Parc national
de La Réunion

Sister Park Arrangement

between

Parc national de la Reunion

&

Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park

Government of France
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Department of National Parks
France
and
National Park Service
United States of America

BACKGROUND:

The US National Park Service (NPS) of the United States of America and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Department of National Parks, France have determined that cooperation concerning the conservation, preservation, and management of national parks and other protected natural and cultural heritage sites for the purpose of conservation, recreation, and public education is mutually beneficial. Within this framework of cooperation two national parks – Parc national de la Reunion (La Reunion National Park (LRNP) and Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park (HAVO)- wish to establish a sister park arrangement to further collaboration and cooperation.

LA REUNION AND HAWAI'I VOLCANOES NATIONAL PARKS

The « Parc national de la Réunion » (La Reunion National Park (LRNP)) has been created as the ninth French National Park on March 5, 2007 and is committed to taking care of the World Heritage Site in La Réunion by providing streamlined and coherent management under the umbrella of its Board of Directors composed by many various institutions and non environmental profit organizations. The representative of the local councils and of the French state are part of the board . The site, the official title of which, as named by UNESCO, is « Piton, Cirques and Remparts of Reunion Island » was officially designed a World Heritage Site in 2010. Reunion National Park covers 40 % of the island (1054,47 km square), as the Heritage World site which corresponds to the National Park core area and includes a few different sites out of the park because of their natural or cultural value. Reunion is the highest mountain into the Indian Sea after the Kilimanjaro. It is an exception among the numerous tropical islands. Its mountain core

is home to awesome landscapes crowned by two volcanic massifs not far from each others but of different ages, and three cirques where men settled only recently. High remparts with spectacular dimensions carve and often inaccessible relief rich in preserved natural habitats. This small piece of land with volcanic bouts is also well-known as one of the world's biodiversity hotspot : it is home to rare flora and fauna types with a high number of endemic species. An epitome of natural history, the island's center provides a rare insight into dramatic examples of evolution.

With less than four centuries of human settlement, Reunion island is an experimental ground of life forms; its scientific and tourist potential is only waiting to be known the world over. In the few last years, the national park has successfully organized the application of « Pitons Cirques and Remparts of Reunion Island » to the Unesco World Heritage list as a Natural Property under the 2010 criteria vii (« areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance") and x (« contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity »), as set by UNESCO.

The << Parc National De La Reunion>> (LRNP) is also committed to protect, conserve, study, enhance and interpret the natural and cultural area descripted into the boundaries of the National Park, which is part of the World Heritage in the core of the island and a part of the seashore, and work also with many various partners for public education and enjoyment. The LRNP is also helping to work on economic development based on the natural and cultural resources for the people. The Parc National De La Reunion (LRNP) is, now and again, responsible and manager of the World Heritage Site.

Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park

Hawaii Volcanoes National Park encompasses 333,000 acres (1335 square kilometers) and is located on the island of Hawai'i. The park protects, studies, and provides access to Kilauea and Mauna Loa, two of the world's most active volcanoes; preserves endemic Hawaiian ecosystems; and perpetuates the traditional Hawaiian culture connected to these landscapes.

The park's active volcanoes serve as a living laboratory for scientific investigations that began over a century ago and continues to advance global understanding of volcanic processes. The park also preserves, protects and interprets the largest and most continuously active volcanoes in the United States, and provides the best physical evidence of the island building process that created the 2000 mile long Hawaiian archipelago. It also protects unique and diverse ecosystems that are the result of the active volcanic landscape, wide climate variation and extreme isolation of the Hawaiian islands. Over 90% of the native plants and animals are endemic to the Hawaiian islands, many of which are rare, endangered and threatened with extinction.

Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park also interprets the traditions and embraces the spiritual significance of the native Hawaiian culture and encompasses a vast array of cultural resources that document over 600 years of human lifestyles and activities on an active volcanic landscape.

In addition to its geological significance, the park also plays a unique role in the history of human development on the Hawaiian Islands and remains an important home to living cultures in Hawai'i. Just as the volcanic and biological features of the land have shaped the land scape of

Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park, so to have the people who have been a part of its history. Over five centuries before the establishment of the park, Native Hawaiians lived, worked, and worshiped on this sacred ground. Later, in the 19th and early 20th centuries, adventures, explorers, scientist, philanthropists, and individuals also left their mark on the landscape. Today, ancient petroglyphs, stone walls, and footpaths persist between massive lava flows. Historic housing districts, historic structures, and historic roads dot the developed corridors of the park, together revealing the diverse cultures and history that have been, and continue to play, an integral role on this landscape.

The two parks could be twins. Both are World Heritage Sites and protect unique geologic, biologic and cultural resource values found nowhere else in the world. Both parks are committed to protect, conserve, study, enhance and interpret the natural and cultural features of the site. They have similar but different aged active volcanoes, landscapes and lava tubes. Both contain shield volcanoes shaped by hot spots similarly directly connected to the center of the earth. Both are tropical biodiversity hot spots containing unique habitats for rare and endangered plants and animals. Both are tropical biodiversity hot spots containing unique habitats for rare and endangered plants and animals with an emphasis on controlling invasive species. Both parks are part of a larger island community and culture and contain historical traditions and unique host cultures that adapted to these lands. Both sites are major economic drivers in their regions.

The parks share the common ideals of stewardship and preservation of the resources given to their care. Their highest priority goals are to preserve the geology, biology and culture of the area; to restore ecosystems; to address growing global environmental concerns such as climate change and pollution, to enhance youth engagement and sustainable behaviors, to create corridors and connections for wildlife, and to implement research, inventory, and monitoring programs necessary to achieve success in these preservation and restoration efforts.

The parks wish to increase their already substantial efforts toward the education of school children and the general public so that their country's people can become committed partners in conservation and development of the next generation of park stewards. Citizen science and volunteer participation is a mainstay of research aimed at the conservation of biodiversity and preserving national parks. Both parks are also striving to involve their surrounding communities in the development of compatible services and facilities for sustainable tourism and appropriate economic development.

The "sister parks" seek to enrich the experience and training of the personnel of both parks through projects of international cooperation that may include the exchange of technical and professional knowledge and personnel, information, data, technology, training, and experience. Examples of potential areas of cooperation may include:

- Sharing natural and cultural resource management methods and techniques.
- Electronic communication and technical information exchanges, including software programs for science and resource management applications, archaeological investigations.
- Environmental education techniques, programs, and facilities, including plans and designs for youth education camps and curriculum.

- Techniques for garnering cross-cultural youth in conservation careers.

PURPOSE:
The purpose of the "sister park" relationship is to promote international cooperation and support for the mutual benefit of both parks and to enrich the experience and training of the personnel of both parks through projects of international cooperation. The relationship allows the sisters to benefit by sharing experiences and approaches to collaboration, including local efforts to work with gateway communities, regional and local economies, friends groups and partner organizations. This may be accomplished primarily through the exchange of managerial, technical and professional knowledge, information, data, technology, training, and experience.

COOPERATION:
Through years of protecting and managing these parks, each nation has gained invaluable experience. With the improved knowledge of the importance and value of national parks, protected areas and world heritage sites, each country has strengthened mutual exchanges and cooperation, which improves the protection, preservation and management work in a comprehensive way for the benefit of future generations.

Examples of potential areas of cooperation may include:

- Resource management methods and techniques for restoration of forest and other habitat restoration, control of exotic or alien species, monitoring of air and water quality

- Electronic communication and technical information exchanges, including software programs for science and cultural and natural resource management applications.

- Environmental education techniques, programs, and facilities, including plans and designs for youth education camps and curriculum.

- Recreation and ecotourism management and planning, including private and public partnerships for development and economic development.

- Development of volunteer and "Friends" organizations for park support.

- Guidance on concessions and commercial services management.

- Interpretation brochures and web site development.

- Sharing park management methods and philosophies, through staff exchanges, and research study-tour programs for managers and subject matter experts.

- Sharing knowledge relative to GIS, fire management, cave resources, etc.

- Broadening the global network through attendance at conferences and in field work organized by each party.

A Sister Park Action Plan should guide future cooperation on an annual basis and be composed of two parts: a Biennial Action Plan and an Individual Theme Project Plan. The Biennial Action Plan should be designed and accepted by the two parks before submitting to the La Reunion administration and to the NPS for filing by the end of November that year. As for the Individual Theme Project Plan, it should focus on specific topics and issues of common concern of the two parks and can be started at any time upon reporting for filing.

UNDERSTANDINGS:

Cooperation under this relationship should initially be for a term of 5 years. The term may be extended or modified in writing, or cooperation may be discontinued at any time by either park; through a three month written notification.

Within the framework of the legal authority of both countries, all exchanges should be subject to the supervision and instruction of the board of directors of LRNP and the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and NPS HAVO and the United States Department of the Interior. Both parks are to fund their own participation in this relationship. It is generally understood that when personnel of one park visit or are detailed to the other, the park sending the employee is to be responsible for the cost of travel to and from the receiving country and receiving park is to generally be responsible for travel and living expenses in their country: each exchange is to be negotiated individually and is dependent upon available resources.

Signed at Hawaii Volcanoes National Park on this 20th day of May 2015, in English and in French.

On behalf of Hawai'i Volcanoes NP

SUPERINTENDENT

On behalf of La Reunion NP

PRESIDENT

PARC NATIONAL DE LA REUNION

On behalf of La Reunion NP

MANAGER

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