

## **CURONIAN SPIT, REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA AND RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

### **Report of an ICOMOS Advisory Mission 19-20<sup>th</sup> March 2013**

#### *1. Background:*

At the invitation of the States Parties of both the Republic of Lithuania and the Russian Federation, an ICOMOS expert, Susan Denyer, was invited to attend an International Seminar on the 'Issues of UNESCO site Curonian Spit (Republic of Lithuania/Russian Federation) Management Plan' on 19<sup>th</sup> March in Nida, Neringa municipality, Republic of Lithuania and on 20<sup>th</sup> March in Lesnoje, Russian Federation.

The Seminar and the Advisory mission were initiated to reflect the strengthening of collaboration and coordination between the two States Parties, as exemplified in the drafting of a retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) and the integrated World Heritage site Management Plan for the property, and the considerable progress made since what were described as the earlier years 'confrontation'. The Seminar also reflected the recommendations of the World Heritage Committee in 2011 and 2012 on the need for a Tourism Strategy, a joint Traffic Management Plan and joint Management Structures to foster closer collaboration between the two National Parks and local government organisations within the trans-boundary property.

#### *2. Acknowledgments:*

The mission expert would like to express her thanks for the excellent arrangements made to accommodate her tight timescale, and for the hospitality provided both in Lithuania and in the Russian Federation .

#### *3. Summary:*

The draft integrated Management plan represents a major step forward in fostering the effective overall management of the trans-boundary property, through closer collaboration between the two National Parks, the Curonian Spit National Park, Lithuania, and the Kurshskaya National Park, Russian Federation, and between Municipalities in both countries and individual members of staff. This work to coordinate planning and management across the property respects certain differing strategies prevailing within the two countries, such as in relation to sustainable tourism. It thus attempts to optimise the tools available within national and local structures through focusing them on the common goal of sustaining the OUV of the property.

The draft Management Plan is seen as part of a wider initiative to strengthen planning protection across the property through the eventual development of a single territorial (spatial) planning document that overarches the existing national plans (as set out in the retrospective Statement of OUV in Annex IV).

The issues, challenges and aspirations that were presented in the Seminar were very rich and need to be reflected in the Management Plan, where they are not already included.

4. Summary of Recommendations:

The mission expert commends the States Parties on the very valuable progress made with the first draft of the Management Plan. In order to make this document as useful as possible to all organisations that will be involved in its implementation, and to make it readily understood by all stakeholders, the mission expert suggests that the Plan needs strengthening through the addition of a few extra sections and through the re-organisation of the central section that sets out Activities and Actions.

All of these recommendations aim to link the plan more clearly to the OUV of the property and to present a clearer understanding of the aspirations of the key stakeholders for the future of the property in terms of its potential to deliver substantial benefits. These also stress the need for the property to be considered as a coherent cultural landscape.

It is thus recommended that:

1. An overall Vision for the Property is inserted at the beginning of the Plan, after Introduction and General Description. This would set out the aspirations for the Plan in the context of where all the partners would like to be in, say, 10 years time, and of how the OUV of the property might become the driving force for a dynamic approach to the sustainable development of the Spit.
2. Define clearly out clearly the attributes of OUV as the basis for management. These attributes are the tangible and intangible aspects of the property that convey its OUV. They will include the overall characteristic of the cultural landscape as well as the processes that are necessary to sustain it. Decide whether the Plan is to include proposals for the management of other attributes of national and local value and if so, set these out as well.
3. Provide a clearer articulation of the challenges to be met.
4. In order to set out more clearly how the Challenges will be addressed, divide Section 4 into two sections. The first section could set out principles and guidelines that over-arch all the proposed activities and include the current sections 4.1 to 4.3. The second Section from 4.2 onwards could then focus on Main Areas of Activity and Actions. It is suggested that the text addresses the following:
  - 4.1 *Principles and guidelines*
  - 4.2 *Conservation of key aspects of the cultural landscape*
    - 4.2.1 *Overall cultural landscape – key relationship between various parts; overall morphology, perceptions of the landscapes, visual appreciation, key views*
    - 4.2.1 *Dunes and traditional re-instatement practices; addressing climate change; natural disaster; coastal erosion; coastal management*
    - 4.2.1 *Forests including risk prevention; fires*
    - 4.2.3 *Settlements – including traditional buildings and traditional building practices; risk prevention; need for conservation project*

*4.2.4 Docks and harbours and fishing*

*4.2.5 Sea and Lagoon*

*4.3 Utilising the Cultural Landscape*

*4.3.1 Developing a Vision for sustainable local communities; promoting traditional crafts*

*4.3.2 Developing a Strategy for sustainable tourism including defining an 'offer' that will attract longer stays;*

*4.3.3 Traffic control and management*

*4.3.4 Exploitation of resources*

*4.4 Understanding and Promoting the Cultural landscape (a new section that could include Education and Information in 6.1 and 6.2 as well as Research and Survey)*

5. Insert a new Governance Section before the Section on Monitoring and Control in order to draw attention to the overall management structure that is being proposed.

6. Include details as to how the Plan will be reviewed and over what timescale.

5. *Background to the property: Inscription, Reports to the WH Committee*

The backboard details set out in the previous Mission Reports of 2009 and 2010 and are not repeated here.

In 2011, the World Heritage Committee requested the State Party of the Russian Federation to halt immediately the current proposals, for the development of large leisure complexes and to review the designation of the economic zone; and to review the overall legal protection arrangements for the property in order to ensure that development respects the Outstanding Universal Value. It urged the States Parties of Lithuania and the Russian Federation to prepare a joint Statement of Outstanding Universal Value for the property as a basis for future management, conservation and economic development; to strengthen collaboration on management and protection, in line with the assurances made at the time of inscription, and to put in place a coordinated management mechanism in line with the requirements of the Operational Guidelines. It also urged the States Parties to develop, as a matter of urgency, an overall Tourism Strategy for the property, based on the UNESCO supported project on the Lithuanian part, in order to define sustainable approaches to tourism that respect the landscape and support local communities.

In 2012, the World Heritage Committee welcomed the submission of the first joint report by the two States Parties. It recognized the efforts made by both States Parties to ensure the safeguarding of the property and encourages them to continue such efforts in cooperation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies; it also welcomed the progress made in terms of greater collaboration between the National Parks in both parts of the property and the joint actions that have been agreed to take forward work on an overall Tourism Strategy, a joint Traffic Management Plan and joint Management Structures. The Committee also noted that the State Party of the Russian Federation has suspended the proposed Economic Development Zone in the Kaliningrad region; requested confirmation from the State Party of the Russian Federation, by 1

September 2012, that the proposed large leisure complexes will not be constructed. The committee took note of the possibility of a liquefied gas terminal outside the property at Klaipeda and also requested the State Party of Lithuania to undertake full impact assessments (Strategic Environmental and Heritage Impact Assessments) prior to any decision on such a development, in order to consider the potential impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property. The Committee also noted the progress with the revised National Park Plan for Lithuania and further requested the State Party of Lithuania to provide three printed and electronic copies of the revised Management Plan for review by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies.

6. *International Seminar*

The Seminar took place over two days, the first day in Lithuania and the second day in the Russian Federation.

It brought together all the key players and specialists from the Ministries of Environment, Culture and the Economy, the State Department of Tourism, the National Park, and Neringa Municipality in Lithuania, and from the Ministry of National Ecology and Resources, the National Park, the Government of Kaliningrad, the Curonian Spit County Administrative Unit and the Zelenogradsk District local authority in the Russian Federation. Representatives of NGOs from both countries also attended. *A list of participants is set out in Annex II.*

The Seminar had six sessions:

1. *Key Principles of the Curonian Spit Management plan*
2. *Protection, preservation and management of the cultural landscape*
3. *Role of Municipal Authorities*
4. *Tourism management plan*
5. *Potential models of cooperation*
6. *Traffic management possibilities*

The detailed and valuable presentations were mostly proactive in considering the opportunities provided by the property, the principles that need to be respected by its management, the resources available and the challenges to be addressed.

Overall what emerged clearly was a shared understanding of the key challenges and of the elements for a road map to move forward.

7. *Summary of Issues raised during the International Seminar*

The following is a summary of the main points that were raised by speakers. These are grouped under headings suggested by the mission expert rather than in the order that they were presented.

a) *Trans-boundary collaboration*

- The challenges of preparing a trans-boundary plan and the need for international advice on how things have been achieved in other trans-boundary properties;
- Trans-boundary collaboration started with the preparation of the EIA for the oil platform EIA in 2005; continued with the development of the SoOUV from 2011 (which involved 17

- specialists working over the course of one year) and expanded with the development of the Management Plan;
- Drafting the SoOUV strengthened collaboration and judgements in decision making;
  - The development of the Management plan has fostered approaches to territorial planning and broadened the scope of collaboration to include education, art, business, and tourism issues;
- b) Aims of the Management plan:*
- As well as sustaining OUV to the ‘diamond’, the Plan should be seen as a mechanism for resolving conflicts; for promoting a sustainable local community, for addressing the causes of population decline, for addressing the weak involvement of local communities; for developing mechanisms to allow collaboration with NGOs; and for improving awareness raising; for promoting ecological tourism;
  - Overall the Plan must address ‘governance’ rather than just ‘management’; the process is important;
  - The Plan must promote sustainable dev strategic /activities
- c) Local Communities:*
- The landscape of the Curonian spit reflect human activities, the interaction between culture and nature; Local communities help protect both cultural both culture and nature; the Plan must be beneficial to them and to business people
- d) Accessibility:*
- Management Plan should be a Public document that communities can access; ‘everyone’ should have a copy of the Plan;
- e) Overall Vulnerabilities and threats:*
- Harmonious interaction between people and nature is vulnerable to the instability of the dunes;
  - The most vulnerable element is the collection of 19<sup>th</sup> century wooden houses;
  - Extent of archaeological evidence from dunes sand is comparatively unknown ; more evidence may be found;
  - Slow degradation of dunes;
  - *Pinus mugho* was planted to fix the restructured dunes and has now reached maturity and there is a need to replant with *pinus sylvestris*;
  - Natural forces that formed Spit are continuing: also climate change (more storms); annual loss of 5-7 metres ;
  - Floods a problem in centre of forests which are at sea level;
  - Threat of fire;
  - Unregulated tourism ;
  - Wind farms approaching Lithuanian coast;
  - Large traffic flows; parking facilities too small;
  - Excessive development;

- Construction of illegal buildings in the Russian Federation; these have been largely addressed on the Lithuanian side through 35 recent successful court cases;
- Water quality problems in the Lithuanian side;

*f) Specific Planning issues:*

- Acknowledged constraints of previous approaches to zoning that led to separation of activities and functions;
- Lack of acknowledgement of the overall value of the Spit, its uniqueness and symbolic value.
- Need to harmonise the Management Plan with other plans such as Neringa Master Plan : the Development Plan in the Russian Federation is no longer valid and its revision should provide the opportunity to acknowledge OUV;
- Current differences in zoning between countries; water zones included in Lithuanian side; in the Russian Federation differentiation between recreational zones and natural zones to control access arrangements for the latter;
- Key features of the cultural landscape run longitudinally along the Spit whereas zoning around settlements is transverse and cuts across the morphology of the property.
- Russian side has no officially approved Buffer Zone although this is being approached;

*g) Specific Tourism issues:*

- Lack of overall tourism strategy; need for a vision based on what type of tourism is most appropriate and how tourism might support socio-economic development of settlements; how detailed should this vision be? who approves it? who will implement it?
- Seasonal business; needs prolonging through events; dominance of one-day tourists;
- labour scarcity & non local capital on Lithuanian side;
- Different tourism structures: on Lithuanian side more self-managed tourists; on Russian side more formal arrangements for groups through National Park administration ;
- lack of adequate information for visitors;
- undeveloped water tourism and cross lagoon contacts;
- non-regulated flows of visitors;
- lack of infrastructure , beach facilities and high quality services;
- More work needed on negative impacts of tourism and traffic;

*h) Recent achievements:*

- In Lithuanian side: drinking water improvements; waste water treatments installed to keep lagoon clean; now 97% residents connected;
- In 2008 waste dumping site closed; waste sieved and removed; land fill being removed; recycling introduced;

*i) Challenges:*

Need to:

- Foster understanding of the Spit as a coherent whole;
- Clarify misunderstandings or different understandings of the significance of attributes;
- Define panoramic views;

- Maintain ‘naturalness’ of landscape;
- Resolve different approaches to re-naturalising the forest; and to whether dunes should continue to move or be stabilised through ‘fixing’ plants;
- Address resources for long-term maintenance of coastal dune ridge;
- Support traditional construction materials and techniques for vernacular buildings;
- Support traditional processes for dune stabilisation;
- Produce guidance on appropriate new architecture;
- Develop a joint programme for the study and conservation of the overall group of traditional houses; perhaps with support of a third State Party ;
- Capture traditional knowledge
- Provide more defined cultural assets for visitors to see – to help visitor flow;
- Reduce car flows along the Spit
- Support water tourism and appropriate location for ports and yacht harbours;
- Create better recreational infrastructure for visitors;
- Develop sustainable movement strategy based on single integrated transport system and more public transport;
- Promote inter-institutional collaboration and the involvement of wider range of agencies such as education;

*j) Tools that are needed:*

- Better understanding of the impact of society over time; of the history of the re-structuring of the dunes from the first plan to stop shifting sand adopted in 18<sup>th</sup> century and completed in 19<sup>th</sup> century, right through to the present day;
- Better understanding of how the Spit has been perceived by writers such as Thos Mann and by artists and what they focused on – boats, dunes etc;
- Acknowledgement of the importance of water, and fishing
- One agreed map needed of the overall asset that explains its integrity
- Acknowledgment that authenticity relates in part to traditional socio-cultural practices such as the intangible traditional systems related to the ongoing protective management of the dunes and to building materials and practices.
- Coordination of agencies based on clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities; and on acknowledgment of the differences between countries;
- Clear definition of status of cultural and natural heritage;
- Habitat inventory for Russian side;
- Inventory of vernacular buildings in both countries to be made readily accessible; protection for buildings in the Russian Federation ( 178 protected buildings in Lithuania and currently only 3 in Russian Federation)
- Control for illegal buildings; these are being addressed in Lithuania while still being constructed in the Russian Federation;
- Water quality problems in Lithuanian side;

The issues, challenges and aspirations that were set out in the Seminar are very rich and needs to be reflected in the Management Plan, where they are not already included.

8. *Draft Management Plan*

The draft Management Plan has yet to be fully considered by all relevant bodies. Parts of the draft available to the Mission were only available in Russian – but the full contents list was in English.

The draft is a very promising document that clearly sets out a Description of the Property, Protection Measures, Current Management Structures, SWOT Analysis, Key Guidelines for Management, Threats Prevention, Monitoring and Control, Education and Information, and an Action Plan.

As touched on in the concluding discussion of the Seminar, the mission expert suggests that the Plan needs strengthening through the addition of an overall Vision for the Property, a clear definition of the attributes of OUV and thus what needs managing, clearer articulation of the challenges to be met and how these will be addressed, and more details on the governance structure. These suggested additions are discussed below one by one.

9. *Vision for the Management Plan*

It is suggested that at the beginning of the Plan, after Introduction and General Description, it would be helpful to introduce a short Section on Vision. This could set out the aspirations for the Plan in the context of where all the partners would like to be in, say, 10 years time in terms of an overall sustainable approach to the property.

At the moment the Plan states that no actions should impact adversely on OUV (para 4.1). Perhaps drafting the Vision could allow consideration to be given to turning this around so that sustaining OUV becomes the driving force for a dynamic approach to the sustainable development of the Spit.

10. *Defining the Attributes of OUV*

A most important part of the Management Plan should be a section on defining what is to be managed. The main purpose of the Management Plan is to sustain the OUV of the property. In order to achieve this, it is important to set out clearly the attributes of OUV. These attributes are the tangible and intangible aspects of the property that convey its OUV. They will include the overall characteristic of the cultural landscape as well as the processes that are necessary to sustain it.

For other World Heritage properties, the process of defining the attributes of OUV has proved to be a very helpful and useful exercise in bringing people together to develop a shared knowledge and understanding of the property in terms of why a property has OUV.

Although the main aim of a Management Plan is to sustain OUV, and thus manage the attributes that convey OUV, such Management Plans may also manage other attributes that are of regional, national or local value. If such is to be the case for the Curonian Spit, it is suggested that this should be made clear at the beginning of the Plan and that national and local attributes should be set out as well as those that convey OUV. For the Curonian Spit this approach could be very

helpful in including natural aspects of the property, such as biodiversity, that may not contribute to OUV but are nevertheless of regional and national importance and are closely intertwined with cultural attributes.

#### *11. Challenges*

The SWOT analysis in the draft Plan provided to the Mission is only in Russian so this has not been studied. It is not known if it includes all the points raised during the Seminar. If not, it is suggested that this is augmented.

As well as the vulnerabilities (or weaknesses) and threats, the other half of this analysis is opportunities and strengths. The Mission suggests that in between the SWOT analysis and the following section 4, it could be helpful to have a short Section that sets out the key challenges that the Plan will need to address.

#### *12. Addressing the Challenges*

Section 4 is the key part of the Plan as it sets out principles, guidelines, and activities for threat prevention and for management.

It is suggested that this one Section might be divided into two. The first Section could set out principles and guidelines that over-arch all the proposed activities and include the current sections 4.1 to 4.3. The second Section from 4.2 onwards could then focus on Main Areas of Activity and Actions.

In the Mission's view, this second Section needs more work to relate the Activities and Actions to the attributes of OUV and to the identified Challenges.

Currently this section is divided into the following sub-sections: Principle Directions (that includes threats); 4.2.1 Biodiversity and landscape conservation; 4.2.2 Forest protection and fire prevention 4.2.3 Protection of cultural heritage and traditions; 4.2.4 Settlement development; 4.2.5 Climate change; 4.2.6 Resource exploitation, 4.2.7 Tourism development 4.2.8 Traffic flow control.

It is suggested that this be re-structured to stress that the whole Spit has cultural value, not just the settlements, houses and archaeology – in other words to stress the importance of the coherence of the whole cultural landscape. Perhaps the Section could be structured around conservation of the attributes of the cultural landscape such as Dunes, Forests, Settlements followed by further sections on how these are to be utilised as part of sustainable plans for tourism and other activities. For instance that Section might be set out as follows:

##### *4.1 Principles and guidelines*

##### *4.2 Conservation of key aspects of the cultural landscape*

##### *4.2.1 Overall cultural landscape – key relationship between various parts; overall morphology, perceptions of the landscapes, visual appreciation, key views*

- 4.2.1 *Dunes and traditional re-instatement practices; addressing climate change; natural disaster; coastal erosion; coastal management*
- 4.2.1 *Forests including risk prevention; fires*
- 4.2.3 *Settlements – including traditional buildings and traditional building practices; risk prevention; need for conservation project*
- 4.2.4 *Docks and harbours and fishing*
- 4.2.5 *Sea and Lagoon*
- 4.3 *Utilising the Cultural Landscape*
  - 4.3.1 *Developing a Vision for sustainable local communities; promoting traditional crafts*
  - 4.3.2 *Developing a Strategy for sustainable tourism including defining an ‘offer’ that will attract longer stays;*
  - 4.3.3 *Traffic control and management*
  - 4.3.4 *Exploitation of resources*
- 4.4 *Understanding and Promoting the Cultural landscape (a new section that could include Education and Information in 6.1 and 6.2 as well as Research and Survey)*

Tourism and the need for a strategy to define how this might be achieved has been a concern of the World Heritage Committee. The section of the Plan related to this issue needs to be a ‘plan within a plan’ but one that respects the overall Vision for the property and the attributes of OUV.

13. Governance:

The need to focus on governance and the processes of management was highlighted during the Seminar. The mission considers that it would be helpful to insert a new Governance Section before the Section on Monitoring and Control in order to draw attention to the overall management structure that is being proposed.

14. Review

For all Management Plans the process of review is crucial to ensure that they reflect current circumstances. It is suggested that some details are included in the Plan as to how it will be reviewed and over what timescale.

15. Summary of Recommendations:

The mission expert commends the States Parties on the very valuable progress made with the first draft of the Management Plan. In order to make this document as useful as possible to all organisations that will be involved in its implementation, and to make it readily understood by all stakeholders, the mission expert suggests that the Plan needs strengthening through the addition of a few extra sections and through the re-organisation of the central section that sets out Activities and Actions.

All of these recommendations aim to link the plan more clearly to the OUV of the property and to present a clearer understanding of the aspirations of the key stakeholders for the future of the property in terms of its potential to deliver substantial benefits. These also stress the need for the property to be considered as a coherent cultural landscape.

It is thus recommended that:

1. An overall Vision for the Property is inserted at the beginning of the Plan, after Introduction and General Description. This would set out the aspirations for the Plan in the context of where all the partners would like to be in, say, 10 years time, and of how the OUV of the property might become the driving force for a dynamic approach to the sustainable development of the Spit.
2. Define clearly out clearly the attributes of OUV as the basis for management. These attributes are the tangible and intangible aspects of the property that convey its OUV. They will include the overall characteristic of the cultural landscape as well as the processes that are necessary to sustain it. Decide whether the Plan is to include proposals for the management of other attributes of national and local value and if so, set these out as well.
3. Provide a clearer articulation of the challenges to be met.
4. In order to set out more clearly how the Challenges will be addressed, divide Section 4 into two sections. The first section could set out principles and guidelines that over-arch all the proposed activities and include the current sections 4.1 to 4.3. The second section from 4.2 onwards could then focus on Main Areas of Activity and Actions. It is suggested that the text addresses the following:
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  - 4.4 *Understanding and Promoting the Cultural landscape ( a new section that could include Education and Information in 6.1 and 6.2 as well as Research and Survey)*
5. Insert a new Governance Section before the Section on Monitoring and Control in order to draw attention to the overall management structure that is being proposed.

6. Include details as to how the Plan will be reviewed and over what timescale.

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**ANNEXES:**

- I Mission Programme**
- II Seminar Programme**
- III Participants to the Seminar**
- V Draft Retrospective Statement of OUV**

**ANNEX 1: MISSION PROGRAMME:**

**Monday, 18<sup>th</sup> of March**

ICOMOS expert Ms. Susan Denyer arrives in Vilnius.  
Trip to Klaipėda with the representatives of the MoE of Lithuania.  
Accommodation in Nida

**Tuesday, 19<sup>th</sup> March**

Day 1 of Seminar at Nida, Neringa Municipality, Lithuania

**Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> March**

Day 2 of the Seminar at *Kurskaja kosa* National Park (Lesnoje), Russian Federation; travel to Vilnius; Susan Denyer departs for London.

**ANNEX II: SEMINAR PROGRAMME:**

**“The issues of Curonian spit cultural landscape management”**

International seminar on the issues of UNESCO site Curonian Spit

(Republic of Lithuania/Russian Federation) Management Plan

19-20<sup>th</sup> of March, 2013

19<sup>th</sup> of March, Nida, Neringa municipality, Republic of Lithuania

20<sup>th</sup> of March, Russian Federation

**Agenda**  
19-20<sup>th</sup> of March participants (The agenda of Neringa municipality (Nida) and the agenda of the seminar for UNESCO)  
19-20<sup>th</sup> of March participants (The agenda of Neringa municipality (Nida) and the agenda of the seminar for UNESCO)

~~10.00 Session I: Curonian Spit management Plan. The general structure and key  
Practical  
13.00 S  
16.30 S  
Discussion areas~~

## Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> of March

9.30 Arrival to the administration office of *Kurskaja kosa* National Park (Lesnoje).

### 9.40 Opening remarks

*Representative of the Russian Federation* (Mr. Anatoly Kalina, director of the *Kurskaja kosa* National Park)

*Representative of the Republic of Lithuania* (Mr. Vidmantas Bezaras)

Ms. Susan Denyer, UNESCO (ICOMOS) expert.

### 10.20 Session V:

#### **Potential models of cooperation as preconditions for protection and sustainable management of OUV of the Curonian Spit**

*Moderator Mr. Anatoly Kalina, Director of the Kurskaja kosa National Park.*

*Representatives of the Russian Federation* (Mr. Anatoly Kalina, Ms. Liudmila Poplavsakaja, deputy director of *Kurskaja kosa* National Park, representatives of Kaliningrad region and Zelenogradsk local authorities...)

*Representatives of the Republic of Lithuania* (Mr. Vidmantas Bezaras).

Ms. Susan Denyer, UNESCO (ICOMOS) expert

Discussion

### 12.30 Lunch break

Brief acquaintance with the *Kurskaja kosa* National Park, Russian Federation

### 15.00 Session VI:

#### **Traffic management possibilities in the Curonian Spit.**

*Moderator Ms. Lina Dikšaitė, deputy director of directorate of National park of Curonian spit*

*Representative of the Republic of Lithuania* (Ms. Lina Dikšaitė)

*Representative of the Russian Federation* (Ms. Irina Zhukovskaja)

Discussion and summary of the sessions

#### 15.40 Summary of the sessions

*Ms. Susan Denyer, UNESCO (ICOMOS) expert*

Discussion

### ANNEX III PARTICIPANTS TO THE SEMINAR

#### **ICOMOS expert:**

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#### **Republic of Lithuania:**

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2. Rata I3askyte, director of State service for protected areas under the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania, e-mail: r.baskyte@vstt.lt. tel.: (8-5)272 3284.
3. Romas Pakalnis, Phd, chairperson of Lithuanian National Commission for UNESCO, deputy director of State service for protected areas under the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania, president Science council of state Science research institute of Nature research centre, e-mail: r.pakalnis@vstt.lt. tel.: (8-5) 272 8497.
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6. Rugile Kicaite, chief specialist of Protected areas section of Protected areas and landscape department of Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania, email: r.kicaite@ilam.lt. tel.: 8-70663567.
7. Lina Diksaite, deputy director of directorate of National park of Curonian spit, email: l.diksaite@nerija.lt. tel.: +37068607423.
8. Marija Dremaitė, Phd, Secretary General of Lithuanian National Commission for UNESCO, e-mail: marija.dremaitė@unesco.lt. tel.: +370 698 48413.
9. Rugile I3alkaite, Heritage Programme Coordinator of Lithuanian National Commission for UNESCO, rugile.balkaite@unesco.lt, tel.: + 370 61832758.
10. Algimantas Degutis, deputy director of Department of cultural heritage under the Ministry of Culture, e-mail: alde@heritage.lt. tel.: 8 69840415.
- II. Linas Naujokailis, leading architect of the General plan of Neringa municipality.
12. Ramunas Povilanskas, Dr. habil, professor of Faculty of health Sciences of

Klaipeda University, e-mail: ramunas.povilanskas@gamil.com.

13. Laura Paulauskiene, head of Tourism Policy Division of Investment and export department of the Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Lithuania, e-mail: laura.paulauskienc@ilukminJ1. tel.: 870664810

14. luozas Raguckas, deputy director of Lilhuanian Slate department of tourism under the Ministry of Economy, e-mail: jragCcil(ourism.lt. tel.: (8-5) 210 87 07.

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#### **Representatives of Neringa municipality:**

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#### **Representative of "KlaipCda region's roads"**

#### **Representatives of NGO's**

#### **Russian Federation:**

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Liudmila Poplavskaja, deputy director of *Kurskaja kosa* National Park, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Ecology of Russian Federation.

Irina Zukovskaja, responsible specialist of *Kurskaja kosa* National Park, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Ecology of Russian Federation.

Julia Sidlovslkaja, responsible specialist of *Kurskaja kosa* National Park, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Ecology of Russian Federation.

Sergej Balbuckij, Mayor of country administrative unit of Curonian spit.

Valerij Gubarov, Mayor of Zelenograd district of Curonian spit.

Larisa Kopcova, head of Service of cultural heritage protection of government of Kaliningrad area.

Representatives of Kaliningrad region authorities

Representatives of Zelenogradsk district local authorities

Representatives of UNESCO RF secretariat

Representatives of Ministry of

Representatives of NGO's

## ANNEX IV DRAFT RETROSPECTIVE STATEMENT OF OUV

### *Draft Statement of Outstanding Universal Value, 15-03-2013*

#### *The Curonian Spit, Lithuania and the Russian Federation (C994)*

##### **Brief synthesis**

The Curonian Spit landscape is a unique vulnerable sandy wooded cultural landscape of the coastal spit with small Curonian lagoon settlements formed and still being formed by the sea, wind and human activity. Rich with abundance of unique natural and cultural properties it has retained its social and cultural importance.

The Curonian Spit cultural landscape reflects changes in the natural environment and local community, and the need to choose and implement the appropriate actions over time in order to survive in the changing environment.

The history of Curonian spit is dramatic: 5,000 years ago a narrow (98 km in length and 0.4–3.8 km in width) peninsular, the Great Dune Ridge, separating the Baltic Sea from the Curonian Lagoon, was formed on moraine islands from the sand transported by currents and later covered by forest. After intensive logging in the 17–18th centuries, the dunes began moving towards the Curonian Lagoon burying the oldest settlements, so that at the turn of the 18th to the 19th century it became evident that human habitation was no longer possible here if no deliberate action was taken. At that time the dune stabilisation work began, which has continued for 200 years till today. By the end of the 19th century, a protective dune ridge was formed along the seashore which prevented sand migration inland and the Great Dune Ridge was reinforced using brushwood hedge and planting trees. Currently, forests and sands dominate in the Curonian Spit. Urbanised areas (eight small settlements) cover just about 3%. The most valuable elements and qualities of the Curonian Spit cultural landscape are the unique size and general spatial structure of the cultural landscape expressing harmonious coexistence between humans and nature as well as characteristic powerful panoramas and silhouette from the Curonian Lagoon; cultural formations including the remains of postal tracks, trade villages of 10–11th centuries, historic fishermen villages and other archaeological heritage covered by sand; the spatial-planned structure and architecture of ancient fishermen villages turned into resort settlements: ancient wooden fishermen houses, professionally-designed buildings of the 19th century: lighthouses, piers, churches, schools, villas; elements of marine cultural heritage.

Natural and man-made formations include the distinctive Great Dune Ridge and individual dunes, relicts of ancient parabolic dunes; man-made protective coastal dune ridge; relicts of moraine islands, seacoast and littoral forests, littoral capes; ancient forests, mountain pine forests and other unique sand flora and fauna, bird migration path;

Social-cultural traditions, spirituality, social perception of the area – reflections of life style of society former based on fishermen, artists, scientists, yachtsmen and gliders, travellers and other visitors, are of high importance.

##### **Criteria**

##### **Criterion v:**

The Curonian Spit is an outstanding example of a landscape of sand dunes that is under constant threat from natural forces (wind and tide). After disastrous human interventions that menaced its survival the Spit was reclaimed by massive protection and stabilization works begun in the 19th century and still continuing to the present day.

### **Integrity**

The entire complex of the Curonian Spit landscape reflects valuable qualities and underlying processes as well as retaining historical functions and specific sustainable land use methods related to the peculiarities of the natural environment as well as a specific spiritual bond between humans and the nature. The boundaries of the World Heritage property are adequate to contain the attributes of Outstanding Universal value. Some of these attributes, such as the fishermen's houses fall into decay, need a careful maintenance and an appropriate repair. The property as a whole is very sensitive to pressures such as climate change, severe weather events, fire, excessive development and tourism. Because of the persistent continuous evolution and development of the cultural landscape it is very important to regulate visitation to the property, new developments and other economic activities in order not to pass the point at which irreversible changes could occur, causing the loss of its identity and Outstanding Universal Value. The most vulnerable authentic elements of the Curonian Spit cultural landscape are the oldest wooden fisherman houses and the wooden decor of professionally designed buildings, the man-made protective coastal dune ridge, which is influenced by the natural coastal processes reinforced due to global climate changes.

### **Authenticity**

In landscape terms, the Curonian Spit has high value. It is an example of a special landform that is subject to changes owing to natural phenomena resulting from climate variations and from human interventions. The latter have been both catastrophic, as in the case of the drastic deforestation in the 16th century, and beneficial, as demonstrated by the creation of artificial barriers in the 19<sup>th</sup> century against further incursions by the sea. The cultural, natural and man-made formations and other valuable elements and qualities of cultural landscape comprising the current structure of the Spit landscape illustrate well the most important features of its formation through their shapes, volumes, materials, purpose and functions. The authenticity of landscape is reflected by tangible and spiritual values of different historical periods shaping its identity.

The vitality, spirituality and special mood of the cultural landscape and its unique nature is highlighted by authentic forms of local intangible heritage, including marine cultural heritage formations and phenomena, traditional trades, folklore and artistic traditions, ethnographic elements of fishermen lifestyles, unique methods of protective coast and dune ridge management and forest maintenance; and sustainable recreational use, which is a leisure cultural tradition from the 19th century.

### **Protection and management requirements**

The Curonian Spit is situated in the Curonian Spit National Park in Lithuania and the Kurshskaya National Park of the Russian Federation. The status of the National Parks safeguards the protection of the cultural landscapes. Both National Parks have common goals of conservation of the Curonian Spit as an integral natural and cultural formation and its individual elements with the main priority to conserve the cultural landscape and attributes which are a part of the property's Outstanding Universal Value. A very important prerequisite for the protection of the Outstanding Universal Value is state land ownership in the National Parks.

The Governments of both states are responsible for conservation of the Curonian Spit: in the Republic of Lithuania through the Ministry of Environment and authorised agencies, and in the Russian Federation through the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment. The Governments have created the national

parks authorities who execute functions and have a key role regarding the conservation of the property, forest and coastal management. The protection of immovable cultural heritage is the responsibility of the Cultural Heritage Department of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania and the State Service for Protection of Cultural Heritage of the Kaliningrad region of the Russian Federation.

The territory of the Curonian Spit is administered by Neringa and Klaipėda City municipalities of the Republic of Lithuania, by the Federal State enterprise “National park “Kurshskaja kosa” and the municipal unit of “Kurshskaja kosa” of the Zelenogradsk area of the Kaliningrad region of the Russian Federation as regards to the area of the villages of the Curonian Spit in the Russian Federation. Local authorities in the Republic of Lithuania determine the main trends of socio-economic development, manage and plan settlements, and generally take care of the protection and management of the territory implementing territorial (spatial) planning documents of the whole Curonian Spit. The local community is the main conservator of tangible heritage and carrier of intangible heritage.

For effective management of the Outstanding Universal Value closer collaboration of all institutions and other stakeholders in the States is needed as well as between States.

In the Republic of Lithuania any activity posing a threat to the Outstanding Universal Value of the Curonian Spit is prohibited by the Law on Protected Areas (2001), and Protection Reglament of Curonian Spit National Park (2002). In the Russian Federation the relevant laws are the Federal Law of Specially Protected Nature Territories of the Russian Federation (1995) and the Law on Federal State Enterprise (FSBA) (2012), implemented through spatial planning documents.

Different attributes of the property require different protection regime and management activities. For this purpose zones of different conservation regimes have been established in the National Parks such as strict reserves, reserves, recreational, residential and other zones. These zones and the conservation measures and the possible uses of National Parks are outlined in spatial planning documents.

The main territorial (spatial) planning documents in the Republic of Lithuania are the Management plan of the Curonian Spit (2012, adopted by Government), and National Park borders plan (2010, adopted by Parliament). Klaipėda City municipality has valid general plan of 2007, Neringa municipality general plan is adopted by municipality in 2012.

In the future the preparation of a common single territorial (spatial) planning document for the management of the area and ensure conservation of the Outstanding Universal Value of Curonian Spit in Lithuania is foreseen. The main territorial (spatial) planning document in the Russian Federation is The Development Plan of National park “Kurshskaja Kosa” for 2009 – 2013.

Coordination of actions in both States is necessary to protect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property. To ensure conservation of the Outstanding Universal Value, to improve cooperation of all institutions in both States, and to agree on future activities, it is planned to develop an integrated Curonian Spit Management Plan, covering the whole property till the 2013. Preparation of this Plan is essential and should include a Tourism Management Plan and also address the other major pressures potentially affecting the property. The implementation of territorial (spatial) planning documents and safeguarding execution of legal acts is a high priority.

