



Namibia had one of its natural wonders put on the Unesco World Heritage List at the 37th session of the World Heritage Committee underway in Phnom Pehn, Cambodia.

Namib Sand Sea described by Unesco as “the only coastal desert in the world that includes extensive dune fields influenced by fog” received the recognition as a place of exceptional beauty or cultural value.

Namib Sand Sea is the only coastal desert in the world that includes extensive dune fields influenced by fog.

Covering an area of over three million hectares and a buffer zone of 899,500 hectares, the site is composed of two dune systems, an ancient semi-consolidated one overlain by a younger active one.

On the Unesco site it is said that the desert dunes are formed by the transportation of materials thousands of kilometres from the hinterland, that are carried by river, ocean current and wind. “It features gravel plains, coastal flats, rocky hills, inselbergs within the sand sea, a coastal lagoon and ephemeral rivers, resulting in a landscape of exceptional beauty.”

Fog is the primary source of water in the site, accounting for a unique environment in which endemic invertebrates, reptiles and mammals adapt to an ever-changing variety of microhabitats and ecological niches.

This is the first natural site in Namibia to be inscribed on the World Heritage List.

Namibia now has two sites on the World Heritage List. In 2007 Twyfelfontin rock engravings were also entered on the list. Twyfelfontin has one of the largest concentration of rock engravings in Africa

relating to hunter-gatherer communities over the last two millennia.

The paintings, according to Unesco, reflect the link between ritual and economic practices of the communities at the time.