

Project: “Land of Eagles and Castles: Pilot Sustainable Tourism Model for the Albanian Adriatic Coastline”

Preliminary Report for the Key Biodiversity Area of Butrinti



Association for Protection and Preservation of Natural Environment in Albania

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the Albanian Adriatic Coastline”**

Preliminary Report for the Key Biodiversity Area of Butrinti

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Abstract

This preliminary report for the Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) of Butrinti is prepared on the frame of the project “Land of Eagles and Castles: Pilot Sustainable Tourism Model for the Albanian Adriatic Coastline”. This project is granted by the “Ecosystem Partnership Fund and Implemented” (CEPF) and implemented by the “Association for Protection and Preservation of Natural Environment in Albania” (PPNEA) in collaboration with project partner “Bulgarian Society for Protection of Birds” (BSPB). “The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund is a joint initiative of l’Agence Française de Development, Conservation International, the European Union, the Global Environment Facility, the Government of Japan, the MacArthur Foundation and the World Bank. A fundamental goal is to ensure civil society is engaged in biodiversity conservation”. The project duration is 36 months and the ending date is 30 July 2016. More information on the project is available on this link: http://ppnea.org/land_of_eagles_and_castles.html. The aim of this report is to provide a general description and context for each KBA, as a base for designing and implementing the further project activates. This report has been prepared based on desk research alone. The main document consulted for the preparation of this report is “The Management Plan for the National Park of Butrinti”.

Abbreviations

CM-Council of Ministers

DCM-Decision of Council of Ministers

DFS-Directorate of Forest Services

FMO-Fisheries Management Organization

ICAA-International Center for Albanian Archeology

IFSV – Institute for Food Safety and Veterinary

KBA – Key Biodiversity Area

NCTM-National Council for Territory Management

NCW-National Council of Waters

NCNB-National Council of Nature and Biodiversity

MoE-Ministry of Environment

MoEFWA-Ministry of Environment Forest and Water Administration

MARDWA-Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Water Administration

MAFCP-Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Customer Protection

MEDTE-Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Enterprise

MTI-Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure

MPWTT-Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Telecommunication

MES-Ministry of Education and Sport

MUDT-Ministry of Urban Development and Tourism

MTCYS-Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports

REA-Regional Environmental Agencies

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1. Description of the Area

1. 1. Legal status of the area

The Key Biodiversity Area of Butrinti in Albania has the status “National Park”. The National Park of Butrinti has been firstly proclaimed in year 2000 by a Decision of Council of Ministers (DCM) no. 82, date 02.03.2000, based on the law for “Protection of Cultural Heritage”, with a total surface of 25 square kilometers including the antique city of Butrinti, a part of Butrinti Lake, the Bufi Lake, the channel of Vivari and the surrounding wetlands, as well as the hills covered by forest trees and shrubs. By DCM no. 531, date 31.10.2002, the wetland complex of Butrinti has been proclaimed Ramsar Zone (13500 ha). Later, in year 2005 by DCM no.693 the area has been expanded by 61 more square kilometers and in February year 2013 by the DCM no.134 date 20.02.2013 the area has been expanded by 833.2ha. Butrinti has been included in the UNESCO List of World Heritage in year 1992. Along the period 1997 -2005, Butrinti has been part of the UNSECO List of World Heritage Sites in Danger.

The National Park includes inside its boundaries territories from three different communes: the commune of Aliko, the commune of Xarra, and the commune of Ksamili. Inside the National Park territory are situated the villages of Ksamili and Manastir. The altitude ranges from 0 to 845m o.s.l and the highest pick of “Mile” Mountain. The use of territory is as shown in the table below:

No.	Use of territory	Surface (ha)
1	Forest	4311
2	Agricultural Land	292
3	Water surface	3342,2
4	Non productive surface (rocks, islands)	214.2
5	Inhabited surface mixed with Agricultural Land	1355
	Total	9424.4

Table 1: Territory Use of the National Park Butrinti

The National Park of Butrinti is divided in different administration zones as described below:

a) Central Zone, marked with the letter “A” in the map (A1, A2,A3), with a surface of 3838.75 ha, which are defined as subzones with high natural and biodiversity values, and this territory should be protected from disturbance. In this area is applied the first scale of protection. The economic and social activities are allowed to be practiced based on the guidelines coming from the management plan and legislation.

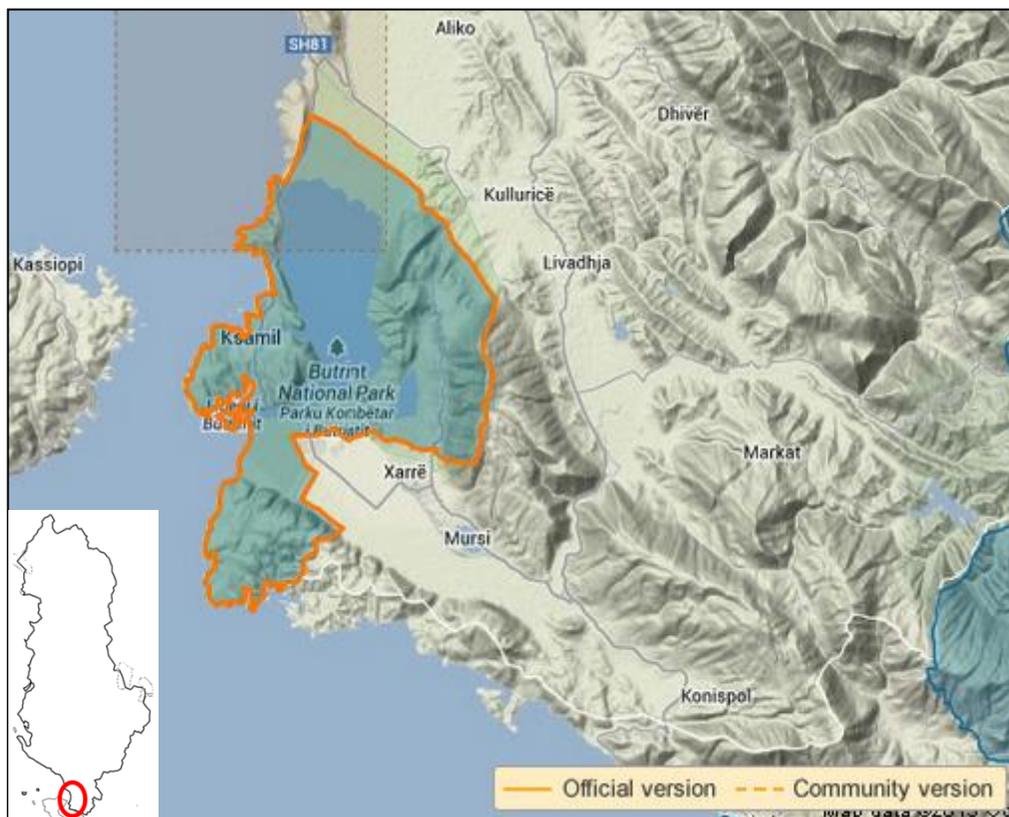


Figure 1: Key Biodiversity Area of Butrinti ¹

b) Recreation Zone, marked in the map with the letter “B”, having a surface of 844.36 ha. This area offers a large scale of education and entertainment opportunities in nature (marine and land) and other facilities related to the park functions, its archeological and natural landscape values. The marine environment included in the Park boundaries is used as well for scientific, cultural, sportive, touristic, diving, and creation of underwater museums (based on low no. 8905 date 6.6.2002 “For the protection of sea environment from pollution and damage”). In this zone is applied the second scale of protection. The social and economical activities might be practiced only based on the guidelines coming from the Management Plan and legislation.

c) Traditional Use Zone, marked in the map with the letter “C” (C1, C2) has a surface of 3952.29 ha, which is defined as sub-zone with natural sources where traditional livelihood activities are allowed to be practiced. Private business subjects are also permitted to apply their activities. This represents an interesting zone for tourists which are interested on learning more about traditional livelihood activities such as; fishing, traditional agriculture etc.

d) Sustainable Development sub-zone marked with the letter “D” in the map. It has a surface of 782.99 ha, where is permitted the development of different socio-economic activities under a

¹ Source: http://www.protectedplanet.net/sites/Butrinti_National_Park

granted permission based. This sub-zone offers internal buffer function, when it is closed to urban centers where economical activates more intensive.

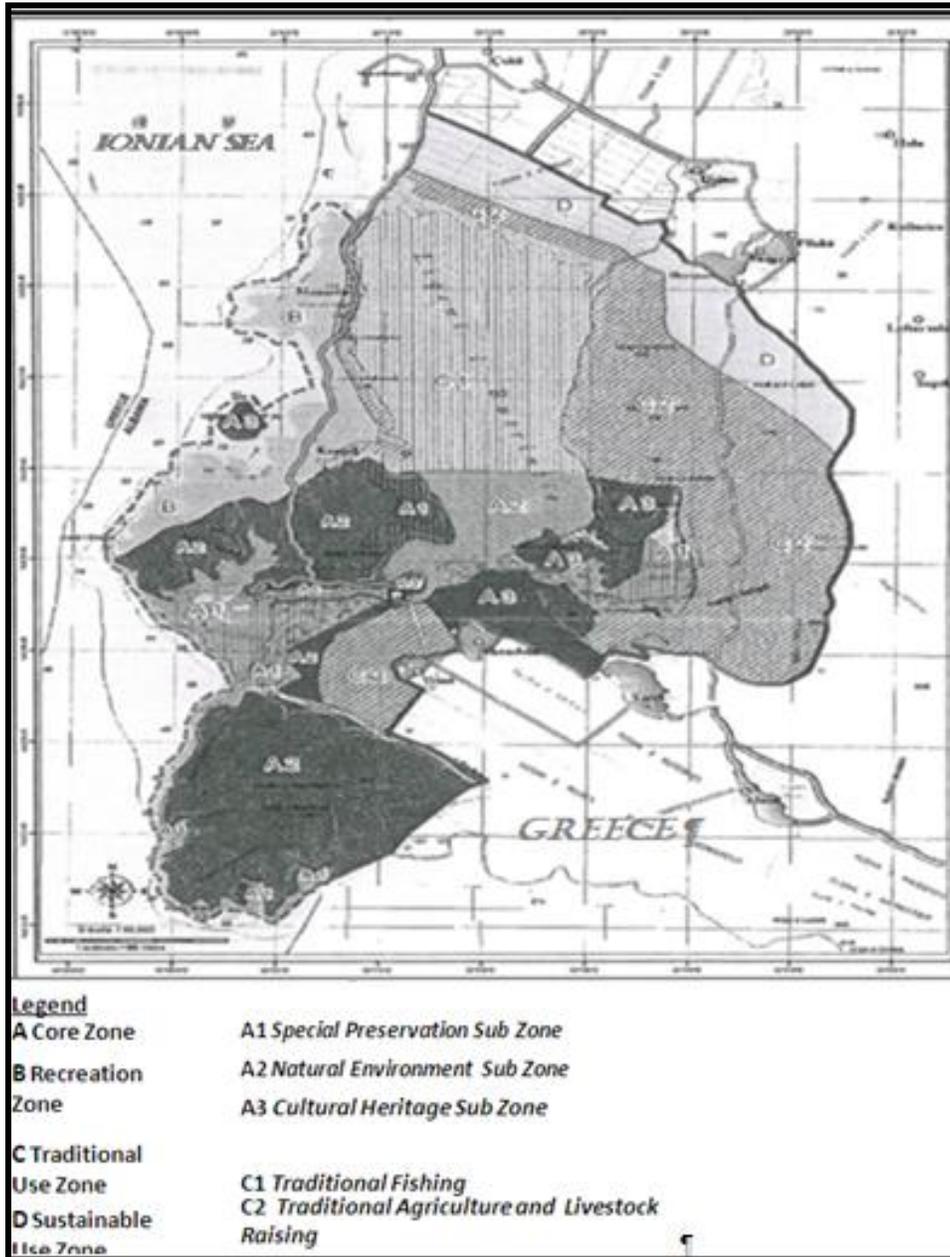


Figure 2: Zonation of the National Park Butrinti²

2. Institutions and Administration of the National Park Butrinti³

Institutions involved in the administration of the National Park area are different and include:

² Source: Official Booklet of Republic of Albania, March 2013

³ This is a description of the institutional framework until 7th of September 2013, date on which was gathered the new government coming from the elections of 23 June 2013. The organization of the new government has been generally explained (not in detail) so far and the websites of the ministries are not yet updated.

central government, local government, nongovernmental organizations and other local stakeholders. In this chapter are described the rights and duties of each institution.

2.1. Central Government

2.1.1. Council of Ministers (CM)

The Council of Ministers (CM) is the highest executive institution in Albania chaired by the prime minister. Under the CM there were three consular and decision maker bodies: The National Council for Territory Management (NCTM), National Council of Waters (NCW) and the National Council of Nature and Biodiversity (NCNB). However, after the elections of June 23, 2013 in Albania the government has changed. The new government gathered on 7 September 2013 is reorganized, however the detailed organization of the government is not yet published and the websites of the ministries are not yet updated.

2.1.2. The National Council for Territory Management (NCTM)

NCTM is the highest decision maker body, which approves and makes changes on the studies and urban plans for the development of tourism, National Parks, airports, ports and infrastructure in regional and national level. NCTM branches are present in every Region (Qarku)⁴ and District in Albania.

2.1.3. National Council of Waters (NCW)

NCW is the highest coordinating and decision-making body on water administration at central level. At local level are operating six Regional Councils of Waters, which are composed by representatives from local government institutions, regional government institutions, and water, use organizations. As executive bodies of this council act the six Water Basin Agencies.

2.1.4. Ministry of Environment (MoE)

Ministry of Environment (MoE) is responsible for completing the legal framework needed for the management of protected areas and has to specify the standards for designing the management and monitoring plans for these areas. After the elections of 23 June 2013 and the creation of the new government on 7 of September 2013 the ex Ministry of Environment Forest and Water Administration (MoEFWA) has been named the Ministry of Environment and has been significantly reframed⁵, however the re-organization patterns are not yet published.

2.1.5. Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Water Administration (MARDWA)

The ex Ministry of Agriculture Food and Consumer Protection (MAFCP), through its Veterinary Service and Food Inspectorate has periodically carried out the water analysis in the Butrinti Lake. This ministry was responsible for the sustainable management of agricultural land,

⁴ Region (Qarku in Albanian) is the administrative division in Albania that includes several Districts

⁵ This information is extracted by the public speech of the new prime minister when presenting the new government

irrigation and drainage system, and measures against flooding. With the new government of 7 September 2013, this Ministry is significantly reframed and the new organization is not yet published.

2.1.6. Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Enterprise (MEDTE)

The ex Ministry of Economy Trade and Energy (METE) through its Directorate of Licenses and Management of Contracts has been responsible for implementing the legislation on the allocation of licenses and concessions to the private subjects for the development of different activities inside the park area, including mines and inert producing activities. With the new government of 7t September 2013, this Ministry is significantly reframed and the new organization is not yet published.

2.1.7. Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure (MTI)

The ex Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Telecommunication (MPWTT), was responsible for the realization of public works and providing services such as: supplying potable water, controlling the urban development, treating the black waters, treating and management of wastes etc. This ministry is significantly reframed and named MTI after the elections of 23 June 2013, and the new organization is not yet published.

2.1.8. Ministry of Education and Sport (MES)

The ex Ministry of Education and Science was responsible for designing and implementing the programs of education. Universities carry out fundamental and applied research for different environmental aspects. The scientific institutions are involved in the monitoring and programs of Environment. The closest university to the National Park of Butrinti is the one of Gjirokastra. This ministry is reframed after the elections of 23 June 2013, and the new organization is not yet published.

2.1.9. Ministry of Urban Development and Tourism (MUDT)

The ex Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports (MTCYS) before the elections of 23 June 2013 has designed and coordinated the policies in the field of tourism, through the public and private investments, and monitored this development. It has been the main and the most important actor for the management and monitoring of the National Park of Butrint. This ministry is significantly reframed after the elections of 23 June 2013, and the new organization is not yet published.

2.2. Local Government

2.2.1. Regional Environmental Agencies (REA)

The REAs are present in each prefecture of the country. The REA of Vlora has its branch in the district of Saranda. The main role of REA consists on strengthening law enforcement, and implementing procedures that are related with environmental licenses as well as collecting and processing environmental data on district and county level.

2.2.2. Directorate of Forest Services Sarande (DFS)

The DFS Sarande used to be under the administration of the ex MoEFWA and is responsible for

the administration, protection and management of forests and pastures within the territory of the district of Saranda including those that are part of protected areas such as the Butrinti Park. DFS takes part in and designs programs for the development of Forests and Pasture's section, collects data on the development of public and private forests ,moreover it reports to the institutions responsible for maintaining and managing documents for the design and implementation of breeding plans and forest inventory. It approves and issues licenses for the use of forests and pastures, as is the case of grazing permits given by this department within the park's territory. With the new government, this institution is expected to be significantly organized.

2.2.3. Councils of Water Basins

These are local institutions responsible for the management of water resources in the respective basins. For every river basin or group of basins, there is a basin water council. Such a council is operating also in Saranda. They used to be dependent from the technical secretariat of the National Water Council, part of ex MoEFWA.

2.2.4. Regional Government Institution of Vlora (Qarku Vlore)

The area of this project is part of the Region of Vlora. The regional level is the most appropriate one to explore the possibilities of cooperation between municipalities and communes of the project area, in relation to environmental management and rural development.

2.2.5. Prefecture (Sub-prefecture Saranda)

The prefecture, legally confirms all decisions taken by the communes (in this case those of Ksamil, Xarre and Aliko). Its impact on the management of Butrinti's Park is of the outmost importance, especially in relation to issues such as illegal construction, fires, floods, or by pressuring other institutions on increasing their vigilance and control, therefore reducing illegal activities inside the park's territory.

2.2.6. Commune Councils

The commune councils are the representative parties of the communes, which are elected every three years. The mayor stands as its executive body and is elected directly by local residents by secret ballot (local elections). Municipal councils have the right to delegate a part of their powers to the mayor. The functions of this governing level are among others, those relating to water supply, sanitation, sewerage, drainage and irrigation, construction, rehabilitation and maintenance of local roads, public transport, waste management, planning urban land and housing management. The municipal councils play an important role in the procedures of approval of local management plans. According to the Law on the Organization and Functioning of Local Government (2000), the local level has been given the opportunity to expand its rights and powers. Based on the above-mentioned law, each local government unit shall have full discretion to exercise initiatives in the interest of the local community, pertaining to those issues, which are not exclusive legitimate rights of any other government body. The lack of intellectual capacity and experience makes many developmental initiatives such as construction in favor of coastal tourism, agriculture and livestock, or exploitation of above or underground reserves, take place without proper studies and severely damages the area's assets. Below we cite the legal

rights of local government, which may serve within the framework of a multi-lateral cooperation, to manage their territories that simultaneously are a part of the Park.

2.2.7. Rights of Local Government

Local governments may establish administrative structures; perform their functions and exercise their powers; create economic units and other institutions under their supervision; they have the right to establish committees, boards, commissions; to exercise special functions and perform administrative territorial division within their jurisdiction.

2.2.7.1. Property rights

Local governments may exercise property rights, including the right to buy, sell or lease the property owned by them.

2.2.7.2. The right to fiscal autonomy

Local governments may receive income from expenses made in accordance to their functions (this is especially important in the use of "entry fee" or any other local tax in favor of local development). Economic rights, municipalities and communes have the right to undertake any initiative in the interest of their residents and of economic development, if these activities do not oppose government policies.

2.2.7.3. Right of cooperation

To perform specific functions for the benefit of their residents, two or more municipalities or municipality may exercise any power given by the law through effectuation of bilateral agreements or contracts. In addition, they can delegate specific powers to one or more third contracting parties. Rights as a legal person, local governments are considered as a legal person and can exercise all rights stipulated in the Civil Code of the Republic of Albania

2.3. Users and Non-Governmental Organizations

2.3.1. Fisheries Association of Saranda and Butrint

This association brings together the interests of fishermen in the area and follows the progress of fisheries and mussel cultivation. According to data from the Department of Fisheries part of this association are seven subjects for mussel cultivation, and three subjects for cultivation of clams: one in Armiras and two in Cape Stillos.

2.3.2. Fisheries Management Organization (FMO) "Fama"

This organization is composed of 7 shareholders, deals with fishing with net in the Channel of Butrinti and Armuri.

2.3.3. Fisheries Management Organization (FMO) "Buka e Vivarit"

This company, besides net hunting, cultivates fish species such as *Sparus aurata* in Alinures Channel.

2.3.4. Firms and other entities

There are also other private entities (domestic and foreign) that operate or have received permission to develop fishing and aquaculture activities, in Lake of Butrint, lake of Bufi and marine waters along the coast of the Peninsula of Ksamili and Cape Stillos.

2.3.5. Shepherds

Although not organized in any association or group, they constitute a group of important users in the area, with significant impact on the conservation and management of natural forestry and pasture resources in the territory of the park. A significant number of shepherds from the three municipalities (Aliko, Ksamili and Xarra) graze their herds of livestock (mainly sheep) within territory of the park, even in central areas, causing damage and degradation of the forest and landscape.

2.4. Other organizations

2.4.1. Commission of "UNESCO"

Butrint Park in December 1999 was declared a UNESCO preservation area based on its importance as a cultural heritage site. Currently, a representative of the committee, is a member of the Board of Butrint.

2.4.2. Foundation "Butrint"

This foundation was established in 1993 by Lord Rothschild and Lord Sainsbury with the aim to protect the archaeological site and the surrounding region. During the operation, the archaeologists led by the Foundation, have done research and have taken care of the maintenance of ancient monuments and has made efforts to preserve this Albanian gem in the middle of Europe.

2.4.3. International Center for Albanian Archaeology

International Center for Albanian Archaeology (ICAA) was founded in August 1999 with support of the Packard Humanities Institute. The aim was to establish an institute that would enable the renewal of the Albanian archaeological service and to promote research as well as excavation and conservation of the rich archaeological heritage of Albania.

2.4.4. National Centre of Mediterranean Theatre

This association since 2000 onwards has begun to organize: "International Festival of Theatre" or "Butrint 2000" which is becoming an annual event, which brings to Butrint theater troops from all Mediterranean countries, and a significant number of spectators.

2.5. Institutional framework of the Management of the National Park Butrinti

The DCM no. 450, date 1/07/1998 on the "Administration of the Antique City of Butrinti", constitutes the legal base for the existence and operation of the office for Management and Administration of the National Park Butrinti, which is composed as below:

Director - Ministry of Tourism

Member – Ministry of Environment

Member – Director of the Institute of Monuments of Culture

Member – Director of the Institute of Archeology

Member – Director of the Cultural Heritage in the Ministry of Tourism

The board of Butrinti checks and approves the strategies and policies for the development, coordination, management, and promotion of the Archeological values of the National Park of Butrinti. This board operates based on a set of rules approved by the minister of tourism. In 2008 by DCM the institute of Archeology has been dissolved and its place in the board is still vacant.

2.5.1. The existing management structure

The administration of the National Park of Butrinti, is based on the DCM no. 857 date 19/12/2003 “Regulation for the operation of the administration of the National Park Butrinti and the coordination office”. This document defines the structure of the office for the administration and coordination of the Butrinti NP. It defines the duties and rights of the Director and the staff of this office.

The actual management is based on the Management Plan designed in 2010 and it is focused mainly on the conservation and management of natural resources and biodiversity of the National Park Butrinti.

The staff of the Coordination and Administration office of the National Park of Butrinti, placed in Saranda is composed from the Director and five specialists: specialist of finance, specialist of tourism, specialist of environment, specialist of archeology and specialist of monuments. In addition, parts of the service provider staff in the National Park of Butrint are the ticket sellers, cleaners, rangers, and maintenance workers. During the touristic pick period are hired in general 4-6 persons, which serve as touristic guides, observers, cleaners etc. In the archeological part of Butrinti are found: the Museum of Butrinti, and the necessary facilities such as ticket selling office, souvenir shop etc.

3. Characteristics of physical environment

3.1. Climate

The area of Butrinti is characterized from a soft Mediterranean climate. The average annual temperature is 17.1 °C. January is the coldest month (9.7 °C), and August is the hottest month (25.1 °C). Rainfall is abundant; it reaches the level of over 1500 mm/year. The area is under the influence of marine winds. The wind speed is higher at wintertime with an average speed of 3.2-3.5 m/s, whereas in the summer the wind speed is 2.2-2.3m/s.

3.2. Geology and Geomorphology

The area of Butrinti is surrounded by two rivers; Bistrice in the north and Pavlo in the south. In the east the “Mile” mountain creates a barrier through wetlands and the continental part of Albania. Inside the RAMSAR area there is a range of different relief forms including; fields, hills, mountains, cumulative coasts) which are characterized from different morphographic and morphogenic features. The central part of the National Park is under the influence of tectonic

grabens of Polyquaternium. The lower part of Butrinti is elevated only centimeters and in the past it has been frequently flooded from the sea. The riverbeds are shallow and wide. Along the rainy periods, fields are flooded from water, creating sweet water wetlands. Different hills and mountain ranges are present in the area; Mountain range of “Mile”, hills of “Çuke”, “Ajtoit-Stillo”, “Mursia-Xarra”, “Gjashta-Butrinti” and the islands of “Ksamili”. The field of “Mursi-Vrina” is created from the activity of Pavllo River and tectonic movements. After Interventions River Pavllo now discharges directly into the Ionian Sea. The field has a very low elevation in its eastern part, and the western part of it is under the sea level.

3.3. Soils

Soils of Vurgu field in the north of Butrinti Lake, and those of Mursi-Vrine field in the south are mainly brown to gray, with alluvial and saline soils, mainly in the western part of Vrina field.

3.4. Hydrology

The central part of the National Park of Butrinti is characterized from a rich hydrographic network, composed by the bottom flows of Rivers “Kalaja”, “Bistirca”, and “Pavllo”, and Butrinti Lagoon (known as Butrinti Lake) and Bufi Lake (Rrëza).

3.5. Superficial waters

3.5.1. Lake of Butrinti

Lake of Butrinti has a surface of 1600 ha represents the central area of the NPB. Waters of Bistrice River, Mile Mountain watershed and Pavllo River, feed it. The lake has a tectonic origin, whereas the water regime is typical for coastal lagoons. It communicates with the Ionian Sea through the channel of Vivari (length: 3600m, width: 60-100cm, depth: 5-6 m).

3.5.2. Lake of Bufi

Lake of Bufi (Rreza) is situated in the southeastern part of Butrinti Lake, around 2 m o.s.l. Its total surface is around 83 ha. The lake is shallow, with an average depth of 1m. It is filled by the strong saline sources of Rreza in the northeast. The waters of Bufi discharge in the Butrinti Lake through a channel.

3.5.3. Pavllo River

The River Pavllo flows in the southern part of Butrinti. It sources from western part of Patrion River (Greece) and passes through the fields of Mursi and Xarra.

3.5.4. Bistrice River

The river of Bistrice represents the river, which has the strongest feed from underground waters in Albania. The hydrographic network is composed from merging rivers of Kalaja, Delvina, and Bistrice. The most important water source is the “Blue Eye” situated in the region of Delvina. When reaching the lower part, Bistrice joins the river of Kalaja, and merged flow towards Ionian Sea through the Çuka channel, which actually is an artificial channel. From this point, the major part of the merged river waters flow into the Butrinti Lake.

3.6. Underground waters

The area is poor with underground waters. The most powerful carstic sources of the area are

4	1150 Coastal lagoons	HD I*	1837,9	19,50%
5	1160 Bays and wide water trails	HD I	61,4	0,65%
6	1210 Annual vegetation of sandy coastline	HD I		
7	1240 Marine rocks of Mediterranean coastal with endemic vegetation <i>Limonium spp.</i>	HD I	83,6	0,89%
8	1310 <i>SaliMiseria</i> and other annual plants colonizer of sandpit and mud	HD I		
9	1410 Salty Mediterranean meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>)	HD I	74,5	0,79%
10	1420 Mediterranean halophilic and thermo-Atlantic shrubs (<i>SarcoMiseretea fruticosi</i>)	HD I	56	0,59%
11	1430 Halo-nitrophilic shrubs (<i>Pegano-Salsoletea</i>)	HD I		
12	1510 Salty Mediterranean steppes(<i>Limonietalia</i>)	HD I*		
13	3140 Strong oligo-mesotrophic with benthos vegetation <i>Chara spp.</i>	HD I	94,5	1,00%
14	3150 Natural eutrophic lakes with vegetation of <i>Magnopotamion</i> or <i>Hydrochrition</i> type	HD I	162,7	1,72%
15	3170 Temporary Mediterranean ponds	HD I*	117,2	1,24%
16	3280 Mediterranean continuously flowing rivers with presence of <i>Paspalo-Agrostidion</i> , <i>Salix alba</i> and <i>Populus alba</i>	HD I	47,9	0,50%
17	5310 Clusters with laurel <i>Laurus nobilis</i>	HD I		
18	5330 Thermo-Mediterranean and semi-desert shrubs	HD I	379,9	4,03%
19	5430 Endemic of <i>Euphorbia-Verbascion</i> alliance	HD I	46,8	0,50%
20	6220 <i>Thero-Brachypodietea</i>	HD I*	43,6	0,46%
21	6310 <i>Quercus spp.</i>	HD I	654,2	6,94%
22	8330 Marine caves immersed partly or totally in water	HD I		
23	92D0 <i>Nerio-Tamaricetea</i>	HD I	62,2	0,66%
24	9320 Olive forests (<i>Olea</i>) and <i>Ceratonia</i>	HD I		
25	9340 Forests of <i>Quercus ilex</i>	HD I	22,5	0,23%
26	9350 Forests of <i>Quercus macrolepis</i>	HD I	3341,4	35,45%
27	Agriculture lands		752,8	7,98%
28	Vineyard, citrus and olive grove		498,3	5,28%
29	J2 Constructions of low density (rural zone)	EUNIS	114,5	1,53%
30	Other littoral habitats (without underwater meadows)		390,39	4,14%
		TOTAL	9424	100,00%

Table 2: Habitats of the National Park Butrinti

4.2. Flora

Flora of Butrinti National Park is rich and diverse, composed from 800-900 species, from which more than half is reported and put in herbarium. A number of 32 species found in Butrinti are listed in the Red Book, 16 of them are considered Endangered species, 12 Rare species and 4 are not sufficiently recognized. It is important to mention here the presence of one endemic species and 11 Sub-endemic species.

No.	Endangered species	Rare	Not sufficiently recognized
1	<i>Agrimonia eupatoria</i>	<i>Alkana corcyrensis</i>	<i>Centaurea spruneri</i> subsp. <i>guiccuiardii</i>
2	<i>Aristolochia sempervirens</i>	<i>Alissum smolikanum</i>	<i>Scabiosa epirota</i>
3	<i>Capparis spinosa</i>	<i>Colchichum cupanii</i>	<i>Stachys sericophylla</i>
4	<i>Colchicum automnale</i>	<i>Crocus boryi</i>	<i>Thymus teuroides</i>
5	<i>Desmazeria marina</i>	<i>Daphne gnidium</i>	
6	<i>Ephedra distachya</i>	<i>Euphorbia dendroides</i>	
7	<i>Hypericum perforatum</i>	<i>Galium intricatum</i>	
8	<i>Laurus nobilis</i>	<i>Galium procurrens</i> Erhend	
9	<i>Lotus cytisoides</i>	<i>Limonium anfractum</i> Salmon.	
10	<i>Mathiola tricuspadata</i>	<i>Pterocephalus perennis</i> coulter subsp. <i>bellidifolius</i>	
11	<i>Origanum vulgare</i>	<i>Stachys decumbens</i>	
12	<i>Prunus webbii</i>	<i>Teucrium fruticans</i>	
13	<i>Quercus ilex</i>		
14	<i>Salvia officinalis</i>		
15	<i>Satureja montana</i>		
16	<i>Viburnum tinus</i>		

Table 3: Flora of the National Park Butrinti

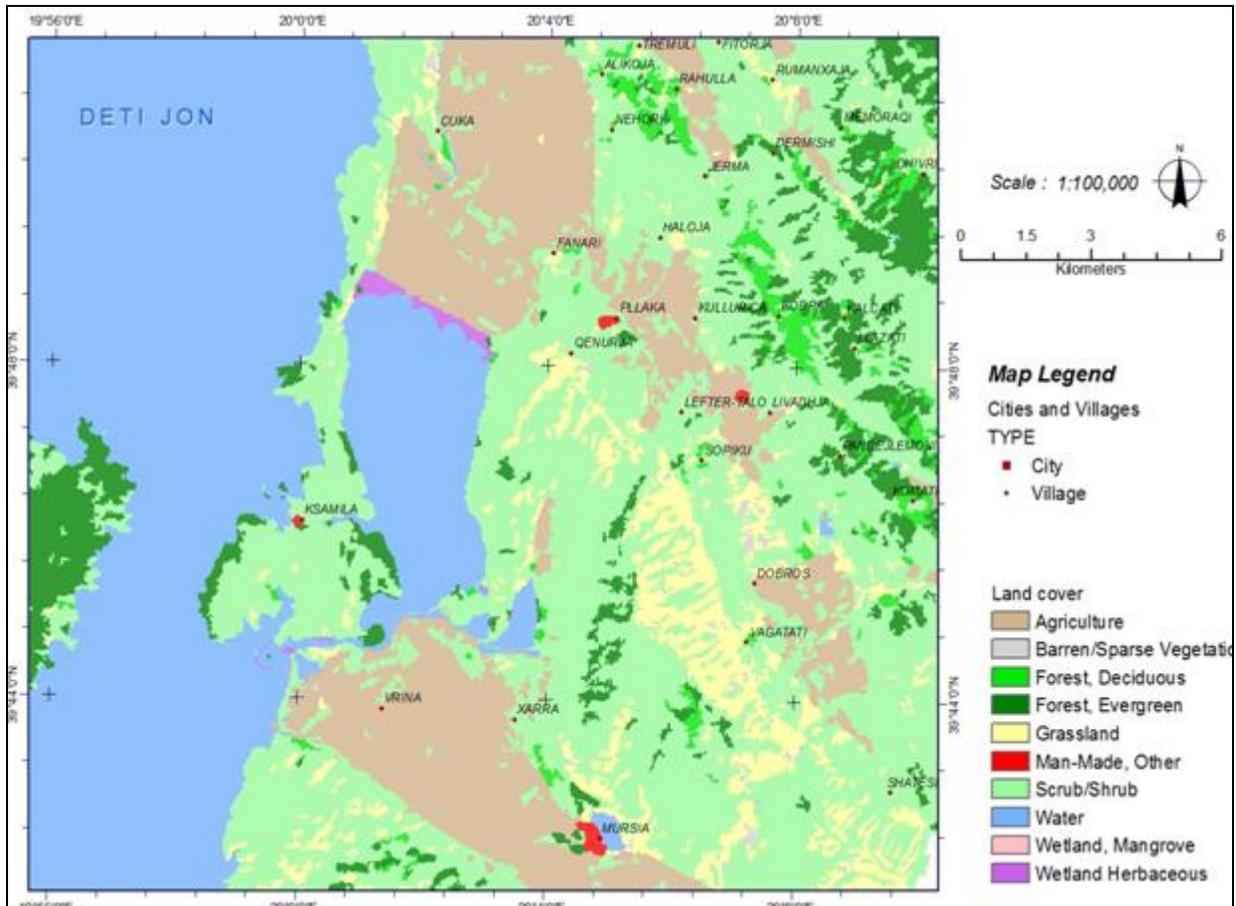


Figure 4: Vegetation cover of Butrinti Area⁷

4.3. Fauna

4.3.1. Invertebrates

As a general fact in Albania, including also the Park Area, the invertebrates are faintly studied. So far in the area of Butrinti are reported 5 species of Spongia, 2 species of Echinodermata, 3 species of Cnidaria, 12 species of Crustaceans, 26 species of Lamellibranch and 21 species of Gastropods.

As regards to insects, few groups have been studied. In these groups take part: butterflies and night butterflies (149 species), from which 62 species of butterflies and 87 species of night butterflies. Beetles are faintly studied as well; so far are reported only 53 species, whereas the number of Hemiptera is estimated to be around 47 species. As invertebrates are very little studied, it is expected that the number of invertebrate species might be far higher and it is estimated to be around 1500-2000 species inside the National Park.

4.3.2. Fishes

The area of Butrinti is very rich and diverse when coming to fish species. This because of

⁷ Source: IFSV 2013

different type of water habitats such as: sweet waters, and seawaters. In this area are found 105 species of fish, which represent 33% of the whole Albanian ictiofauna. Butrinti Lake is populated from 68 species of fish. The most common ones are; Mullet: flathead mullet (*Mugil cephalus*), Thinlip mullet (*Liza ramada*), *Chelon labrosus*; eel (*Anguilla anguilla*), Gilt-head bream (*Sparus aurata*), *Diplodus annularis*, *Lithognathus mormyrus*, Sea Bass *Dicentrarchus labrax*, *Sardina pilchardus*, *Atherina sp.*

In the discharge of the Butrinti/Vivari channel are present the same species and also *Mullus barbatus* and *Mullus surmuletus*, *Merluccius merluccius*. It is important to mention here also the presence of certain migratory fish species such as *Sarda sarda*, *Thunnus thynnus thynnus* and *Thunnus alalunga*. The channel Butrinti/Vivari is the main road for the circulation of the migratory fishes, here it has been installed a net which catches 60% of the fish cached on the lake.

The lake Bufi is dominated from *M. cephalus*, *L. ramada*, *C. carpio* and *C. carassius*. The discharge of river Pavllo is dominated from *M. cephalus* and *L. ramada*, *Leuciscus cephalus albus*, *Chondostroma nasus nasus* and *Barbus graecus*.

Sub-Zones	Number of Species
Butrinti Lake	68
Bufi Lake	9
Pavllo River	10
Coastal area	28

Table 4: Species presence in different habitats of Butrinti Area

4.3.3. Amphibians and Reptiles

National Park of Butrinti shelters 67% of amphibians and 75% of registered reptiles in Albania. Every habitat of this area is populated from this group of animals. In the shrub forests, the most common amphibians are: *Salamandra salamandra*, *Triturus cristatus*, *Bufo bufo*, *Rana graeca*, and *Rana balcanica*. Reptiles are represented with following species: *Lacerta trilineata*, *Anguis fragilis*, *Coluber jugularis*, *Elaphe longissima*, and *Vipera ammodytes*. The majority of registered species (33) are permanent inhabitants of the area. Five species of amphibians are considered rare. There are present also two species, which are globally threatened species: *Testudo marginata* and *Testudo hermanni*.

The agricultural land is an important habitat for the herpetofauna. The majority of species are considered as temporary species. The common amphibians are: *Bufo bufo*, *B. viridis*, *Rana balcanica*, *R. dalmatina*, *R. balcanica*, *Triturus cristatus*, *T. vulgaris*, which populate mostly the irrigation and drainage system.

Reptiles are more abundant in number: *Testudo hermanni*, *Coluber gemonensis*, *Elaphe longissima*, *Natrix natrix* and *N. tessellata*. There are found two endangered species of reptiles; *Emys orbicularis* and *Mauremis caspica*. Lakes of Butrinti and Bufi have a similar herpetofauna. Amphibians and reptiles are the most commons. Rivers of Pavllo and Bistrica have a similar herpetofauna composed from 10 species of amphibians and 25 species of reptiles.

The number of amphibians in the coastal area is smaller than in the other areas mentioned above. A high number of reptiles are rare and endangered such as: *Emys orbicularis*, *Mauremis caspica*, *Testudo hermanni*, *T. marginata*, *Caretta caretta* and *Dermochelis coriacea*.

4.3.4. Birds

The last Surveys have reported so far 246 species of birds for the wetland complex Butrinti.

Wetlands are very important for birds as they serve as place for resting and nesting for more than 8000 individuals of wintering water birds. The diving species dominate the community of birds. The common species are *Podiceps cristatus*, *Phalacrocorax carbo*, *Aythya ferina*, *Fulica atra* and *Larus ridibundus*. The canes on the northern and southern part of the Butrinti Lake are inhabited from *Gallinula chloropus* and *Rallus aquaticus*. The raptor species *Circus cyaneus*, and *Circus aeruginosus* are also found there. Some species of sparrows find here the only place for nesting. The most common are *Acrocephalus melanopogon*, *A. schoenebaenus*, *A. scirpaceus*, *A. arundinaceus* and *Remiz pendulinus*. The temporary wetlands offer a feeding place for a variety of species such as: *Egretta garzetta*, *Ardea cinerea*, *Pluvialis squatarola*, *Pluvialis apricaria*, and *Vanellus vanellus*. During migration have been seen the *Philomachus pugnax*, *Calidris ferruginea*, *Calidris alpina*, *Calidris minuta* and many other migratory sparrow species.

The majority of water birds that feed in surface (not diving birds) are concentrated in the wetlands of Pavllo River. *Anas penelope*, *A. platyrhynchos*, *A. crecca*, *Anas acuta* are common in winter. During migration, the most common species are *Numenius arquata*, *Tringa totanus*, *Calidris alpina*, *Larus genei*, *Sterna sandvicensis*, *S. albifrons* etc.

From the 88 different bird species that have been observed in the forests and shrubs, the sparrow species dominate. The most dominating wintering species are: *Erithacus rubecula*, *Phylloscopus collybita*, *Parus major*, *Troglodytes troglodytes*, *S. melanocephala* and *Scolopax rusticola*. Forest is also an important habitat for the nesting of *Oriolus oriolus*, *Hippolais olivetorum*, *Buteo buteo*, *Otus scops*, *Dendrocopos syriacus* and *Parus lugubris*. Other migratory species such as *Muscicapa striata*, *Sylvia atricapilla*, *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*, *Upupa epops*, *Anthus trivialis*, *Miliaria calandra* etc are present in the river cost forests. The rocky habitats are populated from around 22 species of birds. It is worthy to mention here the presence of species that are not found in other habitats such as; *Aquila chrysaetos*, *Falco peregrinus*, *Alectorix graeca*, *Monticola solitaries* and *Sitta neumayer*. The dry areas are populated from 47 bird species. Avifauna is dominated from the sparrows *Galerida cristata*, *Anthus pratensis*, *Motacilla alba*, *Sturnus vulgaris*, *Turdus pilaris* and *Carduelis carduelis*.

4.3.5. Mammals

In Butrinti are registered 39 species of mammals from 74 species reported to be present in Albania. The majority of mammal species are terrestrial (35). Bats compose the group of flying mammals. Rodents are the most abundant species in number and afterwards the bats. The majority of mammals are connected with the Forest and Mediterranean shrubby habitats. Around 32 species of mammals or 82% of the area mammal fauna are inhabitants of Mediterranean macchia. The characteristic species of these habitats are *Martes foina*, *Vulpes vulpes*, *Sus scrofa*, *Canis aureus*, *Lepus europaeus* etc. *Canis lupus* is a rare wintering visitor. Because of overgrazing and illegal fires, the mammal fauna of this area is not very abundant.

The mammal fauna of grass areas and agricultural land is relatively poor; it is represented by rodents (6 species) and Bats (7 species). Among them we can mention: *Microtus epiroticus*, *M. thomasi*, *Mus macedonicus*, *M. spicilegus*, *Apodemus sylvaticus*, *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* and *P. kuhli*. Grassland areas and agricultural areas are visited from other mammals such as: *Lepus europaeus*, *Vulpes vulpes*, *Mustela nivalis*, *Canis aureus*.

Bats represent the main group of wetland mammals. At least 9 species use this area during their hunting activity. Four species are considered as globally threatened. It is important to mention the presence of *Lutra lutra*, which is protected from international conventions. Some of the large mammals, which visit these environments, are *Vulpes vulpes* and *Canis Aureus*.

The sea habitats are suitable for sea mammals, which are dominated from order *Cetacea*. Until now it has been reported the presence of two dolphin species; *Tursiops truncatus* and *Delphinus delphi*, and another species is expected to be present *Stenella coeruleoalba*. It is also present the monk seal *Monachus monachus* which is globally threatened it is an occasional visitor of this littoral area. The urban habitats have a poor fauna with the presence of certain species such as: *Mus musculus*, *Rattus norvegicus*, *R. rattus*, *Apodemus sylvaticus*, *Crocidura suaveolens* and *Talpa stankovici*. Inhabited centers offer a wintering and summer shelter for bats of genus *Pipistrellus* and *Myotis*. Along the night, other carnivores such as *Vulpes vulpes*, and *Mustela nivalis* can visit these habitats.

5. Socio-Economic Characteristics

5.1. Population

The population of the three communes is approximately 17 000 inhabitants. The villages which are closed to the National Park are Qenurjo, Pllaka, Fanari/Drita (this are in the commune of Aliko) in the north-east and Shen Delli, Vrina, Xarra, Mursia (of the commune of Xarra) in the south east of the Park. The biggest village is Ksamili (commune of Ksamili) which is placed in the western coast of the National Park. The biggest inhabited centers are Ksamili (8,897 inhabitants) and Xarra (2,362 inhabitants). The families are composed from 3 to 5 persons, where the numbers of males dominate (52% vs. 48%).

5.2. Education

In the majority of the villages of the area there are kindergartens and secondary schools. There is only one high school, which is placed in Ksamili. In contrary in the three villages of the commune, Aliko there is no any education institution. The data on education show that 1% of the population has only elementary education, 46% secondary education, 45% high school education and 8% university.

5.3. Employment, revenues and wellbeing

The commune of Xarra has a low unemployment rate. Inhabitants of this commune are employed in small businesses, agriculture and livestock. In the commune of Aliko there is also a low unemployment rate, because of the mentioned livelihoods and also emigration occupies a very significant place. Ksamili is the commune with the highest unemployment rate. Cutting of citrus plantations has cut in the same time many work places. The unemployment rate is higher in women. Many emigrants that have been worked in Greece along the last years are now turning back and trying to invest in the area.

Livestock has always been a very significant livelihood activity in the area. The size of herds has been increased, which is bringing overgrazing and pasture degradation. Fishing and mussel cultivation as well is an important activity. It has been increased the number of licensed subjects which are engaged on fishing and mussel cultivation. In addition the aquaculture in the sea is

getting significantly developed. Along the last years it has been increased a lot the surface of land occupied by buildings (houses and services). The population has been increased, especially in the village of Ksamili where the number of population has been increased by 10 times over the last years. Another work generating activity is the stone quarries as it has been a high demand for stone materials by the construction sector.

5.4. Land Use Rights

The land use rights do not have the same patterns in the three different communes of National Park Butrinti. The main agricultural land fund in the commune Aliko is allocated based on law no. 7501. Here the majority of farmers are landowners, whereas the rest benefit from land uses rights. This constitutes a favorable context for the sustainable development of agriculture.

On the other hand in the commune of Xarra the situation appears different; one part of the land is private, whereas the rest which includes villages of Vrine and Bufi (wetland areas) are yet state owned and it is allocated to farmers based on land use rights. There are not written contracts among state (Agriculture Directorate of Saranda), meaning that the state, when needed can take certain surface of land for rehabilitation. However, farmers that currently use these lands are waiting for a fast process of transferring the ownership to them. Farmers having obtained the land based on law no.7501, have it fragmented in three parts each representing a different land quality.

In the commune of Ksamili the situation is even more complicated. Ksamili before 1990s has been a collective state owned farm, thus the law no.7051 could not be applied in this area. In year 1993 by law no. 7665 for the “Development of Touristic Priority Areas”, Ksamili has been proclaimed “Area for Touristic Development”. By DCM no.61 date 6.2.1995 for the management of problems related to the tourism master plan implementation for Ksamili, the area passes under the administration of the ministry of “Construction and Tourism” of that time. Based on the tourism development master plan, it has been given permission for the construction of 7 touristic villages, and it has been expanded the area where construction is permitted. In the commune of Ksamili, the majority of buildings built after 1990 are illegal because of intensive settling in the area and the chaotic and uncontrolled urbanization. The property rights conflict it is evident in Ksamili. The process of legalization of illegal buildings has started for the whole country but the delays on it make these conflicts to be still persistent in the area. The law no.7665 date 21.01.1993, has been depowered by the law no. 9734, date 14.05.2007 which involves all the state structures to contribute in the tourism development through proposing policies on taxation that encourage local touristic businesses, that operate based on the defined law.

The transfer of administration rights from central to local government for forests and pastures is realized in the commune of Aliko, and it is in an ongoing process in the commune of Xarra and Ksamili. The lakes of Butrinti and Bufi (Rreza) are state owned whereas the property of the pastures along the littoral coast of Brendeshi – Ksamili - Stillo is still not clear.

5.5. Agriculture and Livestock

5.5.1. Agriculture

Agriculture is of special importance in the area of Butrinti, as the agricultural land is generally irrigated and the climate is very favorable for agricultural production. The main agricultural products are olives, citrus (oranges, mandarins, lemons) water melon, corn etc. In the communes of Xarra and Aliko is found the major part of agricultural land fund. However, not all the

agricultural land is used. The surface covered with citrus is decreasing whereas the number of olives and vineyards is augmenting. The commune of Xarra has much higher surfaces covered by vineyards compared with the commune of Aliko (2400ha vs 27 ha). The agricultural production of these two communes (Xarra and Aliko) occupies an important place in the total agricultural production of the Saranda district, especially for the production of corn and watermelon.

5.5.2. Livestock

Big herds of sheep and goats dominate livestock, whereas the number of cattle is limited. Herds of sheep and goats graze in almost all the territory of the National Park including central zones A1 and A2, causing degradation of pastures because of overgrazing.

In the area there are found few agro-products processing facilities such as bakeries, milk processing facilities, and slaughter house. The dairy products are mainly sold in the markets of Tirana and Durres, whereas bakeries produce to satisfy the local demand.

5.6. Medicinal plants

The area has a great potential for the collection and cultivation of medicinal plants, however because of grazing and burning of pastures this activity stands almost not practiced. In the National Park of Butrinti, there are found around 41 species of medicinal plants, but only a small number of these are collected, and a small number of families are linked to this activity. In the villages of Mursi and Xarra the inhabitants almost do not collect at all medicinal. In some other villages (Qnurjo, Pllake, and Fanar) collection of medicinal plants takes place. Medicinal plants are collected 30% inside the National Park and 70% outside. The medicinal plants collected in the area are Salep (*Orchis mascula*), Sage (*Salvia officinalis*) etc. Only few families in some of the villages are engaged in this activity.

5.7. Forestry

The forest cover in Butrinti has been decreased while the pastures are expanded. The three communes include inside their territory 1556 ha of forests (composed from shrubs and oaks) and 3 357 ha of pastures. Xarra commune has the largest part of these forests and pastures. The major part of forest cover is still state owned and only a small surface of it in the communes of Xarra and Aliko is private. There are problems with illegal forest cutting and forest damaging through fires.

5.8. Hunting

Hunting inside the area of the National Park is forbidden. However, illegal hunting is always happening.

5.9. Fishing and Aquaculture

Lake of Butrinti is very important for the development of fishing and mussel growing. Very rich on mussel production, lake of Butrinti until 1990 has been serving as a successful state owned “farm” which survived the strong transition period without getting damaged, and continues to be a profitable activity. The lake of Butrinti has a fishing capacity of 120 ton fish/year and 4500 tones of mussels/year. There are around 70 mussel plants functioning, from those around 50 are given through renting contracts. Along the last years the majority of mussel plants have been

abandoned, because of the increase in the bacteria concentration, however some new plants are built in some other parts where the pollution is less severe. Before 1990s, 70% of the mussel production has been exported, however now this export has been interrupted because of failing to fulfill the EU food safety standards.

The sea aquaculture is also present in the area of Ksamili, at foreland of Stillo there are more than 12 licensed subjects operating (foreign and local). The illegal fishing is present there. The administration of the National Park of Butrinti has not any competences on controlling these activities, and does not participate in the process of signing contracts and giving licenses for these activities, thus it doesn't monitor these activities. Fishing and aquaculture is estimated as a low to average source of revenues.

5.10. Use of water: irrigation and drainage

The irrigation and drainage system in the area has been significantly damaged after 1990s. As in other parts of the country, this system is not maintained and fragmentation of land has brought other difficulties, however on the last years there are efforts made to improve and maintain this system.

5.11. Stone quarries

There are 5 stone quarries working inside the National Park in the north-eastern part of it. Some of these produce stone tiles and the rest produce gravel. This is a disturbing activity as it produces noise and dust.

5.12. Education and Research

Butrinti is the most important area in Albania for people interested in prehistory and archeology. Butrinti has been continuously used for scientific research from different academic institutions, such as the Faculty of Natural Sciences – University of Tirana, The Museum of Sciences, Agriculture University of Tirana, Universities of Vlora, University of Gjirokastra etc. There are also many other foreign researchers that have been carrying out research in the area. School pupils of Albania visit Butrinti every year.

5.13. Transportation

The road Saranda – Butrinti – Konispol passes through the territory of the National Park. The border area is under the management and control of the border police.

5.14. Transportation by raft

This is a paid service to connect the antique city of Butrinti with and the main area of the Park, with the southern part of it and the commune of Xarra, through the channel of Butrinti/Vivari. The length of the trip is 70m. The regulars “passengers” of this raft are the inhabitants of the villages of Vrine, Xarra, Mursi, but is also used from tourists.

5.15. The mussel cleaning plant

There is a mussel cleaning plant in the area, which cleans and oxygenates all the mussel production of Butrinti Lake.

5.16. Other activities in the area

The construction activity has been using several sites to deposit inert materials, spoiling the landscape and the habitat. The sea aquaculture is also influencing the landscape, is disturbing plant communities and very sensitive habitats like the ones of Stillo foreland.

5.17. Tourism and leisure activities

The area of World Heritage represents the most important cultural object of the region of Saranda, and one of the most well known archeological areas in Albania. This area is visited from a high number of tourists and visitors. More than 20000 visitors visit the Archeological National Park of Butrinti every year. The touristic season of 2008, was the peak with 58000 inhabitants and consequently the increase in the number of jobs and revenues of the inhabitants of Saranda and Ksamili. The national park of Butrinti also attracts many touristic agencies that bring tourists also to the island of Corfu. To enter in the Archeological Park of Butrinti the ticket price is 500 – 700 ALL. These funds will help for the management of the National Park and Museum.

Inside the National Park is allowed to be held concerts and artistic and cultural events. These are regulated with law no. 9048, date 7.4.2003 “For the cultural heritage”. Here we can mention the “International Theater Festival” or “Butrinti 2000” which is organized with a push of National Center of Mediterranean Theatre on year 2000 and every year making it an annual activity. In addition, there are organized entertaining events and beauty competitions, like Miss Globe, and Miss Albania.

In Ksamili, there are more than 30 hotels, which operate along the summer period serving to more than 10.000 tourists coming from different countries. The area has not any advantage in the agricultural production and arboriculture thus the only means of revenues remain the seasonal tourism, and it is estimated as the most important activity having the potential to develop the area. However, the chaotic urbanization happened along last years in Ksamili, with illegal construction, lack of infrastructure and lack of an architectural standard has a negative impact on the further development of the tourism and leisure activities in Ksamili and on the entire area of Butrinti.

Tourism plays an important role in the socio-economic development of the area. Two main sources of the tourism development are the Archeological National Park, which is a World Heritage site. The National Park of Butrinti is considered as a source for the further development of the area, as it is part of the agenda of many touristic operators, which for the moment are foreign visitors coming more often from Greece.

The communities living in the area of the National Park of Butrinti conserves fanatically their local traditions. This comes because of the geographical position of this area and the exchanges they have with neighbor country Greece. The traditional music, dance, songs and costumes are highly practiced in every village of the area. The inhabitants of Butrinti are of different religion but they leave in peace and harmony with each other. Inside the National Park, there are 11 main archeological centers, which date from the middle Paleolitikum to the 19th century. From the 11 centers, only the main center (the antique city of Butrinti) and the Manastir of Dema are open for the visitors.

The symbiosis between man and nature gives a special value to the landscape of Butrinti in the historical and archeological context. The National Park of Butrinti represents an area with magnificent natural landscapes. The amazing landscape includes the high mountains, the wide

fields, wetlands, lakes and the rocky seacoast. The human interventions in most of the areas are in harmony with nature and do not dominate it. The land use and the local economical activities reflect into the landscape.

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