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**CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE
WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE**

WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

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Information document 15: Report of the assessment mission to the World Heritage site of Butrinti, Albania (20 - 24 October 1997)

SUMMARY

Following reports that the World Heritage site of Butrinti, Albania was looted and damaged during the civil unrest early 1997, a joint UNESCO-ICOMOS-Butrint Foundation assessment mission was undertaken to the World Heritage site of Butrinti, Albania from 20 to 24 October 1997.

The mission prepared an assessment of the conditions of the site, recommends the World Heritage Committee to inscribe the site on the List of World Heritage in Danger and recommends a programme of corrective action for consideration by the World Heritage Committee.

The World Heritage site of Butrinti, Albania

Report of the assessment mission 20 - 24 October 1997

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SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Following reports that the World Heritage site of Butrinti was damaged during the civil unrest in Albania in early 1997, a joint UNESCO-ICOMOS-Butrint Foundation assessment mission went to the site from 20 to 24 October 1997.

The mission prepared an assessment of the conditions of the site (section 3 of the report).

The mission found that the site museum had been looted and that its content, an unspecified number of archaeological objects, had disappeared. The mission also confirmed that two pumps that had been installed with UNESCO support to avoid flooding of the theatre had been stolen. As a consequence, the ancient theatre and related buildings are flooded again. Furthermore, the mission observed that the site is not properly secured, neither with fences nor with permanent surveillance.

Due to the political changes in Albania, aggravated by the turmoil earlier this year, the management and planning arrangements for Butrinti have been deficient for several years. No clear definition of responsibilities and collaboration arrangements among Government agencies and institutions are in place, no adequate human and financial resources are made available for the site and no management plan exists. At the same time, development, demographic and environmental pressures on the immediate surroundings of Butrinti are increasing.

Considering these ascertained and potential dangers, the mission recommends the World Heritage Committee inscribe Butrinti on the List of World Heritage in Danger (section 4).

Subsequently, a programme of corrective action should be developed (section 5). This programme should include immediate actions to improve the conditions and security of the site, as well as a series of actions for the middle and long term aimed at establishing adequate management arrangements, developing a management plan and incorporating Butrinti in regional and local planning.

It is recommended that the World Heritage Committee provide emergency assistance for an amount of US\$ 47,000 for the implementation of the immediate actions and collaborates with the Albanian authorities in the implementation of a middle and long term programme of corrective action (section 6).

1. INTRODUCTION

A joint UNESCO-ICOMOS-Butrint Foundation assessment mission was undertaken to the World Heritage site of Butrinti, Albania, from 20 to 24 October 1997.

The mission visited the World Heritage site and was able to meet in Tirana with the Minister of Culture and the Minister of the Interior of Albania, with representatives of the Institute of Monuments and the Institute of Archaeology as well as with representatives of UNDP, the World Bank and the European Union.

This report is based on oral information provided by authorities and experts met during the mission (see programme of the mission Annex I), observations of the mission members themselves and written documentation provided by the Butrint Foundation.

Time constraints did not allow the mission to examine the state of conservation of the properties on the Tentative List of Albania. A short visit was paid, however, to the town of Gjirokastra which is one of the cities on the Tentative List.

The members of the mission sincerely thank the Albanian authorities for the open and hospitable way in which the mission was received and for the assistance and information provided during the mission. Our special thanks go to Mr Victor Sharra of the International Relations Division of the Ministry of Culture and Ani Tare who accompanied us during the mission and to both the Director and the Scientific Director of the Butrint Foundation for sharing their extensive knowledge and experience.

2. MANDATE OF THE MISSION

In March 1997 it was reported that the World Heritage site of Butrinti had been looted during civil unrest in Albania. The Butrint Foundation provided a brief report on the condition of Butrinti dated 15 April 1997.

A co-ordination meeting was held at the UNESCO World Heritage Centre on 16 April 1997 with the Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of Albania and representatives of UNESCO (WHC, PROCEED, CLT/CH) and ICOMOS. It was agreed that an assessment mission to Butrinti, and if possible to the sites on the Tentative List of Albania (the cities of Berat and Gjirokastra, the tombs of Selca and the amphitheatre of Durres) would be undertaken by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and the Butrint Foundation as soon as the security situation in Albania would permit.

The Bureau of the World Heritage Committee, at its twenty-first session in June 1997, expressed its great concern about the damages caused to the World Heritage site of Butrinti and about its conditions in terms of protection, management and conservation. The Bureau requested the Secretariat to undertake a mission to the site and to submit a report to the World Heritage Committee at its twenty-first session. The Bureau requested that the report include:

- a) an assessment of the damages to the site and the actual state of conservation,

- b) a recommendation as to whether the Committee should consider the inscription of the site on the List of World Heritage in Danger, as well as
- c) proposals for future actions in the framework of the World Heritage Convention and the resolution adopted by the Executive Board of UNESCO at its hundred and fifty-first session which "urges the Director-General, in close co-operation with the competent authorities of the Republic of Albania and in close co-ordination with the other international organizations concerned, to draw up a plan of action for the rehabilitation of educational, cultural and scientific institutions and the restoration of the cultural and architectural heritage in Albania."

These issues are addressed below.

3. ASSESSMENT OF THE CONDITIONS OF THE SITE

3.1. Justification for Inscription on the World Heritage List

Butrinti was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1992 on the basis of cultural heritage criterion (iii): "The evolution of the old natural environment, which led the inhabitants to abandon Butrinti at the end of the Middle Ages, means that this archaeological site provides valuable evidence of ancient and medieval civilisations on the territory of modern Albania." (text from ICOMOS evaluation, October 1992).

3.2 State of Conservation

3.2.1. Description of Property

Butrinti is an archaeological site of exceptional value with ruins dating from the late Bronze Age (12th century BC), through the Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Venetian and Turkish periods up to the 18th-19th centuries. Its natural landscape is still extraordinarily intact. It is situated in the south of Albania, approximately 19 kilometres from the town of Saranda, near the Greek border. Here, in a strategic position on the southern end of the Ksamili peninsula and situated at about 45m above sea level, is the ancient acropolis, which is 400m long by 200m wide, surrounded by waters for three-quarters and linked to the terra firma only by a narrow strip of land. The Acropolis dominates the Vivari Channel, which connects the Lake Butrinti at the east of the peninsula with the Ionian Sea at the west, and the plain of Butrinti south of the channel.

The site was used for the first time during the Middle Paleolithic Period. The hill had probably been defended since the first millennium BC as the traces of Illyrian walls testify. Starting from the 7th-6th centuries its higher part was surrounded by a strong system of archaic walls. Fragments of these walls, which were incorporated in later reconstructions, can still be seen. During this

period, Butrinti was known as one of the most important cities of the Greek world. At the beginning of the 3rd century BC the city wall was extended enclosing a surface of 4 ha. The wall, from 2.6 to 3.8 metres wide and built with square blocs of stones, can still be entirely seen along the length of its 870-metre perimeter. Two of the gates have monumental characteristics: “Gate Skea”, situated in the vicinity of the lake, is surmounted by two towers and “Gate of the Lion”, with an interesting bas-relief of a lion facing a bull. Through the centuries the town walls have been continuously restored and extended. It is possible to see the massive reconstruction works that were carried out from the 1st century BC to the 1st century AD with parts of walls that are even now 10 metres high.

In the High Middle Age Period, 9th-10th centuries, the outer wall protected by triangular towers, also included the lower part of the city at the foot of the Acropolis reaching the Vivari Channel and covering a surface of approximately 16 ha. In 1153 the town was damaged by a catastrophic earthquake. In the 13th century, during the period of the Despots of Epirus, the reconstruction of the acropolis was undertaken: the stronghold, the tower and the external walls were built, and a double city wall with towers at distances of 15 -20 metres was built on the side that linked the town to the main land.

In 1386 Butrinti was dominated by the Venetians who built a castle and several strongholds on the top of the hill. At the end of the 14th century Butrinti started to lose its importance as a town because of the progressive rise in water levels that changed its lower part into a marshland, thus forcing the inhabitants to shelter along the hills.

However, Butrinti did not lose its strategic importance. In fact, works of military architecture were carried out until the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century. On the opposite side of the town along the Vivari Channel, facing the southern entrance of Butrinti, there is a triangular stronghold of great interest with five subsequent periods of construction from the 14th century to the beginning of the 19th century. Its final phase is linked to the final period of the history of the city’s defensive architecture when, in 1807, Ali Pacha of Tepelena built a quadrangular stronghold to hold off an army coming from Corfu.

In its long history which covers an uninterrupted period of 3,000 years, Butrinti has been enriched with examples of architecture representing all the most important phases of Mediterranean cultures. Even with the limited excavations that have been carried out to date, it is possible to experience the continuous evolution from ancient times to the Middle Ages. Apart from the walls and the fortifications, the most important monuments that can be visited are:

Greek Period: from the 4th century BC onwards public monuments were built at the foot of the acropolis where the agora, the stoa and the temple of Ascepius were situated. In the 3rd century BC the theatre, the council building for the city elders and another temple were added. On the stones of the theatre, it is still possible to read 31 inscriptions dating from the end of the 3rd to the

2nd century BC ; 105 other inscriptions have been reused in a Roman structure of the 1st century BC. The entire collection of inscriptions represents a unique document; in fact this is a larger number than those discovered in Delphi.

Roman Period: The theatre was restored and a new stage decorated with Greek and Roman statues was added. Among these statues is the beautiful head of the so-called “Goddess of Butrint”, which is a 2nd-century B.C.-reproduction of a work dating from the 4th century and belonging to the School of Praxiteles. Furthermore, three baths, three monumental fountains, the gymnasium beautifully decorated with mosaics and a 7 km-long aqueduct were built.

Paleochristian Period: From this period there are considerable quantity of remains dating from the Late Antiquity and the first Byzantine period. Many monuments of this period are almost intact, such as: two basilicas, a baptistery, a palace complex known as the “triconch palace”. The large basilica built in the 5th and 6th centuries AD is one of the rare constructions of this kind still surviving, whose walls still keep their original height. The baptistery is a remarkable monument decorated with a mosaic and is probably one of the largest and most complex works of art of this kind dating from Late Antiquity.

Medieval Period: Many monuments dating from the late Byzantine period can be seen. During the 13th and 14th centuries new churches and chapels were built at Butrinti. Traces of Byzantine frescoes are visible in many places. Starting from this period military buildings and structures played an important role.

3.2.2. Form and Date of Most Recent Records

At present, no consolidated site archive exists. Documentation on past excavations and research and inventories of objects are probably held at the Institute of Archaeology and the Archaeological Museum of Tirana which the mission was not able to visit as it was closed. Other documentation has been published or is dispersed in personal archives. Therefore, it is necessary to briefly summarize the reasearch carried out on the site:

1926 - Sporadic information related to the ruins of Butrinti, dates from the 15th century and the beginning of the 19th century. An Italian mission headed by Luigi Ugolini started the first archaeological scientific research in 1926. The works continued until 1940 and were carried out by Ugolini’s team and were published in a series of volumes, monographs and articles. A lot of interesting unpublished works are dispersed in different places.

1944 - Following the war, the research programmes were continued by the Albanian Institute of Archaeology. The monument conservation and restoration works were directed by the Institute of Monuments.

1990 - The Institute of Archaeology began excavations on the necropolis with a Greek team headed by Kati Hadjis.

1992 - Butrinti was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

1993 - The Butrint Foundation was established in London, aiming at the protection, conservation, archaeological research and presentation of Butrinti.

1994 - The team of the Butrint Foundation headed by Richard Hodges began excavations in the first Byzantine city as well as research on and around the site. The Butrint Foundation set up a programme of publications regarding the documentation, reports and archives related to Butrinti.

1995 - 1997 - The Butrint Foundation, with funds provided by the World Monuments Fund, developed a conservation programme starting with the cleaning and the maintenance of some areas. The site, particularly its museum, were looted during civil unrest in early 1997.

3.2.3 Present State of Conservation

Butrinti is a site which archaeological potential has hardly been explored. It is even said that in more than 70 years of excavations only approximately 10% of the walled city of Butrint has been excavated with much of the Imperial and Byzantine city lying outside the walled area and consequently completely unstudied and unprotected.

The excavations carried out before 1944 seem to be rather outdated, as a result of an obsolete concept of archaeological excavation and interpretation. The interventions aimed at unearthing the most important monuments by choosing the periods considered as the most significant according to the dominant opinion of that time and often by carrying out massive reconstruction works. This approach has given the site its present appearance of a series of remains and isolated monuments within a large natural area. As a consequence, the site has a particular romantic charm emphasized by a lush vegetation that often enwraps and surrounds the remains and also by an outstanding landscape. However, this situation does not respond to a contemporary scientific concept and to the needs for site conservation.

Butrinti consists of a series of sloping terraces that coincide with the sequence of the wall perimeters. Over time, the streets and the pathways have become an integral part of its natural morphology. The fortresses, the stairways and architecture also stabilised the soil and were part of the drainage system. Today, uncontrolled vegetation growth could disturb this system and cause the collapse of parts of the hills in the upper city. Furthermore, the area is subject to seismic activity. Two catastrophic earthquakes occurred in this area and the territory is continuously subject to soil micro-movements. In the lower city the rise in brackish water and its drying out in summer, create favourable conditions for algae growth and decay. It also causes acid conditions which contribute to the decay of mortars and the crumbling of stones. All this particularly affects the large quantity of known and unknown mosaics as well

as those already discovered in the lower city which date back to the Imperial and Byzantine periods.

The upper surface of the masonry are damaged by atmospheric agents that start the process of stone crumbling and the destabilisation of architectonic structures.

The mosaics on the floors of the baptistery are protected by plastic sheeting and a layer of sand that prevent the tourists from damaging them. However, this does not prevent destructive physical-chemical processes. In particular, the Byzantine mural paintings at Butrinti are in a poor state of preservation both with regard to the plaster and the structural condition of the masonry. The above mentioned inscriptions are very vulnerable to deterioration.

During the events in early 1997, no direct damage was caused to the architectural and archaeological structures. The most serious event was the looting of the museum and as yet there is no inventory of the stolen objects. Fortunately the famous marble head of the “Goddess of Butrint” had already been moved to the National Historic Museum of Tirana.

The pumps that used to remove the water from the theatre were also stolen. While in-depth hydrological studies are required to identify adequate solutions to the high water level, these pumps at least solved the problem of water infiltration at the ancient theatre.

Although there is no evidence of clandestine excavations at Butrinti, it is difficult to know whether valuable objects are stolen as the site is easily accessible due to deficient fencing and surveillance. Likewise, it is impossible to determine if housing and other types of constructions in the surroundings of Butrinti endanger valuable archaeological sites.

3.3. Management and Planning

3.3.1. Agencies with management authority

Two government institutions are, by legislation, directly involved in the conservation and management of Butrinti:

The Institute of Monuments, which is a dependency of the Ministry of Culture, is responsible for the management of cultural heritage sites in Albania.

The Institute of Archaeology, a dependency of the Academy of Sciences which is under the direct authority of the Council of Ministers, is responsible for archaeological research in Albania. It is furthermore responsible for the conservation and management of archaeological objects.

This implies that at the site of Butrinti, the Institute of Archaeology defines the excavation and research objectives and work plans, establishes agreements with

foreign archaeological missions such as the Butrint Foundation, and monitors their implementation. It also manages the Venetian Castle where the site museum is located.

Planning, financing and execution of all other matters such as maintenance, conservation works, security and protection, visitor facilities etc. are under the direct responsibility and supervision of the Institute of Monuments. However, the mission was informed that in 1996 the entrance fees to the site were collected by the Institute of Archaeology.

3.3.2. Level at which management is exercised

The Institute of Monuments and the Institute of Archaeology are located in Tirana. Both have representatives in Saranda, the city closest to Butrinti.

The mission was only able to meet with the representative of the Institute of Monuments in Saranda, who acts as the site manager of Butrinti. He is responsible for more than a hundred other monuments in the Saranda region. All decisions on management, conservation works, etc. are taken at headquarters in Tirana and communicated to the Saranda office. At present, no telephone communication exists between Saranda and Tirana.

3.3.3. Agreed plans related to property (e.g., regional, local plan, conservation plan, tourism development plan)

No regional or local plans are presently in place or in preparation.

It should be noted, however, that in 1995, with the support of the World Bank, the preparation of an 'Albanian Coastal Zone Management Plan' was initiated. The further development of this project was interrupted in 1996-1997. A grant for the funding of a feasibility study for this plan has been approved by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

The European Union concentrates its collaboration with Albania on the improvement of infrastructure. A new road is planned from Saranda to the recently re-opened border crossing with Greece at Konispol, ten kilometres from Butrinti. The road is expected to run about two kilometres east of Butrinti.

The mission could observe a great number of inappropriate constructions and severe wood cutting (particularly olive trees) on the peninsula on which Butrinti is located. Furthermore, the mission was informed of several initiatives for the development of tourist resorts or hotels along the west coast of the peninsula, one of them very close and within sight of Butrinti.

3.3.4. Management plan

No management plan exists for Butrinti. However, the Institute of Monuments and the Butrint Foundation have developed conceptual ideas for the future development

and management of the site which could provide the basis for a future management plan.

The Institute of Monuments presented a map to the mission which indicated proposed visitor circuits, a visitor centre and protective structures for the baptistery and the basilica. The Institute of Monuments also informed the mission that it was developing a project with an Italian firm based in Ancona for the triangular fort of Ali Pacha to the south of the canal.

The Butrint Foundation has summarized its activities and conceptual proposals for the site in a brochure on the Butrint Foundation. The brochure describes its research programme, a proposed conservation and management programme, future projects and funding needs. Furthermore, in 1995 it developed a project for the museum and accommodation for researchers at the Venetian Castle on the acropolis.

3.3.5. Sources and levels of finance

Since 1991, the Institute of Monuments has not made any funds available to its Saranda office for maintenance and conservation of monuments under its care, including Butrinti. The Butrint Foundation has provided assistance to the site, particularly for interpretative panels and complementary payments to the Institute of Monuments personnel. With this assistance, the site manager has been able to keep the most important parts of Butrinti cleared from vegetation.

3.3.6. Staffing levels and facilities (professional, technical, maintenance)

The representative of the Institute of Monuments in Saranda is a highly committed engineer/administrator. He acts as the site manager of Butrinti. He has a staff of seven workmen (before 1991: fifteen). Expert advice, if required, is provided by Institute of Monuments in Tirana.

No office space is available to the Institute of Monuments representative in Saranda or in Butrinti. At present, no telephone communications exist between Saranda and Tirana. The Venetian tower at the entrance of the site was consolidated in 1996 with UNESCO funding to serve as the office for the site manager. Funds for equipment and installation of the office have not been made available.

Fifteen policemen are in charge of the round-the-clock security of the site. However, not one of them could be observed during the missions visit to the site. Those of them on duty were at the Venetian Castle which was not accessible to the public.

3.3.7. Visitor facilities and statistics

In 1996, 20,000 visitors came to Butrinti. The entrance fees, an estimated amount of US\$ 40,000, were collected by the Institute of Archaeology. The destination of these funds remains unclear. It was confirmed by several sources, however, that none of these funds were used for the Butrinti site.

In 1996, the Butrint Foundation, with funding provided by the World Monuments Fund, installed a series of interpretative panels and cleared the monuments and circuits from vegetation. This programme has been maintained by the Butrint Foundation in 1997 using its own resources.

The site museum at the Venetian Castle has reportedly been closed since 1992 when some objects were stolen. Most important objects were then removed to the Institute of Archaeology in Tirana. Although the mission was not given access to the museum rooms, it was informed by several sources that since the looting in early 1997 the museum is completely empty.

No visitor facilities such as reception area, ticket booth, bathrooms etc. are provided on the site. A parking lot is located just in front of the site entrance. Unauthorised buildings are appearing there, such as a restaurant and a kiosk.

3.4. Factors Affecting the Property

3.4.1. Development pressures

As already indicated under 3.3.3. above, the peninsula, which until some years ago was practically uninhabited and primarily used for agricultural purposes (olive production) is under great development pressure. Apparently, four national and international companies have been authorised to develop plans for tourist facilities in the Butrinti area. A great number of houses have already been constructed and tourist facilities such as hotels, marinas etc. might appear at any moment. Some of these constructions might be located on important archaeological remains, such as a necropolis.

The Butrint Foundation research strongly indicates that there are also important archaeological sites e.g. from the late classical/ early Byzantine harbour south of the channel.

The new road from Saranda to Konispol will link the Butrinti area directly to Greece. The impact studies that will be undertaken by the European Union should reveal the possible impact of this road on the area and the site of Butrinti.

3.4.2. Environmental pressures

The peninsula of Butrinti is defined by the Ionean Sea to the west, by Lake Butrinti to the east and by the Vivaria Channel to the south. South of the channel is a former swamp that was drained and cultivated in the 1970s.

Research suggests that the water levels at Butrinti and its surroundings, as well as on the coast, are subject to dynamic and continuous change. Every single intervention in the area might seriously disturb the delicate ecological and hydrological balance that exists at the moment.

The first hydrological study was undertaken by the Italian archaeological mission directed by Luigi Ugolini in the 1930s. Studies were also conducted by the Institute of Hydrology in Tirana in 1975/76 in the context of a drainage scheme for the swamp south of Butrinti and by the Butrint Foundation in 1996.

The cutting of trees on the terraced hills of the peninsula has already had a negative impact on the visual qualities of the landscape and might cause severe erosion in the long term.

3.4.3. Visitor/tourism pressures

Visitation to the site dropped from 20,000 in 1996 to practically zero in 1997. The return to stability in Albania, the opening of the new road to Greece and the possible increase in tourism facilities in Saranda and its surroundings might lead to an unexpected increase in numbers of tourists to Butrinti. In fact, the site is not ready to receive any substantial number of visitors.

3.4.4. Inhabitants within Butrinti and its surroundings

No people are living within the protected area of Butrinti. However, as mentioned in point 3.3.3. above, the number of inhabitants on the peninsula is increasing rapidly in an uncontrolled manner. Furthermore, an increase of tourism facilities in the area with associated employment opportunities may attract even more people to the region.

3.5. Summary Conclusions

3.5.1. State of conservation

The state of conservation of Butrinti is typical of a site where the necessary and constant maintenance works have been interrupted. This maintenance could easily be re-started for most of the excavated structures (protection of the upper side of the masonry, filling and replacement of mortars, repairing of cracks, and so on).

An accurate diagnosis and the evaluation of possible interventions are required for each of the monuments at Butrinti. Interventions should consider the historical, scientific and aesthetic importance of the monument as well as the role it could play in the presentation of the site. In fact, there is a difference between protecting a structure that will not be open to the public and one that will be accessible. Difficult decisions and compromises will be required for each of the structures, as well as for its components, such as the mural paintings. The case of the baptistry is an example. The protection of the mosaics and the unanimous choice of showing them to the visitor ask for the construction of a protection which should be moderate, “transparent” and not simply technical, but in harmony with the aesthetic features to be preserved. Another case is the inscriptions on the stones, where a covering could spoil the overall view of the

theatre complex. In this case the stones with inscriptions could be replaced by copies, the originals being placed in the museum.

Measures for the protection of linear structures such as terracing, walls, banks, canals, reservoirs, streets, sewers and water collection systems are much more complex. All these ancient systems are not just monumental but they are also structures that have guaranteed the protection of the complex throughout history. At present, they are abandoned, overgrown by vegetation or completely buried. Their rehabilitation, in some cases their complete reutilization, would enhance the site and contribute to its long term protection.

Deficient drainage and the high water level pose the most serious threat to many of the archaeological remains at Butrinti. These problems will have to be examined in detail, not only for each of the individual monuments, but above all for the site as a whole.

3.5.2. Management and planning

From the description in point 3.3., it is clear that the arrangements for management, planning, financing and execution of interventions at Butrinti are deficient and will have to be reviewed substantively.

The mission is of the opinion that management authority for Butrinti should be delegated to one agency. This agency should have an office as close as possible to the site with adequate human and financial resources. Priority should be given to the preparation of a management plan for Butrinti which would provide the framework for inter-institutional co-ordination and planning. It should, furthermore, provide work plans for archaeological research, conservation, interpretation and visitor facilities.

The geographical location and environmental considerations call for the incorporation of such a management plan in regional and local development schemes.

3.5.3. Factors affecting the site

Several factors could have an adverse impact on the site. Uncontrolled and poorly planned construction of houses and tourist facilities could affect important archaeological sites in the surroundings of Butrinti and would undoubtedly have a negative ecological or visual impact.

The ecological and hydrological system at Butrinti should be studied carefully in order to be able to assess the impact of interventions on the site. The number of visitors might increase sharply during the coming years. At present, the carrying capacity of the site is extremely limited and uncontrolled visitation could cause severe damages to the monuments and the environment.

4. RECOMMENDATION ON THE INSCRIPTION OF BUTRINTI ON THE LIST OF WORLD HERITAGE IN DANGER

The mission recommends the World Heritage Committee to inscribe Butrinti on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

The mission feels that the following criteria that are stipulated in paragraph 78 of the Operational Guidelines are met:

Ascertained danger:

The property is faced with serious deterioration of materials (particularly in the Theatre and annexed structures, as well as the mosaics in the Baptistery) and important loss of cultural significance (looting of museum).

Potential danger:

The property is faced with a lack of conservation policy, threatening effects of regional planning projects and gradual changes due to environmental factors.

In this context, it should be noted that Butrinti has been inscribed in two consecutive years (1996 and 1998-1999) on the 'List of 100 Endangered Sites' established under the World Monuments Watch programme. Uncontrolled encroachment of vegetation, ground-water infiltration, the absence of an overall site-management plan, and the damages that might be caused by uncontrolled speculative and tourism development, were mentioned as justification for this listing.

5. PROPOSED PROGRAMME OF CORRECTIVE ACTION

If the Committee decides to inscribe Butrinti on the List of World Heritage in Danger, a programme of corrective action as defined in paragraph 85 of the Operational Guidelines will have to be prepared. The recommendations in this section are made as a basis for the preparation of such a programme.

Irrespective of the inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger, however, these recommendations should be considered by the Government of Albania and the World Heritage Committee in order to ensure the long-term protection of the site.

It is proposed that the World Heritage Committee and UNESCO establish a long-term collaboration with the Albanian Government on the implementation of a programme of corrective action. This should be undertaken in close co-ordination with other international organizations and agencies such as the World Bank and the European Union. A partnership should be established particularly with the Butrint Foundation which has undertaken or initiated research and planning on a variety of subjects related to Butrinti. The commitment of the Government of Albania to provide adequate institutional arrangements and financial and human resources will be indispensable for this collaboration to be successful.

The implementation of a set of immediate actions is required in order to secure the site and to prevent it from further immediate deterioration.

Recommended actions on the middle and long term include the review of the institutional framework for the management of the site and the incorporation of Butrinti in regional and local planning. In-depth hydrological studies will be indispensable to define measures for the long-term conservation of the very fragile and vulnerable archaeological remains, particularly in the lower city. Effective drainage systems and woodland management will have to be introduced.

A comprehensive management plan will have to be prepared for Butrinti. A basic requirement for the preparation of such a plan will be a clear definition of the values of Butrinti and its surroundings. Then, the adequacy of the boundaries of the protected, World Heritage, site should be examined in order to define the area that should be covered by the management plan. The management plan will have to include a statement of significance, as well as programmes for research, documentation, conservation, interpretation and presentation, as well as training.

5.1. Immediate Actions:

Improve the conditions and security of the site:

1. Prepare an inventory of archaeological objects related to Butrinti, independent of their present location, and collaborate with UNESCO in publishing the objects that are lost;
2. Reinstall water pumps at the Theatre;
3. Improve site protection by repair and extension of the protective fence around the site;
4. Install a temporary office at the entrance for access control and ticketing;
5. Ensure proper surveillance by police assigned to the site;
6. Undertake immediate consultations with appropriate authorities in order to prevent further illegal and/or poorly planned construction or development in the surroundings of Butrinti;
7. Prepare and implement a programme of information and awareness building among local and regional authorities, agencies and populations;
8. Provide expert advice for the implementation of immediate actions and development in detail of the programme of international co-operation for the middle and long term.

5.2. Actions on the Middle and Long Term:

5.2.1. Improve the conditions and presentation of the site:

1. Undertaken hydrological studies and improve drainage systems;
2. Undertake studies for the preservation and presentation of the structure and mosaics of the baptistery as well as other buildings (its results should be incorporated in the management plan for the site);
3. Install provisional site museum (awaiting definitive plans in the context of the management plan for the site);

5.2.2. Review institutional framework for the management of the site:

4. Assign one agency with management authority;
5. Establish a decentralised office of the site manager;
6. Provide adequate delegation of authority to the office of the site manager along with adequate human and financial resources;
7. Provide for adequate inter-institutional definition of roles and responsibilities, co-ordination and co-operation, both at the national and the local/regional level.

5.2.3. Establish a management plan for Butrinti:

8. Prepare an archaeological map of Butrinti and its surroundings;
9. Establish and compile a site archive of scientific reports, documentation, photographs etc.;
10. Review World Heritage values of the site of Butrinti, prepare a statement of significance;
11. Review if the boundaries of the World Heritage designated area and a surrounding buffer zone are clearly established and adequate; if required propose changes in boundaries to the World Heritage Committee;
12. Prepare a comprehensive management plan for Butrinti and its surroundings, including programmes for research, documentation, conservation, interpretation and presentation, as well as training.

5.2.4. Incorporate Butrinti in regional and local planning:

13. Ensure that the heritage values, including World Heritage values, of Butrinti are fully considered in regional and local planning and that

environmental and cultural impact studies are undertaken when appropriate;

14. Collaborate with the World Bank in reviving the 'Albanian Coastal Zone Management Plan'.

6. Proposals for International Co-operation

6.1. Emergency assistance under the World Heritage Fund

It is recommended that the World Heritage Committee approve funds for emergency assistance for financial assistance to the Government of Albania for the implementation of the immediate actions included in item 5.1. above. It will also be necessary to provide under this emergency assistance expert advice for the implementation of some of the actions and to further develop the programme of international co-operation for the middle and long term. A provisional timetable and budget for the emergency assistance is presented in the table on the next page.

6.2. International co-operation

It is recommended that the Committee requests the Secretariat to undertake the necessary co-ordination with the Government of Albania, other international organizations and agencies such as the World Bank and the European Union and non-governmental organizations, particularly the Butrint Foundation, for the implementation of the middle and long term actions listed under item 5.2. above. International co-operation under the World Heritage Fund would have to be considered by the World Heritage Committee at a later stage on the basis of (a) request(s) submitted by the State Party.

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE UNDER THE WORLD HERITAGE FUND

Proposed programme of corrective action: Immediate actions

ACTION	GOVERNMENT AGENCIES	CO-OPERATING INSTITUTIONS	TIME FRAME	BUDGET
1. Prepare inventory of archaeological objects related to Butrinti and collaborate with UNESCO in publishing the objects that are lost	Institute of Archaeology	World Heritage Committee UNESCO CLT/INS Butrint Foundation ICOM	Jan. - April 1998	US\$ 5,000
2. Reinstall water pumps at the Theatre	Institute of Monuments	World Heritage Committee	Jan. - Feb. 1998	US\$ 12,000
3. Improve site protection by repair and extension of the protective fence around the site	Institute of Monuments	World Heritage Committee	Jan. - March 1998	US\$ 7,000
4. Install a temporary office at the entrance for access control and ticketing	Institute of Monuments	World Heritage Committee	Jan. - March 1998	US\$ 8,000

5. Ensure proper surveillance by police assigned to the site	Ministry of the Interior		Immediately	--
6. Undertake immediate consultations with appropriate authorities in order to prevent further illegal and/or poorly planned construction or development in the surroundings of Butrinti	Ministry of Culture Ministry of Public Works Region of Saranda Municipality of Saranda		Immediately	--
7. Prepare and implement a programme of information and awareness building among local and regional authorities, agencies and population	Ministry of Culture Region of Saranda Municipality of Saranda	World Heritage Committee ICOMOS	Jan. - June 1998	US\$ 10,000
8. Provide expert advice for the implementation of immediate actions and development in detail of the programme of international co-operation for the middle and long term	Ministry of Culture	World Heritage Committee ICOMOS	Mission 1: Feb. 1998 Mission 2: May 1998	US\$ 2,500 US\$ 2,500
TOTAL				US\$ 47,000

Programme of mission

Monday 20 October 1997

Arrival of mission members in Tirana and co-ordination meeting with International Relations Division of the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports (Mr Petraq Buka, Director and Mr Victor Sharra)

Tuesday 21 October 1997

Travel to Butrinti

Visit to the site accompanied by Mr Telemak Llahana (representative of the Institute of Monuments for the region of Saranda) and Professor Richard Hodges (Scientific Director of the Butrint Foundation)

Wednesday 22 October 1997

Meeting with Mr Kosta Barka (Vice-President of the Region of Saranda) and Mr Qirjako Martico (Deputy-Mayor of Saranda)

Return travel to Tirana with visit to the town of Giorakastra

Thursday 23 October 1997

Meetings with:

Ms Arta Dade, Minister of Culture, and Ms Lida Miras, Archaeological Museum of Durres

Institute of Monuments: Mr. Valter Shtylla, Director, Mr Gjerak Karalskaj and Mr Guri Pani in the presence of Mr Dhimiter Dishnica, Inspector of the Ministry of Culture

Institute of Archaeology, Mr Muzafer Korkuti, Director

Delegation of the European Commission in Albania, Mr Massimo Mina

World Bank Resident Mission, Mr Arben Bakllamaja

Friday 24 October 1997

Visit to National Historic Museum in Tirana

Debriefing with the Resident Representative of UNDP, Mr Soren Tajno

Meeting with Mr Nerton Ceka, Minister of the Interior