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# **Le Colline del Prosecco di Conegliano e Valdobbiadene**

## **(Italy)**

### **No 1571rev**

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#### **Official name as proposed by the State Party**

*Le Colline del Prosecco di Conegliano e Valdobbiadene*

#### **Location**

Province of Treviso

Veneto Region

Italy

#### **Brief description**

Located in the northern area of the Province of Treviso, in the Veneto Region, the *Colline del Prosecco di Conegliano e Valdobbiadene* comprises a portion of the vineyard landscape of Conegliano Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore DOCG appellation wine production area. The landscape is characterised by hogback hills, small vineyards on steep inclines established on narrow grassy terraces called *ciglioni*, creating a mosaic patterning or patchwork of forests, small settlements and vineyards, all combining to provide spectacular views. The landscape has formed through centuries of settlement and land use in this remote and rugged land, including viticulture based on the Glera grape variety, and the rise of Prosecco sparkling wines. Careful management of water, forest management, the high vines system (known as *bellussera*) and techniques to control erosion have also contributed to the distinctive characteristics of the landscape.

#### **Category of property**

In terms of categories of cultural property set out in Article I of the 1972 World Heritage Convention, this is a *site*.

In terms of the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention* (July 2017) paragraph 47, it is nominated as a *cultural landscape*.

## **1 Basic data**

#### **Included in the Tentative List**

5 October 2010

#### **Background**

This is a referred back nomination. The 42<sup>nd</sup> session of the World Heritage Committee identified the purposes of referring the nomination back to the State Party as follows:

Decision 42 COM 8B.31:

*The World Heritage Committee,*

1. Having examined Documents WHC/18/42.COM/8B, WHC/18/42.COM/INF.8B1, and WHC/18/42.COM/INF.8B4,
2. Refers the nomination of *Le Colline del Prosecco di Conegliano e Valdobbiadene, Italy*, back to the State Party, taking note of a potential of the proposed property to meet criteria (iv) and (v) to:
  1. Redefine the nomination refocusing the potential Outstanding Universal Value on criteria (iv) and (v),
  2. Redefine the boundaries and buffer zones of the nominated property,
  3. Completing the adoption process by the 28 concerned municipalities of the tool "Technical rule – Articolo Unico", which was already approved by the Veneto Region in January 2018;
3. Takes note that the general state of conservation of the site is adequate and that the adopted measures of conservation are generally effective, its monitoring and management systems are well-conceived and structured, and the funding commitments by the relevant local authorities are to be saluted;
4. Commends the State Party for the structured governance process to ensure cooperation among all public and private actors involved in the site management as well as for the commitment expressed by the territorial authorities to increase cooperation for the valorisation, protection and preservation of the nominated property;
5. Recommends the State Party, in dialogue with ICOMOS, to implement the above-mentioned recommendations.

As recommended by the World Heritage Committee, discussions between ICOMOS and the State Party commenced in July 2018, and an ICOMOS Advisory Mission took place from 10 to 14 September 2018. The report of the ICOMOS Advisory Process was finalised in 31 October 2018.

In order to address the requirements of the World Heritage Committee, the ICOMOS Advisory process focused engagement with the State Party on four key tasks:

- Reconceptualise the nomination dossier with special focus on the features of a rural landscape, clearly identifying the attributes and values that contribute to its landscape character and emphasising the interrelationship of the contributing elements, and the resulting potential Outstanding Universal Value,
- Provide a discussion on the State of Conservation of the landscape, and specifically address the authenticity and integrity of the attributes as they contribute to Outstanding Universal Value,
- Expand the comparative analysis to reflect the reconfigured nomination,
- Consider the reconfiguration of the dossier and the rationale needed for its boundaries (nominated area and buffer zone) with regard to Integrity and management purposes.

A revised nomination dossier was submitted for evaluation on 29 January 2019.

## Date of ICOMOS approval of this report

13 March 2019

## 2 Description of the property

Note: The nomination dossier and additional information contain detailed descriptions of this property, its history and its state of conservation. Due to limitations on the length of evaluation reports, this report only provides a short summary of the most relevant aspects.

### Description and history

The State Party has explained that it has revised the description section of the nomination dossier (Chapter 2). The description is based on: the geographical characteristics of the site; the interaction between people and nature; the history and development of the area (modified to reflect the revised boundary); and the attributes of the revised nomination (which is a new section 2.d). The work on the attributes is a specific response to the ICOMOS Advisory process report. The ingenuity of the farmers, the way people have adapted viticulture to harsh terrain, the mosaic of different land parcels interlinked with woods and the distinct chequerboard pattern of the *ciglioni* have been clearly outlined.

New archival and bibliographic research has been conducted to support this text, particularly in relation to the *ciglioni* and mosaic aspects of the vineyards, and the *bellussera* system of training the vines. This research has underlined that the changes in cultivation techniques in the landscape of the revised buffer zone have not affected the property area, which retains characteristics that have been relatively stable over the past two centuries.

Located in the northern area of Treviso Province, in the Veneto Region, the *Colline del Prosecco di Conegliano e Valdobbiadene* is located within the vineyard landscape of Conegliano Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore DOCG (*Denominazione di Origine Controllata e Garantita*) appellation wine production area. The geomorphology is characterised by steep 'hogbacks' (long ridge with steep sides) at the foothills of the Alps. The nominated property comprises a diverse patchwork of vineyards, historic structures, hilltop villages and settlements (including cottages, farmhouses, stone stables, farm buildings), rural and natural areas.

The revised nomination materials focus on the distinctive characteristics of the landscape, including:

- Small vineyards on steep inclines established on narrow grassy terraces called *ciglioni*;
- Distinctive geometric patterning of the vineyard layouts as a method of erosion control, and the training of the high vines referred to as the *bellussera* method;
- Management techniques adapted to this steep landscape still carried out by hand;

- Intermixing of wooded areas and vineyards into a distinctive landscape mosaic; and
- Skillful management of the water supply.

The revised property boundary is considered by the State Party to be the 'heart of the highest quality production of Prosecco wine'. There are also similar vineyards in the buffer zone, but these do not occur within the same distinctive hogback topography and *ciglioni* of the revised nominated property area.

The beginnings of Veneto viticulture date back to around 181 BC when the Roman army passed through eastern Veneto on their way to the colony of Aquileia, and the history of viticulture in the wider region has been outlined by the State Party. The earliest documentation concerning the cultivation of the Glera grape variety in the Veneto region dates back to 1754. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, cultivation of Glera expanded throughout the hills of Veneto and Friuli. The 19<sup>th</sup> century is marked by the *phylloxera* outbreak and the development of a dense network of small and medium-sized farms, which survived until the later 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The first wine maps for the hills of Conegliano and Valdobbiadene date to around 1870. However, the area under vines that for the large part matches that of the originally nominated property, was clearly shown for the first time on maps drawn up in 1936. The State Party further highlights that the wine typically produced in the nominated area is the Conegliano Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore DOCG, which accounts for less than one-fifth of all Prosecco production. The recent dramatic increase of Prosecco supply relates mostly to the Prosecco DOC, which is a very much larger area that covers much of the Veneto and Friuli Provinces. In 2013, more than 300 million bottles of sparkling wine was produced in the Prosecco DOC based on highly mechanised and industrialised methods, and the production levels have continued to grow.

In 1962 a group of 11 producers, representing the principal vine-growers' cooperatives and the major sparkling wine-producing companies, founded the *Consorzio di Tutela del Prosecco di Conegliano Valdobbiadene*, proposing a set of production regulations to safeguard the quality and image of the wine they made. Subsequently, in 1966 the first Italian wine route, *Strada del Vino Bianco* (renamed *Strada del Prosecco e Vini dei Colli Conegliano-Valdobbiadene* in 2003), was created in this area. The importance of Prosecco has increased since 1969 when it obtained the certification DOC (*Denominazione di Origine Controllata*).

In 2003, through the regional law that regulates Production Districts, the Conegliano Valdobbiadene territory was recognised as the first oenological district of the Veneto Region. This recognition was crucial for gaining the DOCG certification (*Denominazione di Origine Controllata e Garantita*) for Conegliano Valdobbiadene in August 2010.

In the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, depopulation was a determining factor in the decline of viticulture, leading to the abandonment of inaccessible vines in the wider area and increased forest cover. There has been a revival in the central region in recent decades due to the commercial success of Prosecco.

Recent vineyards in the larger area have not always been established and managed according to traditional methods (such as planting parallel to the slope), and landslides have occurred. In the flatter southern part and in the hilly areas, where the conditions were favourable, the vineyards were developed using machinery. The landscape outside the revised nominated property has become a wine-producing area on an industrial scale.

### **Boundaries**

The previous nominated area was similar to the designation of the Conegliano Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore DCOG vine growing area, and covered an area of 20,334.20 ha. The State Party has substantially revised the boundaries, based on the decision of the World Heritage Committee and ICOMOS advisory process. The property now consists of an area of 9,197.45 ha, focused on the hogback vineyard areas as the landscape most able to meet the requirements of authenticity. The delineation of the boundary is based on natural features and valleys that separate the hills from the pre-Alps to the north, the Piave River to the west and the bottom of the foothills to the Po Valley to the southeast. The State Party has presented a single property, rather than breaking it into parts as a serial proposal.

The buffer zone comprises an area which also contains vineyards, but these are at a lower elevation, with more rural settlements and other architectural monuments. The single buffer zone of 9,769.80 ha is significantly reduced from the previous proposal of 23,654 ha. In reducing the buffer zone, the State Party's has excluded areas that were not as coherent in relation to the history and landscape of the nominated property. In general, ICOMOS agrees that the revised buffer zone is more heterogeneous in its characteristics than the revised property area.

The State Party has also identified a 'Commitment Area' which is beyond the buffer zone. The size of this area is not indicated, but it is similar to the large buffer zone boundary in the previous nomination. This area contains the forest pre-Alpine flank to the north, the main historic towns, and intensive viticulture areas to the west, south and east. The municipalities in this larger area have joined the Memorandum of Understanding with the Veneto Region in relation to regulations for planning and protection of the wider landscape. The northern parts of the Commitment Area are sparsely populated, and are important to the larger visual setting and ecosystem services to the nominated area.

### **State of conservation**

Based on the distinctive character and the persistence of the 'mosaic' character of the landscape over several centuries, the State Party considers that the revised nominated property demonstrates a good state of conservation. The State Party highlights the state of conservation of the geomorphological components of the landscape, the agro-biodiversity, the architectural and settlement elements, and the vineyards and *ciglion*.

While ICOMOS concurs with much of the general conclusions reached in the additional material submitted, the condition assessment is not sufficiently detailed to provide a basis for future monitoring and management. As discussed below, there are a number of elements which currently suffer from a poor state of conservation (particularly buildings and vernacular architecture in the property and buffer zone). A detailed and systematic assessment and monitoring of the state of conservation of the attributes of the proposed Outstanding Universal Value is recommended as a priority.

### **Factors affecting the property**

The State Party has explained that this section of the nomination dossier required only minor revisions from the original proposal, in order to reflect the changed boundary of the proposed property. The revised nomination suggests that the most important factors affecting the nominated property are related to development pressures, particularly the transformation of the agricultural landscape due to urban development and the mechanisation of vineyard labour. Urban development had a particular impact on the landscape between the 1960s and the global financial crisis in 2008. However, the State Party considers that the Regional Laws 11/2004 and the establishment of city plans for each of the municipalities in the region have allowed this type of pressure to be managed more effectively. In addition, the Regional Law n. 14 of June 2017 has provided a greater degree of landscape protection, including cultivated biodiversity.

ICOMOS considers that the revised nominated property and its buffer zone continue to be affected by some areas of low quality urbanism, infrastructure development, and the poor condition of architecture, monuments and settlement areas, particularly in the buffer zone. Future wind and solar power installations in the buffer zone could also create a detrimental impact on the integrity of the setting of the property.

The substantial increase in the production of Prosecco is based on the larger area of the Prosecco DOC (which comprises almost all of the Veneto and Friuli Venezia Giulia regions), aided by the industrialisation of production. However, the nominated area is a very small portion of this wine region, and the production of wine is primarily the Conegliano Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore DOCG, which accounts for a small portion of the Prosecco produced overall.

Global climate change has increased the incidence of heavy rain events, surface erosion, landslides and heavy runoff. The State Party acknowledges the need for improved drainage infrastructure to respond to these pressures. It has provided a summary of mitigation interventions undertaken over the past two decades. These include inter-row grassing, avoiding *rittochino* systems in the steepest areas (drainage ditches dug between the rows of vines), maximum row lengths and terrace widths, conservation of hedges, and various works to establish ditches and drainage.

Tourism does not currently pose significant pressures within the nominated area, although the number of visitors to the area is expected to increase following a potential World Heritage inscription.

ICOMOS considers that the main factors affecting the nominated property are urban development and expansion, agricultural transformations, landslides and demographic and socio-economic shifts. ICOMOS also notes that poor quality infrastructure, industrial constructions and settlements in the buffer zone have had a detrimental impact on the setting (affecting the tourism appeal of the property itself); and that there are some buildings in the property and its buffer zone in poor condition.

### 3 Proposed justification for inscription

#### Proposed justification

The State Party has revised the proposed justification for Outstanding Universal Value, and the criteria proposed has been reduced to one (criterion (v)).

The nominated property is considered by the State Party to be of Outstanding Universal Value as a cultural property for the following reasons:

- The rural landscape, which dates back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and demonstrates adaptation to a steep ridge landscape or hogback morphological system, creating a specific micro-climate and dramatic scenery;
- The vineyards based on Glera have been established in the grassy terraces on the steep slopes, known as *ciglioni*, and demonstrate the ingenuity of the farmers (including the careful management of water resources and erosion);
- The sustainable ecological processes of the evolved and continuing land uses of the landscape have contributed to its distinctive characteristics. They also demonstrate the historical and continuing interactions between local communities and their natural environment;
- Farming in small plots has contributed to a mosaic (or 'chequerboard') patterning that also includes forests and small settlements.

#### Comparative analysis

The State Party has revised the comparative analysis based on the revised conceptualisation of the revised attributes and boundary of the nominated property. Much of this work has been aided by the report of the ICOMOS Advisory Process. The comparative analysis has been reworked according to three attributes (each of which has several sub-attributes). These are a) the geomorphology (the average height above sea level, the steepness of the slopes, and the geographical character); b) the ingenuity of growers (the agrarian management techniques, especially with regard to measures to contain erosion and the techniques of vine breeding and training); and c) the landscape mosaic (the size and orientation of patches, type and origin of design).

Based on this revised framework, the comparative analysis has been rewritten. The main focus of this analysis has been on European sites and landscapes of rural wine-making. An initial comparison with 37 landscapes has been made, including properties in the World Heritage List and Tentative Lists, and others that have been identified from national and international registers and lists. This first stage of the analysis identified a smaller set of five potentially comparable properties for which a deeper analysis was undertaken. These were: Portovenere, Cinque Terre, and the Islands (Italy, criteria (ii), (iv), (v), 1997); Alto Douro Wine Region (Portugal, criteria (iii), (iv), (v), 2001), Priorat-Montsant-Siurana paysage agricole de la montagne méditerranéenne (Tentative List, Spain, criteria (v), (vi)); Cultural Landscape of the Serra de Tramuntana (Spain, criteria (ii), (iv), (v), 2011); and the Vineyard Landscape of Piedmont: Langhe-Roero e Monferrato (Italy, criteria (iii), (v), 2014).

Based on this analysis, the State Party concludes that the revised nominated property represents a model of a rural landscape that is not otherwise represented in the World Heritage List.

ICOMOS considers that the work undertaken by the State Party to focus the nominated area on the hogback landform (rather than the Prosecco DOC area), together with the substantial changes to the justification for Outstanding Universal Value and the proposed attributes has allowed a much improved framing of the comparative analysis. Based on the exchanges during the ICOMOS advisory process, a number of unconvincing or too-general bases for the comparative analysis have been removed, and the framing has been sharpened to be able to demonstrate the potential contribution of this landscape within its geocultural context. As ICOMOS noted in its previous evaluation, a number of aspects of European viticultural landscapes are already represented in the World Heritage List, but that there are historical and physical contexts and adaptations where gaps potentially remain. The specific land use practices that include forest and water management as well as the localised agricultural and viticultural adaptations to this challenging terrain are therefore central; as are the specificities and practices such as the high vine *bellussera* techniques

which combine to create the distinctive characteristics of this landscape. ICOMOS therefore considers that the substantial revisions to the proposal, the tighter and more coherent boundary, and the re-framing of the comparative analysis provide a sound basis for the further consideration of this property.

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ICOMOS considers that the revised comparative analysis justifies consideration of this property for the World Heritage List.

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### **Criteria under which inscription is proposed**

Although the original nomination was presented on the basis of criteria (iv) and (v), the revised proposal is nominated on the basis of cultural criterion (v) alone.

*Criterion (v): be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change;*

This criterion is justified by the State Party on the grounds that the revised nominated property is an outstanding example of a viticulture landscape, based on the specific characteristics of the hogback geomorphology, which has been inhabited and farmed for centuries. The nominated landscape is a result of transformations that occurred from the 17<sup>th</sup> century. This system of viticulture continues today, including manual management of the fragile *cigloni* – grassy terraces that follow the land contours of the steep slopes. This system of viticulture gives the landscape its strong characteristics, including the ‘chequerboard’ appearance with high perpendicular rows of vines, the complex agricultural patchwork of vineyards and scattered rural settlements, interspersed with forests and other vegetation. The State Party also refers to the *bellussera* system that developed from about 1880 for training the vines. Also relevant is the long history of sharecropping in this area, which is still reflected in the landscape through the small size of properties and the mosaic landscape of cultivated areas.

ICOMOS considers that the revised justification for criterion (v) and the decision to discontinue the proposal in light of criterion (iv) have strengthened the justification for Outstanding Universal Value. In its previous evaluation, ICOMOS noted that the practices of viticulture in steep landscapes and the manual management of the vines are not unique characteristics in the geo-cultural context. However, the State Party has deepened the specificities of the landscape, focusing on the means by which it demonstrates the centuries of interaction of human settlement and land use (particularly wine growing) in this specific topographical context. ICOMOS also considers that the landscape could be vulnerable to irreversible change due to the pressures of production of Prosecco within a growing global market.

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ICOMOS considers that the nominated property has the potential to demonstrate criterion (v).

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### **Integrity and authenticity**

#### **Integrity**

The integrity of the revised nominated property is based on the ability of the nominated area to convey the potential Outstanding Universal Value. The intact nature of the nominated area and its relevant features (including consideration of the adequacy of the boundary), the state of conservation and the way major pressures are managed are also determinants of integrity.

The State Party considers that the nominated area can represent the processes that have created the distinctiveness of the landscape. Various factors have been identified by the State Party that have affected the property over time (such as war, economic crises and emigration), as well as the historical impacts on European viticulture (including plant diseases). Despite these changes, the landscape of the revised nomination has retained many of its attributes, especially the vineyards and *cigloni*, the small settlements and the forests. The agricultural and viticultural techniques have also been maintained over time.

ICOMOS considers that the revised boundary has improved the integrity of the nominated property as the original boundary was largely based on the DOCG appellation delimitation granted in 2010, reflecting a large area that was not delineated until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The areas that were considered to weaken the integrity of the original nomination have been excluded, and are now within the buffer zone and the wider ‘Commitment Area’. The revised boundary contains the areas of the hogback landforms, the distinctive *cigloni* terracing and landscape mosaic of interwoven vineyards and forested areas.

#### **Authenticity**

The authenticity of the property is based on the identification of the elements of the agricultural and viticultural system, including the hogback formations, vineyards, settlements and the *cigloni*. The history of the *cigloni* has been documented back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century; and the ‘mosaic landscape’ based on sharecropping system can be traced back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The various buildings and monuments can also be seen to represent the historical periods that have contributed to the characteristics of the nominated landscape and its buffer zone. The State Party also notes the landscape was included in some religious paintings, such as those by Giovanni Battista Cima da Conegliano in the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

In its previous evaluation, ICOMOS raised concerns that weakened the authenticity of this property, based on the insufficiently well justified attributes within a much larger nominated area. Clearly, significant changes have occurred to the landscape, particularly during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, the deepened documentation of the history of the *cigloni* and the ‘mosaic’ landscape, the revisions made to the justification for Outstanding Universal Value, the reduced boundary that follows the

hogback landform, and the focus on criterion (v) has strengthened the ability for the authenticity to be demonstrated, despite many past and current challenges.

ICOMOS notes that the attributes of the rural landscape are recorded in the archives of the Veneto Region. Despite many changes, the continuity of the vineyard areas and the complexity of the hilly agricultural patchwork in the revised nominated area is established. The integral relationship between the natural and cultural systems is a component of the authenticity, and have created a distinctive sense of place.

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In conclusion ICOMOS considers that while many changes have occurred over the past centuries and various challenges remain, the revised nominated property meets the requirements of integrity and authenticity.

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#### **Evaluation of the proposed justification for inscription**

ICOMOS considers that the comparative analysis justifies the consideration of this nominated property for the World Heritage List. The revised proposal has the potential to demonstrate an Outstanding Universal Value, in relation to criterion (v) and meets the requirements of authenticity and integrity.

#### **Attributes**

The State Party has revised the proposal according to three attributes: geomorphology, the ingenuity of farmers, and the landscape mosaic. Sub-attributes have been identified for each of these, and include: geomorphology (the average height above sea level, the steepness of the slopes, and the geographical character); ingenuity of growers (the agrarian management techniques, especially with regard to measures to contain erosion and the techniques of vine breeding); and landscape mosaic (the size and orientation of patches, type and origin of design).

ICOMOS notes that this is an area where significant improvements have been made by the State Party, based on the exchanges during the ICOMOS advisory process. The previous proposal listed a large array of attributes, many of which seemed of limited relevance to the proposed justification for Outstanding Universal Value. ICOMOS considers that this revised focus has been helpful in reframing the comparative analysis (as discussed above), but that a more comprehensive identification, inventory and mapping of the attributes is needed. The attributes that potentially represent the proposed values of the property include a complex interplay of natural and cultural elements, notably: the hogback landforms and steep slopes, the small vineyards established with the narrow grassy terraces known as *ciglioni*, the distinctive geometric patterning of vineyard layouts, the implementation of the *bellussera* high vine training method, vineyards managed by hand, intermixing of wooded areas and vineyards that creates a landscape 'mosaic', small areas of forest (important for hydrology

and erosion control), the water supply system, and the small settlements and their vernacular structures.

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ICOMOS considers that the revised nominated property is supported by a relevant comparative analysis, demonstrates criterion (v), and meets the requirements of authenticity and integrity. Further work on the mapping and identification of attributes is needed.

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## **4 Conservation measures and monitoring**

### **Conservation measures**

The conservation of the nominated cultural landscape is a complex undertaking, due to the interplay between the tangible attributes, natural processes and the socio-economic arrangements that support the continuing land management processes. The conservation measures are not systematically detailed in the revised nomination dossier, although the mechanisms established through the systems of protection are well described. ICOMOS anticipates that once the management plan is fully elaborated, it should include clear conservation objectives associated with the attributes of the proposed Outstanding Universal Value, and a programme of implementation.

### **Monitoring**

The State Party has explained that this section of the dossier required only minor revisions from the original proposal, in order to reflect the changed boundary of the proposed property.

The property has several monitoring systems, overseen by different institutions in the fields of traditional management of land and agriculture, nature conservation and monuments. As part of the property's Management Plan, a set of indicators has been defined. The monitoring system has been designed by existing instruments according to the seven strategic objectives and actions identified in the Management Plan.

ICOMOS considers that the monitoring system has been well conceived, although there is a need to identify some additional indicators for the assessment of the state of conservation and the biodiversity of the property, and to define the periodicity of measurement of the indicators.

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ICOMOS considers that the conservation measures are satisfactory, but that the monitoring system could be further improved through additional indicators of the state of conservation and biodiversity of the nominated property and its buffer zone.

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## **5 Protection and management**

### **Documentation**

Documentation in the form of current and historical maps, data concerning land uses, vineyards and wine production (based on the AVEPA vineyard register), and an inventory of photographs and other relevant materials have been

provided by the State Party. In addition, there is information about two projects focusing on the plant biodiversity of the Conegliano-Valdobbiadene DOCG by the Biology Department at the University of Padua.

ICOMOS notes that some aspects of the documentation of the landscape lack clarity in the revised dossier, including the precise mapping of attributes (particularly buildings and small settlements). Furthermore, ICOMOS considers that the flora and fauna of the nominated area could be more fully inventoried. ICOMOS also believes that additional historical data on the evolution of the relationship between forest management and agriculture/viticulture would usefully contribute to the understanding of the evolution of the landscape over time, as well as enhancing the management strategies for sustaining the cultural landscape in light of future changes to the climate and socio-economic contexts.

Because of the significant changes to the nomination dossier made by the State Party, it is not always clear whether the text that outlines the documentation of the elements within the property (such as architectural monuments, urbanised areas and art) applies to the property area or the buffer zone. This should be rectified as a priority.

#### **Legal protection**

The State Party has explained that this section of the dossier required no revisions from the original proposal, given that the same arrangements apply, and were considered adequate by the World Heritage Committee.

The property is protected at national, regional, provincial and municipal levels, as well as through the implementation of European environmental laws. The implementation of the constitutional protection of the landscape in Italy is governed by the *Codice dei Beni culturali e del paesaggio* (Cultural Heritage and Landscape Code) issued by Legislative Decree No. 42, 22 January 2004, and amendments: 2006 Legislative Decrees No. 156 and 157; and 2008 Legislative Decrees No. 62 and 63. This legal framework is administered by the Ministry for Cultural Heritage and its regional agencies, and defines the responsibilities of the regional and local public authorities. At the regional level, the main reference regulation is established by the Regional Law 11, 23 April 2004 concerning regulations for the territorial government and landscapes matters, as amended by the subsequent Regional Law of 26 May 2011.

ICOMOS considers that this set of protective measures is adequate, although it could be strengthened by the implementation of the Detailed Landscape Plan (*Piano Paesaggistico di Dettaglio*) (PPD) at the regional level, and the implementation of Intermunicipal regulation of rural police (*Regolamento intercomunale di polizia rurale*).

Several key plans are established by the framework of legal protection. The first is the Regional Land Plan for the Veneto Region (PTRC - *Piano Territoriale Regionale di Coordinamento*), a regional instrument for the governing

of the territory, and applies to the nominated property and buffer zone. It outlines the objectives in line with the guidelines for the provincial socio-economic development of landscapes. In 2018, revision of this plan was underway. The other is the municipal and inter-municipal level *Piani di Assetto del Territorio* which constitutes the planning tools that regulate and control building and renovation permits.

Currently, the establishment of vineyards is regulated in detail in different municipalities. AVEPA (*Agenzia Veneta per i Pagamenti in Agricoltura*) keeps the register of vineyards and oversees their management, including the requirements for the establishment of new vineyards. The property is also protected at the national level by the regulations and orders introduced since 1967 relating to guaranteed controlled appellation wines (DOCG). The Denomination of Controlled and Guaranteed Origin *Conegliano Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore DOCG* regulations constitute a legal instrument that regulates the production of DOCG wine. The production rules of the DOCG determine, among other things, the planting system, the organisation and management of vineyards, the protection of biodiversity and the materials that can be used to build wine-making facilities. However, ICOMOS notes that not all farms are part of this regulatory arrangement.

A Memorandum of Understanding between the Veneto Region and the municipalities of the Prosecco wine production area was approved in Regional Council Resolution No. 561, 26 April 2016. It establishes a shared regulation to be included in the local city planning and/or building codes in order to ensure improved valorisation and protection of the nominated property.

In order to improve and better coordinate across the Municipalities of the Prosecco wine region, the State Party has devised the 'Technical rule - Sole Article' which was developed through collaboration between 28 municipalities over a period of almost two years. This was approved by the Region in January 2018. This is an urban regulation to introduce more specific rules for the nominated property and the buffer zone, and requires the involvement of all municipalities involved in the 2016 Memorandum of Understanding. ICOMOS considers that this strengthens the coordination of management.

#### **Management system**

The State Party has explained that this section of the dossier required no revisions from the original proposal, given that the same arrangements apply, and were considered adequate by the World Heritage Committee.

The management of the site is primarily linked to the plans and planning processes developed by the local authorities, the Veneto Region, Treviso Province and the relevant municipalities. The coordination has been facilitated by the *Associazione Temporanea di scopo Colline di Conegliano Valdobbiadene* (ATS). It provides coordination between the main bodies involved in the nomination: the *Consorzio di Tutela del Prosecco*

*superiore Conegliano Valdobbiadene* DOCG; the Treviso Province; the *Camera di Commercio*; the *Intesa Programmatica d'Area Terre Alte della Marca Trevigiana* (IPA) which coordinates the various municipalities; and the *Gruppi di Azione Locale Alta Marca Trevigiana* (GAL), a group of stakeholders with social and participatory objectives. The temporary association has been established as the 'Association for the Heritage of the Prosecco Hills of Conegliano and Valdobbiadene' which includes all local actors already present in the ATS, in coordination with the relevant national bodies (Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities and Tourism and Ministry of Agriculture). The statute to establish and regulate the Association was approved in November 2017, and the Veneto Region has established certain rules to guarantee its participation through a specific Regional Law (No. 45/2017). Forestry systems are also subject to regulation by specific regional management overseen by the *Corpo Forestale dello Stato*.

The Management Plan defines the objectives, responsibilities, monitoring indicators, financial resources and the governance structure. The Management Plan identifies objectives and actions to be undertaken. The responsibilities for the financial resources are indicated in the management plan for the different fields of action, without giving precise figures. Sources include actors from the region, municipalities and companies, from national programmes for regional development, and from the European Union. ICOMOS considers that the Management Plan needs to be finalised and fully implemented, and that it could be deepened following the recommended improvements to the documentation of the attributes of the property and their state of conservation.

Disaster preparedness is oriented at extreme weather events (with high rainfall), and earthquakes, and is the responsibility of the regional Genio Civile. All restoration or renovation projects as well as new constructions are subject to its mandatory regulation.

ICOMOS considers that an overall management system for the nominated property is in place, and well-coordinated by the ATS, although a number of important aspects are not yet fully implemented.

#### **Visitor management**

Currently tourism numbers are modest, due to the relatively remote location of the nominated area. In 2014 the municipalities belonging to the nominated property represented only 7% of the visitors and 8% of the overnight stays of the Treviso Province. Aside from low-key recreational activities (such as walking and cycling), wine tourism contributes to the local economy. Car or coach tours occur mainly in the spring. The urban centres of Conegliano, Vittorio Veneto and Pieve di Soligo provide tourism accommodation infrastructure, which is otherwise sparsely distributed throughout the area. The State Party estimates that tourism numbers to the area between January and June are approximately 400,000.

ICOMOS considers that the area could benefit economically from a larger flow of tourists, but that the infrastructure for tourism transportation and accommodation is limited. Careful planning is needed to support growth, but without the risk of overcrowding, since many of the sites and access roadways are small.

ICOMOS also considers that tourism planning requires an approach which encapsulates a wider area, and that the buffer zone should be treated as a positive contributor to the presentation of the property, rather than as an area designed to 'absorb pressures' (for example, apart from private dwellings, the nominated area has little potential for the creation of accommodation). However, as noted above, a number of settlements in the buffer zone suffer from buildings in poor condition, and visually intrusive infrastructure and industrial developments. Because these areas serve as a 'gateway' to the property for visitors, and could provide additional tourism accommodation capacity, these are issues that could affect the development of high-quality and sustainable tourism activities.

#### **Community involvement**

Public and private stakeholders were involved in the development of the nomination dossier. Wide contributions were included in the Temporary Association of Purpose (ATS) *Colline di Conegliano Valdobbiadene* which later became the 'Association for the Heritage of the Prosecco Hills of Conegliano and Valdobbiadene'. The State Party has provided information on the participation and activities of various stakeholders, although this is generally not well detailed in the nomination documents.

#### **Evaluation of the effectiveness of the protection and management of nominated property**

ICOMOS considers that the framework for legal protection and the management system for the property are adequate, although a number of aspects need strengthening, full implementation and completion for the long-term protection and management of landscape of Outstanding Universal Value. Accordingly, a number of additional recommendations have been made. They include: the improved documentation of the attributes; assessment and improvement of the state of conservation of buildings and vernacular architecture within the property and buffer zone; enhancements to the monitoring arrangements; completion and implementation of national, regional and municipal legal protection arrangements; development of sustainable tourism planning; establishment of formal Heritage Impact Assessment processes relevant to the Outstanding Universal Value of the property; and the involvement of local communities in management decisions and new initiatives. In particular, the management plan requires further development, adoption and implementation.

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In summary, although a number of important further actions are recommended, ICOMOS considers the protection and management of the revised nominated property to be satisfactory.

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## 6 Conclusion

The State Party has worked swiftly to respond to the issues raised by the World Heritage Committee in Decision 42 COM 8B.31 (Manama, 2018), and has produced a clear and concise revision to its original proposal. There is a helpful guide to the revised proposal that allows the parts that have been changed to be readily understood.

The response of the State Party in relation to the three aspects of the Refer Back decision of the World Heritage Committee are considered specifically below:

*Redefine the nomination refocusing the potential Outstanding Universal Value on criteria (iv) and (v).*

The revised nomination has reconsidered the justification for Outstanding Universal Value, and the State Party has decided to revise its proposal to focus on criterion (v) alone. The description of the property has been clearly presented in relation to these changes.

ICOMOS considers that criterion (v) is appropriate for the revised proposal, and that through further documentation and clarification of the attributes, the State Party has provided additional clarity about the comparative analysis, and the cultural and biological systems that underpin the cultural landscape. The justification for criterion (v) has been strengthened. ICOMOS considers that the landscape is vulnerable, in part due to the pressures of increasing production of Prosecco to service the world market, and that strong protection is warranted.

*Redefine the boundaries and buffer zones of the nominated property.*

The revised nomination has greatly reduced the boundaries of the property and its buffer zone. The State Party has aimed to avoid the need for a serial property in this revised delineation. The excluded areas from the property are the 'corridors' that run from northwest to southeast and contain some urbanised areas and infrastructure developments. The property boundary focuses on the main areas with the hogback landforms and vineyards, which is the area that demonstrates the greatest authenticity in relation to the justification of Outstanding Universal Value. It is more clearly delineated by natural topographic characteristics, and has a more consistent representation of attributes of the proposed Outstanding Universal Value. Much of the area that has been excluded from the original boundary of the nominated property is now included in the buffer zone. The buffer zone has been also reduced in size, excluding areas that are not coherent with the landscape characteristics of the revised nominated property. A further 'Commitment Area' beyond the buffer zone has also been delineated by the State Party.

The State Party considers that these changes address the recommendations of the World Heritage Committee's decision and the ICOMOS Advisory process. Based on topographic rather than administrative considerations, ICOMOS considers that the revised boundary and buffer

zone better demonstrate a landscape approach, and are more logical and coherent. The boundary is considered appropriate in relation to the revised justification for Outstanding Universal Value. The establishment of the 'Commitment Area' seems beneficial for ensuring the protection of the essential ecosystem processes that support the continuing viticulture and other land management processes.

*Completing the adoption process by the 28 concerned municipalities of the tool "Technical rule – Articolo Unico", which was already approved by the Veneto Region in January 2018.*

The 'Technical Rule – Sole Article' is an urban regulation to introduce more specific rules for the nominated property and the buffer zone, and was initiated by the Veneto Region. This process has required the involvement of 28 municipalities, based on a Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2016. There are three main components: a shared urban planning regulation; links to the Management Plan and its objectives; and the intention to prepare a set of shared documents. This is considered by ICOMOS to provide a stronger coordination of governance and management across a wider area that includes the property, the buffer zone and the 'Commitment Area'.

The World Heritage Committee decision also noted that the general state of conservation of the site is adequate, the adopted measures of conservation are generally effective, and that the governance, monitoring, funding and management systems are in place. ICOMOS has provided some additional recommendations to further strengthen the systems for legal protection and management of the cultural landscape.

## 7 Recommendations

### Recommendations with respect to inscription

ICOMOS recommends that *Le Colline del Prosecco di Conegliano e Valdobbiadene*, Italy, be inscribed on the World Heritage List as a cultural landscape on the basis of **criteria (v)**.

### Recommended Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

#### Brief synthesis

The *Colline del Prosecco di Conegliano e Valdobbiadene* in northeast Italy is an area characterised by distinctive hogback morphological system which provides a distinctive mountain character with scenic vistas, and an organically evolved and continuing landscape comprised of vineyards, forests, small villages and agriculture. For centuries, the harsh terrain has both shaped and been adapted by distinctive land use practices. They include the land and soil conservation techniques that comprise the viticultural practices using Glera grapes to produce the highest quality Prosecco wine. Since the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the use of the *ciglion* – the patterned use of grassy

terraces used to cultivate areas with steep slopes – has created a distinctive chequerboard pattern with rows parallel and vertical to the slopes. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the specific training of the vines known as *bellussera*, was developed by local farmers, contributing to the aesthetic characteristics of the landscape. The mosaic appearance of the landscape is a result of historical and ongoing environmental and land use practices. The plots dedicated to vineyards, established on *ciglioni*, coexist with forest patches, small woodlands, hedges, and rows of trees that serve as corridors connecting different habitats. In the hogbacks, small villages are scattered along the narrow valleys or perched on the crests.

**Criterion (v):** The *Colline del Prosecco di Conegliano e Valdobbiadene* is a viticulture landscape resulting from the interaction of nature and people over several centuries. The adaptation and transformation of the challenging terrain of the hogback geomorphology has required the development of specific land use practices, including: vineyard management by hand on steep slopes; the grassy terraces known as *ciglioni*, which follow the contours of the land, stabilising the soils and vineyards; and the *bellussera* training system which was developed in the area about 1880. As a result, the vineyards contribute to a distinctive ‘chequerboard’ appearance with perpendicular rows of high vines, interspersed with rural settlements, forests and small woods. Despite many changes, the history of sharecropping in this area is also reflected in the landscape patterns.

#### Integrity

The boundary of the property is of adequate size, and contains the attributes of Outstanding Universal Value within a topographically distinct and intact landform. Despite many changes and challenges posed by pests, wars, poverty, and the industrialisation of viticulture, many of the attributes such as the vineyards, *ciglioni* and architectural elements demonstrate a good state of conservation, and the patches of forest have been maintained. Ecological processes are critically important for the sustainability of the landscape and the vineyards. Threats are currently managed, although the state of conservation of some elements (particularly architectural and urban elements in the buffer zone) require improvement, and climate change has accentuated the incidence of landslides. The landscape could be vulnerable to irreversible change due to the pressures of production of Prosecco within a growing global market. Agricultural and viticultural techniques for maintaining the integrity of the landscape are continuing, including manual harvesting.

#### Authenticity

The main attributes of the property relate to the distinctive landscape, where nature and human history have shaped and been shaped by an adapted and specific system for viticulture and land use. Despite many changes, the attributes demonstrate authenticity, and are documented through sources such as inventories and cadasters,

historical and religious paintings, and historical documents that demonstrate the introduction of the *ciglioni*, and the operation of the sharecropping system from the first land registries in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

#### Management and protection requirements

The property and its attributes are subject to protection measures at national and local levels; and municipalities and professional associations have introduced additional safeguards through territorial planning tools and the formation of legal and voluntary charters. The protection of the rural landscape is primarily guaranteed by the rules of the Conegliano Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore DOCG that favour the maintenance of the vineyards, *ciglioni* and other attributes that are fundamental for maintaining local traditions and to the protection of the agricultural biodiversity and associated ecosystem services.

Almost all of the property has been nominated to the National Register of Historical Rural Landscapes, a programme developed by the Ministry of Agriculture for the protection of agricultural rural landscapes. The forest vegetation is protected by the forest restrictions included in the National Code for Cultural Heritage, as well as by the management plan of the Site of Community Interest (SCI) of the EU Natura 2000 network applicable to the area. The buildings of historical and monumental value are all protected at national level by the *Codice dei Beni Culturali e del Paesaggio* (Cultural Heritage and Landscape Code) issued by Legislative Decree No. 42, 22 January 2004, along with all public buildings, state property and church-owned buildings that are more than 50 years old. The legal protection could be further strengthened through the implementation of the Detailed Landscape Plan (*Piano Paesaggistico di Dettaglio*) (PPD) at the regional level; the implementation of Intermunicipal regulation of rural police (*Regolamento intercomunale di polizia rural*); and the full implementation of the ‘Technical rule - Sole Article’ in all relevant municipalities.

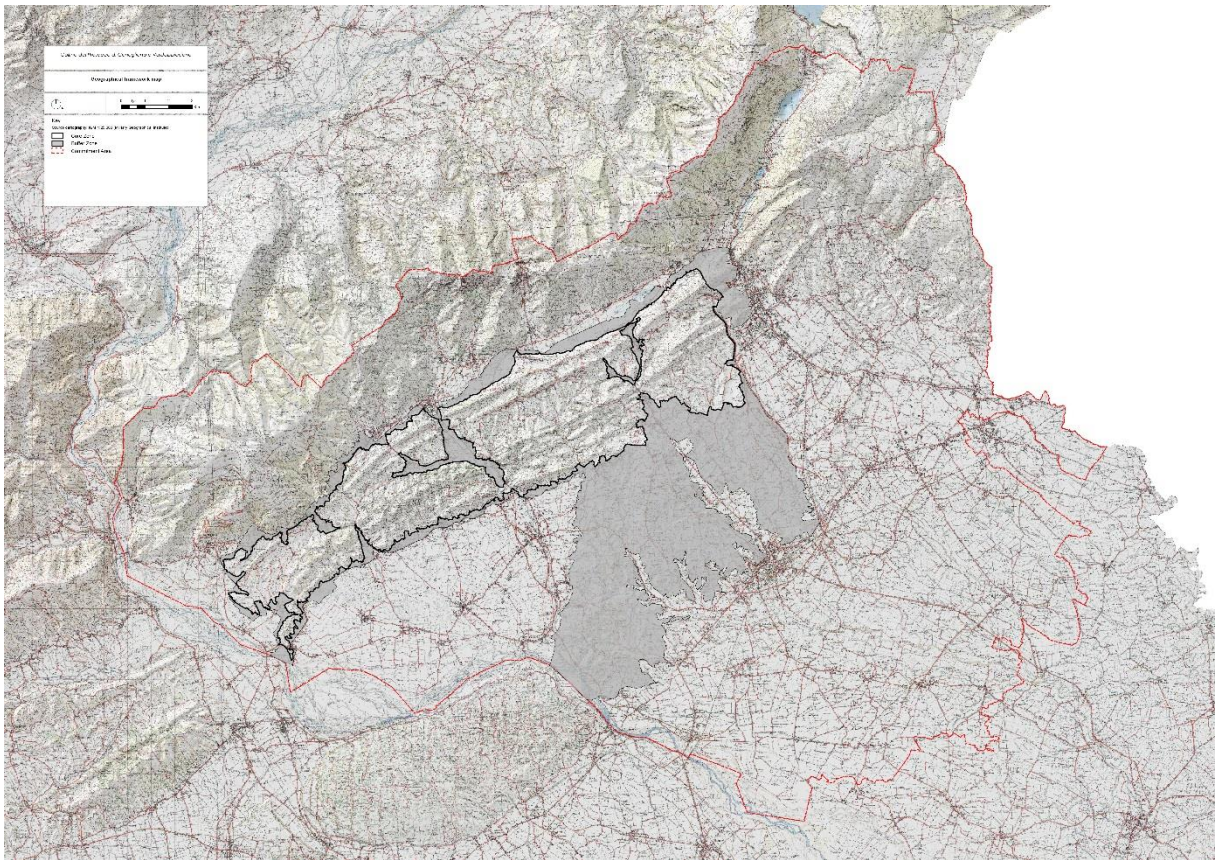
The management of the site is primarily linked to the plans and planning processes developed by the local authorities – the Veneto Region and the Treviso Province – which support and guarantee the participation of all stakeholders through a specific Regional Law (No. 45/2017). Construction of new production areas and buildings in the agricultural zone that are not strictly necessary for the working of agricultural land is not permitted. The Management Plan requires further development, adoption and implementation.

#### Additional recommendations

ICOMOS further recommends that the State Party give consideration to the following:

- a) Clarifying the extent of the Commitment Area (in hectares),
- b) Providing detailed mapping and inventories of the attributes of the property (particularly the vernacular,

- historic or modern architecture and settlements), with a clear distinction of the contents of the property and the buffer zone, and including inventories of flora and fauna,
- c) Establishing as a priority, a detailed condition assessment of all the attributes of Outstanding Universal Value, and incorporating this into the management system and monitoring arrangements,
  - d) Expanding the description of the present-day socio-economic system in relation to its history as part of the management and planning for the long-term sustainability of the cultural landscape,
  - e) Identifying and planning for the improvement of visually detrimental infrastructure, settlements and industrial facilities in the buffer zone (particularly to the north of the property and in the plain),
  - f) Improving the state of conservation of buildings in the property and buffer zone – particularly the vernacular architecture - based on a thorough inventory and condition assessment,
  - g) Improving the documentation of the contributions to the landscape character by historical and current forest management,
  - h) Further developing the monitoring system by adding indicators for the assessment of the state of conservation and the biodiversity of the property,
    - i) Further strengthening the protection for the landscape through implementation of the Detailed Landscape Plan (*Piano Paesaggistico di Dettaglio*) (PPD) at the regional level, the implementation of Intermunicipal regulation of rural police (*Regolamento intercomunale di polizia rural*), and through the implementation of the recently finalised adoption of the 'Technical Rule – Sole Article' by all relevant municipalities,
  - j) Fully including the property in the National Register of Historical Rural Landscapes, and fully incorporate its rules into the management system,
  - k) Further developing and finalising the management plan,
  - l) Developing sustainable tourism planning based on an approach which incorporates the property, buffer zone and Commitment Area, giving attention to the quality and consistency of new tourism facilities and infrastructure,
  - m) Enhancing the involvement of local communities in the management structures, and ensuring that local benefits flow from tourism and sustainable development strategies,
  - n) Ensuring that all new developments – including tourism infrastructure and wind or solar power installations in the buffer zone – are subject to rigorous Heritage Impact Assessment processes that consider their potential impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property and its setting prior to their approval,
  - o) Ensuring that all major projects that could impact on the property are communicated to the World Heritage Centre in line with Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*;



Revised map showing the boundaries of the nominated property



Overview of the vineyards



Steep slopes facing south, traditionally cultivated with *ciglioni*



The *bellussera* system viewed from above



Harvesting in the steepest areas of the site