

## Ohrid Region (FYR of Macedonia)

No 99

### 1. BASIC DATA

*State Party:* Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

*Name of property:* Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid Region

*Inscription:* 1979-1980

*Brief Description:*

Situated on the shores of Lake Ohrid, the town of Ohrid is one of the oldest human settlements in Europe. Built mainly between the 7<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, it has the oldest Slav monastery (St Pantelejmon) and more than 800 Byzantine-style icons dating from the 11<sup>th</sup> to the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. After those of the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow, this is considered to be the most important collection of icons in the world.

### 2. ISSUES RAISED

*Background*

In 2007 the State Party asked the Ministry of Environment to establish an inter-ministerial expert commission to define the boundaries of the property. The commission included representatives of the Department of Nature, Division of Natural Heritage, Ministry of Culture, Administration of Cultural Heritage, and the State Agency on Geodetic Affairs. Through field work and analysis of cultural heritage and archaeological sites, a logical boundary for the property was delineated.

This proposed boundary was considered by the Committee at its 32<sup>nd</sup> session in 2008 (Quebec City). ICOMOS in principle recommended approval, whereas IUCN requested the State Party to consider a more major enlargement of the boundary to encompass the whole Galičica National Park.

The Committee referred the proposed modification back to the State Party for reconsideration (Decision 32 COM 8B.49):

*The World Heritage Committee,*

*1. Having examined Documents WHC-08/32.COM/8B.Add, WHC-08/32.COM/INF.8B1.Add and WHC-08/32.COM/INF.8B2,*

*2. Refers the proposed modification to the boundary of the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid Region, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, back to the State Party for reconsideration;*

*3. Requests the State Party (following the IUCN evaluation) to consider realigning the boundary of the property, preferably along topographic or other features recognisable in the field, to include all of Galičica National Park and other critical areas, and creating an appropriate buffer zone to protect the catchment of Lake Ohrid;*

*4. Notes the ICOMOS evaluation recommending approval of the minor modification of boundary under cultural criteria for the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid Region, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia;*

*5. Encourages the States Parties of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Albania to cooperate towards a transboundary extension of the property to include the Albanian part of Lake Ohrid and its watershed to strengthen the values and integrity of the property;*

*6. Requests the State Party to submit a detailed scaled map and figures for the area of the property by 1 February 2009.*

On 30<sup>th</sup> January 2009, the State Party re-submitted the same modifications, with a request that the Committee reconsider their decision. Also submitted was a detailed map, further justification for the proposed boundary and an explanation as to why a major modification to extend the boundary to cover the whole Galičica National Park and other critical areas, and the creation of an appropriate buffer zone to protect the catchment of Lake Ohrid was not in their view feasible.

*Modification*

The State Party is suggesting a new boundary for the property, based on the survey work carried by the expert Commission. This new boundary is overall slightly smaller than the inscribed boundary. To the north and west the boundary is slightly reduced; to the east the boundary is in part reduced and elsewhere slightly increased, particularly to the south where it joins the land border with Albania. The area within the new boundary is 83.350 ha and a scaled map has been provided.

The proposals put forward are a rationalisation of the original boundary so that it better reflects the attributes of the property.

In its 2008 submission, the State Party indicated that the expert studies so far undertaken will form the basis for the development of a Management Plan for the property by the end of 2009 at the latest. In its re-submission, the State Party confirms that work has started and that a draft Plan will be submitted for review at the end of 2009.

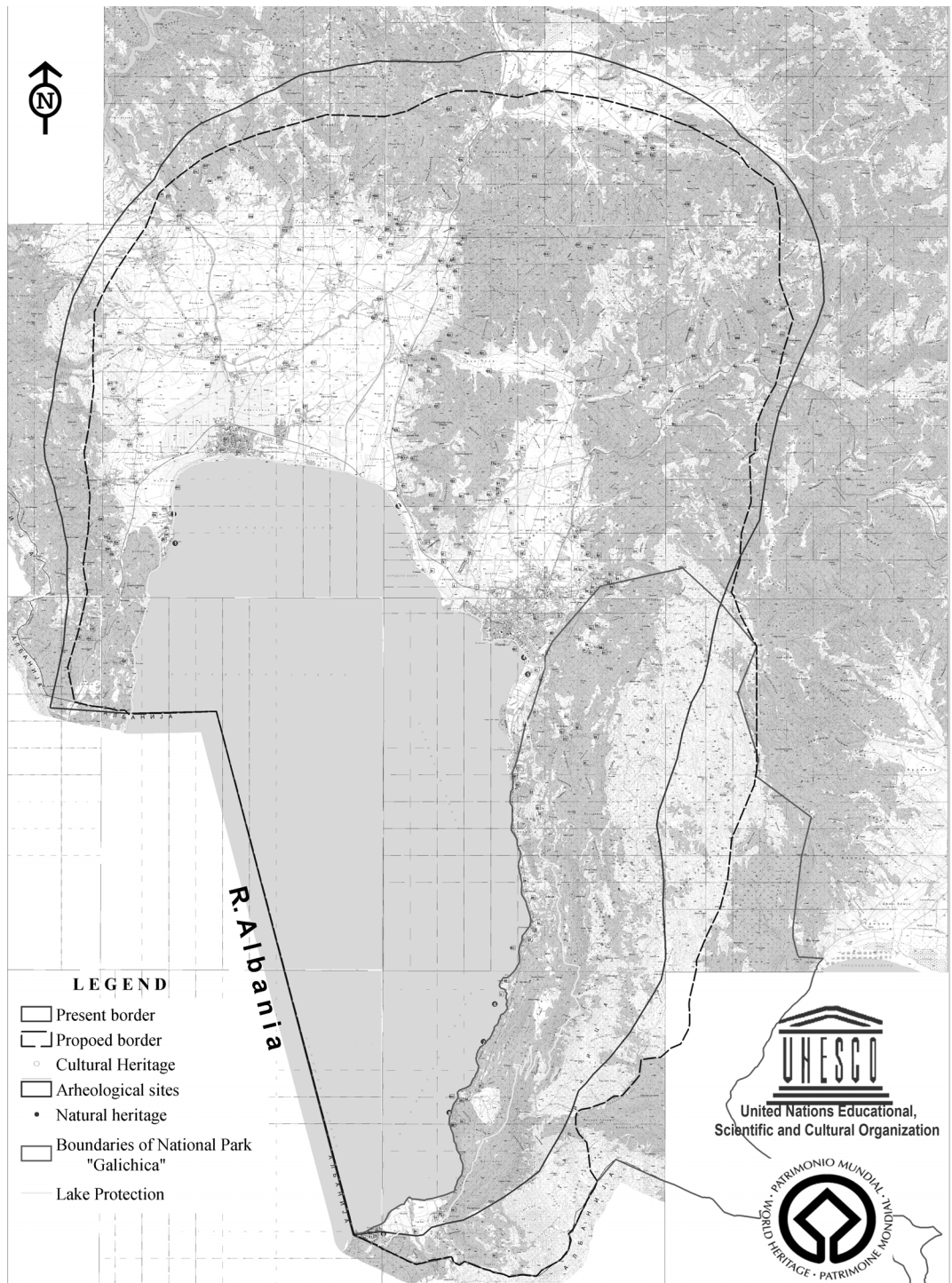
On the request for the State Party to cooperate with the State Party of Albania on the possibility of a transboundary nomination of Lake Ohrid, it is reported that negotiation procedures have been initiated.

### 3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

As in its 2008 evaluation, ICOMOS supported the rationale for defining the boundary on the basis of detailed mapping of the attributes of the property and reiterates this support for the re-submitted proposal.

ICOMOS notes that negotiations have been initiated with the State Party of Albania on the issue of a possible trans-boundary nomination of Lake Ohrid. ICOMOS considers that such a trans-boundary nomination should be for a mixed property, as is the existing property, and therefore urges consideration of the cultural aspects of the Albanian lake shore.

ICOMOS recommends that the proposed boundary for the World Heritage Site of Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid Region, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, be *approved*.



**Map showing the revised boundaries of the property**