



FORMAT FOR THE SUBMISSION OF STATE OF CONSERVATION  
REPORTS BY THE STATES PARTIES

**(in compliance with paragraph 169 of the Operational Guidelines)**

**WORLD HERITAGE –NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE OF THE OHRID  
REGION- (Albania/Republic of North Macedonia) (C/N 99)**

**State of conservation report of the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid Region and  
report on the progress made in the implementation of the recommendations from the World  
Heritage Committee Decision (44 COM 7B.77)**

## **State of conservation report of the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid Region and report on the progress made in the implementation of the recommendations from the World Heritage Committee Decision (44 COM 7B.77)**

**Name of World Heritage Property:** Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid Region (Albania/Republic of North Macedonia)(C/N 99)

**Date of Inscription:** 1979

**Expansion:** 1980, 2019

**Year of insignificant change of the borders:** 2009

**Criteria:** (i) (iii) (iv) (vii)

### **1. Executive Summary of the Report**

The Republic of North Macedonia, in close and coordinated cooperation with the Republic of Albania, remains firmly committed to maintain the World Heritage status for the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid Region. This State of Conservation Report for the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid Region (North Macedonia) expresses the efforts of the State Party, which during this reporting period continued its efforts towards implementation of World Heritage Committee Decisions (43 COM 7B.36) and (44 COM 7B.77), and fulfilling the recommendations of the Reactive Monitoring Missions (2017, 2020).

During the reporting period, and in accordance with the Management Plan for the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid Region (2020-2029), the Republic of North Macedonia began developing an **Urban Plan for Areas and Structures of State Significance for the Protected Coastal Zone in the Ohrid Region**. As part of this process, the State Party defined the scope of the urban plan, which would cover approximately 750 hectares of the lakeshore. As per national legislation, at the beginning of 2022 the State Cadastral Agency began updating the geodetic bases included in the proposed scope of the urban plan.

From May 2021, the Municipality of Ohrid continued the process of removing illegally built structures along the coastline of Lake Ohrid. The removal of structures in this second stage was focused on the strip between Inex Olgica Hotel and the village of Peshtani. At present, interventions have been made on the territory of the Municipality of Ohrid on a total surface of about 32.000 square meters. Eight platforms within the limits of the city have been removed, while nine municipal locations on the coast have been cleaned. Following the removal of the structures, the locations were cleared from debris and restored to the original state.

Additionally, in 2021, Lake Ohrid and Studenchishte Marsh were inscribed on the List of Ramsar Wetlands. Concurrently, as part of the ongoing process to proclaim the Marsh as a protected area, in July 2021, the State Party issued a **Decision for the Temporary Protection of the Studenchishte Marsh**; to last until the final adoption of the Law to Proclaim the Studenchishte Marsh as a Park of Nature. The draft law has been finalized and is publically available, while the consultative process continues.

In September 2021, the **Study for Valorization of the Lake Ohrid** was adopted by the Council of the Ohrid Municipality. Additionally, the **Management Plan for the National Park Galichica 2021-2030** was also formally adopted by all relevant state authorities.

In accordance with World Heritage Committee Decision 44 COM 7B.77 (Fouzhou, China 2021), and in coordination with the Republic of Albania, the Government of North Macedonia formed an expert task force charged with drafting the **Strategic Recovery Plan for the Rehabilitation of the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid Region**. The task force continues to work intensively on a detailed analysis of the state of conservation, the threats to the property, as well as the recommendations made by UNESCO over the years. As part of this comprehensive process, a number of coordination meetings will take place with the local authorities, civil society, and other stakeholders aimed at agreeing on a common mode to address the threats that have negative effect on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property. The draft Strategic Plan should be completed by June 2022, after which North Macedonia will proceed with harmonization of the final document with the Republic of Albania.

Finally, underlining the open partnership of the Republic of North Macedonia with the World Heritage Center and the Advisory Bodies, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention, in December 2021, North Macedonia requested an Advisory Mission to assess an individually protected structure within the boundaries of the Ohrid Region.

## 2. Response to World Heritage Committee Decision:

### 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;

In order to reduce the inappropriate and excessive use of the coastal zone for tourism infrastructure and prevent further urbanization, the Ministry of Transport and Communications

in its Annual Financing Programme for the preparation of the urban plans for 2021 included the preparation of an **Urban Plan for Areas and Structures of State Significance for the protected coastal zone in the Ohrid Region** (Official Gazette North Macedonia no. 15/21). A task force established by the President of the Government of North Macedonia (Decision no. 08-3853/11 from 20.07.2021) defined the draft scope for this urban plan (with approximate surface of 750 hecrates). Consequently, a procedure was initiated for determining the land surveying works for special purposes related to updating the geodetic bases for spatial planning. The process of updating the geodetic bases is on-going and is being implemented by the Agency for Real Estate Cadastre. The approximate calculation of the cost of the urban planning works is in the amount of 30.000.000 MKD, which is to be provided from the budget of the Ministry of Transport and Communications.

From May 2021, the Municipality of Ohrid continued the process of removing illegally built structures along the coast of Lake Ohrid. The removal of structures in this second stage was focused on the strip between the Inex Olgica Hotel and the village of Peshtani. At present, interventions have been made on the territory of the Municipality of Ohrid on a total surface of about 32.000 square meters. Eight platforms within the limits of the city have been removed, while nine municipal locations on the coast have been cleared. Following the removal of the structures, the locations were cleared from debris and restored to the original state. The following link shows a video of the state of the coast cleared in the period July-August 2021: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZuUR1Mj8I0Y>

**Annex 1:** Before and after photos of the demolition process.

Apart from protecting the coastline from excessive urban transformation, the Municipality of Ohrid continues to work in the direction of implementing Recommendation 6 of the Reactive Monitoring Mission from 2017 for the imposition of moratorium (Decision 43 COM 7B.36). To that effect, the Council of the Municipality of Ohrid adopted a *Decision on the mode of implementing the existing urban plans and urban planning documentations and the adoption of new urban plans an urban projects, as well as on the mode of conducting procedures for determining the legal status of illegally built facilities* (no. 08-13561/39 dated 29.12.2021, Official Gazette of the Municipality of Ohrid No. 17 dated 30.12.2021). Pursuant to the existing legal regulation in the Republic of North Macedonia, the Council of the Municipality of Ohrid has been adopting these decisions since 2019 (as reported in the Progress Report no. 35-584/6 dated 31.01.2019).

**Annex 2:** Translation of the Decision of the Municipality of Ohrid, December 2021.

Additionally, the Ohrid Municipality has halted the planned reconstruction project for the Quay Macedonia, in accordance with the findings and recommendations of the 2020 Reactive Monitoring Mission. The funds planned for the project, by the local and central authorities, have been reallocated for other purposes.

In 2021, the work on the **Study for the Revalorization of the Ohrid Region** was intensified. During this period, all individually protected on inventorized cultural monuments were surveyed. The updated information about the state of the cultural heritage in the region, with updated photo documentation, will be included in the revalorization study

**(Recommendation 5e of the RMM 2020).** Due to the significant concentration of cultural heritage in the Ohrid Region, and in order to obtain relevant information about the state of the cultural heritage, this document should be finalized by July 2022.

The comprehensive survey of the state of the cultural heritage in the Ohrid Region is the first step in establishing a regular monitoring protocol for the cultural heritage in the region. The preparation of a specific methodology with a tailored monitoring format is in the final stage.

In the course of 2021, the National Institution (NI) Institute for the Protection of Monuments of Culture and Museum - Ohrid continuously, and as per the resources at its disposal, performs conservation supervision of the numerous cultural properties in the Ohrid Region, including professional control of the conservation projects subject to review in the Institute.

In line with a Government's Conclusion, adopted at the 57<sup>th</sup> session (23.03.2021), the Ministry of Culture formed an Expert Team composed of renowned professionals to support the Ministry of Culture in the realization of preservation activities within the boundaries of the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid Region. The team continues to make significant contribution to the improvement of the professional aspects for the protection of the heritage site.

- 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 Studenchishte 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;**

The Regional Office of the International Union for Conservation of Nature for Eastern Europe and Central Asia (IUCN ECARO), in cooperation with the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning and UNEP, developed a **Study for Valorization of the Lake Ohrid** and a **Draft Management Plan for Lake Ohrid**. The documents were developed with participation by renowned international and national experts. In accordance with national legislation, the preparation of the Study included early consultations with the general public; including consultative workshops with stakeholders about the Draft Study for the Valorisation of the Monument of Nature, as well the Draft Management Plan - Ohrid Lake. These consultations were conducted well before the formal procedure for proclaiming Lake Ohrid as protected area in the category Monument of Nature, in order to ensure timely buy-in by the public and relevant stakeholders.

In September 2021, the Study for Valorisation of the Lake Ohrid was approved by the Council of the Municipality of Ohrid.

In a Joint Statement supporting the Study for Valorisation for Lake Ohrid, signed in September 2021, the mayors of the municipalities of Ohrid, Struga and Debrca affirmed their

readiness for cooperation in the process to re-proclaim the Lake Ohrid as Monument of Nature. The statement also symbolically confirmed the firm commitment by local authorities to protect Lake Ohrid.

In line with the process outlined in the Law on Nature Protection, and with the objective to initiate the formal procedure to re-proclaim the property, a formal Information to the Government of the North Macedonia is being prepared, including a draft-decision on the acceptability of the proposal to re-proclaim Lake Ohrid as Monument of Nature. The adoption of the Information is planned for the first half of 2022. Pending government approval, the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning will proceed to develop a draft Law on Proclamation of Lake Ohrid as Monument of Nature and conduct further public consultations. It is expected that the governmental procedure for the adoption of the draft-law and its submission to parliament would be completed by July 2022.

The integrated preservation and protection of Lake Ohrid and the Studenchishte Marsh remained a priority for the North Macedonia authorities, during this reporting period (**Recommendation 5a of RMM 2020**). Accordingly, in May 2021, Lake Ohrid and the Studenchishte Marsh were inscribed on the List of Ramsar Wetlands; upon the initiative submitted by the civil society organizations OHRID SOS and FRONT 21/42. These organization made a substantive contribution to the work conducted by national experts of the Macedonian Ramsar Secretariat, and also supported the preparation of the application file (RIS) for nominating the Lake Ohrid and the Studenchishte Marsh as a Ramsar Site.<sup>1</sup> The site encompasses the Studenchiste Marsh which includes alkaline wetlands for filtrating nutrients and suitable locations that enable nesting, spawning, and wintering for fish and birds. The Marsh size is reduced due to the changes in the landuse and the degradation of the habitats. Nevertheless, it still remains a home of rare national plants and insects, endemic invertebrates and protected reptiles and amphibians. North Macedonia informed the World Heritage Centre about the inscription of the Lake Ohrid and the Studenchishte Marsh as an additional information to the Progress Report from 2021 (no. 35-3917/5 dated 01.06.2021).

Concurrently, within the opened procedure to proclaim it as protected area, in July 2021, the State Party issued a **Decision for the Temporary Protection of the Studenchishte Marsh** (no. 12-3341/7 dated 12.07.2021, Official Gazette of RNM no. 164/21); to last until the final adoption of the Law to Proclaim the Studenchishte Marsh as a Park of Nature. The draft law is prepared, publicly available and public consultations continue. During the reporting period, meetings with local stakeholders took place, however, another official public debate is to take place in the Municipality of Ohrid, after which the final draft is to be submitted to the Government for adoption, envisioned for the end of February 2022.

In accordance with the Decision for Temporary Protection of the Studenchishte Marsh, during the temporary protection period, prohibited activities include all those provisioned in the existing General Urban Plan (GUP) of the City of Ohrid in Urban Community- UC 17, Urban Block- U.B. 17.1. The restrictions also apply to the preparation and adoption of urban plans and urban projects for spatial planning, conducting procedures to determine the legal status of illegally built structures, conversion of agricultural into construction land, disposal of

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<sup>1</sup> No. 2449 on the List of Ramsar Wetlands of International Importance.

debris and communal waste, use of chemical protective appliances and mineral fertilizers for agricultural activities, allocating new or extending the existing concessions pursuant to concession regulation and public-private partnership, regulations on construction land and the regulations in the field of hunting and fishing and extension or construction of new roads.

Additionally, at the request for technical cooperation on behalf of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, in September 2021 an initial meeting took place with an expert team of the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) on the project *Data collection survey for water management in the area around the Lake Ohrid in the Republic of North Macedonia*. Water quality improvement in the Lake Ohrid and the improvement of the capacity of the work and maintenance of the sewage facilities is subject of the research. The project encompasses update and upgrade of data contained in the 2015 Feasibility Study for the Improvement of the Work of the Water Collector System of Lake Ohrid. The next stage would be finding solutions for permanent financing of the collector system and ensuring its undisturbed work which will provide optimal protection of the lake waters that will lead to preserving the natural values, health of the people and of the living environment around and in the lake, as well as defining the measures for improving the operational capacities of the water collector system and wastewater treatment. The project is a direct achievement of national targets, as well as realization of the recommendations arising from the World Heritage Committee decisions.

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;**

In order to ensure appropriate implementation of the legal framework, a number of processes of further harmonization of the legal regulations, including adoption/review of the by-laws have been initiated. These processes include:

- Adoption of a new **Rulebook on the Criteria, Conditions and Mode of Performance of Valorisation and Revalorization of Cultural Heritage, the Contents of the Elaboration and Review Process** (Official Gazette of North Macedoni no. 44/2021);
- Adoption of a new **Rulebook on the Contents and Methodology for the Preparation of the Protection-Conservation Bases for Cultural Heritage** (Official Gazette of North Macedonia no. 113/2021).

The Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning and the Ministry of Culture remain committed to improve and enhance the management structure, as an important element in the overall protection of the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid Region.

Following the end of the three-year mandate, in March 2021, the Commission for Management of Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid Region was recontinued for a second term, since 2018 (Decision of the Government of North Macedonia no. 14-3323/4 dated 16.02.2021 and no. 14-3323/6 dated 23.03.2021). In the period between March 2021 and January 2022, the Commission held 10 sessions, during which it reviewed 98 cases/requests in



the field of its competences; draft urban plans and documentation, state of the natural and cultural heritage of the Ohrid Region, activities carried out in the region reported by civil society organizations and other issues. The Management Commission firmly adheres to its mission for consistent implementation of the Management Plan for the World Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid Region, including the strict respect of the national laws that regulate this matter, as well as international conventions and the recommendations stemming from the Reactive Monitoring Missions and World Heritage Committee decisions. In that direction, all new proposal and changes and amendments to the urban planning documentation in the Ohrid Region are aligned with the Management Plan. Additionally, the Commission's sessions are attended by representatives of civil society organizations who make important contributions in terms detecting challenges and finding solutions to prevent or address developments which may adversely affect the Outstanding Universal Value of the region (**Recommendation 8a of RMM 2020**). In order to strengthen the capacities of the Commission, the Expert Team formed by the Ministry of Culture and composed of distinguished architects has been supporting the work of the Commission during this entire period (**Recommendation 3e of RMM 2020**).

This reporting period, the **Management Plan for the National Park Galichica 2021-2030** was also prepared (**Recommendation 3d of RMM 2020**). With letter no. 35-6005/2 dated 07.05.2021, the Draft Management Plan and the Draft Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Management Plan were submitted for review to the World Heritage Centre. In the absence of any objections or input, the **Management Plan for the National Park Galichica 2021-2030**, in view of the urgent need for its adoption, pursuant to the national legislation, obtained positive opinion by the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning after the Final Report on the Strategic Environmental Assessment had been submitted (no. 08-295/5 dated 08.06.2021). In line with the Law on Nature Protection, the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning gave consent on the **Management Plan for the National Park Galichica 2021-2030** (no. 03-392/2 dated 13.07.2021) after which the Management Board of Public Institution (PI) National Park Galichica adopted a Decision for it to be endorsed (no. 02-558/3 dated 11.08.2021).

**Annex 3:** Decision for the adoption of the **Management Plan for the National Park Galichica**.

As part of the Tourism Development Program, the Municipality of Ohrid prepared a new **Draft Tourism Development Strategy 2020-2025**. The draft strategy has been prepared by experts from the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality in Ohrid. The new draft strategy was prepared on the basis of a comprehensive analysis of the existing situation, and defines the long-term vision, the strategic direction, the objectives and the priority projects for the future development of tourism. The document is in accordance with the basic principles of UNESCO for protected areas, with the national legislation for protected areas management and with other borderline and regional strategies and plans for natural resources management. In the course of the following period, a procedure for the Impact Assessment on the Environment of this planning document is to take place after which the final version of the strategy will be made.

Strengthening the capacities of experts in the institutions for protection of cultural heritage as a priority will be improved with professional trainings (both theoretical and practical) that are jointly organized by the Directorate for Protection of Cultural Heritage and ICOMOS Macedonia together with the Conservation and Restoration Centre “*La Venaria Reale*” and the Santagata Foundation for Economics of Culture from Torino, Italy within the Project “*Exchange of knowledge on conservation and innovative management of cultural heritage between Italy and North Macedonia*”. The training program will be implemented in several cycles by the middle of 2022.

Also this year, the State Party promoted the IUCN Global Standard for Nature-Based Solutions (2021).

Furthering the firm stated positions of the governments of North Macedonia and Albania for comprehensive realization of the recommendations of the World Heritage Centre and preserving the status of the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid Region as a World Heritage Site, on July 12, 2021, the UNESCO National Commissions of both countries held a meeting in Ohrid at which a Joint Statement regarding the commitments for preserving the property and undertaking concrete steps for its protection was signed.

On September 22, 2021 in Paris, France, a joint consultative meeting took place with representatives of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and IUCN and delegation of the Republic of Albania regarding the current state in terms of protection of the Ohrid Region, particularly after the Decision on the Ohrid Region had been adopted at the 44<sup>th</sup> Session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee (Fuzhou, China 2021).

- 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;**

With the end objective to **redirect the course of Sateska River** in its natural flow (**Recommendation number 15 of RMM 2017; Recommendation 7g of RMM 2020**) within the project “Climate Change Adjustment,” as part of the cross-border project for risk management of floods, implemented in North Macedonia, Albania and Montenegro, with focus on the Drim drainage basin, during 2021, North Macedonia continued with activities in accordance with the foreseen dynamic. The project documentation for the restoration and redirection of the riverbed of Sateska River in its natural flow is under preparation which will lead to the issuance of the proper permits for implementation.

In 2019, UNDP prepared the feasibility assessment about the possibility of redirecting the river in its natural riverbed. The Feasibility Assessment Report determined the critical parts

of Sateska River and possible activities for improving the capacity of the flow of the natural riverbed of Sateska River were recommended.

Due to the scale of the project and significant financial investments to complete the redirection, the process will be conducted in several stages. In the first stage, a completely new basic project, cleaning the old riverbed, was initiated. In August 2021 the Civil Engineering Institute-North Macedonia performed field work on the riverbed of Sateska River near the village of Volino to restore the riverbed and to redirect it in its natural riverbed in accordance with the foreseen project programme. The process will involve a construction of a partition facility with which the flow of the river will be controlled; total length of the riverbed from the partition facility to the flow into Crn Drim River is 7.796 m. The following stages will include: regulating the upper flow of Sateska River with activities for cleaning the riverbed, reforestation of the slopes with the objective to reduce the amounts of mud deposits entering the river, and improving the communication between the two river banks.

Regarding the essential need for closing the Bukovo landfill (**Recommendation 16 of RMM 2017**) the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, in cooperation with the Ministry of Finance, submitted a request to the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) for the establishment of regional waste management system in the Southeast, Vardar, Pelagonija, Southwest and Polog Regions, consisting of a loan amounting to 55.367.614 EUR; with EBRD envisioned as the leading financial institution. During this reporting period, a series of meetings with the representatives of the Bank took place, and the completed project documentation was submitted by the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning. The project is currently being evaluated. With these funds, the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning will establish the system in the Southwest region and within these activities all non-compliant landfills in the region will be closed and rehabilitated (**Recommendation 26 of RMM 2020**).

Acting upon Recommendation 5k of the RMM 2020, in the course of 2021, NI Institute for Protection of Monuments of Culture and Museum - Ohrid, in cooperation with the National Conservation Centre - Skopje, is developing a project for conservation and restoration of the fresco paintings in the St. Sophia Church in Ohrid (XI-XIV century). Having into consideration the scope and the outstanding significance of the fresco paintings in this church, the preparation of the project for its conservation is expected to last several months during 2022. Following this procedure, the Institute and Museum - Ohrid will start the procedures for providing the necessary funding for its realization (**Recommendation 5k of RMM 2020**).

With the goal of full functionality of the waste-water management system on Lake Ohrid, the State Party continues to work on its improvement (**Recommendation 7a of RMM 2020**). In that direction, in May 2021, an agreement was concluded for servicing pumps and pump stations, and seven reduction drives have been serviced for the needs of the water treatment plant in Lozhani, which enabled the plant to work with 90% of its capacity and to meet the standards needed for discharge of treated water in the recipient - the Crn Drim River. In July 2020, a contract for services for electric motor winding was fulfilled, according to which, to date seven electric motors and nine submersible pumps have been serviced, enabling

undisturbed discharge of the wastewater to the treatment plant, as well as putting the reduction drives in the plant into function. Additionally, this year, a 1km pipeline in the vicinity of Eleshec was cleared of sand residue. Moreover, nine new submersible pumps with cutters have been acquired with which the problem of clogging of the water collector system due to bulk material in the pipeline that causes spillover of water polluted with waste matter in the waters of the Lake Ohrid was eliminated. Furthermore, in 2021, the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning ensured financial assets amounting to 60.000.000 MKD to cover the debts of the **Public Enterprise (PE) Collector System** towards the Municipality of Struga.

In accordance with the investment programme for 2022, improvement of the implementation of water polluted with fecal matter in the system is foreseen by setting up frequent regulation of prefabricated pump stations with which the electricity costs and the time needed for switching them on and off would be reduced, as well as repairing of the pools and on-going system maintenance.

In order to prevent damage, destruction and disfigurement of natural rarities, with a decision of the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning upon the initiative of the Municipality of Ohrid, **seven individual trees** in the city of Ohrid **have been protected/proclaimed natural rarities**- stem of Mediterranean hackberry (*Celtis australis* L.) in the yard of the Holy Mother of God Peribleptos Church, stem of *Platanus Orientalis* (*Platanus orientalis* L.) located on Dimitar Vlahov Street, in front of the Red Cross Building, stem of *Platanus Orientalis* (*Platanus orientalis* L.) located at the crossroad between Jane Sandanski Street and Turistichka Blvd., stem of *Platanus Orientalis* (*Platanus orientalis* L.) at the crossroad between Pitu Guli Street and Marko Nestoroski Street in the Vlashka Maala settlement, stem of *Platanus Orientalis* (*Platanus orientalis* L.) located at the Koshishta site, stem of *Platanus Orientalis* (*Platanus orientalis* L.) located on Dimitar Vlahov Street in front of the building of the Retired People Association and stem of *Platanus Orientalis* (*Platanus orientalis* L.) in the Voska settlement.

In 2018, framework agreement was concluded with the Ohrid- Prespa Nature Fund (PONT) the objective of which is long-term support for covering 50% of the operational costs for protected areas management in the cross-border region Ohrid-Prespa. In 2022 the responsibility for the implementation of this activity will be given to the Ohrid Region.

**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;**

In accordance with World Heritage Committee Decision 44 COM 7B.77 (Fouzhou, China 2021), and in coordination with the Republic of Albania, the Government of North Macedonia formed an expert task force charged with drafting the **Strategic Recovery Plan for the Rehabilitation of the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid Region**. The task force continues to work intensively on a detailed analysis of the state of conservation, the threats to the property, as well as the recommendations given by UNESCO missions and Advisory bodies over the years. As part of this comprehensive process, a number of coordination meetings will take place with the local authorities, civil society, and other stakeholders aimed at agreeing on a common mode to address the threats that have negative impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property. The draft Strategic Plan should be completed by June 2022, followed by the coordination and harmonization of the final document with the Republic of Albania. **(Recommendation 3aa of RMM 2020)**.

The Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning and the Ministry of Culture have initiated the process for defining the **buffer zone** of the property. Considering that scale of the territory that would be within the borders of the buffer zone, an ongoing analysis is being conducted of the three scenarios outlined in the Management Plan. When determining the boundaries of the buffer zone, the linear setting of the terrain regardless whether it is natural (relief, water flows, wetlands, etc.) or artificially created (road, border of a cadastre parcel, boundaries of an area with the same or similar use of land, etc.) will be taken into regard.

In view of the fact that in July 2019 part of the Lake Ohrid belonging to Albania was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, the upcoming review of the alternatives for the buffer zone will take into account the boundaries of the already defined buffer zone on the Albanian side. It is foreseen for the draft buffer zone to be defined by the end of 2022 **(Recommendation 10 of RMM 2017)**.

**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 46<sup>th</sup> 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.**

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**3.** Acting in accordance with the paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention, the Government of RNM assigned the Ministry of Culture to ask from the UNESCO World Heritage Centre an Advisory Mission with the objective to assess the state of the Hotel Complex Palace–Ohrid, for which construction activities are foreseen and for the preparation of a proposal for further activities.

On December 1, 2021 a request for Advisory Mission was submitted to the World Heritage Centre with the necessary technical documentation and with a document containing the objective and expected activities and proposals. The Centre forwarded the document to ICOMOS experts for an opinion and after receiving feedback, the procedures regarding the organization of the Advisory Mission will be resumed.

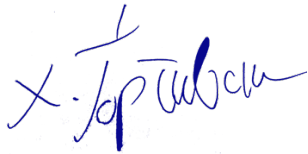
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**State of conservation report of the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid Region and report on the progress made in the implementation of the recommendations of the World Heritage Committee Decision (44 COM 7B.77) was adopted by the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia at its 14<sup>th</sup> session, held on 15.02.2022 (no. 41-1138/1).**

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**4. The Republic of North Macedonia gives consent for this State of conservation report of the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid Region to be published on the web page of UNESCO World Heritage Centre without annexes.**

**Signature of authorized person**



**Hristijan Gjorgievski**  
**National Commission for UNESCO of the Republic of North Macedonia**

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