
WORLD HERITAGE NOMINATION – IUCN TECHNICAL EVALUATION

CORNWALL AND WEST DEVON MINING LANDSCAPE (UNITED KINGDOM) - ID N° 1215

IUCN undertook a desk review of the Cultural Landscape nomination, the full text of which was provided to ICOMOS as an input to their evaluation process. Subsequently, the IUCN World Heritage Panel noted additional points and approved the following brief summary for the information of the World Heritage Committee:

Natural values

IUCN considers that the natural values of the property are evident, though concentrated in the 37% of the nominated property that lies within a Category V protected area (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty). It also notes that several sites within the nominated property, including the highly unusual habitats and plant communities created by some of the former waste and spoil tips, have been nominated for inclusion as part of the European system of Special Areas of Conservation or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest. However, these habitats and plant communities are distinctive precisely because they have adapted to some of the most polluted land in the UK, which has had and continues to have considerable impact, not only on the natural communities of the waste and spoil tips, but on the downstream aquatic and estuarine environments as well. Indeed, the issue of toxicity is a clear manifestation of the interaction of humans and nature in this special environment, and might be given more prominent recognition as an important element of the cultural landscape.

Management aspects

IUCN is pleased to note that these natural qualities and the associated designations have been taken into account in the nomination. The case for listing of this property as a cultural landscape, “a combined work of man and nature”, was not, in the opinion of IUCN, adequately addressed in the nomination document. Thus, it is recommended that this central theme be given prominence in the management programme for the property. IUCN considers that nature conservation, landscape protection, contamination control, and the featuring of human/nature relationships are important elements to be recognized as critical to delivering the objectives of the nominated property, and should not be seen as in any way obstructive to them. In general, IUCN welcomes the aims of the Management Plan, and advises that policies for biodiversity, landscape protection, contamination control, and the recognition of human/nature relationships should be fully integrated into the future management of the property.

IUCN concurs with the ICOMOS recommendation to refer the nomination and suggests that the State Party give due consideration to the points outlined above.