

Butrint (Albania)

No 570 bis

1. BASIC DATA

State Party: Albania

Name of property: Butrint

Location: District of Sarandë, County of Vlorë

Inscription: 1992, 1999

Brief Description:

Inhabited since prehistoric times, Butrint has been the site of a Greek colony, a Roman city and a bishopric. Following a period of prosperity under Byzantine administration, then a brief occupation by the Venetians, the city was abandoned in the late Middle Ages after marshes formed in the area. The present archaeological site is a repository of ruins representing each period in the city's development.

2. ISSUES RAISED

Background

At its 30th session (30COM 7B.75) the World Heritage Committee noted with satisfaction that the State Party had expanded the area of Butrint National Park and thereupon the buffer zone of the World Heritage property and requested the State Party to submit the relevant documents including maps of the revised buffer zone of the World Heritage property in accordance with chapter III.I of the *Operational Guidelines*.

Modification

The State Party has submitted details of the boundary and zoning of the National Park which was established in 2000 and enlarged in 2005. The Park is said to act as a buffer zone. The Park originally extended to 2900 ha and its extension to 8591 ha was approved by Ministers in 2005; no information has been provided as to whether the extension has yet been formally gazetted.

The inscribed property of 16 ha lies within the Park. The Park is divided into four zones. A map has been provided of these four zones:

- Core zone A: 3980 ha - with strongest protection - this includes the World Heritage property.
- Core zone B: 592 ha - Recreation Zone
- Core zone C: 3081 ha - Traditional Use Zone

- Core zone D: 938 ha - Sustainable use zone - with least protection and which act as buffer zones for the neighbouring urban areas

The extension to the Park was mostly in zones B, C and D.

The Park encompasses several villages within zones C and D and some of these, such as Ksamil, are growing rapidly without apparent satisfactory controls. A Management Plan for the National Park has been prepared but has yet to be formally approved and supported by stakeholders. Currently resources to manage and patrol such a large area are few: only four rangers patrol the Park and they have no transport. Involvement of the local communities who live within the Park and managing development in its extensive area are clearly challenges.

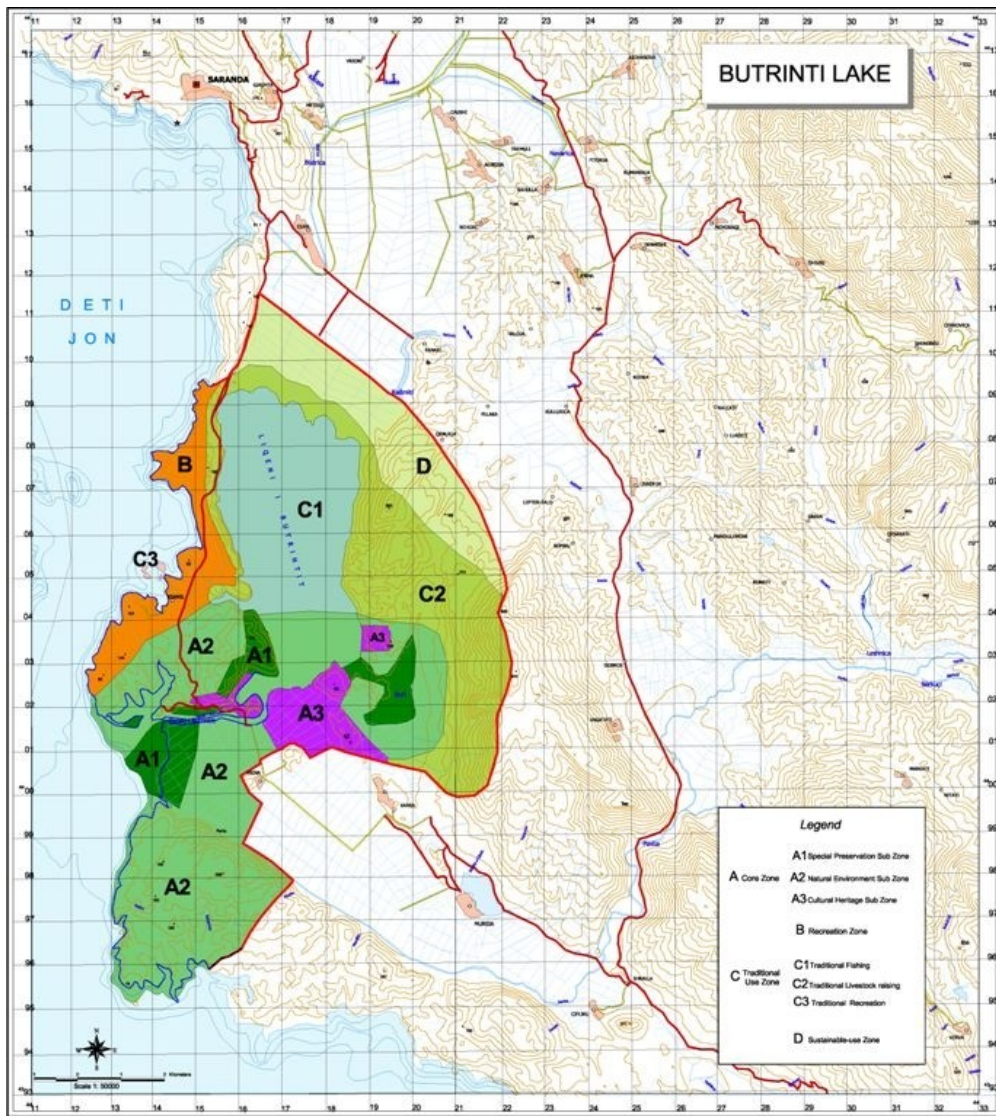
ICOMOS considers that the extension to the National Park and its formal acceptance as a buffer zone for the inscribed property is to be welcomed as a means of protecting not only the natural heritage of the wetlands surrounding the archaeological site, but also its wider setting. However the effectiveness of the new buffer zone and the constraints imposed on its various zones should be monitored. In particular, the boundaries of the villages should be made clear to the citizens and respected.

Confirmation is need of the formal gazetment of the extension to the National Park.

3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

ICOMOS recommends that the Butrint National Park as a buffer zone for Butrint (Albania) be approved.

ICOMOS recommends also that the State Party be requested to provide documentation on the formal gazetment of the enlarged National Park.



Map showing the boundaries of the revised buffer zone