GEORGE CHUBINASHVILI NATIONAL RESEARCH CENTRE

FOR GEORGIAN ART HISTORY AND HERITAGE PRESERVATION

DRAFT MANAGEMENT PLAN

FOR THE WORLD HERITAGE SITE

GELATI MONASTERY

ANNEX 1

ACTION PROGRAMMES

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Director of the Centre   Project Manager

Mariam Didebulidze   David Khoshtaria

Contents

ABBREVIATIONS USED

MoC&MP- Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia

MoE&NR- Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Protection of Georgia

MoE&SD - Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia

MoRD&I - Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia

MoF - Ministry of Finance of Georgia

GNTA - Georgian National Tourist Administration

APA - Agency for Protected Areas

FD - Forestry department

1. INTRODUCTION

Chapter 5 of the MP gives a complete review of issues and related management actions that are needed to achieve the management objectives. Based upon these recommendations a list of programmes has been made that should be completed within the next 5 years (2016-2020). After this period, the plan has to be revised and updated. The programmes are shown in Table 1 (reproduced from Table 10 in Chapter 5 of the Management Plan).

Spatial component	MANAGEMENT ASPECT			
	Culture	Nature	Society	Strategic actors
WH Site **(Chapter 2)**	Facilitate Cultural heritage management ▪ Conservation • Research and education • Training • Monitoring Facilitate tourism;	Protect the setting of the WHS and its visual appearance	Manage traffic and visitor flow; Manage use as religious centre	Patriarchate MoC&MP
Natural monument and forest **(Chapter3)**	Protect cultural heritage monuments	Facilitate natural resource management; Conservation and rehabilitation; Tourist trails	Develop circuit of nature trails; Promote and enforce sustainable resource use	MoE&NR
Rural area **(Chapter 4)**	Protect cultural monuments and archaeological sites	Protect visual appearance and physical integrity of the WHS	Promote sustainable agriculture	Municipality Tkibuli
Site management	Monastery; Kutaisi Historical Architectural Museum Reserve	Local Administration of Imereti Caves Protected Areas	Administrative Unit Kursebi Local inhabitants	Governance and communication between the Management Committee and the site working group (Chapter 5)

Table 1. Action Programmes

It should be noted that the programmes in this section of the Management Plan are at different stages of development. They vary from some projects which are fully planned, costed and resourced to others which at this stage are aspirational, and need much more work to provide necessary detail. This means that it is possible to provide more detail and certainty on timing for some of them than for others.

As time goes on, the more aspirational programmes will become more detailed and more concrete and it will be possible to update the Action Programmes accordingly. The Action Programmes will continue to be developed through the life of the Management Plan as one of the responsibilities of the World Heritage Site Management Committee.

2. PROGRAMMES FOR THE WORLD HERITAGE SITE

Preface

As stated in the first paragraph of section 5.2. of the MP, the first priority issue is to complete the ongoing implementation of the Conservation Master Plan and to strengthen the project management.

Conservation requires regular monitoring and maintenance and qualified and skilled staff. Education and training of the technical staff has a high priority therefore.

The WHS is both a cultural monument and a religious centre; its religious functioning should be protected and safeguarded.

Finally, Management should also foster research and dissemination of results through scientific publications and cultural education.

Cultural Heritage Conservation Programme

1. Rationale

The Gelati Monastery Conservation Master Plan has been elaborated in 2008 and was approved by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre in 2009. Since then all conservation interventions were carried out according the Plan.

The Conservation Master Plan initially was designed as a package of proposals: for rehabilitation/restoration plans of separate architectural sites, archaeological research, conservation of wall painting, stone conservation, zoning of the property area for different functions etc. Extensive works already undertaken within the planned activities have revealed a number of new challenges and provided valuable information to be considered. At the same time, conservation needs were better understood and improved the conservation policy of the World Heritage. This should be reflected in the Gelati Monastery Conservation Master Plan in order to preserve all attributes and features associated with OUV of the Site from the long-term perspective.

In 2015 a joint ICOMOS/WB mission was invited to visit the site In order to improve further parameters for treatment and safety measures for the overall structural stability of the Gelati Monastery Complex. The Mission has reviewed the existing documentation on the ongoing works in the Gelati Monastery and provided recommendations for additional measures; establishment of a permanent monitoring system of the dome of the Church of the Virgin was considered an absolute and immediate necessity.

This particular issue and some other measures concerning the wall consolidations were combined with the ongoing project "Architectural Rehabilitation of the Church of the Virgin at Gelati Monastery" that is implemented by the Georgian Arts and Culture Centre financed by the US Ambassador's Large Grants programme and the programme "Rehabilitation and Conservation of the Stone Surface and Structure of the Church of the Virgin at Gelati Monastery" to be funded by the MDF/ World Bank.

2. Location

The programme is carried out within the compound of is the Gelati Monastery WHS.

3. Description of the works

a. Conservation and consolidation of the Church of the Virgin

The grey areas in the table indicate when the particular task will be carried out.

Phase one

DESCRIPTION	2015		
CONSOLIDATION OF WALL AND STONE STRUCTURE OF THE DOME AND DRUM	May	June	July
Improvement of Scaffolding on the dome			

DESCRIPTION			
Installation of monitoring system on the dome			
Rehabilitation of reinforcing horizontal bars drum window openings			
Creation of reinforcing ring on the bottom of the drum			
Treatment with Biocide			
Post-treatment patina cleaning			
Cleaning of spaces between the stones			
Cleaning of cement fillings			
Filling up the joints and cracks between the masonry stones			
Replacing lost stones with new ones			
Consolidation of powdered and delaminated stones			
Anchoring the stones (by so-called micro-fiber rope) UHTSS (FIDSTEEL 3X2-G)			
Anchoring the stones by glass fiber reinforcement			
Consolidation of missed parts of the masonry			
Consolidation of micro-cracks			
Cleaning of stone surface			

Phase two

DESCRIPTION	2015				
CONSOLIDATION OF WALL AND STONE STRUCTURE OF THE CROSS ARMS	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.
Treatment with biocide	▓				
Post-treatment patina cleaning		▓			
Consolidation of wall and stone structure	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
Cleaning of spaces between the stones	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
Cleaning of cement fillings	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
Filling the joints and cracks between the masonry stones	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
Replacing lost stones with new ones	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
Consolidation of powdered and delaminated stones	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
Anchoring the stones (by so called micro-fiber rope) UHTSS (FIDSTEEL 3X2-G)	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
Anchoring the stones by glass fiber reinforcement	▓	▓	▓		
Replacing missed parts of the masonry	▓	▓	▓		
Repairing micro-cracks	▓	▓	▓		
Cleaning of stone surface	▓	▓	▓		

Phase three

DESCRIPTION	2016								
CONSOLIDATION OF WALL AND STONE STRUCTURE OF THE CHAPELS	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.
Treatment with biocide	▓								
Post-treatment patina cleaning		▓							
Consolidation of wall and stone structure			▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
Cleaning of spaces between the stones			▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
Cleaning of cement fillings			▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
Filling up the joints and cracks between the masonry stones			▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
Replacing lost stones with new ones			▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
Consolidation of powdered and delaminated stones			▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
Anchoring the stones (by so called micro-fiber rope) UHTSS (FIDSTEEL 3X2-G)			▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
Anchoring the stones by glass fiber reinforcement			▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
Consolidation of missed parts of the masonry			▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
Repairing micro-cracks			▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
Cleaning of stone surface			▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓

Phase four

DESCRIPTION	2017		
CONSOLIDATION OF WALL AND STONE STRUCTURE OF THE CHAPELS	Mar	Apr	May
Treatment with biocide			
Post-treatment patina cleaning			
Consolidation of wall and stone structure	▓	▓	▓
Cleaning of spaces between the stones	▓	▓	▓
Cleaning of cement fillings	▓	▓	▓
Filling up the joints and cracks between the masonry stones	▓	▓	▓
Replacing lost stones with new ones	▓	▓	▓
Consolidation of powdered and delaminated stones	▓	▓	▓

Anchoring the stones (by so called micro-fiber rope) UHTSS (FIDSTEEL 3X2-G)			
Anchoring the stones by glass fiber reinforcement			
replacing missed parts of the masonry			
Repairing micro-cracks			
Cleaning of stone surface			

The total cost of the programme is GEL 985,210.

b. Update of the Master Plan

The Conservation Master Plan update will include an evaluation of the results of the works carried out, it will present new technical information that became available and results of new archaeological discoveries and will summarize the recommendations of the report by joint ICOMOS/WB advisory mission to the WH Property in 2015.

Moreover, the conservation policies for separate components will be described and a broader conservation vision will be presented that covers the maintenance strategy, preventive conservation measures, monitoring, conservation of excavated archaeological remains, prioritization of the archaeological study components. Implementation of some specific and urgent recommendations is already under way.

The update of the Conservation Master Plan will include elaboration of detailed plans for the following activities:

- Conservation of the old cobbled path and integration into the hiking trail;

- Conservation of old pavement of the Monastery courtyard;

- Conservation of the perimeter defence wall of the Gelati Monastery one of the characteristic features of the old, external appearance of the Monastery ensemble;

- Conservation and protection of archaeological deposits and remains. This includes both the already sheltered north side of the Academy building (warehouse, water supply network and tunnel communication system and new findings near the south gate: a tomb of an unknown person and unearthed remains of the earlier gate;

- Repair of the old rainwater drainage system alongside the foundation of the Church of the Nativity of the Virgin;

- Improving the structural stability of the Church of the Nativity of the Virgin based on the recommended studies; this also includes construction of a permanent monitoring system on the dome of the church;

It is hoped that the update of the Master Plan will be completed in 2016. Once this has been done, necessary works to be carried out in the remaining years of this Management Plan will be identified and carried out as funding becomes available.

4. Responsible Agency

The National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia in consultation with the Apostolic Orthodox Church of Georgia.

5. Execution

Conservation and rehabilitation works will be carried out by Georgian Arts and Culture Centre (NGO), "Georgian Heritage" (NGO), Department of Conservation and Art History of the Tbilisi State Academy of Fine Arts, construction engineering company "Ikorta" (Ltd), and conservation company "Gorso (Ltd). The project is funded by the USA Ambassadors Fund's Large Grant Programme, the World Bank through the Municipal Development Fund of Georgia, and the National Agency of Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia.

The Conservation Master Plan has been prepared by the NGO "Georgian Heritage". The National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation may commission its update work to the same agency. The work will be carried out in 2015 and 2016. The cost of the work is still unknown; the project will be funded by the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation.

6. Expected output

The works planned will improve the state of conservation of the site and its authenticity and ensures the long-term protection of the WHS.

Monitoring and Maintenance Programme

1. Rationale and objective

Gelati is a large monastery that consists of the main church, two other churches, the bell tower, the two gates, the Academy, the three dwellings, and the oil press building. The owner of the site is the Apostolic Orthodox Church of Georgia.

Conservation of the monuments requires monitoring of their status, regular maintenance and repairs. The Master plan accepted in 2008 is presently implemented and includes major restoration works. However, monitoring and regular maintenance are as yet not include in the programme.

The potential effects on the site of uncontrolled access by large numbers of visitors are not recognized. There is neither an official guided service established nor a full time caretaker employed. Monks are responsible for day-to-day management of the site, visitor monitoring, general upkeep of the territory, ensuring safety, basic cleaning, and maintenance inside the churches as well as for the whole area within enclosure walls. This is not enough for proper management of the site especially during peak periods such as important religious holidays and weekends. Measures should be taken in order to provide the public with information on the site and reduce the risk of deliberate damage to the monuments.

School excursion on the site

The large numbers of visitors to Gelati create problems in terms of litter, illegal trading, begging, and need for increased security, toilet facilities and parking.

2. Location

Regular maintenance and repair is not only required for the WHS but should include also other monuments within the Buffer Zone.

3. Description of work

a. Monitoring

The components of the Monastery are preserved in an authentic state. Monitoring and maintenance of both the WHS and nearby monuments are of major importance. Structures in the Gelati Monastery compound should be monitored on a regular basis (once every three months).

b. Mitigate effect of threats

Natural threats

The natural environment of the Gelati Monastery has a very high humidity all year around. Consequently, the main threat to the wall paintings, mosaics and stone masonry is moisture. Without regular maintenance, grass and minor plants grow on the walls of the monuments that may lead to damage of facing stones.

Shoots of fig tree on the west wall of the south gate   *Biological damage of the stone surface*

Due to the natural climatic conditions and lack of regular maintenance, biological growth is intensive on the walls of the oil press building and enclosure, small shoots of fig tree, moss and ivy can be seen on the walls of different buildings of the Monastery including the south gate and the main church.

Pigeons threaten the wall painting of the main church by leaving guano on its surface.

The following measures should be taken to protect the monuments from the natural threat:

- it is necessary to install climate control and to monitor the humidity by hygrometers both inside and outside the main church and the church of Saint George. in order to protect the frescos, mosaics, and curved stones from damage by the high humidity.
- it is proposed to install bird spikes on the projected areas in the interior of the main church. to protect mural painting from pigeon roosting.

The oil press covered with plants

Human threats

Pollution and littering is a major problem. The sanitary facilities are unsatisfactory and the monks are unable to clean the garbage left by the visitors. Lack of litterbins and toilets complicates proper maintenance of the site. Particularly the grassland around the monuments and excavated structural remains adjacent to the Academy are constantly littered and the courtyard needs regular maintenance.

In order to address the problem of pollution and littering, structural measures are required:

- Garbage cans should be put and regularly cleaned. The present number of monks is insufficient to cope with this.
- It is recommended to outsource these services during summer and to appoint a person, with the additional advantage that begging will reduce.

4. Responsible agency

Two main bodies are involved in the management of the Gelati Monastery. The Orthodox church of Georgia and the State represented by the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia and its unit the Kutaisi Historical Architectural Museum-Reserve.

5. Execution

The Monastery administration is responsible for day-to-day management of the site, visitor monitoring, general upkeep of the territory, ensuring safety, basic cleaning, and maintenance inside the churches as well as for the whole area within the enclosure walls.

The National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia is responsible for monitoring and maintaining a good state of conservation of the site, providing a proper methodology for interventions and issuing permits, and also providing a general management framework as well as visitor facilities and information.

The agency also acts in case of illegal or inappropriate intervention ensures the proper documentation and recording of the site and reports to World Heritage centre as appropriate.
The Kutaisi Historical Architectural Museum-reserve is responsible for monitoring of the state of conservation of the monument. The local staff provides technical consultation and advice to the monks on minor repair works at the site.

6. Expected outcome

The following outcomes are expected:

- Reduced risk of damage due to natural threats such as humidity, vegetation and birds;
- Well-kept and clean environment and a more attractive visual appearance of the WHS;
- Opportunities for community involvement by employing local labour.

Academic Studies Programme

1. Rationale

This section deals with the main priorities of the academic study of the Gelati Monastery World Heritage Site. The research framework is designed to provide a better basis for management decision-making. The objectives set out below should be achieved by the end of the management plan in five years time (2016-2020).

It is generally accepted that the site is better managed when its historic and cultural significance is well understood and its research and educational values are properly acknowledged. Therefore a sustained archaeological investigation within and around the monument as well as research of the architectural ensemble and wall paintings of the Gelati Monastery is essential for the management of the site in an appropriate way.

The Gelati Monastery has eight centuries of continuous history and human activity. The Monastery was of major significance throughout the Medieval period. It still keeps its authentic function and continues to have an important place in spiritual and religious life of Georgia.

The Gelati Monastery is internationally significant for its architectural ensemble, outstanding mosaic and wall paintings. It is an iconic monument of Georgian medieval art and architecture, the most vivid reflection of cultural and intellectual development in the Georgian "Golden Age" (12th -13th c). It is the only medieval monument in the larger historic region of Eastern Asia Minor and the Caucasus that still has well-preserved mosaic decoration comparable with the best Byzantine mosaics, as well as the largest ensemble of wall paintings from the 12th- to the 17th centuries.

Thus the Gelati Monastery still retains a huge potential for research. The academic study programme identifies priorities for new research and explains how the objectives set out in the programme will be fulfilled.

2. Description of work

a. Inventory and database of the site

The inventory should cover all buildings of the Monastery and their wall paintings, archaeological evidence and movable artefacts (kept at present both in the Monastery and in museums, but created in the Monastery or having belonged to it). Also an inventory of sites and monuments located in the Buffer Zone of the WHS should be carried out.

The results of the inventory will be stored in a database, which will be prepared in the framework of the research programme as it should be based on the results of the past and current academic study and on the existing documentations of the site.

At present, textual and visual documentations of the site, such as inventory cards, reports of archaeological excavations and conservation activities, drawings, and photos (including historical photos taken in late 19th and early 20th centuries) are kept in various research

institutions, archives and museums in Tbilisi and Kutaisi. It is important to link all existing materials to provide a "one-stop-shop" that enables access to the full information by the public, researchers, conservationists, stakeholders, and data curators. The database should be kept under regular review and should be updated as knowledge advances.

b. Reinterpretation of the history of the Gelati Monastery

More than 50 years have passed since the publication of the monograph on the history and architecture of the Gelati Monastery. Since then, our knowledge has been increased. Archaeological excavations have revealed new structures and cultural layers thus making topical the task of dating or re-dating discovered structures as well as existing buildings within the Monastery and of identifying construction phases of the Monastery. Technical investigation of the wall paintings exposed earlier layers of the paintings in some parts of the main church of the Monastery. This new data change our vision of the building phases, the chronology of the execution of the wall paintings and the history of the site. New data raise several important questions such as who were the donors of these initiatives etc. Special attention should be focused on the early history (Classical antiquity, late Hellenistic period, etc) of the site. Therefore a reinterpretation of the history of the site is vital for our understanding of its significance.

c. Archaeological research within the site

Since a potential for new discoveries is high, continuation of archaeological research in previously identified sensitive areas is a priority of the academic study programme. Both for management of the site and for research aims, it is important to:

- Set up a scientific base for the conservation approach that will protect the upstanding buildings and the ruined or buried structures of the WHS;
- Complete photographic survey of all the archaeological features;
- Monitor all archaeological structures within the Gelati Monastery on a one-year cycle;
- Carry out assessment of the condition of each of the structures outside the walls of the WHS on a one-year cycle.

The following excavation works are scheduled in the next five years:

- Archaeological monitoring will be undertaken during the implementation of the infrastructure project outside the walls of the Monastery where the visitor centre will be placed;
- In 2016, excavation works will be conducted on the areas adjacent to the main church, the church of St Nicholas, the bell tower, and the oil press; cleaning of both the natural (arranged in the rock clefts) and artificial water collectors will be monitored by archaeologists;
- in 2016 and 2017, archaeological study will be conducted in the basement floor of the monks' house standing to the north of the main church, which contains remains

of a Medieval vaulted structure. The rehabilitation project of the house will be based on the results of the study;

- In 2017 and 2018, archaeological investigation will be conducted on the territory located between the Academy building and the house of the Bishop Gabriel Kikodze. The basement of the house will be excavated;
- Between 2017 and 2020, archaeological excavations will be carried out to the south and east of the southern gate. According to preliminary data, these areas are archaeologically sensitive and may contain the remains of fortification, the auxiliary gate, and the fountain.
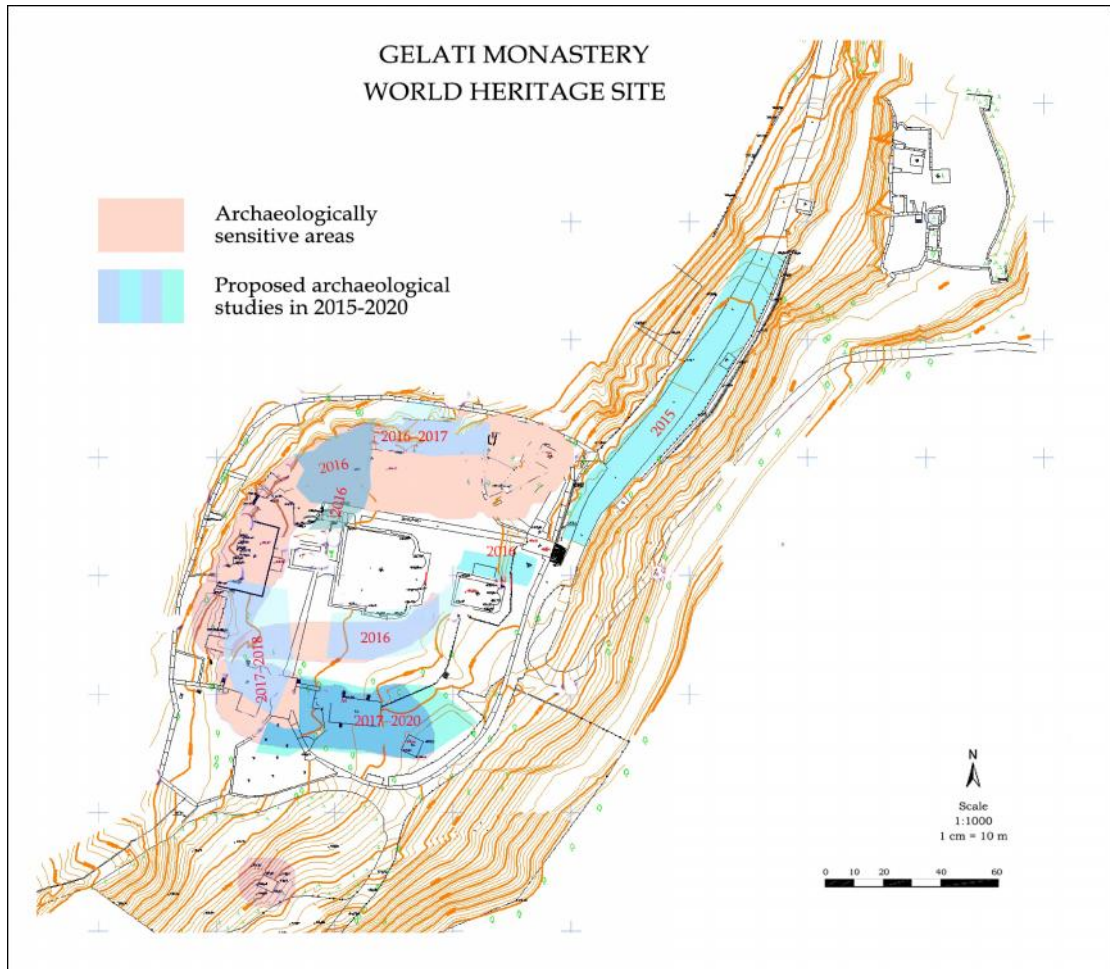
Topographic map of the Gelati Monastery and location of archaeological sites

d. Multidisciplinary research

A multidisciplinary study of the site should be one of the major tasks of the academic study programme. A comprehensive study of the cultural heritage of the site means to research and evaluate all aspects of the monument - written sources, architecture, wall paintings, archaeology, movable artefacts (icons, manuscripts, etc) that were created in Gelati or belonged to the Monastery for centuries and that are stored at present in different museums and archives of Georgia. It should take into account also the monuments - fortresses and churches together with their murals that are located near the Monastery and

are linked to it. This study must be implemented by scholars of different fields – historians, art and architectural historians, archaeologists, archivists, etc.

e. Publications

The results of the research works should be published. The materials obtained during the academic study of the site will form a basis for scholarly research (monographs, articles etc), for albums, educational materials, guide-books, etc.

3. Research Strategy

The research strategy should be accomplished in a responsible way. The academic study must be based on the highest academic level and should be an important contribution to the management of the site. The research work on the site such as archaeological excavations, geological investigations (if needed), investigations of the stone and technical investigation of the wall paintings (if needed) must be undertaken at the highest standard avoiding any destructive process and at all cost should be compatible with WHS values.

4. Responsible agency

The objectives of the academic study must be brought into effect through national research organizations and individual scholars. An Advisory Committee will be established that will set priorities of academic study and will guide and advise the research to be undertaken on the site.

Archaeological studies in Gelati will be conducted by the joint team of the Kutaisi Historical-Architectural Museum-Reserve and Kutaisi State Historical Museum.

Study of the architecture and art of Gelati will be carried out by a number of research institutions, universities, and museums. The key role will be played by the George Chubinashvili National Centre, which is the leading research organization in Georgia for the study in the history of Medieval Georgian art and architecture.

An essential role in the study of various aspects of the Gelati Monastery belongs to the new Gelati Academy, a non-governmental research organization established in 1990s as a spiritual and intellectual successor of the Medieval Academy. It unites eminent scholars of different fields. The new Gelati Academy has particularly contributed to the study of numerous Medieval documents related to Gelati.

5. Expected Outcomes

The main outcomes of the academic study programme will be: an enhanced awareness and knowledge of the Gelati Monastery, its historic, spiritual and cultural features; the promulgation of the research results and a greater understanding of the research value of the monument and of better management of the Site.

Results of academic study will extend our understanding of the history and development of medieval Georgian architecture as well as of the wall painting from the 12th to 17th centuries; will highlight new scientific problems such as characteristics of Georgian

architecture and wall painting at different stage of its history and its relationship with Byzantine culture, the activities of royal and ecclesiastical donors in the Monastery.

The results of academic study will be of great use not only for historians, art historians and medievalists but it would be applied in educational curricula. The data of academic programme will be of great importance for conservation activities on the site in future.

Training Programme

1. Rationale

The Gelati Monastery is one of the most important historical and architectural sites in Georgia. Both local and foreign tourists visit it all year around. As a living monastery it hosts monks and at the same time it is a place where scientists and conservationist work together.

Experienced staff should be available to provide information and support these user groups. This may include employees of the Kutaisi Historical-Architectural Museum Reserve and monks living on the premises, depending on the task that should be performed.

Conservation, interpretation and visitor services require knowledge and skills. The staff and the monks involved in these activities should meet high professional standards. Education and training of staff is essential therefore.

Training on site management at the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation.
October, 2014

In order to ensure the integrity and the authenticity of the Monastery and its cultural values restoration and maintenance is required. The Restoration Faculty of the State Academy of Fine Arts of Georgia provides a special source of expertise and training, particularly for wall painting conservation. This faculty, through its international contacts, has been successfully involved in Gelati conservation issues for the last decade.

Thanks to the co-operation with the Restoration Faculty, it was made possible to produce glazed tile in order to roof monastic buildings. The professional conservationists were trained in producing glazed tiles according to Medieval technique.

Within the frame of the Twinning project supported by the European Union(GE11/ENP-PCA/OT/13), a training courses on Site Management and Museum Collection Management were held at the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia on 6-10 October 2014.

It is essential, however, that the existing staff and new employees can get adequate training on a continuous basis to ensure that they have the knowledge and skills that are required for their tasks.

2. Location

Once the new visitor centre is ready, it offers the facilities for teaching and practical demonstrations on site; courses will be organized on the premises.

3. Description of work

The programme includes the following phases:

Inventory of needs. It is proposed to set up a working group work to make an inventory of needs and to prepare a programme for the various categories of staff: conservation, interpretation and visitor services. Apart from professional skills, attention should be given to other aspects such as safety procedures, communication- and language skills. Moreover it t is important to clearly define responsibilities of staff and monks and to ensure that those working and living in the Gelati Monastery have the necessary background information on their living environment.

Preparation and organizing courses. Once needs have been identified courses should be developed in cooperation with scientific and educational organizations that can provide the required education and training in compliance with UNESCO recommendations. Attendance at the courses should be compulsory and courses should be completed before an employee starts a job.

Following actions should be taken:

- Set up a working group that will define all training needs;
- Develop an introductory programme for all staff, volunteers (if any) and contractors working in the Gelati Monastery to familiarize them with the background of the WHS and safety aspects;
- Develop a training course for guides on the Gelati WHS in cooperation with the Georgian National Tourism Administration;
- Develop a course in restoration and conservation in cooperation with scientific and educational organizations;
- Train monks and the museum-reserve staff in safety procedures, emergency plans and maintenance;
- Assess and control regularly the quality of the courses.

4. Responsible agency

The National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia.

5. Prioritization

The quality of management and staff of the tourist sector needs to be improved to meet international standards. The same applies for the skills of the staff responsible for the WHS. For that reason the training programme has a high priority.

6. Expected Outcomes

Regular training practices will ensure following outcomes:

- Inventory of training needs;
- Prepared WHS training guidelines;
- Safe environment for all staff, monks and visitors;
- Adequately prepared staff and monks;
- Professional guides who will provide proper information on the WHS.

Visitor Management Programme

1. Rationale and Background information

The Gelati Monastery is an important tourist attraction and a spiritual centre that attracts around 200,000 tourists each year. With a proposed targeted marketing strategy this figure will probably increase in future. This has implications for management.

The level of tourist services should be enhanced, qualified staff should be recruited and trained and safety and security should be assured for both the monument and its visitors. The new information centre is instrumental in this respect and a plan should be developed for its operational use.

Gelati is one of the most popular tourist destinations in Georgia. Despite being a living monastery, Gelati is open for visitors and there are no special regulations established. The patterns of visitors are diverse – it is a must see site for travellers to Kutaisi for both foreigners and Georgians, it is commonly visited by schools and university excursions. Since the collapse of the Soviet regime, the restored monastic function has attracted a significant number of religious visitors from all over Georgia. Thus the typical pattern consists of the wedding parties from Kutaisi and nearby villages, religious practitioners, international and domestic tourists and church representatives.

Visitors entering the site

The programme addresses the problems related to these activities. The programme is related to the Monitoring and Maintenance programme and the Traffic Management Programme.

2. Location

The programme focuses on the visitor flow within the Monastery complex but is also important for other components of the Buffer Zone.

3. Description of work

a. General

The programme includes the following components:

- Managing visitor flow
- Visitor services, the role of the visitor centre
- Accessibility
- Other monument
- Visitor infrastructure
- Recruitment and training of staff.

b. Managing visitor flow; carrying capacity

The Carrying Capacity is defined by the World Tourism Organization as "The maximum number of people that may visit a tourist destination at the same time, without causing destruction of the physical, economic, socio-cultural environment and an unacceptable decrease in the quality of visitors' satisfaction". Carrying capacity is the point at which a destination or attraction starts experiencing adverse effects as a result of the number of visitors.

Visitors to the Gelati Monastery include different categories: school excursions, domestic and international tourists and people attending religious ceremonies. Their pattern of arrival, the duration of stay and the anticipated quality of satisfaction is different.

The visitor number and patterns in Gelati can be only generally estimated, as there is no updated statistics on the visitors at the site. Gelati is one of the most-visited sites in Georgia with an estimated average 200 000 visitors per year. Most tourists visit the area in the summer months May, June, July and August

The maximum number of visitors that can fit on the site at any given time and still allow people to be able to move is normally assumed to be around person per 1m^2. The property of the Gelati WHS, i. e. the Monastery compound within its enclosure has an area of 4 ha, about half is open space and the physical carrying capacity of the area as a whole is no problem. Congestion may occur in the principal building, the Church of the Nativity of the Virgin with a main hall of about 400 m^2, Assuming a max density of 1 person/m^2, the carrying capacity here is 400 persons.

If we assume a duration of stay of 0.5 h for an average tourist, 400 persons should arrive and leave in a period of half an hour in order not to exceed the carrying capacity. The maximum visitor flow is then 800 persons per hour.

Presently the number of visitors is well below this number. Available data are estimates, however. The numbers per tourist category, the distribution of visitor flow over the day and over the year are unknown. These data are required a basis for a visitor management plan.

It is proposed therefore:

- to count the number of visitors in three months in summer
- to update the carrying capacity calculation with new data.

c. Tourist services; the role of the visitor centre

Tourist services

There is inadequate information for tourists who want to reach the site. Apart from the standard sign at the access road to the Monastery that indicates the presence of the Monastery, there are no road signs indicating direction on the way from Kutaisi to the Gelati Monastery. The borders of the WHS are not marked and visitors do not know that they are travelling through the WHS.

Inside the Monastery there is no information for tourist that they can also visit nearby sites and monuments along with visiting the Gelati Monastery. There are only a few Information panels at the site and there are no official guides to provide adequate information and interpretation.

The role of the information centre

At present the lack of high quality information and publicity hinders proper understanding of the WHS both among residents and visitors. Improved public relations have a fundamental role to play in successful interpretation of the Gelati monastery. Personnel capable of and responsible for providing appropriate information about the site to all interested visitors will raise awareness on the importance and value of the WHS.

The new information centre will improve the situation inside the Monastery. The development of tourist infrastructure on specified sites is envisaged by the Imereti Regional Development Programme, which is implemented by the Municipal Development Fund of Georgia, in consultation with the Ministry of Culture and Monuments Protection of Georgia.

The Visitor centre will be equipped with facilities such as: an exhibition room, a conference room, a restaurant, toilets, and toilets for people with limited mobility. It will provide information through professional guides, audio guides, leaflets and booklets.

The visitors' centre will be a one storey building, with a total area of 286 sq. m. located along the access road 50 meter away from the Monastery entrance.

Visitors' centre. Image obtained from the architectural project

Proposed actions

To promote the interest towards the Gelati Monastery it is necessary to:

- Improve directions for visitors how to reach the site
- Upgrade the information on the site
- Appoint professional guides
- Publish high quality books, booklets and leaflets about the site;
- Organize exhibitions;
- Establish a website.

d. Recruitment of staff and training

Presently the staff consists of the following:

1. Manager
2. Museum Collections Keeper Site Manager for the Geguti fortress
3. Site Manager – for Historical Architectural Museum (in Kutaisi)
4. Monitoring Specialist - archaeologist
5. Monitoring Specialist– art historian
6. Monitoring Specialist - historian

7. Educational Programme Specialist

8. Technical Support Specialist

9. Exhibition Supervisor

10. Security Guard of the Geguti Fortress.

The present capacity is insufficient

Proposed action

- to contract at least a one full-time site supervisor and one English- speaking guide;

- to encourage local people to get training as professional guides. This may create new opportunities for employment in future.

e. Accessibility

It is difficult for visitors with disabilities to access the monuments of the Gelati Monastery ensemble. Special arrangements should be made in order to facilitate accessibility for wheelchairs.

The WHS is a public place and must comply with the applicable law on disabled access. The Gelati Monastery itself and all monuments on its territory are only accessible by climbing several flights of steps, while movement by wheelchairs on the territory of the site is not limited due to the flatness of the courtyard. The need to provide access is a sensitive issue in ancient places and especially in Gelati architectural ensemble containing several buildings.

Steps towards resolving the problem include:

- To make temporary arrangements for wheelchairs to access the Monastery and its individual monuments;
- To elaborate a permanent infrastructural concept for wheelchairs.

f. Access to other monuments

The number of visitors to the Gelati Monastery and its surrounding monuments each day is not limited. Visitors are always admitted free of charge to all monuments. Filming and photography at the monuments are not restricted.

The landscape of Gelati Monastery is not only limited to the WHS but it bears the imprint of many successive centuries of human cultural activities. The environs of the Gelati Monastery preserve numerous historical sites. Examples include:

- The church of the Virgin known as "the Spring of Life";
- A group of structures, so-called Sokhasteri;
- The Church of St Elijah;
- The Church of St Saba;
- Ruins of Medieval fortification on the Cape of David.

Current public awareness of and access to heritage assets in the wider WHS landscape is generally low. Attention is firmly focused on the Gelati Monastery themselves, with little appreciation of the surrounding monuments. Visitor should be given a chance to enjoy walking around wider area.

Proposed actions:

- Provide information on the surrounding landscape of the WHS;
- Install road signs around the WHS.

g. Visitor infrastructure

At the moment, there are few visitor facilities and related infrastructures. Outside the present north entrance, there is a small parking area. Trading stalls and toilets are located on the territory of the parking.

The current arrangements for visitors in the Gelati Monastery are unsatisfactory and improved visitor facilities and infrastructures are needed. This is foreseen in the Conservation Master plan.

4. Responsible agency

Two main bodies are involved in the management of the Gelati Monastery. The Orthodox church of Georgia and the State represented by the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia and its unit the Kutaisi Historical Architectural Museum-reserve.

5. Execution

The Monastery administration is responsible for day-to-day management of the site, visitor monitoring, general upkeep of the territory, ensuring safety, basic cleaning, and maintenance inside the churches as well as for the whole area within the enclosure walls.

The National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia is responsible for monitoring and maintaining a good state of conservation of the site, providing a proper methodology for interventions and issuing permits, and also providing a general management framework as well as visitor facilities and information.

The agency also acts in case of illegal or inappropriate intervention ensures the proper documentation and recording of the site and reports to World Heritage centre as appropriate.

The Kutaisi Historical Architectural Museum-reserve is responsible for monitoring of the state of conservation of the monument. The local staff provides technical consultation and advice to the monks on minor repair works at the site.

6. Prioritization

The priorities are identified in the Table below.

	Effectiveness and culture conservation	Availability of financial resources	Availability of human resources	Priority
Managing visitor flow		Municipal Development Fund	Staff info centre	Low for short term, high for long term
Visitor services, the role of the visitor centre	High	Municipal Development Fund and NGTA	Staff info centre	High
Accessibility	Moderate	Core financing MoC&MP	External contract	High for temporary measures
Promote other monuments	Moderate	Core financing MoC&MP	Staff info centre	Moderate
Visitor infrastructure	High	Municipal Development Fund	Eternal contract	High
Recruitment and training of staff.	High	Core financing MoC&MP and Monastery	Outsourcing	High

Table 1. Priorities of Visitor Management Programme.

7. Expected outcome

The outcomes from the programme will be:

- Well-equipped visitor centre, which can provide all necessary information to visitors;
- Highly-qualified staff able to meet needs of visitors;
- Improved public access having the quality to welcome all visitors and provide access both spiritual and physical;
- Adequately arranged pathways enabling visitors to enjoy both the WHS and the wider area;
- Developed infrastructure that will mitigate risks of damage on the WHS and represent the site in more attractive way;
- Improved public relation that will raise public awareness about the importance and value of the Gelati Monastery.

Educational and Public Awareness Programme

1. Rationale and objective

Education and training has internal-and external dimensions. The internal component aims at developing the knowledge and skills of the staff working on the World Heritage Site and in the Buffer Zone. This aspect is covered in the vocational training programme and the visitor programme. The present programme focuses on the external component. The external component is used to make people aware of the importance of the WHS and as well as cultural and natural monuments of its Buffer Zone and to promote and support the sustainable use of those resources. It is necessary to increase public awareness of, and interest in the entire Buffer Zone, and to promote its educational and cultural value, not just the WHS.

The Gelati Monastery is an important site to learn and understand the history and culture of Medieval Georgia at local, national and international level; the Monastery has a history of eight centuries of continuous use and related human activities that demonstrates the intellectual and artistic development of the country and its historic and cultural relationships with the Eastern Christian world.

The World Heritage Site provides, therefore, educational material for people of different age: children at primary and secondary schools, undergraduate students of archaeology and Medieval history, post-graduate and doctoral students. This has the potential successfully to promote learning and development by teachers and school or university leaders within the Georgian educational context.

This should be achieved through

- courses and hands on trainings for targeted groups such as local residents, stakeholders and schools and
- workshops for teachers and university staff involved in these teaching and training programmes.

Both the Moc&MP and the Moe have developed educational programmes that emphasize their role in cultural and environmental management. NGOs and associations also play a leading role in training activities to promote sustainable use of land and recourses. However, there is a need to develop a coordinated approach that integrates the various aspects of environmental education: conservation of culture and nature together with sustainable use of natural resources. The objective of the present programme is to make an inventory of ongoing educational activities and to integrate them in a programme for cultural resource management and environmental education. The Management Plan for the Gelati Monastery provides a global overview of these components in a coherent way and is a good base for the development of such a course.

2. Location

The educational activities may be performed in a new information centre, which must be equipped with the required audio-visual equipment. The Agritourism Development Centre

"Korena", which operates several guest-houses in the village Gelati, may be used to provide accommodation for participants from outside the area.

3. Description of work.

a. General

The proposed programme includes:

- An inventory of ongoing activities;
- Preparation of a framework for integration of these activities, using the present management plan as a basis;
- Development of a teaching and training programme for the various user groups.

b. Ongoing activities

Interpretation and presentation are powerful means of raising public awareness and appeal. The guided tours, the wide range of literature and the information panels on site all contribute to public education and the interpretation of the cultural and natural monuments of the World Heritage Site. Presently, public awareness of the Gelati Monastery as a WHS is generally low and only a few of the most famous cultural and natural monuments in its Buffer Zone are known.

In order to provide a platform for improving public awareness and understanding of UNESCO's goals and objectives the course will be based upon relevant publications and guidelines of IUCN, UNESCO and ICOMOS that deal with education about cultural heritage. Presently the following ongoing activities have been identified:

- In 2014, the Supplementary Manual for Teachers: *Schoolchildren Introducing Young People to the Presentation of Heritage Sites and Historic Cities* was published. Publishing of the supplementary manual became possible with the assistance of the European Union's Eastern Partnership Culture Programme – "Regional Cooperation for the Development of Cultural Heritage" realized by ICOMOS Georgia. A digital version of the Georgian version is available for all concerned on the website www.rcchd.icomos.org.ge , as well as on the Teachers Internet Newspaper www.mastsavlebeli.ge and a website of the Association of History Teachers www.imsa.ge . Copies of the printed version of the book will be distributed to all public schools.

- The National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia is implementing two educational programmes *Cultural Heritage to Children* and *Archaeology for Kids*. The latter takes place at Samtavro Archaeological Site in Mtskheta, which is also a WHS. A similar educational programme can be developed for the Gelati Monastery.

- Different events are organized annually in the Tkibuli Municipality by the association "New Okriba". The aim of the association is to promote local cultural and eco-tourism and development of small enterprises in the region.

c. Framework for the course

Both UNESCO and IUCN have proposed a logical framework for plan preparation (the process) and have developed tools and techniques to apply this framework in practical cases (the contents). The MP is based upon this framework and includes the following phases:

- *Information,* describing the site and its landscape, characteristics and the cultural, socio-cultural and natural attributes;

- *Assessment of data* with a view to define management objectives;

- *Interventions,* the measures that should be taken to achieve the objectives. This part is mainly theoretical and should be adapted to the level of the target group;

- *Implementation,* the ways to carry out the proposed actions. This part is theoretical and practical and includes fieldwork and training targeted to the requirements of the respective groups.

It is proposed to structure the course along these lines.

d. Curriculum

The proposed curriculum addresses the contents of the various phases. It is proposed to use a modular approach. Depending on the requirements of the target group different modules can be combined to create a curriculum that is tailored to their requirements. The importance of cultural and historical value of the Gelati Monastery is not doubtful, but it is necessary to increase public awareness toward the Monastery and its Buffer Zone as a World Heritage Site. Educational courses should make all target groups understand that protection of authenticity of the World Heritage Site and its setting is vital for the monuments inscribed in UNESCO's list.

e. Educational programme at local level

The Gelati Monastery has the potential to become once again a leading educational centre in the region. It provides important opportunities for:

- Local community;
- Local schools (the village Gelati, nearby villages and Kutaisi);
- Staff of the WHS;
- Monks of the Monastery;

Courses should cover history, archaeology, and the cultural and natural environment of the WHS. Engagement of local community in the educational programme is vital in order to increase general educational standard and the sense of responsibility toward the cultural and natural heritage of the region. It is important also for better management of the site.

f. Educational programme at national and international level

It is very important to broaden the educational role of the Monastery at national and international level and to reach a new audience. It provides good prospect for:

- Educational activities for school children and students of the country;
- Summer schools in archaeology, art history, conservation, monuments protection;
- Both national and international level Conferences and workshops.

4. Responsible agency

The Moc&MP, being the linking pin with UNESCO should take the lead, the courses should be prepared in close cooperation with ICOMOS and other stakeholders.

5. Project team

Courses should be prepared and should be given by experts in the various fields; this requires contribution from the Moc&MP, National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia, Kutaisi University, GNTA, Georgian Association of Guides and etc.

6. Prioritization

There is an apparent need to improve public awareness towards the cultural and natural heritage of the WHS. This course is an effective way to realize this. The management plan is a good starting point for the first course and qualified staff of the various agencies are capable of presenting the underlying theoretical base. The required funds are limited, therefore, and the first course can start when the information centre is ready. If needed, an earlier start is possible using facilities of the Monastery itself or facilities of Kutaisi Historical Architectural Museum-Reserve.

7. Expected outcome

- The programme will increase public awareness and will strengthen the feeling of stewardship and ownership of the local population;
- The course will improve the quality of education on cultural heritage in schools of the region;
- The WHS can be used as a venue for local, national and/or international cultural and educational activities.

Programme for the religious functioning of the Monastery

1. Rationale and Background information

Following the recommendations of the International Seminar on the Role of Religious Communities in the Management of World Heritage properties, organized in Kiev, Ukraine, in November 2010, the World Heritage Committee requested the World Heritage Centre, to elaborate a thematic paper regarding the management of their cultural and natural heritage of religious interest and to invite States Parties to provide voluntary contributions to this end." (Paragraph 7, Decision 35 COM 5A).

The document emphasized that the continuing nature of religious heritage calls for dialogue and mutual understanding between the religious communities concerned and all other stakeholders, who must work together to preserve the significance of cultural heritage associated with the sacred site.

The Gelati Monastery has the status of a WHS and is a sacred site that kept its authentic religious function and use of the property throughout the years. Tourists of all walks of life visit the WHS yearly, and since 1988, when the Monastery restored its monastic function, considerable numbers of religious visitors, domestic and international church representatives visit the Monastery. At present 5 priests, 12 monks and 4 lay brothers live and act at the Monastery.

The Gelati Monastery experiences many of the problems mentioned in the above declaration:

- Uncontrolled visitor flow that interferes with the religious function of the Monastery and the private life of the monks;
- Inadequate facilities to accommodate the priests, monks and lay brothers living in the Monastery and scholars and religious visitors coming to the Monastery;
- Lack of finances and human resources to maintain the premises;
- Need for education and training.

The present programme addresses these problems and proposes actions within the framework of the above UNESCO recommendations.

2. Location

Activities should be carried out within the Gelati Monastery.

3. Description of work

a. General

The programme includes:

- Controlling visitor flow;
- Improving accommodation and living conditions within the Monastery;

- social and economic issues
- Improving the social and economic conditions;
- Education and training.

b. Controlling visitor flow

Presently the Monastery is open all year around and there are no restrictions for visitors. This openness can be considered as a continuation of the openness to laymen peculiar to the Medieval Gelati and should be preserved as a valuable tradition. However, visitors should respect the *typicon* (regulations, rules) of the Monastery. The Visitor management Programme described in section 2 will help to improve the situation, but in addition following measures are proposed to protect the religious functioning of the Monastery:

- Enforcing code of conduct. This implies:
  - ✓ Respectful behaviour on the territory of the Monastery;
  - ✓ Silence in the churches during religious services;
  - ✓ No littering and no picnics on the territory of the Monastery.

- Restricted visiting time for large groups of tourists. They should not be allowed into the churches during religious services without permission of the Monastery administration.

- Coordination of the Monastery life and scientific investigations and construction works. In order to avoid disturbance of the normal functioning of the Monastery, these activities should be coordinated with the Monastery. This implies:
  - ✓ The Monastery should be informed about planned conservation works a month before starting the works. The project must be approved by the Council of Architecture, Art and Restoration under the Georgian Patriarchy.
  - ✓ The Monastery should be informed in advance (a week before) about forthcoming research works and monitoring of the site.
  - ✓ The library of the Monastery should get copies of published material about Gelati.

c. Improving accommodation and living conditions within the Monastery

This includes the following activities:

- Inventory of the required improvements of the quarters of the monks and the residential house;
- Restoration of the living quarters of the Monastery. If new accommodation is required, this should be located outside the compound, on the area south of the Monastery. Monastic cells must be single-storey and should harmonize with the existing buildings and natural environment;
- Construction of toilet facilities for visitors;
- Internal zoning of the compound of the Monastery. A zoning should be applied, separating areas open to the public from private territory, where monks are living and where public access is prohibited. These areas should be clearly marked on the

site. Such places are the area around the monastic cells and the backyard (behind the Bishop Gabriel Kikodze's house). Moreover, the following should be considered:

- ✓ Construction of roads and paved paths in both the public and private areas;
- ✓ Planning of a "green curtain" in front of the monastic cells in order to provide a peaceful and quiet surrounding.

Within the framework of the "**Integrated Revitalization of Cultural Heritage Site of Gelati Monastery**" sub-project of the World Bank's Second Regional Development Project for Imereti Region, it is planned to make a new water supply system for the Gelati Monastery. The work will be done in 2015-2016.

d. Improving social and economic conditions

There are several ways to generate additional income that could help to improve the social and economic situation. The following list is indicative and not exhaustive. Suggestions of the religious community are welcomed and will be discussed with other stakeholders.

- To get a share of the income from tourism and commerce (form of tourist tax);
- Income from selling monastery products: honey, wine, candle; When a separate information centre is built near the bridge as proposed, regular business may be shifted to that location and only church related activities will remain near the Monastery;
- Establishing an atelier for icon-painting, wood-carving etc., where monks together with invited artists can create and sell their own work;
- Revenues from renting facilities for local and international scientific and theological conferences;
- Fees for specialized interpretation and information services for specialized groups (religious and scientific).

e. Education and training

The monks of the Monastery are one of the target groups of the educational programme described in section 2. To make monks aware of the importance of the WHS as well as of cultural and natural monuments of its Buffer Zone, the following activities should be undertaken:

- Courses that cover history, archaeology, art and architecture as well as cultural and natural environment of the WHS with a view to
  - ✓ Explain UNESCO's goals and responsibilities for the monument inscribed in UNESCO's WH list;
  - ✓ Improve the understanding why the authenticity of the WHS should be protected;
  - ✓ Increase the awareness of the importance of National Acts for monument protection and international legal mechanisms for protection of the WHS.
- Training in day to day maintenance and monitoring of the state of preservation with relevant reports to the responsible bodies;
- Safety and first aid training.

4. Responsible body

Two main bodies are involved in the management of the Gelati Monastery. The Orthodox church of Georgia and the State represented by the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia and its unit the Kutaisi Historical Architectural Museum-reserve.

5. Execution and monitoring

The Kutaisi Historical Architectural Museum-reserve together with the Gelati Information centre and the Gelati Monastery will work on regulation of the visitor flow to the Monastery.

The Kutaisi Historical Architectural Museum-reserve will perform the educational programme.

The National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia will be monitoring the execution of the programme.

6. Expected outcome

The outcomes from the programme will be:

- Dialogue between the religious communities concerned and all other stakeholders and improved mutual understanding;
- Controlled visitor flow and entry regime that respects the monastic life;
- Improved living quarters and sanitary facilities for monks and visitors;
- Zoning and improved infrastructure for the Monastery compound;
- Initiatives to improve the social and economic situation;
- Programme for education and training of monks and the Monastery personnel.

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3. PROGRAMMES FOR NATURAL MONUMENT AND FORESTS

Preface

As stated in sub-chapter two of section 5.2. of the MP, nature conservation is important as the visual appearance of the WHS and other monuments strongly depends on the integrity of the surrounding nature.

Restoring the quality of degraded forests should be a high priority issue for the tourist potential of the area as it enhances the attractiveness of the area for tourists in future. The natural setting of the monuments in the forests should be protected and safeguarded and where possible restored.

Tourist trails are a means for environmental education and provide opportunities for tourism. A tourist circuit connecting the Monasteries of Motsameta and Gelati that uses existing ancient roads and connects historic monuments and spectacular karst caves has a great tourist value. This concept is further developed.

Natural Resources Protection Programme

1. Rationale and objective

The MoE&NR has developed a national Forest Concept for Georgia that will be the basis for the management of the National forests. At the regional level the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment Protection is preparing a Management Plan for the Protected Areas in Imereti. The plan includes the lower reaches of the Tskaltsitela River, that has a status as a Natural Monument, and the neighbouring karst caves that are part of the Buffer Zone.

Nature protection is discussed in the MP, a spatial landscape plan is presented and recommendations are given for conservation and protection of nature.

The objective of the programme is to develop a programme for protection of the natural environment within the framework of the above documents

2. Location

Activities should be performed in and around the Buffer Zone of the Gelati Monastery. Activities will be concentrated in the following landscape components, identified in section 4.2 of the Management Plan:

1. Forests that have both natural and socio-economic values:
    - The mountain slopes west of the Tskaltsitela (forests and meadows, 2,18 square km);
    - The west side of the Kursebi Plain (forests and meadows, 1,31 square km).
2. Forests with special natural features that need special protection:
    - The Tskaltsitela River (0,84 square km);
    - The Motsameta Canyon, Nabambrevi and hinterland (geological formation and scenic landscape, 0, 73 square km). The Sakajia Cave in this area has a protected status. The canyon and part of the Tskaltsitela River have the status of a natural monument, category III of the IUCN classification of protected areas.

3. Description of work

a. Forests

These areas have the character of a Multiple Use Territory, however, natural interests prevail here and human activities should be controlled and restricted where needed. The forests in the area have a high landscape value as they define the visual appearance of the WH monument; moreover they are an important landscape element for the natural monument as the forests on the Motsameta plateau and the west bank of the watershed of the river form the East border of this cultural and natural monument.

The management of the area as a whole is governed by the Law on Protection of Cultural Monuments; management of state owned forests is governed by the Forest Code that makes a distinction between forests in protected areas and other forests. It is not clear whether the Buffer Zone is a protected area in the context of the forest code.

Light forest on the Dokhora Mountain used also for grazing.

Internationally there is agreement that the following aspects are key elements in sustainable forest management:

- The extent of forest resources;
- Biological diversity and presence of rare and endangered species;
- Forest health, vitality and resilience (recuperation potential);
- Production function;
- Regulation function;
- Use and non-use values;
- Management regime.

The following activities should be performed to implement a sustainable forest management:

- Detailed mapping of the area.
- Inventory of flora and fauna with a view to define a biodiversity index for the various forest complexes.

- Assessment of the health, vitality and resilience of the various areas and selection of homogeneous complexes with similar management requirements.
- Preparation of a sustainable forest management plan for each complex that includes restoration, recuperation, protection and conservation. All forests should be protected and preserved.
- Forests on the Motsameta Plateau have been degraded due to woodcutting and mining and need to be restored. The forests on the foot hills and slopes of the Dokhora Massif, behind the Monastery, have also cultural and spiritual value due to the presence of small churches and remains of earlier convents. These should be safeguarded.
- Forests bordering the Kursebi and Gelati Plains are used for grazing and hay making. A strict resource use regime should be enforced here.
- Implementation of the plan and monitoring.

b. The natural monument

The Natural Monument and its hinterland should be managed as a strict natural protected area. The management of the Natural Monument is governed by the Law on the System of Protected areas. It should be managed in accordance with the Management Plan for the Imereti Protected areas. It is proposed to apply the same regime for the surrounding forest area within the Buffer Zone.

The Momtsameta Canyon

The higher reaches of the river between the East border of the Buffer Zone and the Natural Monument have no protection status. The management should comply with the directives of the Law on Water. Monitoring of hydrological parameters (water level, discharge) and morfodynamic parameters (erosion) is recommended. Sanitation and sewage treatment are needed to improve the water quality.

4. Responsible agencies

The work should be initiated by the MoE&NR and should be carried out by its Forestry Department, seconded by external experts where appropriate. The Ministry is also responsible for enforcement of the governing laws and regulation.

5. Project team

It is proposed to separate stakeholder involvement at national level from the site management. The Management Committee, with representatives of National Agencies and the Patriarchate, should be responsible for long term planning and approving annual plans and budgets. The site management groups representing local stakeholders are responsible for the coordination and execution.

6. Prioritization

Most of the proposed programmes are urgent but their effectiveness and appropriateness for reaching the management objective may differ. Moreover, the viability depends on the available financial and human resources. Together these factors determine the priority. This is shown schematically in Table below.

	Effectiveness and appropriateness for nature conservation	Availability of financial resources	Availability of human resources	Priority
Forests	High	Included in state budget of forestry department	Local staff of forestry department and external experts	Ongoing activity, high priority for rehabilitation of degraded areas
Nature protection area.	High	Included in budget of Agency for Protected Areas	Local staff of agency and external experts	Ongoing activity within the frame of Management Plan for Imereti Protected Areas

Table 1. Priorities of natural resources protection programme

7. Expected outputs

The expected output is an improved quality of the natural environment and related improved quality of living for the local population. These factors are important for the visual appearance of the natural and cultural monuments in the area.

Eco Tourism Programme

1. Rationale

One of the objectives of the MP is to make people aware of the historic-cultural values and the value of nature. Tourist trails are a means to achieve this. The project area has a network of paved and unpaved roads; some are remnants of the ancient road of King David. They run through typical parts of the landscape with protected natural sites and along many of these roads remnants of other historic monuments remained. These roads can be upgraded and be used as part of a network of tourist trails. Viewpoints and resting places should be made in scenic points and information panels should provide information on historic-cultural and ecological aspects.

Part of the circuit can also be used as an alternative for reaching the monasteries by car and should be integrated in future in a more environmental friendly transport system for the project area that is described in the Traffic Management Programme.

2. Location

Activities should be performed in and around the Buffer Zone of the Gelati Monastery as defined by the presidential decree 03/5 09.01.2014. The proposed trail is shown on Figure 1 below. It will be possible to connect the trail to a long distance network of trails in Imereti.
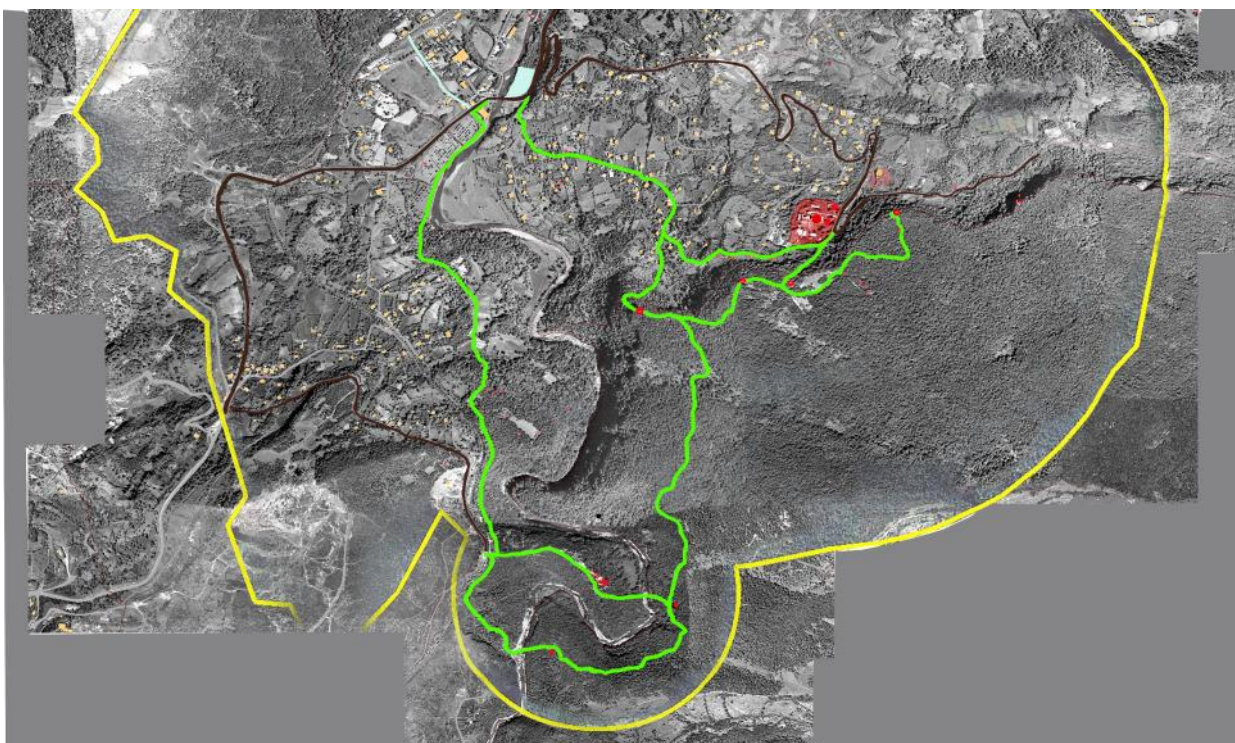

Figure 1. Proposed tourist trail

3. Description

The proposed trail consists of a number of circuits connected at numbered nodal points. It is proposed to use the European system of nodal points used for trails. Numbered nodes link different trails, at each point signs show the direction of the nearby nodal point. The network, the nodal points and the distances between the points are shown on a map and a trip is planned by connecting the points. Maps are placed at important points, copies can be obtained from the information centre. Apps for smart phones should also be prepared.

Trail leading to the Monastery
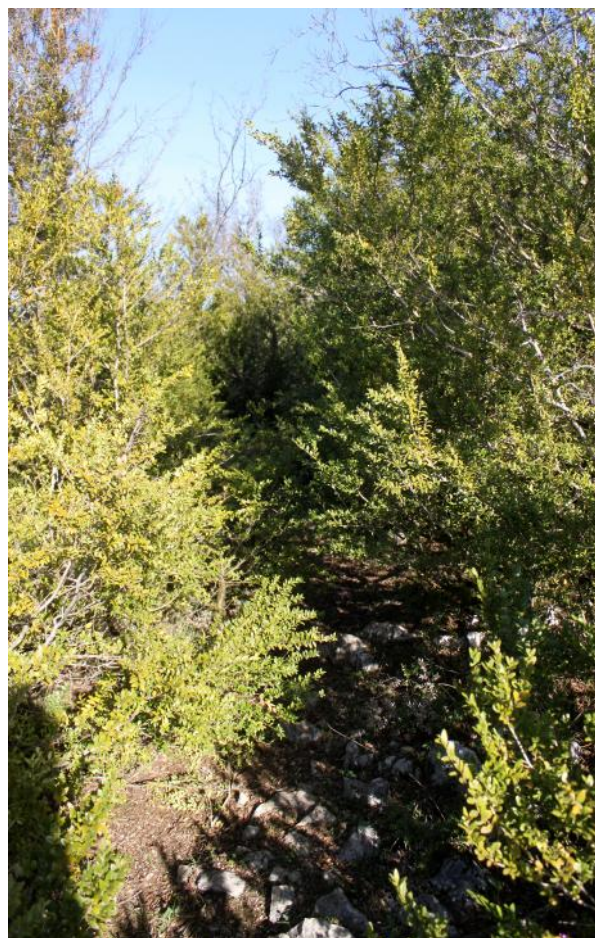
Buxus forest along the trail

The trail consists of a main circuit that runs along both sides of the Natural monument and connects the bridge in Gelati with that near the monastery in Motsameta. A new parking place should be constructed near the bridge in Gelati and an information booth should be located here. The place is easily reached by foot from the Gelati station.

From here the trail runs through the village of Gelati and through the forests on the Dokhora Mountain, it continues on the left bank of the river and along the Canyon. Here it crosses the river south of the canyon and returns to the parking area along the right bank of the river.
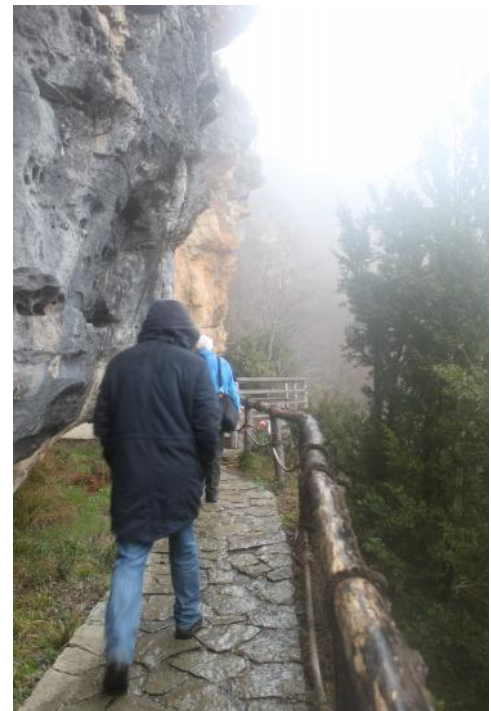
The main circuit is connected to a tourist circuit that follows old roads along the churches of St Saba and St Elijah and the Cape of King David. From this circuit the archaeological sites near the Monastery and St Nino's church on the mountain can be reached.

Typical information panels (Sataplia PA)

Typical nodal point (Netherlands)

Fencing along steep slopes (Sataplia PA)

A second tourist circuit is projected south of the canyon. It connects The Motsameta station with the Motsameta church and the Sakajia Cave Natural Monument located in this area. The caves along the main circuit can also be visited and Sataplia Strict Nature Reserve and Jason Cave Natural Monument, some 5 km outside the Buffer Zone, can also be reached from this circuit. Resting areas are projected near scenic areas and viewpoint. Information panels will inform tourists about the area.

In the trail between Motsameta and Gelati on the right bank a resting area with pick nick facilities is planned that is also accessible from the main road.

Minor infrastructural measures have to be taken. The trail follows existing old roads and paths that have to be upgraded and the footbridge near Motsameta should be improved. An access road to the caves should be made and measures have to be taken to protect the cave and to ensure the safety of visitors. Information panels should be placed along the trail and resting places should be provided. The larger part of the trail is not suitable for wheel chair users.

The total length of the main circuit is 4 km, the two secondary circuits are about 2 km each. An extension is proposed that runs along the Cornea River with a number of Historic bridges. This trail can be reached easily from Gelati but runs outside the Buffer Zone and is not part of the management programme. As it largely enhances the tourist value of the area it is included as one of the (nearby) objects that could be included in a visit to the area.

4. Responsible agencies

As the larger part of the trail crosses forest and the natural monument, the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Protection, in particular the Agency for Protected Areas and the Forestry Department should be the lead agency.

The site management group representing local stakeholders is responsible for the coordination and execution of the work. The work will be executed by local stakeholders and/or external consultants under supervision of the site management group.

5. Prioritization

Construction of tourist trails is an efficient way to enhance the tourist value of the area. Trails are relativity cheap and the staff of the MoE&NR can take care of planning and can supervise constructions. For that reason the project has a high priority.

6. Expected output

The larger part of tourists that visit the area are Georgians. Improved tourist facilities may persuade them to prolong their stay or to stay overnight in guesthouses near the trail.

4. PROGRAMMES FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Preface

Agriculture, tourism and environment protection are priority areas of The Strategy on Regional Development of Georgia for 2010 – 2017. As explained in section 5.1 of the MP Tourism and environment protection are aspects that can be addressed at a regional and/ or local level. As the presence of the WHS is a Unique Selling Point for tourism, sustainable development of its potential for tourism was earmarked as a priority area. Other sectors should be addressed within a regional development policy. The third paragraph of section 5.2 of the MP defines the aspects of a sustainable strategy for tourism.

Sustainable tourism development requires management of nature and cultural values in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, and biological diversity and life support systems. In order to ensure sustainability negative effects of an increased visitor flow should be mitigated. For that reason the visitor flow within the Monastery should be controlled and an overhaul of the existing traffic system is proposed. Buses and cars of tourists should be banned from the area. Tourists can use the proposed circuit of tourist trails or an eco-friendly shuttle service to reach the monasteries. A parking area near the bridge, with tourist information centre and stalls for local vendors, is also foreseen.

Sustainable Tourism Development Programme

1. Rationale and objectives

With the support of the World Bank, a Tourism development plan was prepared for the Imereti region. The Gelati and Motsameta Monasteries are earmarked as priority areas for tourism development in this region. The site specific aspects are discussed in the MP and recommendations for action are given.

The Ministry of Environment Protection has prepared a Management Plan for the Protected Areas in Imereti. The plan includes the lower reaches of the Tskaltsitela River, that has a status as a Natural Monument, and the neighbouring karst caves that are part of the Buffer Zone. These sites may become tourist attractions.

Finally, the World Bank has approved the second Regional Development Project that provides financial support for regional development projects within the Imereti region. The Gelati and Motsameta monasteries are eligible for funding and plans for improvement of infrastructure and building of an information centre are already approved. This may facilitate the implementation of proposed actions. The objective of the present programme is to prepare an action plan for tourism development, within the context of the above regional strategies.

2. Location

Activities should be performed in and around the Buffer Zone of the Gelati Monastery as defined by the ministerial decree 03/5 09.01.2014.

Tourist attractions in the vicinity that are of interest for visitors of the Buffer Zone have also been include although they are outside the official borders.

3. Description of work

a. General

The results of a SWOT analysis presented in the management plan are used as a basis for tourism development in the project area. **Strong** internal points are the presence of the Monasteries, the forests and the protected areas (natural monument, karst caves) in the Buffer Zone. The area is easily accessible by rail and road. The **weak** points are the low level of tourism *infrastructure*, the *lack of a clear development strategy*, the *quality of staff and management* and *uncoordinated actions*. Moreover the poor economic conditions and frequent infringements of laws and regulations of nature protection hamper sustainable development.

The Gelati and Kursebi Plain

The increasing numbers of tourists that visit Georgia provide **opportunities** to improve both the volume and quality of the tourist sector. Related sectors may also benefit due to *linkage* that creates added value to the revenues of tourism. However, these revenues are limited due to *leakage*, the money spent outside the project area due to *absence of adequate facilities* such as accommodation for overnight stay and restaurants or other attractions that may prolong their stay.

Increasing numbers also provide **threats** as tourism may conflict with other aspects, such as the religious function of the church, the protection of cultural and natural resources and the daily life of inhabitants. Moreover, roads and parking facilities will be inadequate to cope with an increasing flow of tourists. The uncontrolled and illegal petty trade will disturb the visitors and the increasing numbers of visitors inside the church will exceed its "carrying capacity". These aspects are addressed in separate programmes but should be taken into account when preparing a programme for tourism development.

The MP gives a review of strategic issues that are important for tourism development. This is shown in Table below.

New markets and products should be developed, the quality of staff and infrastructure should be improved and negative impacts of tourism should be mitigated. The various aspects are discussed below.

TOURIST SEGMENT	MARKETING	PRODUCTS AND SERVICES	INFRASTRUCTURE	HUMAN RESOURCES	SECURITY
General	• *Marketing for prospective product/ market segments to increase the number of visitors.* • *Incentives to increase the length of stay.*	• *Protect and conserve LNC values and functions.* • *Develop new products by combining religious-cultural and ecological assets*	• *Improve public utilities(energy water supply and sanitation* • *Improve access by road and rail* • *Develop alternative mode of transport within buffer zone*	• *Recruit qualified labour*	*Implement tight security and safety measures.* *Recruit qualified guards and security staff*
Trade		• *Produce and sell local products.* • *Increase purchases per visitor (added value)*:	• *Refurbish or replace stalls near Monastery*	• *Train shop keepers.* • *Improve language skills*	• *Discourage illegal petty trade*
Tourist services		• *Provide guides or other services*	• *Create tourist trails* • *Build information centres*	• *Train guides.* • *Improve language skills*	• *Train and educate guards*
Lodging		• *Provide lodging.* • *Host events*	• *Improve accommo-dation*	• *Train hotel staff. Improve language skills.*	
Benefits for society		• *Increased quality of life.* • *Increased environ-mental awareness*	• *Better amenities and infrastructure*	• *Increased standard of living.* • *Improved language skills.* • *Understanding intercultural differences*	• *Security and low crime rate*

Table 1. Measures to facilitate tourism development.

Green = Government, *Blue* = Unions of entrepreneurs, *Red* = Local entrepreneurs

b. Marketing

Marketing is required to develop new markets, to interest customers to visit the site and to provide incentives to prolong their stay. Activities should be initiated by the local tourist sector, seconded by the regional tourist agencies and should be coordinated by experienced consultants. The marketing plan for the Imereti region is a leading document in this respect.

c. Products and services

Visit to the Monastery

The main asset is the Monastery, the main product a visit to the Monastery. The new information centre offers possibilities to broaden the scope of visitor services. Guided tours

by qualified guides may be organized, information on specific scientific issues can be provide and thematic exhibitions can be organized.

Ecotourism

The natural monument and the forests around the Buffer Zone are assets that have not been fully used. Facilities for eco-tourism (hiking and biking) should be developed and local guesthouses should be improved to provide board and lodging. Cultural and religious tourism are the classical Unique Selling Points; eco-tourism should be developed and should be integrated with these traditional products.

Trade stalls at the entrance of the side

The project area has a network of unpaved roads and paths that were used in the past by the inhabitants but are now abandoned and have been replaced by new roads. In a few of these roads architectural monuments and old bridges remained. These roads can be upgraded and be used as part of a network of tourist trails. This is further elaborated in section 3.3. The Ministry of Environment should initiate this action.

Package tours

The area around the Buffer Zone offers also opportunities for tourism. Local tour operators should develop packages for trips to neighbouring attractions such as Sataplia and Prometheus Caves. These packages should combine visits to the Monastery with a visit to other tourist attractions in the neighbourhood and should include overnight stay in or near the project area. Such packages can be sold directly by local entrepreneurs but can also be sold to national operators as a means to reduce the effect of leakage. The prolonged (overnight) stay also offers opportunities to sell local products, thus increasing linkage.

Cultural and scientific events

Another possibility to make overnight stay attractive is to organize thematic events around local traditions (food) or historical sites (historic excursions). The restored Academy within the Monastery offers the possibility to organize scientific conferences and religious events.

d. Human resources

All developments offer opportunities for employment but require also training of staff and upgrading of tourist facilities. The quality of staff and management and the tourist facilities are presently below international standards. The first priority of the Georgian National Tourist Administration is to provide training courses for managers and staff working in the tourist industry. Entrepreneurs in the different sectors should subsequently provide vocational training and education tailored to the needs of their branch. This has already been initiated in certain areas with the support of international donors but should be continued at a larger scale.

e. Infrastructure

Public amenities

Presently the public amenities (energy, water, sanitation) are inadequate or not existing. In order to enhance the quality of services the Municipality and Region should endeavour to improve the level of public utilities within the project area. With financial support from the World Bank, the network for the supply of gas and water is now under construction. Facilities for sanitation and sewage treatment are as yet not available but are urgently needed. Experience in other scarcely populated mountainous areas should be reviewed to define a proper system for this area.

Access roads

The present level of the infrastructure is adequate to cope with the visitor flow. An increase in the number of visitors may damage the access roads and will cause pollution; this is harmful for both the monuments and the environment and creates a health risk for the local population. Moreover visitors arrive at random that causes traffic jams and parking problems during peak hours.

Alternative modes of transport should be considered that minimize these effects. Upgrading the train service between Kutaisi and Motsameta may be a possibility to regulate domestic traffic, if combined with environmental friendly local transportation within the Buffer Zone eco (mini) buses. Parking areas near the monasteries should be abandoned and replaced by a parking area outside the Buffer Zone. From there the eco (mini)buses will bring the tourists to the monuments.

A conceptual design for a revised traffic system is described in the Traffic Management Programme. Another disturbing factor is the transport of stone from the nearby quarry. The government and the owner are presently discussing options to solve this problem.

f. Accommodation

Presently the available tourist accommodation does not meet the standards of international tourism. Existing guesthouses should be upgraded and new facilities may be created by restoring existing old houses in the area. Due to the rural character of the area no major tourist complexes or resorts can be allowed here, however. The private sector should initiate this action, government should develop incentives to facilitate and support these developments through grants or soft loans with extended grace period. With the help of international donors some guesthouses have already been upgraded and other projects will follow as part of an ongoing project to improve economic conditions an create opportunities for employment.

g. Negative impacts, pollution, safety and security

Safety and security are aspects of importance for tourists. Moreover surveillance is required to safeguard property and protect people against negative effects of tourism. It is the first priority of the Government to implement and enforce the relevant laws and regulations for the region as a whole. Noise, pollution and littering are foreseeable negative impacts that have to be addressed in a timely way. Also the visitor flow within the Monastery should be regulated and measures should be taken to guarantee the safety of visitors and the integrity of the monuments.

An increasing traffic flow may cause problems in and around the monument and congestion and traffic jams. For the medium term the overall transport infrastructure should be redesigned to cope with increasing visitor flow. Access to the area by rail and road, internal transport within the Buffer Zone and visitor flow inside the monuments should be reviewed within an overall town development plan.

The Traffic Management Programme describes a more environmental friendly approach that includes improved railway connection with Kutaisi and replacing the private cars and buses by environmentally friendly modes of transport together with the information centre that can provide information for tourists and can act as an outlet for local products. From here visitors can be transported to the Monastery by environmental friendly shuttle buses. The visitor centre is also the pivoting point in the network of tourist trails that can be used to reach both Motsameta and Gelati by foot.

Implementation and enforcement of the Laws and regulation is an aspect of concern. The Municipality is responsible for law and order in the area and the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources will be required to accomplish this task. The Laws and Regulations regarding the Protection of Cultural Monuments should be implemented and enforced by the Ministry of Culture and Monument protection. Safety of visitors in the Monasteries and security of the monuments are important aspects in this respect. These aspects are described in the Visitor Management Programme.

4. Responsible agencies

The agencies responsible for action are indicated in colour in Table 1 above: blue are actions that should be carried out jointly by selected groups of beneficiaries, red are action carried out by individual entrepreneurs. Green are obligations of the government.

Obviously this correlates with the mode of financing: red private financing with governmental support or incentives, blue private financing or public private initiatives partly financed by government and green financed by regional or national government.

5. Project team

As stated in the management plan, it is proposed to separate stakeholder involvement at national level from the site management. The Management Committee, with representatives of National Agencies and the Patriarchate, should be responsible for long term planning and approving annual plans and budgets. The site management groups representing local stakeholders are responsible for the coordination and execution. Plans will be executed by local stakeholders and/or external consultants under supervision of the site management group.

6. Prioritization

Most of the proposed programmes are urgent but their effectiveness and appropriateness for tourism development may differ. Moreover, the viability depends on the available financial and human resources. This is shown schematically in Table 2 below.

7. Expected outputs

The expected output is described in the above sections. The benefits for the local society are shown in the lower row of the table. The direct output is a better product for the tourism sector and a higher turnover for the tourism industry. The indirect effects are a higher standard of living due to reduced unemployment, better public facilities and higher income. Moreover, the proposed information centre may help to solve the problem with vendors near the Monastery.

	Effectiveness and appropriateness for tourism development	Availability of financial resources	Availability of human resources	Priority
MARKETING	High	Financed by National Agency of Tourism and donors	Outsourcing	High, urgent need for coordinated marketing. Can be outsourced if funding is made available
PRODUCTS				
Visit WHS	High	Monastery and MoC	Staff of Visitor centre supplemented by contracted guides	High, can start if local funding is made available
Eco tourism	High	Staff MoE	Staff of MoE	High
Package tours	Moderate	Local tour operators	Private funding and public private partnership	Moderate
Events	Moderate/low	Donor funding	Local entrepreneurs	Low
INFRASTRUCTURE				
Road and rail, public transport. Public amenities. Gas, electricity, water, sanitation	High	Infrastructure and public amenities financed by central and regional government.	Staff of local government and external contractors	High, ongoing as part of regional development project
Feasibility study and implementation of alternative modes of transport	High	Imereti region with donor financing	Subcontract	High
Tourist trails	High	Ministry of Environment with donor financing	Contractor	High
ACCOMMODATION				
Guest houses	High	Private financing , grants and micro credit facilities	External contractors	High, ongoing. To be continued if funds are available
Information centre	High	Donor financing	Georgian National Tourist Agency Local entrepreneurs	High, will help to solve problem with vendors near monastery
HUMAN RESOURCES				
Recruitment and training of staff	High	Financed by National Agency of Tourism. Vocational training financed by local tourism entrepreneurs.	Outsourcing	High, can be outsourced if funding of Tourism Development Project is available.
NEGATIVE IMPACTS				
Pollution	Medium to high	Municipality	State budget	Medium for short term
Traffic regulation	See Traffic Management Programme			
Visitor flow	See Visitor Management Programme.			

Table 2. Priorities of Tourism Development Programme

Traffic Management Programme

1. Rationale and objectives

Traffic has an adverse impact on the WHS Gelati Monastery. The number of cars and buses is steadily increasing over the year; noise and pollution become a problem and traffic jams and congestion occurs during peak hours. There are problems associated with parking, road safety concerns, and limited public transport provision to and from the WHS. These issues have reduced the quality of experience and tranquillity when visiting the WHS. Roads and parking area will not be able to cope with increasing numbers of cars and buses in future. A key aim of the Traffic Management Program is to solve these problem respecting principles of sustainable tourism and approaches to traffic management.

Most visitors arrive at the WHS by car or bus. Local residents use the minibuses that operate from Kutaisi to Gelati. There is no direct public transport available from nearby villages to Gelati. Buses and minibuses from Orpiri, Jvarisa, Tsitskhvati, and Tkibuli follow the main road; bus stops are located 3 km far away from the Monastery.

The programme presents an outline of a traffic management plan to cope with these problems. In this plan, long- and medium-size tourist buses (longer than 6 meters) will not be allowed to enter the village and the area adjacent to the WHS. They should park in a new parking area near the bridge over the river. For minibuses, cars, and motor bikes parking on this area will not be mandatory.

From the new parking area, visitors can use a shuttle bus to go to the WHS. Electrical or hybrid buses will be used for transport to minimize air pollution and noise. Lovers of hiking can reach the Monastery by foot, using the projected tourist trails. A cableway was suggested as one more option to reach the WHS from the proposed parking area. It can significantly reduce traffic on the village road and increase income from tourism; however, its infrastructure may be inappropriate in the vicinity of the WHS. Decision concerning the construction of the cableway must be made only after consultation with the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia.

The plan includes the construction of a waiting area, a café, and toilet facilities in the new parking area. All facilities will be accessible for wheelchairs. Solar panels on the roof of the buildings will be used to generate part of the power. Commercial activities will be concentrated here and facilities near the Monastery will be used for visitor services only.

2. Location

The proposed activities aim at improving conditions within the WHS. This includes a revision of the internal transport system and the construction of a new parking area.

The proposed parking area is located on the left bank of the Tskaltsitela River near the bridge and opposite to the road that leads to the Gelati Monastery. The size of the proposed

plot is 4400 m^2. It is easily accessible from the road. The terrain is gently sloping toward the river and is liable to flooding during high water. Land fill is required to protect facilities against inundation.

The plot belongs to Levan Tkabladze, a resident of the village Gelati. It was registered to him on 05 June, 2014 (registration No 882014291935). According to information provided by local authorities, he agrees to sell his plot though details of sale have not been discussed yet. Estimated price of the plot is about 250 000 GEL (about 110 000 USD as for April 2015).

The proposed activities include also recommendations to improve the possibility to reach the site by public transport. As these actions are outside the scope of the MP they are not further elaborated.

Proposed location of the new parking area

The photo shows the location of the proposed parking area. The road to the right is the access road to the Monastery.

3. Description of work

a. General

This section gives a conceptual plan of the proposed set up and includes the following:

- General outline of traffic system;
- Conceptual plan of the parking facility;
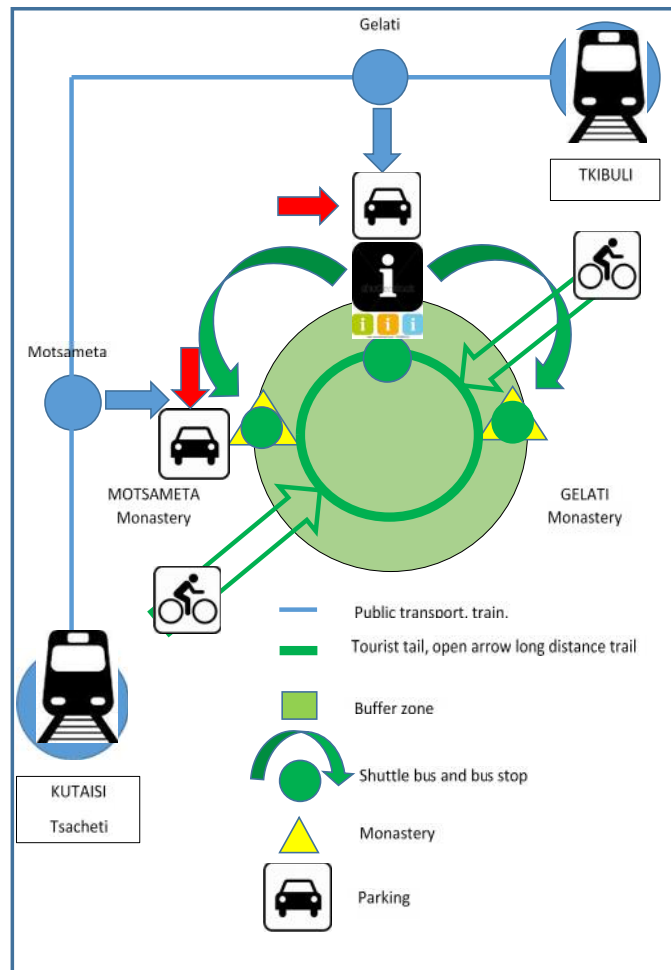- Proposed future actions.

Figure 1. Traffic system

b. Outline of traffic system

A schematic diagram of the proposed traffic system is shown on Figure 1. The green area in the centre symbolizes the Buffer Zone; the two yellow triangles represent the two monasteries, Gelati and Motsameta. The green circle is the tourist circuit described in section 3, "Eco Tourism Programme". The circuit is connected to a proposed long distance tourist bicycle path that links Kutaisi with the Gelati Monastery.

The trails can be reached from the parking near Motsameta and Gelati (red arrows) and can easily be reached from the stations in both places (blue dots). Shuttle busses run between the monasteries and the parking (semicircular green arrows).

c. Conceptual design

Figure 2 shows schematically the proposed plan of the parking area. The low area near the river is used for (future) parking of cars. This area can only be used in summer. Parking area for buses, the waiting area, the café, the toilet facilities and parking of shuttle buses are situated in the higher area near the road. A land fill will be used to increase the height up to the level of the road; the riverside of the landfill should be protected against erosion during high river discharge.
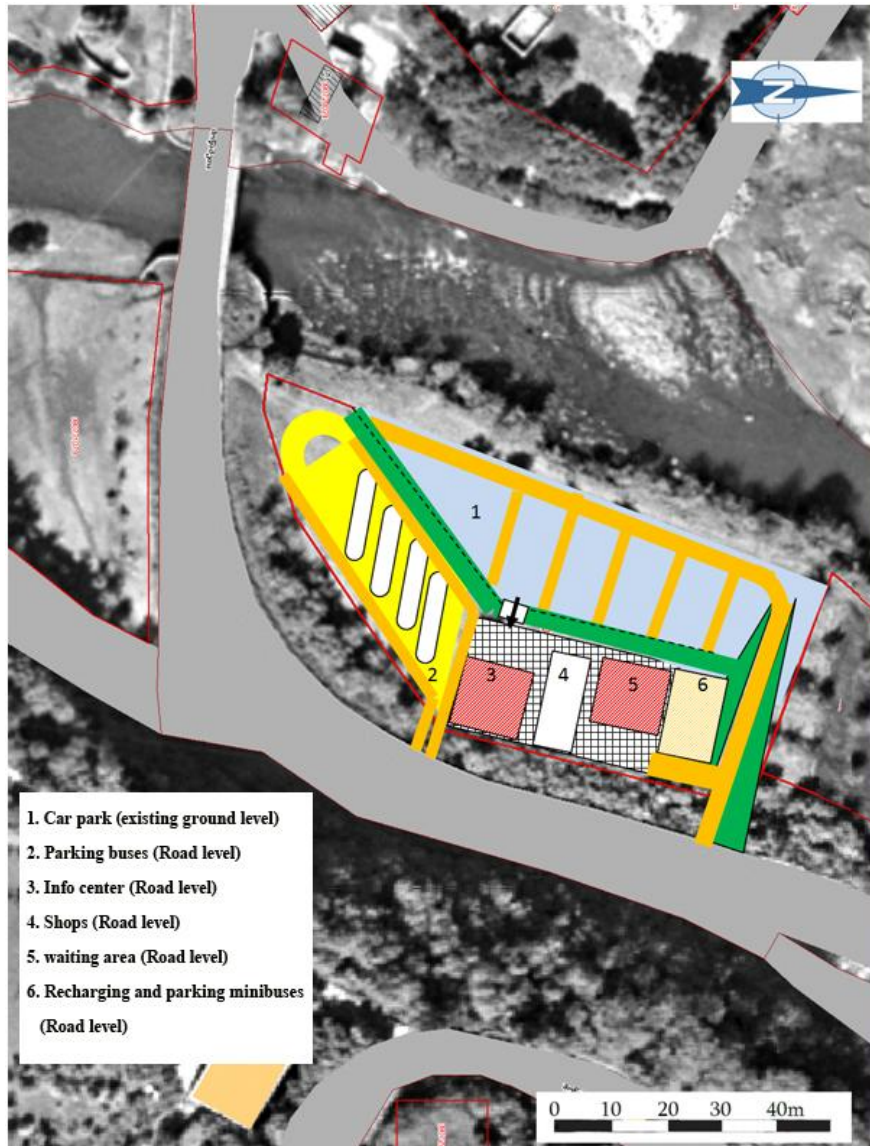
Figure 2. Conceptual design of parking

The minibus parking and recharge station is planned next to the entrance opposite to the road that leads to the Monastery. Bus passengers pass the shopping area and the waiting room while moving from the parking to the shuttle buses. Wheel chairs can easily move from the buses to the shuttle bus stop.

Passengers of cars can offload their passengers near the shuttle bus parking before parking the car. A foot path and stairs lead from the parking to the waiting area.

d. Proposed actions

The proposed traffic system is of regional importance and requires actions of the Tkibuli Municipality, the town of Kutaisi and the Kursebi and Gelati communities. Moreover the national Railways should be involved to improve the connections by rail between Kutaisi, Tkibuli and the Project area

The present programme elaborates the actions related to the revision of the internal transport within the WHS. This includes:

- Feasibility study and design of transport system;
- Acquisition of land for new parking area;
- Design and construction of infrastructure and buildings;
- Purchase of shuttle buses;
- Recruitment and training of operational staff.

4. Responsible agency

The Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure should be the lead agency for all aspects of the project, in cooperation with the Imereti region. The actions related to the revision of the internal transport within the WHS should be coordinated by the local site management group.

5. Execution

The project is multi-sectoral and many stakeholders are involved. In order to secure funding, financing from various agencies and donors may be needed. The Management Committee and site management group as proposed in the MP are useful instruments to coordinate these activities in the preparation and execution phase. External input from consultants and contractors will be required for various aspects of the project.

6. Priority and phasing

	Activity	Availability of financial resources	Availability of human resources	Priority
Phase 1. Preliminary design and feasibility studies.	Technical feasibility study of transport system and environmental impact assessment.	To be financed by MoRD&I.	Outsourcing	High, can start if funds are available
Phase 2. Design and engineering	Inventory of user requirements and design of facilities.	To be financed by MoRD&I	Outsourcing	High, can start if funds are available
Phase 3. Acquisition of land and construction of infrastructure and buildings.	Implementation of plan for use by the beneficiaries.	Public, private and donor financing.	Municipality, contractor	High but can only start when funding for investments is secured
Phase 4. Purchase of shuttle buses and other equipment	Preparation for operational use, training.	Public, private and donor financing (Public private partnership)	PPP to lease buses and operate service.	Same investment can be phased in time
	Operation.	To be financed by PPP	PPP	

Table 1. Priorities of traffic management programme

The project should be divided in phases that can be funded separately depending on the availability of financial and human resources. This is shown in Table 1 above.

7. Expected outputs

As the project has a multiple objective the expected output is of interest for different user groups.

- It will help to restore the tranquillity and dignity of the WHS, respecting principles of sustainable tourism and approaches to traffic management;
- It will solve the problem of traffic jams, which occur frequently because of the congestion of long buses on the present parking area close to the WHS;
- It will help to manage the visitor flow inside the WHS, as the flow towards the WHS can be regulated;
- It will support the vendors as the new location offer ample opportunity to expand the business. Not only tourists but also transit traffic along the road may stop and buy local products;
- It will protect nature as air pollution will be reduced;
- It will protect the monuments as air pollution and vibration due to heavy traffic is reduced;
- It increases the quality of life for local inhabitants as noise is reduced and traffic jams are avoided;
- It will reduce the risk of transport accidents on the village road.

5. GOVERNANCE AND SITE MANAGEMENT

Preface

The governance should ensure that the management objectives are achieved and interests of all stakeholders at local and national level are taken into account in the decision making process. Chapter 6 of the MP gives a blueprint of a possible set up of the management structure.

The management structure should represent the multi-sectoral character of management and the related broad spectrum of interests at national level but should also ensure an effective and efficient site management. This calls for a functional division between central and local components, linked by proper procedures for coordination and communication. This should include procedures for horizontal integration of the contribution of the various ministries and vertical coordination between levels of government.

The legal and institutional context for management is complex. The Law on protection of monuments gives a number of restrictions for the Buffer Zone with a view to protect the integrity of the monument. It does not give directions for conservation and development of the Buffer Zone proper. Protection, conservation and development are the responsibility of various institutions and are not properly coordinated.

Implementation of the MP should, therefore, go hand in hand with the development of an adequate legal framework and management structure. A possible structure is described in chapter 6 of the MP. Chapter 7 describes the aspects related to the implementation of the MP. These aspects are further evaluated in the present programme.

Implementation of the Management Structure

1. Rationale

The management plan gives directions how to manage the area in order to achieve the strategic objectives listed in section 1.4 of the MP. Management is a dynamic process that can be schematized by the process framework shown in Figure 1. The framework shows:

a. The objectives described in section 5.3.

b. The **Management area**, schematized as a box in the centre of Figure 1.

This represents:

- The spatial elements of the area (horizontal bands) and the related cultural, natural, social and economic attributes and values. (Coloured vertical bands) as described in section 3.3. of the MP;

- The required management actions and programmes described in chapter 5.2 of the MP.

c. The **primary process** shown by the horizontal green arrows (input, the required actions and the expected output).

d. The **Management structure.**

This includes:

- the Management Committee and the site management groups;

- The legal framework, the staff and facilities that are needed to facilitate the primary process);

- The commitment and support of stakeholders.

e. The Quality control cycle, the procedures used to monitor, evaluate and control the process and the outcome.

This includes:

- Monitoring the output and the process;

- Evaluation of the result;

- Corrective actions if needed.

The programme describes in greater detail how these aspects should be addressed in the implementation phase.

2. Location

Activities will focus on the WHS but actions are required both on site and in Tbilisi.

3. Description of work

a. General

The programme focuses on three important elements:

- The legal basis;
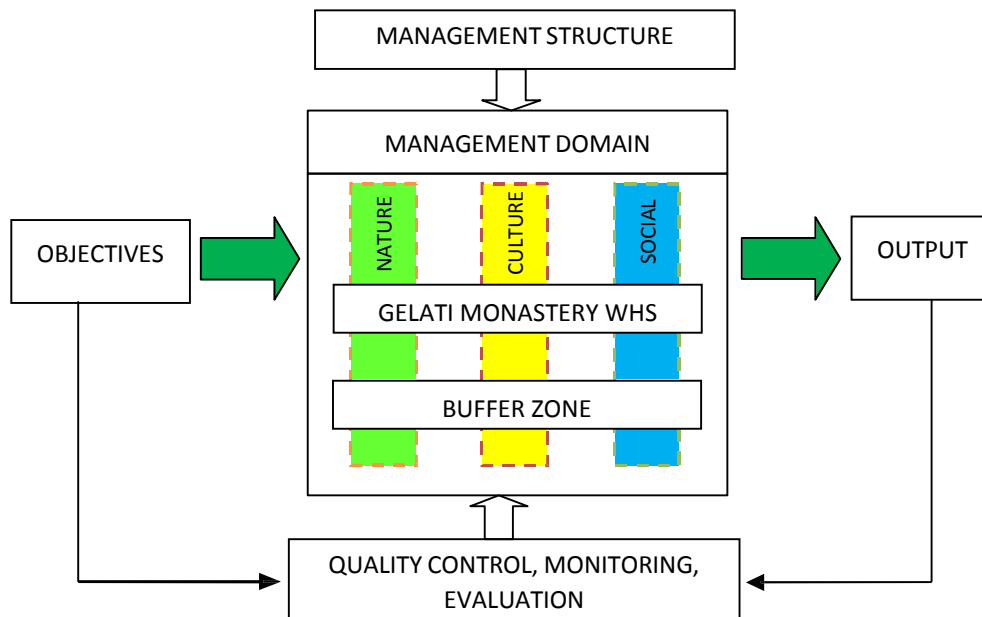- The management structure;
- The quality control system.

Figure 1. Process framework for environmental management

b. Legal basis

Article 5.1.h of the Law on Cultural Heritage provides authority of the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection to develop and implement task oriented and / or State programmes aiming to protect and promote the cultural heritage. The Gelati Management plan aims to protect and promote the Gelati site, State obligations under the UNESCO convention. On the bases of the above regulation the Management Plan may be approved by the Minister of Culture and Monument Protection under the current legislative framework. After the above approval the Management Plan becomes operable and enforceable by the Ministry with active participation of the Management Committee.

A Management Committee for the World Heritage Site - Gelati Monastery (The "Committee") will be formed as stipulate in the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention (WHC. 13/01 July 2013), Annex 8 and on the basis of Article 9 of the Charter of the Ministry of Culture and Monument protection, adopted by the Government of Georgia on 16 July, 2010, by Decree #197. The Managements Committee will have the status of an advisory organ of the Minister of Culture and Monument Protection (the "Minister") and will work in close cooperation with the Cultural Heritage Strategy, Department Organizations Coordination and Permissions and the Advisory

Committee on World Cultural Heritage created by the Order of the Minister #3/37 on 27 February 2007 that has a more general scope.

The Minister approves the Charter of the Committee and appoints a chairperson and a secretary. The chairperson shall convene the Committee at least twice a year. The Committee may form Site working group. The Committee Chairperson appoints a chairperson of the group. The group convenes monthly or more frequent if required.

c. Management structure

Presently there is no example of a management structure for managing a WHS in Georgia. Pending a formal enactment of the management plan and the setup of the related management structure, this programme has a provisional character. The regulations contained in Article 9 mentioned above, gives the Minister the possibility to include in the Committee officials of other governmental bodies as well as representatives of civil society and experts with their consent. This should include and facilitate procedures for horizontal coordination of the contribution of the various ministries and agencies. In this way they can ensure that the management objectives are achieved and interests of all stakeholders at local and national level are taken into account in the decision making process. Necessary expertise should be provided by involving external experts.

Implementation should be based upon the so called 7 S model developed in the end of the previous century by Mc Kinsey (see Figure 2). It shows the important component of an organization and schematizes the complicated formal interactions between these elements.
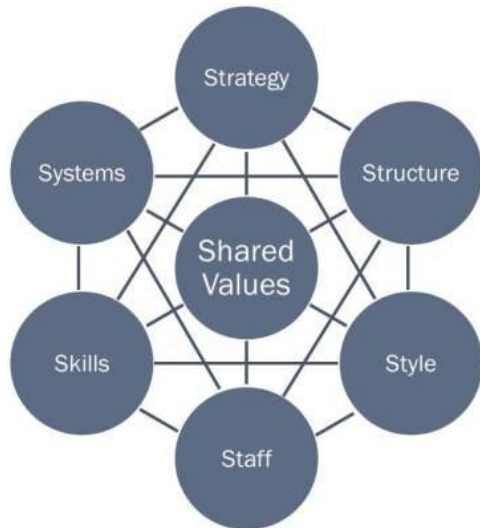

Figure 2. Elements of management structure

All actions are grouped around the central theme "shared values". All activities should aim at a common goal that is accepted by all parties in the management process. In the present case the MP plays that role, but feeling of project ownership and support should be developed in the initiation phase and should be fostered in the following phases of Table 1.

The following cluster of elements includes the "hard" elements of management, the structure (organization) and systems (the facilities, the rules and regulation and the financing). These aspects are main activities in the planning phase.

The second cluster combines the "soft" elements, the staff, their skills and the management style. Human development, recruiting and training of staff, are linking these three elements. These aspects require continuous attention but should start in the implementation phase when legal aspects are settled, facilities are in place, staff is appointed and financing is secured.

d. Quality control

Monitoring

The quality of the output and the process is monitored by means of a set of indicators. Indicators are attributes that are representative for the state of the various landscape components. Indicators should comply with the so called "SMART" criteria. They should be **Specifi**c (S) for the attribute that is monitored, the indicator should be **Measurable (**M**)** and results should be **Achievable** (A) with the resources available. Finely the outcome should be **Representative** (R) for the objective that is evaluated and **Timely** (T**),** so it can be used as input for the evaluation. Details are shown in the box below.

Output indicators.

Indicators for the WHS should represent the aspects that determine the integrity and authenticity of the monuments as prescribed in the operational guidelines of UNESCO.

Natural values and functions may be evaluated through the biodiversity of representative plots. The natural monument within the area may be used for that purpose. The effectiveness of restoration and recuperation of woodlands may be assessed through the thickness of the canopy, the biodiversity of the understory and the fauna population.

Finally the social and economic effects of sustainable land use and tourism development may be derived from micro economic indicators, such as income of households.

Process indicators

Process indicators are used to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the management process. Tracking tools are used to monitor the progress of work. Aspects that are monitored are:

• the effect of external factors;

• the adequacy of the management structure for the planning and execution of activities mentioned in the management plan;

• the availability of human- and financial resources;

• the political commitment and adequacy of the decision making process and information flow.

Evaluation

Monitoring results can be evaluated in two ways. If normative standards are available these should be used as reference. This is often the case for environmental parameters such as

water quality and air pollution. In case normative standards do not exist project standards should be defined for each indicator.

4. Responsible agency

The Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection, as signatory of the treaty with UNESCO, should be the lead agency at National level. The Tkibuli Municipality should coordinate the activities at the site.

5. Execution

Preparing the legal base and set up the required management infrastructure is a process that will take time. The phasing and the key issues are shown in Table 7. The process includes the following phases:

- Initiation, the preparation of a work plan;
- Planning, the development of the required instrument (law, facilities, staff);
- Implementation, enactment, institutional setting, financial and human resources.

KEY ISSUE	INITIATION (YEAR 1)	PLANNING (START YEAR 2)	IMPLEMENTATION (START YEAR 3)
Communication	Convene meeting with stakeholders; establish the Management Committee; set up information system	Prepare strategy and annual plans	Secure funding
Consultation	Establish advisory group; request expert input	Consult experts	Quality control
Cooperation	Establish site management group	Consult stakeholders	Execute plans with stakeholders
Empowerment		Prepare legal basis and institutional setting for management	Enact legal status; empower the Management Committee and site management group

Table 1. Phasing and key elements of the programme

The key issues are listed in the first column and are elaborated in the cells of the following columns. The first step is communication and information sharing. All stakeholders should be informed about the plans and their comments and suggestions should be included. After these meetings, members of a provisional management committee will be selected.

The next step is to consult experts on issues that need further elaboration and to develop a draft law that regulates the legal status and the responsibilities of various participants.

The final step is empowerment. This gives the management agency its legal status, empowers the participating institutes to perform their assigned tasks, and secures financial resources for core activities (staff and facilities).

It is expected that the whole process may take three years. In the first three years stakeholders should finance the activities directly. Available budgets and donor financing will dictate the priorities. If the MP and the Management structure have got a legal status and money is available, internal priorities will be the basis for allocation of money.

6. Prioritization

Presently ongoing activities in the WHS are poorly coordinated. The broader scope on management as advocated by UNESCO makes management even more complicated. As proper management is one of the key elements for the nomination as a WHS there is an obvious need for the programme, therefore.

7. Expected output

More effective and efficient management, improved quality of the output that may ultimately lead to an upgrading of the present status of endangered monument.