
Natural and Culturo-Historical Region of Kotor (Montenegro)

No 125

1 Basic data

State Party

Republic of Montenegro

Name of property

Natural and Culturo-Historical Region of Kotor

Location

City of Kotor and its surrounding territory

Boka Kotorska

Montenegro

Inscription

1979

Brief description

In the Middle Ages, this natural harbour on the Adriatic coast in Montenegro was an important artistic and commercial centre with its own famous schools of masonry and iconography. A large number of the monuments (including four Romanesque churches and the town walls) were seriously damaged by the 1979 earthquake but the town has been restored, largely with UNESCO's help.

Date of ICOMOS approval of this report

14 March 2012

2 Issues raised

Background

The property was originally nominated as a natural site but was inscribed only for its cultural values. Its title reflects these values in terms of the integral relationship of the buildings and monuments around the harbour to their natural setting. The property boundary as shown in the nomination dossier and the 2007 Management Plan encompassed all the nominated settlements including Kotor, Risan, Perast, Prčanj, Dobrata, Morinj and also their steeply rising natural backdrop around the harbour, coinciding with the crests of the natural sinkhole formation. According to the 2007 Management Plan the property totalled 14,600 ha comprising 12,000 hectares of land and 2,600 hectares of sea area. The property is bordered to the north and south-east by national parks, and by the Gulf of Tivat which formed the outer harbour and approach to Kotor from the south-west.

The property was initially included on the List of World Heritage in Danger in 1979 because of extensive damage

to the cultural heritage caused by the earthquakes that occurred six months prior to inscription. Following restoration and consolidation of the monuments with UNESCO's assistance, and following a joint UNESCO/ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission the property was removed from the Danger List in 2003. The mission recommended that a buffer zone be defined around the nominated area of the property. A series of missions and participations in round table meetings took place in Kotor between 2003 and 2006 in order to assist the State Party with the preparation of a Management Plan and involvement of stakeholders in the process. The draft Management Plan was completed in 2007 but did not include a buffer zone. The Periodic Report of 2005 noted uncontrolled urbanisation; poor protection of the cultural landscape and smaller settlements, and poor quality and planning of the new architecture in the protected area.

In 2008 a joint UNESCO/ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission was invited to consider the State Party's proposal to locate a bridge across the entrance to the inner harbour at Veriges as part of the bypass road. The mission recommended the definition and delineation of a *buffer zone* around the nominated area of the property as requested since 2003 to enhance protection in accordance with paragraphs 103 to 107 of the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*; the mission urged the authorities to clearly define such a buffer zone for the protection of the World Heritage property and take into account the integral aspects of the whole Boka Kotorska, noting that this region has an overall cohesion integrating cultural and natural aspects into a cultural landscape.

Modification

The current request as set out in the State Party's State of Conservation Report (2011) is for the creation of a buffer zone. The proposed buffer zone surrounds and includes all the formerly designated property area; the whole outer harbour including the Bay of Tivat extending out into the Adriatic and including a length of coast south to the border of the national park, and an area of hinterland to the north of the entrance to Tivat Bay but not the coast itself. The proposed buffer zone covers 41,100ha of land and 9,991 of sea, totalling 51,091ha. It covers the approach from the Adriatic Sea to the inner harbour including the proposed site of the Veriges bridge.

However the property area as shown in red line on the accompanying map of the World Heritage Site boundaries and described in the legend as "edited in 2010" has been reduced to 6,120ha of land and 2,500 ha of sea area – little over half the original land area as described in the 2007 Management Plan. In fact the State Party has also shown a property boundary in yellow line on this map which it claims to be the original 1979 boundary and from which the new red boundary varies in several locations. The missing area, when the new property boundary is compared with the original 12,000 ha of land area designated in the 2007 Management Plan, can be seen to be to the north-west, extending to the boundary of the "potential Orjen National Park". No reasons have been

given by the State Party for exclusion of this area from the property or for the other variations resulting in the new property boundary as “edited in 2010”.

The buffer zone was determined following a workshop partly funded by UNESCO that involved key stakeholders and expert consultants. Criteria are related to geographic, cultural and historical relations and connections of the property to the wider area of the bay; the visual field of the bay seen from the water; the administrative boundaries of adjacent municipalities and the national parks’ contact zones. In detail it comprises part of the sea area of the Boka Kotorska bay with Tivat bay, Kumbor strait, and Herceg Novi bay including the entrance to the bay with the island of Mamula; Žanjice with Arza cape; peninsula Ponta Oštra; Luštica peninsula; the town of Tivat with villages along its bay; Tivat archipelagos (islands of Prevlaka, St. Marco, and The Lady of Mercy); the western side of the Vrmac peninsula; town of Herceg Novi with villages along its bay; the slopes of Mount Orjen with its villages (Ratiševina, Trebesin, Kameno, Podi, Sušćeapan, Sutorina, Malta, Lučiči); Kruševice, Ubli; Lower and Upper Grbalj; the rear side of the town of Risna (Ledenice and Crkvice); the villages of Upper Orahovac and Zalazi.

The property and proposed buffer zone are protected by the Management Plan, which was revised during 2011 and adopted by the Montenegrin Government in December 2011, under the new Law on Cultural Heritage adopted in 2010. The extent and boundaries of the buffer zone were established in December 2011 by the Directorate for Conservation of Cultural Properties.

ICOMOS considers that the boundaries of the buffer zone are in line with the recommendations of the 2008 UNESCO/ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission to include the whole Boka Kotorska and are perfectly acceptable. However ICOMOS notes that the information provided with the current request does not include details of controls applicable to development including infrastructure within the buffer zone. There is no detail regarding guidelines on protection of the visual integrity of the property, including protection of vistas and visual accents, horizontal and vertical relationships, materials and form of new construction. The co-ordination body proposed in the Management Plan is not yet approved and operating, and it is not clear how the buffer zone will integrate with the planning controls of the individual municipal plans of Kotor, Tivat and Herceg Novi to control development and infrastructure and protect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property.

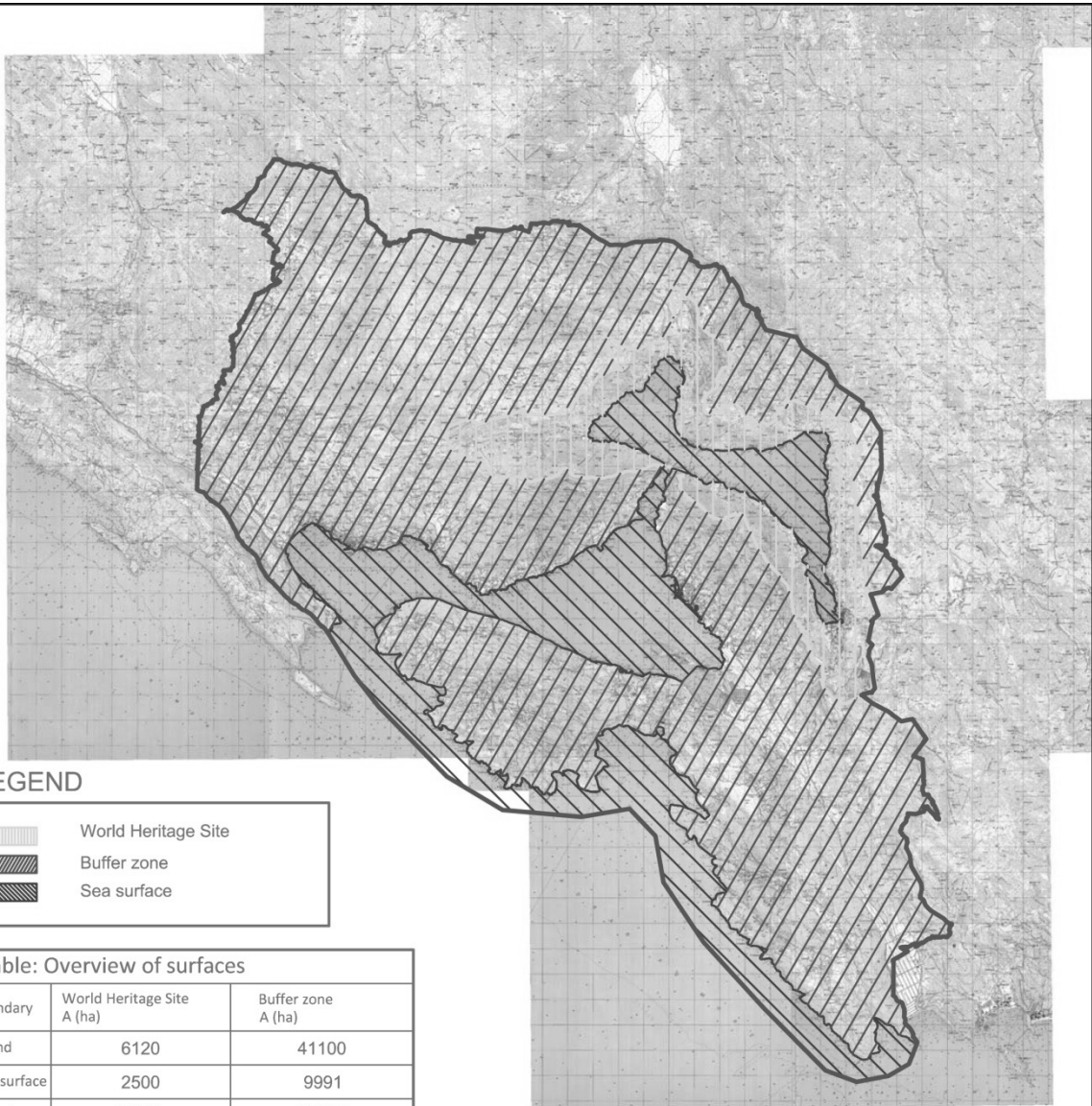
3 ICOMOS Recommendations

Recommendation with respect to inscription

ICOMOS recommends that the examination of the proposed minor modification to the boundary of the Natural and Culturo-Historical Region of Kotor, Montenegro, be **referred back** to the State Party in order to allow it to provide justification and detailed information on the proposed variations to the original 1979 property boundary.

ICOMOS recommends that the proposed buffer zone for the Natural and Culturo-Historical Region of Kotor, Montenegro, be **approved**.

ICOMOS also recommends that the State Party establish as soon as possible a coordination of the Management Plan with the municipal urban planning documents to include controls applicable to development and infrastructure within the buffer zone. Such controls on development and infrastructure need to recognise the components necessary to the visual integrity of the property, including vistas and visual accents, horizontal and vertical relationships, materials and form of new construction, and must be integrated with the individual municipal plans in order to ensure the protection of the Outstanding Universal Value of the property.



LEGEND

	World Heritage Site
	Buffer zone
	Sea surface

Table: Overview of surfaces

boundary	World Heritage Site A (ha)	Buffer zone A (ha)
land	6120	41100
sea surface	2500	9991
Totally	<u>8620</u>	<u>51091</u>
Totally	<u>59711 ha</u>	

Map showing the revised boundaries of the property