



Ramsar Advisory Mission No. 80

Venice and its Lagoon, Italy (2015)

(Ramsar Site N°423 Laguna di Venezia: Valle Averte)

Introduction to Ramsar Advisory Missions

Ramsar Advisory Missions (RAMs) are a means by which the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar Convention) provides technical assistance to Contracting Parties in the management and conservation of listed wetlands of international importance (Ramsar Sites) whose ecological character has changed, is changing or is likely to change as a result of technological developments, pollution or other human interference. 80 such Missions have been completed to date.

The procedure (originally known as the *Monitoring Procedure*) was adopted through **Recommendation 4.7** at the 4th meeting of the Conference of Parties (COP4) in 1990. The main objective is to undertake fact-finding activities and to provide advice (at the request of the Party concerned) in solving problems relating to the maintenance of the ecological character of a particular Ramsar Site or sites. Missions are sometimes also able to advise on other Convention implementation issues at the same time. The benefit of a Mission is often in providing an additional (international) source of assurance for a national decision-making process, through auditing and peer-review. It is an opportunity for the relevant authorities to test and demonstrate the quality (thoroughness, precaution, transparency, consistency etc.) of the decision-making processes involved, in the context of Ramsar requirements.

The process overall assists implementation, reinforces standards and credibility and raises awareness, and the availability of the RAM tool is often seen as one of the benefits of being a Ramsar Party. Where relevant, the Convention's Scientific & Technical Review Panel (STRP) is available as a network of expertise. Mission reports are published once the Party concerned has had an opportunity to study the report and comment on it; and this offers lesson-learning benefits for the Convention as a whole.

Preparation of a joint mission by the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and Ramsar

During its 38th session in 2014, the World Heritage Committee requested Italy (by Decision 38 COM 7B.27) to invite a joint UNESCO/ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission to the World Heritage property "Venice and its Lagoon", including the evaluation of potential impacts derived from development proposals, and to identify options for development proposals in accordance to the Outstanding Universal Value of the property. The World Heritage Committee also recommended Italy to invite a representative of the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention to take part in this reactive monitoring mission. The complete terms of reference, the composition of the mission team and mission programme, are provided in Annexes 1-3 on pages 46-52.

Ramsar Advisory Mission N°80 to Venice and its Lagoon

This joint mission between the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar) focused on outstanding cultural and natural values of Venice and its Lagoon, based on the understanding that the cultural heritage closely depends on the natural heritage and the ecosystem functions of the Lagoon.

The joint report published by the World Heritage Centre focuses on a number of development projects which are addressed in chapter 4. They highlight issues linked to the lagoon ecosystem as well as linked to the urban environment and the maintenance of the constructed and cultural heritage and its values.

The Recommendations of the joint mission are listed in chapter 6 on pages 42-45.



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
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pour l'éducation,
la science et la culture

World Heritage Patrimoine mondial

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POUR L'EDUCATION, LA SCIENCE ET LA CULTURE

CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE WORLD
CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

CONVENTION CONCERNANT LA PROTECTION DU PATRIMOINE
MONDIAL, CULTUREL ET NATUREL

WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE / COMITE DU PATRIMOINE MONDIAL

Fortieth session / Quarantième session

Istanbul, Turkey / Istanbul, Turquie
10-20 July 2016 / 10-20 juillet 2016

Item 7 of the Provisional Agenda: State of conservation of properties inscribed on the World Heritage List and/or on the List of World Heritage in Danger

Point 7 de l'Ordre du jour provisoire : Etat de conservation de biens inscrits sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial et/ou sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial en péril

MISSION REPORT / RAPPORT DE MISSION

Venice and its Lagoon (Italy) (394)
Venise et sa lagune (Italy) (394)

13 – 18 October 2015

This mission report should be read in conjunction with Document:
Ce rapport de mission doit être lu conjointement avec le document suivant :
WHC-16/40.COM/ 7A.Add



International Council on
Monuments and Sites

Conseil International
des Monuments et des Sites



*Convention on
Wetlands*

**REPORT OF THE JOINT UNESCO/ICOMOS/RAMSAR
REACTIVE MONITORING MISSION
TO VENICE AND ITS LAGOON**

ITALY



13 – 18 October 2015

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The members of the mission are extremely grateful to the Italian authorities for their hospitality, support, availability and assistance. They would like to convey their gratitude especially to the all members of the Steering Committee for their valuable efforts in favour of the protection of the property and the preservation of its Outstanding Universal Value.

Special thanks go to all officials and specialists at the level of the state, the region and the province involved in the preparation and the success of this mission.

Particular thanks go to the Mayors of all municipalities involved and their staff, and in particular to Mr Luigi Brugnaro, Mayor of Venice, for meeting the mission team and providing information on the implementation of the Decision of the World Heritage Committee concerning the state of conservation of the property.

The members of the mission also thank all specialists of the office for the UNESCO-site "Venezia e la sua Laguna" within the directorate "Affari Istituzionali" of the Municipality of Venice, and in particular to the Head of the Office, Ms Katia Basili, for their dedicated and constant efforts in management of the World Heritage property, for organizing the mission and for providing valuable information on the current situation of the World Heritage property during the meetings, presentations and site visits.

The members of the mission thank all representatives of Non-Governmental Organisations and civil society actively involved in protection of the property who met with the mission and submitted substantial information re particular issues.

Finally, they thank the representatives of the UNESCO Office in Venice for their logistical support and the continuous accompaniment during the mission.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

As requested by the World Heritage Committee, during its 38th session (Doha, 2014), a joint UNESCO/ICOMOS/RAMSAR reactive monitoring mission to Venice and its Lagoon was invited by the State Party and was carried out from 13 to 18 October 2015. The objective of the mission was to review the overall state of conservation of all component parts of the World Heritage property, to evaluate major construction projects, both undertaken and planned, and to review progress made in the implementation of the Committee's Decision.

Mission Methodology

An understanding of such a multicomponent property and its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), including its authenticity and integrity, as well as its condition, context (including other heritage attributes) and interrelationships is the baseline for all development and management decisions. The perception of the World Heritage property 'Venice and its Lagoon' as a cultural landscape, with the interaction of people and environment, must be the guiding principle for all management decisions.

Widespread consultation occurred with national, regional, local authorities, site manager and port authorities. The Mission undertook on-site visits and received a detailed introduction to a series of documents, plans and programs from the Italian authorities.

Overall State of Conservation

The Mission considered that the general state of conservation of the property composed by the Historic City of Venice and the Venice Lagoon – is currently impacted upon by a number of factors which represent both proven and potential danger to the Outstanding Universal Value of the property in accordance with paragraph 179 of the *Operational Guidelines* and make its authenticity and integrity very vulnerable.

The Mission expressed its concern about the extensive traffic and inappropriate exploitation of the Lagoon resources which could contribute to its severe and irreversible deterioration, if no immediate measures are taken by the authorities.

The zone considered as permanently at risk of serious incident¹, situated in close vicinity to the property, represents a potential danger to its OUV.

The cumulative negative impact of large vessels crossing the San Marco basin and Giudecca canal on the nearby built-up structures of the city, through wave action and their destructive forces, and air pollution were substantiated by all different parties met. The risk of accidents of any nature, such as for example grounding ashore, with possible fuel spills, cannot be neglected. An accident, if occurred, would have disastrous consequences for the property with the attendant risk of an ecological disaster.

As highlighted by the State Party, *'the ancient city is now threatened both by material factors that risk jeopardizing the objectives of physical conservation – abandon or its opposite, excessive wear, wave motion, high tides – and by other intangible factors arising from the way the city is used.'*²

Other major factors affecting the property are developments and transformations which have already occurred in the urban settlements of the historic city following considerable change and development since the inscription of the property, and proposals for large infrastructure, navigation and construction projects in the Lagoon and its immediate setting (excavation of a new connection channel, extension of the existing channels, airport extension), which could lead to irreversible transformations of the overall relationship between the City and its Lagoon.

¹ See "map of fragilities", *Management plan of the World Heritage property "Venice and its Lagoon"*, Figures 9, page 58.

² *Management plan of the World Heritage property "Venice and its Lagoon"*, page 96.

The mission noted the efforts of the site manager to define a shared vision for the future of Venice and shared proposals using the “European Awareness Scenario Workshop and Consensus Conference” method during the preparation of an integrated management plan for the property.

While considerable progress has been achieved with the development of this integrated management plan and the creation of a Steering Committee, the Mission noted the lack of a shared vision for Venice among the many different stakeholders at national, regional and local levels which is not helping to form a coherent response to these negative factors.

The Mission noted that no commonly developed and accepted mechanisms, such as a tourism strategy based on long-term sustainability, (which should include options to bring together the needs of inhabitants and economic development), are in place to ensure the retention (or even enhancement) of normal urban life and to avoid any irreversible transformations that could occur within the property.

Major efforts, at all levels, are necessary for the conservation of the property. The Mission noted the lack of ordinary maintenance of buildings, mainly of those of medium or minor architectural calibre. The gap between necessary and realised maintenance is becoming more and more significant. Even more considerable and concerning are the effects of ever-increasing tourism, in all of its forms, dominating and obscuring the traditional urban society of the historical city. The relationship between the capacity of the historical city, the number of its inhabitants and the number of tourists is out of balance and causing significant damage to the material and cultural urban context. The loss of population in the historical city is alarming; it has several causes, the most important is the pressure on affordable apartments. A further grave problem is the changing use of houses, converted from normal housing into accommodation for visitors.

Within the integrated management of the Lagoon as an ecosystem upon which the human activities and settlements depend, substantial progress has been made. The process includes an important number of major partners, including Municipalities and sectoral public institutions. Nevertheless, there is a lack of coordination between cultural and natural aspects of the property and between the different stakeholders.

The Mission considers that it is important to intensify the relations between the numerous stakeholders, particularly in terms of links between culture and nature, and to ensure that mere coordination is extended to decision-making with compulsory effects for all stakeholders. The basis for such coordination must be a monitoring process that does not consider the different aspects in isolation, but brings them together.

The Mission noted that an enormous amount of data regarding the state and the evolution of many aspects of the city and especially of the lagoon is collected. The information provided by the institutions responsible collecting and analysing monitoring and indicator data of the health of the Lagoon ecosystem and the cultural values that depend on it, needs to be accepted by all parties as a basis for well-informed decision making.

The mid-term assessment of the “Management Plan 2012-2018” should address this issue, and the Municipality of Venice respectively the newly formed Venice Metropolitan City, as the leader of the management planning process, should have overall responsibility for this process.

In addition, formal participation and contributions of non-governmental and civil society organisations is lacking and they often feel excluded from this important process. There is a serious management issue, which needs to be addressed.

Progress in implementation of the Decision of the World Heritage Committee

The Mission noted that the Decision of the World Heritage Committee adopted at its 38th session (2014) has not been implemented. The following matters are yet to be completed:

- preparation of Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) to assess both individual and overall cumulative impacts of the potential modifications of the Lagoon and its immediate land and seascape, and to ensure that there are no negative impacts on the OUV, before planning investment in large-scale developments within the property and its setting;
- enforcement of speed limits and regulation of the number and type of boats in the Lagoon;
- prohibition on the largest ships and tankers entering the Lagoon;
- development of a sustainable tourism strategy, including alternative solutions to allow cruise tourists to enjoy and understand the value of Venice and also its fragility;
- establishment of strong coordination among all stakeholders concerned to ensure the hydro-geological balances of the Venice Lagoon and the whole drainage basin, as well as the protection of all attributes that convey the OUV of the property;
- revision of the proposed buffer zone in line with the ICOMOS technical review and submission of a minor boundary modification.

Proposed Development Projects

A number of substantial intervention plans concerning the Lagoon and its ecological functioning were presented to the Mission. They may result in hazardous effects on the ecosystem and also the cultural values of the property.

- Alternative projects for the nautical accessibility at the Port of Venice

Possibly most damaging, and potentially leading to erosion of the bed of the Lagoon and associated environmental degradation of the functioning Lagoon ecosystem, are the plans to dredge new deepwater navigation waterways inside the Lagoon. These developments could have serious impact, as the new canals together with the enormous deposits of the excavated material may greatly change several parameters of the current system. A further problem is the planning regarding the functioning of the different ports (oil and gas, container, cruise passengers) that is driven by sectoral short-term opportunities while an integrated territorial planning document including the regional context is still missing.

- Multimodal Terminal offshore the coast of Venice

The detailed project was not presented to the mission. The mission was not able to evaluate if such a proposal represents potential threat to the OUV of the property. Nevertheless, any proposal to remove all transport terminals outside of the Lagoon should be encouraged.

- Terminal "Motorways of the Sea" in Fusina

The new terminal "Motorways of the Seas" will be constructed in Fusina. It will partly use the Malamocco-Marghera channel already in use. The terminal will serve rolling stock traffic (ferries transporting trucks or their trailers (Ro-Ro) and ferries carrying cars and passengers (Ro-Pax). The project envisages also the erection of a new logistics platform with links to rail and roadways, further on new buildings, warehouses, classification yards and parking lots. Currently, the Northern Dock is completed. The South Dock is under construction. The Mission was informed by the Venice Port Authority about ongoing asbestos clean-up activities to remove contaminated soil in the area of the planned R-Ro port facility in the southern part of the reclaimed industrial area of Marghera.

- Experimental Electromechanical Module (MoSE)

The artificial flood-gate system (called MoSE) to close the three main Lagoon inlets is under construction and will be operational within a year. The artificial flood gates MoSE should be regarded as a large-scale experiment that can and should be adapted, according to new information and understanding obtained during this period of rapid environmental change triggered by climate change and sea-level rise.

With changes likely occurring as a consequence of a changing climate (sea level rise) and intensifying land-use (sediment reduction, bottom erosion, water quality deterioration), additional solutions to the flood gates are likely to be sought to prevent further flood damage to the cultural heritage of Venice.

- Tourist Port of San Nicolo at the Lido di Venezia

The project is at a conceptual stage only. The Mission is convinced that, as part of an overall SEIA comparing different options for tourist terminal facilities, the feasibility for a tourist port at the Lido di Venezia, including its connection with the city and the hinterland (access by road and rail) should also be analysed.

- Expansion of the International Airport Venice Tessera

Extension plans consider to develop a much larger regional airport facility that serves also different cities in the hinterland (Verona, Padova, etc.). Such substantial expansions of the current international airport facilities could potentially represent a risk and may have negative impact on the OUV of the property.

Mission's Conclusion and Recommendations

The Mission considered that the property is faced with both proven and potential threats, which could have deleterious effects on its inherent characteristics and **recommends that the state of conservation of the property be examined by the World Heritage Committee with a view to considering the inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.**

The Mission concluded that if the proposed projects (excavation of a new connection channel, extension of the existing channels, airport extension), as outlined in the State Party reports and during the Mission, were to be implemented, in addition to the already constructed buildings, new port terminal and ongoing transformations of buildings for tourism purpose, the World Heritage property would be irreversibly damaged. This damage would include serious deterioration of the Lagoon system and the architectural and town-planning coherence of the historic city, resulting in a serious loss of its authenticity.

The Mission strongly recommends that the principal stakeholders, being the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Culture, the Port Authority and the City of Venice, reconvene around the table and resolve an adjusted scheme that includes the observations put forward in this report, as well as a strategy for all on-going and planned developments within the boundaries of the World Heritage property, taking into consideration its Outstanding Universal Value and its specific landscape and seascape settings.

The Mission recommends that the comprehensive measures should be implemented by the State Party to reverse and eliminate any potential threats to the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, as well as to prevent any potential loss of authenticity and integrity or deterioration of structures, urban coherence of the city and degradation of the integrity and ecological functioning of the Lagoon.

On the basis of numerous discussions during the meetings with national and local authorities, the Mission developed a set of measures which might be recommended for implementation in order to address the potential threats and to ensure the hydro-geological balances of the Venice Lagoon and the whole drainage basin, as well as to protect all attributes that convey the Outstanding Universal Value of the property.

- Immediate measures

- Halt the issuing of permits for all development projects within the property and its setting until details of proposed developments, together with Heritage Impact Assessments and Strategic Environmental Assessment, have been submitted to the World Heritage Centre, in conformity with Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*, for review and comments by the Advisory Bodies before any irreversible decisions have been made;
- Enforce of speed limits and regulation of the number and type of boats in the Lagoon;
- Install the automatic speed monitoring system in all relevant canals and to enforce speed limits through fining of any transgressors (incl. taxis).
- Reduce the number of big ships entering the Lagoon;

- Put in place a moratorium on any transformation within the World Heritage property, prior to the preparation and adoption of the tourism strategy, the approval of effective protective juridical regulations, and the establishment of effective control mechanisms;
- Establish regulations for tourism activities, movable facilities and open-air commercial activity;
- Develop and implement urgent measures to halt irreversible transformations of houses and their adaptation for hotel or B&B use;
- Conduct a mid-term review of the Management Plan of the property;
- Reinforce existing coordination among all stakeholders concerned and clarify the tasks and functions of the established Steering Committee.

- Short-term measures (by 1 December 2017)

- Develop a risk management strategy;
- Reintroduce and adopt the Ban on transit of big ships in the Lagoon;
- Implement appropriate measures, including those in conformity with the Special Law for Venice, in order to prevent deterioration of architectural and urban planning coherence;
- Revise the proposed buffer zone in line with the ICOMOS technical review and submit it to the World Heritage Centre as a minor boundary modification;
- Develop a sustainable tourism strategy, based on the consultative model of the UNESCO World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme, and which includes alternative solutions compatible with the city's capacities developed jointly with the major tourism and cruise companies;
- Develop efficient measures to encourage and support private owners of buildings in maintenance and conservation/restoration of their buildings;
- Introduce measures to stabilise and increase the number of inhabitants and improve their living conditions, including application of the principles of the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape;
- Develop and implement efficient legal measures to limit the purchase of flats for second residences and to limit change of use from ordinary habitation into any form of hotel industry (hotels, B&B, etc.);
- Encourage the reconversion of B&B facilities into normally rented flats;
- Develop and implement appropriate measures, including facilities for renting/purchasing atelier-spaces and declaration of provenance, to support local craftsmen and traditional manufacturing.

- Mid-term measures (by 1 December 2019)

- Prepare the Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) to assess both individual and overall cumulative impacts of the potential modifications of the Lagoon and its immediate land and seascape, and to ensure that there are no negative impacts on the OUV of the City of Venice and its Lagoon, before planning investment in large-scale developments within the property, its setting and outside of Lagoon;
- Within the framework of existing legislative, regulatory and administrative provisions, develop a Strategic Environmental Assessment of the proposed development projects, including a specific assessment of potential impacts on the OUV, authenticity and integrity of the property;
- Develop a virtual three-dimensional geomorphological plan of the territory derived from assembly of the substantial scientific and technical available data sets and submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies. The plan should include all aspects of the lagoon, nature, infrastructure and urbanism. It should be conceived as a dynamic instrument, which allows for modelling of potential project proposals in order to simulate their overall cumulative impacts in the future;

- Establish thorough and integrated water and sediment flow models to forecast possible water flow and sedimentation changes as consequences of the digging new deepwater waterways. Based on such integrated modelling studies, more-detailed assessments should be undertaken to calculate the likely consequences of the digging of new deepwater waterways on the Lagoon hydrology, sedimentation and erosion, its biodiversity and species communities, including commercially exploited fish and shellfish;
 - Undertake a review of the effects of the MoSE after two years of operation and to submit the report to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;
 - Within the framework of existing procedures and plans, develop and set up a Master Plan which defines a set of regulations for all on-going and planned developments within the boundaries of the World Heritage property, to be adopted for the recovery and preservation of the Outstanding Universal Value of the property and its associated landscape and seascape values;
 - Develop a strategic environmental planning, including the long-term measures, such as the relocation of the Marittima passenger transport terminal, as well as the Marghera large ship harbour facilities outside of the Lagoon;
 - Submit all requested documents and plans to the World Heritage Centre by 1 December 2019.
- Long-term measures
- Relocate the Marittima passenger transport terminal, as well as the Marghera large ship harbour facilities outside of the Lagoon;
 - Prohibit the large ships and tankers entering the Lagoon.

1. BACKGROUND TO THE MISSION

1.1. Justification of the Mission

By Decision **38 COM 7B.27**, the World Heritage Committee requested the State Party to invite a joint UNESCO/ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission to the property to assess current conditions at the property, including the evaluation of potential impacts derived from development proposals and identify options for development proposals in accordance to the OUV of the property, as well as **to review if the property is faced with threats which could have deleterious effects on its inherent characteristics and meets the criteria for its inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger in line with Paragraph 179 of the Operational Guidelines**. The Committee also recommended to the State Party to invite a representative of the Secretariat of the *Ramsar* Convention to take part in this reactive monitoring mission.

The Terms of Reference for the Mission require review and assessment of the following key issues²:

1. *Assess the overall state of conservation of the property and evaluate factors and conservation issues that could potentially impact on its Outstanding Universal Value, including its conditions of authenticity and integrity;*
2. *Analyse the planning situation for all major construction projects in the property and its setting, whether propose or, approved or contracted;*
3. *Analyse the impact or potential impact of these major construction and development projects that have been carried out or are planned within the World Heritage property or in its setting, in terms of impact or potential impact on Outstanding Universal Value;*

² The complete TOR, the composition of mission team and mission programme, are provided in Annexes 1 - 3.

4. *Assess the achievements made concerning the buffer zone and its protective measures in relation to the recommendations of the Committee regarding protection of setting;*
5. *Review progress made in the implementation of the Committee's decision 38 COM 7B.27, in particular:*
 - *the status of the Heritage Impact Assessments, as well as of "Preliminary technical review" of the environmental impact assessment EIA and SEA, of large infrastructure, navigation and construction projects in the Lagoon (in 2014, the State Party informed on the following projects : an offshore platform at some 8 miles off the Malamocco port, a new terminal "Motorways of the Sea" in Fusina, a new container terminal on the site of former industrial facilities in Porto Marghera, a new multi-functional facility between Venice and its maritime station, and a touristic port in San Nicolò. None of them were submitted to the World Heritage Centre, in compliance with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, for review and comments by the Advisory Bodies);*
 - *the status of the strategic assessment of the cumulative impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property derived from the number and scale of these projects, including full scope of what is proposed (associated pipelines, dredging, other infrastructure, pollution risk, changes in shipping traffic volume and routes, visitor numbers to Venice etc)*
 - *finalisation of the system of mobile gates called MoSE (Experimental Electromechanical Module);*
 - *revision of the Management Plan of the property, including a tourism strategy, as well as its management organization based on the results from the technical evaluation by ICOMOS;*
 - *development and adoption of legal regulations of cruise ship tourism, medium motor boats and high tonnage ships;*
 - *adoption of a legal document introducing prohibition of the largest ships and tankers to enter the Lagoon;*
 - *development, jointly with the major tourism and cruise companies, of alternative solutions towards to reduce the exceptionally high tourism pressure on the City of Venice, and the extensive tourism related activities;*
 - *assessment of the hydrology and geo-mechanics functioning of the Venice Lagoon and its whole drainage basin;*
 - *establishment of measures to strengthen monitoring and management of the property, including establishment of a strong coordination among all stakeholders concerned to ensure the protection of all attributes that convey the OUV of the property.*

1.2. Inscription history

The World Heritage property of the Venice and its Lagoon was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1987 (11th Session of the Committee).

As provided in ICOMOS evaluation³

The nomination of Venice to the list preceded by nine years the ratification of the World Heritage Convention by Italy. There was some concern about such a delay, which international opinion deemed inexplicable: on several occasions, notably during the discussions which preceded the elaboration of the tentative lists, the Committee expressed the wish for a short-list presentation of the most prestigious cultural properties and cited how paradoxical it was that Venice had not been included on the World Heritage List.

³ ICOMOS, May 1987 / http://whc.unesco.org/archive/advisory_body_evaluation/394.pdf

The initiative finally taken by the Italian government responds to this general expectation, and this is all the more positive in that the nomination concerns not only the historic centre of Venice, but the whole lagoon with its hundreds of small islands, its three "gates," the Lido, Malamocco and Chioggia; its basins and fishing areas. The geographic, historic and aesthetic coherency of this ensemble leaves no doubt.

Without summarizing all the actions undertaken following the flooding of 4 November 1966, ICOMOS stresses that the inclusion of Venice on the World Heritage List will further strengthen the coherency of the cultural policy of UNESCO. Venice meets all the criteria for inclusion on the World Heritage List.

1.3. International Campaign for the Safeguarding of Venice

*"During the first days of November, Tuscany and Venetia were devastated by floods of extraordinary magnitude and violence. The damage has been enormous. To the toll in human lives and the loss of property were added the destruction, in Florence and Venice, of creations of the human spirit which made the enchantment of the culture and art of living that Italy has given to the world. In all, 885 works of art of the first importance, 18 churches and some 10,000 other objects have suffered. Seventy libraries and learned institutions have been stricken. More than 700,000 volumes of archives comprising some 50 million items, of which 10,000 were of inestimable historical and scientific value, have been damaged."*⁴

In response to the appeal launched by UNESCO in 1966 (see Annex 6), private organizations were established in a number of countries to collect and channel contributions to restore and preserve Venice.

UNESCO Venice Office administers the "Joint UNESCO-Private Committees Programme for the Safeguarding of Venice", cooperating with the Association of Private Committees and Superintendencies of Monuments and Galleries of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage in Venice in two main areas: the restoration of monuments and works of art and the provision of funding for training of specialists in conservation of cultural heritage. The Private Committees have funded – within the joint UNESCO – Private Committees Programme – more than 1,500 projects worth over 50 million euro. (Source: Working document WHC-14/38.COM/7B.Add)

1.4. Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (SOUV)⁵

The retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (SOUV) for the World Heritage property "Venice and its Lagoon" was adopted by the World Heritage Committee at its 37th session (Phnom Penh, 2013).

The SOUV states:

"Venice and its Lagoon is a unitary and unique eco system characterized by the exceptional variety and complexity of environmental and natural values and for the presence of remarkable historic-cultural and scenic values of exceptional beauty. The uniqueness of the Site is realized by the perfect harmony of shapes and integrated and balanced relations between natural and cultural values, a testimony of man's capacity to create wonderful masterpieces of working together with natural phenomena."

"Venice and its lagoon form an inseparable whole."

⁴ Appeal of 2 December 1966 by René Maheu, the Director-General of UNESCO, at the opening of the international campaign for Venice and Florence

⁵ See Annex 4 - Retrospective Statements of Outstanding Universal Value – Document WHC-13/37.COM/8E

“In this lagoon covering 50 km², nature and history have been closely linked since the 5th century.” It is evident, that the rich history of Venice always depended from the state of the lagoon. It was its main defensive element. The depth of water had to be regulated – it had to be deep enough in order not to permit the enemy to approach easily and with heavy weapons but it had to be shallow enough in order to prevent naval vessels to enter it out of the well-defended channels. The necessity of such a balance makes understandable the important efforts undertaken to bypass the rivers that flew directly into the lagoon that risked with their sediments to fill up the lagoon. The efforts have continuously to go on. To-day, sediments are diminishing. They are flushed out into open Adriatic Sea and the depth of water is continuously rising with negative effects especially for nature but also for built areas. The equilibrium is threatened.

“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.” Indeed, the town of Venice occupies a group of several small, partly artificially created islands. The built areas interdepend strongly with the water: the main connections of transport are channels, between the several islands and within them. On the other hand, the water of the lagoon is a perpetual threat for the built areas, for the foundations and for the lower parts of the buildings. Their maintenance is unusually difficult and expensive. If for the main monuments the necessary efforts can be done, the minor buildings are in danger to be neglected and to disappear.

“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.” The process is going on. Every important decision concerning the built area is influencing the ecosystem of the lagoon, digging new channels for big ships, closing the lagoon with the new system of MoSE.

Some dangers affecting the World Heritage property “Venice and its Lagoon” are already highlighted in the Statement (SOUV).

“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 centres 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.”

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

“A sustainable tourism strategy is one of the Management Plan priorities.”

Those citations illustrate that several threats have been clearly identified. However, the Mission noted that no measures have been taken or that they are not sufficiently effective.

1.5. Examination of the State of Conservation by the World Heritage Committee at its 38th session (Doha, 2014) ⁶

On 29 January 2014, the State Party submitted a detailed state of conservation report, as well as the Management Plan of the property.

The World Heritage Committee at its 38th session (Doha, 2014; Decision 38 COM 7B.27) examined the state of conservation of the property and expressed its concern about the extent and scale of proposals for large infrastructure, navigation and construction projects in the Lagoon that can potentially jeopardize the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property by generating irreversible transformations on the landscape and seascape of the property. The Committee also expressed its concern about the negative environmental impacts triggered by medium motor boats to high tonnage ships that have progressively caused erosion of the lagoon beds, mud banks and salt marshes, and which could represent potential threat to the property's OUV and also requests the State Party to enforce speed limits and regulate the number and type of boats.

The Committee urged the State Party to prohibit the largest ships and tankers to enter the Lagoon and further requested the State Party to adopt, as a matter of urgency, a legal document introducing such a process, as well as to develop jointly with the major tourism and cruise companies alternative solutions to allow cruise tourists to enjoy and understand the value of Venice and also its fragility. The Committee encouraged financial institutions and agencies to ensure that Heritage and/or Environmental Impact Assessments are carried out to determine that there are no negative impacts on the OUV, before planning investment in large-scale developments within the property and its setting.

1.6. Second Cycle Periodic Report

Italy was participating in the Second Cycle of Periodic Reporting for Europe and North America, which was launched at the 36th session of the World Heritage Committee (St. Petersburg, 2012). The results of the Second Cycle of Periodic Reporting exercise in Europe have been presented to the World Heritage Committee in 2015 at its 39th session.

The State Party has clearly identified important threats to the property Venice and its Lagoon in the Periodic Report (Periodic Report _ Section II-Venice and its Lagoon).

The Factors Summary Table (see Annex 7) shows the great number of current negative factors and threats.

“The most pressing management issues are related to high tides and mobile barriers, tourism pressure and maintenance of traditional practices and techniques for restoration.” If the mobile barriers (MoSE) after a long construction period is about to get functional, for the other points mentioned no substantial progress can be noted. The efforts to develop sustainable tourism in the areas around the lagoon do not diminish tourism pressure for the City of Venice. No effective measures for maintaining traditional practices and techniques for restoration can be stated.

The report also notes that coordination between the various levels of administration (national / federal; regional / provincial / state; local / municipal) for in the management of the World Heritage Property should be improved. The relationship of local authorities with World Heritage is declared to be good, however landowners and residents obviously have a poor relationship. The available human resources to manage the World Heritage property are far below optimum.

⁶ See Annex 5 - Working document WHC-14/38.COM/7B.Add

The following main factors affecting the Property are explicitly mentioned in the report:

“Effects arising from use of transportation infrastructure: The main concern is the passage of large ships in the St Mark’s Basin and Giudecca Canal and the water traffic causing wave motion. There are different solutions under assessment. The City of Venice is providing strict rules for traffic regulation.”

“Society’s valuing of heritage: In order to contain the phenomenon of the change of use of buildings in favor of hotel accommodation, the City Council deems effective the urban planning regulations in force on the intended use of the historic buildings of the old city of Venice.”

“Changes in traditional ways of life and knowledge system: Depopulation is a Macroemergence and the MP gives Guidelines to support local economic activities (commercial and handicraft) with special attention to traditional trades and neighborhood businesses and Implement tax relief mechanisms for residents.”

“Identity, social cohesion, changes in local population and community: Regeneration of some buildings and residential compounds in favor of social housing for citizens. Some financial facilitations for the restoration and for the recovery of local traditional activities.”

“Impacts of tourism / visitor / recreation: Specific actions have been developed to relieve the pressure on the city of Venice by offering alternative and complementary options to traditional tourism, also with a system of booking in the less crowded periods.”

“Erosion and siltation/ deposition: Erosion on the morphological of the lagoon and building foundations and structures is caused by water. Controls are undertaken by the City of Venice through regulations on water traffic.”

The report stipulates that within the Management Plan 2012-2018 substantial progress should be achieved. However, the Mission noted in autumn 2015 that the circumstances had not essentially bettered.

2 NATIONAL POLICY FOR THE PRESERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTY

Information on legislation is derived from responses to Sections I and II of Periodic Reports, the retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value, as well the progress reports submitted by the State Party and documents presented or submitted by the national authorities to the mission team.

The mission noted a sufficient number of laws to provide adequate protection of the World Heritage property, including all its components.

Special attention should be paid to the boundary issue and legal protection regulations of the property and their compliance with requirements under the World Heritage Convention.

2.1 Legal Framework

The legal, planning and administrative apparatus is large and extremely complex. Its complexity may lead to the fact that it takes a very long time for decisions to be taken and that responsibilities are not always clear. Some gaps are to be related to limited resources to meet the needs. On some levels of decision-making and also in a number of instruments and rules of governance of the territory, there is a lack of adequate recognition of the site.

There is special legislation for the defence of Venice and its Lagoon with the realization of measures of restoration and conservation of the historical building frame and measures for protection of the Lagoon and of the Town and villages from flooding. The main tasks are: organization, managing and financial actions.

It was only after the great flood in November 1966 that the Italian State became deeply aware of the specific difficulties of making function and maintaining the City of Venice on its islands. Indeed, maintenance of the buildings and of the entire infrastructure in a city, where salt water is ever-present is particularly costly. Also to run a city with all the necessary services as

ambulance, fire intervention, transportation of waste, public transport, taxi services etc. without a network of roads, but only by water transport linking the very narrow streets is extremely complicated and expensive. Together, with the devastations of the flood, those facts led to the so-called Special Law for Venice.⁷

An adequate legal framework for the maintenance of the Outstanding Universal Value including conditions of Authenticity and/or Integrity of the World Heritage property exists. However, there are some deficiencies in implementation.⁸

Two important new laws are under establishment:⁹

- the New Special Law for Venice (which provides a preliminary document to all the planning and governance);
- the Metropolitan City introduced in the Law n. 56 of April 7, 2014.

The new regional landscape plan¹⁰ and the Area Plan Lagoon and the Po delta should be mentioned in relation to the protection of the Venice Lagoon. The Spatial Plan of the Province of Venice recognizes the perimeter of the site. The regional park north lagoon of local interest has been formally set up. The establishment of Regional Reserve of interest of local Ca "Roman (Pellestrina) has been approved in 2012.

The Regional laws (Regione Veneto) regulate navigation, hunting and fishing in the Lagoon. A number of natural habitats, covering areas on the Adriatic seashore, inside the Lagoon, its saltmarshes (barene), fish farm ponds (valli) and along the inland borders are covered by different regional or provincial inventories and regulations (biotopes of natural interest, regional environmental and anthropological park, provincial reserves of local interest and for wildlife at regional scale) in order to protect their biodiversity, natural habitats and ecosystem processes.

This is reflected by binding European Union legislation that recognizes the entire Lagoon as a Special Protection Area (according to the Wild Birds Directive) and the northern and southern parts of the Lagoon (excluding a small area around Venice-Mestre) as two Sites of Community Interest (Flora, Fauna & Habitats Directive), as part of the continent-wide "Natura 2000" network of protected areas for biodiversity where specific rules apply.

The nature reserve "Valle Averte" (500 ha) in the commune of Campagna Lupia was designated in 1989 as a Wetland of International Importance ("Ramsar Site") under the Convention on Wetlands. Since, the Province is preparing for the designation of the entire Lagoon as a Ramsar Site. As part of the ongoing management planning process, proposals are under development to define a buffer zone (sea and landwards) of the World Heritage property.

⁷ Law No. 171, Legge Speciale per Venezia, approved on 16th April 1973. Further laws completed the first law:

- Legge 05.03.1963 n. 366 "Legge ordinaria del Parlamento riguardante Trasporti - Sicurezza Marittima Disposizioni relative a navigazione, navi e personale. Nuove normative relative alle lagune di Venezia e Marano."
- Legge 16.04.1973 n. 171 "Interventi per la salvaguardia di Venezia."
- Legge 29.11.1984 n. 798 "Nuovi interventi per la salvaguardia di Venezia"
- Legge 8.11.1991 n. 360 "Stanziamenti per interventi urgenti a favore di Venezia e di Chioggia."
- Legge 05.02.1992 n. 139 "Interventi per la salvaguardia di Venezia e della sua laguna."
- Legge 31.05.1995 n. 206 "Interventi urgenti per il risanamento e l'adeguamento dei sistemi di smaltimento delle acque usate e degli impianti igienico-sanitari dei centri storici e nelle isole di Venezia e di Chioggia."

⁸ Source: Second cycle Periodic Report EUR - Section II-Venice and its Lagoon (2014).

⁹ State Party Progress Report – received on 30 January 2015

¹⁰ Source: information on the web site of the Veneto Region - <http://www.ptrc.it>.

2.2 Management system

The property is managed by the State Party, under protective legislation. The levels of public authority who are primarily involved with the management of the site are national, regional, local. There also are other public offices and public and private, national and international Associations involved.

At the management level is active the Steering Committee (CoP), coordinated by the City of Venice (*site manager*) and consists of as many as 21 bodies: Veneto Region, Provinces of Venice and Padua, Municipalities of Venice, Campagna Lupia, Cavallino-Treporti, Chioggia, Codevigo, Jesolo, Mira, Musile di Piave, Quarto d'Altino, Regional Directorate for Cultural Heritage and Landscape of the Veneto, the Superintendence for Architectural and Landscape Heritage of Venice and the Lagoon, the Superintendence for Archaeological Heritage of the Veneto, Superintendence of historical, artistic and ethno-anthropological heritage and the museum center of the city of Venice and the lagoon Eaves, Archival Superintendence for the Veneto, Venice Water Authority, Port Authority of Venice, State Archive of Venice, the Diocese of Venice.

All these responsible bodies and the local organisations are represented in the Steering Committee which meets regularly, where the Municipality of Venice has been appointed as the coordinating body.

The structure within the Management System is extremely complex. The involved partners have completely different levels of independence or interdependence.

The Mission met all responsible bodies represented in the Steering Committee and discussed the issues relevant to the decision-making process and ongoing management actions (the morphological and hydraulic conservation of the Lagoon; the conservation of monumental and architectural heritage; and the planning of tourist movements.)

While considerable progress has been achieved with the development of the integrated management plan and the creation of the Steering Committee, the Mission noted the lack of a shared vision for Venice among the many different stakeholders at national, regional and local levels.

The Mission noted the absence of established procedures for coordination and decision-making between the 21 bodies involved in the management of the property. The meetings of the Committee are limited to an exchange of information and point of view without any mandatory results. The involved bodies are independent and the work of the Steering Committee has no real influence on an effective coordination in view of a preservation of the World Heritage property. Furthermore, the process depends on the initiative of some single persons.

Tidal coastal lagoons, such as the Venice Lagoon, are extremely rare in the Mediterranean and only found in the northern Adriatic (where Venice Lagoon is the largest one) and the Gulf of Gabès in Tunisia. Information provided to the Mission stresses that the Province recognizes increasingly the ecosystem services and values provided by the Lagoon. The management system cares about many aspects of its small-size preservation. However, it seems that major aspects (e.g. of bottom erosion along deepwater navigation ways) on the functioning of the entire Lagoon ecosystem are not sufficiently addressed in a consensual way, obtaining agreement by stakeholders with fundamentally differing sectoral interests.

The Mission noted that the Steering Committee has a weak position with only a recommending and no decisive competence. This could compromise appropriate monitoring of the implementation of the Management Plan and evaluation of comprehensive measures to sustain the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV).

Furthermore, no procedures exist to follow-up issues raised by CSOs and NGOs that go beyond issues addressed by the 9 local authorities (municipi) concerned.

During the meetings and discussions with the institutions and the representatives of CSOs and NGOs, the Mission noted the absence of an operational procedure to evaluate and assess sectoral needs and priorities (such as problems with affordable housing, playgrounds, transportation system, lack of areas for handcraft etc.) within the framework of an integrated management process.

Development of trade-off mechanisms for incompatible sectoral and local plans in view of preparing overarching solutions of an integrated and sustainable nature (environmentally, economically and socially) is lacking. As so far the newly created institution, the “Metropolitan City of Venice”, seems to remain without sufficient clarification of its functions and responsibilities with regard to the other institutions and those among them, it might eventually replace, its (positive or negative) effects on these problematic can’t be foreseen.

The tasks and competences of the established Steering Committee should be clearly defined so that the Committee can monitor compliance with provisions of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention and the enforcement of regulatory and protection measures.

2.3 Institutional Framework

Recently, the *Città Venezia metropolitana* has been created. This newly formed Metropolitan City¹¹ will thus partly take over the competences of the communes around the lagoon, the region and the province. The Mayor of Venice will become Mayor of the new institution. The new organisation should start its activities in the beginning of 2016, but the details of its organisation (elections etc.), in autumn 2015 its functioning and competences have not yet been stabilised.

“The reform defined by the Law 56/2014 'Del Rio', is primarily a reform of the institutional framework, as it defines a new plot of territorial governance, introducing the "secundo-grado" authorities, that is, elected in turn by municipalities and therefore representatives of many of the participants in the Steering Committee (CoP). This reform represents a radical innovation, which also complies with a new legislative framework in which mandates will be prepared and thus functions in a devolution of State, Region, Metropolitan City and Municipality, which might facilitate the action levels on the Site and on Buffer Zone. [...] These elements will lead to a change in the administration process, that is in the Steering Committee of the property: the municipalities will find themselves aggregated in the bodies of the Metropolitan City under establishment, both at the level of the Metropolitan Council and at the level of the Metropolitan Conference (all Mayors), where the Province of Venice will be suppressed.”¹²

If appropriate approaches are developed, the Metropolitan City could be a chance for a clearer decision making process that today is extremely complex and an obstacle for connected measures. Questions of decision structure, of governance and of mechanisms of control could be simplified and the processes accelerated.

Conservation activities, undertaken to-day by many different bodies and poorly linked and coordinated, could importantly benefit if the decision-making within *Città Venezia metropolitana* would follow a clear way and if the responsible persons of the new body would be aware of the long-term-importance preserving the City of Venice and its lagoon.

In the period of the Mission, the roles and responsibilities of the newly formed “Metropolitan City of Venice” were not defined and seem not to be yet clear. Its effects on the preservation of the city and the lagoon can’t be foreseen.

¹¹ Introduced by the Law n. 56 of April 7, 2014.

¹² Source: State Party Progress Report – received on 30 January 2015.

2.4 Management Plan / Tourism Strategy / Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction

A Management Plan (MP), approved by all competent authorities between November and December 2012 presents a synthesis of the huge material produced for its preparation.¹³ One of the main challenges of the Management Plan 2012- 2018 is to develop alternative forms of tourism in the lagoon settlements.¹⁴ If the goal is stated, the measures and methods are entirely unclear. Anyhow, it will be long process that needs to be implemented with the coordination of activities of the institutions and operators involved in the tourism industry, also representing opportunities for job generation and income for local communities.

In February 2014, ICOMOS submitted the technical review of the State Party Management Plan of the property. ICOMOS concluded that in its current layout, the MP does not appear yet a practical instrument for management. It is essential that the operationalization and implementation schedule is defined and illustrated, and that the proposed management arrangements are clarified. With regard to the buffer zone, ICOMOS concluded that it is not clear how the proposed tentative buffer zone in the MP could give an added layer of protection to the property. ICOMOS considers that the State Party may need to review the proposed perimeter.

The Mission noted that the Management Plan was not readjusted in response to the comments of ICOMOS.

With support from the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) and the UNESCO Office in Venice, the Municipality participated as a “Model City” in global programmes to identify and prepare adaptation and mitigation activities in response to climate change impacts. By doing so, Venice and its Lagoon become a real-scale laboratory to test solutions of value also in similar situations elsewhere.

The ecological implications of climate change on the Lagoon were analysed during a workshop in 2011. The experts stressed the need of taking into account the growing intensity of agricultural, industrial and urban land use in the water catchment basin upstream of the Lagoon and the repercussions of reduced freshwater and sediment inflow and the deterioration of the inflowing water quality due to pollution and eutrophication (i.e. increased nutrient loads). They also stressed the need to deal with sea level rise in the Adriatic, and the reinforcement of its effects inside the Lagoon by the subsidence of the Lagoon bottom, as a consequence of diminishing sediment inflow and increased bottom erosion through the deepwater navigation channels towards the sea. The frequency of high tides (acque alte) will continue to increase. Closing the Lagoon more frequently towards the Adriatic during these periods, with the artificial system of high flood gates under construction (MoSE) at the three, increasingly modified, connection channels (Lido, Malamocco, Chiocchia), will need counterbalancing measures to maintain the Lagoon connectivity with the sea, in order to maintain sufficient water exchange for the ecosystem. To deal with these major developments, the workshop recommended the elaboration and adoption of a long-term integrated monitoring programme and adaptive strategy.

The Mission recommends to conduct a mid-term review of the Management Plan of the property and readjust it in response to the comments of ICOMOS.

Within the framework of existing procedures and plans, a Master Plan should be developed to define a set of regulations for all on-going and planned developments within the boundaries of the World Heritage property and its buffer zone.

¹³ All reports, preliminary studies and other material developed for the MP will be available asap on the website www.veniceandlagoon.net.

¹⁴ Source: State Party Progress Report – received on 30 January 2015.

It should be adopted as a matter of urgency for the recovery and preservation of the Outstanding Universal Value of the property and its associated landscape and seascape values. The Master Plan should be revised periodically.

2.5 Boundary issues

The property "Venice and its Lagoon" was inscribed in 1987 without a buffer zone.

In 2014, 27 years after its inscription, in response to a request of the World Heritage Centre, the State Party submitted a Management Plan for the property, including a proposal for the establishment of a buffer zone.

In February 2014, with regard to the buffer zone, ICOMOS concluded in its technical review that it is not clear how the proposed tentative buffer zone in the MP could give an added layer of protection to the property. ICOMOS considered that the proposed perimeter should be reviewed.

The Mission did not have the capacity to assess in detail the perimeter as initially proposed by the State Party. Due to the character of the vast surroundings of the property characterized by an almost flat landscape there are no natural delimitations for a Buffer Zone. Consequently, its extent becomes somehow arbitrary. A detailed description should be developed for a revised proposal of the buffer zone to justify its perimeter.

In conformity with the Committee decision, the State Party should be invited to undertake the revision of its preliminary proposal in line with the ICOMOS technical review and submit to the World Heritage Centre the minor boundary modification by 1 February 2017.

3 STATE OF CONSERVATION

3.1 The Historic City of Venice

The inscribed property of "Venice and its Lagoon" is one of the rare World Heritage properties that meet six criteria. During the procedure of inscription, according to the usage of that time, the State Party delivered only summary justifications; also the evaluation by ICOMOS in 1987 was rather general. Since, in 2013, the Committee adopted a Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (SOUV) of the property.

The following assessment takes into account the remarks specified in "Factors affecting the Property" as mentioned in the Periodic Report (Second Cycle). As most of them are related with several criteria, the following observations merge the different criteria and follow the order of the proceeding chapters.

The City of Venice is a unique artistic achievement (Criterion I)¹⁵. The general effect of the islands that, as they emerge only little from the water, seem to float on the water of the lagoon has not changed. The attraction of single islands as urban settings and as a landscape-monuments is intact, seen from outside as seen from inside the property. The high concentration of masterpieces and monuments is unchanged. In general, the monuments of highest value are in good or at least acceptable state of conservation – this can't be affirmed for the majority of buildings of lower artistic interest.

¹⁵ For the entire texts related to the several criteria, see chapter 1.2 and Annex 4 - Retrospective Statements of Outstanding Universal Value – Document WHC-13/37.COM/8E

However, the Mission noted that since the inscription, the “unique artistic achievement” has suffered in some important aspects.

The visual quality of the entrance to the city has considerably suffered. New buildings of infrastructure for parking of private cars and for the cruise-ship-terminal have an important visual impact. It affects the visual integrity of the property.

The material conservation (stability of foundations, effects of waves) and especially the visual integrity of the site are highly compromised by big ships entering the lagoon. It seems that the problem is not resolvable in short or medium term.

The historical importance of the city and the influence of its architects and artists in the Mediterranean and in Europe (Criterion II), of course, have not changed.

The quality of a living city (“... an archaeological site, which still breathes life...”) has essentially diminished since the inscription (Criterion III). The SOUV recognises that Venice is not a museum, but an inhabited city where residents do and should continue to live and work. The Mission noted that the dramatic increase of the number of tourists, followed by a consequently proportional reconversion of buildings into spaces for persons coming from outside on one hand, the enormous decrease of the population on the islands on the other hand are alerting indicators for the irreversible loss of this essential value of authenticity. The given information showed how the normal inhabitation has become very difficult already today; the requirement of “use and function” as an important part of authenticity of the site is threatened.

Generally, the physical state of the main buildings and important architectural ensembles of the property is good or acceptable (Criterion IV). During restoration-work, in the majority of cases international standards for conservation/restoration have been respected.

However, the Mission observed that the state of conservation of very many buildings of minor architectural importance, mainly private houses (“...to more modest residences of *calli and campi in its six quarters (Sestieri), Venetian architecture, presents a complete typology...*”) is precarious, sometimes bad; and is getting worse. However, they are essential elements of the city. The system of subsidies for conservation/restoration for normal maintenance is insufficient and wrongly aligned to public buildings. The process of degradation of common housing begins to essentially affect the authenticity and the integrity of the site.

The effect of waves seems to be an important danger for the historical buildings. The physical consequences of big vessels passing through Venice are due to their wave actions (damaging historical foundations and re-suspending bottom sediments in the Lagoon), air pollution (despite a voluntary agreement not to use heavy fuel while travelling through the city) and their negative visual impact (given the size of the modern ships vs. the building heights of the historical city). In addition, negative effects of wave action are provoked by small boats travelling at high speed, despite speed limit regulations

An important factor is the transformation of the use of buildings, from habitation for permanent residents to the different forms of touristic accommodation. As the inherited use is an essential factor for the definition of authenticity, the on-going process represents a major problem.

3.2 Natural Environment in the Lagoon

The northern Adriatic has a special transitional climate, slightly cooler and more humid than the Mediterranean climate. Rivers originating in the Alpine region played an essential role in the formation of the Venice Lagoon since the ice ages as major providers of freshwater and sediments. However, since Medieval times (14th-18th centuries), the major rivers have been diverted from entering the Lagoon and discharge since into the Adriatic. Coupled with the dredging of deepwater navigation waterways in the central part of the Lagoon, the reduction of sediment and freshwater inflows due to the river diversions, contribute significantly to the

steady seaward erosion of the Lagoon bottom and the evolution of the brackish lagoon ecosystem towards a saltwater coastal bay.

A number of socio-economic systems can be defined: those directly linked to the City of Venice, to the modern harbour and industrial facilities around Mestre, to the tourist activities along the seashore beaches (lido) and to the border area of the Lagoon and its adjacent landward parts ("agri-turismo") in the communes around the Lagoon. But also the Lagoon ecosystem provides its own socio-economic system with a number of sizeable services: i.e. it supports notably 370,000 wintering waterbirds (indicators for the related biodiversity) which are sought after by an increasing number of birdwatching tourists and 1600 leisure hunters. The Lagoon also supports important fish populations that provide income to 110 professional (traditional) lagoon fishermen. In addition, Lagoon fish are also caught by 6000 leisure anglers, that use to this end a sizeable portion of the overall 30,000 small boats circulating on the Lagoon. In the fish farms (valli) inside the Lagoon, 60 professional workers produce annually 600t of aquaculture products. In the open parts of the Lagoon operate additional 50 mussel farm workers (annual production 1,000t) and 440 clam farm workers (annual production 5,000t). These data substantiate the high biological productivity of the Lagoon and its socio-economic benefits. This productivity is based on a diverse mosaic of natural habitats inside the Lagoon that are maintained by tidal actions and freshwater inflows. Over the centuries, the Venetians played an essential role in the sustainable management of these resources. But the intensification of human impacts since WW2 has created significant new environmental challenges that now threaten the outstanding universal value of Venice and its Lagoon.

The entire lagoon and the landscape of the mainland have, in general, maintained their qualities and their defects related to industrial development around Mestre. While in the landward and shallower parts of the Lagoon a positive tendency to restore important ecosystems (such as the barene saltmarshes) is noted, a negative erosion tendency connected to the artificial deepwater navigation channels and their increasing use by increasingly larger ships (petrochemical, cargo and cruise) is observed as well. The shoreline (notably of the Lido) and the connection channels between the Lagoon and the Adriatic are increasingly modified and stabilized. This supports their conservation, but modifies the dynamic system of the natural heritage of the Lagoon.

There is an increasing tendency of intensified agricultural, urban, infrastructure and industrial land-use in the proposed buffer zone and beyond upstream. This may have increasing consequences for the Lagoon ecosystem due to reduction of water and sediment flows and deterioration of the quality of inflowing waters, despite the considerable efforts since WH inscription which led to a reduction of the pollution of water, soils and air.

The efforts for preserving the ecological value of the lagoon are important. Nevertheless, many of these efforts seem to lack a deeper connection between each other. A comprehensive geomorphological plan is lacking.

An important problem is the increasing seaward erosion of the Lagoon bottom. This reinforces also the erosion of saltmarshes (barene) in the tidal zone and has triggered widespread efforts to restore such areas. Encouraging results have been achieved and were showed to the Mission, but the programme of ecological restoration of these ecosystems, extremely important for its biodiversity and biological production (incl. for fisheries resources), is a long-term one and will need further sustained long-term efforts and investment. New techniques, more inspired by local traditional knowledge, are currently being tested through EU-funded LIFE projects.

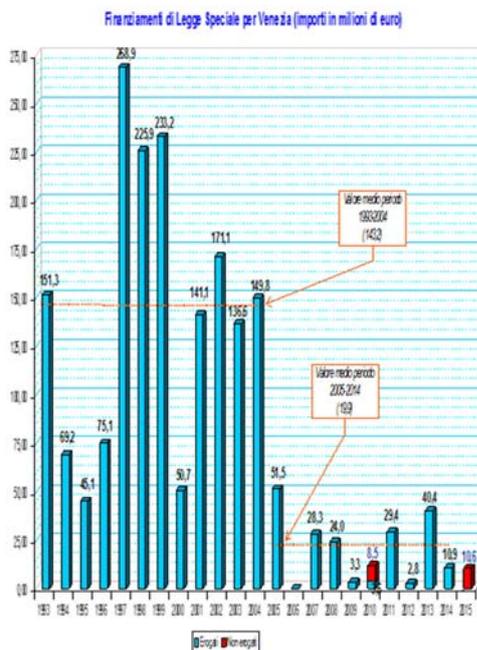
3.3 Conservation Activities

The Special Law for Venice recognises that protection of the property is of preeminent national interest. Its aim is to maintain in a good state of conservation of the landscaped area, historical significance, and archaeological and artistic environment, as well as to protect the hydrologic equilibration, to reduce pollution of water and air and to ensure socioeconomic vitality.

In order to reach these goals, the commune of Venice (apart from subsidies to the province and the region) must receive financial help for restoration works, including the acquisition and the conservative restoration of buildings, in particular if privately owned. For years, the subsidies based on the law have substantially helped to better the situation in the entire lagoon, especially in the fields of reduction of pollution of water and air and the work of MoSE, in an effort to stabilise the hydrologic situation.

The special law recognises that running a city located on islands is much more expensive in relation to a city on the land. Also any work of maintenance is more difficult and transportation of material of any kind is much more complicated. In first line, the financial help was (and is) thought to be used for the continuous maintenance of the historical city and especially of the private owned real estate. Further on, several works of infrastructure have to be finished.¹⁶ Other projects concern the heightening of certain open spaces: The level of pedestrian areas towards the water-front is raised some decimetres in order to avoid flooding. Such measures may lead to difficult and poor situations in the connection to existing buildings¹⁷.

However, the financial help to the commune explicitly foreseen by the special law was almost halted in the last ten years.¹⁸ The figures in the diagram below give a clear perception of the reduction down to almost zero.



The justification for this drastic diminution was that the financial capacity was used for completion of the MoSE-project. As described before, the lack of funds for all the other aims of the Special Law is catastrophic.

¹⁶ Canalisation, water-tubes for firemen.

¹⁷ Region of San Marco and Rialto.

¹⁸ The amounts paid to the commune of Venice varied from 268.9 (1997) to 0 (2008) Mio €. In the period 1992-2004 the medium amount was 143.2, in the period 2005-2014 19.9 Mio €. At least, the medium amount of the first period should be granted and payed regularly.

The Mission highlighted that a substantial financial support is fully justified by the specificities of the City of Venice. The Mission recommends that the State Party is invited to implement appropriate measures, including those in conformity with the Special Law for Venice, in order to prevent deterioration of architectural and urban planning coherence.

4 DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

At the time of the mission, a great number of plans for important interventions concerning the Lagoon and its ecological functioning were presented. They can have disastrous effects on the ecosystem and also on the cultural values. In the following paragraphs only the most important projects are listed and briefly commented.

4.1 Experimental Electromechanical Module (MoSE)

“In recent decades, the frequency and height of tides in the Venice lagoon have increased significantly, especially after the exceptional flood of 1966. Since then a series of interventions have been planned and executed towards the conservation of Venice and the safeguard of its lagoon, as well as infrastructure to protect Venice, Chioggia and other historical lagoon settlements from high tides. The reinforcement of barrier islands was carried out and the construction launched of a system of mobile gates, installed at the three inlets, called MoSE (Experimental Electromechanical Module). Currently, the construction of MoSE is at a very advanced stage. It is scheduled to be completed and in operation by 2016.”¹⁹

The artificial flood gates MoSE (modulo sperimentale elettromeccanico) is about to get operational. With the system, the three connections of the Lagoon with the Adriatic can be closed in order to avoid important raise of water inside the Lagoon in exceptional circumstances (tide in addition with wind). It is planned to operate MoSE only, if the acqua alta is expected to go beyond 1,2 m. A sophisticated system of monitoring and forecast is in place and currently tested for its further improvement.

MoSE should be considered as a large-scale experiment. It is probable that it will need to be adapted or changed, after becoming operational. Continuous monitoring and eventual reacting in light of on-going environmental developments arising from changes in climate, sea level, water and sediment flows are necessary.

4.2 Suspension of the Harbour of Venice

“The suspension of the harbour of Venice prescribed a reduction of not more than 100 transits of ships over 40 000 tons in 2014 and forbade the entry of ships superior to 96,000.00 tonnes in 2015”.

“The issue is the passage of large ships in the St Mark’s Basin and the Giudecca Canal. The concerns and complaints raised by several citizens and organizations include:

- The visual impact created by the size of the ships, which appear oversized compared to the dimension, fragility of the historical city;*
- The hydrodynamic effects on the structures of the urban fabric of the old city and the lagoon morphology;*
- Atmospheric pollution due to the emission of considerable amounts of pollutants and particulate matter.*²⁰

¹⁹ Source : State Party state of conservation report

²⁰ Excerpt from 2014 State Party report

"It is pointed out that Decree no. 79 of 02 March 2012 of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport had already dictated general provisions to limit or ban ship traffic in order to protect sensitive areas. Considering the highly special environmental vulnerability and sensitivity of the Venice lagoon, the same decree prohibited cargo and passenger vessels exceeding 40,000 gross tonnes from transiting in the Grand Canal and the Giudecca Canal. In particular, the harbour master had set, in both canals, a ban on passenger ships exceeding 40,000 gross tonnes for 2014 and, for 2015, a ban on passenger ships exceeding 96,000 gross tonnes. Recently, the Veneto regional administrative court (tribunale amministrativo regionale - TAR) lifted the Venetian Harbour Master's ban on large-ship traffic on the Grand and Giudecca Canals."²¹

"The Administrative Court ordered the suspension of the limits established by the Harbour of Venice until the hearings for discussion of the substance of the appeals. ...The 9th May the hearing was held for the decision on the merits that has postponed any resolution to a new hearing set for June 25 pv. Waiting until the resolution of the appeals, it should be noted that the Italian government is currently considering several alternative hypotheses to the current passage of large ships in the San Marco Basin and the Giudecca Canal".²²

The Mission discussed this issue with different authorities and stakeholders concerned. Precise information was provided about the Ban on transit for big ships (Decree n79 of 2 March 2012) and its results, but not about the procedure of recent abolishment of the ban by the authorities of the region. The case is currently to be decided by the Italian Government.

The cumulative negative impacts of large vessels crossing the San Marco basin and Giudecca canal on the nearby built-up structures of the city, through wave action and their destructive forces, air pollution were substantiated by all different parties met.

The Mission recommends, as a matter of urgency, to enforce speed limits and regulation of the number and type of boats in the Lagoon, as well as to reduce the number of big ships entering the Lagoon. In a medium time perspective, in order to reduce the threat to the cultural heritage provoked by the passage of large ships through the San Marco basin and Giudecca canal, the Ban on transit of big ships in the Lagoon should be adopted.

4.3 Alternative projects for the nautical accessibility at the Port of Venice

In 2014, the State Party informed the World Heritage Centre that "the Maritime Authority, with Decree no. 472 of December 5, 2013 concerning the "Identification of access ways to the Port of Venice Maritime Station alternative to those prohibited to ships over 40,000 GT"³, identified (art. 1) the Contorta Sant'Angelo canal as an alternative waterway to the present one (the Giudecca and St Mark's Canals) to allow passenger ships over 40,000 GT to reach the Maritime Station, as specified in the report by the Port Authority. The plan provides for the current Contorta S. Angelo canal to be resected in width and depth while the Malamocco Marghera canal will not require any further action in addition to the maintenance currently carried out by the Port of Venice Authority."²³

²¹ Excerpt of letter from the State Party, received on 11 June 2015

²² Extracts from State Party reports

²³ Excerpt from SOC report, received Jan 2014: Increasing number of large ships transiting the lagoon

The adaptation of the waterway access to the Maritime Venice Station and redevelopment of the areas around the Contorta - Sant' Angelo Channel is one of the major projects. It is currently under evaluation by the Technical Commission of EIA at the Ministry of Environment. The final result of the EIA is expected by spring 2016.

For the project for a new passenger port in Porto Marghera the Study of Environmental Impact Assessment (Scope phase) is currently being assessed by the Technical Commission of the Ministry.

The plans to dredge new deepwater navigation waterways inside the Lagoon will have serious impact, as the new canals together with the enormous deposits of the excavated material will greatly change several parameters of the current system. They are possibly most damaging and leading to serious bottom erosion and degradation of the Lagoon ecosystems. The entire planning regarding the functioning of the different ports (oil and gas, container, cruise passengers) are driven by short-term opportunities while an integrated territorial planning document, to reach sustainable development (in terms of ecology, economy and society) for the Lagoon and its surroundings is still missing. Such sustainable territorial planning needs to be embedded in the wider geographical and socio-economic context of the northern Adriatic region.

Within such an integrated long-term territorial planning process, it is important to remove large harbour facilities for large ships (of the 20/21 century) incompatible with the natural and cultural values of the WH property outside of its boundaries.

4.4 Project of Multimodal Terminal Offshore the Coast of Venice

"The project was subsequently developed and agreed in consultation between the MAV and APV (Agreement of August 4, 2010) for the construction of a multi modal terminal offshore serving not only oil tankers but also vessels for the transport of containers. ... the project received a positive opinion by the Technical Commission of Verification of Environmental Impact- EIA and SEA of the Ministry of Environment and Protection of Land and Sea of August 2, 2013". ... The Specific environmental authorization procedures are finished. Currently, the area is subject to land reclamation, which will be completed in 2017. The project will be realized in project financing".²⁴

The Mission was not presented with substantial information about this project for an offshore platform at some 8 miles off the Malamocco port. Therefore, it is not able to judge if the needed land reclamation will affect the WH property. The final design should start in the course of 2015 and subsequently the works of the first batch of the container terminal.

The Mission argues that necessary transport via smaller ships or pipelines does not affect further the Lagoon ecosystem and that land reclamation possibly needed for infrastructure related to the multimodal offshore terminal be claimed outside the Lagoon (such as in the 20th century reclaimed lands of the Marghera industrial harbour complex outside of the WH property).

The Mission strongly supports the principle that a multi modal terminal for oil tankers and container transport vessels be established outside of the Lagoon and not necessitating navigation of such ships inside the Lagoon.

²⁴ Extracts from State Party reports.

4.5 Project Terminal "Motorways of the Seas" in Fusina

"State of progress: today the works are started for both the ground part and the water".²⁵

The new terminal "Motorways of the Seas" will be constructed in Fusina. It will partly use the Malamocco-Marghera channel already in use. Four quays will allow to berth simultaneously up to 4 ships. The terminal will serve rolling stock traffic (ferries transporting trucks or their trailers (Ro-Ro) and ferries carrying cars and passengers (Ro-Pax). The project envisages also the erection of a new logistics platform with links to rail and roadways, further on new buildings, warehouses, classification yards and parking lots.

Currently, the Northern Dock is completed. The South Dock is under construction. The entire project will be finished in 2016. The Mission was informed by the Venice Port Authority about ongoing asbestos clean-up activities to remove contaminated soil in the area of the planned port facility in the southern part of the reclaimed industrial area of Marghera.

The Mission strongly supports the need and efforts for further work to clean contaminated groundwater and soil. The Port Authority is encouraged to continue and terminate this programme. Transport regulations for goods need to be strict enough to prevent accidental pollution of the Lagoon, during their transit through the deepwater navigation channel inside the Lagoon.

4.6 Project tourist port of San Nicolo at the Lido di Venezia

"The realization of the Tourist Port was part of an overall plan for the redevelopment of the area north of the island of the Lido, comprising the "ex Ospedale al Mare" and its front beaches. The project has not been realized since the dissolution of the contract between the City of Venice and the promoter of the project".²⁶

The project Venice Cruise 2.0 aims the development of a new terminal at Venice's Bocca di Lido for the docking of large cruise vessels. The location was mentioned as a possible place to install a passenger terminal in replacement of the one at the Marittima basin, thus avoiding large cruise ships having to enter the Lagoon and crossing the San Marco basin and the Giudecca canal.

The project is still in the state of an idea with only general concretisations. Currently, a study of Environmental Impact Assessment (Scope phase) is being assessed by the Technical Commission of the Ministry.

The Mission is convinced that, as part of an overall SEA comparing different options for tourist terminal facilities, the feasibility for a tourist port at the Lido di Venezia, including its connection with the city and the hinterland (access by road and rail) should also be analysed.

4.7 New Multifunctional Complex between Venice and its Maritime Station

"The wide area will become a new meeting place, accessible and usable by the public is that of Venice and Mestre. ... The project is part of the Programme Agreement signed on 07.05.2008 by the Veneto Region, the City of Venice, the Port Authority and the State Property Agency The project was approved by the City Council by the Resolution no. 59 of 26.05.2008 State of progress: waiting to find the subject that will fund the work in project financing".²⁷

²⁵ Extracts from State Party reports.

²⁶ Extracts from State Party reports.

²⁷ Extracts from State Party reports.

The Mission visited newly refurbished cruise passenger terminal facilities (Venezia Terminal Passeggeri) along the Marittima basin aiming to connect road and railway access (via the Liberty bridge) with a cruise ship port established at the edge of the historical city. It took note at the same time of the overarching aim to ban large ships (including cruise liners) from using the San Marco basin and Giudecca canal, in order to avoid further damage to the WH property through wave action, air pollution, visual impact and potential accidental pollution risks posed by large cruise vessels. This implies that large cruise ships should no longer access the Marittima terminal through this itinerary, entering the Lagoon through the Lido inlet.

Several options to dredge new deepwater access channels are currently under study that would allow large cruise ships to access the Marittima terminal via the Marghera area, entering the Lagoon through the Malamocco inlet instead. The Mission shares the opinion of the Ministry of Environment and the Sea that a SEIA is needed to compare the likely impacts of different options in the wider context of the entire Lagoon and the problem of its erosion created by deepwater navigation channels. In order to avoid additional negative impacts through possibly new deepwater channels, it does make sense, to plan to locate the cruise ship passenger terminal outside of the Lagoon. A location that would need no, or only minimal, movements of large cruise ships inside the Lagoon, and thus significantly reduce their impact on the heritage values.

The Mission clearly supports the strategic aim adopted by the local authorities, to prevent large ships (including cruise liners) from using the San Marco basin and Giudecca canal. A new location for passenger terminal facilities needs to be found outside of the Lagoon. The location should avoid large cruise ships to move inside the Lagoon.

4.8 Automatic Boat Speed Measurement

“This refers to the quantity and type of craft present on canals managed by public and private operators for transporting both people (residents, city users, tourists) and goods (material, foodstuffs). The quantity and type of craft, which is increasing constantly in order to meet the growing demand from tourism and connected activities (for example, supply of goods, waste disposal) and must also take into account the cycle of the tides and the phenomena of high water, lead to significant erosion of the banks due to the movement of the waves. New measures to contain the water traffic are come into force in 2015: limited circulation, preparation of plans for the reorganization of the landing and concessions of public water spaces and system of tracking and monitoring of navigation units in the Venetian Lagoon.”²⁸

Wave motion destroys constructed foundations of built-up areas (open spaces as rive, gardens and private spaces as palaces, churches, modest buildings) in the historical and modern parts of the urban settlements as well as natural shorelines of saltmarsh areas (barene) and beaches (sand and dunes) in the lagoon. “...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.”²⁹ It endangers the integrity of the site.

The Mission was informed about a new system to be installed in the Giudecca canal to measure automatically the speed of any boat. As the Authorities and several stakeholder and citizen groups were complaining about transgressing of the speed limits by mainly private boats (incl. taxis), regular controls of the speed limits, fining those who do not adhere to them and reinforcement of the adherence to the limits are required to prevent further damage to the cultural heritage through wave actions, unnecessary air pollution and noise.

²⁸ Extract from received SOC report.

²⁹ Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

The Mission encourages the authorities to install the automatic speed monitoring system in all relevant canals and to enforce speed limits through fining of any transgressors (incl. taxis).

4.9 Expansion of the International Airport Venice Tessera

The Mission was informed about reflections on the longer-term development of the current international airport Venice Marco Polo constructed inside the boundaries of the property. Extension plans consider to develop a much larger regional airport facility that serves also different cities in the hinterland (Verona, Padova, etc.). The current facilities and land reserves would not suffice for such a significant extension. Thus, the planning reflections focus on a nearby landward location outside of the Lagoon and its foreseen buffer zone which would allow an easy connection to the existing motorway and railway infrastructure.

The Mission is convinced that the existing airport facilities have reached carrying capacity as well as the limit of compatibility with the maintenance of the heritage values of the Lagoon, notably in the surroundings of the airport and its connection with the City of Venice. Substantial expansions of the current international airport facilities need therefore to be planned for another location outside of the WH property and its future buffer zone.

4.10 “Palais Lumière”

The "Pierre Cardin Palais Lumiere", located on an area of more than 190,000 square meters near to the towns of Venice, Mestre and Marghera, was considered a "living sculpture", a building of great architectural originality, designed by Pierre Cardin respecting new standards of advanced eco-sustainability and able to reach a new certification for tall buildings.

The tower with a height of 245 m would have been illuminated all night. It should accommodate hotel residences, hotels and restaurants, management areas, sales, services, centers of excellence in technology and arts, R&D centers, a conference center and centers of higher education: about this destination, The Palais Lumiere should have become home of the new "International Fashion University" supported by Mr. Pierre Cardin.

The project should have included new engineering of surrounding areas around the Palais Lumiere and the urban redevelopment of a large area, with the breakdown of the old industrial buildings, the remediation of soil and water contaminated by previous industrial activities and the creation of a large park area for public use and the creation of public transportation from Venice, Mestre and Marghera.³⁰

The project, situated within the proposed Buffer Zone, would have been an important threat for the integrity of the World Heritage Site. The tower would have been visible from far away, notably from many viewpoints of the City of Venice and would have importantly affected the site.

During the Mission it was clearly confirmed that the project has been definitely abandoned. However, it shows how inappropriate projects can be developed without clear refusal from the authorities of all levels within the proposed buffer zone.

³⁰ Indications from documentation received 9th Dec 2013.

4.11 Overall Comment on Development Projects

The Mission noted that an enormous amount of data regarding the state and the evolution of many aspects of the city and especially of the lagoon is collected. However, all of this highly-valuable and informative information is not connected coherently. Some interchange between several partners is assured, but a comprehensive overlook is not possible.

The Mission proposes that the existing, very highly developed data sets should be assembled and used in an integrated manner. The resulting new instrument should be designed to allow modelling of every new project in order to simulate the cumulative effect of every project in the future. It is important that the handling of the new instrument is clarified – probably the Ministry of Environment should be responsible for it, not a private and not of a local authority.³¹

The Mission considers that it is crucial to develop a virtual three-dimensional geomorphological plan of the territory derived from assembly of the substantial scientific and technical available data sets and to uses this combined information in an integrated manner. The plan should include all aspects of the lagoon, nature, infrastructure, urbanism, architecture, sociocultural aspects. It should be conceived as a dynamic instrument, which should allow modelling of new projects in order to simulate their overall cumulative impacts in the future.

5 IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT OF THREATS

5.1 Big Cruise-ships in the Lagoon

Highly problematic decisions of the past – as the construction of a huge passenger terminal nearby the railway-station – have predetermined the cruise-ship-passage through the St. Marks basin and *Giudecca*. The Mission was informed how big ships affect the Lagoon through wave actions and resuspension of bottom sediments through the effects of their large hulks in movement. (The effect of wave motion by the numerous fast boats (taxis, lancioni etc.) is even more important.) The risk of accidents, such as grounding ashore, with possible fuel spills, is higher for larger ships than small ones. These effects can be reduced when moving at slower speed and with a double accompaniment by tug boats, but are still significantly more important for today's large ships (needing deepwater navigation channels) than for the much smaller small ships in use some decades before. Any single accident, even if very rarely occurring, would have much larger consequences than any accident of a small boat.

The sheer size of large modern cruise liners extends by several floor heights the average building heights of the historical city and other settlements, including church towers. This creates an important negative visual impact for both Venice inhabitants as for tourists and visitors. It was mainly this aspect of shocking “out of scale” that led to the ban for big ships to use the St. Marc basin and the *Giudecca* channel. In fact, visual integrity is an important feature for any World Heritage property; not only it is one of the essential criteria within any buffer zone but essential for the property itself.

In order to reduce these impacts and minimize the risk of potentially disastrous accidents, the general aim of the local authorities is to ban large ships from the surroundings of the historic city (notably the deepwater San Marco basin and *Giudecca* canal), but ideally from the entire Lagoon. Particularly the traffic of oil tankers and dangerous goods cargo ships along the industrial canal from the Malamocco inlet to the Marghera port and industrial facilities, presents a certain risk of accidents and possible consequent pollution and navigation obstruction. These are additional reasons from banning all large ships to enter the Lagoon and to develop terminal facilities outside of the Lagoon, and ideally at locations that do not necessitate any passage of large ships across any part of the Lagoon.

³¹ *The existing plan “Corila” is insufficient, as it is more an urbanistic plan.*

The passage of big cruise-ships in the San Marco basin and Giudecca canal represents an obvious negative visual impact and is a danger for the stability of the undergrounds. The passage is a threat for the visual integrity of the property. The problem has been recognised by the authorities and is one main point in the Second Cycle Periodic Report 2014, but no effective measures have been realised. Additionally, in general, the passage of big ships (commercial and cruise) in the Lagoon represents a major potential risk for the survival of its ecosystem.

Strategic environmental planning for the relocation of the Marittima passenger transport terminal, as well as the Marghera large ship harbour facilities outside of the Lagoon should be undertaken. A priority aim would be to consider an alternative location for the passenger terminal location that would not require crossing of the Giudecca canal and San Marco basin or other passage of large cruise ships across the Lagoon.

5.2 Digging New Channels for Big Cruise-ships

With a view to replace the access waterway to the Marittima passenger terminal from the Lido outlet through the San Marco basin and Giudecca canal, different options to dig a new deepwater waterway connection for large ships are considered that would enter the Lagoon through the Malamocco outlet and approach the Marittima area via the industrial canal of Marghera. This would inevitably affect the tidal flow patterns in the deeper central part of the Lagoon which is already losing many sediments due to increased bottom erosion as a consequence of the digging of straight deepwater channels over the course of the last century. The Mission was not presented results of thorough studies of water and sediment flows in this central part of the Lagoon and its consequences on bottom erosion and the water fluxes between the Lagoon and the sea.

It is likely that digging additional deepwater channels would have negative impacts on the already existing major problem of loose of sediments in the Lagoon. The acceleration of this process could threaten the whole ecosystem. Change of location of big masses of material that at least partly contains harmful substances is a further potential threat. The project of digging of new channels for big cruise-ships faces the property with a major threat which could have a deleterious effect on its inherent characteristics.

Thorough and integrated water and sediment flow models should be established to forecast possible water flow and sedimentation changes as consequences of the digging new deepwater waterways. Based on such integrated modelling studies, more detailed assessments should be undertaken to calculate the consequences of the digging of new deepwater waterways on the Lagoon hydrology, sedimentation and erosion, its biodiversity and species communities, including commercially exploited fish and shellfish. Only if such studies exclude any negative effect on the Lagoon ecosystem, digging of new deepwater waterways could be considered.

5.3 Potential threats for nature, also in relation with MoSE

The artificial flood-gate system (called MoSE) to close the three main Lagoon inlets is under construction and will be operational within a year. A sophisticated lagoon monitoring and tide forecasting system (including factors such as wind and precipitation, river water inflow) is now operational and currently tested. As compensation measures for the heavy modification (in the sense of the EU Water Framework Directive) of the Lagoon inlets and large stretches of the shoreline (along the Lido and different lagoon islands), saltmarsh and other ecosystems are restored through the deposition of materials dredged at other places of the Lagoon. While encouraging results are already visible, full saltmarsh ecosystem restoration is a time-

consuming process and will still need many years before fully satisfactory assessments of the reconstitution of fully functional ecosystems could be established. It is not to forget that the maintenance and reparation are and will continually be necessary.

With the overall Lagoon monitoring system in place for the planned operation of the flood gates, to be closed during the periods of extremely high tides, it will be possible to monitor the ecological effects of closing off the Lagoon for specific periods. More detailed monitoring programmes regarding the fauna, including commercially interesting species of fish and shellfish, will be needed to this end. This will allow a large-scale real-world experiment of such temporary de-connection of the Lagoon from the sea.

With the forecasted raise of the sea level, reinforced by subsidence of many islands, due to the missing entrance of river sediments into the Lagoon and the constant loss of sediments towards the open sea, it is highly likely that the closed period of the flood gates will need to become more frequent and longer, in order to prevent more frequent and higher high tides to flood lower parts of Venice and the related constructed islands. The extensive investment in the MoSE floodgates system may eventually only provide temporary and partial solutions, and not prevent lower parts of Venice from flooding in the longer term.

The system of artificial flood gates (MoSE) and its related Lagoon monitoring system should be operated in a way that it allows clear reactions and modifications based on regular monitoring of key indicators of the Lagoon ecosystems and its biodiversity and the beneficial effects on the constructed heritage of Venice (through flood alleviation). The functioning of the system should be used as a large-scale experiment to learn lessons, also for settlements in other lagoons, and to constantly improve the system and its operation. With changes likely occurring as a consequence of a changing climate (sea level rise) and intensifying land-use (sediment reduction, bottom erosion, water quality deterioration), additional solutions to the flood gates are likely to be required to prevent further flood damage to the cultural heritage of Venice.

5.4 Tourism Pressure

The City of Venice³² suffers from an extremely high pressure of tourism. The extent of tourism represents a major problem for the inhabitants and every visitor can feel the influence and danger of mass-tourism. The State Party itself analyses clearly: “Exceptionally high tourism pressure is threatening the OUV.”³³

Tourism in Venice is similar to the head of Janus. On one hand, the tourist-industry with all its dependent branches is the most important economic factor – the city survives by tourism. On the other hand, the influence of the current quantity of tourists and the quality of their sojourn causes significant effects that partly are non-reversible and threaten the survival of Venice as a town with a normal urban life (explicated under 4.3 and 4.4 below). If it is true, that Venice has a historical vocation as a town for visitors from all over the world, it is also evident, that the figures of today’s tourism puts the existence of the city in danger, as well as a physical endangerment as, especially, in social dimension.

If no drastic measures are taken within the very next years, Venice risks turning from a living city to a mere mono-functional touristic establishment, a museum of itself.

³² In the following text, the term “City of Venice” doesn’t mean the political commune of Venice with its vast territories on the mainland, but the islands of the historical city and the surrounding islands.

³³ State Party Progress Report.

The numbers of visitors are extremely high and, importantly, there is continuous unrelenting growth. The City Councillor for Tourism (*assessore del turismo*) indicated the following official figures for the year 2014.³⁴

Presence of tourists: 22 Mio (8-9 Mio one-day tourists, 12-13 Mio with one or more overnight stays³⁵).

- Bus: 90'000 busses with, in average, 33 persons, i.e. 3 Mio of Pax. All those persons visit the historical centre (contrary to the ship passengers), but only 29% of them sleep in Venice. 2013/14: increase of 9.5%!
- Train: daily 44 intercity trains, 200 regional trains. The numbers of passengers seem to exist, but are not available from the Railway-Company FS (sic!)
- Port: 2.0 Mio of Pax (passengers in departure, transit, arrival).
- Airport: 8.5 Mio of Pax (with 7.0 international).

The authorities declared to the Mission, that they don't gather exact figures.³⁶ It is important that for the near future an efficient and precise management tool for collecting data on tourism is developed. It should also include a complete analysis of transport of visitors to Venice (including data of railway-passengers).

The increase in the last few years is notable. The official figures show that since the year of inscription of the property the number of tourists is more than doubled.³⁷ No factors are discernable that would indicate a reversal or at least a decrease of the trend.

Formerly tourism pressure peaked mainly in spring, summer and autumn (and during the Carnival);³⁸ however, nowadays the city is crowded over the course of the year.

For the local inhabitants, life becomes very difficult under those circumstances, even if partly they can avoid the areas most frequented by tourists. Quarters not crowded by tourists have become rare; it would be dangerous and counterproductive to expand tourism pressure on the quiet parts of the city as proposed during the mission by some persons. "It should be noted that especially in the old city tourism is often too obtrusive, to the point where it distorts residents' daily life."³⁹

The main problem are the one-day-tourists. In days of high pressure, more than 100'000 tourists are simultaneously present in town, a town that currently counts some 50'000 inhabitants.⁴⁰ The important urban infrastructure (public transportation, use of pedestrian areas as St. Mark's Square and surroundings, museums, food and beverage, service of water, wastewater, litter etc.) has to take them into account, however they often bring little or no income to the commerce of the city. It is most demanding to continuously expand the current infrastructure in order to satisfy the increasing demand.

"The congestion of public transport and water traffic in some canals, especially in the Grand Canal, during certain periods and times of day"⁴¹ has become a real problem. The Mission was informed by the administration about some ideas for future limitation of the number of

³⁴ Based on a study by the university Ca Foscari (Jan van der Borg) in 2013. The authorities indicated, that in 2015 the figures could have increased by 20%! Ideas for more precise monitoring exist, e.g. with registration of the used numbers of mobile telephones.

³⁵ The average stay is 2.33 nights with notable difference related to the nationality (maximum stay are French persons with an average of 3.01 days).

³⁶ NGOs presented figures that are considerably higher. A figure of 27 mio is cited in newspapers (*la Nuova di Venezia e Mestre*, 15th November 2014, referring to "official figures").

³⁷ From 2.9 mio in 1989 to 6.1 mio „presenze“ in 2012. (EBT Ente Bilaterale Turismo dell'area veneziana)

³⁸ In 2012, some 700'000 in July, some 300'00 in January. (EBT Ente Bilaterale Turismo dell'area veneziana)

³⁹ Management plan 2012-2018

⁴⁰ In summer, during rainy days, an enormous number of beach-tourists undertake a quick trip to Venice.

⁴¹ Report on the State of Conservation of "Venice and its Lagoon" UNESCO World Heritage Site.

visitors.⁴² The sole new measure presented was the limitation for the entrance to St. Marks Square exclusively with reservation and special fee; the proposal seems to be quite phantasmal. No other ideas have been presented and the vision for the future is not clear.⁴³

The discussions and presentations during the mission showed that on a technical level the problem of increasing tourism pressure has been recognised; however, the political authorities don't seem to have the conscience or the will to intervene in order to manage and to reduce the enormous affluence of tourists.

“The impact of tourism on the historic city is commonly acknowledged and carefully assessed by the City’s administrative authorities.”⁴⁴ However, the Mission noted that neither efficient single measures are taken, not a long-term tourism strategy exists. It is important to develop this tool under the aspects of comprehensive sustainability including economic, ecologic and social sustainability. Beside the aspects of tourism, the strategy should take into account the needs of the inhabitants. It would be helpful to involve existing programs.⁴⁵

The efforts to increase the attraction of other sites around the lagoon for tourists are highly appreciable. Many new offers, especially in areas of slow tourism have been created. These initiatives will help to develop the smaller communes of the lagoon. However, they won't diminish the pressure of tourism for the islands of Venice.

Venice has been a centre of attraction for visitors since centuries and its character depends partly on its openness to foreigners. Today, it is out of question that the city’s economical basis is and will be tourism that is also the main factor in employment. It can't be the aim to put in danger this vital resource. However, the sheer number of visitors and its continuous increase represent a fundamental threat for the authenticity and for the OUV of Venice. This threat could be reduced by an efficient management of tourism able to increase the quality of sojourns and therewith to reduce (or at least stabilise) the number of visitors. Instruments to reach this goal are developed in several European countries.

Authenticity depends on several factors. Often it is misunderstood to refer only to form and design or to materials and substance. However, it means also the authenticity of use and function, of traditions, of spirit and feeling. Consequently, the term of authenticity includes the notion of the authentic use of a site. The current tourism pressure within the City of Venice represents a significant loss of those intangible conditions of historical authenticity and many of its urban spaces are faced with the danger of loss of original use and functions. (Operational Guidelines article 179). In addition, it is the flashpoint for several further treats affecting the property (see below).

Thus, the enormous and increasing number of tourists heavily and concretely threatens the OUV that comprises the values of a functioning city with a normal urban life.

The extent and growth of the number of tourist contradicts also the principles of sustainable use of the property as defined in article 119 of the Operational Guidelines.

The Mission recommends that urgent measures to manage tourism at the property should be developed and implemented, based on the consultative model of the UNESCO World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme.

⁴² Under former administrations a numerus clausus was discussed, the closure of the entrance to the city when a certain level of present persons was reached – it is evident that it would be highly difficult and problematic to implement such a measure, in use in many museums all over the world, for an entire city with various possibilities of arrival.

⁴³ A new organ called OGT Organismo Gestione del Turismo is foreseen. It should combine the public and private stakeholders. However, its function seems to be quite unclear.

⁴⁴ Report on the State of Conservation of “Venice and its Lagoon” UNESCO World Heritage Site.

⁴⁵ E.g. the UNESCO World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme or the ICOMOS Cultural Tourism Committee.

The main objectives are:

- **To install tools for precise and differentiated statistics on tourism,**
- **To develop a comprehensive sustainable tourism strategy, and**
- **To implement efficient measures to decrease the number of tourists, especially the one-day-tourists, to a level in accordance with the City's capacity.**

5.5 Lack of Maintenance of Buildings

Accelerated by the devastating flood in 1966, the state of conservation of the city's buildings has become worse. Many buildings, especially the minor architecture, but also important monuments, were heavily damaged.

In the same year, an appeal was launched by UNESCO. Several private organizations were established in a number of countries to collect and channel contributions to restore and preserve Venice. UNESCO Venice Office administers the "Joint UNESCO-Private Committees Programme for the Safeguarding of Venice", cooperating with the Association of Private Committees and Superintendencies of Monuments and Galleries of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage in Venice. Two main areas are concerned, the restoration of monuments and works of art and the provision of funding for training of specialists in conservation of cultural heritage. The Private Committees have funded – within the joint UNESCO – Private Committees Programme – more than 1,500 projects worth over 50 million euro.

Also the city-administration has become more active. Today, an important player is Insula Spa, an entirely public society, responsible not only for the historical city, but also for the onshore-parts of the commune. Its creation in 1997 was a consequence of the special law for Venice. In 2008 the former Edilvenezia, created in 1972, which was meant to actively maintain the minor buildings of the historic centre, was merged with Insula. Thus, Insula is now the operative body of the city for the realisation of work and infrastructure for maintenance of urban facilities and buildings. The society, organized as a public company, is responsible for designing the long perspective, making the single projects, and coordinating the execution; it brings together the projecting and the contracting competences.⁴⁶

Beside Insula, other companies such as "Venezia Nuova" are also involved in the maintenance of public infrastructure. Several interventions for securing banks of islands (e.g. at *Torcello* or *San Giacomo in palude*) of this company have been executed with inappropriate means, including heavy interventions with concrete instead of the normally used pillars by natural stones and bricks.

In the years of its existence, Insula has accomplished remarkable work. Important progress has been reached to secure foundations that suffer from the water and from the *moto ondosso*, the waves from speedy private boats as taxis or *lancioni* (see below). It seems that the general state of conservation of infrastructure and public buildings today are much better than some 20 years before. In fact, the public infrastructure has been placed in proper conditions and further investments have been planned. In occasion of digging the channels and renewing the infrastructure, the stability of foundations of buildings, public or private, has normally been reinforced. Today, the publicly owned houses, palaces and open spaces don't represent major problems.

⁴⁶ Since some years interventions on buildings in possession of the commune are directed by the technical office *Patrimonio e Lavori Pubblici*.

In the last years the financial possibilities of the society have been considerably restricted. One difficulty seems to be the very late approval of the annual budget.⁴⁷ However, the main problem is the lack of sufficient financial means. For 2014, the minimum of financial resources would have been around 23 Mio €, the final attributed means were of 13 Mio €.

Evidently, this is also a consequence of the non-application of the special law for Venice.

In this situation, the normal maintenance is not possible and even the minimally necessary interventions can't be executed. Particularly, citizens living in apartments belonging to the city suffer from indecent conditions. Further on, the society has begun to sell public buildings⁴⁸ and publicly owned apartment-houses in order to get the necessary resources for its activities. Of course, this evolution can be dangerous in view of maintaining affordable housing for inhabitants.

Religious buildings such as churches and cloisters need special attention. As they have no economic value, their maintenance is especially difficult. The increasing number of tourists represent a risk and causes additional deterioration. The financial means coming from selling tickets in some of the main churches cover the running, but not the maintenance. Further, the change from essentially religious use to sites of merely touristic interest puts the value of authenticity in danger: *"Il valore cultuale è un valore culturale"*.

The maintenance of privately owned houses remains a major problem on the islands of Venice. "The least *palazzetto*, which in Venice seems only a minor construction, would constitute the glory of many historic cities."⁴⁹ Despite the fact that investments for maintenance can be deduced from taxes, private owners do not get substantial subsidies.⁵⁰ Apart from houses and palaces owned by societies or prosperous persons, many private buildings are in a poor state of conservation as the owners can't or wouldn't afford the necessary investment. This statement concerns specifically modest housing. It has a further influence on the depletion of Venice.

An important danger for the historical buildings is the effect of waves. The physical consequences of big vessels passing through Venice are controversially discussed. On the other hand, the disastrous effects provoked by the waves of boats are evident, particularly if whose, what is frequent, exceed the allowed speed. The political influence of private boat-owners leads to the fact that practically no fines are payed.

Many old towns suffer from the problem of lack of maintenance of buildings; in most cases it is due to the moving-away of inhabitants and therefore of houses without use. This effect is not discernable in Venice: there is an intense demand for houses from the inhabitants. Lack of maintenance is due to the fact that maintenance under the special conditions in Venice is over-proportionally expensive and effective measures to counterbalance this fact are missing. Thus, the property is faced with the danger of serious deterioration of the material substance, especially of its minor buildings and, in consequence, with its architectural coherence. (Operational Guidelines article 179).

The lack of maintenance represents a real and imminent danger for the authenticity of Venice. If the deterioration is not stopped, the OUV is put in question.

⁴⁷ For 2014 the municipal budget was approved only on September 30th.

⁴⁸ A well-known example is the palace *Fondaco dei Tedeschi*, the former post-office nearby the *ponte de Rialto*. It was sold in 2012 to the company Benetton. The transformation into a centre for shopping and exhibitions provides heavy interventions into the historical building-substance; works have begun.

⁴⁹ Citation from the justification of inscription)

⁵⁰ 50% of the investment for maintenance can be deduced from taxes in pro-rata during the following 10 years (system of *agevolazioni fiscali*).

The mission noted the lack of effective maintenance works on buildings of medium and minor architectural value and recommends that the City of Venice in cooperation with the State Party implement appropriate measures, including those in conformity with the Special Law for Venice, in order to prevent deterioration of architectural and urban planning coherence.

5.6 Change of Use of Buildings

An eminent problem consists in the occupation of palaces and houses by hotels and, even more meaningful, by the establishment of B&B-facilities. “The transformation of the historic city caused by changes in the use of buildings from residential to tourist accommodation”⁵¹ represents a major problem and a potential threat.

Mainly, three effects are important.

On one hand, an over-proportional increase of price for real estate is to be observed. The market has become an explicit sellers-market and as generally normal apartments are sold to the highest bidder, the general price-level for housing has increased enormously. Between 2000 and 2012 prices in the central area have been triplicated, in more peripheral areas quadruplicated.⁵² Houses can be sold for an essentially higher price if, after renovation/transformation, they will be used for accommodation of non-residents rather than for normal apartments. The process is significantly more accentuated in Venice in comparison with other Italian towns.

The extreme increase of price for real estate makes houses unaffordable for locals of the middle or lower economic class. It is one, perhaps the most important reason for the marked process of gentrification that is to be observed. Persons with a modest income are forced to leave the city. However, it will be probably not be possible to intervene with general measures within the balance of offer and demand.

Partly, the rise of housing prices is due to persons from outside the town, both Italians and foreigners, who buy flats. Predominantly, those flats are used as second residences. The process aggravates the effect of gentrification. The owners of second residences are rarely present and hardly contribute to normal urban life; if they pay taxes, the amounts are small. The effects of “cold beds” are well known and they are devastating for the normal life of the city. In this domain, legal interventions to diminish the negative consequences for local inhabitants are known and efficient. They are important in relationship with the threat of crowding out inhabitants.

Step by step, normal urban housing is changed into the different forms of hotel industry. If in 2000 21'000 beds in hotels were available, the figure raised to almost 30'000 in 2015. Many palaces or houses have been substantially transformed in order to change their use from apartments for locals to rooms for visitors.

For two reasons, this change of use represents a major threat. On one hand this process leads in every single case to important interventions into the structure of the houses and palaces. The goal of passed centuries to adapt palaces and houses “... maintaining their physical characteristics and their architectural and aesthetic qualities, ...”⁵³ is not fulfilled any more. The change of use into accommodation for tourists means the installation of a great number of

⁵¹ Report on the State of Conservation of “Venice and its Lagoon” UNESCO World Heritage Site.

⁵² Central area from 3'100 €/m² to 9'300 €/m², in peripheral area from 2'100 €/m² to 7'600 €/m² (Conversion 1 ITL = 0.00051EUR). Source: *Comune di Venezia: VI Rapporto Annuale Osservatorio Casa – XIV Rapporto Annuale Osservatorio Casa*.

⁵³ Declaration of Outstanding Universal Value.

additional bathrooms, new technical installations and extensive rescue provisions (staircases et cetera). In general, these transformations are important and they threaten the authenticity and integrity of the palaces and houses and in consequence the OUV that depends clearly on them; they present a “specific and proven imminent danger ... for deterioration of structure”.

On the other hand, each transformation in hotel or B&B means a loss of area fit for “normal” habitation, habitation for local families with their children. As shown above, the development has been very strong in the last decade.

The problem has become considerably worse as the regional administration has entirely deregulated the B&B-business. The number of officially registered B&B establishments went from 197 in 2000 to 317 in 2015.

In fact, traditionally B&B in the sense of holiday rental or home share is based on an apartment where a person (or family) lives permanently; one or more rooms that temporarily or permanently is not used, is rented to visitors. It is important to note that the B&B is managed by a person living in the apartment.⁵⁴ This type of B&B doesn't represent a problem; basically it allowed the concerned flats to be rented by other locals for “normal” use as well. However, in numerous houses and palaces in Venice this condition is not fulfilled: the majority of flats is hired by (in many cases foreign) societies with professional personal.⁵⁵ It is not a small-scale rendition of services of single persons, but a flourishing industry. As for hotels, the installation of this type of industrial B&B often leads to important and destructive interventions within the houses and palaces. The process of reconversion of normally rented apartments into commercially-run B&B considerably increases the lack of affordable housing for Venetians. The process seems to go on in high acceleration.

Integrity: “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 centres 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 Site. These factors may in future have a serious negative impact on the identity and integrity of the site...”⁵⁶

The accelerated and widespread change of use threatens the interior substance of the palaces and houses and thus their authenticity.

Furthermore, the authenticity of use is an important value. With the change of use of buildings, the property is faced with the danger of serious deterioration of the conditions of authenticity, which include its use and function. (Operational Guidelines article 82).

It is most important to establish, implement and control clear rules, especially for the use of existing houses. The instruments to do so are well known.⁵⁷

The different developments cited here-above have a cumulative effect. If the tendency can't be stopped or even reversed, it becomes a threat for the authenticity of use of buildings. Further on, it is an important factor to contribute to crowding out inhabitants.

⁵⁴ That also means that this person pays normal taxes.

⁵⁵ Cases are known where entire houses have been bought by a foreign investor, subsequently transformed to B&B, rented exclusively for persons coming from his own country and operated by personnel from his country.

⁵⁶ Declaration of Outstanding Universal Value

⁵⁷ The “traditional” methods can be found in planning instruments with zones, even with small extent, where no use for hotel industry (hotels and B&B) is permitted and all the apartments have to be owned or rented to persons, living themselves in the apartment and so paying the taxes in Venice. In zones, where already B&B exist, a maximal percentage of hotel-like-use per building could be permitted.

The Mission recommends to:

- **install efficient legal measures to discourage**
 - **the purchase of flats for second residences and**
 - **change of use from ordinary habitation into any form of hotel industry (hotels, B&B, etc.) and**
- **encourage the reconversion of B&B facilities into rented flats.**

5.7 Crowding-out Inhabitants

“Save Venice means to save the Venetians.”⁵⁸

“For centuries the city has kept the same approach to and rhythms of daily life...”⁵⁹ This statement is not true anymore. The local conditions of life are severely impacted by the increasing mass of visitors with the subsequent politics-priority of satisfying the demands of tourist-industry on one hand, the effects of increasing costs and change of use of real estates. Their needs regarding specific infrastructure are not taken enough in consideration. Many of them, mainly from lower and middle classes, are forced to leave the city as they cannot find appropriate conditions and, especially, cannot afford the housing-locations proposed. In general, the prices for renting an apartment in the historical city are around the double from what is paid in the mainland-part of Venice.⁶⁰ The same observation is valid for the purchase of apartments. A pronounced process of gentrification is going on.

Altogether, this development causes an important decrease of inhabitants. In 1951 the City of Venice (*centro storico*) had 175'000 inhabitants, in the year of inscription 82'700, today (2014) there are only 56'000 permanent residents left.⁶¹ Currently, every year, nearly 1000 inhabitants voluntarily leave or are forced out of the city. Their income doesn't support the increasing cost of life, especially the increasing rent, the number of affordable apartments diminishes constantly.

It is true, that many historic cities are confronted with similar problems. Gentrification and loss of inhabitants are often due to insufficient economic perspectives or insufficient quality of life, namely in the outside spaces. With varied success those cities fight against those tendencies in order to maintain the authenticity of use. Such efforts are of fundamental importance: a historic city that loses its “normal” use as lieu of habitation either becomes a ghost town or a coulisse-town. It is highly understandable that the Operational Guidelines explicitly mention “use and function”, when defining the conditions of authenticity.⁶²

For the City of Venice the question of remaining a vital community of permanent urban inhabitants is crucial. Not breaking the current tourism trend, which has been identifiable for a long time but not antagonised, would mean that within the near future, the city would become a cultural theme-and-leisure-park. It certainly still would be inhabited by some well-healed persons and students, but not by families or craftsmen.

⁵⁸ “Salvare Venezia significa salvare i Veneziani.” Mayor Luigi Brugnaro in his address to the members of the Mission, 13th October 2015.

⁵⁹ Declaration of Outstanding Universal Value

⁶⁰ VI Rapporto Annuale Osservatorio Casa – Comune di Venezia

⁶¹ <http://www.comune.venezia.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/4055>.

⁶² Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention, 8 July 2015, 79.

The University can be one factor in the range of efforts for a living urban community. Its different chairs and research institutes attract persons living permanently in Venice and dispose with a good understanding of social relationship. The many students contribute to a lively atmosphere.

Apart the necessary efforts to stop the further rise of real-estate-prices mentioned before, it is important to improve the conditions of daily life for the inhabitants, to ensure a good environment and to considerably increase the offer of affordable apartments for rent or purchase for permanent residents. This necessity can be realised by the measures for existing houses mentioned above, but also by new housing on waste-land. Good examples dating from the last decade exist; their high urbanistic and architectural qualities define the level for new projects. Several areas for densification would be available.⁶³

“The city and the lagoon historical settlements are a unique and unrepeatable testimony to a civilization which has maintained the customs and habits of its cultural traditions and preserved the structure and authenticity of its ancient urban fabric, along with the close networks of social relations and high standards of living that typify them.”⁶⁴

Doubtlessly, the crowding out of inhabitants that is mainly influenced by the several effects of mass-tourism is a significant danger for the survival of living islands of Venice. The OUV depends on the fact that the historical city is an urban structure with a resident community who comprises the “close network of social relations”. Relationships and dynamic functions present in cultural landscapes, historic towns or other living properties essential to their distinctive character should also be maintained.⁶⁵

This important feature of authenticity and integrity is about to disappear or, at least, to be considerably weakened.

Based on the principles of the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape a plan for stabilising and increasing the number of inhabitants should be prepared, including measures for bettering the conditions of life for inhabitants and new housing projects.

5.8 Loss of Traditional Craftsmanship

For its maintenance, the World Heritage property depends on a craftsmanship of high experience and qualification. Obviously the number of specialised craftsmen decreases and more and more it is necessary to have works being executed by workmen who don't have the necessary qualification. That lack of qualified persons represents a potential threat for an adequate maintenance and restoration of the historical buildings and subsequently is a threat for the authenticity of the World Heritage property.

In Venice, craftsmanship plays an important role. On one hand, the maintenance of buildings needs specialised craftsmen who are familiar with the specificities of Venetian constructions. On the other hand, traditional artisanry for glass-manufacturing or maskers-creation are closely linked to the tradition of the city. The tradition of local manufacturing makes part of the authenticity of the site. “The abandonment of traditional activities in favour of those related to

⁶³ Several areas could be appropriate for new habitation-dwellings, e.g. Giudecca, ex-gasometro, San Basilio, Murano, in a long term Marittima. Further on, empty real estate property of the church could be converted in habitation-areas for permanent residents. For instance, the recently abandoned cloister of St. Alvise (Cannareggio) could be converted into housing.

⁶⁴ Declaration of Outstanding Universal Value

⁶⁵ Operational guidelines, 89.

tourism and the depletion of neighbourhood services for residents”⁶⁶ further menaces this aspect of authenticity.

Both activities are in danger. Craftsmen need ground floor located ateliers, available for affordable prices. Such locations are becoming rare; the professionals for maintenance and conservation/restoration are forced to leave the city. They are replaced by persons that may have good professional qualifications, but are not used to the specific building traditions, the specific difficulties of Venetian building-constructions not with the difficulties of building in the restricted space of Venice.

Traditional craftsmanship is confronted with increasing difficulties. To the lack of affordable space for manufacturing, mentioned above, the pressure of cheap articles is added. It seems that more than 90% of “Venetian” glass articles are not manufactured in Venice but come from outside the city. The same proportion seems to be true for “Venetian” maskers.

*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 site is given precisely by the adoption and recognition of the effectiveness of traditional conservation and restoration practices and techniques.*⁶⁷

For the maintenance of the city in its authenticity the specialised knowledge of local craftsmen is essential. Further on, the criterion of a living city includes the local tradition of a handicraft, developed during centuries and being a sort of trademark for Venice. If such knowledge disappears, an important element of authenticity would be put in question.

It is important to create institutions to ensure a sufficient number of trainees. That can be done with an encouragement of elderly specialists in matter to transmit their knowledge to young colleagues (system of apprentice) or with specific training courses.

Anyhow, it is important to record traditional craftsmanship trades and craft skills. As the tradition is disappearing quite fast, such a project should be undertaken in the immediate future. It is to underline, that recording doesn’t replace the transmission of living tradition.

Local craftsmen and traditional manufacturing should be encouraged and supported by facilitate adequate and affordable atelier-spaces and by ensuring a clear declaration of provenance.

6 LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of assessment of the overall state of conservation of the property and analysis of the planning situation for all major development projects in the property and its setting, the Mission developed its recommendations presented in the report and listed below by topic.

Management system

- A vision for Venice shared among all stakeholders concerned at national, regional and local levels and common strategy should be developed towards protection of all components of the property.
- The tasks and competences of the established Steering Committee should be clearly defined so that the Committee can survey compliance with provisions of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention and the enforcement of regulatory and protection measures.

⁶⁶ Report on the State of Conservation of “Venice and its Lagoon” UNESCO World Heritage Site.

⁶⁷ Declaration of Outstanding Universal Value

Management Plan / Tourism Strategy / Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction

- A mid-term review of the Management Plan of the property should be conducted in view to readjust it in response to the comments of ICOMOS.
- A risk management strategy should be developed as a matter of urgency, including definition of all relevant rules and regulations.
- A sustainable tourism strategy should be developed on the basis of the consultative model of the UNESCO World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme, and should include alternative solutions compatible with the city's capacities developed jointly with the major tourism and cruise companies.

Boundary issues

- In conformity with the Committee decision, the State Party should undertake the revision of its preliminary proposal in line with the ICOMOS technical review and submit to the World Heritage Centre the minor boundary modification by 1 February 2017.

Planned developments: regulations and cumulative impact assessment

- The Mission considers that it is crucial to develop a virtual three-dimensional geomorphological plan of the territory derived from assembly of the substantial scientific and technical available data sets and to use this combined information in an integrated manner. The plan should include all aspects of the lagoon, nature, infrastructure, urbanism, architecture, sociocultural aspects. It should be conceived as a dynamic instrument, which should allow modelling of new projects in order to simulate their overall cumulative impacts in the future.
- Within the framework of existing procedures and plans, a Master Plan should be developed to define a set of regulations for all on-going and planned developments within the boundaries of the World Heritage property and its future buffer zone. It should be adopted as a matter of urgency for the recovery and preservation of the Outstanding Universal Value of the property and its associated landscape and seascape values. The Master Plan should be revised periodically.
- The system of artificial flood gates (MoSE) and its related Lagoon monitoring system that soon will be in function, should be operated in a way that it allows clear reactions and modifications based on regular monitoring of key indicators of the Lagoon ecosystems and its biodiversity, and the beneficial effects on the constructed heritage of Venice (through flood alleviation). The functioning of the system should be used as a large-scale experiment to learn lessons, also for settlements in other lagoons, and to constantly improve the system and its operation.
- Within an integrated long-term territorial planning process, it is important to remove large harbour facilities for large ships (of the 20/21 century) incompatible with the natural and cultural values of the WH property outside of its boundaries.
- The Mission strongly supports the principle that a multi modal terminal for oil tankers and container transport vessels be established outside of the Lagoon and not necessitating navigation of such ships inside the Lagoon.
- The Mission strongly supports the need and efforts for further work to clean contaminated groundwater and soil. The Port Authority is encouraged to continue and terminate this programme. Transport regulations for goods need to be strict enough to prevent accidental pollution of the Lagoon, during their transit through the deepwater navigation channel inside the Lagoon.
- The Mission is convinced that, as part of an overall SEIA comparing different options for tourist terminal facilities, the feasibility for a tourist port at the Lido di Venezia, including its connection with the city and the hinterland (access by road and rail), which is at a conceptual stage only, should also be analysed.
- The Mission clearly supports the strategic aim adopted by the local authorities, to prevent large ships (including cruise liners) from using the San Marco basin and Giudecca canal.

A new location for passenger terminal facilities needs to be found outside of the Lagoon. The location should avoid large cruise ships to move inside the Lagoon.

- The Mission is convinced that the existing airport facilities have reached carrying capacity as well as the limit of compatibility with the maintenance of the heritage values of the Lagoon, notably in the surroundings of the airport and its connection with the City of Venice. Substantial expansions of the current international airport facilities need therefore to be planned for another location outside of the WH property and its future buffer zone.

Big Cruise-ships in the Lagoon

- Strategic environmental planning for the relocation of the Marittima passenger transport terminal, as well as the Marghera large ship harbour facilities outside of the Lagoon should be undertaken. A priority aim would be to consider an alternative location for the passenger terminal location that would not require crossing of the Giudecca canal and San Marco basin or other passage of large cruise ships across the Lagoon.

Digging New Channels for Big Cruise-ships

- Thorough and integrated water and sediment flow models should be established to forecast possible water flow and sedimentation changes as consequences of the digging new deepwater waterways. Based on such integrated modelling studies, more detailed assessments should be undertaken to calculate the consequences of the digging of new deepwater waterways on the Lagoon hydrology, sedimentation and erosion, its biodiversity and species communities, including commercially exploited fish and shellfish. Only if such studies exclude any negative effect on the Lagoon ecosystem, digging of new deepwater waterways could be considered.

Speed Limits in Canals

- The mission encourages the authorities to install the automatic speed monitoring system in all relevant canals and to enforce speed limits through fining of any transgressors (incl. taxis).

Lack of Maintenance of Buildings

- The mission noted the lack of effective maintenance works on buildings of medium and minor architectural value and recommends that the City of Venice in cooperation with the State Party implement appropriate measures, including those in conformity with the Special Law for Venice, in order to prevent deterioration of architectural and urban planning coherence.

Tourism Pressure

- The Mission recommends that urgent measures to manage tourism at the property should be developed and implemented, based on the consultative model of the UNESCO World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme.

The main objectives are:

- To install tools for precise and differentiated statistics on tourism,
- To develop a comprehensive sustainable tourism strategy, and
- To implement efficient measures to decrease the number of tourists, especially the one-day-tourists, to a level in accordance with the City's capacity.

Change of Use of Buildings

- The Mission recommends to install efficient legal measures to discourage the purchase of flats for second residences and to change of use from ordinary habitation into any form of hotel industry (hotels, B&B, etc.) and to encourage the reconversion of B&B facilities into rented flats.

Crowding-out Inhabitants

- Based on the principles of the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape a plan for stabilising and increasing the number of inhabitants should be prepared, including measures for bettering the conditions of life for inhabitants and new housing projects.

Loss of Traditional Craftsmanship

- Local craftsmen and traditional manufacturing should be encouraged and supported by facilitate adequate and affordable atelier-spaces and by ensuring a clear declaration of provenance.

Annex 1 – Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference
Joint UNESCO/ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission to Venice and its lagoon
Venice, Italy, 12 – 18 October 2015 (including travel days)

The World Heritage property of Venice and its lagoon (Italy) was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1987 under cultural criteria (i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi).

20 years before its inscription, in response to an appeal launched by UNESCO in 1966, private organizations were established in a number of countries to collect and channel contributions to restore and preserve Venice. The UNESCO Venice Office currently administers the "Joint UNESCO-Private Committees Programme for the Safeguarding of Venice", cooperating with the Association of Private Committees and Superintendencies of Monuments and Galleries of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage in Venice in two main areas: the restoration of monuments and works of art and the provision of funding for training of specialists in conservation of cultural heritage. The Private Committees have funded – within the joint UNESCO – Private Committees Programme – more than 1,500 projects worth over 50 million euro.

In 2014, 27 years after its inscription, in response to a request of the World Heritage Centre, the State Party submitted a detailed state of conservation report, with annexes describing a number of proposed large maritime infrastructures that would allow ultra-large ships mainly handling oil and other bulk and container traffic to call at the Port of Venice. It also submitted a Management Plan for the property and a proposal for the establishment of a buffer zone. The State Party also reported that the system of mobile gates called MoSE (Experimental Electromechanical Module) to control high waters and temporarily isolate the lagoon from the sea is under construction and will be operational by 2016.

The State Party reported in Section II of the 2014 Periodic Reporting exercise that the boundaries of the World Heritage property are adequate to maintain the property's Outstanding Universal Value. The property had no buffer zone at the time of its inscription on the World Heritage List. The minor boundary modification proposal to establish a buffer zone, submitted by the State Party to the World Heritage Centre, is under review by ICOMOS.

At its 38th session (Decision 38 COM 7B.27, Doha, 2014) the Committee expressed its concern at the extent and scale of proposals for large infrastructure, navigation and construction projects in the Lagoon that could potentially threaten the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property by generating irreversible transformations on the landscape and seascape of the property and its setting. The Committee also expressed its concern at the negative environmental impacts triggered by medium-sized motor boats and high tonnage ships that have progressively caused erosion of the lagoon beds, mud banks and salt marshes, and which could also represent potential threats to the property's OUV.

For the first time since the inscription of the property, the Committee requested the State Party to invite a joint UNESCO/ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission to the property in 2015 to assess current conditions at the property, including the evaluation of potential impacts derived from development proposals and identify options for development proposals in accordance to the OUV of the property, as well as to review if the property is faced with threats which could have deleterious effects on its inherent characteristics and meets the criteria for its inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger in line with Paragraph 179 of the Operational Guidelines.

As recommended by the Committee, a representative of the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention has been invited by the State Party to take part in this joint UNESCO/ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission.

As requested by the Committee, the State Party submitted, on 5 June 2015, a progress report on the state of conservation report of the property.

In line with this Committee decision, the objective of the monitoring mission is to review the overall state of conservation of all components of the property as well as progress in the implementation of the Committee's decision 38 COM 7B.27.

The mission should also review whether the property is faced with threats which could have deleterious effects on its inherent characteristics and whether it meets the criteria for inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger, in line with Paragraph 179 of the Operational Guidelines. The mission should provide a report that sets out recommendations for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 40th session in 2016, with a view to considering, in the absence of substantial progress, **the possible inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.**

In particular, the mission should review and assess the following key issues:

6. Assess the overall state of conservation of the property and evaluate factors and conservation issues that could potentially impact on its Outstanding Universal Value, including its conditions of authenticity and integrity;
7. Analyse the planning situation for all major construction projects in the property and its setting, whether proposed or, approved or contracted;
8. Analyse the impact or potential impact of these major construction and development projects that have been carried out or are planned within the World Heritage property or in its setting, in terms of impact or potential impact on Outstanding Universal Value;
9. Assess the achievements made concerning the buffer zone and its protective measures in relation to the recommendations of the Committee regarding protection of setting;
10. Review progress made in the implementation of the Committee's decision 38 COM 7B.27, in particular:
 - the status of the Heritage Impact Assessments, as well as of "Preliminary technical review" of the environmental impact assessment EIA and SEA, of large infrastructure, navigation and construction projects in the Lagoon (in the 2014 State Party informed on the following projects : an offshore platform at some 8 miles off the Malamocco port, a new terminal "Motorways of the Sea" in Fusina, a new container terminal on the site of former industrial facilities in Porto Marghera, a new multi-functional facility between Venice and its maritime station, and a touristic port in San Nicolò. None of them were submitted to the World Heritage Centre, in compliance with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, for review and comments by the Advisory Bodies);
 - the status of the strategic assessment of the cumulative impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property derived from the number and scale of these projects, including full scope of what is proposed (associated pipelines, dredging, other infrastructure, pollution risk, changes in shipping traffic volume and routes, visitor numbers to Venice etc)
 - finalisation of the system of mobile gates called MoSE (Experimental Electromechanical Module) ;
 - revision of the Management Plan of the property, including a tourism strategy, as well as its management organization based on the results from the technical evaluation by ICOMOS;
 - development and adoption of legal regulations of cruise ship tourism, medium motor boats and high tonnage ships;

- adoption of a legal document introducing prohibition of the largest ships and tankers to enter the Lagoon;
- development, jointly with the major tourism and cruise companies, of alternative solutions towards to reduce the exceptionally high tourism pressure on the city of Venice, and the extensive tourism related activities;
- assessment of the hydrology and geo-mechanics functioning of the Venice Lagoon and its whole drainage basin;
- establishments of measures to strengthen monitoring and management of the property, including establishment of a strong coordination among all stakeholders concerned to ensure the protection of all attributes that convey the OUV of the property;

11. Other conservation issues currently affecting the property.

In 2014, requested the State Party to submit, in English or French, information regarding the above-mentioned projects, as well as the summary results of a strategic assessment of the cumulative impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property derived from the number and scale of these projects, including full scope of what is proposed (associated pipelines, dredging, other infrastructure, pollution risk, changes in shipping traffic volume and routes, visitor numbers to Venice etc). Moreover, WHC requested SP, in compliance with paragraph 174 of the Operational Guidelines, to verify with the authorities concerned the content of the information regarding the decision of the regional court of the Veneto region to suspend the law reducing the number of cruise ships.

The mission team should hold working meetings and consultations with the Italian authorities at national and local levels and all other relevant stakeholders.

Based on the results of the above mentioned assessment and discussion with the State Party representatives, the mission team will propose recommendations to the State Party and the World Heritage Committee to further improve the conservation and management of the property. The mission team will prepare a concise mission report in English or French on the findings and recommendations of this Monitoring Mission for review by the World Heritage Committee at its 40th session (2016).

Annex 2 Composition of Mission Team

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Annex 3 Programme

World Heritage Site "Venice and its Lagoon" - Reactive Monitoring Mission – Programme 13-18th October 2015

MISSION TEAM = Anna Sidorenko(WHC)/ Bernhard Furrer(ICOMOS), Tobias Salathé (RAMSAR) + Francesca Riccio(MBACT) + Katia Basili (City of Venice-WH Site Ve&lagoon)

DAY 1: 13th October (Tuesday)

| CONTEXT | TIME | PLACE | THEME | HOW | WHO | ORGANISATION |
|------------------------|--------------|---|--|--|---|--------------------------------|
| OPENING OF THE MISSION | 9.15 - 10.30 | City of Venice, Ca'Fasetti-Sala Giunta grande | Welcome by the Mayor of the City of Venice and Official opening of the mission. Presentation by the delegation of the objectives of the mission and of the procedures to the Steering Committee members. | Colloquia | Mayor Brugnera | Comune di Venezia |
| | 10.30-13.00 | Ca' Fasetti Sala Giunta grande | Governance of the World Heritage Site. Institutional meeting with political representatives of the authorities of the Steering Committee (SC) on the issues of protection, preservation and enhancement of the Site. | Each representative introduces her/himself, its own authority, institutional responsibilities, projects and initiatives. | Political representatives of the SC: presidents, superintendents, mayors, etc. Along with the technical representatives of the SC | Comune di Venezia + SC members |
| | 13.00-14.30 | | Light lunch | | | |
| MEETINGS | 14.30-15.30 | Ca' Fasetti Sala Giunta | 1. Snapshot of the property/state of conservation since 1987 + 2. Management of the Site, Steering Committee Management Plan, projects under way and update requests under the WHC 38th Decision (Doha 2014). | Presentation ppt and colloquia | Comune di Venezia | Comune di Venezia |
| | 15.30-17.30 | Ca' Fasetti Sala Giunta grande | 3. Plans and actions of environmental protection on a regional, provincial, local scale+ Ramsar Convention, Procedures EA / SEA. | Presentation ppt and colloquia | Environmental sectors of : Veneto Region + Città Metropolitana di Venezia + Comune di Venezia | Comune di Venezia |
| | 17.30-19.00 | Ca' Fasetti Sala Giunta grande | 4. Urban planning framework on regional, provincial and local scale and territorial development. | Presentation ppt and colloquia | Urban Planning Sectors of : Veneto Region + Città Metropolitana di Venezia + Provincia di Padova+ Comune di Venezia | Comune di Venezia |
| | 19.00-20.00 | Ca' Fasetti Sala Giunta ovale | 5.State of advancement on the Buffer Zone, update. | Presentation ppt and colloquia | Comune di Venezia + MBACT + Regione | Comune di Venezia |
| | 20.00 | | Official dinner | | | |

Day 2: 14th October (Wednesday)

| CONTEXT | TIME | PLACE | THEME | HOW | WHO | ORGANISATION |
|------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|---|--|---|---|
| MEETINGS& VISITS | 9.00-10.30 | COHILA Headquarters | 1. Scientific research and monitoring of the physical, territorial, environmental, economic and social system of the Venice Lagoon (Projects: SiPlan, Resilient City, Climate Change) | Presentation ppt and colloquia | COHILA (Consortium for coordination of research activities concerning the Venice lagoon system) | Comune di Venezia |
| | 10.30-13.00 | Port Authority Headquarters | 2.Port Authority activities and projects within the Venice Lagoon. | Meeting with Port Authority Presentation ppt and colloquia | MISSION TEAM + APV staff | Comune di Venezia |
| | 13.00-14.00 | Venice Terminal Passeggeri | 3. Most relevant issues regarding the activities of the Venice Terminal Passeggeri. | Visit to the Venice Terminal Passeggeri and colloquia with VTP and Cruise ship Association | MISSION TEAM + APV staff + CoVE +VTP+Cruise ship Association | Comune di Venezia |
| | 14.00-14.30 | | Light lunch | | | |
| MEETINGS | 14.30 – 20.00 | UNESCO VENICE OFFICE | 4. Most relevant and representative issues regarding the cultural, socio-economic, natural aspects of Venice and its Lagoon (opportunities and concerns). | Colloquia with stakeholder + NGOs | MISSION TEAM + stakeholders &NGOs | Comune di Venezia+ MBACT+ UNESCO Office in Venice |
| | 20.30 | | Dinner | Mission de legation | | |

Day 3: 15th October (Thursday)

| CONTEXT | TIME | PLACE | THEME | HOW | WHO | ORGANISATION |
|------------------|--|---|---|--|---|-------------------------------------|
| MEETINGS& VISITS | 8.45- Departure from Ca'Fasetti by boat | | Morphology of the lagoon, the lagoon ecosystem functioning also in terms of geomorphological and hydrological | | MISSION TEAM + Comune di Venezia, Water Authority, Consorzio Venezia Nuova. | Comune di Venezia + Water Authority |
| | 9.00 -11.00 | Consorzio Venezia Nuova Headquarters (Arsenale) | 1. Protective/safeguarding programme and actions in the lagoon and illustration of the Mo.SE system+ MoSE Control Room | Presentation ppt and colloquia | | |
| | 11.30 – 13.00 | Bocca di Lido- MoSE | Illustration in gallery of the Mo.SE- Bocca di Lido | Field visit by boat and colloquia | | |
| | 13.30- 14.00 | Fishfarming cooperative Headquarters in Burano | Illustration of the concerns and potentials regarding fishfarming in the lagoon: opportunities for the enhancement of fishfarming traditional values and related sustainable tourism initiatives. | Presentation ppt and colloquia | | |
| | 14.00-15.00 | Burano | Light lunch with Fishfarmers | | | |
| MEETINGS& VISITS | 15.00 – 16.00 | Fishfarming cooperative Headquarters in Burano | 2. Illustration of the plans, projects and participatory processes underway for the sustainable conservation of the salt marshes and fishfarming activities (City of Venice + EU Project LIFE VIMINE + EU Project LIFE SERESTO) | Presentation ppt and colloquia | MISSION TEAM + Comune di Venezia, Water Authority, Consorzio Venezia Nuova. + Representatives of University of Padua, of University of Venice (VIMINE), of University of Venice (SERESTO), representatives of the fishfarming cooperatives of Burano and Pellestrina. | Comune di Venezia + Water Authority |
| | 16.00- 18.30 | Venice Lagoon | Visit to the salt marshes and illustration in situ of sustainable interventions underway on the lagoon morphology. | Field visit by boat | | |
| | 18.30 – 19.00 back to Venice Historic centre | | | | | |
| | 19.00- 20.30 | Ca'Fasetti | Infrastructural projects in the Venice lagoon | Technical meeting with representative of the Ministry of Environment | MISSION TEAM + Comune di Venezia,+ representative of the Ministry of Environment | |
| | 21.00 | | Dinner | | | |

DAY 4 : 16th October (Friday)

| CONTEXT | TIME | PLACE | THEME | HOW | WHO | ORGANISATION |
|------------------|---------------|--|--|---|--|---|
| MEETINGS& VISITS | 9.00- 11.00 | Water Authority Headquarters, Palazzo X Savi, Venice | 1. Mobility, wave motion, traffic | Presentation ppt and colloquia | MISSION TEAM +Comune di Venezia (Mobility sector), Water Authority+ Venice Port Captancy | Comune di Venezia |
| | 11.00-13.30 | Archivio di Stato | 2. Tourism pressure 3. Conservation and protection. Policies, strategies, projects, researches, initiatives | Presentation ppt and colloquia Field visit by foot | MISSION TEAM +Comune di Venezia+ MBACT authorities+ Diocese of Venice | Comune di Venezia+ MBACT |
| | 13.30-14.00 | | | Light lunch | | |
| MEETINGS& VISITS | 14.00 – 16.30 | Venice Historic Centre | Conservation and protection issues. | Colloquia and field visit: Chiesa di San Bartolomeo (internal construction site), Ponte di Rialto (outside), Fondaco dei Tedeschi (outside), Ruga Oresi and the area in front of San Giacomo (assessments of its use on public land), Area mercato peschiera, Campanile di San Cassian (safety structural bell towers), Sottoportego sora beina (graffiti vandalism), Campo Santa Maria Mater Domini (plaster and historical windows), San Zan Degola' (ancient brickwork), F. Is San Simeon Piccolo (advertising on scaffoldings), Ponte della Costituzione (comments on the inclusion of the work landscape). | MISSION TEAM + MBACT+ Venice Diocese | MBACT + Comune di Venezia |
| | 16.30-18.00 | Departure from Venice to the south lagoon by car | Protection and enhancement of the south lagoon landscape- Buffer Zone territorial context. | Buffer Zone territorial context | | Comune di Venezia +Città Metropolitana di Venezia+ Municipality of Chioggia |
| | 18.00 – 23.00 | Chioggia | Protection and enhancement of the city of Chioggia | Field visit to the historic centre of Chioggia, to the mini MoSE + Museo di Zoologia Adriatica Giuseppe Olivi + dinner | MISSION TEAM + Città Metropolitana di Venezia+ Municipality of Chioggia | |
| | 23.00 | Back to Venice | | | | |

DAY 5 : 17th October (Saturday)

| CONTEXT | TIME | PLACE | THEME | HOW | WHO | ORGANISATION |
|------------------|---------------|---|--|---------------------------|---|--|
| MEETINGS& VISITS | 9.00 - 11.00 | Private Office | Mission Delegation meeting | Colloquia | MISSION Delegation | MISSION Delegation |
| | 11.00 -14.00 | Comune di Venezia Palazzo Consistrali Moenigo | Mission Team meeting | Colloquia | MISSION TEAM | Comune di Venezia |
| | 14.30- 15.30 | Transfer from Venice to Jesolo by car | Protection and enhancement of the north-east lagoon landscape- Buffer Zone territorial context. | Traveling | MISSION TEAM | Comune di Venezia + Comune di Jesolo, Comune di Cavallino Treporti |
| | 15.30- 16.30 | Lo Maggiore | Protection and enhancement of the north-east lagoon landscape: Cavallino Treporti and Jesolo | Working lunch | MISSION TEAM+ Comune di Jesolo, Comune di Cavallino Treporti | Comune di Venezia + Comune di Jesolo, Comune di Cavallino Treporti |
| MEETINGS& VISITS | 16.30- 17.00 | Transfer to Quarto by car | | | MISSION TEAM+ | Comune di Venezia +Comune di Quarto d'Altino |
| | 17.00 - 19.30 | Quarto d'Altino | Protection and enhancement of the north-east lagoon landscape: Quarto d'Altino Visit to the National Archaeological Museum of Altino Walk to the new wooden dock in the river Sile Meeting with cultural associations active in Altino Visit to the tourism Office in Quarto d'Altino. | Colloquia and field visit | MISSION TEAM+ Comune di Cavallino Treporti Comune di Jesolo Comune di Quarto d'Altino National Archaeological Museum of Altino + stakeholders+ NGOS representatives | |
| | 19.30 - 20.00 | Transfer to Venice | | | | |
| | 20.00 - 21.30 | Fondazione Vedova | Conservation and reuse of architectural complex. Public/private partnerships good practice. | Colloquia and field visit | MISSION TEAM+ President Fondazione Vedova & cultural and artistic experts involved in the management of the Vedova Foundation. | Comune di Venezia |
| | 21.30-23.00 | | | Dinner and farewell | MISSION TEAM | |

Annex 4

Retrospective Statements of Outstanding Universal Value - Document WHC-13/37.COM/8E

The World Heritage Committee at its 37th session (Decision: 37 COM 8E, Phnom Penh, 2013) adopted the retrospective Statements of Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage property Venice and its Lagoon.

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 50,000 km², 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 Zanipolo, 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 semilacustral 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.

1.1 Inscription

11th session of the World Heritage Committee, Paris, France, 7 - 11 December 1987

Decision: CONF 005 VII.A

The World Heritage property of the Venice and its Lagoon was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1987 (11th Session of the Committee).

Founded in the 5th century 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.

1.2 Inscription criteria and World Heritage values as formulated by ICOMOS

RECOMMENDATION:

That the proposed cultural property be included on the World Heritage List on the basis of criteria i, ii, iii, iv, v, vi.

JUSTIFICATION:

The nomination of Venice to the list preceded by nine years the ratification of the World Heritage Convention by Italy. There was some concern about such a delay, which international opinion deemed inexplicable: on several occasions, notably during the discussions which preceded the elaboration of the tentative lists, the Committee expressed the wish for a short-list presentation of the most prestigious cultural properties and cited how paradoxical it was that Venice had not been included on the World Heritage List.

The initiative finally taken by the Italian government responds to this general expectation, and this is all the more positive in that the nomination concerns not only the historic centre of Venice, but the whole lagoon with its hundreds of small islands, its three openings to the Adriatic Sea, the Lido, Malamocco and Chioggia; its basins and fishing areas. The geographic, historic and aesthetic coherency of this ensemble leaves no doubt.

In this lagoon covering 50,000 ha, nature and history have been so closely linked since the 5th century A.D. when Venetian populations, to escape Barbarian raids, found refuge on the sandy islands of Torcello, Isole and Malamocco. These temporary settlements gradually became permanent and the initial refuge of the land-dwelling peasants and fishermen became a maritime power. Several key dates stand in the minds of all: the small island of Rialto was chosen as the headquarters of the new city; in 1000 A.D., Venice controlled the Dalmatian coast; in 1112, a trading market was founded in Sidon; in 1204 Venice allied with the Crusaders to capture Constantinople. The abundant booty brought back on that occasion, including St. Mark's horses, is only the more spectacular part of the loot from Byzantium that the doge Enrico Dandolo shared with his allies. Under the doge a maritime empire of unequalled power extended over the entire length of shores along the eastern Mediterranean, to the islands of the Ionian Sea, and to Crete.

During the entire period of the expansion of Venice, over the centuries when it defended its trading markets against the business undertakings of the Arabs, the Genoese and the Ottomans, and those of the European monarchs who were envious of its power, Venice never ceased, in the literal sense of the term, to consolidate its position in the lagoon. The marriage with the sea, that "sposalizio" that since 1172 was symbolized by the ring of the doge, who had replaced the dux (elected for the first time in 697 by an assembly of the people was never called into question. Defense of the site in the face of major dangers, siltings and the destructive assault of the waters' waves, was a matter of constant concern. From the High Middle Ages to the 18th century, the course of the rivers' waters was deviated and controlled;

the three channels through which the tide engulfs the lagoon have continuously been rearranged; the thin strip of shore has been protected by fences, stone piles and breakwaters. By the time completion was achieved in 1782 of the fantastic construction of the murazzi, a veritable dam holding back the Adriatic, the Most Serene Republic would survive only 15 years longer.

In this inland sea which has continuously been under threat, rises amidst 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, every small island, or nearly, had its own settlement, town, fishing village and artisan village (e.g., Murano, Burano), but at the heart of the lagoon, Venice stood as one of the greatest capitals in the medieval world. When a group of tiny islands were consolidated, nothing remained of the primitive topography but canals such as Giudecca Canal, St. Mark's Canal and the Great Canal (according to Commynes, "the most beautiful street in the world"), and a network of small rii that are the veritable arteries of a city on water. In this unreal space, where there is no notion of the concept of terra firma, masterpieces of one of the most extraordinary architectural museums on earth have been accumulated for over 1,000 years. The least palazzetto, which in Venice seems only a minor construction, would constitute the glory of many historic cities.

Everyone is familiar with the dangers threatening the inestimable heritage of Venice: changes in ground level and tides, atmospheric pollution and socio-economic changes are some of the direct or indirect consequences of the industrialization of the zone of Mestre. These factors have posed, in new terms, the problem of the survival of Venice. The action of the Council of Europe, UNESCO, and of many non-governmental organizations on behalf of Venice has shown the reality of international solidarity which only great causes bring to the forefront.

Without summarizing all the actions undertaken following the flooding of 4 November 1966, ICOMOS stresses that the inclusion of Venice on the World Heritage List will further strengthen the coherency of the cultural policy of UNESCO. Venice meets all the criteria for inclusion on the World Heritage List.

- 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 city reveals itself instantly. The lagoon of Venice also includes one of the highest concentrations of masterpieces in the world: from Torcello Cathedral to the church of St. Mary of Salvation, all the centuries of an extraordinary Golden Age are represented by monuments of exceptional beauty: San Marco, the Palazzo Ducale, Zanipolo and Scuola di San Marco, the Grari and Scuola di San Rocco, San Giorgio Maggiore, etc.

- Criterion II. The influence of Venice on the development of architecture and monumental arts has been considerable. It first made its impact in all the trading markets and stations of the Most Serene Republic along the shores of Dalmatia, in Asia Minor and in Egypt, in the islands of Ionian Sea, in Euboea, in Peloponnesus, in Crete, and in Cyprus, where the monuments built were inspired by Venetian models. But at the time when this empire of the seas experienced its first defeats, Venice founded a school of a very different type, thanks to its painters. Bellini and Giorgione, then Titien, Tintoret, Veronese and Tiepolo so profoundly changed the perception of space, light and colour that they made a decisive mark on trends in painting and decoration in 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; she 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 age of its splendor. From great monuments such as Piazza San Marco and Piazzetta (the cathedral, the Palazzo Ducale, Marciana, correr Museum, Procuratie Vecchie), to the more modest residences of calli and campi in its six quarters (Sestieri), and including hospitals and charitable or cooperative institutions which in the 13th century were originally Scuole, medieval

Venetian architecture, presents a complete typology 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 constitutes an outstanding example of a semi-lake settlement which has become vulnerable as a result of irreversible changes. In this coherent ecosystem where the bareness, muddy ground which alternately sinks below water level and then rises again, are as important as the islands, the houses standing on piles, the fishing villages, and the rice-fields need as much protection as the palaces and the churches.

- Criterion VI. Venice symbolizes the victorious struggle of mankind against the elements, and the mastery men and women have imposed upon hostile nature. The city is also directly and tangibly associated with universal history. The "Queen of the Seas," heroically gripping to her tiny islands, did not limit her horizon, either to the lagoon, or to the Adriatic, or to 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 assumed by Venetian merchants in the discovery of the world- after the Arabs, but well before the Portuguese.

1.3 Integrity issues raised in the ICOMOS evaluation report at time of inscription

Source: ICOMOS Evaluation of the inscription (1987)

The dangers threatening the inestimable heritage of Venice: **Changes in ground level and tides, atmospheric pollution and socio-economic changes** are some of the **direct or indirect consequences of the industrialization of the zone of Mestre**.

1.4 Examination of the State of Conservation by the World Heritage Committee at its 12th, 13th, 14th, 37th and 38th sessions

12th session of the World Heritage Committee, Brasilia, Brazil, 5 - 9 December 1988

Decision: CONF 001 XII.57

Donation for Use in the Preservation of the Great Wall (China) and Venice (Italy)

57. The Secretariat informed the Committee that, in addition to the budget it had approved, a sum of two million French Francs (\$340,000 as of 9 December 1988) had been donated to Unesco in November 1988 by a private association which had organized a special cultural event "The Return of Marco Polo". This sum was to be divided equally for use in the preservation of the Great Wall (China) and Venice (Italy), two World Heritage properties.

13th session of the World Heritage Committee, Paris, 11-15 December 1989

Decision: CONF 004 IX.22

22. The same delegate informed the Committee of his concern over the announcement of a universal exhibition in Venice. The fragile structures and the limited space of this town, inscribed together with its lagoon on the World Heritage List in 1987, made Venice extremely vulnerable to the effects of mass events. The Secretariat informed the Committee that the Director-General had already written to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Italy requesting more details on this project. The Committee decided to launch the following appeal:

The World Heritage Committee, meeting for its 13th session at Unesco headquarters in Paris from 11 to 15 December 1989, expressed its grave concern about the new threats to Venice which is inscribed on the World Heritage List. A universal exhibition, which would attract several hundreds of thousands of visitors in addition to the usual surge of tourists, risks threatening the integrity of this heritage which is unique in the history, art and civilization of humanity. The World Heritage Committee calls upon the Italian authorities so that irreparable damage can be avoided.

14th session of the Bureau of the World Heritage Committee, Paris, 11-14 June 1990

Decision: CONF 003 IV.B.43

In the course of its fourteenth session the Bureau was informed of the Italian authorities' decision not to confirm the proposal to have Venice selected as the site of the Universal Exhibition for year 2000. The members of the Bureau welcomed the news and expressed great satisfaction at the decisive role played by the Committee in that regard

37th session of the World Heritage Committee, Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 17-27 June 2013

8E. Adoption of retrospective Statements of Outstanding Universal Value

Decision: 37 COM 8E: The World Heritage Committee adopted the retrospective Statements of Outstanding Universal Value, as presented in the Annex of Document WHC-13/37.COM/8E, including Venice and its Lagoon.

38th session of the World Heritage Committee, Doha, Qatar, 15 - 25 June 2014

Working document WHC-14/38.COM/7B.Add

Decision 38 COM 7B.27

Current conservation issues

In response to the appeal launched by UNESCO in 1966, private organizations were established in a number of countries to collect and channel contributions to restore and preserve Venice. UNESCO Venice Office administers the "Joint UNESCO-Private Committees Programme for the Safeguarding of Venice", cooperating with the Association of Private Committees and Superintendencies of Monuments and Galleries of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage in Venice in two main areas: the restoration of monuments and works of art and the provision of funding for training of specialists in conservation of cultural heritage. The Private Committees have funded – within the joint UNESCO – Private Committees Programme – more than 1,500 projects worth over 50 million euro.

After receiving information from the civil society, the World Heritage Centre requested in 2012 the State Party to provide clarifications on a number of large infrastructure, navigation and construction projects within the property and its setting including Veneto region, as well as on the progress in the adoption of a planned decree to stop large cruise ships and tankers. ICOMOS reviewed some projects (eg. Dogaletto – Giare Project, Palais Lumière) and provided extensive comments to the Italian authorities.

In the light of the above, the World Heritage Centre requested the State Party in August 2013 to provide further information, as a basis for the submission of a state of conservation report to the World Heritage Committee.

On 29 January 2014, the State Party submitted a detailed state of conservation report, with annexes describing a number of new large maritime infrastructures to allow ultra-large ships mainly handle oil, bulk and container traffic to call at the Port of Venice. The report is available on <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/394/documents/>. It also submitted the Management Plan of the property and a proposal for the establishment of a buffer zone.

The State Party reported that the system of mobile gates called MoSE (Experimental Electromechanical Module) to control high waters temporarily isolating the lagoon from the sea is under construction and will be operational by 2016. Projects currently being developed include an offshore platform at some 8 miles off the Malamocco port, a new terminal "Motorways of the Sea" in Fusina, a new container terminal on the site of former industrial facilities in Porto Marghera, a new multi-functional facility between Venice and its maritime station, and a touristic port in San Nicolò. The report confirms that the project of Palais Lumière has been withdrawn.

The State Party highlighted that the passage of medium to high tonnage ships is progressively causing the erosion of the lagoon bed, mud banks and salt marshes, and that, accordingly to the Piano di Assetto del Territorio (PAT) of the Municipality of Venice, the goal is the final exclusion of ships incompatible with the historic city and with the lagoon. It reported that numerous proposals and alternative projects for the passage of cruise ships within St. Mark's Basin and the Giudecca Canal are currently being examined by various organizations and institutional bodies, and that transitional measures to mitigate the traffic of large cruise ships were established. The State Party informed that in conformity with the 2013 Decree concerning the "Identification of access ways to the Port of Venice Maritime Station alternative to those prohibited to ships over 40,000 GT", the Maritime Authority identified the Contorta Sant'Angelo canal, pending the results from the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIAs), as an alternative waterway. It also indicated that a Steering Committee meets regularly to monitor the implementation of the Management Plan, as well as to evaluate corrective and mitigating measures to sustain the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV).

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The State Party has made some efforts to develop a range of mechanisms to safeguard Venice and its lagoon landscape that cover 50,000ha. The nature reserve Valle d'Averto (at the North-West edge of the Lagoon) is also designated as a Ramsar Site within the framework of the Convention on Wetlands, signed in 1971 at Ramsar(Iran).

Irreversible transformations could however derive from proposals for large infrastructure, navigation and construction projects in the Lagoon and its immediate setting would appear to have the potential to seriously jeopardize the OUV of the property.

Taking into account that the State Party submitted the majority of information regarding new constructions and infrastructure developments in Italian, the World Heritage Centre requested the State Party, in conformity with Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*, to submit information regarding such projects in one of the working languages, including Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) for review by the Advisory Bodies before any decision is taken.

Given the large number of projects that are planned or on-going in and around the lagoon (including new off-shore platform, new terminals, tourist port and large leisure facilities), the cumulative impacts on the OUV of the property needs to be comprehensively assessed. The results need to be submitted in English or French to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies.

There are also some concerns about the negative environmental impacts triggered by motor boats, cruise ships and oil tankers. The goal aiming to exclude all ships incompatible with the historic city and with the lagoon, as stated in the Territorial Plan (PAT) has not been achieved and that the City Council has fostered a series of in-depth studies. Following media reports about the decision of the regional court of the Veneto region to suspend the law reducing the number of cruise ships entering from the Adriatic, the World Heritage Centre requested the State Party, in conformity with Paragraph 174 of the *Operational Guidelines*, to provide detailed information regarding legal instruments and regulations applicable to this World Heritage property.

It is recommended that the Committee urge the State Party to implement all relevant measures to prohibit the largest ships to enter the Lagoon Alternative means to allow cruise tourists to enjoy and understand the value and frailty of Venice should be developed with the tourism and cruise companies.

The exceptionally high tourism pressure on the city of Venice and the extensive tourism related activities should also be highlighted. They have become a danger for the OUV and authenticity and integrity of the property. Mechanisms to ensure that no irreversible transformations occur must be taken in the immediate future. A sustainable tourism strategy, which includes options to accommodate development needs, is a priority for implementation within the framework of the Management Plan. The ICOMOS technical review provided recommendations for the

revision of the Management Plan and for tentative buffer zone that need to be undertaken accordingly.

Currently, the responsibilities over the Venice Lagoon are widely divided among the national, regional and local authorities. The Venice Water Authority (MAV) plays a decisive role. It is recommended that the Committee request the State Party to establish a strong coordination among all stakeholders concerned to ensure the hydro-geological balances of the Venice Lagoon and the whole drainage basin, as well as the protection of all attributes that convey the OUV of the property.

Given the current situation, a reactive monitoring mission is needed to assess current conditions at the property and assist with the evaluation of project proposals and identify options that are in accordance to the OUV of the property, as well as to review if the property is faced with threats which could have deleterious effects on its inherent characteristics and meets the criteria for its inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger in line with Paragraph 179 of the *Operational Guidelines*. It is recommended that the Committee suggest to the State Party to invite a Ramsar expert to participate in this mission.

Decision: 38 COM 7B.27

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-14/38.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decision **13 COM IX.22**, adopted at its 13th session (UNESCO, 1989),
3. Takes note of the State Party's efforts to develop a range of mechanisms to safeguard Venice and its lagoon landscape and of the approved Management Plan resulting from extensive consultations among all stakeholders, and encourages the State Party to undertake its revision based on the results from the technical evaluation by ICOMOS;
4. Expresses its concern about the extent and scale of proposals for large infrastructure, navigation and construction projects in the Lagoon that can potentially jeopardize the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property by generating irreversible transformations on the landscape and seascape of the property;
5. Requests the State Party to undertake Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) for these projects to assess both individual and overall cumulative impacts of the potential modifications of the Lagoon and its immediate land and seascape, in order to prevent any irreversible transformations and potential threat to the property's OUV and to enhance the protection of the property in relation to sustaining its OUV;
6. Also expresses its concern about the negative environmental impacts triggered by medium motor boats to high tonnage ships that have progressively caused erosion of the lagoon beds, mud banks and salt marshes, and which could represent potential threat to the property's OUV and also requests the State Party to enforce speed limits and regulate the number and type of boats;
7. Urges the State Party to prohibit the largest ships and tankers to enter the Lagoon and further requests the State Party to adopt, as a matter of urgency, a legal document introducing such a process;
8. Recognises the exceptionally high tourism pressure on the city of Venice, and the extensive tourism related activities, urges the State Party to prioritise the development of a sustainable tourism strategy, and also encourages the State Party to develop jointly with the major tourism and cruise companies alternative solutions to allow cruise tourists to enjoy and understand the value of Venice and also its fragility;
9. Further encourages financial institutions and agencies to ensure that Heritage and/or Environmental Impact Assessments are carried out to determine that there are no negative impacts on the OUV, before planning investment in large-scale developments within the property and its setting;

10. Encourages furthermore the State Party to continue with the assessment of the hydrology and geo-mechanics functioning of the Venice Lagoon and its whole drainage basin; and invites the State Party to establish a strong coordination among all stakeholders concerned to ensure the hydro-geological balances of the Venice Lagoon and the whole drainage basin, as well as the protection of all attributes that convey the OUV of the property;
11. Also takes note of the proposal for the establishment of the buffer zone and also invites the State Party to undertake its revision in line with the ICOMOS technical review and submit to the World Heritage Centre the minor boundary modification by **1 February 2015**;
12. Requests furthermore the State Party to invite a joint UNESCO/ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission to the property in 2015 to assess current conditions at the property, including the evaluation of potential impacts derived from development proposals and identify options for development proposals in accordance to the OUV of the property, as well as to review if the property is faced with threats which could have deleterious effects on its inherent characteristics and meets the criteria for its inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger in line with Paragraph 179 of the *Operational Guidelines* , and recommends to the State Party to also invite a representative of the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention to take part in this reactive monitoring mission;
13. Requests moreover the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2015**, a progress report on the state of conservation of the property, and by **1 December 2015** a state of conservation report on the implementation of the above, both reports including a 1-page executive summary, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 40th session in 2016.

Annex 6 - Second Cycle Periodic Report: Factors Summary Table

Periodic Report - Second Cycle

Section II-Venice and its Lagoon

3.15. Factors Summary Table

3.15.1 - Factors summary table

| | Name | Impact | Origin |
|---------------|--|---|---|
| 3.1 | Buildings and Development | | |
| 3.1.1 | Housing |     | |
| 3.1.2 | Commercial development |   |  |
| 3.1.3 | Industrial areas |   |   |
| 3.1.4 | Major visitor accommodation and associated infrastructure |   |   |
| 3.1.5 | Interpretative and visitation facilities |    |   |
| 3.2 | Transportation Infrastructure | | |
| 3.2.1 | Ground transport infrastructure |   |  |
| 3.2.2 | Air transport infrastructure |   |  |
| 3.2.3 | Marine transport infrastructure |   |  |
| 3.2.4 | Effects arising from use of transportation infrastructure |   |   |
| 3.4 | Pollution | | |
| 3.4.1 | Pollution of marine waters |   |   |
| 3.4.2 | Ground water pollution |   |   |
| 3.4.3 | Surface water pollution |   |  |
| 3.4.4 | Air pollution |   |   |
| 3.4.5 | Solid waste |   |  |
| 3.5 | Biological resource use/modification | | |
| 3.5.2 | Aquaculture |   |  |
| 3.5.3 | Land conversion |    |   |
| 3.5.6 | Commercial hunting |   |  |
| 3.7 | Local conditions affecting physical fabric | | |
| 3.7.2 | Relative humidity |   |  |
| 3.7.5 | Dust |   |   |
| 3.7.6 | Water (rain/water table) |   |  |
| 3.8 | Social/cultural uses of heritage | | |
| 3.8.1 | Ritual / spiritual / religious and associative uses |   |  |
| 3.8.2 | Society's valuing of heritage |    |  |
| 3.8.4 | Changes in traditional ways of life and knowledge system |   |  |
| 3.8.5 | Identity, social cohesion, changes in local population and community |   |   |
| 3.8.6 | Impacts of tourism / visitor / recreation |     |  |
| 3.9 | Other human activities | | |
| 3.9.1 | Illegal activities |   |  |
| 3.9.2 | Deliberate destruction of heritage |   |  |
| 3.10 | Climate change and severe weather events | | |
| 3.10.1 | Storms |   |  |
| | Name | Impact | Origin |
| 3.12.5 | Hyper-abundant species |   |    |
| 3.13 | Management and institutional factors | | |
| 3.13.1 | Low impact research / monitoring activities |   |    |
| 3.13.3 | Management activities |   |    |
| Legend |  Current |  Potential |  Negative |
| |  Positive |  Inside |  Outside |

Page 7

Annex 7 – International Campaign for the Safeguarding of Venice

Appeal of 2 December 1966 by René Maheu, the Director-General of UNESCO, at the opening of the international campaign for Venice and Florence:

"During the first days of November, Tuscany and Venetia were devastated by floods of extraordinary magnitude and violence. The damage has been enormous. To the toll in human lives and the loss of property were added the destruction, in Florence and Venice, of creations of the human spirit which made the enchantment of the culture and art of living that Italy has given to the world. In all, 885 works of art of the first importance, 18 churches and some 10,000 other objects have suffered. Seventy libraries and learned institutions have been stricken. More than 700,000 volumes of archives comprising some 50 million items, of which 10,000 were of inestimable historical and scientific value, have been damaged.

Florence and Venice! The names alone say why Italy's grief is ours. But they indicate also why Italy's resolution to preserve and restore everything that can be saved will be the common purpose of us all. Venice sinking into the waters, it is as if one of the most radiant stars of beauty were suddenly engulfed; Florence bemired, it is the springtime of our hearts which is for ever disfigured. We will not resign ourselves to such disasters.

The General Conference of UNESCO, which has just concluded its fourteenth session, has decided unanimously to issue an urgent appeal 'to the spirit of fellowship of Member States to assist, to the fullest extent of their means, the efforts of the Italian people and authorities to preserve and restore cultural property that has been or is in danger of being damaged'.

In so doing, UNESCO in no way wishes to take the place of the aid and cooperation, public and private, which Italy's innumerable friends throughout the world have spontaneously offered and are prepared to furnish directly. The brotherhood of man that the international agencies seek to promote and to organize is nurtured by the living springs of natural and historic friendships between persons and peoples.

But UNESCO, called upon by its Constitution to assure 'the conservation and protection of the world's inheritance of books, works of art and monuments of history and science' can, as the Italian Government has requested, assemble and distribute information regularly on the needs, on the one hand, and offers of aid on the other. In this way outside assistance may be best directed by stages, in agreement with the Italian authorities, to meet the needs and fit the possibilities of the situation.

Most important, UNESCO can stimulate international solidarity - and that indeed should be its role. Just six years ago, from this very platform, my predecessor launched a pressing appeal to the world to save the monuments of Egyptian and Sudanese Nubia which were threatened to be flooded as a result of the construction of the Aswan High Dam. Fifty countries responded to that appeal. Today it can be said that the safeguarding of the antiquities of Nubia is accomplished or assured, including the unique monumental ensemble of Abu Simbel. I am sure that once again mankind will not fail to acknowledge and act to save its common heritage, thereby acknowledging again and reaffirming its profound spiritual unity.

On behalf of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization I address a solemn appeal to the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind for the preservation and restoration of the damaged cultural treasures of Florence and Venice.

I call upon the 120 Member States of UNESCO, and first of all upon their governments, to give generous aid in the form of money, equipment and services to carry out this immense task of preservation and restoration which will require several years.

I call upon museums, libraries, archives and learned institutions in all the countries to put their experts, their laboratories and their workshops at the disposal of the corresponding Italian institutions whose installations and collections have suffered. I call upon those international organizations of specialists which are closely associated with UNESCO's work in this field - the International Council of Museums, the International Council on Monuments and Sites, and the International Federation of Library Associations and the International Council on Archives - to promote and coordinate efforts in this respect.

I call upon the writers, artists, musicians, critics and historians, indeed all those - and they are legion - whose works have been inspired by the treasures of Florence or Venice, to donate a part of what they have gained - they know better than anyone else that they can never repay their true debt, which is a spiritual one - and to help us with their talents in reaching the public.

I call upon museums, art galleries, theatres, and concert halls, foundations and private collections, which glory in the works we owe to the genius of Florence and Venice, to organize exhibitions, performances, and other events, devoted to Florence and Venice, the proceeds of which would go to the funds that have been set up in many countries, and by UNESCO itself, to receive voluntary financial contributions.

I call on the millions and tens of millions of persons who have visited these famous cities, even if only once, and who have returned enriched for the rest of their lives, to send one dollar - or whatever they can - to UNESCO.

Finally, I also call on all those who have never been to Florence or Venice, and many of whom may never have that chance, to contribute something: be it money or work - something of themselves. Each one of us knows himself to be a member of the family of Man. How then could any one of us remain indifferent to the fate of these most precious jewels of our common human heritage?"

UNESCO Report of 13 August 1993: International Campaign for the Safeguarding of Venice: Review of Results (1966-1992)
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0009/000946/094690EB.pdf>

a) Main results

- Origins: Floods of 1966 and the appeal of the DG of UNESCO
- Main results:
 - Adoption of the Special Laws of 1973 and 1984, for a national legal and institutional framework
 - Implementation of these laws
 - Safeguarding of the cultural heritage of Venice
 - Physical and environmental protection
 - Revitalization of the historic center
 - Awareness
- Role of UNESCO: to provide administrative and technical services to public and private bodies engaged in the conservation and restoration process

b) Origins of the Campaign

- 1966: Appeal by the DG
- 1967: Executive Board of UNESCO considers a Memorandum by the Italian authorities and adopts a decision that authorizes the DG to take the necessary action.
- 1967: Italian authorities and UNESCO organize an International Meeting
- 1968: Executive Board of UNESCO considers the outcome of the International Meeting and authorizes the DG to take further action.

- International Advisory Committee for the safeguarding of Venice founded.
- First stage: Special emphasis on public information
- Turning point 1973: Adoption of Special Law
- Second stage: Implementation of the various measures prescribed by the Special Law
- 1989: Executive Board notes that the Campaign has generally met the objectives

b) Organization of the Campaign

- *International Advisory Committee for the safeguarding of Venice:*
 - Founded by Italian authorities in agreement with the DG, in accordance with the International Meeting of November 1967
 - To monitor the progress of the Campaign
 - Last meeting in 1978. No statement on why the Committee became inactive.
- Funds from the Council of Europe and from private organizations, which held meetings among themselves
- UNESCO's operational participation:
 - 1973: UNESCO is granted statutory rights of participation in two Italian bodies created by the first Special Law:
 - a) *Commission for the Safeguarding of Venice:* Empowered to give advise on restoration and construction works, and on town-planning
 - b) *Technical and Scientific Committee for the study of problems relating to the protection of Venice:* Advisory body for all problems of physical protection. (Abolished in 1984)
- UNESCO's administrative and technical services:
 - Normal functions: fact-finding and reporting; information of the public; organization of meetings and trainee courses; liaison and advisory services vis-à-vis the national services; liaison and coordination in respect of organizations participating in the campaign; provision of experts' services and technical cooperation
 - 1967: UNESCO Office in Rome to follow up on the Campaign
 - 1973: UNESCO Office moved to Venice (Venice Office): liaise with private organizations and Italian authorities.



The sheer mass of tourists – not only in special hotspots as the St. Marc's square – represents an enormous problem. (Bernhard Furrer, October 2015)



Palazzo Minotto, Fondamenta Briati (Orsoduro 2365-2371A): property of the Comune, closed and with bricked windows, abandoned and out of use since years, with important defects due to humidity (exterior and interior). (Bernhard Furrer, October 2015)



Hotel Tre Archi, fondamenta de Cannaregio (Cannaregio 923): palace with apartments used by personal of RAI, interiors intensively transformed in the late 90ies to install a tourist accommodation. (google street view, August 2013)



Palazzo Cendon, Calle Cendon (Cannaregio 532, 533, 534): used for apartments till 2009, changed into B&B with subsequent interior transformations. (www.palazzocendon.it)



Campo S. Alvise, Istituto Figlie della Carità Canossiane: Empty complex of houses with potential for housing inhabitants (Bernhard Furrer, October 2015)



Initiative of inhabitants cleaning their neighbourhood from waste and graffiti (Bernhard Furrer, October 2015)



MS "Island Princess" (91.627 BRT) passing in St. Mark's channel: (Bernhard Furrer, October 2015)



The "industrial" recreation of lost saltmarshes (*barene*) by depositing sediments dredged elsewhere in the Lagoon (as part of the MoSE construction works) is showing promising results: regrowth of saltmarsh vegetation; nevertheless the lost ecosystem is not yet recovered and it may still take substantial time until a full restoration of the saltmarshes. (Tobias Salathé, October 2015)



UNESCO mission at the hydraulic pumps of the MoSE system underneath the Lido Lagoon inlet. (Tobias Salathé, October 2015)



The "industrial" recreation of lost saltmarshes (*barene*) by depositing sediments dredged elsewhere in the Lagoon (as part of the MoSE construction works) is showing promising results: regrowth of saltmarsh vegetation; nevertheless the lost ecosystem is not yet recovered and it may still take substantial time until a full restoration of the saltmarshes. (Tobias Salathé, October 2015)



UNESCO mission visits the "artisanal" restoration of degraded saltmarshes (mainly due to ship traffic wave actions) by the LIFE-VIMINE project NW of Burano at "Palude dei Laghi" that works with local artisans (fishermen, foresters). (Tobias Salathé, October 201