

World Heritage in Danger: two natural sites listed

Brasilia, Brazil, 30 July 2010 (IUCN) - Following the recommendations of IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature), important rainforest areas in Madagascar and the Everglades National Park (USA) have been added to the List of World Heritage in Danger at the World Heritage annual meeting, currently taking place in Brasilia.

The World Heritage Committee decided to remove the Galapagos Islands (Ecuador) from the List of World Heritage Sites in Danger, despite IUCN's recommendation to the contrary.

The Rainforests of Atsinanana are critically important to the survival of Madagascar's unique biodiversity. Over 80 percent of species there are endemic and include rare and threatened lemurs. But since the 2009 political crisis, illegal logging of precious woods has drastically increased and lemur poaching for bushmeat, previously unheard of in Madagascar, is developing at a worrying rate, with a reduction in population density of 30 to 75 percent observed in some places.

*"The ongoing illegal logging of precious woods in parts of Madagascar is of serious concern and is having serious impacts on endangered lemurs," says **Tim Badman, Head of World Heritage at IUCN**. "In adding this site to the Danger List, we are calling for international action to halt illegal logging and to also ensure that no illegally logged precious woods from Madagascar enter national markets."*

The Everglades National Park, a sanctuary for birds and reptiles and home to 20 rare, endangered and threatened species, has been added to the Danger List upon request by the USA. It had previously been on this List from 1993 until 2007 because of the large amount of water diverted from the Park to nearby cities, which dried out the wetland habitats and caused a 90 percent drop in the population of wetland birds.

*"We commend the USA's request to re-inscribe the site on the danger list, and its plans for major infrastructure overhaul to restore the Everglade's fragile wetland ecosystem," says **Mariam Kenza Ali, IUCN World Heritage Conservation Officer** "It reflects the role of the World Heritage Convention in supporting restoration efforts for the wetland habitats."*

The Galapagos Islands, which have been called a unique "living museum and showcase of evolution" were inscribed on the Danger List in 2007 because of threats posed by invasive species, unbridled tourism and overfishing.

*"IUCN's recommendation for the Galapagos was that it should not be removed from the Danger List as there is work still to be done," says **Tim Badman, Head of IUCN's World Heritage Programme**. "But we recognize the major efforts of the Ecuadorian government to rectify the situation there."*

Note to editors

There are now 16 danger listed natural World Heritage sites.

Fifteen other sites already on the Danger List were discussed at the 2010 World Heritage Committee Meeting. While there have been improvements in the situations of some sites like the Simien National Park in Ethiopia and Manas Wildlife Reserve in India, many other sites remains severely threatened.

List of sites inscribed on the Danger List in 2010

1. Rainforests of the Atsinanana – Madagascar
2. Everglades National Park - USA

Sites already on the Danger List

3. Manovo-Gounda St Floris National Park - Central African Republic
4. Comoé National Park - Cote d'Ivoire
5. Mount Nimba Strict Nature Reserve - Cote d'Ivoire/ Guinée
6. Virunga National Park – DRC
7. Kahuzi-Biega National Park – DRC
8. Garamba National Park – DRC
9. Salonga National Park – DRC
10. Okapi Wildlife Reserve – DRC
11. Simien National Park – Ethiopia
12. Air and Ténéré Natural Reserves – Niger
13. Niokolo-Koba National Park – Senegal
14. Manas Wildlife Sanctuary – India
15. Belize Barrier Reef Reserve System – Belize
16. Los Katíos National Park - Colombia

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http://www.iucn.org/knowledge/news/focus/2010_worldheritage

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