



IUCN World Heritage Outlook 2

A conservation assessment of all natural
World Heritage sites

November 2017



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IUCN is a membership Union uniquely composed of both government and civil society organisations. It provides public, private and non-governmental organisations with the knowledge and tools that enable human progress, economic development and nature conservation to take place together.

Created in 1948, IUCN is now the world's largest and most diverse environmental network, harnessing the knowledge, resources and reach of more than 1,300 Member organisations and some 10,000 experts. It is a leading provider of conservation data, assessments and analysis. Its broad membership enables IUCN to fill the role of incubator and trusted repository of best practices, tools and international standards.

IUCN provides a neutral space in which diverse stakeholders including governments, NGOs, scientists, businesses, local communities, indigenous peoples organisations and others can work together to forge and implement solutions to environmental challenges and achieve sustainable development.

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The IUCN World Heritage Programme also initiates innovative ways to enhance the role of the World Heritage Convention in protecting the planet's biodiversity and natural heritage, and in positioning the world's most iconic places as exemplars of nature-based solutions to global challenges.

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CLARENCE HOUSE

Some forty-five years have passed since the international community, driven by a sense of the common good, first set out its ambition to conserve the world's most exceptional places from one generation to the next. Throughout my life, I have witnessed many national and global efforts to protect and cherish our shared natural and cultural heritage, for the benefit of all mankind and all Nature.

In this context, it is therefore particularly heartening that almost every country in the world has endorsed the World Heritage Convention. Realizing the world's aspirations in this area can only be achieved if every country and society participates in this shared project.

However, notwithstanding this high level of collective agreement and all the efforts we have witnessed over recent decades, it remains tragically the case that many of the world's natural World Heritage sites remain in chronic danger of losing their outstanding values and therefore their integrity.

This I.U.C.N. report describes the troubling reality faced by so many sites, whether as a result of poaching, unsustainable tourism or conflict. These challenges on the ground are only likely to increase and are indeed set to be further compounded by climate change. The report demonstrates that climate change is in actual fact becoming regarded as the fastest growing threat, its impacts already visible in many of the sites.

This combination of threats to some of our most cherished places should surely prompt us to do a great deal more to secure the future of natural World Heritage sites, the finest treasures of Nature that we are duty bound to protect with care and attention. I would have thought it was, above all, our collective responsibility – falling to governments, businesses, conservation organizations and local communities – to ensure that these natural World Heritage sites exist and flourish in perpetuity? We are, after all, the stewards and the custodians of the world we wish to bequeath to our children and grandchildren...

Happily, the I.U.C.N. World Heritage Outlook, while drawing attention to the risks we face, and to where action is most needed, also provides plentiful illustration of the positive incentives to act, as well as to the multiple benefits of investment and due attention being paid to natural World Heritage sites. I am particularly struck by the livelihoods, job opportunities and other economic benefits that well-managed natural World Heritage sites generate for often vulnerable and disadvantaged local communities.

In summary, it seems to me that if we are to fulfil our collective commitment towards the protection of the planet's most vital and valuable natural World Heritage sites, we must redouble our efforts to create a coalition of concern and action capable of delivering a brighter outlook. Simultaneously, the report also highlights the incredibly urgent need to expedite the global response to climate change, given the scale of the systemic threat it poses to these sites.

Across these efforts, it is clear that our actions today must give substance to, and fulfil, the promise made almost half a century ago to future generations. I can only hope this Outlook will have a lasting and decisive impact in generating greater concern, and above all action, in support of these precious places.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Theresa', with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Foreword

From the kaleidoscopic seascapes of the Great Barrier Reef to the austere heights of Mount Kilimanjaro, natural World Heritage sites include some of the most remarkable wild places on the planet. But the wealth these natural wonders represent to humanity goes far beyond spectacular sights. They harbour unique ecosystems and species, support livelihoods, contribute to climate stability and buffer against natural hazards.

And yet, our planet's natural World Heritage is being degraded. As this report shows, while we can celebrate a positive outlook in 64% of natural World Heritage sites, concerns remain over the future of far too many of these unique places.

This first update of the IUCN World Heritage Outlook allows us to track how prospects are evolving over time, and shows that threats are escalating while protection is increasingly challenged. The forecast has worsened for nearly 10% of the sites assessed in 2014 as having a "good" conservation outlook. But the report also points to several success stories where joint efforts have improved a critical outlook. Thailand's Dong Phrayayen-Khao Yai Forest Complex, where international cooperation has resulted in action to tackle illegal trade of Siamese Rosewood, is one such site.

The 241 existing natural World Heritage sites were chosen as exceptional among some 220,000 protected areas worldwide. The unique natural value of these sites must be safeguarded for the benefit of future generations. What is more, they should be beacons of conservation, demonstrating world-class protection in the face of global challenges.

Achieving this vision is a litmus test of the success of conservation worldwide. If we cannot secure the highest quality protection for the world's most precious natural areas, what will this say about our ability to fulfil our collective commitments towards the planet, including the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement?

This World Heritage Outlook serves as an impetus to revitalise efforts so that all natural World Heritage sites have a chance to achieve good outcomes. By providing access to a wealth of knowledge from across IUCN's global network, the Outlook empowers and strengthens World Heritage conservation. The report both pinpoints the sites in greatest need of care and demonstrates success that can be scaled up elsewhere.

Natural World Heritage sites have the power to mobilise action where it is most needed and often pioneer management solutions which contribute to sustainable development needs. Strengthened heritage protection is thus a crucial step in demonstrating that conservation works, and that nature is indeed a powerful ally worth investing in.

IUCN continues to work towards achieving this vision and calls on the support of governments, civil society and the private sector to increase our collective commitment towards securing the future of natural World Heritage. This is work we will be promoting across our Union, by building new global and regional partnerships and prioritising World Heritage in new flagship programmes such as the IUCN Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas. The IUCN World Heritage Outlook shows where we must focus our energies to protect the planet's most precious natural areas and the multiple benefits they provide to humanity.



Inger Andersen,
Director General,
IUCN



Kathy MacKinnon,
Chair,
IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas

Acknowledgements

The IUCN World Heritage Outlook gathers the knowledge and expertise of hundreds of experts and organisations, without whom this report and the assessments on which it is based would not have been possible. We are extremely grateful for the in-depth work of the assessors and reviewers who have contributed to this report. Input to the IUCN World Heritage Outlook draws widely from across IUCN's network, including members of IUCN's World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA), the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC), IUCN Member organisations, IUCN regional and country offices, as well as a vast array of other stakeholders involved in conservation and management of natural World Heritage sites. A list of the many contributors to this initiative can be found on worldheritageoutlook.iucn.org.

We give special thanks to IUCN World Heritage Outlook Partners – currently the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), Birdlife International, Fauna and Flora International (FFI), the Frankfurt Zoological Society (FZS), the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), WWF and the Zoological Society of London (ZSL) – who have committed to raise the conservation prospects of those natural World Heritage sites that need it most through on-the-ground initiatives developed with IUCN. We encourage any IUCN Member to follow their lead in helping to assure the long term protection of the planet's priceless natural World Heritage.

We also thank our colleagues in the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM for their collaboration in the preparation of State of Conservation documentation for the World Heritage Committee, which provides an invaluable information base for many sites that are discussed in this report.

We thank the members of the IUCN World Heritage Outlook Methodology Advisory Group: Jon Day, Susanna Lindeman, Geoffroy Mauvais, Scott Perkin, Peter Shadie and Sue Stolton, who provided constructive advice on revising and improving the system of Conservation Outlook Assessments whilst not losing the ability to compare and contrast the findings of this assessment with those of 2014. We also thank the members of the Regional Review Groups, as well as the IUCN World Heritage Panel who have been fundamental for ensuring quality and consistency across all assessments.

We also wish to thank our image partner Our Place World Heritage who have provided extensive access to their collections of stunning photos of World Heritage sites.

IUCN gives special mention to Elena Osipova for her diligence in managing and drawing together the complex elements of this 2017 outlook assessment.

Finally, IUCN acknowledges with sincere thanks the MAVA Foundation, who have engaged consistently with IUCN in pioneering new approaches to our work supporting World Heritage conservation, and whose generous financial support has made the IUCN World Heritage Outlook possible.

Executive summary

The IUCN World Heritage Outlook is 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, with every assessment available online (worldheritageoutlook.iucn.org) and a regular report presenting global and regional results. This report, IUCN World Heritage Outlook 2, marks the first update since the system was launched at the 2014 IUCN World Parks Congress, a landmark event taking place every 10 years.

The 2014 Congress set an agenda for the next decade, the Promise of Sydney, which reinforced the idea that World Heritage conservation is a litmus test for the broader success of conservation worldwide. Natural World Heritage sites, which are granted unique international recognition, should demonstrate leadership, and it is our collective duty to ensure they have a bright conservation outlook. By showing how the conservation outlook of natural World Heritage sites has evolved in the last three years, this report gives the first indication of whether we are on track for meeting these ambitions. The IUCN World Heritage Outlook 2 summarises the key trends in the state of conservation of natural World Heritage sites, the threats and pressures they are facing, and the effectiveness of their protection and management. By providing this assessment, the report serves not only as a valuable tool for tracking the state of natural World Heritage globally, but also as an indicator of our ability to address global conservation challenges, scale up successes and pinpoint where investment is most needed.

Based on a wealth of detailed evidence, compiled in 241 assessments, the key findings of the IUCN World Heritage Outlook 2 are as follows.

The overall outlook for natural World Heritage sites is not improving

The global World Heritage Outlook in 2017 remains similar to 2014 with a positive conservation outlook (“good” or “good with some concerns”) for 64% of sites, an outlook of “significant concern” for 29% and a “critical” status for 7%. These results are for the 241 natural World Heritage sites listed as of November 2017, including new sites which have been inscribed on the World Heritage List since the previous report.

When comparing results only for sites where two assessments can be made, fewer sites are assessed as having a good conservation outlook (43 sites in 2017 compared to 47 in 2014). This is a shift away from the improvement in performance that World Heritage should aspire to. A more positive finding is the reduction in the number of sites assessed as critical (17 in 2017 compared to 19 in 2014), confirming that, with increased conservation effort, the outlook for these most threatened sites can improve.

Since November 2014, 13 new sites have been inscribed on the World Heritage list for their natural values, and their conservation outlook varies. While 10 out of 13 are assessed as having a positive conservation outlook (good or good with some concerns), for three newly-listed sites the conservation outlook is assessed as of significant concern.

When comparing regions, North America remains the one with the highest percentage of sites with a positive conservation outlook (90%), followed by Oceania (82%) and Asia (74%). In Europe and Arab States the overall results match the overall global average, with a positive outlook for 63% and 62% respectively. Africa (48%), South America (48%) and Mesoamerica and the Caribbean (45%) are the three regions with the smallest percentage of sites with a positive outlook. Africa remains the region with the highest percentage of sites whose conservation outlook is assessed as critical, and is the region with the highest number of natural sites on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

26 sites have a changed outlook

While the overall picture remains similar, many changes in status have occurred at the level of individual sites and wider regions, and in relation to threats and protection and management. The conservation outlook of 26 sites changed between 2014 and 2017: 14 improving and 12 deteriorating. The biggest change occurred in Europe, where the conservation outlook improved for two sites, but deteriorated for seven. One encouraging finding is that only positive changes were recorded in Asia, with four sites improving in 2017, while in Africa changes were

mainly positive with four sites demonstrating an improved conservation outlook. These regions are also where two sites succeeded in moving out of a critical outlook since 2014 – Comoé National Park in Côte d'Ivoire and Dong Phrayayen-Khao Yai Forest Complex in Thailand.

Threats to natural World Heritage sites are increasing

The IUCN World Heritage Outlook assesses both current and potential threats. The 2017 results show that almost all categories of threats are occurring in an increasing number of natural World Heritage sites.

Climate change is the fastest growing threat to natural World Heritage

Climate change has increased most significantly as a current threat since 2014, with a 77% increase in sites where it is already seen as a high or a very high threat (62 sites in 2017, compared to 35 in 2014). The 2014 Outlook assessment rated climate change as the most significant potential threat and, for a number of sites, this threat is materialising, with tangible impact on World Heritage values. Climate change is also still by far the largest potential threat, with 55 sites where it could have high or very high impacts in the future.

Invasive species, climate change and tourism impacts are the biggest current threats

Invasive species, climate change and tourism impacts are assessed, in that order, as the three most significant current threats to natural World Heritage – a clear signal that we must redouble conservation efforts both locally and globally. Whilst climate change impacts continue to grow faster than any other threat, invasive species and tourism impacts are adversely affecting many sites around the world. Since 2014, the number of sites where these two threats are reported as high or very high has continued to increase (nearly 14% more sites are now affected by invasive species and 10% by tourism impacts than in 2014).

Pressure from planned infrastructure development is increasing

Major development including roads, dams, tourism facilities, mining and oil and gas development are also among the top potential threats, with road construction increasing most significantly since 2014 (in three years there has been a near doubling of sites potentially affected). The number of sites which could be significantly affected by hydropower infrastructure development has grown from 13 to 17 and by construction of tourism facilities from 11 to 15 since 2014.

Protection and management performance drops

The overall effectiveness of protection and management of natural World Heritage sites has decreased since 2014. The percentage of sites where protection and management are assessed as overall “effective” or “highly effective” has declined from 54% in 2014 to 48% in 2017, when comparing the 228 sites for which two assessments are available. This combination of increasing threats and less effective protection and management presents a clear risk to the World Heritage values of the sites, and calls for greater attention to protect these world class sites.

Nature conservation works where sustained action is taken

In order for natural World Heritage sites to be able to respond to threats, investing in protection and management is key. The 14 sites which have moved towards an improved outlook show that positive outcomes are possible where sustained efforts are made to address challenges. It is important to do more to prioritise efforts, at national and international levels, to help the most threatened sites move from a critical outlook, as has been achieved for Comoé National Park and Dong Phrayayen-Khao Yai Forest Complex. Many sites show areas of improved performance and, even if in some cases this has not been enough to trigger a change in the overall outlook rating, they still provide examples of good practice. Conversely, sites with a positive outlook should not be considered impervious to pressures and continued vigilance is required to guarantee their outlook remains positive. As threats to natural World Heritage sites are intensifying, it will be even more important to ensure that the positive results from sites with an improved outlook are shared, as a means to inspire the highest levels of conservation success that are expected from World Heritage status.

Introduction

Natural World Heritage sites are internationally recognised as having the highest global nature conservation priority and include iconic places such as the Serengeti, Great Barrier Reef and Galápagos Islands. As of November 2017, the date of publication of this report, there are 241 natural and mixed (both cultural and natural) World Heritage sites, representing about 0.1% of the total number of protected areas globally, but yet with a total coverage of 294 million hectares, accounting for 8% of the combined surface of terrestrial and 6% of marine protected areas.

Through the World Heritage Convention, these renowned sites have the highest level of international visibility and provide a crucial insight into the successes and challenges on the frontlines of conservation. Monitoring World Heritage sites is therefore an extremely important barometer of the effectiveness of the global community's overall conservation effort.

In 2014 the IUCN World Heritage Outlook was launched, providing the first global assessment of the conservation prospects of all natural World Heritage sites (228 at the time). With Conservation Outlook Assessments carried out every three years to a standard format, 2017 marks the first time that results can be compared.

The IUCN World Heritage Outlook system is both forward-looking and proactive. It helps determine where natural World Heritage sites and the critical values they protect are heading, how we can anticipate their future needs, and how we can optimise their contribution to human well-being. It also seeks to celebrate and amplify success, supporting the role of World Heritage sites in demonstrating excellence.

The main objectives of the IUCN World Heritage Outlook are to:

- **Recognise well-managed sites** for their conservation efforts and encourage the transfer of good management practices between sites.
- **Track the state of conservation of all natural World Heritage sites over time** and raise public awareness of their importance for biodiversity conservation.
- **Identify the most pressing conservation issues** affecting natural World Heritage sites and the actions needed to remedy those issues, thereby supporting the international community, including IUCN and its members and partners, in helping to address site level challenges.

The IUCN World Heritage Outlook is built on site assessments, compiled for each natural World Heritage site. The assessment process is designed to be transparent and open to input from a wide range of stakeholders, including management authorities, site managers, researchers, community groups, IUCN Member organisations and IUCN Commission members, non-governmental organisations and development agencies. The IUCN World Heritage Outlook does not replace the World Heritage Convention's monitoring mechanisms¹, but is designed to both support and complement them. All assessments can be found on worldheritageoutlook.iucn.org. The website enables States Parties, site managers, civil society and other stakeholders to review the prospects for natural World Heritage sites, learn about solutions to common management challenges, examine new sources of information, and identify potential partners.

This report provides an overview of the main conservation challenges that natural World Heritage sites are facing, and the trends and changes observed in the last three years. It presents global results, listing sites under each category of rating – good, good with some concerns, significant concern and critical. It then explains the main findings with regard to the state of natural values, threats and protection and management. Finally, it breaks down the results across eight regions of the world.

Readers are encouraged to go beyond the summary data provided in this report to discover the many stories unfolding at the site level, accessible at worldheritageoutlook.iucn.org. These are stories of challenges, opportunities, successes and sometimes frustrations as we endeavour to protect these special places.

1. The World Heritage Convention's monitoring mechanisms consist of reactive monitoring through State of Conservation reports focused on sites affected by threats, prepared by the Advisory Bodies and UNESCO World Heritage Centre, and Periodic Reporting undertaken by States Parties every six years. More information is available on whc.unesco.org.

Methodology

The IUCN World Heritage Outlook is the first global assessment of natural World Heritage. It consists of Conservation Outlook Assessments prepared for each natural World Heritage site, which provide a projection of whether a natural World Heritage site is likely to conserve its values over time. The Conservation Outlook Assessments are based on a desk-based assessment of:

- **The current state and trend of values**
- **The threats affecting those values**
- **The effectiveness of protection and management**

The overall conservation outlook for a particular site is assessed against four categories shown on the gauge below. Where insufficient data is available to draw a conclusion, a site may be categorised as 'data deficient':



Rating	Definition
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.
Good with some concerns	While some concerns exist, with minor additional conservation measures the site's values are likely to be essentially maintained in the long term.
Significant concern	The site's values are threatened and/or are 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 information is insufficient to draw a conclusion.

It is noteworthy that the Conservation Outlook Assessments are focused on the outlook for the site's **values** not the future trends for threats or protection and management per se.

Conservation Outlook Assessments also compile additional information on benefits provided by each site, which was also discussed in more depth in the IUCN's Benefits of Natural World Heritage study², as well as information on projects (active projects in and around the site, and future project needs).

The standardised methodology for the Conservation Outlook Assessments was developed by IUCN in 2011 via a technical advisory group. The methodology draws on a wide range of existing methodologies for protected area assessments, including:

- Methodologies and framework for Management Effectiveness of Protected Areas, developed by IUCN's World Commission on Protected Areas (Hockings *et al.*, 2006)
- Lessons learned from the assessment framework developed for the Great Barrier Reef Outlook report (Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, 2009)
- The Enhancing Our Heritage Toolkit (Hockings *et al.*, 2008)
- The Managing Natural World Heritage Manual (Stolton, Dudley and Shadie, 2012)
- The World Heritage Periodic Reporting questionnaire (Cycle II) (UNESCO, 2008)

Following the first round of assessments, the methodology was further refined by IUCN based on feedback collected during the 2014 assessment and consultation process, and on best available methodologies on protected area assessments at the time of review. This adaptive approach is intended to enable the improvement of the IUCN World Heritage Outlook methodology over time, but in a manner that ensures assessments are consistent and therefore comparable between assessment rounds.

All Conservation Outlook Assessments are desk-based and no new site visits are required. The assessments are completed by independent experts based on their own knowledge of a site and on information sourced from IUCN's knowledge base on natural World Heritage sites, official and publicly available documents for the World Heritage Committee (such as State of Conservation reports, mission reports etc.), existing management effectiveness evaluations, scientific articles, and information gathered through consultation with a wide range of knowledge-holders, including site managers and management authorities. Each type of information source has its different strengths and limitations in terms of depth, coverage and quality. Assessments also help identify information gaps which, if filled, will aid future assessments. Source information for each Conservation Outlook Assessment is listed on the IUCN World Heritage Outlook website.

The Conservation Outlook Assessments undertaken in 2014 established a baseline for monitoring the conservation outlook of sites over time. 2017 represents the first update of these assessments, and provides the first opportunity for comparison, and for tracking changes in the conservation outlook of natural World Heritage sites since 2014.

Consultation process

The consultation process is indispensable to the IUCN World Heritage Outlook to ensure that Conservation Outlook Assessments are as accurate as possible and focused on the most pressing issues.

A range of knowledge-holders are informed and invited to take part in the consultation process. They typically include:

- IUCN Commission members, in particular those of IUCN's World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) and Species Survival Commission (SSC)
- IUCN Secretariat, which is spread across global headquarters, eight regional offices and 50 country offices
- Site managers and stakeholders involved in the management of sites (including IUCN Member organisations, government authorities, non-governmental organisations [NGOs], community groups, and international agencies)
- Researchers and the scientific community

2. A global analysis was prepared in the report "The Benefits of Natural World Heritage: Identifying and assessing ecosystem services and benefits provided by the world's most iconic natural places" (IUCN, 2014).

Each assessment undergoes multiple internal and external reviews before finalisation. Draft assessments, prepared by independent assessors, selected for their knowledge of a site, are first reviewed internally to verify that they meet the required standards. Inputs are then sought from independent expert reviewers. Following this, all assessments are reviewed in each IUCN region. The regional review groups consist of the IUCN WCPA Regional Vice-Chairs, representatives of the IUCN regional office and regional specialists for World Heritage. A final draft is prepared for each Conservation Outlook Assessment, incorporating all feedback received, and wherever possible site managers are invited to provide comments, which are then also considered in the final version of the assessment. The IUCN World Heritage Panel, composed of experts specialised in the field of natural World Heritage, provides final approval of all completed assessments.

Main steps in the IUCN World Heritage Outlook consultation process



All assessments are publicly available online at worldheritageoutlook.iucn.org and comments are welcome at any time through an online feedback form. Full details of the Conservation Outlook Assessment methodology are also available on the website.

Conservation Outlook Assessments are reviewed every three years. However, if significant new information becomes available on a particular site, its assessment may be revised at any time.

Facts and figures: **Global**

- * **206** natural and **35** mixed World Heritage sites in **107** countries
- * **293,620,965** hectares in total
- * **49** marine and coastal sites
- * **18** transnational sites
- * **16** sites listed as 'in danger'
- * **13** new sites since 2015

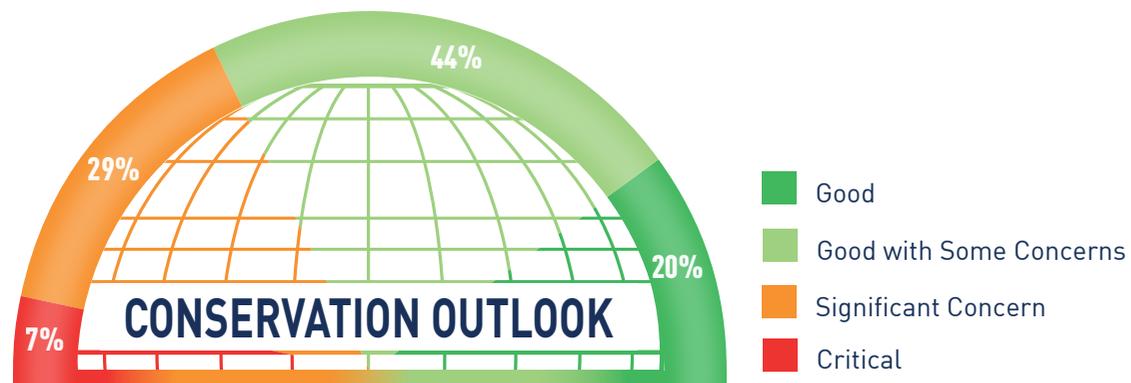
Global Outlook

Overview

The 2014 IUCN World Heritage Outlook provided the first global assessment of all natural World Heritage sites – 228 at that time. Since 2015, 13 new sites have been inscribed on the World Heritage List from 15 countries, including two transboundary sites. Two of these sites are marine, 11 are terrestrial and four are mixed (both cultural and natural) sites. Significant extensions of four existing sites have also been approved since 2015. Oceania was the only region with no new sites or extensions since 2015.

This chapter summarises the 2017 IUCN World Heritage Outlook assessments, providing both the overall results for all 241 natural sites currently listed, and a comparison of results for the 228 sites which comprised the World Heritage List in 2014 and for which there are now two assessments available.

2017 Conservation Outlook for 241 natural World Heritage sites



The results of the 2017 IUCN World Heritage Outlook indicate that for 64% of all sites (154) the conservation outlook is either good or good with some concerns, while for 29% of sites (70) the outlook is of significant concern, and for 7% it is assessed as critical.

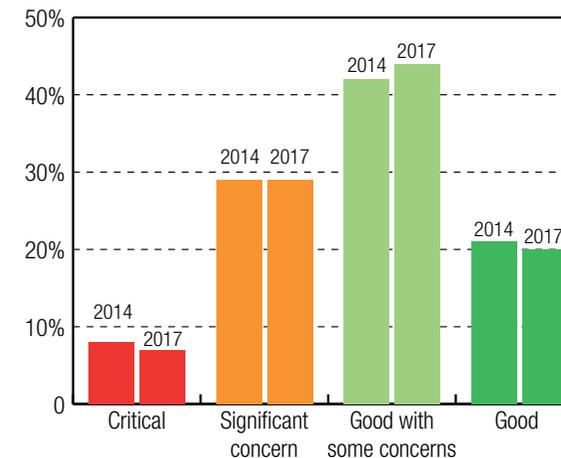
This overall figure includes the 13 new sites inscribed on the World Heritage List between 2015-2017. These 13 sites exhibit a profile which is not only positive. While 10 are assessed as having a positive conservation outlook (good or good with some concerns), for three sites the conservation outlook is assessed as of significant concern.

A closer examination of some of these sites reveals concerns over the readiness of some sites to be inscribed, be it a result of poor site design, weak protection and/or inadequate management capacity. As a result these sites can generate additional monitoring activity and increased work under the World Heritage Convention's mechanisms to rectify significant unresolved problems.

When comparing the 228 sites which were on the World Heritage List in 2014, for which two assessments are now available, there are mixed results. On one hand a notable positive result is the reduction in the number of sites assessed as critical (17 in 2017 compared to 19 in 2014). On the other hand fewer sites were assessed as having a good conservation outlook (43 sites in 2017 compared to 47 in 2014).

Overall 26 sites recorded a change in conservation outlook between 2014 and 2017. At a global level results were finely balanced with 14 sites improving and 12 deteriorating in terms of their future prospects. The biggest change occurred in Europe, where for two sites the conservation outlook improved, but deteriorated for seven, including for Białowieża Forest and Plitvice Lakes National Park.

Change in conservation outlook between 2014 and 2017 for the 228 sites inscribed on the World Heritage List up to 2014 (% of sites in each category)

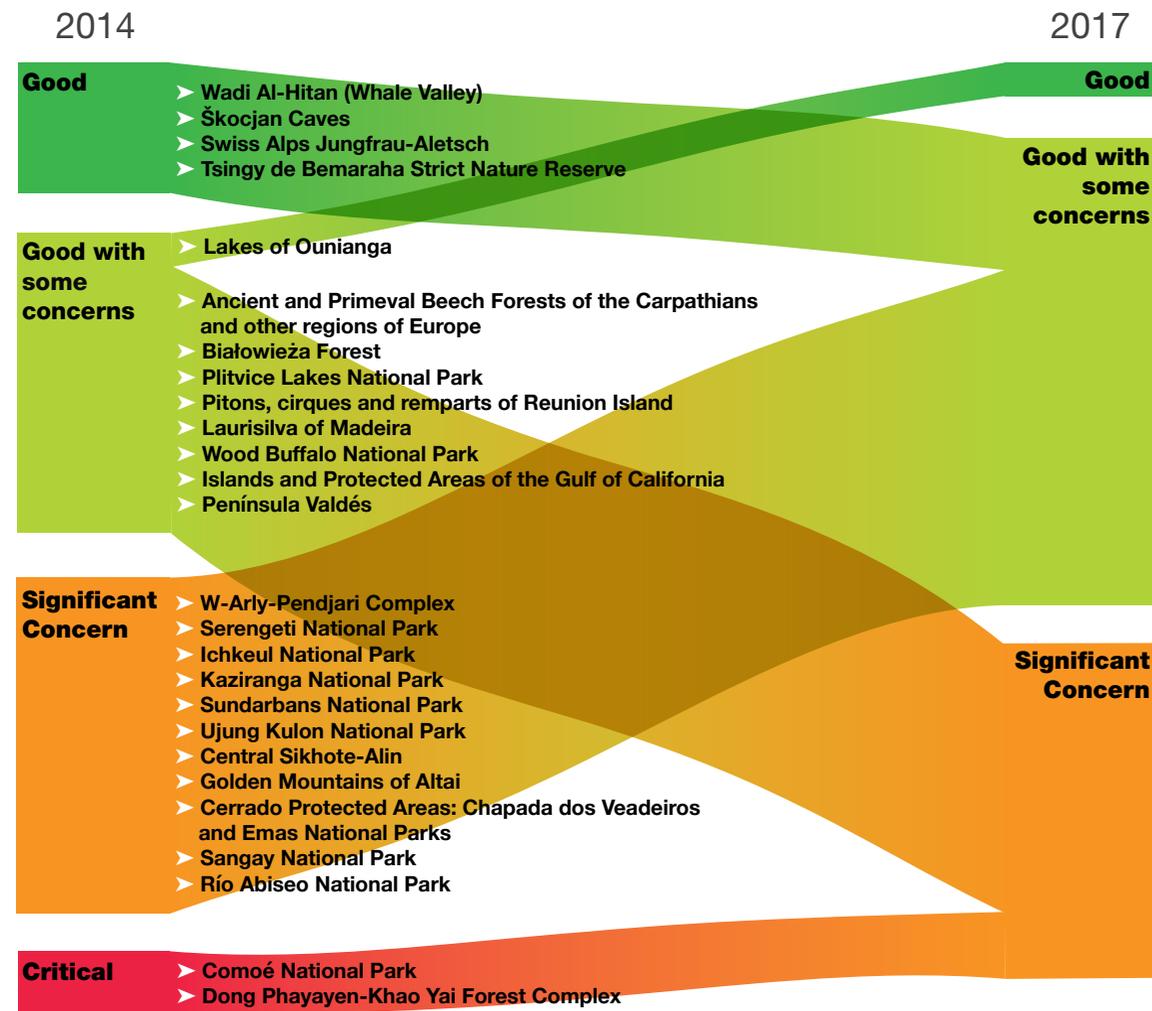


Conservation Outlook for 13 sites inscribed on the World Heritage List between 2015 and 2017

Region	Country	Site	Inscription year	Conservation Outlook 2017
Africa	Chad	Ennedi Massif: Natural and Cultural Landscape	2016	Significant concern
Arab States	Iraq	The Ahwar of Southern Iraq: refuge of biodiversity and the relict landscape of the Mesopotamian Cities	2016	Significant concern
Arab States	Sudan	Sanganeb Marine National Park and Dugonab Bay - Mukkawar Island Marine National Park	2016	Good with some concerns
Asia	China	Hubei Shennongjia	2016	Good with some concerns
Asia	China	Qinghai Hoh Xil	2017	Good with some concerns
Asia	India	Khangchendzonga National Park	2016	Good
Asia	Iran	Lut Desert	2016	Good
Asia	Kazakhstan/ Kyrgyzstan/ Uzbekistan	Western Tien-Shan	2016	Significant concern
Asia	Mongolia/ Russian Federation	Landscapes of Dauria	2017	Good with some concerns
North America	Canada	Mistaken Point	2016	Good
Mesoamerica and Caribbean	Jamaica	Blue and John Crow Mountains	2015	Good with some concerns
Mesoamerica and Caribbean	Mexico	Archipiélago de Revillagigedo	2016	Good with some concerns
South America	Argentina	Los Alerces National Park	2017	Good

On the other hand, only positive changes were recorded in Asia and mainly positive in Africa, with four sites in Asia and four sites in Africa showing an improved conservation outlook in 2017. These are also the two regions where sites previously assessed as critical have moved to “significant concern” category – Comoé National Park in Côte d'Ivoire and Dong Phrayayen-Khao Yai Forest Complex in Thailand. In the former this was a result of improved management consequent to the stabilisation of the political situation in 2012 and in the latter the international cooperative efforts to stem the illegal trade in Siamese Rosewood which has been an on-going serious threat to the site.

Sites with a changed conservation outlook between 2014 and 2017



The changes towards a more positive conservation outlook (14 sites) in the majority of cases were associated with a decrease of threats affecting the sites (eight out of 14 cases) or an assessed improvement in the status of the site's World Heritage values (seven out of 14 cases). For three sites (Comoé National Park in Côte d'Ivoire, Dong Phrayayen-Khao Yai Forest Complex in Thailand and Central Sikhote-Alin in the Russian Federation) a positive change occurred in all three elements of the Conservation Outlook Assessment (values, threats, protection and management). Similarly, in cases where the change in conservation outlook was negative (12 sites), this was mostly associated with a deterioration of the site's values (eight out of 12 cases) and/or an increase in the level of threats (nine out of 12 cases).

Improved Outlook

From critical to significant concern: Comoé National Park, Côte d'Ivoire

International support and renewed joint efforts on the ground have resulted in an improved conservation outlook for Comoé National Park in Côte d'Ivoire. The park came off the List of World Heritage in Danger in 2017, where it had been included in 2003 due to farming, illegal gold mining and poaching affecting its species populations. Due to insecurity in the region, which further exacerbated these threats, park staff had been unable to access some areas and carry out conservation work. After a stabilisation of the political situation in 2012, the management was able to regain control of the site and populations of species, including chimpanzees and elephants which were previously thought to have disappeared from the park, started to recover. A new management plan is now in place, which was developed in consultation with local communities who take part in wildlife monitoring and other conservation activities. All elements of the site's conservation outlook assessment have improved, with the rating for protection and management changing most significantly – from ‘serious concern’ (red) in 2014 to ‘effective’ (light green) in 2017. However, threats remain, including farming and artisanal gold mining taking place within the park. Such activities still pose a threat to its key habitats for threatened species, and continued action is needed to tackle them.

Deteriorated Outlook

From good with some concerns to significant concern: Plitvice Lakes National Park, Croatia

Housing developments to cater for ever increasing numbers of visitors have contributed to a deteriorated conservation outlook for one of Croatia's most popular destinations – Plitvice Lakes National Park. When managed sustainably, tourism can bring benefits, such as employment and funds to support conservation. But tourism can also pose a threat when uncontrolled. In the case of Plitvice Lakes National Park, it is threatening its sensitive hydrology and ecosystem and impacts could become worse over time if urgent measures are not taken. The rapid expansion of tourism facilities is causing water pollution due to excessive water use and inadequate sewage systems. The overflow of visitors who congregate in the same limited lake area also spoil the park's beautiful landscapes and its characteristic travertine dams – natural limestone barriers over which the water flows. While the site's ecological values have so far been preserved, protection and management has moved from ‘effective’ (light green) in 2014 to ‘some concern’ (orange) in 2017. The issuing of construction permits and lack of involvement of the park's authority in the decision-making processes in this regard is among the biggest concerns.

List of 26 sites for which conservation outlook changed between 2014 and 2017. The columns Values, Threats and Protection and management show the change in these aspects (arrows) and the 2017 rating (colours)

Country	Site	Conservation Outlook 2014	Conservation Outlook 2017	Values	Threats	Protection and management
Benin/Burkina Faso/Niger	W-Arly-Pendjari Complex*	Significant concern	Good with some concerns	↗	→	→
Chad	Lakes of Ounianga	Good with some concerns	Good	→	→	↗
Côte d'Ivoire	Comoé National Park	Critical	Significant concern	↗	↘	↗
Madagascar	Tsingy de Bemaraha	Good	Good with some concerns	→	↗	→
Tanzania	Serengeti National Park	Significant concern	Good with some concerns	→	↘	→
Egypt	Wadi Al-Hitan (Whale Valley)	Good	Good with some concerns	→	→	↘
Tunisia	Ichkeul National Park	Significant concern	Good with some concerns	↗	→	→
India	Kaziranga National Park	Significant concern	Good with some concerns	↗	→	→
India	Sundarbans National Park	Significant concern	Good with some concerns	→	↘	→
Indonesia	Ujung Kulon National Park	Significant concern	Good with some concerns	↗	→	→
Thailand	Dong Phrayayen-Khao Yai Forest Complex	Critical	Significant concern	↗	↘	↗
Albania/Austria/Belgium/Bulgaria/Croatia/Germany/Italy/Romania/Slovakia/Slovenia/Spain/Ukraine	Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and other regions of Europe*	Good with some concerns	Significant concern	→	↗	→
Belarus/Poland	Białowieża Forest	Good with some concerns	Significant concern	↘	↗	↘
Croatia	Plitvice Lakes National Park	Good with some concerns	Significant concern	→	→	↘
France	Pitons, cirques and remparts of Reunion Island	Good with some concerns	Significant concern	↘	→	→
Portugal	Laurisilva of Madeira	Good with some concerns	Significant concern	↘	↗	→
Russian Federation	Central Sikhote-Alin	Significant concern	Good with some concerns	↗	↘	↗

Country	Site	Conservation Outlook 2014	Conservation Outlook 2017	Values	Threats	Protection and management
Russian Federation	Golden Mountains of Altai	Significant concern	Good with some concerns	→	↘	→
Slovenia	Škocjan Caves	Good	Good with some concerns	↘	↗	→
Switzerland	Swiss Alps Jungfrau-Aletsch	Good	Good with some concerns	↘	↗	↘
Canada	Wood Buffalo National Park	Good with some concerns	Significant concern	↘	↗	↘
Mexico	Islands and Protected Areas of the Gulf of California	Good with some concerns	Significant concern	↘	↗	→
Argentina	Península Valdés	Good with some concerns	Significant concern	↘	↗	→
Brazil	Cerrado Protected Areas: Chapada dos Veadeiros and Emas National Parks	Significant concern	Good with some concerns	→	↘	↗
Ecuador	Sangay National Park	Significant concern	Good with some concerns	→	↘	→
Peru	Río Abiseo National Park	Significant concern	Good with some concerns	→	↘	↗

*Natural World Heritage sites which have been extended since 2015.

The following sections include an overview of sites in each of the overall conservation outlook categories (good, good with some concerns, significant concern and critical). Each of these categories not only shows the potential for a site to preserve its values, but also indicates the urgency of measures that need to be taken in order to improve the conservation outlook and ensure long-term conservation of all sites.



Good

If a site has a good conservation outlook, 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. Some threats to the site's values might exist and it is therefore essential that the management efforts are maintained in order to ensure the site's conservation in the long term. It is important that World Heritage sites with a good outlook maintain their current performance, and serve as examples of good management practices. The 2017 IUCN World Heritage Outlook assesses the following 47 sites to have a "good" conservation outlook:

Map marker	Country	Site
9	Australia	Australian Fossil Mammal Sites (Riversleigh / Naracoorte)
20	Hungary / Slovakia	Caves of Aggtelek Karst and Slovak Karst
26	China	Chengjiang Fossil Site
27	China	China Danxia
36	Canada	Dinosaur Provincial Park
42	UK	Dorset and East Devon Coast
65	Malaysia	Gunung Mulu National Park
67	USA	Hawaii Volcanoes National Park
68	Australia	Heard and McDonald Islands
71	Finland / Sweden	High Coast / Kvarken Archipelago
81	Argentina	Ischigualasto / Talampaya Natural Parks
85	South Korea	Jeju Volcanic Island and Lava Tubes
87	Canada	Joggins Fossil Cliffs
93	India	Khangchendzonga National Park*
102	▲ Chad	Lakes of Ounianga
104	Sweden	Laponian Area
106	Russian Federation	Lena Pillars Nature Park
107	Australia	Lord Howe Island Group
109	Argentina	Los Alerces National Park*
112	Iran	Lut Desert*
121	Germany	Messel Pit Fossil Site
123	Canada	Miguasha National Park
124	Canada	Mistaken Point*
126	Switzerland / Italy	Monte San Giorgio
130	China	Mount Emei Scenic Area, including Leshan Giant Buddha Scenic Area
131	Italy	Mount Etna
132	Philippines	Mount Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary

OUTLOOK: GOOD

Map marker	Country	Site
133	China	Mount Huangshan
136	China	Mount Sanqingshan National Park
140	Namibia	Namib Sand Sea
144	New Zealand	New Zealand Sub-Antarctic Islands
146	Australia	Ningaloo Coast
154	USA	Papahānaumokuākea
163	Australia	Purnululu National Park
164	Russian Federation	Putorana Plateau
181	Australia	Shark Bay, Western Australia
182	Japan	Shirakami-Sanchi
192	UK	St Kilda
193	Denmark	Stevns Klint
195	Iceland	Surtsey
197	Switzerland	Swiss Tectonic Arena Sardona
204	Spain	Teide National Park
208	Denmark / Germany / Netherlands	The Wadden Sea
212	New Zealand	Tongariro National Park
218	Australia	Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park
229	Norway	West Norwegian Fjords - Geirangerfjord and Nærøyfjord
235	Australia	Willandra Lakes Region

▲ The conservation outlook improved since 2014 ▼ The conservation outlook deteriorated since 2014

* New site inscribed on the World Heritage List since 2015

Good with some concerns

If a site's conservation outlook is good with some concerns, it indicates that its values are currently in good condition and are likely to be maintained in the long term, provided that minor additional conservation measures are put in place to address existing concerns. It is hoped that these sites will address these issues and seek to move to a good conservation outlook in future assessments. The 2017 IUCN World Heritage Outlook assesses the following 107 sites to have a conservation outlook that is good with some concerns.

Map marker	Country	Site
2	Seychelles	Aldabra Atoll
3	Cuba	Alejandro de Humboldt National Park
6	Mexico	Archipiélago de Revillagigedo*
13	Jamaica	Blue and John Crow Mountains*
14	Brazil	Brazilian Atlantic Islands: Fernando de Noronha and Atol das Rocas Reserves
15	Uganda	Bwindi Impenetrable National Park
16	Canada	Canadian Rocky Mountains
18	South Africa	Cape Floral Region Protected Areas
19	USA	Carlsbad Caverns National Park
21	Brazil	Central Amazon Conservation Complex
22	Sri Lanka	Central Highlands of Sri Lanka
23	▲ Russian Federation	Central Sikhote-Alin
24	Suriname	Central Suriname Nature Reserve
25	▲ Brazil	Cerrado Protected Areas: Chapada dos Veadeiros and Emas National Parks
33	Romania	Danube Delta
35	Cuba	Desembarco del Granma National Park
45	Gabon	Ecosystem and Relict Cultural Landscape of Lopé-Okanda
46	Mexico	El Pinacate and Gran Desierto de Altar Biosphere Reserve
49	Australia	Fraser Island
54	▲ Russian Federation	Golden Mountains of Altai
55	Australia	Gondwana Rainforests of Australia
56	Turkey	Göreme National Park and the Rock Sites of Cappadocia
58	USA	Grand Canyon National Park
60	India	Great Himalayan National Park Conservation Area
61	USA	Great Smoky Mountains National Park
62	Australia	Greater Blue Mountains Area

OUTLOOK: GOOD WITH SOME CONCERNS

Map marker	Country	Site
63	Canada	Gros Morne National Park
64	France	Gulf of Porto: Calanche of Piana, Gulf of Girolata, Scandola Reserve
66	Viet Nam	Ha Long Bay
70	Turkey	Hierapolis-Pamukkale
73	China	Huanglong Scenic and Historic Interest Area
75	China	Hubei Shennongjia*
77	▲ Tunisia	Ichkeul National Park
80	Denmark	Ilulissat Icefjord
82	South Africa	iSimangaliso Wetland Park
84	Italy	Isole Eolie (Aeolian Islands)
86	China	Jiuzhaigou Valley Scenic and Historic Interest Area
90	▲ India	Kaziranga National Park
91	Kenya	Kenya Lake System in the Great Rift Valley
92	India	Keoladeo National Park
94	Tanzania	Kilimanjaro National Park
95	Malaysia	Kinabalu Park
96	Canada / USA	Kluane / Wrangell-St. Elias / Glacier Bay / Tatshenshini-Alsek
98	France	Lagoons of New Caledonia: Reef Diversity and Associated Ecosystems
103	Mongolia / Russian Federation	Landscapes of Dauria*
110	Argentina	Los Glaciares National Park
113	Australia	Macquarie Island
114	South Africa / Lesotho	Maloti-Drakensberg Park
115	Colombia	Malpelo Fauna and Flora Sanctuary
116	USA	Mammoth Cave National Park
122	Greece	Meteora
127	Dominica	Morne Trois Pitons National Park
128	Zambia / Zimbabwe	Mosi-oa-Tunya / Victoria Falls
129	Greece	Mount Athos
134	Kenya	Mount Kenya National Park/Natural Forest
137	China	Mount Taishan
138	China	Mount Wuyi
139	Canada	Nahanni National Park
141	India	Nanda Devi and Valley of Flowers National Parks
145	Tanzania	Ngorongoro Conservation Area
148	Bolivia	Noel Kempff Mercado National Park
149	Japan	Ogasawara Islands
151	Botswana	Okavango Delta
152	USA	Olympic National Park
156	Kiribati	Phoenix Islands Protected Area
157	Viet Nam	Phong Nha-Ke Bang National Park
162	Philippines	Puerto-Princesa Subterranean River National Park
165	France / Spain	Pyrénées - Mont Perdu
166	China	Qinghai Hoh Xil*
168	USA	Redwood National and State Parks
169	▲ Peru	Río Abiseo National Park
171	Palau	Rock Islands Southern Lagoon
172	Uganda	Rwenzori Mountains National Park
175	Sudan	Sanganeb Marine National Park and Dugonab Bay - Makkawar Island Marine National Park*
176	▲ Ecuador	Sangay National Park
178	Kazakhstan	Saryarka - Steppe and Lakes of Northern Kazakhstan
180	▲ Tanzania	Serengeti National Park

OUTLOOK: GOOD WITH SOME CONCERNS

Map marker	Country	Site
183	Japan	Shiretoko
184	Mexico	Sian Ka'an
185	China	Sichuan Giant Panda Sanctuaries - Wolong, Mt Siguniang and Jiayin Mountains
188	▼ Slovenia	Škocjan Caves
190	China	South China Karst
191	Bulgaria	Srebarna Nature Reserve
194	▲ India	Sundarbans National Park
196	▼ Switzerland	Swiss Alps Jungfrau-Aletsch
198	Côte d'Ivoire	Taï National Park
199	Tajikistan	Tajik National Park (Mountains of the Pamirs)
201	Australia	Tasmanian Wilderness
202	Algeria	Tassili n'Ajjer
203	New Zealand	Te Wahipounamu - South West New Zealand
206	Italy	The Dolomites
210	Thailand	Thungyai-Huai Kha Khaeng Wildlife Sanctuaries
211	Guatemala	Tikal National Park
215	▼ Madagascar	Tsingy de Bemaraha Strict Nature Reserve
216	Philippines	Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park
217	▲ Indonesia	Ujung Kulon National Park
219	Mongolia / Russian Federation	Uvs Nuur Basin
220	Seychelles	Vallée de Mai Nature Reserve
225	▼ Egypt	Wadi Al-Hitan (Whale Valley)
226	Jordan	Wadi Rum Protected Area
227	▲ Benin / Burkina Faso / Niger	W-Arly-Pendjari Complex
228	Canada / USA	Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park
234	Mexico	Whale Sanctuary of El Vizcaino
238	China	Xinjiang Tianshan
239	Japan	Yakushima
240	USA	Yellowstone National Park
241	USA	Yosemite National Park

▲ The conservation outlook improved since 2014 ▼ The conservation outlook deteriorated since 2014

* New site inscribed on the World Heritage List since 2015



Significant concern

If a site's conservation outlook is of significant concern, its values are considered to be threatened by a number of current and/or potential threats, with significant additional conservation measures being required to preserve these values over the medium to long term. The specific threats and protection and management issues vary across sites and this is discussed in more detail in the next two chapters. The 2017 IUCN World Heritage Outlook assesses the following 70 sites to have a conservation outlook that is of significant concern.

Map marker	Country	Site
4	▼ Albania / Austria / Belgium / Bulgaria / Croatia / Germany / Italy / Romania / Slovakia / Slovenia / Spain / Ukraine	Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and other regions of Europe
5	Mexico	Ancient Maya City and Protected Tropical Forests of Calakmul, Campeche
7	Costa Rica	Area de Conservación Guanacaste
8	Brazil	Atlantic Forest South-East Reserves
10	Mauritania	Banc d'Arguin National Park
11	Belize	Belize Barrier Reef Reserve System
12	▼ Belarus / Poland	Białowieża Forest
17	Venezuela	Canaima National Park
28	Nepal	Chitwan National Park
29	Mali	Cliff of Bandiagara (Land of the Dogons)
30	Costa Rica	Cocos Island National Park
31	Panama	Coiba National Park and its Special Zone of Marine Protection
32	▲ Côte d'Ivoire	Comoé National Park
34	Panama	Darien National Park
37	Brazil	Discovery Coast Atlantic Reserves
39	Senegal	Djoudj National Bird Sanctuary
40	Spain	Doñana National Park
41	▲ Thailand	Dong Phrayayen-Khao Yai Forest Complex
43	Montenegro	Durmitor National Park
47	Chad	Ennedi Massif: Natural and Cultural Landscape*
50	Ecuador	Galápagos Islands

OUTLOOK: SIGNIFICANT CONCERNS

Map marker	Country	Site
51	Spain	Garajonay National Park
53	UK	Giant's Causeway and Causeway Coast
57	UK	Gough and Inaccessible Islands
59	Australia	Great Barrier Reef
69	UK	Henderson Island
72	Peru	Historic Sanctuary of Machu Picchu
74	Peru	Huascarán National Park
76	Spain	Ibiza, Biodiversity and Culture
78	Brazil	Iguaçu National Park
79	Argentina	Iguazu National Park
83	▼ Mexico	Islands and Protected Areas of the Gulf of California
89	Australia	Kakadu National Park
97	Indonesia	Komodo National Park
99	Russian Federation	Lake Baikal
100	Malawi	Lake Malawi National Park
105	▼ Portugal	Laurisilva of Madeira
108	Indonesia	Lorentz National Park
111	Colombia	Los Katíos National Park
117	Zimbabwe	Mana Pools National Park, Sapi and Chewore Safari Areas
118	India	Manas Wildlife Sanctuary
120	Peru	Manu National Park
142	FYR Macedonia	Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid Region
143	Russian Federation	Natural System of Wrangel Island Reserve
153	Brazil	Pantanal Conservation Area
155	▼ Argentina	Península Valdés
158	Bulgaria	Pirin National Park
159	Saint Lucia	Pitons Management Area
160	▼ France	Pitons, cirques and remparts of Reunion Island
161	▼ Croatia	Plitvice Lakes National Park
167	Madagascar	Rainforests of the Atsinanana
173	Nepal	Sagarmatha National Park
177	Cameroon / Central African Republic / Congo	Sangha Trinational
186	Ethiopia	Simien National Park
187	Sri Lanka	Sinharaja Forest Reserve
189	Yemen	Socotra Archipelago
200	Costa Rica / Panama	Talamanca Range-La Amistad Reserves / La Amistad National Park
205	Iraq	The Ahwar of Southern Iraq: refuge of biodiversity and the relict landscape of the Mesopotamian Cities*
207	Bangladesh	The Sundarbans
209	China	Three Parallel Rivers of Yunnan Protected Areas
213	Viet Nam	Trang An Landscape Complex
221	Russian Federation	Virgin Komi Forests
223	Russian Federation	Volcanoes of Kamchatka
224	South Africa	Vredefort Dome
230	Russian Federation	Western Caucasus
231	India	Western Ghats
232	Kazakhstan / Kyrgyzstan / Uzbekistan	Western Tien-Shan*
233	Australia	Wet Tropics of Queensland
236	▼ Canada	Wood Buffalo National Park
237	China	Wulingyuan Scenic and Historic Interest Area

▲ The conservation outlook improved since 2014 ▼ The conservation outlook deteriorated since 2014

* New site inscribed on the World Heritage List since 2015



Critical

Sites with a critical conservation outlook are severely threatened and require urgent, additional, and large-scale conservation measures, or their values may be lost. These sites face a range of threats and in many cases have low capacity to address them. Often, however, the issues span national borders and international attention is urgently needed to help mitigate those threats and prevent these sites from irreversibly losing their values. Many of these sites are included on the List of World Heritage in Danger, and others should be considered for Danger Listing. They should be the highest priority for conservation action within the World Heritage Convention. The 2017 IUCN World Heritage Outlook assesses the following 17 sites to have a critical conservation outlook.

Map marker	Country	Site
1	Niger	Aïr and Ténéré Natural Reserves
38	Cameroon	Dja Faunal Reserve
44	Solomon Islands	East Rennell
48	USA	Everglades National Park
52	Democratic Republic of the Congo	Garamba National Park
88	Democratic Republic of the Congo	Kahuzi-Biega National Park
101	Kenya	Lake Turkana National Parks
119	Central African Republic	Manovo-Gounda St Floris National Park
125	Mexico	Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve
135	Côte d'Ivoire / Guinea	Mount Nimba Strict Nature Reserve
147	Senegal	Niokolo-Koba National Park
150	Democratic Republic of the Congo	Okapi Wildlife Reserve
170	Honduras	Río Plátano Biosphere Reserve
174	Democratic Republic of the Congo	Salonga National Park
179	Tanzania	Selous Game Reserve
214	Indonesia	Tropical Rainforest Heritage of Sumatra
222	Democratic Republic of the Congo	Virunga National Park

▲ The conservation outlook improved since 2014 ▼ The conservation outlook deteriorated since 2014

* New site inscribed on the World Heritage List since 2015

Values

The concept of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) is central to the World Heritage Convention. OUV is defined as “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” (*Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, 2016).

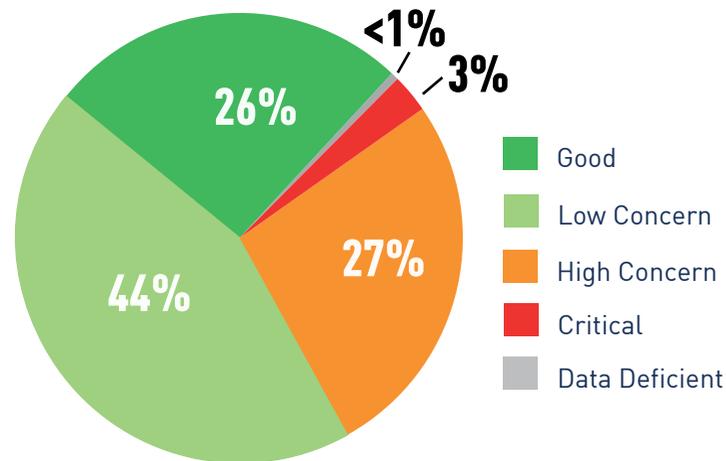
To be deemed of Outstanding Universal Value a site needs to meet one or more of the World Heritage criteria as defined in the Operational Guidelines (2016) as well as meeting conditions of integrity and effective protection and management. Criteria (vii) to (x) are applied to natural sites:

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

The IUCN World Heritage Outlook evaluates the current state of the values for which a site was inscribed on the World Heritage List, as well as how the state of values may have changed compared to previous assessments.

Overall, the World Heritage values of 70% of sites are considered to be in good condition or their state is of low concern, while in 27% the state of value is of high concern and in 3% critical. For one site (Western Tien-Shan, Kazakhstan/Kyrgyzstan/Uzbekistan) it was considered that insufficient information was available to make a conclusion and therefore the state of its values was assessed as data deficient. This site was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2016 despite IUCN's recommendation to defer its inscription and uncertainties remain with regards the design of the site and the extent to which it includes all the attributes ascribed to the Outstanding Universal Value.

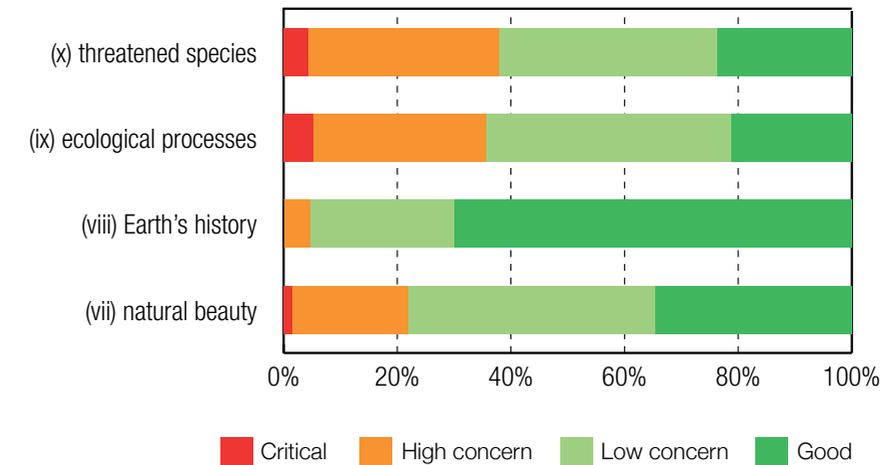
Overall state of values of all natural World Heritage sites in 2017



Although changes in the state of values are assessed in a number of sites, the overall results from 2017 remain very similar to those from 2014, because both negative and positive changes between assessments balanced out.

When considering values associated with different criteria, similarly to the results from 2014, the biodiversity values (criteria ix and x) continue to be of higher concern with many more attributes assessed as of high concern or critical:

State of World Heritage values associated with different criteria of all 241 natural World Heritage sites in 2017



Threats

The IUCN World Heritage Outlook identifies and evaluates current and potential threats affecting natural World Heritage sites. Current threats refer to activities or occurrences that have an immediately apparent impact affecting a site's values, such as built infrastructure, invasive species, tourism or natural disasters, while potential threats refer to planned activities or evolving trends that could have a future impact if they materialise, such as planned infrastructure projects. For each identified threat, its level is assessed against four possible categories: very low, low, high or very high.

The threats classification used for the IUCN World Heritage Outlook is adapted from the Open Standards (OS) for the Practice of Conservation threats classification (version 1)³, a classification widely used in the nature conservation field, including by the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. The OS classification features broad categories of threats (e.g. geological events), which are then divided into further subcategories (e.g. volcanoes, earthquakes/tsunamis, avalanches/landslides). During the 2017 Conservation Outlook Assessment methodology update, the wording of some 2014 threat labels was simplified to make them clearer in the context of natural World Heritage.

The 2017 IUCN World Heritage Outlook shows that natural World Heritage sites are increasingly facing a wide range of threats and pressures. The two sub-sections below provide a comparison between 2014 and 2017 of current and potential threats affecting the 228 sites inscribed on the World Heritage List up to 2014 based on the number of sites where they were registered as high or very high.

Current threats

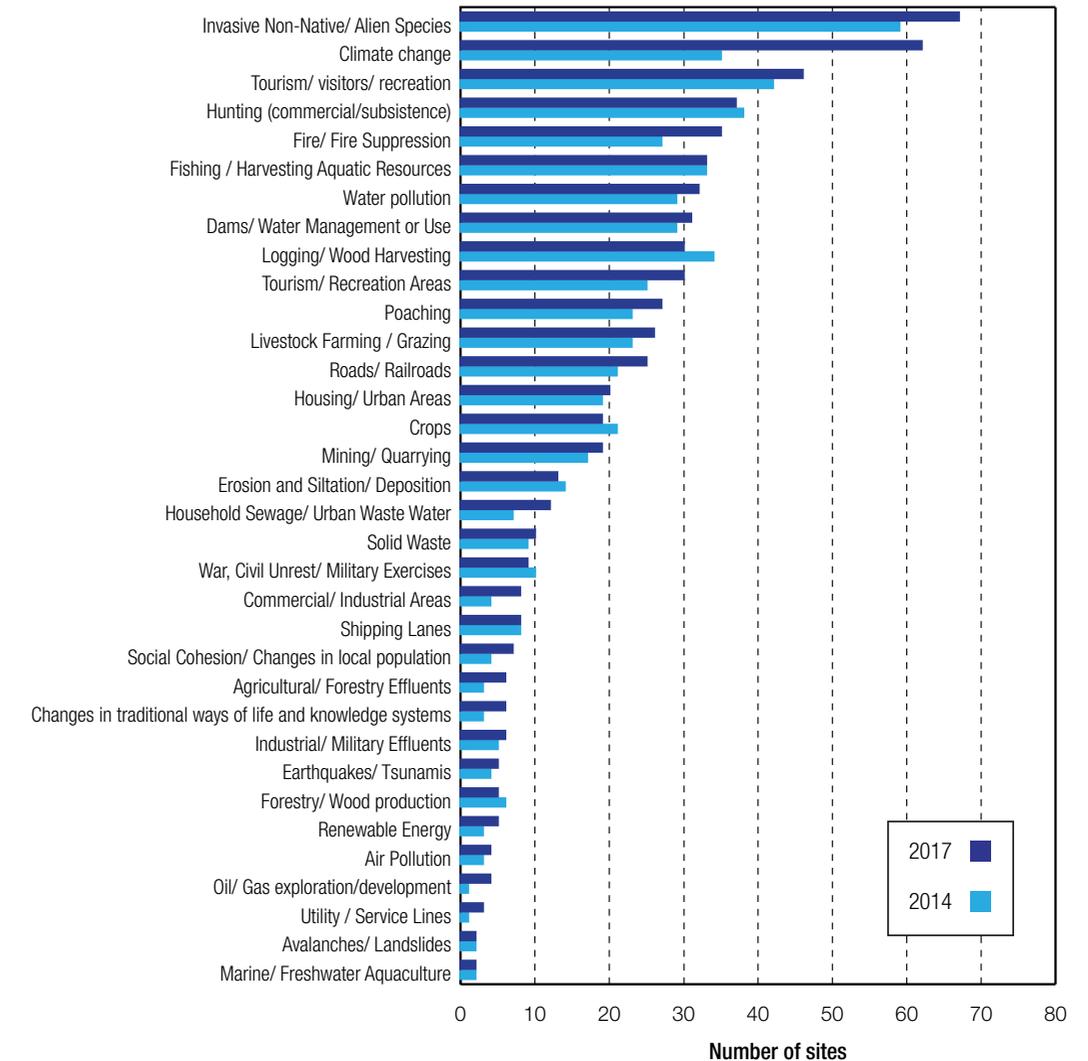
The 2017 results show that invasive species and climate change now represent the two most significant current threats to natural World Heritage. These are followed by tourism impacts, legal and illegal fishing and hunting, fires, water pollution and dams.

Climate change has been the fastest moving current threat increasing dramatically since 2014 – by 77% (62 sites in 2017 where it was assessed as a high or very high current threat, compared to 35 in 2014). The IUCN World Heritage Outlook 2014 assessed climate change as the most significant potential threat and for a number of sites this threat has since become a discernible reality.

The threat of fires ranks second in terms of the increase in sites it is affecting, with an increase of 33% between 2014 and 2017 (36 sites where it was assessed as a high or very high threat in 2017 compared to 27 in 2014). In most cases it is likely that increasing fire risks are linked to climate change impacts.

While invasive species and tourism impacts remain in the top three most widespread current threats, the increase in sites these threats are affecting has been less significant between 2014 and 2017 (14% increase for invasive species and 10% for tourism).

This figure shows current threats assessed as high or very high in 2017 and 2014. Numbers are based on the number of sites where these threats occur



3. <http://cmp-openstandards.org/using-os/tools/threats-taxonomy/>

Potential threats

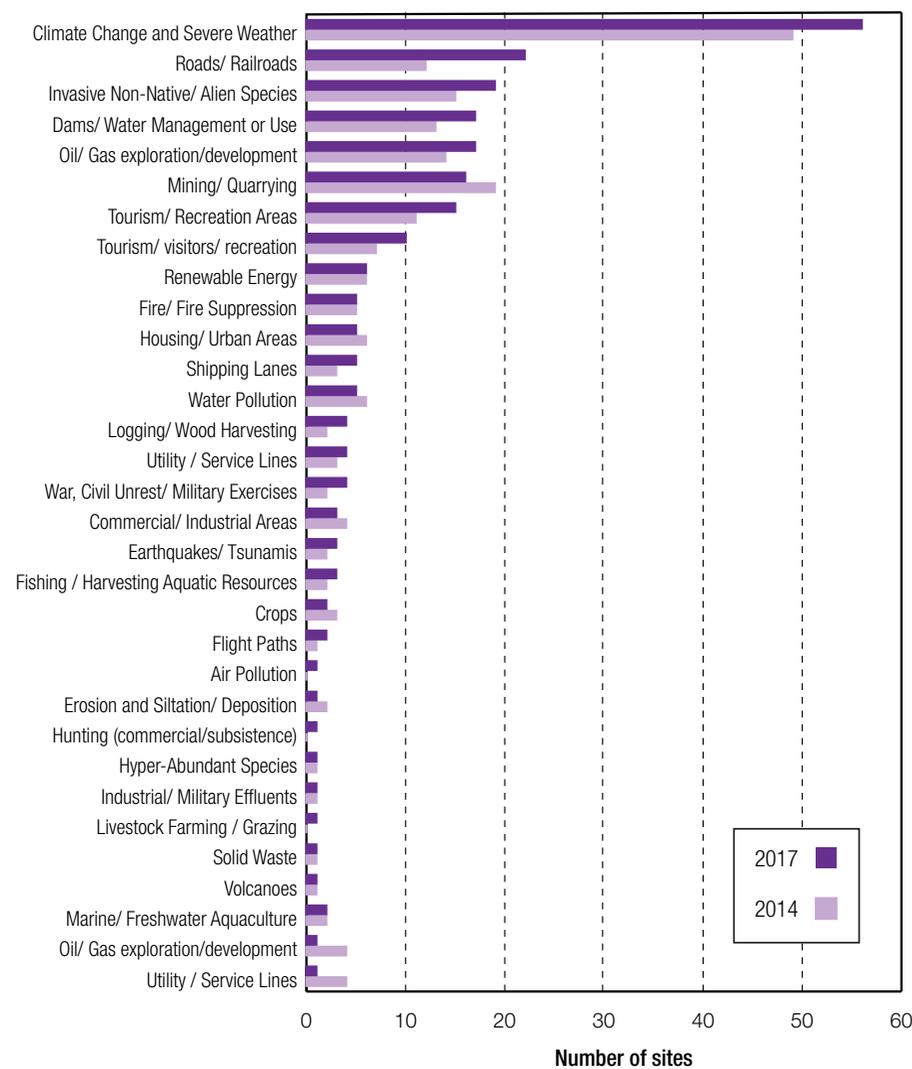
While its impacts are becoming increasingly visible in many natural sites, climate change is also the most widespread significant potential threat and in fact it has been reported as a potential threat in more sites in 2017 compared to 2014 (55 compared to 49).

Road construction has become the second most widespread potential threat and it is the threat which has increased most significantly between 2014 and 2017 – by 83% (22 sites assessed as potentially affected in 2017 compared to 12 in 2014).

Other infrastructure projects (dams and tourism facilities), mining and oil and gas development are also among the top potential threats. The number of sites which could be significantly affected by hydropower infrastructure development has grown from 13 to 17 (31% increase) and by construction of tourism facilities from 11 to 15 (36% increase) since 2014.

While some potential threats show a decrease between 2014 and 2017 this might be attributed to the fact that a particular threat has already materialized and become current.

This figure shows potential threats assessed as high or very high in 2017 and 2014. Numbers are based on the number of sites where these threats occur

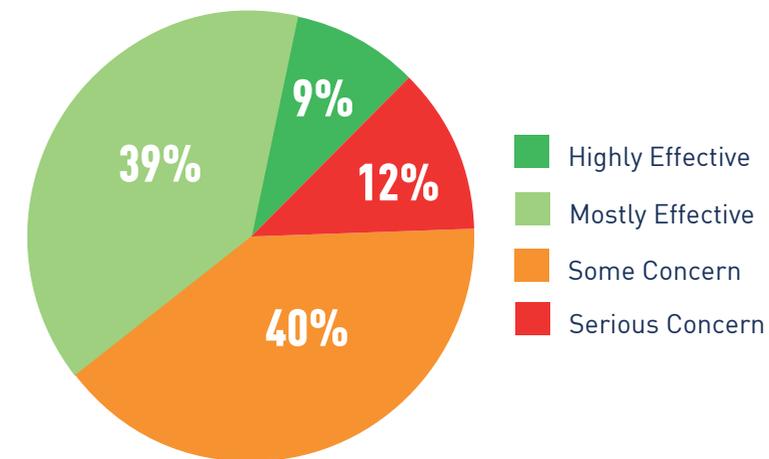


Protection and management

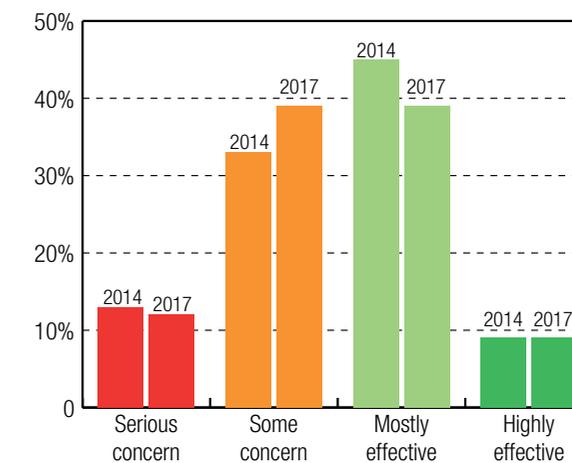
The IUCN World Heritage Outlook evaluates 14 different aspects of protection and management for sites, including legislative frameworks, management systems, relationships with local people, monitoring, site boundaries, and tourism and visitation management⁴. The assessments for each of these categories are then used to determine the overall assessment of the protection and management effectiveness of each site.

The 2017 results for all 241 natural World Heritage sites, including the new sites inscribed from 2015 to 2017, show that only 48% of sites have overall effective or highly effective protection and management and in 12% of sites protection and management are of serious concern.

2017 results for protection and management, % of all sites



Comparison between 2014 and 2017 of overall protection and management in 228 sites inscribed up to 2014



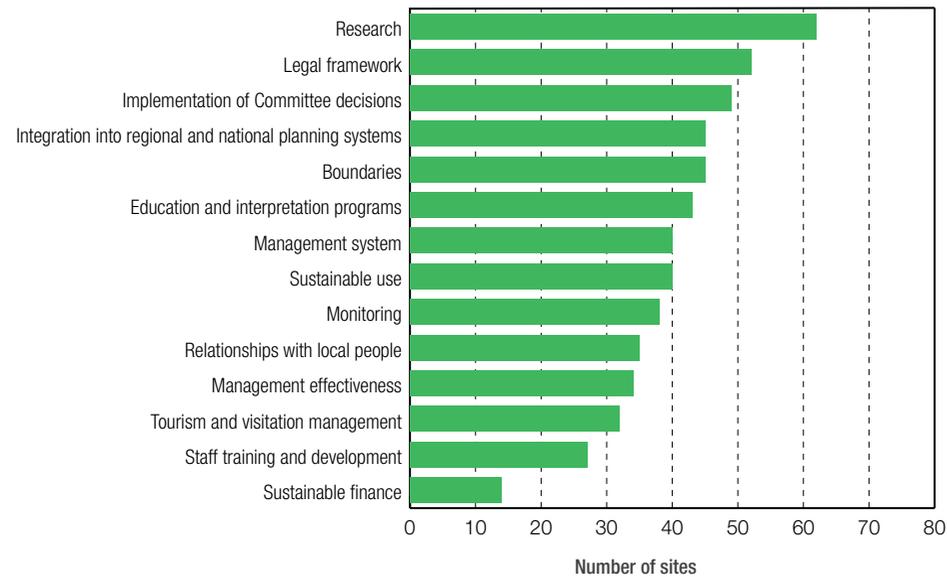
4. The full list of protection and management categories are: relationships with local people, legal framework, enforcement, integration into regional and national planning systems, management system, management effectiveness, implementation of the World Heritage Committee's decisions and recommendations, boundaries, sustainable finance, staff training and development, sustainable use, education and interpretation programs, tourism and visitation management, monitoring, and research.

Among the 13 new sites inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2015-2017, only one site was assessed as having highly effective protection and management, five (38%) were assessed as having mostly effective protection and management and in seven sites (54 %) protection and management were assessed as being of some or serious concern.

Overall, effectiveness of protection and management has decreased between 2014 and 2017. From the 228 sites inscribed on the World Heritage List up to 2014, more sites are assessed as having some concern overall with protection and management, and fewer sites are assessed as having overall effective or highly effective protection and management. It is clearly evident that more effort is needed to address declining protection and management standards for natural World Heritage sites. In this respect there are many tools and standards which aim at increasing management effectiveness which should be directed at sites most in need. The developing proposals for IUCN's Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas offer much scope to support these priority sites and help to lift standards.

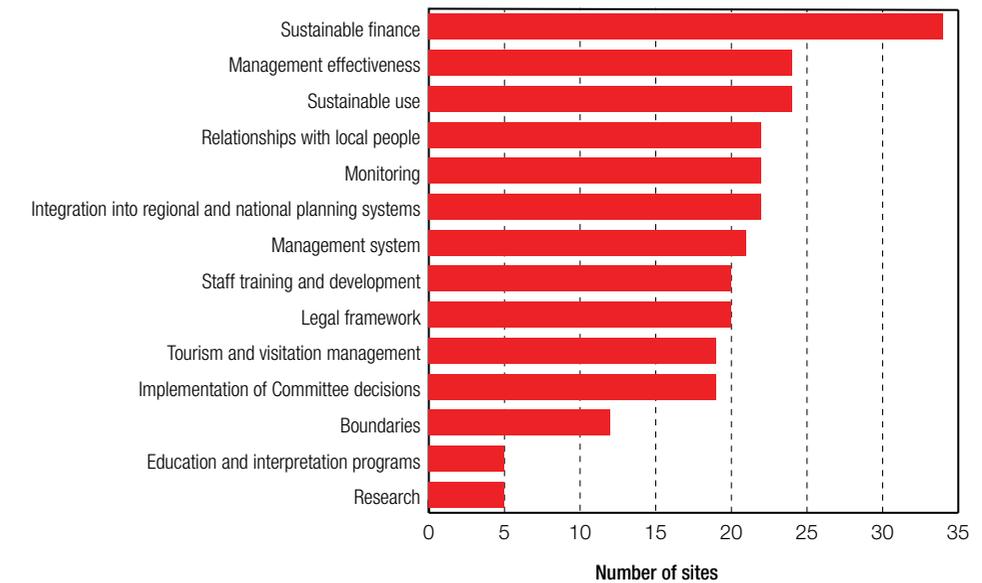
The figures below show the management aspects that were most often assessed as highly effective, and those assessed as being of serious concern in 2017. Similarly to 2014, research remained the topic most often assessed as highly effective. In 2017 sustainable funding has become the issue most often assessed as being of serious concern.

Number of sites where specific protection and management topics were assessed as highly effective in 2017



When comparing how different management aspects have been assessed in 2014 and 2017, sustainable finance remains the topic of highest concern, with the highest number of sites in which it is assessed as being of some or serious concern (118 sites in 2017). However, the most significant decreases in management effectiveness in the last three years are in the areas of integration into regional and national planning systems (a 40% increase in sites where it was assessed as being of some or serious concern in 2017 compared to 2014) and relationships with local people (22%), followed by sustainable use (18%). There is a link between these three areas of management as they all relate to the degree to which World Heritage sites are able to be integrated into broader landscape and regional planning and development sectoral strategies. The recently adopted Policy for the integration of a sustainable development perspective into the processes of the World Heritage Convention can provide a framework for addressing these issues more effectively in future.

Number of sites where specific protection and management topics were assessed as being of serious concern in 2007



Number of sites where specific protection and management topics were assessed as being of some or serious concern in 2017 compared to 2014



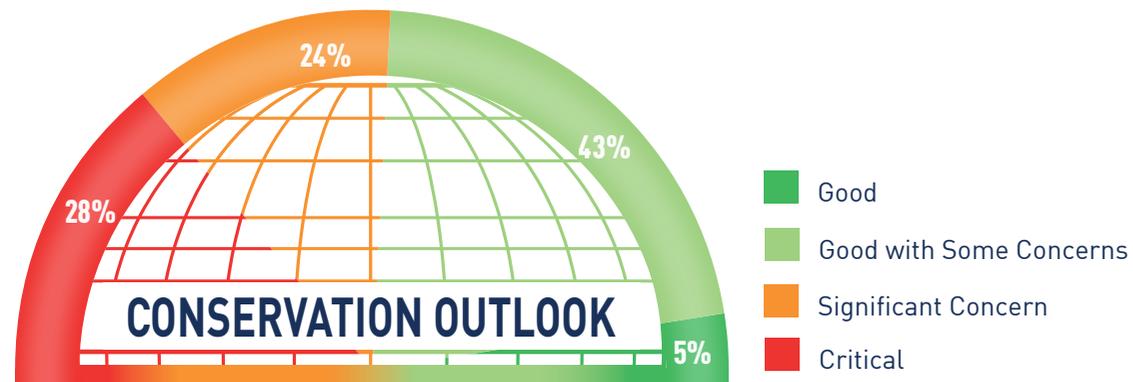
Facts and figures: Africa

- * **37** natural and **5** mixed World Heritage sites in **26** countries
- * **41,047,244** hectares in total
- * **2** marine and coastal sites
- * **5** transnational sites
- * **11** sites listed as 'in danger'
- * **1** new site since 2015

Regional Outlook: Africa

Results of the IUCN World Heritage Outlook 2 show that, of all natural and mixed (both natural and cultural) World Heritage sites in Africa, for 48% the conservation outlook is either “good” or “good with some concerns”, for 24% it is of “significant concern” and for 28% the outlook is “critical”.

Conservation Outlook 2017 results for natural World Heritage in Africa



One new site was inscribed in Africa since 2015:

Country	Site	Conservation Outlook 2017	Inscription year
Chad	Ennedi Massif: Natural and Cultural Landscape	Significant concern	2016

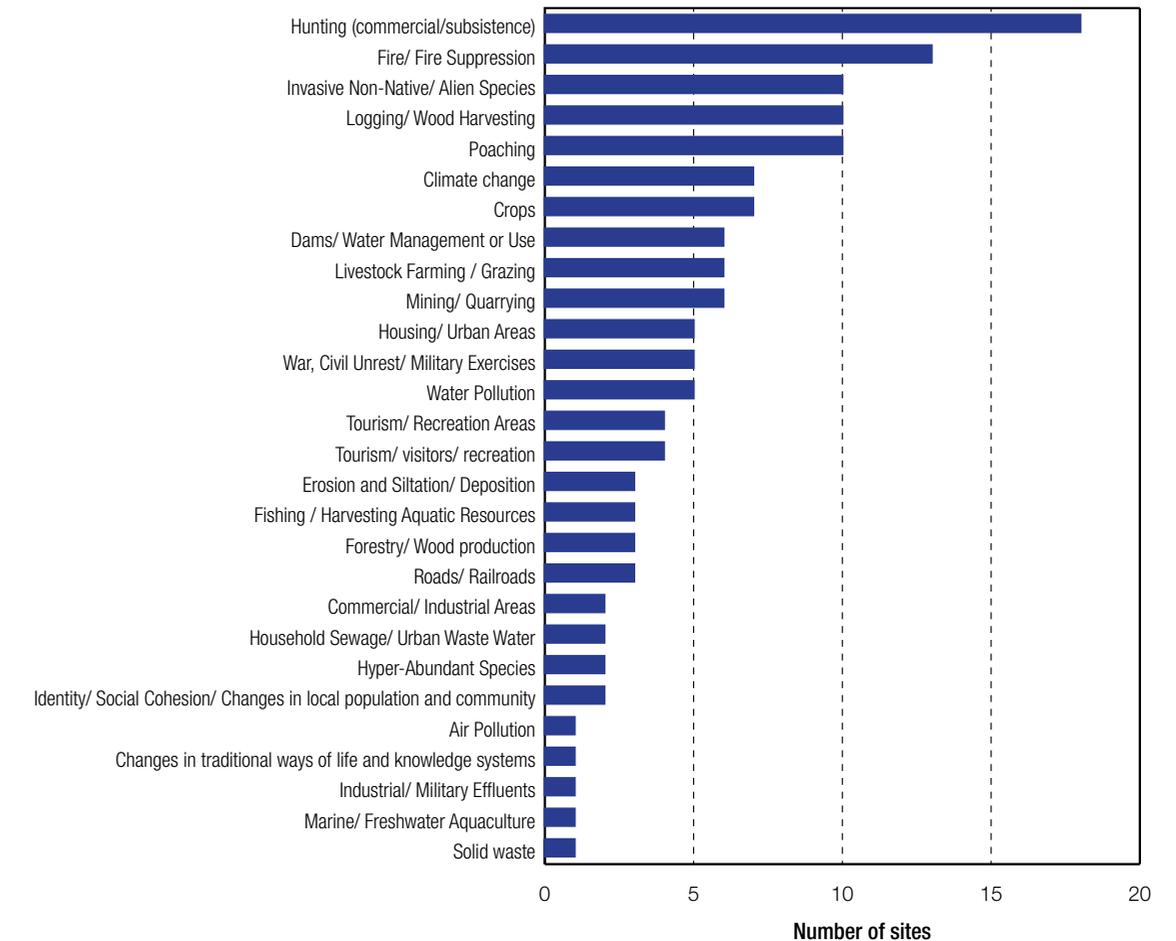
Among the sites that were inscribed up to 2014 and were therefore already assessed in the IUCN World Heritage Outlook 2014, the conservation outlook for four sites showed an improvement and deteriorated for one:

Country	Site	Conservation Outlook 2014	Conservation Outlook 2017
Chad	Lakes of Ounianga	Good with some concerns	Good
Côte d'Ivoire	Comoé National Park	Critical	Significant concern
Benin/Burkina Faso/ Niger	W-Arly-Pendjari Complex	Significant concern	Good with some concerns
Madagascar	Tsingy de Bemaraha Strict Nature Reserve	Good	Good with some concerns
Tanzania	Serengeti National Park	Significant concern	Good with some concerns

Threats

Legal and illegal hunting, fires, logging, invasive species and climate change are the most significant current threats to natural sites in Africa.

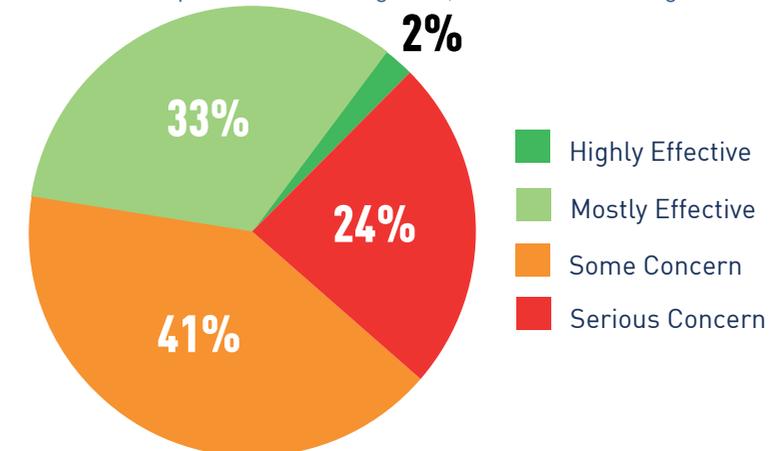
Current threats assessed as high or very high in 2017. Figures are based on the number of sites where these threats occur.



Protection and management

Only 35% of natural World Heritage sites in Africa have been assessed as having mostly effective or highly effective protection and management, while for 41% protection and management have been assessed as of some concern and for 24% as of serious concern.

2017 results for protection and management, % of all sites in the region



Map marker	Site
102 ▲	Lakes of Ounianga, Chad
140	Namib Sand Sea, Namibia

GOOD

2	Aldabra Atoll, Seychelles
15	Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, Uganda
18	Cape Floral Region Protected Areas, South Africa
45	Ecosystem and Relict Cultural Landscape of Lopé-Okanda, Gabon
82	iSimangaliso Wetland Park, South Africa
91	Kenya Lake System in the Great Rift Valley, Kenya
94	Kilimanjaro National Park, Tanzania
114	Maloti-Drakensberg Park, Lesotho / South Africa
128	Mosi-oa-Tunya / Victoria Falls, Zambia / Zimbabwe
134	Mount Kenya National Park/Natural Forest, Kenya
145	Ngorongoro Conservation Area, Tanzania
151	Okavango Delta, Botswana
172	Rwenzori Mountains National Park, Uganda
180	Serengeti National Park, Tanzania
198	Taï National Park, Côte d'Ivoire
215 ▼	Tsingy de Bemaraha Strict Nature Reserve, Madagascar
220	Vallée de Mai Nature Reserve, Seychelles
227 ▲	W-Arly-Pendjari Complex, Benin / Burkina Faso / Niger

GOOD WITH SOME CONCERNS

29	Cliff of Bandiagara (Land of the Dogons), Mali
32 ▲	Comoé National Park, Côte d'Ivoire
39	Djoudj National Bird Sanctuary, Senegal
47	Ennedi Massif: Natural and Cultural Landscapes, Chad*
100	Lake Malawi National Park, Malawi
117	Mana Pools National Park, Sapi and Chewore Safari Areas, Zimbabwe
167	Rainforests of the Atsinanana, Madagascar
177	Sangha Trinational, Cameroon / Central African Republic / Congo
186	Simien National Park, Ethiopia
224	Vredefort Dome, South Africa

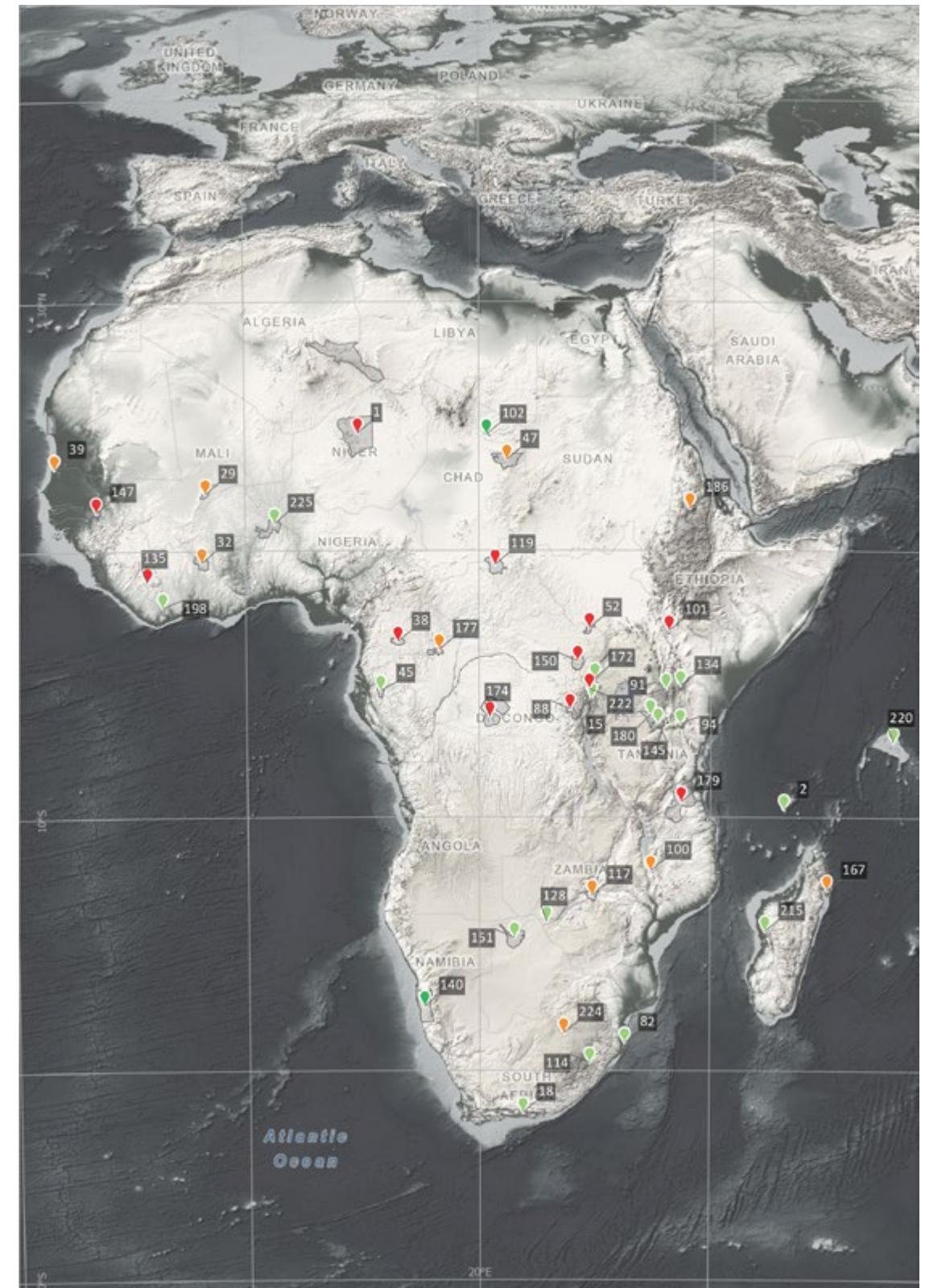
SIGNIFICANT CONCERN

1	Aïr and Ténéré Natural Reserves, Niger
38	Dja Faunal Reserve, Cameroon
52	Garamba National Park, Democratic Republic of the Congo
88	Kahuzi-Biega National Park, Democratic Republic of the Congo
101	Lake Turkana National Parks, Kenya
119	Manovo-Gounda St Floris National Park, Central African Republic
135	Mount Nimba Strict Nature Reserve, Côte d'Ivoire / Guinea
147	Niokolo-Koba National Park, Senegal
150	Okapi Wildlife Reserve, Democratic Republic of the Congo
174	Salonga National Park, Democratic Republic of the Congo
179	Selous Game Reserve, Tanzania
222	Virunga National Park, Democratic Republic of the Congo

CRITICAL

▲ The conservation outlook improved since 2014 ▼ The conservation outlook deteriorated since 2014

* New site inscribed on the World Heritage List since 2015



Facts and figures: Arab States

- * **5** natural and **3** mixed World Heritage sites in **8** countries
- * **9,762,327** hectares in total
- * **3** marine and coastal sites
- * **0** sites listed as 'in danger'
- * **2** new sites since 2015

Regional Outlook: Arab States

Results of the IUCN World Heritage Outlook 2 show that, of all natural and mixed (both natural and cultural) World Heritage sites in the Arab States, for 62% the conservation outlook is “good with some concerns” and for 38% it is of “significant concern”, noting that this region’s eight sites represent a small dataset.

Conservation Outlook 2017 for natural World Heritage in Arab States



Among the sites that were inscribed up to 2014 and were therefore already assessed in the IUCN World Heritage Outlook 2014, the conservation outlook for one site showed an improvement and deteriorated for one:

Country	Site	Conservation Outlook 2014	Conservation Outlook 2017
Egypt	Wadi Al-Hitan (Whale Valley)	Good	Good with some concerns
Tunisia	Ichkeul National Park	Significant concern	Good with some concerns

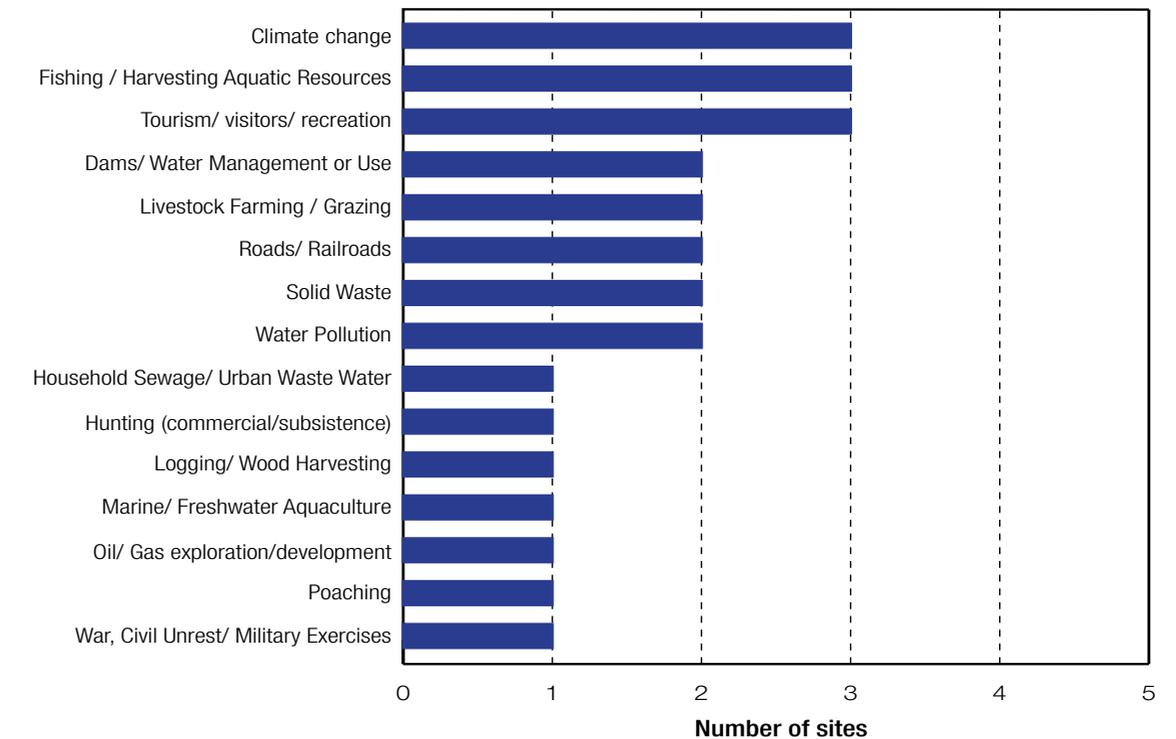
Two new sites were inscribed in the Arab States region since 2015:

Country	Site	Conservation Outlook 2017	Inscription year
Iraq	The Ahwar of Southern Iraq: refuge of biodiversity and the relict landscape of the Mesopotamian Cities	Significant concern	2016
Sudan	Sanganeb Marine National Park and Dugonab Bay - Mukkawar Island Marine National Park	Good with some concerns	2016

Threats

Climate change, tourism impacts and fishing are the most widespread current threats to natural sites in the Arab States.

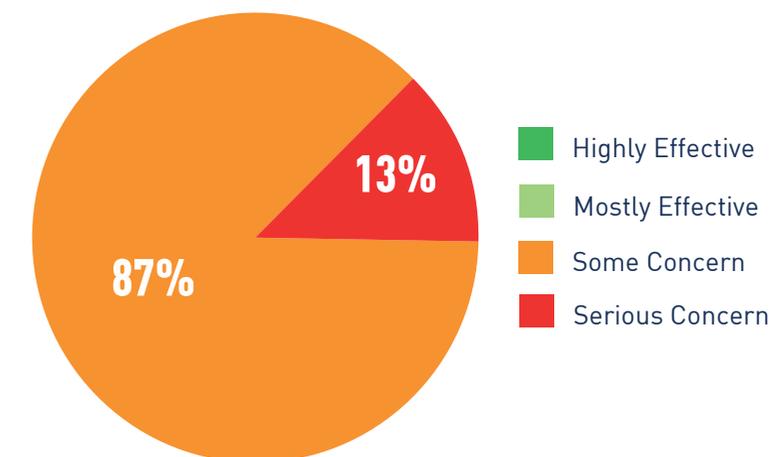
Current threats assessed as high or very high in 2017. Figures are based on the number of sites where these threats occur



Protection and management

None of the natural sites in the Arab States were assessed as having effective protection and management. For the majority of sites, protection and management are of some concern, and in one site it was assessed as being of serious concern.

2017 results for protection and management, % of all sites in the region



Map marker	Site	GOOD
	No sites	
77 ▲	Ichkeul National Park, Tunisia	GOOD WITH SOME CONCERNS
175	Sanganeb Marine National Park and Dugonab Bay - Mukkawar Island Marine National Park, Sudan*	
202	Tassili n'Ajjer, Algeria	
225 ▼	Wadi Al-Hitan (Whale Valley), Egypt	
226	Wadi Rum Protected Area, Jordan	
10	Banc d'Arguin National Park, Mauritania	SIGNIFICANT CONCERN
189	Socotra Archipelago, Yemen	
205	The Ahwar of Southern Iraq: refuge of biodiversity and the relict landscape of the Mesopotamian Cities, Iraq*	
	No sites	CRITICAL

▲ The conservation outlook improved since 2014 ▼ The conservation outlook deteriorated since 2014

* New site inscribed on the World Heritage List since 2015



Facts and figures: **Asia**

- * **48** natural and **6** mixed World Heritage sites in **19** countries
- * **25,220,159** hectares in total
- * **9** marine and coastal sites
- * **3** transnational site
- * **1** site listed as 'in danger'
- * **6** new sites since 2015

Regional Outlook: Asia



Results of the IUCN World Heritage Outlook 2 show that, of all natural and mixed (both natural and cultural) World Heritage sites in Asia, for 74% the conservation outlook is either “good” or “good with some concerns”, for 24% it is of “significant concern” and for 2% the outlook is “critical”.

Conservation Outlook 2017 for natural World Heritage in Asia



Six new sites were inscribed in Asia since 2015:

Country	Site	Conservation Outlook 2017	Inscription year
China	Hubei Shennongjia	Good with some concerns	2016
China	Qinghai Hoh Xil	Good with some concerns	2017
India	Khangchendzonga National Park	Good	2016
Iran	Lut Desert	Good	2016
Kazakhstan/ Kyrgyzstan/Uzbekistan	Western Tien-Shan	Significant concern	2016
Mongolia/Russian Federation	Landscapes of Dauria	Good with some concerns	2017

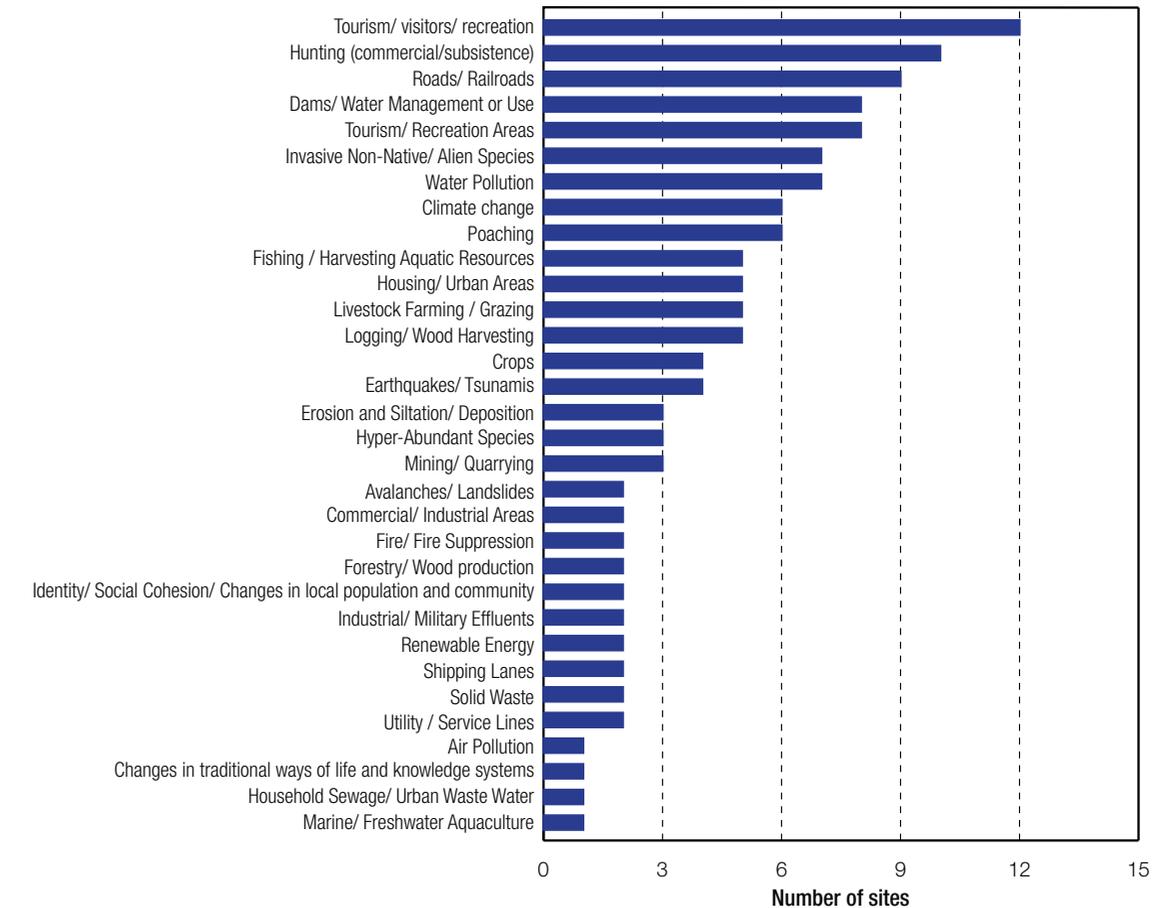
From the sites that were inscribed up to 2014 and therefore already assessed in the IUCN World Heritage Outlook 2014, for four sites conservation outlook has changed since 2014 and for all four it was an improvement:

Country	Site	Conservation Outlook 2014	Conservation Outlook 2017
India	Kaziranga National Park	Significant concern	Good with some concerns
India	Sundarbans National Park	Significant concern	Good with some concerns
Indonesia	Ujung Kulon National Park	Significant concern	Good with some concerns
Thailand	Dong Phrayayen-Khao Yai Forest Complex	Critical	Significant concern

Threats

Impacts from tourism and tourism infrastructure, hunting, roads and dams are the most widespread significant current threats to natural World Heritage sites in Asia, followed by water pollution, invasive species and climate change.

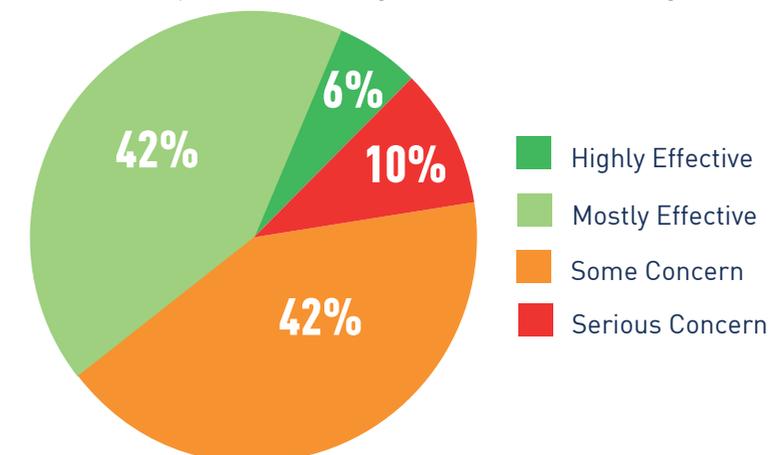
Current threats assessed as high or very high in 2017. Figures are based on the number of sites where these threats occur



Protection and management

48% of natural World Heritage sites in Asia have mostly effective or highly effective protection and management. For 42% protection and management are of some concern and for 10% they are of serious concern.

2017 results for protection and management, % of all sites in the region



Map marker	Site
26	Chengjiang Fossil Site, China
27	China Danxia, China
65	Gunung Mulu National Park, Malaysia
85	Jeju Volcanic Island and Lava Tubes, South Korea
93	Khangchendzonga National Park, India*
112	Lut Desert, Iran*
130	Mount Emei Scenic Area, including Leshan Giant Buddha Scenic Area, China
132	Mount Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary, Philippines
133	Mount Huangshan, China
136	Mount Sanqingshan National Park, China
182	Shirakami-Sanchi, Japan

GOOD

22	Central Highlands of Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka
60	Great Himalayan National Park Conservation Area, India
66	Ha Long Bay, Viet Nam
73	Huanglong Scenic and Historic Interest Area, China
75	Hubei Shennongjia, China*
86	Jiuzhaigou Valley Scenic and Historic Interest Area, China
90 ▲	Kaziranga National Park, India
92	Keoladeo National Park, India
95	Kinabalu Park, Malaysia
103	Landscapes of Dauria, Mongolia/Russian Federation*
137	Mount Taishan, China
138	Mount Wuyi, China
141	Nanda Devi and Valley of Flowers National Parks, India
149	Ogasawara Islands, Japan
157	Phong Nha-Ke Bang National Park, Viet Nam
162	Puerto-Princesa Subterranean River National Park, Philippines
166	Qinghai Hoh Xil, China*
178	Saryarka - Steppe and Lakes of Northern Kazakhstan, Kazakhstan
183	Shiretoko, Japan
185	Sichuan Giant Panda Sanctuaries - Wolong, Mt Siguniang and Jiayin Mountains, China
190	South China Karst, China
194 ▲	Sundarbans National Park, India
199	Tajik National Park (Mountains of the Pamirs), Tajikistan
210	Thungyai-Huai Kha Khaeng Wildlife Sanctuaries, Thailand
216	Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park, Philippines
217 ▲	Ujung Kulon National Park, Indonesia
219	Uvs Nuur Basin, Mongolia / Russian Federation
238	Xinjiang Tianshan, China
239	Yakushima, Japan

GOOD WITH SOME CONCERNS

28	Chitwan National Park, Nepal
41 ▲	Dong Phrayayen-Khao Yai Forest Complex, Thailand
97	Komodo National Park, Indonesia
108	Lorentz National Park, Indonesia
118	Manas Wildlife Sanctuary, India
173	Sagarmatha National Park, Nepal
187	Sinharaja Forest Reserve, Sri Lanka
207	The Sundarbans, Bangladesh
209	Three Parallel Rivers of Yunnan Protected Areas, China
213	Trang An Landscape Complex, Viet Nam
231	Western Ghats, India
232	Western Tien-Shan, Kazakhstan / Kyrgyzstan / Uzbekistan*
237	Wulingyuan Scenic and Historic Interest Area, China

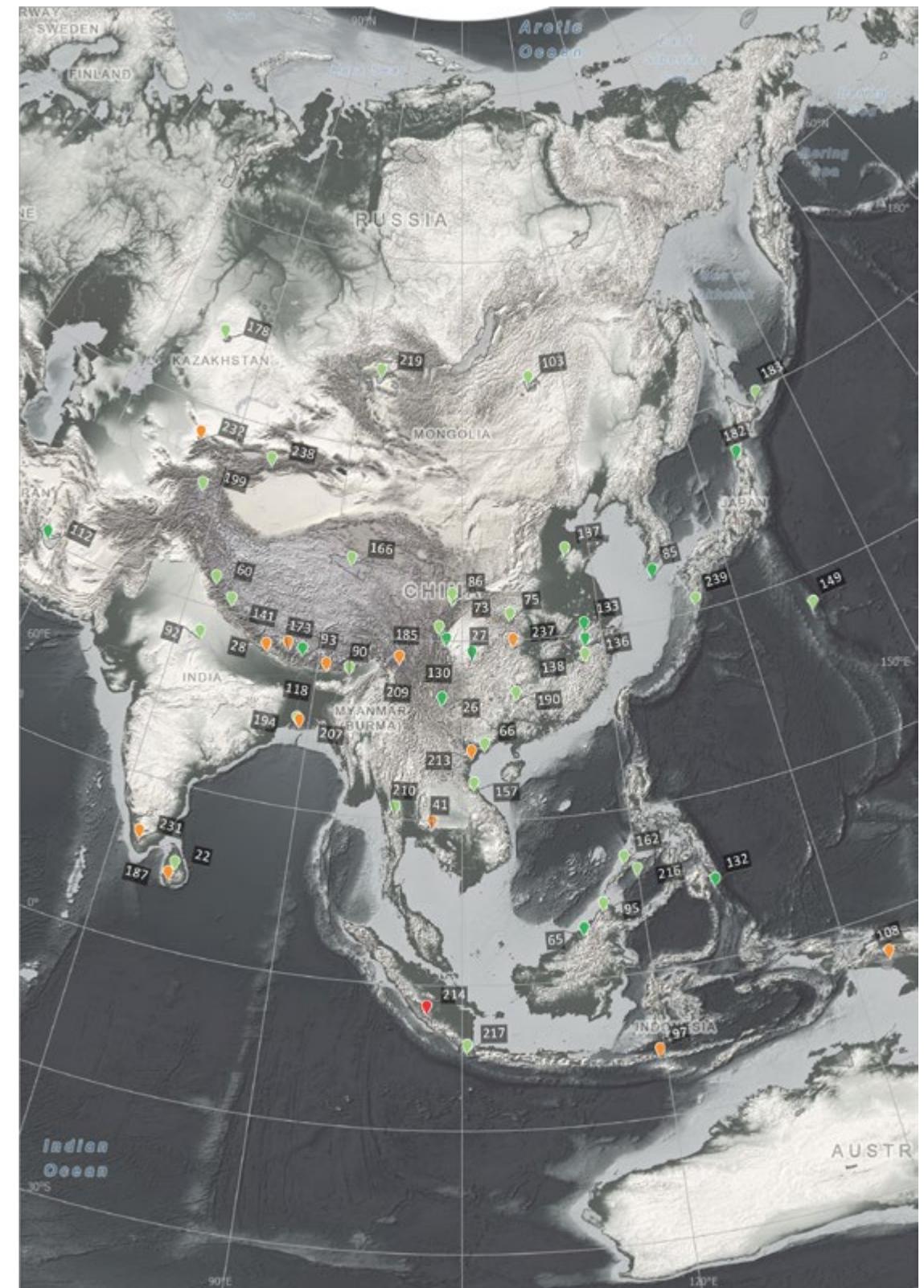
SIGNIFICANT CONCERN

214	Tropical Rainforest Heritage of Sumatra, Indonesia
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CRITICAL

▲ The conservation outlook improved since 2014 ▼ The conservation outlook deteriorated since 2014

* New site inscribed on the World Heritage List since 2015



Facts and figures: Oceania

- * **16** natural and **6** mixed World Heritage sites in **5** countries
- * **90,691,671** hectares in total
- * **9** marine and coastal sites
- * **1** site listed as 'in danger'
- * No new site since 2015

Regional Outlook: Oceania

Results of the IUCN World Heritage Outlook 2 show that, of all natural and mixed (both natural and cultural) World Heritage sites in Oceania, for 81% the conservation outlook in 2017 is either “good” or “good with some concerns”, for 14% it is of “significant concern” and for 5% the outlook is “critical”.

Conservation Outlook 2017 for natural World Heritage in Oceania



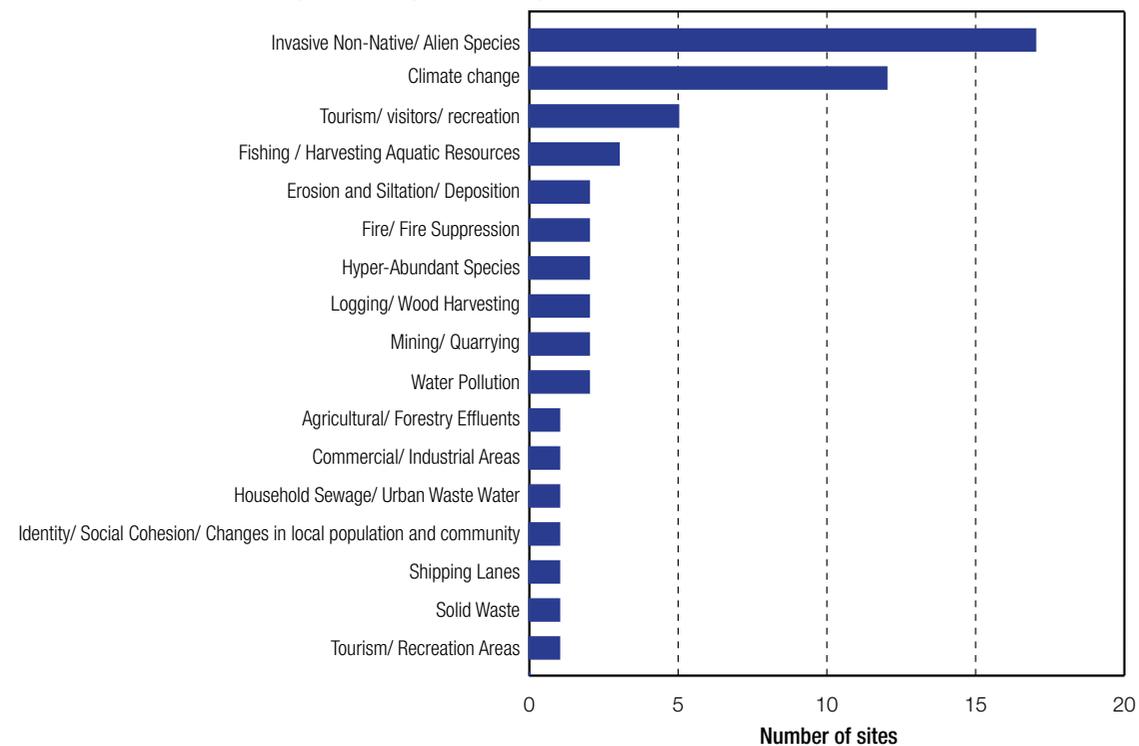
No new sites were inscribed in Oceania since 2015.

Among the sites that were inscribed up to 2014 and were therefore already assessed in the IUCN World Heritage Outlook 2014, none saw a change in their conservation outlook.

Threats

Invasive species and climate change are the two most significant current threats to natural World Heritage sites in Oceania, followed by tourism impacts and fishing.

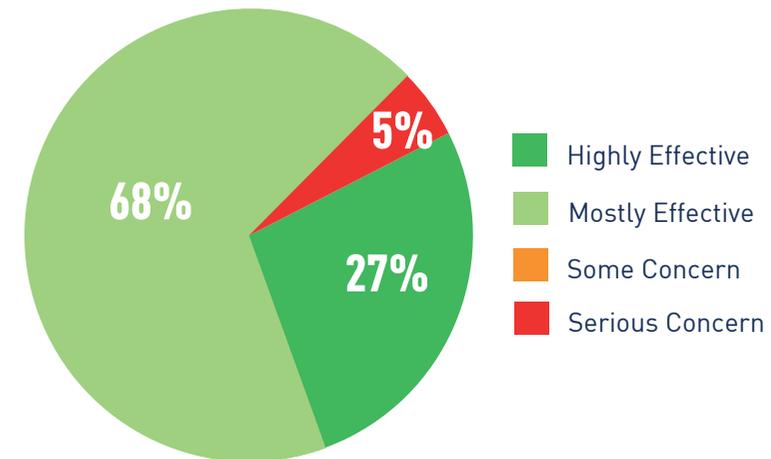
Current threats assessed as high or very high in 2017. Figures are based on the number of sites where these threats occur



Protection and management

Protection and management of natural World Heritage sites in Oceania are overall effective, with only 5% of sites whose protection and management were assessed as being of serious concern and the rest of sites having highly or mostly effective protection and management in place.

2017 results for protection and management, % of all sites in the region



Map marker	Site
9	Australian Fossil Mammal Sites (Riversleigh / Naracoorte), Australia
68	Heard and McDonald Islands, Australia
107	Lord Howe Island Group, Australia
144	New Zealand Sub-Antarctic Islands, New Zealand
146	Ningaloo Coast, Australia
163	Purnululu National Park, Australia
181	Shark Bay, Western Australia, Australia
218	Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park, Australia
235	Willandra Lakes Region, Australia
212	Tongariro National Park, New Zealand

GOOD

49	Fraser Island, Australia
55	Gondwana Rainforests of Australia, Australia
62	Greater Blue Mountains Area, Australia
113	Macquarie Island, Australia
156	Phoenix Islands Protected Area, Kiribati
171	Rock Islands Southern Lagoon, Palau
201	Tasmanian Wilderness, Australia
203	Te Wahipounamu - South West New Zealand, New Zealand

GOOD WITH SOME CONCERNS

59	Great Barrier Reef, Australia
89	Kakadu National Park, Australia
233	Wet Tropics of Queensland, Australia

SIGNIFICANT CONCERN

44	East Rennell, Solomon Islands
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CRITICAL

▲ The conservation outlook improved since 2014 ▼ The conservation outlook deteriorated since 2014

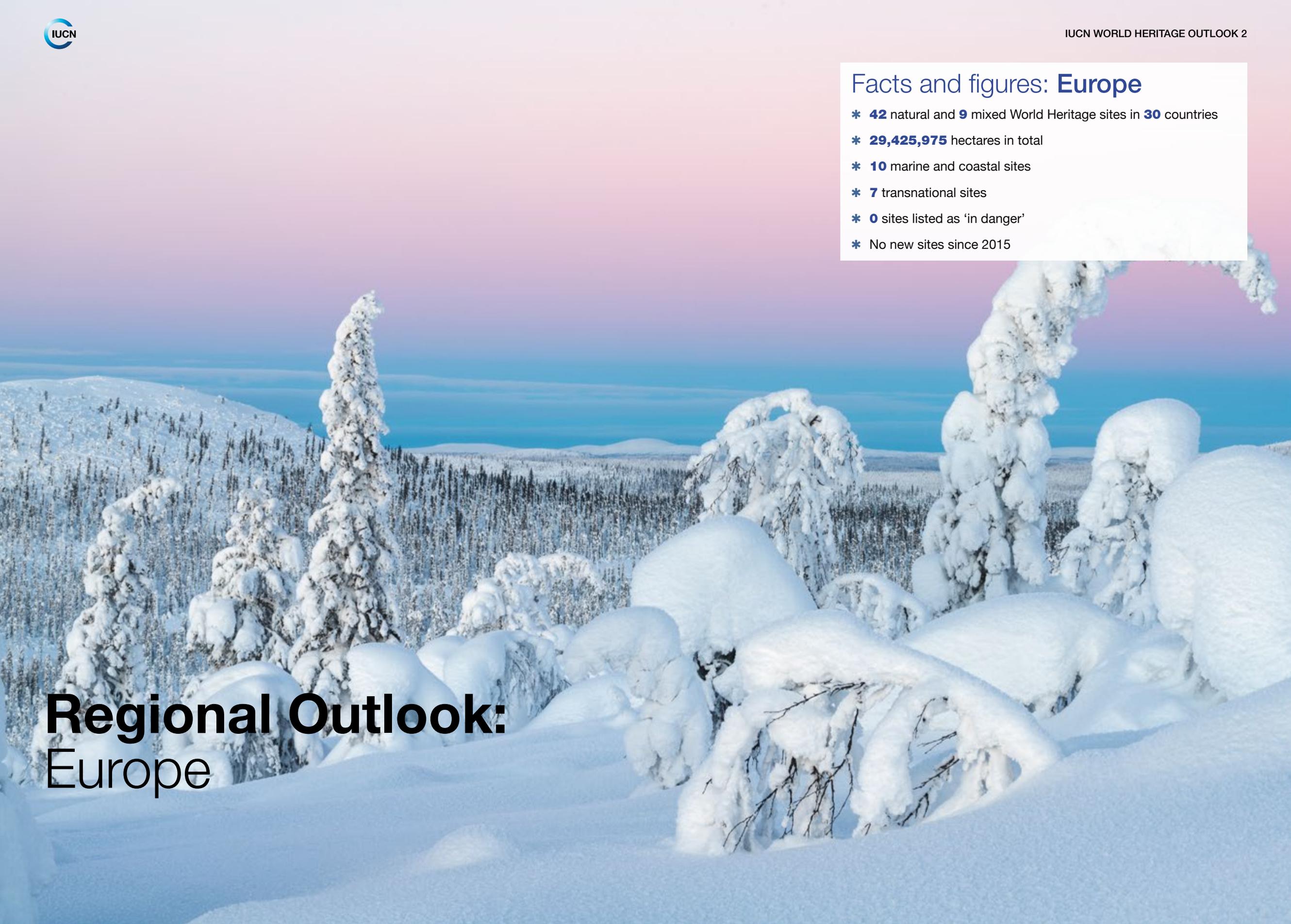
* New site inscribed on the World Heritage List since 2015



Facts and figures: Europe

- * **42** natural and **9** mixed World Heritage sites in **30** countries
- * **29,425,975** hectares in total
- * **10** marine and coastal sites
- * **7** transnational sites
- * **0** sites listed as 'in danger'
- * No new sites since 2015

Regional Outlook: Europe

A wide-angle photograph of a winter landscape. The foreground and middle ground are dominated by evergreen trees heavily laden with snow, their branches drooping under the weight. The ground is a smooth, undisturbed expanse of white snow. In the background, a range of snow-covered mountains stretches across the horizon under a clear, pale blue sky. The overall scene is serene and cold.

Results of the IUCN World Heritage Outlook 2 show that, of all natural and mixed (both natural and cultural) World Heritage sites in Europe, for 63% the conservation outlook is either “good” or “good with some concerns” and for 37% it is of “significant concern”.

Conservation Outlook 2017 for natural World Heritage in Europe



No new sites were inscribed in Europe since 2015. A new transboundary site between the Russian Federation and Mongolia (Landscapes of Dauria) is included in the Asia region in this report.

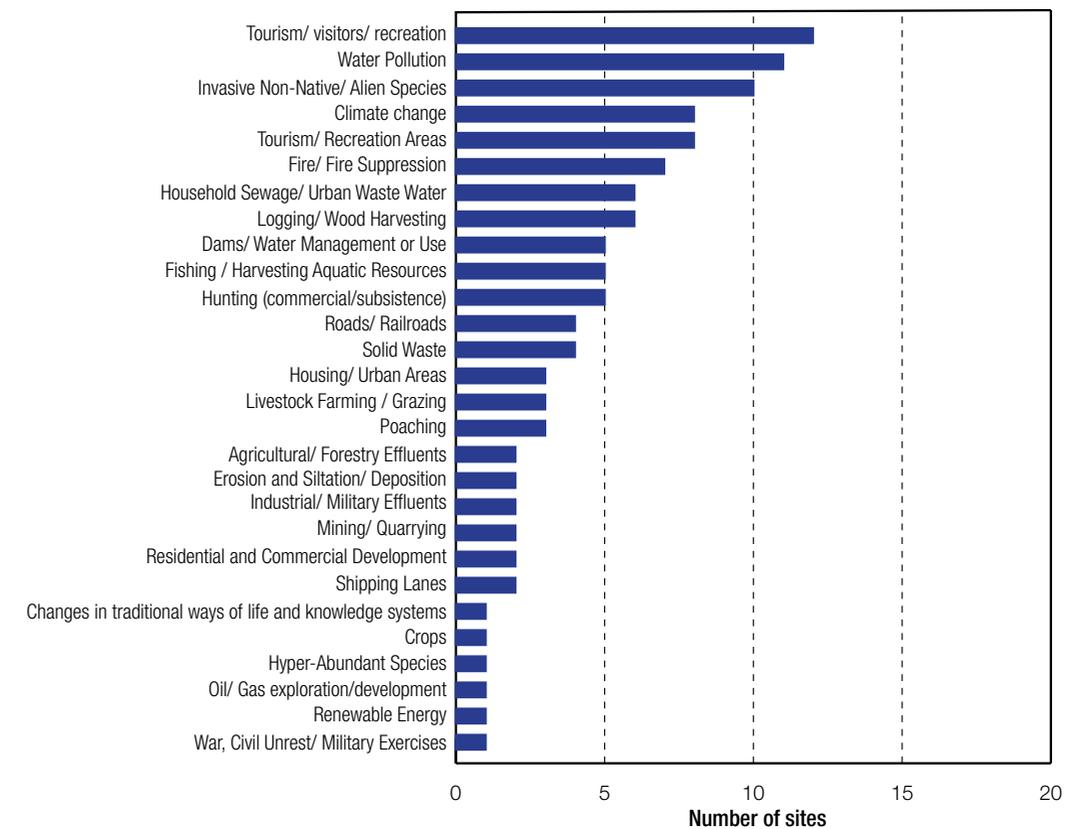
Among the sites that were inscribed up to 2014 and were therefore already assessed in the IUCN World Heritage Outlook 2014, the conservation outlook for nine sites changed since 2014. For two sites, it was an improvement and for seven a deterioration.

Country	Site	Conservation Outlook 2014	Conservation Outlook 2017
Albania/Austria/ Belgium/Bulgaria/ Croatia/Germany/Italy/ Romania/ Slovakia/Slovenia/ Spain/Ukraine	Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and other regions of Europe	Good with some concerns	Significant concern
Belarus / Poland	Białowieża Forest	Good with some concerns	Significant concern
Croatia	Plitvice Lakes National Park	Good with some concerns	Significant concern
France	Pitons, cirques and remparts of Reunion Island	Good with some concerns	Significant concern
Portugal	Laurisilva of Madeira	Good with some concerns	Significant concern
Russian Federation	Central Sikhote-Alin	Significant concern	Good with some concerns
Russian Federation	Golden Mountains of Altai	Significant concern	Good with some concerns
Russian Federation	Lake Baikal	Good with some concerns	Significant concern
Slovenia	Škocjan Caves	Good	Good with some concerns

Threats

Impacts from tourism and tourism infrastructure, water pollution, invasive species and climate change are the most widespread significant current threats to natural World Heritage sites in Europe.

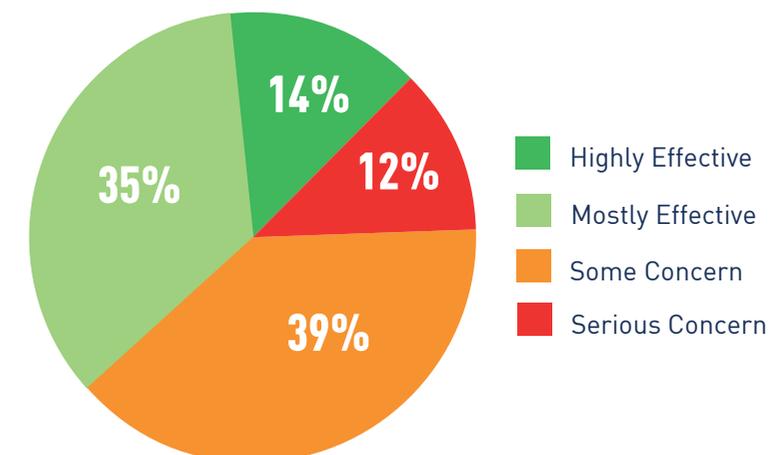
Current threats assessed as high or very high in 2017. Figures are based on the number of sites where these threats occur



Protection and management

49% of natural sites in Europe have mostly effective or highly effective protection and management. For 39% protection and management are of some concern and for 12% of serious concern.

2017 results for protection and management, % of all sites in the region



Map marker	Site
20	Caves of Aggtelek Karst and Slovak Karst, Hungary / Slovakia
42	Dorset and East Devon Coast, UK
71	High Coast / Kvarken Archipelago, Finland / Sweden
104	Laponian Area, Sweden
106	Lena Pillars Nature Park, Russian Federation
121	Messel Pit Fossil Site, Germany
126	Monte San Giorgio, Switzerland / Italy
131	Mount Etna, Italy
164	Putorana Plateau, Russian Federation
192	St Kilda, UK
193	Stevns Klint, Denmark
195	Surtsey, Iceland
197	Swiss Tectonic Arena Sardona, Switzerland
204	Teide National Park, Spain
208	The Wadden Sea, Germany / Netherlands / Denmark
229	West Norwegian Fjords - Geirangerfjord and Nærøyfjord, Norway

GOOD

23	▲	Central Sikhote-Alin, Russian Federation
33		Danube Delta, Romania
54	▲	Golden Mountains of Altai, Russian Federation
56		Göreme National Park and the Rock Sites of Cappadocia, Turkey
64		Gulf of Porto: Calanche of Piana, Gulf of Girolata, Scandola Reserve, France
70		Hierapolis-Pamukkale, Turkey
80		Ilulissat Icefjord, Denmark
84		Isole Eolie (Aeolian Islands), Italy
98		Lagoons of New Caledonia: Reef Diversity and Associated Ecosystems, France
122		Meteora, Greece
129		Mount Athos, Greece
165		Pyrénées - Mont Perdu, France / Spain
188	▼	Škocjan Caves, Slovenia
191		Srebarna Nature Reserve, Bulgaria
196	▼	Swiss Alps Jungfrau-Aletsch, Switzerland
206		The Dolomites, Italy

GOOD WITH SOME CONCERNS

4	▼	Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and other regions of Europe, Albania / Austria / Belgium / Bulgaria / Croatia / Germany / Italy / Romania / Slovakia / Slovenia / Spain / Ukraine
12	▼	Białowieża Forest, Belarus / Poland
40		Doñana National Park, Spain
43		Durmitor National Park, Montenegro
51		Garajonay National Park, Spain
53		Giant's Causeway and Causeway Coast, UK
57		Gough and Inaccessible Islands, UK
69		Henderson Island, UK
76		Ibiza, Biodiversity and Culture, Spain
99		Lake Baikal, Russian Federation
105	▼	Laurisilva of Madeira, Portugal
142		Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid Region, FYR Macedonia
143		Natural System of Wrangel Island Reserve, Russian Federation
158		Pirin National Park, Bulgaria
160	▼	Pitons, cirques and remparts of Reunion Island, France
161	▼	Plitvice Lakes National Park, Croatia
221		Virgin Komi Forests, Russian Federation
223		Volcanoes of Kamchatka, Russian Federation
230		Western Caucasus, Russian Federation

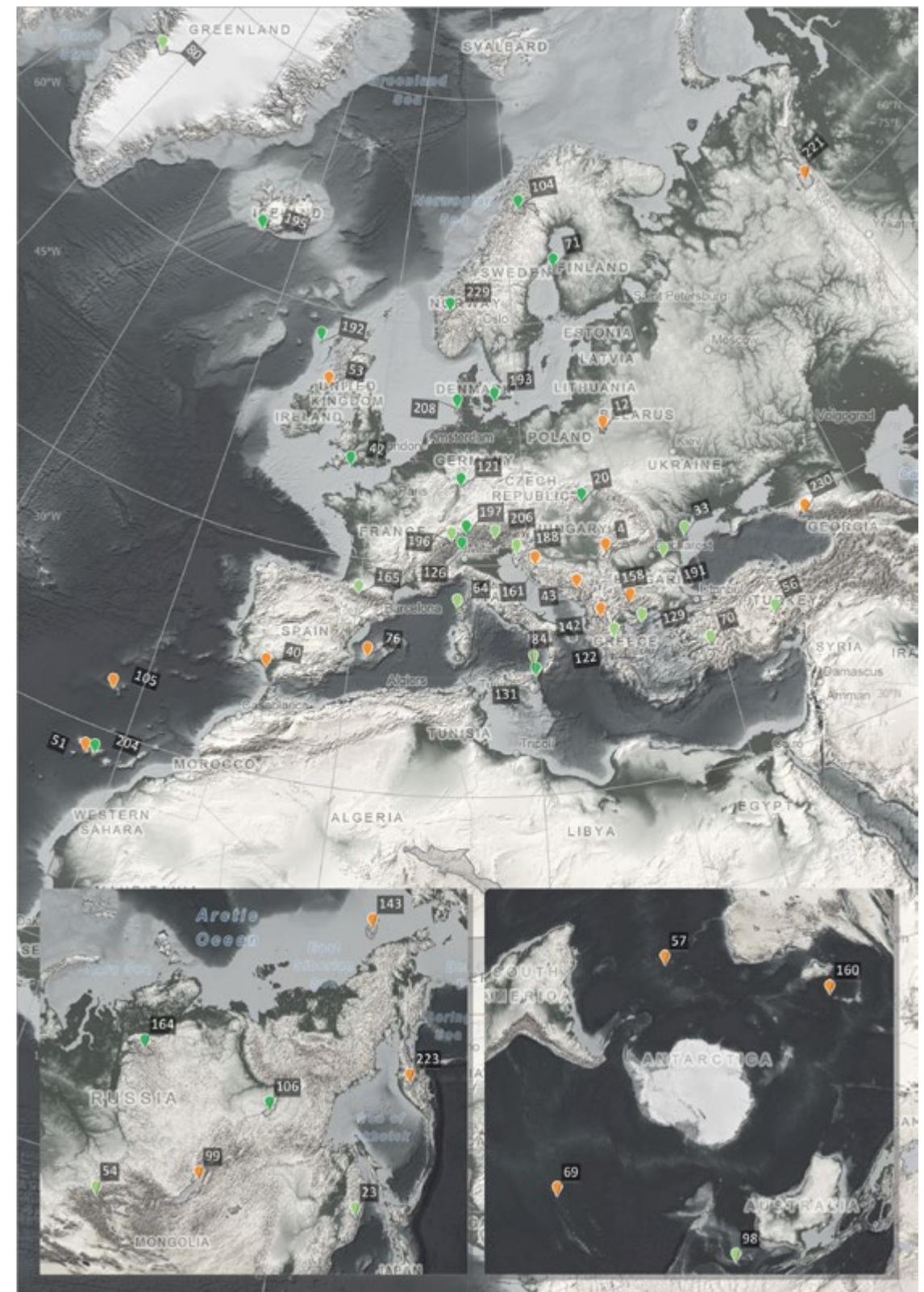
SIGNIFICANT CONCERN

No sites

CRITICAL

▲ The conservation outlook improved since 2014 ▼ The conservation outlook deteriorated since 2014

* New site inscribed on the World Heritage List since 2015



Facts and figures: **North America**

- * **20** natural and **1** mixed World Heritage sites in **2** countries
- * **57,265,847** hectares in total
- * **3** marine and coastal sites
- * **2** transnational sites
- * **1** site listed as 'in danger'
- * **1** new site since 2015

Regional Outlook: North America

Results of the IUCN World Heritage Outlook 2 show that, of all natural and mixed sites in North America, for 90% the conservation outlook is either “good” or “good with some concerns”, for 5% it is of “significant concern” and for 5% the outlook is “critical”.

Conservation Outlook 2017 for natural World Heritage in North America



One new site was inscribed in North America since 2015:

Country	Site	Conservation Outlook 2017	Inscription year
Canada	Mistaken Point	Good	2016

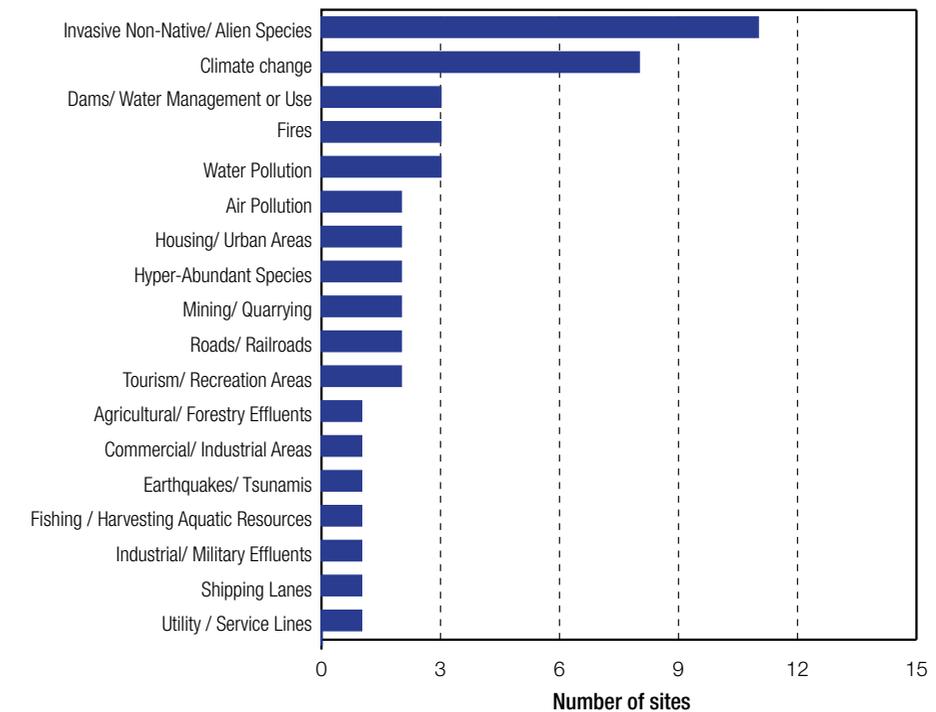
Among the sites that were inscribed up to 2014 and were therefore already assessed in the IUCN World Heritage Outlook 2014, the conservation outlook changed for one site since 2014:

Country	Site	Conservation Outlook 2014	Conservation Outlook 2017
Canada	Wood Buffalo National Park	Good with some concerns	Significant concern

Threats

Invasive species and climate change are by far the two most widespread significant threats to natural World Heritage sites in North America. These are followed by water pollution, fires and dams and water management.

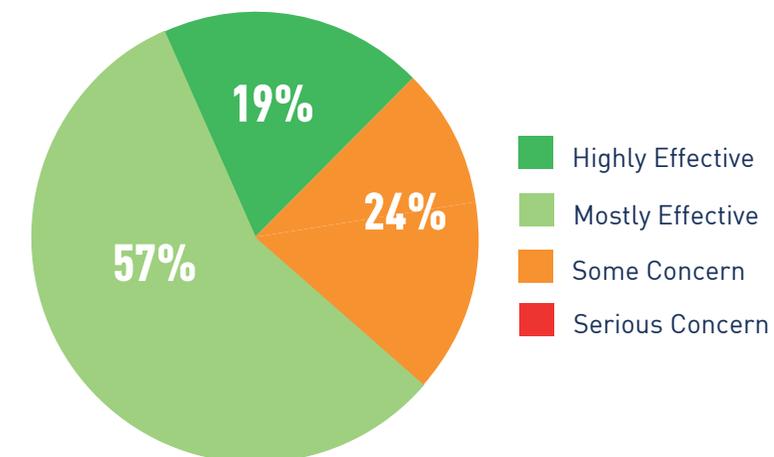
Current threats assessed as high or very high in 2017. Figures are based on the number of sites where these threats occur



Protection and management

76% of natural sites in North America have mostly effective or highly effective protection and management. For 24% protection and management are of some concern.

2017 protection and management results, % of all sites in the region

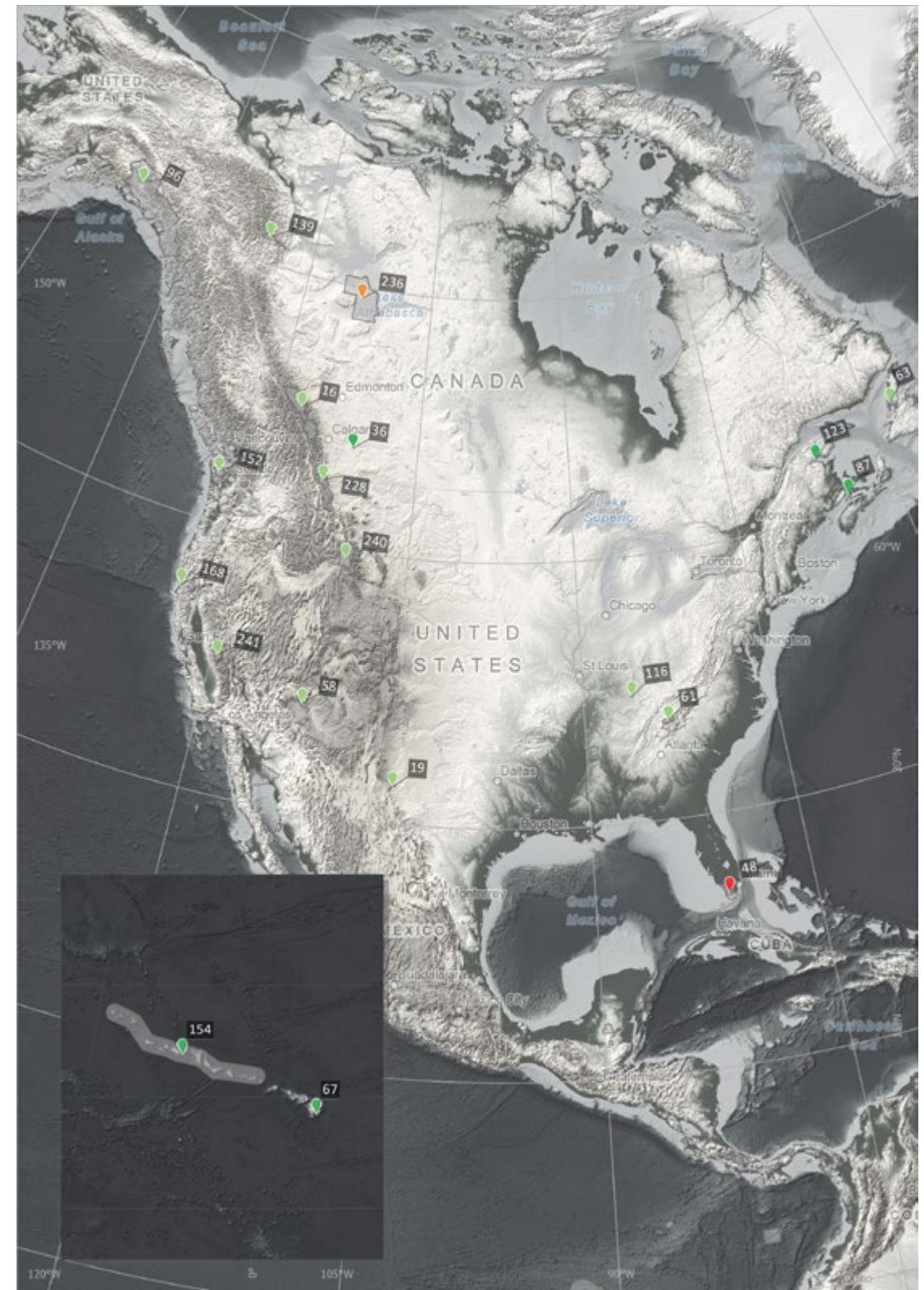


Map marker	Site	
36	Dinosaur Provincial Park, Canada	GOOD
67	Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, USA	
87	Joggins Fossil Cliffs, Canada	
123	Miguasha National Park, Canada	
124	Mistaken Point, Canada*	
154	Papahānaumokuākea, USA	

16	Canadian Rocky Mountains, Canada	GOOD WITH SOME CONCERNS
19	Carlsbad Caverns National Park, USA	
58	Grand Canyon National Park, USA	
61	Great Smoky Mountains National Park, USA	
63	Gros Morne National Park, Canada	
96	Kluane / Wrangell-St. Elias / Glacier Bay / Tatshenshini-Alsek, Canada / USA	
116	Mammoth Cave National Park, USA	
139	Nahanni National Park, Canada	
152	Olympic National Park, USA	
168	Redwood National and State Parks, USA	
228	Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park, Canada/USA	
240	Yellowstone National Park, USA	SIGNIFICANT CONCERN
241	Yosemite National Park, USA	

236	▼ Wood Buffalo National Park, Canada	CRITICAL
48	▲ Everglades National Park, USA	

▲ The conservation outlook improved since 2014 ▼ The conservation outlook deteriorated since 2014
 * New site inscribed on the World Heritage List since 2015



Facts and figures: **Mesoamerica and the Caribbean**

- * **17** natural and **3** mixed World Heritage sites in **10** countries
- * **7,532,655** hectares in total
- * **8** marine and coastal sites
- * **1** transnational site
- * **2** sites listed as 'in danger'
- * **2** new sites since 2015

Regional Outlook: Mesoamerica and the Caribbean

Results of the IUCN World Heritage Outlook 2 show that, of all natural and mixed (both natural and cultural) World Heritage sites in Mesoamerica and the Caribbean, for 45% the conservation outlook is “good with some concerns”, for 45% it is of “significant concern” and for 10% the outlook is “critical”.

Conservation Outlook 2017 for natural World Heritage in Mesoamerica and the Caribbean



Two new sites were inscribed in Mesoamerica and the Caribbean since 2015:

Country	Site	Conservation Outlook 2017	Inscription year
Jamaica	Blue and John Crow Mountains	Good with some concerns	2015
Mexico	Archipiélago de Revillagigedo	Good with some concerns	2016

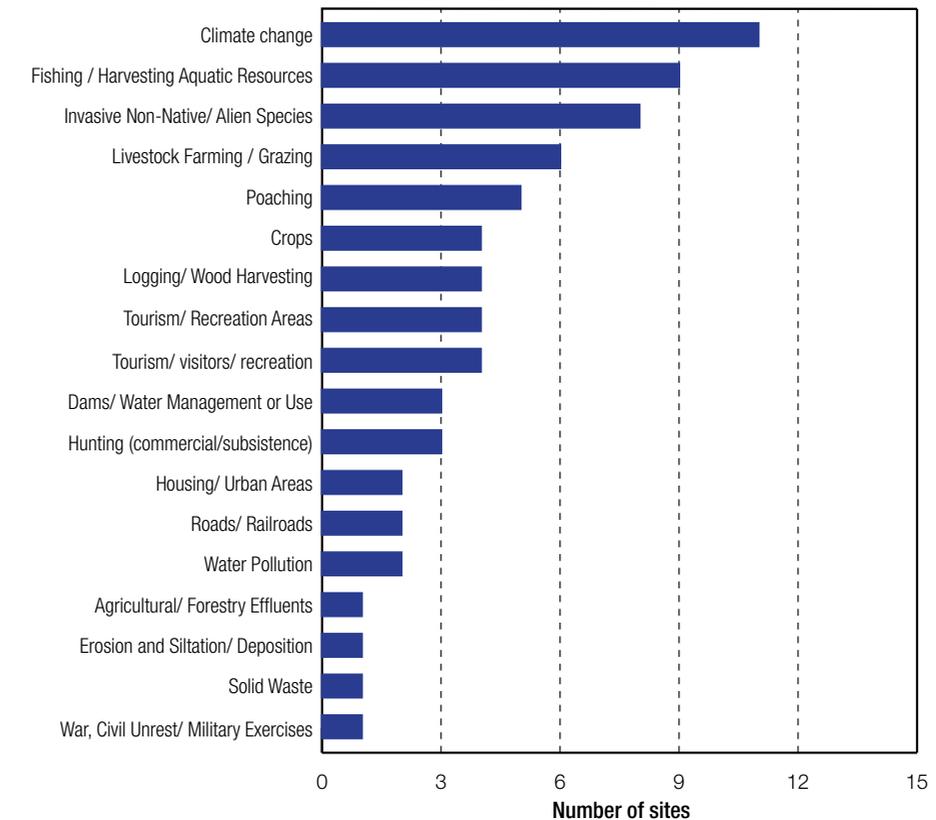
Among the sites that were inscribed up to 2014 are were therefore already assessed in the IUCN World Heritage Outlook 2014, the conservation outlook for one site changed since 2014:

Country	Site	Conservation Outlook 2014	Conservation Outlook 2017
Mexico	Islands and Protected Areas of the Gulf of California	Good with some concerns	Significant concern

Threats

Climate change, fishing and invasive species and the three most widespread current threats to natural World Heritage in Mesoamerica and the Caribbean. These are followed by livestock grazing and poaching.

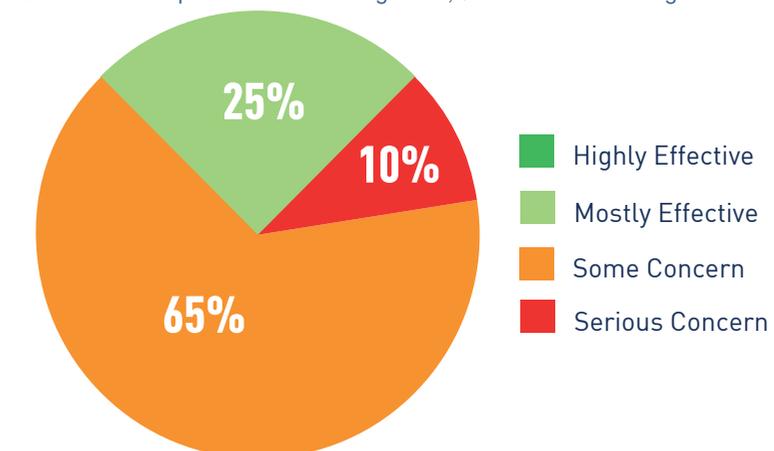
Current threats assessed as high or very high in 2017. Figures are based on the number of sites where these threats occur



Protection and management

Only 25% of natural sites in Mesoamerican and the Caribbean have effective protection and management. For 65% protection and management were assessed as being of some concern and for 10% they are of serious concern.

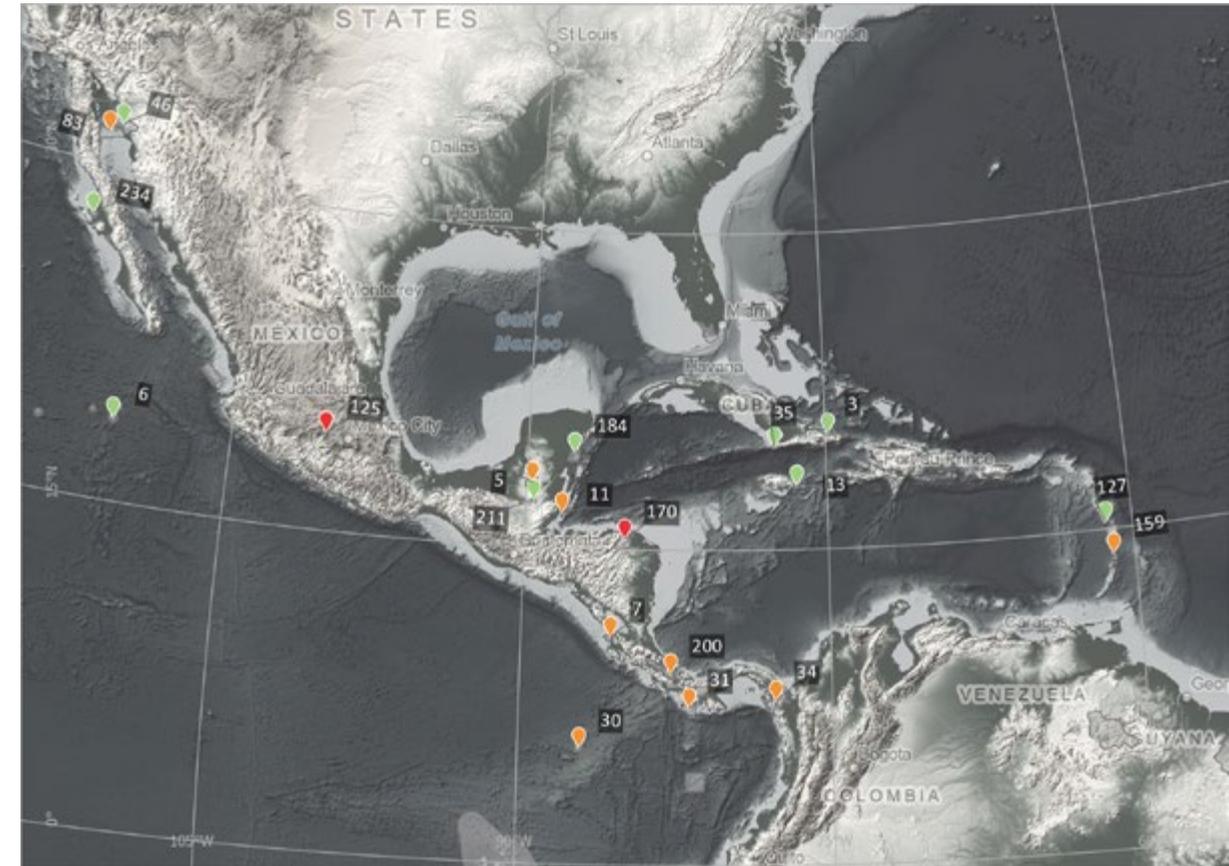
2017 results for protection and management, % of all sites in the region



Map marker	Site	GOOD
	No sites	
3	Alejandro de Humboldt National Park, Cuba	GOOD WITH SOME CONCERNS
6	Archipiélago de Revillagigedo, Mexico*	
13	Blue and John Crow Mountains, Jamaica*	
35	Desembarco del Granma National Park, Cuba	
46	El Pinacate and Gran Desierto de Altar Biosphere Reserve, Mexico	
127	Morne Trois Pitons National Park, Dominica	
184	Sian Ka'an, Mexico	SIGNIFICANT CONCERN
211	Tikal National Park, Guatemala	
234	Whale Sanctuary of El Vizcaino, Mexico	
5	Ancient Maya City and Protected Tropical Forests of Calakmul, Campeche, Mexico	
7	Area de Conservación Guanacaste, Costa Rica	
11	Belize Barrier Reef Reserve System, Belize	
30	Cocos Island National Park, Costa Rica	CRITICAL
31	Coiba National Park and its Special Zone of Marine Protection, Panama	
34	Darien National Park, Panama	
83 ▼	Islands and Protected Areas of the Gulf of California, Mexico	
159	Pitons Management Area, Saint Lucia	
200	Talamanca Range-La Amistad Reserves / La Amistad National Park, Costa Rica / Panama	
125	Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve, Mexico	CRITICAL
170	Río Plátano Biosphere Reserve, Honduras	

▲ The conservation outlook improved since 2014 ▼ The conservation outlook deteriorated since 2014

* New site inscribed on the World Heritage List since 2015



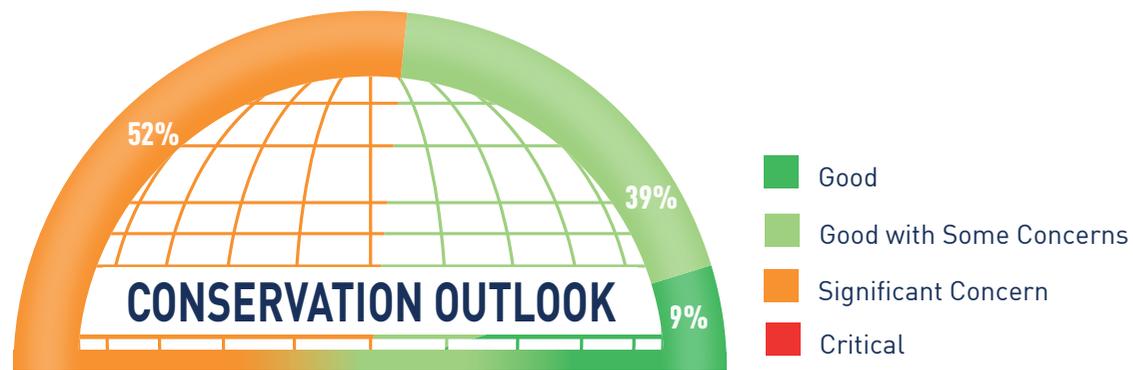
Facts and figures: South America

- * **21** natural and **2** mixed World Heritage sites in **8** countries
- * **32,675,087** hectares in total
- * **4** marine and coastal sites
- * **0** sites listed as 'in danger'
- * **1** new site since 2015

Regional Outlook: South America

Results of the IUCN World Heritage Outlook 2 show that, of all natural and mixed (both natural and cultural) World Heritage sites in South America, for 48% the conservation outlook is either "good" or "good with some concerns" and for 52% it is of "significant concern".

Conservation Outlook 2017 for natural World Heritage in South America



One new site was inscribed in South America since 2015:

Country	Site	Conservation Outlook 2017	Inscription year
Argentina	Los Alerces National Park	Good	2017

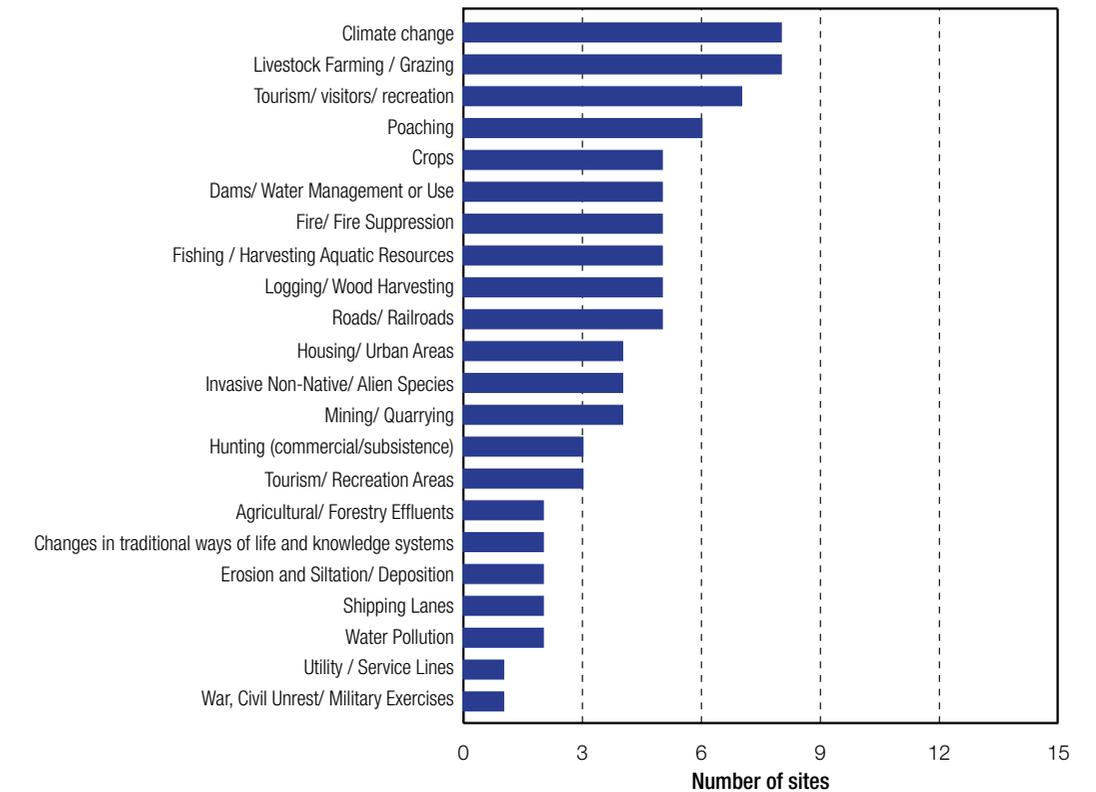
From the sites that were inscribed up to 2014 and therefore already assessed in the IUCN World Heritage Outlook 2014, for four sites conservation outlook has changed since 2014. For three it was an improvement and for one the conservation outlook has deteriorated:

Country	Site	Conservation Outlook 2014	Conservation Outlook 2017
Argentina	Península Valdés	Good with some concerns	Significant concern
Ecuador	Sangay National Park	Significant concern	Good with some concerns
Peru	Río Abiseo National Park	Significant concern	Good with some concerns
Brazil	Cerrado Protected Areas: Chapada dos Veadeiros and Emas National Parks	Significant concern	Good with some concerns

Threats

Climate change, livestock grazing and impacts from tourism are the most widespread significant current threats in South America.

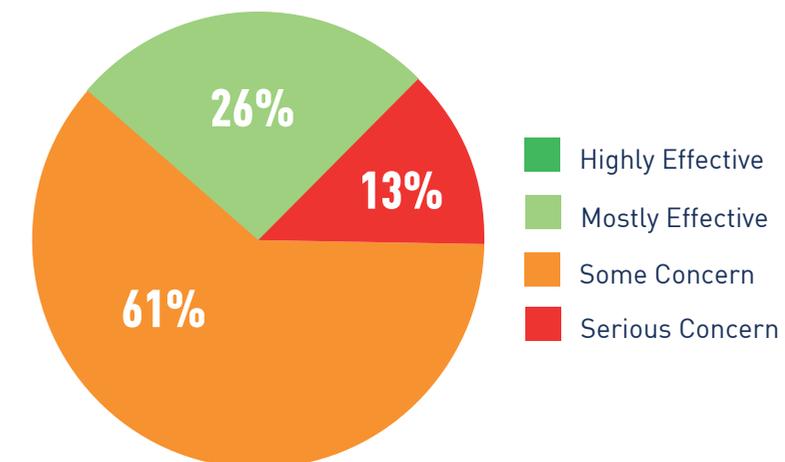
Current threats assessed as high or very high in 2017. Figures are based on the number of sites where these threats occur



Protection and management

Only 26% of natural World Heritage sites in South America have effective protection and management. For 61% protection and management were assessed as being of some concern and for 13% of serious concern.

2017 results for protection and management, % of all sites in the region



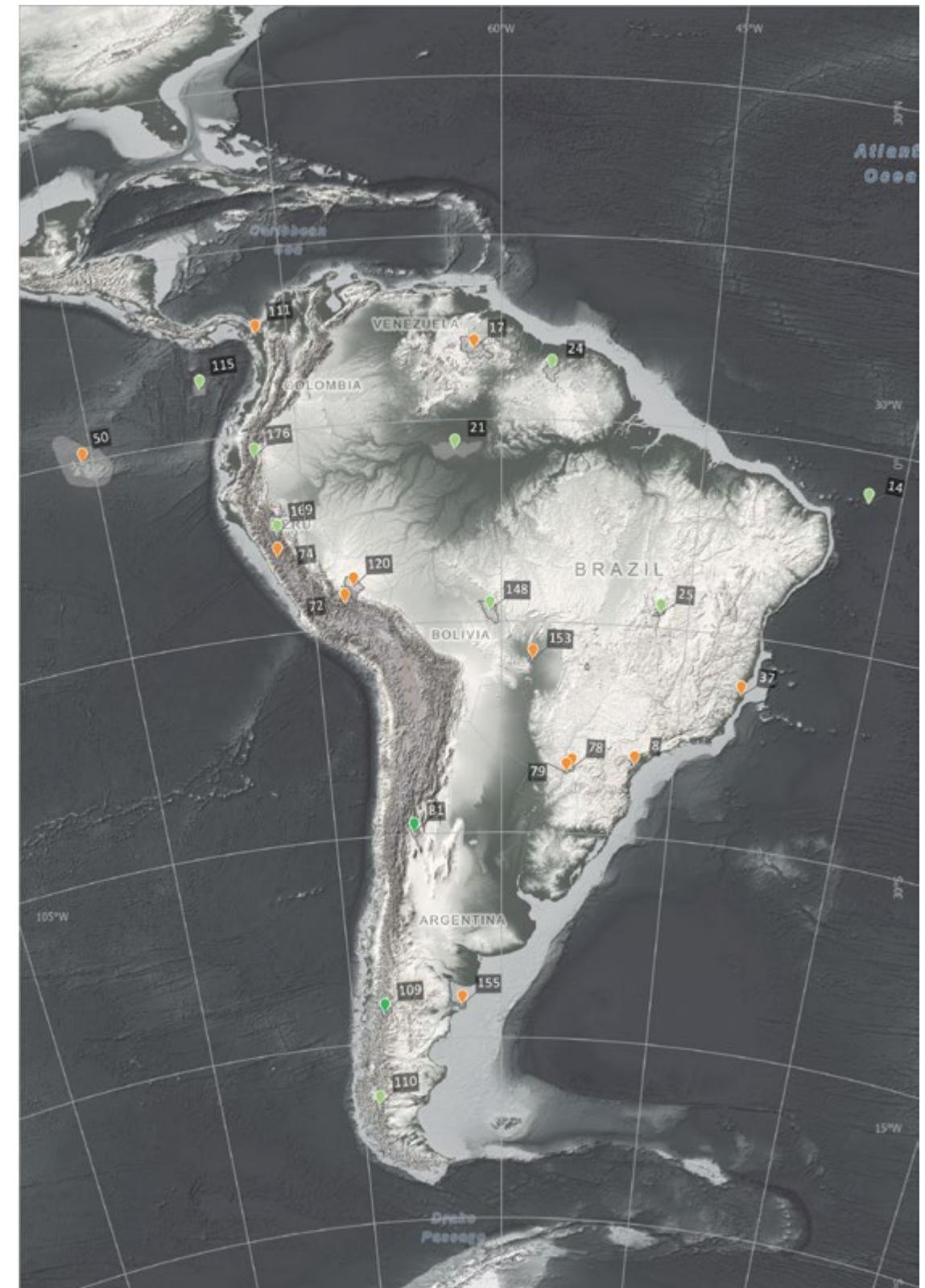
Map marker	Site	
81	Ischigualasto / Talampaya Natural Parks, Argentina	GOOD
109	Los Alerces National Park, Argentina*	

14	Brazilian Atlantic Islands: Fernando de Noronha and Atol das Rocas Reserves, Brazil	GOOD WITH SOME CONCERNS
21	Central Amazon Conservation Complex, Brazil	
24	Central Suriname Nature Reserve, Suriname	
25 ▲	Cerrado Protected Areas: Chapada dos Veadeiros and Emas National Parks, Brazil	
110	Los Glaciares National Park, Argentina	
115	Malpelo Fauna and Flora Sanctuary, Colombia	
148	Noel Kempff Mercado National Park, Bolivia	
169 ▲	Río Abiseo National Park, Peru	
176 ▲	Sangay National Park, Ecuador	

8	Atlantic Forest South-East Reserves, Brazil	SIGNIFICANT CONCERN
17	Canaima National Park, Venezuela	
37	Discovery Coast Atlantic Forest Reserves, Brazil	
50	Galápagos Islands, Ecuador	
72	Historic Sanctuary of Machu Picchu, Peru	
74	Huascarán National Park, Peru	
78	Iguaçu National Park, Brazil	
79	Iguazú National Park, Argentina	
111	Los Katíos National Park, Colombia	
120	Manu National Park, Peru	
153	Pantanal Conservation Area, Brazil	
155 ▼	Península Valdés, Argentina	

No sites		CRITICAL
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▲ The conservation outlook improved since 2014 ▼ The conservation outlook deteriorated since 2014
 * New site inscribed on the World Heritage List since 2015



Regional comparison

As shown in the previous chapters, significant regional differences could be observed again in 2017. In terms of the overall conservation outlook, North America remains the region with the highest percentage of sites “in the green” – with a positive conservation outlook in 90% of cases, followed by Oceania (81%) and Asia (74%). These are followed by Europe and Arab States – 63% and 62% respectively. Africa (48%), South America (48%) and Mesoamerica and the Caribbean (45%) are the three regions with the smallest percentage of sites whose outlook was assessed as good or good with some concerns.

Significant differences were also observed at the level of the three elements of outlook – values, threats, and protection and management. Oceania is the region with the highest percentage of effectively managed sites (95%), followed by North America (76%). Europe (49%) and Asia (48%) are comparative to the global average (48% of sites with highly effective or mostly effective protection and management) and other regions are below the global average – Africa (35%), South America (26%) and Mesoamerica (25%). No sites in the Arab States region were assessed as having effective protection and management.

As for the three most widespread significant current threats – invasive species, climate change and tourism, Oceania and Mesoamerica and the Caribbean are the regions with the highest number of sites where climate change was assessed as a high or very high current threat. Oceania and North America are the regions with the highest number of sites where invasive species were assessed as a high or very high current threat. Europe and Asia are the regions with the highest number of sites where tourism impacts were assessed as a high or very high threat.

Conclusions

The IUCN World Heritage Outlook 2 provides the first indicator of whether we are on track for meeting the 10-year agenda set by the Promise of Sydney in 2014: to secure a brighter conservation outlook for all natural World Heritage sites. Results show that, while we can still celebrate success in many sites, prospects are not improving overall.

Global results remain similar to 2014, with the conservation outlook being “good” or “good with some concerns” for 64% of sites, of “significant concern” for 29% and “critical” for 7%. While the big picture remains even, many changes in status have been assessed at the level of individual sites and regions, and in relation to threats and protection and management. The conservation outlook of 26 sites changed between 2014 and 2017: 14 improved and 12 deteriorated. As for new listings since the last report, 10 out of 13 of the new natural World Heritage sites are assessed in the green (good or good with some concerns), and for three sites the conservation outlook is assessed as of significant concern.

In terms of regional differences, North America has the highest percentage of sites in the green – 90%, followed by Oceania (81%) and Asia (74%). Europe and Arab States register 63% and 62% respectively. Africa (48%), South America (48%), and Mesoamerica and the Caribbean (45%) are the three regions with the smallest percentage of sites with a positive outlook. Africa remains the region with the highest percentage of sites with a critical conservation outlook, which reflects the fact that it is the region with the highest number of natural sites on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Overall, the World Heritage values of 70% of natural sites are considered to be in good condition or their state is of low concern, while in 27% the state of value is of high concern and in 3% critical. But the IUCN World Heritage Outlook 2 also shows that threats to these values are increasing overall, be they either existing or potential.

Invasive species, climate change and tourism impacts represent the three most significant current threats to natural World Heritage. Climate change is the fastest growing threat to natural World Heritage, with a 77% increase in sites where it is seen as a high or a very high threat (62 sites in 2017, compared to 35 in 2014).

Like in 2014, climate change remains by far the largest potential threat, with 55 sites where it was assessed as a high or very high potential threat in 2017. Major infrastructure development (roads, dams and tourism facilities), mining and oil and gas development are also among the top potential threats. Road construction has increased most significantly as a potential threat since 2014, with nearly twice as many sites that could be affected (22 sites where this threat was assessed as high or very high in 2017 compared to 12 in 2014). The number of sites which could be significantly affected by hydropower infrastructure development has grown from 13 to 17 and by construction of tourism facilities from 11 to 15 since 2014.

While pressure from threats is mounting, the overall effectiveness of protection and management of natural World Heritage sites has decreased since 2014. The percentage of sites where protection and management were assessed as overall effective or highly effective has dropped from 54% in 2014 to 48% in 2017, when comparing the 228 sites for which two assessments are available. This combination of increasing threats and less effective protection and management presents a clear risk to the World Heritage values of the sites. This strongly signals an opportunity to better utilise tools and standards which aim at increasing management effectiveness such as the developing proposals for IUCN's Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas.

The IUCN World Heritage Outlook 2 shows that we must refocus efforts on protection and management to secure a bright outlook for the planet's most iconic natural areas. Since the launch of the IUCN World Heritage Outlook in 2014, IUCN has strived to build on the results and the information collected to improve the state of conservation of the most threatened natural World Heritage sites by establishing site-specific partnerships with IUCN Members. The objective is to develop initiatives and projects collaboratively with IUCN World Heritage Outlook Partners, to help address the main challenges that these sites are facing, guide management efforts, and improve the effectiveness of their conservation.

Since 2016, seven non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have become IUCN World Heritage Outlook Partners: African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), BirdLife International, Fauna and Flora International (FFI), Frankfurt Zoological Society (FZS), Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), WWF, and the Zoological Society of London (ZSL). Combined, these international NGOs are working in about 100 natural World Heritage sites. It is hoped that the results of the IUCN World Heritage Outlook 2 will help further mobilise a network of organisations and experts around a common goal – to secure the highest level of protection to all sites and ensure a brighter outlook for natural World Heritage.

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Natural World Heritage sites

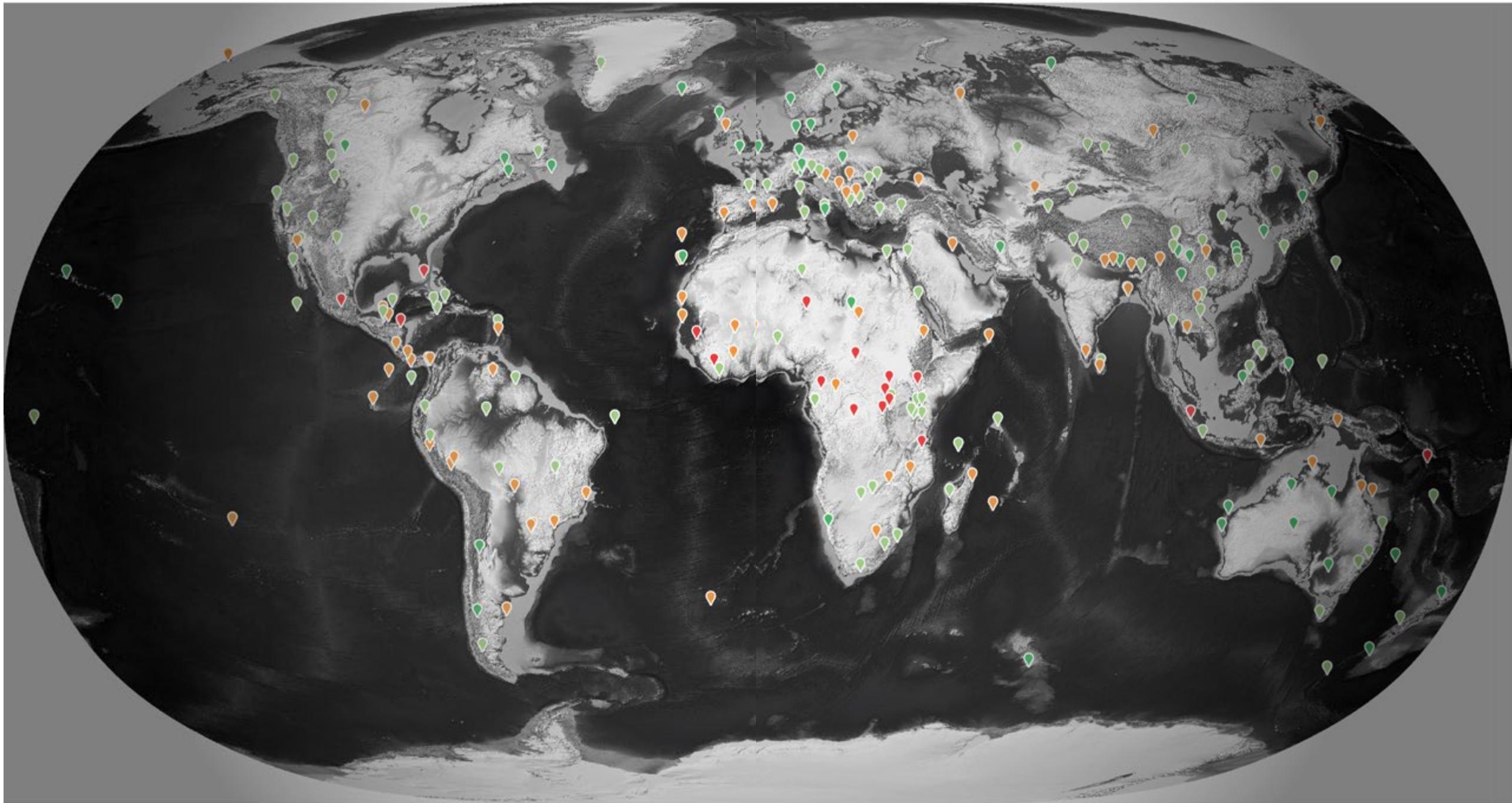


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