

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.77

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decisions 43 COM 7B.36 and 43 COM 8B.9, adopted at its 43rd session (Baku, 2019),
3. Welcomes the efforts that have been made by both States Parties to start addressing the recommendations of the Committee, and notes in particular the improvements in legal processes and management structures, the temporary suspension of building permits in North Macedonia and the demolition of some illegal structures in both North Macedonia and Albania as well as the creation of the Transboundary Watershed Management Committee and the commitment to initiate a transboundary dialogue on the Struga to Lin section of the European corridor VIII railway project;
4. Considers that while some decisions and missions' recommendations over the past six years have been addressed, several have only been partly or insufficiently implemented, and a number of them not addressed at all;
5. Expresses utmost concern at the findings of the 2020 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission that:
  - a) Regarding North Macedonia, there has been insufficient action to halt the slow erosion of the attributes of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) in the urban fabric and the wider landscape arising from inappropriate conservation, reconstruction and development, or to re-consider alternative outcomes for major projects relating to railway and road development,
  - b) Regarding Albania, the acute vulnerabilities that were noted at the time of the extension of the property have not been curtailed and new projects and new developments are being planned that could be highly detrimental to the already compromised lake shore and the Lin peninsula;
6. Notes with grave concern the conclusions of the 2020 mission, which considered that tall buildings close to the lake, the poor architectural quality of the built environment (especially in the main towns of Ohrid, Struga, and Pogradec (buffer zone), but also along the coast outside urban centres), and the inappropriate and excessive use of the coastal zone for tourism infrastructure, have all had a highly negative impact on OUV of the property;
7. Takes note of the ongoing process for the proclamation of Lake Ohrid as a Monument of Nature in North Macedonia, including the development of a Valorization study, as well as a preliminary decision to declare the Studenčišča Marsh a nature park, and requests the State Party of North Macedonia to ensure that these processes are fully integrated with other relevant management and planning processes and are aimed at strengthening the overall management of the property, including through the establishment of functioning management structures;
8. Notes with concern that in spite of recent initiatives, the management system appears still not to be fully mandated to maintain OUV due to conflicting priorities, poor

*implementation of the legal framework and little involvement of civil society, all of which have combined to fragment the management system;*

9. *Also considers that halting and reversing the degradation that is now facing the property, which reflects the cumulative impact of inappropriate changes and lack of conservation over many years, will take considerable concerted efforts over a long timespan, and that, while the immediate actions to halt certain activities are welcomed, these are insufficient and can only be seen as the beginning of a much longer integrated and strategic process, which remains to be defined;*
10. *Further considers that this legacy of erosion of the attributes over decades, combined with the continuing impact of the development in both parts of the transboundary property, represent actual and potential danger to the property according to Paragraphs 179 and 180 of the Operational Guidelines;*
11. *Decides to inscribe the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid region (Albania, North Macedonia) on the List of World Heritage in Danger;*
12. *Urges the two States Parties to develop a detailed Strategic Recovery Plan with an associated phased action plan that sets out clearly defined aims and outcomes to mitigate threats to OUV both in the short and longer term as well as a phased action plan, based on the full recommendations of the 2020 mission, and which would provide an overarching transboundary political and institutional framework for addressing the severe and multiple threats facing to the property;*
13. *Also requests the States Parties, in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, to develop a proposal for the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger and a set of corrective measures, including a timeframe for their implementation, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session in 2022, based on the recommendations of the 2020 mission and the framework of the Strategic Recovery Plan;*
14. *Finally requests the States Parties to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2022**, an updated joint report on the state of conservation of the property, including a report on the progress made in the implementation of the above for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session in 2022.*

77. Natural and Cultural Heritage of the **Ohrid** region (Albania/North Macedonia) (C/N 99)

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1. Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decisions 43 COM 7B.36 and 43 COM 8B.9, adopted at its 43rd session (Baku, 2019),
3. Welcomes the efforts that have been made by both States Parties to start addressing the recommendations of the Committee, and notes in particular the improvements in legal processes and management structures, the temporary suspension of building permits in North Macedonia and the demolition of some illegal structures in both North Macedonia and Albania as well as the creation of the Transboundary Watershed Management Committee and the commitment to initiate a transboundary dialogue on the Struga to Lin section of the European corridor VIII railway project;
4. Considers that while some decisions and missions' recommendations over the past six years have been addressed, several have only been partly or insufficiently implemented, and a number of them not addressed at all;
5. Expresses utmost concern at the findings of the 2020 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission that:
  - a) Regarding North Macedonia, there has been insufficient action to halt the slow erosion of the attributes of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) in the urban fabric and the wider landscape arising from inappropriate conservation, reconstruction and development, or to re-consider alternative outcomes for major projects relating to railway and road development,
  - b) Regarding Albania, the acute vulnerabilities that were noted at the time of the extension of the property have not been curtailed and new projects and new developments are being planned that could be highly detrimental to the already compromised lake shore and the Lin peninsula;
6. Notes with grave concern the conclusions of the 2020 mission, which considered that tall buildings close to the lake, the poor architectural quality of the built environment (especially in the main towns of Ohrid, Struga, and Pogradec (buffer zone), but also along the coast outside urban centres), and the inappropriate and excessive use of the coastal zone for tourism infrastructure, have all had a highly negative impact on OUV of the property;
7. Takes note of the ongoing process for the proclamation of Lake Ohrid as a Monument of Nature in North Macedonia, including the development of a Valorization study, as well as a preliminary decision to declare the Studenčišča Marsh a nature park, and requests the State Party of North Macedonia to ensure that these processes are fully integrated

with other relevant management and planning processes and are aimed at strengthening the overall management of the property, including through the establishment of functioning management structures;

8. Notes with concern that in spite of recent initiatives, the management system appears still not to be fully mandated to maintain OUV due to conflicting priorities, poor implementation of the legal framework and little involvement of civil society, all of which have combined to fragment the management system;
9. Also considers that halting and reversing the degradation that is now facing the property, which reflects the cumulative impact of inappropriate changes and lack of conservation over many years, will take considerable concerted efforts over a long timespan, and that, while the immediate actions to halt certain activities are welcomed, these are insufficient and can only be seen as the beginning of a much longer integrated and strategic process, which remains to be defined;
10. Further considers that this legacy of erosion of the attributes over decades, combined with the continuing impact of the development in both parts of the transboundary property, represent actual and potential danger to the property according to Paragraphs 179 and 180 of the *Operational Guidelines*;
11. Urges the two States Parties to develop a detailed Strategic Recovery Plan with an associated phased action plan that sets out clearly defined aims and outcomes to mitigate threats to OUV with a set of agreed actions including a timeframe both in the short and longer term as well as a phased action plan, based on the full recommendations of the 2020 mission, and which would provide an overarching transboundary political and institutional framework for addressing the severe and multiple threats facing to the property; and to present the Strategic Recovery Plan to the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre in February 2023;
12. Finally requests the States Parties to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2022 a progress report, and by 1 February 2023, an updated joint report on the state of conservation of the property, including a report on the progress made in the implementation of the above for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session, with a view to considering, in case of the confirmation of the potential or ascertained danger to its Outstanding Universal Value, the possible inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.