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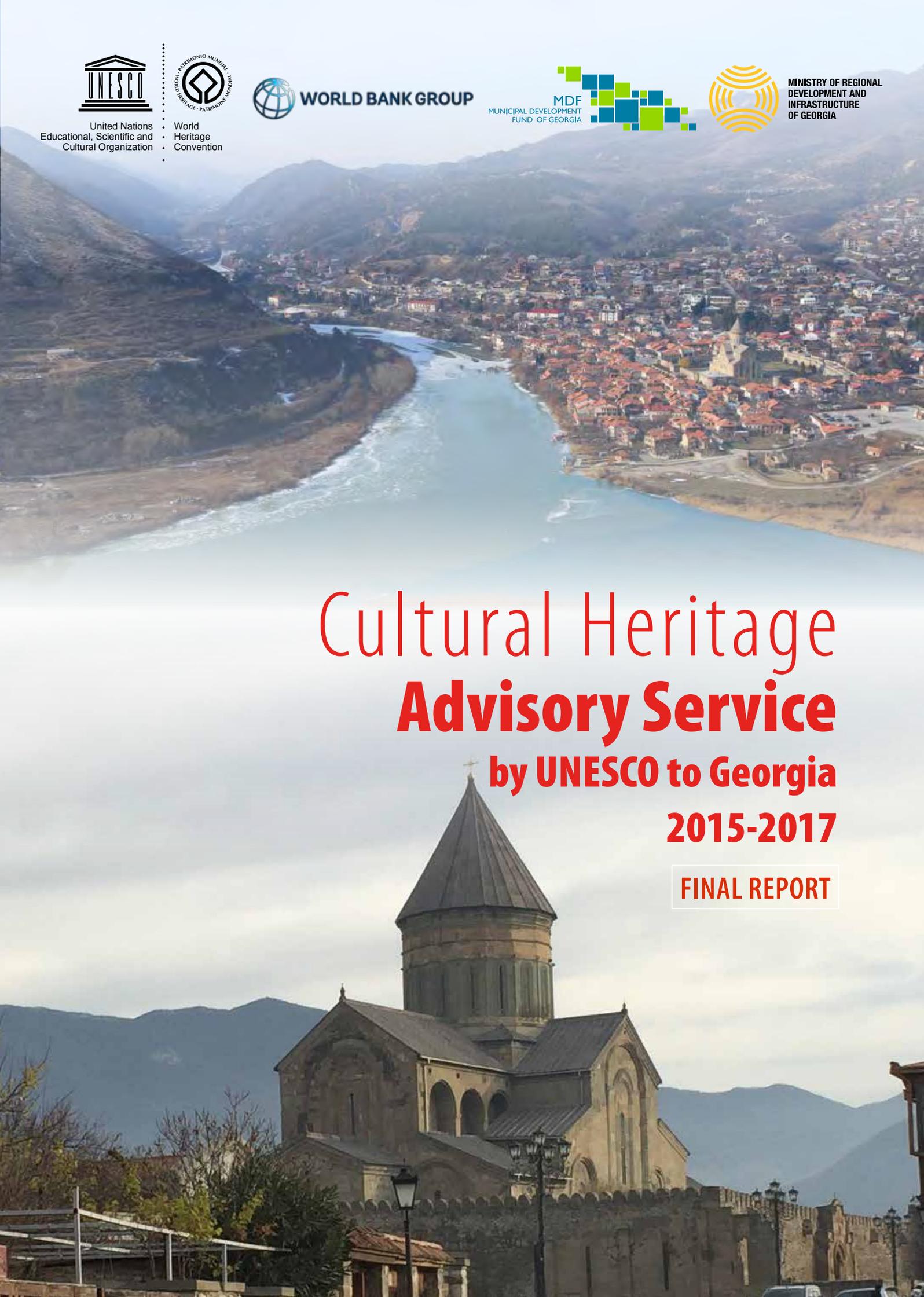
WORLD BANK GROUP



MINISTRY OF REGIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT AND  
INFRASTRUCTURE  
OF GEORGIA

# Cultural Heritage Advisory Service by UNESCO to Georgia 2015-2017

FINAL REPORT



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Cultural Heritage  
**Advisory Service**  
by UNESCO to Georgia  
2015-2017



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# Abbreviations

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<b>ICCROM</b>	International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property
<b>ICOMOS</b>	International Council of Monuments and Sites
<b>IUCN</b>	International Union for Conservation of Nature
<b>LUMP</b>	Land Use Master Plan
<b>MDF</b>	Municipal Development FUND
<b>MoESD</b>	Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development
<b>MoC</b>	Ministry of Culture, Monuments Protection and Sport of Georgia
<b>NACHP</b>	National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation
<b>NCDT</b>	Ltd. <i>“New City Development Team”</i> (sub-contractor firm of the Ltd <i>“Sally”</i> <sup>1</sup> )
<b>TA</b>	Technical Assistance
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNEP-WCMC</b>	United Nations-Environment World Conservation Monitoring Centre
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>UNESCO-WHC</b>	UNESCO World Heritage Centre
<b>WH</b>	World Heritage

<sup>1</sup> Ltd «Sally» was the major contractor responsible for delivery of 2016 LUMP, while the Ltd «New City Development» was its sub-contractor with limited responsibilities.

# Acknowledgment

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# Background

## Nomination and inscription on the World Heritage List<sup>2</sup>

Georgia ratified the World Heritage Convention in November 1992. In 1994, a nomination for the site of “The City-Museum Reserve of Mtskheta” was submitted. The town had been declared “City-museum” in 1982 in the Georgian SSR, with a plan that provided for the preservation of the scale and townscape of the historic part of the town, confining new development to an area to the north of the fortress. The Nomination underlined the site as a *“striking example of the unity of architecture with its surrounding landscape”*.

In the evaluation of the submitted nomination, ICOMOS whilst recognizing that the authenticity of setting was total, proposed to inscribe the site only for the three churches, changing the identification of the World Heritage property.

<sup>2</sup> Documents available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/708/documents/>

“The churches in the town, together with their lesser confreres, are a natural group but their visual cohesion is insufficient to justify the designation of a single Site and the two principal churches are, therefore, recommended for separate individual designation: likewise the extra-muros church of the Jvari (Holy Rood).

A buffer zone is proposed embracing the churches in the town and the Jvari Church, sufficient to protect their environs and principal views. The buffer zone is less extensive than the zone of protection afforded by the state.”

On the other hand, the evaluation mission recognized the importance of the setting and the need to protect it as part of the outstanding value of the property.

“All the Sites are situated in dramatic landscapes with extensive views and the impact of the buildings depends considerably on the shapes, usage and quality of the land. In consequence, substantial or inappropriate intrusion into these



landscapes over quite wide areas could have a disadvantageous effect and the wide drafting of the protective zone under state legislation is, therefore, an important advantage. While the mission's Identification of the specific sites and buffer zones is conventional and adequate under present circumstances, future consideration may be given to extending these to incorporate other areas protected under present state legislation."

The Committee, in inscribing this property on the World Heritage List under criteria (iii) and (iv) in 1994, according to ICOMOS's recommendations suggested to the State Party to change the name to "Historic Churches of Mtskheta". In the end, the property's name was changed to *Historical Monuments of Mtskheta* only in 2005, following a reiterated request by the World Heritage Committee.

In a context in which the Historic Urban Landscape Recommendations were not yet developed, the decision of limiting the site to the churches with a monumental approach is at the origin of the ambiguity about the elements that constitute

the value of the site and the conservation tools to be applied.

The retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value, adopted in 2014, focuses on the three major monuments, making reference to the setting: "*The Historical Monuments of Mtskheta are located in the cultural landscape at the confluence of the Aragvi and Mtkvari Rivers, in Central-Eastern Georgia, some 20 km north-west of Tbilisi in Mtskheta. The property consists of the Jvari Monastery, the Svetitskhoveli Cathedral and the Samtavro Monastery*".

## Inscription on the List of the World Heritage in Danger and corrective measures

Starting from 1999 a series of State of Conservation reports denounced a degradation of the site and the lack of management mechanisms, underlining the need to preserve the urban and landscape context together with a proper conservation of the monuments.

In 2003, under a co-funded UNDP and World Heritage Fund project, a Study and Development of the Mtskheta Heritage and Tourism Master Plan was proposed by UNESCO-WHC's experts for the integrated protection and development of the site and to prevent loss of valuable archaeological, architectural and landscape elements.

The proposed plan was not taken into consideration by the State Party, whereas the management of the World Heritage property continued to be problematic with inappropriate conservation interventions and a policy of privatization of the public land without any urban planning tool in place.

The World Heritage Committee at its 33rd session (Seville, Spain 2009) expressed its serious concern about the state of conservation of the different components of the property; regretted that the State Party report did not adequately address the preparation of legal and technical provisions to address the various threats, the aspect of land privatization, the development of an integrated management plan and the development of a special programme on the protection of all archaeological components; further regretted that the State Party did not submit documents clarifying the exact boundaries of the protected area of the property and its buffer zone; and noted with regret that some components have lost their authenticity due to restoration works conducted with unacceptable methods. The Committee decided to inscribe the Historical Monuments of Mtskheta on the List of World Heritage in Danger (33 COM 7B.102) due to the state of conservation of the monument and loss of authenticity.

The Desired State of Conservation (DSOC) was adopted at the 34th session of the World Heritage Committee (Brasília, 2010)<sup>3</sup> as follows:

- a. the World Heritage property with clearly marked boundaries and buffer zone precisely identified;
- b. the Urban Master Plan of the City of Mtskheta, including land-use regulations and conservation master plan approved;
- c. a comprehensive management system, including an Integrated Management Plan of the World Heritage property and its buffer zone, approved;
- d. long-term consolidation and conservation of the historical monuments in Mtskheta ensured.

An extensive list of corrective measures was endorsed by the Committee<sup>4</sup>, going from the clarification of the boundaries and ownership, data collection, maps improvement and development of a conservation monitoring system, legal and planning instruments, and a management system.

The property was maintained on the World Heritage List in Danger in the following years because the problems had not been resolved and also due to developments being undertaken by the State Party in the vicinity of the property within the area of the river Mtkvari bank.

Following the World Heritage Committee's decisions, the State Party took measures to improve the protection of the property. More particularly, the Georgian authorities secured funding for the drafting of the Land Use Master Plan and the plan

<sup>3</sup> Decision 34 COM 7A.27 <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4103>

<sup>4</sup> Decision 34 COM 7A.27 <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4103>

was commissioned in 2015 by the self-governing city of Mtskheta, as planning is a decentralized responsibility. This process was developed without consultation with the UNESCO-WHC.

A moratorium was introduced (Decree #411, August 2015) to curb uncontrolled development until the Urban Land Use Master Plan and unified buffer zone are approved. More specifically, the Moratorium forbids any construction during the period needed for the elaboration of the comprehensive urban planning documentation, which, according to Georgian legislation, comprises the Land Use Master Plan (LUMP), the Development Regulation Plan(s), its rules on usage of territories and its development regulations, as well as the urban cadaster of the city of Mtskheta. Moreover, the Government announced the intention of establishing an inter-ministerial coordination mechanism, as well as strengthening the management system through the cooperation agreement with the Patriarchate of Georgia.

## Agreement on technical support

In this context, the State Party developed reinforced collaboration with UNESCO through the signature of an agreement for technical assistance, especially regarding quality control and guidance related to international integrated urban planning standards. The Agreement was signed in October 2015, within the framework of the project financed by the World Bank : "Cultural Heritage Advisory Service to the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation (NACHP)" to be implemented under the Third Regional Development Project (RDP III).

The technical assistance of the UNESCO-WHC, primarily thought to be in view of removing the site from the List of World Heritage in Danger, had larger objectives: to enhance the institutional and technical capacity of the national and local authorities, to ensure cross-institutional collaboration, including development ministries and municipalities, and to ensure long-term planning and the reinforcement of management mechanisms and capacities required to deal with the integration and sustainable implementation of heritage protection and development needs in the future.

The main objective was to assist the authorities in the development of territorial strategies focusing on protection of cultural heritage within the framework of the UNESCO Culture Conventions, sustainable socio-economic development of the local communities and based on UNESCO's 2011 Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape. Accompanying the State Party in the elaboration of the urban master plan was one of the priorities of the project.

The foundation idea was to integrate conservation and sustainable spatial planning in one approach recalling UNESCO's Historic Urban Landscape Recommendation, *"the principle of sustainable development provides for the preservation of existing resources, the active protection of urban heritage and its sustainable management is a condition sine qua non of development."*

Here below the activities identified within the Agreement for the collaboration in the form of advice and assistance provided by the UNESCO-WHC to the State Party:

### **Activity 1**

#### **Conservation and management of the World Heritage property “Historical Monuments of Mtskheta”**

- UNESCO-WHC technical assistance in the preparation, by the Georgian authorities, of the urban master plan for the City of Mtskheta which includes the component parts of the World Heritage property Historical Monuments of Mtskheta and its buffer zone and its surrounding landscape, meeting high-level quality standards for conservation, management and development;
- UNESCO-WHC technical assistance in the development, by the Georgian authorities of the tools, documents and mechanisms requested by the World Heritage Committee.

### **Activity 2**

#### **Provision of technical assistance for the Upstream Process and harmonization of the Georgian Tentative List**

- UNESCO-WHC technical assistance in the identification, by the Georgian authorities, of cultural and natural heritage and revision of Georgia’s Tentative List, in conformity with the Operational Guidelines for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention and the Periodic Reporting Action Plan;
- in coordination with the Advisory Bodies, advisory support on nominations of potential sites already on the Tentative List.

### **Activity 3**

#### **Capacity-Building**

- organization of capacity building workshops for the Mtskheta municipality staff and relevant national agencies staff on landscape and sustainability planning practices focusing on the Mtskheta urban master plan project;
- organization of a study tour to France for State and municipal professionals to share experiences and foster networking amongst European professionals.

### **Activity 4**

#### **Cultural Heritage Promotion with Sustainable Tourism**

- guidance for the development of a new national sustainable tourism project.

In accordance with Annex IV of the Agreement, UNESCO-WHC submitted to MDF two reports on the implementation of the activities: an Inception Report covering the period from November 2015 to April 2016 and a Progress Report covering the period from April 2016 to May 2017 (*see Annex 1 and 2*).





# Activity

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1

**Conservation and management  
of the World Heritage property  
“Historical Monuments  
of Mtskheta”**

One of the key corrective measures identified by the World Heritage Committee to remove the site from the WH List in Danger was the implementation of an effective urban planning system, beginning with the preparation and adoption of the Land Use Master Plan (LUMP). The World Heritage Committee's decisions make reference to a generally defined "Urban Master Plan" to be interpreted within the complete urban planning legal framework of the country. In the case of Georgia, the LUMP is one of the

interconnected documents that constitute the urban planning documentation together with the Safeguard Plan and the Development Regulation Plan. Moreover, it has to be noted that the urban planning documentation should be prepared in compliance with a "Spatial Arrangement Plan", defining the strategy of development for a larger area. It is important to highlight that the adoption of a LUMP would not be sufficient to control the development and cultural heritage conservation of Mtskheta.



The main challenge as always for World Heritage properties is to include the specific requirements such as the protection of the property's Outstanding Universal Value and specific site management mechanisms into the national legal framework. In the present case, one of the main issues is to acknowledge the value of the setting into a framework focusing on functional zoning.

The project was intended to be a representative model, where culture actually does become a driver for the development of an integrated urban master plan and a basis for local authority capacity building, with these elements:

- conservation of urban heritage within contemporary urban development;
- decentralized planning tools;
- community participation.

The UNESCO-WHC involvement came at a very advanced stage of the LUMP preparation process. Unfortunately, the TORs for the selection of the company that would have prepared the LUMP had not previously been shared with the UNESCO-WHC.

The implementation partner identified in the original project agreement, the regional planning agency of Ile-de-France (IAURIF), declared its unavailability at the very beginning of the activity, obliging a revision of the implementation methodology and expert team. Individual experts with extensive experience in urban heritage conservation and World Heritage issues were identified and announced to the MDF in the UNESCO-WHC inception report. The experts that participated at different moments in different missions of this Activity 1 are:

- Franca Miglioli, consultant, town planner;
- Daniele Pini, consultant, architect town planner;
- Bertrand Reymondon, consultant, architect town planner;
- Federica Felisatti, consultant, architect town planner.

## 1.1 Activity implementation

Fundamentally, activity 1 was implemented with the organization of expert missions and on-site technical assistance. It identified the major critical points, made recommendations and provided advice to the relevant Georgian authorities on urban planning issues through meetings with various stakeholders, desk review of available documents, analysis of the legal and planning framework and field visits. A summary of the missions carried out follows below, whereas for the detailed contents and recommendations please refer to the annexed mission reports.

### Preparatory Mission (23-28 November 2015)<sup>5</sup>

At the request of the Georgian authorities, the UNESCO-WHC carried out a preparatory mission in November 2015 funded by the World Heritage Fund, to assess the work in progress for the preparation of the Land Urban Master Plan (LUMP), as the responsible firm was due to deliver the plan by the end of December 2015. In particular, the mission task was to assess if the LUMP was prepared in conformity with the corrective measures adopted by the World Heritage Committee.

<sup>5</sup> See Annex 3

It is important to remember that the UNESCO-WHC was not consulted nor involved in the preparation of the LUMP, commissioned in 2015 by the self-governing city of Mtskheta, thus not being able to provide a quality control during its development.

The mission met the team in charge of the preparation of the LUMP and received a very general presentation, but no clear elements on the strategy, philosophy and concept to develop the land use plan and urban master plan. Even without receiving the documents produced, it was clear that the working team needed guidance and technical assistance to strengthen the methodology to elaborate the urban land use plan. The mission considered that a solid background for decision-making, reflecting the scenario and the planning decisions through data analysis, was missing. The question **“for whom and what will be the city of tomorrow?”** had not been fully addressed by the Georgian authorities.

Therefore, the conditions to approve the plan were not met and the mission considered that the firm responsible for delivery of the LUMP was not able to complete the work within their assignment deadline, also due to the lack of expertise and the need of an adequate integration of the World Heritage site in the proposed LUMP.

The mission report identified the crucial points to be addressed to achieve consistent conservation of the World Heritage property within an integrated urban development approach in relation to governance and urban planning strategy, the needs of the different stakeholders and working methods to provide guidance on the overall process. One of main the recommendations was that the Georgian

authorities define, in coordination and with the involvement of all stakeholders, **a shared vision for the town**, with varied functions and varied requirements based on the conservation of World Heritage values.

## **Mission 1** Land Urban Master Plan analysis (28 February- 4 March 2016)<sup>6</sup>

In this mission it was possible to analyse in detail the quality of deliverables provided by the firm responsible for delivery of the LUMP under the assignment “The Urban Planning Assignment for the Development of the Land Use Master Plan of the Self-Governing City Mtskheta”, particularly in relation to the requirements for conservation and management of the World Heritage property, identifying strengths, weaknesses and gaps of the work submitted.

It seems important to underline that the assignment for the work, approved by the City Council of Mtskheta, required the planners to take Land Use decisions without the previous approval of the Spatial Arrangement Plan, defining a broader planning framework with long-term strategic orientations. This gave way to an ambiguous and confused urban planning exercise, which is reflected in the deliverables produced by the NCDT planning team. Moreover, in the LUMP, the input of the Cultural heritage protection zones was not considered as a crucial element, but included as a thematic element, not giving this tool due weight in the zoning decisions.

<sup>6</sup> See Annex 4



The WHC experts made an evaluation of the deliverables provided by the firm responsible for delivery of the LUMP, synthesized here below:

- the work done did not meet international standards and was not altogether satisfactory;
- a background for decision-making reflecting the scenario and the planning decisions through data analysis, was missing. The analyses to support any evaluation and subsequent decision were not sufficiently developed;
- main criticisms on the inappropriate level of detail in mapping, unclear representation between the existing situation and what is proposed, the unmanageable digital files of the produced maps;
- the significant amount of work done was not altogether satisfactory due to methodological gaps. Clarifications and a synthesis of the work were needed, including some additional studies and materials listed in detail in the report.

It was also clear to the mission that the Municipality of the Self-governing City of Mtskheta has no technical capacity for revising and continuing the

preparation of the LUMP and eventually to establish a complete urban planning documentation, in compliance with the international standards and the Georgian legislation. In the report the pre-requisites necessary to continue the process and to make efficient the technical assistance and international expertise of the UNESCO-WHC were clearly suggested:

- how to improve the coordination and, therefore, the decision-making procedures;
- how to continue the technical work.

The later stages of the process were identified with the necessary resources and skills to develop a strategy for the development of Phase 2 of the Urban Planning Documentation of Mtskheta, including a detailed diagnosis of the capacity-building needs of the municipality, short and medium term, in line with the preparation of the Urban Planning Documentation.

The following was suggested:

- constitution of a Planning Unit within the architecture bureau of the self-governing city of Mtskheta;

- organization of a robust capacity-building activity to train the staff of the Planning Unit who would then be enabled to perform (to directly carry out work or to commission and supervise external consultancy) all the studies and the technical tasks leading to the establishment of planning tools for the protection and the revitalization of the City;
- creation of a joint Steering Committee / Technical Committee between the different institutional stakeholders.

For the capacity-building component, a first technical workshop was proposed for a subsequent mission to assess the implementation of the revision of the elements of the LUMP, with the team that had produced it and/or a working group within the municipality.

During the mission, the WHC experts delivered lectures on urban conservation issues at the University of Tbilisi, showing examples of best practices (see Activity 3).

## **Mission 2** Workshop on Cultural Heritage Protection Zones (19-22 December 2016)<sup>7</sup>

This mission was supposed to carry out a workshop with the technical team in charge of continuing the preparation of the Master Plan. Actually, it resulted that all the activities for the urban planning were stopped by the Georgian authorities and the above-mentioned LUMP had not been revised in accordance with the WHC detailed recommendations delivered in its mission reports.

The mission was informed that the LUMP had been rejected by the Municipality and no progress had been made towards the phases identified in the previous mission report.

The main issue remained organizing a process and framework to allow for the preparation of the Master Plan and capacity building of the municipality to address urban planning and design components, integrating the cultural heritage preservation. The question of governance remained crucial as well as the reinforcement of capacities at the local level.

The mission report reiterated recommendations for a series of actions to be implemented, as a matter of urgency, by the relevant Georgian authorities. These included the proposal for an intermediate step to prepare the basic materials and the ToR for the elaboration of the Master Plan, to be followed by a competitive procedure to select the team in charge with its preparation.

<sup>7</sup> See Annex 5.

While stressing the need to involve the Municipality in the process, the mission proposed:

- To create a coordination committee, with the involvement of the Mtskheta Self Governing city;
- To create a technical working group, with professionals from the different identified stakeholders;
- To appoint a UNESCO expert for an on-site mission to provide technical support to the above teams in order to prepare the materials and the brief to launch the competitive procedure to select the team in charge of the elaboration of the Master Plan.

Instead of the planned workshop for the team in charge of the revision of the LUMP, intense three-day work was dedicated to discussing general and specific methodological and technical issues with the NACHP team, performing an almost complete detailed analysis of the possible Protection Areas to be proposed. To this purpose, the mission carried out an in-depth field survey together with the team, very useful to take some sensitive decisions and clarify pending controversial issues. The spatial analysis of the Mtskheta cultural landscape and visual basins of the World Heritage Monuments, conducted in the process of elaboration of the Management Plan in 2012, and verified through the pilot landscape study, allowed the outline of an area which is equally important for the protection and management of all three components of the World Heritage site (Svetitskhoveli Cathedral, Jvari Monastery, Samtavro Nunnery) and the historic landscape of Mtskheta per se. The methodology of spatial analysis included the on site assessment



as well as the assessment of the legal protection system in place. The work done with the NACHP team can be considered as an excellent example of how the collaboration for capacity building can be conducted.

### **Mission 3** **Governance and management mechanisms** (30 July - 5 August 2017)<sup>8</sup>

In the mission, clarifications on the set of required planning documents and their legal framework were obtained in order to allow the on-site expert (see below) to produce the TOR for all the necessary planning documents, i.e. the revised LUMP, the Safeguard Plan and the Development Regulations. All these documents are needed to lift the Moratorium that has frozen the building activity in the sensitive areas of Mtskheta. The mission produced a work plan for conducting the on-site technical assistance that was discussed and agreed with all the concerned stakeholders.

The mission was informed of the decisions taken by the Georgian Government for the institutional set-up for the management of the urban planning issues of Mtskheta. In order to support the Municipality of Mtskheta to overcome the lack of financial and technical resources and to ensure the effective management of a site considered of outstanding importance for Georgia, the Prime Minister decided to entrust the MoESD Department of Spatial Planning with the coordination of the Project and its implementation. Moreover, in order to ensure the stakeholders relevant

engagement in the process, following the UNESCO-WHC experts' previous recommendations, it was decided an exceptional strategic scheme in the management system, with the establishment of dedicated structures (see below *Creation of the Steering Committee, Technical Committee and multidisciplinary planning team*). These reflect to a large extent the recommendations of the previous WHC reports and demonstrate the strong engagement of the Georgian Government to undertake an effective and proper planning process in Mtskheta.

### **Short term on-site technical assistance** (24 July-10 October 2017)<sup>9</sup>

Despite the fact that a direct on-site assistance was not foreseen in the advisory service by the agreement, it was decided to implement this kind of support to facilitate the progress of the project.

An international expert based on site and working for a short-term duration was contracted by the WHC to assist in preparing the basic materials for revising the LUMP, designing the terms of reference and relevant and necessary documentation; assisting in the methodology and definition of the goals and objectives of the Master Plan, elaboration of the brief and preparation of the related documentation. The work of the expert was supposed to accompany the activity of the Technical Committee and the planning team as proposed by the WHC mission report of March 2017.

The expert was hosted by the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development (MoESD) and a local

<sup>8</sup> See Annex 6.

<sup>9</sup> See Annexes 6, 7 and 8.



architect was specifically hired to work with the international expert. Contrary to the information received from the Georgian authorities, when the assistance started neither the working group nor the steering committee were established, but as mentioned, in the following days the institutional situation was clarified. Within the premises of the Ministry, the expert could benefit from excellent working conditions with full support for the organization of meetings and contacts with relevant stakeholders and for the collection of all available materials and documentation.

Collecting the available existing materials (photos and maps for the graphic materials, and database and statistics, where existing) the expert's contribution was focused on the direct production of the fundamental documents necessary for continuing the planning process, as identified in the defined work plan.

The presence of the expert on site definitely had a crucial role in facilitating and ensuring a regular and frequent dialogue between relevant stakeholders, necessary for a shared knowledge and awareness on issues and facts and for problem solving. These exchanges ensure a solid ground and a commonly shared view, both fundamental ingredients for a successful planning process.

## 1.2 Activity outputs

The outputs of the project identified in the Agreement were split into:

- deliverables to be produced by the UNESCO-WHC, mainly mission reports including assessments and recommendations;
- outcomes to be produced by Georgia (relevant institutions and stakeholders) under the advisory assistance of UNESCO-WHC, mainly documentation, planning documents and Terms of Reference for activities to be developed.

For the outcomes, it is considered important to start with the major institutional/statutory events that accompanied the implementation of the project and are highly relevant for the conservation of the urban heritage of the city of Mtskheta. These may be considered the important institutional outputs of the dynamic triggered with the contribution of the UNESCO-WHC's support, in addition to the other outcomes.

For the production of documentation, the Georgian institutions did not constitute an operational planning working group dedicated to the implementation of the project, and it was clear since

the very beginning that the municipality did not have human resources available for it. Therefore, part of the missing necessary documentation was produced personally by the UNESCO-WHC on-site expert with the support of the architect recruited for the project by the Georgian authorities (see below).

Here below the elements of different outputs are analysed and commented, specifying what was done and what has still to be done by the Georgian authorities, referring to the annexes for the complete list and contents.

### Deliverables from the UNESCO-WHC<sup>10</sup>

Extract of the Annex 1 of the Agreement:

- a. First mission report on the assessment of the major needs, including an implementation strategy, work plan proposal and time frame.
- b. Guidance provided to the Agency to undertake a specific assessment report on the available human resources and necessary capacities and skills and estimated financial resources needed.

<sup>10</sup> See Annexes from 3 to 8.

- c. Assessment report on the existing documentation and the identification of necessary complementary studies, including identification of urban and landscape assets of the City of Mtskheta. Accordingly, terms of references of complementary studies and inventories to be conducted.
- d. Assessment report on the cadastral map and land use map. Assessment report on the draft terms of reference of the integrated urban master plan for the City of Mtskheta.
- e. Assessment report on stakeholders to be involved and community participation.
- f. Report on the detailed monitoring mechanisms.
- g. Proposal for a short term and long term training and monitoring program for the National Agency and Municipal staff. The latter should be linked to activity 3.
- h. Recommendation on the implementation of steering mechanism and sustainable funding of management and implementation bodies.

Since the preparatory mission in November 2015, crucial items were identified, whereas in the March 2016 mission 1 a first assessment of the submitted LUMP was carried out and the necessary steps for the preparation of the Master Plan were detailed, including:

- methodology,
- additional studies,
- institutional needs,
- phases,
- human resources.

An assessment of the **cadastral situation** was carried out through the analysis of the plot traces received for the preparation of the base map; it has revealed the presence of dramatic diffused mistakes. For any land management and urban planning issues, a correct cadastral information is necessary, and the elaboration of a systematic extensive survey to upgrade the National Cadaster is a crucial issue and should be an absolute priority for the Georgian Government.

A throughput **analysis of the previously produced data and plans within the submitted LUMP** has been carried out by the on-site technical assistance (see below) as well as an assessment on accuracy and reliability of existing materials, detailed in a report. It is important to valorize at maximum the efforts made by the previous team in producing the 2016 LUMP proposal, but it has to be highlighted that the whole **planning framework and documentation** were missing. To address different objects of study at a correct scale, a set of maps at different scales of representation, with different definitions of details was produced by the on-site expert as a base map.

The lack of **coordination between the different stakeholders** has been identified as one of the main problems for the protection and management of the World Heritage site. The experts proposed to constitute two bodies, which will follow the process of elaboration and implementation of the Master Plan ensuring the coordination among the different actors in the decision-making process, in the preparation of the technical documents, in monitoring the activities and results, while promoting the citizens' participation. According to



claims of a minor part of the population, shared with the experts in November 2015 during a first community-meeting required by the citizens-land owners involved in a development project in a sensitive area, the local authorities avoided any further exchanges between the experts and civil society. At local level, there is somehow a wrong perception of what a Master Plan can be. Particularly in the case of a city which includes a property which is on the World Heritage List, the Master Plan should consider cultural heritage, landscape and associative sacred values not as a constraint but, on the contrary, as a major concern and a resource to be protected and enhanced to ensure a sustainable and high quality urban development. If development is intended as freedom of use and exploitation of any land of the city, the result is that the public interest will not be guaranteed, in particular the OUV of the World Heritage property will not be safeguarded.

the proposal, a new institutional structure has been defined for the management, and its mechanisms are being put in place (see below *Creation of Steering Committee etc.*).

The importance of the local community's involvement in the continued protection and conservation of the "Historical Monuments of Mtskheta" was highlighted by the UNESCO-WHC in its exchanges with the Georgian authorities and the Mtskheta civil society representative. As underlined in the reports, the need to define terms of diffusion of information to the public concerned and to prepare participative approach is absolutely needed since the point of view of the citizens should concur in the definition of a long-term sustainable urban project. The UNESCO-WHC in its last exchange with the Mtskheta civil society on 31 August 2017 recommended that the Georgian authorities

organize a meeting with the civil society during the forthcoming UNESCO-WHC/ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission, requested by the World Heritage Committee.

## Major institutional and statutory events

### Removal from the List of World Heritage in Danger

In 2016, by Decision 40 COM 7A.29, the World Heritage Committee decided to remove the Historical Monuments of Mtskheta (Georgia) from the List of World Heritage in Danger, welcoming the important work and commitment by the State Party, noting the measures taken by the authorities to guarantee protection of the property. It has to be noted that this decision rewarded the positive process initiated by the state, while the corrective measures had not yet been implemented and the desired state of conservation reached, ensuring adequate planning, efficient management and decision making.

### Moratorium

The Moratorium on Urban Development and Land Privatization in the Cultural Heritage Protection Zones of Mtskheta (Decree of the Government of Georgia N411, 03.08.2015) has been prolonged until 31 December 2018 (Governmental decree N119, March 7, 2017) on the condition that the full set of town planning documentation be elaborated and approved. The Moratorium, initially established until the end of December 2016, has been extended until December 2018, when the complete planning tools should be prepared and adopted.

### Mtskheta region's development strategy

In summer 2016, the MoESD delivered the *Mtskheta region's development strategy for 2016-2021*, a framing document that gives guidelines for the economic development at regional level with long-term strategic orientations.

### Land Use Master Plan rejection

Also based on the recommendations received from the UNESCO-WHC report of July 2016, the LUMP submitted by the firm responsible for its delivery was formally rejected by the Mtskheta Municipality in December 2016.

### Buffer zone boundaries modification

The World Heritage Committee had requested to revise the buffer zone for the property in such manner as to encompass the landscape surrounding the components, including the panorama along the rivers and the mountain setting.

Following specific territorial analysis, the Unified Visual Protection Area (Buffer Zone) of the Historical Monuments of Mtskheta was adopted by the Decree of the Minister of Culture and Monuments Protection of Georgia in June 2016 (N03/212, 28.06.2016).

Based on this Protection Area, a minor boundaries modification was submitted to the UNESCO-WHC and approved by the World Heritage Committee at its 41st session, Krakow, Poland, 2017, by Decision 41 COM 8B.44, enlarging the buffer zone of the World Heritage site from 8.73 ha to 2382.5 ha.

## Definition of Cultural Heritage Protection Zones

In 2016-2017, the NACHP drafted a proposal of Cultural Heritage Protection Zones according to Law no 47-08-IS, 8 May 2007 for “Cultural Heritage Protection”, which concern the listed heritage buildings, the sensitive areas that require specific building regulations, the archaeological areas and the cultural landscapes. The UNESCO-WHC experts collaborated in defining the methodological approach in Mission 2 (December 2016). This draft proposal is pending the review by the relevant stakeholders before its approval and enforcement. The process is currently ongoing.

## Creation of the Steering Committee, Technical Committee and multidisciplinary planning team

In order to support the Municipality of Mtskheta to overcome the lack of financial and technical resources and to ensure the effective management of a site considered of outstanding importance for Georgia, following a Prime Minister’s decision the MoESD - Department of Spatial Planning has been entrusted with the coordination of the Project and its implementation.

This structural change was officially communicated to the UNESCO-WHC with a letter sent by the Minister of MoESD in August 2017, expressing his decision to establish the following structure to guarantee the proper implementation of a comprehensive Urban Planning Documentation:

- Steering Committee (SC), composed by the representatives of the relevant authorities (different Ministries, Local Governments, Patriarchate and other relevant stakeholders),

who will ensure the supervision over the process and the elaboration of the recommendations to the Georgian Government. This Committee will include the Mtskheta Municipality.

- Technical Council (TC), supervised by the Steering Committee, that will coordinate the work of a Multidisciplinary Operational Planning Team that is in charge of the drafting of the Urban Planning Documentation. The TC will be composed of local and international experts in different professional fields.
- Multidisciplinary Planning Team will consist of a “core team”, composed by the authors of the LUMP submitted in 2016, and by other national or international experts. The procedure for contracting this team (procurement or bidding) will be decided based on the ToR prepared by the current on-site TA mission.
- In addition, to strengthen this structure, a free lance expert, Mr. P. Shanshiashvili, was appointed to liaise between the UNESCO-WHC, the above-mentioned SC, TC and Operational Planning Team, WB, MDF and all other concerned stakeholders.

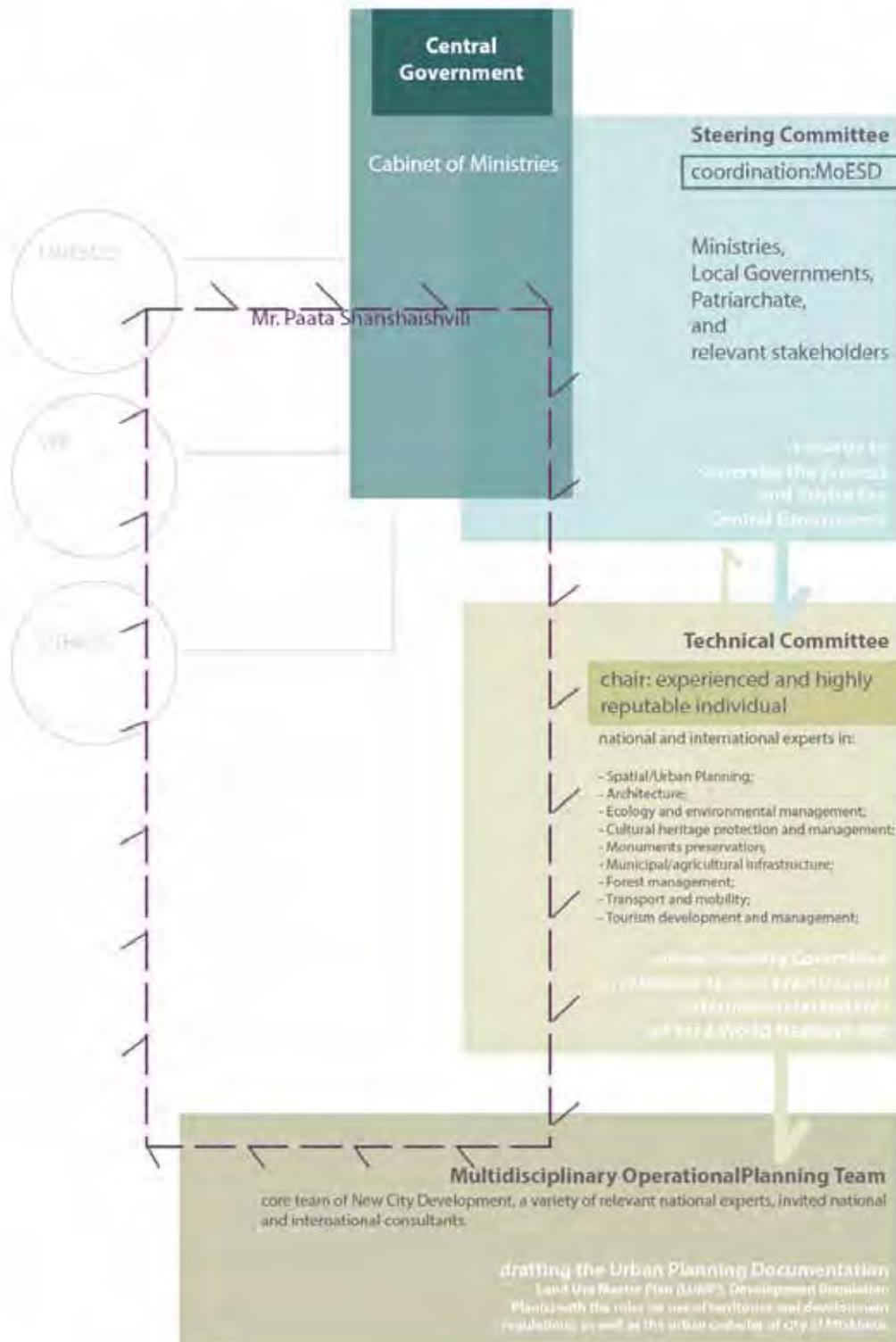
## Revision of local administrative organization

A reform on Self Governing Cities will take place soon: of the current 12 Self-Governing Cities in the Country, 7 will be merged with the respective Municipalities or Municipal Regions; among them, the Mtskheta Self-Governing City, created only a few years ago. How the effective restructuring will occur is currently unknown, nor what will happen to the boundaries of the Self-Governing City. As

underlined during the project implementation, having the components of the WH site managed under one administration would make its

management more efficient, however it is strongly recommended to create a dedicated technical office with the necessary skills and resources.

### Mtskheta exceptional measures long-term planning system



## Outcomes of the activity from the Georgian authorities with the guidance of UNESCO-WHC

The outcomes to be produced by the Georgian authorities foreseen in the Agreement can be summarized as follows:

- **terms of reference of the integrated urban master plan** for the City of Mtskheta
- complementary **documentation and maps**, including either a **finalized cadastral map and land use plan**, or an implementation and finalization time frame as per the Committee decision. Guidance for the preparation of an implementation strategy and timetable;
- assessment of the existing documentation and identification of **complementary studies** needed;
- **financial and human resources** estimate. Short term and long term training and monitoring program for National Agency and Municipal staff;
- **the conservation and management tools** requested by the World Heritage Committee for the World Heritage Site of Mtskheta. Thus allowing Georgia to comply with its commitments and allow the World Heritage Committee to take the World Heritage site off the World Heritage List in Danger in due time;
- **crucial planning document** that will be at the heart of the World Heritage site management tools and a **core tool** for the long-term management and development of the City and

its surrounding landscape within the overall national decentralization process;

- development of an **urban planning and heritage desk** within the Mtskheta Municipality;
- **training activities** of the National Agency and Municipal staff and strengthening skills (training by doing approach).

The **complementary documentation** as well as the **TOR for studies and the master plan** have been prepared by the international expert and are available.

In relation to the **tools requested by the World Heritage Committee**, the fundamental goals achieved are :

- boundaries of the World Heritage property's buffer zone, revised and adopted by the World Heritage Committee in 2017;
- a Management Structure established;
- Cultural heritage areas protection identified by NACHP with UNESCO-WHC assistance, in the process of being approved;
- the TORs for development of the urban planning documents prepared by the UNESCO-WHC expert.

The key skills for a Master Plan development team were clearly identified. The set-up of a **planning unit within the Municipality** was impossible due to the lack of local resources. This fact deeply hindered the development of training activities. The Ministry of Economy has now taken the task over and, according to the information received by the UNESCO-WHC, the Self-governing city will be

included in the administrative structure of the city of Mtskheta. At that moment, it will be crucial to create a dedicated planning unit.

A **specific training programme** on urban conservation could be tailored only once a **dedicated working team is set-up**. Such a training programme could be developed within the framework of the ongoing collaboration between the National Agency and ICCROM, one of the Advisory Bodies of the World Heritage Committee.<sup>11</sup>

## Outcomes produced by the UNESCO-WHC on-site technical assistance<sup>12</sup>

In synthesis, the outputs of the technical assistance are the following:

- assessment on accuracy and reliability of existing materials, including the cadastral map and data; the careful study of the map materials has made it possible to clarify that the church of Jivari (one of the components of the World Heritage property), contrary to what had been assumed by all the previous studies and cartographies, is in fact not included in the perimeter of the National Park, element that has an impact on the level of protection of the area;
- set of complete and integrated base maps of different scales;
- working methodology for drawing and planning standards required at international level for a World Heritage site,
- set of revised maps of the LUMP on the newly created base map in A-CAD, with geo-reference with completed and updated information retrieved during the mission,
- Terms of Reference for the additional planning process: A written document with reference to existing legislation, including the phasing of the project and the expected outputs. Detailed description of the outputs content and graphic standards supported by graphic samples. Detailed description of the professional profile and standard required for drafting the plan. Detailed description of the assignment evaluation mechanism via the technical proposal, and suggestions concerning the involvement of both relevant stakeholders and population through participatory processes.
- Terms of Reference for Additional Sector Studies,
- Maps with proposed Cultural heritage protection zones drafted on the newly created base map.

## Additional output

Thanks to effective relationships with UNESCO-WHC acquired as part of the project, the statutory process of submission of documents from the State Party for the technical evaluation of infrastructures and development projects to be implemented in Mtskheta has been facilitated. Recommendations have been given on the following subject, whereas the evaluation is on-going for other submitted projects.

<sup>11</sup> ICCROM is assisting the National Agency in assessing capacity-building needs in the field of heritage conservation and providing technical assistance to advise on a national capacity-building strategy.

<sup>12</sup> See Annexes 7 and 8.

## The Archaeological Museum<sup>13</sup>

During mission 1, the experts were requested to give advice on a project for the transformation of an ancient cinema building into an archaeological museum of the city of Mtskheta. Since the former cinema building has strong architectural qualities that have to be respected together with the archaeological site and its setting, the experts identified the main assets to take into consideration and recommended that an urban design component be added to ensure that the museum is integrated in the urban context and some guidelines are presented at the end of this report. According to these elements, the project was revised by the Georgian authorities and validated by UNESCO-WHC and ICOMOS.

### 1.3 Results

The project was carried out in a very collaborative relationship with the Georgian authorities, with a positive and proactive attitude of NACHP and MoC since the first part of it, joined later by the staff of MoESD.

It created the opportunity to organize joint meetings among the relevant stakeholders (namely MoESD, MoC and NACHP), with an important exchange of information that helped to better understand the complex and multifaceted framework for urban planning and conservation.

The project has produced a very positive dynamics that has allowed to focus many efforts on cultural heritage protection. It is worth summarizing here again the immediate institutional/legal effects of

the guidance and assistance given by the UNESCO-WHC during the project, already detailed above:

- the revision of the visual protection of the listed buildings, now enlarged to the entire visual basin by a Decree approved in July 2016;
- the proposal of a minor boundary modification to enlarge the buffer zone including the entire visual basin, approved by the World Heritage Committee in 2017;
- the revision of the legal provisions to protect the cultural heritage of the area of Mtskheta, with the identification of four types of Protection Areas defined by the current Georgian Law;
- the establishment of these Protection Areas with clear and well-justified boundaries is an important step also for the preparation of the Master Plan, since it would positively affect the definition of the zoning. The establishment of these Protection zones is crucial for the eventual preparation of the Urban Planning Documentation. It will ensure the protection of the most sensitive and strategic areas thus orienting any decision concerning possible future developments. Furthermore they would become the basis to identify the areas to be covered by the Safeguard plans and the Development Regulation Plans (see below);
- the decision to adopt exceptional measures for the production of the Urban Planning Documentation of Mtskheta. The Central Government has identified the planning of Mtskheta as a high priority task, and proposed an extraordinary Governmental Set-up to support the local Government to realize, select

<sup>13</sup> See Annexes 9 and 10.

and  
implement  
a Planning  
framework for the  
Municipality of Mtskheta and  
its surrounding territories.

UNESCO-WHC considers these outcomes as major results of the project and hope they entail long-term structural changes in the governance and management mechanisms within the Government of Georgia.

The on-site technical assistance mission has proved to have positive effects on getting institutions together, sharing basic information and supporting better coordination. The presence of the on-site UNESCO-WHC expert was extremely useful to ease the contacts and obtain information and materials from in-house staff and external stakeholders. The expert had an important role in the start of the working group that will help fill the gap of communication amongst the different actors involved in this phase.

Despite the fact that the property was removed from the List of World Heritage in Danger and great strides have been made towards the desired state of conservation, we are far from being able to say that the property is now perfectly preserved and managed. Recalling the World Heritage Committee decision regarding the Desired State of Conservation of the property:

**a.** The World Heritage property with **clearly marked boundaries and buffer zone** precisely identified.

This point has been completed, the boundaries and buffer zones are now clearly identified and formally approved and adopted.

**b.** The **Urban Master Plan of the City of Mtskheta**, including land-use regulations and conservation master plan approved.

The documents are ready to re-launch the process, which will take a long time, in line with the normal timing of urban planning processes. During this project implementation, the experts clearly declared that it was unrealistic that the Master Plan could be achieved before October 2017. The establishment of the Cultural Heritage Protection zones, completed and under approval, is a crucial step for the eventual preparation of the Urban Planning Documentation. It will ensure the protection of the most sensitive and strategic areas thus orienting any decision concerning possible future developments. Furthermore, it has been used as a basis to identify the areas to be covered by the Safeguarding plans and the Development Regulation Plans.



- c. A comprehensive **management system**, including an Integrated Management Plan of the World Heritage property and its buffer zone, approved.

At the moment a management system is being set-up, with the new institutional arrangements to be consolidated and made fully operational.

- d. Long-term consolidation and **conservation of the historical monuments** in Mtskheta ensured.

Not inherent in the main focus of this agreement on urban planning issues, this item was nevertheless addressed with the Patriarchate, owner of the monuments, and the representatives of MoC and NACHP, during the missions. The study tour, implemented under Activity 3 on capacity-building, was very instructive in showing excellent examples of conservation of monuments shared among different stakeholders, and may hopefully result in a bilateral agreement for cooperation between Georgia and France (*see below Ch. 3*).

## 1.4 Recommendations

The governance structure and the management mechanisms are key issues and should receive the full attention they deserve. More specifically the governance structure and the management mechanisms for the preparation of the Urban Planning Documents and their eventual implementation still need to be put in place, and probably require some more clarification and specification. In this regard, the following points can be underlined:

## Institutional issues

- Urgent need to reinforce the coordination and collaboration amongst the different institutional stakeholders, namely the MoESD, MoC, Ministry of Infrastructure, the NACHP (but also other ministries and agencies, the Patriarchate, and so on), including the Municipality of Mtskheta. There is a serious gap of communication that needs to be addressed, due to the intermingling of tasks and competences in the planning process.
- Take advantage of the momentum, making the identified exceptional measures for the management and planning system truly operational and consolidate the system for the long-term management.
- Need to better define and reinforce the role of the Self-governing city and/or the Municipality in the preparation of the planning documents. Despite the lack of financial and human resources, these institutions will implement the planning tools and therefore should be involved in the definition of the goals and objectives, to be carried out through a participatory approach, as well as in its technical elaboration, to be fully aware of the planning provisions and solutions. In particular, this will be crucial when facing the pressures for new developments after the lift of the Moratorium.

## Next planning steps

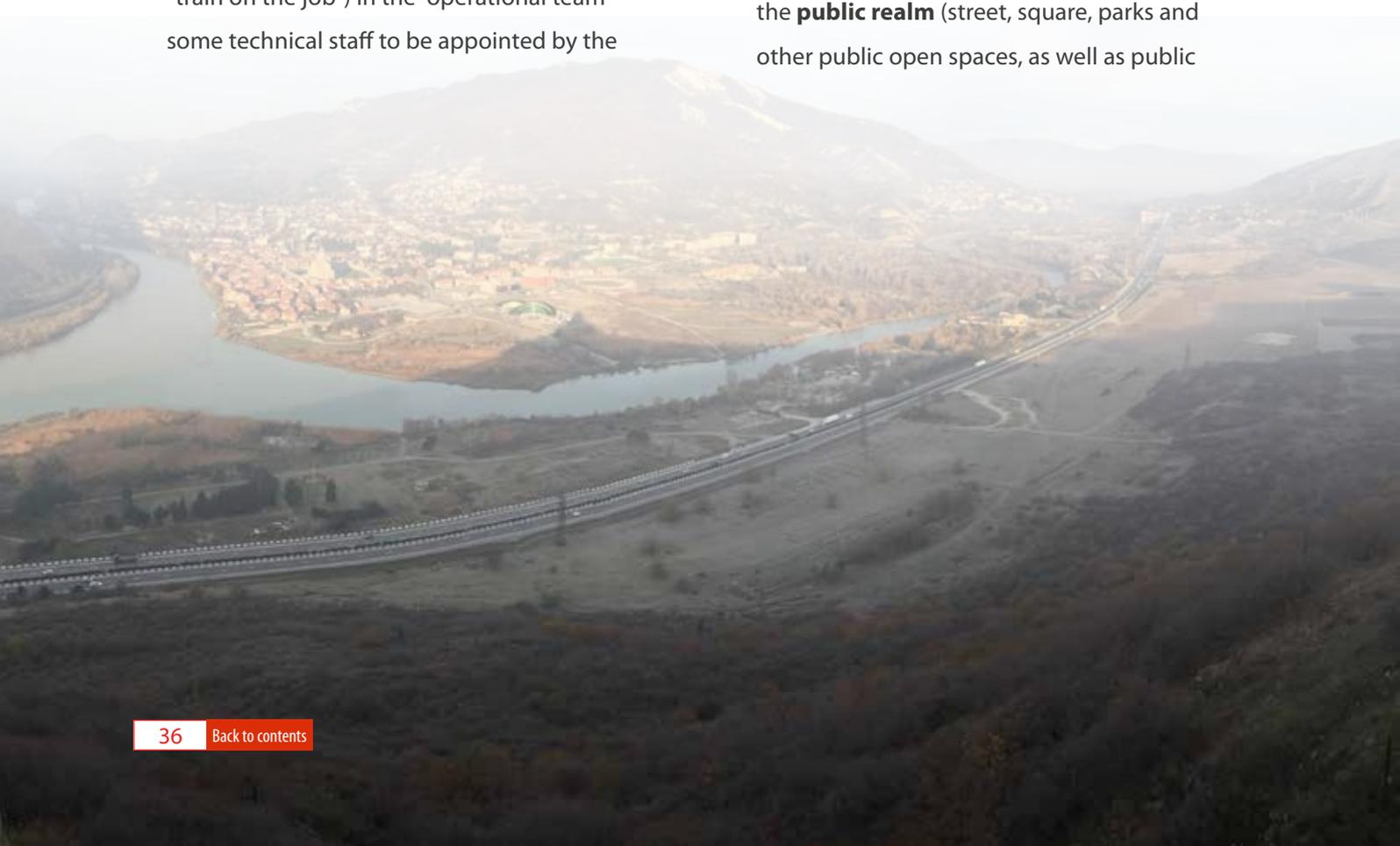
- Define a shared vision, **integrating heritage and landscape as an essential component of the future city**, as elements that define its identity and make it attractive as a place to live, as well as a high-level tourism destination. A long-term sustainable urban project long-term planning will first sketch strategic orientations for the whole city, in order to prepare the following stages of the Master Plan;
- Define **validation procedures** to be followed by the Steering and Technical Committees (see above), as well as the possible modalities of **public participation** at each stage of the studies;
- Define and design a suitable presentation process for sharing clear reflections with all the concerned stakeholders and partners. Presentation design and explanations should be easy to understand for any citizen. The Steering Committee has to define **terms of diffusion of information** to the public concerned and to prepare a participative approach, if needed;
- The urban planning options should be linked to an **implementation strategy** which can provide gradual and evolutionary responses to evolving needs and expectations, allowing priority interventions in the short-term;
- The decision whether the Urban Planning Documentation assignment will occur via a bidding process or a direct procurement has not yet been taken. The experts reiterate a

preference for a competitive procedure as proposed by the UNESCO-WHC report of March 2017. It has stressed the need to ensure, through mechanisms to be defined, the highest technical capacities and the most appropriate cultural approach of the planning team. For example, in the case of a procurement procedure, the contractor could be bound to present a detailed methodological document and technical work plan (or “technical offer”), to be discussed and revised not only by the Steering Committee and the Technical Committee but also by a high-level panel of independent national and international experts;

- The UNESCO-WHC reiterates the proposal to create a **“planning unit”** within the Municipality or at least to reinforce its technical capacities. This can be envisioned for the long term, but the preparation of planning documents could be an excellent opportunity to include (and “train on the job”) in the “operational team” some technical staff to be appointed by the

Municipality in the participatory process to be developed, and in the eventual implementation phases;

- Urgently clarify the **land ownership** situation by a systematic extensive survey to upgrade the National Cadastre;
- Revise the short-term policies to privatize land to provide immediate monetary income because this weakens the national and local governments’ assets and capacity to provide future public facilities and manage urban development.
- Organize meetings with the civil society during the forthcoming UNESCO-WHC/ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission, requested by the World Heritage Committee;
- In parallel to the preparation of the Urban Planning Documentation, elaborate an urban design and conservation strategy focusing on the upgrading and enhancement of the **public realm** (street, square, parks and other public open spaces, as well as public



buildings for the community use). A hierarchy of regeneration priorities with short, medium- and long-term actions and timelines should be developed and could be implemented even before the completion of the Urban Planning Documentation.

## Monuments conservation in the urban context

A project to adequately present and better integrate the heritage building and sites is needed as a substantial contribution to the upgrading of the urban environment. The World Heritage properties, other relevant heritage buildings and the archaeological areas should be made visible and accessible with appropriate landscape arrangements, including a well-designed system of signage and readable interpretation panels.

## Heritage of Religious Interest: challenges and specific recommendations

The establishment of a platform for dialogue and mutual understanding among the stakeholders involved in the preservation of heritage of religious interest is considered as significant by UNESCO; therefore, the first major international meeting on the role of the religious communities in the management of World Heritage properties was organized successfully under the patronage of UNESCO in 2010 in Kiev (Ukraine).

The representatives of the Patriarchate of Georgia actively participated in this meeting and in the adoption of the Statement on the Protection of

Religious Properties within the Framework of the World Heritage Convention (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/religious-sacred-heritage/#statement>).

The preservation of the historic urban landscape and the artistic and monumental wealth within the living religious community in the city of Mtskheta constitutes a real challenge for all the involved parties.

The State Party of Georgia has to guarantee the maintenance of the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage property “Historic Monuments of Mtskheta” owned by the Apostolic Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Georgia<sup>14</sup>, while the religious practices and associated rituals of the religious community continue to take place unhindered.<sup>15</sup>

In this regard, the Memorandum of Cooperation was signed in 2014 by the Minister of Culture and Monuments Protection of Georgia and the Representative of the Patriarchate of Georgia to improve cooperation between the state and the church, *inter alia*, through joining the Councils in decision making over the intervention on World Heritage properties.<sup>16</sup>

The Statement of Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage property submitted by the Georgian authorities and adopted by the World Heritage Committee in 2014, highlights that the World Heritage property of “Historical Monuments of Mtskheta” *represent associative*

14 The Constitutional agreement concluded by the State and the Apostolic Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Georgia in 2002 defines the ownership of the religious sites, including the Historical Churches of Mtskheta.

15 In 2014, the Patriarch of Georgia declared Mtskheta a Spiritual Capital of the country. This status, although rather unofficial marked increased interest of the Patriarchate of Georgia to get involved in the management of the site (extract of the 2015 State Party’s state of conservation report).

16 Source: 2015 State Party’s state of conservation report.

*values with religious figures, such as Saint Nino, and the 6th-century church in Jvari Monastery remains the most sacred place in Georgia" and that "Mtskheta has maintained its role as the spiritual and cultural centre of the country, assumed ever since the introduction of Christianity in the region."*

It should also be noted that in 2014, ICOMOS International highlighted "symbolic ideas related to The Holy City of Mtskheta as the Second Jerusalem, in which the most significant religious monuments in the area (inside and outside the current boundaries of protection) are enrolled in a circle representing monuments of the real Jerusalem". ICOMOS also noted that "these sites are functionally linked through a litany (religious procession), which represents the venerable pilgrimage to the holy city of Christendom - Jerusalem. This interpretation of Mtskheta has similarities with other places where monuments were intended to evoke the real Jerusalem, such as churches intended to represent the Church of the Holy Sepulcher like the seven churches of Santo Stefano in Bologna, Italy. Jerusalem was regarded as the ideal city in the Middle Ages. Accordingly, this idea perhaps could be used to explain the development of the medieval city of Mtskheta and would influence the way limits of development were defined".

Thus, the management of the property should aim not only towards the maintenance of its Outstanding Universal Value, but also towards the maintenance of its spiritual values, which are of primary importance to the religious community.

One of the UNESCO-WHC main recommendations was that the Georgian authorities define, in coordination and involvement of all stakeholders,

a shared vision for the town, with varied functions and varied requirements based on the conservation of World Heritage values (see our recommendations and advice on this specific issue in our first mission report).

The importance given by the highest religious authorities of Georgia to this UNESCO-Georgia project, as well as participation of the representatives of the Art and Restoration Council of the Georgian Patriarchate in the meetings and study tour visit have well illustrated interest of the Patriarchate of Georgia to contribute to the process of protection of the World Heritage properties.

A close coordination and collaboration between all relevant stakeholders at national, local authorities and the Patriarchate of Georgia was established during the implementation of the project, in order to increase awareness on issues related to World Heritage values and to include information about the specific character of living religious community.

The study developed by the on-site assistance within the framework of the UNESCO-Georgia Agreement includes **a reference to the religious significance of the site** through history along with the outline of related events, and suggests **an assessment of all the elements** that can be fundamental in the enhancement, protection or development of these activities and practices within the settlement.

In addition, it is recommended to advance with systematic research in the field of religious tourism and pilgrimage, as well as to plan any possible future tourism, spiritual/religious tourism, pilgrimage activities and developments with the

historic city of Mtskheta in line within the UNWTO **Global Code of Ethics for Tourism** and its Article 4 "Tourism, a user of the cultural heritage of humankind and contributor to its enhancement",<sup>17</sup> as well as the UNWTO **Santiago de Compostela Declaration on Tourism and Pilgrimages**.<sup>18</sup>

Taking into account the above-mentioned complex character of the property, the Decision of the World Heritage Committee adopted at its 34th session in 2010 should be reiterated regarding development, in coordination with all relevant stakeholders, of **a state programme for the protection of World**

17 Full Text of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism <http://ethics.unwto.org/en/content/full-text-global-code-ethics-tourism>  
Article 4 "Tourism, a user of the cultural heritage of humankind and contributor to its enhancement" <http://ethics.unwto.org/en/content/global-code-ethics-tourism-article-4>

18 [http://cf.cdn.unwto.org/sites/all/files/pdf/santiago\\_de\\_compostela\\_declaration\\_on\\_tourism\\_and\\_pilgrimages.\\_en.pdf](http://cf.cdn.unwto.org/sites/all/files/pdf/santiago_de_compostela_declaration_on_tourism_and_pilgrimages._en.pdf)

**Heritage religious properties in Georgia**, as a legal framework for co-management under which **the respective responsibilities of the State Party and the Georgian Patriarchate are effectively established, monitored and evaluated** in relation to the protection and conservation of the World Heritage property of religious interest.

It could be recommended that **the Patriarchate of Georgia organize a workshop** to discuss the linkages between the World Heritage Convention and the heritage of religious interest, the definition of associated spiritual values, the assessment of all religious activities and practices within the City of Mtskheta, the research in the field of religious tourism and pilgrimage, and the role of the religious community in the management of the World Heritage property.



## 1.5 List of Annexes

### Activity 1

1. UNESCO-WHC, Mission (23-28 November 2015), *Preliminary Assessment and Recommendations to the State Party*, December 2015
2. UNESCO-WHC, Mission (29 February-4 March 2016), *Historical Monuments of Mtskheta – Report*, July 2016
3. UNESCO-WHC, Mission (19 to 22 December 2016), *Final Report*, March 2017
4. On-site Technical Assistance Final Report, including Annex 1 Agreed Work Plan
5. On-site Technical Assistance Final Report Annex 2
  - TA-Output 1: Base map (drawings)
  - TA-Output 3.3: REVIEW OF 2015-16 WMP MAPS
  - TA-Output 5: Cultural heritage protection zones on Base map (drawings)
  - TA-Output 6: Study areas delimitation (drawings)
6. On-site Technical Assistance Final Report Annex 3
  - TA-Output 3.1 Relevant Legal, planning and management Framework (text)
  - TA-Output 3.2\_3.4 On the production of Base map and on the available data within the 2015-2016 LUMP proposal (text)
- TA-Output 4: Provision of Consultancy Services for a Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Background Study
- TA-Output 2, 3.5, 7. 8.: Terms of Reference – Provision of Consultancy Services for the Design and Preparation of Spatial Arrangement Plan, Safeguard Plan and Urban Planning Documentation for the Self – Governing City of Mtskheta and surrounding territories
7. UNESCO-WHC, *Additional note to the ICOMOS technical review of the project for the new Archaeological museum in Mtskheta*, April 2016
8. UNESCO-WHC, *Final technical review of the project for the new Archaeological museum in Mtskheta*, October 2017





A group of people are gathered around a table in a meeting room, looking at documents and a laptop. A large white number '2' is overlaid on the right side of the image. The text 'Activity' is written in white, bold font, followed by the large number '2'.

# Activity 2

**Provision of technical assistance  
for the upstream process and  
harmonization of the  
Georgian tentative list**

Within the framework of the *World Heritage Convention*, State Parties to the Convention are required to establish a Tentative List before submitting nomination proposals.

Within the framework of the Agreement signed between UNESCO and Georgia for Cultural Heritage Advisory Service, it was foreseen to provide Georgia with technical assistance for the revision of its World Heritage Tentative List, as part of the upstream process for the implementation of the *World Heritage Convention*. There are currently 7 cultural and 4 natural sites on the

*Tentative List*. This revision is also one of the priority actions of the *2015 Helsinki Action Plan for States Parties in Europe following the Second Cycle of Periodic Reporting*. Georgia submitted its current Tentative List in 2007.

The basic principle of the upstream process is to enable the World Heritage Committee's Advisory Bodies and Secretariat to provide direct support to States Parties throughout the whole procedure leading up to a possible nomination of the sites for inscription on the WH List.



## 2.1 Activity implementation

### Workshop on Tentative List (27-28 September 2017)<sup>19</sup>

A workshop on the revision of the Tentative List was held at the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia on 27-28 September 2017 with the following objectives:

- Present and discuss the World Heritage concepts and procedures related to Tentative List revision and upstream support;
- Present and discuss the current profile of cultural and natural heritage in Georgia and its management and protection constraints/ requirements;
- Discuss and outline a Tentative List process for Georgia.

The workshop brought together representatives of the UNESCO-WHC (Alessandro Balsamo, WHC Policy and Statutory Meetings Unit) and the Advisory Bodies (Luisa De Marco, ICOMOS and Hervé Lethier, IUCN) and representatives of the different stakeholders involved in the identification and management of cultural and natural heritage of Georgia.

Presentations were given by the experts on the Tentative List and Upstream Process as well as discussions on planning legal tools for States Parties. In particular, it underlined the importance of the identification of the values of the properties and the criteria that can be applied to define its

Outstanding Universal Value, the need for specific thematic and comparative studies in global or regional context, the effectiveness of the legal and management framework, and the involvement of the community.

An analysis of the current Tentative List of Georgia was made by the representative of the Advisory Bodies in their field of competences.

#### Cultural sites

The revision of a Tentative List needs to be based on scientific appraisal (or reappraisal) of the cultural heritage within the territory of a State Party, because this assessment forms the basis for the identification of the cases which exhibit the strongest potential for World Heritage listing. A united national database and GIS platform for Cultural Heritage developed thanks to the assistance of the Norwegian Directorate of Cultural Heritage, makes it possible to analyse statistics on listed buildings and objects of cultural heritage value, information from the archives of the NACHPG, as well as condition and availability of documentation for each site.

#### Natural sites

Georgia does not have natural sites inscribed on the World Heritage List, whereas there are 4 natural/ mixed on the Tentative List<sup>20</sup>. The discussion focused on Georgia's natural heritage and in particular on Colchic Forests and Wetlands – the site for which the documentation for World Heritage nomination is currently under preparation.

The first observation was that several key sites

<sup>19</sup> see Annex 11

<sup>20</sup> <http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/>



of exceptional biodiversity are missing in the TL, whereas the description of the 4 identified is out of date, incomplete, lacking the statement of Outstanding Universal Value and significant comparative analysis. Considering the inventory of natural heritage, tremendous work has already been completed in Georgia and should be used as a strong baseline to revisit the Tentative List as well as to nominate a potential site in the nearest future.

To expand characterization of Georgian heritage in the framework of World Heritage, the “natural” criteria identified within the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention were extensively explained. The comparative analysis should study the sites in the context of broad-scale global conservation priorities, with the support of international legal

instruments and recognitions and referring to the IUCN and UNEP-WCMC series of global theme studies on natural World Heritage.

To prioritize the possible sites to nominate, not only consider the Outstanding Universal Values and the integrity, but also actual political, geographical, structural conditions and socio-cultural backgrounds, researching historic gaps and thematic studies.

The IUCN expert prepared a brief note on the comparative analysis for the site of Colchic Forests and Wetlands, identified as a priority, expressing his personal opinion, not reflecting necessarily the IUCN Advisory Body and the IUCN World Heritage panel views. This comparative analysis for the site was introduced as an example of methodological approach.

## Upstream advice on cultural heritage sites for the Tentative List revision<sup>21</sup>

A shortlist of three priority cultural properties that may be included in a revision of the current Tentative List of Georgia was submitted by the Georgian authorities to UNESCO-WHC and transmitted to ICOMOS for advice:

- Arch Dam of Enguri Hydroelectric Power Plant
- Mta-Tusheti
- Vardzia-Khertvisi

As part of this upstream advice, ICOMOS provided analysis and advice about the three candidate properties. Based in part on confidential “desk reviews” (no site visits were undertaken) from international specialists drawn from within and outside ICOMOS’s worldwide network of experts’ in fields relevant to each candidate property, specific analysis and advice were developed by ICOMOS on the potential Outstanding Universal Value of each candidate property.

This analysis and advice indicates the apparent strengths and weaknesses of each candidate property on the basis of the requirements of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention. These include the factors to be taken into account by the State Party of Georgia in assessing a candidate property’s integrity and authenticity, its protection and management, and the scope and nature of a comparative analysis of other properties expressing the same or similar values, in order to get a general sense of whether the candidate property may have the potential to be considered “outstanding” among them.

<sup>21</sup> See Annexes 12 and 13.

And finally, some other issues that became apparent during the analysis were identified for the benefit of the State Party. Methodologically, the statements related to the candidate properties were put in question by the experts to clarify any element that should / could be reviewed or developed.

## Upstream advice on the possible nomination of wine making landscapes<sup>22</sup>

The national authorities informed the UNESCO WHC that they wish to explore the possibility of including a nomination of a site or series of wine making landscapes related to the distinctive wine making processes of Georgia. In particular to understand the chances of success of such a nomination with respect to existing inscriptions and in relation to the ICOMOS Thematic Study on wine making landscapes.

Based on the desk study, ICOMOS highlighted methodological issues that relate to nominations on vine – farming and wine –making, which need to make reference where necessary to already inscribed sites and clarify. ICOMOS highlighted the challenges that a potential nomination by Georgia may have to address and overcome to be successful.

ICOMOS concluded that there are at least 2 possibilities regarding the scope of a possible nomination:

**Option 1.** A dossier presented by Georgia, concerning mainly Georgian vinicultural landscapes: A serial landscape, coming from the Neolithic archeological sites till the present vineyards,

<sup>22</sup> See Annex 14.

including all vine varieties, vinicultural methods, equipment and settlements, as well as the artefacts and works of art that have represented it all along the centuries, as the social rites that have accompanied the wine culture until to-day. The similarities and influence with other cultures, especially the ones directly derived from Georgia vines and winemaking must also be explained.

**Option 2:** A serial dossier could be proposed jointly with Armenia, including the above-mentioned components in Georgia and the main Armenian sites and traditional wine landscapes in Areni Valley.

ICOMOS further highlighted the scope of future advice as part of the Upstream Process that could be provided in case the State Party wishes to pursue a nomination project related to long-standing traditional wine making processes.

## 2.2 Results

The first important result of the workshop was to convene at the same table experts in cultural and natural heritage.

The participants gained a better understanding of the entire procedure and precise elements to improve the Nomination process in the future for sites whose significance and Outstanding Universal Value have been correctly identified and stated.

Future steps were identified and operational recommendations made to the State Party regarding setting objectives for the Upstream Process of the revision of the Tentative List and strategic planning and further collaboration opportunities for the overall process of nominating sites in the future. It is at this stage that the State

Party decides what properties are eligible for future nominations and it is therefore crucial that the properties included in the Tentative List are really the strongest candidates.

Future steps were also identified for a possible nomination related to long-standing traditional wine-making processes in Georgia for the consideration by the Georgian authorities.

## 2.3 Recommendations

- It would be suitable to build up and institutionalize the technical cooperation between the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Environment, to dialogue and work together on World Heritage issues.
- Revisit the current Tentative List and identify the most accurate sites responding to the World Heritage standards according to criteria, integrity, level of protection and management.
- Follow the 2012 Action Plan<sup>23</sup> for the natural/mixed sites, which is still fully valid.
- For the natural sites, coordination and cooperation with the neighbouring countries for borders sites. State clearly and without ambiguity the sites' OUV prior to their delimitation.
- A strong legal context can and should strengthen the governmental policy to maintain and manage the natural sites and should facilitate the establishment of a specific system for managing this heritage. Buffer zones should also be recognized in the legal instruments.

<sup>23</sup> "Action Plan towards the future designation of natural/mixed sites under the WH Convention" (Garstecki, 2012)

- Confirm the strong governmental political will and allocate appropriate capacities (human, financial and technical) to site management.
- To nominate a potential site in the nearest future, a concrete and pragmatic approach from the State Party is suggested, with a reasonable ambition, having in mind the need to allocate proper capacities to site management.
- Careful consideration will need to be given to the delineation of the boundaries to ensure that the necessary protection and management of the property, and its immediate setting, is in place.

## 2.4 List of annexes

### Activity 2

1. ICOMOS-IUCN, Mission Report: *Upstream Workshop on the Revision of Tentative Lists 27-28 September 2017, Tbilisi, Georgia*
2. ICOMOS, List of requirements for documentation to be submitted for ICOMOS review
3. ICOMOS, "*ICOMOS Upstream advice on three selected sites*", October 2017
4. ICOMOS, "*Proposal for upstream advice to the State Party of Georgia on the potential for a nomination based on long-standing traditional wine-making processes*", October 2017.





# Activity

**Capacity building**

This activity was designed to support Activity 1 and focuses mostly on capacity building for heritage-led urban planning for national and local authorities. As foreseen in the original project document, capacity building has been a cross-cutting theme throughout the project.

Originally, it was supposed to be implemented through the organization of capacity-building workshops for the Mtskheta municipality and relevant national agencies staff on landscape and sustainability planning practices. Actually, specific training workshops were not organized, the activity was fulfilled in the form of joint working sessions with the national staff in all the missions.

A study tour was the second component planned within this activity with the rationale to invite decision-makers and technical staff to France, to hold meetings at UNESCO, and include field trips and site visits.

In parallel with the UNESCO-Georgia Agreement implementation, ICCROM is conducting a capacity-building activity in Georgia to assess capacity-building needs in the field of heritage conservation, to provide technical assistance and to advise on a national capacity-building strategy. It should be recommended that the national capacity-building strategy under development with ICCROM assistance include the UNESCO-Georgia Agreement recommendations in the domain of World Heritage management, Historic Urban Landscape Planning, Upstream process and Tourism strategy.

### 3.1 Activity implementation

The preparation of a training mechanism on management for the national and local authorities was assessed as a priority. Different modalities of training activities were identified, based on the availability of a team of national staff dedicated to the planning and based on the results of first missions, and discussions started on setting up on-site short term assistance to provide guidance with the follow up on the LUMP and design of the Master Plan.

#### On-the-job capacity building

The creation of a technical unit within the Municipality had been identified as the best way to guarantee the taking possession of the planning process by those charged with implementing it daily. To this end, a strong reinforcement of internal expertise was needed. Unluckily, the foreseen technical workshop with municipal staff was not implemented because of the too reduced human resources in the municipal office. Instead, a fruitful “on-the-job” workshop with the NACHP team was run allowing discussions and clarifications on the identification of cultural heritage areas and values (see point 1.1).

The joint meetings occasioned by the missions with the stakeholders can be considered as full-featured capacity-building sessions, particularly to improve the required dialogue and cooperation among the different stakeholders.

#### On-site technical assistance

An on-site technical assistance to allow for on-the-job training of national and local government

professionals was agreed with the Georgian authorities. The selected UNESCO-WHC expert is a heritage planner with relevant field experience in providing technical assistance for a World Heritage site and organizing capacity-building activities.

It was not possible to implement the original idea of training and accompanying the work of a dedicated planning team within the Mtskheta municipality due to the lack of local human resources. Instead, not to miss an opportunity for the capacity-building component, one of the main outputs of this on-site assistance is a set of guidelines, meta-documents prepared by the expert, which explain the adopted methodology in the production of the revised graphic materials and data. These will be very useful in particular at the level of the capacity building within the municipality, once a dedicated planning unit is set-up.

## Lectures

Additionally, on the occasion of the February/March mission in 2016, the mission experts gave presentations at the University of Tbilisi, on urban conservation, planning methodology, and the Historic Urban Landscape approach. Links with universities should be supported.

## Study tour

A study tour was planned in the Agreement to strengthen institutional and technical competences of the national and local Georgian authorities.

From 17 to 23 September 2017, the UNESCO-WHC welcomed eight representatives from Georgia to discuss protection of World Heritage properties and

the results of the technical assistance implemented through the Agreement for collaboration.

The visit started with a two-day round table at the Headquarters of UNESCO in Paris. The Georgian delegation composed of national, municipal and religious authorities and technical staff discussed with the French representatives, the UNESCO-WHC and ICOMOS the issue of protection of the World Heritage property of the “Historical Monuments in Mtskheta”, as well as the establishment of future collaboration in the domain of World Heritage.

During the round table the participants exchanged experiences in the management of historic urban landscapes and World Heritage properties of religious interest. The representative of the French Ministry of Culture offered future cooperation in these fields. During a visit to the Notre-Dame Cathedral and a meeting with Monseigneur Patrick Chauvet, Rector-Archpriest of the Cathedral and the representatives of the Regional Direction for Cultural Affairs (DRAC Île-de-France), the Georgian authorities exchanged on the participation of the religious community in the management of the outstanding heritage sites of religious interest.

The tour continued with visits to World Heritage properties in France (the Loire Valley between Sully-sur-Loire and Chalonnes), organized in close cooperation with the French Ministry of Culture and the French Association for World Heritage (*l'Association des biens français du patrimoine mondial*). In the course of this tour, participants had the possibility to share their experiences and to illustrate the main challenges in governance, management and use of World Heritage properties in France and Georgia.

Highlights included visits to French heritage sites such as the old church of Rigny-Ussé, the abbey of Fontevraud, components of the World Heritage property in the Loire Valley as well as the World Heritage property Cathedral of Chartres. The site visits were alternated with presentations and meetings with mayors, architects, and various members of associations concerned with the preservation, use and promotion of French World Heritage sites. The objective of the visit was to explore future avenues of cooperation and share experiences between the French and Georgian experts.

## 3.2 Results

The results of the on-site assistance are already presented above, in Ch. 1. As already underlined, the presence of the expert on site facilitated the dialogue between relevant stakeholders, necessary for a shared knowledge and awareness on methodology.

The results would have been more effective if the assistance could have had the opportunity to train a team of professionals in charge of continuing the activities for the preparation of the Urban Planning Documentation. However, the day-to-day work with the technical staff of the different institutions, represented an opportunity to share methodologies, the definition of goals and objectives, and to underline the single phases of the work and process. For instance, information on housing stock and building permits in the Municipality are collected in acts/paper format and/or thanks to the memory of single staff members, and the requests to display information on maps

and to work on the graphic representation of facts, represented a great opportunity to build technical capacities that will remain long after the presence of the technical assistance experts.

An evaluation of the study tour was carried out through a questionnaire completed by the participants who expressed great satisfaction in the tour. The various sites visited, the topics discussed and the presentations fully met the expectation of the participants.

The Georgian participants got the chance to gain more insights into French heritage sites in order to study their good practices in the domains of conservation and management, protection of historical urban landscapes, urban development and heritage strategies and policies regarding spatial planning.

As identified by the participants, the top lessons learned are:

- The importance of the quality of relations and collaboration between the State, the local authorities and the inhabitants, since they alone can guarantee the sustainable development of the territories; in France, the expression of direct democracy is present at all levels of local governance and local communities are involved in heritage issues.
- The necessary coherence between the particular nature of the places (in particular the World Heritage OUV and its boundary), national / local planning instruments and management tools.
- The existence of certified “heritage architects”, the only ones authorized to intervene on

historical monuments and protected buildings is a guarantee for protection.

- The respect for the general interest for cultural and natural heritage protection takes priority over the nature of the property (public or private buildings).
- In France, the separation of the Church and the State made it possible to clarify the questions of ownership and to define the responsibilities of each of the parties in legal, institutional and financial terms.

### 3.3 Recommendations

- Envisaging means to continue on-site technical assistance is suggested to provide the necessary daily guidance in a much more efficient way, reinforcing the steering mechanism and the technical work, whilst ensuring on-the-job training.
- It may be appropriate to organize *in situ* training courses (which may vary from 2 weeks to a few months) for technical staff of Georgian ministries

within communities or management structures of French World Heritage properties.

- French elected officials and technicians could be mobilized for on-site assistance (subject to the expression of a need on the part of the Georgian Government).
- An hypothesis to establish a network of Georgian managers could be deepened to property management and how they are handled.
- In Georgia, a special certification for all professionals involved in the field of heritage that have received adequate training and legal recognition should be created.

### List of Annexes

1. *Notes de la table-ronde au Siège de l'UNESCO (18–19 Septembre 2017)*
2. *Association des biens français du Patrimoine mondial, Rapport technique relatif à la visite d'étude en France des autorités nationales, municipales et religieuses géorgiennes (19-22 septembre 2017, Val de Loire/Chartres), octobre 2017*





# Activity 4

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## Cultural Heritage Promotion with Sustainable Tourism



The implementation of this activity, put on hold in 2016 as it was not considered a priority, was addressed in 2017, mainly assisting the Georgian authorities in the assessment of the National Tourism strategy and Action Plan in terms of the goals of the UNESCO World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Programme.

## 4.1 Activity implementation

Within the framework the UNESCO World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme, an assessment of the National Tourism Strategy submitted in August 2017 by the Georgian authorities was conducted. Advice from the UNESCO-WHC and guidance on a sustainable tourism approach strategy for World Heritage properties in Georgia were given within a dedicated workshop organized in September 2017.

The areas of focus were:

- a. an understanding of the UNESCO-WHC approach to sustainable tourism development,
- b. an understanding of the goals and priorities of the Georgian authorities and how the National Tourism strategy addresses tourism impacts (positive and negative), interaction with the local community and how tourism affects their lives (positive and negative), and the sustainability measures in place.

## 4.2 Results

As a State Party to the World Heritage Convention (1972), Georgia is responsible for protecting and managing the three properties inscribed on the World Heritage List, ensuring conservation of the Outstanding Universal Values for which they are inscribed.

Following the assessment of Georgia Tourism Strategy 2025, the UNESCO-WHC has provided guidance on a sustainable tourism approach and strategy for World Heritage properties in Georgia. This may lead to the revision of the Georgia's national tourism strategy 2025. In particular, based on discussions during the workshop held in September in Tbilisi the Action Plan for 2018-2019 was updated, considering the specificity of World Heritage.

## 4.3 Recommendations

The following recommendations specifically aim to assist the government of Georgia to ensure the protection of the Outstanding Universal Value of current and potential future World Heritage properties while seeking to contribute to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

1. Prioritize the protection and management of World Heritage properties and sites on the Tentative List in the implementation of the Strategy, and identify the specific contributions of the sector to the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals;
2. Develop an integrated national strategy for World Heritage and sustainable tourism including property specific actions based on a shared vision to:

- a. integrate the *Policy Orientations defining the relationship between World Heritage and sustainable tourism*,<sup>24</sup> and Policy for the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective into the Process of the World Heritage Convention;<sup>25</sup>
  - b. specifically consider factors affecting the sites, and seek to manage tourism in a way that minimize, or even eliminate, negative impacts;
  - c. include requirements for the development of impact assessments (including but not limited to Heritage Impact Assessments and Environmental Impact Assessments) prior to any infrastructure developments that may directly or indirectly affect World Heritage properties or sites on the Tentative List;
3. Based on the Georgia Tourism Strategy 2025, develop site-specific World Heritage and sustainable tourism strategies and action plans that integrate into the respective management plans, by:
- a. establishing a tourism management baseline for each of the properties;
  - b. facilitating the development of property specific vision statements within the frameworks of the national tourism strategy and shared vision for World Heritage and sustainable tourism;
  - c. supporting the development site specific
    - applying the framework of SMART action planning;
    - d. supporting the involvement of a broad based set of stakeholders throughout the process (e.g. through property Coordinating Committees with representation from key stakeholders), supporting public meetings and stakeholders' consultations;
    - e. applying and promoting use of the UNESCO World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism online toolkit (including 10 "How To" Guides and Tourism Management Assessment Tool), and other relevant resources providing guidance specific to World Heritage management;
    - f. ensuring a destination approach and consideration of existing or foreseen plans including Urban Master Plans including those referred to in the World Heritage Committee documents;
    - g. supporting the World Heritage properties and management representatives in implementation of the strategies; and
    - h. Utilizing the suite of UNESCO tools to monitor tourism management contributing global good practice examples that can be globally shared.

<sup>24</sup> Based on the report of the international workshop on *Advancing Sustainable Tourism at Natural and Cultural Heritage Sites* (Mogao, China, September 2009), and adopted by the World Heritage Committee at its 34th session in Brasilia, 2010 (Decision 34 COM 5F.2)

<sup>25</sup> Adopted by the General Assembly of the States Parties to the World Heritage Convention at its 20th session in Paris, 2015 (Resolution 20 GA 13)

## List of Annexes

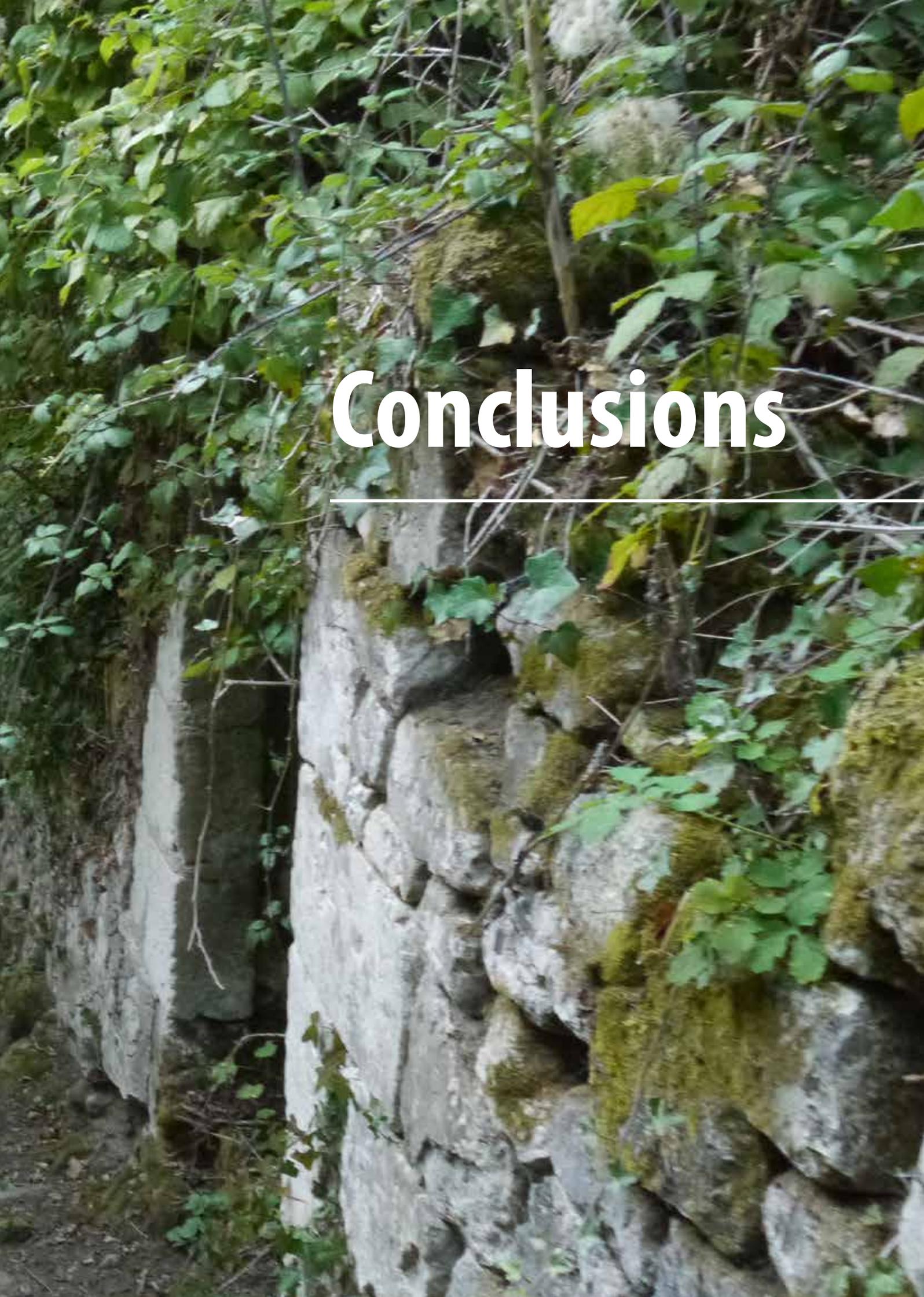
### Activity 4

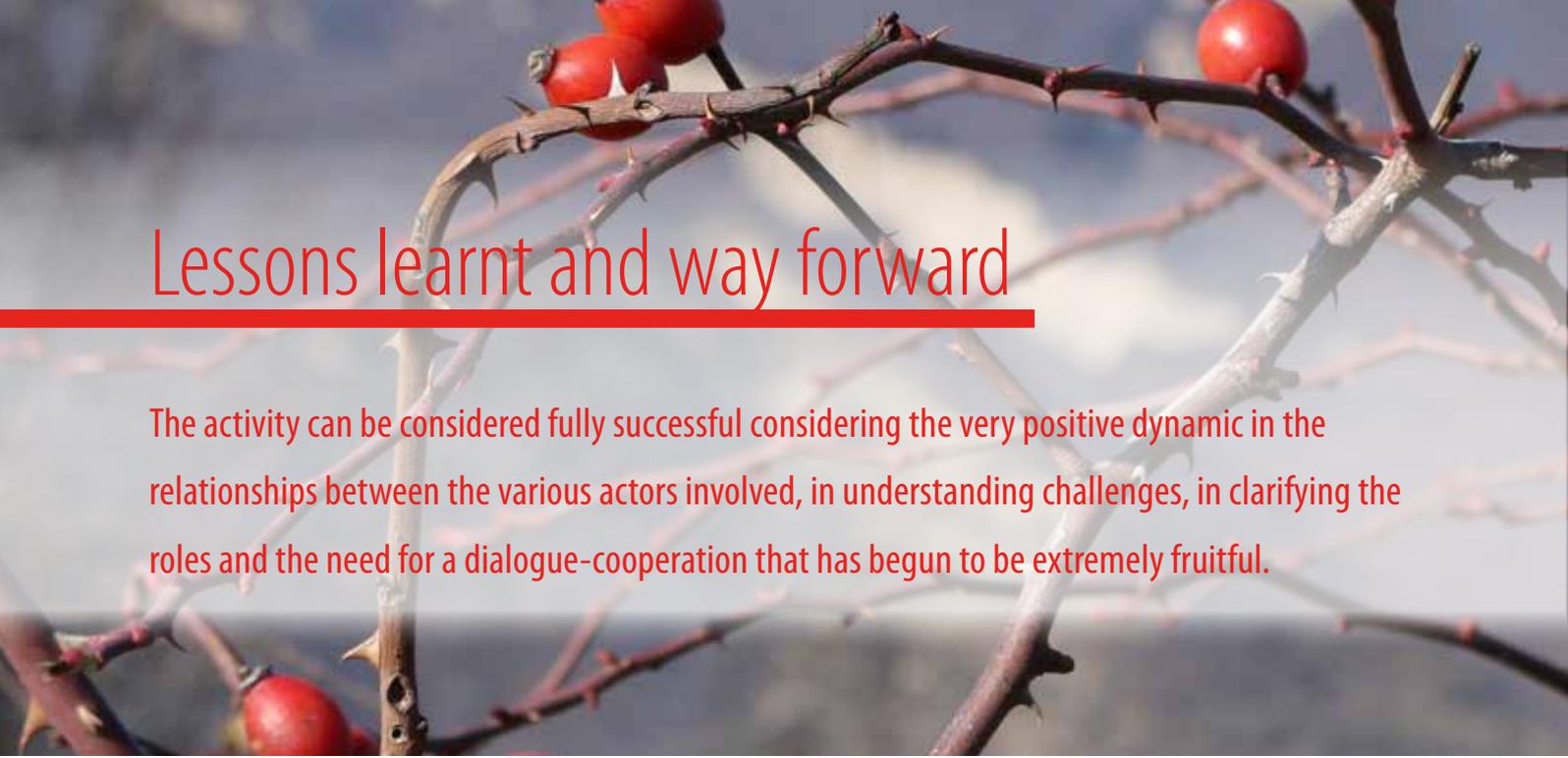
1. Report on *World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism in Georgia*, October 2017
2. *Georgia's national tourism strategy 2025 – Revised Action Plan for 2018-2019*, October 2017



# Conclusions

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A close-up photograph of a thorny branch with several bright red berries. The background is a soft-focus landscape with a blue sky and distant hills. The title 'Lessons learnt and way forward' is overlaid in a red serif font on a white background that spans the width of the image.

# Lessons learnt and way forward

The activity can be considered fully successful considering the very positive dynamic in the relationships between the various actors involved, in understanding challenges, in clarifying the roles and the need for a dialogue-cooperation that has begun to be extremely fruitful.

The strong involvement of the Georgian authorities led to the World Heritage Committee's decision in July 2016 to remove the property of the "Historic Monuments of Mtskheta" from the List of World Heritage in Danger, considering that many of the corrective measures were under development, although not yet effective. Even though the property is removed from the List of World Heritage in Danger, the Government and the institutional stakeholders are fully aware of the challenges and issues related to the preservation and management of Mtskheta's heritage.

The positive change in the approach of the State Party shows the deep conviction and involvement in an active management of the property.

Through the implementation of the project, it was highlighted that the urban planning processes can be developed only on a shared common long-term vision. Due to their complexity, these processes need a long development period and a continuous participatory involvement of all stakeholders.

As already highlighted, there is the need of investing in human resources, of clear policy aiming

to strengthen the volume of human capacities, improve the level of education and skills of the management staff and stabilize this staff to guarantee a medium-long term management. It is suggested to reinforce capacity in the domain of urban conservation and planning, as well as in cultural and natural heritage management through the ICCROM training / capacity-building courses, ICCROM/IUCN World Heritage Leadership courses and sub-regional activities in view of the third cycle of the Periodic Reporting exercise.

The local community has a key role in the continued protection and conservation of the cultural and natural heritage sites. A strong involvement of the local communities in the management of the World Heritage properties is an important ingredient to guarantee the long-term safeguarding of the World Heritage sites around the world. The State Party should endeavour to adopt a general policy to give the heritage a function in the life of the community.

Taking advantage of this experience and of the momentum, it is crucial to ensure continued governance by consolidating the



identified exceptional measures in a long-term management system.

Through the project implementation, the Georgian authorities expressed their appreciation for the technical advisory assistance provided by the UNESCO-WHC.

It should be highlighted that the role of UNESCO-WHC, within the framework of the project, was to provide technical assistance, advice and [guiding](#) recommendations to the Georgian authorities concerned in implementing the corrective measures adopted by the World Heritage Committee in view of the removal of the World Heritage property “Historic Monuments of Mtskheta” from the List of World Heritage in Danger. Technical assistance was also provided with regarding to the implementation of the 2015 Helsinki Action Plan from the Periodic Reporting exercise for Europe, which includes the components regarding the identification of potential sites as part of the Upstream Process for the revision of Tentative Lists and nominations on the World Heritage List, as well as capacity building at national and local levels.

In conformity with Article 4 of the World Heritage Convention, each State Party to this Convention recognizes its duty of ensuring the identification, protection, conservation, presentation and transmission to future generations of the cultural and natural heritage referred situated on its territory.

In this regard, all guiding recommendations provided during this assistance have been prepared to support Georgia, as a State Party signatory of the World Heritage Convention, in the implementation of the Decisions adopted by the World Heritage Committee, as part of the overall World Heritage statutory process.

The collaboration between the UNESCO-WHC and the Georgian relevant stakeholders should continue to strengthen all processes initiated during the project, as well as those relevant to the implementation of the World Heritage Convention. The UNESCO-WHC would like to confirm its readiness to continue to assist the Georgian authorities through project follow-up upon request of the State Party.

# ANNEXES

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# Project Agreement Reports

1. Inception report : Cultural Heritage Technical Advisory Service to Georgia under 3rd Regional Development Project- Report 1, November 2015-April 2016, WHC
2. Progress Report : Cultural Heritage Technical Advisory Service to Georgia; April 2016-May 2017

## Activity 1

1. UNESCO-WHC, Mission (23-28 November 2015), *Preliminary Assessment and Recommendations to the State Party*, December 2015
2. UNESCO-WHC, Mission (29 February-4 March 2016), *Historical Monuments of Mtskheta – Report*, July 2016
3. UNESCO-WHC, Mission (19-22 December 2016), *Final Report*, March 2017
4. On-site Technical Assistance Final Report, including Annex 1 Agreed Work Plan
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## Activity 2

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## Activity 4

1. Report on *World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism in Georgia*, October 2017
2. Georgia's national tourism strategy 2025 – Revised Action Plan for 2018-2019



For more information, please visit: <http://whc.unesco.org>



