

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Cultural and Historic Ensemble of the Solovetsky Islands

Brief description

The Solovetsky archipelago comprises six islands in the western part of the White Sea, covering 300 sq. km. They have been inhabited since the 5th century B.C. and important traces of a human presence from as far back as the 5th millennium B.C. can be found there. The archipelago has been the site of fervent monastic activity since the 15th century, and there are several churches dating from the 16th to the 19th century.

1. Introduction

Year(s) of Inscription 1992

Agency responsible for site management

- Solovetskiy State Historical Architectural and Natural Museum-Reserve
164070 Solovki Village
Archangelsk Region, Russian Federation
E-mail: lopatkin@solovki.ru
Website: www.museum.ru/m942

2. Statement of Significance

Inscription Criteria C (iv)

- Change to criteria proposed: State Party proposed in the Periodic Report to add criteria (vii), (viii), (ix), (x)

Justification provided by the State Party

Remarkable value of the historical cultural and natural complex "Solovetsky islands" can be defined as follows:

1. Solovetsky historical, cultural and natural complex is a unique whole body, a masterpiece of the creator that hasn't got analogues.

It is a multiform world, opening great achievements of primeval culture, material culture of Medieval Russia and New time, Russian spirituality, architecture, military engineering and natural landscape, changed by man.

2. The complex consists of unique primeval island monuments the oldest in Russian North; sanctuaries with sepulchres, stands and workshops

having rich collection of artefacts of spiritual and economic origin. The earliest are Saam sepulchres, closed stone harbour of Big Zayatsky island, stone stews, system of drinking canals, stone cell-houses (Solovetsky island). Archaeological monuments of archipelago are extremely valuable as examples of ancient sea culture.

3. During four centuries Solovetsky monastery influenced a great deal to the development of history and culture of Russia and European North, being spiritual, economic, cultural and military centre of Northern-West region. It formed, popularized its economic, technical, fortificational, building experience. It was the pioneer in creating many innovations in architecture, hydrotechniques, navigation of Northern Europe.

4. Architectural ensembles of Solovetsky monastery are the only in the North collection of numerous monuments erected from boulders, brick and forged iron.

Integrity and architectural expression is reached by high concentration of bodies of the buildings on small territory. The fortress of Solovetsky monastery is the only Russian fortificational complex made from large boulders. The complex is a synthesis of cultural and natural forms.

5. Solovky are connected with the prominent persons and historical events in the World History: Ivan the Terrible, Peter the Great, metropolitan Phillippe, North War (1700-1721), Crimea War (1853- 1856); in 1920-1930 one of the largest concentration camps located in the territory of Solovetsky monastery. Prisoners of this camp were distinguished men of culture and science, Father Pavel Florensky and D.S.Lihatchev and others.

6. Solovetsky islands as a natural phenomenon are of great value. Geological formation of the archipelago reflects all main stages of after glacial geological history of Northern Europe, the islands have been demonstrating the processes of compensational raise of the land and abatement of the water-level of the seas of the Arctic Ocean. Solovky is a unique example of harmonic activity of man in Nature. There are rare species of plants and animals registered in the International Red Books. Solovetsky archipelago is a region of wonderful natural beauty.

As provided in ICOMOS evaluation

Qualities: The Solovetskii complex is an outstanding one, representing the apogee of Russian Orthodox monastic endurance and enterprise in a hostile environment.

ICOMOS RECOMMENDATION:

That this cultural property be included on the World Heritage List on the basis of Criterion iv, but that the description be amended to read "Solovetskii historic and cultural complex".

- Criterion iv : The Solovetskii complex is an outstanding example of a monastic settlement in the inhospitable environment of northern Europe which admirably illustrates the faith, tenacity, and enterprise of late medieval religious communities. Its subsequent history is graphically illustrated by the wealth of remains of all types that have survived.

Committee Decision

Bureau (1992): The Bureau requested the competent Russian authorities to reconsider the title of this property, which could be modified as follows "Cultural and historic ensemble of Solovetsky".

- Statement of Significance does not adequately defines the outstanding universal value of the site
- Proposal for text has been made by State Party
- UNESCO's official description of the site is not satisfactory. State Party presented detailed proposal in the Periodic Report
- State Party proposed in the Periodic Report to change the name of property to *The Solovetsky Historical-Cultural and Natural Complex*

Boundaries and Buffer Zone

- Status of boundaries of the site: inadequate
- Buffer zone: inadequate
- In 2001 the Project of the revision of the Solovetskiy Archipelago buffer zone (which should protect not only the ensemble of the Solovetskiy Monastery and the territory of historical settlement but also all islands of the Archipelago) is being developed. Up to now the Project is not agreed by all relevant national authorities. It is necessary to complete the development, coordination and approval of the Project of the revision of the buffer zone of Solovetskiy Archipelago

Status of Authenticity/Integrity

- World Heritage site values have not been maintained. There have not been any significant changes to the authenticity/integrity of the site since inscription
- Current construction activities within the buffer zone may affect the outstanding universal value of the site

3. Protection**Legislative and Administrative Arrangements**

- Law: not provided
- In 1995, the Solovetskiy Historical and Cultural Complex was inscribed on the List of particularly valuable objects of cultural heritage of the Russian Federation. According to the national legislation in force, such objects are declared as exclusive federal property not liable to alienation. In 1999, the objects comprehended in the Complex were included into the Federal Assets Register. In 2004, 14 ha of land at the territory of Solovetskiy town were included into the buffer zone
- The protection arrangements are not sufficiently effective

Actions proposed:

- Establishment of the Historical-Cultural and Natural Reserve of federal significance including the forests of the Archipelago
- Timeframe: 2005

4. Management**Use of site/property**

- Visitor attraction, religious use, rural landscape, museum-reserve

Management /Administrative Body

- Steering group has been legally set up in 1967
- Site manager on full-time basis
- Levels of public authority who are primarily involved with the management of the site: regional, local
- The current management system is sufficiently effective

Actions taken:

- Site Development Concept formulated by the Ministry of Culture in cooperation with all stakeholders
- Improvement of the monitoring exercise of the natural component of the property up to 2007

5. Management Plan

- Management plan is being implemented
- Implementation commenced: 2002
- The current management plan considered to be adequate
- Responsibility for over-seeing the implementation of the management plan and monitoring its effectiveness: The Federal

Agency for Culture and Cinematography of the Russian Federation

6. Financial Resources

Financial situation

- State budget and other national sources
- Funding is insufficient

7. Staffing Levels

- Number of staff: 165

Rate of access to adequate professional staff across the following disciplines:

- Good: management, visitor management
- Average: conservation, promotion, interpretation, education

8. Sources of Expertise and Training in Conservation and Management Techniques

- Educational Centre has been established within the Museum; Belomorskaya biological station of the Moscow State University; workshops and seminars organised by the UNESCO Chair in Urban and Architectural Conservation
- Museum conservation facilities: not provided
- Training on site management is not available

9. Visitor Management

- Visitor statistics: 19,813 visitors in 2004
- Visitor facilities: visitor centre, hotels, shops
- Visitor needs: broaden accommodation and transport infrastructure

10. Scientific Studies

- Monitoring projects of the natural component of the site (2001-02) and of the architectural monuments (2004-05); permanent primitive and medieval archaeological surveys
- Studies dedicated to the tourism regulation
- Researches dedicated to the identification, registration, study and inventory of the cultural and natural heritage monuments

11. Education, Information and Awareness Building

- Inadequate number of signs referring to World Heritage site
- World Heritage Convention Emblem used on some publications

- Inadequate awareness of World Heritage among: visitors, local communities, businesses, local authorities
- Need for awareness raising: media campaigns and promotional activities
- Web site available: www.solovki.ru
- In 2005 the *Programme of Socio-Economic Development of the Solovetskiy Village* was presented to the local community

12. Factors affecting the Property (State of Conservation)

Reactive monitoring reports

- N/A

Conservation interventions

- Conservation: not provided
- Present state of conservation: very vulnerable

Threats and Risks to site

- Development pressure, environmental pressure, natural disasters, tourism pressure
- Emergency measures taken: Programme of Socio-Economic Development of Solovetskiy District

13. Monitoring

- Formal monitoring programme approved (2003)
- Monitoring on the dynamic of deformations of the walls, basements and foundations; monitoring of the hydrological, temperature and humidity regimes
- Key indicators have been identified within the framework of the Programme of Monitoring of the Immovable Monuments

14. Conclusions and Recommended Actions

- Main benefits of WH status: management
- Strengths of management: The property legally obtained the superior category of the cultural heritage monuments; increased funding for the protection and restoration of the property. The Federal Architect has been appointed to supervise the restoration works
- Weaknesses of management: limited access to some monuments due to the weak transport infrastructure; inadequate legal base for the protection and conservation of the property

Future actions:

- Implementation of the project aimed at the capacity-building of the Solovetskiy Museum-Reserve