

THE AFRICAN WORLD HERITAGE FUND AT THE EXTENDED 44th SESSION OF THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

FUZHOU, CHINA, 16-31 JULY 2021

HIGHLIGHTS

34 new properties inscribed on the World Heritage List. Overall the World Heritage List comprises **1154** properties including **139 from the African continent**.

Sudanese Style Mosques in Northern Cote d'Ivoire (Cote d'Ivoire) and **Ivindo National Park** (Gabon) were inscribed on the World Heritage List.

Selous Game Reserve in Tanzania was retained on the World Heritage List.

Salonga National Park in Democratic Republic of Congo was removed from the List of World Heritage in Danger.

W-Arly-Pendjari complex in Benin, Burkina Faso, and Niger was not listed on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

A consensus obtained on **Sites of Memory and the World Heritage Convention**. The Committee decided to create an open-ended working group of States Parties to continue reflecting on the matter.



Minjiang River, Fuzhou, China © Fuzhou Municipal People's Government.

The extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee was held in Fuzhou, China from 16th to 31st July 2021. The online session was presided over by His Excellency Mr Tian Xuejun, Vice Minister of Education and Chairperson of the National Commission of the People's Republic of China for UNESCO, Chairperson of the extended 44th session of World Heritage Committee.

The World Heritage Committee inscribed **34** new properties on the World Heritage List with 2 properties from Africa. The committee also approved the extension of 3 properties on the List.



Opening ceremony © Fuzhou Municipal People's Government.

The African World Heritage Fund would like to thank all our Partners, Experts and the African World Heritage Committee members (Egypt, Ethiopia, Mali, Nigeria, South Africa and Uganda) for your valuable support.

World Heritage Committee inscribes **Sudanese Style Mosques** in northern Côte d'Ivoire and **Ivindo National Park** in Gabon on UNESCO's World Heritage List

The World Heritage Committee decided to inscribe **Ivindo National Park** on the World Heritage List under criteria (ix) and (x). Ivindo National Park, situated in northern Gabon encompasses an area of about 300,000 ha crossed by several rivers including Ivindo River. The Park is home to rare, threatened and endemic species of the region.

Also, the World Heritage Committee decided to inscribe **Sudanese style mosques** in northern Côte d'Ivoire on the World Heritage List under criteria (ii) and (iv). The mosques are remains of hundreds of mosques that existed with distinctive Sudanese style, specific to the savannah region of West Africa, which were constructed between the 17th and 19th centuries as traders, and scholars spread south from the Empire of Mali, extending the trans-Saharan mercantile routes into the forest area.

AWHF provided upstream technical support and expert advice throughout the various steps having led to the inscription of Ivindo National Park and Sudanese style mosques on the UNESCO World Heritage List.



Ivindo National Park, Gabon © Gabon wildlife camps.

“The inscription by UNESCO of the Ivindo National Park on the List of World Heritage is a reward to the efforts of Gabon in the field of forest protection, whose role is decisive in the fight against global warming. A great day!” H. E. Ali Bongo Ondimmba, president of Gabon tweeted.

“...It is with great joy that I welcome the World Heritage Committee decision to inscribe the Ivindo National Park on the UNESCO World Heritage List. This masterpiece of nature fully deserves this World Heritage designation...” Prof. Lee White, Minister of Water, Forests, Sea and Environment, Gabon



Sudanese Style Mosques in northern Côte d'Ivoire © OIPC.

“Thank you to the African World Heritage Fund for all the efforts made during the whole process which has led today to the inscription of the Sudanese style mosques on the World Heritage List. Conscious of the important role that the Fund plays in supporting African countries, Côte d'Ivoire is committed to supporting the work of the Fund like other African countries” Hon. Harlette Badou N'guessan Kouame, Minister of Culture, Arts and Entertainment Industry



Prior to the extended 44th extended session of the World Heritage Committee, the African World Heritage Fund in collaboration with Uganda organized from 30th June to 2nd July 2021 the **5th Meeting of the African Experts to the World Heritage Committee** in preparation for the World Heritage Committee session. The meeting aimed at brainstorming and finding a common approach to issues raised in the reports to the World Heritage Committee, including State of Conservation Reports and proposed nominations from Africa.



Participants, 5th meeting of the African Experts to the World Heritage Committee, 30th June – 2nd July 2021 ©AWHF

Selous Game Reserve retained on the World Heritage List

The World Heritage Committee decided to retain Selous Game Reserve in Tanzania on the World Heritage List following a proposal by IUCN to delist the property from the World Heritage List due to infrastructure development within the boundaries of the property. The World Heritage Committee agreed to the arguments put forward by the State Party of Tanzania and other Committee members mainly from Africa region led by Uganda.



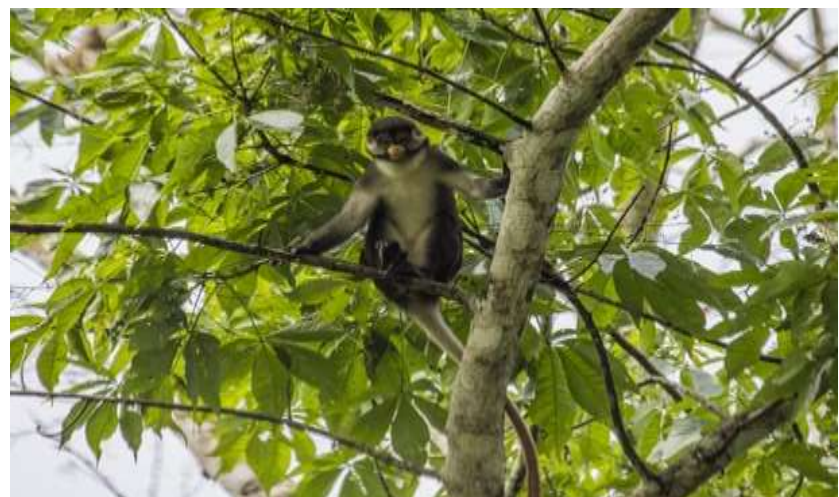
Selous Game Reserve, Tanzania © WWF Deutschland/Michael Poliza.



Selous Game Reserve, Tanzania © WWF Deutschland/Michael Poliza.

Salonga National Park removed from the List of World Heritage in Danger

The World Heritage Committee also decided to remove Salonga National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo from the List of World Heritage in Danger following significant improvement in site conservation. The property has in recent years experienced serious conservation challenges including extractive activities and poaching. The property has been on the List of World Heritage in Danger for past 22 years.



Salonga national Park, DRC ,© Vande Weghe.

Side Event: Capacity Building in World Heritage Conservation and Management – towards Future Cooperation between Africa and China

The African World Heritage Fund attended the “Capacity Building for World Heritage Conservation and Management-towards future Cooperation between Africa and China” side event at the occasion of the extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee. The online event was held on 19th July 2021 and attended by representatives of UNESCO Advisory Bodies, and heritage experts from China and African.

Mr. Souayibou Varissou, the Executive Director of the African World Heritage Fund stressed that no African country should be left behind with no site on the UNESCO World Heritage List. There are 12 countries in Africa that still don't have any site on World Heritage List and 22 of the 53 properties are on the List of World Heritage in danger are located in Africa. He further stressed the need for increased financial support for the AWHF to improve Africa's capability to protect world heritage.

Mr. Tian Xuejun, Director of the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO and chair of the extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee expressed that the World Heritage Committee should give priority to Africa in policy formulation, capacity building, international aid, and upstream processes in a bid to enhance the representativeness and improve the balance of World Heritage.

The Director of UNESCO World Heritage Centre, Dr. Rössler Mechtild stressed that Africa urgently needs to strengthen capacity building regarding application for UNESCO World Heritage status, and the management and monitoring of World Heritage. Dr Rössler thanked China for its support in protecting World Heritage in Africa. According to her, Africa looks forward to new cooperation with China in World Heritage protection.



*Mr. Souayibou Varissou, Executive Director,
African World Heritage Fund*



*Mr. Tian Xuejun, Director of the Chinese National
Commission for UNESCO*



*Dr. Rössler Mechtild, Director of UNESCO World
Heritage Centre*

Side Event: Looking into the Future: Highlights of the regional Action Plan for Africa, 2021/2027

Looking into the future
Highlights of the Regional Action Plan for Africa (2021-2027)

30 July 2021
4 pm - 5.30 pm
(Paris time, GMT+2)

Online Event (Zoom platform)
<https://unesco-org.zoom.us/j/92515162283>

In the framework of the extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee

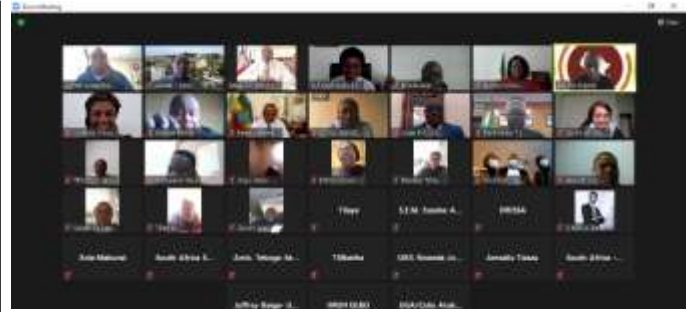
On 30th July 2021, the African World Heritage Fund in collaboration with the World Heritage Centre organized an online side event, “Looking into the future: Highlights of the Regional Action Plan for Africa (2021/2027)”. The event reflected on the objectives and challenges in the implementation of the approved Action Plan (2021-2027) for Africa, as a result of the report of the Third Cycle of the Periodic Reporting exercise in the region. The meeting was attended by among others, the Director of the UNESCO WHC, Dr Mechtild Rössler, who lauded the remarkable achievement made.

Mr Souayibou Varissou, Executive Director of the AWHF, congratulated African States Parties for achieving 100% of completing the questionnaires. Mr Varissou urged all actors to commit on the vision of having all African countries represented on the World Heritage List by 2027.



Coordination meetings with African World Heritage Committee members and Experts

As the chair of the Regional Group 5A, the State Party of **Uganda** and the **African World Heritage Fund** organized daily coordination meetings with delegations of the African World Heritage Committee members (Egypt, Ethiopia, Mali, Nigeria and South Africa) from 16th – 31st July 2021 at the occasion of the extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee. Experts from the continent were also invited to provide technical input on various topics. The meetings were held daily prior to the World Heritage committee sessions to reflect on the days agenda. Specific matters were discussed by the Africa Group to find a common approach. Following consultations among Africa Committee members, South Africa was elected as Chair of the Regional Group 5A and Vice Chairperson of the Bureau of the 45th session of the World Heritage Committee taking over from Uganda whose term has expired. The committee members thanked Uganda for the good leadership.



Participants, daily coordination meetings of the Africa Group



H.E. Hon. Dr. Richard Nduhuura, Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of Uganda to UNESCO



H.E. Mr Alaa Youssef, Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of Egypt to UNESCO



H.E. Mr. Tebogo Seokolo, Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of South Africa to UNESCO



H.E. Dr. Oumar Keita, Permanent Delegate of Mali to UNESCO



H.E. Dr. Hajo Sani, Permanent Delegate of Nigeria to UNESCO