

WORLD HERITAGE

AFRICAN HERITAGE and its sustainable development

Ennedi Massif
Chad

Grand Bassam
Côte d'Ivoire

**Bwindi & Rwenzori
National Parks**
Uganda

Mosi-oa-Tunya/Victoria Falls
Zambia/Zimbabwe



Cover: Ennedi Massif: Natural and Cultural Landscape, Chad.

WORLD HERITAGE No. 82

In this issue we are pleased to focus on the heritage of Africa and its sustainable development. The diversity and wealth of African heritage is extraordinary, from its large-scale ecosystems to modern architecture; from the memory of slavery and colonial heritage to cultural landscapes and sacred sites.

Preserving this heritage is an ambitious and challenging task. Once we move beyond the initial efforts to inventory this heritage, we must have goals that don't just focus on short-term gains, but work toward a larger vision: long-term sustainable development with benefits to the local communities. Part of this involves encouraging the reinvestment of financial earnings from sites into heritage conservation and best practice interpretation.

Effective efforts to preserve this heritage mean that we all must work together, and diverse stakeholders must collaborate for heritage conservation, not just at the local or national levels, but across borders to reinforce peace and security.

As George Okello Abungu points out in the introductory article, the question of whether heritage can be used sustainably for development seems to be no longer contested, and now the issue of heritage as a possible driver for development and community benefit has taken central stage.

In this issue of *World Heritage* we look at sustainable harvesting by local community members around Mosi-oa-Tunya/Victoria Falls (Zambia/Zimbabwe); tourism development at Bwindi Impenetrable and Rwenzori National Parks (Uganda); the mixed site of Ennedi Massif: Natural and Cultural Landscape in Chad, inscribed on the World Heritage List this year; and the N'zima people and the preservation of the French District of the Historic Town of Grand-Bassam (Côte d'Ivoire).

We will also look at the artisans in Timbuktu, whose expertise in preserving their earthen architecture is passed on from one generation to the next. In an interview with Webber Ngoro, Director of the African World Heritage Fund, we learn about the Fund's accomplishments and plans for its future as it celebrates its tenth anniversary.

I hope you will enjoy discovering the rich heritage of this continent, as we move forward together in preserving its treasures for the future.

Mechtild Rössler
Director of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre





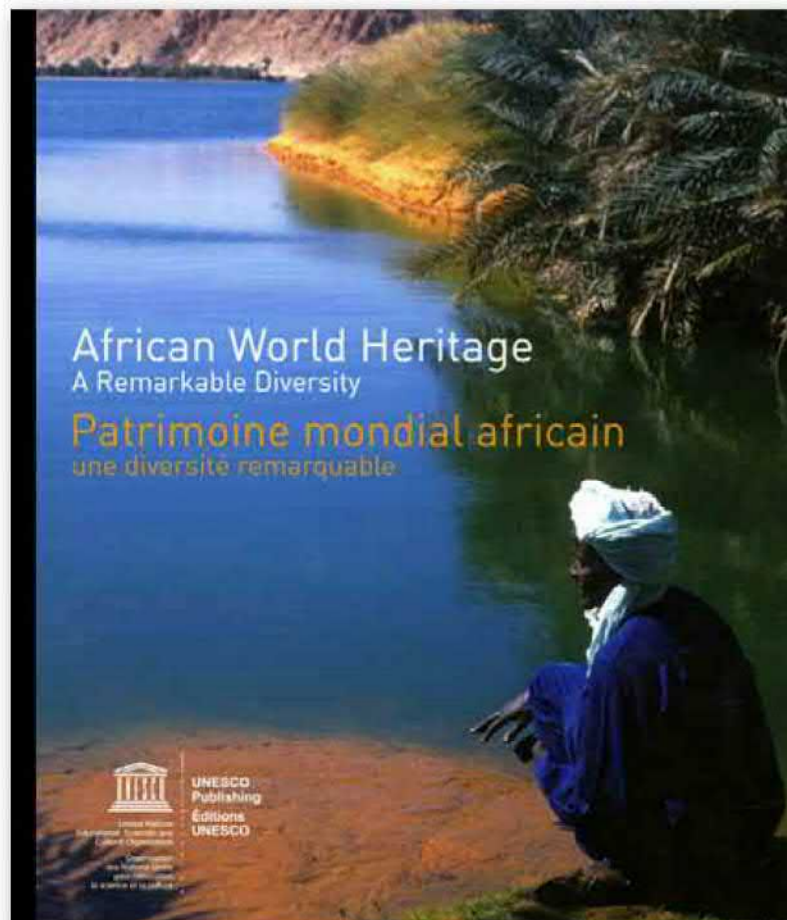
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African World Heritage A Remarkable Diversity



■ This publication presents for the first time a comprehensive overview of the World Heritage properties in the Africa region.

■ It highlights emerging issues, the impact on local communities and their role in managing and monitoring, ongoing research and new knowledge available on these properties since their inscription.

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Contents



In Focus
African Heritage and its sustainable development **6**



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African heritage and its sustainable development **6**

The subject of African heritage and its sustainable development has become one of the most discussed issues of late, both within and outside the continent.



Conservation based on indigenous knowledge: Mosi-oa-Tunya / Victoria Falls **16**

Dialogue and collective decision-making in development through stakeholder participation is a promising strategy if incorporated in World Heritage management programmes.



The N'Zima and the French District of Grand-Bassam **22**

The Ivorian authorities work on raising awareness among civil society and young people of the importance of taking care of and protecting the country's World Heritage assets.



Ennedi Massif, Chad **30**
A cultural and natural gem **30**

The inscription of the Ennedi Massif on the World Heritage List gives great pride not only to the native population but to all Chadian citizens, and will further encourage the local population to conserve and better manage the site.



Wealth creation through conservation: Bwindi Impenetrable and Rwenzori Mountains National Parks, Uganda **38**

Despite the challenges, Bwindi Impenetrable and Rwenzori Mountains National Parks have demonstrated that natural resources can trigger sustainable development and environmental conservation.

Ennedi Massif, Chad

A cultural and natural gem

Dr Baba Mallaye
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the World Heritage Convention in Chad

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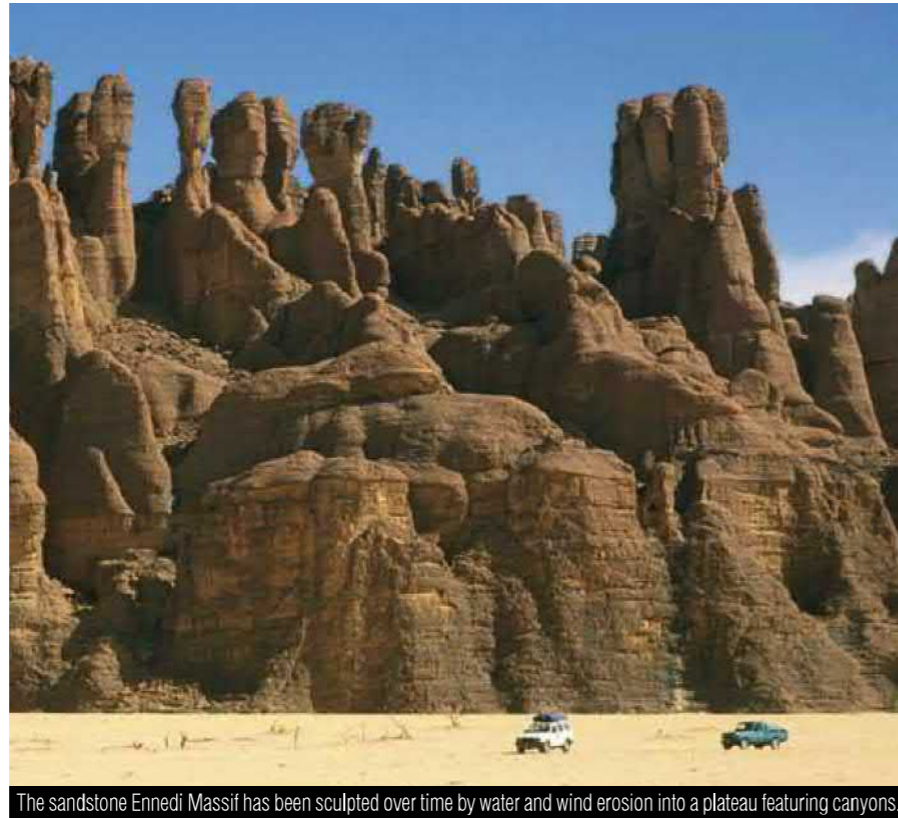
Aloba Arch.

© Stefan Kröpelin / Comité Technique

Located in the heart of Africa, with a surface area of 1,284,000 km², Chad is one of the African continent's largest countries. It is also one of the most multi-ethnic and pluricultural with a population of around 12 million inhabitants. The country has three climatic zones: the Sudanian, the Sahelian and the Saharan. All three zones have a wealth of natural and cultural wonders, such as Lake Chad and the ancient hominid sites of Djourab, notably those to the west of the Rift Valley that provided evidence of the first *Australopithecus*, and the site where the ancestor of humanity *Toumai* was discovered on 19 July 2001 by a team from the Centre national d'appui à la recherche du Tchad (National Centre for Research Support of Chad, formerly CNAR), during a mission initiated and conducted by Dr Baba Mallaye, director of the centre at the time. Chad's myriad marvels also include Tibesti, the Sahara's greatest mountain, the Lakes of Ounianga – first site in Chad to be inscribed on the World Heritage List, in 2012 – and a number of other sites featured on the Tentative List.

The Ennedi Massif lies in Eastern Sahara, in the northeast of Chad. Its inscription in July 2016 as a mixed site on the World Heritage List will contribute to its preservation for all humanity, and allow the world to discover its unique characteristics. Mixed sites represent only 3% of the inscribed World Heritage properties; in other words, there are only 33 sites in total, only five of which are in Africa. The inscription of the Ennedi Massif on the List sends out a powerful message, both for the State Party, advocating the conservation of other sites of Outstanding Universal Value, and also for a World Heritage List that is more equally balanced between continents. In fact, Africa, comprising 54 countries, accounts for only 12% of the sites inscribed as World Heritage.

Since 1999, a tight collaboration between the CNAR and the University of Cologne, in Germany, has spurred basic fieldwork research in an effort to expand the technical files and management plan for the site, within the framework of the technical committee responsible for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention in Chad. Thanks to the



The sandstone Ennedi Massif has been sculpted over time by water and wind erosion into a plateau featuring canyons.

© Stefan Kröpelin / Comité Technique

participatory approach taken, the local population has also been involved in all discussions and decisions, and throughout the entire process. As a developing country, Chad has important priorities to manage, notably education, health, food safety, etc. Despite these huge challenges the country faces, Chad's government has supported the project from the very beginning and has taken full responsibility for managing the conservation of the sites.

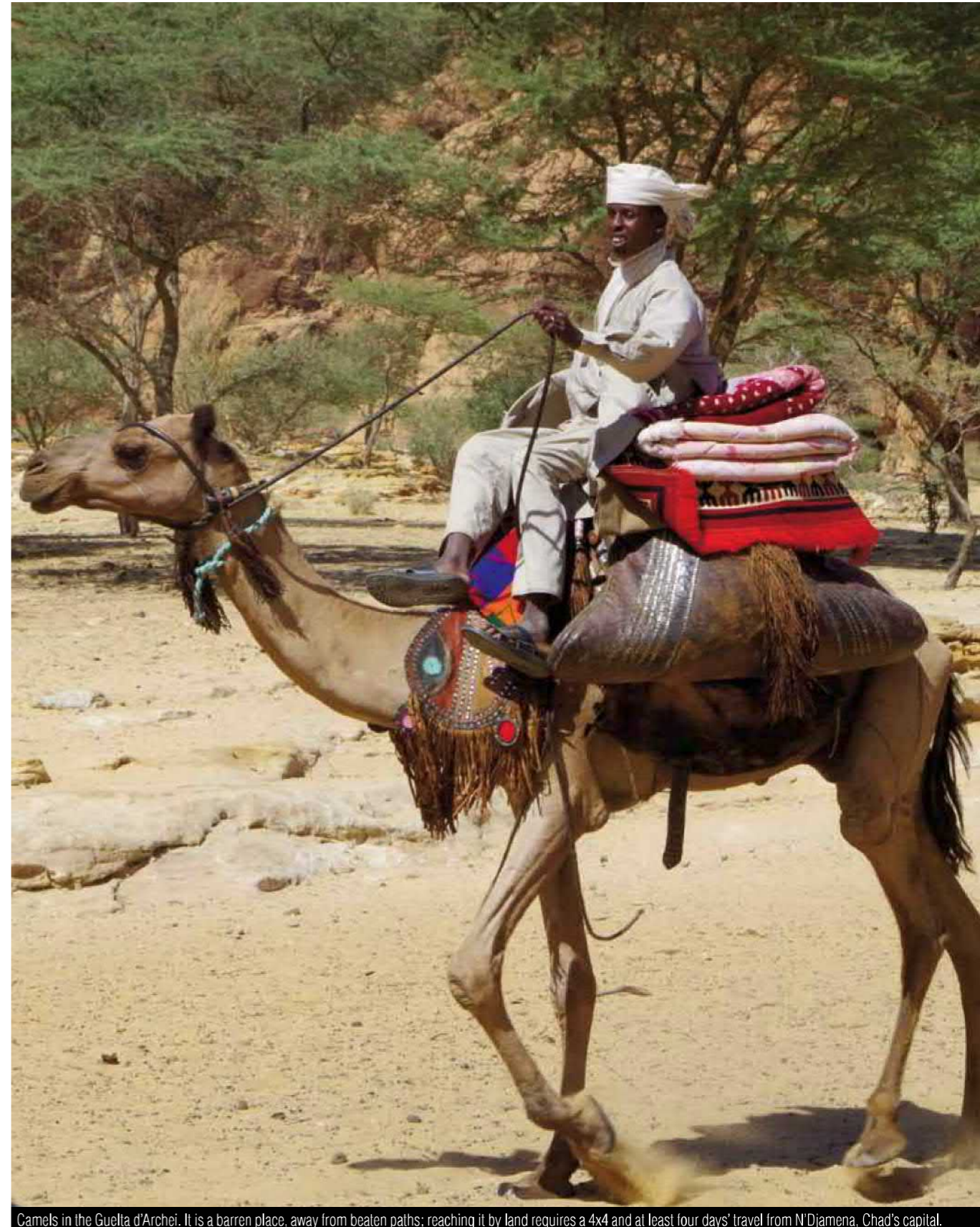
Ennedi Massif

The Ennedi Massif is one of the six mountain regions of the Sahara, which, expanding over 9 million km², encompasses only a dozen World Heritage sites, half of which are currently inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger. Ennedi is located on the southern borders of the eastern centre of this immense desert that dominates the north of Africa.

The Ennedi Massif is a triangular sandstone plateau stretching over some 40,000 km², an area nearly the size of Switzerland. The site covers 24,412 km², with a buffer strip of 7,778 km², making a total of 32,190 km².

For millions of years, water and wind erosion sculpted this plateau, carving out canyons and valleys to form spectacular landscapes. Permanent groundwater plays an essential role in the massif's ecosystem, ensuring the sustainability of the flora, fauna and humankind. On the rocky walls of the shelters and caves, thousands of images have been painted and engraved, forming one of the largest collections of rock art in the Sahara.

The Outstanding Universal Value of the Ennedi massif is based on a combination of three specific aspects: the natural beauty, the relict biodiversity and the rock art. Each of these attributes is unique and quite remarkable in itself; in their alliance, the wonder of nature's creativity is present in all its glory. These attributes can be classed under three criteria: iii (testimony to a civilization or cultural tradition which has disappeared), vii (natural phenomena of exceptional natural beauty) and ix (outstanding examples representing significant ongoing ecological and biological processes).



Camels in the Guelta d'Archei. It is a barren place, away from beaten paths; reaching it by land requires a 4x4 and at least four days' travel from N'Djamena, Chad's capital.

© Stefan Kröpelin / Comité Technique



Mushroom-shaped rock formations in surroundings of Guelta d'Archei.

© Stefan Kröpelin / Comité Technique

Natural beauty

Ennedi is abundant with landscapes of incomparable beauty: cliff silhouettes, rock formations, tassilis (plateaus), golden sand dunes, forest-covered valleys, lush gueltas (pockets of water), immense desert plateaus striped with ribbons of green, natural amphitheatres surrounded by gigantic red rocks, narrow gorges at dizzying heights, and arches – some slender and delicate, others massive and imposing. Some of the gorges and gueltas form a kind of tropical sanctuary, sheltering rich and dense vegetation – a completely unexpected sight in the heart of the Sahara.

Among the numerous examples of extraordinary beauty in the massif are the Archeï, Bachikélé, Koboué and Maya canyons and gueltas, the Oyo maze, the Terkeï mushroom rocks and the monumental Aloba arch – at a height of 120 m, it is the second tallest in the world. Everything, in Ennedi, evokes beauty and serenity. For thousands of years, little has changed! The Ennedi Massif is a magical place.

Exceptional fauna and flora

Ennedi is an ecosystem unparalleled in the Sahara, a true oasis of biodiversity inhabited by sahelian and tropical species in the heart of the desert. It is one of the last places, in the largest desert on the planet, to shelter species that were widely prevalent during the wettest periods of the 'green Sahara'. In this oasis exists a relict fauna and flora, concentrated for the most part in the gorges with water sources. One of the most iconic examples is the presence of crocodiles in the Guelta d'Archeï. These crocodiles have survived since the end of the river connections, thousands of years ago. They are the last survivors in the Sahara, other than populations in the Nile River Valley in Egypt and in Mauritania. To observe them in the heart of the desert is a unique sight that fascinates every visitor.

The Guelta d'Archeï holds a significant quantity of water and plays an essential role in the socio-economic life of local populations who roam the western

and southern foreland belts of Ennedi, given that the plateau has long been less travelled. Nomads often come long distances to reach the guelta so their camel herds can drink from these waters, said to have therapeutic properties.

In the neighbouring valley of Bachikélé, lush vegetation has also survived. It is an extraordinary experience to stand in such a niche ecological system, surrounded by dripping walls, vegetation and varied sahelian fauna, in the middle of a desert. For thousands of years, numerous plant species have been isolated in this botanic garden. For migratory birds, this is an indispensable water source on the long journey from sub-Saharan Africa to Europe, and back again.

For wildlife species that have disappeared in the last century, a vast reintroduction programme was launched in the area. It involves ostriches, dama gazelles, oryx and addax.



The Guelta d'Archei is inhabited by several kinds of animals, most notably the Nile crocodile (*Crocodylus niloticus Laurenti*).

© Eric Goethals / Comité Technique



Baboon at the Guelta Maya.

© Stefan Kröpelin / Comité Technique



Barbary sheep (*Ammotragus lervia*) in Archei.

© Stefan Kröpelin / Comité Technique



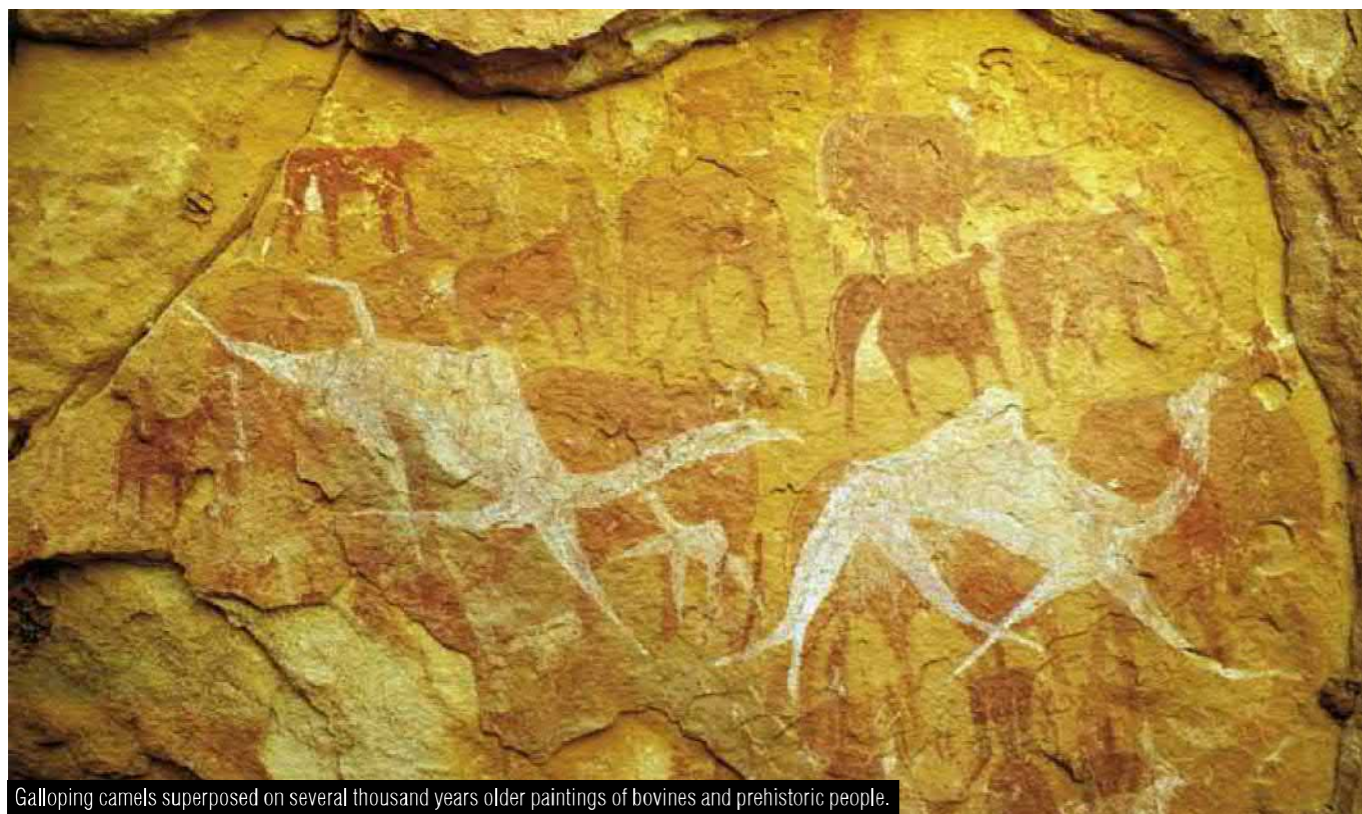
Acacia trees in one of the Ennedi's southwestern valleys.

© Stefan Kröpelin / Comité Technique



Thousands of images have been painted and carved into the rock surface of caves, canyons and shelters, presenting one of the largest ensembles of rock art in the Sahara.

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Galloping camels superposed on several thousand years older paintings of bovines and prehistoric people.

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The local population is involved in the conservation and in the management of the site.

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Rock art - A photograph of the past

The rock art found in the Ennedi Massif is among the most impressive examples in the world. Along with other archaeological remains, it provides evidence of the evolution of human life in the Sahara over a long period of time. Rock art is like a photograph of the past. There are engravings of an extraordinary size, but most abundant are the coloured and superimposed paintings of the prehistoric era. Numerous experts have agreed that certain particularities of the Ennedi Massif cave art are of outstanding value, for their style, quality and number, as well as for their state of preservation. It is clear that countless sites still remain to be discovered in the branched canyons and the vast unexplored plateaus.

The most ancient images date back to the time of resettlement in the Sahara at the end of the Ice Age, around 10,000 years ago. Hundreds of sites sheltering thousands of cave paintings and engravings provide us with valuable insight into the daily life and cultural and economic values of the people who once lived there, as well as of the key climatic and environmental changes.

An ideal sequence of superimposed layers begins with the engravings of archaic people with round heads, standing peacefully in the centre of rhinoceros or giraffe herds, suggesting that the savannah landscape was fully developed at the beginning of the wet period. These earthly paradise scenes are followed by imposing paintings of domestic bovines and detailed scenes of the life of prehistoric shepherds. The next phase features riders on horses in flying gallop, most likely of the Iron Age. The top layers show people riding camels, introduced less than 2,000 years ago in a much drier environment. The most recent drawings even show the introduction of vehicles in the last century. Thus, they remarkably and consecutively show human adaptation to the changing environments in the largest hot desert in the world, from the beginning of the 'green Sahara', to its progressive drying out, to the modern day.

Management

The inscription of the Ennedi Massif, in association with the establishment of the site as a protected area, reinforces the legal statutes regarding its management and protection. The effectiveness of the

conservation and management of the property by the local population has already been proved, as shown by the presence of the Archei crocodiles, who have survived for thousands of years. This traditional conservation and management also applies to the rock art, linked to traditional practices in which they are held to be sacred and must, for this reason, be conserved. The inscription of the Ennedi Massif on the World Heritage List, bestowing international recognition, gives great pride not only to the native population but to all Chadian citizens, and this will further encourage the local population to conserve and better manage the site. A combination of traditional and institutional management shall be implemented, to ensure that the authenticity and integrity of the site be respected by all, both national and international, visitors.

The Ennedi Massif is a unique natural and cultural jewel of the world. It is a landscape in which 10,000 years of climatic and cultural history are inscribed. It provides evidence to a time when the Sahara Desert was not a desert. It is a Louvre of the Sahara, a Noah's ark, a Garden of Eden in the Sahara. 🌍