

**Emblematic Mediterranean Mountains**  
as Coastal destinations of excellence  
**(EMbleMatiC)**

Project Ref: 594 | 1MED15\_3.1\_M12\_272

**CASE STUDY, PP1**

**ÇIKA MOUNTAIN**



**Deliverable D 3.3.3**

**WP3 – Studying**

**Activity A3.3 Conduction of the in depth study of the criteria composing the emblematic dimension of the EMM**

*Final Version – March 2018*

## SUMMARY

This case study is drafted in the framework of the WP3 “Studying” of EMbleMatiC project. This document presents the recording of the elements of the emblematic dimension of mountain **ÇIKA** based on the template produced by PP4’s subcontractor (ETAM), approved and adapted by the project’s Study Scientific Committee (LP1, PP4, PP6, PP8).

This case study document will consist of a reference document for **the overall in depth study of the emblematic dimension of the project’s touristic dimension** whilst it will constitute the emblematic dimension characterization document for mountain **ÇIKA**.

The case study is operative in correlation with D.3.3.2-Report on participative workshop, results of which have been incorporated in it.

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## Executive Summary

Thanks to a very positive and enthusiastic response of Himara Municipality to the invitation of Emblematic creators, Mount Çika is today part of EMbleMatiC (Emblematic Mountains of the Mediterranean as coastal destinations of excellence) project and network, sitting next to the mountains of Canigó (France), Olimp (Greece), Ida (Crete), Gran Sasso (Italy), Pedraforca (Spain), Serra de Tramuntana (Mallorca), Saint Victoire (France), and Etna (Italy).

The timing of Himara Municipality joining the initiative coincided with the finalisation of the territorial administrative reform undertaken by the Government of Albania, leaving the municipality of Himara with an almost three times bigger territory to administer, Mount Çika being one of the assets.

Beside potentials for the development of sustainable tourism in Himara, the region remains extremely inflexible in terms of diversifying the tourism product and it is a very typical Sea and Sand destination.

The tourism visionaries trust that Emblematic initiative will help rise another pole of attraction in Himara as a tourist destination and the wider region beside the sea, and shift the tourism demand in general to active tourism. The project is expected to bring Cika Mountain out of the shade of the nearby National Park of Llogara and awake the interest of the travel and tourism businesses about this new feature of the area. Although Mount Çika is considered an epic landmark of Albania South, south coast in particular, it has never before received such an interest in studying it, nor have its unique values been brought into the attention of the wider public or the community and visitors of the territory of Himara, where Mount Çika is situated. In order to rise this pole the Emblematic profile of the mountain needs to be designed.

It is expected that the major obstacle, that is the infrastructure, be tackled also through this initiative.

The earning of the '*Emblematic*' status for Mount Çika is perceived a challenge and at the same time a high responsibility by the administration of Himara. The criteria used for this purpose, such as picturesque scenery, myths and legends, power of inspiration, historical sites, excellent biodiversity and local specific services are analysed in this paper.

This study provides information about the criteria based on desk research and several interviews conducted by the staff of Municipality led by Gentian Stratoberdha, Local Coordinator of the project for the Project Partner 1, Himara Municipality. Several meetings held with stakeholders of Himara and the outcomes of these meetings are integrated in this paper.

## **PART I**

### ***1.1 Introduction***

Albania is well-known for its mountainous geographical character with 2/3's of the territory occupied by mountains. It is home to legendary peaks such as the southernmost edge of the Dinarics, which stretches up to the Southwestern territories of the country along the Ionian coast. Among these peaks Cika stands out for its location and unique features analyzed in this paper.

Regarding location **Mount Çika** distinguishes for two reasons. Unlike the rest of the peaks in Albania, **Mount Çika** rises in the south-western region of Albania, else known as the south-western Ionian coast. The second reason of distinguish is the distance from the sea, which is considered 0 since the mountain roots deeply into the Ionian.

It has attracted the interest of hikers, but there was a limited activity going on in the past. Increased interest from hikers have placed Çika today amongst the most demanded itineraries therefore mountaineering is expected to experience a boom.

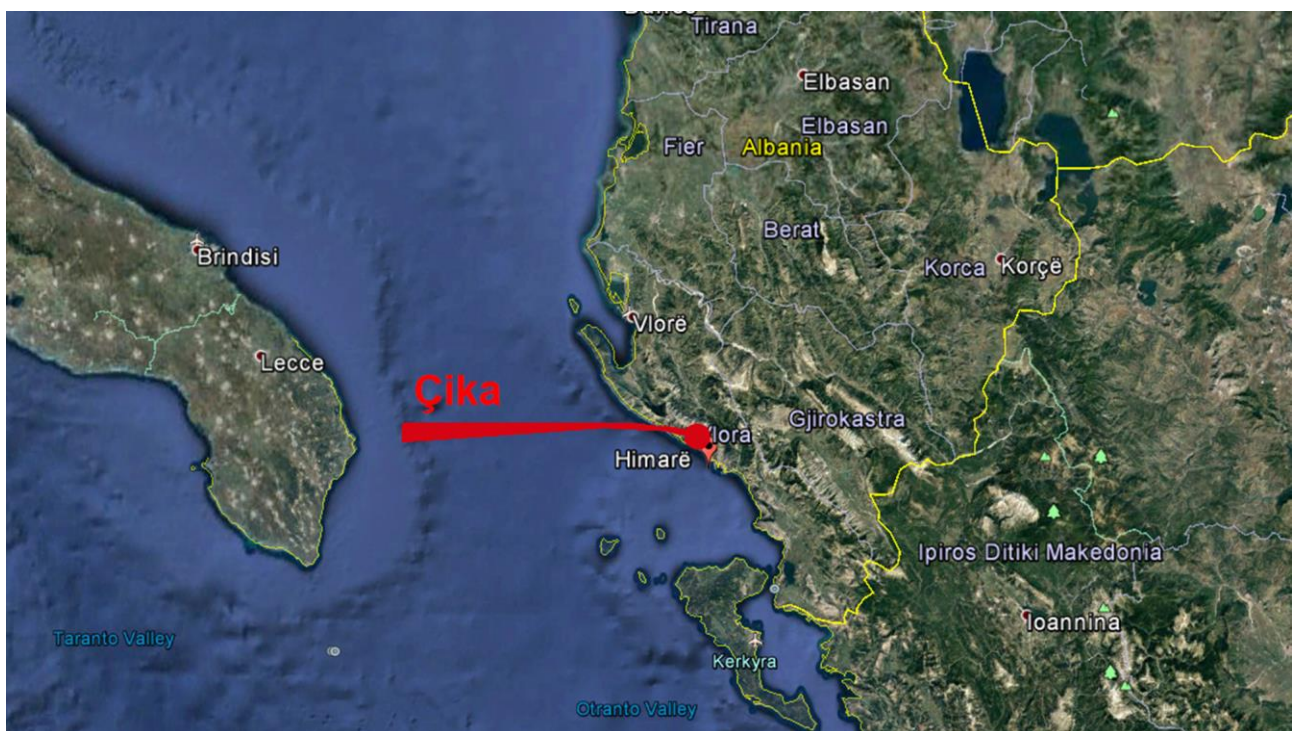
### ***1.2 Physical and human geography of the mountain***

**Çika** is the highest peak of Çike-Lungare coastal range known as the Ceraunian Mountains, rising grandiosely on the northeastern coast of the Ionian Sea with an elevation of 2045m (6,706 ft). Next highest peak of the range is Qorre at 2,018m. The classical name of the range derived from Ancient Greek *Κεραύνια ὄρη*, meaning "thunder-split peaks". The Ceraunian Mountains have been described by ancient writers such as Ptolemy, Strabo and Pausanias.

Geologically, the Karaburun Peninsula belongs to the mountain range, forming the western Ceraunian Mountains or Acroceraunians. The Llogara Pass (1,027 metres (3,369 ft)) makes this division of the range into the eastern Ceraunian Mountains and the Karaburun Peninsula. The range extends for approximately 100 km (62 mi) in a northwest-southeast direction along the southwest coast of Albania from Orikum to Sarande, else known as the Southern Albania Ionian Coast. The range width varies from 5-12 km.



Çika peak starting point is at Llogara Pass, 40 km south-east of the port city of Vlorë, 80 km north-west of the port city of Saranda, 190 km south of the capital city of Tirana and country's only International Airport. Cika Range alone starts at Kudhes stream (S), up to Saint George Pass 1252 m (S), which serves as a natural boundary with Lungare range. On clear weather the range can be viewed from Otranto situated 70 km across the Otranto straits.



Before 2015 the reform Himara municipality territory and competences were limited up to Himara town situated in the western feet of the eastern range facing the Ionian extending up to 7 small villages in the surrounding area.

Himara territorial cover has extended as a result of the territorial reform that GoA undertook in 2015 delivering the Municipality competences of administering a territory of approximately 600 sq. km.

Within this territory the eastern part of the Ceraunian range (including Cika) is configured both geographically and administratively as the spine of it, while the whole range is part of the wider Vlora Region.

Under this new territorial and administrative cover Himara Municipality counts 24 villages located on both sides of the range. This can be considered the area of direct influence of Cika Mountain, however this influence extends due to its western extension and its location in the very heart of Vlora Region.



Cika Mountain certainly impacts municipalities of Vlora and Selenica bordering Himara in the north, Municipality of Saranda in the south, Municipalities of Delvine, Tepelenë and Gjirokastër in the East, last two administratively belonging to Gjirokaster Region.

Details about the area of direct influence of Cika Mountain, that is, Himara Municipality and the 24 surrounding villages is provided bellow. Himara municipality itself is part of Vlora region

Area: 571.94 km<sup>2</sup>

Habitants: 27.168 (by the civil register in 2015).

-The 3 units of the new municipality:

**a. Himare:** Himara city, Villages: Pilur, Kudhës, Qeparo fshat, Qeparo Fushë, Vuno, Ilias, Dhërmi, Gjilekë, Palasë.

**b. Lukove:** Lukovë, Borsh, Fterrë, Çorraj, Piqeras, Sasaj, Qazim Pali, Shënvasil, Nivicë.

**c. Hore-Vranisht:** Vranisht, Kuç, Kuç Buronjë, Bolenë, Kallarat, Tërbaç.

The density of the population according to the civil register is 47 inhabitants per square km, however during the summer months this number triples especially in the villages situated in the western side of Cika facing the Ionian. The administrative units are: Himara, Horë-Vranisht and Lukova, with the latter being part of Saranda municipality.

The area can be accessed by road, through the coastal national axis that starts in Vlora and passes through Llogara Pass all the way to Saranda where it connects with other national and international axis.

This road serves as the main access to the Mountain with Llogara Pass being considered the 'junction' as it serves both as a gateway to the southern coast and a starting point of Ceraunian Mountains trails, Cika in particular.



The coastal road runs in parallel with the range crest and Vlore-Corraj axis which connects the villages situated on the Eastern side of the range. Both axis join in Corraj south and Narta, north of Vlore creating a loop.

Public transportation by buss is scarce, but available on daily basis both from Tirana, the capital city, Vlora North and Saranda further south. Minibus lines run on daily basis within the area of Himara connecting separately villages of the eastern Cika and those on the western side. The quality of road on the eastern side is not as good as the coastal western road, however at the present a project for the rehabilitation of the axis has just begun. Also there is no proper connection between east and west areas of Cika, beside Pilur (the highest village established on the mountain area) rural axis, which lack maintenance due to not being registered as an official axis. Most of the time certain segments are not crossable.

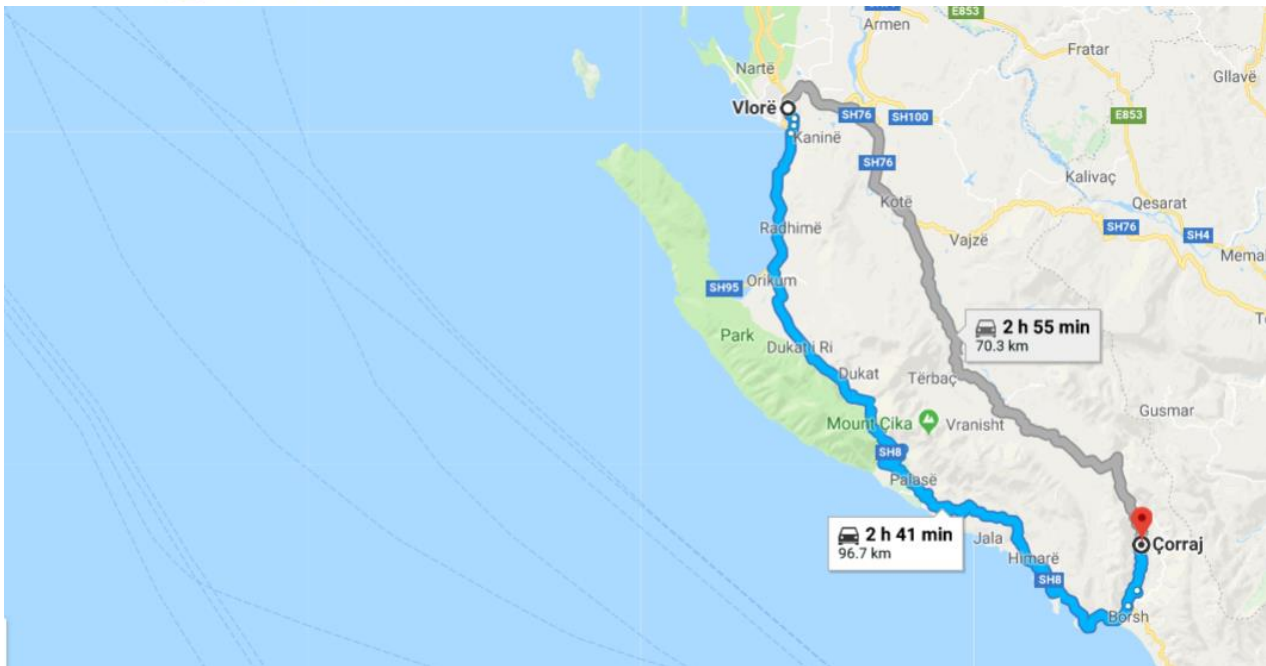
The nearest train connection is in Vlora, 40 km away, actually out of use.

There are three ports that cater for access to the area by sea. Vlora, North, a port of call mainly for passenger boats (ferry lines) connecting Brindisi- Puglia Region in Southeast Italy with Vlora.

Saranda port in the south connecting Northern Greece (mainly Corfu) and Southern Italy with Saranda. A hydrofoil line connects Himara directly with Corfu during the summer on a daily basis.

The nearest and only international airport in Albania is TIA, 225 km away, however both Corfu and Ioannina airports can be considered as an alternative connection to the area by air.

Recently the Government of Albania has announced the construction of Vlora airport. This is considered a strategic investment and it is expected to impact dramatically the life and activity around Cika.



The economy of the area is based on tourism which is a very seasonal activity and is built around the sea as main element of attraction. It consists of accommodation services, lodgings, restaurants, incoming agencies, guides, the info center of Llogara Natural Park, etc. Although the area is rich in natural and cultural attractions, little are these assets utilized until now due to mainly lack of infrastructure.

The area is also focused in fisheries, agriculture, livestock. Service sector such as banking and education is underdeveloped. The industry is non-existent in the area except for small agri-food craft industries. In the early 90's the population of Himara and the villages emigrated massively mainly to Greece, while population from remote areas of the neighboring regions of Albania, even north of the country, known as newcomers, were settled in the periphery of the coastal villages and Himara town.

Remittances contributed substantially to the economy of the region and by the end of 90's a considerable number of families began to return. This flux occurred once a year especially during summer.

Today most of these families have already set up seasonal family businesses in the service sector (mainly tourism) and spent the summer months in Himara. The newcomers are

usually hired as daily laborers by people in order to look after their gardens, olive groves and to collect olives during winter. They also cover most of the stock breeding activity or construction works.

As per the geographical aspect of Cika massif, the range is considered to be the continuation of the Dinarics as they share many common features.

The range hosts one of the most important National Parks in Albania, Llogara National Park and the northern part of Cika is considered itself part of Llogara National Park.

The distinguishing feature of Cika stands in the immediate rise of the feet-in-the-Ionian mountain. This rise starting under the sea level creates the impression of a very steep and very high mountain, especially on the side facing the sea not only due to this fact, but also because the distance from the crest to the sea is about 5.8 km.

The eastern slope of the mountain is less steeper but more difficult to conquer due to lack of paths. This immediate rise of the mountain overall is accompanied also by a drastic change in climate and vegetation.

The view over the peak of Cika is magnificent covering the northern Ionian Islands in Greece and the Italian coast of Poulia (across the straits of Otranto).

The lower mountain landscape is of a large crescent of coastal watershed with many intermittent stream beds having carved a series of gorges and hills. This crescent ends in a long shore divided into beaches separated by a ridge of limestone jutting into the sea. Most of the villages of Himara facing the sea are established in this height and proximity to the sea, apart from Piluri and Kudhes. The area is rich in fresh water springs.

The natural vegetation is sparse marquis mixed with pine and Shed Cypresses at the valley to the interior. The intermittent stream beds support denser areas of vegetation. The intermittent stream beds lead further up the slopes toward the ridge and provide good opportunities for hiking routes to Piluri and further inland. Ancient olive yards and citrus trees dominate the lower parts of the range.

Geologically, the area is represented by carbonate deposits of Mesozoite of Paleogenes, mainly in the Dukati Valley, north of Llogara Park. The territory of the range and the surroundings consists of:

- *Cretaceous limestone - low paleogenic, mixed with dolomite. These deposits are highly carved, which helps the development of a rich vegetation.*
- *Terrigenous flysch consist mainly of fine clay and occupy the low section of the park, with sloping deposits. Its relief is mostly mountainous, with sloping sides and quite fragmented by the hydrographic network.*

Superficial concentrated erosion, evident in the northwestern Terrigenous suburbs of the range and Llogara park is the result of the intensified human activity. Gravitational drifts in the numerous limestone areas of the park and the range, often quite bare, consist of stones of different sizes usually cut off from fundamental rocks, which collapse due to their continuous physical alienation.

The climate distinguishes for the heavy rainfall (over 1800 mm per year), mainly concentrated in the colder half of the year and quite intense. Snow is present throughout winter, however it forms a layer of not a long duration. During long winters a snow cap remains at the summit throughout the summer.

## Flora

The northern part of the range, that is, the Karaburun – Cika Mountain segment is considered an IPA (Important Plant Area) of the Mediterranean. The main types of vegetation of the range are:

Forest vegetation, dominated by *Pinus nigra* and *Abies borisii-regis* (Querco-Fagetea). The forests dominated by *P. nigra* and *A. borisii-regis* (Pineto-Abietetum *borisii-regis*) populate the valley between the mountains of Qorre and Shëndëlli covering a considerable surface, from 750 to 1300 m above the sea level.



Generally, these forests are preserved in very good condition. In the *Abies borisii-regis* wood floor participates in significant quantities *Pinus nigra* and at lower heights also *Ostrya carpinifolia*, *Acer obtusatum* and rarely *Taxus baccata*.

The shrubs' floor is richer. Shrubs such as *Ostrya carpinifolia*, *Colutea arborescens*, *Cotinus coggygria*, *Fraxinus ornus*, *Daphne laureola*, *Cornus sanguinea*, *Ilex aquifolium*, are common in these forests.

In some cases *Buxus sempervirens* also participates in the construction of the floor in significant quantities. In lower areas, the forests with *Abies borisii-regis* and *P. nigra* are represented by an evergreen shrubbery dominated by Mediterranean-rich species, characteristic of the macro-region such as, *Quercus coccifera*, *Juniperus oxycedrus*, etc.

Lianat *Clematis vitalba*, *Hedera helix* and semi-parasitous evergreen *Viscum album* are common on *P. nigra* trees.

Herbaceous floor is relatively rich with *Euphorbia amygdaloides*, *Bellis sylvestris*, *Agrimonia agrimonoides*, *Mercurialis perennis*, *Parietaria officinalis*, etc.

The most illuminated environments in these forests have the richest herbaceous flora, including the species *Sternbergia lutea*, *Crocus* spp., *Orchis* spp., etc. On a wet rocks, near a source in the Llogara Pass (950 m), there is a large colony of *Pinguicula balcanica* insectivores.

Along the mountain pastures, in the Llogara area, plant associations are dominated by *Salix alba*, *S. elaeagnos*, *Platanus orientalis*, *Alnus glutinosa*, *Rhamnus*

Main types of plants:

Gradually above 1300 m, the forests with *Abies borisii-regis* and *Pinus nigra* leave their place to forests dominated by *Pinus leucodermis*.

These forests cover large surfaces on the western slopes of Mount Qores and Cika, at elevations of 1300-1700 m. The wood floor on most of the surfaces covered by these forests is represented only by *Pinus leucodermis*, but in the lower areas it often joins *Abies borisii-regis* and *Pinus nigra*, rarely with *Fagus sylvatica*.

The shrub Floor includes a larger number of species with higher values of dominance: *Rhamnus alpinus* subsp. *fallax*, *Juniperus communis*, *Daphne oleoides* etc.

*Euphorbia cyparissias*, *Senecio squalidus*, *Sideritis raeseri*, etc. are found at a high presence on the herbaceous floor.

On the *Pinus leucodermis* belt, up to the height of 2045 m (Cika), there is a variety of habitats, where undoubtedly the surface is covered by alpine pastures, where flinty slope vegetation and heavy rocky vegetation should not be underestimated. Vegetation type and floristic composition are highly influenced by the type of motherly rock. In the alpine pasture, species of *Festuca*, *Sesleria*, *Poa*, *Phleum* etc. play the main role.

Llogara Region-Karaburun (western Ceraunian range) has a very rich flora, richer than any other region in Albania with comparable area.

About 1400 species or 42.4% of the Albanian flora make up the flora of this region. Endemic species of this region *Hypericum haplopylloides* (Llogora Park, 750-1400 m above sea level) and *Leucojum valentinum* subsp. *vlorense* (the cliffs of Jonufra, north of the range, and rocky areas around the old Orikum church, 10-15 m above sea level) belong to the group of neoendemisms.

Llogara-Karaburun, western Ceraunian Range, hosts 68 species or 21.25% of the total number of threatened and rare plants of Albania, of which 2 species belong to the category that may be extinct (Ex?), 25 endangered (E) categories, 34 rare (R), 4 vulnerable (V) and 3 inadequately known (K) categories.

Some plant species of particular interest in this area are: *Leucojum valentinum* subsp. *vlorense*; *Hypericum haplopylloides*, as endemic species, *Petteria ramentacea*; *Crataegus heldreichii*; *Limonium anfractum*; *Pedicularis graeca*; *Crocus boryi*; *Scutellaria rubicunda* subsp. *rubicunda*; *Valantia aprica* etc, subendemic

## Fauna

There are many habitats in this ecosystem, which is also expressed by the large number of species of which 105 birds. There are 6 rare and endangered species within the park area alone and these species belong to the order of Accipitriformes (day predators).

Among the mammals of the park we mention the wolf, the wild cat (lynx), the wild boar, the brown bear, the deer (elk), the marten, the badger, the squirrel. Inside the park little hamsters are met including Thomas and Felten's rat (*Microtus thomasi*, *F. felteni*) and the Balkan type, the rock rat (*Apodemus mystacinus*). The most common mammal is the fox. The hare is met on very rare occasions recently.

Two threatened deer species of the Mediterranean are also restricted to a single site in Albania: *Buxbaumia viridis* (to Northern Albanian Alps IPA) and *Mannia triandra* (to Karaburun - Mali i Çikës IPA). The main threats to IPAs in Albania are overgrazing, illegal deforestation, burning of vegetation, tourism development and recreational habitat fragmentation and eutrophication.

No accidents have been recorded so far. This due to low levels of visitors that in most of the cases would exercise hiking under the guidance of local and professional guides. The mountain raises over a seismically active area but that has not presented any risk.





### *1.3 Spatial cohesion*

The area is considered cohesive. From the territorial point of view the space has the range in the middle running almost parallel with the coastline and the valley on the eastern side.

Northwest of Cika, relatively close to the summit starts the Llogara park which caters as a green ring that separates the mountain range into the Ceraunians to the east and the Akroceraunians or Reza e Kanalit -Karaburun Peninsula to the west.

This territory formed by a watershed of 1010 hectares (800 hectares of forests and the other pastures, meadows and rocky places) is situated on the spatial boundary between the Adriatic Sea and Ionian Sea.

The western extension of the range itself has been classified a Managed Nature Reserve.

The proximity of the mountain to the sea gives this area a very distinctive dimension in terms of the spatial cohesion. The range is viewed as the spine of the territory, separating



the coast from the inland territories, but at the same time it organically stretches to the sea via Karaburun peninsula.

As Cika represents only the summit it is about time to bring it in the focus.

Controlled economic activity occurs at Llogara Pass level, which serves as a recreational area for daily travelers and holiday makers. These services cater also to the needs of hikers since there is no other facilities at this very starting point of the trail.

Within the area the level of human settlements on both sides of the range varies. The population is spread along the range and scattered in small villages along the parallel roads running on both sides of the mountain. The side facing the Ionian has had a more intense physical development due to tourism. There is only one connection between the two zones, through a very basic road across the range. The rest of the connections are only trails.

In the early past century the area was under communism. Beside the inexistence of road connections the perception of the boundaries of the area matched the real boundaries. By early 90's the connection faded creating a sharp division contributing towards a narrowing of virtual and perceptive limits of the area.

Municipality is trying to integrate both sides under the new territorial coverage and regulation.

## ***PART II***

### ***C.1 Proud Local People***

The pride of the people of Himara about the mountain is by and large very evident. The mountain has in a way shaped their characteristics. Beyond naming Cika the House of Gods and setting up worshiping places over the centuries, the locals often call themselves mountaineers of the south. Pointing this fact out speak of a strong sense of pride, very typical of mountaineers in Albania.

### ***C2 Institutional recognition***

The Cike –Lungare range is surrounded to the north by areas that are considered highly protected. The summit itself sits only a short distance from the southern borders of Llogara National Park which influences positively towards its status.

The whole protected area Llogara – Karaburun is situated between the mountain range Cikë-Lungara on the east and the Adriatic and Ionian seas on the west. The peninsula serves as a natural border of Adriatic and Ionian, otherwise known as Cika’s feet in the sea. This fact reiterates once more the distinguishing feature of the mountain that is the direct and integral connections with the sea.

The tendency of extending the surface of protected areas have been obvious over the course of the years.

Altogether three protected areas are proclaimed within the influence territory of the mountain range: National Park of Llogara (1.010 ha) by a decision of the Albanian Government Nr. 1, date 27.7.1977, Managed Nature Reserve of Rrëza e Kanalit-Karaburun (20.000 ha) by decision of the Albanian Government Nr. 1, date 27.7.1977, and Marine Protected Area of Karaburun–Sazan 12.570,82 ha, where 9.8 ha belong to the marine area close to Karaburun peninsula and 2.7 ha to the marine area close to the Sazan island by a decision of the Albanian Government Nr. 1, date 27.7.1977.

Besides, this area has a great number of monuments of nature (third category of IUCN) such as geomonuments, hydromonuments, and biomonuments. Contribution has been given to the protected areas by the geographers, geologists, and biologists who have published papers or studies about geology, structural relief and biodiversity of certain areas of this zone, however little has been done about Cika massif itself and the range in the light of the natural heritage study and promotion.

This case study undertaken courageously by the Municipality of Himara intends to shed light to the range as an integral site highlighting Cika mountain in particular by emphasizing its values of a geosite with complex geological, geomorphological, biological, cultural, historic and human values and scenic beauty. The range and the mountain (outside the protected areas) is actually under the patronage and administration of the municipality of Himara, which for the first time undertakes the promotion of Cika proudly.

It is the very first time that the mountain is considered an asset for the tourism product and the very first time a holistic approach is applied by a local administration in Albania over a mountain. Of course no funds have ever been allocated to the massif earlier, but the protected areas. Municipality is giving its financial contribution towards Cika's recognition in the frames of this project. For the moment the mountain has not undergone any assessment regarding quality of night sky or nocturnal natural environment.

### *C3 Reputation*

Mali i Çikës is an ultra-desirable mountain for many reasons. It has a very alpine feel to it, with sheer drops, cliffs, distant views and a 3.5 kilometer long exhilarating summit ridge. There is no shortcut. Unless you decide to transverse Mali i Çikës one has to go back the same way.

Nowadays Cika has grown very popular both for the national and international public. With Albania being promoted as a country of mountainous terrain and ample opportunities for adventure seekers Cika has grown its popularity and its own share within this market.

Over the past 20 years its popularity has risen in the international market and the hiking activity is by no doubt growing along with sparks of domestic activity exercised by a narrow niche of Albanian mountain lovers.

This information is obtained by the operators and local guides catering in the area as there is no official counting due to lack of infrastructure.

Recently indicative signage was delivered within the frames of a project undertaken by the GIZ, however that is very basic compared to the need for attention.

The classical hiking trail from Llogara pass to the summit makes for 14.5 kilometers out and back, a cumulative climb of more than 1400 Meter, and a very long day.

International public would substantially grow had there been other opportunities of exploring the range as a destination for nature lovers and not just hikers.

An ultra-prominent peak, or Ultra in short, is a mountain with a topographic prominence of 1,500 meters or more. In order to climb a higher peak, you first have to descend at least to a quota of 1500 meter.

Prominence – at least for the mountaineer - is a measurement for the subjective significance of a summit regardless of its actual height.

There are 119 Ultras in Europe. If you think of Switzerland as the motherland of European mountains, think again. Switzerland has only eight Ultras. Many of the highest peaks of the European Alps are connected by high passes, and they do not “stand out” as an Ultra would do.

Albania has six Ultras and Mali i Çikës is one of them. It has an official height of 2044 Meter, and a prominence 1563 Meter. But this aside, when you stand on its top, you have an unobstructed view 2044 Meter right down to the sparkling blue Ionian Sea.

There is a paragliding takeoff infrastructure already in place at a spot overlooking the Ionian on the western slope, 935 m above sea level. The takeoff spot was constructed with the initiative of Himara Municipality aiming to host National and International Championships of Aeronautics take place annually in this very spot and offer an additional opportunity for entertaining activity. Professionals use this spot to offer tandem flights for the visitors.

#### ***C4 Legends and myths***

Julius Caesar, Emperor of Rome, set foot on Llogara and rested his legion at Palasë on the Albanian Riviera during his pursuit of Pompey in 48 b.c.

What today is known as Caesar's pass, (called Ca'car of Cesar) is situated 200-300 m away from the tourist center.

This spot was considered the EYE as the view stretches from the mountain heights to a good part of what is known as the Albanian Riviera (the villages of Palasë , Dhermi, Vuno, etc.).

#### ***C5 Power of inspiration***

**Inspirational quotes:**

**Inspirational painting:**

There is a rich archive of paintings inspired by Cika. The majority of them belong to 19th century painters and are not actually found within Albania. Most of them are theme to many postcards and gravures.





Beyond paintings the area has inspired a lot of folk creators of the famous polyphonic music.

Most of their songs pay a tribute to the beauties of the land of Himara and its people.

One of these songs “Vajza e valeve- Lady of waves” is of a very old origin and it is sang even today on public events.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qkeb13Pkav0>

During 30's a version of this song was recorded in France by an Albanian band that for the first time used mandolin in a polyphonic song.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DElExCAh9mg>

A famous Albanian jazz singer has already streamed this song into a jazz version.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DvGriI8tn\\_k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DvGriI8tn_k)

### *C6 Picturesque landscape*

When you stand on top of Cika peak, you have an unobstructed view 2045 Meter right down to the sparkling blue Ionian Sea. On the peaks of Cika mountain there is a magnificent view of the northern Ionian Islands as well as the Italian coast of Apulia (including Otranto). On the foot of the western side of the mountain there are small beaches which attract tourists during the summer months.

Near Llogara pass, woods meet with interesting curves, influenced by wind turbines, among which is the "Pine Flag", a rare monument of nature of scientific value. The park offers beautiful, stunning scenery, both inland and in characteristic locations and prevailing points.

Driving from Llogara pass to the feet of the mountain via the winding road one meets a stunning optical illusion as driving towards the rocky side of the mountain. It obviously gives the impression that the rocky slope moves towards. This illusion is explained by the view contrasts with the open horizon.







### *C7 Particular ecosystem*

The relief is varied, with many mountain passes, canyons, gorges, hills and other landforms.

The mountains house Black pines, Bulgarian firs, Bosnian pines and Ash trees.

The range is home to many large mammals, including brown bears, grey wolves, lynx, golden eagles etc.

The feet of the range are marked with long pebble beaches, with a number of bays and headlands.

The climate is Mediterranean, having hot summers and generally warm to cool, dry winters. Furthermore, the mount falls within the Illyrian deciduous forests terrestrial ecoregion of the Palearctic Temperate broadleaf and mixed forest.

Llogara National Park, is distinguished for its rich biodiversity and vegetation. The western flank of the mount is vegetated by species such as the Bulgarian fir, Austrian pine, Bosnian pine and Macedonian pine. The mountains are characterized by housing Black pines, Bulgarian firs, Bosnian pines and Ash trees.

The area has high and significant biodiversity in the Mediterranean hosting: alpine and subalpine meadows, pine forests (*Pinus nigra*) and spruce (*Pinus peuce*, *Pinus leucodermis*), Macedonian fir trees (*Abies borisii-regis*) as well as (*Quercus coccifera*), (*Q. macrolepis*), typical Mediterranean maquia, typical vegetation of marine cliffs, wetlands and remains of alluvial forests, with well-expressed littoral floor, with highly developed benthos, broad meadows of posidonium (*Posidonia oceanica*).

The area overall has a very rich marine and land flora and fauna. In seawater, dolphins (*Delphinus delphi* and *Tursiops truncatus*), and many other threatened species that are protected by several conventions are met. Karaburun marine waters are visited by the Mediterranean (Monachus monachus), one of the most threatened species in the world. The northern boundary of the OleoCeratinion alliance is the northern seabed border. Area where endemic and subendemic species come and many rare and endangered species (*Taxus bacata*, *Ceratonia siliqua*. Çika is the highest peak of Çike-Lungare coastal range known as the Ceraunian Mountains, rising grandiosely on the northeastern coast of the Ionian Sea with an elevation of 2045m (6,706 ft). Next highest peak of the range is Qorre at 2,018m. The classical name of the range derived from Ancient Greek Κεραύνια ὄρη, meaning



"thunder-split peaks". The Ceraunian Mountains have been described by ancient writers such as Ptolemy, Strabo and Pausanias.



### *C8 Mediterranean cultural identity*

Himara is mentioned in ancient manuscripts by Herodotus and Thucydides and by historical sources: roman empire, byzantine authors, Ottomans empire etc.

Himara Municipality, or "the Riviera" as Albanians prefer to call it, lies along the coastline of Ionian Sea, starting from Llogara in the north up to Nivice village, near Saranda.

Himara city and its 2400 year old castle is a symbol of resistance across the region.

With a very favorable geographical position in the south-western part of Albania it features unique cultural dimensions.

Greek minority lives in a dominant number of the coastal villages and Himara and this coexistence has been an exemplary one with populations exchanging rites and traditions.

Himara has a rich historical and cultural heritage which has given the place a very distinguishing identity.

Above all the human heritage is what himariots (local people) boast for.

Himariots are known for their vivid free spirits. Over the course of the history they have demonstrated the profile of a proud population. The sea has been both a source of life and danger at the same time, however the sea and the wilderness of the mountains has carved their characters evidently.

Today Himariots boast a rich cultural heritage and tradition. The highlight of this legacy is:

*a. the POLYPHONY (group singing) which is a protected human heritage under the patronage of UNESCO and*

*b. the traditional coastal villages bearing unique architectural character and values.*

*(a rich list of cultural monuments and 4 historical centers)*

Himara counts over 40 cultural heritage objects proclaimed as such by the Ministry of Culture. Various castles situated in along the coast are evidence of life since 3500 b.C.

<http://himara.gov.al/lista-e-monumenteve-te-kultures/>

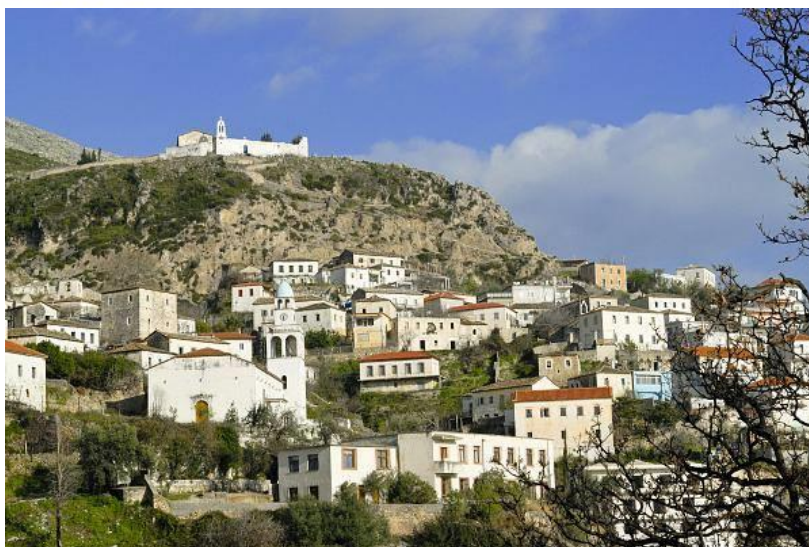
### ***C9 Sustainability and anthropogenic environment***

The challenges of today Himara Municipality:

-Promoting an adequate development along the coast and mountainous areas that supports the regeneration of the local, regional and national economy without saturating the environment and cultural heritage.

*(just a very few examples).*





Architecturally, Himara has survived the real estate boom and, despite the pressure of recent years, the region has remained attractive. However the tourism activity has exerted a lot of pressure on the environment, but on the other hand there is obviously increase in the consciousness of the community and the stakeholders.

Some of the damages that have been done in the natural environment are concentrated in the feet of the mountain, hence inhabited area and they include:

- *Scarcity of water,*
- *Lack of Treatment of wastewater,*
- *Lack of a landfill and presence of waste,*
- *Erosion for the mountain and the roads.*

It has been pointed out that the main problem of the erosion occurs in lower heights of Cika and the people is not the main cause, it is the rainfall. The area does not develop any industry and remains deeply mountainous and dominantly rural.

### ***C10 Historic places***

The ancient and religious monuments: *(just a very few examples).*

There is presence of ancient life in the area of Himara and the villages of Cika in particular. In the feet of the mountain surveys carried out have provided information on the development and evolution of the pre-urban fortified settlements. This territory has furnished stratigraphic data about the dating and of the surrounding walls and for the first time, Late Bronze Age dwellings were discovered.

Such settlements constructed during the Bronze and Iron period in the territories of Badher, Karos (Qeparo) and Kalivo reflect the changes occurring to the society. The settlements, rectangular or oval represent the only data for the identification of the dwelling's architecture we have in the territory today.

Excavations undertaken in Himara Cave (Spile) in 2002-2003 reinvestigated the data of the excavations undertaken by Kardini (Italian archaeologist in 1939. Mesolithic flint tools proved that Himara was inhabited earlier than it was previously known. There is plenty of monuments that prove a dynamic life in the middle ages as well as a very strong religious heritage.

### **The cultural monuments: (just a very few examples).**

Obviously a very rich list of monuments have been claimed since early 60's by the communist regime. Although the cultural revolution undertaken in 1967 by the communism prohibited belief to Albanians and destroyed the majority of cult objects the churches and monasteries claimed Monuments of Culture by the then Ministry of Culture were left out of

Upper Qeparo village.



20. Strati Zhupa house -Dhermi : 16.02.1979
21. Tano Jorgji Goro house (within the old castle) - Himare : 18.12.1987
22. Lilo Llazani house – Himare : 08.08.1980 – 25.10.1980
23. Remaining of the tower house of Shane Koka –Vuno :08.08.1980 – 25.10.1980
24. Ex remaining of Odise Kasneci house -Vuno :08.08.1980 – 25.10.1980
25. Ali Pasha's Tower -Qeparo : 08.08.1980 – 25.10.1980
26. Tower –Vuno : 16.02.1979
27. Vreto's Tower -Dhermi : 16.02.1979
28. The Kumi's tower -Dhermi : 16.02.1979
29. Decorative ceiling at Pirro Gjikopull Family -Dhermi : 16.02.1979
30. Nushi brothers Museum house -Vuno : 10.06.1973
31. Petro Marko House (famous national writer) -Dhermi : 29.07.2008

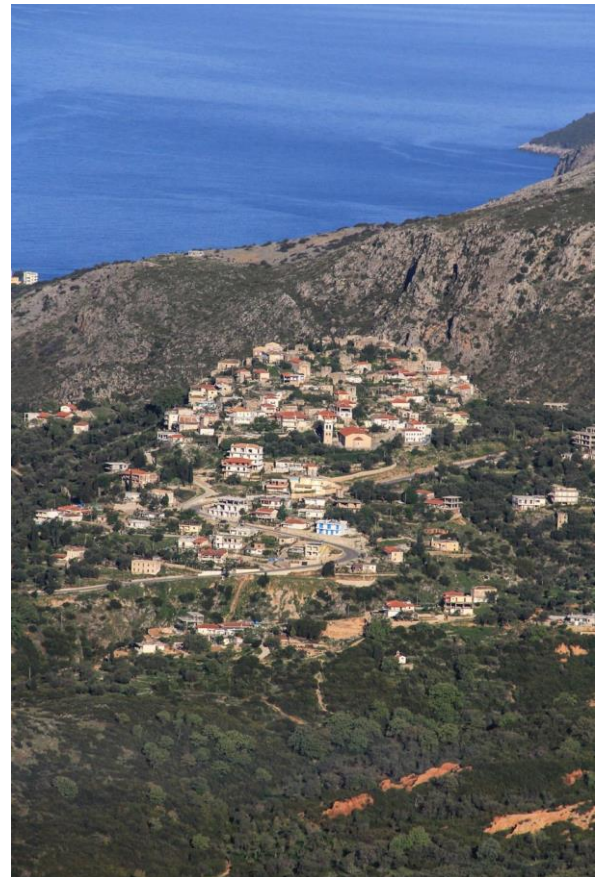
A unique feature of the cultural heritage is also the communist monuments that decorate almost every village on both sides of the range. They consist of various sculptures of war martyrs as well as obelisks/plaques bearing the names of martyrs and heroes of WWII.

Cika is a very attractive mountains for hikers and climbers. Although there has been no recording of the beginning of the climbing in Cika, presence of such activity has been observed and appreciated throughout the last century. It basically consisted one of the challenging peaks for the passionate climbers.

The inhabitants would climb the mountain but not exactly to the peak. The paths that connects the east to the west of the range would reach a certain height and usually follow the traces of herds. There are very rich pastures and stationary point for the herds up to 1500m. Nowadays there is an obvious increased interest of climbing the peak and groups of mountain lovers keep going to the peak. The majority use local guides and professional guides which keep supplying info in several media opened for this purpose.









The seas and mountains: *(just a very few examples).*

From Karaburun peninsula till Saranda the area is rich in pristine beaches stretching from 30 m to sometimes 3 kms long. It is the most favourite beaching area to all the Albanians. Most of them are pebble beaches limited by limestone plaques that dive into the sea.



New infrastructure projects being developed nowadays: *(just a very few examples).*

The municipality of Himara is very keen on infrastructure projects. Actually the strategy of the Municipality is to support projects that enhance both access to less accessible areas (inhabited areas) and entertainment areas (beach, mountain, etc)

Beside these orientation Municipality's major concern is the waste management. An actual project is taking action towards the clean up of a hotspot waste while searching for a long term solution of waste collection and treatment spot (landfill).

Other projects include the rehabilitations of social buildings such as schools, social centers, promenades, piazzas and stone alleys, etc











### *Synthesis of the extraordinary-emblematic characteristics of the mountain*

#### **The ÇIKA Mountain short key words characteristics:**

1. *Breathtaking landscape.*
2. *Gateway to the Ionian*
3. *Rich, Colorful views*
4. *Snowcapped Alps over the Mediterranean*
5. *Element of Pride to the locals*
6. *Strong sense of place*
7. *Place of 4 seasons*
8. *Observatory of the Mediterranean*
9. *Source of life and energy*
10. *Impressive views-strong memories of the Albania Southern Coast*
11. *Source of humbleness and love for the nature*
12. *Challenge to the bold*
13. *House of the wilderness*
14. *Element of attraction for the visitors. It can be easily viewed from Northwest Corfu and Puglia.*

## 5 globally unique characteristics

1. *An authentic mountain for the shape and location along and close to the shore,*
2. *The rural life it hosts very representative of rural Albania and the way of living in harmony with the mountain and the wildlife*
3. *Views of the mountain and from the mountain are the most impressive of Albania*
4. *It hosts Ultras and endangered species*
5. *Presence of WWII & communist regime monuments*

## 10 key words with reference to the mountain

1. Rewarding visits in the villages
2. Caesar's Pass
3. Abundant pristine beaches
4. 11 Hiking trails & 10 Mountain Biking Trails
5. Preserved landscape
6. 24 authentic villages
7. 37 churches and monasteries
8. Tasty organic food
10. Abundant green areas of national parks & more

## PART III

### III.1 Tourism infrastructure and supply

Although there is an obvious boom in tourism activity recently there is only a restricted number of hotel/B n'B structures in the area. On base of the statistics gathered by the Albanian Tourism Association there are only 80 such structures in Himara coast and 20 guest houses in the eastern side of the mountain. There is however a complementary number of as many apartments and rooms.

There are a variety of restaurants serving local food, as well as bars. Road connection is good however there is only one axis along the coast and behind the mountain along Shushica river. Hiking and mountain biking trails exist in the area and a foreign initiative has supported the local administration to mark this trails.

A paragliding platform is in place since two years ago.

### III.2 Tourism operators

Tourism operators in the area consist of a number of hotel/bnb entrepreneurs, restaurant owners and a few local tour agents catering mostly to foreign special interest visitors. The rest of the operators are based out of Himara supplying the territory with services and groups of visitors and tourists during spring and late fall, that is very seasonally. The majority of the personnel is local however not sufficiently educated. Most of them are trained on the job and usually leave from Himara at the end of the season.

### *III.3 Tourism demand*

*All ages, cultures and races.*

Into the types of tourism

Himara and mount Cika represent an area of great importance for different types of tourism such as sea& sand tourism, ecotourism, speleology, fishing, hunting, etc.

The coastal landscape and special geosites of different forms such as karstic caves, canyons, small bays, small beaches, etc., are in particular high potential assets and could turn into the main tourist attractions to domestic and foreign visitors. However, despite their values, the geodiversity of this area is still unknown to the admirers of these landforms, due to poor promotion, lack of information and infrastructure to reach them.

So far the sea and sand is a dominant component of the demand and the development of tourism is in fact demand driven.

Existing or in development phases:

Natural assets such as beaches, hiking and trekking paths in national parks, mountains and forests, are examples of traditional tourist attractions that can host summer vacationers and holiday makers that are attracted to adventure.

Domestic tourism involves mainly residents travelling for beach holidays.

Inbound tourism involves internationals traveling for exploring purposes. The dominant part of them look for active and eco-tourism. Altogether Himara caters and can cater for the following types of tourism:

Adventure tourists

Eco-tourists

Leisure tourist

Religious tourist

Sport and recreation tourist

Backpacking or youth tourist

Special Interest Tourist

Alternative Tourism

Cultural Tourism

Social Tourism

Geotourism





### III.4 Tourism impact

It is the main economic sector nowadays in our territory. According to Vlora Regional Council for the whole territory of Vlora tourism makes up to 23% of the Local Gross Income. It is understandable that for Himara this number is higher, however no proper measuring has been conducted.

### III.5 Public infrastructure and services

Definite/stable geographical coverage of mobile communications across the mountain area, emergency aid possibilities, and speed of response of rescuers is actually almost unfeasible.

There is no point of access from the road to start the hiking with panels and tables to inform about itineraries and difficulties.

This will help people know where to start the hiking.

Also there is no parking where people can drop their vehicles prior to climbing Cika.

There is no Via ferrata and/or Zip line (<http://www.marimangat.org/index.html>)

### *III.6 Partner's perception of the tourism vision of their territory*

Capitalising on the work done on the third day of the TWS of TNM1 Gran Sasso, please summarise your perception of the tourism strategic orientation of your territory and provide one A4 size Landscape illustration of it (such as a scan of the type of representation your created in Gran Sasso: photos will be made available on dropbox

Dropbox\EMbleMatiC\_partners\1. ALL TNMs & Kick-Off\01-TNM1-17-06-GRAN SASSO\TNM1-TWS-Minutes\TWS Part 3)

## PART IV

Max 5 pages for PART IV

This section will provide partners with an exercise that should help them organise previous findings towards the identification of potential eco-itinerary options for their territory.

### *IV.1 SWOT analysis regarding the implementation of an emblematic slow tourism product (eco-itinerary)*

Strengths :

1. In accordance with the Charterer for Sustainable Tourism, the tourist product is established within the framework of EMbleMatiC using both sides of the mountain as well as the massif.
2. The tourist product to be created as part of EMbleMatiC will utilize all the unused assets and resources.
3. The product will be able to rely on intersecting cycling and pedestrian routes (currently being designated).
4. The tourist product will be supported by the representatives of the local authorities and hopefully a DMO that is about to be established in Vlora.
5. EMbleMatiC will be able to offer an international visibility to a better and more focused set of assets.
6. Earlier attempts to identify services and local tourism infrastructure are a very sound initiative to capitalize on.

Weaknesses:

1. Lack of other projects with the mountain in focuss.
2. Very basic intervention in terms security of hiking.
3. No maintenance of trails.
4. No administration to undertake the mountain territory but the Municipality.
5. No proper infrastructure for tourism activities in place



6. Length of trip and trails conditions the type of activity and duration, thus excluding many age groups from the opportunity of climbing/hiking.
7. Lack of substantial studies undertaken for the mountain and the range.
8. Absence of a group of stakeholders in winter and lack of attention of them to the development opportunities opened via the new product.
9. Absence of trained guides, specialized in hiking and ecotourism issues
10. Absence of stationing points that encourage the extension of the trip

#### Opportunities:

1. The product will be able to rely on an improved pedestrian path currently undertaken by Emblematic.
2. Training will boost other initiatives carried by local actors in the same project.
3. The product will bring to the attention places still little or insufficiently valued.
4. Extensive promotion will be undertaken by EMbleMatiC.
5. Information at the beginning of the trail will assist the travelers.
5. The quality of door to door discussions with the stakeholders proved the link between a public initiative and the private actors.
6. The product will support smooth/slow travel (cyclist, pedestrian) with journeys designed without the use of the car.
- 7 A label is not used earlier therefore branding is like light in the dark
8. The approval of a special fund for the assistance of farmers and small farmers to invest in agro tourism. Packages of 3000 EU help shepherds upgrade kettle stations with certain services such as wifi, alternative energy, kitchenware, campground establishment.

#### Threats:

1. Coordination between partners as well as the partners and stakeholders.
2. Lack of financial resources has not enabled the laying of the ground for next projects.  
it difficult to implement the EMbleMatiC projects.
3. Delays, beaurocracy and formalisms
4. Lack of capacities of the local service providers to absorb funds.

#### *IV.2 Indication of ideal locations for an eco-itinerary and possibilities to engage stakeholders.*

National Park of Llogara - Cika Mountain, 2045

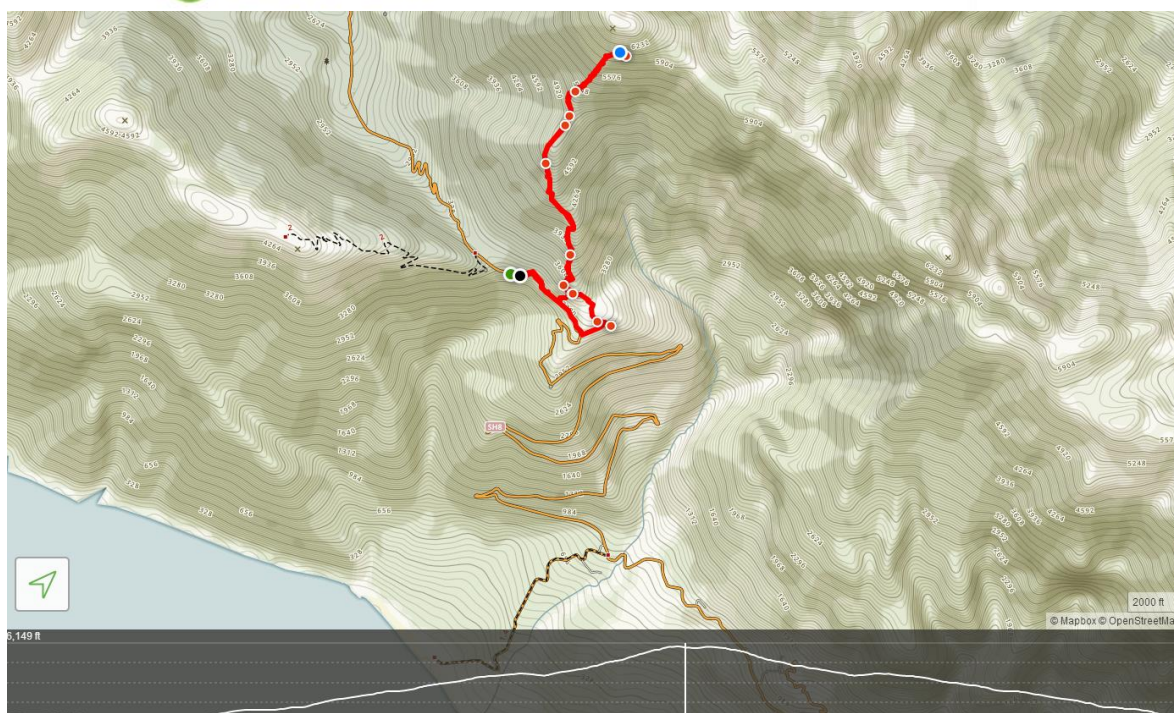
The establishment of stationary spots along the trail would be ideal. The best option are certain kettle stationaries. Couple of them are identified. Despite their basic conditions a very practical package for support to small farmers launched recently by the Ministry of agriculture is expected to give a helping hand to the farmers. they include update of the station, installment of photovoltaic panels, purchase of camping facilities and accessories, etc.

Being out on a limb on the long summit ridge, with few opportunities for a retreat means that you don't want to be caught by thunder and lightning. Unfortunately, at the edge of the Mediterranean, weather conditions around the mountain can change rapidly, and one is advised to clear the summit by noon time. It took us 5.5 hours to reach the summit, and we were glad to have started from the Llogara pass at 7 am. In summer, you may consider starting even earlier.

The route itself is not difficult to follow, and there is a faint mule-trail to and across the summit of Cika. Still, there is an advantage in carrying a GPS to see where you veer off the trail and to not waste too much time looking for the right way. The trail leads sometimes to the east and sometimes to the west of the actual ridge, avoiding some of the higher bumps along the way.

<http://www.palmtreeproduction.com/Hikes%20and%20Climbs/Albania%20Climbs/Qorres/Qorres-Gallery.html>

<http://www.palmtreeproduction.com/Hikes%20and%20Climbs/Albania%20Climbs/cikes/Cikes%20Gallery.html>



The night will be spent at a hotel-restaurant inside the national park of Llogara.

## ANNEX

### Tables and diagrams

Place statistical and other types of data, picture diagrams etc.

Since there is no systematic way of acquiring data about the numbers of visitors in the area the only information provided by the municipality is empirical. According to this data an approximate 40000 is the number of visitors and tourist hosted by Himara throughout the year reaching its peak during the summer. That is almost twice the number of the local population according to the civil registry inhabiting the area on both sides of the mountain. It is judged that between 2- 4% of these visitors consume the mountain as an attraction or travel guided by the mountain as a motivation beside a variety of designated paths. Only 200 have reached the summit over the last two years.

### HIKING TRAILS

Trail name	tot time	tot distance	top uphill	top downhill	difficulty
the forgotten caravan route	6h	12.5 km	875m	700m	moderate
Village to village in Shushica valley	5h	13.1km	150m	300m	moderate
the last beat to the beach	3h	9km	100m	800m	moderate
the slogans	3.5h	7.7km	450m	200m	moderate
shepherd's trail"	5h	12.6km	400m	300m	moderate

"The partisans' trail"	7.3h	11.7km	450m	850m	moderate
"Across the mountain on Shepherd's Trails"	7.3h	13.5km	1300m	1300m	moderate
"Walk and Swim"	6h	15.1km	450m	430m	moderate
"When mountains end in the deep blue sea"	4.5h	11km	625m	400m	moderate
"The costal ridge traverse"	12h	27.3km	1350m	1550m	moderate

## MOUNTAIN BIKING TRAILS

Trail name	tot time	tot distance	tot climb	difficulty
"Beach to rock and back"	1.5h	11km	410m	easy
"The secret submarine bunker"	1.5h	16km	330m	easy
"Between heaven and sea"	2.75h	22km	950m	medium
"In the shadow of mount Cikës"	2.75h	19km	450m	medium
"Away from the hustle, and back in time"	7h	60km	2550m	medium difficult
"Down to the coast and climbing back to Himara"	4.25h	42km	1700m	medium
"One of the best"	3.5h	35km	1400m	medium difficult
"The hidden circle"	5.25h	41km	2200m	medium difficult
"In two days from the mountains hospitality to the easy going of the seaside"	2days	86km	2700m	medium difficult
"The hidden village in the valley"	2.75h	26km	1300m	medium



### Photographs

These photographs should complement and not replicate the ones already inserted into your text when developing each criteria in relation to your territory.

Therefore, please attach 8 photographs of your EMbleMatiC mountain, inclusive of different perspectives of view point and of the 4 seasons.

The definition should be at least of 800 kb.



### Self-evaluation table

CRITERIA / KPITHPIA		Score
C1 Proud Local people	1-10	10
C2 Institutional recognition	1-10	7
C3 Reputation	1-10	5
C4 Legends and myths	1-10	5
C5 Power of inspiration	1-10	6
C6 Picturesque landscape	1-10	10

CRITERIA / KPITHPIA		Score
C7 Particular ecosystems	1-10	8
C8 Mediterranean cultural identity	1-10	9
C9 Sustainability and anthropogenic environment	1-10	7
C10 Historic places	1-10	9
<b>TOTAL</b>	10-100	<b>76</b>

1 very small, 2-3 small, 4-5 medium, 6-7 high, 8-9 very high, 10 paramount

**Arguments:** IT IS RARE TO FIND SUCH VARIETIES WHEN YOU CLIMB A PEAK!

### *Bibliography*

Only in English if any

Useful links:

<https://tourism.albinfo.al>

<https://ca.wikiloc.com/wikiloc/view.do?id=10984850>

<https://ca.wikiloc.com/wikiloc/view.do?id=10133982>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mount\\_%C3%87ika](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mount_%C3%87ika)

<http://himara.gov.al/>

Pictures and Videos:

[https://www.google.al/search?q=cika+vlore&rlz=1C1CHFX\\_frFR553FR554&tbm=isch&tbm=isch&source=univ&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwj5ks7z6s7RAhUBOhQKHZ8IBPIQsAQIGA](https://www.google.al/search?q=cika+vlore&rlz=1C1CHFX_frFR553FR554&tbm=isch&tbm=isch&source=univ&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwj5ks7z6s7RAhUBOhQKHZ8IBPIQsAQIGA)

[https://www.google.al/search?q=Maja+e+Cikes+-+Mali+i+Cikes&rlz=1C1CHFX\\_frFR553FR554&biw=1422&bih=755&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiWhOPi7c7RAhVJbBoKHV8wB3sQ\\_AUIBigB](https://www.google.al/search?q=Maja+e+Cikes+-+Mali+i+Cikes&rlz=1C1CHFX_frFR553FR554&biw=1422&bih=755&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiWhOPi7c7RAhVJbBoKHV8wB3sQ_AUIBigB)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VOLfqNM7CRs>

Websites:

<https://visitvlora.com/vlora/2395/maja-e-cikes-mali-cikes>

Maps:

<https://mapcarta.com/13912516>

## Questionnaire

### C1. Spatial Cohesion

#### Questions

Does the territory's legal protection set certain boundaries?

Do the virtual boundaries of the mountain correspond to a homogenic geographical area?

Is the area considered a continuous or discontinuous area?

Key words to raise discussion:

spatial cohesion spatial and socio-geographic similarities along the mountain homogenic elements/parts in the natural relief uniformity (e.g. land types, cultivars, desertification) common features in the practice of anthropogenic activities sub-sections shaping the boundaries of the mountain and the common cultural characteristics delimitation of the area settlements along the mountain particular territorial similarities in the physical and human geography

### C2. Institutional recognition

#### Questions

Is the mountain or part of it institutionally recognized?

Key words to raise discussion IUCN designation as Strict Nature Reserve or Wilderness Area or National park UNESCO World Heritage List World Network of Biosphere Reserves and Global Geoparks European Destination of Excellence European Diploma of Protected Area, Natura 2000 award System of Measures for Excellence in Destinations (SMED) Cross-border cooperation and institutional recognition

### C3. Reputation

#### Questions

Is there a global or national or regional or local reputation of the mountain?

What are the highly esteemed characteristics?

Key words to raise discussion outstanding universal value principal factors for the reputation high reputation capital / elements widespread knowledge power of the word of mouth number of visitors

### C4. LEGENDS AND MYTHS

#### Question

Regarding local myths and legends what are the strong points of the mountain?

Key words to raise discussion mythology godly presence haunted places unknown powers supernatural phenomena spiritual, symbolic and other interactions heroic accomplishments folktales sacred plants and animals

#### C5. Power of Inspiration

##### Questions

How strong is the up to now power of inspiration and what is the potential not yet promoted or self-revealed?

Can you recall examples of people, personal or collective work of art inspired by the mountain?

Key words to raise discussion literature fine arts films theatre music contemporary art design photography video games smartphones applications

#### C6. PICTURESQUE LANDSCAPE

##### Questions

What are the grandiose parts of the mountain?

How far more is the aesthetic enjoyment of the mountain compared with other?

Key words to raise discussion extraordinary / uncommon shape spectacular formations imposing peaks magnificent scenery geological exceptional characteristics rock formations steep slopes impressive landscape and panoramas topographic prominence graphic and astonishing parts of landscape aesthetic enjoyment

#### C7. Particular ecosystems

##### Questions

How unique do you consider the ecosystems of the mountain?

What is their vulnerability and state of conservation?

Key words to raise discussion:

naturalness intactness of natural systems special biotopes and geotopes caves alpine lakes unique biodiversity botanical richness endemism species richness unique terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems forest diversity tree cover/density remarkable trees threatened species natural quietness high nature value farmland high conservation status of habitats and species conservation of vulnerable areas aesthetic enjoyment natural phenomena climate



particular conditions scenic pastures gorges, valleys emblematic plants and animals as national or regional symbols

## C8. MEDITERRANEAN CULTURAL IDENTITY

### Questions

What is the particular cultural profile of the area?

Which are the elements attributing a unique character to the area?

Key words to raise discussion:

Values and works of the local society customs music dance festivals market places dietary habits local dialect social characteristics and peoples special attitude folklore artisanal production ethnicity religion intangible cultural heritage holy places thematic routes quality products (PDOs, PGIs, TSGs, bio) local peoples' pride for the mountain particular mentality and temperament of the locals architectural works works of monumental sculpture and painting locations, elements or structures of an archaeological nature

## C9. SUSTAINABILITY AND ANTHROPOGENIC ENVIRONMENT

### Questions

What does the anthropogenic environment offer to a traveler?

What damage has been made to the natural environment?

Key words to raise discussion:

vulnerability current state of conservation management of the area manmade environment profile pleasing urban scenes architectural features aesthetics of settlements authenticity antiquities industrial heritage notable public works of the past sustainable, non-intensive, small scale interventions large scale interventions sustainable or exceeding carrying capacity environmental impact of the human activity (businesses, public works, locals and tourists) uncontrolled urbanism negative impacts of tourism at present or foreseen man-caused and natural catastrophes wounds

## C10. HISTORIC PLACES

### Questions

Are there historic elements that can be promoted?

Key words to raise discussion:

prehistoric and historic places and resources historic monuments traditional trails sanctuaries landmarks battle fields emblematic personalities origin historic towns