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## Natural and Culturo-Historical Region of Kotor (Montenegro)

### No 125bis

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#### 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

12 March 2015

#### 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 document 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 hectares 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. The 2007 Management Plan 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. A buffer zone was subsequently defined following a workshop partly funded by UNESCO that involved key stakeholders and expert consultants and was approved in 2012 by the World Heritage Committee Decision 36 COM 8B.58 (St Petersburg, 2012).

The property area delineated on the map showing the buffer zone did not accord with that approved by the World Heritage Committee in 1979 and shown in the 2007 Management Plan. In the absence of explanation or information on this, the Decision 36 COM 8B.58 (2012) referred back the examination of the proposed minor modification to the property boundary to allow the State Party to provide justification and detailed information on the proposed variations to the original 1979 property boundary.

Decision 36 COM 8B.58:

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Documents WHC-12/36.COM/8B.Add and WHC-12/36.COM/INF.8B1.Add,
2. Refers the examination of the proposed minor modification to the boundary of the Natural and Culturo-Historical Region of Kotor, Montenegro, 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;
3. Approves the proposed buffer zone for the Natural and Culturo-Historical Region of Kotor, Montenegro;
4. 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.

#### **Modification**

In response to Decision 36 COM 8B.58, the State Party has provided a series of maps showing the property boundary enclosing the area as originally specified for the nominated property land area: 12,000 ha. The boundary appears to follow the same line as shown in the 2007 Management Plan and as inscribed in 1979. The buffer zone remains as approved in 2012. No additional information or explanation has been provided.

ICOMOS concludes therefore that the State Party no longer proposes to modify the boundary of the property as inscribed in 1979.

### **3. ICOMOS Recommendations**

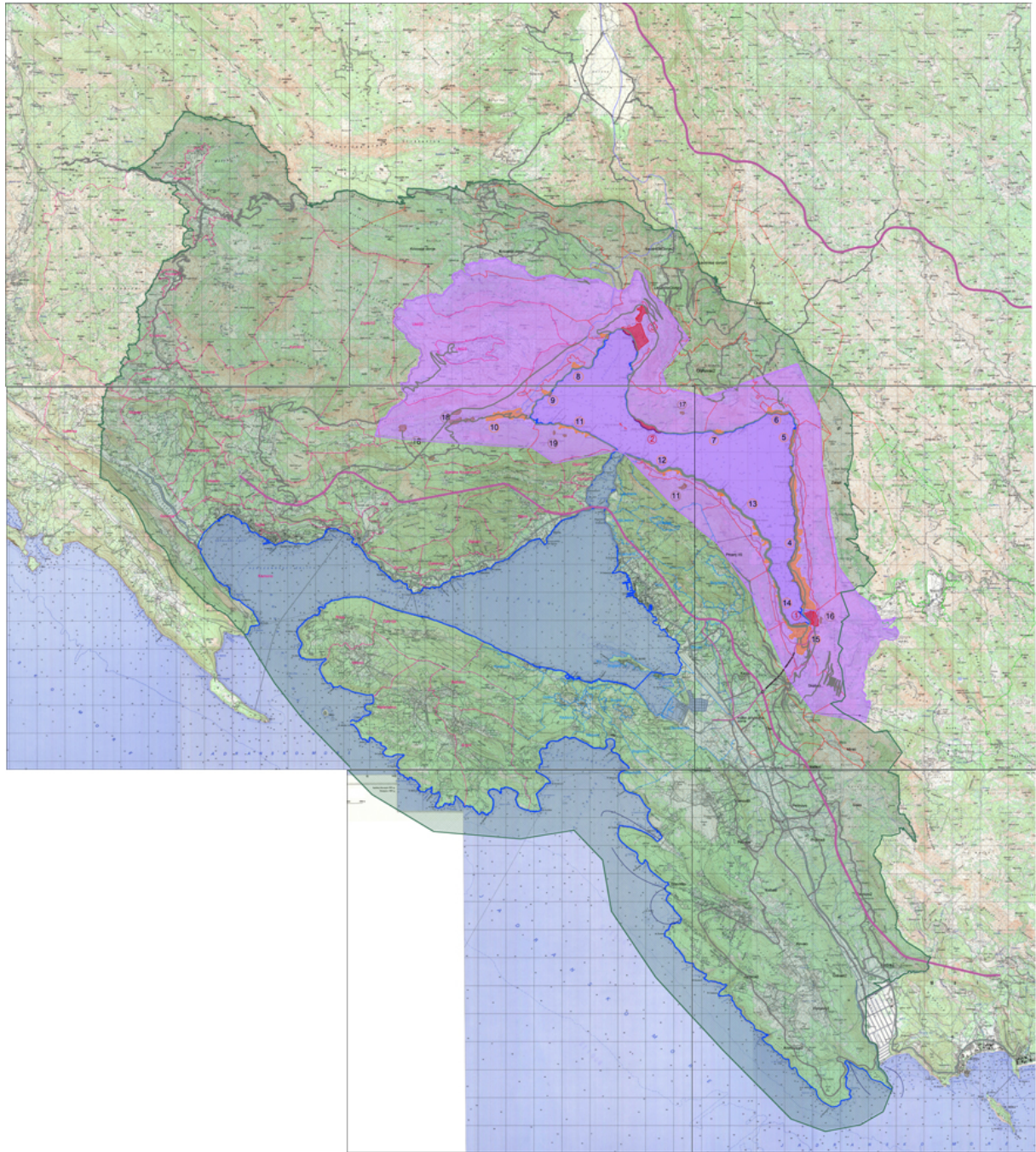
#### **Recommendations with respect to inscription**

ICOMOS recommends that the proposed minor modification to the boundary of the Natural and Culturo-Historical Region of Kotor, Montenegro, be **approved**.

#### **Additional recommendations**

ICOMOS recommends that the State Party ensure that the Management Plan incorporates the correct property boundary as inscribed in 1979.

ICOMOS further recommends that the Management Plan should integrate the relevant municipalities with responsibilities within the property area and buffer zone and coordinate their activities in relation to protection mechanisms and local traffic networks which link the main transport corridors.



Map showing the boundaries of the property