Pitons, cirques et remparts de l’ile de la Réunion

2025 Conservation Outlook Assessment

INFORMATIONS

Country: France
Inscribed in: 2010
Criteria: (vii) (x)

RÉSUMÉ

2025 Conservation Outlook

Finalised on 11 oct 2025

PRÉOCCUPATION ÉLEVÉE

Invasive alien species (IAS), already considered at time of inscription to be a major threat, continue to increase and to have a high impact on the natural values of the property. The number of documents and strategies concerning the property are very impressive, but there is an urgent need to use all the knowledge gathered and put this into practice to combat this critical threat. While the fires of 2010 and 2011 amplified the IAS issues, good management, if maintained, will reduce this threat in the future. Some management concerns include governance (particularly collaboration between the Park and the ONF), law enforcement, hunting in the property, poaching, livestock grazing, and disturbance. Climate change is the great unknown but could have a catastrophic effect on the property.

FULL ASSESSMENT

Description of values

Values

World Heritage values

A dramatic landscape of striking beauty **Criterion:(vii)**

The combination of volcanism, tectonic landslides, and erosion by heavy rains and rivers has produced a rugged and spectacular landscape of striking beauty, dominated by two volcanoes, the dormant Piton des Neiges and the extremely active Piton de la Fournaise. Other major features of the landscape include the "remparts" – steep rock walls of varying age and geological nature, and the "cirques" which can be described as massive natural amphitheatres of dizzying height and verticality. Within the property there are deep, partly forested gorges and escarpments, with subtropical rainforests, cloud forests and heathland, all forming a mosaic of remarkable and highly aesthetic ecosystems and landscape features (World Heritage Committee, 2010; State Party, 2008).

Remarkable mosaic of ecosystems and landscape features **Criterion:(vii)**

The islands' tropical and subtropical forests, cloud forests, high-altitude grasslands and moors form a mosaic of remarkable and highly aesthetic ecosystems and landscape features (World Heritage Committee, 2010; State Party, 2008).

Exceptional plant diversity with a high degree of endemism **Criterion:(x)**

The property is a global centre of plant diversity with a high degree of endemism (WWF & IUCN, 1994). It contains the most important remaining natural habitats for the conservation of terrestrial biodiversity in the Mascarene Islands, including a range of rare and endemic high mountain forests and vegetation (World Heritage Committee, 2010; State Party, 2008).

Endemic and threatened birds **Criterion:(x)**

The property is a last refuge for the survival of a significant number of endemic and threatened species (World Heritage Committee, 2010). 10 endemic bird species or subspecies (plus 2 Mascarene endemic species) are primarily or entirely dependent on the property (State Party, 2008).

Endemic and threatened reptiles **Criterion:(x)**

The property is a last refuge for the survival of some endemic and threatened species. An endemic species of Phelsuma (Phelsuma borbonica), split into two distinct populations (Thébaud, 2013), is almost entirely restricted to the property (State Party, 2008).

Endemic and threatened invertebrates **Criterion:(x)**

The property is a last refuge for the survival of a large number of endemic and threatened species (World Heritage Committee, 2010). although the inventory of invertebrate species is far from complete, it is cited, for example, that 335 of the 844 inventoried species of beetles are endemic (State Party, 2008). This exceptional diversity of invertebrates is strongly linked to the exceptional diversity of habitats and plants.

Assessment information

Threats

Current Threats

High Threat

Invasive alien species (IAS) have been recognized as the greatest threat to the property and despite management actions, continue to be so. Other threats, such as fire, hunting, sporting events such as the "Grand Raid", as well as "natural" events such as cyclones and volcanic eruptions, also lead to an increase in IAS by opening up areas which are then colonised by IAS rather than native species, as well as causing erosion. While exemplary work has been undertaken for years to define strategies to combat invasive alien species, more action is needed on the ground. Fire, thanks to management measures, is regarded as less of a threat today than previously, although increased funding is necessary for effective fire prevention measures . Threats including illegal poaching of plants, unsustainable use and livestock grazing within the property still require management.

► Invasive Non-Native/ Alien Species

Very High Threat

(Invasive Alien Species)

Inside site, throughout(>50%)
Outside site

Recognized as the greatest threat to the property (State Party, 2008; IUCN, 2010), a strategy to manage invasive species was developed (PNRun et al., 2010) and many publications and projects have been undertaken by the National Park of Réunion (PNRun) and the Forestry Service (ONF) to sensitise the public about invasive species, to prevent new invasions, to map areas in order to guide management actions (Strasberg et al. 2005; Fenouillas et al., 2020), and finally to deal with the invasions (ONF 2015, 2016a, 2016b; Roussin, 2023), of which examples are provided in the Annual Reports of the National Park (e.g. PNRun, 2024). A coalition of partners managing invasive species, the GEIR (Groupe Espèces Invasives de La Réunion), brings together actors working on the "POLI", the operational plan against invasives which was reviewed by the Comité de l'eau et de la biodiversité and validated by the CSRPN. The new POLI (2024-2027) has been validated by the directors.

The restoration of natural environments project (REMINAT), funded by the Green Fund, aims to limit the spread of IAS. It is a joint project between the Park, CIRAD and the University of La Réunion, and involves action research into the development of IAS (IUCN consultation, 2024). ONGs such as SREPEN engage in public awareness activities to combat invasives. Targeted activities to deal with cats and rats which are threatening Critically Endangered species (Faulquier et al., 2009; Arrêtés 2021a, b) are undertaken. However, despite all these studies and outreach activities, the overall situation continues to deteriorate. Natural succession is severely compromised (e.g. Potgieter et al., 2014), and the progression of invasive plants has continued in areas no longer cleared due to financial constraints. New species of invasive plants continue to be detected (e.g. Augros, 2018).

► Fire & Fire Management

Low Threat

(Fires)

Inside site, scattered(5-15%)
Outside site

While fire in volcanic landscapes is natural, since human colonisation most fires that have had a significant impact are of anthropogenic origin. Fire mainly threatens the semi-dry, high-altitude and mesophilic areas of the property (State Party, 2008), and promotes the establishment and spread of invasive alien species. Repeated fires alter soils and the regeneration of native plants not adapted to fire. Two major fires in the leeward part of the property in 2010 and 2011 had a significant impact in the west of the island (PNRun, 2010; Muller & Échaubard, 2011); in 2020-2021 a major fire hit Maido (IUCN consultation, 2024). However, a fire management plan (ORSEC, 2020) including new firefighting strategies, reservoirs, availability of a Dash aircraft (France Info, 2024) and eco-guards (Réunionnais du monde, 2022) has been implemented. Provided this plan continues beyond 2025, the risk of catastrophic fire in the property is reduced. Nevertheless, increased funding for fire prevention is necessary, which is estimated at €1 million per year for maintenance and construction of new facilities (IUCN Consultation, 2025). The risk of a catastrophic fire, given how difficult fires are to control, would be high.

► Hunting, Collecting & Controlling Terrestrial Animals, Gathering, Harvesting & Controlling Terrestrial Plants & Fungi

High Threat
Inside site, scattered(5-15%)
Outside site

(Hunting)

A limited number of hunting permits for introduced tenrecs or "tangues" (Tenrec ecaudatis) are issued by the Forestry Service (ONF), which allows hunters to walk anywhere within the property and in doing so, they trample vegetation and open up trails which are vectors for invasive species. The legal hunters also illegally poach palms and orchids, and are not controlled sufficiently (IUCN Consultation, 2025). Deer are also an issue, as although once eradicated from the island, they were reintroduced and farmed for hunting in areas surrounding the property (State Party, 2008). While limited deer hunting is allowed (PNRun, 2014), deer are an invasive species for an island flora un-adapted to herbivores and should be removed (Salamolard & Fouillot, 2012). Although current numbers are relatively low, the Javan deer can cause significant damage to vegetation, including grazing on endemic species and facilitating the invasion of exotic plants.

► Recreational Activities

High Threat
Inside site, scattered(5-15%)
Outside site

(Sporting events and helicopter visits)

Excessive tourism results in increased waste and disturbance, especially during sporting events. The largest is the "Grand Raid" ultramarathon race, where around 5,000 athletes run through the property each year, with numerous impacts, not to mention the CO2 footprint of bringing many international visitors to the race (Heck, 2019). Tourism is subject to management plans (State Party, 2008; IUCN, 2010; PNRun, 2014), Already an issue at time of inscription, a great number of helicopters fly over the property (BLR, 2012). These flights impact visitor appreciation on the ground, but the obligatory altitude at which these flights can be made in order to protect the fauna is mostly respected (IUCN Consultation, 2025).

► Gathering, Harvesting & Controlling Terrestrial Plants & Fungi

Low Threat
Inside site, localised(<5%)
Outside site

(Illegal plant collection)

Cutting palms for their edible palm hearts and collecting orchids and medicinal plants was a problem at time of inscription (State Party 2008, IUCN 2010) and continues today. An orchid (Jumellea fragrans or "fahame") is widely collected to flavour rum, and used unsustainably (IUCN consultation, 2025).

► Residential Areas, Recreation & Tourism Areas

Low Threat
Inside site, localised(<5%)
Outside site

(Urban development)

The population of Réunion was 775,000 in 2005, 896,000 in 2025, and will likely exceed one million in 2030 (State Party, 2008). The extremely high population density is a threat to both landscape and biological values. However, these anthropogenic pressures with all the surrounding communities are addressed in the "Charte" (PNRun, 2014). The only inhabited part of the property (Mafate) is also the most degraded, and has an islet development plan (IUCN Consultation, 2025).

► Terrestrial Animal Farming, Ranching & Herding

Data Deficient
Inside site, extent of threat not known

(Livestock within the property)

Cattle farms continue to exist in the property and contribute to habitat degradation through grazing and the clearing of native species, while promoting the expansion of invasive species (e.g. areas around the Volcan, the Cassé de la Rivière de l'Est and at Piton de l'Eau; plus there are feral sheep and goats in the Cirque of Mafate) (State Party, 2008; BRL, 2012: PNRun, 2014). The situation appears not to have changed and cattle and goats continue to pose a threat to the values of the property (IUCN Consultation, 2025)., although the park was funded by ERDF to combat wild goats. Feral pigs, not previously present in the property, have also invaded (IUCN Consultation, 2025).

Potential Threats

High Threat

Climate change is the most serious potential threat, with increased temperatures, sea level, coastal erosion, landslides, and number and strength of cyclones, plus reduced rainfall, predicted. Prospecting for geothermal energy in the park would have seriously compromised its Outstanding Universal Value, but this project has been abandoned. While various hydroelectric, wind and solar projects are still under study (especially as a way to reduce C02 and climate change), at the same time they could have a negative effect on the OUV of the property.

▶ **Changes in Physical & Chemical Regimes, Changes in Temperature Regimes, Changes in Precipitation & Hydrological Regime**

High Threat
Inside site, throughout(>50%)
Outside site

(Climate Change)

Higher temperatures and lower precipitation have been recorded, with a 20 cm rise in sea level since the beginning of the 20th century, and all is set to increase in the future. In addition, cyclones will probably become more frequent and stronger, with increased coastal erosion and landslides (Grammont, 2021).

▶ **Renewable Energy**

Low Threat
Outside site

(Renewable energy infrastructure)

Exploration for geothermal energy in the park would have seriously compromised its Outstanding Universal Value, but this project was abandoned (World Heritage Committee, 2010). Various hydroelectric, wind and solar projects are still being assessed (BRL, 2012; PNRun, 2014; IUCN Consultation, 2025). The development of renewable energy projects remains a concern, even if they are unlikely to be developed within the property. However, even outside of the property, these projects could potentially have negative impacts on the OUV (IUCN Consultation, 2025).

Overall assessment of threats

High Threat

Invasive alien species (IAS) have been recognized as the greatest threat to the property and despite management actions, continue to be so. Other threats, such as fire, hunting, sporting events such as the "Grand Raid", as well as "natural" events such as cyclones and volcanic eruptions, also lead to an increase in IAS by opening up areas which are then colonised by IAS rather than native species, as well as causing erosion. While exemplary work has been undertaken for years to define strategies to combat invasive alien species, more action is needed on the ground. Fire, thanks to management measures, is regarded as less of a threat today than previously, although increased funding is necessary for effective fire prevention measures . Threats including illegal poaching of plants, unsustainable use and livestock grazing within the property still require management. Potential threats include climate change which will likely exacerbate current threats, as well as potential renewable energy projects, which could have negative effects on the OUV of the property.

Protection and management

Assessing Protection and Management

▶ **Involvement of stakeholders and rightsholders, including indigenous peoples and local communities, in decision-making processes**

Mostly Effective

Engagement by local communities and stakeholders is high, as most (20 of the 24 surrounding communies) have adhered to the "Charte", an agreement of shared objectives with all relevant local communities, and a requirement for all French National Parks (State Party, 2008; PNRun, 2014). Local communities are engaged in governance (see below) although there are many conflicting interests,

making decision-making and implementation difficult at times. But stakeholders and local communities are clearly involved in decision-making processes (PNRun, 2014).

▶ Legal framework — Highly Effective

The property was declared a National Park in 2007, with a management structure in place (State Party, 2008, PNRun, 2014). 33,474 ha within the National Park (which covers 105,447 ha) were already designated "Réserves biologiques", thus were already legally protected and managed by the Forestry Service (ONF, 2006).

▶ Governance arrangements — Some Concern

The Park is a public institution with a decisional Administrative Council (88 members) which delegates a smaller group (the Bureau, 15 members) to prepare and monitor the work plan. This group is guided by various advisory bodies: the Scientific Council; the Economic, Social and Cultural Council; and various thematic and geographical commissions. An audit of the park (Ministère de l'environnement, de l'énergie et de la mer, 2016) recommended among other things a convention between the Park and the Forestry Service (ONF), the historical managers of the land. Governance with so many different interest groups (e.g. farmers, hunters, fishers, the tourism sector, foresters, conservationists) in a complex local context makes governance complicated, and Park managers have encountered difficulties in the past. The audit of 2016 was contested on numerous points by the Park managers. It is clear that governance issues are complicated, but also that enormous efforts are being made to improve governance with much thought being put into the process, which is closely linked to the "Charte" (the agreement between the park and most of the neighbouring communes to engage in conservation and sustainable development activities). Members of the current Administrative Council were appointed for a 6 year term in 2020, and the current Park Director is in place since 2017.

▶ Integration into local, regional and national planning systems (including sea/landscape connectivity) — Mostly Effective

Due to the governance system bringing together representatives from local, regional and national bodies in the large Administrative Council of the Park (88 members), integration with other planning systems should in theory be accomplished.

▶ Boundaries — Mostly Effective

The boundaries of the property are based on the core area of the National Park, which represents 96% of all the remaining natural areas on the island of Reunion. Excluded are the three major inhabited areas inside the "cirques", in order to avoid potential conflict with urban development plans. The idea being that these inhabited areas would serve as gateways to the park (IUCN, 2010).

▶ Overlapping international designations — Data Deficient

N/A

▶ Implementation of World Heritage Committee decisions and recommendations — Data Deficient

The most recent WHC decision (37 COM 7B.20) of 2013 recommended strengthening invasive alien species management (done in part) and removing cattle from the property (not done); strengthening guava removal from the property and restructuring the guava fruit production activities in the buffer zone (status unsure); fire management (done); tourist management strategy, in particular addressing the impact of major sporting events (not done); abandonment of the geothermal project in the Plaine des Sables (done). Since 2013, no further decision or recommendation was addressed to the property.

▶ Climate action — Mostly Effective

Various actions have been carried out to strengthen site-level climate action including the development of regional and local climate change models 2021-2023, the launch of a reflection on the issues of climate change on the property, and an integration of climate change issues in the revision of the

"Charte" of the National Park (State Party of France, 2024).

► Management plan and overall management system — Some Concern

At time of inscription, the property did not have an overall Management Plan, and the "Charte", adhered to by 20 of the 24 surrounding communes (PNRun, 2014), was accepted as a de facto Management Plan for the property (IUCN, 2010). However, while the "Charte" has a vision for the property as a whole, it is more an instrument for outlining rules and responsibilities of various stakeholders. A number of specific Action Plans for species and workplans developed by the Park Director and Administrative Council have since been developed. The most recent being a 4 year "Projet d'Etablissment" (CA, 2024), which outlines a strategy with several objectives and activities (one of which is to prepare a Management Plan for World Heritage). The "Projet de l'Etablissment" is linked to the "Charte", which was signed in 2014 for a period of 15 years (CA, 2024). Another activity is to evaluate implementation of the "Charte", and a consultancy group (BRL) has been mandated to do this and to provide recommendations for all modifications to the Administrative Council in Oct-Nov 2025 (IUCN Consultation, 2025). In conclusion, the "Projet d'Etablissement" appears to be the Management Plan for 2024-2028 (CA, 2024).

► Law enforcement — Some Concern

Regulations for all activities are outlined in the "Charte" (2014). Activities within the "Projet d'Etablissement" 2024-2028 include modernisation of these regulations (particularly concerning "photography, sound recording, camping, access, hunting, noise, etc."); implementation of the law; providing the means to implement the law; and liaison with the police among other activities (CA, 2024). The number of guards patrolling the Park was not available for this evaluation, but numerous illegal activities have been observed within the park with no sanctions enforced, which raises some concerns (IUCN Consultation, 2025).

► Sustainable finance — Data Deficient

According to the latest periodic report, the budget is acceptable, but could be increased in the future in order to adequately respond to management needs (State Party periodic report, 2024). Reduced funding for invasive alien species has been reported, with a number of trails in the property closed as there is no funding available to ONF to clean them (IUCN Consultation, 2025). However, there is a lack of detailed information to assess sustainable finance.

► Staff capacity, training and development — Highly Effective

A local capacity-building programme exists and is fully implemented. All technical skills are imparted to those who manage the property locally (State Party of France, 2024).

► Education and interpretation programmes — Highly Effective

The Park manages an excellent interpretation centre and is involved with numerous school groups (see: https://www.reunion-parcnational.fr/fr/des-actions/accueillir-et-sensibiliser/education-lenvironnement-et-au-developpement-durable).

► Tourism and visitation management — Some Concern

Adventure tourism (hiking, canyoning, paragliding, sports events) is significant, with potential environmental impacts, and is a major focus of the "Charte" (as well as a reason for inscribing he property as World Heritage, with the hope to increase nature-based tourism). The "Charte" identifies "13 gates and discovery paths", which highlight the natural, cultural and landscape heritage of the island (PNRun, 2014). A representative from the Office of Tourism sits on the Administrative Council of the Park. According to the State Party's periodic report (2024), there is no strategy to manage the flow of visitors, tourism activity and its impacts on the property. Therefore, although visitation is managed (mainly in areas of high visitation, such as the volcano when it is erupting), improvements could be made (State Party of France, 2024).

► Sustainable use — Some Concern

Managed hunting (tenrec and Javan deer, both invasive alien animals) is permitted in the property, but this has negative consequences on biodiversity values (trampling, pathways for poaching). Ideally the deer should be eradicated from the property, but there is a strong hunting lobby (IUCN Consultation, 2025). Agricultural activities have also been permitted within the property (PNRun, 2014) although cattle rearing in the property has negative consequences. Collection of ferns and orchids (for gardens, but also Jumellea fragrans or "fahame" is collected for flavouring rum), and certain medicinal plants, is uncontrolled.

▶ Monitoring — Some Concern

Permanent plots to monitor vegetation change was implemented in the DIVINES project from 2016-2019 and monitoring is also outlined in the "Charte" (PNRun, 2014). Nevertheless, there are no monitoring protocols linked to specific activities outlined in the "Projet d'Etablissement" (CA, 2024).

▶ Research — Mostly Effective

Numerous publications, especially concerning invasive alien species, but also on the flora, fauna and other values of the property, have been published. The only concern is that at times research may have taken priority over actual management, possibly contributing to the degradation of World Heritage values (IUCN Consultation, 2025).

▶ Effectiveness of management system and governance in addressing threats outside the site — Mostly Effective

The "Charte" (a document and process required for all French National Parks), is an agreement between nearly all the communes surrounding the property, and is a major tool in addressing threats outside the site.

▶ Effectiveness of management system and governance in addressing threats inside the site — Some Concern

The greatest threat to the property, invasive alien species, appears to be increasing (IUCN Consultation, 2025), despite both the management and governance system aimed at addressing this issue. Examples of strategies that have ben developed (Julliot et al., 2014), only to be duplicated several years later, indicate that the management system is not as effective as it could be. Budget reductions with the principle managers of the property, the Forestry Service (ONF) have resulted in trails that were previously cleared of alien invasive species being closed, creating new nodes of invasion (IUCN Consultation, 2025). While the great threat of fire within and surrounding the property has been well dealt with by management (and needs to be sustained), issues such as hunting in the property leading to plant poaching, insufficient policing, livestock grazing and disturbance by massive sporting events continue despite a management system in place.

Overall assessment of protection and management — Some Concern

The greatest threat to the property, invasive alien species, appears to be increasing, despite both the management and governance system aimed at addressing this major issue. While the legally mandated "Charte" is important for stakeholder involvement in the property, a Management Plan with clear activities, indicators and measurable milestones for monitoring is still required. The "Projet d'Etablissement" appears currently to be the Management Plan for 2024-2028. Law enforcement to ensure the agreed-upon regulations appears to be weak as activities like plant collection are continuing in an uncontrolled manner. A significant threat to the property, the wildfires of 2010 and 2011 and 2020, have been well dealt with by management and it is essential that the measures are maintained. Issues such as hunting in the property leading to plant destruction and poaching, insufficient policing, livestock grazing and disturbance by massive sporting events continue despite a management system in place.

▶ Good practice examples

A methodology to map the property and identify priority sites for management (Fenouillas et al., 2020) is an important step in the fight to manage invasive alien species, and could inspire other World Heritage site managers.

State and trend of values

Assessing the current state and trend of values

World Heritage values

▶ **A dramatic landscape of striking beauty** — **Low Concern** — **Trend:Stable**

The exceptional landscape values of the property remain in good condition, even if many of the vertiginous slopes are covered with monotypic invasive species (which was the case at time of inscription).

▶ **Remarkable mosaic of ecosystems and landscape features** — **High Concern** — **Trend:Deteriorating**

The most threatened ecosystem of the property is the semi-dry forest in the west of the island, which was further stressed by the fires of 2010 and 2011, with the creeper Hiptage benghalensis rapidly invading (particularly in Mafate, the most degraded part of the property). LIFE-funded collaborative projects to restore this forest have been undertaken since 2009 (LIFE+ Corexerun 2009-2014 with 30 ha of restored forests and 9 ha of planted forests) was continued by the LIFE+ Forêt Sèche 2014-2020 project (www.foretseche.re). Since 2020 there appears to be no further news. However, plant invasions continue to further deteriorate other habitat types as well, especially in ravines and on the steep ramparts. A map and methodology to identify priority sectors and actions to combat invasives has been developed (Fenouillas et al., 2020) and will serve as a basis for monitoring the impact of plant invasions, especially in the more or less primary habitats of the island which are less subject to invasion. Needed now is action on the ground is this value is to be maintained.

▶ **Exceptional plant diversity with a high degree of endemism** — **High Concern** — **Trend:Deteriorating**

The most recent conservation assessment of the vascular flora of Reunion is very worrying as it shows a sharp deterioration: 41% of the vascular flora was threatened in 2023, compared to 30% in 2010 (UICN France et al., 2023). Five National Action Plans (NAPs), led by the Conservatoire botanique national de Mascarin have already been implemented (Polyscias aemiliguineae, Polyscias rivalsii, Poupartia borbonica, Ruizia cordata, Zanthoxylum heterophyllum). A National Action Plan for critically threatened species on Réunion was published in 2021 (CBN, 2021).

▶ **Endemic and threatened birds** — **Low Concern** — **Trend:Improving**

The three most threatened birds in the property, the Réunion Cuckooshrike (CR), Réunion Black Petrel (CR), and Barau's Petrel (EN) all have active conservation actions which in a large part consist of controlling rats and cats as well activities mitigating light pollution and cables (https://www.seor.fr/page-14-17-conservation-des-especes.html). The Cuckooshrike has had two National Action Plan (Salamolard, & Ghestemme, 2004; Samolard & Fouillot, 2012). There is a current National Action Plan for the two Petrels (Virion et al., 2021) after an earlier one on the Black Petrel (Riethmuller , 2012). While these species continue to be highly threatened, conservation action has resulted in an improvement of their status—although these actions will need to be maintained. The Réunion Harrier (EN) is also highly threatened. While its population has remained stable until recently, it may now be declining, attributed to many factors of which including habitat loss and secondary poisoning by rat poisons (Birdlife Intl, 2021). While a number of bird species on the island are extinct, the few others which remained have a

fairly good conservation status. There is some discussion about introducing closely related species that survived on other islands but which became extinct on Réunion (e.g. parakeet, SEOR https://www.seor.fr/page-14-17-conservation-des-especes.html; CCEE, 2022).

▶ **Endemic and threatened reptiles** — **Data Deficient** — **Trend:Data Deficient**

The two extant species of reptiles on the island are highly threatened, and the Endangered Réunion Day Gecko (Phelsuma borbonica) has been split into two distinct populations (Thébaud, 2013). A project to reintroduce this species as part of the dry forest restoration project (www.foretseche.re) was undertaken, but as the project finished in 2020 there is no recent information on their website. A National Action Plan on the green geckos (Sanchez & Caceres, 2019) is in progress and some have been introduced, however there is no update on their status (IUCN Consultation, 2025).

▶ **Endemic and threatened invertebrates** — **Data Deficient** — **Trend:Data Deficient**

Knowledge of the exceptional invertebrate diversity (inventory, distribution, threat assessment) needs to be improved for many groups that are either little or not studied at all.

Summary of the Values

▶ **Assessment of the current state and trend of World Heritage values** — **High Concern** — **Trend: Deteriorating**

The documented deterioration in several values for which the property was inscribed (mosaic of ecosystems, exceptional flora, and possibly some bird, lizard and invertebrate species) are of high concern. While causes for the decline are several, the most significant is loss of natural habitat due to invasive alien species. It is of utmost importance that concrete and directed long-term actions to manage invasives and restore priority habitats are undertaken as soon as possible.

Additional information

Benefits

Understanding Benefits

▶ **Soil stabilisation,**
Coastal protection,
Water provision (importance for water quantity and quality)

Forested slopes provide coastal protection, soil stabilization and groundwater renewal.

Factors negatively affecting provision of this benefit :
- Invasive species Impact level - High, Trend - Increasing

▶ **Commercial wells**

Mineral water (e.g. Cilaos) is collected and bottled, an important resource for both the local population and tourists.

▶ **Importance for research**

There is a high level of scientific research on a range of subjects, such as plant succession and invasive species, knowledge which is important both locally and internationally.

▶ **Wilderness and iconic features**

Although the site is too small to be truly described as "wilderness" , in relation to the size of the island and the inaccessibility of its mountains and valleys, the sense of "wilderness" can clearly be felt in some parts of the property.

Factors negatively affecting provision of this benefit :
- Invasive species Impact level - High, Trend - Continuing
- Habitat change Impact level - Low, Trend - Continuing

► **Collection of medicinal resources for local use,**
Outdoor recreation and tourism,
Natural beauty and scenery

The property is extremely important for outdoor recreation and tourism, which is a benefit as well as a threat to certain values if not properly managed. Its natural beauty and scenery is part of this benefit. The local population also benefit from medicinal plant collection, some of which may be unsustainable.

► **Legal subsistence hunting of wild game,**
Collection of wild plants and mushrooms

Hunting (legal and illegal) of the introduced tenrec provides locally valued meat, as does the collection of wild fruits such as Strawberry Guava (Psidium cattleyanum), which is one of the major invasive alien species, but its fruits are widely collected both within and outside the property and processed into guava paste, syrup and jams. The "fahame" orchid (Jumellea fragrans) is collected, at times unsustainably, to flavour rum.

Summary of benefits

The "wilderness" and scenic beauty of the property provide important benefits for recreation and tourism, and densely forested areas are important for soil stabilisation and water provision. The property is a laboratory for scientific research. Sustainable (and unsustainable) products such as tenrec meat, medicinal plants, guava and the "faham" orchid which is used for flavouring rum are widely appreciated by the local population.

RÉFÉRENCES

№	Références
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