

**Agreement on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Prespa Park Area  
Working Group on Sustainable Tourism (WGST) of the Prespa  
Park Management Committee  
Rules of Organization and Procedure – Proposed Terms of  
Reference (ToR) – January 2023**

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**Article 1**

**Purpose and Functions of the WGST**

1. The WGST is a standing expert group of the PPMC and operates under the auspices of the latter. More specifically, the WGST will assist the PPMC and the Parties in formulating and implementing a common tourism strategy as stipulated in the Prespa Park Agreement (arts. 3(1)(e) and (2)(e)).

2. The overall objective of the WGST is to facilitate coordination of efforts for development and implementation of a joint strategy for the touristic development of the Prespa area. This objective will be pursued by providing support to the PPMC and by issuing recommendations based on the principles of sustainable tourism, by organizing consultations with local, regional and national stakeholders and exchanges of best practices. In this context, the WGST will also facilitate cooperation, support project development and collaborate in developing ideas to promote Prespa as a sustainable tourism destination.

**Article 2**

**Tasks of the WGST**

Pursuant to article 3 and taking into account article 10(9) of the Prespa Park Agreement, the specific tasks and mandate of the WGST are defined as follows. The WGST will:

- i. Support the work of the PPMC in the preparation of discussion / decision papers on issues related to tourism, including providing inputs when requested;
- ii. Facilitate a regular transboundary discussion on sustainable tourism development, the coordination of tourist development plans based on the principles of Sustainable Tourism on United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), with the aim at developing and subsequently implementing a common tourism strategy;
- iii. Share relevant information, knowledge and experience in relation to sustainable tourism, while enhancing transnational and cross-border cooperation on sustainable tourism in the region;
- iv. Facilitate the establishment of data collection/data-sharing mechanisms for the regular and ongoing exchange and assessment of available tourism data, including: data on tourist flows, nights spend, added value, social impact etc.;
- v. Support identification and involvement of key actors (including national, regional and local stakeholders) for exchange and collaboration regarding sustainable tourism development in the Prespa Park Area;
- vi. Support project development and cooperate on resource mobilization with relevant stakeholders and donors;

- vii. Share best practice and expertise supporting activities on sustainable tourism development in the Prespa Park Area and beyond for exchange of knowledge with other regions with similar characteristics,
- viii. Contribute to ideas and actions to raise the attention to Prespa as a sustainable tourism destination.

### **Article 3**

#### **Composition of the WGST**

The State Parties, after consultation, shall nominate representatives from competent organisations for sustainable tourism as members of this Working Group and inform on such nomination the chairperson of the Prespa Park Management Committee.

The WGST will consist of a total of 10 members, including:

- a. Three representatives from the national tourism organisations or other national experts of each of the three State Parties.
- b. Three representatives from local government, one from each of the three State Parties,
- c. Three representatives of Protected Area Authorities competent on tourism, one from each of the three State Parties
- d. one representative from the European Commission.

The members of the WGST are appointed – and replaced if need arises - by the Minister for the Environment of each State Party and by the European Commission, respectively.

Each member may have an alternate, appointed and replaced as above mentioned, and fully authorised to replace her/him in case of inability to attend meetings or follow related WGST work.

### **Article 4**

#### **Organisation of work of the WGST**

1. *Meetings:* The WGST will convene twice a year, in the same country. The venue of the WGST meetings will rotate among the three State Parties. Meeting dates will be agreed at the end of the previous meeting. Extraordinary meetings may also be held upon request by the PPMC and whenever deemed necessary by any of the three State Parties or the European Commission. It is further provided that one of the two meetings of the WGST each year under the same chair might be organized via teleconference, following a relevant decision of the PPMC.

2. *Decisions and recommendations:* Recommendations of the WGST to the Prespa Park Management Committee will be based on consensus and shall be included in the Minutes of the WGST.

3. *Chair:* The WGST will be chaired on a rotational basis for a period of one year by each of the Municipalities' representative. It is further specified that the chair continues to serve as the chair of the WGST for the duration of the year i.e. not only during meetings but also in between and until the next country takes over. In case of absence of the state representative, the meeting will be chaired by his alternate. The powers and duties of the Chair shall be to:

- a. Convene the regular meetings of the WGST.
- b. Prepare the draft agenda for the meeting in consultation with the members. Any member may propose agenda items.
- c. Preside over each meeting of the WGST.

- d. Review the Minutes summarizing the main conclusions and outcomes of the meeting, prepared in the English language by the PPMC Secretariat; ensure their review by all members of the WGST at the end of the meeting; incorporate feedback; Proposal for reformulation: ensure signing of the final Minutes by all members of the WGST; ensure that the signed Minutes are sent to the PPMC in electronic form through the Secretariat; and that the signed Minutes are circulated in electronic form to all members of the WGST
- e. Ensure the observance of the present Terms of Reference.

The PPMC Secretariat will assist the chair in performing the above duties.

4. *Working language*: The working language of the WGST is English.

5. *Communication*: Internal communication among members of the WGST between meetings will be conducted through electronic means (preferably e-mail, web meetings etc).

6. *Technical expertise*: In the event that the WGST lacks sufficient technical expertise on a relevant issue or specific thematic area on an agenda item, relevant expert(s) (from the Parties or international experts) may be invited to participate in the meeting(s) on an ad hoc basis; and/or

g. Ad hoc Task Groups may be established to contribute to the work of the WGST, upon guidance by the latter.

7. *Attendance of meetings*: The WGST meetings will be open to the PPMC and Secretariat members as well as interested parties and stakeholders to attend as observers.

## **Article 5**

### **Expenses of the WGST**

The operational costs of the WGST (i.e. hospitality expenses and meals during meetings) will be covered by the Chairing Party in whose territory the WGST meeting will be organised, and each Party shall in principle bear the expenses associated with the participation of its representatives (i.e. travel and accommodation expenses) in the WGST meetings.