

ICOMOS

international council on monuments and sites

ICOMOS Launches Initiative to Highlight the Heritage Value of Transhumance Cultural Landscapes

Press Release

3 July 2024

Throughout the 20th century, the transhumance lifestyle has declined due to economic changes favouring settlements and reduced grazing areas. This decline has led to the erosion of built heritage, community disintegration, and the deterioration of intangible cultural practices. Climate change further threatens transhumance by making traditional pastures less viable and restricting adaptation due to competing land uses by industrial and urban development.

Led by ICOMOS and supported by the State Tourism Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the project strives to embrace the complex environmental, cultural and social dimensions of transhumance, promoting international cooperation and building awareness of its contribution to the heritage of humanity.

The initiative aims to:

- build a comprehensive understanding of transhumance as a way of life and a sustainable socio-ecological system;
- define parameters for the identification of transhumance landscapes and transhumance-related heritage places to achieve an improved representation in the World Heritage List and other international programmes;
- identify key challenges and opportunities in the safeguarding, management and transmission of transhumance-based landscapes and heritage places and map possible responses and good practices.

Through elaborating and delivering the **Thematic Approach to Transhumance Cultural Landscapes**, the project aims to strengthen the capacity in preparing robust nominations of properties illustrative of transhumance to the World Heritage List, facilitate their representation in other relevant international programmes and address key management challenges.

An international expert conference, to be held in Azerbaijan in 2025, will feed into the **Thematic Approach to Transhumance Cultural Landscapes**. The conference will bring into focus the lessons that can be learnt from this lifestyle and the services and benefits they provide to communities dependent on transhumance and society at large. It will also gather information on existing and possible policies for the conservation, persistence and sustainability of transhumance.

Key messages, including recommendations for improving the management, transmission and transition into the future of these landscapes will be summarized in a **Conference Declaration on Transhumance Cultural Landscapes of global importance**.

The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) is a non-governmental, not for profit international organisation, committed to furthering the conservation, protection, use and enhancement of the world's cultural heritage. With over 11,000 members, 110+ National Committees, 31 International Scientific Committees and several Working Groups, ICOMOS has built a solid philosophical, doctrinal and managerial framework for the sustainable conservation of heritage around the world. As an official Advisory Body to the World Heritage Committee for the implementation of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention, ICOMOS evaluates nominations and advises on the state of conservation of properties inscribed on the World Heritage List. www.icomos.org

The State Tourism Agency of Azerbaijan (STA), is a central executive authority that implements state policy and regulation in the field of tourism, as well as the protection of historical and cultural monuments located in the territories of state reserves under its jurisdiction. The STA oversees the development and execution of a unified state policy in the field of tourism, implementation of norm-setting activities, the governmental regulation, control, and arrangement in tourism, maintaining coordinated activities between other governmental bodies, and organizations, as well as with physical persons and legal entities, international and non-governmental organizations in terms of tourism development, protection and development of state cultural reserves under its jurisdiction and sustaining the purposive use of its resources, promotion and protection of national culinary samples. www.tourism.gov.az/en