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

**BUREAU OF THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE
Twenty-fifth session**

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**Report of the UNESCO-ICOMOS-Butrint Foundation mission to Butrint,
Albania, 19-25 April 2001**

UNESCO-ICOMOS-Butrint Foundation mission to Albania

19-25 April 2001

Report

TABLE OF CONTENTS

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Special thanks go to Mr Gezim Hoxha, Director of Cultural Heritage at the Ministry for Culture, Mr Auron Tare, Director of the Office of the Butrint National Park and to the staff of the Office for their help and for sharing their knowledge and experience of the country and of the World Heritage site itself.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. INTRODUCTION

The joint mission UNESCO-ICOMOS-Butrint Foundation to Albania was undertaken from 19 to 25 April 2001 at the request of the World Heritage Committee.

The mission visited the World Heritage site of Butrint and was able to meet in Tirana with a number of Albanian authorities including the Minister of Culture, Representatives of the Institute of Monuments and the Institute of Archaeology, the Secretary General of the Albanian National Commission, as well as Representatives of the World Bank, the European Union and UNDP.

The mission had the opportunity, on the way to the Butrint World Heritage site, to visit the town of Gjirokastra, included in the Tentative List of Albania and to meet with representatives of the Packard Foundation working on the organization of a seminar on Gjirokastra.

2. BACKGROUND TO THE MISSION

2.1. Inscription history

Butrint 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 Butrint 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” (ICOMOS evaluation, October 1992). In 1997, at its twenty-first session, the Committee, on the basis of the recommendations of a joint UNESCO-ICOMOS-Butrint Foundation assessment mission (20-24 October 1997), and with the agreement of the Government of Albania, decided to inscribe Butrint on the List of World Heritage in Danger and to allocate US\$ 100,000 as emergency assistance for the implementation of remedial action.

In 1999, the boundaries of the World Heritage site were expanded to include not only the walled city from the Greek, Roman and Venetian period (approximately 16 ha), but an additional 184 ha to better protect the site.

A detailed description of the property can be found in the report of the UNESCO-ICOMOS-Butrint Foundation joint mission held in 1997.

2.2. Examination of the state of conservation by the World Heritage Committee and its Bureau

Since the inscription of Butrint on the World Heritage List in Danger in 1997, the World Heritage Committee and its Bureau examined annually the state of conservation of the property.

At its twenty-fourth session held in Cairns (Australia) from 27 November to 2 December 2000, the World Heritage Committee recalled the assessment mission of 1997 and the decision of the Committee to allocate US\$ 100,000 as emergency assistance to implement activities identified in the Programme of Corrective Actions. The Committee reiterated its request to the State Party to submit a progress report by 15 April 2001 on the implementation of recommendations of the 1997 UNESCO-ICOMOS-Butrint Foundation Joint Mission, to enable the Bureau to examine this case at its twenty-fifth session.

Furthermore, the Committee noted the apparent difficulties in the implementation of the Programme of Corrective Actions (including those financed under the World Heritage Fund's Emergency Assistance) and requested the Albanian authorities concerned to establish the administrative procedures necessary to enable the implementation of the Programme.

The Committee requested UNESCO and ICOMOS to undertake a joint mission to the site for an assessment of the current situation and to report to the twenty-fifth session of the Bureau. As the Butrint Foundation was part of the joint mission held in 1997 and is an important partner of UNESCO in the implementation and co-ordination of the programme of corrective action, the Foundation was also invited to be part of this joint mission.

2.3. Justification for the mission

The UNESCO-ICOMOS-Butrint Foundation mission took place from 19 to 25 April 2001. The objectives of the mission were:

- a) In the framework of the implementation of the programme of corrective action:
- Assessment of the implementation of the actions proposed by the UNESCO-ICOMOS-Butrint Foundation mission of October 1997.
 - Assessment of the current situation of the site in terms of management arrangements, planning, state of conservation of the site and its components.
 - Proposition, if necessary, of actions and corresponding time frame that will lead to the completion of the programme of corrective action.
 - Formulation of a recommendation as to whether and when the site can be withdrawn from the List of World heritage in Danger.
- b) In the framework of the implementation of the World Heritage emergency assistance:
- Assessment and recommendations on the procedures for the implementation of the World Heritage emergency assistance with a view to accelerate its implementation for completion by the end of 2001.

3. NATIONAL POLICY FOR THE PRESERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTY

3.1. Developments since 1997 in the legal and institutional framework

Since the assessment mission of October 1997, the followings steps have been undertaken within the legal and institutional framework concerning the preservation and management of the World Heritage site of Butrint:

- The Government of Albania created in 1998, the “Office of Administration and co-ordination of Butrint” with the objective of protection of the World Heritage site and with the overall responsibility for planning and management of the site of Butrint. A Director, Mr Auron Tare was appointed and staff was provided by the Institute of Archaeology, Institute of Monuments and the local municipal authorities.
- In June 1999, the Ministry of Culture established the Butrint National Park covering an area of 29 Km² around the site as a buffer zone in order to protect it and notably to prevent illegal and inadequate developments within the area. Mr Tare was appointed Director of this National Park.
- In the same year, a request for extension of the site was submitted to the World Heritage Committee by the Albanian authorities in order to enlarge the World Heritage Site to include important archaeological monuments in the vicinity of Butrint and to cover the whole area of the Butrint National Park. This extension took effect in July 2000, after the recommendation of including a small area on the coast (Maltese

development') in the zone of the proposed enlargement was agreed upon by the State Party.

- Concerning the legal framework of the national policy for the preservation of cultural heritage at the national level, the mission was informed that a new law is under preparation by the Direction of Cultural Heritage within the Minister of Culture.

- Furthermore, the mission was informed that a "Butrint National Park Board" had been set up by the Council of Ministers and is composed of representatives of Minister of Culture, Minister of Environment, Institute of Monuments, Institute of Archaeology, Committee of Tourism. The Minister of Culture acts as chair of the Board. The Board has been set up with the objective of creating and reinforce inter-institutional co-ordination for the management and protection of the site. Up to now, the Board has met twice. During its stay in Tirana, the mission had the chance to meet with the Board in order to give an assessment of the visit to Butrint and to listen to the views of the members of the Board on the co-ordination that should enhance the management of the World Heritage Site.

4. CONDITIONS OF THE PROPERTY

4.1. State of conservation

The state of conservation of Butrint was last reviewed on behalf of the World Heritage Committee in 1997. The principal concerns over the conservation of the World Heritage Site as then defined were:

- Necessary and constant maintenance works had been interrupted
- An accurate diagnosis and evaluation of possible interventions was needed for each of the monuments at Butrint
- There were particular problems over the treatment and possible exposure of mosaics
- There were particular needs for special attention to the linear features on the site such as terracing, town walls, streets and drainage systems
- There were major security concerns over the site and the museum

This part of this report reviews the state of conservation as observed and examined on the most recent mission. It is based in part on observations of the site during the mission and in part on discussions with the agencies and individuals involved. During the visit to Butrint it was possible only to visit the main classical site and the excavations at Diaporit. Some major structures, in particular the Triangular Fortress and Ali Pasha's Castle, could not be visited in the time available.

The best known part of the site of Butrint is of course the core of the classical city on and around the acropolis. However, this is just one part of a much larger site, both spatially and chronologically. There is attested occupation from the Palaeolithic down to the nineteenth century spread over the whole of the Butrint plain and the surrounding hills. The site's significance lies not just in its spectacular classical remains but in the evidence for humanity's interaction with the environment over many millennia. The landscape as a whole reflects the

history of that involvement in its form, its character and its archaeological and structural remains. Because it has been so little damaged, the evidence for this is well preserved. The landscape also has high natural values as well as being of outstanding beauty. It is of major significance to the people of the region, to modern Albania, and to the world at large.

The next sections of the report look in turn at the state of conservation of:

1. The wider landscape setting of the World Heritage Site
2. Natural environmental aspects of the Site
3. The archaeological resource
4. Standing structures

Finally, this section will review some issues affecting the Site as a whole:

5. Security of the site
6. Site presentation and interpretation
7. Education

4.1.1 Wider Landscape Setting

The overall setting and character of the landscape of the World Heritage Site is of very high importance for conserving the sense of magic and wonder of Butrint as well as for preserving the evidence of changing landuse and settlement over time. It will be very sensitive to any changes to agricultural use which need to be considered very carefully before they are introduced.

The most damaging impact on the Site will however come from building development or inappropriate changes to the transport infrastructure. In the past, there has been illegal development within the boundaries of the Park. There is clearly pressure along the boundary of the Park next to Ksamili. There are also pressures elsewhere in the Park and illegal buildings under construction could be seen on the lake shore south of Diaporit. There should be no new buildings within the Park unless expressly authorised by the National Park.

A longer term potential risk is any pressure to upgrade the road through the Park from Ksamili to Vrina. Any improvement to this road, in particular the construction of a bridge across the Vivari Channel, would have an immediate and devastating impact on the character of the World Heritage Site. It would also increase the longer term pressure for new developments within the Park. Any proposals for improvement of the Ksamili – Vrina road in this way should be resisted. The impact of the proposed road from Konispoli to Saranda should be carefully studied.

4.1.2 Natural environmental aspects of the Site

The natural environment of the Site is of at least national importance as has been demonstrated in the *Butrint Management Plan 2000 – 2005* (see below, section 4.2). It is also an important part of the overall character of the World Heritage Site and therefore contributes to Butrint's outstanding universal significance.

It is sensitive to the same pressures as the wider landscape. Apart from this, Lake Butrint itself is very sensitive to eutrophic crises resulting in the poisoning of most life in the lake. It is important that this problem is tackled rapidly by improving the flow of fresh water into the lake.

In the terrestrial areas of the Park it is vital that any changes to land use are properly monitored and that their environmental impact is assessed before they are introduced. In particular any proposals affecting woodland or wetlands will require very careful consideration. Again there is a need for the National Park to have control over such activities and for the National Park Office to have permanent access to appropriate expertise.

4.1.3 *The archaeological resource*

Work by the Institute of Archaeology, the National Park Office, the Butrint Foundation and other overseas bodies has added greatly to understanding of the cultural past of the Butrint World Heritage Site. It is now clear that archaeological sites are distributed thickly over the whole of the National Park. They will be vulnerable principally to the impact of development, to agriculture and to illegal excavation. At present there seems to be little or no damage occurring to known sites within the Park.

It is important that the National Park Office should monitor the condition of known archaeological sites on a regular basis and that it should be able to exercise effective control over any proposals which might affect them. It is also essential that the Office should evaluate any proposals for development or landuse change in the Park because of the high probability that there are archaeological sites still to be discovered.

Apart from proper systems for the consideration of such proposals and adequate powers to deal with them, the Park Office's ability to deal with these issues will be greatly increased by the development of a modern information system. This needs to be computer based and to make use of a Geographical Information System. The system should contain all archaeological information together with any other information relevant to the holistic management of the Park.

Continued archaeological research is also a vital tool for management of the archaeological resource. Improved knowledge of the whereabouts and nature of archaeological sites within the Park will greatly help the Park Office to manage change in a sustainable way and to devise appropriate mitigation.

Such research should be based in the main on extensive, non-destructive survey techniques. The work of the Butrint Foundation in particular has demonstrated the potential of such techniques to identify and define both the area and character of archaeological sites within the Park.

Excavation will sometimes be necessary. Since all excavation is destructive, it is important that it is planned to recover the maximum amount of information possible. It is also important that the research design for any excavation provides either for the safe backfilling of the excavation or for the proper conservation and display of any structural remains.

4.1.4 Standing structures

The World Heritage Site contains a large number of significant standing structures. The greatest concentration of these is on the Butrint peninsula itself, including the theatre, baptistry and other classical and Byzantine buildings, the town wall and the Venetian Castle and Tower. Elsewhere, there are the Triangular Fortress and Ali Pasha's Castle, as well as less substantial features such as the remains of the fortifications of Kalivo. Excavations, such as those at Diaporit, will also add to the number of structures requiring conservation.

The state of conservation of these visible ruins was a major area of concern in the 1997 Report. There was concern over the cessation of routine maintenance as well as over the substantial backlog of major repair works that were needed. There was also concern over technical problems such as the permanent waterlogging of the lower buildings on the Butrint peninsula and the mosaics in the baptistry and the triconch palace.

Since 1997, routine maintenance (funded by the Butrint Foundation) has been re-established on the Butrint peninsula. Some major works have been carried out. The outer buildings of the Venetian Castle on the acropolis have been repaired and turned into offices for work on the site. Conservation of the Venetian Tower by the lake shore was being completed during the mission. Both these tasks have been carried out by the Park Office.

Much of the masonry, particularly of the city walls, has been recorded by the Butrint Foundation. Research has been carried out on the effects of waterlogging and flooding of the theatre and other low-lying structures. There has also been investigation of the possible ways in which mosaics in the baptistry and in the triconch palace could be conserved and displayed despite the high water table in those buildings.

The research on the flooding has suggested that the water table has been around its present level for very long periods and that the buildings concerned will not suffer greatly from continued flooding or waterlogging provided that the water level is kept relatively constant and that standing water is kept free of litter and dead vegetation in order to prevent the development of acid conditions. Research also suggests that it would be possible to consolidate the mosaics so that they could be uncovered and displayed for a limited period each summer.

Work planned for this summer includes the preparation of a condition survey of the buildings on the Butrint peninsula by an experienced British conservation architect employed by the Butrint Foundation, and the conservation of the Lion Gate by the University of Bologna.

There has therefore been considerable progress since the last mission in 1997. Much still remains to be done. It is vital that a full annual maintenance programme is developed and maintained. This will do much to prevent major problems developing in the future. There is still, though, a very major backlog of conservation work that needs to be carried out over and beyond what can be done as routine maintenance. Apart from routine repointing and replacement or securing of loose masonry, there is much work, for example to be done to the city walls, including the removal of substantial trees from them, followed by repair of the damage so-caused.

The condition survey being carried out this summer needs to be prioritised according to the urgency of the work. It then needs to form the basis of a programme of work over the next few years. There appear to be problems both over the funding of this work and also over the availability of the skilled labour needed to carry it out. Both these need to be addressed urgently. As far as possible, only reversible techniques should be used in conservation work.

In the meantime, it is debatable whether re-exposure of the mosaics and their conservation for future display should be a high priority. Given the scarcity of resources, it might be better to concentrate what is available on structures already exposed and at risk, rather than on features which are safely buried, will be expensive to expose and repair initially, and costly to maintain in the future.

4.1.5 Security of the Site

Site security has been greatly improved since 1997, but much still remains to be done. The museum (still the responsibility of the Institute of Archaeology, not of the National Park Office) has not re-opened and the police who provide its security are likely to be replaced by private security guards. The opportunity for augmenting the National Park Rangers to take over this task does not seem to be under consideration. Improved security systems within the museum would also be desirable before it re-opens.

4.1.6 Site presentation and interpretation

There is now virtually no interpretation of the core site of the Butrint peninsula itself. Even the graphics panels there in 1999 have been removed. There is still, as noted above, no site museum which should be an essential part of its interpretation. On the other hand, the new entry kiosk provides a more effective welcome to the site than previously and does stock the guidebook produced by the Butrint Foundation. As yet this latter is available only in English.

Much work is needed in this area. Possibilities include an Albanian version of the guidebook, translations of the guidebook into other languages common among visitors to Butrint, and site graphics, preferably multi-lingual. Provision of site graphics across the whole of the World Heritage Site would be very costly, difficult to maintain, and might have an adverse impact on the landscape. Therefore, another option which should be considered would be to train locally-employed staff to guide parties around the Park. This would also be a good way of dispersing visitors around the landscape as well as creating sustainable employment for local communities.

It is essential, too, that a new site museum should be developed either in the Venetian Castle or elsewhere. Given adequate security, this would allow objects from Butrint to be stored and displayed there. It would give visitors the opportunity of seeing the objects used in day to day life during the history of Butrint. It would also provide the setting for much fuller interpretation of this very important place than is possible in a guidebook or on graphic panels.

4.1.7 Education

Butrint has enormous education potential across a wide range of subjects. Above all, as one of the most potent sources for Albanian national and cultural identity it should figure prominently in Albanian national education at all levels. These programmes have yet to be developed.

4.2. Management and planning

Since 1997 there has been substantial progress in the management of Butrint. Major advances have been the establishment of the Butrint National Park, the extension of the World Heritage Site to include the whole National Park, the setting up of the National Park Office and the production of the *Butrint Management Plan 2000 – 2005*. This is an impressive response by the Albanian government and its partners to the 1997 Monitoring Report. However, much remains to be done.

4.2.1 The Management Plan

A Butrint Management Plan (2000 – 2005) has been produced by the Butrint Foundation - in cooperation with the Office of Butrint National Park - as part of the Foundation contribution towards the conservation and management of the site of Butrint.

The Plan follows a logical sequence. After an introduction, the site is described and its significance analysed in terms of all its values, archaeological, natural and socio-economic. Issues and pressures affecting or likely to affect Butrint are then described and analysed. Finally the Plan sets out management objectives both for the internal management of the Park and for its wider regional context. For each of the 15 objectives, the Plan sets out short-term (1 – 5 years) and medium term (5 – 10 years) actions.

The principal aims of the Plan are:

- **To preserve the character and qualities of Butrint for future generations**
- **To promote sustainable forms of agriculture, educational use and tourism in and around the Park, and thereby contribute to the regional economy and the community**
- **To unite the local communities and interest groups involved with the Park behind a single programme of action**

(Butrint Management Plan 2000 – 2005, 14)

The Plan is a good example of a World Heritage Site Management Plan. Its policies represent a good balance between the competing needs affecting the site but are soundly based on an assessment of the place's outstanding significance and what is needed to protect and enhance it. They are also practicable and achievable as has been demonstrated by the actions of the National Park Office since its creation.

4.2.2 Other Plans affecting the World Heritage Site

There appear to be a considerable number of other plans in existence or preparation which could affect the management and conservation of the Butrint National Park. Of these the most significant is probably the Saranda master plan, dated 18th February 2000, (see below section 4.3) which proposes a series of developments in and abutting the National Park. As presented, these developments would have a very damaging effect on the values of the site. It is important that all planning documents which have a potential impact on the World Heritage site are reviewed in conjunction with the National Park Office to ensure that their policies support the future conservation of the World Heritage Site.

4.2.3 Site Management

The establishment of the National Park Office under its Director is a major step forward and an impressive response by the Albanian government to the concerns expressed in the report of the 1997 assessment mission. The Park Office has made impressive progress since its establishment. The National Park is clearly benefiting from focused and energetic management. An effective events programme has raised awareness of the site.

The National Park is overseen by a Board, the Butrint National Park Board chaired by the Minister of Culture with representation from the Institute of Archaeology, the Institute of Monuments, the National Committee for Tourism, the National Committee for the Environment, and Saranda municipality. The Butrint National Park Board does not contain representation from the other government ministries with a role in the Park, including agriculture, forestry, planning and development, and defence. It would be considerably strengthened if it were expanded in this way.

Similarly the success to date of the Office rests to a considerable extent on the enthusiasm and contacts of the Director. As yet, the National Park has no specific legislation to give it effective powers or to give it a proper position within the administrative structure of government. There is a need for it to be institutionalised in this way so that it has appropriate legal powers to protect and conserve the Park and to control the activities within the Park of other bodies.

Finally, the financial position of the National Park is not satisfactory in the long term. Its activities at present are largely funded by or through the Butrint Foundation. The Foundation has a deep and real commitment to the future of the World Heritage Site but it is unreasonable to expect or assume that it will be able to continue indefinitely to support Butrint to the extent that it does now. There is a need both for the Park to continue to raise the income it can earn through sustainable tourism and for government to assess its likely long-term commitment to Butrint and identify funding to meet this.

4.3 Factors affecting the site

4.3.1 Development Pressures

Unemployment in the Saranda region, to which Butrint belongs, is very high. Job creation is essential if migration is to be slowed and the local community is to begin to enjoy the benefits of economic development. The Saranda local authorities are therefore under pressure to incorporate into their master plan all proposals put to them by development companies for the construction of tourist facilities without regard to their impact on the Butrint site or the fragile natural environment in the National Park.

The master plan dated 18 February 2000 and which was endorsed by the Prime Minister and other central government authorities, fails to acknowledge the existence of the Butrint National Park which had been set up some months previously. The master plan shows the location of several tourist developments within the National Park or close to it. The mission had the opportunity to discuss this issue, which would undoubtedly have a damaging impact on the Park, its environment and possibly also on unexcavated archaeological sites, with several stakeholders at the national level as well as local level. In this context, the mission was received by the mayor of Saranda who confirmed that he was very attentive to all construction developments within the National Park and that he will do his best to avoid any of these.

Furthermore, the mission was invited to a meeting of the Butrint National Park Board, held in Tirana on 24 April, in which confirmation was received from the representative of the Tourism Development Committee - which depends on the Prime Minister's office - that whilst these developments had been approved by the government, it would be ensure that, in practice, the projects would not proceed.

Urgent steps should be taken to clarify the legal position and to make sure that the projects within the Park will not go ahead. This probably means that the concessions should be formally revoked.

The National Park could also be affected by building close to the boundaries of the Park. Ideally arrangements should be made which provide for the formal opinion of the Butrint National Park authority to be required on all development applications within a certain distance of Butrint.

A further threat arises from the purchase of existing buildings within the Park (i.e the gendarmerie barracks, the customs house etc) by private individuals who then proceed to convert the existing buildings into guest houses, restaurants etc.

There are also pressures on Butrint arising from road construction plans. The mission was told that the Konispoli – Saranda road, which will be financed by the EU, will go up the Vaghalati Valley to the east of the range of mountains closing the Plain of Butrint and not, as had been earlier proposed, along the boundary of the National Park. The Park authority and the Butrint Foundation will need to continue to monitor developments.

A spur road is envisaged from the new Konispoli – Saranda road to Vrina, the nearest village south of the National Park. This road will bring tourists from Epirus to Butrint quickly. The mission believe it is desirable that the spur should not be built before the Konispoli – Saranda road itself is completed (probably not before 2004) because its immediate construction would strengthen arguments for upgrading the road from Ksamili (the village to the north of the

Park) down to the Vivari Channel and on to Vrina, and perhaps bridging the Channel. It would imply that traffic from Saranda to the Greek border would pass through the Park and close to the main monuments. This situation needs to be carefully watched.

4.3.2 *Environmental Pressures*

The peninsula of Butrint is defined by the Ionian Sea to the west, by Lake Butrint to the east and by the Vivari Channel to the south. Beyond the Channel there are marshes that were drained and cultivated in the 1970s.

Research suggests that the water levels at Butrint and in the National Park are subject to dynamic and continuous change. Every intervention risks disturbing the delicate ecological and hydrological balance.

Research also suggests that the monuments at Butrint are not likely to suffer too much from changes in the water levels provided the water is free of chemical pollutants which encourage algae and are not subject to rapid changes of conditions from wet to dry and vice versa and hot to cold. Continuous monitoring is required.

The issue of eutrophication of Lake Butrint is perhaps the single most important environmental issue. Measures to prevent the build-up of toxics in the Lake and the damage this causes to the fish stock and mussel cultivation are very desirable not least because they will ensure that the local community continues to gain economic benefit from the Butrint National Park.

The Butrint Foundation intend to carry out work in this area in association with the Fisheries Directorate of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Environmental Agency.

4.3.4 *Visitor/Tourism Pressures*

After a low point during the Kosovo crisis, visitor numbers to Butrint have started to increase again. They can be expected to increase further when the Konispoli – Saranda road is open. In principle this is a welcome development since it will speed the day that the Butrint National Park is able to stand on its own feet economically but it is important that steps should be taken to avoid facilities at Butrint being overwhelmed. The archeological work being carried out in sites in the National Park away from the main site is important, not only intrinsically, but because it will encourage the development of counter attractions to the main site and should lead to the development of trails within the Park, boat rides etc.

4.3.5 *Inhabitants within the Butrint National Park*

Few people live within the area of the Park. However the number of inhabitants on the peninsula is rapidly increasing as a result of migration into the Ksamili area. An urban plan is urgently needed for Ksamili if construction is not to spill over into the Park.

5. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF CORRECTIVE MEASURES and RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE COMPLETION OF THE PROGRAMME OF THESE MEASURES (ACTIONS AND TIMEFRAME)

5.1. Status of implementation of corrective measures as proposed in 1997

The information regarding the status of implementation of corrective measures as proposed by the joint mission held in 1997 can be found in the tables below:

5.1.1 Status of implementation of immediate actions: improve the conditions and security of the site.

ACTION	STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION	RECOMMENDATIONS
1. Prepare inventory of archaeological objects related to Butrint (.....)	The mission had a meeting with the Institute of Archaeology (IOA), the responsible agency designated by the Government to implement immediate action n° 1. The IOA presented to the mission the work done since 1997. To this effect, and with the amount of U\$5,000 provided as Emergency assistance under the World Heritage Fund, the IOA purchase a computer, a printer and a digital camera which have been used to realize, in an electronic format, an inventory of 300 most important archaeological objects related to Butrint. The equipment will now be used to realize inventories of objects of others archaeological sites in Albania.	No further recommendation.
2. Reinstall water pumps at the Theatre	The mission was informed that the water pumps stolen from the Theatre in 1997 have been replaced by movable ones that can be used at different locations if needed for restoration or maintenance works. Studies have indicated that it is not necessary to keep the theatre and other structures completely free of water but that the most important is that the water is kept clean. The mission was informed that the funds allocated for this action were also used to install cables and electricity supply to the site.	No further recommendation.
3. Improve site protection by repair and extension of the protective fence around the site	During the visit to the site, the mission noted that the fence which protect the core site had been repaired and that the entrance area had been re-arranged. Furthermore, the mission also noted that the boundaries of the Park had been indicated by stones and that at the entrance at Ksamili a traditional wall of stone is under construction	No further recommendation
4. Install a temporary office at the entrance	A temporary office at the entrance of the core site has	No further recommendation

for access control and ticketing	been constructed for ticketing and for access control. Some general information concerning the site (brochures, maps and history books of Butrint) are sold at the office. The funds collected at this office are used for the Site. The mission has also noted that another office at the entrance of the Butrint National park is under construction with the aim to indicate to visitors that they are entering the area of the National Park. This will also give an indication to the Office of Butrint National Park of how many people are entering the National Park area on a defined period.	
5. Ensure proper surveillance by police assigned to the site	A ranger service was created with the help of the World Bank (Institutional Development Fund) and is responsible for security and access control. Concerning the proper surveillance of the site by the Police - and particularly of the museum within the area -, the mission was informed by the Institute of Archaeology that, by a decision of the Government, it is envisaged that the police of state which was in charge of the security of all archaeological museums of Albania, would be replaced by a private security company.	The mission is of the opinion that an integrated surveillance system to ensure the security within the site should be established as soon as possible.
6. Undertake immediate consultations with appropriate authorities in order to prevent illegal and/or poorly planned construction or development in the surroundings of Butrint.	The mission was informed and has noticed that development pressure is still very high within and in the surroundings of the Park. Several authorisations have been given for constructions (i.e. tourist facilities) that would represent threats to the site and its vicinity. However, national as well as local authorities ensured the mission to be very attentive to this issue. Assurances were given at the meeting with the Butrint National Park Board that projects developments which had already been authorized will not be implemented.	The mission feels that the National Park Directorate's views should be sought for any construction project within the park and its vicinity. An impact assessment study should be made by the National Park for any developments or changes in the land use. Furthermore, all illegal buildings in the National Park should be removed.
7. Prepare and implement a programme of	This project is underway, it includes a schools	In this context, the mission recommends that an

information and awareness building among local and regional authorities, agencies and populations.	programme, community information campaign, promotion of the National Park to agencies in Tirana and the Rangers service equipment and training.	Albanian translation of the Butrint guidebook be produced as soon as possible and that interpretation panels should be installed on the main visited sites. Consideration should also be given to the development of guided visits within the World Heritage site and of educational programmes specifically targeted at schools and young people.
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.	In this context, experts from the UNESCO Secretariat and ICOMOS participated in several workshops and missions.	No further recommendation.

5.1.2 Status of implementation of the actions on the Middle and Long Term

The actions on the Middle and Long Term recommended by the joint mission held in 1997 were:

- A) Improve the conditions and presentation of the site
- B) Review institutional framework for the management of the site
- C) Establish a management plan for Butrint
- D) Incorporate Butrint in regional and local planning

The status of the implementation of these actions could be found in the tables beneath:

A) Improve the conditions and presentation of the site

ACTIONS	STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION	RECOMMENDATIONS
1. Undertake hydrological studies and improve drainage systems.	Hydrological studies have been undertaken confirming the delicate water balance in the region. Studies concluded also that the water level has been relatively high for a long period and that, if well managed, this does not pose a threat to the site.	Continuous monitoring should be undertaken, drainage systems should be well-maintained and measures should be defined that can further improve the water management.
2. Undertake studies for the preservation and presentation of the structure and mosaics of the baptistery as well as other buildings.	A seminar on the conservation of the baptistery mosaic took place on September 1998.	The mission is of the opinion that all known archaeological sites in the vicinity of Butrint should be monitored on a regular basis and that all proposals affecting known archaeological sites should be approved by the National Park Office. Furthermore, available resources for conservation should be concentrated on what is already exposed and at risk, skills for the conservation of the site need to be developed and retained . As far as possible, only reversible techniques should be used for conservation of standing masonry. Further studies on the preservation and presentation of the mosaics should be undertaken.
3. Install provisional museum.	No action has been taken regarding this action.	The museum is under the responsibility of the Institute of Archaeology. The mission did not have the possibility to visit the museum itself during the visit to the site. However, from a meeting with the Institute of Archaeology, the mission understood that, due to the lack of security equipment (i.e alarm system), and of

		security personnel, the museum is still closed. The mission is of the opinion that all the necessary should be done to re-open and ensure security at the museum as soon as possible.
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B) Review institutional framework for the management of the site

ACTIONS	STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION	RECOMMENDATIONS
1. Assign one agency with management authority.	The Butrint Office and of the National Park have been set up under the responsibility of the Minister of Culture. However, the museum of the site is under the responsibility of the Institute of Archaeology which is independent from the Ministry of Culture.	
2. Establish a decentralised office of the site manager	The office for Butrint was created in 1998 and is located in Saranda (approximately 20 km from the site)	
3. Provide adequate delegation of authority to the office of the manager along with adequate human and financial resources.	The Office of Butrint National Park is meant to contain staff from local and national authorities working in an integrated manner under the Director of the Butrint National Park. However, full integration of all the responsible representatives on the ground is not effective.	The mission feels that this is not a satisfactory situation and that the Office of Butrint National Park should be given effective legal status and powers to enable it to achieve its objectives, that the government should move towards long term financial self-sufficiency for the National Park and that management of the museum should be integrated with that of the rest of the National Park. Furthermore, the mission is of the opinion that the Butrint National Park authority urgently needs the powers provided by a new law to

		prevent all building within the National Park. The mission was informed that this new law is under preparation
4. Provide for adequate inter-institutional definition of roles and responsibilities, co-ordination and co-operation both at the national and the local/regional level.	The National Park is overseen by the Butrint National Park Board, chaired by the Minister of Culture with representation from the Institute of Archaeology, the Institute of Monuments, the National Committee for Tourism, the National Committee for the Environment, and Saranda municipality.	The Butrint National Park Board should be expanded to include representation of all government departments with a role in the National Park Effective participation within the National Park Office of the Institute of Archaeology, the Institute of Monuments, the National Committee of Tourism and the National Committee for the Environment should be achieved as soon as possible Furthermore, as for the future, it is vital that the planning authorities both at local and national level should take account of the existence of the Butrint National Park.

C) Establish a management plan for Butrint

ACTIONS	STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION	RECOMMENDATIONS
1. Prepare an archaeological map of Butrint and its surroundings.	An archaeological map of Butrint was prepared in the context of the draft management plan.	No Further recommendation.
2. Establish and compile a site archive of scientific reports, documentation, photographs, etc...	This action is underway.	
3. Review World Heritage values of the site of Butrint, prepare a statement of significance.	This action was undertaken in the context of the enlargement of the site.	No further recommendation.
4. Review in 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.	The boundaries of the site have been reviewed. The Butrint National Park was created in 1999 and the extension of the site to include the whole of the park as a World Heritage site is effective since 2000. The area is now covering 29Km2.	No further recommendation.
5. Prepare a comprehensive management plan for Butrint and its surroundings.	A draft management plan for Butrint (2000-2005) has been prepared by the Butrint Foundation in co-operation with the Butrint Office. The Plan is based on work by many different people. There has been considerable involvement of all the stakeholders, local, national and international, with a series of workshops in Saranda on various aspects of the management of the site.	The Management Plan for Butrint has yet to be formally adopted by the Albanian government as guidance for the management of the National Park itself and also for the activities of the surrounding authorities which could adversely affect the site. There is an urgent need for this formal adoption by the government. When it is adopted, it needs also to be recognised formally as guidance conditioning the activities of all bodies which could affect the conservation and sustainable use of the National Park.

D) Incorporate Butrint in regional and local planning

ACTIONS	STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION	RECOMMENDATIONS
<p>1. Ensure that the Heritage values, including World Heritage values of Butrint are fully considered in regional and local planning and that environmental and cultural impact studies are undertaken when appropriate.</p>	<p>The significance of the site has been recognised by the creation of the Butrint National Park and by the extension of the World Heritage Site to include the whole of the Park, as well as by the creation of the Park Office to manage it. An area of this size (29 kms²) requires to be conserved in many different ways. While its significance lies in its value as a whole, separate elements require distinct approaches to protect and conserve their individual values and contribution to the whole. The range of potential threats is also very large. In this case, it could include decay of standing structures, erosion of standing structures or buried archaeology, accidental damage, deliberate damage or vandalism, and theft and looting. Changes of landuse, whether through agricultural change or through development of new buildings, are also likely to have an adverse impact both on the overall value of the site as a whole and its setting and on individual archaeological elements.</p>	<p>The mission feels that proposals for road improvements which would adversely affect the character of the National Park should not be permitted. In this context, and concerning the road Albania-Greece financed by the EU, the mission had received confirmation by the representative of the European Commission in Saranda that no support from the EU will be given to a project which could damage or threatening the World Heritage site of Butrint.</p> <p>The mission is also of the opinion that any proposed changes of land use should be the subject of environmental impact assessment. Furthermore, the National Park Office should develop a Geographical Information System (GIS) as a basic management tool for the World Heritage Site. Archaeological research programmes should be encouraged to improve the basic understanding necessary to manage the site to conserve its significance. A full annual maintenance programme should be developed and maintained and the condition survey of all standing structures should be completed and prioritised so that it can be as a basis for planning work programmes for major conservation projects</p> <p>Finally the mission feels that other</p>

		development and master plans affecting the World Heritage Site and its surroundings should be revised so that their policies are in conformity with the provisions of the World Heritage Site Management Plan.
2. Collaborate with the World Bank in reviving the “Albanian Coastal Zone Management Plan”.	The status of this plan is unknown.	

5.2 Recommendation as to whether the site can be deleted from the List of World Heritage in Danger (conditions and timeframe)

The World Heritage site of Butrint was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger in 1997 upon recommendation of the first UNESCO-ICOMOS-Butrint Foundation mission which considered at that time that :

- the property was faced with serious deterioration of materials and important loss of cultural significance.

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

The mission undertaken in April 2001 noted considerable progress in terms of preservation, conservation and maintenance of the site as well as in terms of its legal protection and management. However, this needs to be consolidated and institutionalised by a strong continued commitment at the local, regional and national level.

Therefore, the mission recommends the World Heritage Committee to retain the site on the List of World Heritage in Danger and to periodically review the conditions of the site on the basis of reports that should be submitted by the Albanian Government.

Furthermore, the mission recommends that another assessment mission to the site be undertaken in October 2003 in order to allow the World Heritage Committee to review the progress made and in order to assess if the site can be deleted from the List of World Heritage in Danger at his twenty-seventh session (June 2004).

6 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORLD HERITAGE EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

6.1 Status of implementation of World Heritage emergency assistance

The World Heritage Committee, at its twenty-first session in December 1997, approved an amount of US\$ 100,000 under Emergency Assistance. The funds were distributed as follows:

- US\$ 47,000 for the implementation of Immediate actions defined in the report of the joint mission held in 1997 (cf. para. 5.1.1 above).
- US\$ 53,000 for implementation of Actions in the Middle and Long term to be allocated in consultation with the Chairperson of the Committee (cf. para. 5.1.2)

During the implementation of the immediate actions for an amount of US\$ 47,000, the Secretariat has expressed serious concern about the delays in the implementation of the assistance by the Albanian authorities. It had to accept several amendments to the established contracts and to the dates of conclusion of the activities in order to allow their completion. The Secretariat was informed, and this was confirmed during the

mission, that internal administrative procedures caused these delays and that in certain cases it had taken more than a year for funds to be transferred from the capital to the site for implementation. Furthermore, the requirement of bidding procedures for even small amounts of money is an administrative burden for the Park Office and prevents the Park authority to implement the activities with its own staff.

It has now been agreed upon with the National Commission for UNESCO that in the future contracts will be established directly with the Ministry for Culture for implementation through the Park Office. Payments will be made through the UNDP office or by bank transfer directly to the beneficiary.

Delays in the implementation of the above-mentioned activities have made it impossible for the Secretariat to proceed with the implementation of activities that had been proposed for the use of the remaining funds under the Emergency Assistance. These activities were approved in consultation with the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee in March 2000 but were kept in abeyance awaiting conclusion of the existing contracts.

The status of the implementation of the emergency assistance can be found in the table below:

Immediate action	Amount (US\$)	Status
Action N° 1: Purchase of computer equipment for preparation of an inventory of archaeological objects.	5,000.	Action completed. Contract closed.
Action N° 2: Purchase and installation of equipment for water pumps and for electric installation.	13,500	Action completed. Last payment underway.
Action N° 3: Repair and extension of the protective fence around the site.	7,100	Action completed. Last payment underway.
Action N° 4: Install a temporary office at the entrance of the site for access and ticketing.	15,600	This action was implemented under the funds allocated for repair and extension of the protective fence around the site (Action No 3). A request from the Albanian government to use the funds for the construction of sanitary facilities was approved but not implemented. Following the mission, the Butrint Park proposed that the funds now be used for the upgrading of visitor's facilities on the site and in the acropolis castle. A Work plan has been submitted. Completion of the action is foreseen by September 2001.
Action No 5: Expert advice and missions	5,000	Action completed.
TOTAL	46,200	

6.2 Recommendations for completion of World Heritage emergency assistance

The mission agreed with the Secretary General of the National Commission and with the Office of Butrint that revised and detailed proposal will be submitted as soon as possible for the use the remaining funds allocated for actions on the Middle and Long term under the emergency assistance. The mission strongly recommended that part of these fund should be used in the

7. **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The joint mission had the opportunity to note that since 1997 and in response to the recommendations of the previous mission in Albania, some important initiatives have been undertaken for the preservation and protection of the World Heritage site of Butrint.

Among these, particular mention should be made of the establishment of the “Office of Administration and co-ordination of Butrint” and of the Butrint National Park Board– at the national level - and of the enlargement of the World Heritage Site as Butrint National Park.

However, this progress now needs to be consolidated and institutionalised.

The mission recommends therefore that the Butrint National Park Board should be enlarged to include, at the national level, all relevant authorities (e.g Ministry of Agriculture, Public work,) and to permit an effective participation of local authorities, in order to ensure a strong and effective coordination for the management of the World Heritage site. The Park needs to be given sufficient control over the activities of other agencies within its area.

Furthermore, the mission feels that there is a need to institutionalise the Butrint National Park structure by a Law in order to allow clear identification of responsibilities between local authorities and the Park Directorate within the World Heritage site and its surroundings. Therefore, the mission is of the opinion that the office of the Butrint National Park should be involved in the planning application in the surroundings of the Park. This decision, allowing a better coordination, would permit to control building developments - in particular- which can represents threats to the World Heritage Site and its surroundings. To this regard, the mission was informed that this Law is in preparation.

Over the coming years there is a need to move to a more autonomous and financially self-supporting National Park.

In the meantime, the Park needs to identify the amount of outstanding conservation work and prioritise and plan its execution.

The draft Management Plan provides an excellent framework for its future activities but it should be adopted by the government as guidance for all bodies concerned with the National Park, as soon as possible.

Furthermore, the mission noticed that there is a general feeling at the national level as well as at the regional and local levels, that thanks to the changes of the political situation in Albania and to the progress made in the management of the World Heritage site, Butrint is almost “saved” . However, the mission is of the opinion that progress still remains to be made in the preservation and protection of the World Heritage site of Butrint.

As to the World Heritage Emergency Assistance, the mission urges the national authorities to establish clear and effective procedures for the smooth implementation of the assistance. It suggests that the authorities consider the possibility that activities are carried out directly by and under the full responsibility of the Butrint National Park Office.

The mission recommends the World Heritage Committee to retain the site on the List of World Heritage in Danger and to periodically review the conditions of the site on the basis of reports that should be submitted by the Albanian Government.

Furthermore, the mission recommends that another assessment mission to the site be undertaken in October 2003 in order to allow the World Heritage Committee to review the progress made and in order to assess if the site can be deleted from the List of World Heritage in Danger at his twenty-seventh session (June 2004).

ANNEXES

I. Itinerary and programme of the mission

Thursday 19 April 2001

- 4:00 pm: Arrival of the members of the mission in Tirana
- 6:00 pm: Coordination meeting with the mission members, Mr Fation Peni Secretary- General of the Albanian National Commission to UNESCO, Mr Gezim Hoxha, Director of Cultural Heritage – Minister of Culture and Mr Ani Tare, Director of the Office of Butrint National Park and of the Butrint National Park.

Friday 20 April 2001

- 10:00 am: Meeting with Mrs Uruci, Minister of Culture.
- 11:00 am: Meeting with Mr Korkuti, Director Institute of Archaeology.
- 12:00 am: Meeting with Mr Shkreli, Director Institute of Monuments.
- 3:30 pm: Visit of the Archaeological Museum of Tirana.
- 4:30 pm: Coordination meeting with the mission team.

Saturday 21 April 2001

- 8:00 am: Departure for Saranda
- 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm: Arrival in Gjirokastra. Visit of the town and meeting with the representatives of the Packard Foundation.
- 4:30 pm: Arrival in Saranda
- 5:30 pm: Visit of the Office of Butrint National Park

Sunday 22 April 2001

- 9:30 am: Meeting with the Butrint Office team on developments threats to the World heritage Site and the Butrint national Park

- 11:00 am: Meeting with the Mayor of Saranda, Mr Adrian Shehu.
- 11:30am: Departure for the World Heritage Site of Butrint.
- 2:00 pm: Visit of the archaeological site of Diaporit facing Butrint.
- 3:00 pm: Extended Visit of the World Heritage site of Butrint.
- 5:30 pm: Departure for Saranda

Monday 23 April 2001

- 9:00 am: Meeting with the Office of Butrint Staff and the Director of Cultural Heritage on the implementation and follow-up of Emergency Assistance Funds.
- 11:00 am: Departure for Tirana.
- 7:00 pm: Arrival in Tirana.
- 8:30 pm: Dinner with Mrs and Mr Kadaré.

Tuesday 24 April 2001

- 9:00 am: Meeting with the Representative of the World Bank, Mr Eugene Scanteie.
- 11:00 am: Meeting with the Butrint National Park Board chaired by the Minister of Culture.
- 1:00 pm: Official Lunch hosted by Mrs Uruci, Minister of Culture.
- 3:30 pm: Meeting with the Representative of the European Union, Mr Michel Perreti.
- 5:00 pm: Meeting with the Deputy-Representative of UNDP, Mr Fartash.

Wednesday 25 April 2001

- 9:30 am: Coordination meeting of the mission team with Mr Fation Peni, Secretary-general of the Albanian National Commission to UNESCO.
- 12:30: Departure for Paris.

III. Mission team

- UNESCO:** Mr Herman van Hooff, Chief European and Latin American Desk, WHC, Head of Mission
- Mrs Frédérique Robert, Assistant Programme Specialist, European Desk, WHC
- ICOMOS :** Mr Christopher Young, Head of World Heritage and International Policy, English Heritage, ICOMOS expert.
- Butrint Foundation:** Sir Patrick Fairwether, Director of the Butrint Foundation.