properties						

15	Sudan	Dinder National Park	28/09/2004	Natural	vii, viii, ix, x	Wetland, savanna, forest	Transition ecotone between two floristic regions, boundary of two major faunal realms, designated as biosphere reserve in 1979	Very brief, no OUV statement
		Sanganeb Marine National Park and Dungodab Bay	28/09/2004	Natural	vii, viii, ix, x	Coastal {coral reef}	Richness of marine life, coral reefs, sharks, dolphins, turtles, fishes, molluscs, designated national park in 1990	Nomination proposal submitted Jan 2014, pending decision June 2015
		Wadi Howar National Park	28/09/2004	Natural	vii, viii, ix, x	Wetland, desert	diverse flora, outstanding geological features including volcanic and crater landscape, designated as national park in 2001	Very brief, no OUV statement
16	Syria	(no properties)						
17	Tunisia	Chott El Jerid	28/05/2008	Natural	vii, viii, ix, x	Desert	Large endorheic salt lake	No shortcomings
		Oasis de Gabes	28/05/2008	Mixed	vii, x	Coastal	-	No shortcomings
		Parc National d'El Feija	28/05/2008	Natural	vii, viii, x	Forest	Rich flora, oak and mixed forest	No shortcomings
		Parc National de Bouhedma	28/05/2008	Natural	vii, viii, x	Pseudo-savanna, mountain	Mountain range, salt alluvium plain, designated as biosphere reserve in 1977	No shortcomings
18	UAE	Sir Bu Nair Island	30/1/2012	Natural	ix, x	Coastal, sea	Rich biodiversity, refuge for sea turtles, birds, coral communities, and reef fishes	No shortcomings
		The Cultural Landscape of the Central Region in the Emirate of Sharjah	30/1/2012	Mixed	vii	Desert	Geological area illustrating formation of geomorphologic traits of the region's physical geography	No shortcomings
19	Yemen	Balhaf/Burum Coastal Area	08/07/2002	Mixed	Not specified	Coastal, sea {coral reefs}	Coastal area, islands with extensive fringing coral reefs, nesting for seabirds and marine turtles	Very brief, no OUV statement or selection criteria specified
		Jabal Bura	08/07/2002	Mixed	Not specified	Mountain, forest	Rare valley forest escarpment mountains, several regionally rare species	No OUV statement or selection criteria specified
		Jabal Haraz	08/07/2002	Mixed	Not specified	Mountain	Terraces, beautiful landscape	No OUV statement or selection criteria specified
		Sharma/Jethmun Coastal Area	08/07/2002	Natural	Not specified	Coastal	Important nesting area for marine turtles	No OUV statement or selection criteria specified
		The Hawf Area	08/07/2002	Natural	vii, x	Unclear	Centre of plant diversity, 'fog oasis' in predominantly arid land	Very brief, no OUV statement

* Information mainly taken from the site description found in the UNESCO website Tentative Site list

** Special Interest characteristics are those that were mentioned as gaps or important criteria by the WH Global Strategy or IUCN thematic studies

*** Shortcomings were judged according to WH requirements that submissions must include: name, geographical location, brief description, and justification of OUV

Properties in Green have been newly proposed since the TABEA' I report

Properties in Yellow were proposed over 10 years ago

Properties in Red were proposed over 15 years ago

Areas in Grey are countries with no tentative properties

Annex 2. Summary of types of World Heritage properties

No	Country	Natural/mixed properties		Cultural properties	
		Tentative	Inscribed	Tentative	Inscribed
1	Algeria	1	1	5	6
2	Bahrain	1	0	4	2
3	Egypt	9	1	23	6
4	Iraq	2	0	9	4
5	Jordan	3	1	11	3
6	Kuwait	0	0	2	0
7	Lebanon	1	0	8	5
8	Libya	0	0	0	5
9	Mauritania	0	1	3	1
10	Morocco	4	0	8	9
11	Oman	5	0	3	4
12	Palestine	2	0	11	2
13	Qatar	1	0	0	1
14	Saudi Arabia	0	0	1	3
15	Sudan	3	0	3	2
16	Syrian Arab Republic	0	0	12	6
17	Tunisia	4	1	6	7
18	United Arab Emirates	2	0	5	1
19	Yemen	5	1	5	3

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