WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTY “BUTRINT”

ALBANIA

Ref 570ter.

November 2015
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1 Executive Summary of the Report

The report for the state of conservation of the world heritage property Butrint was prepared in following the ICOMOS comments concerning the world heritage property Butrint presented to the state Party on 4 August 2015 (Ref.: CLT/HER/WHC/7963/AL/AF/PT) and in compliance to the format for submission of SoC reports in the Operational Guidelines 2015.

Chapter 2 focuses on the points the ICOMOS comments and gives information regarding the landscape mitigation works including photographs (Section 2.1.)

In section 2.2 the Report provides information regarding the issue of the Map of the World Heritage Property indicating also the existing buffer zone. The revised Map of the World Heritage Property of Butrint within the Butrint National Park is provided in Annex 1 of the report.

Section 2.3. of the Report give information regarding the issue of the Integrated Butrint Management Plan 2014-2020. As explained in this section, the preparation of this strategic document will be based on the new provisions foreseen in the new draft-law on Cultural Heritage. Currently the Administration and Coordination Office of Butrint will implement and follow up, along with the main directives of the Butrint National Board, the management provisions foreseen by the Environment Management Plan of Butrint.

Chapter 3, Section 3.1. (Annex 2) gives information regarding investments done within the world heritage property during 2015.

2 Response to the ICOMOS comments

2.1 Further detailed information on the landscape mitigation works as they progress including photographs

The State of Conservation report submitted by the State Party in April 2015 (Appendix 1 Photo 1 – 10) provides pictures of the current situation of the road.

Following the ICOMOS comments as stated in the previous reviews, the photos below are taken from the same viewpoints as the Report on the UNESCO – ICOMOS advisory mission to Butrint, (Albania), 2010 and Landscape Agency’s initial 2012 Issue document.

Section 1 - Landscape Agency’s Issue document, 2012 p. 10 – Saranda to Butrint new road
Section 2 - Landscape Agency’s Issue document, 2012, p. 7 – Saranda to Butrint new road

Section 2 – Current situation - November 2015
Section 3 - Report on the UNESCO – ICOMOS advisory mission to Butrint, (Albania), 2010, p. 21, 6.6.c

Section 3 – Current Situation - November 2015
Section 4 - Report on the UNESCO – ICOMOS advisory mission to Butrint, (Albania), 2010, p. 23, 6.6.f

Section 4 – Current Situation - November 2015
2.2  Map of the World Heritage Property indicating the existing buffer zone

The Map presented in the Report submitted by the State Party in April 2015 was prepared by the Ministry of Culture and the Administration and Coordination Office of Butrint in close cooperation with the National Institute of Military Geography.

The Map shows the boundaries of the World Heritage Property and the existing buffer zone. The World Heritage property covered an area of 2500 ha and lies within the Core Zone A (3980 ha-Environmental Zone) of the Butrint National Park as established by the Decision of Council of Minister no. No. 693, dated 10 November, 2005 “On the proclamation of the Butrint Wetlands Complex as National Park”. The entire area of the National Park as established by the above mentioned decision serves as a buffer zone of the World Heritage property.

The boundaries of the buffer zone of the WH Property are those as established by the above mentioned Decision, covering a total area of 8591.2 ha (Buffer zone - 6091.2 ha and Core zone 2500 ha.).

The State Party is considering the possibility for minor extension of the Buffer Zone. In case the State Party decides to extend the existing Buffer zone, it will follow the necessary procedures as established by the Operational Guidelines 2015.

Annex 1: Map of the World Heritage Property of Butrint and Buffer Zone

2.3  The Integrated Butrint Management Plan

The protection of the world heritage property Butrint is based on the Law “On Cultural Heritage” No. 9048, dated 7.04 2003, as amended and on a series of bylaws (Decision of Council of Ministers approved in 1998, 2000, 2003, 2005, 2013 and 2014). As it was presented in the report submitted by the State Party on April 2014, the implementation of the above legislation in all the cultural heritage management system in Albania has highlighted a series of problems and difficulties which make necessary the improvement of this legislation. For this purpose, the preparation of the new draft Law "On Cultural Heritage" aims to improve the operating procedures and the management system in the field of cultural heritage. The new draft-law is expected to be approved by the end of 2016.

The management of World Heritage Property within the National Park of Butrint is also subject to the Law on Protected Areas and the Law on the protection of biodiversity. Currently, the Ministry of Environment has started the process for the preparation of the new draft Law on the Protected areas, planned to be approved within 2016.

In this context, the draft of the Integrated Management Plan of Butrint 2014-2020, as presented in the Report submitted by the State Party on December 2013, will be revised and updated based on the new provisions foreseen in the new legal framework.
For the time being, the Administration and Coordination Office of Butrint will implement and follow up along with the main directives and programs approved by the Butrint National Board also the management provisions foreseen by the existing Environment Management Plan of Butrint.

3 Other current conservation issues identified by the State(s) Party(ies) which may have an impact on the property’s Outstanding Universal Value

3.1 Investment in the World Heritage Property Butrint during 2015

During 2015, The Administration and Coordination Office of Butrint through its staff or licenced companies (as established by the Albanian Legislation on procurement) has undertaken a number of maintenance and restoration works within the property.

The data include Administration and Coordination Office of Butrint budget funding (maintenance works), and international funding.

The Administration and Coordination Office of Butrint is a partner in the project EX.PO AUS (EXtension of PОtentiality of Adriatic UNESCO Sites), a cross-border project co-financed by the EU within the IPA Adriatic CBC Programme 2007-2013. In the frame of this project, two major restoration interventions were implemented in two castles located within the World Heritage Property. The first castle is located westwards at the mouth of the Vivari Channel and the second one on Vrina Plain.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>MONUMENT LOCATION</th>
<th>VALUE IN ALL</th>
<th>INTERVENTION PERIOD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Restoration and rehabilitation intervention in the Venetian Tower Within the core zone</td>
<td>823,574</td>
<td>May-August 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Rehabilitation intervention of the wooden stage – Theatre of Butrint Within the core zone</td>
<td>2,560,532</td>
<td>May 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Conservation and backfilling of Roman Thermae in close proximity to the Venetian Tower Near the main entrance to the Park</td>
<td>820,344</td>
<td>July – September 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Maintenance programme: - Management of vegetation in the ruins of the Hellenistic wall (from Gymnasium to the tower gate) - Management of vegetation and documentation of the Acropolis fortification</td>
<td>672,000</td>
<td>September 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>- Restoration of the Triangular Castle in Vrina Plain, Butrint - Restoration of Ali Pasha castle west at the mouth of the Vivari Channel Nearby the main entrance to the Park</td>
<td>9,149,679</td>
<td>August - October 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Conservation of the Peninsula's enclosing northwest wall</td>
<td>950,000</td>
<td>June – August 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.2 Activities of Butrint National Board during 2015

The Board of the Butrint National Park, was convened 3 times by the Minister of Culture during 2015. Composed of high representatives from the General Directorate of Strategic Planning for Cultural Heritage and Diversity in the Ministry of Culture, Institute of Cultural Monuments, Centre for Albanian Studies/Institutes of Archaeology, representatives of the Ministries of Environment, as well as the General Secretary of the Albanian National Commission for UNESCO, the Board is assuming its role as a proactive strategic institution in the management of the Butrinti Archaeological park. The newly elected Mayor of Saranda has been kept informed and invited by the General Director of Cultural Heritage to participate at the Board meetings with a view to eventually actively build the local authority She represents into the development plans of Butrint.

To best address the concerning needs, the last Board meeting (in September 19, 2015) was held in situ, in the WH Property. After the site visit and the vivid discussions/comments and views shared regarding best conservation, protection and presentation of Butrinti, the meeting focused mainly on the following:

1. Review and approval of the Park's annual, restoration/conservation intervention and maintenance program and research,
2. Allocation of required budgetary resources, and monitoring of the implementation of planned projects and activities,
3. International assistance through EU-IPA funding projects and other donors
4. Technical comments and recommendations of ICOMOS related to the report on the state of conservation of the world heritage property as presented by the Ministry of Culture on April, 2015.
5. State of conservation of the cultural monuments within the world heritage property

The need for a new integrated management plan for the whole property The indispensable need for an inter-institutional commitment and cooperation on the part of the specialized institutions covering various aspects like conservation and restoration, greenery and landscape, local handicrafts and intangible heritage etc., Requested by the Minister of Culture and approved by the Board (Decision No.1, dated 22.01.2015), the Ministry of Environment and its regional institutions are kept accountable for:

- Determining the status of the environment in the protected area and landscape of the Park and assessing and managing the potential impacts on flora and fauna.
- Assisting and supporting the staff of the Administration and Coordination Office of Butrint. Butrint has got one environmental specialist to attend on a daily basis but there is a need for the Environmental Ministry to dedicate its specialized people to it.

By the Decision of Council of Minister No. 102, date 04.02.2015 the new National Agency of Protected Areas (NAPA) was created. With a General Directorate located in Tirana and 12 regional Directorates, NAPA manages the network of protected areas and other natural networks as Natura 2000 under management plans. It designs and implements the management plans for protected areas and proposes changes and improvements to the legal framework for management of the PA.

Butrint as a National Park under the Law on Protected Areas and as a Ramsar Site is one of the main centers where NAPA and its Regional Administration of Vlora planned to focus their activities and program related to the management, protection and conservation of nature in close cooperation with the state institutions responsible for cultural heritage. Despite the better presence in situ, there is a need to further institutionalize and concretize this start off cooperation. Requested by the Minister of Culture and approved by the Board (Decision no. 1, dated 22.01.2015 and Decision No. 3, dated 23.09.2015) from January 2015, two specialized institutions, the Regional Directorate of National Culture, Vlora sector and the Institute of Cultural Monuments are formally responsible to cover all the technical needs, as jointly identified and/or requested by the Administration and Coordination Office of Butrint, concerning the drafting of ToR for project design, restoration and maintenance projects, (drafting of ToRs for the design of the technical project to the supervision of their implementation The National Centre for Inventorying of Cultural Properties is assisting the staff of the Administration and Coordination Office of Butrint in preparing and completing detailed schedules for each cultural monument/value housed in the world heritage property. As established by the decision No. 3, dated 23.09.2015 of the Board this process will be finalized by end of November 2015.

High level meetings have been convened with the Institute of Archaeology and the Institute of History, and the Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Education and Science upon which depend the two scientific institutes at the request of the MoC, to jointly decide on the best management and use of the premises and archaeological artifacts pertaining to the Institute of Archaeology.

3.3 Visitors management and statistics

The Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship and Tourism has trained and certified 18 touristic guides for Butrint and Saranda region in mid August 2015. Considered as inappropriate to introduce a new service/people in the peak of a high touristic season, Butrinti continued with the traditional scheme of involving the voluntary students, already familiarized with the various issues coming up over time.
While positive feedback regarding the presentation and maintenance of the Butrint archaeological park – as a better managed cultural and natural touristic product has been shared, the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare in cooperation with the Saranda Municipality organized late November 2015, a multi actor Conference on "Social Tourism – a Potential for Saranda". The speakers representing key institutions expressed their commitment to lobby for upgrading the social, medical, educational, housing infrastructure for hosting of the third –aged people in Saranda with a view to extending the touristic season of Saranda and revitalizing the housing resources created over the last 20 years. In the framework of prevention of illicit trafficking of cultural values, the Ministry of Culture is cooperating with UNESCO Office in Venice, Carabinieri per la Tutela del Patrimonio Culturale, Italy and the Albanian institutions related to the National Action Plan to establish and consolidate an inter-institutional working group, the Head of the Prosecution Office in Saranda was one of them. The group of 10 experts from the MoC, Heads of Prosecution Offices of Berati and Saranda, Customs Offices and National Center for Inventorying of Cultural assets last week in (22-27 November 2915). It will be followed up with awareness raising and information providing trainings for the various related groups of interest. The National Park of Butrint is still the most visited cultural heritage destination in Albania. Compared to one year ago, the Butrint National Park has an increased number of foreign visitors. The Park was visited by at least 1500 visitors per day during the last summer season. The table below shows the number of visitors during 2013, 2014 and 2015 (period January – November).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>January</th>
<th>February</th>
<th>March</th>
<th>April</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>June</th>
<th>July</th>
<th>August</th>
<th>September</th>
<th>October</th>
<th>November</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>683</td>
<td>3,043</td>
<td>13,150</td>
<td>8,680</td>
<td>16,775</td>
<td>30,542</td>
<td>14,011</td>
<td>4,544</td>
<td>648</td>
<td>92,359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>749</td>
<td>3,506</td>
<td>13,302</td>
<td>10,013</td>
<td>17,918</td>
<td>33,174</td>
<td>12,085</td>
<td>4,843</td>
<td>953</td>
<td>96,893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>1,115</td>
<td>4,451</td>
<td>18,276</td>
<td>16,910</td>
<td>23,527</td>
<td>43,435</td>
<td>20,088</td>
<td>8,202</td>
<td>1,375</td>
<td>137,949</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.4 Capacity building and training of the Administration and Coordination Office of Butrint

Ministry of Culture and Butrint National Board consider that the staff of Administration and Coordination Office of Butrint as well as the director needs to be exposed to the best conservation and presentation practices both in Albania and abroad. Hence during 2015, the Director and the staff have been attending some international trainings:

1. 23-29 August 2015 - A know-how exchange visit to Bulgaria, in the region of Burgas. The aim of this study visit was to "touch" the site conservation and development achievements, and learn also from the mistakes, in order to inspire a perspective for transferring the successful examples for the sustainable development of our project sites in Albania.
3. 21-26 September 2015 - Training course “Birdwatching & Wildlife”.
4. 18-26 September 2015 - Training “Conservation and Management of Archaeological sites with mosaics”, the last training session of a two year course.

4 Public access to the state of conservation report.


5 Signature of the Authority

MINISTER OF CULTURE

MIRELA KUMBARO FURXHI
ANNEX 2

Investments in the World Heritage Property “Butrint”
during 2015
I. Restoration and rehabilitation intervention of the Venetian Tower

Rehabilitation of the internal stairs of the Venetian tower

Before intervention

After intervention

Second floor of the tower

Before intervention

After intervention
Ground floor of the tower

Before intervention

After intervention

Internal and external stairs of the tower

Before intervention

After intervention
II. Rehabilitation intervention of the wooden stage – Theatre of Butrint
III. Conservation and backfilling of Roman *Thermae* in close proximity to the Venetian Tower

*Before intervention*  
*After intervention*
Before, during and after intervention
IV. Maintenance programme

- Management of vegetation in the ruins of the Hellenistic wall (from Gymnasium to the tower gate)

*Before and after intervention*
- Management of vegetation and documentation of the Acropolis fortification

**Before intervention**

**After intervention**
V. Restoration of the Triangular Castle in Vrina plain, Butrint

Conservation of the northwest tower of Triangular Castle
South facade of the Castle

Northern gate and stairs

Before, during and after intervention
Southwestern tower - basement

Before, during and after intervention

Inside the Triangular Castle

Before and after intervention
VI. Restoration of Ali Pasha castle westwards at the mouth of the Vivari Channel

Inside the castle premises/grounds

*Before and after intervention*
Entrance way to the castle

Before and after restoration works
VII. Conservation of the Peninsula's enclosing northwest wall

Before, during and after conservation works
Before and after conservation works