

REPORT
of the Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission to
Venice and its Lagoon
(Italy)
28-31 OCTOBER 2024



(Venice, Canale Grande © Bernhard Furrer)

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Over the course of its four-day programme, the Mission Team met a wide range of individuals and institutions working with dedication to protect the Outstanding Universal Value of 'Venice and its Lagoon' and its underlying attributes. Experts generously shared insights on various themes, providing valuable perspectives on both ongoing initiatives and future plans. Their commitment and knowledge are deeply appreciated.

The Team also thanks representatives of non-governmental organisations active in the protection of the property, who engaged in constructive dialogue and shared their views and concerns. Their contributions enriched the Mission's understanding of the broader context in which conservation efforts are taking place.

The Mission Team is grateful to all participants for the open, frank, and respectful exchanges throughout the visit, and for their evident commitment to the long-term safeguarding of the 'Venice and its Lagoon' World Heritage property.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND MAIN CONCLUSIONS

Following Decision 45 COM 7B.189 of the World Heritage Committee at its extended 45th session (Riyadh, 2023), the State Party of Italy invited an Advisory Mission to the World Heritage property 'Venice and its Lagoon' in March 2024. The Mission comprised experts from the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies ICOMOS and ICCROM. It was tasked with two principal objectives: first, to assess and advise on progress towards establishing an integrated management system for the property; and second, to evaluate the adequacy of the legal and procedural planning framework in preventing development projects within the property and its wider setting that could negatively affect its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV). In addition, the Mission reviewed progress in tourism management, the development of corrective measures, and the implementation of previous decisions of the Committee and recommendations made during the 2020 Advisory Mission.

To carry out its mandate, the Mission conducted site visits and engaged in dialogue with representatives of the State Party and its institutions at both national and local levels. It also met with representatives of non-governmental organisations. The Mission's observations and recommendations are presented in this report, structured by thematic areas as outlined below.

Management of the property

The Mission considers that a shared understanding of the OUV of 'Venice and its Lagoon', including its underlying attributes and associated values, is essential for its effective protection, conservation, management, and planning. To this end, the Mission recommends the establishment of a more detailed attribute framework. This framework should inform the further development of the draft updated Management Plan and underpin an effective monitoring system to assess the state of conservation of the property and evaluate the effectiveness of the management framework. A comprehensive attribute framework, supported by a GIS database, is also regarded as indispensable for assessing the potential impacts of proposed changes and development projects.

In the view of the Mission, while the existing legal and regulatory framework provides a basis for the property's protection, shortcomings remain in its implementation and coordination. In particular, there are insufficient linkages with strategic and spatial planning tools at local and regional levels, and limited mechanisms to anchor key actions within legal instruments at the national level. The Mission emphasises the importance of sustaining and implementing the priorities and funding mechanisms set out in the Special Law for 'Venice and its Lagoon' and related regulatory measures. These must be aligned with the Management Plan and other relevant plans and policies to ensure the ongoing safeguarding of the property's OUV. Furthermore, harmonisation between national, regional, and local regulations is required, alongside the development of legal tools specifically tailored to the needs of the property, or adjustments to existing frameworks at regional and national levels.

While recognising the complexity of governance and the progress made in improving management structures, the Mission considers it essential to clarify the roles, responsibilities, and mandates of all involved stakeholders – particularly those of the Steering Committee and the Site Managers. The Mission recommends the establishment of a formal World Heritage Site Management Office, equipped with independent technical expertise and a clear decision-making mandate for the whole of the property, to ensure the effective safeguarding of its OUV. Strengthening participatory approaches within the management system is also seen as a priority.

The Mission acknowledges the considerable efforts made in developing the draft updated Management Plan, which brings together a broad range of relevant information. It recommends

the use of the *Enhancing Our Heritage Toolkit 2.0*¹ to conduct a self-assessment of the management system prior to finalisation. The revised Management Plan should then be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by ICOMOS before adoption. The Mission further advises that the updated Plan be accompanied by a dedicated implementation plan (Action Plan) outlining short-, medium-, and long-term measures. These should support the integration of the Management Plan's objectives into formal planning tools and be formally recognised by all relevant authorities within the governance and management framework of the property.

Regarding the establishment of a buffer zone for the property, the Mission strongly encourages the State Party to continue pursuing the original proposal it submitted in 2019, in line with the World Heritage Committee's recommendations outlined in **Decision 43 COM 8B.46**, and the guidance provided by the 2020 Advisory mission. To provide an added layer of protection for the property in the meantime, the Mission recommends incorporating the area of the nine affected municipalities – as presented to the Mission – as a national-level protection zone within the relevant spatial planning instruments. Furthermore, it is essential that management measures for this zone be integrated into the updated Management Plan.

Development plans and proposals within the property and its wider setting

Regarding the planning framework for areas within the property and its wider setting, the Mission considers it essential for relevant stakeholders to develop a coordinated and integrated vision for planning and implementing changes and developments. This vision must take full account of the property's vulnerabilities and its capacity for change. To this end, the Mission recommends that major spatial planning tools explicitly reference the property's OUV and include a clearly defined list of its underlying attributes. These references should also be incorporated into environmental, land-use, and landscape protection regulations.

The Mission strongly advises the State Party at governmental level to revise regulations governing impact assessments in accordance with paragraph 118bis of the Operational Guidelines. It is recommended that project proponents be required to undertake iterative impact assessment processes, specifically focused on the property's OUV and attributes. All projects with the potential to adversely affect the OUV – whether within or around the property – should be subject to individual impact assessments. Only those proposals that demonstrate no negative impact on the OUV should be approved. In support of this, the Mission recommends the development of a strategic Skyline Policy document for 'Venice and its Lagoon', based on the 'Functional Tool for Skyline Policy' presented during the Mission and submitted to the World Heritage Centre as well for review with ICOMOS. This Policy should establish maximum building heights in areas within and around the property to prevent the cumulative negative impact of large scale and high-rise developments and be integrated into relevant planning frameworks.

The Mission reviewed the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) prepared for a selected group of twelve larger-scale projects and found it to be of good scientific quality, utilising a sound methodology appropriate to the complexity of the task. Nevertheless, these projects – and similar ones proposed within and around the property – pose a significant risk of adverse impacts on its OUV and its diverse tangible and intangible attributes. The way this HIA was being conducted, also highlights a critical deficiency in the planning system, which currently does not mandate World Heritage-focused impact assessments at early project stages for developments that could affect the property's values. Accordingly, the Mission recommends establishing coordination mechanisms and an integrated vision among stakeholders responsible for planning and authorisation. This approach should include strategic consideration of the cumulative impacts of both small and large interventions, alongside clear priorities to ensure the protection of the OUV and all attributes of the property. Further recommendations include conducting a World Heritage-

¹ Available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/eoh20/>.

focused Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the revision of the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (PUMS) and developing a dedicated policy for the renewable energy transition and its related projects.

With regard to flood management, the Mission acknowledges the significant investments made to develop the MoSE system to protect 'Venice and its Lagoon' from the impacts of *acqua alta*. However, the Mission stresses the importance of ongoing monitoring of the system's effects on the Lagoon's morphology and ecosystems, in line with requests by the World Heritage Committee, and the provision of regular reports. The Mission also commends the emergency interventions and current flood management project for San Marco Basilica and Piazza San Marco, which it considers respectful of the property's OUV. The State Party is advised to keep the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS informed of the project's progress and to report on the medium- and long-term effectiveness of the installed system.

The Mission received new or updated information on specific projects from the State Party's representatives and learned of several additional projects from third parties. The Mission also recommends carrying out the SEA already recommended on the options for developing port systems for large ships, either inside or outside the lagoon, which would not result in adverse impacts on OUV of the property and its relevant attributes. Additionally, the Mission recommends taking a cautious approach for extending shipping routes in the Lagoon, and to abandon plans to reopen the Vittorio Emanuele Channel. The Mission provides individual recommendations on the other projects.

Tourism management

The Mission recognises the important role tourism plays in sustaining the economy and supporting both residents and businesses within the historic urban areas of the property. However, it considers that mass tourism, or overtourism, represents one of the most critical challenges for 'Venice and its Lagoon', as it exerts a major negative impact on its OUV. Therefore, finding and maintaining a sustainable balance between generating economic benefits and preserving the tangible and intangible values of the property – while safeguarding local communities from the damaging effects of mass tourism – requires significantly more effective actions than those implemented to date.

In this context, the Mission emphasises the crucial role of the existing visitor infrastructure within and around the property, as well as the planned expansion of such infrastructure, in shaping tourism management outcomes. Consequently, the Mission advises the State Party to support and coordinate the development of a dedicated Sustainable Tourism Management Plan for 'Venice and its Lagoon' as a World Heritage property. This Plan should aim to promote sustainable tourism through measures designed to substantially reduce the number of daily visitors and limit short-term rentals of private apartments and houses. The Plan would also facilitate a strategic assessment of existing initiatives, including the effectiveness of the access fee introduced in 2024, and support the design of additional tools to manage tourism pressure more efficiently.

The proposed Tourism Management Plan should be based on systematic data collection and take the property's carrying capacity into account. To be effective, it must be supported by appropriate legal instruments enabling the introduction and enforcement of necessary restrictions, alongside financial incentives to offset potential economic losses for stakeholders during the transition period. Revenue generated from tourism management measures, such as the access fee, should be reinvested into enhancing property management, undertaking conservation and maintenance work, and improving the quality of life for local residents.

Furthermore, the Mission acknowledges the efforts made by relevant authorities to support residents and local communities through targeted housing programmes aimed at renovating

existing homes and providing new accommodation to reverse the decline in residents of the historic areas of Venice. Nevertheless, the Mission recommends strengthening these efforts by adopting a more integrated and strategic approach to improve living conditions for local communities, while avoiding further expansion of tourism infrastructure.

Overall state of conservation of the property and development of the corrective measures requested by the World Heritage Committee

The Mission acknowledges that the relevant Italian authorities have made significant efforts to address several issues previously identified by the World Heritage Committee, and progress has been made in implementing a number of the Committee's requests. However, these efforts have yet to translate into a marked improvement in the overall state of conservation of the property. Most of the recommendations from the 2020 Advisory Mission remain valid and require continued attention. Consequently, the Mission urges the State Party to persist with their implementation alongside the recommendations contained in this report. Furthermore, the Mission emphasises that the World Heritage Committee's request to develop a comprehensive set of corrective measures, accompanied by a clear timeframe for their execution, is essential to safeguarding the property's OUV. The corrective measures developed to date by the State Party could be expanded and further refined, closely integrated with the updated Management Plan. These measures may form the core of the property's Action Plan – serving as a key component of the Management Plan's implementation strategy – and be organised into short-, medium- and long-term actions.

A draft table is provided in **Annex 5** combining the 2020 Advisory Mission recommendations with the findings of the current Mission. The table groups these recommendations and findings under four key topics:

- Management of the property,
- Development plans and proposals within the property and its wider setting,
- Tourism management, and
- Environmental values of the Lagoon.

This table should be regarded as a foundation for developing corrective measures. The State Party, at all levels, is encouraged to refine and finalise it before submitting it to the World Heritage Committee for review and approval.

The full list of recommendations from the Advisory Mission is provided in **Chapter 3** of this report.

1. BACKGROUND TO THE MISSION

The World Heritage property 'Venice and its Lagoon' was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1987, on the basis of all the cultural criteria (i), (ii), (iii), (iv), (v), and (vi). The retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value of the property (**Annex 1**) was adopted in 2013 at the 37th session of the World Heritage Committee (Decision **37 COM**).

The property has been under a Reactive Monitoring process since 2014, due to long standing issues. The challenges that the property is faced with have an adverse impact on its Outstanding Universal Value individually and adding up to cumulative impacts. The key challenges could be listed as:

- deficiencies of the legal framework (national and local levels) and integrated management of the property,
- pressure from mass tourism/over tourism, paired with the continued decrease in the number of local residents on the islands in the Lagoon,
- the alteration of the spirit of the place and loss of historical authenticity,
- pressure from developments within the boundaries of the property and in its wider setting, (including industrial infrastructures, high-rise constructions, new facilities for transportation and visitors) paired with deficiencies in the planning mechanisms and framework,
- human intervention causing damage to the Lagoon ecosystem (including traffic from large ships entering the waters of the Lagoon, in particular cruise ships and oil tankers docking at the industrial port of Marghera),
- the negative impact of climate change, in particular temporary flooding with increasing frequency and the steady rise in sea levels.

Since 2016, in its successive decisions (**40 COM 7B.52**, **41 COM 7B.48** and **43 COM 7B.86**), the Committee has considered the possible inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger if the implemented mitigation measures and the adapted management system did not result in significant and measurable progress in the state of conservation of the property.

In 2021 and 2023, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies considered that the property continued to face ascertained and potential danger as defined in paragraph 179 of the Operational Guidelines, and therefore, recommended its inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger, hoping that such inscription would lead to greater dedication and mobilisation of local, national and international stakeholders, for the development of effective and sustainable corrective measures to address long-standing issues. Nevertheless, in its **Decision 44 COM 7B.50**, the Committee decided not to add the property to the List of World Heritage in Danger. Instead, it requested Italy to develop, in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, a proposal for corrective measures with a timeframe for their implementation. In its subsequent **Decision 45 COM 7B.189**, the Committee considered that the corrective measures proposed by the State Party needed to be further developed. It, therefore, urged the State Party to continue implementing its previous decisions and recommendations of the 2020 Advisory mission, through a structured consultation process with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies. An online Technical Assistance meeting took place on 13 July 2023, with the participation of representatives of the State Party, the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS (see in **Annex 9** the Summary Report of this meeting).

At its extended 45th session in 2023, the Committee also encouraged the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission to the property to assess the overall state of conservation of the property and to engage with the State Party in its efforts to address the issues which could have a potential impact on the preservation of the property (Decision **45 COM 7B.189**). Following this latest decision of the Committee, on 28 March 2024 the State Party of Italy invited a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission to the property and submitted with the invitation a proposed Terms of Reference.

The draft Terms of Reference for the Mission were jointly revised by the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM, to make it more focused on specific issues to be addressed by the Mission, also taking into account the relevant decisions of the World Heritage Committee. The agreed Terms of Reference with Italy is available as **Annex 2** of this report.

The main objectives of the Advisory mission were to:

- assess the overall state of conservation of the property and to
- assist the State Party in its efforts to address those issues that may have a potential impact on the conservation of the property.

In order to achieve the latter, the Mission was entrusted to assess and advise on the following:

- 1) progress towards the property's integrated management system, including the proposal for the establishment of a buffer zone, and the finalisation of its updated Management Plan,
- 2) the adequacy of the legal and procedural planning framework to prevent development projects within the property and its wider setting that may adversely impact on its OUV,
- 3) progress in tourism management of the property,
- 4) progress in the further development of the corrective measures and the implementation of previous Committee decisions and recommendations of the 2020 Advisory mission so as to assist the State Party in their implementation.

Prior to the Mission, the State Party provided updated information related to these issues by submitting:

- an updated summary of the outcomes of the Heritage Impact Assessment World Heritage 'Venice and its Lagoon',
- updated documentation on the project of building temporary barriers and other infrastructure to safeguard the Basilica di San Marco and the surrounding area from the high-water phenomena,
- information and documents related to the 'Marzenago River Park' project,
- information related to the interventions within the City of Venice for wastewater treatment and drinking water supply,
- information and documents related to tourism management (experimental implementation of the access fee and regulating accompanied tourist groups).

In addition, the Mission team referred to the replies provided by Italy in the Third Cycle of Periodic Report for the property (Section II. of the questionnaire).

The State Party provided a draft programme for the mission following the agreement on the Terms of Reference (ToR). As this initial draft did not fully align with the ToR, joint feedback and requests for revisions were communicated by the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS, and ICCROM. A revised programme was subsequently submitted by the State Party; however, it did not incorporate all the requested amendments (see the finalised version in **Annex 3**). This presented certain challenges for the mission team in preparing this report. Additional documents and information requested by the mission team and received following the mission are provided in **Annex 7**.

It is also important to note that over the last 10 years, two missions have visited the property:

1. between 13-18 October 2015, a World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/Ramsar Reactive Monitoring mission, and
2. between 27-31 January 2020, a World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/Ramsar Advisory mission.

The reports of these missions are referenced in this report, using the relevant year of the missions as identification.²

As the property has been under Reactive Monitoring for 20 years, a vast amount of information and documentation is available in the form of reports, submitted by Italy to UNESCO, reports prepared by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies (ICOMOS and ICCROM) to the Committee for the sessions of the World Heritage Committee when the property's state of conservation was reviewed, and letters and documents exchanged between UNESCO and Italy over the years. The Mission studied the available documentation and was also presented with information and documents by the State Party related to specific subjects before, during and after the visit to the property. While much of this information and documentation underpins this report, the Mission necessarily had to limit the depth and level of detail in the final report.

² The reports of these missions are available on UNESCO's website dedicated to documents related to the 'Venice and its Lagoon' World Heritage property through the following link:
<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/394/documents/>.

2. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPONSE TO THE TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)

This section of the report is structured following the main objectives included in the Terms of Reference of the Mission. (The complete Terms of Reference is included in [Annex 2](#), and the list of documentation requested as additional information, in [Annex 7](#)).

2.1. Management of the property

The management of the World Heritage property 'Venice and its Lagoon' is made up of legal frameworks and governance structures, including procedures and roles of stakeholders at international, national, regional and local levels that form a very complex management system. At the heart of the management system should be the maintenance of the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) and the attributes that convey the OUV.

2.1.1. The Outstanding Universal Value of the property and the attributes that convey it

'Venice and its Lagoon' is an extraordinary World Heritage property, one of only two globally that has justified inscription under all six cultural criteria (the statement of OUV is provided in [Annex 1](#)). Sustainable management of World Heritage properties requires complex and interdisciplinary management systems and plans. Yet, safeguarding the OUV and significant number of attributes of 'Venice and its Lagoon', and the parallel handling of the many challenges, threats and opportunities it faces, calls for extraordinary care and attention in planning and implementation of the legal, governance and management systems.

In addition to the OUV and significant number attributes attesting to the cultural heritage dimensions of the urban areas of Venice, the Venice Lagoon is a large coastal saltwater basin, and the largest lagoon in the Mediterranean. It contains significant landscape- and natural characteristics recognised in particular through criterion (v). The Lagoon of today results from a combination of its intrinsic natural properties and events as well as a long history of anthropogenic interventions which have significantly altered its evolution. Additionally, the associated and symbolic aspects recognised through criterion (vi) provide yet another layer of intertwined complexity to the property.

'Venice and its Lagoon' is also a historic yet living heritage, in which local communities and a plethora of functions and activities through public service, local businesses and cultural stakeholders sustain and support the daily life of people in the World Heritage property. A key issue in this regard is the need to sustain a liveable city, while safeguarding the OUV of the property. Climate change is already a significant ongoing threat to both communities and the OUV and attributes of the World Heritage property, requiring a systematic approach to safeguard those communities and the property itself. Tourism plays a significant role in economic terms but also has the potential to undermine local commercial and neighbourhood urban fabrics and services. Demographic changes and depopulation are further major challenges not to be ignored, as well as the importance of safeguarding immaterial knowledge and traditional management techniques.

The administrative, financial, legal and planning structures in place to handle this plethora of issues are very comprehensive yet extremely complex. A consequence of such complex structures, with various stakeholders at different levels holding different responsibilities and interests, may be that mandates, roles and responsibilities can be overlapping and unclear. Another potential risk is fragmentation which may hinder ambitions for holistic management of a complex World Heritage property and also limit the full understanding and appreciation of various stakeholders of the OUV and attributes of the property. Having a shared understanding of OUV

in its various dimensions and the attributes that supports it is therefore crucial for effective management and protection.

Prior to the efforts to update the first Management Plan of the property (Management Plan 2012-2018), there was no attempt to systematically identify and map the attributes that convey the OUV of the property. Therefore, the 2020 mission report advised the State Party the following:

Recommendation 10 Ensure that the updated Management Plan is based on a systematic value assessment (including the identification and mapping of attributes that convey the OUV of the property) and accompanied by short- and medium-term Action Plans, including roadmaps and its measurable benchmarks.

In the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting (for which the reporting phase took place for Europe and North America between September 2022 to July 2023), seven key attributes of OUV were identified. These serve as a significant starting point for governance, management and monitoring needs:

1. Venice's and its major islands' artistic masterpieces and monuments
2. Historical urban fabric (made of minor buildings and calli, campielli, bridges, etc) and Venetian architectural typologies)
3. Use of traditional building materials and techniques in restoration projects
4. Venice lagoon ecosystem and its landscape (made of water, barene, ghebi, velme, lagoon settlements, casoni, fishing villages and fishing valleys)
5. Venice townscape and lagoon scape and significant scenic views
6. Testimony of Venice and lagoon culture (identity, cultural traditions, ritual and religious events, etc)
7. Legacy of the Serenissima and its influence (archival and bibliographic heritage, etc)

The State Party of Italy describes in its Periodic Report that the attributes are preserved, with the exception of attribute nr 6, which is considered compromised due to impacts of mass tourism. The State Party further comments that attributes 4 and 5 are subject to considerable attention from the authorities in charge. Overall, Italy considered in the report that the OUV of the property has been maintained. While the integrity of the property is considered intact, the authenticity of the property is reported to be compromised. This relates to tourism pressures and its social consequences, in particular within the Municipality of Venice.

The draft of the updated Management Plan (marked as 2024-2030) specifically describes the following eight attributes:

1. Venice and its major islands – monuments and art masterpieces
2. The historical urban fabric (consisting of its minor architecture, calli, campielli, bridges, canals, etc.) and the Venetian architectural types
3. Venice cityscape and significant panoramic views
4. Lagoon landscapes (lagoon waters dotted with Venetian fortresses, octagons, *casoni*, pile dwellings, rural architecture, fishing villages, fishing valleys, etc.)
5. The Venice Lagoon ecosystem and its landscapes (water surfaces, salt marshes, *ghebi*, *velme*, etc.)
6. Employment of traditional building materials and techniques in restoration projects
7. Historical marks from Venice and its Lagoon culture (identity and character, cultural traditions, ceremonial and religious events, etc.)
8. Legacy of the Serenissima and its influence (archival and bibliographic heritage, etc.)

There are significant similarities between the two analyses of attributes. Yet, certain differences can be outlined in particular in relation to landscape and waterscape and the specific mentioning of various attributes. These differences may seem minor but can potentially have large implications for the understanding of OUV and attributes. Concretely, the latter approach separates the Venice cityscape as a separate attribute disconnected from the environment. This may result in a significantly different approach towards grouping of attributes and subsequent management measures. Hence, this may also influence the understanding and analysis of impacts from various initiatives and projects within and around the World Heritage property.

It is further worth noting that the Heritage Impact Assessment for the 12 major projects (see chapter 2.2.2) have adopted a different approach altogether, in which three broad themes of attributes are defined:

1. The architectural masterpieces and urban structure of Venice and its islands
2. Venice and its Lagoon landscape
3. The testimony of Venice

For each of these themes, key attributes are identified connecting them to the OUV, the authenticity and integrity of the property, and one or more of its criteria.

The Mission considers that the State Party made an important step in starting to identify the attributes that convey the OUV of the property. As paragraph 111 of the Operational Guidelines points out, an effective management system includes *“a thorough shared understanding of the property, its universal, national and local values and its socio-ecological context by all stakeholders, including local communities and indigenous peoples”*.

Nevertheless, the attributes are currently defined at a high level, and the project to identify and map these in more details should continue. A shared understanding of what needs to be conserved, managed and monitored is crucial. In the case of impact assessment processes, it is of utmost importance that all relevant attributes are included to form the basis of assessment of a proposed change or development initiative.



Figure 1: Mapping of attributes (source: State Party presentation)

In the last Periodic Report, the State Party points to a number of issues and challenges which reflect a realistic perspective as well as strong intentions to continue its efforts to safeguard the property. The Mission observed that a number of actions have been initiated to tackle a series of challenges identified through both Reactive Monitoring, Periodic Reporting, Advisory missions and other mechanisms. Yet, it also became clear to the Mission that 'Venice and its Lagoon' may have different connotations for different stakeholders as to what needs to be protected and managed.

The Mission considers that there are indeed several unresolved challenges and issues related to the OUV and the attributes that convey it. Many of these challenges are described in-depth in previous mission reports and State of Conservation reports. **In order to reinforce the efforts for protecting and preserving the OUV of the property, to monitor its state of conservation in an efficient way, to update and reinforce its management system also by implementing a set of corrective measures as requested by the World Heritage Committee, and to control planning and development, the tangible and intangible attributes need to be identified, spatially mapped (when feasible) as well as included in GIS land use planning systems and made accessible to all stakeholders and right-holders with utmost priority.**

Summary of the recommendations of the Mission in relation to the OUV and attributes of the property:

1. A detailed, comprehensive framework for the OUV and its attributes should be finalised through an inclusive and exploratory process involving all relevant stakeholders to establish a shared understanding of the property. Additional heritage and conservation values at local, regional and national levels should also be considered and potentially included to strengthen protection and management. The *Enhancing Our Heritage Toolkit 2.0* (EoH 2.0) could be a useful tool to support this process.

2. Based on the comprehensive analysis of attributes conveying the OUV, tangible attributes should be mapped and incorporated into relevant GIS databases accessible to all stakeholders, ensuring they are considered in all future spatial planning and development initiatives.
3. The finalised comprehensive framework for OUV and its attributes should form the foundation for the updated Management Plan and all future revisions of legal, governance, and management structures and plans.
4. A framework for monitoring the state of conservation, including evaluation of management effectiveness, should be developed based on this comprehensive framework, enabling assessment of the extent to which heritage values are maintained and management objectives are met.

2.1.2. Legal and regulatory framework

A wide range of legal and regulatory frameworks at various levels coexist and provide protection for 'Venice and its Lagoon'. Through its ratification of the World Heritage Convention, Italy has committed to identify, protect and conserve World Heritage sites on its territory. The Constitution of the Italian Republic provides the State with central authority to enforce necessary mechanisms to safeguard 'Venice and its Lagoon', which includes all stakeholders at all levels.

In 1973, the Special Law for Venice and its Lagoon was issued, which, in parallel with later regulatory measures (Act 798/1984, Act 360/1991, Act 139/1992), define strategic objectives, relevant procedures and competencies of various institutional agencies. The Mission was informed of uncertainties in relation to continued priorities and funding through the Special Law, and the potential consequences related to safeguarding the OUV of the property. The Mission understood that the funding capacity under this law will expire soon, and a specific decision of the Italian Parliament is needed for its redetermination and reinstallation. The law and its accompanying funding schemes are considered crucial for safeguarding the OUV of Venice and its Lagoon, and it is highly important to ensure that its mechanisms for implementation are continued.

The geographical delimitation of Venice and its Lagoon corresponds to an area of "*considerable public interest*" demarcated by Ministerial Decree of 1 August 1985. The Decree is a legal instrument to safeguard protection of the property in which development initiatives, transformation projects etc must be subject to review by territorial offices of the Ministry of Culture. The definition of the World Heritage area as "*considerable public interest*" relates to "*the outstanding environmental landscape complex*" and the area being "*a unique example of an environmental system as an inexhaustible source of visual accumulations with high aesthetic value, in which naturalistic values, ecological singularities, rich archaeological and historical presences are present and interpenetrate*" (draft updated Management Plan 2024-2030).

Additionally, on the national level, a specific law related to protection and management of the Italian World Heritage properties was issued through Law no. 77/2006. General provisions for cultural heritage and landscape are provided through the National Decree n. 42 of 22 January 2004. Further, the spatial planning system on the regional and local levels, supported by a number of legal regulations, provides a framework for planning, change and new developments.

The planning system for 'Venice and its Lagoon' is characterised by its significant complexity with numerous spatial and sectorial planning instruments and plans at various levels (see in further detail in chapter 2.2.1).

The Lagoon is recognised by the European Union as a Natura 2000 site. The nature reserve in Campania Lupia was designated in 1989 as a Wetland of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. Overall environmental legal protection is provided through Decree No. 152 of 3 April 2009. Further, the natural environment of the Lagoon is protected under ministerial decrees of 1969 and 1985. Further legal instruments regulate the upstream water sources and the setting of the property at regional, subregional and local levels.

The management of the ports of the Lagoon is based on Law No. 84 of 28 January 1994 with complementary port strategic planning documents and individual, local masterplans. Later regulations limit the size of ships entering the various waterways and ports of the Lagoon. These are described in further detail below.

The State Party of Italy reported in the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting that the legal framework has an increasing positive impact. In general, positive developments have taken place in terms of the legal and regulatory framework governing 'Venice and its Lagoon'. Yet, the Mission observed that the multilayered legal provisions and various responsible authorities at local, regional and national levels are not always in mutual compliance in terms of regulations and legal requirements. This may potentially hamper the effectiveness of governance related to the property. This seems to be confirmed by the State Party in its Periodic Report, where governance (i.e. lack of effective governance) is indeed described as having a negative impact.

The legal framework is described in greater detail in the draft Management Plan and the 2015 Reactive Monitoring and 2020 Advisory Mission Reports³.

In general, the Mission considers that the legal framework can be considered sufficient but with deficiencies in its implementation and overall coordination, including in terms of specific linkages to strategic and spatial planning tools at local and regional levels. Further, the possibilities for certain needed actions to be anchored in high level legal acts at national level seems limited.

Throughout the discussions, the Mission was faced with problematic issues deriving from the characteristic of the property being a historic urban site situated on several islands, and therefore undertaking most of its activities related to transportation of goods and people, as well as maintenance services, on water. As this is a unique characteristic for an urban area in this scale in Italy, the laws and regulations at the national and regional levels are not adapted to the specificities of the site (for example the regulations towards speed limits and sanctions for boats circulating in the urban areas of the Lagoon, which are designed to regulate cars on the mainland). In addition, in line with the hierarchical structure of any legal framework, issuing the much-needed restrictions regarding tourism infrastructure on the local level (either for constructing new infrastructure or limiting and transforming existing infrastructure), needs authorisation from National-level acts.

The 2020 mission report already provided the following recommendation:

Recommendation 1 Recognise the specificities of the property and systematically revise the national and regional regulations in order to provide possibility for exemption from all relevant ones accordingly. Provide room for the regional and local authorities to prepare specific legal tools or adjust the national and regional regulations to the need of the property, to provide bases for its suitable management.

³ The two reports are available at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/394/documents/>

Recommendation 18 *Revise the Special Law for Venice, including fully the fact of the inscription of “Venice and its Lagoon” (with the planned buffer Zone) on the World Heritage List and clearly defining the consequential obligations.*

The Mission considers that these recommendations are still valid and should be implemented together with the recommendations below.

Summary of the recommendations of the Mission in relation to the legal and regulatory framework of the property. The State Party needs to

5. Ensure that the priorities and funding schemes established under the Special Law for ‘Venice and its Lagoon’, along with the related regulatory measures, continue to be implemented to safeguard the property’s OUV in the long term, in line with the Management Plan and other relevant plans and policies.
6. Conduct a hierarchical analysis of the legal and regulatory framework, clearly outlining the status and interrelationships of different instruments, strategies and policies.
7. Strengthen implementation and coordination of legal frameworks, ensuring specific linkages to strategic and spatial planning tools at local and regional levels.
8. Harmonise national, regional and local regulations, establishing mechanisms at local and regional levels to develop or adjust legal tools tailored to the property’s needs.

2.1.3. Governance arrangements and management system

The property ‘Venice and its Lagoon’ has a very complex governance system due to the multitude of stakeholders at different levels. The management system includes stakeholders and authorities at different institutional levels, while the overall responsibility for protecting and managing the World Heritage property rests with the State Party and includes stakeholders from the national, regional and local levels. The site itself includes nine municipalities inside and bordering the Lagoon. Numerous other public and private agencies and stakeholders have various responsibilities and interests in the World Heritage property. In addition, a range of national and international interest organisations and associations are actively involved in the management of ‘Venice and its Lagoon’. In broad terms, the management of interventions within the property is complex, with intertwined responsibilities between the State, the Veneto Region, the Province of Padua, the Metropolitan City of Venice (when involved) and the municipalities. The State Party explains that the structure ensures a balance between protection, local development and sustainability, yet at the same time the Mission team observes risks and significant challenges related to coordination of the many authorities and initiatives as well as fragmentation of responsibilities.

Based on the Special Law for Venice, an Interministerial Committee for Safeguarding Venice was established, composed of numerous ministries, the President of the Veneto region and mayors from the municipalities. This high-level Committee is a strategic decision-making body which reports to the Italian Parliament. An outline of the roles and responsibilities between the Government, the Veneto region, Padova Province and Metropolitan City of Venice and municipalities can be found in **Annex 8**.

The specific law related to protection and management of the Italian World Heritage properties issued in 2006 (Law no. 77/2006) was followed by a Memorandum of Understanding in 2007 signed by the responsible authorities for Venice and its Lagoon. In formal terms, the City of Venice was identified as site manager for the property, and the various authorities in charge at different levels are described as responsible bodies. A Steering Committee was established in accordance with Law no. 77/2006 to implement the Convention at the property and provide a platform for

collaboration and exchange, consisting of a political and technical member from each of the responsible bodies. The Steering Committee meets periodically to discuss monitoring of the conservation status and to implement the projects of the Management Plan. The draft updated Management Plan 2024-2030 (p. 54) outlines the composition of the current Steering Committee with 20 stakeholders with different and overlapping areas of expertise, roles and responsibilities.

The high number and wide range of stakeholders testifies to the complexity of the management system. The Mission observed that the structure of the Steering Committee appears fragmented and overlapping, with multiple jurisdictions and competencies acting within separate legal and governance structures. Although significant progress in collaboration and communication is reported, it appears unclear what mandate and formal role this body has collectively, especially regarding strategic level decision-making concerning the property

The Municipality of Venice is in charge of managing the property. The operational site management is currently coordinated by the International Policies, Cooperation and UNESCO Service of the Municipal Administration, consisting of a small staff. Its tasks include coordinating protection, management and enhancement activities in liaison with the Steering Committee. Beyond the important function as Secretariat for the Steering Committee, organising and coordinating its meetings, the role and mandate of this office remains limited in the understanding of the Mission.

The World Heritage Site Manager needs to coordinate protection, management, monitoring and enhancement activities, in collaboration with the Steering Committee and other relevant stakeholders, including the municipalities whose administrative areas encompass parts of the property. Hence, it must be ensured that a specific World Heritage site management office is set up and formalised with independent, technical, expert functions, yet with sufficient mandate to safeguard the OUV of the property.

Decision-making appears to follow formally established structures operating outside and individually of the Steering Committee and any operational site management. Hence, it is paramount to clarify the roles, responsibilities and mandates of the various stakeholders and authorities, and clearly show where decision-making and legal competencies are placed.

The Mission's observations align with the analysis of the State Party in its Periodic Report, where the current management system/plan is considered only partially adequate. It is further reported that the current management system is only partially implemented. In terms of coordination between various levels of administration involved in the management of the property, it is reported that there is coordination, but it could be improved.

The Mission also considers that the management system appears to be very much directed towards authorities, and less towards other stakeholders and rightsholders, such as land- and property owners, local communities, non-governmental organisations and businesses, etc. This is also evident in the reported "poor" cooperation between World Heritage management and landowners, local communities, youth/children, visitors, tourism industry, local businesses and industries among others. The same is also witnessed through the limited contribution of the management system towards local economic development, enhancement of livelihoods, social inclusion and equity etc.

The draft updated Management Plan outlines new governance and management structures that may contribute to resolve some of these issues (cf. 2.1.4 below), but caution and care must be exercised in decisions concerning who will be included, with what jurisdictions and

responsibilities, and it must be clear for all stakeholders where decisions are made and where actual overall responsibilities for the safeguarding of the World Heritage property reside.

The Smart Control Room (SCR) can fill a central role in monitoring and management of several complex issues in Venice and its Lagoon. In simplified terms, the SCR, through surveillance cameras and sensors, cell phone data, Artificial Intelligence and human verification, monitors all movement and activity in Venice. The Mission has been informed of plans to extend the SCR to include also the canal to the airport, along the Lido etc. The surveillance systems are very advanced, and allows for mapping of movement patterns, classification of types and modes of transport etc. The integration of all these big data into overall site monitoring and management is yet to be fully developed.

The Mission has been informed that the data collection and processing of SCR is conducted in full compliance with the national privacy legislation and the applicable national regulations concerning the protection of personal data. The collected data is used only for specific and legitimate purposes, such as the management of urban services and security, it is anonymized and aggregated to avoid the identification of individuals. Nevertheless, the Mission observed through its meetings with civil society organisations that there are feelings of alienation, inappropriate intervention in people's privacy and integrity etc. related to the SCR which should be discussed and resolved with the local communities.

At a general level, this Mission observed that the same stakeholders are involved in both governance and management, which may potentially blur the boundaries between creating and enforcing regulations and policies on one side and the application or implementation of those same regulations and policies in the management system. It must also be commented that despite the presence of a multitude of regulatory tools actual enforcement appears to be complex and not always consistent with the goals and ambitions necessary to safeguard the OUV of the property.

It has been noted by the Mission that some of the stakeholders have a well-defined and crucial role in protecting and preserving the OUV, its attributes and other local values of the property (like the museums working under the Venice Museum Association - *Fondazione Musei Civici di Venezia*; and the local branch of the Superintendency for Archaeology, Fine Arts and Landscape). Some of the actions of the competent municipalities (like the sections responsible for public works) carry out important maintenance work. Nevertheless, the role and mandate of other stakeholders is not so directly linked with the protection and management of the property. In this respect, the Mission sees room for enhancing the recognition and acknowledgement of a shared understanding related to the property's OUV and attributes, and the specific role each rights-holder and stakeholder should play.

The mission recognises the progress made through the development of the updated draft Management Plan and the signing of agreements between various authorities. Yet, the full formalisation of an integrated management and governance structure remains to be completed. In relation to the possibility of exploring the Enhancing Our Heritage Toolkit 2.0⁴ in terms of creating a shared understanding of OUV and attributes and a shared vision of how OUV should be protected, the same toolkit may be utilised to evaluate the current management effectiveness in terms of whether the OUV and various other heritage values are being maintained and whether management goals and objectives are achieved through the current management system and established structures.

⁴ Available at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/eoh20/>

The mission also observed that there is a heavy emphasis on rules, regulation, surveillance and policing when it comes to the management and protection needs of 'Venice and its Lagoon'. Complementary to this, it should be considered whether also incentive mechanisms targeted towards the needs of the property and its communities could be further developed and institutionalised. One example is the previous funding scheme through the Special Law for Venice which provided support toward restoration and conservation of privately owned property. Another potential incentive could be foreseen through the tax system, through which differentiation for owners using their property for residential purposes and having their primary address within the property is a possibility to be considered.

The mission considers that significant efforts have been undertaken, and progress is made in terms of governance and legal frameworks since the last mission to Venice and its Lagoon in 2020. Yet, the recommendations provided by that mission are still highly relevant. Harmonisation of national, regional and local regulations appears indispensable to achieve further progress, as does local and regional leeway to develop and implement relevant legal tools specific to the needs of the property or necessary adjustment of regional and national regulations.

The 2020 Advisory mission report provided a long set of recommendations concerning the governance system of the property and its management system which remain highly relevant:

Recommendation 2 Develop a shared vision for protecting the OUV of the property and ensure its transmission to future generations, furthermore, update and align the existing Road Map with this shared vision and develop an appropriate Action Plan (or Actions Plans if appropriate), related to the identification and mitigation of major threats to the property and its OUV as requested by the World Heritage Committee, and submit these in a draft form before final approval to the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies. Continue developing Master Plans defining and regulating specific issues for enhancing the protection of the OUV of the property.

Recommendation 3 Revise the governance of the property, especially the designation and mandate of the responsible site management, to enable more autonomous and empowered decision making and actions.

Recommendation 4 Reconsider the role of the Steering Committee, as this platform should act in a more proactive and cross cutting manner, developing overall visions, strategies and policies for the property, which then could be transmitted and discussed with the Interministerial Committee that has the power to designate projects and allocate financial sources for their implementation.

Recommendation 5 Ensure that the protection of the OUV of the property is harmonised on the local, supralocal, regional and national level. Provide a platform for discussing and mediating conflicts in an effective and result-based way.

Recommendation 6 Establish a participatory governance approach for the management of the property and in the main decision-making processes that have a strategic importance. Involve residents, civil associations, and through awareness raising tools visitors as well in the site management.

Recommendation 7 Provide means to the site management body in order to enhance the level of its involvement with all the stakeholders, including residents and civil associations, and enable the overall coordination power over the protection and management of the property, as well as its monitoring.

Recommendation 8 Develop adequate procedures for coordination and decision-making between the bodies involved in the management of the property and evaluate and assess sectorial needs and priorities.

Regarding visions for the future of 'Venice and its Lagoon' by the primary stakeholders responsible for its protection and management, the draft updated Management Plan opens with a paragraph that states that "Venice represents a millennia-old story of resilience, a story of continuous practice at sustainability and tireless resistance to the hazards, of various kinds, that have threatened the city for more than 1,600 years." The introductory text is also followed by another statement that points out that "The City of Venice had to establish itself in the Lagoon, with the knowledge that without the continuous and ingenious search for a balance between the needs of a community of inhabitants and the very special environment that hosts it, Venice would

never have survived.” These statements seem to correspond with the vision of the Mayor of Venice and the Metropolitan City of Venice as site manager, which was presented to the Mission, including seeing the property as “a city that continues to generate wealth and wellbeing for its residents, while safeguarding its historical and environmental framework, thus becoming a model of sustainability for the whole world. Our goal is not 'happy degrowth,' but rather a balanced and harmonious development that respects the city's identity without compromising the needs of progress. The future of Venice is built by enhancing its past and integrating the innovations of the present, without ever compromising what makes it unique. “

The Mission in this respect recognises the importance that a vision for the future of the city by its primary stakeholders has been articulated, however points out that in the respect of the World Heritage property ‘Venice and its Lagoon’, this vision needs to be the result of a coordinated agreement between all the stakeholders and rights-holders for the property, and especially that of the authorities in charge of policy development and decision making. As impacts of change derive also from outside of the property from its wider setting, the coordinated vision needs to be established with this in mind as well, and also when putting into action tools and measures for protecting and preserving the property’s OUV for future generations. Hence, the strategies and policies concerning decision making and management should be developed in line with the above approach.

The draft updated Management Plan also highlights the following in its introductory section: *“In order to promote an environmental, economic, social and urban planning model for the sustainable development of Venice and the Venetian Lagoon, the Municipality of Venice and the Veneto Region have promoted the "Venice World Capital of Sustainability" project which represents a virtuous alliance between local authorities, institutions, academia, culture and business, united by the innovative tool of the Participatory Foundation. In addition to the City of Venice, and the Veneto Region, the founding partners include the City's top scientific-cultural educational institutions (Ca' Foscari University, the IUAV, the Academy of Fine Arts, the Cini Foundation, the Benedetto Marcello Conservatory) some national industrial entities with strong local roots In addition, other business entities of absolute importance ... who, ... have expressed willingness to join the Foundation by contributing to the sustainable development and resilience of Venice: "the oldest city of the future". The representatives of the World Capital of Sustainability Foundation also regularly attend the meetings of the Steering Committee.*

While the Mission appreciates the commitment of the local stakeholders to work jointly and in a coordinated manner towards a sustainable development approach, it will be crucial to base these joint efforts on the shared understanding of the OUV of the World Heritage property ‘Venice and its Lagoon’ and fully identified system of attributes that convey it. **In order to efficiently channel the joint efforts into actions that respect these commonly understood values, the Mission recommends that the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape approach to be implemented through intersectoral cooperation among the relevant authorities and stakeholders.**

Summary of the recommendations of the Mission in relation to governance arrangements and management system of the property. The State Party needs to

9. Complete the ongoing development and formalisation of an integrated management and governance structure.
10. Appoint and mandate a dedicated team with technical expertise in World Heritage management as the operational site manager for ‘Venice and its Lagoon’. The role should be

formalised to coordinate implementation of the Management Plan, monitor the state of conservation, and evaluate management effectiveness.

11. Further develop participatory approaches in management, in line with paragraph 108 of the Operational Guidelines, to engage a broad range of stakeholders including landowners, businesses, civil society, local communities, youth, and visitors.
12. Establish and formalise systematic procedures for ongoing dialogue and involvement among stakeholders and authorities at all governance levels. Inclusive management can enhance local economic development, livelihoods, social inclusion, equity, and strengthen OUV protection.
13. Ensure that civil society and local communities are informed and involved in the development and implementation of measures related to the Smart Control Room.

2.1.4. Updated Draft Management Plan

The last Management Plan (2012-2018) for 'Venice and its Lagoon' expired in 2018, and the process of updating it began in the same year. The draft updated Management Plan (marked as 2024-2030) was updated considering the results of the monitoring of the previous Management Plan.

The 2020 Advisory mission provided the following recommendations in this process:

Recommendation 9 Ensure that the updated Management Plan becomes a living document, which is based on a shared vision by authorities and stakeholders and is developed in a transparent and inclusive way and available for all stakeholders, including residents, associations and non-governmental organisations. Ensure that the document serves as an integrated plan for the whole property and its planned buffer zone, which guides all responsible bodies and stakeholders, and provides them with detailed Road Map and indicators for measurable benchmarks in order to protect the OUV of the property.

Recommendation 10 Ensure that the updated Management Plan is based on a systematic value assessment (including the identification and mapping of attributes that convey the OUV of the property) and accompanied by short- and medium-term Action Plans, including roadmaps and its measurable benchmarks.

Recommendation 11 Ensure that the monitoring of the property is part of the management system and the Management Plan. The key indicators should be identified to measure and assess the state of conservation of the property, the factors affecting it, conservation measures at the property, the periodicity of their examination, and the identity of the responsible authorities.

Recommendation 12 Develop a specific monitoring system for vulnerability of heritage areas to Climate Change and strengthen the existing monitoring for disaster risk. Ensure that the updated Management Plan includes an integrated approach for disaster, Climate Change, and other risk preparedness, as well as training strategies for the responsible bodies and stakeholders.

Recommendation 13 Revise the overall management system of the property in the process of updating the Management Plan, in order to ensure that a sustainable development approach is followed, and the coordinated management of the proposed buffer zone is integrated into the management system.

Further guidance and input have been provided by the World Heritage Committee through its decisions (Decisions **38 COM 7B.27**, **40 COM 7B.52**, **41 COM 7B.48**, **43 COM 7B.86**, **43 COM 8B.46**, **44 COM 7B.50** and **45 COM 7B.189**), as well as the 2015 UNESCO/ICOMOS/Ramsar Reactive Monitoring mission report. A draft of the updated Management Plan was submitted to the World Heritage Centre on 18 June 2024 for review and comments.

In the form of a Technical Review, the Advisory Body ICOMOS undertook an assessment and provided comments and recommendations, which was transmitted to the State Party by the World

Heritage Centre on 24 October 2024, a few days before the mission took place. ICOMOS grouped its analyses and recommendations on the draft Management Plan under the following three main themes: 1) The integrated management system of the property, 2) The adequacy of the legal and procedural planning framework to avoid development projects within the property and in its wider environment that could have a negative impact on its OUV, and 3) Progress in tourism management of the property. Beyond the detailed comments on the above topics, ICOMOS generally recommended ensuring a better alignment of the strategic objectives with the operational actions detailed in the Management Plan and detailing the steps for implementing the actions by developing a clear operational strategy and planning that ensures the effective management of the World Heritage property and the conservation and protection of its OUV.

The Mission noted that the draft updated Management Plan addresses a number of issues related to the OUV of the property. The plan identifies five overarching management challenges as strategic objectives:

1. Environment & Climate
2. Protection & Enhancement
3. Sustainable tourism
4. Planning & Development
5. Communication & Training

The five strategic objectives are broken down into 29 operational objectives and 53 projects or actions. A set of monitoring objectives have been defined to verify implementation of the projects. An analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were undertaken for the five challenges.

Regulatory and planning system within the draft updated Management Plan

The draft updated Management Plan describes to a certain extent how the many layers of legal provisions are integrated. Annex A to the draft updated Management Plan analyses briefly the regulatory-planning system. The planning includes supra-municipal planning and programming tools, sector plans for special interests and municipal planning tools. The analysis lists a total of 60 economic, spatial, urban and environmental planning tools for Venice and its Lagoon. This analysis allowed for identification of competent entities and a gross list of institutional stakeholders, their respective responsibilities and the hierarchies between them. A total of 18 stakeholders are identified. It is claimed that this provides more clarity towards the functioning of the institutional legal framework, yet it is not fully clear how this insight is reflected in the draft updated Management Plan.

A highly positive outcome is the contextualisation of the planning instruments in relation to the focus areas that came out through the comprehensive analyses resulting in the five overall challenges guiding the draft updated Management Plan and the management system. Specifically, in terms of planning and development, it is commented in the analysis that *"The planning system for "Venice and its Lagoon" is very complex and characterized by numerous territorial and sector plans. Thus, the main area in which this challenge is realized is in their integration in order to ensure the protection of the OUV of the property and its attributes."* Hence, a strong emphasis should be on ensuring that all planning instruments are aligned with the safeguarding of the OUV of the property.

Only 10% of the 60 planning instruments analysed explicitly mention the 2012-2018 Management Plan. The Mission also noted that attributes related to criterion (i) (25 of 60) and criterion (v) (38 of 60) are clearly most present in the planning instruments. Attributes relating to the remaining

criteria are only found in a very low number of the planning instruments (cf. draft updated Management Plan, Annex A, pp. 49). This may also indicate a lack of shared knowledge and understanding of the criteria, the OUV and attributes, individually and holistically. A positive finding is that the planning instruments analysed are indeed highly consistent with and relevant in terms of the five overall, strategic challenges in the draft updated Management Plan. The analyses however reveal that challenge 3 – Sustainable Tourism, and challenge 5 – Communication and Training are the least covered by the existing planning instruments. These findings call for a specific focus on these challenges in the future management and governance structures. A further concern relates to coordination and harmonisation between all the different stakeholders and legal and planning mechanisms. It is important to ensure that roles and responsibilities are defined and agreed. Further, potential conflicts of interests must be identified and mitigated, including procedural challenges in cases where economic interests may be in conflict with conservation objectives.

Proposed changes to the Governance and Management System in the draft updated Management Plan

In the draft updated Management Plan, changes to the management and governance structure are suggested to ensure a multi-level, more inclusive, structured and effective organisation. These include both structural, legal and operational adjustments. Some of these are already being implemented.

The draft updated Management Plan suggests developing a work plan for the Steering Committee, to streamline priorities for action efficiently and in a participatory manner. The programme includes developing a new Memorandum of Understanding to establish and define the composition of the Steering Committee including roles, responsibilities and duties of all involved. The work plan will also include the definition of the buffer zone, implementation of the Management Plan's monitoring system and identification of corrective actions to allow full implementation and updating of the plan.

It is also suggested to formalise an agreement to govern the relationships between the authorities involved in the management of the property. This will also aim to redefine the role of the site manager, as well as outline the roles and commitments of the organisations involved in site management. There is also a proposal on strengthened community participation and involvement, but it is not clear how this will be actually implemented.

Structural adjustments for the Steering Committee itself are also suggested. A notable recent development is the creation of a new public body that assumes the entire responsibility for safeguarding the property related to the Lagoon itself, the 'Authority for the Venice Lagoon'. It should be operational as of 2025. It brings together several competencies and must be involved or referred to by all the bodies that intervene in the Lagoon system and whose actions may affect the property (e.g. the Port Authority, etc.). The great 'institutional' novelty is that the Authority is not an operational arm of a ministry but has its own autonomous form. The heart of the new institution is the Management Committee. It includes the four ministries that have direct jurisdiction over Venice and its Lagoon: the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of the Environment, the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Ministry of Finance. In addition, there are the competent territorial institutions: the Veneto Region, the Metropolitan City of Venice and the Municipality of Venice. This new organisation can make it possible to have a direct and continuous involvement between the various subjects responsible for environmental, infrastructural policies and protection affecting the Lagoon, a very important component of the World Heritage property.

A director is employed for the 'Authority for the Venice Lagoon', and the Mission learnt that transfer of personnel from the public works office will commence in January 2025 with the aim to have the authority fully operational as of June 2025. The Mission considers this to be a very positive addition for management of the water landscape, the natural attributes especially connected to criteria (v) and their essential contribution to the OUV of 'Venice and its Lagoon'. A number of issues were presented to the Mission, including massive loss of sediments jeopardising the sandbanks and related fragile elements, requiring cyclical restoration efforts and continuous monitoring. Another issue presented to the Mission is the collapse of fisheries in the Lagoon due to blue crab invasion. Not only has this disturbed the ecosystems of the Lagoon but also caused redistribution of benefits and financial gains from the marine economy, creating tensions between those benefiting from fishing crabs and those involved in traditional fisheries who experience a gradual collapse in the underwater ecosystem resulting in substantial losses in financial terms.

Further, close integration with the firm VERITAS (a fully public company) that is responsible for waste and sewage treatment and owned by the Municipality of Venice, will be crucial to monitor and safeguard the already highly vulnerable Lagoon area. Existing challenges related to sewage are well known. Specific risks can stem from overflow after extreme precipitation, an issue expected to increase with climate change effects. Nitrogen emissions can also be detrimental to the ecosystems of the Lagoon. Nitrogen is monitored but not separated from the discharge. In this context, the Mission notes that all wastewater treatment plants operated by VERITAS are subject to strict discharge limits, with even more stringent limits on nitrogen and phosphorus concentrations—especially in cases where discharge occurs into the Lagoon, which requires enhanced removal of these substances. Significant efforts are made towards separation of waste- and surface water. The purification systems in place and related monitoring systems are highly advanced and comprehensive. Nevertheless, the Mission received concerns from third parties about the incineration plants at Fusina. VERITAS informed the mission that they treat a total of 40 000 tonnes of sludge annually, of this, 20 000 tonnes goes to agricultural purposes, the rest to energy production and landfills. The Mission was also informed of plans to extend significantly the capacity of VERITAS. Any such extensions must be subject to Environmental Impact Assessments, and the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies should be informed and consulted.

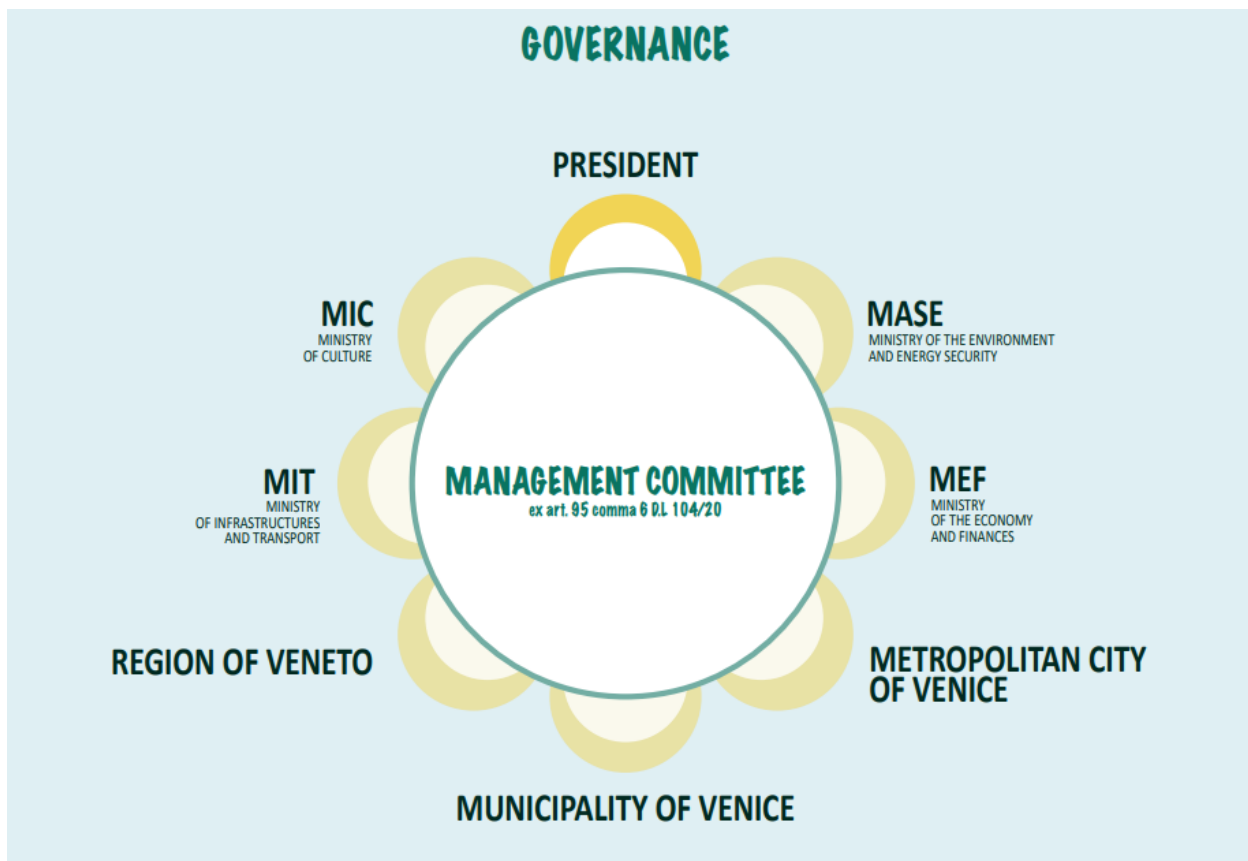


Figure 2: Suggested new institutional platform within the 'Authority for the Venice Lagoon' (source: State Party presentation)

Among the strategic actions that the 'Authority for the Venice Lagoon' intends to activate is placing the Lagoon's morphology at the centre of the Authority's operational policies. The intention is to change the paradigm whereby morphological interventions are a consequence of other actions (such as canal excavations or the effects of the MoSE). Instead, it will be the vision of the Lagoon's morphological dynamics that guides operational interventions for the maintenance and use of Lagoon environments.

The Steering Committee is thus suggested to be expanded to include also a representative for the "Authority for the Venice Lagoon". It will be crucial to fully integrate the new authority, its mandates and activities, in the management structure and plan for Venice and its Lagoon. It is also suggested to establish a "Steering Board", a small group composed by some of the authorities of the Steering Committee to ensure follow-up of decisions made by the Steering Committee.

A further structural adjustment proposed in the draft updated Management Plan is the establishment of Thematic Working Tables (cf. chapters 7.1/7.2) according to the five strategic challenges identified in the draft updated Management Plan. The Thematic Working Tables should enrich the network of stakeholders involved in management and make implementation more efficient. These thematic bodies will operate as consensus bodies and in continuous dialogue with the Steering Committee. These may be a valuable support for the Steering Committee and the site management, yet there is an unresolved risk in adding new structures with further potential jurisdictional overlaps and unclear roles and responsibilities.

The mission acknowledges the progress made and the well-founded considerations forming the basis for the suggested changes in governance and management structures. Yet, it will be absolutely critical that the many stakeholders, roles and responsibilities, mandates and activities are coordinated and integrated in a holistic management addressing the threats and serving the needs to safeguard the OUV of the property.

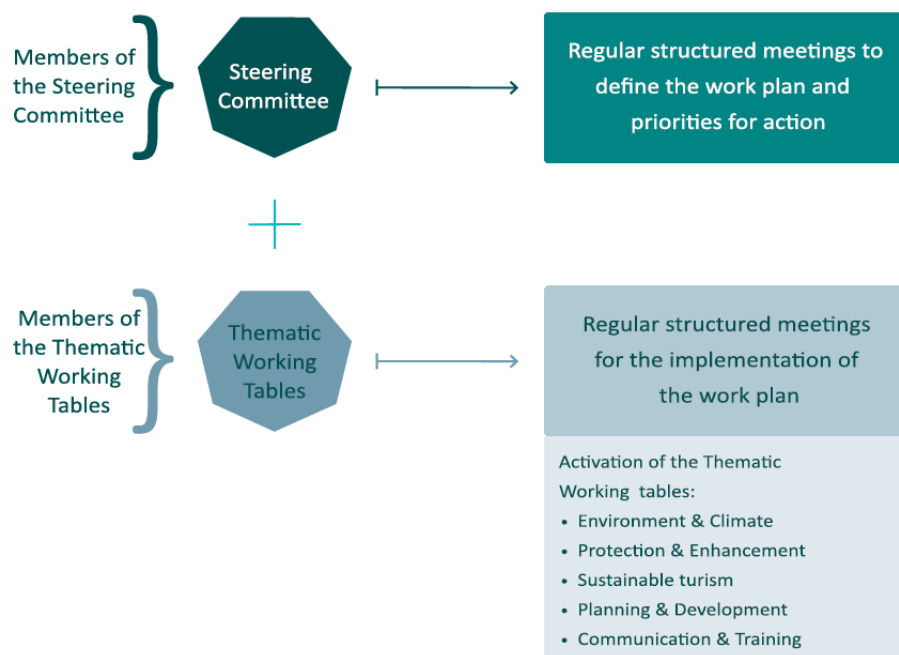


Figure 3: The functions of the Steering Committee and the Thematic Working Tables (source: draft updated Management Plan p. 116)

While the Mission received a document defining the composition, roles and responsibilities of the Steering Committee after the site visit, it is not clear from this whether the formal Agreement of the Steering Committee has already been updated in line with the suggestions mentioned in the draft updated Management Plan (cf. above). While it explicitly mentions the mandate for drafting of the Management Plan, it is not clear on specificities related to the planned buffer zone, monitoring system and corrective actions. A further document describes the members of the Steering Committee, explicitly mentioning the planned inclusion of not only the "Authority for the Venice Lagoon" but also the Venice World Capital of Sustainability Foundation. The document further states that "Over time, the mandate of the Steering Committee, even though not formalized, has been extended to all management activities of the site." This clearly indicates the need for clear agreements and definitions of roles, responsibilities and mandates of all stakeholders involved. An inclusive and participatory approach to management, in line with paragraphs 12 and 108 of the Operational Guidelines is crucial to ensure successful management and protection of the property and must be ensured in the finalised updated Management Plan.

Monitoring and indicators

In terms of monitoring, the draft updated Management Plan contains a specific action to define a set of indicators for assessing various interventions, plans and programmes. The review of the former Management Plan clearly shows the importance of effective monitoring of implementation and achievement of goals. The review summary does not indicate whether the monitoring has actually measured the effect of the projects and initiatives on the attributes that support the OUV of 'Venice and its Lagoon' and its ability to continue to meet the criteria for inscription.

In the draft updated Management Plan, monitoring appears to be directed towards the project bank, and not directly towards attributes, their integrity and authenticity, or management effectiveness. The mission considers that the current indicators only to a limited degree directly monitors state of conservation and whether OUV is maintained. Climate change impacts are also a significant factor which must be monitored. It should also be mentioned that results and outcomes from both Periodic Reporting and State of Conservation reports could be integrated, implemented and monitored in the Management Plan. This includes also relevant elements from the Action Plan for Periodic Reporting and relevant monitoring measures in that regard.

Tourism management is discussed in more detail in chapter 2.3.3. It should however be noted that this topic is included as an overall strategic challenge in the draft updated Management Plan when it comes to management and protection of Venice and its Lagoon. The State Party and various levels of authority have committed to work with these challenges through for example the Smart Control Room and the piloting of the Entry Fee system in 2024. Yet, the draft updated Management Plan does not appear to target the underlying systemic challenges related to environmental issues and infrastructure challenges arising from tourism, and the current monitoring system does not seem to provide clear indicators to measure the potential impact of various initiatives such as the Smart Control Room and the Entry Fee on the attributes that support the OUV of the property. It should be noted that demographic changes, gentrification, increase in temporary residents and property conversion towards short-term rentals at the expense of local residents have effects on sense of place, feelings of belonging and the notion of being a "Venetian". These are complex relationships between people, culture and place which must be monitored and managed.

The mission was informed that a proposal for indicators towards monitoring of the criteria (and thus the OUV and its attributes) was being developed. This can be a crucial component of a comprehensive monitoring strategy and -system. The Mission is of the view that consideration should be given to strengthening the monitoring system for the state of conservation of the property through development of a comprehensive monitoring strategy and -system which encompass all aspects of OUV, including the ability of the property to meet the justification of the criteria and its attributes. Monitoring will be a crucial step to ensure that risks and impacts are mitigated and that the attributes conveying the OUV of the property are maintained. Systematic monitoring will also reveal needs of any necessary adjustments to the management system and governance structures etc. The management system and relevant indicators should be included in the new, updated Management Plan, and a plan for evaluation should be included to ensure continuity and avoid gaps between management plans. Necessary resources to develop and implement a systematic monitoring programme must be allocated.

The Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre should be consulted to provide guidance and advice before finalisation of these critical indicators. It is vital that all attributes are monitored, including all natural and landscape attributes. In terms of monitoring, it is also important to monitor the effectiveness of governance and management. Relevant indicators should be developed also for these dimensions.

Formal or legal status of the property's Management Plan

In Italy, World Heritage management plans do not have a legal status similar to that of other territorial plans or economic programming tools provided for by national or regional legislation. Hence, the safeguarding of the OUV of properties must be ensured by their management system, implemented through other, existing legal mechanisms. Still, the Management Plan is considered by the State Party to play an important role as a tool to coordinate various interventions including strategic conservation and valorisation efforts. The Management Plan is also considered crucial for

identification of issues and challenges, as well as opportunities related to the World Heritage property. In addition, it also has the mandate to outline roles and responsibilities.

The Management Plan should be highlighting and showing linkages between the many plans, initiatives and various stakeholders. According to the State Party, the finalised Management Plan will be approved by all concerned municipalities, with a resolution of their respective municipal boards, and will be integrated in the planning tools of the municipality. Once the plan is approved, it becomes a planning tool for the City of Venice, to be aligned with other planning tools. The monitoring system for the Management Plan will be integrated with administrative procedures, and overall, it supposedly becomes a plan on the same level as all other plans/administrative actions are based. Yet, the Management Plan formally will not have any planning or regulatory status but is intended as a tool to coordinate the many plans, initiatives, conservation efforts etc of the property. It must be clearly described who is responsible and accountable for the follow-up and implementation of the Management Plan.

The Mission acknowledges the efforts of all the stakeholders in developing the draft updated Management Plan, which includes a large array of important information related to the property and already provides a good outline of the current management system. Nevertheless, the Mission considers that it is of utmost importance that shared knowledge and understanding of the six criteria that justify the OUV of the property, and the attributes that support it are further developed, as well as the indicators for the state of conservation of the property (including its current state, trends and forecasts) and actively recognised as the foundation of the updated Management Plan.

The Management Plan on a strategic level should be accompanied by a specific implementation plan (Action Plan with short-, medium- and long-term actions with the identification of responsible parties and a timeframe for their implementation) towards the integration of the objectives of the plan into formal planning tools at the various levels involved in governance and management of ‘Venice and its Lagoon’.

The Mission also considers that there is a need to define structural, operational and legal adaptations of the Steering Committee, and to provide an effective legal mechanism to mandate and enforce collaboration across all levels of government. The corrective measures requested to be developed by the World Heritage Committee (cf. chapter 3. of this report), should also be an integral part of the Management Plan, as well as the Action Plan(s) developed for its implementation. The Mission recommends utilising both the ICOMOS Technical Review of October 2024 and this report in the finalisation of the draft updated Management Plan. The finalised draft document is advised to be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review and comments with ICOMOS before its adoption by the relevant authorities.

Summary of recommendations of the Mission in relation to the draft updated Management Plan. The State Party needs to

14. Further develop the draft updated Management Plan to include mapping of all relevant local, regional and national plans and their hierarchical relationships, providing mechanisms to ensure that future planning instruments align with safeguarding the OUV, particularly focusing on challenges such as Sustainable Tourism and Communication and Training.
15. Clearly outline and define revised governance and management structures, including roles and responsibilities of the Steering Committee, Authority for the Venice Lagoon, Site Management Office, and Thematic Working Tables, updating all relevant documents and agreements accordingly.

16. Define clear strategic objectives for short-, medium- and long-term management, and develops specific indicators within a comprehensive monitoring system encompassing the OUV and its attributes, relevant inscription criteria, management challenges, (future) buffer zone, and governance.
17. Integrate mechanisms to identify, mitigate and resolve conflicts of interest within governance, legal and planning frameworks to safeguard the OUV and promote sustainable development.
18. Develop mechanisms for the close integration of VERITAS (Venice's company responsible for waste and sewage treatment) into management and governance structures, in order to monitor and safeguard the highly vulnerable Lagoon area. This should include monitoring sewage and nitrogen emissions, as these can have a severe impact on the Lagoon. Any potential extensions to VERITAS' capacity and operations must be subject to Environmental Impact Assessments, and the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies should be informed and consulted in accordance with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines.
19. Finalise the Steering Committee's work plan to include:
 - developing a revised MoU for the Steering Committee,
 - formalising a proposal for a buffer zone,
 - establishing monitoring systems for the OUV and an evaluation procedure to assess the effectiveness of the management system and Management Plan. This procedure can also be used to prepare subsequent renewals of the Management Plan,
 - revising the corrective measures for submission to the World Heritage Committee for adoption.
20. Analyse climate change vulnerabilities and potential impacts, integrating mitigation and risk preparedness measures within the Management Plan.
21. Establish a shared knowledge and understanding of the OUV and the attributes that support it. This should be achieved by gaining an understanding of all the criteria that justify the inscription of the property on the World Heritage List, as well as the indicators for the state of conservation, the current status, and the trends and forecasts of all stakeholders. This will form the basis for the finalisation of the updated Management Plan. Consult the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre in the process of finalising the updated Management Plan.
22. Develop a specific Action Plan with short-, medium- and long-term actions integrated into the updated Management Plan.
23. Develop a method for adoption or formal recognition of the Management Plan across all relevant authorities involved in governance and management.

2.1.5. Progress on the establishment of a buffer zone

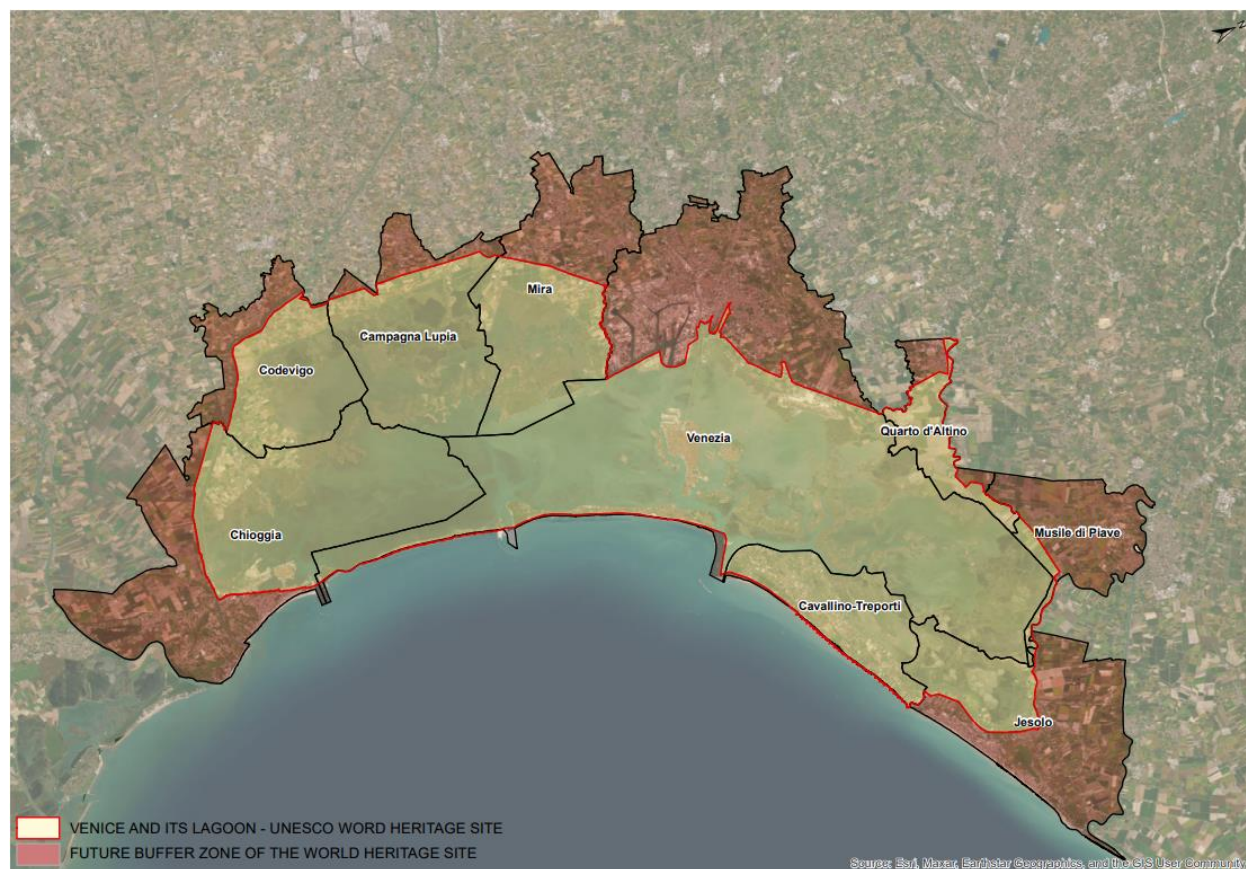
The World Heritage property 'Venice and its Lagoon' was inscribed on the World Heritage List without a buffer zone (See the official map of the property in **Annex 4**). The 2020 Advisory mission report summarised the history of the initiative to establish a buffer zone for the property that led to a minor boundary modification request by the State Party in 2019, examined by the World Heritage Committee at its 43rd session (Baku, 2019). This request was based on a thorough mapping of the hydrological areas and water sources feeding the Venice Lagoon. Based on ICOMOS's evaluation, in its Decision **43 COM 8B. 46**, the Committee referred the proposed buffer zone back to the State Party, requesting clarifications regarding the exclusion of the water bodies from the proposed buffer zone and reconsideration of the exclusion of this part of the southern coastal strip. It also called for the signing of a Programme Agreement to officially establish the

governance system for the coordinated management, enhancement and sustainable development of the proposed buffer zone.

The Advisory mission of 2020 also assessed the status of the buffer zone establishment plans and advised that the delineation of the buffer zone not be limited by administrative zoning or sectorial territorial designations but rather be based on the assessment of the OUV of the property (Recommendation 14 of the 2020 Advisory mission report).

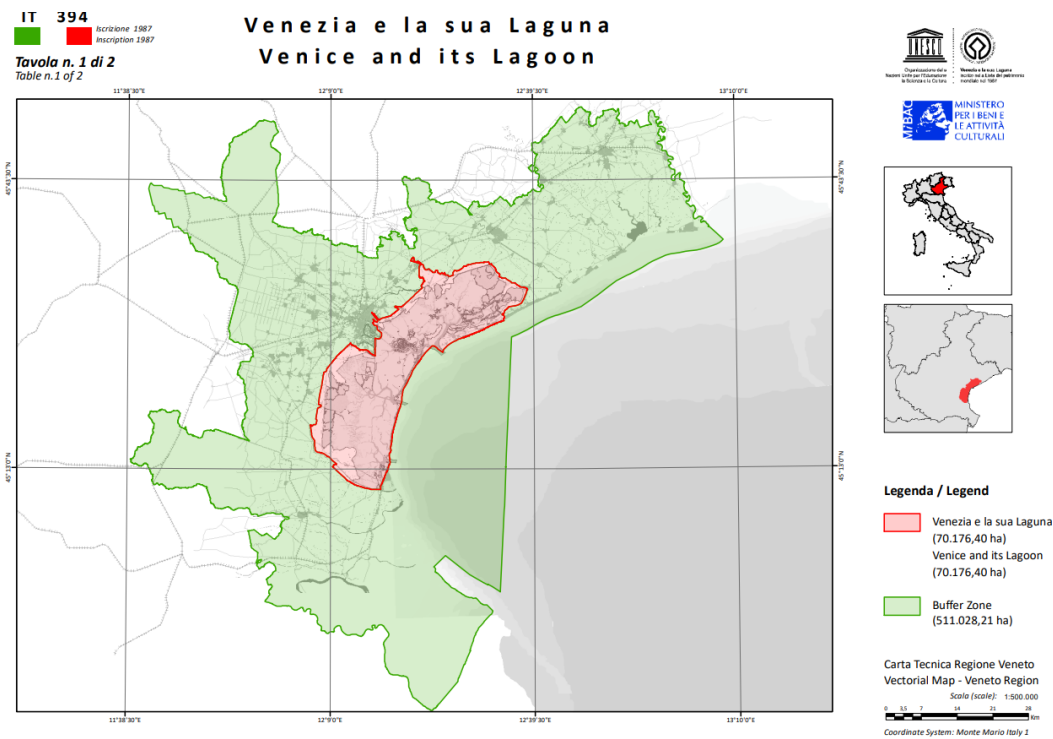
In 2023, through its **Decision 45 COM 7B.189**, the Committee urged the State Party to identify adequate measures for the future buffer zone within the updated Management Plan and to resubmit a revised minor boundary modification request for its establishment. Therefore, according to the Terms of Reference, one of the main purposes of this mission was to assess and advise on the progress towards the property's integrated management system, including the proposal for the establishment of a buffer zone.

The Mission was provided with a brief presentation by the Municipality of Venice concerning the buffer zone, which emphasised the aim for a stricter control over the water sources of the Lagoon. Nine different municipalities are situated in the territory surrounding the Lagoon, each of which has established regulations concerning the water sources. The Mission was presented with the argument that, from a regulatory perspective, the establishment of the buffer zone based solely on the mapping of the relevant hydrological areas, is no longer appropriate; instead, the inclusion of the area covered by these municipalities was proposed. Consequently, the State Party is considering a potential buffer zone around the property, with boundaries corresponding to those of the nine relevant municipalities. As additional information following the mission, the State Party submitted a map reflecting this proposal (see Map 2).

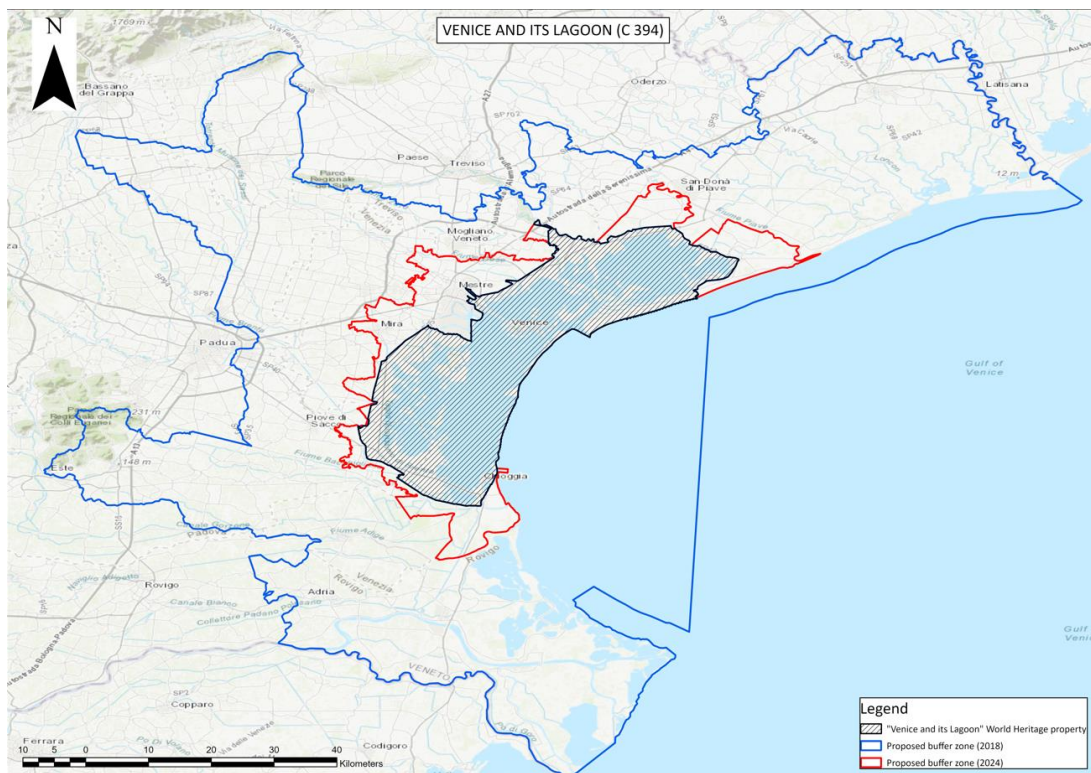


Map 1 Boundary of the World Heritage property 'Venice and its Lagoon' (red) and the latest suggestion (November 2024) for the boundary of establishing a buffer zone around it (black) (source: State Party)

The Mission compared the boundaries of the presented area with the previous proposal by the State Party in 2019 (see Map 3) and found that this new proposal suggests the establishment of a significantly smaller buffer zone area than the one proposed in 2019 (see Map 4). This new proposal is based on administrative zoning, and in the Mission's understanding, its definition does not specifically consider the supportive role of the buffer zone in relation to the OUV of the property. While aligning the buffer zone boundaries with those of the municipalities surrounding the Lagoon creates a relatively straightforward legal and procedural framework for its management, the original intention to designate a larger area based on the relevant hydrological areas is regarded by the Mission as a more robust approach. This is because it acknowledges the environmental interdependence between the Lagoon ecosystem and its water sources, highlighting the importance of keeping these areas under close inspection and control in relation to the state of conservation of the property.



Map 2: Area of the World Heritage property 'Venice and its Lagoon' (red) and the area requested as buffer zone around it (green) in the frame of a minor boundary modification in 2019



Map 3: Comparison between the suggested boundary of a buffer zone in 2019 (blue) and in 2024 (red) around the World Heritage property 'Venice and its Lagoon' (black)

Recommendation of the Mission in relation to the establishment of a buffer zone for the property:

24. To ensure the adequate protection and preservation of 'Venice and its Lagoon', the State Party should revisit and further develop the original proposal in line with the Committee's recommendations in **Decision 43 COM 8B.46** and the guidance provided by the 2020 Advisory mission.
25. To provide urgently an added layer of protection for the property, in parallel to this effort, the Mission advises the State Party to designate the area encompassing the nine affected municipalities as a national-level protection zone within the relevant spatial planning instruments and appropriate regulatory frameworks, and to integrate relevant management measures for this zone in the updated Management Plan.

2.2. Development plans and proposals within the property and its wider setting

2.2.1. Legal and procedural planning framework

With regard to the legal and procedural framework for planning and authorising changes and projects within and around the property, the Advisory mission of 2020 summarised the information that was valid during that mission, and provided the following recommendations related to this topic:

- *Recommendation 15: Develop an assessment process that would allow the site management body and the relevant authorities to comply with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines. Notify planned changes (major restoration or new construction projects) which may affect the OUV of the property to the World Heritage Committee through the World Heritage Centre as soon as possible and before making any decisions that would be difficult to reverse.*
- *Recommendation 16: Develop adequate processes that will allow the relevant authorities to fully comply with Paragraph 118bis. of the Operational Guidelines, which request for States Parties to ensure that Environmental Impact Assessments, Heritage Impact Assessments, and/or Strategic Environmental Assessments be carried out as a pre-requisite for development projects and activities that*
- *Recommendation 22: Halt any construction overtopping the average maximum height of the existing townscape and ensure that no further permit for buildings exceeding the average maximum height of the existing built fabric be issued in the setting and the planned buffer zone of the World Heritage property prior to the establishment of an Integrated Master Plan for construction projects within the property and its future buffer zone with a clear concept in relation to a Tall Building/Skyline Policy with maximum heights.*

In 2021, the World Heritage Committee in its decision concerning the property (Decision **44 COM 7B.50**) noted with concern that there are no adequate mechanisms in place to report planned changes/projects to the World Heritage Centre in line with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the Convention, or to assess their potential impacts on the OUV of the property in line with Paragraph 118bis, and therefore, urged the State Party to, among others:

- *Develop an overall strategy and vision for the protection and preservation of the property, and ensure its implementation through targeted Action Plans and a revised Road Map,*
- *Develop an Integrated Master Plan for construction projects, including a skyline policy for the property, its future buffer zone and its setting, in order to protect the property from impacts on its integrity,*
- *Implement the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape approach in the regional and urban planning,*
- *Halt all newly proposed large-scale projects within the property and its setting until the above listed measures are put in place,*
- *Engage in dialogue with the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies towards developing the proposed measures.*

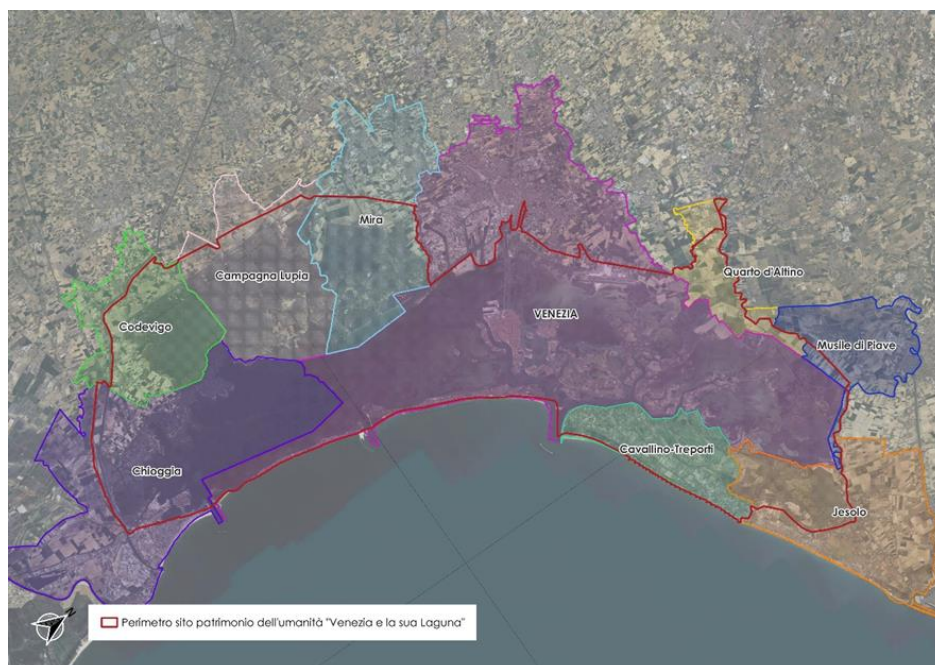
Following this decision, an online Technical Assistance meeting was held on 13 July 2023, for which Italy submitted brief information on 12 projects in the frame of a draft impact assessment which was in progress. The documentation also included proposed attribute groups that convey the OUV of the property, and a methodology for developing a Skyline policy. ICOMOS prepared a summary report after the meeting that they shared with the State Party on 1 December 2023. This report included a suggested Road Map for the relevant Italian authorities (see **Annex 9**).

Meanwhile, during its 45th session, in September 2023, the World Heritage Committee reviewed the state of conservation of the property, and in its relevant decision (Decision **45 COM 7B.189**) considered that the reported large scale development projects that were being investigated for

implementation in the property hold potential, individually and cumulatively, to have an adverse impact on its OUV, and expressed concerns that these projects, when implemented, will add to the possible deterioration effects of human intervention, climate change impacts and mass tourism, which could threaten to result in irreversible change, and substantial loss of historical authenticity and cultural significance, which are an integral part of the OUV of the property, if appropriate measures are not implemented. It moreover urged the State Party on the one hand to integrate measures in line with Paragraph 118bis of the Operational Guidelines that ensure the protection and preservation of the OUV of the property in the planning, Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment processes, and ensure that specific World Heritage-focused impact assessments are carried out if no other impact assessment procedures are in place to consider the impacts of planned or proposed projects within the property and its wider setting. On the other hand, the Committee also urged the State Party to establish processes in line with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines for submitting planned/proposed changes and projects to the World Heritage Centre in a timely manner for review by the Advisory Bodies and ensure that impact assessment processes and the Management Plan support the relevant decision-making.

This mission was entrusted according to its Terms of Reference, to continue to assess and advise on the adequacy of the legal and procedural planning framework to prevent development projects within the property and its wider setting that may adversely impact on its OUV.

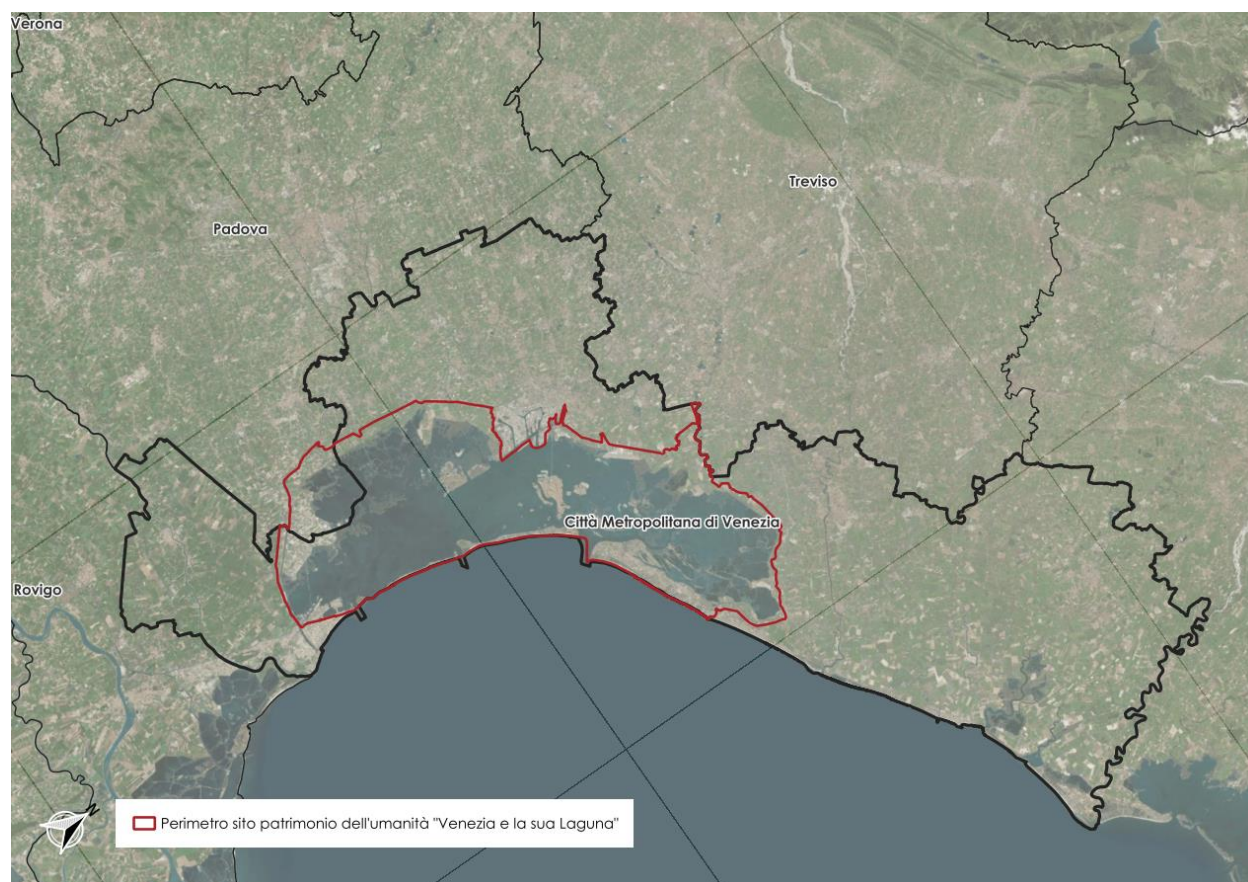
From an administrative point of view, the World Heritage property 'Venice and its Lagoon' is situated in the Veneto region in the territory of nine neighbouring municipalities (Campagna Lupia, Cavallino-Treporti, Chioggia, Codevigo, Jesolo, Mira, Musile di Piave, Quarto d'Altino and Venezia). A large part of its territory falls in the administrative area of the Metropolitan City of Venice, established in 2015 (and within it eight of the above listed municipalities) and a smaller part, in the administrative area of the Metropolitan City of Padua, to which only the municipality of Codevigo belongs (See Maps 5 and 6).



Map 4: Map of the World Heritage property 'Venice and its Lagoon', with indication of the boundaries of the municipalities which territories are overlapping with the boundary of the site (SP)

The national and regional planning frameworks do not contain specific provisions to safeguard World Heritage, and the Italian state relies on Regional Landscape Plans to "*identify urban and*

building development guidelines, according to their compatibility with the different recognized and protected landscape values, with particular attention to the safeguarding of rural landscapes and sites included in the UNESCO World Heritage List " (art. 135 c. 4 lett. d) of Legislative Decree 42/2004).



Map 5: Boundary of the World Heritage property 'Venice and its Lagoon' (red), with indication of the boundary of the Metropolitan City of Venice (black)

Regarding spatial planning instruments, the metropolitan cities have a Metropolitan General Territorial Plan that outlines objectives and fundamental planning elements, while the municipalities have Land Use Plans (*Piano di Assetto del Territorio* - PAT, that includes structural provisions), and Intervention Plans (*Piano degli Interventi*, including operational provisions). The approval of changes and projects are primarily within the mandate of the municipalities. The Metropolitan City of Venice approved its Strategic Metropolitan Plan in 2018. Subsequent Urban Municipality Plans are expected to be aligned with the Strategic Metropolitan Plan.

The Veneto region defines strategic directions and development scenarios, regulates environmental and land and landscape protection. In this respect, the mission was informed that the Veneto Region is working on identifying landscape assets with heritage value and integrating them into the Regional Territorial Coordination Plan (PTRC), as a result of an agreement between the region and the Italian Ministry of Culture to give the PTRC the quality of territorial urban plan with specific consideration of the identified and mapped landscape values (included in a GIS system). As a result, 14 Regional Landscape Plans will be approved (covering the area of the whole region) that will constitute the main reference for landscape planning and for the definition of conservation, and actions for reconstruction and transformation. The mission has also been informed that the Government can intervene directly in strategic interventions, such as projects

of national or international importance (e.g. port, airport or railway infrastructures), especially to speed up decision-making processes. While the Municipality of Venice also provides comments related to these strategic plans in order to maintain the property's OUV, it remained unclear for the Mission if there is an obligation for these initiatives to systematically consider the relevant inputs and ensure that approved projects do not harm the OUV of the property and the attributes that convey its OUV.

Regarding the situation of planned and proposed specific projects, the procedure is very straightforward when it comes to listed and protected areas or structures (that could be for example an archaeological site, element of landscape heritage, a protected area, a single historic monument or a group of historic buildings or other structures). The territorial office of the Ministry of Culture, e.g. the respective office of the Superintendence of Archaeology, Fine Arts and Landscape authorises the proposed actions and often carries out itself actions to maintain and promote these buildings or sites. The related procedures put in place works undoubtedly very well, and all the persons involved are highly trained experts.

Nevertheless, the situation is different when it comes to areas and buildings/structures with an 'unprotected' status. In addition, there is no specific distinction from a legal perspective if any planned changes or projects are taking place within the World Heritage property or outside it. Neither the Ministry of Culture (as the 'focal point' for implementing the World Heritage Convention regarding Cultural properties), nor the World Heritage site managers have the mandate in this capacity to be officially consulted in the decision-making process by the relevant municipal authorities and to halt projects that would result in an adverse impact on the property's OUV. Any intervention from their side is based on negotiations.

Concerning impact assessment procedures, Italy as part of the European Union, is implementing the relevant EU directives, and therefore, certain categories of projects fall under the requirement to be accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). Nevertheless, the national legislation for the EIA process does not include an obligation to assess cultural heritage considerations or World Heritage related impacts (impacts on the OUV and attribute) even if the project is planned or proposed in a World Heritage context (within a property, in its buffer zone or in its wider setting). Neither there is an obligation to assess impact of projects as a separate procedure on cultural heritage or World Heritage properties.

In the Mission's understanding, Strategic Impact Assessment (SEA) procedures also need to be conducted at a pre-planning stage in case the spatial planning framework (such as the PAT – land use plans) will be changed in order to accommodate a new, usually large scale, project proposal. Nevertheless, these SEAs (as the EIAs) do not assess impacts from a World Heritage perspective but focus on assessing issues related to the new land use, the density of the planned constructions, the building material intended to be used, etc.

The Mission learned that the Municipality of Venice started working on defining guidelines to assess impacts of planned/proposed changes on cultural heritage, nevertheless, in the absence of an appropriate national legal framework, this could not become a standardised legally binding tool. The Italian Ministry of Culture (often through the relevant office of the Superintendence) supports assessing the impact of certain projects when proposed in a World Heritage context. This has been the case with the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA), that included the 12 projects and of which a first draft was presented first to the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS in 2023.

While the spatial planning documents (like land use plans) might define designated heights and dimensions for constructions in different zones or plots, there is no legal framework for regulating the height of building within and around the property with the aim to preserve its OUV and attributes. The majority of the spatial planning tools are 20-25 years old and therefore date back to a time before this factor was recognised as a threat to the OUV of the property. New proposals are carefully assessed and considered by the planning authorities, whom within their mandate

make considerable efforts to initiate the mitigation of proposals that have an adverse impact on the property's OUV, special negotiations and agreements are needed with project proponents in the case of already approved projects. The Mission was informed that a scientific committee also operates as a body of the 'Venice Lagoon Authority'. It consists of up to five members, appointed by the President from among experts in the following fields: hydraulics, hydrodynamics, lagoon morphology, environmental science, ecosystem services, cultural heritage protection and preservation, climate change adaptation strategies, large-scale hydraulic defence systems, and environmental engineering. Its role is to support and advise the President also in the planning of relevant projects.

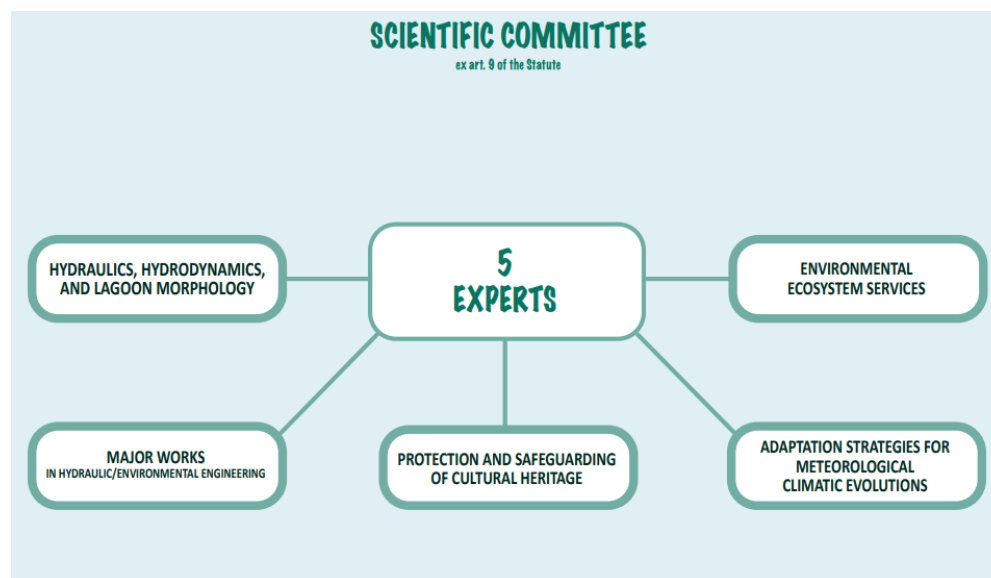


Figure 4: Composition and operation of the Scientific Committee (source: State Party presentation)

A project has been launched within the above mentioned HIA procedure for the creation of a tool to define the Skyline Policy, specifically for the 'Venice and its Lagoon' World Heritage property. This document of more than 100 pages, using a highly technical approach in order to establish a subjective visual assessment tool, was submitted to the World Heritage Centre in July 2024, and in the form of a Technical Review, ICOMOS International provided its detailed comments and recommendations for its further improvement, which was transmitted to Italy by the World Heritage Centre on 21 February 2025. **The Mission aligns itself with the assessment and recommendations of this Technical Review, and considers that the Skyline Policy document, as currently presented, could serve as a first, important attempt for developing a supporting tool in assessing the impacts of proposals that might have a visual impact on the property's OUV. Nevertheless, the methodology for establishing the visual value basis for the tool directly linked with the OUV of the property, needs considerable refinement and further development. As a second step, the tool should also serve the basis for developing a strategic level Skyline Policy (which has been requested by the World Heritage Committee) that aims to preserve the OUV and attributes of the property at the landscape level as well.**

During the presentation of specific projects, the mission noted the lack of a strategic vision for planning among the municipalities having mandate to approve proposals within the World Heritage property and in its wider setting. This was reflected especially in the increasing number of planned, proposed and already approved projects for high-rise buildings and it also points to the absence of a jointly agreed and approved Skyline Policy document that would provide all the relevant decision-making authorities with a guideline in relation to these types of proposals (or

any other type of project that might be incompatible with the preservation of the property). The efforts of the relevant authorities to mitigate the negative impacts of the high-rise buildings by reducing their heights during the planning approval procedure is clear, but at the moment all these efforts are done on a case-by case basis. In addition, without the supporting legal basis, the outcome of these efforts is not always fully satisfactory. The heterogeneity of management levels within the management system of the property makes the assessment of projects challenging and might lead to inconsistencies whether or not certain projects affect the OUV of the World Heritage property. In this respect, the emphasis from conservation (protecting and preserving the property's OUV) as a priority according to the UNESCO World Heritage Convention, could be overruled by the desire to optimise development and therefore rather focus on managing change and minimise harm, which is a completely different mindset in the view of the Mission.

The gap in the national legal framework for the implementation of paragraph 118bis of the Operational Guidelines prevents the inclusion of a basic and important tool in the planning procedure to ensure that the OUV and attributes of World Heritage properties in Italy are fully protected and preserved in the long term. This may also hamper decision makers in their efforts to fulfil the State Party's obligations towards the World Heritage Convention.

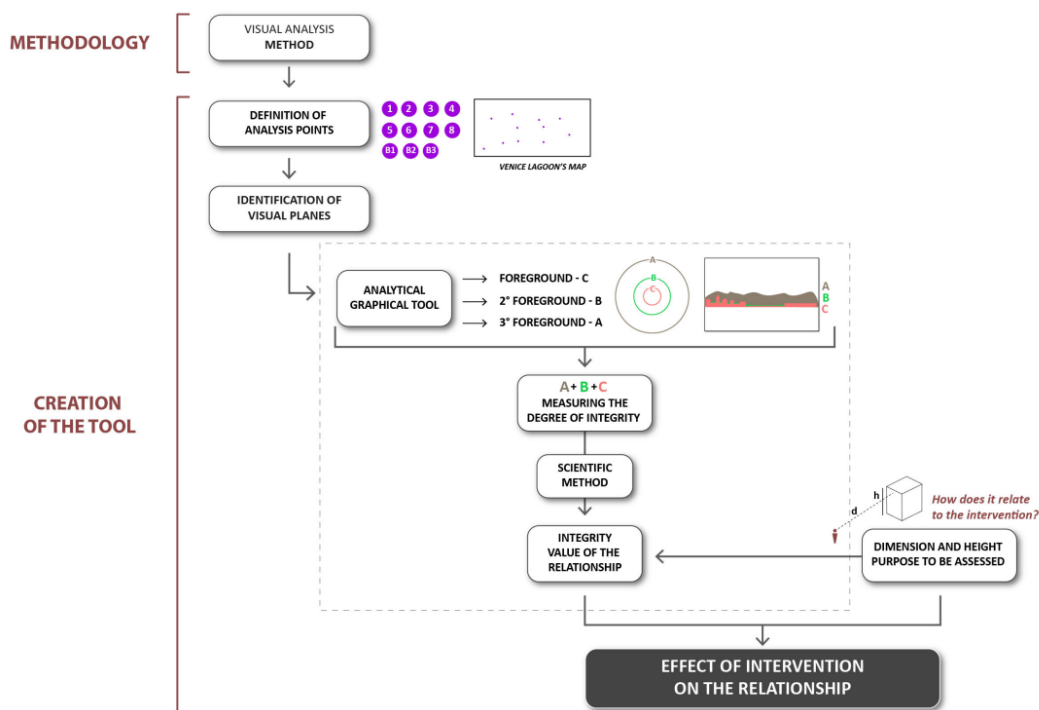


Figure 5: Methodology used for setting baselines and creation of the Skyline assessment tool (source: State party document)

The Mission considers that regional planning initiatives may serve the needs of World Heritage properties stretching across municipalities and regional entities. In the case of ‘Venice and its Lagoon’ it should certainly be considered whether a World Heritage focused regional approach paired with the implementation of the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape in strategic planning could be feasible as it could provide a stronger basis for long-term management and protection. Such planning initiatives, nevertheless, should also include, when relevant, World Heritage focused Strategic Environmental Assessments to provide baselines and ensure that environmental and other sustainability themes to safeguard the values and attributes of the property are considered in later steps of planning, policy and decision-making. This may also facilitate environmental and

heritage impact assessments (EIAs and HIAs) at local and specific project levels. For this to work, however, the World Heritage Management Plan of the property would need to have a much stronger official role than what is currently possible and should clearly set out ways that will allow project proponents to understand the parameters within which a development that supports the OUV might take place.

Summary of the recommendations of the Mission in relation to the legal and procedural planning framework:

26. Relevant stakeholders should develop a coordinated and integrated vision for planning and implementing changes and developments within and around the property, taking into account its vulnerabilities and carrying capacity for change. In this regard, it is strongly recommended to include specific references to the property's OUV and its defined underlying attributes in major spatial planning tools, as well as in regulations related to environmental, land, and landscape protection.
27. The State Party should revise, at the governmental level, the current planning policy framework applicable to projects within the property and wider setting, to ensure full alignment with paragraph 118bis of the Operational Guidelines concerning impact assessments. Systematic impact assessment procedures should be integrated at all relevant levels of planning and decision-making, with a specific focus on potential impacts on the property's OUV and its underlying attributes.
28. Using the further refined Skyline Assessment Tool, the relevant authorities should jointly develop a strategic Skyline Policy for the World Heritage property 'Venice and its Lagoon'. This policy should be prepared through coordinated cooperation among all administrative entities and relevant authorities and should define maximum height and volume limits for new constructions and for the refurbishment of existing buildings within and around the property to prevent the cumulative negative impacts of high-rise developments. These limits should be adopted into the relevant spatial plans and included in GIS databases linked to zoning plans, in order to reduce reliance on case-by-case assessments.
29. As part of finalising the updated Management Plan for the property, the relevant municipalities and regional authorities should update and harmonise their spatial planning tools and guidelines to ensure they collectively support the protection of the property's OUV and attributes. In particular, the Metropolitan General Territorial Plan and the municipal Intervention Plans should be revised to incorporate the restrictive measures developed through the Skyline Policy.

2.2.2. Projects reported under a single Heritage Impact Assessment

Regarding specific projects that are mentioned in this report in any of the chapters, the Mission was not entrusted for carrying out detailed and full evaluation of these, as this would exceed the scope of the mission. Therefore, the report provides general views and impressions related to the development projects based on site visits and information/documentation received, with the main aim of assessing whether any of these projects would require closer follow up by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies.

Prior to its visit to the property, the State Party submitted to the World Heritage Centre an extract (an English summary of the whole documentation including 161 pages) and a very brief status report with updated information of the 12 projects that were first notified to the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS in July 2023, and which impacts were assessed in a single HIA document. The Mission understood that this HIA has been financed by the Ministry of Culture and commissioned by the Municipality of Venice to include large scale projects within and around the property that have the potential to have negative effect on its OUV, in the absence of an adequate legislation that would oblige project proponents to conduct impact assessment procedures in the planning process of individual projects which would take into consideration or focus on the potential impacts of the planned changes on the OUV of the property. In the frame of this single HIA, the evaluation process of these projects had been concluded, and the information shared with the mission focused on the assessment of impacts (on the level of individual projects and considering cumulative impacts) and the resulting recommendations. The Mission was also informed during its visit that in several cases project designs had been modified or are being modified compared to the situation presented in the updated HIA summary, therefore, the images included in the report do not necessarily reflect a final stage. A completed version of the HIA (including only eleven projects, as the project 'Jesolo Magica' was considered no more relevant) has been submitted to the World Heritage Centre on 6 February 2025. While this document, amounting to 352 pages, have provided additional information for the drafting this report, due to its late arrival, could not be studied and analysed in depth by the Mission.

Description of the projects in question

The twelve projects in question and their recent status are included in the table below (the numbering follows the completed HIA, with 'Jesolo Magica' added as the twelfth project):

No.	Name of the project	Location of the project (municipality/borough)	Status (October 2024)	Planning approval status related to the HIA (finalised in January 2025)
1	Real San Marco Tower	Mestre	Project is progressing; HIA suggested the lowering of the towers; The Urban Implementation Plan (<i>Piano Urbanistico Attuativo</i> - PUA) is in process.	Approval granted before the HIA has been finalised
2	Towers via Ulloa – FFSS (linked with the railway Station upgrade of Mestre)	Mestre	Project is progressing; HIA suggested the lowering of the towers.	Approval granted before the HIA has been finalised
3	Sotoriva Restaurant	Cavallino Treporti	Project proposal withdrawn in order to develop a new proposal, more in line with the HIA recommendations.	N/A

4	Isola Blue Tower buildings	Jesolo	The two east and west towers received building permission already in July 2023. The remaining three towers envisaged by the project is being redesigned to lower their height.	Approval granted before the HIA has been finalised
5	Ex Casa per Ferie (former Holiday Home)	Jesolo	Project design was slightly modified compared to the status presented in the HIA; Under construction.	Approval granted before the HIA has been finalised
6	Ex Cantiere ACTV	Venice	Project is progressing; HIA provided several recommendations for its modification.	Approval granted before the HIA has been finalised
7	Former Gasometri	Venice	Project is progressing; HIA provided several recommendations for its modification. A new design solution is being evaluated also in the light of the HIA recommendations.	Approval pending when the HIA has been finalised
8	Bosco dello Sport	Mestre	Project design was slightly modified compared to the status presented in the HIA; Under construction.	Approval granted before the HIA has been finalised
9	Bretella Aeroporto (Airport ring road)	Mestre	The HIA provided several recommendations for modifications, and the project (following some revisions) is under construction.	Approval granted before the HIA has been finalised
10	PUMS project	Metropolitan City of Venice	Project is progressing; HIA provided several recommendations which are stated to be taken into account in the following design stages.	Strategic project framework, several elements will each need a planning permission
11	Photovoltaic fields Dogaletto	Mira	Project has been withdrawn.	Approval granted before the HIA has been finalised
12	Jesolo Magica	Jesolo	Project already has a building permit, but developer decided not to proceed with it. The final HIA excluded this project as not relevant anymore.	Approval granted before the HIA has been finalised

Figure 6: List of the 12 projects assessed through a single HIA process

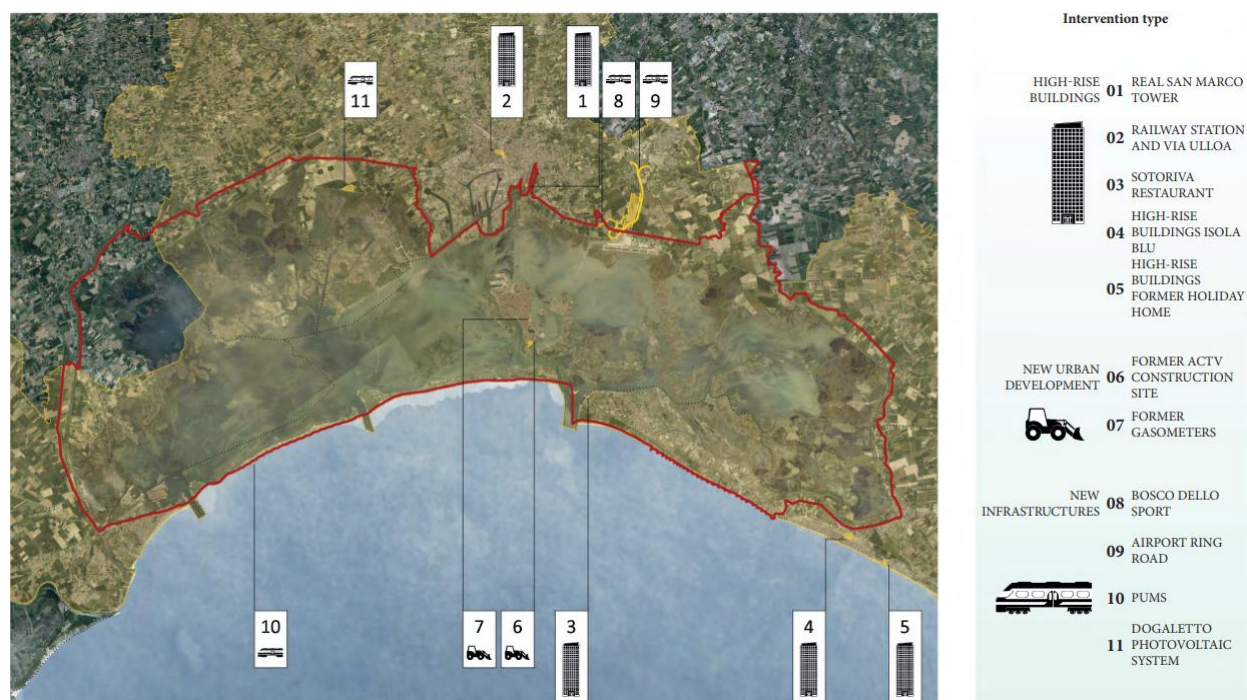


Figure 7: Location and intervention type of the 11 projects included in the completed HIA (source: State Party document)

Brief summary of the twelve projects

The Real San Marco Tower (1), now called “RSM Complex – Viale San Marco”, is a high-rise building construction project, located in Mestre, in the San Marco district, 150m outside the boundaries of the property. The project involves two autonomous sectors, the first compartment will comprise a commercial building with parking lots and an internal road network, and the second compartment features a residential building and a recreation area. The planned height of the tower, located in the second compartment, was 70m in 2021. The mission was informed that height of this tower has been reduced from 70 to 60 meters. The HIA concluded that the project has a negative visual impact on the values of the property and “*adds to the industrial and urban developments that have been creating a visual alteration to the understanding of Venice within its environment and broader context since the late 1800s*”. It recommends to “consider the vertical dimensions of the project in accordance with the Skyline Policy, in order to produce an effect below a threshold compatible with the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the Site.”



Figure 8 and 9: Project design of RSM Complex – Viale San Marco – initial on the left and with reduced height on the right (source: State Party document)

The Towers Via Ulloa – FFSS (2) at the Mestre Railway Station, is a combination of two interrelated projects located in the wider setting of the property, approximately two kilometres from its boundaries. The aim of the project in Mestre is to redevelop the urban area adjacent to the railway station by building two towers and to construct a link between Mestre and Marghera by adding a bridge. The project located in Marghera aims at building a public park and two multi-purpose towers (primarily for commercial function, including accommodation for visitors). Even though the project has already been requalified and the height of the towers on the Mestre side were reduced from 100m to approximately 50m in 2019; and the height of the buildings in Marghera were reduced to 80m in 2023 from 168m, the HIA concluded that the height of the four proposed towers poses a highly significant negative visual impact on the property's key attributes paired with a high cumulative negative visual impact. The HIA also pointed out the risk resulting from the establishment of additional accommodation near the railway station.



Figure 10: Project design of the multi-purpose towers and railway station upgrading with a new bridge at Mestre railway station (source: State Party document)

The Sotoriva Restaurant (3) is located in the municipality of Cavallino, within the property and is part of a wider recovery plan for the Dante Alighieri waterfront promenade along the north side of the Lido inlet (Punta Sabbioni). Its aim was pairing the redevelopment of the Sotoriva Restaurant with the construction of a new hotel and commercial building at the neighbouring plot. The HIA concludes that the project would have a dominant role in the historic maritime entrance to Venice and would add a new landmark to the low Lagoon landscape, significantly altering the relationships with the horizontal elements of the open Lagoon. The HIA recommends to *“avoid all tall buildings that are not necessary for navigation requirements or related to technical needs essential for the protection of Venice and its Lagoon, in order to maintain the character of natural and low beaches near the port entrances.”* According to the presentation, given to the mission, this project has been withdrawn in favour of finding a new solution which consider compatibility with the property’s values.



Figure 11: Proposed project design at the former Sotoriva Restaurant (source: State Party document)

The project of Isola Blue Tower buildings (4) is located in the municipality of Jesolo, 510m from the property’s boundary, within its setting and is part of an Urban Plan Implementation authorised in 2007. It consists of five vertical buildings ranging from 37 to 100m in height and forming a complex of towers. The building permits have already been issued for two of the towers and the other three are being reconsidered. The HIA concluded that the complex of towers would be visible across a significant portion of the Lagoon landscape and would have a negative visual impact on the property’s key attributes and threaten its integrity. It also added that the complex of towers would have a high visibility and adds a new landmark to the low Lagoon landscape, significantly altering the relationships with the horizontal elements of the open Lagoon. The HIA recommended modifications to *“consider the vertical dimensions of the project in accordance with the Skyline Policy, in order to produce an effect below a threshold compatible with the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the Site.”*



Figure 12: Project design of Tower Buildings Isola Blu (source: State Party document)

The 'Ex Casa per Ferie' (Former Holiday Home) (5) is a building complex project located in the municipality of Jesolo, outside the property within its wider setting, including a high-rise building element. Parts of the project has already been implemented, the high-rise building element in the Mission's understanding, is under construction. The HIA concluded that the presented design with the high tower has a negative visual impact as the planned tower will be visible across a significant portion of the Lagoon landscape. The HIA also noted that the *"tower is visible and adds a new landmark to the low lagoon landscape, altering the relationships with the horizontal elements of the open lagoon"*. The recommendation included to *"consider the vertical dimensions of the project in accordance with the Skyline Policy to produce an effect below a threshold compatible with the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the Site"*. The Mission was informed that some modifications were carried out in the final design, nevertheless the project is currently under construction.



Figure 13: Project design of the Ex Casa per Ferie (source: State Party document)

The former Cantiere ACTV site (6) is a residential development located in the municipality of Venice, within the property, on the island of Sant'Elena. The project is an Urban Variant to the Intervention Plan and involves the development of residential housing, with accompanying commercial activities, public spaces, green areas, and a sports centre, with large waterfront areas. The project is in a scale that is in line with its surroundings, nevertheless, the proposal involves the construction of a large contemporary volume on the waterfront and therefore has the potential to adversely impact the OUV and attributes of the property. Among others, the HIA recommends that the *“development should be designed as part of a broader regeneration plan for the social fabric that facilitates at the urban scale of Venice not only residential living but also an adequate balance with workplaces”*. The Mission was informed that the project managers have declared that the recommendations of the HIA will be taken into consideration for the subsequent design phases.



Figure 14: Project design of the Ex Cantiere ACTV (on the left)

Figure 15: the location of the project (on the right, encircled with solid yellow line) (source: State Party document)

The area of the “former Gasometri” (7) is particularly important as it is located within the property on the Island of Venice, facing the northern Lagoon waterfront nearby ‘Fondamenta Nova’. The project aims at creating a new urban district with housing facilities and public green spaces within the remaining buildings of the Gasometri (the remains of large former gas storage tanks). Accompanying the project, there are plans for adding a new bridge, a new multi-functional indoor sports facility and a floating pier for temporary mooring as well as creating a multi-functional indoor sports facility and modifying the bridge of Fondamenta Santa Giustina. The HIA concluded that the current design has moderate to major negative visual impact while having positive social impacts, and therefore recommended, among others, modifications regarding building volumes and the waterfront area. The Mission was informed that a new design is being evaluated in light of these recommendations.



Figure 16: Former Gasometri present status, Figure 17: planned project (source: State Party document)

The Bosco dello Sport project (8) aims to construct a large new sport-infrastructure in Mestre, in an agricultural area, inside the wider setting of the property and facing the edge of the Lagoon. It involves the construction of multiple facilities such as an arena, a stadium, and further educational, health and leisure facilities. The project also encompasses additional infrastructures such as parking space, green and landscaping elements and is linked to the completion of the new Tessera-Airport Road system. The project area is in the immediate vicinity of the Marco Polo Airport and is situated along the rail tracks of the 'Bretella Aeroporto' project. The HIA concluded that it has a moderate visual impact on the Lagoon as the new facilities will stand out against the margin of the current waterfront. The HIA also stated that this *"intervention must also be considered in relation to two other planned projects: the construction of the railway link and the works related to the airport's master plan. The cumulative effect produced by these three interventions will result in an overall transformation of the entire reclamation area, which will completely alter its character and introduces an incongruous element in relation to the character of the lagoon shore."* The Mission was informed that in the final design stage the volume of the design plans was slightly reduced, and that the project is now under construction.



Figure 18: Project design of Bosco dello Sport (source: State Party document)

The ‘Bretella Aeroporto’ (Airport ring road) project (9) is located in Mestre, inside the property and in its wider setting. It aims to connect the Marco Polo Airport with the national rail network towards Trieste and Mestre through the construction of a new railway line through a large agricultural area, and alongside the A57 road, for approximately 8 kilometres. The project route envisages an initial section of 1200 m of double-track embankment, rising from ground level to successively cross the Dese river with a viaduct section, and then descending in a trench to enter a tunnel with a loop track configuration. The project, which is already in the implementation phase, includes the construction of a new station at the airport on three levels, two of which will be underground. The construction of a bridge over the Dese River is also part of the plans. The HIA concluded that the main impact of the project results in the urbanization of an agricultural reclamation area, which will increase the barrier effect. It noted that *“in addition to the direct occupation of the railway bed, from the embankment to the underground level, the intervention combines the morphological modification with the indirect effects associated with the management of excavated grounds, alongside the energy production forecasts outlined in the airport master plan. This contributes to a substantial change in the rural character of the reclaimed area.”* As it is linked with the ‘Bosco dello Sport’ project, the HIA recommended the assess their cumulative impacts together and deepen the environmental assessments prior to the implementation of the project, particularly concerning hydraulic and hydrogeological issues, with a view to preserving the OUV of the property.

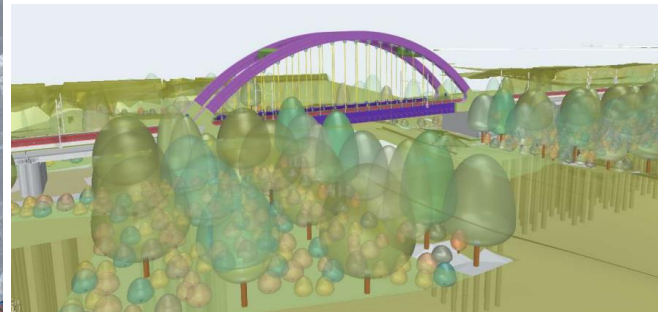
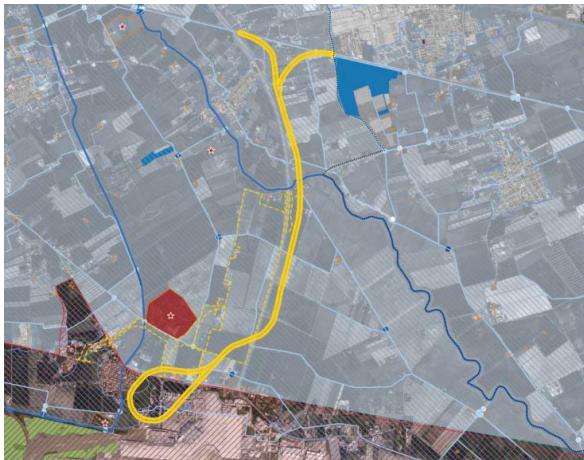


Figure 19: Planned railway line connecting the San Marco Airport with the line between Mestre and Trieste
 Figure 20: the planned bridge (source: State Party document)

The PUMS (Piano Urbano Della Mobilità Sostenibile) project (10) or Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan is a “strategic-level plan aimed at reducing private mobility among citizens” in the area of the Metropolitan City of Venice (including the property and its wider setting). The project has been drawn up by the Metropolitan City of Venice as a 10-year strategic plan for enhancing the public transportation infrastructure and management. As a primary aim, the PUMS proposes a new concept of water transport in the Lagoon, based on the creation of a series of terminals on the mainland and micro hubs around Venice as well as the smaller islands, to distribute traffic and increase the resilience of the mobility system. The PUMS also aims for the gradual replacement of the most polluting vessels on water and road with electric or hydrogen-powered ones, and the adoption of vessels equipped with hulls that do not produce high wave motions (*moto ondosso*). Reduction of traffic on the Grand Canal and enforcing strict speed limits are also foreseen.

Regarding the water traffic, the plan includes establishing a high-capacity boat-connection between Chioggia and Mestre with Venice, and new boat-connections linking Venice with the mainland passing by the minor islands (Murano, Burano etc.) using very small boats. The PUMS also

identifies the system of intermodal terminals that are planned to provide new access to the historic centre of Venice and other islands in the Lagoon. Two types of these multimodal terminals could be differentiated: those located on the Lagoon edges, and those involving the historic city and the islands. On the Lagoon edges new terminals are planned at Fusina, San Giuliano, Montiron. In the historic city terminals are planned at San Basilio, San Giobbe, and Stazione-Piazzale Roma-Tronchetto. The Mission also received information about the new port planned to be constructed within the property: Terminal Montiron (an intermodal terminal, reported with the objective to provide more rapid connection from Burano and the northern part of the Lagoon to the mainland primarily for residents), and two waterfront projects in Venice at San Basilio and Santa Marta and both sides of Canale Scomenzera, and a similar one in Chioggia at the shore of Canale Lombardo Esterno, in the proximity of the historic centre (for more information see section 2.2.4).

As the PUMS is a strategic level, the HIA was not able to identify direct impacts, as the works that could generate the impact are not described and developed in the project at this stage. However, it has recommended to coordinate the mobility strategy with a strategy for sustainable tourism, considering that the new access routes will inevitably be used by tourists as well. The Mission was informed that the project managers have declared that the recommendations of the HIA will be taken into consideration for the subsequent design phases.

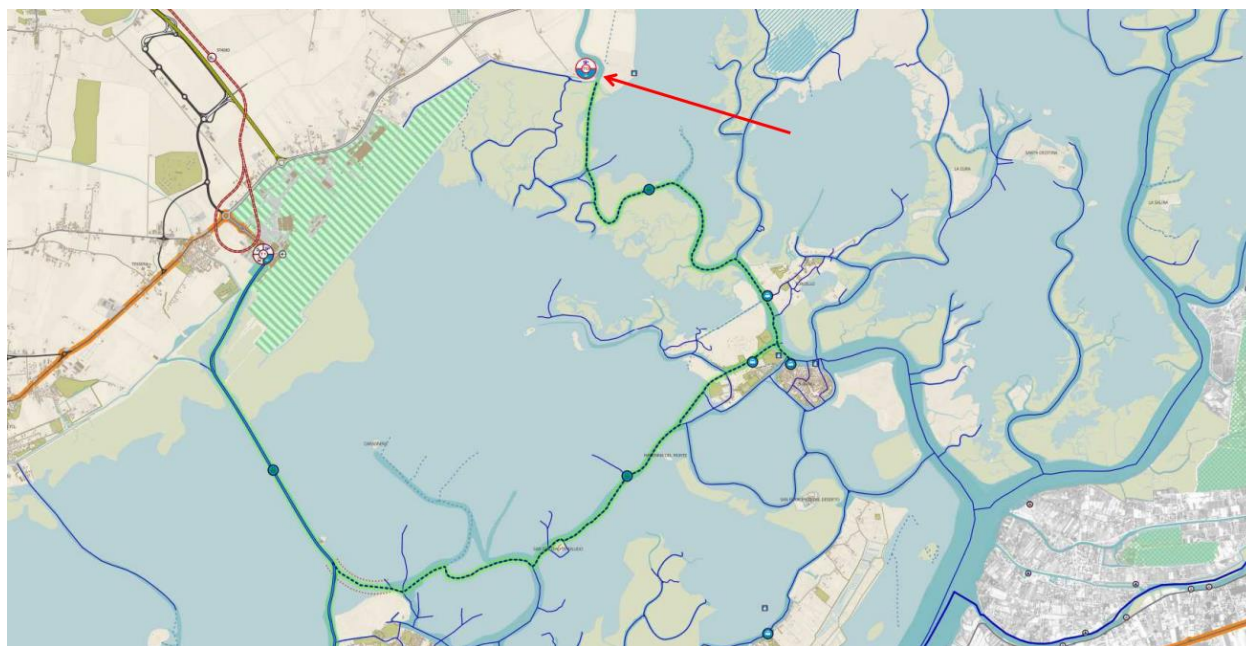


Figure 21: Extract from PUMS about water mobility enhancement and the indication of Terminal Montiron (red arrow) (source: State Party document); both the existing airport and the proposed Terminal Montiron are located in the property.

The project for an industrial level photovoltaic field (11) is located in the municipality of Mira, inside the property at the border of the Lagoon in an agricultural basin. The proposal consists of 14,500 panels, with additional infrastructure of three electrical field cabins, a grid connection cabin, a transformation cabin, and underground cable ducts. The project area is located among agricultural fields and is reported to be affected by solid urban waste dump. The HIA considered that the proposed intervention would not improve the existing misuse of the land but rather superimposes another type of use on top of it, which would not resolve or improve the current state, but would result in a change in the perception of the area's function from agricultural landscape toward a more industrial character, similar of Porto Marghera. The HIA also considered that the risk that the

intervention will be replicated is high. The Mission was informed that the proposal has been withdrawn.



Figure 22: Proposed project for a photovoltaic field in Mira (source: State Party document)

The Jesolo Magica project (12) is a portion of a plan already partly implemented, it aimed at developing a retail and business centre, located near the boundaries of the property in its setting. The project went through an EIA procedure and received building permit in 2021, nevertheless, the project proponent decided not to continue the project.



Figure 23: Jesolo Magica design representation ((source: State Party document)

Assessment of the Mission

The Mission appreciates the efforts of the relevant Italian authorities for coordinating and supporting the development of this HIA, which created a well-thought assessment framework for the challenging task of including multiple projects with very different character, scale and status in one impact assessment procedure. The HIA described in detail the analyses and assessment of each project, and its outcomes and the accompanying recommendations are considered by the Mission sound and useful. Nevertheless, as mentioned in chapter 2.2.1, the deficiencies in the legal

framework, which do not make it obligatory for the project proponents to accompany the planning of all the individual projects with an impact assessment process that focuses on impacts on the OUV and attribute of the property 'Venice and its Lagoon', especially for larger scale projects, remains a major issue concerning planning changes and developments within and around the World Heritage property. This united HIA for the 12 (and at its final stage 11) selected projects showcases the ad hoc solution to overcome this problem. While the methodology and analyses in the HIA is considered by the Mission as very good level of scientific quality, and the document itself as a useful outcome of this exercise, it could not replace the benefits of individual impact assessment procedures carried out for each project in an iterative manner, using the procedure and its outcome to inform and influence planning decisions from the early planning stages. The Mission also noted that the HIA had a strong emphasis on visual impacts, understandably especially for the high-rise buildings. Nevertheless, considering impacts of each project individually, and relevant to its characteristic and location, as well as the attributes of the OUV it might affect, would be important to be fully reflected in HIAs. These impacts could account to increase in traffic, affects to social fabric, ecosystem, functions of the structures and their interconnectedness within the overall urban plans. In addition, this united HIA had to focus on a select set of specific larger scale project, which were in different planning stages. As could be seen from the status table of the projects, and their individual descriptions, in most of the cases, the HIA has been carried out too late, with little option for mitigating negative impacts, and with very little influence on having a result when the proposal is abandoned due to having adverse impact on the OUV of the property. In principle, projects with adverse impact on the OUV of a World Heritage property should be considered unsuitable and should not be granted permission.

Several of the projects which were subject of this united HIA were already granted permission when the impact assessment was launched, and therefore, the implementation of its recommendations depends heavily on the narrow negotiating power of the relevant authorities and the good will of the project proponents. This situation jeopardises the potential for maintaining the property's OUV and related attributes in the long term, and therefore, urgent solutions need to be found that would allow predictable, transparent decision-making processes while ensuring the adequate protection of the property. In addition, while this HIA was launched as an attempt to resolve issues with the ongoing projects, the Veneto region is under rapid development, as it is a living and dynamic area of Italy, new project ideas continuously emerge, therefore, a more stable and reliable solution is needed to follow this dynamic nature of change and provide stakeholders and decision-makers with adequate legal tools and procedural actions in fulfilling their duties for protecting the site and avoiding harm to its OUV.

The 2020 Advisory mission report provided the following recommendation in relation to development projects:

Recommendation 21 As in the current political municipal system, the mainland areas are managed together with Venice and the habitable islands/peninsulas in the Lagoon, ensure that all changes and development projects of these areas follow a joint management strategy that ensures the preservation and protection of the World Heritage property and its OUV.

Recommendation 22 Halt any construction overtopping the average maximum height of the existing townscape and ensure that no further permit for buildings exceeding the average maximum height of the existing built fabric be issued in the setting and the planned buffer zone of the World Heritage property prior to the establishment of an Integrated Master Plan for construction projects within the property and its future buffer zone with a clear concept in relation to a Tall Building/Skyline Policy with maximum heights.

The Mission noted that the HIA grouped the assessed projects in three main categories: high-rise buildings, urban developments and plans for new infrastructures. It provided an assessment of the cumulative impact of each of these category as well as specific overall recommendations. On a general level, it concluded that all the projects subject to it pose a risk, as they have a negative

visual impact on the property's OUV, deriving from *"large vertical developments on the edge of the lagoon or transformations in the reclaimed landscapes at the lagoon's edges"*. This manifests in cumulative negative effect *"due to the progressive alteration of the visual relationships with the wider context, the transformation of the character of the reclaimed landscape on the lagoon's edges"*. In addition, the HIA concluded that certain projects pose *"the risk of opening new access routes to the Site"*. The HIA observed a trend as well (through the assessed intervention plans) that seem to confirm considering primarily the Venice Lagoon as an infrastructural platform, before seeing it as a historical and environmental setting linked to the preservation and promotion of the recognised OUV of the World Heritage property 'Venice and its Lagoon'.

For the urban developments and plans for new infrastructures, the HIA considers as a cumulative risk that *"Urbanisation and transformation of the reclaimed landscape at the lagoon edges result in the deterioration of the OUV of the Site"* and that *"Opening of new and widespread access routes potentially encourages access to the Site also from tourist flows"*. Regarding high-rise buildings the HIA considered that the *"Additional vertical buildings increase the visual impact of industrial and urban developments, creating a visual obstacle to understanding Venice within its environment and broader context. They introduce new landmarks into the low-lying lagoon landscape, generating a great negative impact on the OUV"*. Therefore, for those projects that propose high buildings, the HIA makes recommendations to *"apply prerequisites before decisions are made"* and to *"reconsider the vertical dimensions of projects according to the Skyline Policy, in order to produce effects below a threshold compatible with the OUV of the Site"*. ***The Mission recommends developing an adequate definition for tall buildings within and around the property and systematically apply this approach for all of these in the frame of a defined Skyline Policy that is recommended in chapter 2.1.***

The Mission also considered that such large-scale projects have a high potential to result in negative impacts on the OUV of the property and on its diverse tangible and intangible attributes, and therefore, also recommends to systematically carry out individual impact assessment procedures in line with paragraph 118bis of the Operational Guidelines, using the methodology provided in the 'Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context'⁵ for all projects exceeding the traditional height and dimension of building in the region/neighbourhood concerned. Notifications, in line with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines should be provided to the World Heritage Centre after the screening phase of the impact assessment procedure, and not when an HIA has been finalised, and potentially decisions have already been taken.

This advice is all the more relevant, as the final version of the HIA provided information on a list of 19 further projects (final HIA chapter 3.5), which were not part of the HIA, and for which World Heritage focused impact assessments have not been carried out (some of these projects are included briefly in chapter 2.3 of this report, that discusses other projects). The Mission aligns its view with the HIA that all these projects (which are in different stages of implementation) have the potential to affect the OUV of the property and recommends that when relevant (e.g. for projects that are not yet approved or started implementation) the impacts are analysed both individually and regarding their cumulative impacts and only approved if they result in no adverse impact on the OUV of the property. The comments and recommendations of the HIA in this respect (including to highlight the deficiencies in coordination between the different municipalities within and around the property) are highly relevant and should be followed, as well as its chapter related to cumulative impacts (final HIA chapter 3.6). The list of these projects reflects the dynamics in change in and around the property and clearly indicates that the planning framework needs to be urgently revised, as the approach taken in commissioning an HIA for a selected set of projects, could not follow the

⁵ Available at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/guidance-toolkit-impact-assessments/>

dynamics of change and does not guarantee the protection and preservation of the OUV of the property.

The HIA also highlighted the lack of coordination between policies at national level and their application at local levels. ***The Mission agrees with the outcomes of the HIA, which demonstrates that planning changes (any type, including smaller and larger scale development projects) within and around the property lacks overall coordination and an integrated vision. The impacts that changes (individually and cumulatively) have on the property's OUV, and on its attributes that convey this OUV, are not taken into account. The Mission in this respect, wishes to highlight for the State Party, that this situation already produces irreversible negative impacts, and if it is not addressed with utmost urgency, in a few years, the further degradation of the property's OUV and attributes will amount to a highly critical level.***

Regarding the 12 projects assessed in the frame of the HIA process, the Mission considers the following:

Regarding the abandoned photovoltaic park in Mira, the Mission welcomes the decision for not proceeding with it and considers that such installations heavily disturb the landscape and should be avoided within the boundaries of the property and its future buffer zone. In the view of the Mission, industrial photovoltaic projects on open field within and around the property represent a potential high negative threat especially to the authenticity of the Lagoon landscape from a visual point of view. ***The mission advises to develop a specific policy (what type, where and with which threshold of minimal capacity) for solar energy infrastructures (both free standing and integrated solar panels) within the property and its wider setting.*** (See also comments and recommendations regarding the agrivoltaics in Sant Erasmo and Vignole in chapter 2.2.4.)

Regarding the project 'Jesolo Magica', the Mission also welcomes the decision of the project proponent not to proceed with the plans. In its view, the project design was inappropriate for the designated location, with a very high potential to resulting in a harmful visual and social impact on the OUV and relevant attributes of the property.

Regarding the former 'Sotoriva Restaurant', ***the Mission advises to not proceed with its high-rise element and its use for hotel functions. It recommends the project proponent to accompany the planning process with an iterative impact assessment and submit a revised proposal that demonstrates no adverse impact on the OUV of the property. The revised plans need to be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review and feedback before any irreversible decisions are made.***

For the projects that aimed at revitalizing degraded urban areas within the city, such as the 'Ex Cantiere ACTV' and 'Former Gasometri', ***the Mission advises both the project proponents and the relevant authorities to follow closely the recommendations of the HIA in the revision and finalisation of these projects and ensure that the final design of these projects are in harmony with the surrounding urban architecture and respect the aim to serve the needs of the local community of Venice.***

Regarding the 'Bosco dello Sport', the Mission considers that its impacts on the OUV of the property should have been assessed in its early planning stages (as all the projects in the HIA), together with the other projects planned in this area, and considers that a more sensitive design that would respect on a higher level the local landscape would have been ideal for this project? The Mission advises the relevant authorities to ensure the choice of high-quality designs and materials in the implementation phase and that the degrading effect due to enhanced traffic and land use in this part of the Lagoon and the Lagoon landscape is mitigated to a maximum possible level.

Concerning the PUMS, the mission provides comments related to its potential impact on tourism management under chapter 2.3.2 and considers that several of its planned infrastructure elements

could have negative impacts on the property's OUV. Among these the Mission wishes to highlight the planned new boat-connections between the historic centre and the mainland. Especially that the Terminal Montiron is planned in proximity of the mouth of river Dese in a highly sensitive and, up to now, merely untouched and very well-preserved natural context. On a more general level, as this is a strategic level long-term plan, ***the Mission strongly recommends its World Heritage focused assessment through a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The Mission recommends using the results of the SEA to abandon the potentially harmful elements of the PUMS and finding alternatives that would align with the objective of protecting and preserving the property's OUV and attributes as well as with the site-specific tourism management strategy that is advised to be developed in chapter 2.3.2 of this report. A final decision about the plan should be based on the results of the SEA, and its planned built infrastructure elements should be subject to specific project focused impact assessments, carried out in line with the 'Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context'.***

Regarding the 'Bretella Aeroporto' project, the Mission considers that all the potential impacts of the project should be further investigated, notably with regards to the hydrology of the area, and mitigation measures that take into consideration also the HIA recommendations should be developed. In the Mission's view, ***the design of the bridge over the Dese River is very invasive, especially due to its big arch, and it recommends building a simple low bridge. All other infrastructural elements of the project (acoustic walls etc.) should be designed in view of minimal visual impact.*** (Further comments on this project is provided under chapter 2.3.2.)

The Mission regrets that the 'Ex Casa per Ferie' project has been approved by the relevant authorities and concurs with the HIA that this high-rise building, already under construction will result in a negative impact on the OUV of the property, especially a negative visual impact on the Lagoon landscape. Therefore, for the yet unbuilt parts of the project, ***the Mission recommends stopping or altering the project to mitigate its negative impacts.***

Concerning the remaining projects with high-rise building elements (Real San Marco Tower, Towers via Ulloa – FFSS linked with the railway Station upgrade of Mestre, and Isola Blue Tower buildings) ***the Mission recommends to not proceed with them. In case this is not legally feasible, it advises continuing their design revision with individual impact assessments (including not just heritage related but social impacts as well) until their adverse impact is mitigated to a neutral level and submitting their revised design versions to the World Heritage Centre for review before their final approval and implementation.***

Summary of recommendations of the Mission related to the HIA for multiple projects:

30. Relevant stakeholders should fully consider the findings and recommendations of the Heritage Impact Assessment conducted for twelve larger-scale projects and use these—alongside the recommendations of this report—to revise the planning framework at national, regional and local levels. The revision should aim to ensure the sustained protection and preservation of the OUV of the property 'Venice and its Lagoon', and the attributes that convey it.
31. The State Party should establish effective coordination mechanisms and a shared strategic vision among stakeholders for the planning and authorisation of changes within and around the property. These mechanisms should address both individual and cumulative impacts on the OUV and its underlying attributes.
32. Impact assessments should be systematically carried out for all proposed projects that exceed traditional building heights or dimensions in the respective neighbourhoods within or around the property. In cases where negative impacts are not demonstrably avoided or

sufficiently mitigated by the relevant authorities, the projects should be notified to the World Heritage Centre in line with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines prior to any approval.

33. The *Piano Urbano della Mobilità Sostenibile* (PUMS) should be subject to a World Heritage-focused Strategic Environmental Assessment and revised accordingly based on the results.
34. A specific policy should be developed for the renewable energy transition, with particular focus on the installation of solar energy systems within the property and its wider setting.

2.2.3. Planned and implemented projects related to flood management

High tide (*acqua alta*) has always been one of the major problems for Venice. It occurs when the sirocco wind pushes the water inland into the Lagoon during particularly high tides, low air pressure and full moon. The Mission in this respect received detailed information and documentation about the specific flood defence works for the San Marco Basilica and the Piazza San Marco and had the opportunity to visit the artificial inlet between Lido and Treporti of the MoSE system.

MoSE

The MoSE is a modular, temporary barrier system constructed at all three entry points to the Lagoon from the sea (Lido, Malamocco and Chioggia) which aims to protect Venice and the other islands in the Lagoon from the *acqua alta* high water phenomenon. The floating metal barriers are operated by an elaborate computerised system of weather and meteo-marine forecast. Since October 2020, the barriers have been raised when the water level rises higher than 130 cm. This happens approximately 20 times per year for a few hours (much more often than it was originally foreseen) and have proven efficient especially in November 2022, when the third highest water event recorded in history occurred.

Closing the three entrances to the Lagoon is only one of several huge projects developed to prevent damage in case of high tide. It also includes a substantial reinforcement of flood-defence of the coastal line on 80 km, widespread interventions of “local defence” by raising and reinforcing embankments and improvement of environmental resilience (protection and reconstruction of salt marshes). On the islands, important work has been executed and is still under construction to maintain the embankments and to higher their level to +1.10 m over normal water level.

The Mission appreciated the information and site visit to learn about the functioning and management system of operating the MoSE, and the efforts and resources of multi-level stakeholders to develop and construct the system to protect Venice and its Lagoon from the more frequent and severe impacts of the *acqua alta*.

As previously highlighted by the 2020 mission report, as well as several subsequent decisions of the World Heritage Committee, the frequent closing of the Lagoon from the open sea has the potential to result in negative effects for the ecological balance of the Lagoon, its morphology, its water vegetation and fauna. The importance of monitoring of these impacts have also already been highlighted and the need for regular reporting. While the programme of this Mission did not include discussion on this specific topic, the diminution of the *fanerogome marina* (marine phanerogams, seagrass), which is the nutrition basis for the fauna, has been mentioned several times. ***The Mission recommends, therefore, for the State Party to collect precise data concerning the condition of fanerogame marina (marine phanerogams, seagrass). In addition, to submit regular reports in relation to the operation and maintenance of the MoSE to the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies. These reports should include the results of monitoring related to the frequent closure of the Lagoon from the open sea and its effects on the Lagoon’s ecological balance, morphology, aquatic vegetation and fauna. (Recommendation 35)***

Protection of the San Marco Basilica and Piazza San Marco

The area around the San Marco Basilica and Square is part of the defence system established to improve urban resilience against the *acqua alta*, as this is the lowest part of Venice, flooded by water before it reaches the threshold level when the MoSE is operationalised. The project involves raising the banks of the waterfront to a height of 1.10m and constructing a system of valves and pumps aimed at preventing the water from rising from the sewage system and water collection

tunnels. Some provisional emergency interventions have already been completed, such as the realization of a horizontal, waterproof glass barrier that replaced former metal barriers surrounding the San Marco Basilica, as the lower level of the church was regularly flooded, endangering and degrading the historic structure. The construction of a new sewage network is also underway, as well as a new tunnel for the rainwater from the Piazza and the Piazzetta San Marco and a remote system controlling four valves located near the barriers. A full documentation on the technical details of the project was provided to the Mission.

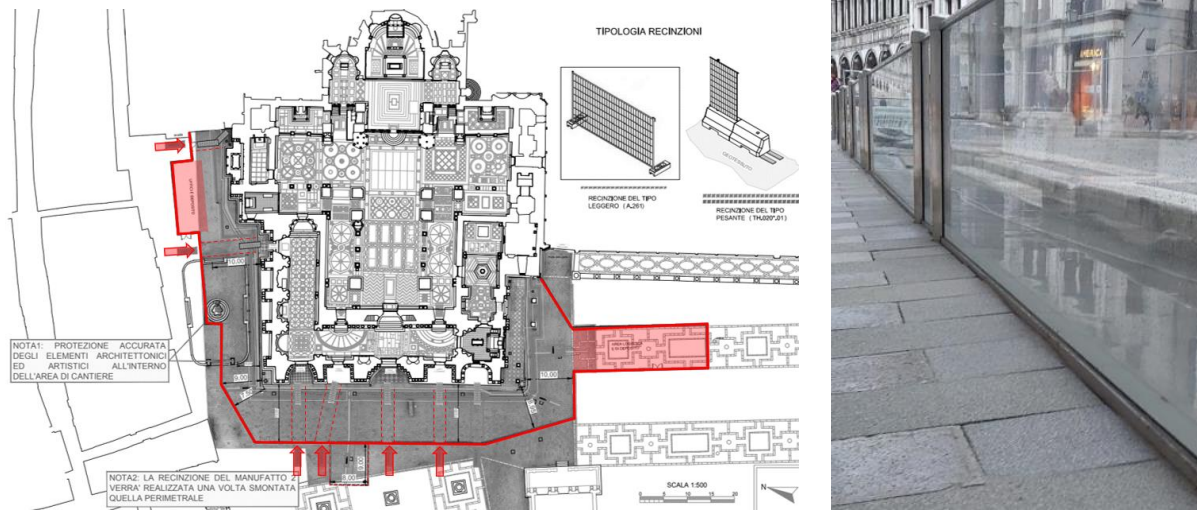


Figure 24: Provisional glass barriers around the Basilica San Marco with red lines on the ground plan (left)
 Photo 1: A section of the glass barriers after implementation (right) (source: State Party document)

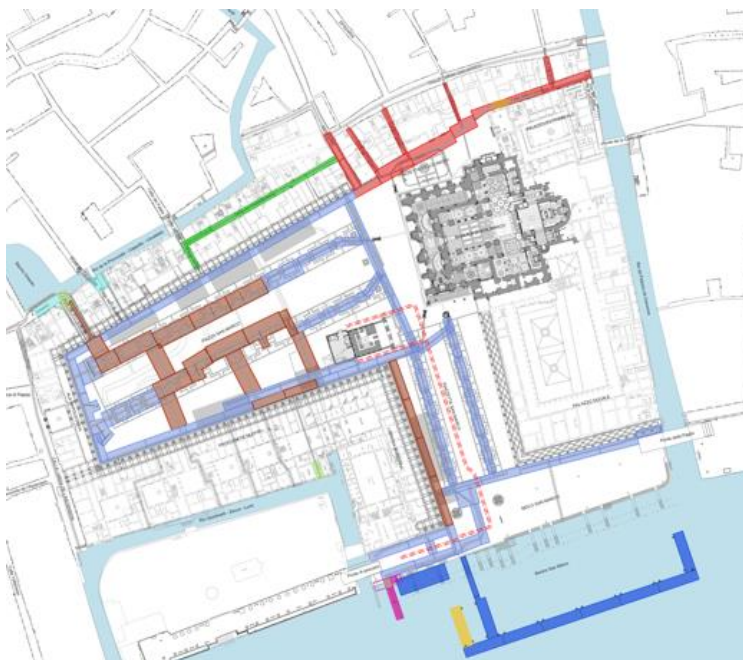


Figure 25: Planned interventions for flood management around the San Marco square (source: State Party document)

The Mission considers that the planning of this project took into consideration the specific characteristics and attributes of this part of the property and found the best possible solution that is feasible with the currently available technology. The Mission noted the excessive preventive archaeological research conducted before and in parallel with the installation of the underground infrastructure. ***Concerning the project to protect the San Marco Basilica and Piazza San Marco, it is advised for the State Party to keep the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS regularly informed on the progress of implementation and provide data on the system's effectiveness in the medium and long term. (Recommendation 36)***

2.2.4. Other development projects

In addition to the above assessed projects, the Mission received new or updated information about several project from the representatives of the State Party and was made aware of several further projects by third parties (some of these were sent as documentation to the Mission, others were presented during the session with the NGOs). The projects presented by the State Party representatives are summarised below.

Mooring of large ships outside and inside of the Lagoon

Large ships (over 25.000 ton) entering the Lagoon through the Giudecca and San Marco canal has been a long-standing problematic issue for the property. The 2020 Advisory mission in this respect recommended the following:

Recommendation 26 Ensure that by the end of 2020, cruise ships over 40,000 gross register tons be directed to a provisional terminal in the port of Marghera as a temporary solution, and search for solutions to ban the cruise ships from the Lagoon altogether.

Recommendation 27 Limit cruise ships allowed to pass within the San Marco basin and the Giudecca canal to a maximum of 40,000 gross register tons.

Recommendation 31 Develop in the near future a Strategic Environmental Assessment for the relocation of the Marittima passenger terminal, as well as the Marghera large ship harbour facilities outside of the Lagoon.

In reply also to repeated requests from the World Heritage Committee (in Decisions **38 COM 7B.27**, **40 COM 7B.52**, **41 COM 7B.48** and **43 COM 7B.86**), the Italian government introduced a legal measure in July 2021 (Decree-Law 103, August 1, 2021), aimed at prohibiting large ships of more than 25,000 tonnes from passing through the San Marco basin. From there on, the larger ships use the Malamocco- Marghera canal when entering the Lagoon and arrive in the Marghera Port where temporary moorings are provided. In 2021, the government launched an international competition to find solutions for large ships mooring outside the Lagoon.

The Mission was informed that this international competition is going much slower than was foreseen and was halted for a while. This option, in any case, evokes concerns regarding several issues, such as potential negative environmental impact of the mooring system itself, the inevitable transportation means that is needed to be established for the large number of passengers arriving there and aiming to reach the islands in the Lagoon and the mainland.

The Mission was also informed about proposals for constructing new mooring stations for large ships in the Port of Marghera, in order to replace the temporary solutions. The project seems to install a definite infrastructure for reception of ship passengers. As there is now larger traffic in the Malamocco- Marghera canal to Marghera Port, there is ongoing, and planned maintenance works for the recovery of sediment to rebuild the mudflats and salt marshes along the channel.

For the large ships to reach again the port of Venice at Tronchetto, the reopening the Vittorio Emanuele channel (through dredging) is foreseen. It is to be used for relatively smaller passenger ships as well for shuttle-boats bringing passengers of big ships to the island of Venice.

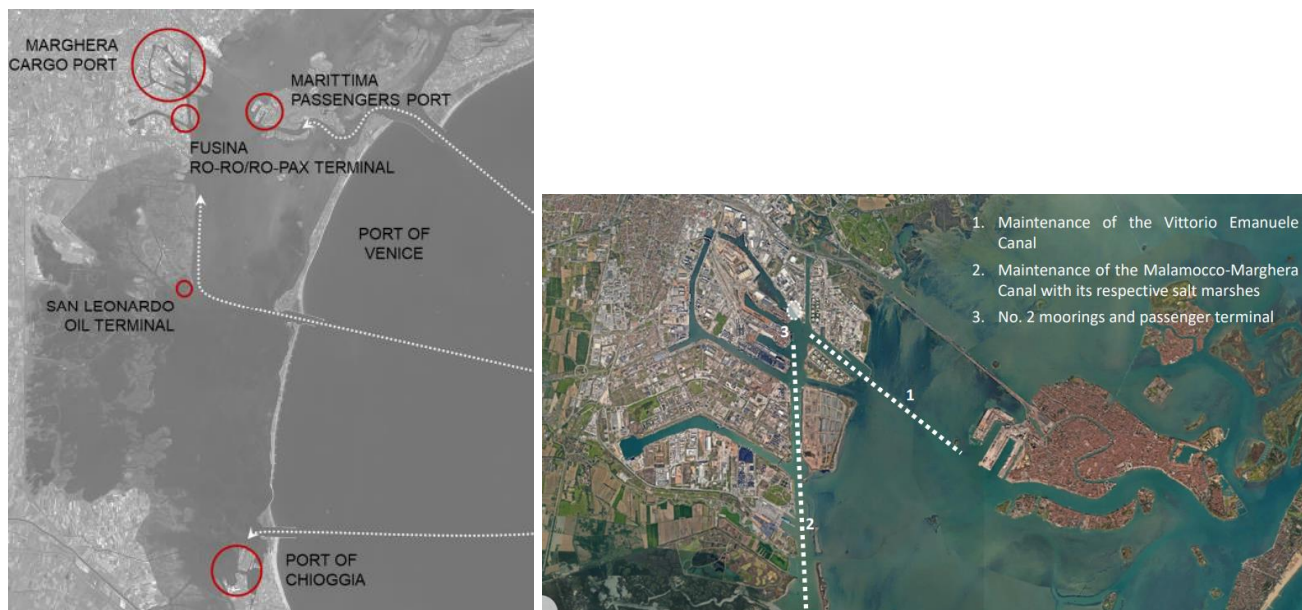


Figure 26 and 27: Access of cruise ships to the ports of Venice and Chioggia, and plans for the reopening of the Vittorio Emanuele canal and other upgrading and maintenance works (source: State Party presentation)

In addition, the port authority is of the opinion that the existing morphological plan should be adapted to improve the condition for maritime traffic in the Lagoon.

In light of the updated information and plans concerning the mooring of large ships both inside and outside the Lagoon, the mission recommends the State Party consider the interdependence of the proposed mooring berth in Marghera and the search for alternative mooring options outside the Lagoon. It is also recommended to use this opportunity to carry out the previously requested Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to examine the feasibility of developing port infrastructure either inside or outside the Lagoon. This SEA should aim to identify options that do not result in adverse impacts on the OUV of the property and its attributes. The SEA should include, inter alia, an assessment of:

- potential impacts on the physical attributes of the property,
- the environmental condition of the Lagoon,
- climate change-related effects,
- tourism pressure and tourism management,
- and social aspects such as residents' quality of life. *(Recommendation 37)*

Concerning plans to adapt the morphology of the Lagoon to better accommodate maritime traffic, the Mission strongly recommends prioritising the protection and ecological integrity of the Lagoon over shipping interests. (Recommendation 38)

Even if the biggest ships don't pass by Venice through the San Marco and the Giudecca canal, they still enter the Lagoon, and therefore, they remain a source of environmental concern, which has adverse impacts on the property's attributes and its OUV.

Regarding the reopening of the Vittorio Emanuele shipping channel, the Mission considers that on the one hand the project will result in the need for renewing the regular dredging of this part of the Lagoon, adding pressure on its fragile environmental state. On the other hand, even if this

shipping road will allow only small and medium sized boats to use the port of Venice in Tronchetto, it adds up to the available infrastructure that support and maintains the tourism pressure on the historic areas of the Lagoon. (See further comments in this respect in chapter 2.3.2.). ***The Mission, therefore, advises to formally abandon this plan. (Recommendation 39)***

Linked with the PUMS project (see chapter 2.2.2), the Port Authority is developing two so called waterfront projects within the property. One project is located in Venice nearby Tronchetto at San Basilio and Santa Marta and both sides of Canale Scomenzera, and the other in Chioggia with the shores of Canale Lombardo Esterno, near the historic centre. The competition for developing proposals has already been held and the company called in for further planning is determined.



Figure 28 and 29: The two areas of the waterfront projects, left in Venice, right in Chioggia (source: State Party document)

The aim of the projects is to create hybrid spaces serving both urban and port users while improving connectivity between the port and the city. This will allow to modernize these areas, which are for the most part in bad condition and underutilised. According to available documents, in Venice a new railway station linked to the port is foreseen and the new space will be mainly used for “city service, office, and parking space for cars”.

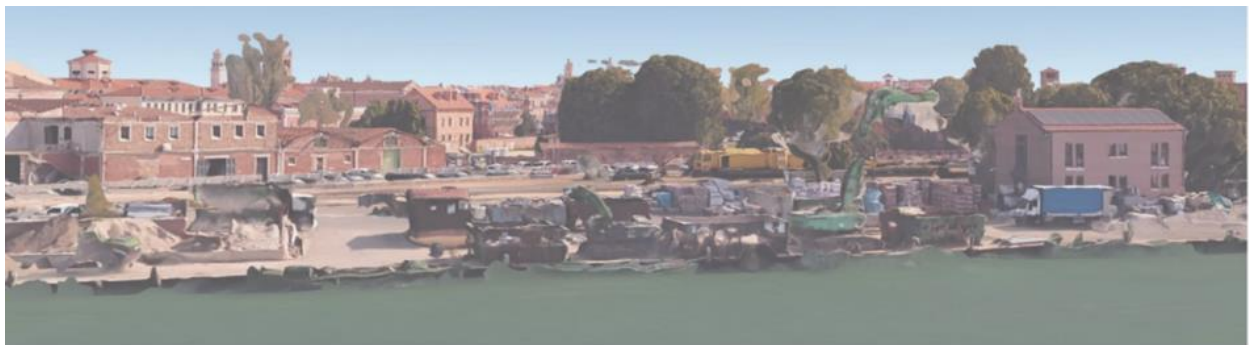




Figure 30 and 31: Planned project at the Santa Marta neighbourhood, Scomenzera Dock (above the existing situation, below the planned new constructions) (source: State Party document)

The Mission underlines the fact that the location within the property of both areas give them a strategic importance. These areas, while in a fairly abandoned state, still serve as quiet areas for residents mainly. ***The Mission recommends the current intended uses of the two waterfront development projects to be fundamentally reconsidered. The focus of their design should shift towards the creation of residential apartments and essential services for local residents – particularly families – while significantly limiting the inclusion of visitor-oriented services*** (See further comments in this respect in chapter 2.3.2.). ***The further design and planning of these projects should be informed by an iterative impact assessment process. Finalised design proposals should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review and comments by ICOMOS before any planning decisions are taken.*** (Recommendation 40)

Regarding the LPG storage facility in Chioggia, the 2020 Advisory mission report provided the following recommendation:

Recommendation 23 Ensure that the permit for operating the storage-facility for petroleum products in Chioggia be rejected, the plant that presents an important threat to the OUV be dismantled and moved into an alternative location, preferably outside the property's boundaries. In case the relocation is planned within the property or its setting, an EIA and HIA be conducted prior to taking final decision about its location, and the plans be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Secretariat and the Advisory Bodies.

This recommendation was followed up by a similar request from the World Heritage Committee (in Decision **44 COM 7B.50**), noting also that new legal measures were developed with a more restrictive approach related to construction and operation of LPG storage facilities.

The Mission received a status report indicating that the plant had not been put in operation, nevertheless it is still not dismantled, discussions are underway to quantify the expected compensation and define the methods of dismantling and relocating the facility.

The Mission salutes the decision of the relevant Italian authorities for revising the legislation concerning the construction of these plants and recommends a mutually agreed solution to be reached to dismantle and relocate the LPG storage facility as soon as possible. (Recommendation 41)

The Former Fornaci da Re project, is located in the immediate setting of the property, in Mestre. Its planned height has been essentially reduced from a maximum height of 56m in 2011 to 5.6m in 2023. The planned high-rise building will not be realised, and the currently planned buildings is expected to respect the scale of the existing built volumes. The new building will be developed on

a single floor, will include a ground level with parking spaces, and is intended to be used for the sale of fresh food products and related services.

The Mission welcomes the decision to reduce drastically the scale and height of the project.



Figure 32 and 33: Fornaci da Re in Mestre (source: State Party document)

The conversion of former fruit and vegetable market project in Mestre at Via Torino, aims at developing five towers around 50m high, two lower buildings as well as public green spaces.



Figure 34: Conversion of the former fruit and vegetable market (source: State Party document)

The Mission recommends that should planning for this redevelopment project proceed, it be accompanied by a dedicated individual impact assessment procedure. Should the chosen design retain any potentially negative impacts on the OUV of the property, the project should be notified to the World Heritage Centre prior to approval, in line with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines. (Recommendation 42)

The Logistic Hub in Dese Nord is a project located just outside the boundary of the property. Its aim is the construction of a new logistics park including large warehouses, office/service spaces and outdoor green areas. Its maximum height has been reduced from 45m in 2022 to 18m in 2023. The Hub will comprise six buildings used as warehouse as well as a green park and a truck parking.



Figure 35 and 36: Venice Logistics Hub in Dese (source: left: Immobiliare DILS, <https://www.wlpvenicepark.it/>; right: State Party document)

The New Police Headquarters in Marghera is a project located just outside property, in Marghera. It is a low-rise complex that is already fully constructed. Its maximum height has also been reduced from 45m in 2022 to 23,8m in 2023.

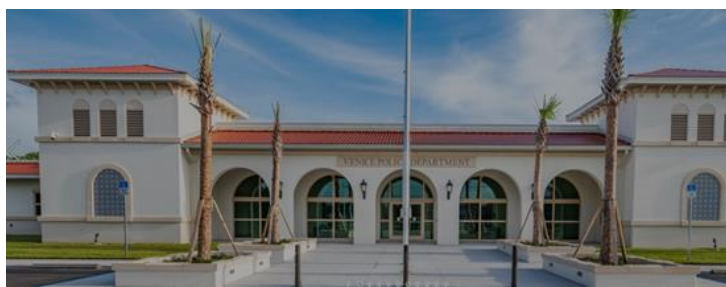


Figure 37 and 38: The new police headquarters in Marghera (source: left: State Party presentation; right: AJAX Building Company)

The Mission was provided a presentation about plans for restauration and repurposing projects in and around the Arsenale, in order to extend the space for the Biennale, which at this stage seem to be respecting the attributes that convey the OUV of the property in this area.

The Parco Fluviale del Marzenego (Marzenego River Park) is located near the property in the Mestre municipality. The Mission was informed that several interventions are planned in the area to reduces the flood risk and to activate landscape and socio-economic benefits. The environmental redevelopment interventions involve the redefinition of the river with forms typical of distant lowland watercourses (meanders, floodplains), by widening the section of the riverbed. It also aims to create a new river park with an area of approximately 27 hectares along the Marzenego and other watercourses. It envisages the inclusion of recreational functions linked to the river itself.

The San Giuliano Park is located within the property, it is a 74ha green area overlooking the Lagoon. A project for an expansion of the park was presented to the Mission, it concerns a 6ha area located in front of the actual park on the waterfront. The starting year of the planting was 2024 and the aims is to add green spaces with walking paths and benches, as well as additional parking areas.



Figure 39: Project San Giuliano Park (source: State Party document)

The Mission recommends that the extension and improvement of green areas such as San Giuliano Park be continued and prioritised, as these initiatives contribute to improving both the ecological conditions of the Lagoon and the quality of life of local communities. However, these green infrastructure projects should not be combined with or support developments aimed at increasing private vehicular traffic (e.g., new car parks) or the expansion of tourism infrastructure (e.g., the creation of new hotel facilities in adjacent or neighbouring areas). (Recommendation 43)

Regarding the project to install an agri-voltaic park on the island of Sant'Erasmo, located within the property, the Mission was informed that currently there is no application for the acquisition of authorisations and permits has been filed with the Municipality of Venice. Nevertheless, the State party provided additional information about plans for the neighbouring island of Vignole, where the Venice Municipal Council is in the process of approving the project for the construction of an agro-voltaic greenhouse in a state-owned area located south of the island. The municipal urban planning system has earmarked this area as a public green space and granted a temporary concession to the local association Veras. The association intends to set up a renewable energy community (REC) for the production and consumption of clean energy (<https://cervignole.org/>).

The Mission is of the opinion that the handling of the renewable energy transition needs a strategic approach. Therefore, **it recommends the relevant authorities to develop a comprehensive renewable energy strategy through a specific Strategic Environmental Assessment. This should explore the appropriate types, scales, and locations for renewable energy installations within and around the property. A zoning approach should be adopted, establishing restrictions and exclusion areas for certain project types, and this strategy should be integrated into the updated Management Plan. (Recommendation 44)** (See also comments and recommendations for the abandoned photovoltaic park in Mira in chapter 2.2.2.)

Another project is also foreseen on the island Sant'Erasmo for the construction of new radio base station, and it is currently under the authorisation process. The existing pole will be demolished, and the tide centre sirens will be placed on the new pole, therefore the new radio base station will incorporate the existing equipment, and the overall area will measure 5.60 x 2.00 m. The project subject envisages the installation of a new 18m high flanged pole with a 6m flagpole, for a total of

approximately 24m. At the height of the second trunk, at about 12 m, a small gallery will be placed with the sirens of the tidal centre of the Municipality of Venice, which will be accessible by a staircase. Six antennas will be installed on the flagpole at two different heights. Below these, three dishes with a 60 cm diameter, as well as radio modules, will be placed. At the base of the pole, within the fenced area, the transceiver equipment will be placed. The visibility of the new radio base station will be mitigated, in part by the presence of vegetation to the northwest, which will almost completely conceal the pole. The equipment area will be masked by climbing vegetation, and there are also recently planted trees around the radio base station that will mask the lower part from the south. The project includes the insertion of 5G technology (id. 48093) with three 700 MHz frequency antennas and three 3700 MHz frequency antennas. According to national legislation, the provision of electronic communication networks and services is of overriding general interest, and such installations have the character of 'public utility' and, they are assimilated to all effects to 'primary urbanisation' works and as such are compatible with any functional destination provided for by urban planning.

The Mission recommends that the visual impacts of the proposed radio base station be carefully assessed, both in terms of close-range and long-distance views. An impact assessment procedure should be undertaken to evaluate and mitigate any potential adverse visual impacts on the surrounding landscape. (Recommendation 45)

2.3. Tourism management

Mass tourism or pressure from overtourism is one of the decisive issues for this property, as having a major negative impact on its OUV, including most of its attributes that convey it. Therefore, there is a long history of this topic in the relevant decisions of the World Heritage Committee and both the 2015 and the 2020 mission reports. Several other issues affecting the property such as legal framework; governance and management; planned, proposed or already implemented developments; number of residents and their quality of life; environmental pressure on the Lagoon; traffic management (on water, air and land), to list the most important, are all interlinked with this problem. With regard to the overall trend in Italy and in many places of the world, and especially in Europe, which shows a decreasing demographic rate of the population, and challenges for maintaining residents and businesses in historic city centres, the Mission is aware of the role of tourism to support resolving these. In addition, tourism is one of the leading sectors of the economy of the Veneto region. Therefore, as tourism is an important and necessary “industry” for Venice, the crucial issue is maintaining a healthy balance, and to have its benefits but avoiding its destructive impacts. To provide forward looking comments and advice, in the frame of this report, the topic of tourism management is assessed under the following sub-topics:

- tourism management framework,
- tourism infrastructure, including the management of transportation and mobility
- protection of residents.

The Mission recalls the World Heritage Committee’s latest decisions regarding the topic of tourism pressure. In 2021, the World Heritage Committee noted in its decision (Decision **44 COM 7B.50**) that the State Party is working towards refining tourism management tools, improving public spaces and public housing and urged Italy to work towards a sustainable tourism model for the property and to develop strategies and policies that will result in reducing the number of visitors to the property, in significantly enhancing the quality of life of residents and the requalification of urban areas to their former residential use, as well as in a more diverse resilient economic basis for future of the property and its inhabitants.

In 2023, the Committee in Decision **45 COM 7B.189**, while welcoming the efforts of Italy in continuing enhancing tourism management tools, public spaces, and public housing possibilities, expressed concern that despite the progress assessed in the implementation of previous Committee decisions and mission recommendations mass tourism, among others, is an important issue that remain to be addressed. Therefore, it requested the State Party to continue working towards a sustainable tourism model for the property and developing efficient strategies and measures that will reduce the exceptionally high number of visitors to the property, significantly improve the quality of life of the residents and the requalification of urban areas to their former residential use, as well as creating a more diverse resilient economic basis for future of the property and its inhabitants. The decision also described the adoption of an experimental system for managing tourist flows, based on an entry fee and a compulsory booking method.

2.3.1. Tourism management framework

The Advisory mission of 2020 provided a summary of the main tourism management framework, including the related strategy of Veneto region, based on the National Tourism Plan of Italy, listing the five main objectives of the Destination Management Organisations in the region: managing resources, protecting the residents, distributing visitors to less frequented destinations and balancing the extra costs for the enhancement and development of the city with an objective to regenerate the existing tourism facilities without creating new ones. The mission report of 2020 included the following recommendations in this topic:

Recommendation 32: *Develop adequate measures to substantially reduce the number of tourists, aware that otherwise the authenticity and integrity of the property is considerably compromised, and its OUV threatened.*

Recommendation 33: *Use and implement the UNESCO Sustainable Tourism Toolkit. Enhance the sustainable tourism management tools for mass tourism pressure related to the property with data and experience obtained from the operation of the Smart Control Room, to ensure the long-term protection and preservation of its OUV.*

Recommendation 34: *Develop pilot projects related to the management of mass tourism for sharing with site managers of other World Heritage properties, furthermore, cooperate and exchange information with them.*

Based on the 'Project of Territorial Governance of Tourism in Venice' (2017), the 'Destination Management Plan' of Venice defines the strategic planning objectives for the territory of the Thematic Tourism System 'Venice and its Lagoon'. It shows the potentials of destination development, and its aim is to harmonize economic aspects with social and environmental protection. Regarding a strategic approach to enhance a sustainable tourism that is respecting the need for protecting the OUV of the property, and to manage the high pressure from a large number of visitors throughout the year, the Mission has been informed that the main tools and measures that were developed in recent years are the following:

The '#EnjoyRespectVenezia' initiative is in force since 2017, by which the municipality of Venice promotes awareness-raising for tourists in respecting with their behaviour the use of communal areas and protecting the safety, decorum and tranquillity of residents. On strategic spots, stewards inform tourists about the existing rules, and the municipality issued provisions to penalising breaches of the regulations. In this respect a recent regulation is also limiting the number of persons within a guided tour group to 25 persons and prohibiting the use of loudspeakers with the aim to help reducing the conjunctions in pedestrian traffic and guarding the tranquillity of residents.

A Smart Control Room has been established in 2020 that serves as an integrated management tool for the city services as the local police, the local public transport system, the waste collection services, and ambulance, as well as the boat traffic control within Venice and environmental data (like information on weather, weather forecast and tides). The system is connected to other available online databases and able to monitor in real time through a video surveillance network and other tools and is currently being equipped with 748 cameras installed in public places. The system is using artificial intelligence and video analysis algorithms to prevent critical situations. It is also used for monitoring presence and movement of people and thereby crowd density and tourist flows. For the latter, anonymised mobile phone data by the service providers is also used to identify origin of users as well as their movement.

The trial for establishing an access fee for day trippers in the historic centre of Venice, Giudecca and San Giorgio was put in practice in 2024. In 2024 for 29 days (between April and July, especially on weekends) day-trippers had to book their visit and pay a local tax of € 5 per person on a specific online platform (<http://cda.ve.it>). Visitors staying overnight in Venice are paying a tourist tax per night, so they are exempt from the entry fee. Control of proof of registering and paying the entry fee was undertaken in key entry points and occasional areas within the city. The aim of the initiative was primarily to urge day trippers using alternative dates. In 2024 during the trial period there were nearly 500.000 paid registration, generating an income of approximately 2.5 million Euros. The Municipality of Venice plans to use the income for providing better services and other dispenses in relation to tourism. Based on the presented results, the number of visitors during the days where registration was obligatory did not decrease, therefore, the initiative did not seem to deliver the expected result in reducing the number of visitors. Nevertheless, the initiative was deemed successful by the relevant authorities in Venice, as it also serves as collecting specific data related to visitors that do not stay overnight and therefore, will continue in 2025 for 54 days. Registration

on the platform during the appointed days is also obligatory for students, workers, and family and visitors of permanent residents, therefore, these expressed their discontent with the new initiative.

In addition, the operation of commercial activities is regulated to ensure their compatibility with the need of protecting and enhancing the cultural heritage of Venice and the other visited islands, by limiting the openings of low-quality souvenir stores and instead encouraging the development of activities of quality traditional crafts. Food markets within the historic centre are restored and upgraded to ensure that these remain available for residents. There are also attempts to control the opening of new fast food and takeaway restaurants in the historic centre of Venice.

The measures related to short term rentals for visitors, enhancing the lodgement and services for residents, as well as mobility and transportation related issues are discussed in further parts of this chapter and in other parts of the report.

The Mission concurs with the observations of the 2020 Advisory mission report that mass-tourism or tourism pressure is one of the most decisive threats to the OUV of the World Heritage property (including its authenticity and integrity). It also noted that the analyses in the draft updated Management Plan recognised 'sustainable tourism' as one of the five priority challenges for the management of the property and considered it as one of issues that are least covered in the existing legal instruments. The Mission considers hence the above listed actions useful and to improve tourism management. They help visitors to enjoy their stay in Venice and the authorities to better manage the visitor flows. However, in the opinion of the Mission they don't resolve or even try to resolve the essential problem that consists of the overcrowding of the islands of Venice with tourists and shifting commercial activities to cater for visitors. In addition, these developed tools and measures do not seem to provide comprehensive data on tourism pressure in a systematic way for all aspects of this issue. **The Mission considers that a variety of monetary measures (such as levying special tax for tourism related rentals, secondary homes, etc.) could be supportive for the reduction of the number of tourists especially, as the economic advantage of increasing tourism is a very important driver, overtaking in importance the damage that mass tourism brings for 'Venice and its Lagoon' and its inhabitants. Nevertheless, the development and introduction of these monetary measures need to be carried out in a strategic way and with developing a more solid and comprehensible legal framework for it. *In this respect, the Mission recommends that the effectiveness of the entry fee system in reducing the number of visitors be carefully assessed, particularly in light of its reported negative impacts on the daily lives of residents. Consideration should be given to revising this approach in a way that does not adversely affect local communities, while ensuring that any revenue generated is transparently allocated to enhancing the management of the property, supporting heritage conservation and maintenance, and improving the quality of life for residents. (Recommendation 46)***

Recalling what has been stated in the introduction of this chapter, the Mission is aware of the role that tourism plays in maintaining the economic force and the dynamic, living nature of areas on the islands and in the historic urban centres within the property. Nevertheless, it considers that finding and maintaining a healthy balance, and avoiding its destructive impacts need more efficient actions than the ones listed above. **In this respect, the Mission is convinced that the already established infrastructure that services the visitors within and around the property, and the planned extension of this infrastructure has a detrimental role in the question of tourism management.**

2.3.2. Tourism infrastructure, including transport and mobility management

Tourism infrastructure includes a complex system of ancillary and complementary facilities, equipment, systems, processes, and resources necessary for the functioning of tourist destinations.

This primarily includes roads, railways, airports, and the like, which make a tourist destination accessible for tourists, but it also encompasses accommodations open for visitors and services provided primarily for tourists visiting a place. In this respect, the mission report of 2020 included the following recommendations:

Recommendation 35: Stop building further hotels in the city of Venice without any exception.

Recommendation 36: Provide the municipalities with highest priority, an efficient legislative basis, permitting them the limitation or ban of new private rental places and B&Bs and reducing the existing ones. Subsequently, implement this regulation in an efficient way.

Recommendation 37: Maintain the limitation for creating new tourism infrastructure facilities, enhance the quality of the existing infrastructure and furthermore, strengthen the service infrastructure for residents' use.

With regard to hotel accommodations, the statistical data shows that the number of hotel beds available in Venice in 2023 were 98.720. When regarded in a decade span of time (for the time period between 2012 and 2023), this data shows a fairly stable number, having a peak in 2020, with 100.439 beds⁶. Nevertheless, this information does not define what should be understood under the geographical term of 'in Venice'. The Mission has been informed by the State Party that there is no available data on the number of new hotels or hotel beds created in the last 10 years within the Metropolitan City of Venice.

The Mission has been informed of some proposed hotel projects, such as the new hotel at Restaurant Sotoriva in Cavallino Treporti, the tower buildings Isola Blu, the tower building of Ex Casa Ferie in Jesolo, and the resort project on the Ca' Roman Island, which were discussed due to them being proposed as high-rise buildings or larger scale projects (see them in detail in chapter 2.2). Of two larger scale hotel projects under construction in Tronchetto, which were already approved by the municipality in 2017 without notifying it to the World Heritage Centre, the Mission learned by chance (and they were also included among the 'other projects' in the HIA discussed in chapter 2.2.).

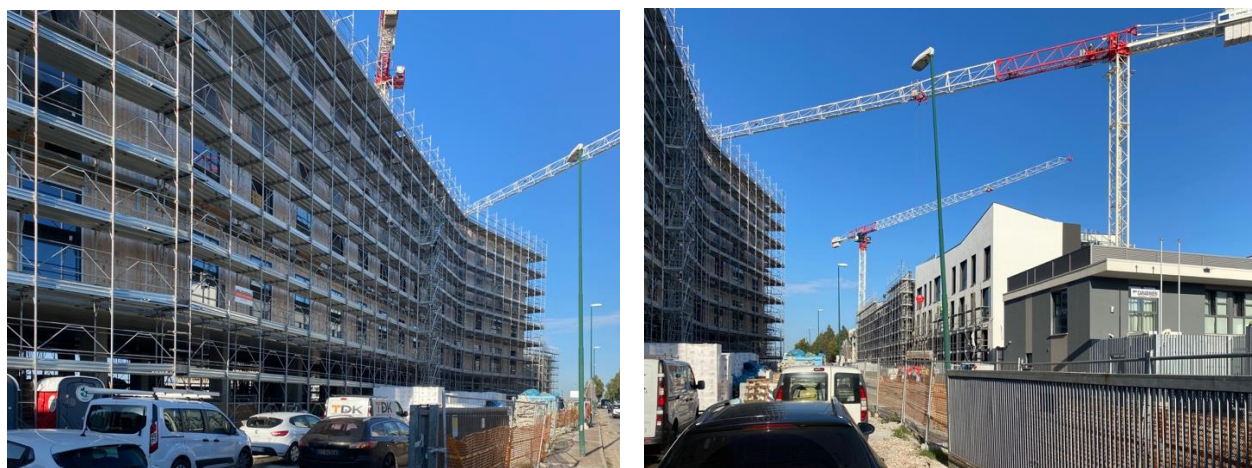


Photo 2 and 3: Construction area of new hotels in Tronchetto (©Bernhard Furrer)

With regard to transportation and mobility projects, the Mission was informed of the following plans: The area of the Venice Marco Polo International Airport is intended to be extended from 65,000m² to 190,000m². As a first phase, the airport-building is enlarged with a new passenger terminal,

⁶ Data source : <https://www.statista.com/statistics/732654/hotel-room-supply-in-venice-italy/>

called new South Pier, while in a second phase its technical capacity will be extended to allow increased air traffic. The capacity of the airport will rise in the medium term to 15 million passengers per year (which means doubling the current capacities) and the number will rise up to 20 million passengers by 2037. The implementation plan of the development aims to fully respect the protection of the Lagoon's ecosystem, and measures were reported to have and will be taken when needed. There is also a proposal in place to connect the airport with a railway line to the national rail network (the project called *Bretella Aeroporto*), allowing passengers from a larger area to access the airport or to depart easily from the airport to other destinations than Venice (see also comments to the project in chapter 2.2)

The train station in Mestre is also to be upgraded and be connected by an 'over the rails' bridge to Marghera.

Some of the plans and projects related to water traffic, discussed in chapter 2.2, are also relevant to be discussed here, as they are bringing large numbers of visitors to Venice.

In this respect the question of mooring large ships (cruisers) inside or outside of the Lagoon is relevant. The former includes plans for updating the berths in the Marghera port for the large ships over 50.000 tons, that are using the Marghera canal to enter the Lagoon. Currently there are 4 berths available, bringing approximately 500.000 passengers, out of which 200.000 passengers are estimated to visit Venice per year, and in the future only 2 permanent berths will be used for the cruisers but with larger capacities, resulting in foreseeably a rise to 800.000 passengers, out of which 280.000 passengers are foreseen visiting Venice per year. The plans for a cruise port outside the Lagoon yet lacks details and is under a feasibility procedure. In any case, there are no plans to reduce the number of ships and passengers arriving to Venice if a mooring station would be built outside the Lagoon.

Concerning the port of Venice at Tronchetto, to date 7 berths are available for different size of ships. Before the Decree no. 103/2021, 1.600.000-2.000.000 passengers were coming with cruise ships to Venice per year. As currently only the ships under 25.000 tons could reach the port through the Malamocco-Giudecca canal, this number is reduced to approximately 30.000 by ships using 2 berths at the port. Nevertheless, in order to get more use of this existing port infrastructure, the plans for reopening the Vittorio Emanuele canal between Marghera and Tronchetto port, has been renewed, which would allow the large ships of 50.000 tons to use the Venice port at Tronchetto, at 4 more berths. This would increase passenger traffic to Venice to 160.000/year, out of which 80.000 is foreseen to visit the historic city parts.

A shipping berth for ships up to 50.000 ton is also available in the port of Chioggia, which registers approximately 50.000 passengers/year, out of which 20.000 visits Venice. If the plans for upgrading the above-mentioned ports and shipping routes is realised, the number of ships and passengers might slightly decrease in Chioggia, resulting in the arrival of 40.000 passengers, out of which 16.000 would visit Venice.

All in all, Italy is calculating currently with 235.000 passengers arriving to visit Venice by ships yearly and calculates for the future for this number to rise to 376.000 visitors, an increase of 60%.

As detailed in section 2.2.2 the PUMS project was also shared with the Mission. The long-term objective of the Metropolitan City of Venice with the PUMS among others, is to counteract the depopulation of Venice and the small islands by maintaining and enlarging the public water transport service with universal accessibility in the Lagoon.

While the above listed plans and projects could be noted and understood if scrutinised separately, it is not difficult to see that their cumulative effect will add to bringing even more visitors to 'Venice and its Lagoon'. Even the PUMS project, as a strategic public transportation plan, while a very important and useful plan on its own, including objectives for improving environmental factors and reducing private traffic, as it is planned for this very place, involves high risks of further increasing

the tourist affluences to parts of the property that remained until today relatively calm and mainly reserved for the residents. This is especially true for the planned new boat-connections linking Venice with the mainland passing by the minor islands, the new high-capacity boat-connection between Chioggia and Mestre with Venice and the Terminal Montiron. (See the Mission's specific recommendation for the PUMS in chapter 2.2.2.)

The Mission considers that the existing and expanding tourism infrastructure, which has led to the conversion of houses in historic areas into tourist rentals, the transition of traditional local services to tourism-oriented operations, and the substantial construction of new tourist accommodation in the Lagoon and on the mainland surrounding the Lagoon embeds in itself the fundamental problem. Allowing the visitors to access Venice by terrestrial transportation (cars and buses, with parking possibilities in Tronchetto, and by tram and train to the main station of Venice) adds to this issue, which will be further aggravated by enhancing and extending the transportation facilities throughout the Lagoon (including enlarging the airport's traffic, the reopening the Vittorio Emanuele shipping canal between Marghera and Tronchetto, allowing small and medium size cruise ships to use the Venice port). In fact, the terrestrial transport through the bridge to Tronchetto allows large quantities of tourist buses to bring to Venice huge amounts of day visitors from around the Lagoon and further away. They come in rows in the morning, and after discharging the visitors, turn around and leave to park on the mainland until the evening when they return to recollect them. The absence of legal mechanisms to regulate these matters means that the situation is likely to worsen in the future, as new developments are driven by economic interests and many of them are already underway.

The HIA discussed in chapter 2.2.2 in this report arrived to very similar conclusions and therefore recommended to *“develop a broad-based strategic plan, which takes into consideration the direct and indirect effects produced by the development of coastal tourism in relation to the Site, in order to frame the desired socio-economic development within a framework that has as its objective the preservation of the values of the Site”,* as well as to *“define a strategy for sustainable tourism that takes into account the Site's carrying capacity”.*

Regarding the above, the Mission considers that there is a need for creating a specific strategy for sustainable tourism for the property 'Venice and its Lagoon', which collects specific data from monitoring all aspects of tourism pressure on the property and takes into account the site's carrying capacity (as the HIA, discussed in chapter 2.2 also points out). It is also imperative that this is paired with introducing restrictive and discouraging measures to find a balance in tourism management. This might mean through direct and indirect monetary measures, such as the establishment of special tourist bus fees for accessing Tronchetto, parking ban and elevated parking fees for visitors and tourist busses, restricting new hotel construction within the property and the surrounding mainland area, higher hotel tax for the Metropolitan City of Venice area, disembarkation fee for visitors from tourist boats, etc. To coordinate necessary actions, a strategic level plan is needed, which aims and objectives differ from the more traditional tourism management plans like the 'Project of Territorial Governance of Tourism in Venice' and the 'Destination Management Plan' of Venice.

Thus, the Mission recommends that efforts continue towards establishing a sustainable tourism model for the property, supported by strategies and policies that will result in a tangible reduction of visitor numbers. (Recommendation 47)

The Mission furthermore advises the State Party to support and coordinate the development of a dedicated Sustainable Tourism Management Plan for 'Venice and its Lagoon' as a World Heritage property. The Plan should

- ***enable the implementation of effective measures to significantly reduce the number of daily visitors and limit short-term rentals in private homes and apartments,***
- ***increase infrastructure and services for long-term residents,***
- ***be based on the carrying capacity of the property and on systematically collected data concerning tourism pressure,***
- ***be supported by adequate legal frameworks that enable enforceable restrictions,***
- ***and be complemented by financial incentives to mitigate potential economic losses during the transition to a more sustainable tourism model. (Recommendation 48)***

2.3.3. Support to local communities

Regarding this question, the 2020 Advisory mission report provided the following recommendation:

Recommendation 38 Ensure that efficient measures are developed and implemented in order to increase the number of residents in Venice and on the islands, in awareness that otherwise the authenticity and integrity of the property is thoroughly compromised, and the OUV and the attributes of the property is threatened.

The Municipality of Vence presented several projects and programs to the Mission that aim to improve existing housing and offer homes specifically for young families and couples. In this respect specific efforts are undertaken by the municipality with the investments of approximately 50 million Euros for the years 2024–2026 for the historic city⁷. Several initiatives are grouped together, covered by funds of from the Italian Government. All these efforts concern existing houses.

Regarding the regulation of tourist rentals, there was no legal basis on the national level to introduce any kind of restrictions for private owners to use their properties as short term rentals (like B&Bs, and Airbnb)⁸. In December 2023 a new law was voted by the Italian Parliament that allows the City of Venice (counting 7.600 B&B-appartements) to regulate “tourist rentals, short rentals, tourist accommodation activities and the national identification code”. The measures foreseen in Venice are not very strict however, as they consist in some self-evident rules for lessors (personal reception, waste collection rules, cleaning, security). Only for those who refuse to submit a Certified Start of Business Report SCIA, rental duration is limited to 120 days per year. For all other lessors renting out B&B-appartements remains entirely free in what concerns the duration per year.

The Mission was also informed of another phenomena that concerns secondary homes in Venice and its Lagoon’. An increasing number of apartments are occupied by persons having their primary residence outside Venice, in the Veneto region, in Italy or abroad. In general, they use their secondary residence in Venice sparsely.

Among the measures to improve local residency, the Mission has also been informed about the intention of the municipality and the universities operating in Venice (Ca’ Foscari University and Università luav di Venezia) to increase the number of student’s homes with the intention to make Venice more attractive for students studying in Venice. The planned projects are targeting abandoned areas and buildings to be rehabilitated for creating student accommodation within the Lagoon.

⁷ Historic city and hinterland together 106 million Euros.

⁸ Article 27bis of Regional Law 11/2013 defines that tourist rentals are residential accommodations exclusively rented for tourist purposes, as well as accommodations rented on a short-term basis without provision of services.

In addition, the Mission had the possibility to visit the newly opened World Heritage Visitor Centre in Forte Marghera, situated on the mainland in Marghera, that is primarily targeting locals and school children to learn more about the OUV and attributes of 'Venice and its Lagoon' as a World Heritage property.

The Mission considers all of these measures and actions very appropriate and helpful for maintaining residents within the property and enhancing the quality of lives of local communities in the historic areas of 'Venice and its Lagoon'.

Regarding the housing projects, the Mission is convinced that improving the existing housing is important, but not sufficient to increase the number of residents. By now, decreasing trend of the number of residents has not stopped and it would be important to invert the dynamics from decrease to increase. The Mission emphasises that decrease of the number of residents is among the main issues that put in danger the historic part of Venice as a living city.

The Mission recommends that in all future planning processes on the islands, priority be given to the construction of apartments for long-term residents. A coordinated effort by all involved municipalities should aim to significantly increase the availability of residential housing. (Recommendation 49) The relevant authorities should use a Strategic Environmental Assessment process to identify potential areas for new housing. When specific projects arose from the result of this exercise, Heritage Impact Assessment procedures should be used to test the individual proposals' compatibility with the objective of preserving the values and attributes of the property.

The family environment (such as children's playgrounds, sport grounds) are also important for attracting families to remain in or to move to Venice. In this respect, due to the scarce open areas on the different islands, Venice has specific difficulties, but it should make major efforts. Also, childcare and schools are important factors for the family environment. The projects of the Marzenego River Park and San Giuliano Park are important steps towards this aim.

With regard to the newly introduced regulation for private rentals, the Mission is of the opinion that this regulation will not have a significant influence on the most problematic effects of short time rentals. Appartements rented out as private accommodation makes a deficit on the market for long term rents.

Therefore, the Mission recommends that strong and effective measures be introduced to substantially reduce the number of short-term rentals within the Metropolitan City of Venice. In this regard, the State Party is encouraged to draw on best practices from other World Heritage properties, including the introduction of a general and strict cap on short-term rentals (e.g. 90 to 120 days per year), coupled with a progressive taxation system. (Recommendation 50)

Regarding the trend of increasing numbers of secondary homes that are also taking potential residential rentals off the market, the Mission recommends this issue to be closely monitored and quantified. The State Party should explore whether regulatory or fiscal instruments exist or can be developed to mitigate this phenomenon. (Recommendation 51)

The Mission understands and supports the plans of the Municipality of Venice and the two universities to increase student accommodation possibilities, especially in the urban areas of Venice. Nevertheless, the Mission highlights that the priority focus should remain on extending the possibilities for permanent residents. In this respect, the Mission noted that the former 'Caserma Giuglielmo Pepe' on the Lido, presented as potential future student's apartments, could perfectly well be adopted as housing complex for young families, and more central locations could be identified for housing students.

In conclusion, the Mission considers that the question of protecting local communities within 'Venice and its Lagoon' is complex, as it includes not only access to housing but also ensuring adequate transportation means, local services, schooling and leisure facilities, etc. The Municipality of Venice and the Metropolitan City of Venice are taking positive steps to enhance these as well. Nevertheless, the development and institutionalisation of incentive mechanisms targeted towards the needs of the property and its communities would also be needed. The Mission considers that only an integrated and more strategic approach would deliver long term positive results that interconnects especially with sustainable tourism management and would increase the quality of life of the local communities without supporting the increase of the tourism infrastructure.

2.4. Overall state of conservation of the property and development of the corrective measures requested by the World Heritage Committee

In 2021, through **Decision 44 COM 7B.50**, the World Heritage Committee requested that the State Party develop a proposal for a set of corrective measures, including a timeframe for their implementation, in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, for examination at the Committee's 46th session.

On 30 November 2022, the State Party submitted to the World Heritage Centre an updated report on the state of conservation of the property, as requested by the Committee. This report included a table presenting a set of proposed corrective measures with an implementation timeline (see the table below, reproduced from Annex 5 of the 2022 report). The State Party also confirmed its commitment to maintain an ongoing dialogue with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to ensure that the actions proceed according to the proposed schedule.

At its extended 45th session, the Committee examined the World Heritage Centre's and the Advisory Bodies' state of conservation report (WHC/23/45.COM/7B.Add), which included their analysis of the proposed corrective measures annexed to the State Party's report. The World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies considered these measures to be insufficiently detailed, recommending further discussion and exchange.

THEMES	ACTIONS	2023	2024	2025	2026 and beyond
Governance: Site Management Plan and Buffer Zone	Management Plan and Memorandum of Understanding	X			
	Buffer Zone (Annex 11)		X		
Tourism management and residential protection	Entry fee and booking systems	X	X		
	Regulations for tourist rentals	X	X		
	Residential protection	X	X	X	X
Large ships and related projects	Temporary landings and off-shore harbour construction	X	X	X	X
	Hydrodynamic studies				
MoSE (high water defence system) and preservation of the lagoon ecosystem	Defence works (barriers)	X	X		
	Raising Insula San Marco	X	X	X	X
	Mitigation and compensation works	X	X	X	X
	Morphological Plan and Sludge Protocol	X	X	X	
Climate Change	Climate Action Plan and Disaster Risk	X	X		
Planning and Development: EIA/SIA/HIA Assessments and Monitoring Plans and Projects	HIA, Master Plan and Skyline Policy	X	X		
	Monitoring plans/projects (para. 172 OG)	X	X	X	X

Figure 40: Table of corrective measures (source: State Party document)

During its extended 45th session (Riyadh, 2023), the World Heritage Committee reviewed the state of conservation of the property and concluded that the proposed corrective measures require further development. It therefore urged the State Party to continue implementing previous Committee decisions and the recommendations of the 2020 Advisory Mission, maintaining a structured consultation process with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies.

Regrettably, the mission programme did not allocate dedicated time to discuss the refinement of corrective measures, despite the agreed Terms of Reference including the Mission's task to assess and advise on progress in their further development. Accordingly, the Mission offers the following comments and recommendations based on observations during the mission and analyses set out in Chapters 2.1 to 2.3.

The Mission notes that, although relevant Italian authorities have made significant efforts to address some problematic issues identified by the World Heritage Committee, and implementation of several Committee requests has advanced, these efforts have not yet resulted in a marked improvement in the overall state of conservation of the property. While progress is evident on certain issues (such as restrictions on large ships entering the Giudecca–San Marco Canal), new challenges continue to emerge, notably climate change-related impacts causing more frequent high tides. Therefore, **the Mission considers that, although the World Heritage Committee has so far refrained from inscribing the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger, the development of an adequate set of corrective measures with a clear implementation timeframe remains indispensable to safeguard the OUV of the property.**

The corrective measures developed thus far by the State Party lack sufficient detail and do not encompass all necessary actions. ***The Mission, therefore, recommends that the corrective measures developed thus far by the State Party be further elaborated, refined, and closely aligned with the updated Management Plan of the property. These corrective measures should form the basis of the primary Action Plan for the property – as an integral part of the implementation strategy of the Management Plan – and should be structured into short-, medium-, and long-term actions. (Recommendation 52)*** To support this process, the Mission has prepared a draft table, largely based on the 2020 Advisory Mission recommendations (see **Annex 5**), most of which remain valid and have been updated with the findings of the current Mission. This table is presented as a draft proposal; hence ***the Mission recommends that the State Party, at all relevant levels, refine and finalise this in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, and submit it to the World Heritage Committee for review and adoption. (Recommendation 53)***

3. LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are extracted from the respective parts of the report in order to provide an overview for the relevant stakeholders. *The Mission advises that when considering and planning the implementation of these recommendations, the further deliberations and additional recommendations highlighted in bold in Chapter 2 of the report should also be taken into account, alongside the full assessment, background, and context. For Chapters 2.1 and sub-chapters 2.2.1–2.2.2, only summary recommendations are listed here to keep this overview concise.*

2.1. MANAGEMENT OF THE PROPERTY

2.1.1. The Outstanding Universal Value of the property and the attributes that convey it

The Mission recommends that:

1. A detailed, comprehensive framework for the OUV and its attributes should be finalised through an inclusive and exploratory process involving all relevant stakeholders to establish a shared understanding of the property. Additional heritage and conservation values at local, regional and national levels should also be considered and potentially included to strengthen protection and management. The *Enhancing Our Heritage Toolkit 2.0* (EoH 2.0) could be a useful tool to support this process.
2. Based on the comprehensive analysis of attributes conveying the OUV, tangible attributes should be mapped and incorporated into relevant GIS databases accessible to all stakeholders, ensuring they are considered in all future spatial planning and development initiatives.
3. The finalised comprehensive framework for OUV and its attributes should form the foundation for the updated Management Plan and all future revisions of legal, governance, and management structures and plans.
4. A framework for monitoring the state of conservation, including evaluation of management effectiveness, should be developed based on this comprehensive framework, enabling assessment of the extent to which heritage values are maintained and management objectives are met.

2.1.2. Legal and regulatory framework

The Mission recommends that the State Party's relevant stakeholders:

5. Ensure that the priorities and funding schemes established under the Special Law for 'Venice and its Lagoon', along with the related regulatory measures, continue to be implemented to safeguard the property's OUV in the long term, in line with the Management Plan and other relevant plans and policies.
6. Conduct a hierarchical analysis of the legal and regulatory framework, clearly outlining the status and interrelationships of different instruments, strategies and policies.
7. Strengthen implementation and coordination of legal frameworks, ensuring specific linkages to strategic and spatial planning tools at local and regional levels.
8. Harmonise national, regional and local regulations, establishing mechanisms at local and regional levels to develop or adjust legal tools tailored to the property's needs.

2.1.3. Governance arrangements and management system

The Mission recommends that the State Party's relevant stakeholders:

9. Complete the ongoing development and formalisation of an integrated management and governance structure.
10. Appoint and mandate a dedicated team with technical expertise in World Heritage management as the operational site manager for 'Venice and its Lagoon'. The role should be formalised to coordinate implementation of the Management Plan, monitor the state of conservation, and evaluate management effectiveness.
11. Further develop participatory approaches in management, in line with paragraph 108 of the Operational Guidelines, to engage a broad range of stakeholders including landowners, businesses, civil society, local communities, youth, and visitors.
12. Establish and formalise systematic procedures for ongoing dialogue and involvement among stakeholders and authorities at all governance levels. Inclusive management can enhance local economic development, livelihoods, social inclusion, equity, and strengthen OUV protection.
13. Ensure that civil society and local communities are informed and involved in the development and implementation of measures related to the Smart Control Room.

2.1.4. Updated Draft Management Plan

The Mission recommends that the State Party's relevant stakeholders:

14. Further develop the draft updated Management Plan to include mapping of all relevant local, regional and national plans and their hierarchical relationships, providing mechanisms to ensure that future planning instruments align with safeguarding the OUV, particularly focusing on challenges such as Sustainable Tourism and Communication and Training.
15. Clearly outline and define revised governance and management structures, including roles and responsibilities of the Steering Committee, Authority for the Venice Lagoon, Site Management Office, and Thematic Working Tables, updating all relevant documents and agreements accordingly.
16. Define clear strategic objectives for short-, medium- and long-term management, and develops specific indicators within a comprehensive monitoring system encompassing the OUV and its attributes, relevant inscription criteria, management challenges, (future) buffer zone, and governance.
17. Integrate mechanisms to identify, mitigate and resolve conflicts of interest within governance, legal and planning frameworks to safeguard the OUV and promote sustainable development.
18. Develop mechanisms for the close integration of VERITAS (Venice's company responsible for waste and sewage treatment) into management and governance structures, in order to monitor and safeguard the highly vulnerable Lagoon area. This should include monitoring sewage and nitrogen emissions, as these can have a severe impact on the Lagoon. Any potential extensions to VERITAS' capacity and operations must be subject to Environmental Impact Assessments, and the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies should be informed and consulted in accordance with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines.
19. Finalise the Steering Committee's work plan to include:
 - developing a revised MoU for the Steering Committee,
 - formalising a proposal for a buffer zone,

- establishing monitoring systems for the OUV and an evaluation procedure to assess the effectiveness of the management system and Management Plan. This procedure can also be used to prepare subsequent renewals of the Management Plan,
 - revising the corrective measures for submission to the World Heritage Committee for adoption.
20. Analyse climate change vulnerabilities and potential impacts, integrating mitigation and risk preparedness measures within the Management Plan.
 21. Establish a shared knowledge and understanding of the OUV and the attributes that support it. This should be achieved by gaining an understanding of all the criteria that justify the inscription of the property on the World Heritage List, as well as the indicators for the state of conservation, the current status, and the trends and forecasts of all stakeholders. This will form the basis for the finalisation of the updated Management Plan. Consult the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre in the process of finalising the updated Management Plan.
 22. Develop a specific Action Plan with short-, medium- and long-term actions integrated into the updated Management Plan.
 23. Develop a method for adoption or formal recognition of the Management Plan across all relevant authorities involved in governance and management.

2.1.5. Progress on the establishment of a buffer zone

The Mission recommends that:

24. To ensure the adequate protection and preservation of 'Venice and its Lagoon', the State Party should revisit and further develop the original proposal in line with the Committee's recommendations in **Decision 43 COM 8B.46** and the guidance provided by the 2020 Advisory Mission.
25. To provide urgently an added layer of protection for the property, in parallel to this effort, the Mission advises the State Party to designate the area encompassing the nine affected municipalities as a national-level protection zone within the relevant spatial planning instruments and appropriate regulatory frameworks, and to integrate relevant management measures for this zone in the updated Management Plan.

2.2. DEVELOPMENT PLANS AND PROPOSALS WITHIN THE PROPERTY AND ITS WIDER SETTING

2.2.1. Legal and procedural planning framework

The Mission recommends that:

26. Relevant stakeholders should develop a coordinated and integrated vision for planning and implementing changes and developments within and around the property, taking into account its vulnerabilities and carrying capacity for change. In this regard, it is strongly recommended to include specific references to the property's OUV and its defined underlying attributes in major spatial planning tools, as well as in regulations related to environmental, land, and landscape protection.
27. The State Party should revise, at the governmental level, the current planning policy framework applicable to projects within the property and its wider setting, to ensure full alignment with paragraph 118bis of the Operational Guidelines concerning impact

assessments. Systematic impact assessment procedures should be integrated at all relevant levels of planning and decision-making, with a specific focus on potential impacts on the property's OUV and its underlying attributes.

28. Using the further refined Skyline Assessment Tool, the relevant authorities should jointly develop a strategic Skyline Policy for the World Heritage property 'Venice and its Lagoon'. This policy should be prepared through coordinated cooperation among all administrative entities and relevant authorities and should define maximum height and volume limits for new constructions and for the refurbishment of existing buildings within and around the property to prevent the cumulative negative impacts of high-rise developments. These limits should be adopted into the relevant spatial plans and included in GIS databases linked to zoning plans, in order to reduce reliance on case-by-case assessments.
29. As part of finalising the updated Management Plan for the property, the relevant municipalities and regional authorities should update and harmonise their spatial planning tools and guidelines to ensure they collectively support the protection of the property's OUV and attributes. In particular, the Metropolitan General Territorial Plan and the municipal Intervention Plans should be revised to incorporate the restrictive measures developed through the Skyline Policy.

2.2.2. Projects reported under a single Heritage Impact Assessment

The Mission recommends that:

30. Relevant stakeholders fully consider the findings and recommendations of the Heritage Impact Assessment conducted for twelve larger-scale projects and use these—alongside the recommendations of this report—to revise the planning framework at national, regional and local levels. The revision should aim to ensure the sustained protection and preservation of the OUV of the property 'Venice and its Lagoon', and the attributes that convey it.
31. The State Party establish effective coordination mechanisms and a shared strategic vision among stakeholders for the planning and authorisation of changes within and around the property. These mechanisms should address both individual and cumulative impacts on the OUV and its underlying attributes.
32. Impact assessments be systematically carried out for all proposed projects that exceed traditional building heights or dimensions in the respective neighbourhoods within or around the property. In cases where negative impacts are not demonstrably avoided or sufficiently mitigated by the relevant authorities, the projects should be notified to the World Heritage Centre in line with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines prior to any approval.
33. The *Piano Urbano della Mobilità Sostenibile* (PUMS) be subject to a World Heritage-focused Strategic Environmental Assessment and revised accordingly based on the results.
34. A specific policy be developed for the renewable energy transition, with particular focus on the installation of solar energy systems within the property and its wider setting.

2.2.3. Planned and implemented projects related to flood management

The Mission recommends that:

35. In relation to the MoSE system, the State Party collect precise data concerning the condition of *fanerogame marina* (marine phanerogams, seagrass). In addition, to submit regular reports in relation to the operation and maintenance of the MoSE to the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies. These reports should include the results of monitoring related to the frequent closure of the Lagoon from the open sea and its effects on the Lagoon's ecological balance, morphology, aquatic vegetation and fauna.
36. Concerning the project to protect the San Marco Basilica and Piazza San Marco, the State Party keep the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS regularly informed on the progress of implementation and provide data on the system's effectiveness in the medium and long term.

2.2.4. Other development projects

Mooring of large ships inside and outside the Lagoon

The Mission recommends that:

37. In light of the updated information and plans concerning the mooring of large ships both inside and outside the Lagoon, the State Party consider the interdependence of the proposed mooring berth in Marghera and the search for alternative mooring options outside the Lagoon. It is also recommended to use this opportunity to carry out the previously requested Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to examine the feasibility of developing port infrastructure either inside or outside the Lagoon. This SEA should aim to identify options that do not result in adverse impacts on the OUV of the property and its attributes. The SEA should include, inter alia, an assessment of:
 - potential impacts on the physical attributes of the property,
 - the environmental condition of the Lagoon,
 - climate change-related effects,
 - tourism pressure and tourism management,
 - and social aspects such as residents' quality of life.
38. Concerning plans to adapt the morphology of the Lagoon to better accommodate maritime traffic, the Mission strongly recommends prioritising the protection and ecological integrity of the Lagoon over shipping interests.
39. Regarding the proposed reopening of the Vittorio Emanuele shipping channel, the Mission recommends that this plan be formally abandoned.

Waterfront development projects within the property

The Mission recommends that:

40. The current intended uses of the two waterfront development projects be fundamentally reconsidered. The focus of their design should shift towards the creation of residential apartments and essential services for local residents – particularly families – while significantly limiting the inclusion of visitor-oriented services. The further design and planning of these projects should be informed by an iterative impact assessment process.

Finalised design proposals should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review and comments by ICOMOS before any planning decisions are taken.

LPG storage facility in Chioggia

The Mission recommends that:

41. A mutually agreed solution be reached to dismantle and relocate the LPG storage facility as soon as possible.

Conversion of the former fruit and vegetable market project in Mestre

The Mission recommends that:

42. Should planning for this redevelopment project proceed, it be accompanied by a dedicated individual impact assessment procedure. Should the chosen design retain any potentially negative impacts on the OUV of the property, the project should be notified to the World Heritage Centre prior to approval, in line with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines.

San Giuliano Park

The Mission recommends that:

43. The extension and improvement of green areas such as San Giuliano Park be continued and prioritised, as these initiatives contribute to improving both the ecological conditions of the Lagoon and the quality of life of local communities. However, these green infrastructure projects should not be combined with or support developments aimed at increasing private vehicular traffic (e.g., new car parks) or the expansion of tourism infrastructure (e.g., the creation of new hotel facilities in adjacent or neighbouring areas).

Agri-voltaic park on the Island of Sant'Erasmo

The Mission recommends that:

44. The relevant authorities develop a comprehensive renewable energy strategy through a specific Strategic Environmental Assessment. This should explore the appropriate types, scales, and locations for renewable energy installations within and around the property. A zoning approach should be adopted, establishing restrictions and exclusion areas for certain project types, and this strategy should be integrated into the updated Management Plan.

New radio base station on the Island of Sant'Erasmo

The Mission recommends that:

45. The visual impacts of the proposed radio base station be carefully assessed, both in terms of close-range and long-distance views. An impact assessment procedure should be undertaken to evaluate and mitigate any potential adverse visual impacts on the surrounding landscape.

2.3. TOURISM MANAGEMENT

2.3.1. Tourism management framework

The Mission recommends that:

46. The effectiveness of the entry fee system in reducing the number of visitors be carefully assessed, particularly in light of its reported negative impacts on the daily lives of residents. Consideration should be given to revising this approach in a way that does not adversely affect local communities, while ensuring that any revenue generated is transparently allocated to:

- enhancing the management of the property,
- supporting heritage conservation and maintenance,
- and improving the quality of life for residents.

2.3.2. Tourism infrastructure, including the management of transportation and mobility

The Mission recommends that:

47. Efforts continue towards establishing a sustainable tourism model for the property, supported by strategies and policies that will result in a tangible reduction of visitor numbers.
48. The State Party support and coordinate the development of a dedicated Sustainable Tourism Management Plan for 'Venice and its Lagoon' as a World Heritage property. The Plan should:
 - enable the implementation of effective measures aimed at significantly reducing daily visitor numbers and the prevalence of short-term rentals in private homes and apartments,
 - increase infrastructure and services for long-term residents,
 - be based on the carrying capacity of the property and on systematically collected data on tourism pressure,
 - be supported by adequate legal frameworks that enable enforceable restrictions,
 - and be complemented by financial incentives to mitigate potential economic losses during the transition to a more sustainable model.

2.3.3. Support to local communities

The Mission recommends that:

49. In all future planning processes on the islands, priority be given to the construction of apartments for long-term residents. A coordinated effort by all involved municipalities should aim to significantly increase the availability of residential housing.
50. Strong and effective measures be introduced to substantially reduce the number of short-term rentals within the Metropolitan City of Venice. In this regard, the State Party is encouraged to draw on best practices from other World Heritage properties, including the introduction of a general and strict cap on short-term rentals (e.g. 90 to 120 days per year), coupled with a progressive taxation system.
51. The trend of increasing numbers of secondary homes be closely monitored and quantified. The State Party should explore whether regulatory or fiscal instruments exist or can be developed to mitigate this phenomenon.

2.4. OVERALL STATE OF CONSERVATION OF THE PROPERTY AND DEVELOPMENT OF CORRECTIVE MEASURES REQUESTED BY THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

The Mission recommends that:

52. The corrective measures developed thus far by the State Party be further elaborated, refined, and closely aligned with the updated Management Plan of the property. These corrective measures should form the basis of the primary Action Plan for the property – as an integral part of the implementation strategy of the Management Plan – and should be structured into short-, medium-, and long-term actions.

53. The Mission recommends that the State Party, at all relevant levels, refine and finalise the draft table of extended corrective measures (see **Annex 5**), in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, and submit it to the World Heritage Committee for review and adoption.

Annex 1. Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

Decision 37 COM 8E with the adoption of the retrospective Statements of Outstanding Universal Value

Brief synthesis

The UNESCO World Heritage property comprises the city of Venice and its lagoon situated in the Veneto Region of Northeast Italy. Founded in the 5th century AD and spread over 118 small islands, Venice became a major maritime power in the 10th century. The whole city is an extraordinary architectural masterpiece in which even the smallest building contains works by some of the world's greatest artists such as Giorgione, Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese and others.

In this lagoon covering 70,176.4 ha, nature and history have been closely linked since the 5th century when Venetian populations, to escape barbarian raids, found refuge on the sandy islands of Torcello, Jesolo and Malamocco. These temporary settlements gradually became permanent and the initial refuge of the land-dwelling peasants and fishermen became a maritime power. Over the centuries, during the entire period of the expansion of Venice, when it was obliged to defend its trading markets against the commercial undertakings of the Arabs, the Genoese and the Ottoman Turks, Venice never ceased to consolidate its position in the lagoon.

In this inland sea that has continuously been under threat, rises amid a tiny archipelago at the very edge of the waves one of the most extraordinary built-up areas of the Middle Ages. From Torcello to the north to Chioggia to the south, almost every small island had its own settlement, town, fishing village and artisan village (Murano). However, at the heart of the lagoon, Venice itself stood as one of the greatest capitals in the medieval world. When a group of tiny islands were consolidated and organized in a unique urban system, nothing remained of the primitive topography but what became canals, such as the Giudecca Canal, St Mark's Canal and the Great Canal, and a network of small rii that are the veritable arteries of a city on water.

Venice and its lagoon landscape is the result of a dynamic process which illustrates the interaction between people and the ecosystem of their natural environment over time. Human interventions show high technical and creative skills in the realization of the hydraulic and architectural works in the lagoon area. The unique cultural heritage accumulated in the lagoon over the centuries is attested by the discovery of important archaeological settlements in the Altino area and other sites on the mainland, which were important communication and trade hubs.

Venice and its lagoon form an inseparable whole of which the city of Venice is the pulsating historic heart and a unique artistic achievement. The influence of Venice on the development of architecture and monumental arts has been considerable.

Criterion (i): Venice is a unique artistic achievement. The city is built on 118 small islands and seems to float on the waters of the lagoon, composing an unforgettable landscape whose imponderable beauty inspired Canaletto, Guardi, Turner and many other painters. The lagoon of Venice also has one of the highest concentrations of masterpieces in the world: from Torcello's Cathedral to the church of Santa Maria della Salute. The years of the Republic's extraordinary Golden Age are represented by monuments of incomparable beauty: San Marco, Palazzo Ducale, San Zaniolo, Scuola di San Marco, Frari and Scuola di San Rocco, San Giorgio Maggiore, etc.

Criterion (ii): The influence of Venice on the development of architecture and monumental arts is considerable; first through the Serenissima's fondachi or trading stations, along the Dalmatian coast, in Asia Minor and in Egypt, in the islands of the Ionian Sea, the Peloponnesus, Crete, and Cyprus, where the monuments were clearly built following Venetian models. But when it began to lose its power over the seas, Venice exerted its influence in a very different manner, thanks to its

great painters. Bellini and Giorgione, then Tiziano, Tintoretto, Veronese and Tiepolo completely changed the perception of space, light and colour thus leaving a decisive mark on the development of painting and decorative arts in the whole of Europe.

Criterion (iii): With the unusualness of an archaeological site which still breathes life, Venice bears testimony unto itself. This mistress of the seas is a link between the East and the West, between Islam and Christianity and lives on through thousands of monuments and vestiges of a time gone by.

Criterion (iv): Venice possesses an incomparable series of architectural ensembles illustrating the height of the Republic's splendour. From great monuments such as Piazza San Marco and Piazzetta (the cathedral, Palazzo Ducale, Marciana, Museo Correr Procuratie Vecchie), to the more modest residences in the calli and campi of its six quarters (Sestieri), including the 13th century Scuole hospitals and charitable or cooperative institutions, Venice presents a complete typology of medieval architecture, whose exemplary value goes hand-in-hand with the outstanding character of an urban setting which had to adapt to the special requirements of the site.

Criterion (v): In the Mediterranean area, the lagoon of Venice represents an outstanding example of a semi-lacustral habitat which has become vulnerable as a result of irreversible natural and climate changes. In this coherent ecosystem where the muddy shelves (alternately above and below water level) are as important as the islands, pile-dwellings, fishing villages and rice-fields need to be protected no less than the palazzi and churches.

Criterion (vi): Venice symbolizes the people's victorious struggle against the elements as they managed to master a hostile nature. The city is also directly and tangibly associated with the history of humankind. The "Queen of the Seas", heroically perched on her tiny islands, extended her horizon well beyond the lagoon, the Adriatic and the Mediterranean. It was from Venice that Marco Polo (1254-1324) set out in search of China, Annam, Tonkin, Sumatra, India and Persia. His tomb at San Lorenzo recalls the role of Venetian merchants in the discovery of the world - after the Arabs, but well before the Portuguese.

Integrity

Due to their geographical characteristics, the city of Venice and the lagoon settlements have retained their original integrity of the built heritage, the settlement structure and its interrelation in the lagoon. The boundaries of the city and other lagoon settlements are well circumscribed and delimited by water. Venice has retained its boundaries, the landscape characteristics and the physical and functional relationships with the lagoon environment. The structure and urban morphological form of Venice has remained broadly similar to the one the city had in the Middle Ages and Renaissance.

The maintained integrity of the layout and urban structure of Venice therefore attests to the formal and organizational conception of space and the technical and creative skills of a culture and civilization that created exceptional architectural values. Despite the diverse styles and historical stratifications, the buildings and constructions have organically fused into a coherent unit, maintaining their physical characteristics and their architectural and aesthetic qualities, as well as their more technical features, through an architectural language that is both independent and consistent with the function and design principles of the traditional urban structure of Venice.

Transformations have occurred in the urban settlements in terms of functionality. The historic city has altered its urban functions due to the significant decline in population, the change of use of many buildings, the replacement of traditional productive activities and services with other activities. The exceptionally high tourism pressure on the city of Venice has resulted in a partial functional transformation in Venice and the historic centres of the Lagoon. This includes functional transformations of Venice and the lagoon historic centers caused by the replacement of residents'

houses with accommodation and commercial activities and services to the residence with tourism-related activities that endanger the identity and the cultural and social integrity of the property.

These factors may in the future have a serious negative impact on the identity and integrity of the property and are consequently the major priorities within the Management Plan.

The phenomenon of high water is a threat to the integrity of cultural, environmental and landscape values of the property. The occurrence of exceptional high waters poses a significant threat to the protection and integrity of Venice lagoon and historic settlements. The increase in the frequency and levels of high tides, in addition to the phenomenon of wave motion caused by motor boats, is one of the main causes of deterioration and damage to the building structures and urban areas. Although this phenomenon has a significant impact on the morphology and landscape configuration of the lagoon due to the erosion of the seabed and of the salt marshes, it does not at present endanger the integrity of the property. These threats are recognized as a priority in the Management Plan which includes a specific monitoring system.

Authenticity

The assets of the World Heritage property have substantially retained their original character. The urban structure has predominantly maintained the formal and spatial characters present in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance with a few later additions due to landfills and land reclamation. The numerous monuments and monumental complexes in the city have retained their character and authenticity through the conservation of their constitutive elements and their architectural features. Similarly, the whole urban system has maintained the same layout, settlement patterns and organization of open spaces from medieval times and the Renaissance. In the structural restoration of the buildings, much attention is given to applying conservation criteria and the use and recovery of materials in their historical stratifications. The local culture has developed a deep-seated continuity in the use of materials and techniques. The expression of the authentic cultural values of the property is given precisely by the adoption and recognition of the effectiveness of traditional conservation and restoration practices and techniques.

The other lagoon settlements have also maintained a high level of authenticity, which continues to manifest itself in preservation of the character and specificity of the places. The historical processes that were developed over the centuries and helped shape the lagoon landscape have left a strong testimony of the action of the people, whose work is tangibly visible and recognizable in its authenticity and historical sequences.

Protection and management requirements

The Ministry for Cultural Heritage and Activities through its local offices (Regional Directorates and Superintendencies) performs the institutional tasks of protection and preservation of the cultural heritage and landscape, under the Code of the Cultural and Landscape Heritage (Legislative Decree no. 42/2004).

One of the main tools for the protection of the property is the implementation of the 1973 Special Law for Venice, which aims to guarantee the protection of the landscape, historical, archaeological and artistic heritage of the city of Venice and its lagoon by ensuring its socio-economic livelihood.

At regional level, land-use and urban planning tools aim at the promotion and implementation of the sustainable development of the area, with particular attention to the protection of the cultural and historical identity of the settlements, the landscape and areas of outstanding natural beauty.

Provincial plans deal with the synergies between the preservation and development of the environment and the traditional economic activities and tourism, aimed at the sustainable valorisation of the property, intersecting issues relevant to both cultural heritage and environmental values.

At municipal level, the existing planning tools guarantee, in particular, the refurbishment and upgrade of the existing architectural heritage and infrastructure, urban renewal, public housing programs, roads. They regulate action on the urban fabric, ensuring the preservation of its physical and typological characteristics and the compatibility of any intended use.

Other public authorities, such as Magistrato alle Acque (the Venice Water Authority), safeguard Venice and the lagoon ecosystem. Environmental protection and landscape is governed by specific laws and regulations, under which the Superintendence of Architectural Heritage and Landscape of Venice and its Lagoon oversees all works and interventions that can change the landscape of the property.

The Management Plan for the World Heritage property is approved by the responsible bodies for the protection and management of the property: Veneto Region, Province of Padua, Province of Venice, Municipality of Venice, Municipality of Campagna Lupia, Municipality of Cavallino-Treporti, Municipality of Chioggia, Municipality of Codevigo, Municipality of Mira, Municipality of Musile di Piave, Municipality of Jesolo, Municipality of Quarto D'Altino, Regional Department of Cultural Heritage and Landscape of Veneto, Superintendence of Architectural Heritage and Landscape of Venice and its Lagoon, Superintendence of Archaeological Heritage of Veneto, Superintendence of Historical and Artistic Heritage of Venice and of the municipalities in the lagoon boundary area, Superintendence of the Archives of Veneto, State Archive of Venice, Diocese of Venice, Venice Water Authority and Port Authority of Venice.

The development of the Management Plan has been based on a participatory approach involving all these responsible bodies and the local organisations. They are represented in the Steering Committee which meets regularly, where the Municipality of Venice has been appointed as the coordinating body.

The Management Plan contains many projects for communication and participation in decision-making and for the implementation of the objectives of protection and enhancement of the property. A specific Action Plan focuses on awareness building, communication, promotion, education and training in order to develop a greater awareness among the citizens on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property.

The most pressing management issues are related to high tides and mobile barriers, tourism pressure and maintenance of traditional practices and techniques for restoration.

In order to preserve the lagoon and protect its historic settlements and the historic city of Venice against flooding, several projects have been elaborated. These include an integrated system of public works, such as the mobile flood gates (MoSE - Experimental Electromechanical Module) to temporarily isolate the lagoon from the sea and some complementary measures capable of reducing the level of the most frequent tides in the lowest areas on the water.

A sustainable tourism strategy is one of the Management Plan priorities. Strategic objectives and a specific Action Plan have been agreed to relieve the pressure on Venice by offering alternative and complementary options to traditional tourism by creating a network among the municipalities in the lagoon boundary area and other key stakeholders that are operating within the property. In addition, other initiatives aiming at managing tourist flows are in place. Within the territory of the property there are excellent universities, high level national and international institutes and research centers for the conservation and protection of artistic and architectural heritage. However, many consolidated restoration practices, based on traditional techniques, are at risk to disappear or to be incorrectly applied, for the use of techniques and materials that do not always correspond to the principles and methods of restoration and for the lack of qualified operators. The underlying causes of the reduced efficacy of the restoration interventions are the high costs of the urban maintenance and restoration of buildings. These issues are recognised within the Management Plan that contains a specific Action Plan and

projects regarding training of operators and professionals, the promotion and dissemination of good restoration practices.

Annex 2. Terms of Reference of the Mission

Joint WHC/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission

'Venice and its Lagoon' (Italy)

28-31 October 2024

Background:

The World Heritage property 'Venice and its Lagoon' was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1987, on the basis of all the cultural criteria (i) (ii) (iii) (iv) (v) (vi). The retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value of the property was adopted in 2013 at the 37th session of the World Heritage Committee (Decision **37 COM 8E** – Annex 1).

The property has been under a Reactive Monitoring process since 2014, primarily due to the following issues identified by the Committee:

The cumulative impact of the following challenges, each of which, individually, has an adverse impact:

- deficiencies of the integrated management and urban planning mechanism,
- mass tourism,
- the decrease in the number of local residents,
- the alteration of the spirit of the place and loss of historical authenticity,
- unnotified projects within the boundaries of the property, including industrial infrastructure and high-rise constructions in the immediate vicinity, which have resulted in an adverse impact on the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) and the attributes that convey it,
- human intervention causing damage to the lagoon ecosystem (including traffic from large ships entering the waters of the lagoon, in particular cruise ships and oil tankers docking at the industrial port of Marghera),
- the negative impact of climate change, in particular temporary flooding with increasing frequency and the steady rise in sea levels.

Since 2016, in its successive decisions (**40 COM 7B.52**, **41 COM 7B.48** and **43 COM 7B.86** – see Annex 2), the Committee has considered the possible inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger if the mitigation measures implemented, and the adapted management system did not result in significant and measurable progress in the state of conservation of the property. In 2021 and 2023, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies considered that the property continued to face ascertained and potential danger as defined in paragraph 179 of the Operational Guidelines, and therefore, recommended its inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger, hoping that such inscription would lead to greater dedication and mobilisation of local, national and international stakeholders, for the development of effective and sustainable corrective measures to address long-standing issues. Instead, in its Decision **44 COM 7B.50**, the Committee requested Italy to develop, in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, a proposal for a set of corrective measures with a timeframe for their implementation. In its subsequent Decision **45 COM 7B.189**, the Committee considered that the corrective measures proposed by the State Party needed to be further

developed and urged the State Party to continue, in the implementation of previous Committee decisions and recommendations of the 2020 Advisory mission, a structured consultation process with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies; (see [Annex 2](#)).

At its extended 45th session in 2023, the Committee also encouraged the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission to the property to assess the overall state of conservation of the property and to engage with the State Party in its efforts to address the issues which could have a potential impact on the preservation of the property (Decision **45 COM 7B.189**).

The property's last Management Plan expired in 2018, and the process of updating it began in the same year. A draft of the updated Management Plan, following the joint UNESCO/ICOMOS/RAMSAR Advisory mission in 2020, was submitted to the World Heritage Centre on 18 June 2024 and is currently subject of an ICOMOS Technical Review to support its finalisation.

Following the Committee's latest Decision **45 COM 7B.189**, the State Party of Italy invited on 28 March 2024 the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission to the property.

Objectives of the Advisory mission:

The main objective of the Advisory Mission is to

- assess the overall state of conservation of the property and to
- assist the State Party in its efforts to address those issues that may have a potential impact on the conservation of the property.

In particular, the Advisory Mission will assess and advise on:

- 1) progress towards the property's integrated management system, including the proposal for the establishment of a buffer zone, and the finalisation of its updated Management Plan,
- 2) the adequacy of the legal and procedural planning framework to prevent development projects within the property and its wider setting that may adversely impact on its OUV,
- 3) progress in tourism management of the property,
- 4) progress in the further development of the corrective measures and the implementation of previous Committee decisions and recommendations of the 2020 Advisory mission (see [Annex 3](#)) so as to assist the State Party in their implementation,

To address these objectives, the mission shall:

Through discussion sessions and site visits, assess information and related documentation in the areas covered by the main objectives of the mission, including in particular the review of:

- specific development projects and the draft skyline policy of the property included in the Heritage Impact Assessment document that the State Party is preparing, as well as in the document related to defining the skyline policy of the property, submitted to the World Heritage Centre by the State Party on 17 July 2024;
- follow up on the implementation of the recommendations included in the ICOMOS Summary Report of the Online Technical Workshop held on 13 July 2023,
- specific further development projects brought to the mission's attention by the State Party,
- the methodology and current content of the draft Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) document itself,

- updated documentation related to the establishment of a buffer zone for the property,
- the updated draft Management Plan submitted to the World Heritage Centre on 18 June 2024 and its upcoming review by ICOMOS,
- the most up-to-date tourism management tools and measures specifically aimed at regulating mass tourism pressures on the property in a comprehensive and strategic manner.

Following the on-site mission, the World Heritage Centre and the two Advisory Bodies will prepare a report within ten weeks including the results of the above assessments and providing relevant advice and recommendations to the State Party. The draft mission report shall be provided to the State Party for comment on any factual errors. Following the mission, the mission team may request additional information from the State Party for the preparation of the draft mission report, which the State Party shall provide within two weeks of the request.

The State Party shall ensure that the mission can conduct on-site visits for a comprehensive inspection of all relevant sites.

The State Party (through its competent national, regional and local organisations and authorities) should also ensure that, at least two weeks prior to the start of the mission, the mission team is provided with all relevant information and documentation (including legal instruments and policies) in English necessary for the efficient conduct of the mission, to enable it to assess and review the issues listed above.

The documentation to be provided to the World Heritage Centre and the two Advisory Bodies prior to the mission must include in particular the following documents or substantial summaries:

- The most up-to date version of the pending HIA that was presented at the Online Technical Workshop on 13 July 2023,
- The status and planned timeline of the projects included in the pending HIA,
- The detailed documentation of the ongoing project to construct temporary barriers to protect the San Marco Basilica and the surrounding area from the high-water phenomena, and of the planned works to elevate the entire San Marco insula, including the assessment of the impact of the proposed changes on the Basilica,
- Information and documentation on other project proposals within the property or its immediate and wider setting that may affect its Outstanding Universal Value to be brought to the mission's attention,
- Impact Assessment regulations/legislation relevant to World Heritage at national and local levels,
- Updated documentation related to the establishment of a buffer zone for the property,
- The most up-to-date Sustainable Tourism Management Plan and/or other relevant documents, strategic tools and measures specifically related to tourism management in the property.

The State Party should organise the working meetings and consultations between the mission and the relevant authorities/organisations and all other stakeholders, including the representatives of the local communities and NGOs in English or ensure that translation to English is available for the mission experts.

The State Party should cooperate with the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM in preparing the detailed programme of the mission. A draft programme and a list of stakeholders

with whom the mission will meet should be provided to the mission team at least two weeks prior to the start of the mission.

In accordance with UNESCO, ICOMOS and ICCROM respective policies, the experts participating in the mission will not engage with the media and will not discuss the findings or recommendations of the mission, which will only be made public with the publication of the final report.

Annex 3. Programme of the mission as implemented, with the mission experts and the list of people met

Composition of the mission team:

Lazare Eloundou Assomo	Director of UNESCO World Heritage Centre
Réka Viragos	Programme Specialist, UNESCO World Heritage Centre
Bernhard Furrer	Expert, ICOMOS
Ole Søe Eriksen	Expert, ICCROM

WHC / ICOMOS / ICCROM JOINT ADVISORY MISSION "Venice and its Lagoon" World Heritage 28-31 October 2024

AGENDA

MONDAY, 28th OCTOBER

Ca' Vendramin Calergi

Official opening of the Mission by the State Party

Ambassador Consultant Paolo Andrea Bartorelli - *Head of UNESCO and International Cultural Organizations*

Office – *Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI)*

Official opening of the Mission by the Mayor of Venice - Outline of the general vision of the city and the territory

Luigi Brugnaro - *Mayor of the City of Venice*

Presentation of the Authority for the Venice Lagoon - Interventions to Safeguard the Lagoon

Roberto Rossetto - *President of the Lagoon Authority*

Conservation and protection of the historic city of Venice

Fabrizio Magani - *Superintendent - Superintendency for Archaeology, Fine Arts and Landscape of the*

Municipality of Venice and the Lagoon (SABAP)

Sara Bini – *Archaeologist Official - SABAP*

Chiara Ferro – *Architect Official, UNESCO sites liaison – SABAP*

Federica Romano – *Architect Official – SABAP*

Coffee break

Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Culture and the Veneto Region for the protection of landscape values

Laura Foscolo - *Veneto Region – Territorial Planning Department – Urban Planning Department Manager*

Ellena Finco – *Veneto Region – Territorial Planning Department – Regional Landscape Observatory*

HIA assessment processes within EIA/SEA

Luca Marchesi – *Veneto Region - Director of the Territorial Protection and Development Department*

Lunch break

Environmental redevelopment projects

Massimiliano De Martin – *Councillor for Urban Planning and Environment - Municipality of Venice*

Presentation of 2024-2030 Management Plan

Dennis Wellington – *International Policies, Cooperation and UNESCO Office General Manager*
–
Municipality of Venice

Impact assessment and local corrective measures

Danilo Gerotto – *Director of the Territorial Development and Sustainable City Area - Municipality of Venice*

Presentation of the functional tool for defining the Site skyline policy, the Heritage Impact Assessment

(HIA) document, attribute mapping,

Andrea Rossetto – *Terre srl (Consultant Municipality of Venice)*

Discussion of specific projects:

Venice airport ringroad

Dell'Aquila Roberto - *Project Manager – North East Area Investment Management – Italian Railways Network*

(Rete Ferroviaria Italiana) S.p.A.

Rossato Enrico - *Project Engineer – North East Area Investment Management - Italian Railways Network (Rete Ferroviaria Italiana) S.p.A.*

PUMS

Stefano Ciurnelli - *TPS Pro srl (Consultant Metropolitan City of Venice)*

Blue Island Project

Gaetano di Gregorio – *Municipality of Cavallino Treporti*

Sotoriva Restaurant Project

Daniela Vitale - *Municipality of Jesolo*

Buffer zone hypothesis

Danilo Gerotto – *Director of the Territorial Development and Sustainable City Area - Municipality of Venice*

The following Representatives of the Steering Committee's bodies were also present:

Veneto Region – UNESCO Elements and Sites Coordination Office	Giulio Bodon	Office Manager (<i>remotely</i>)
	Laura De Manzini	Official
Metropolitan City of Venice	Nicola Torricella	General Manager
	Barbara Merotto	Head of Transportation and Car- parking Service
Padua Province	Roberto Anzaldi	Service Manager Territorial and Urban Planning
	Cosetta Bernini	Service Official Territorial and Urban planning
Municipality of Campagna Lupia	Gabriele Rorberi	Private Housing Area Manager (<i>remotely</i>)
Municipality of Cavallino Treporti	Gaetano di Gregorio	Manager of the Urban and Territorial Planning Service
Municipality of Chioggia	Lucio Napetti	Director Urban Planning
Municipality of Codevigo	Paola Ranzato	Manager of Culture and Education sector
Municipality of Jesolo	Daniela Vitale	Public Works and Urban Planning Sector
Municipality of Mira	Massimo Pizzato	Director of Private Housing and Urban Planning
Municipality of di Musile	Agostino Furlanetto	Area Manager of the Public Works and Urban Quality and Technical Area
Municipality of Quarto d'Altino	Nicola Candian	Urban Planning Office Manager
Veneto Regional Museums Department	Marialetizia Pulcini	Director of the National Archeological Museum of the Venice Lagoon
State Archive of Venice	Andrea Erbosio	Director (<i>remotely</i>)

Superintendence of Archives and Bibliography of Veneto - Trentino Alto Adige	Lucia Piastra	Enhancement Manager
North Adriatic Sea Port System Authority	Antonio Revedin	Director of Strategic Planning and Development
	Federica Bosello	Area Manager of Promotion, Communication and Institutional Relations
Special Commissioner of Government for the realization of cruise landings and the preservation of Venice and its Lagoon	Sara Lunardelli	Structure of the Special Commissioner of Government
Special Commissioner of Government for the realization of cruise landings and the preservation of Venice and its Lagoon	Sara Lunardelli	Structure of the Special Commissioner of Government
Diocese of Venice	Gianmatteo Caputo	Patriarchal Delegate for Cultural Heritage and Worship Buildings (<i>remotely</i>)
MIT – Office of Regional Works for Triveneto	Valerio Volpe	Director of the Venice Safeguard Office - Maritime Works for the Veneto Region

In addition, the following people were present:

UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe	Magdalena Landry	Director
Municipality of Venice	Morris Ceron	General Manager
	Luca Zuin	Cabinet of the Mayor
	Marco Mastroianni	Director of the Department Promotion of the City and Protection of Traditions and Public Landscaping
	Elena Fregonese	International Policies, Cooperation and UNESCO Office

MiC – Ministry of Culture	Stefano Musco	Director of the UNESCO Office (former Service II – General Secretariat)
	Mariassunta Peci	Director of General Secretariat – Service III International Relations
	Adele Cesi	National World Heritage Convention Focal Point - UNESCO Office
	Francesca Gottardo	Architect Official UNESCO Office

TUESDAY, 29th OCTOBER

Implementation and operation of the MOSE System - Inspections at the inlet

Interventions:

Roberto Rossetto - *President of the Lagoon Authority*

Giovanni Zarotti – *Director General - Consorzio Venezia Nuova*

Davide Sernaglia – *MOSE System Lifting Manager - Consorzio Venezia Nuova*

Stefano Libardo – *MOSE System Decision Room Manager - Consorzio Venezia Nuova*

The following people were also present:

Municipality of Venice	Morris Ceron	General Manager
	Marco Mastroianni	Director of the Department Promotion of the City and Protection of Traditions and Public Landscaping
	Dennis Wellington	International Policies, Cooperation and UNESCO Office General Manager
	Andrea Rossetto	Terre srl – Consultant
MAECI – Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation	Paolo Andrea Bartorelli	Head of UNESCO and International Cultural

		Organizations Office
MiC – Ministry of Culture	Stefano Musco	Director of the UNESCO Office (former Service II – General Secretariat)
	Mariassunta Peci	Director of General Secretariat – Service III International Relations
	Adele Cesi	National World Heritage Convention Focal Point - UNESCO Office
	Francesca Gottardo	Architect Official UNESCO Office
Consorzio Venezia Nuova	Sergio Maso	Inlet Operations Manager
	Francesco Baldan	Inlet Operations Manager
	Alvise Costa	Inlet Operations Manager
	Raffaele Pavanello	Control Room Operative
	Antonio Furlan	Lido Inlet Site Manager
MIT - Office of Regional Works for Triveneto	Tommaso Colabufo	Office of Regional Works for Triveneto Manager
	Valerio Volpe	Director of the Venice Safeguard Office - Maritime Works for the Veneto Region
	Giorgio Barbato	St. Mark's Square works procedure manager
Superintendency for Archaeology, Fine Arts and Landscape of the Municipality of Venice and the Lagoon	Chiara Ferro	Architect Official, UNESCO sites liaison

Arsenale – Torre di Porta nuova

12.00 – 12.30

Realization of temporary landings for cruise traffic and complementary works to safeguard Venice and its Lagoon

Fabio Russo - *Venice Cruise Sub Commissioner*

12.30 – 13.00

Routine and supplementary maintenance works in the Historic City

Alberto Chinellato - *Public Works, Mobility and Transportation Area – Municipality of Venice*

13.00 – 13.15

Protection of traditions and sustainability of events

Fabrizio D'Oria – *Vela*

The following people were also present:

Municipality of Venice	Morris Ceron	General Manager
	Francesca Marton	Director of Works of Urbanization, Cemeteries, Forts and Hydraulic Works Sector
	Dennis Wellington	International Policies, Cooperation and UNESCO Office General Manager
	Andrea Rossetto	Terre srl – Consultant
MAECI – Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation	Paolo Andrea Bartorelli	Head of UNESCO and International Cultural Organizations Office
MiC – Ministry of Culture	Stefano Musco	Director of the UNESCO Office (former Service II – General Secretariat)
	Mariassunta Peci	Director of General Secretariat – Service III International Relations
	Adele Cesi National World Heritage Convention	National World Heritage Convention Focal Point - UNESCO Office
	Francesca Gottardo	Architect Official UNESCO Office

Consorzio Venezia Nuova Sergio Maso Inlet Operations Manager	Sergio Maso	Inlet Operations Manager
	Francesco Baldan	Inlet Operations Manager
	Alvise Costa	Inlet Operations Manager
	Raffaele Pavanello	Control Room Operative
	Antonio Furlan Lido	Lido Inlet Site Manager
MIT - Office of Regional Works for Triveneto	Tommaso Colabufo	Office of Regional Works for Triveneto Manager
	Valerio Volpe	Director of the Venice Safeguard Office – Maritime Works for the Veneto Region
	Giorgio Barbato	St. Mark's Square works procedure manager
Superintendency for Archaeology, Fine Arts and Landscape of the Municipality of Venice and the Lagoon	Chiara Ferro	Architect Official, UNESCO sites liaison
Special Commissioner of Government for the realization of cruise landings and the preservation of Venice and its Lagoon	Sara Lunardelli	Structure of the Special Commissioner of Government

Lunch break

15.00 - 16.30

Actions for the safeguarding of the St. Mark's Square/Basilica insula - Site inspection

Valerio Volpe - Director of the Venice Safeguard Office - Maritime Works for the Veneto Region
- *Office of*

Regional Works for Triveneto

Giorgio Barbato - St. Mark's Square works procedure manager - *Office of Regional Works for Triveneto*

Amerigo Restucci - *Deputy Procurator of the Saint Mark's Basilica*

16.30 – 19.00

Procuratie Vecchie (Auditorium)

Visit of the Procuratie Vecchie: presentation of restoration work

Alexia Boro - *The Human Safety Net*

Presentation of the Venice World Sustainability Capital Project

Renato Brunetta – *President of the Venice World Sustainability Capital Foundation*

Venice campus city

Tiziana Lippiello – *Rector of Ca' Foscari University of Venice*

Benno Albrecht - *Rector of University IUAV of Venice*

Venice can offer possible recipes for salvation for all cities around the world

Pietrangelo Buttafuoco – *President of La Biennale di Venezia Foundation*

Presentation of projects and initiatives of the Venice Biennale

Andrea Del Mercato - *General Manager of La Biennale di Venezia Foundation*

The following people were also present:

Municipality of Venice	Morris Ceron	General Manager
	Luca Zuin	Cabinet of the Mayor
	Dennis Wellington	International Policies, Cooperation and UNESCO Office General Manager
	Andrea Rossetto	Terre srl – Consultant
MAECI – Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation	Paolo Andrea Bartorelli	Head of UNESCO and International Cultural Organizations Office
MiC – Ministry of Culture	Mariassunta Peci	Director of General Secretariat – Service III International Relations
	Adele Cesi	National World Heritage Convention Focal Point - UNESCO Office
	Francesca Gottardo	Architect Official UNESCO Office
Lagoon Authority	Roberto Rossetto	President
Venice World Sustainability Capital Foundation	Alessandro Costa	Director

Ca' Foscari University of Venice	Dario Pellizzon	Head of research and libraries
La Biennale di Venezia Foundation	Debora Rossi	Manager of Legal and Institutional Affairs
CORILA - Consortium for the coordination of researches regarding the Venice Lagoon	Pierpaolo Campostrini	General Manager
Superintendency for Archaeology, Fine Arts and Landscape of the Municipality of Venice and the Lagoon	Chiara Ferro	Architect Official, UNESCO sites liaison

WEDNESDAY, 30th OCTOBER

Smart Control Room – Tronchetto

8.30 – 9.30

Smart Control Room Presentation

Presentation of the Water Traffic Sanctioning System (SISa) of the City of Venice

Marco Agostini - *General Commander of the Local Police Corps of the Municipality of Venice*

Marco Bettini – *General Manager - Venis*

Roberto Rossetto – *President of the Lagoon Authority*

9.30 – 11.00

Actions and tools for tourism management of the property - Access Fee trial and new developments

Simone Venturini – *Councillor for Social Cohesion, Residents Policies, Economic Development and Tourism of the Municipality of Venice*

Coffee break

11.30 -12.00

Local public transport sustainability plans and investments

Giovanni Santoro - *Director of External Relations, Innovative Processes and Controls - AVM Group*

12.00 – 12.30

Demographic dynamics in Venice

Stefania Battaggia – *Director of Citizen and Business Services and Quality of Life Area – Municipality of Venice*

12.30 – 13.00

Interventions for the protection of residents

Simone Venturini – *Councillor for Social Cohesion, Residents Policies, Economic Development and Tourism of the Municipality of Venice*

The following people were also present:

Municipality of Venice	Morris Ceron	General Manager
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	Luca Zuin	Cabinet of the Mayor
	Marco Mastroianni	Director of the Department Promotion of the City and Protection of Traditions and Public Landscaping

	Nicola Nardin Director of the Economics and	Nicola Nardin Director of the Economics and
	Dennis Wellington	International Policies, Cooperation and UNESCO Office General Manager
	Andrea Rossetto	Terre srl – Consultant
MAECI – Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation	Paolo Andrea Bartorelli	Head of UNESCO and International Cultural Organizations Office
MiC – Ministry of Culture	Mariassunta Peci	Director of General Secretariat – Service III International Relations
	Adele Cesi	National World Heritage Convention Focal Point - UNESCO Office
	Francesca Gottardo	Architect Official UNESCO Office
Superintendency for Archaeology, Fine Arts and Landscape of the Municipality of Venice and the Lagoon	Chiara Ferro	Architect Official, UNESCO sites liaison
Ciset – International Centre of Studies on Tourism Economics	Federica Montaguti	Senior Researcher

Lunch Break

14.30 – 14.45

Visit of UNESCO Infopoint (Forte Marghera)

Marco Mastroianni – *Director of the Department Promotion of the City and Protection of Traditions and Public Landscaping - Municipality of Venice*

14.45 - 15.30

Forte Marghera inspection

Marco Mastroianni - *Director of the Department Promotion of the City and Protection of Traditions and Public Landscaping - Municipality of Venice*

15.45 – 18.30

Veritas Headquarters**Visit of Veritas water service analysis laboratory**

Stefano Della Sala - *Laboratory Director – Veritas*

Projects on the Venice aqueduct and sewer system in the historic centre**Climate change mitigation interventions - hydraulic safety projects**

Andrea Razzini – *General Manager - Veritas*

Giuseppe Boscolo Lisetto - *Engineering Director – Veritas*

The following people were also present:

Municipality of Venice	Dennis Wellington	International Policies, Cooperation and UNESCO Office General Manager
MAECI – Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation	Paolo Andrea Bartorelli	Head of UNESCO and International Cultural Organizations Office
MiC – Ministry of Culture	Adele Cesi	National World Heritage Convention Focal Point - UNESCO Office
	Francesca Gottardo	Architect Official UNESCO Office
Superintendency for Archaeology, Fine Arts and Landscape of the Municipality of Venice and the Lagoon	Chiara Ferro	Architect Official, UNESCO sites liaison

THURSDAY, 31st OCTOBER

9.00 – 12.00

UNESCO Venice Office, Palazzo Zorzi**Meeting with stakeholders, categories and associations**

The following people were also present:

Municipality of Venice	Marco Mastroianni	Director of the Department Promotion of the City and Protection of Traditions and Public Landscaping
	Dennis Wellington	International Policies, Cooperation and UNESCO Office General Manager
	Giovanna Boscaino	International Policies, Cooperation and UNESCO Office
	Elena Fregonese	International Policies, Cooperation and UNESCO Office
MAECI – Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation	Paolo Andrea Bartorelli	Head of UNESCO and International Cultural Organizations Office
MiC – Ministry of Culture	Adele Cesi	National World Heritage Convention Focal Point - UNESCO Office
	Francesca Gottardo	Architect Official UNESCO Office
Superintendency for Archaeology, Fine Arts and Landscape of the Municipality of Venice and the Lagoon	Chiara Ferro	Architect Official, UNESCO sites liaison

12.30 -13.00

Correr Museum

Enhancement works of the Venice City Museums

Mattia Agnetti - *Organizing Secretary, Fondazione Musei Civici di Venezia*

Chiara Squarcina - *Scientific Director, Fondazione Musei Civici di Venezia*

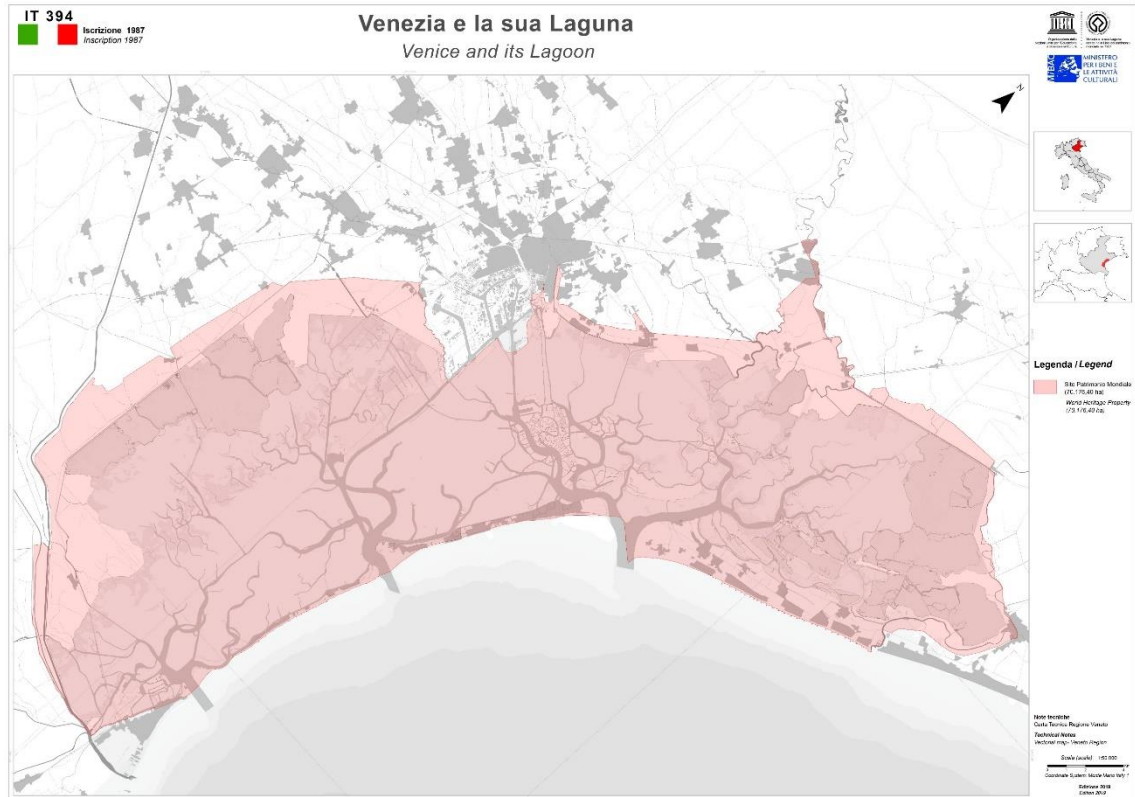
Arianna Abbate – *Maintenance, Preparation, and Technical Service Architect, Fondazione Musei Civici di Venezia*

Lunch and closing the of mission

The following people were also present:

Municipality of Venice	Morris Ceron	General Manager
	Marco Mastroianni	Director of the Department Promotion of the City and Protection of Traditions and Public Landscaping
	Dennis Wellington	International Policies, Cooperation and UNESCO Office General Manager
VELA S.p.A	Fabrizio D'Oria	Operations Manager
MiC – Ministry of Culture	Adele Cesi	National World Heritage Convention Focal Point - UNESCO Office
	Francesca Gottardo	Architect Official UNESCO Office
Superintendency for Archaeology, Fine Arts and Landscape of the Municipality of Venice and the Lagoon	Fabrizio Magani	Superintendent
	Chiara Ferro	Architect Official, UNESCO sites liaison

Annex 4. Official map of the property



Annex 5. Suggested revised draft corrective measures

Key topic	Sub-topic	Actions	Specific goals and objectives	Main responsible	Status	Timeline for implementation
Management of the property	Legal framework	Developing and revising the relevant legal tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the Special Law for Venice is reissued, including funding schemes and regulatory measures towards safeguarding the property - the legislation concerning the EU Directive on the implementation of Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) and the specific national regulations for impact assessment procedures (at project and policy levels) is revised and updated for a World Heritage context, in order to comply with Paragraph 118 bis of the Operational Guidelines. - regional and local spatial planning documents are harmonised to enable impact assessment procedures consistent with World Heritage requirements. 	<p>National (Government)</p> <p>Stakeholders at regional and local levels</p>		
		Consolidating legal frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - clear linkages between the protection of the property and strategic and spatial planning tools. are established - unique characteristics of Venice as a city of water are incorporated into the national and regional legal frameworks, enabling the development of regional and local legal measures to ensure effective protection and management of the property, including the implementation of a balanced and sustainable tourism strategy and policy. 	Stakeholders at regional and local levels		

Key topic	Sub-topic	Actions	Specific goals and objectives	Main responsible	Status	Timeline for implementation
	Institutional framework	Enhancing the governance of the property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - sectoral needs and priorities are identified and addressed - roles, responsibilities and mandates of the various stakeholders and authorities are formally defined and recognised within legal instruments, and establish clear procedures for decision-making and allocation of legal competencies - procedures to support decision-making processes, facilitate information sharing, and promote awareness-raising among all relevant parties are developed and implemented. 	Stakeholders at relevant levels		
		Reconsidering the role and mandate of the Steering Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a common vision for the protection, preservation, and management of the property is developed with relevant strategies and policies - procedures for protecting, preserving, and managing the property are created in a more proactive and cross-cutting manner - procedures and measures to mediate differing interests and conflicts among stakeholders and rights-holders are developed. 	Stakeholders at all levels		
		Designating a specific World Heritage site manager team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a specific World Heritage site management team is established for the property with staff possessing adequate technical skills. - the mandate, role and responsibility of the site management team is established and respected by all stakeholders - the site management team has the capacity to coordinate the management of the property and to 	Relevant municipalities and the Metropolitan City of Venice		

Key topic	Sub-topic	Actions	Specific goals and objectives	Main responsible	Status	Timeline for implementation
			implement the World Heritage management cycles, including the Management Plan, necessary monitoring activities, and follow-up and enhancement measures.			
	Management system	Developing a shared understanding of values and attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a detailed attribute system is identified and spatially mapped (where possible) - the attribute system is made accessible to all stakeholders and rights-holders - the attributes are integrated into the management system and Management Plan, as well as spatial planning documents, ensuring their protection through planning measures. 	site manager, competent municipalities and the Metropolitan City of Venice		
		Committing to a shared vision for protecting the OUV of the property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - focus is placed on protecting and preserving the property's OUV for future generations. - a coordinated agreement is established among all stakeholders of the property. - a coordinated management approach is implemented, extending to the wider setting and the future buffer zone of the property. 	All the stakeholders		
	Updated draft Management Plan	Finalising the draft with the recommendations by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to the World Heritage Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The finalisation process of the updated Management Plan considers and follows the recommendations of the following documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Report of the joint WHC/ICOMOS/Ramsar Advisory mission of January 2020 ▪ Report of the joint WHC/ICOMOS/ICCROM 	Relevant municipalities and the Metropolitan City of Venice		

Key topic	Sub-topic	Actions	Specific goals and objectives	Main responsible	Status	Timeline for implementation
			<p>Advisory mission of October 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICOMOS Technical Review of October 2024 			
		Developing a specific implementation plan for the Management Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A cycle of short-, medium- and long-term actions is developed to protect, conserve, and present the property, with clearly assigned responsibilities and implementation timelines. The Action Plan(s) provide a detailed roadmap with indicators for measurable benchmarks. Actions are developed considering a sustainable development approach, alongside an integrated framework for disaster risk preparedness and climate change adaptation. 	Relevant municipalities and the Metropolitan City of Venice		
		Putting in place monitoring measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adequate monitoring systems are established to assess the state of conservation of the property, the effectiveness of the management system and Management Plan, and the implementation of related action plans Indicators are developed to measure and evaluate the state of conservation, influencing factors, and necessary conservation measures Indicators are created for additional monitoring activities Specific monitoring systems are developed or reinforced within the management system to track vulnerabilities of the property, including impacts from disasters and climate change An assessment process is established enabling the site 	Relevant municipalities and the Metropolitan City of Venice		

Key topic	Sub-topic	Actions	Specific goals and objectives	Main responsible	Status	Timeline for implementation
			management body and relevant authorities to comply with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines.			
		Formalising the updated Management Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the updated Management Plan is formally recognised and effectively integrates its objectives into formal planning tools across all governance and management levels of the property - the Management Plan functions as a comprehensive, integrated plan for the entire property and its designated buffer zone, embraced by all stakeholder - the Management Plan is accessible to all stakeholders and rights-holders, including residents, businesses, and non-governmental organisations, and directs coordinated actions. 	Relevant municipalities and the Metropolitan City of Venice		
	Buffer zone	Establishing a buffer zone with complementary legal and/or customary restrictions placed on its use and development in order to give an added layer of protection to the property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A plan is developed to comply with the World Heritage Committee's request as outlined in Decision 43 COM 8B.46 - A request for the establishment of a buffer zone is submitted promptly to the World Heritage Centre for adoption by the Committee, in accordance with Paragraph 164 and Annex 11 of the Operational Guidelines. 	All relevant stakeholders		
Development plans and proposals within the property and its wider setting	Legal and procedural planning framework	Updating and harmonising the spatial planning tools and guidelines of all the relevant administrative entities within and around the property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a coordinated and integrated vision is developed by all stakeholders for planning and implementing changes and developments within and around the property - height limits are identified for new constructions and 	Relevant municipalities and the Metropolitan City of Venice		

Key topic	Sub-topic	Actions	Specific goals and objectives	Main responsible	Status	Timeline for implementation
		to jointly ensure the maintenance of the OUV of the property and its attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> refurbishment of existing buildings within and around the property - a strategic Skyline Policy document is developed for the property, establishing maximum building heights in relevant areas to avoid the cumulative negative impact of high-rise projects - relevant planning tools are revised to incorporate the restrictive measures established by the Skyline Policy - Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) are carried out for plans and programmes with potential impact on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property and its attributes - project-specific impact assessments are conducted for all projects potentially affecting the property's OUV and attributes; only projects that do not harm the property's values and attributes are authorised. 			
	Planned and proposed projects within and around the property	Developing procedures and measures to prevent negative impacts on the property's OUV and its underlying attributes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the outcomes of the HIA for the 12 specific projects are used to avoid and mitigate adverse impacts of projects already planned and proposed within and around the property - the requests of the World Heritage Committee, as well as the advice and recommendations from the 	Relevant municipalities and the Metropolitan City of Venice		

Key topic	Sub-topic	Actions	Specific goals and objectives	Main responsible	Status	Timeline for implementation
			<p>2020 and 2024 Advisory missions, are implemented and followed for specific projects planned and proposed within and around the property</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - specific impact assessment procedures are systematically carried out for all projects exceeding the traditional height and dimensions of buildings in the relevant region or neighbourhood - a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is developed for the PUMS, with outcomes used to develop alternatives aligned with the objective of protecting and preserving the property's OUV and attributes, as well as a site-specific tourism management strategy - a specific policy is developed for the installation of renewable energy infrastructures and energy efficiency retrofitting within the property and its wider setting. 			
	Projects related to flood management	The impacts of flood management projects are continuously monitored, and timely corrective actions are implemented as necessary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - maintenance of the developed systems is ensured through a coordinated approach with all relevant stakeholders - data is collected and specific indicators are developed for monitoring the impacts of all types of flood management projects, specifically those of the MoSE - negative impacts are mitigated in a strategic way, and necessary actions 	All relevant stakeholders		

Key topic	Sub-topic	Actions	Specific goals and objectives	Main responsible	Status	Timeline for implementation
			are put in place to protect and preserve the OUV of the property.			
	Projects related to infrastructure for large ships	The infrastructure for large passenger ships within and around the property is managed through a restrictive and strategic approach that aligns with sustainable tourism objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the protection of the Lagoon is prioritised over the interests of shipping - the ban on large ships passing through the San Marco basin and the Giudecca canal is maintained - an SEA is carried out for options to develop port systems either inside or outside the Lagoon for large ships, including the additional transportation needs of passengers from a remote port to the Lagoon islands or the mainland - works to create new water traffic routes or restore previously existing canals (including the Vittorio Emmanuel canal) for ships in the Lagoon are not pursued - projects to create new mooring berths within or around the property are considered in relation to the outcomes of the developed tourism carrying capacity study. 	All relevant stakeholders		
Tourism Management	Tourism management framework	Developing a sustainable tourism model specifically tailored to the World Heritage property, incorporating targeted strategies and policies to effectively reduce and balance tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a study for the tourism carrying capacity of the property (identifying the most vulnerable areas within the property) is developed (using data from the Smart Control Room and other adequate sources), to form the basis for further actions. 	Municipality or the Metropolitan municipality of Venice and government		

Key topic	Sub-topic	Actions	Specific goals and objectives	Main responsible	Status	Timeline for implementation
		pressure while safeguarding the property's OUV.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a specific Tourism Management Plan for 'Venice and its Lagoon' as a World Heritage property is developed (with the help of the UNESCO Sustainable Tourism Toolkit), with the aim of fostering sustainable tourism through means that allow efficient measures to be taken. - the number of daily visitors is reduced in line with the outcomes of the developed tourism carrying capacity study. - visitor access and mobility are regulated in a way that does not negatively impact the life of local communities and residents. - services and commerce become more balanced between providing for local communities and for visitors. - a pilot project is developed related to the management of mass tourism for exchanging lessons learned and good practices with site managers of other World Heritage properties. properties with similar issues 			

Key topic	Sub-topic	Actions	Specific goals and objectives	Main responsible	Status	Timeline for implementation
	Tourism infrastructure	Developing appropriate legal instruments that enable the implementation of restrictive measures and the provision of financial incentives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a coordinated strategy is developed by the relevant stakeholders within and around the property to monitor the number of available hotel rooms and other visitor accommodation, to prevent their further expansion and reduce their number based on the outcomes of the developed tourism carrying capacity study. - a specific SEA is developed (in conjunction with the PUMS) to assess the impacts of the present transportation and mobility infrastructure as well as future plans and policies concerning the property and its wider setting. - public transportation and mobility infrastructure are further developed to ensure services primarily for local communities. - infrastructure for large ships is closely controlled and restricted in line with the outcomes of the developed tourism carrying capacity study. - restrictive measures are put in place for private vehicle traffic of visitors (both cars and buses) to access the most vulnerable parts of the property. - efficient measures are put in place to restrict the availability of short-term private rentals and B&Bs for visitors (including the reduction of existing ones in line with the outcomes of the developed tourism carrying capacity study). 	Municipality or the Metropolitan municipality of Venice and government		

Key topic	Sub-topic	Actions	Specific goals and objectives	Main responsible	Status	Timeline for implementation
	Protection of local communities	An integrated, strategic approach is developed to support the stabilisation of local communities within the property, including maintaining resident numbers and enhancing their quality of life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the number of residents within the property is stabilised, or even increased, through targeted housing and community support policies. - measures to ensure the quality of life of local communities are interconnected with sustainable tourism management, reducing tourism-related pressures. - local services and infrastructure for small businesses, transportation, and mobility are enhanced without resulting in increased pressure from tourism. - the available housing (including new apartments on the housing market, long-term private rentals, and social housing) is increased for residents. - public services, service infrastructure, and care facilities are strengthened for the use of local communities. 	Relevant municipalities and the Metropolitan City of Venice		
Environmental values of the Lagoon	Risk of pollution of the Lagoon	Developing and maintaining an effective urban sewer and waste management system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - pollution caused by the release of untreated sewage is mitigated through an ecosystem-based approach - the company VERITAS is closely integrated into management and governance structures, enabling effective monitoring of waste and sewage treatment - the system includes a mandatory Environmental Impact Assessment for any 	Relevant municipalities and the Metropolitan City of Venice		

Key topic	Sub-topic	Actions	Specific goals and objectives	Main responsible	Status	Timeline for implementation
			extension to VERITAS' capacity and operations			
		Enhancing the regulatory framework governing emissions from boats and ships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the requirement for the use of low-emission fuel by ships circulating in the Lagoon is maintained and is sufficiently dissuasive to achieve a tangible impact - the use of no-emission (electric) boats is encouraged through economic measures, especially for smaller-scale public transport and private boats. 	All relevant stakeholders		
	Impacts of climate change	Strengthening existing frameworks to ensure environmental stability and mitigate the adverse impacts of climate change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the 'Environmental and Morphological Plan for the Lagoon' is regularly updated, and its full implementation is integrated into the relevant legal framework - the 'sediment-protocol' (<i>protocollo fanghi</i>) in the Lagoon follows state-of-the-art scientific data and practices, prioritizing the environmental health and stability of the Lagoon. - dredging activities on existing navigation canals in the Lagoon are fully aligned with the 'Environmental and Morphological Plan' for the Lagoon and the 'sediment-protocol'. - the Climate Action Plan is regularly updated and embedded within the relevant legal and procedural framework 	Relevant municipalities and the Metropolitan City of Venice		

Key topic	Sub-topic	Actions	Specific goals and objectives	Main responsible	Status	Timeline for implementation
			to ensure its full implementation.			
		Collecting new data, developing climate change scenarios, and implement new initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - projects are launched to collect scientific data (such as the status of <i>fanerogome marina</i> in the Lagoon) that help understand and predict impacts of climate change within and around the property - actions and projects are developed and implemented to monitor and mitigate negative impacts of climate change within and around the property - experience and developed practices are shared with site managers of other World Heritage properties. 	Relevant municipalities and the Metropolitan City of Venice		
	Water traffic in the lagoon	Monitoring and regulating the movement of boats and ships to ensure safety and prevent the adverse effects of wave action (<i>moto ondosso</i>).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - relevant data is continuously collected, and regulatory measures are developed and implemented to ensure the avoidance and mitigation of negative impacts from water traffic and circulation in the Lagoon - structural damage caused by boat waves is closely monitored and promptly repaired. 	Relevant municipalities and the Metropolitan City of Venice		

Key topic	Sub-topic	Actions	Specific goals and objectives	Main responsible	Status	Timeline for implementation
	Restoration of the Lagoon ecosystem	Creating a functional framework for environmental restoration policies and plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a Lagoon water and sediment flow model is developed as a basis to take management decisions to avoid Lagoon bed erosion towards the Sea - the related limits and restrictions for navigation waterway dredging and sediment relocation are clear and are implemented through the relevant legal tools - relevant projects for the restoration of specific Lagoon ecosystem are continuously developed, implemented, and their impact is monitored 	Relevant municipalities and the Metropolitan City of Venice		

Annex 6. Decisions of the World Heritage Committee in 2021 and 2023

Decision 44 COM 7B.50

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decisions **38 COM 7B.27**, **40 COM 7B.52**, **41 COM 7B.48** and **43 COM 7B.86** adopted at its 38th (Doha, 2014), 40th (Istanbul/UNESCO, 2016), 41st (Krakow, 2017) and 43rd (Baku, 2019) sessions respectively,
3. Notes the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/Ramsar Advisory mission of 2020, which reviewed the progress in implementing previous Committee decisions, and to assess the state of conservation of the property, and the State Party's efforts to start implementing the mission recommendations;
4. Also notes that the State Party is working towards refining tourism management tools, improving public spaces and public housing and urges the State Party to work towards a sustainable tourism model for the property and to develop strategies and policies that will result in reducing the number of visitors to the property, in significantly enhancing the quality of life of residents and the requalification of urban areas to their former residential use, as well as in a more diverse resilient economic basis for future of the property and its inhabitants;
5. Welcomes the updated information provided by the State Party with reference to the measures adopted to ban ships over 25.000 gross tons, from 1 August, from the San Marco Basin, San Marco and Giudecca channels, and acknowledges the measures approved for a temporary mooring of the large ships and for a long-term solution to the maritime traffic, prioritizing the option outside the Lagoon altogether and redirecting them to other, more suitable ports in the region as a final solution;
6. Also acknowledges that the Management Plan of the property is being updated, and also urges the State Party to ensure that, in order to protect the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, the updated Management Plan is based on a systematic value assessment, including the identification and mapping of attributes that convey the OUV of the property, and that it will serve as an integrated plan for the property and its planned buffer zone;
7. Notes with concern the exceptional high tide events that affected the property at the end of 2019, and commends the joint efforts of the stakeholders, including the local communities, for managing the disaster in an efficient way and taking actions and measures for repairing and mitigating the damage;
8. Further acknowledges the efforts of the State Party to work towards the completion and operationalization of the MoSE high tide defense barriers system, and further urges the State Party to monitor closely the impacts of the construction and the operation of the system, and to develop appropriate measures for mitigating any negative impacts it might have on the ecosystem of the Lagoon;
9. Also requests the State Party to continue its efforts to mitigate the negative impacts of human interventions in the Lagoon ecosystem in a more strategic and coordinated way, and to develop further measures that will ensure the long-term protection and preservation of this unique and complex environmental area; and therefore, urges furthermore the State Part to progressively eliminate activities in the port of Marghera

which have a damaging effect on the ecosystem of the property and implement a sustainable development approach to all future plans;

10. Also notes with concern that currently, there are no adequate mechanisms in place to report planned changes/projects to the World Heritage Centre in line with Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*, or to assess their potential impacts to the OUV of the property in line with Paragraph 118bis, and therefore, urges moreover the State Party to:
 - a) Further revise the governance of the property and develop appropriate mechanisms that allow compliance with the *Operational Guidelines*,
 - b) Develop an overall strategy and vision for the protection and preservation of the property, and ensure its implementation through targeted Action Plans and a revised Road Map,
 - c) Develop an Integrated Master Plan for construction projects, including a skyline policy for the property, its future buffer zone and its setting, in order to protect the property from impacts on its integrity,
 - d) Implement the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape approach in the regional and urban planning,
 - e) Halt all newly proposed large-scale projects within the property and its setting until the above listed measures are put in place,
 - f) Engage in dialogue with the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies towards developing the proposed measures;
11. Regrets the construction of the liquified petroleum gas (LPG) storage facility in Chioggia within the property that presents an important threat to its OUV, and while noting with satisfaction the new legal measures related to construction and operation of LPG storage facilities, further requests the State Party to dismantle the storage facility in Chioggia and move it to an alternative location outside the property's boundaries;
12. Expresses concerns that despite the progress assessed on several issues identified, some important issues remain to be addressed;
13. Takes note of the key conclusions and recommendations of the 2020 Advisory mission and requests furthermore the State Party to report to the World Heritage Centre on their implementation;
14. Requests moreover the State Party, to develop a proposal on a set of corrective measures with a timeframe for their implementation, in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session;
15. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session.

Decision 45 COM 7B.189

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decisions **38 COM 7B.27, 40 COM 7B.52, 41 COM 7B.48, 43 COM 7B.86, 43 COM 8B.46** and **44 COM 7B.50** adopted at its 38th (Doha, 2014), 40th (Istanbul/UNESCO, 2016), 41st (Krakow, 2017), 43rd (Baku, 2019), and extended 44th (Fuzhou/online, 2021) sessions respectively,
3. Welcomes the State Party's efforts to implement previous Committee decisions and several of the 2020 mission recommendations, including:
 - a) Continuing enhancing tourism management tools, public spaces, and public housing possibilities,
 - b) Improving coordination between the different stakeholders to enhance the protection of the ecosystem of the Lagoon and reduce the polluting emissions from the industrial area of Marghera,
 - c) Creating and reinforcing tide barriers, and the reconstruction and consolidation of beaches and coastal dunes, as well as the development of advanced tidal forecasting technology,
 - d) Reconfirmation of the ban on large ships from the San Marco Basin - Giudecca Canal and the continuing efforts to find new options for docking large ships outside the Lagoon,
 - e) Still ongoing update of the Management Plan, as well as the development of World Heritage-focused Heritage Impact Assessments for a set of projects,
 - f) Adopting an experimental system for managing tourist flows, based on an entry fee and a compulsory booking method;
4. Considers nevertheless that further progress still needs to be made by the State Party in addressing individual threats and their cumulative impact, and therefore requests the State Party, as a matter of priority, to:
 - a) Continue research on the evaluation of existing phenomena, prediction and modelling of future phenomena related to climate change and its current and potential impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property and develop related action plans,
 - b) Fully complete and operationalise the MoSE system and ensure its long-term management and maintenance including through establishing with urgency the proposed management authority,
 - c) Ensure close joint monitoring by all relevant stakeholders of the impacts of the MoSE system (construction and operation), and continue developing appropriate measures to mitigate any negative impacts it might have on the ecosystem of the Lagoon,
 - d) Submit the results of related studies on the environmental impact of large ships passing through the Malamocco-Marghera canal and the competition for docking points outside the Lagoon for large passenger ships and container ships to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies before irreversible

decisions are made, furthermore, to continue to prioritise the option of redirecting large ships to other more suitable ports in the region as a final solution,

- e) Continue submitting action plans and documents related to the morphological conditions of the Lagoon and sustainable energy use to the World Heritage Centre for review and comments by the Advisory Bodies
 - f) Continue working towards a sustainable tourism model for the property and developing efficient strategies and measures that will reduce the exceptionally high number of visitors to the property, significantly improve the quality of life of the residents and the requalification of urban areas to their former residential use, as well as creating a more diverse resilient economic basis for future of the property and its inhabitants;
5. Also notes the information provided on the construction of temporary barriers to protect the San Marco Basilica and the surrounding area from the high-water phenomena not managed by the MoSE, and furthermore requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, as soon as possible, detailed documentation on the works planned to elevate the entire San Marco insula, for review by the Advisory Bodies, prior to any irreversible decision being taken and implemented;
6. Also considers that a strategic long-term vision for the long-term preservation of the property has to be further developed, and that integrated coordinated management at all stakeholder-levels needs to be further strengthened, and therefore urges the State Party to:
- a) Finalise the updating of the Management Plan with adequate measures for the future buffer zone as well, and develop in parallel an Integrated Master Plan and a skyline policy for the property,
 - b) Integrate measures in line with Paragraph 118bis of the Operational Guidelines that ensure the protection and preservation of the OUV of the property in the planning, Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment processes, and ensure that specific World Heritage-focused impact assessments are carried out if no other impact assessment procedures are in place to consider the impacts of planned or proposed projects within the property and its wider setting,
 - c) Establish processes in line with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines for submitting planned/proposed changes and projects to the World Heritage Centre in a timely manner for review by the Advisory Bodies and ensure that impact assessment processes and the Management Plan support the relevant decision-making,
 - d) Resubmit a revised minor boundary modification request for the establishment of a buffer zone, responding to the requests made in previous Committee decisions;
7. Further considers that reported large scale development projects that are currently being investigated for implementation in the property hold potential, individually and cumulatively, to have an adverse impact on the OUV of the property, and therefore expresses concern that these projects, when implemented, will add to the possible deterioration effects of human intervention, climate change impacts and mass tourism, which could threaten to result in irreversible change, and substantial loss of historical authenticity and cultural significance, which are an integral part of the OUV of the property, if appropriate measures are not implemented;

8. Expresses concern that, despite the progress assessed in the implementation of previous Committee decisions and mission recommendations some important issues remain to be addressed, related in particular to mass tourism, development projects and climate change;
9. Further considers that the corrective measures proposed by the State Party need to be further developed, and therefore also urges the State Party to continue, in the implementation of previous Committee decisions and recommendations of the 2020 Advisory mission, a structured consultation process with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies;
10. Encourages the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission to the property to assess the overall state of conservation of the property and to engage with the State Party in its efforts to address the issues which could have a potential impact on the preservation of the property;
11. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2024**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 47th session.

Annex 7. Documentation and information requested after the mission

- The **final programme** of the mission with the actual people met during each programme item;
- The **competence** of the municipalities within the property and its planned buffer zone, the Metropolitan City of Venice, and the regions that competence over the area of the property and its planned buffer zone concerning spatial planning regulations within the property (what kind of master plan is under their auspices) and decision-making power related to planning proposals (which kind of development proposals they make decisions about);
- The **Master Plans** of the Municipality of Venice and the Metropolitan City of Venice;
- Description of the legal status of the World Heritage Management Plan of the property ones adopted, and its relation to other major plans;
- The **organigram** of the departments operating under the Municipality of Venice, with indication where the World Heritage site management team is situated and whose responsibility it is under (enabling better understanding the linkages between management structures and the implementation potential of the Management Plan);
- Description of the operational team of the **World Heritage site management**
 - number of people working specifically to manage 'Venice and its Lagoon' as a World Heritage property within the Municipality of Venice,
 - the education background of the management team members,
 - the description of the tasks of the management team within the Municipality of Venice and their decisional role
- The **mandate of the Steering Committee**;
- Updated list of the **members (name of the organization) of the Steering Committee** for 'Venice and its Lagoon' as a World Heritage property;
- A description of the new **Venice Lagoon Authority** with indication of
 - which ministry or other authority(ies) is its supervisory authority,
 - which organisations it will be supervising and will fall under its authority,
 - its planned yearly budget and the source of the budget,
 - its planned number of staff,
 - the list of its planned tasks,
 - its planned organisation in expectation of its functioning,
 - the planned date of starting its operation;
- The current version of the **Special Law for Venice** and the timeframe and the budget it provided in the last ten years (please indicate also for which tasks the budget was dedicated). Please also indicate if there is an overview of total financial flows specifically related to the World Heritage property 'Venice and its Lagoon';
- The legal tool that provides the Municipality of Venice authorization to **restrict private rentals**;
- An approximate number of **new hotels/beds** created/constructed in the last 10 years within the Metropolitan City of Venice;
- An (approximate) number of total residential units within the historic centre of Venice and an overview of how many are **registered as short term rentals** now and in the last 10 years;
- Outline of the most recent plan concerning the future **buffer zone** of the World Heritage property (if possible, with a map, indicating the suggested boundaries);

- Description of the **monitoring tools related to the evolution of the Lagoon** over the last ten years with regard to its morphology and water quality, and the effect of the MoSE;
- List of measures related to mitigate the potential negative impacts of the **MoSE**;
- The exact number of already available and planned mooring stations for cruise ships in the **Marghera port**, the size of the ships that are/or will be received and the number of people they bring/year to Venice;
- The exact number of already available mooring stations for ships in the **Venice port in Tronchetto**, the size of the ships that are received and the number of people they bring/year to Venice;
- The number of available mooring stations for ships in the **port of Chioggia**, the size of the ships that are received and the number of people they bring/year to Chioggia and the Venice Lagoon;
- The exact number of planned mooring stations for ships in the **Venice port in Tronchetto**, the size of the ships that will be received and the number of people they bring/year to Venice if the Vittorio Emmanuel Canal is reopened;
- Figures for **motorized boat transport** in the canals for the last 10 years;
- The number of passengers using the **Marco Polo Airport in Venice**, with indication of the foreseen number of passengers in the next 10 years;
- The current status of the **LPG facility in Chioggia** within the property, with regard to the request of the World Heritage Committee to dismantle it and move it to an alternative location outside the property's boundaries;
- Provide indication if there is any further **planned or proposed project** that was not included in the submitted HIA, but have the potential to impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property (even if it is situated in its future buffer zone or in its wider setting);
- Provide brief information (related to the following **projects that were brought to the attention of the mission by third parties** if information is available (with indication of exact location, plans and renderings/photos). Please also indicate specifically if no information is available on these projects for the relevant authorities or the operational World Heritage site management):
 - construction of a 12-hectare agri-voltaic park on the island of Sant'Erasmo,
 - a recently installed 24-metre-high antenna for mobile radio service in Sant'Erasmo,
 - recovery plan for the area of the former Umberto I Hospital, including the demolition or transformation of historical buildings and the construction of a 87 meter tower,
 - construction of residential buildings in a nature reserve on the Ca'Roman island,
 - Terminal Montiron - Ca' Noghera,
 - Project planned in the area of the Cantiere Navale Beraldo,
 - 'The waterfront development plan'

Annex 8. Responsibilities within the UNESCO Site 'Venice and its Lagoon' (as presented to the Mission)

The management of interventions within the site "Venice and its Lagoon" is characterised by a complex authorisation chain, in which the responsibilities of the State, the Veneto Region, the Province of Padua, the Metropolitan City of Venice (when involved) and the Municipalities are intertwined.

This multi-level distribution of responsibilities ensures a balance between needs of protection, local development and sustainability. However, coordination between multiple actors and the management of tight constraints pose significant challenges.

What follows is a brief outline of the responsibilities assigned to each subject. Keep in mind that this is not an exhaustive picture considering the complexity of the regulatory framework of reference and the current fragmentation of responsibilities.

1. The Government

Role and Responsibilities:

- **Legislative framework:** the Government establishes the general principles for urban and territorial planning, and defines specific sector regulations with specific legislative instruments (e.g. the Code of Cultural and Landscape Heritage, Legislative Decree 42/2004) managing the protection of landscape and cultural heritage, Legislative Decree 152 of April 3rd, 2006 containing environmental regulations;
- **Superintendency for Artistic and Cultural Heritage and Ministry of Culture (MiC):** The Superintendency assesses interventions in restricted areas or on restricted property. The two Authorities have authorisation power over cultural, landscape and archaeological aspects.
- **Major works and infrastructures of national importance:** the Government can intervene directly in strategic interventions, such as projects of international importance (e.g. port, airport or railway infrastructures), using instruments such as Conferences of Services to speed up decision-making processes.
- **Interregional Superintendency for Public Works,** which performs the functions of safeguarding and depolluting the lagoon.

2. Veneto Region

Role and Responsibilities:

- **Strategic planning:** through the Regional Territorial Coordination Plan (PTRC), the Region defines strategic directions and development scenarios, integrating environmental and cultural protection objectives.
- **Legislative framework:** the Region approves the regional urban planning law and regional laws for land protection. For example, LR 14/2017 and 14/2019, which aim to gradually reduce the consumption of undeveloped land and promote building and environmental redevelopment, urban regeneration and the development of urban buildings with low energy and environmental impact.
- **Environmental Protection:** The Region's responsibilities concern actions for the protection of the environment and the territory, such as reducing the level of pollution in the lagoon and in the watercourses of the Drainage Basin, securing and reclaiming polluted sites, infrastructural redevelopment and productive reconversion of Porto Marghera, and updating and monitoring the interventions related to the Special Law for Venice. The Region also issues the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for interventions that may have a significant impact on the territory.

- **Coordinating the municipalities:** the Region supervises the Land Use Plans (PAT) and Intervention Plans (IP), ensuring consistency with regional strategies.
- **Enhancement of the landscape:** the Region is committed to the enhancement and protection of the Veneto landscape through projects, legislations, surveys and policies.
- **Additional responsibilities:** The Region also plays a key role in promoting urban and environmental regeneration policies, encouraging the use of green infrastructure and sustainable solutions. It has specific responsibilities in the management of the hydraulic and lagoon system.

3. Padova Province and Metropolitan City of Venice

Role and Responsibilities:

- **Intermediate planning:** these two Authorities jointly draft the Provincial Coordination Territorial Plans (PTCP) and the Metropolitan General Territorial Plan (PTGM), which link regional and municipal planning.
- **Large area infrastructure management:** Coordinate infrastructure works affecting several municipalities.
- **Safeguard of the environment and of protected areas:** both the Padova Province and the Metropolitan City of Venice collaborate with the Region in the management of nature reserves and restricted areas. Integrated environmental management for small and medium-sized enterprises and large industrial facilities (Environmental Impact Assessment, water, air, agri-environment, waste, soil recovery and protection); pollution prevention and control.

4. Municipalities

Role and Responsibilities:

- **Local planning:** through Land Use Plans (PAT) and Intervention Plans (PI), Municipalities regulate land use and the management of urban transformations.
- **Building authorisations:** Municipalities issue building permits, SCIA (Segnalazione Certificata di Inizio Attività – Certified Start of Activity Report) and authorisations for minor building works.
- **Safeguard of the environment and of protected areas:** Municipalities give expert opinions in the procedures of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of Integrated Authorisations (IEA).
- **Environmental protection activities:** Actions for the containment, surveillance and control of different forms of pollution (air, water and soil pollution, noise pollution, etc.); Policies on waste collection and disposal.
- **Safeguard of local heritage:** Municipalities work with the Superintendencies to ensure compliance with cultural and landscape constraints and issue landscape permits;
- **Land management:** Municipalities look after public infrastructure, parks and areas of community interest.

Annex 9. Road Map, suggested by ICOMOS in its Summary Report related to the online Technical Assistance meeting of 13 July 2023.

Step 1: Invite an Advisory mission to the property to assist in reviewing the definition of attributes, the delineation and purpose of the buffer zone and the wider setting, and provide assistance on next steps, which will include the review of the Piano Regolatore as well as other municipal plans and the structure of the management system, and the updating of the management plan.

Step 2: Improve communication to the World Heritage Centre:

- a. Communicate to the World Heritage Centre any projects which may negatively impact the OUV of the property, as a matter of priority and halt any process of approval or realisation until a response has been issued by the World Heritage Centre;
- b. Evaluate through HIAs all 107 projects identified during the management plan,
- c. Ensure all projects are subject to HIAs in order to understand which might have potential impact on OUV.

Step 3: Improve understanding of the Outstanding Universal Value of the property to be able to improve its management:

- i. Bring all activities, that seek to identify the attributes of the property, into a single action which aims to provide a full inventory of tangible and intangible attributes and ensure that these are documented and thereafter introduced in the GIS system (as presented by the State Party during the meeting);
- ii. Undertake a project to define how the buffer zone and the wider setting of “Venice and its Lagoon” support the Outstanding Universal Value of the property;
- iii. Based on the outcomes of the two steps mentioned above, delineate a buffer zone boundary and submit this to the World Heritage Centre, as a minor boundary modification.

Step 4: Validate the mapping of attributes, the contribution of the wider setting to the OUV and the proposed buffer zone boundary zone delineation:

- i. Invite a second Advisory mission to the property to assist in reviewing the definition of attributes, the delineation of the buffer zone and provide assistance on next steps, which will include the review of the Piano Regolatore, as well as other municipal plans and the management system.

Step 5: Update the management system:

- i. Strengthen the functioning of the Steering Committee including a mandate to communicate any development projects that may affect the OUV of the property to the national focal point for communication to the World Heritage Centre and a mandate to request impact assessments by fully independent bodies for projects that may impact the OUV of the property;
- ii. Ensure the Steering Committee has a clear mechanism in place through which stakeholder engagement is structured;
- iii. Review the Piano Regolatore to ensure that the attributes and setting of the property are placed centrally to its development aims;
- iv. Review the other territorial plans, including municipal master plans to align them with the updated Piano Regolatore;
- v. Review the management plan, establishing the maintenance of the attributes that convey the property’s OUV is as its central ambition.

- vi. Ensure that the management plan embeds, as a legal condition for the evaluation and eventual approval of project proposals, the need for HIAs for proposed developments in order to understand which might affect the OUV of the property.

The above steps are presented in a sequential manner as each step builds on the outcomes of the previous step. ICOMOS appreciates that the HIA process is currently being undertaken and cannot wait for the full definition of all attributes of the property, as well as the delineation of the buffer zone, and therefore recommends that the State Party:

- i. Communicate the outcome of the current HIA process to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies as soon as possible, and
- ii. Ensure that the maximum number of mitigation measures are implemented in an iterative fashion to reduce possible impact on the OUV of the property;
- iii. Explore all possible options to halt high-rise developments that may already have been given approvals within the setting of the property until such time as the impacts have been assessed and appropriate mitigation defined and fully implemented.

Annex 10. List of NGOs met during the mission, on 31 October 2025

WHC/ICOMOS / ICCROM JOINT ADVISORY MISSION
World Heritage Site "Venice and its Lagoon"

Meeting with stakeholders and associations

1. FAI Fondo Ambiente Italiano
2. Italia Nostra Venezia
3. WWF Venezia e Territorio
4. Legambiente Venezia
5. Lipu
6. Ambiente Venezia
7. Comitato No Grandi Navi Laguna Bene Comune
8. Venezia Cambia
9. We are here Venice
10. Comitati Privati Internazionali per la Salvaguardia di Venezia
11. Confindustria Veneto Est
12. AVA Associazione Veneziana Albergatori
13. Confcommercio Unione Metropolitana di Venezia
14. AEPE Associazione Esercenti Pubblici Esercizi Venezia
15. Confartigianato Venezia
16. CNA Associazione Metropolitana di Venezia
17. Camera di Commercio di Venezia Rovigo
18. Ordine Architetti Pianificatori Paesaggisti e Conservatori della Provincia di Venezia
19. Ordine degli Ingegneri della Provincia di Venezia
20. Venice Gardens Foundation
21. Comitato Etico Sant'Erasmo
22. Gruppo Insieme contro il moto ondoso
23. Venice International Foundation
24. Save Venice
25. Comité Français pour la Sauvegarde de Venise