

Rhine Valley (Germany)

No 1066

Identification

Nomination Upper Middle Rhine Valley (The Middle Rhine Valley from Bingen/Rüdesheim to Koblenz)

Location Federal State (*Land*) of Rhineland-Palatinate:

Parts of the Autonomous (*kreisfreie*) city of Koblenz and the counties of Mainz-Bingen, Mayen-Koblenz, Rhine-Hünsrück, and Rhine-Lahn

Federal State (*Land*) of Hesse:

Parts of the county of Rheingau-Taunus

State Party Federal Republic of Germany

Date 28 December 2000

Justification by State Party

Since prehistoric times the Middle Rhine Valley has been one of the most important transport routes in Europe, serving to promote the migration and exchange of ideas, products, and culture between the Mediterranean region and the northern part of the continent. The valley, which lies in the heart of the continent and has served on occasion both as a divide and as a bridge between East and West, boasts a strategic importance that has irrevocably linked it to the chequered history of the west.

Criterion ii

The Middle Rhine Valley is a cultural landscape that has organically developed for over 2000 years but whose character is still today determined by the inherited structural elements of the landscape such as settlements, transport infrastructure, and land-use. In a patchwork of small natural places legacies from all periods of its history and exceptional monuments have been preserved in numbers and a concentration that no other European cultural landscape can rival.

Criterion iv

The Middle Rhine Valley is an exceptional example of an evolving traditional way of life and means of communication in a narrow river valley. What is more, human transformation of the profile of its steep slopes into terracing constitutes an outstanding example of human land use handed down through the ages: the crops grown there and the designated land usage have influenced and shaped the landscape in many ways down through history. However, now this form of land-use and the preservation of the scarce habitats and rare populations associated with it are under threat from the pressure of unstoppable change. In individual cases the development of transport and socio-economic change could also pose a threat to the continued existence of received values.

Criterion v

The Middle Rhine Valley is closely linked with important historical events, ideas, traditions, works of literature and the fine arts, especially from the Romantic period. These have helped (and are continuing) to shape the image of the landscape and impact on notions of European history and culture.

Criterion vi

Category of property

In terms of the categories of cultural property set out in Article 1 of the 1972 World Heritage Convention, this is a *site*. It is also a *cultural landscape*, as defined in paragraph 39 of the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*.

History and Description

History

There has been human settlement on the terraces of the Middle Rhine Valley since the last Ice Age. It came under Roman rule in the 1st century BCE, as a frontier province, and a military road was constructed on the left bank, linking military fortress and camps. The Rhine was also a major shipping route during this period, linking northern Europe with the Alpine massif and the Mediterranean lands, a role that exerted a major influence on the subsequent history of the Middle Rhine Valley.

There was continuity of settlement following the departure of the Romans in the 5th century. The Roman settlements were taken over by the Frankish kings and most of the area from Bingen downstream to Koblenz was crown property until well into the Carolingian era. However, the process of divesting the state of this property began in the 8th century and was not to be completed until the beginning of the 14th century. Much of it was donated to the church and the monastic orders. As bailiffs of the abbey of Prüm the Counts of Katzenelnbogen established control in the area around St Goar and Rheinfels, and this was to pass to the Landgraves of Hesse in 1479.

With the partition of Charlemagne's empire in 842 the left bank of the Rhine was assigned to the Middle Kingdom. Lorraine was not to be united with the East Frankish Kingdom until 925. It remained a heartland of royal power until the election of the Hohenstaufen King Konrad III in 1138. This saw the fragmentation of power in the Middle Rhine area, with parcels of land being distributed among the bishop-electors of Cologne, Mainz, and Trier and the counts palatine. Some forty castles were constructed between Bingen and Koblenz, as symbols of power and also as customs stations on this flourishing trade route. Towns such as Boppard and Oberwesel struggled to maintain their independent status as free towns, as testified by the remains of their defensive walls.

The Middle Rhine Valley was a core region of the Holy Roman Empire. Four of the seven Electors, the highest ranking rulers within the Empire, held portions of the area and it was here that they would meet to determine the succession.

Bacharach was the centre of the Rhine wine trade in the later Middle Ages. Vines had been cultivated on the lower slopes since Roman times, and this expanded greatly from the 10th century onwards. Some 3000ha of vineyards were under cultivation by 1600, five times as much as at the present

time. The Thirty Years' War (1618–48) witnessed a substantial decline in viticulture, the land being converted partly into orchards and partly into coppice forest.

The 14th–16th centuries were the golden age of art in the Middle Rhine, which saw the convergence of artistic influences from the Upper Rhine (Strasbourg) and the Lower Rhine (Cologne). Gothic masterpieces such as the Werner Chapel above Bacharach, the Church of Our Lady in Oberwesel, and the former collegiate church of St Goar date from this period.

Since the 17th century the Middle Rhine has been the scene of conflict between Germany and France. During the War of the Palatine Succession (1688–92) there was extensive destruction of fortresses and town fortifications, and much of Koblenz was destroyed. In the late 18th century the left bank of the Rhine became part of, first, the French Republic, and then the French Empire. This came to end in 1814, when the region came under Prussian rule. Extensive fortifications were constructed, including the fortress at Koblenz, and trade was fostered by the construction of the Rhine highway from Bingen to Koblenz, the widening of the shipping channel, the abolition of tolls over long stretches of the river, and the introduction of steam navigation. Railways were constructed on both the left and the right bank in the 1850s and 1860s.

A deliberate policy of promoting the Rhine as a “German” landscape was adopted by the Prussian state. This led to the renovation of fortress ruins in the Romantic style and the reconstruction of historic monuments, and also to the beginnings of the modern monument conservation movement.

The 20th century has seen major structural changes, notably the decline of the traditional winemaking sector and of mining and quarrying. Freight traffic has become concentrated on a small number of large harbours. The most important economic sector is now tourism. Ordinances of 1953 and 1978 have focused on the preservation of the cultural landscape, which is the main economic asset of the Middle Rhine.

Description

The appearance of the Middle Rhine Valley is characterized by the interaction between its physical natural features (a steep-sided narrow river valley), the human interventions (vineyards, fortresses, historic towns and villages), and its “tourist” image (Romanticism in the Loreley valley and the Rheingau). In the 65km stretch nominated for the World Heritage List the river breaks through the Rhenish Slate Mountains, connecting the broad floodplain of the Oberrheingraben with the lowland basin of the Lower Rhine.

At the 5km long Bingen Gate (*Bingen Pforte*), which was widened in the 19th and 20th centuries, the Rhine enters the upper canyon stretch of the river. Just before the Gate itself there are two small towns. **Bingen** on the left bank is noteworthy for “political” symbols such as the Niederwald Monument, erected in 1883 to commemorate the unification of the German states in 1871. **Rüdesheim** on the right bank is dominated by the 12th century Brömserberg fortress. The vineyards of the Rüdesheimer Berg, known from as early as 1200, are among the best in the Rheingau.

The entrance to the canyon is marked by a small castle, the **Mäuseturm** on a rock in the middle of the river. Originally a medieval customs house, it was restored and enlarged in the

neo-Gothic style in 1855 as a signal tower for Rhine navigation. The sides of the canyon are overlooked by the romantic castles of **Rheinstein** and **Reichenstein**.

After the Bingen Gate comes the 15km long Bacharach valley, which extends down to Oberwesel. It is indented with smaller V-shaped side valleys, notably the picturesque Morgenbachtal, much favoured by 19th century Romantic painters.

At **Lorch** on the right bank the river Wisper flows into the Rhine. The small town extends at right-angles to the Rhine up its valley, lined with terraced vineyards. It is notable for its fine Gothic parish church of St Martin and the Renaissance facade of the mid-16th century Hilchenhaus aristocratic residence.

The site of **Bacharach**, at the entrance of the Steeger valley, is also very picturesque. It lies at the centre of the “Four Valley Region” (**Vier-Täler-Gebiet**), which includes the small towns of Steeg, Oberdiebach, and Manubach and the fortresses of Stahleck, Stahlberg, and Fürstenberg. Bacharach contains many timber-framed houses and retains its medieval appearance, despite having suffered much destruction in the 17th and 19th centuries. Of especial interest are the High Gothic Werner Chapel and the Late Romanesque parish church of St Peter.

Kaub and its immediate environs contain a number of monuments, among them the elegant Baroque building used as his headquarters by the Prussian general Blücher when he crossed the Rhine in 1814, the Pfalzgrafenstein castle (a fortified customs house of the Elector Palatine), the town wall of Kaub itself, and the terraced vineyards, created in the Middle Ages.

In spite of having been badly damaged in the Thirty Years' War and again in the War of the Palatine Succession, and cut through by road and railway construction in the 19th century, **Oberwesel** has preserved a number of rows of fine early houses, as well as two Gothic churches, the medieval Schönburg castle, and its medieval town wall almost in its entirety.

The valley landscape begins to change at Oberwesel with the transition from soft clay-slates to hard sandstone. The result is a series of narrows, the most famous of which is the **Loreley**, no more than 130m wide (and at 20m the deepest section of the Middle Rhine). This stretch of river was once hazardous for shipping, whence the legend, and is reputed to be the place where the fabulous treasure of the Nibelungs lies hidden.

The oldest part of the parish church of **St Goar**, the seat of the Counts of Katzenelnbogen (later Margraves of Hesse), is a vast 11th century three-aisled crypt. The nave was rebuilt in the mid 15th century and is a high point in the architectural history of the Middle Rhine Valley. Nearby is the magnificent ruin of Burg Rheinfels, one of the finest on the Rhine; the earliest part of this castle dates from the 14th century, and it was reconstructed in the 15th and 16th centuries.

Across the river on the right bank is **St Goarshausen**, with its castle of Neu-Katzenelnbogen (familarly known as Burg Katz). The third Katzenelnbogen fortress is Burg Reichenberg, still immensely impressive despite its ruined condition. Its design suggests that it may have been inspired by Crusader fortresses in Syria and Palestine.

A short distance downstream on the right bank is the fortress of Peterseck built by the Elector of Trier to protect his lands against the Counts of Katzenelnbogen. Later renamed Deuernberg, it is now known as Burg Maus. It was one of the most advanced fortresses of its day.

Bad Salzig on the left bank marks the beginning of the section known as the Boppard Loops (**Bopparder Schlingen**). On the right bank is the twin town of **Kamp-Bornhofen**. There is a number of fine houses of the nobility in Kamp, and Bornhofen contains a pilgrimage church and a Baroque Franciscan abbey; it is overlooked by a rocky ridge with two castles on it, Burg Liebenstein and Burg Sterenberg, known as the *Feindliche Brüder* (The Feuding Brothers).

Located at the start of a horseshoe loop in the river, **Boppard** originated as a Roman way-station (*mansio*), and was replaced in the 4th century by a military fort. The square plan of the *Bodoubriga* Roman fortress forms the historic centre of the present-day town. The Collegiate Church of St Severus is located on the site of the Roman bath-house; the structure visible today is a late Romanesque galleried, three-aisled basilica with two towers. The late Gothic Carmelite abbey is richly furnished and decorated.

Beyond Boppard is **Osterspai** with its timber-framed houses from the 16th–18th centuries and a ruined moated castle. **Oberspays** and **Niederspays** have fused into a single town and contain more timber-framed houses than anywhere else on the Middle Rhine: there is a particularly fine group on the waterfront (known as *Auf der Schottel*).

On the left bank, **Rhens** is where the German Emperors were enthroned after being elected in Frankfurt and crowned in Aachen Cathedral. The ceremony took place in the *Königsstuhl*, the meeting house of the Electors, which was restored in 1842 and moved to its present site in 1929. There is still a number of historic buildings in the town, despite heavy bombing in World War II, among them the old City Hall, one of the finest early buildings on the Middle Rhine.

The fortress of Marksburg, along with Pfalzgrafenstein the only surviving medieval fortifications on the Middle Rhine, towers above **Braubach**. Dating from the 14th and 15th centuries, it is based on French and Italian models. It was succeeded as the residence of the Landgraves of Hessen-Rheinfels by the Philippsburg, built in 1568 in the valley below.

Although much altered after the coming of the railway in 1860, **Lahnstein** preserves its imposing parish church of St John the Baptist, the west tower of which is visible for long distances around. Other important monuments are the Romanesque Salhof, one of the earliest unfortified 12th century buildings on the Rhine, and the late medieval fortress of the Martinsburg with its Baroque additions.

Above the Lahnstein Gate (*Lahnsteinerpforte*) the Rhine valley takes the form of a funnel leading into the Neuwied Basin. The slopes of the left bank near Koblenz-Stolzenfels are quite steep whilst those on the right bank, on either side of the mouth of the Lahn, fall gently to the river. The castle of **Stolzenfels**, which belonged to the Elector of Trier, was restored in 1835 by the Prussians, using plans prepared by Karl Friedrich Schinkel that carefully integrated the original structures into what became one of the most significant secular buildings of German Romanticism.

Severe aerial bombardment during World War II resulted in the loss of much of the historic built heritage of **Koblenz**. Of the buildings that survive mention should be made of the Romanesque basilicas of St Kastor, Our Lady, and St Florin, the modified 14th century Balduin bridge over the Mosel, the former castle of the Elector, and the *Neues Schloss* (*New Castle*), the first and most important early Classicist building in the Rhineland.

Prussian rule saw the construction of the Rhine parks along the riverfront from Oberweck to Deutsche Eck at the confluence of the Rhine and the Mosel. The Kaiser Wilhelm monument at this point is best seen from the Prussian Ehrenbreitstein fortress on the other side of the river. This impressive structure, built on the site of a 17th–18th century princely residence, is considered to be one of the finest examples of German architecture of the early 19th century.

Management and Protection

Legal status

The nominated cultural landscape, which covers *c* 272.5km², comprises over sixty towns, communities, etc. The delimitation of the nominated areas takes account primarily of the geographical and geomorphological features of this clearly defined landscape, into which are closely integrated the historical and other cultural elements (coherence of settlements, landscape characterized by castles, terraced vineyards, coppice woodland, etc). There is a substantial number of protected monuments within this area. There is a buffer zone of *c* 346.8km², the external boundary of which is on the catchment divide, so as to prevent encroachment on the protected cultural landscape by highly visible and inharmonious structures of any kind. This division also has historical and cultural relevance.

In Rhineland-Pfalz the monuments are covered by the 1978 Cultural Monuments Protection and Conservation Law (*Landesgesetz zum Schutz und zur Pflege der Kulturdenkmäler*) and the 1998 Building Ordinance (*Landesbauordnung Rheinland-Pfalz*). The landscape values are protected by the 1977 Forest Law (*Landesforstgesetz*), 1979 Landscape Conservation Law (*Landespflegegesetz*), 1977 Planning Law (*Landesplanungsgesetz*), 1990 Water Law (*Landeswassergesetz*), and the 1978 Middle Rhine Landscape Protection Ordinance (*Landschaftsschutzverordnung Mittelrhein*).

Monuments in Hesse are covered by the 1976 Hesse Monuments Protection Law (*Gesetz zum Schutz der Kulturdenkmäler*) as amended in 1986. The 1993 Hesse Building Ordinance (*Bauordnung*) also has a significant role to play in monument protection. The landscape values are protected by a series of statutes, such as the 1978 Hesse Forest Law (*Forstgesetz*), the 1996 (amended 2000) Nature Protection and Landscape Conservation Law (*Gesetz über Naturschutz und Landschaftspflege*), the 1994 Planning Law (*Landesplanungs Gesetz*), and the 1990 Water Law (*Wassergesetz*).

Signatories of the Rhine Valley Charter (*Die Rheintal Charta*) of November 1997, which include the great majority of communities in the Middle Rhine Valley, undertake to conserve, manage, and exercise care in developing the natural and cultural heritage and the unique cultural landscape of the Rhine Valley.

Management

Ownership and management of the properties included in the nominated area are very diverse – *Land* governments, local authorities, non-profit foundations and associations such as the German Castle Association (*Deutsche Burgenvereinigung*), the Roman Catholic Church, the Protestant State Churches, institutions, companies, and private individuals. The river itself is a federal waterway owned by the Federal Republic of Germany.

At the highest level of management are the Rhineland-Palatinate Regional Development Programme (LEP III) and the Hesse Regional Development Plan 2000, both of which specify the framework for sustained overall development of the space available in the two *Länder*. The valley between Bingen and Koblenz is identified as a “space requiring special planning”; the agencies responsible for regional planning are given the task of drawing up a concept for the best use of this space. The vineyards are given special protection as preferred agricultural land.

The regional plans drawn up for Middle Rhine-Westerwald and Rheinhessen-Nahe in Rhineland-Palatinate and the South Hesse Regional Plan take this process one stage further, setting out objectives and principles for developing built-up areas and open spaces in the Middle Rhine Valley with a view to the sustained future development of its cultural landscape.

There is a series of other plans in force at county and commune level, which interlock with the overall objectives enunciated by the higher-level plans.

There is a number of authorities and agencies with management authority over properties within the nominated area. At the highest level these are in Hesse the Ministries of Economic Affairs, Transport and Regional development, of the Environment, Agriculture and Forestry, and of Arts and Sciences, and in Rhineland-Palatinate the Ministries of the Environment and Forestry, of Culture, Youth, Family and Women’s Affairs, of Economic Affairs, Transport, Agriculture and Viticulture, and Interior and Sport.

At the middle level in the federal state hierarchy come the Darmstadt Regional Commission (*Regierungspräsidium*), which is the highest nature conservation authority, the Structural and Approval Directorates (North in Koblenz, South in Neustadt) which are, respectively, the higher planning authority and the higher authority responsible for the preservation of natural resources, and the Supervisory and Services Directorate in Trier, the higher authority responsible for monument conservation.

At the third level come the Rheingau-Taunus County Council, the Hesse administration’s lower nature conservation authority, and in Rhineland-Palatinate the county councils and the town council of Koblenz.

Each of the *Länder* has specialized agencies for conservation and protection. These are for Hesse the Monument Conservation Authority (Wiesbaden), and in Rhineland-Palatinate the Monument Conservation Authority (Mainz), the Regional Authority for Environmental Protection and Trading Standards (Oppenheim), and the Regional Geological Office (Mainz).

No management plan as such exists for over the entire area covered by the nomination, and it is unrealistic to expect that there should be one, given the diversity of properties, communities, and agencies involved. The federal structure of

the German state also militates against the production and approval of a single management plan. Nonetheless, it is important that there should be some form of coordinating body that can ensure the harmonization of the plans and policies in the two *Länder* and the local authorities covered by the nomination.

The model for this appears to exist in the form of the Middle Rhine Valley Forum (*Forum Mittelrheintal e.V.*). This association acts as a platform for exchanging ideas and providing information. It is committed to formulating collective objectives and projects, transcending local interests. The local authorities in the nominated area are all members of this body, along with private individuals and associations. Significantly, it occupies a key position in the organizational chart of the planning and management system in force for the nominated area provided by the State Party to the ICOMOS expert mission.

However, the two *Länder* and all the planning and local government authorities involved have collaborated in the production in 2001 of a spatial analysis of the Middle Rhine Valley – *Raumanalyse Mittelrheintal von Bingen/Rüdesheim a. Rh. bis Koblenz (Managementplan zum Antrag für die Aufnahme des Mittelrheintales in die Welterbeliste der UNESCO)*

Conservation and Authenticity

Conservation history

The Middle Rhine Valley is an organic cultural landscape, the present appearance of which is the result of reacting over many centuries to economic, political, social, climatic, and other pressures and imperatives.

Most of its native forest cover was cut down and replaced by agriculture, in which vine-growing on laboriously terraced hillsides played a major role. A decline in viticulture saw the vines replaced by fruit trees or by coppice woodland.

Small towns sprang up along the busy trade route that was the Rhine: some grew and prospered, others stagnated. Roman autocratic rule was replaced by centralized imperial government in the Middle Ages and then fragmentation: unified government did not reappear until the early nineteenth century.

The strategic location of the Middle Rhine Valley and its use as a transport artery led to repeated invasions and battles, as a result of which many buildings, both military and lay, were destroyed. In the early 19th century the Prussians initiated a programme of restoration and reconstruction, principally for ideological reasons; nonetheless, it laid the foundations for the whole modern conservation movement. Over the past half-century much outstanding work has been done on the restoration and conservation of the many historic buildings that survive in the Valley.

The later 18th century saw the growth of sensibility towards the beauties of nature, and the often dramatic physical scenery of the Middle Rhine Valley, coupled with the many ruined castles on prominent hilltops, made it appeal strongly to the Romantic movement, which in turn influenced the form of much 19th century restoration and reconstruction.

In recent years there have been strenuous efforts by government bodies and private associations and individuals alike to conserve what is recognized to be a cultural landscape of very high quality and one that is vulnerable to threats of many kinds. Special attention is being paid to the impact on the landscape of the abandonment of considerable areas of terraced vineyards.

Authenticity and integrity

In the case of a cultural landscape of this type the quality of integrity is as relevant as that of authenticity, and it can confidently be asserted that the level of integrity of the Middle Rhine Valley is very high. To a considerable extent as a result of its geomorphology and its geology, the Valley has undergone few major disturbances to its socio-economic structure or its overall appearance over a millennium. Policies currently in force in the region will ensure that this integrity will be preserved for the foreseeable future.

Evaluation

Action by ICOMOS

An ICOMOS expert mission visited the Middle Rhine Valley in September 2001. The ICOMOS/IFLA Scientific Committee on Historic Gardens and Cultural Landscapes was consulted on the cultural values of the nominated property.

Qualities

The Rhine is one of the world's great rivers and has witnessed many crucial events in human history. The stretch of the Middle Rhine Valley between Bingen and Koblenz is in many ways an exceptional expression of this long history. It is a cultural landscape that has been fashioned by humankind over many centuries and its present form and structure derive from human interventions conditioned by the cultural and political evolution of western Europe. The geomorphology of the Middle Rhine Valley, moreover, is such that the river has over the centuries created a natural landscape of great beauty which has strongly influenced artists of all kinds – poets, painters, and composers – over the past two centuries.

Comparative analysis

Rivers have played a very significant role in human social, economic, and cultural development; they form the arteries along which both goods and ideas were transmitted. This process of transmission and renewal has left its imprint on many river valleys in the form of distinctive cultural landscapes.

The Rhine was, and continues to be, one of the most important rivers in Europe, alongside a handful of others – the Danube, the Loire, the Po, the Rhône, the Volga. Three of these are already represented on the World Heritage List: the Danube, the Wachau stretch of which was inscribed in 2000; the central stretch of the Loire between Sully and Chalonnes (2000); and the Po delta, as an extension to the city of Ferrara (1999).

In none of these cases is there a landscape with such stark relief and contrasts as the Middle Rhine Valley. The Wachau is essentially a rolling vineyard landscape, the Loire flows placidly through a wide plain, and the importance of the Po lies in its delta. The cultural monuments of the Wachau are fewer and later than those in the Middle Rhine Valley, the most important of which date from the Middle Ages. Those of the Loire, whilst more numerous and, in the case of the castles, more impressive than those on the Rhine, are, once again later. The Po delta monuments are confined essentially to a single period in the Renaissance.

In cultural, historical, and landscape terms the Middle Rhine may be considered to be distinct from those European riverine landscapes that are already on the World Heritage List.

ICOMOS comments and recommendations for future action

Despite the extensive documentation provided in the nomination dossier, and subsequently to the expert mission, ICOMOS was still uncertain about the coordination of the numerous plans and policies at different government levels. This point is made in the *Raumanalyse* (see above), which insists upon there being a “conclusive layout plan.” It suggested therefore that the State Party should be requested to provide a single, concise, and unambiguous statement of how the conservation and management plans for the different components will be coordinated. This information was supplied by the State Party and found by ICOMOS to conform with the requirements of the Committee.

ICOMOS is concerned about the noise pollution in the Valley from the very busy train services on both banks of the river. It commends the financial support being provided by the Federal Government to mitigate this problem.

During the expert mission the delimitation of the nominated area in Bingen was discussed and it was agreed that this should be slightly modified. The State Party has relocated the boundary at the Drusus Bridge, one of the oldest medieval stone bridges in Germany (on the site of a Roman bridge) which spans the Nahe tributary, so as to include the church of St Martin.

Brief description

The 65km stretch of the Middle Rhine Valley, with its castles, historic towns, and vineyards, graphically illustrates the long history of human involvement with a dramatic and varied natural landscape. It is intimately associated with history and legend and for centuries has exercised a powerful influence on writers, artists, and composers.

Statement of Significance

The Middle Rhine Valley is a cultural landscape of great diversity and beauty which has shaped both by nature and by human intervention. It is rich in cultural associations, both historical and artistic, which are imprinted upon the present-day landscape.

ICOMOS Recommendation

That this property be inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of *criteria ii, iv, and v*:

Criterion ii As one of the most important transport routes in Europe, the Middle Rhine Valley has for two millennia facilitated the exchange of culture between the Mediterranean region and the north.

Criterion iv The Middle Rhine Valley is an outstanding organic cultural landscape, the present-day character of which is determined both by its geomorphological and geological setting and by the human interventions, such as settlements, transport infrastructure, and land-use, that it has undergone over two thousand years.

Criterion v The Middle Rhine Valley is an outstanding example of an evolving traditional way of life and means of communication in a narrow river valley. The terracing of its steep slopes in particular has shaped the landscape in many ways for more than two millennia. However, this form of land-use is under threat from the socio-economic pressures of the present day.

ICOMOS, April 2002