Joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Advisory mission to the Slovak components of the World Heritage property “Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe“

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Cover picture (© Robert Brunner) taken in the Strict Nature Reserve Borsuciny, Slovakia
Aknowledgements

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Executive Summary

The State Party of Slovakia invited this Advisory mission to obtain advice on the current proposal for a significant boundary modification of the Slovak components of the property. The objective of the mission was to advise on if and how far the proposed boundary modification could guarantee and enhance the protection of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property. Based on field visits, stakeholder meetings and review of documents provided by the State Party, the mission draws the following conclusions:

1. Consultations and cooperation have been successfully enhanced.

The mission observed the State Party’s notable efforts to consult relevant stakeholders on the planned significant boundary modification, in line with 42 COM 7B.71. Since a consultation meeting between the State Party, World Heritage Centre, and IUCN in November 2017, important progress has been made, especially in terms of negotiations with non-state and state landowners and through the elaboration of a number of detailed maps and studies. Whilst reservations and past conflicts still come to the fore, the State Party successfully established an inter-sectoral dialogue involving nature conservation, forestry, landowners and civil society at the local levels. Inter-institutional and inter-ministerial coordination has been strengthened considerably. This is in line with the requests by the World Heritage Committee in its Decision 38 COM 7B.75. In the mission’s view, the State Party should be commended for these continued efforts.

2. The boundary modification proposal needs further revisions to fully express the OUV.

The mission highlights that the current version of the current boundary modification proposal would

1. Consolidate existing core zones and align some of them with Strict Nature Reserves (e.g. the Strict Nature Reserves Rozok and Havesova), but
2. Exclude some natural and potential primeval Beech Forest from the currently inscribed core and buffer zones (e.g. Strict Nature Reserves Sipkova and Stinska);
3. Downsize current buffer zones which would exclude several stands of natural forest;
4. Reduce connectivity of the Slovak components of the World Heritage property (e.g. through the division of the Stuzica – Bukovske vrchy component into two isolated components).

Consequently, the mission considers that the current boundary modification proposal does not yet meet relevant requests by the World Heritage Committee: Decision 42 COM 7B.71 requires the State Party to ensure that “the proposed boundary modification results in better protection of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, and the new delineation includes all important areas that are important for the expression of OUV,” and that “proposed buffer zones are adequate in size and are subject to a management regime which ensures the protection of the property’s OUV.” Furthermore, it requested that “all areas within the property are provided with an adequate legal protection regime.”

In order to fully comply with the Committee’s request, the mission considers that the boundary modification proposal needs to be revised further and recommends continuing the consultation processes and considering the establishment of additional Strict Nature Reserves and development of legally binding agreements, in order to consistently include all areas that are important for the expression of OUV (see also detailed recommendations in chapter 5). Special attention should be paid to the negotiation with private

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1 As presented during the joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Advisory mission from 16 to 19 October 2018.
landowners, i.e. landowners’ associations, to enhance the understanding for and the acceptance of the significance of the World Heritage property.

3. The current and potential future core and buffer zones require effective protection.

Any logging and intensive² forest management practices, such as “shelterwood cuts,” in the current core and buffer zones as inscribed in 2007, may significantly threaten the OUV of the property and its integrity, and has already compromised it in the past. In the view of the mission, a continuation of logging and intensive forest management within the limits of the current property could thus potentially represent an ascertained danger to the entire World Heritage property in line with paragraph 180 of the Operational Guidelines. Therefore, the mission considers imperative the effective protection of all currently inscribed core and buffer zones, as they remain valid until the World Heritage Committee may eventually approve a boundary modification. The same principles shall apply to the proposed extension areas to prevent valuable forest stands from deterioration, until a decision is taken by the World Heritage Committee on a future boundary modification proposal.

Detailed recommendations can be found in chapter 5.

² This report uses the term „intensive forest management” to describe impactful forest management practices from the perspective of nature conservation. For instance, clear-cuts and “shelterwood cuts” would be a case of intensive forest management. It should be noted however that in Slovak forestry terminology more intensive management systems are understood to entail closer-to-nature management practices, whereas more impactful forest management practices are denoted as “extensive forest management.” Therefore, the term “intensive forest management” as used in this report should be translated as “extensive forest management” into the Slovak language.
1. Background

The four Slovak components of the World Heritage property “Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe” (Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Italy, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Ukraine) were inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2007, jointly with six components in Ukraine. The inscription was preceded by a withdrawal of the Slovak Republic’s nomination of 21 components as “Primeval Forests of Slovakia” in 2004. Today, the four components Stuzica, Rozok, Havesova and Vihorlat are part of a transnational 78-component site shared by 12 States Parties since the latest extension in 2017.

In 2011, it was noticed that the 2007 nomination file included discrepancies between the reported size and the maps of the Slovak components. The legal protection regime did not correspond to the Slovak components, as inscribed in 2007. Similarly, a Reactive Monitoring mission concluded in 2014 that the current boundary design of the Slovak components would not adequately reflect its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV). The Committee consequently requested the State Party in 2015, to develop a proposal for boundary modification of its components (Decision 39 COM 7B.19). Subsequently, two proposals for boundary modification were presented at a consultation meeting with the World Heritage Centre and IUCN in November 2017, which served as basis for a further developed proposal presented to this Advisory mission. In light of the potential impact of the boundary modification on the OUV of the property, the Committee considered in its latest Decision 42 COM 7B.71, that the modification should be submitted as a significant boundary modification, in line with paragraph 165 of the Operational Guidelines. The Committee requested the State Party of Slovakia to ensure that

a) “the proposed boundary modification results in better protection of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property and the new delineation includes all important areas for the expression of this OUV,

b) all areas within the property are provided with an adequate legal protection regime,

c) consultations have been held with relevant stakeholders through a participatory process,

d) proposed buffer zones are adequate in size and are subject to a management regime which ensures the protection of the property’s OUV.”

This mission report assesses how far these conditions set by the Committee are met in the current boundary modification proposal as suggested by the State Party and as presented to the mission (see table 2, maps 2, 4, 6, 8). The current boundary modification proposal was reported as a minimum version for boundaries consented by all involved stakeholders following long-lasting negotiations between state institutions and state and non-state landowners. This compromise was the base line presented to the mission.

In addition to the need for a boundary modification, concerns have been raised about the adequacy of legal protection and the threat of logging and unsustainable forest management by the 2014 Reactive Monitoring mission, by civil society organisations, and by the World Heritage Committee in its Decisions 37 COM 7B.26, 38 COM 7B.75, 39 COM 7B.19, 41 COM 7B.4 and 42 COM 7B.71. At its 42nd session (Manama, 2018), the World Heritage Committee expressed its utmost concern about “the continued absence of adequate legal protection for part of the property and the continued reports of logging within the buffer zone and within the property” (Decision 42 COM 7B.71).
This mission report shall provide advice on the current proposal for boundary modification of the Slovak components of the World Heritage property and their buffer zones, as presented to the joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Advisory mission from 16 to 19 October 2018. The objective is to provide advice on whether and how the proposed boundary modification could guarantee and enhance the protection of the OUV of the property, and address other requests expressed by the World Heritage Committee (see Terms of Reference in Annex I). In 2017, two missions were already undertaken by the World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Programme to explore the opportunities for sustainable tourism thanks to the support of the Government of Slovakia and the Slovak National Commission.

2. Description of the current boundary modification proposal and comparison with the currently inscribed boundaries

After the inscription of the property in 2007, it has been noted that the design of the core and buffer zones are neither corresponding to the protected areas regime, nor to the established delimitations of forest stands. It has further been argued that the current boundaries do not include all areas necessary to adequately express the Outstanding Universal Value, whilst they do include forest stands that are not at all expressing OUV.

The current proposal of the delineation of the Slovak components of the World Heritage property, excludes parts of the currently inscribed components, especially their buffer zones, but includes the new component Kyjovsky prales as well as additions to existing components. The description of the delineation proposal refers to the proposals of 5 October 2018 (maps 2, 4, 6 and 8 in table 2) as presented to the mission.

| Legend for current boundaries as inscribed (2007) |
| Core zone |
| Buffer zone |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legend for current boundary modification proposal (10/2018)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boundary of the core zone with six component parts – version from the 5th of October 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Connaturality level by NLC mapping</td>
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<tr>
<td>2a – Natural forest with natural tree species composition and spatial arrangement</td>
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<tr>
<td>2b – Natural forest with natural tree species composition, but with amended spatial arrangement</td>
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<tr>
<td>2c – Natural forest with slightly amended tree species composition and spatial arrangement</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 – Mainly natural forest</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 – Modified forest</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 – Changed forest</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluating of segment by FSC mapping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A – Primeval forest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B – Influenced primeval forest</td>
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<tr>
<td>C – Potential primeval forest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N – Not evaluated part</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UP – Former meadow inside primeval forest with successive stand</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1:** Legends for table 2 and maps 1-8. The maps for the current boundary modification proposal include the results of the “connaturality study” describing how close to nature the status of the examined forest stand is, in terms of tree species composition and spatial arrangement and which stands qualify as primeval, influenced primeval and potential primeval forest.
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Map 1" /></td>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Map 2" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Map 3" /></td>
<td><img src="image4.png" alt="Map 4" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Havesova**

**Rozok**
Table 2 Maps 1-8: Comparison of the current boundaries of the Slovak components as inscribed in 2007 with the current proposal of the potential boundary modification proposal as presented to the mission. On the left: Extracts of topographic maps; On the right: Extracts of connaturality mapping. Cartography maps 1, 3, 5 and 7: Slovak Environmental Agency, 2005; Cartography maps 2, 4, 6 and 8: Marian Gic, State Nature Conservancy, 2018. The red arrows in map 6 indicate the section, which according to the proposal would be excluded from the current component Stuzica – Bukovské vrchy.
1. **Havesova (see table 2, maps 1-2):**

   The Havesova component as inscribed in 2007 contains a core zone located on a mountain ridge between the settlements Topola and Kalna Roztoka. The core zone largely overlaps with the Strict Nature Reserve\(^3\) Havesova; however, its boundaries are not accurately aligned with the Reserve. The buffer zone is extremely narrow towards the northern and southern hillslopes outside the Reserve, and it expands widely towards the southeast and northwest along the mountain ridge and across the stream Ulicka to cover the Strict Nature Reserve Ulicska Ostra in the southeast. The 2007 buffer zone covers all nearby forest stands that have been classified as at least “mainly natural forest” according to the connaturality study (see caption of table 1).

   **Proposed modification:**

   According to the maps, the boundary modification of the core zone is insignificant, adapting the boundary to the Strict Nature Reserve Havesova. Compared with the nomination file (text: 171.30 ha, map: 179.33 ha) the proposal is marginally reduced to 167.86 ha. The buffer zone varies significantly, and covers only 179.43 ha against 63.99 ha (text) and 1,924.01 ha (map) in the 2007 nomination project. According to the classification (Mapping of forest stands connaturality; see table 1 and map 2), the core zone of Havesova is classified as primeval and natural forest with natural tree composition. It is state land in the tenure of the Agroforestry Estate Ulic. The core is congruent with the Strict Nature Reserve Havesova and categorised as Special Purpose Forest,\(^4\) the buffer zone as Commercial Forest.

2. **Rozok (see table 2, maps 3-4):**

   Rozok is the smallest component of the 2007 inscription and is not fully aligned with the boundaries of the Strict Nature Reserve Rozok. Its buffer zone is extremely narrow at the southern side of the core zone, and it stretches significantly northwards along the Ukrainian border covering the Strict Nature Reserve Stinska and two significant clusters of forest stands classified as at least “mainly natural forest” in the connaturality study.

   **Proposed modification:**

   Similar to the Havesova component, the core zone boundaries of the Rozok component are slightly adapted in the new proposal – from 67.10 ha (text) and 69.38 ha (map) in the

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\(^3\) Strict Nature Reserves ensure a non-intervention regime on the territory they cover, in accordance with the highest level of protection, i.e. 5th level of protection under the Act of June 25, 2002 on Nature and Landscape Protection of the Slovak Republic.

\(^4\) Special Purpose Forests are those forests with special functions associated with specifically important social needs. These forests are managed via the application of so-called functionally differentiated management systems, allowing for the purposeful reinforcement of one or more selected functions such as water purification, recreation, nature conservation, spas and other health treatments, education and research, etc. (Ambrušová L., et al., Atlas of the forest sector in Slovakia, Working papers of the Finnish Forest Research Institute 257).

According to § 14 of Act no. 326/2005 Coll. on Forests by the Slovak Republic, “Special Purpose Forests are the forests whose task is to fulfill the specific needs of society, legal and artificial and natural persons. The management of these forests is aimed to fulfill its purpose and it is totally different from common management.

- a) Forests situated in the protective zones no. 1 and no. 2 of water sources
- b) Forests situated in the protective zones of mineral and natural waters, in interior of spas
- c) Suburban forests with health, cultural and recreation function
- d) Forests in the pheasantries and game parks
- e) Forests in protected areas and on forest land with occurrence of habitats of European interest or protected species
- f) Forest situated in genes bases of forest tree species
- g) Forest used for the research and forestry education
- h) Military forest”
nomination file to 67.39 ha. The adapted boundaries would fully match the boundaries of the Strict Nature Reserve Rozok. Again, the discrepancies of the buffer zone’s size are significant, reducing the area from 864.84 ha (map) (but only 41.40 ha in the text) to 181.28 ha in the delineation version (current proposal).

The forest in the Rozok component is classified as primeval and as natural forest with natural tree composition. The proposed core and buffer zones are mainly state land in the tenure of the Agroforestry Estate Ulic with a small part in non-state ownership (landowners association Urbariat). The core is categorised as Special Purpose Forest, the buffer zone as Commercial Forest.

3. **Stuzica – Bukovske vrchy (see table 2, maps 5-6):**

The Stuzica – Bukovske vrchy component, as inscribed in 2007, represents a narrow strip along the Polish border with two more extensive parts at its western (Udava) and Eastern (Stuzica) end. It connects six Strict Nature Reserves and covers numerous stands that qualify as primeval forests, as well as stands that have been classified as potential and influenced primeval forests in the connaturality study. The buffer zone has been generously drawn to include various mountain ridges towards the south and the valley of the upper reaches of the stream Zbojsky potok, upstream of the settlement Nova Sedlica. It includes a number of stands classified as “mainly natural forest” and higher by the connaturality study.

*Proposed modification:*

The most substantial changes are related to the Stuzica – Bukovske vrchy component along the northern state border and contain enlargements as well as exclusions. Udava, which is part of the current component Stuzica – Bukovske vrchy, would become a separate component according to the modification proposal, whereas a new extension southwards is added to the Stuzica – Bukovske vrchy component. As detailed figures of the excluded and added areas are not available, the following numbers are not fully comparable. The now separated component Udava is described under paragraph 4.

The size of the current Stuzica – Bukovske vrchy component (including Udava) is 2,950.00 ha (text) and 1,881.30 ha (map), the buffer zone covers 11,300.00 ha (text) and 7,164.87 ha (map). The boundary modification of the core zone would include adaptions (enlargements as well as reductions), in line with the current delineation of Strict Nature Reserves. The modification would extend the core zone of the Stuzica part southwards within the current buffer zone, as recognised in 2007, and exclude approximately 10 km of the border stripe from the core zone, resulting in a separation of Udava from the Stuzica – Bukovske vrchy component. The new size of the remaining part of Stuzica – Bukovske vrchy, including the appendix, is 1,751.86 ha for the core zone and 1,464.47 ha for the buffer zone. This is a significant reduction of the buffer zone, which would now even coincide, in some places, with the boundary of the core zone.

The newly proposed core and buffer zones include forest stands classified as influenced primeval forest and potential primeval forest, surrounded by commercial forest as it was also demonstrated during a field trip. The proposed core and buffers are situated on state land in the tenure of the Agroforestry Estate Ulic and on private land where agreements with the landowners have been reached. The forest of the core zone is categorised as Protection Forest, Special Purpose Forest and Commercial Forest in the newly proposed

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5 The authorities of the Slovak Republic proposed to add an extension to the Stuzica – Bukovske vrchy component, stretching southwards. In this report, this extension is named “(Southern) Appendix”.

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southward extension, whereas the buffer zone is Commercial Forest with only one small stand declared as Protection Forest.

![Image]

**Figure 1:** The border of the Nature Reserves is marked with a red circle and a half circle indicating the direction of the Nature Reserve (picture © Robert Brunner, 2018, taken in the proposed “southern appendix”)

4. **Udava (see table 2, map 6):**
   In the proposal, the new component Udava, former part of the Stuzica – Bukovské vrchy component, would now be separated and covers a core area of 453.75 ha and a buffer zone of 222.83 ha. In comparison with the current situation, the boundaries of the core zone of the Udava part are modified and the core zone enlarged. The buffer zone is significantly downsized. Due to the exclusion of parts of the currently larger component, Udava would become an isolated component.

   The site includes forest stands in different age classes, some of them categorised as influenced primeval and potential primeval forest. The core zone would be enlarged, compared with the current situation. The core zone is categorised as Special Purpose Forest and as Protection Forest, mostly designated as Strict Nature Reserve Udava, the buffer zone as Commercial Forest. Both zones are established on state land in the tenure of the Forest of Slovak Republic Banska Bystrica.

5. **Vihorlat (see table 2, maps 7-8):**
   The core zones of the Vihorlat component as inscribed in 2007 roughly follow the peaks of the Vihorlat mountains from Mount Vihorlat via Mount Montragon and others, to the peaks Strihovska polana and Veza, excluding the surrounding valleys and the seminatural lake Morske oko. These are covered by the buffer zone, which consolidates the peculiar shape of the core zone. The design of the core zone intersects with the numerous small Strict Nature Reserves, but does not capture them systematically. Many of the forest stands that have been classified by the connaturali ty study as “Natural forests with natural tree species composition and spatial arrangement” are covered by the current core zone, whereas several stands of this quality, especially around lake Morske oko, are not.

   **Proposed modification:**
   In the proposed boundary Vihorlat component, the core zone is slightly enlarged to 1,564.13 ha in the proposed project compared to 1,404.89 ha in the map of the nomination project, whereas the text of the nomination describes the core area with 2,578.00 ha and encompasses all nature reserves in the 5th level of legal protection. The
buffer zone is reduced from 2,413.00 ha (text) and 1,836.45 ha (map) to the now proposed 1,166.93 ha. In several places, the boundaries of the core and the buffer zone are shifted and adapted to the forest stands.

The forest in the core zone of Vihorlat consists of various age classes and is classified as natural forest but partly influenced by forestry. Vihorlat is the only component where no forest stand has been classified as “primeval” or “influenced primeval” or “potential primeval”. As it became evident during a field trip, the component comprises small patches of important old-growth forest stands interspersed with stands of recent use and surrounded by lands used for mining long ago. The buffer zone is small and in some areas, its border is identical to the core zone boundary. The landownership in the core zone of the Vihorlat component and in the buffer zone is a mix of non-state private land, state land in the tenure of various agencies and private ownership. The forest is partly categorised as Protection Forest, partly as Special Purpose Forest with a few stands of Commercial Forest.

6. Kyjovsky prales (see table 2, map 8):

Kyjovsky prales is a newly proposed component for the World Heritage property and would contain a core zone of 393.49 ha and a buffer zone of 598.19 ha.

The Kyjovsky prales component consists of natural forests, according to the “connaturality mapping.” The buffer zone is about 500 m wide for most of its parts without any places where buffer and core zone boundaries would almost coincide. The core zone and the buffer zone are on state land in the tenure of the Military Forest and Estates, the buffer zone is partly also on private land. The core zone is partly Special Purpose, partly Protection forest, the buffer zone is mainly categorised as Special Purpose Forest with a small portion of Commercial Forest.
3. Assessment of the current boundary modification proposal

This assessment is based on field visits, stakeholder meetings, documentation held at the World Heritage Centre, all documents and maps provided to the mission team (a selection and extracts of these maps are presented in table 2 and in Annex 2) and on the above description and comparison. In accordance with the Terms of Reference (Annex I), it seeks to assess in how far the current proposal for the boundary modification could guarantee and enhance the protection of the OUV of the property, and to address the requests by the World Heritage Committee in its Decision 42.COM 7B.71 (see subheadings a-d below).

The mission recalls that the property has been inscribed on the World Heritage List under criterion (ix) (on-going ecological and biological processes). The property has been recognised as an “outstanding example of anthropogenically undisturbed complex temperate forests,” exhibiting “the most complete and comprehensive ecological patterns and processes of pure and mixed stands of European beech.” “Sufficient size to maintain natural processes necessary for the long-term ecological viability of the wider ecosystem, (...) degree of naturalness of a forest” and “the inherent functional capacity of the ecosystem” have been identified as central for the property’s integrity, with “a special emphasis (...) given to connectivity between beech forests and the surrounding complementary habitats as a perceived prerequisite for ecosystem functioning and adaptation to environmental change.”

These provisions clearly suggest a non-intervention regime as a requirement for the effective protection of the property.

a) **Request by the World Heritage Committee:** “The proposed boundary modification results in better protection of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property and the new delineation includes all important areas for the expression of this OUV”

The 2014 Reactive Monitoring mission noted that the currently inscribed Slovak components do not include all components that could contribute to the expression of the OUV. At the same time, the inscribed components encompass areas, which do not qualify as primeval forests. In line with the conclusions of the 2014 Reactive Monitoring mission, the State Party has conducted a study ("connaturality study") to determine the degree of naturalness of relevant forest stands. The results of this study are presented in table 2, maps 2, 4, 6 and 8 in the preceding section as well as in Annex II. However, it has been reported to the mission that the connaturality mapping has not been completely finished yet. Following review of the age classes of all forest stands beyond the areas examined by the connaturality study, it can be noted that there are numerous stands of high age that have not yet been subject to this study. Therefore, it could be considered to extend the scope of this study to examine further forest stands concerning their tree composition and spatial arrangement, especially in zones where a connection of core and buffer zones could be established, in order to enhance the ecological connectivity of the property, therefore supporting protection of the OUV.

For the Rozok component, it is proposed to significantly reduce the current buffer zone. It should be noted that eliminating the Northern portion of the current buffer zone from the Rozok component, would also exclude the Strict Nature Reserve Stinská and forest stands that have

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6 See provisional Statement of Outstanding Universal Value in Decision 41.COM 8B.7 of the World Heritage Committee (Note that following the properties extension in 2017, the World Heritage Committee is expected to consider the final Statement of Outstanding Universal Value at its upcoming 43rd session); see also Statement of Outstanding Universal Value in decisions 31.COM 8B.16 and 36.COM 8B.65, the latter stipulating that „a strict non-intervention management applies to all component parts of the serial property.”
been classified as natural forest with natural tree species composition, and with amended spatial arrangement (see table 2, maps 3 and 4).

This is to a lesser extent also the case for the Havesova component where the buffer zones are proposed to be significantly reduced, also excluding the Strict Nature Reserve Ulicska Ostra (see table 2, maps 1 and 2).

At the same time, the current proposal includes forest stands in the "southern appendix" of the Stuzica component that are classified as having, partly, a lower natural value than many of those stands proposed to be excluded from the current buffer zone of the Rozok component, according to the connaturality study. The mission considers that it would not be convincing to include forest stands of lower value into the newly proposed core zone, whilst stands of higher value are planned to be excluded from the current buffer zones. Instead, it would be more convincing to keep all stands of high natural value, which are already inscribed since 2007, and to limit the exclusion to stands of low value. This mismatch is also exemplified by the proposed exclusion of the approximately 10 km long forest strip currently part of the Stuzica component. The proposed subdivision of the Stuzica component into "3a Stuzica - Bukovské vrchy" and "3b Udava" would result in the exclusion of the Strict Nature Reserve Sipkova and natural forests with "natural tree species composition, but with amended spatial arrangement" and forest stands that have been classified as "potentially primeval forests" in the connaturality study. This strip could also be seen in connection with the adjoining forests on the Polish side of the border. The main argument to exclude this strip from the Stuzica component was the unwillingness of landowners to accept this area as part of the World Heritage core and buffer zones. At the same time, this strip partly functions as protective forest, mainly to protect soil from erosion. The imposed restrictions are limiting the economic use of this area notwithstanding the limited economic viability of these barely accessible stands.

For the Vihorlat component, it is appreciated that the current proposal foresees the inclusion of partly old-growth stands around Lake Morské Oko into the core zone of the property. The mission also welcomes that thanks to the support of Military Forests and Estates of the Slovak Republic, it was possible to agree on keeping the south-western strip of the current core and buffer zones, albeit slightly modified, in the current proposal. Therefore, some important stands of ancient forests that have not been subject to interventions for at least 40 years would remain part of the property. The mission also welcomes that the Military Forests and Estates of the Slovak Republic have stopped any interventions in this part of the property two and a half years ago. At the same time, the mission regrets that the core zone inscribed in 2007 has thus been subject to conventional forest management until recently.

In order to enhance the overall integrity of the property, possibilities to connect components through buffer zones and, where appropriate, through core zones should be explored further. For instance, it could be explored if the Vihorlat component could be connected to the newly

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7 Protective Forests are typically found on extraordinarily unfavourable sites, such as high altitude mountainous locations or the zone of dwarf pine designed to provide water and soil protection (Ambrušová L., et al., Atlas of the forest sector in Slovakia, Working papers of the Finnish Forest Research Institute 257).

According to § 13 of Act no. 326/2005 Coll. on Forests by the Slovak Republic, Protective Forests are

a) "Forests situated on extremely unfavourable habitats, such as scree, ravines, very steep slopes with parent rock, unconsolidated gravel deposits, peatlands, wetlands, flood-plain areas

b) Alpine forests situated under upper tree line which protect lower situated forests and land, forests situated on mountain slopes which are under strong unfavourable climatic influence and forests which protect the environment against the avalanches

c) Forests situated above the upper tree line with dominant representation of dwarf pine

d) Other forests with prevailing soil protection function"
The proposed component Kyjovský prales. The nearby Strict Nature Reserve Jovsianska hrabina should be noted in this respect as well as a high number of forest stands in age classes of 81 to 120 years, including stands of 121 years and more, located on state land under tenure of Military Forests and Estates of Slovak Republic Priesovce. Further potential connections could be explored between the proposed “southern appendix” of the Stuzica component and Rozok and Havesova.

**Recommendation:**

In order to
- better protect the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, and to
- include all important areas for the expression of this OUV in the new delineation,

it is recommended
1. not to exclude forest stands of high natural value that are part of the property and its buffer zones as inscribed in 2007 (as e.g. the strip connecting Stuzica and Udava and the current buffer zone of Rozok),
2. to ensure that the design of the core and buffer zones captures forest stands of high value in a consistent manner,
3. to explore possibilities to enhance connectivity between the components of the current version of the boundary modification proposal through buffer zones, and core zones where appropriate, in line with the methodology of the connaturality study, once it is completed, and the approach taken for the establishment of the “southern appendix.”

b) *Request by the World Heritage Committee:* All areas within the property are provided with an adequate legal protection regime

The Slovak Act on Nature and Landscape Protection⁸ specifies five levels of protection. The first level of protection encompasses the territory of the Slovak Republic unless specified otherwise. The extent of restrictions increases with the level of protection.

Without repeating the various restrictions listed in the act mentioned above, the fifth level of protection can be understood as a non-intervention area and shall in the mission’s view be applied to all core zones of the World Heritage components by means of Strict Nature Reserves and legally binding agreements with landowners. This is the case in most current core zones within the Poloniny National Park, but not in Vihorlat Protected Landscape Area, where the core zone is partly under the second level of protection. Formally, neither the currently inscribed zones, nor the proposed zones are fully covered by the 5th level of protection.

The current and the proposed buffer zones of the World Heritage components within the Poloniny National Park are mainly under the third level of protection with a few areas under the second level, whereas the buffer zone of the Vihorlat component (existing as well as proposed) is only protected under the second level. The buffer zone of the proposed extension Kyjovský prales is only under the first level. Management activities in the buffer zones should be restricted to a strictly limited number of interventions and must be defined in detail in the Integrated Management Plan, which was requested by the World Heritage Committee (Decisions 39 COM 7B.19 and 41 COM 7B.4).

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c) Request by the World Heritage Committee: “Consultations have been held with relevant stakeholders through a participatory process”

During the mission, it became apparent that significant efforts are taken by the Ministry of Environment and the State Nature Conservancy to consult on the planned boundary modification with relevant stakeholders through a participatory approach. An inter-sectoral dialogue has been established, involving nature conservation, forestry, landowners and civil society at the local levels. This was also implemented during the mission itself. While the negotiations were not in all cases successful, it should be noted that agreements could be reached with many state and non-state landowners, especially in case of the Vihorlat and Stuzica – Bukovske vrchy components. Recently introduced compensation mechanisms play a pivotal role in achieving agreements with private landowners.

In spite of the possibility of compensations, some private landowners remain averse to the inclusion of their land into World Heritage core and buffer zones. Past conflicts over land matters not related to World Heritage, still play a role in the discussions. While these reservations still arise, it was reported to the mission that the dialogue is now more constructive.

In the mission’s view, the State Party should be commended for the consultations between relevant institutions and stakeholders, and for its efforts in negotiations with landowners.

Recommendation:

In order to
- ensure that all areas within the property are provided with an adequate legal protection regime,
- enact the fifth level of protection to the whole future core zones of all components where it is not the case yet by means of Strict Nature Reserves and legally binding agreements with state and non-state landowners (e.g. Vihorlat component, Udava, “southern appendix”);
- protect all future buffer zones at least under the fourth level of protection, ensuring that no intensive forest management such as clear-cuts or “shelterwood cuts” are implemented within the buffer zones and all interventions are following the integrated management plan.

In order to
- include all important areas for the expression of the OUV in the new delineation,
- ensure that all areas within the property are provided with an adequate legal protection regime, and to
- hold consultations with relevant stakeholders,
- continue and resume negotiations to reach compensation agreements, and to establish provisions for the implementation of a non-intervention regime in key areas for the expression of the OUV of the property, where such agreements could not be reached yet.
d) **Request by the World Heritage Committee:** “Proposed buffer zones are adequate in size and are subject to a management regime, which ensures the protection of the property’s OUV”

The *Operational Guidelines* define buffer zones and their functionality. It should be noted that buffer zones are not part of the nominated property, but they can be essential for the proper protection of the property. Especially the protection of forest ecosystems in their natural state, requires protective zones that alleviate anthropogenic impacts from outside the boundaries of the buffer zones. In this respect, it should again be noted that the property is inscribed under criterion (ix) (ecological processes), as it “…exhibit[s] the most complete and comprehensive ecological patterns and processes of pure and mixed stands of European beech (…)”. Furthermore, the beech forests are “of sufficient size to maintain natural processes necessary for the long-term ecological viability of the wider ecosystem. Buffer zones including surrounding protected areas (nature parks, biosphere reserves) are managed sympathetically to ensure the long-term conservation of the particular character of the designated beech forests together with its inherent attributes.”

In the specific case of the Slovak components with intensive logging (so-called “shelterwood cutting”) occurring in the buffer zones and in small parts even within core zones, the designation of buffer zones of adequate size and with clear restrictions is essential. Any management within the buffer zone has to be carefully defined and limited in the Integrated Management Plan. The same principles shall apply to all components of the World Heritage property.

The buffer zones of the four components as inscribed in 2007 are large, but to some extent curious in their shape and allocation. Although the scientific methods of defining the current buffer zones are not fully comprehensible, it is obvious that these buffer zones include those old-growth stands of small size, which were probably evaluated as too small to be set out as components (see table 2, maps 2, 4, 6 and 8 and Annex II).

The buffer zones in the current version of the boundary modification proposal have been defined according to the forest stands adjoining the core zones, which are mainly defined by age classes and landownership. In principle, each stand bordering the core zone has been selected as a buffer zone. There are a few exceptions for forest stands where no agreement with the respective state or non-state landowners could be reached. The varying shape of the forest stands included into the buffer zone results in buffer zones of significantly differing widths, ranging from approximately 100 metres to buffer zone boundaries touching the boundaries of the core zones.

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9 UNESCO, Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention, WHC.17/01 12 July 2017, Para. 103-106
11 Provisional Statement of Outstanding Universal Value, according to Decision 41 COM 8B.7 of the World Heritage Committee
12 idem
13 See footnote 2 on page 5
During the mission, discussions were held on which size of buffer zone would be appropriate, which level of protection should be imposed and to what extent forest management can be allowed. Neither a uniform 100 or 150 meters width, nor a simple one-stand wide buffer zone can guarantee the integrity of the core zone. Instead, the width of the buffer zone has to be assessed with reference to factors ranging from the morphology, tree composition, the exposure or its potential to naturally evolve into an old-growth forest, and other criteria, to determine how they can function as protective zones for the core zones. This should also take into account ongoing discussions within the network of the transnational World Heritage property and guidance currently being elaborated by E.C.O.

**Recommendation:**

In order to ensure that
- buffer zones are adequate in size and are subject to a management regime, which ensures the protection of the property's OUV,

it is recommended to

7. broaden the factors taken into account for the buffer zone design to determine their protective function for the core zones in consultation with experts involved in the discussions regarding principles and approaches to the design of buffer zones within the entire transnational property;

8. restrict interventions in buffer zones to a minimum, enabling undisturbed evolution of/towards old-growth forest by means of a close-to-nature management to be defined in the future Integrated Management Plan in line with recommendation 5.

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4. Assessment of key issues

According to the terms of reference, the mission should provide advice on the current version of the proposal for the requested significant boundary modification and in particular on the following six key issues a) to f):

- **a) Integrity and ecological connectivity of the Slovak components of the property and their state of conservation:**

Regarding the existing and currently valid core and buffer zones of the Slovak components of the World Heritage property, the mission notes with serious concern intensive\(^\text{14}\) logging and forest management that has been conducted in recent years. The mission confirms that intensive cuts have taken place especially in the current buffer zone of the component Stuzica – Bukovske vrchy. To a small extent, such cuts have also been carried out within the current core zone along the border with Poland connecting the primeval forest of the Strict Nature Reserve Stuzica with primeval and partly primeval forest stands of the Strict Nature Reserve Jaraba Skala (see Annex II).

Satellite images submitted by third parties to the World Heritage Centre (see Annex III) confirm the observations by the mission and show significant logging in the Eastern part of the current buffer zone of the Stuzica – Bukovske vrchy component and in small parts also within the component’s core zone. These “shelterwood cuts”, according to Slovak forestry terminology, or “clearcuts”, according to Slovak NGO terminology, are reported to have been conducted in conformity with the respective laws and quotas of the relevant forest management plans, which apply to areas inside the core and buffer zones of the World Heritage property as inscribed in

\(^{14}\) See footnote 2 on page 5
2007 and which do not take into account the protection of the World Heritage property from logging. The experts also noted that until 2016 no management plan was elaborated and approved for the whole National Park Poloniny including the World Heritage components (see also section b below). The affected stands are subject to the 3rd degree of protection of act no. 543/2002 Coll. on Nature and Landscape Protection, which does not prohibit intensive15 forest management.

The logging has reportedly taken place shortly before these stands would have been overaged and without interest for economic use. A map showing the age of forest stands of Poloniny National Park in the mid-nineties supports this and indicates that mainly areas, where forest stands having reached 100 to 120 years by the time they have been logged, have been affected. This is also underpinned by an age class map (see Annex II) where the logged areas are indicated as 1st age-class (1-21 years, 81-100 years in mid-nineties) while stands of at least 101 years (81-100 years in mid-nineties) are still remaining in areas that have not been affected by logging yet.

The mission recalls Decision 39 COM 7B.19 of the World Heritage Committee stating that “no logging operations are to take place within the property’s boundaries until this issue is resolved through the development (…) of an integrated management framework for the Slovak components of the property, focused on nature conservation (…).” In conclusion, the mission notes with regret that especially old stands have been lost through logging, i.e. stands that would have had the potential to evolve into old-growth forests in the long-term. While these interventions have been stopped for the time being, the mission considers that these interventions have already seriously undermined the integrity and ecological connectivity of the Stuzica component. Considering that the affected core zone is very narrow, the affected buffer zones should have played an important protective and connecting function of the Stuzica – Bukovské vrchy component. In spite of the significant impacts, it remains in the mission’s view crucial that so far unaffected stands of high conservation value will be protected from logging in future and that the areas in proximity of the Strict Nature Reserves Jaraba Skala and Borsukov vrch in the valley of Zbojsky potok will in future serve as an actual buffer zone and connecting corridor. This is especially important in light of the planned inclusion of the Strict Nature Reserve Borsuciny ("Southern Appendix") into the Stuzica Bukovské vrchy component. In the mission’s view, the buffer zone as recognised in 2007 should remain valid in the valley of Zbojsky potok, upstream of the settlement Nova Sedlica. Accordingly, the mission considers it important to keep, in principle, the parts affected by logging (see Annex III) and to apply a close-to-nature management regime in those remaining stands that have the potential to evolve into old-growth stands and to allow natural regeneration in those stands that have been affected by logging.

15 See footnote 2 on page 5
Regarding the current proposal for the boundary modification of the Slovak components, the mission welcomes the designation of new Strict Nature Reserves, such as Kyjovsky Prales, and the efforts to include further ancient and primeval forests through the Strict Nature Reserve Borsuciny into the Stuzica-Bukovske vrchy component. It should be noted though that these areas will need a detailed assessment during an eventual IUCN evaluation of the future significant boundary modification proposal. At the same time, the mission regrets the proposed exclusion of the currently inscribed strip along the Polish border between the Strict Nature Reserves Udava and Plasa, which would remove from World Heritage protection mostly natural forests and potential primeval forests, including those that are protected by the Strict Nature Reserve Sipkova. In the view of the mission, this split of the component Stuzica-Bukovske vrchy into two parts seems unacceptable as it would further undermine the integrity of this component.

The exclusion of parts of the Stuzica-Bukovske vrchy component, which would not even be designated as buffer zone, can only be argued with the non-willingness of private landowners to keep their land included within the World Heritage component. Nevertheless, as laid out above, these forests are classified partly as protective forests, which underlies certain restrictions. The exclusion would also weaken any attempt to extend the World Heritage property on Polish territory and interrupt the connectivity between ancient and primeval forests. Furthermore, the proposed extension southwards with the new “appendix” cannot substitute the loss, especially of the Strict Nature Reserve Sipkova, which is classified under the 5th level of protection. Concerning the extension southwards (“appendix”) the mission welcomes any attempt to enlarge the component and to include all potential primeval, respective old-growth stands, although the core zone includes stands that have not been assessed by the connaturality study or recorded as valuable natural forests. The slight modification of the core zone boundaries, mainly enlarging the core zone of the Stuzica and Udava units (except the excluded strip) is welcome as the modification incorporates valuable stands into the core zone.

**Recommendation:**

In order to
- better protect the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, and to
- ensure buffer zones are adequate in size and are subject to a management regime, which ensures the protection of the property’s OUV,
it is recommended

9. not to exclude the parts of the current buffer zones that have been affected by logging and to apply a close-to-nature management regime in those stands that have the potential to evolve into old-growth stands and to allow natural regeneration in those stands that have been affected by logging;

With a view to the reporting on the property’s state of conservation, it is recommended that the State Party

10. provides a clear and transparent documentation as supplementary information for the upcoming joint state of conservation report on
   a) all logging activities that have been conducted since 2007 within the currently inscribed core and buffer zones specifying the affected areas, age and volumes of the logged stands and further management activities such as natural regeneration or reforestation;
   b) all areas of the currently inscribed core and buffer zones that could be subject to “shelterwood cutting” or any other form of intensive forest management, according to the quotas of the currently valid forest management plans, and on
   c) any safeguards in place for the current core and buffer zones that prevent any impacts from logging until the boundary modification is in place.

Regarding the current proposal for the boundary modification of the Slovak components, the mission welcomes the designation of new Strict Nature Reserves, such as Kyjovsky Prales, and the efforts to include further ancient and primeval forests through the Strict Nature Reserve Borsuciny into the Stuzica - Bukovske vrchy component. It should be noted though that these areas will need a detailed assessment during an eventual IUCN evaluation of the future significant boundary modification proposal. At the same time, the mission regrets the proposed exclusion of the currently inscribed strip along the Polish border between the Strict Nature Reserves Udava and Plasa, which would remove from World Heritage protection mostly natural forests and potential primeval forests, including those that are protected by the Strict Nature Reserve Sipkova. In the view of the mission, this split of the component Stuzica - Bukovske vrchy into two parts seems unacceptable as it would further undermine the integrity of this component.

The exclusion of parts of the Stuzica-Bukovske vrchy component, which would not even be designated as buffer zone, can only be argued with the non-willingness of private landowners to keep their land included within the World Heritage component. Nevertheless, as laid out above, these forests are classified partly as protective forests, which underlies certain restrictions. The exclusion would also weaken any attempt to extend the World Heritage property on Polish territory and interrupt the connectivity between ancient and primeval forests. Furthermore, the proposed extension southwards with the new “appendix” cannot substitute the loss, especially of the Strict Nature Reserve Sipkova, which is classified under the 5th level of protection. Concerning the extension southwards (“appendix”) the mission welcomes any attempt to enlarge the component and to include all potential primeval, respective old-growth stands, although the core zone includes stands that have not been assessed by the connaturality study or recorded as valuable natural forests. The slight modification of the core zone boundaries, mainly enlarging the core zone of the Stuzica and Udava units (except the excluded strip) is welcome as the modification incorporates valuable stands into the core zone.
Concerning the buffer zones of the Stuzica-Bukovske vrchy component a significant reduction is obvious. As laid out in chapter 3, buffer zones have a protective function and their size depends on various criteria. Therefore, it is not convincing that the borders of the buffer zones are in several places touching the border of the core zone leaving the core zone without protective buffer. Especially the buffer zone of the “southern appendix” needs to be re-evaluated and will likely need to be enlarged.

The core zones of the Rozok as well as of the Havesova components are just slightly modified to adjust the boundaries to those of the forest stands, whereas the buffer zones are proposed to be significantly reduced. This is especially remarkable for the Rozok component, where the current buffer zone stretches towards the northeast includes forest, which is assessed by the Forestry Institute as “natural forest with natural tree species composition”, but which would not be part of the proposed buffer zone anymore. Both components were not visited by the mission.

Concerning the Rozok and the Havesova component, the mission recommends adopting the slight modifications of the boundaries of the core zone which adjust the core zone boundaries to the forest stands and can be easier identified on the ground. Concerning the buffer zones, the mission recommends a reconsideration of the boundaries so as to ensure sufficient size for the buffers to fulfil their protective function. For the Rozok component, the mission strongly recommends keeping the natural forest stands northeast of the current core zone within the buffer zone.

The core zone of the Vihorlat component is slightly shifted, adjusting the boundaries to the natural stands and including most of the surrounding area of lake Morské Oko. In the west and in the south of the component, stands classified as natural forests are neither incorporated in the core nor in the buffer zone. The new component Kyjovsky prales is located southwest of Vihorlat, the distance between both sites is about 6 km in the beeline. The mission welcomes the designation of a new component Kyjovsky prales and suggests minor adaptations of the boundaries of the Vihorlat component so as to include stands classified as natural stands.

**Recommendation:**

In order to
- better protect the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property,
- include all important areas for the expression of the OUV in the new delineation, and to
- ensure buffer zones are adequate in size and are subject to a management regime, which ensures the protection of the property’s OUV,

it is recommended to

11. review the reduced size of the currently proposed buffer zones and the elimination of significant parts of the Stuzica – Bukovske vrchy component, especially the Strict Nature Reserve Sipkova and to keep the border strip to ensure the connectivity and the integrity of the component. The protection of the border strip should be supported by an update of the forest management plan on the occasion of its expiry in 2019;

12. pursue the slight modifications of the boundaries of the core zones of the Rozok and the Havesova components, but to reconsider the proposed boundaries of their buffer zones so as to ensure sufficient size for the buffers to fulfil their protective function. For the Rozok component, the mission strongly recommends keeping the natural forest stands northeast of the current core zone within the buffer zone.

13. adapt the proposed boundaries of the Vihorlat component so as to include stands classified as natural stands at least in the buffer zone.
b) the elaboration of a comprehensive integrated management plan for achieving an effective protection of the OUV;

It is a peculiarity of the protected area system in Slovakia that management plans exist for protected areas as well as for forests, but are not necessarily harmonised. This can result in discrepancies and conflicts as it was exemplified by the above mentioned “shelterwood cuts” in World Heritage core zones. The non-existence of management documents for the National Park Poloniny until 2016 is not only related to the World Heritage components. The majority of the current core and buffer zones is situated within the boundaries of the National Park Poloniny, which was awarded the European Diploma of the Council of Europe. While a management plan for the whole Poloniny area was stipulated by the Council of Europe since 1998, the management plan for the National Park was only approved in 2016.

At the same time, forest management plans exist for all forested areas in the Protected Landscape Area Vihorlat and the National Park Poloniny, including the World Heritage components. As already laid out, forest management so far did not consider the strict protection of the World Heritage sites and the National Park Poloniny in its entirety, superordinating forestry over nature protection.

The recent management plan for the area of the National Park Poloniny was evaluated by order of the Council of Europe in 2017. Concerning the World Heritage components, an enlargement by 405 ha was mentioned in the management plan. The expert appraisal for the Council of Europe concluded that the management plan, although fulfilling the provisions of the Slovak legislation, does not meet international standards for management plans for protected areas and cannot secure the integrity of the protected areas. In particular, the experts missed a clear vision on the further development of the area, strategies on how to preserve the values in the long-term and a timeline for the implementation of the management.

In line with Decision 41 COM 7B.4 of the World Heritage Committee and the requirement for a management plan, it is therefore highly recommended to elaborate an Integrated Management Plan for the Slovak components, aiming to preserve the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage components. The surrounding protected areas, especially the World Heritage buffer zones with the forest management subordinated under the protective management would also be an important element of the Plan. The ongoing discussion on zoning and management guidelines for the entire transnational World Heritage property “Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe” shall be taken into account as well. Another element should be the development and management of sustainable tourism, in line with the workshops held with the World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Programme in 2017. A draft of the Integrated Management Plan shall be submitted to the World Heritage Centre and IUCN for review and comments well before approval.

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18 Poloniny National Park Management Plan (see Footnote 12), Appendix, Operational Goal/Measure Number F.1.1 und F.1.2.
20 Coordination office E.C.O. Institute of Ecology, UNESCO World Natural Heritage “Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and other Regions of Europe”, Zoning and Management Guidelines, Version September 2018; see also Decision 41 COM 8B.7
c) Enhancing of the legal protection status of the property:

First of all, the mission welcomes the establishment of new Strict Nature Reserves in recent years. The protection category of Strict Nature Reserves stipulates the 5th degree of protection, the highest in Slovakia, ensuring a non-intervention regime, which is essential in the core zones of the components. Since by far not all areas proposed to be part of the World Heritage components are currently protected as Strict Nature Reserves, it is recommendable to continue the process of establishing further Strict Nature Reserves, especially in order to fill existing gaps and to enhance the connectivity between those reserves. Legally binding agreements with state and non-state landowners that stipulate the 5th degree of protection in areas that are not designated as Strict Nature Reserve can serve as an intermediate solution to ensure adequate protection (see also chapter 3).

Besides these provisions for nature conservation, it is in the mission’s view imperative to harmonise all forest management plans overlapping with the components of the World Heritage property with the non-intervention regime of the World Heritage core zones and a close-to-nature regime in the buffer zones. The past has shown that inconsistencies between valid Forest Management Plans and the objectives of the conservation of the World Heritage components can lead to logging inside the core and buffer zones. Given the 10-year validity of the Forest Management Plans, it is recommended to update them accordingly when they expire and to implement intermediate provisions for current plans where their implementation could lead to intensive management inside World Heritage buffer and core zones.

Recommendation:

In order to
- implement Decision 41 COM 7B.4 of the World Heritage Committee
- better protect the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, and to
- ensure buffer zones are adequate in size and are subject to a management regime, which ensures the protection of the property’s OUV,

it is recommended to
14. ensure that the Integrated Management Plan for the Slovak components takes into account the
- surrounding protected areas, especially the World Heritage buffer zones with the forest management subordinated under the protective management,
- ongoing discussion on zoning and management guidelines for the entire transnational World Heritage property
- development and management of sustainable tourism, in line with the workshops held with the World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Programme in 2017,

and to submit the draft plan to the World Heritage Centre and IUCN for review.

Recommendation:

In order to
- ensure that all areas within the property are provided with an adequate legal protection regime,

it is recommended to
15. update and harmonise the Forest Management Plans, as soon as they expire, with the non-intervention management regime foreseen in the modified World Heritage components and to implement intermediate provisions for currently valid plans where their implementation could lead to intensive management inside current and/or potential future modified World Heritage buffer and core zones.
d) Improving Buffer zone management and design, with the objective to ensure the effective protection of the OUV of the property, including through supporting undisturbed natural processes with special emphasis on dead and decaying wood, applying close-to-nature forestry practices and ongoing monitoring of threats and risks, including developing sustainable tourism activities that have been discussed with the Slovak authorities and local stakeholders during previous missions;

A buffer zone is an area surrounding the inscribed property, which has complementary legal and/or customary restrictions placed on its use to give an added layer of protection to the property. Although buffer zones are not formally part of the inscribed World Heritage components, they play a crucial role in preventing negative impacts on the core zone.

The functions of buffer zones can be described as instrument to

1. “(...) maximise the protection of the values of the protected area, including the OUV of the World Heritage property and their resilience to change,
2. maximise the connectivity of the World Heritage property/protected area with other natural lands in a landscape (...) and to maximise landscape connectivity, habitat connectivity (...),
3. integrate the World Heritage property/protected area within landscape scale conservation with community initiatives for sustainable use practises (...)

Both the current and the proposed buffer zones are located within the protected areas of the National Park Poloniny and Protected Landscape Area Vihorlat (with only a few exceptions of the current buffer zones and the proposed component Kyjovsky prales). Therefore, the protection of the components could be guaranteed in principle, providing that the management plan for the protected areas considers the protective function of the buffer zones preventing any intensive forest management such as "shelterwood cuts." As experience has shown with the intensive cuts detailed in chapter 3, the protection level of National Parks (3rd degree of protection) and Protected Landscape Areas (2nd degree of protection) does not suffice to ensure an effective protection of World Heritage core and buffer zones.

Furthermore, the buffer zones could improve the connectivity and support undisturbed natural processes if they remain of sufficient size. To ensure the protective function, a harmonisation of the forest management plan with the Integrated Management Plan for the protected area is crucial.

Management in the buffer zones has to be restricted to those interventions, which have positive impacts on the OUV of the components and has to be determined in the Integrated Management Plan. In line with Committee Decision 41 COM 8B.7, such interventions should support undisturbed natural processes, and the increase of dead and decaying wood, including ongoing monitoring of threats and risks. All interventions should be defined on the basis of broad monitoring and scientific research including for game management. As mentioned before, it is also crucial that forest management is subordinated to the protection objectives of the buffer zone. In a similar fashion, the use of the buffer zones for tourism should focus on low-impact activities such as hiking or bird watching. Forestry management practices that would avoid intensive management and clear cutting would also reduce negative effects for visitors.

23 See footnote 2 on page 5
Recognition of the World Heritage status of the property in the national strategies and plans of Slovakia, strengthening cooperation between different governmental authorities (such as Ministries and Agencies) relevant for the management of the property and in dialogue with relevant stakeholders

As for the institutional level, it should be highlighted that inter-institutional and inter-ministerial coordination has been considerably strengthened. The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development plays an important role besides the Ministry of Environment as the lead institution for the development of a boundary modification proposal. An interdepartmental coordination group between the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, which is based on a cooperation and collaboration agreement signed between both ministries, also included negotiations with other ministries regarding coordinated approaches to the planned boundary modification of the Slovak components as well as to the management of the property. This is in line with the requests by the World Heritage Committee in its decision 38 COM 7B.75 and can also serve as a platform for the development of the Integrated Management Plan.

In the mission’s view, the State Party’s efforts to strengthen coordination and consultations between relevant institutions and stakeholders should be welcomed.

In terms of the recognition of the World Heritage status in national strategies and plans, the touristic potential of the region could be explored further. The outcomes of the 2017 conference “Benefits Beyond Inscription: Leveraging the UNESCO brand for Sustainable Tourism Development in the Central European Regions” and the already established cooperation with the World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Programme can serve as a basis for developing the tourism vision for the wider region, leveraging World Heritage status for regional branding. Following the meetings during the mission, the mission experts believe that civil society organisations could also contribute in conceiving sustainable forms of tourism, such as hiking or bird watching in the buffer zones.

In the mission’s view, this will require going well beyond the Beech Forest components using a regional and destination management approach that scrutinises the appeal to visitors of the branded landscape, which is currently shaped by commercial forestry. Improved services and tourism infrastructure could be included in compensations for enhanced protection. Experience-sharing with the network of all other components of the Beech Forest World Heritage site could be informative in this process, which can also be streamlined with the development of the Integrated Management Plan.

Recommendation:

In order to
- ensure buffer zones are subject to a management regime, which ensures the protection of the property’s OUV,

it is recommended to
16. base interventions and tourism in buffer zones on broad monitoring and scientific research and to restrict interventions to those favourable for continuation and development of natural processes, such as the increase of dead and decaying wood and game management. This should be determined in the Integrated Management Plan.
f) potential negative impacts of other projects and activities on the OUV of the property, including the condition of integrity, protection and management of the site

Major impacts on the OUV can be caused by forest management. As laid out, logging took place in the core zone and in the buffer zone, including in the recent past. These interventions are contradictory to the designation as a World Heritage site and must not be taken up again in the currently inscribed and potential future components of the World Heritage property to avoid any loss or serious damage to valuable habitats.

So far, buffer zones are often categorised as commercial forests with some exceptions in the Vihorlat and the Kyjovsky prales components. Such designation would allow logging according to the forest management plan. Forest management is often connected with the construction of forest roads or other means of hauling timber such as ropeways. As buffer zones should be managed only to ensure the protection of the core zone, interventions should be limited to those measures, which are necessary for the protection of the core zone.

No plan for the construction of any forest or other infrastructure was reported during the mission, which would have negative or significant impact on the World Heritage property. According to the Slovak representatives at the mission, no project is being developed and none was implemented in the last years beside the maintenance of existing tourist infrastructure.

Concerning the newly proposed component Kyjovsky prales and the part of the Vihorlat component that intersects with the military district, special attention should be paid to any potential impacts from military exercises outside but in proximity of the property. The mission was informed of approved plans to construct a second training ground for exercises with heavy military equipment. Depending on the respective shooting ranges of both zones, it could be recommendable to conduct an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to assess any potential impact on the Vihorlat component and Kyjovsky prales should it be included in the boundary modification.

Recommendation:

It is recommended to

17. use a regional and destination management approach for the development of sustainable tourism, streamlined through the development of the Integrated Management Plan.

Recommendation:

It is recommended to

18. Assess and, in line with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, inform of any potential environmental impacts from current and future military exercises in proximity of the property and avoid any construction of new infrastructures inside the core zones or with potential impacts on them.
5. List of recommendations

The following list assembles all recommendations made in chapters 3 and 4, which are:

1. not to exclude forest stands of high natural value that are part of the property and its buffer zones as inscribed in 2007 (as e.g. the strip connecting Stuzica and Udava and the current buffer zone of Rozok);
2. to ensure that the design of the core and buffer zones captures forest stands of high value in a consistent manner;
3. to explore possibilities to enhance connectivity between the components of the current version of the boundary modification proposal through buffer zones, and core zones where appropriate, in line with the methodology of the connaturality study, once it is completed, and the approach taken for the establishment of the “southern appendix”;
4. enact the fifth level of protection to the whole future core zones of all components where it is not the case yet by means of Strict Nature Reserves and legally binding agreements with state and non-state landowners (e.g. Vihorlat component, Udava, “southern appendix”);
5. protect all future buffer zones at least under the fourth level of protection, ensuring that no intensive\(^{24}\) forest management such as clear-cuts or “shelterwood cuts” are implemented within the buffer zones and all interventions are following the integrated management plan;
6. continue and resume negotiations to reach compensation agreements, and to establish provisions for the implementation of a non-intervention regime in key areas for the expression of the OUV of the property, where such agreements could not be reached yet;
7. broaden the factors taken into account for the buffer zone design to determine their protective function for the core zones in consultation with experts involved in the discussions regarding principles and approaches to the design of buffer zones within the entire transnational property;
8. restrict interventions in buffer zones to a minimum, enabling undisturbed evolution of towards old-growth forest by means of a close-to-nature management to be defined in the future Integrated Management Plan in line with recommendation 5;
9. not to exclude the parts of the current buffer zones that have been affected by logging and to apply a close-to-nature management regime in those stands that have the potential to evolve into old-growth stands and to allow natural regeneration in those stands that have been affected by logging;
10. provide a clear and transparent documentation as supplementary information for the upcoming joint state of conservation report on

\(^{24}\) This report uses the term „intensive forest management” to describe impactful forest management practices from the perspective of nature conservation. For instance, clear-cuts and “shelterwood cuts” would be a case of intensive forest management. It should be noted however that in Slovak forestry terminology more intensive management systems are understood to entail closer-to-nature management practices, whereas more impactful forest management practices are denoted as “extensive forest management.” Therefore, the term “intensive forest management” as used in this report should be translated as “extensive forest management” into the Slovak language.
b) all areas of the currently inscribed core and buffer zones that could be subject to “shelterwood cutting” or any other form of intensive\textsuperscript{25} forest management, according to the quotas of the currently valid forest management plans, and on

11. review the reduced size of the currently proposed buffer zones and the elimination of significant parts of the Stuzica – Bukovské vrchy component, especially the Strict Nature Reserve Sipkova and keep the border strip to ensure the connectivity and the integrity of the component. The protection of the border strip should be supported by an update of the forest management plan on the occasion of its expiry in 2019;

12. pursue the slight modifications of the boundaries of the core zones of the Rozok and the Havesova components, but reconsider the proposed boundaries of their buffer zones so as to ensure sufficient size for the buffers to fulfill their protective function. For the Rozok component, the mission strongly recommends keeping the natural forest stands northeast of the current core zone within the buffer zone;

13. adapt the proposed boundaries of the Vihorlat component so as to include stands classified as natural stands at least in the buffer zone;

14. ensure that the Integrated Management Plan for the Slovak components takes into account the

a. surrounding protected areas, especially the World Heritage buffer zones with the forest management subordinated under the protective management,

b. ongoing discussion on zoning and management guidelines for the entire transnational World Heritage property,

c. development and management of sustainable tourism, in line with the workshops held with the World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Programme in 2017,

and to submit the draft plan to the World Heritage Centre and IUCN for review;

15. update and harmonise the Forest Management Plans, as soon as they expire, with the non-intervention management regime foreseen in the modified World Heritage components and to implement intermediate provisions for currently valid plans where their implementation could lead to intensive\textsuperscript{26} management inside current and/or potential future modified World Heritage buffer and core zones;

16. base interventions and tourism in buffer zones on broad monitoring and scientific research and to restrict interventions to those favourable for continuation and development of natural processes, such as the increase of dead and decaying wood and game management. This should be determined in the Integrated Management Plan;

17. use a regional and destination management approach for the development of sustainable tourism, streamlined through the development of the Integrated Management Plan;

18. Assess and, in line with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, inform of any potential environmental impacts from current and future military exercises in proximity of the property and avoid any construction of new infrastructures inside the core zones or with potential impacts on them.

\textsuperscript{25} See footnote 24 on page 28
\textsuperscript{26} See footnote 24 on page 28
ANNEX I: Terms of Reference

TERMS OF REFERENCE

World Heritage Centre/IUCN Advisory mission to the Slovak components of the World Heritage property “Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe”

Slovakia, 16 – 19 October 2018

Background:

The World Heritage property “Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe” is a serial property comprising 78 components in over 12 countries. This property of European Beech Forests is indispensable to understand the history and evolution of the genus *Fagus*, which, given its wide distribution in the Northern Hemisphere and its ecological importance, is globally significant. These undisturbed, complex temperate forests exhibit the most complete and comprehensive ecological patterns and processes of pure and mixed stands of European beech across a variety of environmental conditions, such as climatic and geological conditions, throughout all relevant European Beech Forest Regions. In 2011, the Slovak-Ukrainian property – inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2007 under criterion (ix) (Decision 31 COM 8B.16 of the World Heritage Committee) – was extended by adding further components in Germany (Decision 35 COM 8B.13), and in 2017 further 63 component parts in ten countries were added through a second extension (including new components in Ukraine) (Decision 41 COM 7B.4).

In 2011, discrepancies between the reported size and maps of the Slovak components were identified, especially between the maps and the nomination text. In addition, serious difficulties in implementing the recommendations of the World Heritage Committee were mentioned at different levels, showing a very complex situation resulting from shortcomings of the nomination dossier. The World Heritage Committee in several decisions noted that “the current delineation of the Slovak components of the property does not provide for adequate protection of the property’s Outstanding Universal Value” (Decision 39 COM 7B.19). A Reactive Monitoring mission took place in 2014; since then, limited progress has been achieved to address the issue of boundary delineation besides discussions at domestic levels. An update on potential modifications of the boundaries of the Slovak components of the property was presented at a consultation meeting in Paris in December 2017, to get advice and to discuss the requirements for a boundary modification with the World Heritage Centre and IUCN. The overall situation is also described in document WHC/18/42.COM/7B (pp. 141-144).

At its 42nd session (Manama, 2018), the World Heritage Committee expressed its utmost concern about “the continued absence of adequate legal protection for part of the property and the continued reports of logging within the buffer zone and within the property” (Decision 42 COM 7B.71). The World Heritage Committee noted continued efforts of the State Party of Slovakia to elaborate a proposal for boundary modifications for the Slovak components of the property, and considered that given its potential impact on the OUV of the property, the boundary modification should be submitted as a significant modification in line with paragraph 165 of the *Operational Guidelines.*

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27 Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Austria, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Italy and Ukraine.

28 The original nomination file was lacking general background on forestry, contact to the field and the wider region and a full understanding of the requirements and commitments resulting from an inscription on the World Heritage List.

The World Heritage Committee further requested the State Party of Slovakia “to finalize the proposal as a matter of priority, in consultation with the other States Parties of this transnational property, ensuring that:

a) the proposed boundary modification results in better protection of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property and the new delineation includes all important areas for the expression of this OUV,

b) all areas within the property are provided with an adequate legal protection regime,

c) consultations have been held with relevant stakeholders through a participatory process,

d) proposed buffer zones are adequate in size and are subject to a management regime which ensures the protection of the property’s OUV.”

The mission is attentive to the fact that the statement of the Outstanding Universal Value is provisional at the time of the mission.

**Stakeholders and participants of the mission:**

- World Heritage Centre (WHC)
- International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- Slovak Authorities:
  - Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic
  - State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic
  - Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic
  - Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic
  - Ministry of Defense of the Slovak Republic
  - Forests of the Slovak Republic (state-owned enterprise)
  - Agroforestry Estate Ulic (state-owned enterprise)
  - Military Forests and Estates of the Slovak Republic (state-owned enterprise)
- Non-governmental organizations (tbc):
  - World Wildlife Fund Slovakia
  - Aveis Foundation

**Challenges:**

- The component parts do not entirely fall under the 5th level of protection of Slovakia. It is unclear in how far effective protection could be based on contractual agreements with landowners.
- Agreements with landowners are still to be negotiated. Sustainable tourism development may be an important aspect of these negotiations.
- There is a need to clarify and to better specify the description and requirements for the management of the buffer zone.

**Objectives:**

1. In accordance with Decision **42 COM 7B.71**, the primary objective of the mission is to provide advice on the current proposal for boundary modification of the Slovak components of the UNESCO World Heritage property and their buffer zones. The aim of the mission is to provide advice on whether and how the proposed boundary modification could guarantee and enhance the protection of the OUV of the property and address other requests expressed by the World Heritage Committee (points a-d above).

The mission will include consultations with local state and non-state stakeholders, including local communities and landowners, and representatives from other State Parties of the property, with a focus on the planned boundary modification of the components’ boundaries.

2. The mission should provide advice on the current proposal, which is being developed by
the State Party of Slovakia for the proposed significant boundary modification and in particular on the following key issues:

a) Integrity and ecological connectivity of the Slovak component sites of the property and their state of conservation;

b) the elaboration of a comprehensive integrated management plan for achieving an effective protection of the OUV;

c) Enhancing of the legal protection status of the property;

d) Improving Buffer zone management and design, with the objective to ensure the effective protection of the OUV of the property, including through supporting undisturbed natural processes with special emphasis on dead and decaying wood, applying close-to-nature forestry practices and ongoing monitoring of threats and risks, including developing sustainable tourism activities that have been discussed with the Slovak authorities and local stakeholders during previous missions;

e) Recognition of the World Heritage status of the property in the national strategies and plans of Slovakia, strengthening cooperation between different governmental authorities (such as Ministries and Agencies) relevant for the management of the property and in dialogue with relevant stakeholders;

f) potential negative impacts of other projects and activities on the OUV of the property, including the condition of authenticity, integrity, protection and management of the site.

Related Issues:
1. During the mission, the experts shall conduct field visits to the Slovak component parts of the “Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe”, in order to make the assessments necessary to the objectives of the mission. The field visits shall include detailed visits to the different parts of Slovak components and buffer zone, including any sites where logging has taken place, all in order to assess proposed boundary modification and its primary objective to enhance the protection of the OUV.


2. The experts shall have the opportunity, through stakeholder meetings, to exchange views and receive information from a wide range of different stakeholders, including representatives of state institutions and state enterprises, regional and local authorities, private landowners, environmental NGOs, researchers and local communities.

Supporting documents and Reporting

In preparation for the Advisory mission, the State Party shall provide the World Heritage Centre and IUCN, prior to the mission, with all necessary background technical material and relevant information to consider the present conservation status of the property, in line with requirements specified by experts. These documents shall be provided in one of the working languages of the Convention (English). In case of substantial documents, at least summaries shall be provided in one of these languages.

On the basis of site visits and meetings with representatives of the State Party, the Advisory mission shall prepare for the State Party a concise report including analysis of the abovementioned points and recommendations of the World Heritage Committee. The experts shall deliver this report six weeks after the conclusion of the advisory mission.
ANNEX II: Maps

Maps reviewed by the mission (all maps included in this annex in **bold**)

1. **Version of delimitation consisting from six component parts from the 5th of October 2018. Comparing with delimitation by nomination project**
2. **Mapping of forest stands connaturality. Version of delimitation consisting from six components parts from the 5th of October 2018**
3. Forms of tenure of forest stands. Version of delimitation consisting from six components part from the 5th of October 2018
4. Physico-geographical map. Version of delimitation consisting from the 28th of September 2018
5. Physico-geographical map. Version of delimitation consisting from six components part from the 5th of October 2018
6. **Categories of forest. Version of delimitation consisting from six components part from the 5th of October 2018**
7. Delimitation on the base of proposals presented at meeting on the 29th of November 2017. *(Age structure of forest stands)*
8. **Age forest stands in mid 90’ – Poloniny NP**
10. Forms of tenure of forest stands. Multipart version of delimitation from the 28th September 2018 without non-state-land owners associations Ruske, Smolnik and Zvala
12. Delimitation on the base of proposals presented at meeting 29th November 2017
13. Topographical map. Version of delimitation depicted on map attachments of nomination project
14. **Validity period of the forest management plans. Version of delimitation consisting from six component parts from the 5th of October 2018**
15. Beech primeval forests of the Carpathians – The position of the serial nomination properties on the Ukrainian and Slovak territories

Maps 1-7 and 9-16 provided by the State Nature Conservancy, map 8 provided by National Forest Centre and map 17 by VLM SR.
### Staré bukové lesy a bukové pralesy Karpát a iných regiónov Európy - slovenská časť

**Karpátske a iné regióny Európy - slovenská časť**

**Version of delimitation consisting from six component parts from the 5th of October 2018**

**Porovnanie s vymedzením podľa nominačného projektu**

**Comparing with delimitation by nomination project**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Číslo / Number</th>
<th>Názov komponentu / Name of component part</th>
<th>Zóna / zone</th>
<th>Výmera na mapu zohľadnená vyznačenými územia/ zónami (ha) / Surface area of the property drawn on the map - as of 28/09/2018 (ha)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Havelcová</td>
<td>jedová zóna / core zone</td>
<td>167,8579</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Belianska</td>
<td>jedová zóna / core zone</td>
<td>179,4294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3a.</td>
<td>Studla - Bukovské vrchy</td>
<td>jedová zóna / core zone</td>
<td>195,2195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3b.</td>
<td>Udavský potok</td>
<td>jedová zóna / core zone</td>
<td>194,9575</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4a.</td>
<td>Chomutovský prales</td>
<td>jedová zóna / core zone</td>
<td>453,794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4b.</td>
<td>Hrubý potok</td>
<td>jedová zóna / core zone</td>
<td>1564,3318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Kráľovský prales</td>
<td>jedová zóna / core zone</td>
<td>393,4385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Vihorlatsky potok</td>
<td>jedová zóna / core zone</td>
<td>508,2535</td>
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</table>

**Legend / Legend**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Legend</th>
<th>Surface area in hectares</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Originally the buffer zone on the Nomination Project map - De Facto: Land in Poland (In the attached table cells from b1 to b6)</td>
<td>Light green</td>
<td>2000 2000 4000 6000 8000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Originally the buffer zone on the Nomination Project map - De Facto: Land in Ukraine (In the attached table cells from c1 to c6)</td>
<td>Dark green</td>
<td>2000 2000 4000 6000 8000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Originally the buffer zone on the Nomination Project map - By new delimitation: Land excluded from both zones (In the attached table cells from d1 to d6)</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>2000 2000 4000 6000 8000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Originally the buffer zone on the Nomination Project map - By new delimitation: Land included into the core zone (In the attached table cells from e1 to e6 or from g1 to g6)</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>2000 2000 4000 6000 8000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Originally the core zone on the Nomination Project map - De Facto: Land in Poland (In the attached table cells from b1 to b6)</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>2000 2000 4000 6000 8000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Originally the core zone on the Nomination Project map - De Facto: Land in Ukraine (In the attached table cells from c1 to c6)</td>
<td>Light red</td>
<td>2000 2000 4000 6000 8000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Originally the core zone on the Nomination Project map - By new delimitation: Land included into the buffer zone (In the attached table cells from e1 to e6 or from g1 to g6)</td>
<td>Dark red</td>
<td>2000 2000 4000 6000 8000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Originally land outside of both zones on the Nomination Project map - By new delimitation: Land included into the buffer zone (In the attached table cells from h1 to h6)</td>
<td>Pink</td>
<td>2000 2000 4000 6000 8000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Originally land outside of both zones on the Nomination Project map - By new delimitation: Land included into the core zone (In the attached table cells from h1 to h6)</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>2000 2000 4000 6000 8000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** The delimitation map is based on the following sources:

- Basic map SVM50 © Geodesy, Cartography and Cadastre Authority of Slovak Republic, 2000
- Forest stands © Národné lesnícke centrum SR Zvolen, 2014
- © Vojenské lesy a majetky, š.p., Pliešovce, 2014
- © Štátna ochrana prírody SR Banská Bystrica, 2018
Staré bukové lesy a bukové pralesy Karpát a iných regiónov Európy - slovenská časť
Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe - Slovakian Part
Verzia vymedzenia pozostávajúca zo šiestich komponentov zo dňa 5. októbra 2018
Version of delimitation consisting from six component parts from the 5th of October 2018
Mapovania prírodenosti lesných porastov
Mapping of forest stands connaturality
Kategórie lesa / Categories of forest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Číslo / Number</th>
<th>Názov komponentu / Name of component part</th>
<th>Zóna / zone</th>
<th>Výmerná na mapu zobrazená / Measured on the map - as of 23/09/2018 (ha)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Hotolíková</td>
<td>Jadrová zóna</td>
<td>167,8579</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Púťová</td>
<td>Jadrová zóna</td>
<td>67,2872</td>
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<tr>
<td>3a.</td>
<td>Stolica - Bukovské vrchy</td>
<td>Jadrová zóna</td>
<td>195,7298</td>
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<tr>
<td>3b.</td>
<td>Ušica</td>
<td>Jadrová zóna</td>
<td>149,4075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3c.</td>
<td>Hrabová Roztoka</td>
<td>Jadrová zóna</td>
<td>455,7044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4a.</td>
<td>Vihorlat</td>
<td>Jadrová zóna</td>
<td>1564,1318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4b.</td>
<td>Bystravský prales</td>
<td>Jadrová zóna</td>
<td>381,9388</td>
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</table>

Spolu / sum: 6596,4803

Lesy hospodárske / Commercial forest

Lesy osobitného určenia / Special purpose forest

Lesy ochranné / Protection forest

Legendu / Legend
Staré bukové lesy a bukové pralesy Karpát a iných regiónov Európy - slovenská časť
Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe - Slovakian Part
Vymedzenie na základe návrhov prednesených na pracovnom stretnutí dňa 29. novembra 2017
Delimitation on the base of proposals presented at meeting on the 29th of November 2017

Legenda / Legend

ANNEX III: Satellite image

(submitted in April 2018 by a third party to the World Heritage Centre)
ANNEX IV: Mission programme and participants

Programme

16 October 2018:
Accommodation and venue: Hotel Kamei, Sninské rybníky. [http://www.kamei.sk/en/]
Afternoon/evening – arrival of participants, check-in and accommodation.
17:30 – 18:30 – short coordination meeting, presentation of the programme of advisory mission
19:00 – dinner at the Hotel Kamei

17 October 2018:
Accommodation: Hotel Kamei, Sninské rybníky. [http://www.kamei.sk/en/]
08:30 a.m. Departure from the Kamei Hotel
08:30 a.m. - 09:30 a.m. Transfer by cars from Snina to Uličské Krivé
09:30 a.m. - 12:00 (noon) Field visit in the Nature Reserve Borsučiny
(in case of bad weather: field visit to component Rožok)
Participants: Ministry of Agriculture, Agroforestry Estate Ulic, state-owned enterprise, Forests of the Slovak Republic, state-owned enterprise, National Forest Centre
12:00 (noon) –13:00 p.m. Transfer by cars from the site Borsučiny to Kamei Hotel
13:00 p.m. - 02:00 p.m. Lunch at Kamei Hotel
02:30 p.m. - 03:30 p.m. Free time
03:30 p.m. - 04:30 p.m. Meeting with representatives of private landowners (Poloniny NP) Participants: representatives of landowners’ associations Ruské, Smolník and Zvala
04:30 p.m. - 05:00 p.m. Break
05:00 p.m. - 06:00 p.m. Meeting with representatives of environmental NGOs Participants: WWF Slovakia, Aveis Foundation, OZ Prales, WOLF Forest Protection Movement
06:00 p.m. Dinner

18 October 2018:
Check-out from the Hotel Kamei and transfer to the National Park of Vihorlat.
08:30 a.m. Meeting of the participants – Hotel Kamei, Snina
08:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. Transfer to Pofana under Vihorlat /terrain cars/
10:00 a.m. - 01:00 p.m. Walk along the educational trail to Jedlinka - through the World Heritage component Vihorlat
Participants: Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, Agroforestry Estate Ulic, state-owned enterprise, Forests of the Slovak Republic, state-
owned enterprise, National Forest Centre, Military Forests and Estates of the Slovak Republic, state-owned enterprise

01:00 p.m. - 01:45 p.m. Transfer from Jedlinka through Malé Morské oko to the National Nature Reserve Morské oko
01:45 p.m. - 02:15 p.m. Transfer to the hotel Juliana for lunch
02:15 p.m. - 03:15 p.m. Lunch at the hotel Juliana, Zemplínska Šírava – Kaluža
03:15 p.m. - 03:45 p.m. Transfer to the hotel Eurobus
03:45 p.m. - 04:45 p.m. Accommodation (Hotel Eurobus)
04:45 p.m. - 05:45 p.m. Meeting with representatives of state entities

Participants: Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, Agroforestry Estate Ulic, state-owned enterprise, Forests of the Slovak Republic, state-owned enterprise, National Forest Centre, Military Forests and Estates of the Slovak Republic, state-owned enterprise

05:45 p.m. - 07:00 p.m. Free time, discussions
07:00 p.m. Dinner

In case of bad weather, change in the field excursion:
08:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. Transfer to Nature Reserve Morské oko
10:00 a.m. - 01:00 p.m. Walk around Morské oko to Malé Morské oko and back
01:00 p.m. - 01:45 p.m. National nature reserve Morské oko – break at the Infocentre of the Vihorlat Protected Landscape Area
01:45 p.m. - 02:15 p.m. Transfer to the hotel Juliana for lunch

19 October 2018:
08:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. – Final evaluation and discussion, hotel Eurobus
10:45 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. – coffee break/brunch, check-out
Afternoon – close-up of the mission, departure
## Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Department</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Environment</td>
<td>Katarina Butkovská</td>
<td>Directorate for Nature, Biodiversity and Landscape protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Environment</td>
<td>Milan Chrenko</td>
<td>Directorate for Environmental Policy, EU and International Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ministry of Environment</td>
<td>Peter Maňka</td>
<td>Department of biodiversity and Landscape protection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ministry of Environment</td>
<td>Katarína Smálová</td>
<td>Department of International Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Environment</td>
<td>Simona Stašová</td>
<td>Department of biodiversity and Landscape protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Nature Conservancy</td>
<td>Ivan Kouábek</td>
<td>Directorate</td>
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<td>State Nature Conservancy</td>
<td>Marta Mútňanová</td>
<td>Directorate</td>
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<td>State Nature Conservancy</td>
<td>Mário Perinaj</td>
<td>Poloniny National Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Nature Conservancy</td>
<td>Marián Gič</td>
<td>Poloniny National Park</td>
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<td>Milan Piroš</td>
<td>Poloniny National Park</td>
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<td>State Nature Conservancy</td>
<td>Ladislav Rovňák</td>
<td>Vihorlat Protected Landscape Area</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development</td>
<td>Eva Huštáková</td>
<td>Section of Forestry and Wood Processing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forests of the Slovak Republic</td>
<td>Ľuboslav Mika</td>
<td>Department for Nature Protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forests of the Slovak Republic</td>
<td></td>
<td>Representative of the Branch office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forests of the Slovak Republic</td>
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<td>VranovnadTopľou</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Forest Centre</td>
<td>Ivor Rizman</td>
<td>Forest Management Planning Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Forests and Estates of the Slovak Republic</td>
<td>Zuzana Balandová</td>
<td>Department of Forest production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Position</td>
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<td>Military Forests and Estates of the Slovak Republic</td>
<td>Anton Bodnár</td>
<td>Director of the Branch office KamenicanadCirochou</td>
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<td>Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs</td>
<td>Mária Krasnohorská</td>
<td>Secretary of the Slovak Commission for UNESCO</td>
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<td>Agroforestry Estate Ulič</td>
<td>Igor Láclav</td>
<td>Head of Production and Property Management department</td>
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<td>Štefan Karaščák</td>
<td>Head of Economy department</td>
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<td>Marek Vlasák</td>
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<td>Aveis Foundation</td>
<td>Tomáš Vida</td>
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<td>Pavol Polák</td>
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<td>Union of Regional Association of Non-state Forest Owners of Slovakia</td>
<td>Milan Ovseník</td>
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<td>Landowners association Zvala</td>
<td>Róbert Latta</td>
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