

AFGHANISTAN

1.1 Introduction

Year of ratification 1979

Organisation submitting the report

- Ministry of Information & Culture, Department of Monuments & Sites, Kabul, Afghanistan
- National Institute of Archaeology, Kabul, Afghanistan
- National Museum of Afghanistan, Kabul, Afghanistan

1.2 Identification of cultural and natural heritage properties

The status of national inventories

- Since 1922, lists of monuments submitted to the National Museum were regularly registered until 1989 when this activity was interrupted. Currently, 2,800 archaeological areas have been registered by the Department of Monuments & Sites, of which 200 are historic monuments.
- In co-operation with UNOCHA, the Society for the Preservation of Afghanistan's Cultural Heritage (SPACH), and relevant IGOs & NGOs, a feasibility mission was carried out in 1995 to inventory Afghan cultural heritage and the collection of the National Museum in Kabul.
- Since 2002, under funding from the 'Emergency Assistance Package for Afghanistan', WHC, IUCN, ICCROM & ICOMOS have assisted in the reconstruction of inventories of Afghan heritage & archival resources.
- NH: IUCN has produced a reference publication 'Documentation to assist the elaboration of a national inventory of natural heritage in Afghanistan' in April 2002 with emergency funding from the WH Fund.

The preparation of a Tentative List

- In principle, historic monuments in different provinces of Afghanistan will be included in a Tentative List, but many problems hinder the process.
- A workshop is being planned by the Afghan Government, UNESCO Kabul & WHC in May 2003 regarding the elaboration of a Tentative List and the formulation of nominations (especially the dossiers deferred in 1982).

Nominations and the nomination process

- 1982 * Nine nomination dossiers submitted.
4 dossiers deferred
- (a) City & monuments of Herat
- (b) Monuments of Bamiyan Valley

- (c) Archaeological site of Ai Khanum
- (d) Minaret of Jam
- 5 dossiers not examined
- (a) Site & monuments of Ghanzi
- (b) Mosque of Haji Piyada or Nu Gunbad
- (c) Stupa & Monastery of Guldarra
- (d) Site & monuments of Lashkari Bazar-Bust
- (e) Archaeological site of Surkh Kotal

- 2002 * Minaret & Archaeological Remains at Jam (inscribed)
- Potential new nominations include: (i) Historical sites of Kharwar; and (ii) Helamnd Monuments.

1.3 Protection, conservation and presentation of the cultural and natural heritage

Integration of heritage and planning

- On 3 December 2002, a 'National Council for the Protection of Afghan Cultural Heritage' was created, presided by Prince Mirwais.
- The Council is composed of the Deputy Minister of Culture; General Director of the National Institute of Archaeology; Director of the National Museum; Head of the Dept. of Historical Monuments; a General from military intelligence; and the Cultural Officer of the UNESCO Kabul Office.
- A prime responsibility of the Committee is the amendment to & modernisation of the 'Law on the Protection of Historic & Cultural Heritage' (1980) and the incorporation of the 1970 UNESCO Hague Convention & UNIDROIT Agreement.

Participation of local communities

- Local people have been consulted in the preliminary compilation of a Tentative List. However, given the post-conflict present conditions, they are not yet sufficiently involved.

Tourism Development

- * No information available.

Financial measures and budget allowance

- The Ministry of Information & Culture has drawn up a National Development Budget which gives high priority to cultural heritage. WH is part of "a regular budget for sites and monuments."

Professional

- 100 staff are employed by the Ministry of Information & Culture: 52 work at the Ministerial level & in the 3 main national institutes, and 48 work as local representatives of the Ministry in different provinces of the country.

New and improved services

- International partners currently working with the Afghan authorities in cultural heritage conservation include: (i) SPACH for the Minaret of Jam; (ii) the

Agha Khan Foundation for the Mausoleum of Timur Shah, the Garden of Babur & Ashok-Arefan; and (iii) DHSA for the Tea Room of the Garden of Babur.

- * Other partners include the: (i) Hirayama Foundation (Japan), (ii) Fondation Bibliotheca Afghanica (Switzerland), and (iii) the Musée Guimet (France).
- Following a meeting on the 15 December 2002, the members of the National Council will: (i) work with international experts for the rehabilitation of Afghan monuments & sites; and (ii) help bring researchers to work on a list of sites identified by the Interim Government.
- * In 2001, the Director General of UNESCO formed a special task force to prepare UNESCO's contribution on education & heritage conservation to the UN Inter-agency programme on the rehabilitation of Afghanistan.

Issues to be addressed

- Capacity-building and training "in all domains of heritage protection are needed". An offer has been received for long-term training at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC.
- Problems identified by the Ministry include: (i) "illicit excavations of historical sites for the purpose of exporting historical objects to foreign countries by armed groups"; (ii) "lack of professional cadres in the field of archaeology, museum, preservation and restoration of historical monuments"; (iii) "collecting looted heritage objects and returning the heritage that has been exported to foreign countries"; (iv) limited financial, technical & laboratory resources.

1.4 International co-operation and fund raising

National and International Fund Raising

- Bilateral assistance is acknowledged from the Governments of Germany, Japan, Greece, France, UK, Italy, USA & Korea.
- * International Assistance from WHF as follows:

1990	\$7,369	Preparatory, Nomination of Herat
1995	\$17,200	Emergency, Minaret at Jam
2001	\$49,000	Emergency, Immovable heritage
2002	\$42,860	Emergency, Training for national & local Authorities
	\$50,000	Training, IUCN
2003	\$100,000	Emergency Package for Afghanistan
- * Assistance planned in 2003 to help the Afghan authorities in reformulating WH nomination dossiers include: (i) a WHC mission to the Bamiyan Valley; and (ii) a WHC-IUCN expert mission to the Lakes of Bandi-e-Amir.
- * Extra-budgetary funds mobilised by the UNESCO Division of Cultural Heritage include:

2003	US\$124,300	Conservation, restoration: Minaret and archaeological remains of Jam (Switzerland)
------	-------------	--

US\$499,460 Conservation, restoration: Minaret/ archaeological remains at Jam and Herat (Italy)
US\$1,815,967 (TL) Conservation, restoration: Bamiyan (Japan)

1.5 Education, information and awareness-building

Information and awareness measures

- Under the guidance of the UNESCO Kabul Office, the Ministry of Information & Culture has prepared documents in the fields of archaeology, historic heritage & museums.

1.6 Conclusions and recommended actions

Conclusions and proposed actions

- The international seminar on the preservation & restoration of Afghanistan's cultural heritage held in May 2002 in Kabul "opened a new page to the restoration of Afghanistan's cultural heritage".
- The 'Plan of Operation' for the rehabilitation of the Minaret of Jam is in the process of signature and should commence in summer 2003.
- Proposed actions identified by the Ministry include: (i) "emergency excavations" with international financial support to prevent illicit excavations from archaeological sites; (ii) training of experts through long & short terms scholarships; (iii) cooperation with Interpol in returning looted historical & cultural heritage; (iv) reinforcing financial backing of cultural institutions; (v) inclusion of historical sites and monuments on the WH List; (vi) assistance in the completion of forms for the WH Convention.