

Training Programme on Monitoring of Outstanding Universal Value of Natural World Heritage Sites: Khangchendzonga National Park



Yuksom, Sikkim
21st - 22nd November, 2022

Organized by

Wildlife Institute of India-Category 2 Centre (WII-C2C) for World Natural Heritage Management and Training for Asia and the Pacific Region, under the auspices of UNESCO

Executive Summary

The Wildlife Institute of India-Category 2 Centre (WII-C2C) for World Natural Heritage Management and Training for Asia and the Pacific Region organized a training workshop entitled “Training Programme on Monitoring of Outstanding Universal Value of Natural World Heritage Sites: Khangchendzonga National Park” on 21st - 22nd November 2022, at Yuksom, Sikkim, in cooperation with the Sikkim Forest Department.

The purpose of this workshop was to build capacity and sensitize frontline staff, communities, and other stakeholders living around the World Heritage property about the Outstanding Universal Values of the site and assess its current status.

The programme was inaugurated in the presence of Panchayat Pradhan, SDM and DFO. WII-C2C shared the context of the workshop and provided valuable information on the Outstanding Universal Value, Monitoring & Reporting, OUVs and SWOT analysis of Khangchendzonga National Park as a Mixed (Natural and Cultural) World Heritage Site.

The workshop held an interactive discussion with forest frontline staff and other stakeholders on the current status of OUVs of the heritage site and explored monitoring, planning and management strategies. This report contains background information that was presented to participants, summarizes workshop discussions of OUV and SWOT analysis and catalogues potential recommendations. With the consent of the participant, it was reported that the very limited loss or alteration of the elements necessary to maintain the OUV has occurred. The overall condition is not causing persistent or substantial effects on the OUV of the property. The respondents have assessed the criteria, integrity/authenticity and protection and management requirements as mostly good, with intact and improving trend. In conclusion, the following recommendation is put forwarded for further augmentation of capacity building and long-term conservation of Khangchendzonga as a World Heritage Site:-

- Awareness generation on the importance of World Heritage among the forest front-line staff, local community, visitor and related stakeholders.
- Reinforced tourism infrastructure, zonation and visitor facilities.
- Financial support for specialised needs of World Heritage Site management.
- Capacity-building of forest staff with specific reference to World Heritage reporting, monitoring, protection obligations.
- Strengthened research on rare species (like Red Panda, Himalayan Tahr, Musk Deer, and Snow Leopard) and management of threatened flora.
- Consideration of human-wildlife conflict and wildlife health issues.
- Enhanced information and capacity required for climate change and disaster.
- Mitigation of forest land diversion for other purpose.
- Enhancement of linkage between natural and cultural values for more effective conservation outcomes.

Background and Objectives

The Khangchendzonga National Park is situated in the State of Sikkim in India which falls under the eastern Himalayan region. The climate and rainfall pattern here has led to a variety of unique plant and animal species. It is a biodiversity hotspot and covers 25% area of the State of Sikkim. Khangchendzonga is the highest peak of India and the third highest peak of the World, which is at a height of 8,586m asl. The floral and faunal biodiversity comprises almost 1,580 vascular plants species, which includes 106 pteridophytes, 11 gymnosperms, and 1,463 angiosperm species, and in the case of fauna, 45 species of mammals, 213 birds, ten reptiles, five amphibians, and eight fishes are present.

The UNESCO-recognised World Heritage Site of Khangchendzonga National Park represents a part of the immense Himalaya global biodiversity hotspot where the ecosystem ranges from the sub-tropical to alpine ecosystems. The Himalayas of this region are the narrowest that increases the variation of the different eco-zones. 86% of the park's area falls within greater Himalaya and 14% of the area is in trans-Himalaya. The park's peaks and landscapes are respected in various religion and cultures and have sacred significance. It holds deep cultural meanings for the Buddhists (Beyul) and to Lepchas as Mayel Lyang. People of both the communities co-exist and exchange religious traditions and ethnicities. The ensemble of myths, stories and notable events, as well as the sacred texts themselves, convey and make manifest the cultural meanings projected onto natural resources and the indigenous and specific Buddhist cosmogony that developed in the Himalayan region.

The Wildlife Institute of India-Category 2 Centre (WII-C2C) for World Natural Heritage Management and Training for Asia and the Pacific Region has been established at the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun, India in 2014 (http://www.wii.gov.in/unesco_category2_centre). The Centre's mission is to strengthen implementation of the World Heritage Convention by building the capacity of professionals and institutions involved with world natural heritage site inscription, protection, conservation and management in Asia and the Pacific region, through training, research, dissemination of information and network building.

In this context, WII-Category 2 Centre (WII-C2C) conducted a training programmes titled '**Monitoring of Outstanding Universal Values of Natural World Heritage Sites: Khangchendzonga National Park**' in Yuksom, Sikkim on 21st and 22nd November, 2022. The overall objective of the training programme was to build capacity and sensitize World Heritage Site frontline staff and other stakeholders about the Outstanding Universal Values of the site and assess its current status.

Introduction to World Heritage and Outstanding Universal Value

Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of Natural World Heritage Sites

Mr. Niraj Kakati, Technical Officer, WII-C2C provided an introduction to World Heritage and Outstanding Universal Value. The UNESCO World Heritage Convention emphasises that the cultural and natural heritage of the world is among the priceless and irreplaceable assets, not only of each nation, but of humanity as a whole. Parts of that heritage, because of their exceptional qualities, can be considered to be of ‘Outstanding Universal Value’ (OUV). OUV means cultural and/or natural significance which is so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations of all humanity. As such, the permanent protection of this heritage is of the highest importance to the international community as a whole.

The Convention is not intended to ensure the protection of all properties of great interest, importance or value, but only for a select list of the most outstanding of these from an international viewpoint. It is not to be assumed that a property of national and/or regional importance will automatically be inscribed on the World Heritage List.

The Committee defines the criteria for inscription of properties as cultural or natural heritage on the World Heritage List. The following are considered as “natural heritage”:

- natural features consisting of physical and biological formations or groups of such formations, which are of OUV from the aesthetic or scientific point of view;
- geological and physiographical formations and precisely delineated areas which constitute the habitat of threatened species of animals and plants of OUV from the point of view of science or conservation;
- natural sites or precisely delineated areas of OUV from the point of view of science, conservation or natural beauty.

Criteria: To be included on the World Heritage List, sites must be of outstanding universal value and meet at least one out of ten selection criteria as explained in the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention. There are six cultural and four natural criteria:

Criteria (i)- to represent a masterpiece of human creative genius;

Criteria (ii) - to exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design;

Criteria (iii) - to bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared;

Criteria (iv) - to be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history;

Criteria (v) - to be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change;

Criteria (vi) - to be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance. (The Committee considers that this criterion should preferably be used in conjunction with other criteria);

Criteria (vii) - contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance;

Criteria (viii) - be outstanding examples representing major stages of earth's history, including the record of life, significant on-going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features;

Criteria (ix) - be outstanding examples representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals;

Criteria (x) - contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation.

To be deemed of OUV, a property nominated under 'natural' criteria must also meet the condition of integrity, and must have adequate protection and management system to ensure its safeguarding.

Integrity is a measure of the wholeness and intactness of the natural heritage and its attributes. Examining the conditions of integrity therefore requires assessing the extent to which the property:

- a) includes all elements necessary to express its OUV;
- b) is of adequate size to ensure the complete representation of the features and processes which convey the property's significance;
- c) suffers from adverse effects of development and/or neglect.

Protection and management of World Heritage properties should ensure their OUV are sustained or enhanced over time. All properties inscribed on the World Heritage List must have adequate long-term legislative, regulatory, institutional and/or traditional protection and management to ensure their safeguarding. Each nominated property should have an appropriate management plan or other documented management system which must specify how the OUV of a property should be preserved, preferably through participatory means.

Khangchendzonga National Park as a World Heritage Site

Ms. Anindita Debnath, World Heritage Assistant, WII-C2C gave a talk on the Khangchendzonga National Park (KNP) as a World Heritage Site. The Khangchendzonga National Park (KNP) was the first major area of unique species assemblage in the Eastern Himalayas to be protected by the Indian/State Government as part of its commitment to ecosystem conservation. Khangchendzonga National Park was first declared on 26th August 1977 with an initial area of 835 sq.km. Later, it was extended to 1784.00 sq. km. in May 1997. It displays a rich intertwined range of natural and cultural values contributing to the natural and cultural heritage of the region. The park has three range: Chungthang, Dzongu and Yuksam spreading across North, West and South District of Sikkim. KNP also forms a part of the greater Khangchendzonga transboundary landscape with Nepal's Kanchenjunga Conservation Area. The Park is of major religious and cultural significance in Sikkim since it abounds in sacred mountains and holy places. Natural features like caves, 18 glaciers, 17 crystal clear placid lakes are present inside the PA. Mt. Khangchendzonga revered as guardian deity to all the Sikkimese people. The property was inscribed on 2016, covering an area of 178,400 ha with an additional buffer zone of 114,712 ha. It is a mixed site, and meets criteria: iii, vi, vii, and x.

Criteria (iii) and (vi) represents cultural attributes of the property. Khangchedzonga National Park is the heartland of a multi-ethnic culture, Mount Khangchendzonga being revered as Mayel Lyang, regularly rituals performed both by Lepcha people and Bhutias, the Nay-Sol and the Pang Lhabsol. The property is central to the Buddhist understanding of Sikkim as a beyul, that is, an intact site of religious ritual and cultural practice for Tibetan Buddhists in Sikkim, in neighbouring countries and all over the world. Criterion (vii) represents superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance. The third highest peak on the planet, Mt. Khangchendzonga (8,586 m asl) straddles the western boundary of Khangchendzonga National Park and is one of 20 picturesque peaks measuring over 6,000 m located within the park. The combination of extremely high and rugged mountains covered by intact old-growth forests up to the unusually high timberline and the pronounced altitudinal vegetation zones further adds to the exceptional landscape beauty. Criterion (x) signifies the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity. Khangchendzonga National Park is home to nearly half of India's bird diversity, wild trees, orchids and rhododendrons and one third of the country's flowering plants. It contains the widest and most extensive zone of krummholz (stunted forest) in the Himalayan region. Six cat species have been confirmed (Leopard, Clouded Leopard, Snow Leopard, Jungle Cat, Golden Cat, Leopard Cat) within the park.

Current threats to the park were highlighted, such as unsustainable tourism, human-wildlife conflict, grazing, natural disasters and climate change. Tourism best practices were also discussed it was suggested to put proper signage, promote zero-waste trail, awareness amongst the tourist as well as the tour guide. The current status of IUCN Conservation Outlook 2020 defines KNP in a "good" category. It indicates that its values are currently in good condition and are likely to be maintained for the foreseeable future, provided that current conservation measures are maintained. Management Recommendations were suggested as per the strategies laid out in the management plan. It was also emphasized that the participation of Eco-Development Committees, Local Panchayat members, Himal Rakshak, officials from line departments, NGOs and other relevant stakeholders will be sought in the monitoring and evaluation process

Linking Cultural & Natural heritage of Khangchendzonga National Park

Ms. Pallabi Chakraborty, World Heritage Assistant, WII-C2C delivered her talk on 'Linking natural and cultural heritage' by defining the concept of nature-culture linkage, that culture–nature, or nature–culture, is an approach to heritage that has emerged based on the understanding that relationships between people and the natural environment have worked to shape both our physical environment and belief systems. She stated the Belem Declaration of 1988 that, “many of the areas of highest biological diversity on the planet are inhabited by indigenous and traditional peoples, providing an 'inextricable link' between biological and cultural diversity”. Knowledge of the environment is based on the relationship between humans and nature, and also between the visible world and the invisible spirit world. For many people around the world, the evocative power of mountains highlights basic cultural and spiritual values and beliefs that deeply influence how people view and treat the world. These values and beliefs determine to a great extent which resources people are willing to exploit and which features of the environment they feel motivated to protect. As a modern scientific concept biodiversity and conservation may have little or no meaning in traditional societies. On the other hand, the conservation of biodiversity may be the result, rather than the intention, of beliefs and practices associated with a mountain site. For example, sacred groves scattered throughout the Himalayas have preserved many different species and could serve as kernels around which larger protected areas could be established that would make more sense to the local populace. Bringing in the UNESCO World Heritage Convention’s take on this concept, Pallabi stated that although the Convention designated world heritage sites with both cultural and natural criteria (mixed category) as early as the 1981, and in 1992 it became the first international legal instrument to protect outstanding examples of the ‘combined works of nature and of man’, in the form of cultural landscapes, much deliberations and actions are needed in the still sustaining divide between nature and culture, heavily influenced by the ‘western’ idea of heritage. In other words, heritage thinking needs to mature in its appreciation of the complex interconnections between values both cultural and natural.

Moving on to the case of Khangchendzonga National Park, she highlighted the site’s natural features, along with Mount Khangchendzonga, that are endowed with deep cultural meanings and sacred significance, and are worshipped as a hidden land both to Buddhists and Lepchas. The Outstanding Universal Value of the property is expressed by the coexistence of multiple layers of sacred meaning, and of shamanic and Buddhist traditions. The collection of myths, stories, and significant events, as well as the sacred texts themselves, communicate the cultural connotations projected onto natural resources, as well as the indigenous and detailed Buddhist mythology that developed in the Himalayan region. The property and the buffer zone of the national park have no permanent inhabitants; therefore no development pressures are expected from existing communities. However, these unique values are faced with some existing and prospective threats. Increase in tourism, weakening of cultural ties, impacts of modernization, potential hydroelectric dam, feral dogs, and impending land encroachment are some issues that have been documented. In order to tackle these problems robust management framework, visitor management and interpretation, along with a system of multi-disciplinary and interdepartmental cooperation is recommended. In her concluding remarks Pallabi acknowledged the close collaboration of the Forest Department and the local Eco-Development Committees and the joint protection efforts of the site, and concluded by saying that such institutional collaborations need to be recognized and efforts for strengthening these institutions must be taken.

Monitoring and Reporting for World Heritage

Various mechanisms of Monitoring and Reporting for World Heritage Sites were outlined by Mr. Niraj Kakati, Technical Officer, WII-C2C:

State of Conservation Report: States Parties have an obligation to regularly prepare reports about the state of conservation and the various protection measures put in place at their sites. These reports allow the World Heritage Committee to assess the conditions at the sites and, eventually, to decide on the necessity of adopting specific measures to resolve recurrent problems. The World Heritage Centre has developed a “World Heritage State of Conservation Information System” - one of the most comprehensive monitoring systems of any international conventions. The Information System offers a data on the state of conservation of World Heritage properties since 1979 and the threats they have faced in the past, or are currently facing.

Reactive Monitoring: It is the reporting by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to the World Heritage Committee on the state of conservation of specific World Heritage properties that are under threat. Reactive Monitoring is foreseen in the procedures for the inclusion of properties in the List of World Heritage in Danger and for the removal of properties from the World Heritage List.

Periodic Reporting: The Periodic Reporting process provides an assessment of the application of the World Heritage Convention by the States Parties. They are prepared on a regional basis and are examined by the World Heritage Committee on a pre-established schedule based on a six-year cycle. The objectives of Periodic Reporting are to provide an assessment of the application of the World Heritage Convention by the State Party, trend of OUV over time, updated information about World Heritage properties, and mechanism for regional cooperation and exchange of information between States Parties concerning the implementation of the Convention and World Heritage conservation.

Under the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting for the Asia-Pacific Region (2020-21), Khangchendzonga National Park was assessed for its application of the World Heritage Convention.

World Heritage Outlook: The IUCN World Heritage Outlook of 2014 was the first global assessment of natural World Heritage. It evaluates the conservation prospects of all sites inscribed on the World Heritage List for their natural values. The first three-yearly update of this assessment was released in 2017 followed by the next in 2020. The main objectives of the Outlook are to recognise well-managed sites, track the state of conservation of all natural World Heritage sites over time; and identify the most pressing conservation issues.

The IUCN World Heritage Outlook does not replace the World Heritage Convention’s monitoring mechanisms, but is designed to both support and complement them. It fills the information gap on the remaining sites through proactive and more regular monitoring of WHS beyond the UNESCO process. The overall conservation outlook for a particular site is assessed against four categories shown on the gauge below:

Detailed assessment of Khangchendzonga National Park during the World Heritage Outlook 2020 placed it in the category of “Good”.

Assessment of OUV with specific reference to Khangchendzonga National Park – Group work with participants

Dr. Chitiz Joshi, Assistant Technical Officer, WII-C2C, facilitated the OUV assessment exercise for the participants. OUV means cultural and/or natural significance which is so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations of all humanity. As such, the permanent protection of this heritage is of the highest importance to the international community as a whole. OUV is the fundamental central concept to the credibility of the World Heritage system. OUV forms the basis for World Heritage nominations and reporting. OUV can also form a useful framework to assist and prioritise management.

Based on an approach developed by Jon Day, ARC Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies, James Cook University, Australia, it seeks to break down the OUV to more effectively manage and report on a World Heritage Site. Every Site has a Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (SoOUV) addressing the relevant World Heritage criteria, integrity, protection and management requirements. This OUV analysis attempts to break down the complex SoOUV into smaller, more understandable components by highlighting key issues from the statement. Each of these issues is then assessed for their current condition and trends. The conditions are classified in four grades:

Assessment grade			
Very good condition	Good condition	Poor condition	Very poor condition
All elements necessary to maintain the OUV are essentially intact, and their overall condition is stable or improving. Available evidence indicates only minor, if any, disturbance to this element of OUV	Some loss or alteration of the elements necessary to maintain the OUV has occurred, but their overall condition is not causing persistent or substantial effects on this element of OUV	Loss or alteration of many elements necessary to maintain OUV has occurred, which is leading to a significant reduction in this element of the OUV	Loss or alteration most elements necessary to maintain the OUV has occurred and has caused a major loss of the OUV

Recognize key examples of values/attributes and the factors affecting those values and tried to prioritize the highest priority threats. The participants (forest frontline staff and community representatives) were organized according to mixed groups of 8 members. The resource persons from WII-C2C acted as facilitators. Worksheet (Appendix C) on the OUV statement was provided to all the groups to discuss and comment on the current status of specific criterion and the effectiveness of the management and protection strategies.

Criteria (iii) – *“to bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared”*

Current Status: As per respondents, the ancient belief for Sikkim Beyul is still prevailing. Currently the site’s cultural and religious values are intact. The ancient traditional practices are ongoing, and the core sacred region of the property is well conserved.

Criteria (vi) – *“to be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance.”*

Current Status: The religious rituals are being performed regularly by Lepcha, Bhutia and other communities. The importance of these religious festivals is sustained through each generation and is valued by everyone. The Sikkimese people have deep connection with nature and hold knowledge about their surrounding environment. The tradition of worshipping the Guardian deity still prevail and stable.

Criteria (vii) – *“contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance”*

Current Status: With the high degree of consensus, it was found that the park’s natural beauty, snow-capped peaks, and exceptional landscape contributes to its aesthetics. The natural beauty is unspoiled and in increasing trend.

Criteria (x) – *“contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation”*

Current Status: KNP is enriched with diverse flora and fauna across wide elevation zones. The park continues to provide critical refuge and diversity of habitat to large mammals and various other species. It was found that the OUVs (in terms of population, habitat, and protection) are essentially intact, and their overall condition is stable or improving. Available evidence indicates Himalayan Tahr, Mainland Serow, Blue Sheep are naturally protected. Skin diseases in Goral and presence of Feral dogs for other species were identified as threats.

Current Status of Integrity

At present the area of KNP is adequate and in good condition. It was found the integrity is intact, stable and with the current area it can sustain the complete representation of its OUV. The buffer provided by the Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve and sacred belief systems were also mentioned as positive factors towards maintenance of integrity.

Current Status of Authenticity

The authenticity of the cultural elements is well maintained. The beliefs and customs continue to be practiced in their traditional manner with sacred reverence. Minor restoration work has been used for the maintenance of some shrines and gompas.

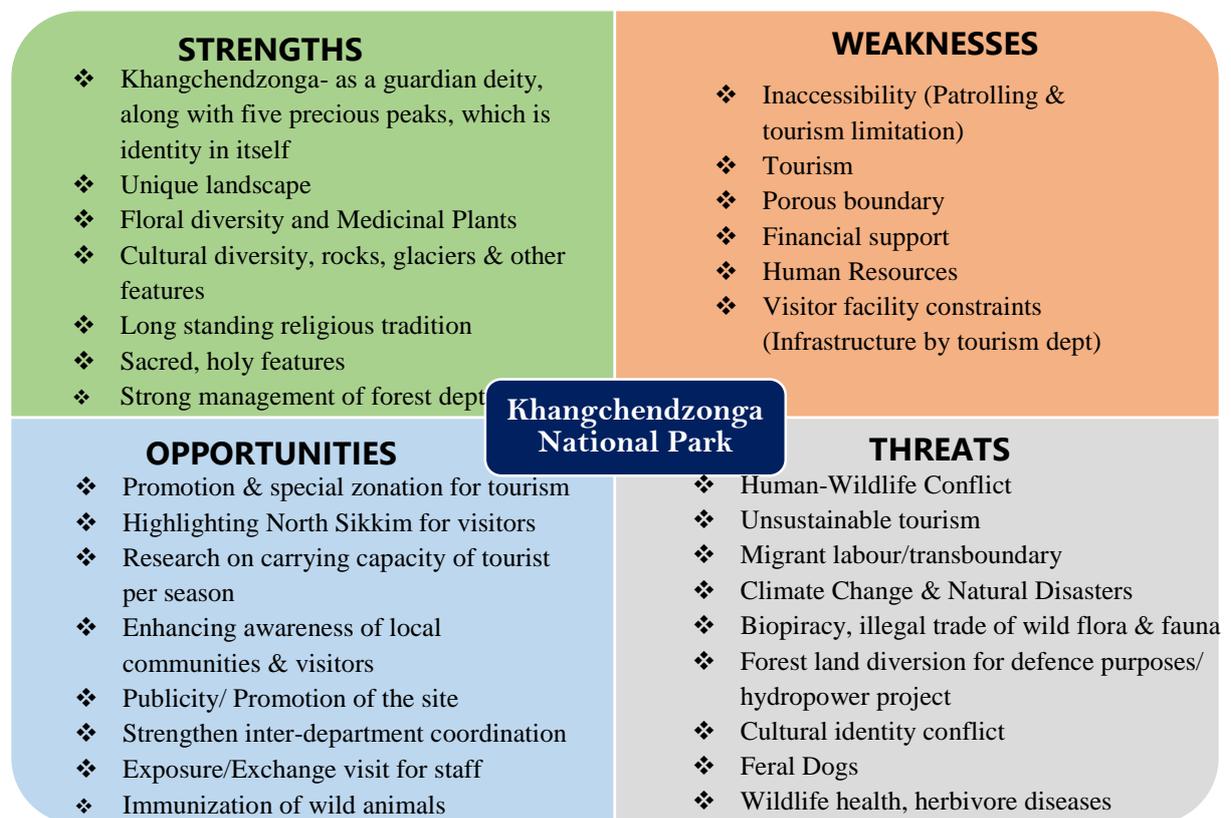
Current Status of Management and Protection

The protected area status of Khangchendzonga National Park under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 of India ensures strong legal protection of all fauna and flora as well as mountains, glaciers, water bodies and landscapes which contribute to the habitat of wildlife. At present the laws are strictly implemented. The local people here are pro-active in conservation and together with the Forest department, JFMC and EDC they work towards advancement of well-being of the residents, e.g. The Himal Rakshaks- people from local communities working with Forest department for the protection of the park and aiding in conservation. The problem of crop depredation by Himalayan Black Bear and conflict with humans was highlighted. It has been noted, hunting is completely banned from the park as people abide by the law and cultural prohibitions further reinforce protection mechanism.

Strengths, Weakness, Opportunity, Threats (SWOT) Analysis for Khangchendzonga National Park

A Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis is a strategic planning tool to evaluate internal and external influences upon a common vision or specific goal. Therefore, to analyse and understand the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats, a survey was carried out during workshops to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the Khangchendzonga National Park Mixed World Heritage Site.

All the participants were divided into groups and provided predesigned SWOT analysis worksheet (Appendix D). Participants were asked to fill the information as per their previous experience. The groups completed a SWOT analysis and identified several key strategic issues regarding world heritage management strategy. All the worksheets were analysed for common response and prepare actions to be prioritised in the strategy for natural world heritage management.



Appendix-A



Training Programme on Monitoring of Outstanding Universal Value of Natural World Heritage Sites: *Khangchendzonga National Park*

21-22 November, 2022, Yuksom, Sikkim

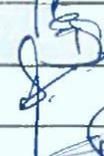
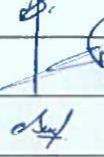
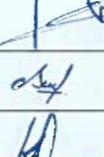
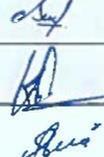
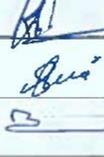
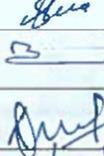
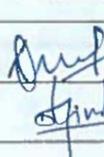
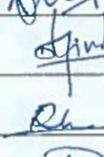
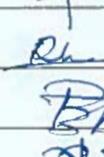
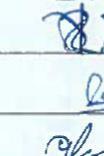
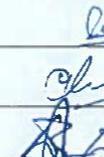
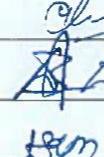
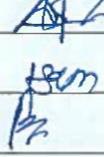
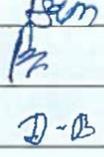
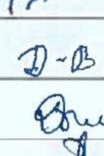
PROGRAMME SCHEDULE

PROGRAMME SCHEDULE	
21 November, 2022 (Yuksom)	
1000 h-1015 h	Welcome & Introductions
1015 h-1100 h	Introduction to World Heritage and Outstanding Universal Value
1100 h-1130 h	Khangchendzonga National Park as a World Heritage Site
1130 h-1145 h	Tea Break
1145 h-1230 h	Monitoring and Reporting for World Heritage (<i>State of Conservation Report, Periodic Reporting, Reactive Monitoring, World Heritage Outlook</i>)
1230 h-1300 h	Linking Cultural and Natural Heritage
1300-1400 h	Lunch Break
1400 h-1600 h	Assessment of OUV with specific reference to Khangchendzonga National Park – Group work with participants
1600 h-1630 h	Tea and Close of Session
22 November, 2022 (Yuksom)	
1000 h-1100 h	Presentation of Group Work by Participants
1100 h-1115 h	Tea break
1115 h-1215 h	Strengths, Weakness, Opportunity, Threats (SWOT) Analysis for Khangchendzonga National Park
1215 h-1245 h	Interpretation and Promotion for World Heritage
1245 h-1300 h	Concluding Session: Experience Sharing and Certificate Distribution
1300 h-1400 h	Lunch
1400 h	Field Visit
24 November, 2022 (Gangtok)	
1100 h	Debriefing at Sikkim Forest Department Headquarters

Appendix- B
Participants List

DATE:- 21st Nov 2022

ATTENDANCE SHEET

Sl. No.	Name	Address	Signature
1	Shri. D.S. Limboo	Zilla Adhyakshya, Gyalshing	
2	Shri T. T. Bhutia	SDM Yuksam Tashiding	
3	Ms. Sonam Norden Bhutia	DFO KNP	
4	Shri Joseph Lepcha	ACF KNP West	
5	Sanita Limboo	panchayat president	
6	Kanzang Bhuti	panchayat v. post	
7	Sabini Chhetri	Member	
8	Mangal Bir Sukh		
9	Dham Maya Limboo	Member	
10	Sun Hong Limboo	"	
11	Phurtenpa Bhuia	SHARPA	
12	Periba Tshu Bhuia	Sindroabang	
13	Chirpa Tshu Bhutia	Chongri	
14	Sempa Lepcha	Kongri	
15	Pomchung Lepcha	Kongri	
16	Dhan B. D. Guang	Labdang	
17	Han Lak Mager	Atpi Dara	
18	Phushal Lal	Noda	
19	Dil B. B. Manger	Dhupi	
20	Karmee Doma Bhutia	U. Mangnam	
21	Prose Ram Guang	u/mangnam	

22	Tek Bahadur Subba	Tsong	Subba
23	Nima Dorjee		
24	Aitengpa Subba	Khongpa	Subba
25	Thinley Bhadra	Norbugang	T.B.
26	Sangay Lepcha	Khechepesi dojo	Sang
27	Nima - Tsering Lepcha	Changpa	Changpa
28	Purni Maya Subba	Yukam	Subba
29	Sancha Maya Limboo	Khongpa	Subba
30	Binita Subba	Mangabang	Subba
31	Phurba Doma Lepcha	Yukam	Phurba
32	Lachi Maya Chettri	Mangabang	Subba
33	Sancha Man Limboo	Tsong	Subba
34	Bali Hang Limboo	Tsong	Subba
35	Pana Hang Subba	IThangpa	Subba
36	Suk Hang Limboo	T. Khongpa	Hang Limboo
37	Om Tea Lepcha	Yukam	10000
38	Eksa Hang Limboo	T. Khongpa	Subba
39	Karma Gummy Bhadra	Co. KNP	Subba
40	Sanchu Man Limboo	Tsong	Subba
41	Bassant Subba	Tsong	Subba
42	Kamal Singh Fanning (KNP)	Labrang	Subba
43	Yunam Hang Subba (KNP)	KNP Yukam	Subba
44	Mahinda Limboo	FG, KNP, Yukam	Mahinda
45	Mak Hang Limboo	FG, KNP, Yukam	Subba

46	Karna Zoya Bhatia	DZONGU RANGE KNP	
47	Souam Chah Bhatia	Chandnagar Range KNP	
48	Top Seh. Lepcha	DZONGU RANGE, KNP	
49	Toshen Tashi Bhatia	WIPRO (BAC Yulesem)	
50	Karna Pintoo Bhatia	H.F.G. Chunglang NKP	
51	Mitup Lakonpa	B.O. KNP	
52	Kamchung Lakonpa	H.F.G. (KNP)	
53	Chodar Lachpa	B.O. (KNP)	
54	Phupharnu Bhatia	R.O. KNP Chunglang	
55	Ranjit Lakonpa	R.O. KNP Chunglang	
56	Palben T. Bhatia	B.O. KNP	
57	Mangal Bir Subbar	Forum	
58	Aita Hany Limbo	For President's Young (eg)	
59	Ugan Tumpa Bhatia	Passion Duet An	
60	Behima Gurung	EDC Yulesem Kangra	
61	Budha Lal Limbo	EDC Yulesem	
62	Souam Lakonpa	EDC Yulesem	
63	Pezang Lepcha	EDC Yulesem	
64	Loday Thering Bhatia	F.G. KNP Yulesem	
65	Norden Thering Bhatia	F.G. KNP Yulesem	
66	Mohan Sharma	H.F.G. KNP Yulesem	
67	Prayash Tamang	F.G. KNP Yulesem	
68			
69			

Appendix- C

Statement of Outstanding Universal value

Khangchendzonga National Park

Located at the heart of the Himalayan range in northern India (State of Sikkim), the Khangchendzonga National Park includes a unique diversity of plains, valleys, lakes, glaciers and spectacular, snow-capped mountains covered with ancient forests, including the world's third highest peak, Mount Khangchendzonga. Mythological stories are associated with this mountain and with a great number of natural elements (caves, rivers, lakes, etc.) that are the object of worship by the indigenous people of Sikkim. The sacred meanings of these stories and practices have been integrated with Buddhist beliefs and constitute the basis for Sikkimese identity.

Outstanding Universal Value

Brief synthesis

Situated in the northern Indian State of Sikkim, Khangchendzonga National Park (KNP) exhibits one of the widest altitudinal ranges of any protected area worldwide. The Park has an extraordinary vertical sweep of over 7 kilometres (1,220m to 8,586m) within an area of only 178,400 ha and comprises a unique diversity of lowlands, steep-sided valleys and spectacular snow-clad mountains including the world's third highest peak, Mt. Khangchendzonga. Numerous lakes and glaciers, including the 26 km long Zemu Glacier, dot the barren high altitudes.

The property falls within the Himalaya global biodiversity hotspot and displays an unsurpassed range of sub-tropical to alpine ecosystems. The Himalayas are narrowest here resulting in extremely steep terrain which magnifies the distinction between the various eco-zones which characterise the property. The Park is located within a mountain range of global biodiversity conservation significance and covers 25% of the State of Sikkim, acknowledged as one of India's most significant biodiversity concentrations. The property is home to a significant number of endemic, rare and threatened plant and animal species. The property has one of the highest number of plant and mammal species recorded in the Central/High Asian Mountains, and also has a high number of bird species.

Khangchendzonga National Park's grandeur is undeniable, and the Khangchendzonga Massif, other peaks and landscape features are revered across several cultures and religions. The combination of extremely high and rugged mountains covered by intact old-growth forests up to the unusually high timberline further adds to the exceptional landscape beauty.

Mount Khangchendzonga and many natural features within the property and its wider setting are endowed with deep cultural meanings and sacred significance, giving form to the multi-layered landscape of Khangchendzonga, which is sacred as a hidden land both to Buddhists (Beyul) and to Lepchas as Mayel Lyang, representing a unique example of co-existence and exchange between different religious traditions and ethnicities, constituting the base for Sikkimese identity and unity. The ensemble of myths, stories and notable events, as well as the sacred texts themselves, convey and make manifest the cultural meanings projected onto natural resources and the indigenous and specific Buddhist cosmogony that developed in the Himalayan region.

The indigenous traditional knowledge of the properties of local plants and the local ecosystem, which is peculiar to local peoples, is on the verge of disappearing and represents a precious source of information on the healing properties of several endemic plants. The traditional and ritual management system of forests and the natural resources of the land pertaining to Buddhist monasteries express the active dimension of Buddhist cosmogonies and could contribute to the property's effective management.

Criterion (iii): The property – with Mount Khangchendzonga and other sacred mountains – represents the core sacred region of the Sikkimese and syncretistic religious and cultural traditions and thus bears unique witness to the coexistence of multiple layers of both Buddhist and pre-Buddhist sacred meanings in the same region, with the abode of mountain deity on Mt Khangchendzonga. The property is central to the Buddhist understanding of Sikkim as a beyul, that is, an intact site of religious ritual and cultural practice for Tibetan Buddhists in Sikkim, in neighbouring

countries and all over the world. The sacred Buddhist importance of the place begins in the 8th century with Guru Rinpoche's initiation of the Buddhist sanctity of the region, and later appears in Buddhist scriptures such as the prophetic text known as the Lama Gongdu, revealed by Tertön Sangay Lingpa (1340-1396), followed by the opening of the beyul in the 17th century, chiefly by Lhatsun Namkha Gijme.

Criterion (vi): Khangchendzonga National Park is the heartland of a multi-ethnic culture which has evolved over time, giving rise to a multi-layered syncretic religious tradition, which centres on the natural environment and its notable features. This kinship is expressed by the region surrounding Mount Khangchendzonga being revered as Mayel Lyang by the indigenous peoples of Sikkim and as a beyul (sacred hidden land) in Tibetan Buddhism. It is a specific Sikkimese form of sacred mountain cult which is sustained by regularly-performed rituals, both by Lepcha people and Bhutias, the latter performing two rituals: the Nay-Sol and the Pang Lhabsol. The kinship between the human communities and the mountainous environment has nurtured the elaboration of a profound traditional knowledge of the natural resources and of their properties, particularly within the Lepcha community. Mount Khangchendzonga is the central element of the socio-religious order, of the unity and solidarity of the ethnically very diverse Sikkimese communities.

Criterion (vii): The scale and grandeur of the Khangchendzonga Massif and the numerous other peaks within Khangchendzonga National Park are extraordinary and contribute to a landscape that is revered across several cultures and religions. The third highest peak on the planet, Mt. Khangchendzonga (8,586 m asl) straddles the western boundary of Khangchendzonga National Park and is one of 20 picturesque peaks measuring over 6,000 m located within the park. The combination of extremely high and rugged mountains covered by intact old-growth forests up to the unusually high timberline and the pronounced altitudinal vegetation zones further adds to the exceptional landscape beauty. These peaks have attracted people from all over the world, mountaineers, photographers and those seeking spiritual fulfilment. The park boasts eighteen glaciers including Zemu Glacier, one of the largest in Asia, occupying an area of around 10,700

ha. Similarly, there are 73 glacial lakes in the property including over eighteen crystal clear and placid high altitude lakes.

Criterion (x): Khangchendzonga National Park is located within a mountain range of global biodiversity conservation significance and covers 25% of the State of Sikkim, acknowledged as one of the most significant biodiversity concentrations in India. The property has one of the highest levels of plant and mammal diversity recorded within the Central/High Asian Mountains. Khangchendzonga National Park is home to nearly half of India's bird diversity, wild trees, orchids and rhododendrons and one third of the country's flowering plants. It contains the widest and most extensive zone of krummholz (stunted forest) in the Himalayan region. It also provides a critical refuge for a range of endemic, rare and threatened species of plants and animals. The national park exhibits an extraordinary altitudinal range of more than 7 kilometres in a relatively small area giving rise to an exceptional range of eastern Himalaya landscapes and associated wildlife habitat. This ecosystem mosaic provides a critical refuge for an impressive range of large mammals, including several apex predators. A remarkable six cat species have been confirmed (Leopard, Clouded Leopard, Snow Leopard, Jungle Cat, Golden Cat, Leopard Cat) within the park. Flagship species include Snow Leopard as the largest Himalayan predator, Jackal, Tibetan Wolf, large Indian Civet, Red Panda, Goral, Blue Sheep, Himalayan Tahr, Mainland Serow, two species of Musk Deer, two primates, four species of pika and several rodent species, including the parti-coloured Flying Squirrel.

Integrity

Khangchendzonga National Park has an adequate size to sustain the complete representation of its Outstanding Universal Value. The Park was established in 1977 and later expanded in 1997 to include the major mountains and the glaciers and additional lowland forests. The more than doubling in size also accommodated the larger ranges of seasonally migrating animals. The property comprises some 178,400 ha with a buffer zone of some 114,712 ha included within the larger Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve which overlays the property. The property encompasses a unique mountain system comprising of peaks, glaciers, lakes, rivers and an entire range of ecologically-linked biological elements, which

ensures the sustainability of unique mountain ecosystem functions.

The key human-made features that shape the sacred geography embedded in the Sikkimese belief systems, are included in the property. Dzonga, Sikkim's guardian deity and the owner and protector of the land, resides on Mount Khangchendzonga and, on its slopes, Mayel Lyang, the Lepcha's mythological place, is located. On the other hand, the Buddhist concept of beyul, or hidden sacred land, extends well beyond the boundaries of the property, endowing the whole of Sikkim with a sacred meaning.

Therefore, other human-made attributes that are functionally important as a support to the cultural significance of the property, its protection and its understanding, are located in the buffer zone, in the Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve, and in the wider setting of the property.

The representativeness of lower altitude ecosystems within the property could be improved by considering progressive additions of what are well protected and valuable forests in the current buffer zone. The functional integrity of this system would also profit from opportunities to engage with neighbouring countries such as Nepal, China and Bhutan which share the wider ecosystem: the most obvious collaboration being with the Kanchenjunga Conservation Area in Nepal as this protected area is contiguous with Khangchendzonga National Park and Mt Khangchendzonga effectively straddles the border between the two countries.

The integrity of the associative values and of traditional knowledge has been impacted by past policies for environmental protection, changes in lifestyle and discouragement of traditional practices for subsistence.

Authenticity

The authenticity of the cultural attributes within the boundary of the property has been preserved. Although the tangible human-made attributes within the property are restricted to some chortens, gompas and several sacred shrines associated with revered natural features, their continued reverence, maintenance and the associated rituals attest that they bear credible witness to the property's Outstanding Universal Value. Sources of information on the associative values of the property and its attributes comprise

the Nay-Sol and the Nay-Yik texts, which provide important information on the stories, the rituals and the associated natural features as well as the still-performed rituals, the oral history and the traditional knowledge held by the Lepcha.

Protection and management requirements

The protected area status of Khangchendzonga National Park under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 of India ensures strong legal protection of all fauna and flora as well as mountains, glaciers, water bodies and landscapes which contribute to the habitat of wildlife. This also assures the protection and conservation of the exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic value of the natural elements within the Park. The property comprises state-owned land and has been protected as a National Park since 1977, whilst the buffer zone is protected as a Forest Reserve.

Natural features having cultural significance are protected by notifications, n.59/Home/98 and n. 70/Home/2001, issued by the Government of Sikkim. They identify the sacred features and regulate their use as places of worship. Some of the monuments fall under the protection of the Archaeological Survey of India, while other ones are managed by monastic and local communities through traditional management systems that extend to the immediate and wider settings of the monasteries (gya-ra and gya-nak zones).

The property is managed by the Sikkim Forest, Environment and Wildlife Management Department under the guidance of a management plan with a vision to conserve key ecosystem and landscape attributes whilst promoting recreational opportunities, cultural and educational values as well as the advancement of scientific knowledge and strategies which advance the well-being of local communities. Opportunities should be taken to better empower local people and other stakeholders into decision making related to the property's management. A partnership is envisaged with the Ecclesiastical Department of Sikkim, the Department of Cultural Heritage Affairs and the Namgyal Institute of Tibetology, to ensure that consideration of cultural values and attributes are integrated into the existing management.

Efforts should continue to expand knowledge of the property's biological and ecological values as data is still inadequate. Inventory, research and monitoring should focus on clarifying the species

composition within the property and informing policy and management. Periodic evaluation of the effectiveness of management should continue and be used to direct investment into priority areas so that financial and staff resources are matched to the challenges of future management.

Khangchendzonga National Park displays a rich intertwined range of natural and cultural values which warrant a more integrated approach to the management of natural and cultural heritage. Legal protection, policy and management should be progressively reformed and improved to ensure an appropriate balance between the natural, cultural and spiritual aspects of the property.

A participatory approach to management exists through the Eco-Development Committees (EDC's); their role in monitoring and inspection is planned to also be extended to cultural aspects and attributes. From a cultural perspective, the extension of the traditional and participatory management to

cultural attributes located in the buffer and transitional zones would greatly assist the effective protection of the cultural values, and the reinforcement of cultural ties and traditional knowledge of the local communities with their environment.

There are no significant current threats for the property, however, vigilance will be required to monitor and respond to the potential for impact from increasing tourism as a result of publicity and promotion. Similar attention must be paid to the potential impact of climate change on the altitudinal gradients within the property and the sensitive ecological niches which provide critical habitat. Active management of the buffer zone will be essential to prevent unsympathetic developments and inappropriate landuses from surrounding local communities whilst at the same time supporting traditional livelihoods and the equitable sharing of benefits from the park and its buffer zone.

Assessment grade				Area		
Very good condition	Good condition	Poor condition	Very poor condition	Tubbutaha Reefs Natural Park		
						
All elements necessary to maintain the OUV are essentially intact, and their overall condition is stable or improving. Available evidence indicates only minor, if any, disturbance to this element of OUV	Some loss or alteration of the elements necessary to maintain the OUV has occurred, but their overall condition is not causing persistent or substantial effects on this element of OUV	Loss or alteration of many elements necessary to maintain OUV has occurred, which is leading to a significant reduction in this element of the OUV	Loss or alteration of most elements necessary to maintain the OUV has occurred and has caused a major loss of the OUV	Trend since 1993	Confidence	
				↑ Improving	Grad	Trend
				↓ Deteriorating	1	1
				↔ Stable	½	½
				↕ No clear trend	0	0
					Adequate high-quality evidence and high level of consensus	
					Limited evidence or limited consensus	
					Very limited evidence, assessment based on anecdotal information	

In applying this subjective assessment approach, the following principles should be considered:

- The wording of the grading statements is based on a grading system used by IUCN to assess natural WH sites.
- OUV should be considered as being distributed throughout the whole of the WH property, rather than being found at discrete locations unevenly distributed throughout the property.
- To provide the most effective assessment of the elements of the SoOUV, the grade reflects a grade for the entire element (this is easier to assess for some elements than others). Each assessment is therefore a 'grade of best fit' for that element across the whole property and all matters relating to the element.
- To be deemed to be of OUV, "a property must also meet the conditions of integrity ... and must have an adequate protection and management system ... "(s. 78 of the Guidelines). Consequently this assessment considers the four criteria and integrity.

What is now required for the worksheets on the following five pages?

1. Firstly, noting the excerpt from the Statement of OUV, write a 1-2 sentences in the second column about the current condition of that SoOUV excerpt.
2. Assess the grade against the four colour-coded grading statements and chose the grade of best-fit today based on the best available evidence (*not just what you think or want*) i.e. Is the current grade Good, or Poor... or what? If helpful, copy and paste the relevant column colour into the relevant 'cell' to indicate the grade.
3. Insert a trend arrow into the same 'cell' as the coloured grading statement; the trend arrow should indicate the trend today compared to the benchmark of the date of inscription (ie 1993). If helpful, copy and paste the arrows from the example below.
4. (*Not essential but useful*) Indicate your confidence in both the grade and trend arrow by inserting either 0, ½ or 1

Worksheet for Khangchendzonga National Park (KNP)

Synthesis: (as this description is not covered elsewhere by wording in any of the criteria below)

Excerpt from Statement of OUV	Comments on <u>current</u> condition c.f. SoOUV excerpt	Very good	Good	Poor	Very poor	Confidence	
						Condition	Trend
<i>Khangchendzonga National Park (KNP) exhibits one of the widest altitudinal ranges of any protected area worldwide. The Park comprises a unique diversity of lowlands, steep-sided valleys and spectacular snow-clad mountains including the world's third highest peak, Mt. Khangchendzonga. Numerous lakes and glaciers, including the 26 km long Zemu Glacier, dot the barren high altitudes.</i>							
<i>The property falls within the Himalaya global biodiversity hotspot and displays an unsurpassed range of sub-tropical to alpine ecosystems, along with exceptional landscape beauty.</i>							
<i>Mount Khangchendzonga and many natural features within the property and its wider setting are endowed with deep cultural meanings and sacred significance.</i>							

Criteria III: “to bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared”

Excerpt from Statement of OUV	Comments on <u>current</u> condition c.f. SoOUV excerpt	Very good	Good	Poor	Very poor	Confidence	
						Condition	Trend
<i>The property – with Mount Khangchendzonga and other sacred mountains – represents the core sacred region of the Sikkimese and syncretistic religious and cultural traditions</i>							
<i>The property is central to the Buddhist understanding of Sikkim as a beyul, that is, an intact site of religious ritual and cultural practice for Tibetan Buddhists in Sikkim, in neighbouring countries and all over the world.</i>							

Criteria VI: “to be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance”

Excerpt from Statement of OUV	Comments on <u>current</u> condition c.f. SoOUV excerpt	Very good	Good	Poor	Very poor	Confidence	
						Condition	Trend
<i>The property represents kinship between the human communities and the mountainous environment that has nurtured the elaboration of a profound traditional knowledge of the natural resources and of their properties.</i>							
<i>This kinship is expressed by the region surrounding Mount Khangchendzonga being revered as Mayel Lyang by the indigenous peoples of Sikkim and as a beyul (sacred hidden land) in Tibetan Buddhism and which is sustained by regularly-performed rituals, both by Lepcha people and Bhutias.</i>							

Criteria VII: “to contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance”

Excerpt from Statement of OUV	Comments on <u>current</u> condition c.f. SoOUV excerpt	Very good	Good	Poor	Very poor	Confidence	
						Condition	Trend
<i>The scale and grandeur of the Khangchendzonga Massif and the numerous other peaks above 6000m within Khangchendzonga National Park are extraordinary; and combined with intact old-growth forests and the pronounced altitudinal vegetation zones further adds to the exceptional landscape beauty</i>							

Criterion x:“... contain the most important and significant natural habitats for *in-situ* conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation”

Excerpt from Statement of OUV	Comments on <u>current</u> condition c.f. SoOUV excerpt	Very good	Good	Poor	Very poor	Confidence												
						Condition	Trend											
<i>Khangchendzonga National Park is home to nearly half of India's bird diversity, wild trees, orchids and rhododendrons and one third of the country's flowering plants.</i>																		
<i>It contains the widest and most extensive zone of krummholz (stunted forest) in the Himalayan region.</i>																		
<i>This ecosystem mosaic provides a critical refuge for an impressive range of large mammals, including several apex predators. Flagship species include:</i>																		
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<i>Golden Cat</i>																		
<i>Leopard cat</i>																		

INTEGRITY - as 'a measure of the wholeness and intactness of the natural and/or cultural heritage and its attributes'.

Examining the conditions of integrity requires assessing the extent to which the property:

- a) includes all elements necessary to express its OUV;
- b) is of adequate size to ensure the complete representation of the features and processes which convey the property's significance;
- c) suffers from adverse effects of development such as hydroelectric project, Road and railway construction etc.

Excerpt from Statement of OUV	Comments on <u>current</u> condition c.f. SoOUV excerpt	Very good	Good	Poor	Very poor	Confidence	
						Condition	Trend
<i>Khangchendzonga National Park has an adequate size to sustain the complete representation of its Outstanding Universal Value. The Park was established in 1977 and later expanded in 1997 to include the major mountains and the glaciers and additional lowland forests.</i>							
<i>The property comprises some 178,400 ha with a buffer zone of some 114,712 ha included within the larger Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve which overlays the property.</i>							
<i>The key human-made features that shape the sacred geography embedded in the Sikkimese belief systems (Dzonga, Mayel Lyang), are included in the property and beyond (beyul).</i>							

AUTHENTICITY - Depending on the type of cultural heritage, and its cultural context, properties may be understood to meet the conditions of authenticity if their cultural values (as recognized in the nomination criteria proposed) are truthfully and credibly expressed through a variety of attributes including:

- form and design;
- materials and substance;
- use and function;
- traditions, techniques and management systems;
- location and setting;
- language, and other forms of intangible heritage;
- spirit and feeling; and
- other internal and external factors.

Excerpt from Statement of OUV	Comments on <u>current</u> condition c.f. SoOUV excerpt	Very good	Good	Poor	Very poor	Confidence	
						Condition	Trend
<i>The authenticity of the cultural attributes within the boundary of the property has been preserved. Although the tangible human-made attributes within the property are restricted to some chortens, gompas and several sacred shrines associated with revered natural features, their continued reverence, maintenance and the associated rituals attest that they bear credible witness to the property's Outstanding Universal Value.</i>							

Management and protection requirements

Excerpt from Statement of OUV	Comments on <u>current</u> condition c.f. SoOUV excerpt	Very good	Good	Poor	Very poor	Confidence	
						Condition	Trend
<i>The protected area status of Khangchendzonga National Park under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 of India ensures strong legal protection of all fauna and flora as well as</i>							

<i>mountains, glaciers, water bodies and landscapes which contribute to the habitat of wildlife.</i>							
<i>Natural features having cultural significance are protected by notifications, n.59/Home/98 and n. 70/Home/2001, issued by the Government of Sikkim. They identify the sacred features and regulate their use as places of worship. Some of the monuments fall under the protection of the Archaeological Survey of India, while other ones are managed by monastic and local communities through traditional management systems that extend to the immediate and wider settings of the monasteries (gya-ra and gya-nak zones).</i>							
<i>The property is managed by the Sikkim Forest, Environment and Wildlife Management Department under the guidance of a management plan with a vision to conserve key ecosystem and landscape attributes whilst promoting recreational opportunities, cultural and educational values as well as the advancement of scientific knowledge and strategies which advance the well-being of local communities.</i>							
<i>A participatory approach to management exists through the Eco-Development Committees (EDC's), which is planned to also be extended to cultural aspects and attributes.</i>							

Appendix D

SWOT Analysis Worksheet

<p style="text-align: center;">Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Khangchendzonga- as a guardian deity, along with five precious peaks; which is identity in itself • Unique landscape • Floral diversity and Medicinal Plants • Cultural diversity, rocks, glaciers & other features • Long Standing religious tradition • Sacred, holy features • Strong management of forest department 	<p style="text-align: center;">Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inaccessibility (Patrolling & tourism limitation) • Tourism • Porous boundary • Financial support • Human Resources • Visitor facility constraints (Infrastructure by tourism department)
<p style="text-align: center;">Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism • Research on carrying capacity of tourist per season • Promotion of tourism in North Sikkim • Special zonation for tourism • Enhancing awareness of local communities & tourist • Publicity/ Promotion of the site • Strengthen inter-department coordination • Exposure/Exchange visit for staff • Immunization of wild animals 	<p style="text-align: center;">Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human-Wildlife Conflict • Unsustainable tourism • Migrant labour/transboundary • Climate Change • Natural Disasters • Biopiracy, illegal trade of wild flora & fauna • Forest land diversion for infrastructure development for defence purposes/ Hydropower project • Cultural identity conflict of Gurudongmar lake (Sikh-Buddhist) • Feral Dog • Wildlife health, herbivore diseases



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