

EUROPE / NORTH AMERICA

BASIN OF THE NORD-PAS-DE-CALAIS

FRANCE

WORLD HERITAGE NOMINATION – IUCN COMMENTS TO ICOMOS

BASIN OF THE NORD-PAS-DE-CALAIS (FRANCE) – ID No. 1360

IUCN considered this cultural landscape nomination based on a desk review of the nomination and considered the comments of two external reviewers. IUCN also communicated with ICOMOS regarding the content of its reviews.

IUCN's World Heritage Panel considered that a convincing case for considering the nominated cultural landscape "a combined work of man and nature" is not made in the nomination documents. The Panel further questioned whether mining landscapes in general should not qualify for cultural landscape status under the Convention, as the interaction that took place between man and nature would have involved substantial and destructive alteration of the environment. A large number of waste tips had developed nature conservation values which have been identified for protection under French law, and some also have European designations. A survey of these has been undertaken recently with a view to classifying their nature conservation value. These should be clearly identified in the nomination document and included in the site management plan.

The altered flora and fauna in previously mined areas, as well as areas of semi-natural vegetation in the region, whilst of nature conservation importance at the national level, cannot be considered to present a phenomenon that is, of itself, of Outstanding Universal Value.

In relation to protection and management issues, the French regional nature park of Scarpe-Escaut (IUCN Category V) covers part of the nominated area. However, it is difficult to confirm the degree of cohesion between the established protected areas and the decision to include part of it in the WH nomination. The State Party should be asked to explain how the boundaries of the nominated property relate to the regional nature park, and how the world heritage nomination will relate to and support its management.