
WORLD HERITAGE NOMINATION - IUCN TECHNICAL EVALUATION

RØROS MINING TOWN AND CIRCUMFERENCE (NORWAY) - ID N° 55bis

IUCN considered the nomination of this cultural landscape property based on desk reviews and the comments of three external reviewers, and provided the following comments to the ICOMOS World Heritage Panel.

- a) The nominated property does not display intrinsic natural values of international significance and much of the naturalness of this property has been lost, or at least the natural features and values are at relatively low levels of intrinsic significance.
- b) The main natural values, including uplands and lakes, of the area appear to be included in the buffer zone, rather than within the boundaries of the nominated property, or lie more widely outside the buffer zone. The nomination notes that the forests were depleted within 50 years of establishment of the copper mining in the area, pollution and grazing prevented the forests from growing back and Røros was left in a deforested landscape. Forest regeneration is now taking place.
- c) The buffer zone includes parts of Femundsmarka National Park and Forollhogna National Park, which are of importance for biodiversity conservation. The former is home to bear, wolverine, lynx and rare bird species such as golden eagle and osprey. The latter park connects to adjoining protected areas in Sweden and supports low alpine vegetation rich in heather and willows, and provides important reindeer habitat, supporting the only remaining reindeer populations in Europe. Thus in terms of the definition of cultural landscape in the World Heritage Convention, as a “combined work of man and nature”, ICOMOS may wish to consider to what extent the landscape presented is such a cultural landscape, and to what extent it is essentially a mining landscape, where natural values have largely been subsumed beneath human use. A second issue ICOMOS may wish to consider is whether there are key features related to the interaction of man and nature that are located in the buffer zone of the property, rather than the area nominated for inscription.
- d. One key issue that is not referred to adequately in the nomination is the management required to mitigate mining related pollution from heavy metals, and from acid mine drainage. Some remediation work to cover waste material has been attempted, whereas elsewhere the preservation of cultural heritage features is reported to have been prioritized in relation to the implementation of measures to reduce pollution. The nomination notes that the variety of methods to prevent pollution is an interest of the property, but does not clearly state what the present and future imperatives to reduce pollution further would be. There is thus a tension between the presence of the testimony of mining, and the need for continued interventions to reduce the impacts of mining pollution. The solution of the State Party to this issue is an important issue for ICOMOS to consider in its evaluation.
- e. IUCN reviewers noted the positive nature of a number of aspects of the nomination and the work of the State Party in relation to the nominated property and its buffer zone.
 - The significant investment in engaging with stakeholders and communities, resulting in a high level of reported support for the stewardship approaches proposed.
 - The provision of special funding to support the necessary land use systems and traditional farming practices. The provision of financial support to grazing regimes of the summer grasslands and therefore to safeguard them from abandonment is an important aspect of maintenance of the values of the property, and the long term commitment to provide this support should be clarified.
 - The measures to be adopted in relation to the intended management of the property appear to be comprehensive and operationally sound, in relation to the reported natural values within the nominated property.