
**REPORT OF THE JOINT UNESCO/ICOMOS
REACTIVE MONITORING MISSION
TO THE 'UPPER MIDDLE RHINE VALLEY' WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTY
(GERMANY)
FROM 9 TO 12 MAY 2022**



The Loreley rock (photo: Bernhard Furrer)



TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	3
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND LIST OF RECCOMENDATIONS	4
I. THE PROPERTY	12
II. THE MISSION	13
III. SUMMARY OF THE NATIONAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR THE PRESERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTY	14
IV. ASSESSMENT OF THE STATE OF CONSERVATION OF THE PROPERTY	19
Introduction to the key issues	
IV.1. Assessment of the management system of the property	20
Attributes conveying the Outstanding Universal Value	
Management system/management framework	
The new draft Management Plan	
IV.2. Assessment of the overall state of conservation of the property	25
The Upper Middle Rhine Valley cultural landscape	
State of conservation of the natural landscape	
State of conservation of the rural landscape	
State of conservation of the urban landscape	
IV.3. Assessment of already implemented and planned projects	31
IV.3.1. Traffic infrastructure	31
Freight trains and railway noise	
Restoration of railway tunnels at Sankt Goar and Oberwesel	
Railway Crossings at Rüdesheim	
Road bypass at Braubach	
Permanent river crossing over the Rhine	
Cable Car in Koblenz	
IV.3.2. Housing and redevelopment proposals	40
Redevelopment of the former army barracks of the Fritsch Kaserne in the Niederberger Höhe district	
Koblenzer Brauerei and new residential quarters 'An der Königsbach'	
IV.3.3. Tourism related projects and tourism management	43
Developments at the Loreley	
Osteinscher Park Rüdesheim	
The Federal Horticultural Show (BUGA) in 2029	
Assessment of the tourism management strategy for the property	
IV.3.4. Renewable energy projects	49
Wind energy infrastructure	
Photovoltaic energy infrastructure	
V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	54
VI. ANNEXES	58
1. Retrospective Statement of OUV of the property	
2. Decision 43 COM 7B.83 (Baku, Azerbaijan, 2019)	
3. Decision 44 COM 7B.155 (Fuzhou, China/online meeting, 2021)	
4. Terms of Reference of the mission	
5. Composition of mission team	
6. Programme of the mission	
7. Peoples met during the mission	
8. List of attributes identified by the State Party	
9. Map of the property and photographs of the Mission	
10. List of key legislation and other documents relevant for the management of the property	

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The members of the mission are highly grateful to the German authorities of all state levels for their support, availability and assistance throughout the mission. The mission team was impressed by the excellent collaboration and friendly collegial atmosphere among the various partners charged with the protection and management of the property. Particularly, the mission team would like to emphasise the important role of the *Zweckverband*, the formal association that brings together the two states Rhineland-Platinat and Hesse, 4 districts, 4 towns and 48 communes. The mission team also thanks all the experts who gave presentations on the various projects in and around the World Heritage property, helping the UNESCO/ICOMOS members of the mission understand what has been achieved and what is planned for implementing the World Heritage Committee decisions.

Special gratitude of the mission team goes to Ms Stefanie Hahn for organizing and coordinating the mission, compiling a very dense program and providing valuable information on the current situation of the World Heritage property. Further on, the mission wishes to convey thanks to the Ms Birgitta Ringbeck, the National Focal Point of Germany for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention, Ms Nicole Steingaß and Mr Jens Deutschendorf Secretaries of State, for their continuous presence and contribution to the mission.

The mission team also conveys its gratitude to the representatives of the NGOs actively involved in the protection of the property, who met the mission experts provided information and expressed the points of view of their respective organisations on several important issues related to its state of conservation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND LIST OF RECCOMENDATIONS

The joint UNESCO/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to the Upper Middle Rhine Valley was undertaken from 9 to 12 May 2022, in line with the World Heritage Committee Decisions **43 COM 7B.83** (Baku, Azerbaijan, 2019) and **44 COM 7B.155** (Fuzhou, China/online meeting, 2021).

The purpose of the mission was to

- evaluate the property's state of conservation,
- assess the impact of already implemented changes, and
- provide expert advice on how to assess, mitigate or avert the potential cumulative adverse impact on the OUV of the property of prospective projects, including the upgrading of three railway tunnels, and the Federal Horticultural Show 2029.

During the mission, the mission team visited the property from Bingen and Rudesheim to Koblenz, paying special attention to the areas where announced projects have been implemented or planned. Throughout these four days, the State Party organised several meetings and provided information, presentations and documents for the mission.

Prior to the mission, the State Party informed UNESCO's World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS that the holiday resort project in Sankt-Goar-Werlau has been cancelled. In addition, information has been provided in relation to the railway tunnels in the Middle Rhine Valley: the existing tunnels have already been restored and plans for additional tunnels have been cancelled for the time being. With regard to this information, the mission did not assess these projects; nevertheless, should the aforementioned projects recommence, UNESCO will need to be notified in a timely manner in line with paragraph 172. of the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention* (Operational Guidelines).

The mission reviewed all other issues included in the Terms of Reference and visited all the relevant sites.

Overall management system of the property

Concerning the overall management of the property, the mission welcomes the progress the State Party has made in recent years. The legal framework on the federal and state levels is well established and is being implemented to adequately ensure the safeguarding of the property and its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV). There is also a firmly grounded (however very complex) institutional framework and a functioning management system.

The mission recommends evaluating the effectiveness of the current site management system and if necessary to revise the mechanisms for the involvement and coordination of the various activities between different partners and stakeholders. In any case, the mission considers it important for the operative management to be enforced and their resources to be ensured in the long-term.

Updating of the Management Plan for the property

The mission also welcomes the work in progress related to preparing a new Management Plan for the property that includes the essential task of identifying and mapping attributes that convey the OUV of the property, as well as the development of further tools (like the 'Cultural Landscape Compatibility Study' - CLC and the 'Mapping of Exclusion Zones for Wind Turbines Outside of the Buffer Zone of the Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage Site') that aim to facilitate decision making concerning planned projects and developments and avoiding their adverse visual impact on the OUV.

The mission wishes to point out that the main focus of the updated Management Plan needs to be the long-term protection and preservation of the OUV and attributes of the property. For this reason, the mission recommends carrying out a vulnerability assessment for the property to social, economic, environmental and other pressures and changes, including disasters and climate change, as well as the monitoring of the impacts of trends and proposed interventions.

Furthermore, the mission recommends before proceeding with the finalisation of the updated Management Plan and other supporting documents, to reconsider both the methodology used and the identified list of attributes and in addition to the important visual qualities of the Upper Middle Rhine Valley cultural landscape, to dedicate equal attention to other attributes (tangible and intangible) of the OUV of the property, ensuring their identification and inclusion in protective and managerial actions and tools.

Effectiveness of the management system in relation to the territorial areas related to the property (including its buffer zone and its wider setting)

With regard to the spatial arrangements of the property, the mission wishes to point out the purpose of buffer zones in the protection and management of the OUV of World Heritage properties, and their important contribution to effective management of properties and their setting.

To this end, the mission wishes to encourage the State Party to strengthen the supportive role and management of the buffer zone of the property in preserving its OUV, and consider extending the buffer zone of the property, following the vulnerability assessment both for renewable energy projects and the related exclusion zones, and for potential other sensitivities.

The overall state of conservation of the property as a cultural landscape

The mission assessed the overall state of conservation of the Upper Middle Rhine Valley as a cultural landscape, and while it concludes that although there are currently no imminent major threats to the OUV of the property and its authenticity and integrity, a negative evolution related to changes is already discernable that could over time cumulate to a serious degradation of the OUV. A loss of the historic rural environment, reduction of biodiversity and homogenisation of the landscape are clearly present. The mission also recognised that economic growth and pressure have led to sprawling of urban areas around the towns and villages, that threatens the preservation of the landscape values. The mission therefore recommends developing programmes and implement actions aimed to prevent the disappearance of the historic rural landscape and to revise existing regulations concerning urban areas and restrict new constructions to preserve the landscape qualities of the property.

The mission considers that a long persisting important constant negative impact to the property's OUV since its inscription of the World Heritage List and a highly disturbing factor affecting the quality of life of local citizens is the noise of the freight trains that heavily impacts the entire Upper Middle Rhine Valley. Despite many efforts, this issue remained unresolved and in the view of the mission, it needs urgent attention and immediate mitigation actions.

Already implemented and planned projects that have or will potentially have an impact on the OUV of the property

Among the implemented projects, the Koblenz cable car is an example for a project in which the focus was on the providing a temporary solution for a short-term event that was supposed to be reversible, and therefore, no careful planning was carried out with regard to the OUV and attributes. However, the constructed transportation facility has become an important element in the public transportation system of Koblenz, therefore, now it will become a permanent element of the urban landscape of Koblenz, and the negative impacts of the project could now only be mitigated. On the other hand, the State Party showed much more consideration and careful planning in relation to the 'Culture and Landscape Park' on the Loreley plateau, which has so far been constructed in a fairly respectful manner for the local values and the OUV. The question of the crystal rock that is to be constructed on the top of the exhibition hall of the Park is still pending, and the recommendation of the mission is to not implement it.

The planned traffic-related projects (the permanent river crossing over the Rhine, the Railway Crossings at Rudesheim and the bypass road at Braubach) currently show the preparatory steps of careful planning. Nevertheless, the presented plans for the Koblenzer Brauerei and

the new residential quarters 'An der Königsbach' are cause for concern. The mission considers that the current plans do not show sufficient respect for the importance of local values and the OUV. The mission is also concerned about the prospect of a new hotel project on the Loreley plateau, which is a highly sensitive area with regard to the OUV of the property and its other values. ICOMOS International had reviewed the project plans for the proposed new hotel and in a Technical Review dated April 2021 and concluded in the review that the project constitutes a serious threat to the authenticity and integrity of the property and advised the State Party to halt the hotel development in its current form. Both the planners and decision-makers for the above projects are to be reminded of the importance of impact assessment processes, which focus on potential impacts of changes on the OUV and attributes of the property. In this respect the processes described in paragraphs 110, 118bis. and 172. of the Operational Guidelines needs to be respected. In addition, the State Party is recommended to develop processes for assessing the potential cumulative impact also of projects with minor impact in order to preserve the OUV of the property for future generations.

The event of the Federal Horticultural Show (BUGA) in 2029 is of great importance for the State Party, as this event will take place throughout the whole World Heritage property, mobilizing a significant financial resource for projects, raising awareness about the property and generating income for local peoples and firms. The mission considers this event as an opportunity for sustainable development (especially with regard to tourism infrastructure) within the property but also a potential danger for the long-term preservation of its OUV. The mission recommends using this possibility for heritage conservation and growth of cultural tourism, furthermore, for establishing good practices for sustainable development that respect the OUV of the World Heritage property. With regard to management of the property, the mission advises the State Party to consider the positive potentials of the BUGA 2029 only as one element in the action chain needed for the long-term protection and safeguarding of the property, its OUV and attributes, and be alert concerning its potential negative impacts that may be difficult to reverse after the exhibition.

Concerning renewable energy projects, the mission welcomes the approach of the State Party to create 'Exclusion Zones' (within the wider setting, as the current regulations ensure that within the property and its buffer zone these projects are not permitted) and recommends the State Party to continue harmonising the relevant legal regulations and processes of the states Rhineland-Palatinate and Hesse and to establish a consistent and transparent decision-making for these development proposals.

Tourism management strategy of the property

Regarding tourism management, the State Party considers that tourism is a characteristic feature of the Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage property and cultural landscape, and also as the main image bearer and marketing vehicle. During the presentations and documents for the mission, the State Party clearly expressed that the development of tourism is counted as a strength to be harnessed. Assessing this issue, the mission considers that the State Party should find a definition for the local aspects and regional profile of sustainable tourism and clarify what kind of 'tourism' is compatible with the aim to protect and preserve the OUV of the property.

The mission does not agree with the State Party's recognition of 'evolving tourism tradition' to be an attribute directly linked with criterion (v) and recommends the State Party develop a sustainable tourism strategy that focuses on the importance of protecting and maintaining the cultural landscape "of great beauty which has strongly influenced artists of all kinds - poets, painters, and composers - over the past two centuries".

Recommendations of the mission for the special attention of the World Heritage Committee

With regard to the analyses and conclusions, the mission recommends the World Heritage Committee to requests the State Party the following.

Concerning the management system, the Management Plan and the territorial areas of the property:

- i. Revise and further develop the attributes that convey the Outstanding Universal Value of the property in line with the retrospective Statement of OUV and other research resources.
- ii. Evaluate the effectiveness of the current site management system of the property and enforce the protection and management capacities and measures both for the property and the buffer zone in order to prevent the degradation of the cultural landscape, excessive urban expansion and the disappearance of the historic rural landscape. To this mean:
 - a. Restrict land conversion and urban sprawl within the property.
 - b. Revise the regulations for the buffer zone to control the impact of developments related to urban expansion as well.
- iii. Establish a process of continued monitoring and evaluation (linked to the management system and the Management Plan) in order to follow the overall state of conservation of the property.
- iv. Consider revising the buffer zone boundaries with the result of the vulnerability assessments in progress or conducted in the future.

Concerning the overall state of conservation of the property as a cultural landscape:

- v. Consider all tangible and intangible attributes conveying the OUV when assessing potential impacts of planned changes and projects, and not just the values related to visual qualities.
- vi. For planned and proposed changes and project, apply consistently the processes described in paragraphs 110, 118bis and 172 of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention and ensure that all projects are handled through these processes. In addition, continue using impact assessments as a proactive tool throughout project development processes, assessing alternatives in an integrative manner with the aim of avoiding negative impacts on the OUV of the property, and develop processes for project planning to assess cumulative impacts.
- vii. Find solutions, as soon as possible, for limiting the speed of freight trains between Rüdeshheim/Bingen and Koblenz (to 50 km/h if feasible), and continue finding long-term solutions, as a matter of urgency, for diverting the freight trains from the property altogether.
- viii. Ensure that the projects proposed and implemented within the framework of the BUGA 2029 do not result in negative impacts for the property and ensure that the event is managed as a possibility for heritage conservation and growth of cultural tourism, furthermore, for establishing good practices for sustainable development that respect the property's OUV and aligning the projects with a well-established sustainable tourism strategy.

Concerning specific implemented and planned changes/projects:

- ix. Approve the expansion plans of the Sooneck open pit quartzite mine only if the implementation of this project will not impact adversely the OUV of the property. In addition, implement bioengineering works in order to re-integrate the already exploited open mine areas in the natural environment.
- x. Concerning the plans for a permanent river crossing over the Rhine, continue implementing Decision **44 COM 7B.155**, that requests "the State Party to involve

the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, at the earliest possible stage in the appraisal of options undertaken in a wide regional strategic context, but focusing on developing solutions for local needs, and before any decisions are taken;”

- xi. Ensure that the development of the project options for the permanent river crossing are subject to an appropriate impact assessment process focusing on impacts on the OUV and attributes of the property. Submit the proposed project option to the World Heritage Centre before any irreversible decision is made.
- xii. Redesign the ‘valley station’ of the cable car in Koblenz, relocating it to another area that excludes the vicinity of the St. Kastor Church.
- xiii. Revise the plans for the rehabilitation of the *Koblenzer Brauerei* area and the transformation to a new residential use excluding the reuse of the tank-building and with a reduced density and number of storeys of the buildings between the main road and the valley slope.
- xiv. Finalise the construction of the exhibition hall in the Loreley Culture and Landscape Park with a flat skylight and without the foreseen ‘crystal rock’ on top of it.
- xv. Stop extending the operation permit of the Summer Bobsleigh Run next to the Loreley Landscape and Culture Park on its current location, and fully rehabilitate this area after its dismantling.
- xvi. In relation to the planned hotel project on the Loreley plateau, continue implementing Decision **44 COM 7B.155** (paragraph 8) of the World Heritage Committee.

Concerning wind energy infrastructure:

- xvii. Continue harmonising the legal regulations and processes of the states Rhineland-Palatinate and Hesse for constructing wind energy and large-scale photovoltaic energy infrastructures that concerns both the property, its buffer zone and its wider setting, and ensure maintaining in the long-term the policy, in both states, to exclude the area of the property and the buffer zone from the construction of these infrastructures and to identify areas in the wider setting where their construction is prohibited due to their negative impact on the OUV.
- xviii. Extend the ‘Exclusion Zones for Wind Turbines Outside the Buffer Zone of the Upper Middle Rhine World Heritage Site’ document to the areas of the wider setting of the property in Hesse as well and develop a similar vulnerability assessment for photovoltaic projects.
- xix. Do not grant permit for the repowering of wind farms that have a negative impact on the OUV of the property and ensure that they are dismantled after their operation license expired and their area is fully rehabilitated.

Concerning the tourism management strategy of the property:

- xx. Develop a sustainable tourism strategy for the property (including a comprehensive programme for sustainable tourist mobility) that supports and ensures the protection and long-term preservation of its OUV for future generations and include the strategy in the new World Heritage Management Plan of the property.

The mission considers that the issues assessed in the frame of this mission and the recommendations to be implemented by the State Party in the future cover many areas of the property and are highly important for its state of conservation. For this reason, the World

Heritage Committee might wish to consider following up these issues in the coming years with a further Reactive Monitoring Mission, in order to verify the progress.

List of recommendations for the State Party

The Mission provides the following recommendations to the State Party and its relevant national authorities

Attributes conveying the OUV:

1. Revise and further develop the attributes of the OUV of the property in line with the SOUV and other research resources, creating a more comprehensive and extensive attribute list for the protection and management purposes. (For the purpose of the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting, the advised restricted number of attributes could then be selected from this more comprehensive and extensive attribute list.)
2. In addition to the important visual qualities of the Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage property, dedicate equal attention to other aspects of the OUV, ensuring the identification of further attributes and their inclusion in protective and managerial actions and tools.
3. Align the final draft of the updated Management Plan with the revised and extended attribute list.

Management system/Management Plan:

4. Strengthen the protective role and management of the buffer zone (the processes and regulations) in order to enhance the supportive role of the buffer zone in preserving its OUV, and consider extending the buffer zone of the property, following the vulnerability assessment both for renewable energy projects and the related exclusion zones, and for potential other sensitivities.
5. Establish a process of continued monitoring and evaluation for the overall state of conservation of the property, linked to the management system and the Management Plan.

Overall state of conservation of the property as a cultural landscape:

6. Restrict land conversion and urban sprawl within the property and revise the regulations for the buffer zone to control the impact of developments related to urban expansion.
7. Conduct an appropriate impact assessment for the expansion plans of the Sooneck open pit quartzite mine in order to assess the potential impact of the planned project on the OUV of the property prior to the planning application and consider approving the proposal only if the expansion of the mine will not impact adversely the OUV of the property. Implement bioengineering works in order to re-integrate the already exploited open mine areas in the natural environment.

Traffic infrastructure projects:

8. Urgently implement the recommendation of the World Heritage Committee (Decision **44 COM 7B.155**, paragraph 5.), by continuing to search for long-term solutions for diverting the freight trains from the property.
9. Limit the speed of freight trains (as a matter of priority) between Rudesheim/Bingen and Koblenz to 50 km/h, as soon as possible.

10. Continue the project development for the railway crossing at Rüdesheim with the underpass option and submit the final draft project proposal accompanied by an impact assessment to UNESCO for review with ICOMOS before any final decision is taken.
11. Develop new alternative solutions for a bypass road that avoid the historic centre of Braubach (excluding also the Rhine banks), and subject the alternatives to an impact assessment that focuses also on potential impacts on the OUV of the property. Submit the final draft project proposal to UNESCO for review by the Advisory Bodies before a final decision is taken.
12. Until the bypass road is constructed that avoids the historic centre of Braubach, restrict the circulation of trucks in the historic town of Braubach to the necessary minimum to enhance the quality of life of local citizens and guarantee their safety.
13. Urgently comply with the requests of the World Heritage Committee regarding the plans for the permanent river crossing on the Rhine, and ensure that the project planning includes solutions and measures for the viability of the existing ferry services over the river;
14. Carry out an adequate impact assessment process based on updated project options and taking into consideration a full range of attributes that convey the OUV of the property.
15. Carefully plan a new routing of the cable car in Koblenz with a decent distance of the valley station from the area of the St. Kastor church' and develop a design for the new valley station as visually neutral as possible. Assess the plans through extensive impact assessment process and inform the World Heritage Centre according to paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines before any decision is made.

Housing and redevelopment projects:

16. Revise the development plan Bebauungsplan Nr. 330 «An der Königsbach» in Koblenz, ensuring that an impact assessment informs the planning process.
17. Develop the plans for the rehabilitation of the *Koblenzer Brauerei* area and the transformation to a new residential use without including the reuse of the tank-building and with a reduced density and number of storeys of the buildings between the main road and the valley slope.
18. Submit the final design plans with impact assessments for the transformation of the *Koblenzer Brauerei* and new residential quarters 'An der Königsbach' in Koblenz to UNESCO, for review with ICOMOS International, before irreversible decisions are taken.

Tourism related projects and tourism management:

19. Finalise the construction of the exhibition hall in the Loreley Culture and Landscape Park with a flat skylight and without the foreseen 'crystal rock' on top of it.
20. The operation permit for the Summer Bobsleigh Run (that is currently situated on the Loreley plateau) should not be extended at the current location when the permit expires. In the long-term, alternative locations may be found; the new location must be chosen in a cautious way in line with the paragraph 8. of the World Heritage Committee Decision **44 COM 7B.155**, and if it is within the property or would have an impact on the OUV any such proposal should be forwarded to the World Heritage Centre under Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines* and, following the obligations included in Par 118bis of the *Operational Guidelines*, be assessed through an Impact Assessment.
21. In relation to the planned hotel project on the Loreley plateau, continue implementing the Decision **44 COM 7B.155** (paragraph 8.) of the World Heritage Committee and

notify the World Heritage Centre in a timely manner of any new project proposals before irreversible decisions are made.

22. Initiate policies and programs that aim to achieving a unified undisturbed landscape at and around the Loreley plateau with very limited constructions and a land use that respect the preservation of the OUV and suit the *genius loci*.

Renewable energy projects:

23. Extend the 'Exclusion Zones for Wind Turbines Outside the Buffer Zone of the Upper Middle Rhine World Heritage Site' document to the areas of the wider setting of the property in Hesse as well and ensure in the long-term that policies are maintained in both states to exclude the area of the property and the buffer zone from the erection of wind farms. Submit the final version of the 'Exclusion Zones' document to the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies for review before it is adopted.
24. Do not grant permit for the repowering of wind farms that have a negative impact on the OUV of the property and ensure that they are dismantled after their operation license expired and their area is fully rehabilitated.
25. Exclude the area of the property and the buffer zone from the installation of photovoltaic panel farms.
26. Develop an 'Exclusion Zones' document for photovoltaic projects for the wider setting of the property in both Rhineland-Palatinate and Hesse, taking into consideration in the sensitivity mapping the revised list of attributes, and all types of potential impacts in addition to visual impacts on the integrity of the property.

I. THE PROPERTY

The World Heritage property '**Upper Middle Rhine Valley**' was inscribed on the World Heritage List as a cultural landscape in 2002, under criteria (ii), (iv) and (v), by Decision **26COM 23.9** of the World Heritage Committee (26th session of the World Heritage Committee, 2002, Budapest, Hungary).

The property is 27,250 ha large and is located in a 65km-stretch of the Middle Rhine Valley running from between Bingen and Rudesheim in the south, to Koblenz in the north. As a transport route, the Rhine has served as a link between the Mediterranean region and the northern half of the European continent since prehistoric times, enabling trade and cultural exchange.

The property has been inscribed on the World Heritage List under 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.

The Middle Rhine Valley with its castles (which defended and issued taxes for the trade), 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. Its landscape, as interpreted by Romanticism, is a reference for the modern European culture.

A retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value was adopted by the World Heritage Committee at its 35th session in 2011 (See **Annex 1**).

Further documents and information about the property is available at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1066>

Within the framework of developing the Management Plan, the State Party has identified the following five key attributes conveying the Outstanding Universal Value - OUV (see full list of attributes in **Annex 9**):

1. **Geology and geomorphology:** terraces and valley sections
2. **Land use:** settlement structure, transport infrastructure, vineyard terraces
3. **Elements in the cultural landscape:** hilltop castles, significant cultural and natural monuments
4. **Views and viewpoints:** viewpoints with special cultural-historical relevance for the Rhine Romanticism
5. **A (cultural) region worth living in:** sustainable transport, commerce and cultural exchange making this region worth living in on both sides of the Rhine

II. THE MISSION

The World Heritage Committee requested the State Party to invite a Reactive Monitoring mission in its Decision **43 COM 7B.83** (Baku, Azerbaijan, 2019 – **Annex 2**). In September 2019, the State Party informed the World Heritage Centre that a new management plan is being prepared for the property, in which the challenges and development projects are being addressed. The State Party considered that the draft management plan should be the basis for a mission and therefore, considered the invitation of the mission for late summer 2020. In August 2020, the State Party has asked for the postponement of the mission due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In April 2021, the State Party invited the mission to be carried out between 20 and 24 September 2021, which was also acknowledged by the World Heritage Committee in Decision **44 COM 7B.155** (Fuzhou, China/online meeting, 2021 – **Annex 3**). However, the mission was postponed again due to the severe floods that hit the Rhineland-Palatinate region during the summer of 2021.

The Terms of Reference (**Annex 4**) for the joint UNESCO/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission were agreed to in December 2021, and the mission finally took place between 9 to 12 May 2022. During these four days, the mission team visited the property from Bingen and Rüdesheim to Koblenz (for the composition of the mission see **Annex 5**). The mission team received information, presentations and documents from representatives of the State Party charged with the protection and management of the property in all issues included in the Terms of Reference and was able to visit all the relevant sites (for the programme of the mission and the peoples met, see **Annexes 6 and 7**).

Prior to the mission, in April 2022, in line with the agreed Terms of Reference, the State Party sent UNESCO's World Heritage Centre updated information and documents related to the state of conservation of the property, which had not been submitted before or which become available since the last State Party State of Conservation Report for the World Heritage Committee, dated November 2020. The documents included feedback to the last decision of the World Heritage Committee, (Decision **44 COM 7B.155** – **Annex 3**), a description of the management system, mapping of exclusion zones of wind turbines in the setting of the property, and a summary document on the draft Integrated Cultural Landscape Compatibility Study.

The State Party also informed the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS that the holiday resort project in Sankt-Goar-Werlau has been cancelled, therefore, the mission did not assess this project. In addition, information was provided in relation to the railway tunnels in the Middle Rhine Valley: the existing tunnels (including their portals) have already been restored and plans for additional tunnels have been cancelled for the time being.

The main objectives of the Reactive Monitoring mission:

The World Heritage Committee in Decision **43 COM 7B.83** requested the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to assess the impact of already implemented changes and provide expert advice on how to assess, mitigate or avert the potential cumulative adverse impact on the OUV of the property of prospective projects, including the upgrading of three railway tunnels, and the Federal Horticultural Show 2029. In addition, in Decision **44 COM 7B.155**, the Committee encouraged the State Party not to make any final or irreversible decisions for major projects before the planned mission has visited the property.

III. SUMMARY OF THE NATIONAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR THE PRESERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTY

The property is situated in two federal states (*Länder*) within the Federal Republic of Germany: Rhineland-Palatinate and Hesse. The area within the boundaries of the property in Rhineland-Palatinate is a protected landscape (by the 1978 State Ordinance on the 'Protected Landscape Rhine Area from Bingen to Koblenz'). It comprises part of some of the cities and joint municipalities as well. Elements of the cultural landscape (individual monuments and landscape values) are also protected by federal laws and state regulations of Rhineland-Palatinate and Hesse.

During the preparation of the file of the site for nomination to the World Heritage List in 2001, an initial and brief Management Plan was drawn up. This document included regional guiding principles with specific objectives for the different stakeholders. The guiding principles targeted safeguarding measures of the property, development guidelines, promoting its image and enhancing the regional identity. Nevertheless, it did not have the adequate depth and complexity to fully document and guide management actions. The conciseness for the necessity of a more detailed planning document arose around 2010, and between 2012-2013, the Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage Master Plan was developed. This document included approaches, visions and measures for the development of the property. In addition, an Action Programme Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage Association for the 2012-2017 period was also created. The World Heritage Committee, in Decision **39 COM 7B.78**, stressed the need for a Management Plan to set out clear governance processes as well as clear policies and strategies in order to support coherent and consistent development across the whole property. A request was also put forward (in Decision **41 COM 7B.45**) to revise the Master Plan and integrate it into an updated Management Plan. The development of the updated Management Plan started in 2018 and is currently in an advanced stage. The State Party has presented its draft outline for the mission.

Key actors in implementing protection and management measures:

While the management of the property is the responsibility of the national (Federal State), states (*Länder*) and local administrations, the practical management is coordinated primarily on the level of the two states. Both in Rhineland-Palatinate and in Hesse, the task of protecting and managing the property is embedded in the government system. In Rhineland-Palatinate, the Secretary of State of the Ministry of Interior and Sport is the highest-level representative for World Heritage. In Hesse, it is the Secretary of State of the Ministry of Economics, Energy, Transport and Housing. The Federal Foreign Office of Germany (with the help of the National Focal Point for World Heritage) coordinates the tasks related to the implementation of the World Heritage Convention between the international and national (and federal) levels. The tasks related to the implementation of the Convention are also enforced by the German UNESCO Commission and the German National Committee of ICOMOS, which operates 'preventive monitoring' groups for the German World Heritage properties.

Concerning the local level, the 'Rhine Valley Charter' (*Die Rheintal Charta*) has been signed by the great majority of municipalities in the Middle Rhine Valley in November 1997, with the obligation to conserve, manage and develop the natural and cultural heritage of the Rhine Valley.

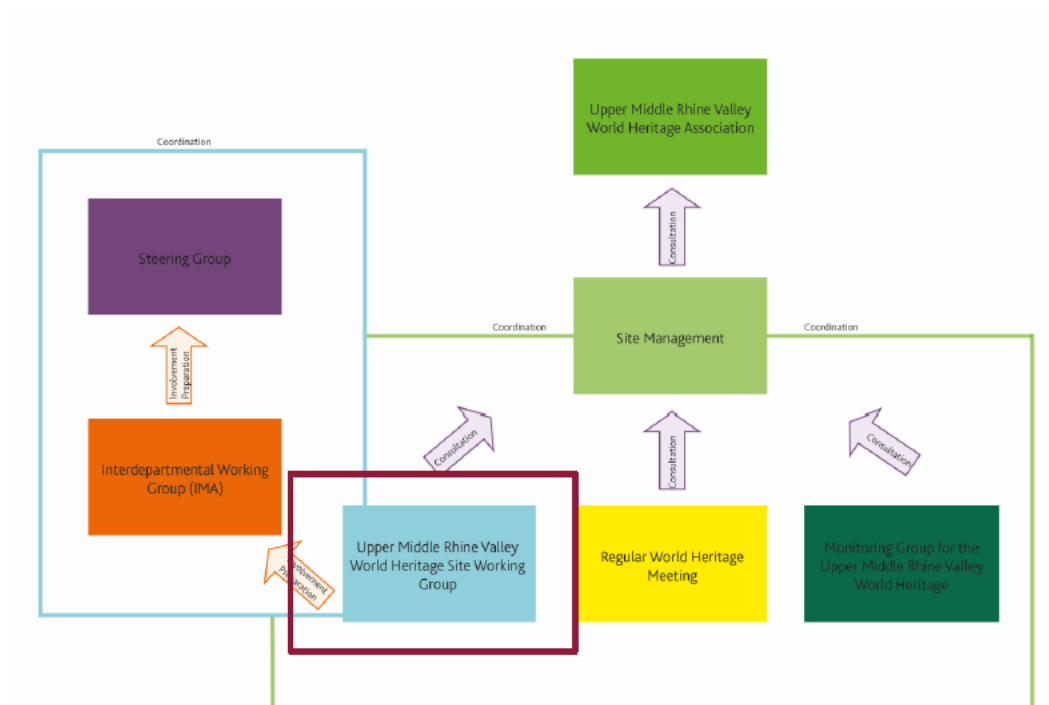
Since 2005, the operational management of the property is entrusted to the Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage Association (*Zweckverband Welterbe Oberes Mittelrheintal – UMRV-WHA*), which unites all stakeholders for the property and comprises representatives from all the relevant administrative bodies (including 6 cities, 4 joint municipalities, 42 municipalities, 5 districts and the federal government of both states). The operational site management team is also part of the Association, and they are supported by officials coordinating the management system.

The operative site management is assisted by a complex system of advisory and monitoring bodies, these are the

- Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage Site Working Group (*Arbeitsgruppe Welterbe Oberes Mittelrheintal* - UMRV-WG) that is an inter federal state working group, serving as an advisory platform for developments and projects between the technical bodies and the political decision makers;
- Monitoring Group for the Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage property (*Monitoringgruppe Welterbe Oberes Mittelrheintal* - MG-UMRV), which has been set up to protect the OUV of the World Heritage property by means of short communication channels. The Group includes the representatives of the ICOMOS Monitoring Group for the Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage Site, the members of the Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage Site Working Group and the Coordination Office UNESCO World Heritage Sites of Hesse;
- Monitoring Advisory Council (*Monitoringbeirat* - MAC), a body for advising the site management and the UMRV-WG, and including representatives from the Federal Foreign Office of Germany, the Monitoring Group of ICOMOS Germany, the monument conservation offices of Rhineland-Palatinate and Hesse and external technical experts;
- Interdepartmental Working Group (*Interministerielle Arbeitsgruppe*), comprising representatives of the state administration bodies of Rhineland-Palatinate and Hesse, (mostly on the ministerial level), which has a responsibility in relation to the property;
- Steering Group (*Steuerungsgruppe*), including representatives of the government (the Secretaries of State) of Rhineland-Palatinate and Hesse that are in charge of World Heritage, the board of the UMRV-WHA, and potentially other Secretaries of State, and which discusses the recommendations of the MAC and the suggestions of the UMRV-WG.

In addition, the World Heritage Secretariat (*Welterbesekretariat*) in Rhineland-Palatinate, which has a coordination role for all World Heritage properties in the state, supports the UMRV-WHA in developing frameworks and strategies for the protection and conservation of the OUV and monitoring the site. It also prepares the documents for communicating with UNESCO.

Management matrix of the property (image provided by the State Party):



The list of key legislation, spatial planning documents, and other plans, programmes, guidelines that are relevant for the protection and management of the World Heritage property 'Upper Middle Rhine Valley' is included in **Annex 10**.

Concerning the measures related to spatial planning for the property, its buffer zone and its wider setting, in Rhineland-Palatinate, it is supervised by the Structural and Approval Directorate North, (*Struktur- und Genehmigungsbehörde Nord*) which also oversees issues related to nature conservation and construction. In Hesse, spatial planning and construction is supervised by the Regional Authority Darmstadt (*Regierungspräsidium Darmstadt*). The protection and conservation of monuments (and the management and development of state-owned castles and other monuments) in Rhineland-Palatinate is overseen by the General Directorate for Cultural Heritage Rhineland-Palatinate (*Generaldirektion Kulturelles Erbe*). While in Hesse, the State Office for Monuments and Sites of Hesse (*Landesamt für Denkmalpflege Hessen*) is in charge of monument protection and the Castles and Gardens Administration of Hesse (*Staatliche Schlösser und Gärten Hessen*) is tasked to manage the state-owned monuments.

Administrative structure for the Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage property in Rhineland-Palatinate and Hesse (image provided by the State Party):



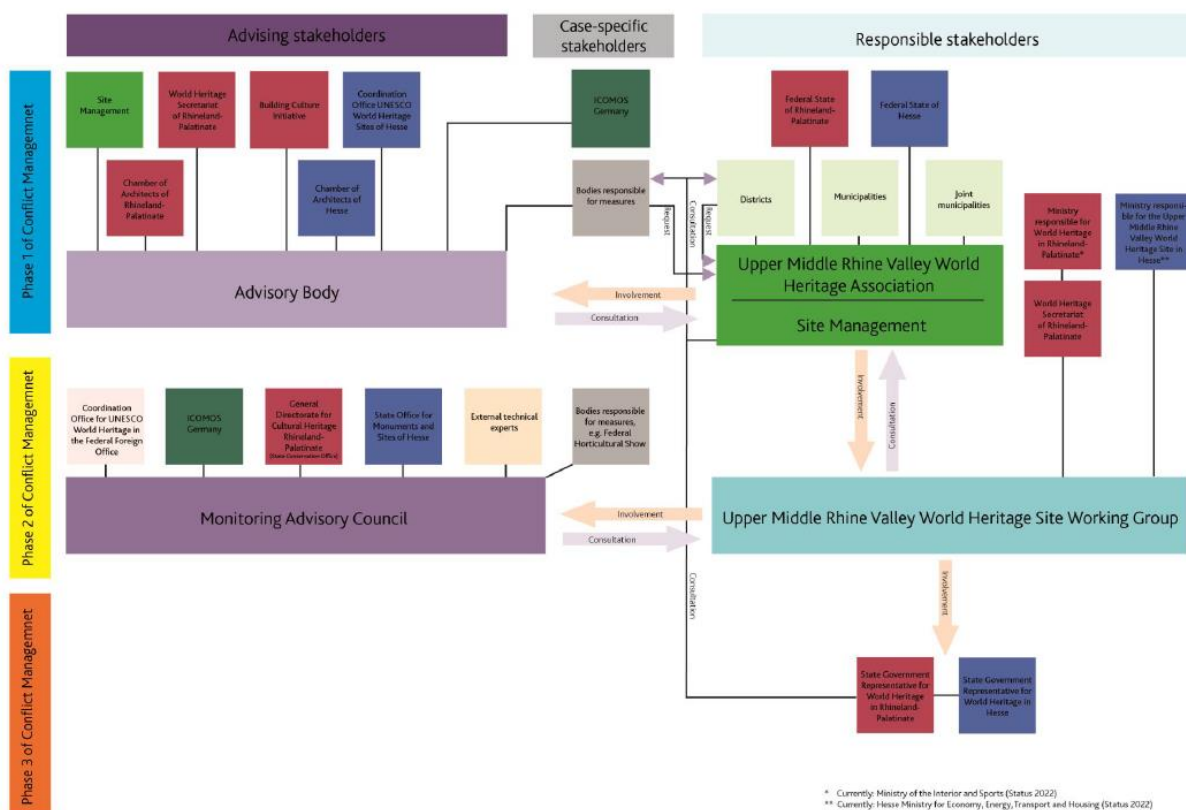
ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE IN RHINELAND-PALATINATE



ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE IN HESSE

Within the framework of updating the Management Plan, the State Party has developed processes to enforce the assessment of impacts of planned and proposed developments/projects on the OUV of the World Heritage property and drew up a Cultural Landscape Compatibility Study. In addition, a conflict prevention/conflict management framework has also been established between the different stakeholders, to ensure the identification of potential threats and processes to manage their avoidance and mitigation in a transparent way.

Stakeholders of the conflict management for the property (image provided by the State Party):



IV. ASSESSMENT OF THE STATE OF CONSERVATION OF THE PROPERTY

Introduction to the key issues

The state of conservation of the property 'Upper Middle Rhine Valley' was first reviewed by the World Heritage Committee under the Reactive Monitoring process in 2008, with regard to plans for the Rhine crossing project (Decision **32 COM 7B.93**). Between 2008 and 2011, the World Heritage Committee continued to annually review the state of conservation of the property, and since 2011 the Reactive Monitoring was shifted to a biannual cycle. (The complete list of State of Conservation reports, draft and accepted World Heritage Committee decisions could be consulted through this link:

https://whc.unesco.org/en/soc/?action=list&pattern=Upper+Middle+Rhine&soc_start=&soc_end=&fullsearch=&otherthreats=).

The main issues identified by the World Heritage Committee and included in its decisions since 2008, could be listed as follows:

- plans to construct a permanent river crossing over the Rhine,
- development of a 'Master Plan' for the property,
- the cable car in Koblenz between the town and the fortress Ehrenbreitstein,
- the bobsleigh track on the Loreley plateau,
- plans for different large-scale hotels at the Loreley plateau and in general, the use of the Loreley plateau,
- plans for a holiday resort at Sankt Goar-Werlau,
- several planned and proposed projects that might have a potential impact on the OUV of the property and the assessment of their impacts,
- noise generated by the railway traffic in the valley,
- plans for upgrading railway tunnels in the valley,
- planned and constructed wind turbines within the property, its buffer zone and its wider setting, and in general development of wind energy facilities within and around the property,
- development of a Management Plan for the property (consolidated with the 'Master Plan').

A joint UNESCO ICOMOS Advisory mission was carried out on 11 February 2008, with the aim to consider plans to build a bridge over the Rhine, or eventually a tunnel under it within the World Heritage property. An ICOMOS Advisory mission took place on 13-14 December 2012, which assessed the possibility of extending the use of the temporarily installed cable car service in Koblenz, plans to extend the tourism infrastructure on the Loreley Plateau, and the wind power installations within the property and the buffer zone.

In its 2021 decision, (Decision **44 COM 7B.155 – Annex 3**), the World Heritage Committee among others,

- noted the delay of the planning process for a permanent river crossing on the Rhine and reiterated its request to the State Party to involve the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, at the earliest possible stage in the appraisal of options undertaken in a wide regional strategic context, but focusing on developing solutions for local needs, and before any decisions are taken;
- also noted the State Party's efforts to reduce rail related noise pollution, especially from freight trains and encouraged the State Party to continue finding long-term solutions for diverting these trains from the property;
- in relation to wind farms, urged the State Party to:
 - find legally grounded solutions that will allow the refusal of applications for wind energy projects which would potentially have a negative impact on the OUV of the property and its attributes,

- develop a strategic spatial framework for wind energy developments that is based on a sensitivity mapping for the property, its attributes, its buffer zone and its wider setting, related to the OUV of the property (including potential visual impacts), and which can form the basis of wind energy development siting in the future,
- ensure that the developed spatial framework is assessed through a Strategic Environmental Assessment that provides means for looking at cumulative impacts and enables to address them at the earliest stage of decision making;
- welcomed the cancellation of the last proposed hotel project on the Loreley plateau, and requested the State Party to develop an appropriate spatial framework for the future use of the Loreley plateau, based on a thorough assessment of the relevant attributes that convey OUV and supporting their critical contribution to it, and test this spatial framework through an independent Visual Impact Assessment and Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) before the framework is given legal status and any new proposals are developed following on from the framework;
- further noted that a number of projects are planned or proposed for approval, planned for implementation within the property, which have the potential to impact on the OUV of the property, therefore, requested the State Party to keep the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies informed of all major project design options planned for implementation within the property, its buffer zone and its wider setting in line with Paragraph 172 of the 'Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention' (OG)¹, and ensure that impact assessments are carried out for these and that irreversible decisions are not taken before the relevant documentation has been reviewed by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies;
- commended the State Party for its progress made to update the Management Plan of the property, as well as conducting a study that will facilitate impact assessments related to the OUV and attributes of the property, and requests the State Party to ensure that:
 - the Management Plan includes a thorough inventorying of the attributes of the property and its constituent parts, or makes provision for a short-term creation of such an inventory as baseline for impact assessments,
 - the document includes a shared vision by stakeholders for the protection and management of the property,
 - the Management Plan is adequately embedded in the national and federal legal system,
 - the draft consolidated document is submitted to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, in order to ensure that its recommendations and comments can be appropriately taken into account in the final document;

The findings and recommendations of the Reactive Monitoring mission are discussed below based on the Terms of Reference of the mission (**Annex 4**).

IV.1. Assessment of the management system of the property

Detailed information on the management system of the property was provided to the World Heritage Centre in April 2022, and it was also presented during the mission. The result of identifying attributes of the property that convey the OUV, the planned structure and content of the updated Management Plan were also shared, and specific parts of the document as well as the assisting tools developed in parallel, were presented.

¹ <https://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines/>

Attributes conveying the Outstanding Universal Value

Tangible and intangible heritage features/attributes convey the OUV of a property, and they are functionally important as a support to the property and its protection. The primary source for identifying the attributes is the Retrospective Statement of OUV, in addition, further research is needed to link heritage features and attributes to the OUV, which might not have been specifically recognised in the Retrospective Statement of OUV, but convey the OUV, including authenticity and integrity of the property.

As requested by the WH Committee, the baseline for the updated Management Plan and other documents assisting the protection and management of the property should be an inventory of identified attributes. The State Party started to work on identifying and mapping the attributes within the framework of updating the Management Plan of the property. The mission has been informed that the attribute identification has been based on the form and requirements included in the questionnaire of the third cycle of Periodic Reporting (which will only start for the Europe and North America region in September 2022, but the other regions have already completed it). This form advises the identification of 5 key attributes and maximum 15 related attributes to be used in the Periodic Reporting. For the Upper Middle Rhine Valley property, the State Party created an attribute system (see **Annex 8**) by using the revised examination of the spatial analyses of the Master Plan and a comprehensive landscape analysis. The challenges and potential threats have been identified in the form of a SWOT analyses. The main actor for this exercise has been the Michael Kloos Planning and Heritage Consultancy firm, which has been charged with the task of updating the Management Plan and developing its supporting documents. It was explained to the mission that the attribute mapping required intense dialogue between stakeholders and resulted in a deeper understanding of the values and attributes of the property, forming a solid base for the protection and management of the property and allowing the development of further supporting tools.

Considerations

The mission considers that the chosen methodology (extracted from the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting), restricted the State Party's potential in identifying further attributes conveying the property's OUV, including those which might reflect the complex relational patterns of its tangible and intangible attribute network.

Concerning the identified 5 key attributes for the Upper Middle Rhine Valley (see **Annex 8**), the mission considers that attributes **1 to 4** have direct and clear connection to the SOUV, while attribute **5**. ("A (cultural) region worth living in") does not have this direct connection with the OUV and is rather suitable to be included as a strategy in the updated Management Plan and as a goal in an action plan for the property.

At the same time, the significance of the Rhine Valley in the European culture as an archetype of the perfect Romantic Landscape could be considered as an important intangible attribute and form the basis of strategies related to tourism development. In this respect, the 'evolving tourism tradition' has been identified as an attribute related to the application of criterion (v) to the property, that states that "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."² While linking a sustainable tourism strategy with this criterion could be acknowledged, the State Party needs to broaden the understanding of 'evolving traditional way of life', include further aspects and reformulate the related attributes for criterion (v) (see also the related findings and recommendations of the mission in chapter IV.3.3., under 'Assessment on the tourism management strategy for the property'). It has also been noted during the mission that the supporting tools (like the 'Cultural Landscape Compatibility Study' and the document for the 'Exclusion Zones for Wind Turbines Outside the Buffer Zone of the Upper Middle Rhine

² <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1066/>

World Heritage Site'), developed to assess impacts and to assist in avoiding/mitigating negative impact of planned and proposed projects, focus on the visual impacts on the integrity of the property and do not consider potential other type of impacts that might adversely impact further attributes and heritage values.

Conclusion

The mission considers that before proceeding with the finalisation of the updated Management Plan and other supporting documents, the State Party should reconsider both the methodology used and the identified list of attributes. In this process, it should ensure that both the site managers and other stakeholders, including local communities are closely included in this process and are free to contribute with their knowledge and experience about the property.

Recommendations

The mission recommends that the State Party:

1. Revise and further develop the attributes of the OUV of the property in line with the SOUV and other research resources, creating a more comprehensive and extensive attribute list for the protection and management purposes. (For the purpose of the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting, the advised restricted number of attributes could then be selected from this more comprehensive and extensive attribute list.)
2. In addition to the important visual qualities of the Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage property, dedicate equal attention to other aspects of the OUV, ensuring the identification of further attributes and their inclusion in protective and managerial actions and tools.
3. Align the final draft of the updated Management Plan with the revised and extended attribute list.

Management system/management framework

The purpose of a management system is to ensure the effective protection of the nominated property for present and future generations, and an effective management system includes a cycle of planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and feedback, with short, medium and long-term actions (Paragraphs 109 and 111 of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention).

Considerations

The mission considered that governance of the property, both on the federal and states level, is well grounded; all relevant authorities and organisations are part of the management system. The creation of the Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage Association ensured that a common platform is available for all official stakeholders. There is also a well-established, however complex system for communication and decision making among the federal and states authorities, the municipalities and the organisation with an advisory role. To this end, several advisory, monitoring and working groups have been created within the management system on different levels and with varying tasks. Currently, the actors of the management system are also charged with tasks related to the *2029 Federal Horticultural Show (BUGA 2029)*, including project and programme planning and decision-making.

The legal framework on the federal and state levels is well established and is being implemented to adequately ensure the safeguarding of the property and its OUV. Different levels of spatial planning regulations and the plans themselves provide the main tools for protecting the OUV of the property from the negative impacts of changes/developments, with the additional legal tools for specific fields (monument protection, nature protection, forest, and water management, etc). The developed 'Cultural Landscape Compatibility Study' (CLCS), which provides a three-dimensional digital map (a computer model) of the property and incorporates the location of the identified tangible attributes, has been created in the frame of updating the management plan and will be available to project developers

as an evaluation tool, with the aim to assist the assessment of potential and ascertained visual impacts of planned, proposed changes/projects or already implemented constructions. The tool makes the evaluation of positive and negative impacts of planned activities easier to recognise and more comprehensible, also for non-experts. The State Party is to be congratulated for its efforts in developing the CLCS. Nevertheless, while it will clearly be an important supporting tool to ensure that projects, which might have the potential to have a negative visual impact on the integrity of the property are recognised early in the planning stages, it does not take into consideration other types of impacts.

The process of avoiding or mitigating potential negative impacts to the OUV and attributes of the property from planned/proposed changes and developments is assured by the three-phase conflict prevention/conflict management framework, which incorporates both the site management, the different advisory and monitoring groups, and the relevant authorities. While its mechanism also seems to be quite extensive and complex that provides predictable and transparent ways for finding adequate solutions through dialogue, the State Party and the relevant national authorities should keep in mind that as a principle, negative impacts on the OUV of a World Heritage property need to be avoided, therefore the established mechanisms should ensure that solutions will lead to no negative impacts³.

The State Party is also conscious of potential impact of developments or changes happening in the buffer zone and the wider setting of the property that might have an impact on its OUV. Therefore, it is working on developing specific tools, especially to manage visual impacts from outside the property (such as the mapping of exclusion zones for wind turbines outside the buffer zone of the property). The need for these tools highlights how important this property's buffer zone is in protecting and maintaining the OUV of this property. From a legal perspective the buffer zone, as a well-defined area with clear boundaries, enables the creation or extension of new or existing supporting legal measures for this zone. Regarding the wider setting, the measures aiming to control changes that have the potential to adversely impact the property, will need to be tackled by a different approach, through identifying and assessing specific vulnerabilities of the property and by developing special tools and measures to avoid the adverse impacts (like in the case of wind turbines, by creating the 'Mapping of Exclusion Zones for Wind Turbines Outside of the Buffer Zone of the Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage Site').

The mission understood that the planned 2029 Federal Horticultural Show (BUGA 2029) is considered as a good possibility to boost developments (also by providing significant extra funding) that have the potential to be sustainable and enhance the quality of life of the local communities and the experience of visitors in the longer term.

Conclusion

The mission noted that in addition to the fact that the property, as a cultural landscape, encompasses a large area, and therefore, a high number of stakeholders on different governance level are charged with its protection and management, the responsible state bodies created a complex decision-making and management system, which functioning as a whole and the relationship between the different actors are rather hard to comprehend for external observers. In addition, in spite of the extensive framework and large number of organisations/entities included in the management system, the operational management of the property is carried out by a very small operational group (currently 4 people).

The mission also wishes to point out the important purpose of buffer zones in the protection and management of World Heritage properties, and their important contribution to effective protection of the OUV.

It has also been understood by the mission that the Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage Association is the largest shareholder of BUGA 2029, and the establishment of

³ A new guidance on impact assessment in a World Heritage context has been recently published in order to assist States Parties carrying out these processes in an adequate manner: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/guidance-toolkit-impact-assessments/>

the World Heritage site management system has currently a strong focus on including planning and decision-making into its management processes. Moreover, the updated World Heritage Management Plan foresees the incorporation of the feasibility study of the BUGA 2029. While the importance and potential of BUGA 2029 for the property is acknowledged, the mission advises the State Party to consider the positive potentials of this event only as an element in the action chain needed for the long-term protection and safeguarding of the property, its OUV and attributes, and be alert concerning its potential negative impacts that may be difficult to reverse after the exhibition (as is the case with the Koblenz cable car, built for the event of BUGA 2011 as a temporary instalment).

Furthermore, the mission considers that the systematic integration of the actions included in paragraphs 118bis. and 172. of the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention* into the processes of planning and assessing planned and proposed changes, would help protecting the property's OUV in a consistent way.

Recommendations

The mission recommends the State Party to

4. Strengthen the protective role and management of the buffer zone (the processes and regulations) in order to enhance the supportive role of the buffer zone in preserving its OUV, and consider extending the buffer zone of the property, following the vulnerability assessment both for renewable energy projects and the related exclusion zones, and for potential other sensitivities.
5. Establish a process of continued monitoring and evaluation for the overall state of conservation of the property, linked to the management system and the Management Plan.

In addition, the mission also considers that the management system of the property could be especially enhanced by the following actions of the State Party and its relevant authorities:

- Creating an online database for the property, which could serve as common, knowledge management platform for all stakeholders, facilitating the sharing of information and ensuring the long-term preservation and archiving of information relevant for the property.
- Enforcing the operational site management team of the property both by providing additional human resources and through capacity building possibilities.
- Ensuring that the preparatory and project creation tasks related to the BUGA 2029 do not overshadow the main objective of the site management system for the long-term preservation of the OUV of the property, and do not create a conflict of interest within the site management.
- Ensuring also the thorough shared understanding of the property, its universal, national and local values and its socio-ecological context are understood by all stakeholders, including local communities.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the current site management system and if necessary, revise the mechanisms for the involvement and coordination of the various activities between different partners and stakeholders.

The new draft Management Plan

The mission acknowledges that the State Party undertook a multi-year multi-staged process for updating the management plan. Considerable effort has been put to assigning the task of drafting and coordination to appropriate experts and to include all the relevant

stakeholders in the process. The mission received information about the planned structure and a brief description about the planned content of the updated Management Plan. The mission acknowledges that the State Party considers that the updated Management Plan will serve as an integrated planning and action framework for preserving the property and for its sustainable development. It is also well noted that the document aims to update former concepts and strategies, identify fields of actions, and ensure that the protection of the World Heritage property is implemented in a consistent way with sustainable economic development and the integrity of social justice.

Considerations and conclusion

The mission wishes to point out that the main focus of the updated Management Plan needs to be the long-term protection and preservation of the OUV and attributes of the property, and for this reason, the importance of a more extended list of attributes needs to be highlighted. Concerning planning and development, the document would rather need to point out on the one hand the potential and necessary fields of development, on the other hand the vulnerabilities of the property and restrictions related to planning changes. The mission supports the concept of preparing detailed (thematic short-, medium- and long-term) action plans for the Management Plan, which could include combined actions on the core strategies of the Management Plan and the sustainable development concepts and strategies for the cultural landscape.

The mission considers that the updating process and the updated Management Plan could be especially enhanced by the following actions of the State Party and its relevant authorities:

- Assessing the vulnerabilities of the property to social, economic, environmental and other pressures and changes, including disasters and climate change, as well as the monitoring of the impacts of trends and proposed interventions. Include adequate measures in the Management Plan and the related action plans. Furthermore, extend the assisting tools for impact assessment to a broader scope of attributes, taking the result of the vulnerability assessment into account.
- Ensuring that an accountable, transparent description on how the management system of the property functions, is provided to all stakeholders and right holders. Explain clearly in the new Management Plan the roles and functions of the site management, including the different supporting organisations and working groups. Put in the focus the role of the operative management and explain in relation to the operational management team the role of the other groups.
- Making the Management Plan a long-term living document that is continuously monitored and regularly updated and ensure that the document has accessible language and content for all stakeholders (including the local communities and private estate owners), is easily available for the large public as well (consider making it available as an interactive online document and not a book like publication), making clear the values of the property and the tasks of all stakeholders and rightsholders.

IV.2. Assessment of the overall state of conservation of the property

The Upper Middle Rhine Valley as a cultural landscape

The Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage property is included in the World Heritage List as a cultural landscape. According to the *Operational Guidelines* (OG), cultural landscapes "...represent the "combined works of nature and of man" designated in Article 1 of the Convention. They are illustrative of the evolution of human society and settlement over time, under the influence of the physical constraints and/or opportunities presented

by their natural environment and of successive social, economic and cultural forces, both external and internal.” It is also recognised in the OG that “cultural landscapes often reflect specific techniques of sustainable land use, considering the characteristics and limits of the natural environment they are established in, and may reflect a specific spiritual relationship to nature.” The property falls under the ‘organically evolved landscape’ type, reflecting the process of evolution in its form and component features, and the distinguished cultural landscape is one of the bases of the property’s OUV.

There were many issues brought to the attention of the World Heritage Committee since the time of the inscription of the property on the World Heritage List, nevertheless, the mission felt it important to provide also an overview on the overall state of conservation of the cultural landscape quality of the property and point out some trends and challenges it observed.

The State Party has carried out an exercise to identify and map the attributes that convey the OUV of the property (analysed in chapter IV.1.). The identification and mapping of attributes assist the site managers, the stakeholders and the decision-makers to better understand the OUV of the property, facilitate its protection and management, and communicate its values to the general public. The related studies recognized a set of sensitive elements related to the key attributes: the Rhine canyon and the terraces, related to geomorphology; the historic settlements, the traffic infrastructures and the vineyards, related to land use; the iconic landmarks and the views that influenced writers and painters, related to the contribution of the Rhine valley to culture, at national and international level. The studies are also the basis for a SWOT (Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats) analysis (as part of the updating of the Management Plan of the property), which aims to provide guidelines for the policies and strategies of management.

Further studies that are based on the identified attributes, assist the management of the property and facilitate decision making related to project planning (e.g., identification of appropriate areas for wind turbines in the buffer zone and the wider setting; planning the new Railway Crossing at Rüdesheim). Nevertheless, it must be noted that at present the appliance of these studies (as shown during the mission) is limited to the visual quality of attributes in order to avoid or at least minimize (until they do not pose an adverse impact) the potential negative effects of future developments on the landscape. The relations among the key attributes and the present landscape and the vitality of the processes which have produced these attributes remain mainly implicit. Therefore, a further step would be needed, which consists of investigating the processes and analysing the evolutive trends that affect the landscape, in order to control them.

Avoiding or minimising the negative impacts of every relevant infrastructure proposal on a case-by-case basis is necessary but is not enough for avoiding the slow deterioration of the historic landscape. Many minor actions, which impacts are not assessed (have cumulative effects that escape control and may produce undesired transformations.

During the mission, most presentations were dedicated to describing modalities and devices for limiting impact of new infrastructures in a scenario of urban growth. It was also reported that the Upper Middle Rhine Valley is an expansion area for the growth of nearby cities, particularly for the booming metropolitan area of Frankfurt am Main. Local policies seem to be oriented to support the trends of gentrification and suburbanization that is an ongoing process in the region and can be detected within the property as well. The settlements favoured by commuters were pointed out as possibilities for revitalizing the river towns and to boost development in the Rhine Valley. The Municipality of Koblenz presented the project of transforming the area of the Koblenzer Brauerei into a denser ‘multifunctional city district’ as an improvement of urban quality; a project that is an expansion of the urban fabric along the riverfront and toward the Stolzenfels Castle, which is an attribute of the property.

These trends and examples are aligned with what has been identified as key attribute 5 (“a cultural region worth living in: sustainable transport, commerce and cultural exchange making this region worth living in on both sides of the Rhine”). This in itself could generate negative impacts on the historic landscape and demonstrate that key attribute 5 (as currently formulated) is unconvincing. Actually, every component of the landscape (natural,

urban, rural) of the Upper Middle Rhine Valley shows modifications and deteriorations that reduce the quality of the landscape and may jeopardize OUV in the long-term.

Sensitivity towards the modalities of development and related choices and decision-making is present in the property and seems to be part of the public debate. A vision of the future too much oriented on physical growth worries groups of local citizens: the - *Citizens' Initiative Rheinpassagen* and association *VCD Verkehrsclub Deutschland e.V.* some of them are contesting new projects (for example the Citizens' Initiative Rheinpassagen and association VCD Verkehrsclub Deutschland, reject the idea of a new bridge on the Rhine and considers it "A shift from sustainable modes of transport [public transport, cycling and walking] to increasing the use of cars"). Others (like the initiative *Braubach lebenswerter e.V.* for a bypass in Braubach) are supporting project ideas that could result in more liveable urbanised environment.

In conclusion, policies oriented to support growth are unquestionable but cannot be confused with preservation and the sole focus on avoiding significant negative impacts of major projects is not enough for preserving the OUV. The authenticity of the property within the retrospective Statement of OUV is described at the time of inscription as a landscape that "has remained largely untouched..., many of the features and elements that lend the area its authenticity has been preserved." In order to preserve the authenticity of the property in the long term, it needs dedicated policies, grounded on the principle that heritage is a strategic opportunity and a major chance for new development, and could go hand-in hand with the priority to protect the OUV of this World Heritage property for the future generations. The enhancement of the OUV should be part of future actions, and to this end, proactive initiatives are needed.

During the mission, the site manager: Upper Middle Rhine Valley Association demonstrated to be a sensitive actor and active in promoting heritage, but the initiatives it has taken and is implementing appeared to be disconnected from the mainstream policies. As the Association includes the representative of (approximately) all the stakeholders, its role in promoting and sharing policies for sustainable development based on heritage valorisation should be encouraged and enhanced.

State of conservation of the natural landscape

In relation to cultural landscapes, the OG also points out that their protection "can contribute to current techniques of sustainable land use and can maintain or enhance natural values in the landscape. The continued existence of traditional forms of land use supports biological diversity in many regions of the world. The protection of traditional cultural landscapes is therefore helpful in maintaining biological diversity."

The Middle Rhine Valley as a whole is an outstanding example of an organically evolved landscape, with traces of harmonious integration of human labour. Nevertheless, there are some critical issues concerning the possibility to preserve the values of the landscape, which the mission wishes to point out:

One example is the open-pit quartzite quarry at Trechtingshausen and Niederheimbach, next to Sooneck Castle. The quarry covers a large area and is well visible from the river (a common way of enjoying the valley landscape and appreciating its OUV). During the last state of conservation reporting, the issue of the Sooneck open pit quartzite mine within the property was raised, stating that there are plans to expand the long-existing (the stone pit exists since the middle of the 17th century) quartzite mine and that a comprehensive impact assessment will be carried out as part of the planning approval procedure. The State Party was requested by the World Heritage Committee to keep the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies informed of all major project design options planned for implementation within or around the property in line with Paragraph 172 of the OG and ensure that impact assessments are carried out for these and that irreversible decisions

are not taken before the relevant documentation has been reviewed by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies⁴.

The company, operating the mine has long-term mining and operating licenses. The currently possible operating period with an economically required output amounts to less than 10 years. Because the potential extension of the mine is subjected to approval, measures would be possible to limit the exploitation of the site and transform this area to sustainable uses. However, the State Party provided the information that “preliminary investigations for planning approval procedures under mining law are taking place, examining whether and how far an expansion of the Sooneck quartzite open pit mine is compatible with the Outstanding Universal Value”.

Another recurrent factor of degradation is the presence of camping grounds and camper parking lots along the Rhine. Vehicles are parked close to the river shore and thin green areas and trees form a barrier and a visual screen to reduce their visual and environmental impact. One of the camping grounds is exactly on the opposite side of the river from the famous Loreley rock and occupies a large portion of the view that can be seen from the top of the cliffs at the recently redeveloped Loreley Park. The spectacular view is also negatively affected by an open-air deposit of industrial materials located nearby the camping ground. The adverse impacts are enhanced by the fact that this area still includes an important attribute of the property, consisting of a track siding the river that is a remnant of the historic roads for towing the boats upstream.

A further possible threat comes from the system of dikes and devices in the river Rhine that are necessary to make navigation possible and safe. It is most important that technical installations don't only follow technical considerations but their influence on the water landscape is taken in account as a decisive element as well. An example is the planned installations of new dolphins, the cylindrical posts that emerge from the riverbed in mooring places. Local associations of citizens complain that the dolphins of new generations are higher and bigger and impact negatively on the river shores (initiative #gegenReede2.0, Bad Salzig).

State of conservation of the rural landscape

The retrospective Statement of OUV of the property states that “the present-day character” of the landscape “is determined both by its geomorphological and geological setting and by the human interventions, such as settlements, transport infrastructure, and land use” (criterion iv). Nowadays traditional land uses are at risk, as the Statement itself recognized: “The terracing of its steep slopes in particular has shaped the landscape... this form of land use is under threat from the socio-economic pressures of the present day” (criterion v).

Four main elements at present characterise terrain of the Rhine Valley:

- cliffs of bare stone (Loreley is a major example);
- productive vineyards, organized for cultivation by machine in large parcels that extend on sloped terraces supported by walls of concrete and stone;
- patchworks of smaller agricultural parcels, sustained by lower dry-stone walls, that are mostly abandoned and invaded by bushes and trees;
- dense woods that border urban areas and agricultural lands.

This is the image of a landscape in evolution, where modern, intensive specialized agriculture dominates, mixed cultivation has dramatically decreased, spontaneous vegetation is expanding, old hand-made walls collapse, woods are increasing; and ecotonal environments and the areas of transition between the urban and the natural landscape are disappearing. The loss of the historic rural environment, reduction of biodiversity, homogenisation of landscape are major threats.

⁴ <https://whc.unesco.org/en/soc/4198/>

The State Party also pointed out for the mission 'orchards and garden landscape' and the 'small-scale vineyard landscape' among the elements of the cultural landscapes. Today these elements of the landscapes are hardly visible, which is considered by the mission as a severe threat to the preservation of the OUV. This issue seems to be absent from the main political agenda that primarily concentrates on new developments, nevertheless, the mission has been informed of initiatives and actions, which help preserve the traditional landscape and land use, like the cultivation of cherry trees in the area of Filsen and the promotion of this traditional production. This is an initiative that should be supported and extended to other fields. The Upper Middle Rhine Valley Association has carried out several interesting activities, i.e., the actions 'Grazing systems for keeping xerothermal sites clear' and 'Integration of side valleys in order to create biotope networks' in the context of the project '36 Degrees and Getting Hotter. Transformation of Cultural Landscapes in Times of Discontinued Use and Climate Change'. These activities should be reinforced in the frame of a general awareness about the need for strategic protection and preservation actions. The participation of the Association in a European initiative for caring for dry-stone walls and educating a new generation of workers in this field is also a very positive initiative but the degradation of old walls is only one aspect of the degradation of landscape due to the abandonment of traditional agriculture – a degradation that must urgently be tackled in its complexity.

State of conservation of the urban landscape

The '2011 Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape'⁵ recognises that "urban heritage is for humanity a social, cultural and economic asset, defined by an historic layering of values that have been produced by successive and existing cultures and an accumulation of traditions and experiences, recognized as such in their diversity". This document also points out that "Urban areas are increasingly important as engines of growth and as centres of innovation and creativity; they provide opportunities for employment and education and respond to people's evolving needs and aspirations. Rapid and uncontrolled urbanization, however, may frequently result in social and spatial fragmentation and in a drastic deterioration of the quality of the urban environment and of the surrounding rural areas." Therefore, it needs to be considered that "Urban heritage, including its tangible and intangible components, constitutes a key resource in enhancing the liveability of urban areas, and fosters economic development and social cohesion in a changing global environment. As the future of humanity hinges on the effective planning and management of resources, conservation has become a strategy to achieve a balance between urban growth and quality of life on a sustainable basis."

In the Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage property chains of villages and small towns are important elements of the cultural landscape, incorporating historic built heritage features both through individual buildings or building complexes and in their outlay and structure. The urban landscape of the property in general, is particularly sensitive to the impacts of by-passing traffic and traffic infrastructure, that are separately analysed in chapter IV.3.1. of this report. In general, major disruption is caused by the intensive passage of freight trains along the valley, but the increasing transit of cars and lorries must not be underestimated either, especially if the plans for a new bridge, tourist resorts and residential developments will be implemented.

Two other problems affect especially the historic urban areas within the property:

One is the average quality of contemporary architecture that probably satisfies common comfort requirements but looks extraneous and inadequate to urban landscapes that are strongly characterized by medieval ruins, monuments and historic buildings of high quality.

⁵ <https://whc.unesco.org/uploads/activities/documents/activity-638-98.pdf>

Undoubtedly, the municipalities and the states of Rhineland-Palatinate and Hesse issue building regulations that are legally and technically appropriate, but these are not specifically adapted to promote building activities which are more sensitive to the historic context and the OUV. A set of 'Guidelines on Building Culture'⁶ that concerns colour of street design, buildings details (roofs, windows, doors, colours, etc.), garden arrangements exist nevertheless, in order to evaluate their efficiency, it would be important to monitor how far these guidelines are applied and what the outcome of their implementation is.

A more threatening phenomenon is the expansion or sprawling of urban areas; already present in the hills around many towns like Boppard, Bad Salzig, Oberwesel. Accompanying urban infrastructure facilities (like power lines on trellis) also heavily affect the valley landscape today, as can be easily seen from the river.

The recent developments in Bingen provide telling examples. In this area the property extends to the wooden slopes that frame the town southward but does not include the town and the Rhine shores. However, the western quarters of the town have a strong impact on the valley landscape, due to a high rise building and the urban sprawl on the hills. In addition, a new residential area is under completion along the river, including a row of four-stories dwelling houses and a big hotel. This development has a high visual impact both from the river, from the Osteinscher Park, and from Rüdesheim. This is an issue that highlights the need to enhance the protective role and management of the property's buffer zone (See also chapter VI. 1.).

In conclusion, the sprawling of urban areas around the towns is a very worrying trend with regard to the long-term preservation of the cultural landscape and the maintenance of the property's OUV. In addition, the extensive building activity in the buffer zone and setting of the property results in an adverse impact on the OUV. This is especially evident in such a sensitive part as around Bingen on one of the most outstanding sceneries offered to visitors from the Osteinscher Park.

The development of special tools and measures to avoid the adverse impacts of planned projects (like the Cultural Landscape Compatibility Study (CLCS) or the creation of exclusion zones for wind turbines in the setting of the property) are ideal starting points for developing new strategies for building zoning and building regulations aimed to control urban sprawl within and around the property. The impact of existing expansions may be reduced by means of dedicated projects.

Recommendations:

The mission recommends the State Party to

6. Restrict land conversion and urban sprawl within the property and revise the regulations for the buffer zone to control the impact of developments related to urban expansion.
7. Conduct an appropriate impact assessment for the expansion plans of the Sooneck open pit quartzite mine in order to assess the potential impact of the planned project on the OUV of the property prior to the planning application and consider approving the proposal only if the expansion of the mine will not impact adversely the OUV of the property. Implement bioengineering works in order to re-integrate the already exploited open mine areas in the natural environment.

In addition, the mission also considers that the state of conservation of the property as a cultural landscape could be especially enhanced by the following actions of the State Party and its relevant authorities:

⁶ <https://sgdnord.rlp.de/de/planen-bauen-natur-energie/bauen-und-eigentum/die-initiative-baukultur/>

- Pay special attention to the degradation of the rural landscape within the property, especially related to the abandonment of smaller parcels, collapse of dry-stone walls, progress of invasive vegetation on agricultural land, soil degradation and loss of biodiversity. Encourage initiatives for developing new forms of sustainable agriculture coherent with landscape preservation.
- Develop a framework to regulate (ban or restrict and remove) the arrangement of parking lots and camping grounds within the property, especially in the riverside locations. Initiate projects for removing existing camping grounds along the river or limiting their impact on landscape, with special attention to their visibility and appearance from the river and from the main viewing points.
- Consider the effects of navigation infrastructure (installations) on the Rhine regarding the possible demand for new installations and mooring places in order to control the impact of the water infrastructure on the landscape.
- Monitor the application and the effectiveness of the existing building guidelines, promote contemporary good quality architecture that harmonise with, or strengthens the OUV of the property and award outstanding projects and practices.
- Develop studies and carry-on projects aimed to reduce the impact of modern urban expansions that are incongruent with historic towns and impact negatively on landscape and assess such plans through appropriate impact assessment processes.
- Enhance awareness about the importance and values of architectural heritage, promote contemporary good quality architecture that harmonises with, or strengthens the OUV of the property and monitor the application of the existing building guidelines, and award outstanding projects as best practices.

IV.3. Assessment of already implemented and planned projects

The challenges and trends related to changes within the property, as a cultural landscape, its buffer zone and its wider setting have been analysed in the previous chapter (Chapter **IV.2.**). In this current chapter, the mission assesses specific projects in line with the Terms of Reference, which constitute projects that are under the examination of the World Heritage Committee. In addition, the State Party has highlighted additional planned or implemented projects, which were not yet part of previous monitoring but are relevant for assessing the state of conservation of the property.

IV.3.1. Traffic infrastructure

The Upper Middle Rhine Valley is a historical transport route, with the Rhine serving as a link between the southern and northern halves of the continent since prehistoric times. Transportation and traffic in this area remains an important element of everyday life. The Rhine (and its two banks within the valley) remains in use as means of transport for people and goods. Nevertheless, it also presents a barrier between the two river sides, and the river and the valley pose challenges and restrictions to the organisation and development of traffic to contemporary standards-

Freight trains and railway noise

Already in 2002, the State Party wrote: “On the whole, the noise abatement programme for railway traffic initiated by the states of Rhineland-Palatinate and Hesse and the measures already under way to renew rolling stock will considerably reduce the level of noise endured by the local population and visitors to the area within the cultural landscape of the Middle Rhine Valley.”⁷ In its Evaluation Report, ICOMOS “was concerned about the noise pollution in the Valley from the very busy train services on

⁷ <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1066/documents/>: Nomination Dossier, 2002, page 99.

both banks of the river”.⁸ And the ICOMOS Advisory Mission Report 2012 stated: “It is impossible to visit with open senses the Upper Middle Rhine Valley and not notice the tremendous noise caused by the railway.” Moreover, it has long been evident that the international rail-cargo connection between Rotterdam and Genoa would be significantly expanded with entirely new tracks. In the Lugano Agreement (1996), the Federal Republic of Germany declared to complete the extension and new construction of the line at the same time as the New Transalpine Rail Link (NEAT) with the Gotthard base tunnel. The later was opened in 2016.

Twenty years after the inscription, the noise-problem in the Upper Middle Rhine Valley is still far from being resolved. The bypassing route, under discussion for decades, has still not been realised and the mission was informed that currently only a very first step, a feasibility study, is in process. Implementation of any improvement will seemingly not take place earlier than 2050 or 2060.

The mission was informed that the Deutsche Bahn, which is the owner and manager of these lines, calculates that approximately 300 freight-trains daily pass through the Upper Rhine Valley (in average a train every 5 minutes), running mainly at night-time. As the valley has become a central part within the logistics channel Rotterdam-Genova, the traffic is expected to increase; astonishingly, the forecast shows a slight increase only.⁹ The noise emissions are up to 110 dBA, a level that can lead to notable health damage, especially if it occurs during night-time. The specific conditions of the valley lead to a spread-out and a reflection of the noise to both of the valley-sides and even up to the higher situated houses. Trains, in the past years, have become longer, heavier and faster. At present, railway noise (which is significantly amplified by the geographical characteristic of a narrow valley) is by far the greatest nuisance to the local population. It prevents the undisturbed life of people, impacts their health, devalues the region, strongly hinders a prosperous sustainable tourism, and therefore, needs to be treated as one of the major threats for the long-term preservation of the World Heritage property.

The noise level of local and long-distance passenger trains has been reduced in the past years. Nevertheless, freight trains are still extremely loud despite the measures implemented by Deutsche Bahn. The majority of carriages have been equipped with quiet brake blocks. However, according to the information available, still some 15% of the carriages are considered to have loud brakes. In addition, considering the noise of brakes as the mayor or even sole problem leads to a false image. Cargo-trains running with a speed around 90 km/h emit noise levels between 85 and 90 dB(A) with peaks largely above 90 dB(A). That corresponds with the noise-level in a discotheque. The problem is aggravated by the fact that freight wagons coming from all European countries must be accepted for transportation; many of them still are old models with very noisy undercarriages or, partly, only two axes. It is evident, that mere technical installations with rail dampers, low noise barriers or rail lubrication equipment have not led to a significant noise reduction.¹⁰ The mission experienced daily that such a noise-level is unbearable; it harms the well-being and the health of people living in the valley.

As for the permanent installations, noise-barriers have been installed in some areas. However, in many cases they have led to important visual impairments with the architectural character of the settlements or the landscape features within the property and are partially blocking the visual relationship between the houses and the river. The mission observed several areas with the described situation (with noise-barriers with a height up to appr. six meters¹¹), that led to a total visual separation of areas that belong together.

⁸ <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1066/documents/>: ICOMOS evaluation, 28 December 2000, page 15.

⁹ According to the Federal Transport Infrastructure Plan and the “Deutschlandtakt”.

¹⁰ Station of Andernach.

¹¹ It has not been possible to get exact measures of the newly built noise-wall in Bingen.

Considerations

The importance and role of local communities in the protection and management of World Heritage properties is evident today. Therefore, the quality of life of communities must be taken in account as a high priority at every World Heritage property. For the Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage property, one of the five proposed key attributes reads as “A (cultural) region worth living in: sustainable transport, commerce and cultural exchange making this region worth living in on both sides of the Rhine.” The inclusion of this element as a key attribute is challenged by the mission in another part of this report. It could, however, serve as an important objective in a strategy and action plan for the long-term protection and management of the property.

As explained before, the realisation of a new railway track can be expected in 30 to 40 years at the earliest and a short-term improvement is only possible with operational restrictions. This calls for an adjustment of the international freight timetable and could be implemented within two to three years, a period that seems to be useful and reasonable.

The most helpful measure would be a ban on night-time driving between 11 p.m. and 6 a.m. A similar measure is enforced for trucks in some European countries. However, the closure of a section of line during the night hours is not conceivable within a continuous international rail network and would be unrealistic as it would provoke important disturbance in the entire international service.

A feasible measure that would decisively improve the noise level is the reduction of the speed of freight trains. Such a measure can be planned within the management of the timetable. Slowing down the trains would bring a substantial reduction in noise pollution within a reasonable timeframe. With a maximum speed of 50 km/h for goods trains, the noise-level is appr. 75 dB(A), which is comparable with the noise of personal vehicles on regional roads. The traffic can be organised with more continuity and so, partly, the prolongation of the running-time can be reduced. Compared with the currently valid target running time of trains between Rotterdam and Genoa of about 24 to 30 hours, the additional extension of travelling time of about 20 to 25 minutes appears to be acceptable.

Conclusion

The Federal Republic of Germany is a signatory to the 1972 World Heritage Convention and nominated the Upper Middle Rhine Valley for inscription on the World Heritage List, thereby committing to the maintenance of its OUV. The Federal Republic of Germany is the sole proprietor of Deutsche Bahn AG.

With consideration of the restricted and partially again interfering effect of improvements so far, the mission comes to the opinion that the persistent noise pollution represents a highly important negative impact, generating a serious deterioration for the use and appreciation of urban and rural spaces. The high noise level generated primarily by freight trains is, therefore, one of the major issues. It is a threat to the authenticity and the long-term protection and preservation of the property and its OUV.

The mission does not consider the erection of noise-barriers as an acceptable solution to the problem of train traffic-noise. Urgent actions are needed in finding solutions within the shortest timeframe possible, even if these solutions are temporary until a more consistent approach could be taken for diverting the freight trains from the property altogether.

Recommendations

The State Party (through especially the Deutsche Bahn A.G.) is recommended to

8. Urgently implement the recommendation of the World Heritage Committee (Decision **44 COM 7B.155**, paragraph 5.), by continuing to search for long-term solutions for diverting the freight trains from the property.
9. Limit the speed of freight trains (as a matter of priority) between Rüdesheim/Bingen and Koblenz to 50 km/h, as soon as possible.

Restoration of railway tunnels at Sankt Goar and Oberwesel

Several of the existing railway-tunnels with its portals date back to the 19th century. The portals are of high architectural quality. As they are important testimonies of the pioneer time of railways, and they are under protection. They are a non-negligible attribute to the OUV of the property.

Considerations

The mission was informed that plans exist to broaden the existing portals and the tunnels, but specific plans were not presented. It has been confirmed that there are currently proposals for the construction of further tunnels but no concrete projects.

Conclusion

As far as the related actions consist merely in restoring the railway tunnels, no objections are to be made. A broadening of the portals is to be avoided.

The Deutsche Bahn A.G. is to be advised to restore the tunnel's portals in their historic form and substance and notify UNESCO in line with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines about any new, related project proposals.

Railway Crossing at Rüdesheim

The currently existing level crossing of the railway at Rüdesheim is causing major congestions on the B42 national road and obstructing fluent traffic flow to and from the nearby car ferry landing.

The Federal Ministry for Digital and Transport (Bundesministerium für Digitales und Verkehr) commissioned a feasibility study for a new crossing and the state of Hesse is in charge of the planning. Four different options have been outlined and were subjected to an impact assessment that considered visibility of each option and a series of other factors that affect the area (risks from flood events, need for agricultural roads, preservation of habitats and protected species of animals, etc.). The preferred option is an underpass (the construction of a road for vehicle traffic under the railway lines).

The outcomes of the assessment were communicated to the World Heritage Centre in 2021 in the frame of the state of conservation reporting and were incorporated as a decisive evaluation criterion in the feasibility study regarding the removal of the present railway crossing. The Federal Government will review the feasibility study and will decide on the preferred option that will be the basis of the planning approval procedure.

Considerations

The mission recognises the necessity and utility of a bypass road that does not require the interruption of road traffic. It acknowledges the result of the assessment, which predict that the proposed solution might result in a modest local negative impact but will not impair the OUV of the property.

Conclusion

The mission also considers that the Railways Station place and the whole area west of Rüdeshheim along the riverbank is currently poorly arranged and unattractive. In the vicinity of the old town there are large, asphalted areas. One that is used as a bus and car parking is flanking the Niederburg Castle, which is a preeminent landmark of the property.

The construction of the railway underpass is an opportunity for improving the overall situation of the river waterfront in connection with the new Harbour Park that is expected to be one of the five exemplary exhibition spaces of the BUGA 2029. Therefore, the mission considers it important to upgrade the general condition of the riverbank at Rüdeshheim, with special concern for the area surrounding the Brömserburg Castle and include potentially the requalification of the whole riverbank in Rüdeshheim, connecting the town to the landmark Railway Station to the project of the Harbour Park, as part of the BUGA 2029.

Recommendations

The mission recommends the State Party and the relevant authorities to

10. Continue the project development for the railway crossing at Rüdeshheim with the underpass option and submit the final draft project proposal accompanied by an impact assessment to UNESCO for review with ICOMOS before any final decision is taken.

Road bypass at Braubach

The state road L335 passes through the historic town of Braubach, and for a long stretch the street is not large enough for the safe crossing of parallel line of vehicles in both directions, therefore, it is restricted to an alternating single lane in correspondence with the medieval tower 'Obertor'. This result in adversely impacting the quality of life of local residents (including concerns for the safe circulation of pedestrians in this part of the town, the possibility of appreciating the cultural values of the historic urban environment). In addition, the situation raises issues related to heritage conservation, especially with regard to the structure of the 'Obertor'.

Considerations

Cars of commuters and trucks carrying goods (10.000 vehicles per day) use this local road as an alternative to the major roads connecting Koblenz to the metropolitan area of Frankfurt am Main. The State Office for Mobility in Rhineland-Palatinate developed two planning options, but both of these have been abandoned due to their negative visual impact on the integrity and the OUV of the property. The Monitoring Advisory Council recommended to develop a new project with an accompanying heritage impact assessment. A citizens' initiatives ('Braubach lebenswerter e.V.', which provided information to the mission as well) is urging a quick solution.

The options considered were the widening the existing road by the destruction of private houses, including historic buildings (of which the oldest is dated to the 15th century), or constructing a bypass road.

Conclusion

The mission visited the site and could confirm the recognised threats and concerns. As the broadening of the road with demolition of historic fabric of this settlement that contributes to the OUV, or the construction of a bypass road within or nearby the historic city and along the Rhine might surely have a high negative impact on the OUV of the property, due to the scarcity of spaces and natural morphology of the site of Braubach further solutions of a bypass must be explored. An adequate alternative could probably be a completely new tract of road running far from the town and the

river shore. This solution would definitely mean higher financial investments; however, it could be justifiable not only because safety and hygiene of the urban environment in historic Braubach are citizens' priorities but also because making traffic fluid will reduce significantly traffic costs.

Recommendations

The mission recommends the State Party and the relevant authorities to

11. Develop new alternative solutions for a bypass road that avoid the historic centre of Braubach (excluding also the Rhine banks), and subject the alternatives to an impact assessment that focuses also on potential impacts on the OUV of the property. Submit the final draft project proposal to UNESCO for review by the Advisory Bodies before a final decision is taken.
12. Until the bypass road is constructed that avoids the historic centre of Braubach, restrict the circulation of trucks in the historic town of Braubach to the necessary minimum to enhance the quality of life of local citizens and guarantee their safety.

Permanent river crossing over the Rhine

Discussions whether a new bridge nearby St. Goar could be erected in order to provide a permanent crossing of the river date back to the beginning of the 20th century. After the inscription of the property on the World Heritage List, the proposal for a permanent Rhine crossing has been a topic included in almost every Decision of the World Heritage Committee.¹² In several decisions it invited the State Party to “evaluate in a more detailed manner the feasibility of possible construction and traffic management, whilst respecting the Outstanding Universal Value of the property”¹³ and “to allow ... a full assessment of the proposed bridge, tunnel and other solutions on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property”¹⁴

In the region, a new permanent crossing is not uncontested. The mission has been confronted with several statements from third parties that deny its necessity or sharing concerns that a new bridge will be used as a bypass within the regional or national road system. Nevertheless, the authorities argue that only a permanent crossing allows to bring the two sides of the valley better together and justify the reason for its necessity to ensure the connection for the local population without waiting times and during the night (out of ferry service operating hours). It has also been pointed out that ferries cannot be operated during periods of high and low water levels (a situation that probably will happen more often due to climate change).

In 2010, concerning a planned bridge between Fellen/Wellmich (of St. Goar and St. Goarshausen), the World Heritage Committee in Decision **34 COM 7B.87**, acknowledged the receipt of an Environmental Impact Assessment, the new Traffic Evaluation of bridge, tunnel and ferries and the Visual Impact Assessment, submitted by the State Party. In addition, the Committee noted that:

- a. “The Environmental Impact Assessment clearly demonstrates the overall sensitivity of the Rhine Valley landscape and the adverse impact that the proposed bridge would have on the cultural landscape,
- b. The traffic evaluation demonstrates that the bridge represents the most economically favourable solution, and

¹² Decision **32 COM 7B.93** (2008) – Decision **33 COM 7B.104** (2009) – Decision **34 COM 7B.87** (2010) – Decision **35 COM 7B.93** (2011) – Decision **37 COM 7B.75** (2013) – Decision **39 COM 7B.78** (2015) – Decision **41 COM 7B.45** (2017) – Decision **43 COM 7B.83** (2019) – Decision **44 COM 7B.155** (2021).

¹³ Decision **32 COM 7B.93** (2008).

¹⁴ Decision **33 COM 7B.104** (2009).

- c. The Visual Impact Study demonstrates that, if the valley north of St. Goar and St. Goarhausen is in some way of lesser importance to the overall Outstanding Universal Value of the property than the area immediately to its south, then the bridge could be considered acceptable in visual terms;”

In the current state of the project as presented to the mission, the State Party confirmed that the bridge is planned between Fellen and Wellmich, in a part of the valley that offers possibilities for a less impairing access. The choice of this location is in line with the outcome of several studies¹⁵ and an examination based on the 'Cultural Landscape Compatibility Study' (CLCS). Several solutions for crossing the river have been examined and assessed under diverse aspects: optimised ferry solution (24/7/365) – tunnel – low level central option – high level central option – low level outside option.¹⁶ The planned location of the bridge is declared to be based on the necessities of local traffic, in conformity with the World Heritage Committee's request (Decision **44 COM 7B.155**) that asked for the appraisal of options undertaken in a wide regional strategic context, but focusing on developing solutions for local needs.

The mission was informed that the next step of the project is foreseen to include the further revisions of its feasibility within the Spatial Planning Procedure (*Raumordnungsverfahren* – ROV), which will be followed by a formal Spatial Planning Decision. After the decision, an internationally announced competition for the development of an execution project is planned to take place with the technical and design details – the current design, with its extravagant form and its route running diagonally to the river, has been the result of a preliminary study only.

Considerations

It is to be acknowledged that no bridge exists between Bingen/Rüdesheim and Koblenz. During its visit and particularly in occasion of a continuous boat-trip on the Rhine, the mission got aware of the importance of this fact. This major characteristic of the Upper Middle Rhine Valley gives the river its priority and majesty and assures the free perception of the river and its flanks. Between the Schiersteiner Brücke nearby Wiesbaden (national road B 43) and the Südbrücke in Koblenz (national road B 327) crossing the river is assured exclusively by several privately operated ferry-boat-services.

The mission considers that the 'bridgeless valley' with the ferry services is a historic feature of the property and part of the “traditional way of life and means of communication in a narrow river valley”.¹⁷ This feature is an important attribute of the OUV of the property.

With regard to the above, the mission is of the view that the conclusion of the Environmental Impact Study (presented to the World Heritage Committee in 2010), which considers that “the valley north of St. Goar and St. Goarhausen is in some way

¹⁵ *Examinations*: Immission-pollution measurements; Acoustic measuring; Air pollution report taking nitrogen input into account. *Environmental analyses*: Environmental Impact Assessment, Compatibility testing regarding the Habitats Directive (FFH) in accordance with Article 34, Paragraph 1 of the Federal Nature Conservation Act for the Natura 2000 area DE 5510-301 – Middle Rhine; FFH compatibility testing in accordance with Article 34, Paragraph 1 of the Federal Nature Conservation Act for the Natura 2000 area DE 5711-301 – Rhine slopes between Lahnstein and Kaub; Compatibility testing with bird reserves (Vogelschutzgebiete – VSG) in accordance with Article 34, Paragraph 1 of the Federal Nature Conservation Act for the Natura 2000 area DE 5711-401 – Middle Rhine Valley; Faunistic special investigation. *Other expert reports*: Transport study on the Middle Rhine crossing to prepare the spatial planning procedure; Economic feasibility study on the Middle Rhine crossing; Investigation for improved Middle Rhine crossings – outline; Report assessing the visual impact of the Rhine crossing planned between St. Goar and St. Goarhausen; Report on the evaluation of the visual impact of the Rhine bridge planned between Wellmich and Fellen regarding the integrity of the Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage Site (2010); Expert urban development report on the Middle Rhine crossing.

¹⁶ WGF Nürnberg GbR (Gerd Aufmkolk) with Kunibert Wachten and Michael Kloos.

¹⁷ Criterion (v).

of lesser importance to the overall Outstanding Universal Value of the property than the area immediately to its south..."¹⁸ could not be justified. The property is to be considered as a whole entity, avoiding any differentiation that ultimately would lead to a weakening of its OUV.

The mission noted that all presented studies focus on the environmental, economic and feasibility aspects of a permanent river crossing. The studies show that a bridge would have a low environmental impact, that from an economical perspective a bridge in the chosen location is the most favourable solution. Concerning the World Heritage status of the property, the studies also took into account the potential visual impact of a bridge, nevertheless, as a complete attribute list have not been available for these studies, its other potential impacts on the OUV of the property were not or not fully considered.

The mission notes that current location of the planned bridge answers well to the expectations of the local population. However, the mission has not been informed how a planned permanent river crossing over the Rhine have been assessed in a wide regional strategic context. It has not been demonstrated how to avoid an increased interregional or international traffic, as the new crossing would allow an easy access from the region east of the Rhine to the highway 61/E31. Considering the existing road connections, the use of the new crossing by regional or interregional traffic can't be excluded as it would allow an easy access from the region East of the Rhine to the highway 61/E31. No comprehensible regulation on how this traffic could be stopped or at least hindered was presented.

Conclusion

The mission considers that assessing the visual impacts of a permanent river crossing in a World Heritage context (with regard to the OUV of the property), is important. However, the OUV encompasses further complex characteristics, therefore, the mission is of the view that the assessment of the full range of impacts on the attributes and the OUV of the property is necessary. In this respect, the State Party is to be reminded that impact assessments are iterative processes, in which all project alternatives need to be considered. The mission is of the opinion that as a priority, a permanent crossing must consider the protection of the OUV and the management necessities of the property. Economic considerations are important, but they cannot be the primary or even the defining factor.

Considering the use of the new crossing, a full assessment in a wide regional strategic context is needed, considering regulations on how an increased traffic could be avoided or at least mitigated. It is important to know exactly the procedures foreseen to avoid regional and interregional traffic to use a new crossing.

In addition, in the mission 's view, a new permanent river crossing should not reduce the viability of the ferry services, which are historic features and attributes of the property. The functioning of the existing ferries must be assured in a long-term perspective; the foreseen measures are advised to be developed and assessed together with a project for the new river crossing.

The mission also wishes to point out that for any project for a construction of a certain importance within a World Heritage property it is the requirements of high-quality "Baukultur" is adequate.¹⁹ A new construction for a crossing must be as discreet and restrained as possible and the project must represent a high quality of engineering and design.

Finally, the mission also considers that a permanent river crossing (bridge or tunnel) will unavoidably result in a negative impact on the OUV of the property, albeit in a different degree. The State Party will need to develop tools and processes (mentioned

¹⁸ Decision **34 COM 7B.87** (2010).

¹⁹ Declaration of Davos 2018. <https://baukultur--production--storage.s3.amazonaws.com/baukultur/2022-06-09-075742--context-document-en.pdf>

in this report under other items as well) to assess the cumulative impact of the planned river crossing projects on the OUV of the property. The World Heritage Committee repeatedly requested that the appraisal of options of this project be undertaken in collaboration with the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS, and the mission considers that this request will need to be urgently met before further decisions are taken in the project planning.

Recommendations

The mission recommends the State Party and the relevant authorities to:

13. Urgently comply with the requests of the World Heritage Committee regarding the plans for the permanent river crossing on the Rhine, and ensure that the project planning includes solutions and measures for the viability of the existing ferry services over the river;
14. Carry out an adequate impact assessment process based on updated project options and taking into consideration a full range of attributes that convey the OUV of the property.

Cable Car in Koblenz

The existing cable car was built as a temporary transportation mean for the Federal Horticultural Show (BUGA) in 2011 to connect the city centre of Koblenz with the exposition area in the Ehrenbreitstein Fortress, under the specific and binding commitment to dismantle it immediately after the closure of the event. Nevertheless, it has been in operation by a private company since its installation in 2011 and it is still in function. Its current operation permit is valid until 2025.

During this time, the cable car has become an important element of the public transportation system in Koblenz, connecting the people living in the residential area of the Niederberger Höhe district behind the Ehrenbreitstein fortress with the city centre and linking the city with the touristic hotspot Ehrenbreitstein fortress. The importance of this link will further increase with the creation of a new housing quarter in the area of the former army barracks of the Fritsch Kaserne.

Despite the original commitment to dismantle the cable car, the competent local authorities expressed their intention to maintain the cable car with its current trajectory and include it as a definite element of the public urban transportation system, that could continue its operation in the long term, probably for some generations. To this aim, the authorities are considering the redevelopment and redesign of the two stations in the coming years, to ensure their safety and long-term durability.

In a simplified spatial planning examination regarding the planned construction of the cable car, nine options for various potential sites and routings were reviewed in 2007. From the total of the 9 options, 2 substantially different options were further explored:

- a monocable detachable gondola lift over the Moselle combined with multi-cable detachable gondola lift over the Rhine (Option 2a) and
- a multi-cable detachable gondola lift) from Konrad Adenauer Riverbank near St. Castor Basilica (Option 9).

The project has also been subject to the 'Cultural Landscape Compatibility Study' (CLCS), which has not come to a clear conclusion. The CLCS showed several problems (Pylon 1 Disturbs Rhine Promenade – Valley Station Partially Inside of Monument Zone – Valley Station of Koblenz Cable Car Disturbs Close-up View of St. Castor) and concluded that a closer examination of the issue of the pylon and the valley station is necessary. A one-day workshop is foreseen to be organised in August 2022 in order to discuss the outcomes of the study and the potential ways forward.

Considerations

The ICOMOS Advisory Mission Report of 2012 concluded that the cable car “is not compatible with the requirements of the World Heritage property”²⁰, and has an adverse impact on the OUV of the property and on its authenticity and integrity.

The mission retains the conclusions of the Advisory Mission Report 2012. The on-site visit confirmed that the valley station of the cable car is too close to the choir of the basilica of Saint Kastor and visually impacts the important Romanesque church. In the context of the surrounding, it is too voluminous and too high. Further on, it interferes with the impressive promenade along the Rhine. The valley station poses an important visual impairment from the direction of the river and the riverfront. The mission has been informed that the current location was chosen to avoid cutting down some trees in the river front, a consideration that may be correct for a temporary, but is wrong for a long-lasting installation.

In addition, the mission considers that the continued operation of the cable car enables and promotes the urban expansion of Koblenz in the Ehrenbreitstein Fortress area. Nevertheless, the mission acknowledges the importance of this transport system for the city and is aware of the fact, that citizens would not easily accept the reasoning if it would be dismantled without replacement.

Conclusion

The cable car was originally a temporary project for the time period of the BUGA 2011 and was intended to be completely dismantled after one year. For the relatively short period foreseen for its operation, an important, primarily visual impairment on the World Heritage property has been acceptable as it would be entirely reversible.

The situation is different now, and if it is to become a permanent element of the city traffic infrastructure, the complete replanning and redesigning of the cable car system is needed in order to mitigate its negative impact on the attributes conveying the OUV in this area, as well as the authenticity, and the integrity (with its visual and ‘spiritual’ values) of the property.

As there are already several cable cars installed in and around the property, the State Party might wish to be careful not to include new ones in the future within the property and its buffer zone, especially crossing the river Rhine.

Recommendations

The mission recommends the State Party and the relevant authorities to

15. Carefully plan a new routing of the cable car in Koblenz with a decent distance of the valley station from the area of the St. Kastor church’ and develop a design for the new valley station as visually neutral as possible. Assess the plans through extensive impact assessment process and inform the World Heritage Centre according to paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines before any decision is made.

IV.3.2. Housing and redevelopment proposals

The property stretches 65km along the two sides of the Rhine. The vision of the State Party with regard to housing and residential areas for this area is focused on growth and expansion, clearly wishing to develop and redevelop the residential areas of the settlements within the property to become a booming metropolitan suburban range for commuters to the big cities like Frankfurt and Mainz. The mission had observed

²⁰ <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1066/documents/>: Report on the ICOMOS Advisory Mission to the Upper Middle Rhine Valley, 13-14 December 2012

ongoing and already implemented new residential buildings both within the property and its buffer zone. Nevertheless, only two specific developments were pointed out by the State Party in recent State of Conservation reports and during the current mission:

- plans for the redevelopment of the former army barracks of the *Fritsch Kaserne* in the Niederberger Höhe district behind the Ehrenbreitstein fortress to become a new residential area in the setting of the property, and
- the proposal for the redevelopment of the Koblenzer Brauerei and the creation of a new residential quarters nearby, called 'An der Königsbach' within the property.

Redevelopment of the former army barracks of the Fritsch Kaserne in the Niederberger Höhe district

The presented plans for this project, which is located just outside the buffer zone of the property but in its setting, implies the goal to convert this area to a new residential quarter, fitting into the current use and scale of its environment.

Considerations

According to Paragraph 104. of the Operational Guidelines, for the purposes of effective protection, a buffer zone has complementary legal and/or customary restrictions placed on its use and development in order to give an added layer of protection to the property. Paragraph 112. of the Operational Guidelines furthermore states that the effective integrated management approach to planning and management that ensures the maintenance of all aspects of the OUV, goes beyond the property to include not only the buffer zone but the wider setting as well. The management of the wider setting is related to its role in supporting the OUV and contributing to sustainable development.

Conclusion

If the proposal will proceed in the presented form with no major alteration to presently existing buildings and the addition of only low ranging further constructions, it is foreseen not to threaten the OUV of the property. Nevertheless, it should also be noted that one of the main reasons for maintaining and upgrading the cable car in Koblenz is the growing importance of the residential area in this location, which will be boosted by this proposed project as well. Adding up to the smaller scale negative impacts on the OUV of the property and justifying the overall recommendation of the mission to develop a methodology to assess cumulative impacts of all scales of projects on the OUV of the property and its attributes.

In case major alterations are introduced for the presented plans related to the former army barracks of the Fritsch Kaserne in the Niederberger Höhe district, the potential impact of the alternative on the OUV of the property will need to be assessed, and if relevant, a notification is to be sent to UNESCO in line with Paragraph 172 of the OG.

Koblenz: Koblenzer Brauerei and new residential quarters 'An der Königsbach'

The Koblenz brewery was established under the name Königstein brewery in 1885. Today it contains the industrial infrastructure of beer production and a row of historical buildings (mainly offices today) of the brewery. In 1970 a huge industrial building with a length of approx. 60 m and a height of approx. 60 m was added. (No exact information has been provided.) This latter contained some beer tanks, is partly empty and has an entirely closed façade of panels on the valley side, whilst the side to the hill has remained open. The entire area of the development is part of the World Heritage property and prominently located on the Rhine shore at the southern exit of the city of Koblenz with a strong visual relationship to Stolzenfels Castle. The area forms the

transition from the densely populated city of Koblenz to the green-shaped scenic part of the Middle Rhine Valley, thus, it is of special significance.

Some years ago, the ownership of the brewery changed, and the new owner has the intention to outsource the beer production and to convert the area (on both sides of the railway lines and the main street) into a new residential quarter. The existing historical buildings of the brewery are to be dismantled, the structure of the beforementioned tank-building is to be maintained and the building is entirely remodelled to convert it to dwellings; the presented plans show the existing dimensions of the building with a new layout of the floor plans. On the free land beside the river, on the other side of the road and the railway-track the construction of new residential buildings is foreseen.²¹

In the current land use plan, the entire area of the Koblenz brewery falls under a zone with industrial/commercial function. The representatives of the city of Koblenz explained that the redevelopment of this part of Koblenz is regarded as a good possibility to rehabilitate a currently unattractive part of the city and to offer new housing for residents and people in the region who wish to move to the city. It has also been explained that the new owner could not be forced to demolish the tank-building.

The competent authorities presented the city's development plan for the area. It includes plans for the new buildings between the main road and the valley slope, maintaining the tank-building and converting it into dwellings. Furthermore, the plans for the new residential area between the railway line/the main road and the river. The mission was informed that currently no heritage impact assessment has been elaborated.

Considerations

Based on the presented information and plans, the mission considers that the positioning and volume of the existing tank-building is already problematic. In its current form, the large-scale tank-building is witness of unbridled industrialisation with disregard for its surroundings and landscape. With its impressive volume it is a dubious feature of the cultural landscape. Its dimensions are out of scale and give an enormous contrast to the landscape and the surrounding building (including Stolzenfels castle). It is also an enormous break-in to the structure of settlements within the valley that are characterised by the small-scale developments following the linear structure of the course of the river, in which the height-signs of church and castle towers give accents in the valley. The existing tank-building is to be considered the most important visual impairment on this part of the World Heritage property.

The mission is of the opinion that its proposed change of use of the tank-building (as a residential building) through restructuring and rehabilitating, with the intention of creating a new landmark, would make it appear as a new construction. As the important negative impact of the construction on the OUV of the property would prevail for a long time and be amplified by its restructuring, the mission does not see the proposed idea justifiable and do not support the proposed plans.

The mission is aware of the fact that the new owner can't be forced to demolish the tank-building. However, the city of Koblenz has the planning sovereignty and jurisdiction over planning proposals. For the new project it would need to change the classification/use of this zone from industrial use to a residential area (living and works spaces). Thus, the city is free to accept the proposal or not.

Concerning the planned new residential quarters, the current plans imply a very high density of the buildings to replace the historical brewery complex between the main road and the valley slope that is not under protection. The height of the planned constructions is critical and untypical for the Upper Middle Rhine Valley. The planned living quarters between railway line and the river, while still quite densely built over are

²¹ Bebauungsplan Nr. 330 «An der Königsbach».

foreseen creating ample green spaces in between and around the living quarters. Therefore, these will fit better into the general view of the urban landscape.

Conclusion

The mission recognises the potential positive outcomes of a rehabilitation project of the *Koblenzer Brauerei* for the city of Koblenz. However, the presented plans would lead to a most serious impairment of the OUV. They have to be completely revised, considering the OUV and the attributes that convey it in this area, and other local values, furthermore, the results of an appropriate impact assessment procedure. The relevant authorities will need to ensure to approve only plans that have no new negative impacts on the OUV of the property and would potentially assist in mitigating already existing negative impacts.

Recommendations

The mission recommends the State Party and relevant authorities to

16. Revise the development plan *Bebauungsplan Nr. 330 «An der Königsbach»* in Koblenz, ensuring that an impact assessment informs the planning process.
17. Develop the plans for the rehabilitation of the *Koblenzer Brauerei* area and the transformation to a new residential use without including the reuse of the tank-building and with a reduced density and number of storeys of the buildings between the main road and the valley slope.
18. Submit the final design plans with impact assessments for the transformation of the *Koblenzer Brauerei* and new residential quarters 'An der Königsbach' in Koblenz to UNESCO, for review with ICOMOS International, before irreversible decisions are taken.

IV.3.3. Tourism related projects and tourism management

The State Party considers that tourism is a characteristic feature of the Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage property and cultural landscape, and also as the main image bearer and marketing vehicle. During the presentations and documents for the mission, the State Party clearly expressed that the development of tourism is counted as a strength to be harnessed. In addition, 'evolving tourism tradition' has been identified by the State Party as an attribute that relates to the application of criterion (v) to the property.

Developments at the Loreley plateau

The Loreley rock is the epitome and a focus point for the Upper Middle Rhine Valley. Its plateau is the most visited spot of the property and many installations and buildings have been erected before and after the inscription of the Upper Middle Rhine Valley on the World Heritage List.

Since the last ICOMOS Advisory Mission in 2012 (that already mentioned a new visitor centre, which opened in 2012), an important improvement has been realised. After the acquisition of several parts of the privately owned land, the organisation of an international competition led to a complete redesign of the part of the Loreley plateau facing the Rhine, based on a concept for a 'Culture and Landscape Park'. The former building of a camping site and the 'Berghotel', which was placed on a delicate, well visible spot and which did not have any historical or architectural value, has been demolished together with several smaller buildings and a district road. The historically interesting 'Gymnastics and Youth Centre' (constructed in 1928) is currently under refurbishment to become a restaurant. In line with the winning project concept (advised also by ICOMOS Germany) the new park has been created and opened in 2019. It combines a rigid straight axis, cut with a somewhat brutal gesture into the rock, with a meandering footpath and works with an elaborate communication concept. Substantial landscaping complements the projects, with interpretation panels and areas for the

visitors. An exhibition hall was constructed in the middle of the park. Its concrete shell construction is completed, and the continuation foresees to place an artificial 'crystal rock' on top of the building. Constructed with metal frames and essentially glazed, its highest point would be more than 12 m high and reach the height of the big old trees of the park.²² The mission was presented the related plans, including a visibility analysis for the crystal rock, based on four viewpoints.

Despite its attitude of overdesign, the new Culture and Landscape Park intervention as actually realised has essentially improved the former situation of this part of the property and all responsible bodies are to be congratulated for their efforts.

Considerations

Concerning the exhibition hall of the 'Loreley Culture and Landscape Park', the mission considers that no convincing justification has been provided on the meaning and necessity of the 'crystal rock', which would be an entirely foreign element within the landscape park and dominate the visual appearance of the Loreley plateau. The functioning and appearance of the already built exhibition hall is not dependent on the 'crystal rock'. In case the 'crystal rock' is closely linked from an interpretative perspective with the planned exhibition, it could be placed inside the exhibition hall. On the top of the exhibition hall, the planned 'crystal rock' would be an important visual impairment, for the Loreley plateau and its immediate surroundings.

Conclusion

The placement of the 'crystal rock' on the top of the exhibition hall would undo a significant part of the substantial improvements that has been achieved with the creation of the landscape park. It would have a significant adverse impact on the most emblematic attribute of the Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage property.

Recommendations

The mission recommends the State Party to

19. Finalise the construction of the exhibition hall in the Loreley Culture and Landscape Park with a flat skylight and without the foreseen 'crystal rock' on top of it.

The project also includes an ellipse-shaped 'multifunctional' car park next to the visitor centre that has been built some time ago, both of which fit quite well into the topography. At the time of the visit, work was underway for an additional large car park to accommodate the large number of cars of visitors visiting the Loreley open-air theatre. The terrain will be greened.

Considerations and conclusion

Concerning the 'multifunctional' car park next to the visitor centre, the mission comprehends the need for an organised parking space for cars and buses of visitors, however, considers it important to better integrate the parking area into the surrounding landscape, and therefore advises the State Party to complete the car park with an appropriate landscape design, including loose groups of trees.

The summer bobsleigh park, which is situated above the visitor centre and the Loreley open-air theatre is still in operation.

Considerations and conclusion

The summer bobsleigh run is to be considered one of the existing impairments of the landscape, confirming its already assessed impacts detailed in the ICOMOS Advisory Mission Report 2012. During the on-site visit of 2022, due to a chemical treatment that

²² This height is above the eaves height of the demolished «Berghotel» (a decisive visual landmark), and it nearly reaches its ridge height.

turned the grass into a yellow colour, the negative impact of this infrastructure on the attributes of the property was even more evident. Even under normal conditions, it remains a significant impairment for the attributes related to the Loreley.

Recommendations

The mission recommends the State Party the following:

20. The operation permit for the Summer Bobsleigh Run (that is currently situated on the Loreley plateau) should not be extended at the current location when the permit expires. In the long-term, alternative locations may be found; the new location must be chosen in a cautious way in line with the paragraph 8. of the World Heritage Committee Decision **44 COM 7B.155**, and if it is within the property or would have an impact on the OUV any such proposal should be forwarded to the World Heritage Centre under Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines* and, following the obligations included in Par 118bis of the *Operational Guidelines*, be assessed through an Impact Assessment.

The Loreley Open-air theatre (that is owned by the municipality of St. Goarshausen and managed by a private firm) has recently been covered with a new protection foil to cover the stage. The chosen colour is hard white, and it represents an extremely visible and disturbing element in the landscape. Its visibility is accentuated by the fact that several big trees that would hide the sheet have been cut down.

Considerations and conclusion

The new white covering of the Loreley Open-air theatre has a negative visual impact on the attributes that convey the OUV on the area (both from the river and the other side of the valley). The Mission is of the opinion that the argument that the preceding sheet was white as well, but have been invisible due to the green foliage, is insufficient. It considers important that all efforts are done to mitigate its newly arisen adverse impact. It is not helpful to wait for the newly planted trees to provide some coverage in later decades. The mission, therefore, considers that the cover over the stage of the Loreley Open-air Theatre should be replaced as soon as possible and to a shade that better integrates with the surrounding landscape, in order to reduce its visual presence.

The largely over-dimensioned proposed hotel project on the big open meadow situated immediately east of the Loreley rock was subject of an ICOMOS Technical Review of April 2021, which concluded that the project constitutes a serious threat to the authenticity and integrity of the property and advised the State Party to halt the hotel development in its current form. Following the transmission of the Technical Review, UNESCO was informed by the State Party that this project has been withdrawn by the private developer. The World Heritage Committee welcomed the cancellation of the hotel project in Decision **44 COM 7B.155**, and requested the State Party “to develop an appropriate spatial framework for the future use of the Loreley plateau, based on a thorough assessment of the relevant attributes that convey OUV and supporting their critical contribution to it, and test this spatial framework through an independent Visual Impact Assessment and Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) before the framework is given legal status and any new proposals are developed following on from the framework;”²³

The mission has been informed that the existing legal preconditions have not changed, and the investor intends to develop a new, although smaller-scale project for a hotel on the same location.

Considerations

²³ <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/7870>

Considering the project for a new hotel at the currently empty, meadowed landscape area surrounding the Loreley rock, the mission highlights the urgency and importance for the State Party to closely follow the request of the World Heritage Committee.

The landscape of the Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage property is an integral attribute of its OUV. The retrospective Statement of OUV accentuates the importance of the Loreley as the most famous 'narrow' in the river, and the description of authenticity highlights the value that 'the landscape has remained largely untouched. As a result, many of the features and elements that lend the area its authenticity has been preserved.'

Conclusion

The mission, therefore, recommends the State Party to closely control the land use of the Loreley plateau and restrict all attempts for new constructions. The mission is of the view that every effort is to be made to keep the landscape around the Loreley rock as untouched as possible, considering it is one of the most prominent attributes that convey the OUV of the World Heritage property. In this most delicate location, in the long-term, the authentic untouched elements of the landscape need to be preserved.

Recommendations

The mission recommends the State Party the following:

21. In relation to the planned hotel project on the Loreley plateau, continue implementing Decision **44 COM 7B.155** (paragraph 8.) of the World Heritage Committee and notify the World Heritage Centre in a timely manner of any new project proposals before irreversible decisions are made.
22. Initiate policies and programs that aim to achieving a unified undisturbed landscape at and around the Loreley plateau with very limited constructions and a land use that respect the preservation of the OUV and suit the *genius loci*.

Osteinscher Park Rüdesheim

In the late 18th Century, Count von Ostein built his summer residence on the hills dominating a meander of the River Rhine, west of Rüdesheim. He built pavilions in a romantic style in an area surrounded by gardens and woods. The Count's house is today lost, and several pavilions were damaged, yet the place is still a vast, attractive and well-maintained public park. The Niederwald Monument, dedicated to the unification of Germany, is located in the park and dominates the valley landscape. The Park hosts a Visitor Centre and other recently rebuilt visitor facilities in a discrete form. The park also functions as an introduction point for the Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage property.

Considerations and conclusion

The mission considers that the Osteinscher Park is a good example of correct management and use of heritage. As one of the highlights of the property, could serve as inspiration and a good practice for the development of future cultural and sustainable tourism projects.

Therefore, the mission advises the State Party to assure continuity of the current lines of management of the Park and develop projects for the surviving elements of the historic property that need restorations.

The Federal Horticultural Show (BUGA) in 2029

The Federal Horticultural Shows (*Bundesgartenschau* - BUGA) are very popular events in Germany that attract many visitors, catalyse new projects and foster local development. The Upper Middle Rhine Valley region has already hosted one such event, the BUGA 2011 which was organised in Koblenz, and the BUGA 2029 will also

take place here, but it will involve the whole World Heritage property from Bingen/Rüdesheim to Koblenz. It is expected to be a great opportunity for the micro region that (according to the information provided during the mission) is considered underdeveloped in comparison with the more prosperous regions around. In 2008 Bingen also hosted a similar, but smaller scale event, called a *Landesgartenschau*. In both cities (Koblenz and Bingen), the horticultural exhibition was a starting point for several development projects and especially the revamping of the Rhine banks.

Considerations

For the BUGA 2029, the organisers are conceiving a new approach: instead of locating the event in one single city, it will be organized as a network of exhibitions scattered along the Upper Middle Rhine Valley. This approach is an opportunity with a significant financial budget that could spread benefits on many places. Regarding the historic multipolar urban system of the valley, the event can be organised in a way that spread and lessen localized tourist pressure and activate a multiplicity of collateral actions to upgrade especially the visitor infrastructure of the whole property in a sustainable way.

Conclusion

If the planned developments are not prepared and implemented in a careful manner that focuses on protecting the OUV of the property, the event and its accompanying projects that will stay on spot for the medium and long term could result on having adverse impact on the property by stimulating urban sprawl and improper developments, inducing aggressions to heritage and processes of deterioration of the OUV. The still operating cable car in Koblenz, which is the result of the BUGA 2011 (analysed in chapter IV.3.1.) is an example for this: a useful transportation improvement for the city but also an infrastructure that, due to the solutions adopted, has generated conflict with local heritage and still negatively impacts the OUV.

The design competitions for the BUGA 2029 are foreseen to take place soon and the State Party reassured the mission that the parameters for design competitions will be based on the identified attributes and consider the Cultural Landscape Compatibility Study and the Heritage Assets Map. As the preparations for the event are still in their early phases, including or strengthening the focus on heritage preservation and promotion are open options. The mission considers this approach highly important and recommends the State Party to communicate closely with UNESCO on both the overall project design and its individual elements. The BUGA must be strategically taken as an opportunity for interventions that result in lasting positive impacts in protecting the OUV of the property and contribute to upgrading the sustainable tourism infrastructure of the property, especially existing green areas (e.g. connection of urban riverbanks, and the Osteinscher Park).

In this respect, the mission considers that it would be important for the State Party to

- plan and develop projects for the BUGA 2029 with the OUV and revised attributes of the property in its centre point and ensure that the proposed projects promote heritage conservation and sustainable cultural tourism;
- ensure that appropriate impact assessments that focus on protecting the OUV of the property are carried out for the proposed and planned BUGA 2029 projects and that the overall programme and project design and the individual project elements with impacts assessments, are submitted to UNESCO in a timely manner and before final decisions are taken.

Assessment of the tourism management strategy for the property

UNESCO, through its World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme consider that managers of World Heritage properties should follow in their tourism management

strategy an approach based on dialogue and stakeholder cooperation where planning for tourism and heritage management is integrated at a destination level, the natural and cultural assets are valued and protected, and appropriate tourism developed. To this end, UNESCO also considers that World Heritage and tourism stakeholders share responsibility for conservation of our common cultural and natural heritage of Outstanding Universal Value and for sustainable development through appropriate tourism management.²⁴

The 'evolving tourism tradition' has been identified as an attribute related to criterion (v) of the property, which states that "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." In relation to tourism, the State Party provided the information that 'nature and culture-oriented tourism with a regional profile' is one of the main objectives of the management system of the property and it will be an important focus of the new Management Plan as well. The mission received documents from the State Part, in which the objective of a "sustainable tourism" is recurrent.

Considerations

The mission has been assessing several planned projects for new infrastructures and buildings (analysed in the report above in chapter IV.3.), however, the focus of these is rather the enhancement of the quality of life of local citizens. 'Sustainable tourism' for the local aspects and regional profile has remained undefined and must find a better definition in the upcoming new Management Plan. Adequate information is still lacking on what kind of 'tourism' is compatible with the aim to protect and preserve the property's OUV that the State Party wishes to encourage.

Positive actions undertaken, which could be the focus of a sustainable tourism management of the property concern rehabilitation of several landmarks that are part of the cultural landscape (e.g. Hilchenhaus, Bacharach walls), cases of urban design and open space planning in sensitive places (competition for the Rhine River's bank and Lighting Master Plan in Boppard), initiatives for the maintenance of agricultural activities (restoration of terraces and reactivation of vineyards at Rheinstein Castle and Oberwesel, studies for maintaining grazing), opening to the public of the castles that are privately owned; actions for promoting hiking and biking tourism. Similar actions that presently appears random must be coherently connected to overall programmes of restoration and rehabilitation with clear objectives and linked with a sustainable tourism strategy and the new Management Plan.

The Rhine valley has been an important route of Western Europe since prehistoric ages and the romantic appraisal of its landscape has significantly contributed to shape present day European culture. As described in the Retrospective Statement of OUV, the property is "a cultural landscape of great beauty which has strongly influenced artists of all kinds - poets, painters, and composers - over the past two centuries." Therefore, a great care must be put in preserving and enhancing these values and making them the basis for the development of a tourism more oriented to discover in the valley the roots of modern culture.

The Culture and Landscape Park on the Loreley is an example for a recent project that aimed for the requalification of heritage. Undoubtedly the park represents an improvement; nevertheless, its close environment is currently not ideal (with regard to the still operational summer bobsleigh park, large vast parking areas, and the threat of a planned large hotel complex).

²⁴ <https://whc.unesco.org/en/tourism/>

The old centre of Rudesheim strikes the visitors not only for the beauty of its old timber houses but, even more, for the aggressiveness of shops that display souvenirs in the streets, the signs and the installations, which hides the facades of historic buildings, the sequences of bars and restaurants that invade public spaces, the presence of vehicles in the pedestrian streets. All these overwhelmed the genuine traces of heritage.

Conclusion

In general, tourism offers within the property, seem spontaneously directed on the one hand to satisfy mass tourism based on quick consumption of daily visitors in major spots, and on the other hand to give more chance to high level (cultural) tourism offering exclusive resorts in detached places. Both forms of tourism are somehow inevitable and can be 'sustainable' as far as they are controlled and adequately managed, but in the long run their effect on local heritage values and on the OUV can be destructive. A reflexion about the kind of tourist development to pursue is urgently needed, accompanied with targeted policies and strategies. The 'Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage Association' as operational site manager organisation (when reinforced as recommended) would need to have a decisive role in this process.

In relation to 'evolving tourism tradition', the mission does not fully align itself with the State Party to connect this phenomenon directly with criterion (v). The mission considers that the 'traditional way of life' recognised in criterion (v) could rather be understood as processes and actions that enable communities (both rural and urban), to live in harmony with their environment, respecting its values. The tradition of tourism in the Middle Rhine Valley in the past is a historic phenomenon that could be the source and inspiration of a contemporary sustainable tourism strategy, linked with the OUV in general, and that should, therefore, focus on the importance of protecting and maintaining the cultural landscape "of great beauty which has strongly influenced artists of all kinds - poets, painters, and composers - over the past two centuries".

With regard to the above, the mission considers that the tourism management strategy for the property could be especially enhanced by the following actions of the State Party and its relevant authorities:

- Develop a sustainable tourism strategy for the property (including a comprehensive programme for sustainable tourist mobility) that supports and ensures the protection and long-term preservation of its OUV for future generations and include the strategy in the new World Heritage Management Plan of the property
- Initiate programs for the rehabilitation of historic urban town centres and the urban riverfronts, in order to valorise heritage and public spaces and enhance accessibility to the river shores.
- Revise the efficiency and coherence of the regulations for the uses of public spaces in the historic town centres of the property and the commercial activities that can hamper appreciation, appropriate use and social benefits (including the type and dimension of advertising panels and restaurant and store signs).

IV.3.4. Renewable energy projects

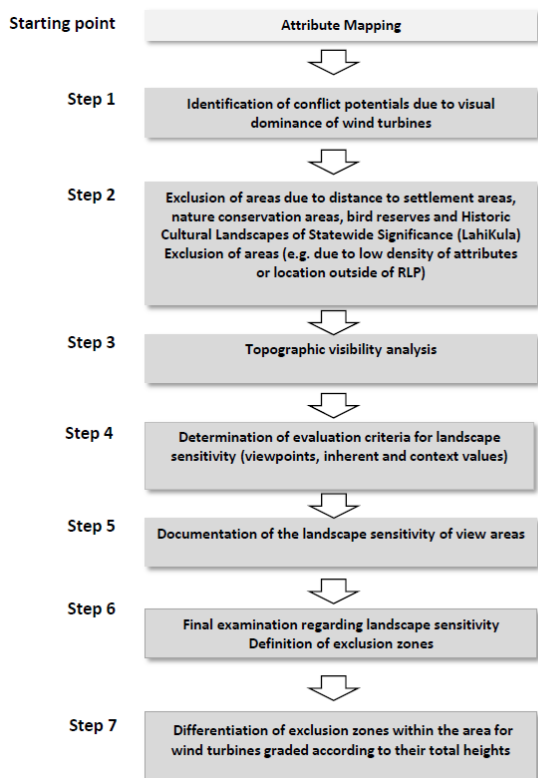
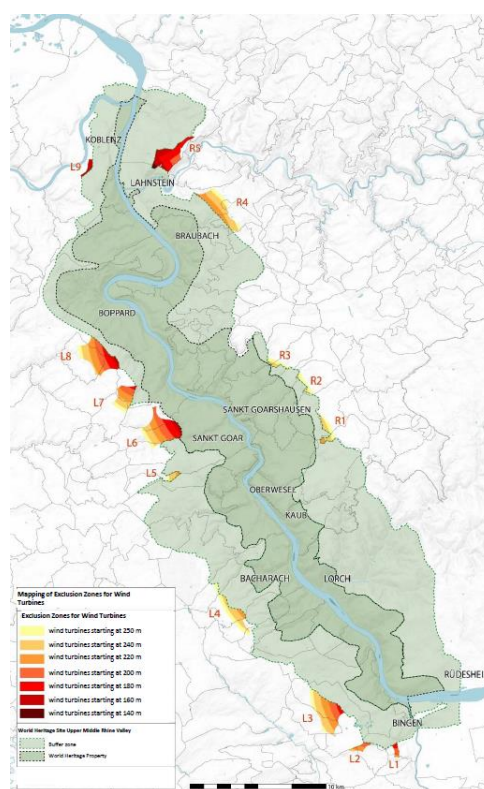
The State Party is strongly committed to contribute to the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and also to comply with the European Union Renewable Energy Directive. It puts high emphasis on regarding the renewable energy transition as important contribution to climate protection and the use of both wind energy and photovoltaic energy as a way forward to contributing to a climate neutral energy supply.

Wind energy infrastructure

The World Heritage Committee has first included the topic of wind turbines in relation to the property in its decision in 2013 (**37 COM 7B.75**). In that year, the State Party reported that a draft partial update of the federal state development plan on wind energy specifies that wind turbines will not be allowed within the boundaries of the property. They could be allowed within the buffer zone and setting, however, only where the property's OUV would not be impaired. In the following years, based on a specific sight-line study, Rhineland-Palatinate passed a resolution to keep the property and buffer zone free of wind turbines and to ensure that any proposals beyond the buffer zone are evaluated for their impact on the OUV. Nevertheless, the regulations in Hesse have not yet been aligned with this approach. The Hesse Regional Development plan banned wind turbines in the property but not within the buffer zone. There was also no transparent and consistent methodology to assess the impacts of the wind turbines, especially in the wider setting of the property.

Currently, several wind farms exist in the buffer zone and the setting of the property, which have an adverse visual impact on the integrity of the property. In its last decision (**44 COM 7B.155**), the World Heritage Committee urged the State Party to find legally grounded solutions that will allow the refusal of applications for wind energy projects which would potentially have a negative impact on the OUV of the property and its attributes, develop a strategic spatial framework for wind energy developments that is based on a sensitivity mapping for the property and ensure that the developed spatial framework is assessed through a Strategic Environmental Assessment that provides means for looking at cumulative impacts and enables to address them at the earliest stage of decision making.

The mission has been informed that a specialist consultancy, which is also in charge of developing the updating of the Management Plan, has been contracted by the Ministry of the Interior and Sports of the state of Rhineland-Palatinate to prepare an Expert Report on the 'Exclusion Zones for Wind Turbines Outside the Buffer Zone of the Upper Middle Rhine World Heritage Site' ('Exclusion Zones' document). The mission has been presented with detailed information about the document. Its development is based also on the identified attributes and its objective is to map exclusion zones in the setting of the property (bordering the buffer zone), where wind turbines would cause visual impairments to its integrity. The methodology included the identification of important viewpoints and the defined exclusion zones have been identified with relation to the total height of wind turbines (graded from 140 to 250 meters). At the same time, the sensitivity mapping allowed for the identification of areas where wind energy developments do not have an adverse impact on the OUV. It also provided a tool to assess the impact of already existing wind turbines and find a consistent way of deciding that repowering the existing wind turbines will also only be possible outside the exclusion zones and up to the respective height defined for certain areas. The amendment of the State Development Programme (LEP) of Rhineland-Palatinate is currently under discussion. Regional planning objectives have already been established and need to be considered when approving proposals for the construction of wind turbines.

Methodology for developing the exclusion zones:*Map with the exclusion zones:*

(Images provided by the State Party)

Concerning wind energy development in Hesse, the mission has been informed that currently 1,9% area in total, within the state, is eligible only for the erection of wind turbines. The State Development Plan includes the relevant measures concerning this topic and various spatial planning measures ensure that World Heritage properties are not impaired by wind energy constructions. In principle, this would imply that no project is approved in the property, the buffer zone or outside these if the proposed project has negative impact on the OUV.

The State Party considers that wind farms are projects with reversible impacts, the wind turbines currently located in the exclusion zones do not constitute irreversible damage to the Outstanding Universal Value of the Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage Site. Any currently existing visual impairments can be removed by dismantling the turbines once their operating permit expires.

Considerations

As the State Party explained, the regulations concerning wind farms in the two federal states are quite strict in the sense that their operational license is definite, and they can or should be dismantled at the end of their operational lifetime (the average lifecycle of wind farms is 20 to 35 years) if this license is not renewed and the wind farm site to be partially or fully restored to, as much as possible, pre-existing conditions. Dismantling/deconstructing a wind energy facility completely, however, is an option rarely used, and project proponents usually opt for extending or renewing the life span of these facilities. This phenomenon is foreseen to be the typical case, also with regard to the pressing demand for the energy transition as a consequence of climate change and problems with energy supplies. Repowering wind farms is then normally subject to a new – but oftentimes simplified – permission process and, if needed, also a new Environmental and Social Impact Assessment. Regarding the changing policy approaches, in many cases designated areas for wind energy facilities will and should be able to remain in use for a long time (in line with a given regional or state policies

and legal framework). For this reason, the relevant national authorities will need to ensure that they only give permission to proposed wind energy facilities on suitable locations, where they have no negative impact on the OUV.

Conclusion

The mission considers that the 'Exclusion Zones' document is a welcome approach to manage the question of wind energy infrastructure for the property, its buffer zone and its wider setting, and establishes the possibility for a consistent and transparent decision-making for these development proposals.

As a result of this integrated exercise of mapping and vulnerability assessment, the State Party will need to verify if the modification/extension of the buffer zone will be needed (see also the relevant analyses and recommendation in chapter IV.1.).

In addition, following the suggested revision of attributes of the OUV of the property the State Party might also need to revise the sensitivity assessment of the property, in order to ensure that no other impacts need to be considered in relation to the potential impact of wind turbines outside the buffer zone of the property.

Recommendations

The mission recommends that the State Party to

23. Extend the 'Exclusion Zones for Wind Turbines Outside the Buffer Zone of the Upper Middle Rhine World Heritage Site' document to the areas of the wider setting of the property in Hesse as well and ensure in the long-term that policies are maintained in both states to exclude the area of the property and the buffer zone from the erection of wind farms. Submit the final version of the 'Exclusion Zones' document to the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies for review before it is adopted.
24. Do not grant permit for the repowering of wind farms that have a negative impact on the OUV of the property and ensure that they are dismantled after their operation license expired and their area is fully rehabilitated.

Photovoltaic energy infrastructure

The mission has also been informed that, with regard to contribution to a climate neutral energy supply, the State Party is considering the possibility of the installation of free standing, 3-10 meters large photovoltaic panels in open spaces around the area of the Upper Middle Rhine Valley. Regarding the already gained experience with the wind turbines, the states are considering that the areas of the property and its buffer zone will be exclusion zones for these projects. A sensitivity mapping has been started to assess if the wider setting is prone to threats from photovoltaic projects concerning their visual impact on the integrity of the property. A similar 'Exclusion Zones' document is planned to be prepared, and its result are to be included in the building and constructions plans.

Considerations and conclusion

The mission also welcomes the proactive approach the State Party has taken in relation to planning photovoltaic energy infrastructure.

Recommendations

The mission recommends the State Party to

25. Exclude the area of the property and the buffer zone from the installation of photovoltaic panel farms.

26. Develop an 'Exclusion Zones' document for photovoltaic projects for the wider setting of the property in both Rhineland-Palatinate and Hesse, taking into consideration in the sensitivity mapping the revised list of attributes, and all types of potential impacts in addition to visual impacts on the integrity of the property.

With regard to renewable energy transition in general, the mission considers it important that the State Party continue the harmonisation of the legal regulations and processes of the states Rhineland-Palatinate and Hesse for constructing wind energy and large-scale photovoltaic energy infrastructures that concerns both the property, its buffer zone and its wider setting.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The joint reactive monitoring mission carried out by representatives of UNESCO's World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS between 9-12 May 2022, came to the following conclusions and recommendations after review of the documents provided as well as on-site visits and meetings with stakeholders.

The mission highly appreciated the collaborative spirit between the stakeholders concerned with the property and considers that it is a key element in supporting the intention to resolve existing and upcoming challenges and problems. The mission particularly welcomes the work of the Upper Middle Rhine Valley Association, which is the formal association of public entities and is the manager of the property. Its work should be supported by all relevant actors and stakeholders and to this end its permanent human capacities, operating the site management, needs to be increased and its resources ensured in the long-term.

The mission welcomes the progress in enhancing the management of the property and the work in progress related to preparing a new Management Plan that includes the essential task of identifying and mapping attributes that convey the OUV of the property is appreciated. Furthermore, the development of tools like the 'Cultural Landscape Compatibility Study' (CLCS) and the 'Mapping of Exclusion Zones for Wind Turbines Outside of the Buffer Zone of the Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage Site' will facilitate decision making related to the proposed projects and developments and avoiding their adverse visual impact on the OUV. The effectiveness of the new Management Plan and the accompanying action plans as well as the assisting tools will depend on its successful implementation on a daily basis, with an operational site management team and well-established processes among stakeholders and decision makers.

The mission assessed the overall state of conservation of the Upper Middle Rhine Valley as a cultural landscape; and while it concludes that although there are currently no major threats to the OUV of the property and its authenticity and integrity, a negative evolution related to changes is already discernable that could cumulate to serious loss of values and degradation of the OUV. The mission considers that the vision of the State Party in focusing on growth and expansion of urban developments (residential areas) is a potential threat with regard to maintaining the OUV and attributes, especially on the landscape level. Plans for housing and infrastructure development, tourism management and renewable transition, will need to be balanced, and it must be ensured that related policies and concrete plans have no negative impact on the attributes and the OUV. The State Party also needs to pay close attention to plans for seemingly less important changes, for which impacts might not be highly negative individually (like upgrading of navigation infrastructure on the Rhine, or any consideration for the construction of further cable cars) but could accumulate and add to the degradation of the OUV of the property.

The mission noted the State Party's careful approach to several important projects, like the planned permanent river crossing, the project for the railway crossing at Rudesheim, or the efforts in finding solution for the problematic traffic situation in Braubach. These efforts are forward-looking and could also establish an example for future good practise concerning processes for project planning and development. The importance of impact assessments that focus on the potential impacts of the planned changes on the OUV of the property, has been recognised by State Party and the different stakeholders.

Despite of the progress in site management, the mission considers that several problems remain entirely or partly unresolved. An important continuous negative impact for the property's OUV and a highly disturbing factor for the quality of life of local citizens is the noise of the freight trains that heavily impacts the entire Upper Middle Rhine Valley. This was already identified as a major problem at the time of the inscription of the property of the World Heritage List and has remained essentially unresolved in spite of many efforts. Several implemented projects (as the cable car in Koblenz, the summer bobsleigh run on the Loreley, several wind turbines) or intended/planned projects (like the construction of a hotel resort on the Loreley plateau and the housing development of the 'Koblenzer Brauerei) within the property and its buffer zone show problems in sufficiently respecting the importance of the OUV and the need

for their enhanced protection. The mission notes that stakeholders and decision-makers, especially on municipal level, are not all aware of the necessary careful appreciation of project planning and development.

The loss of the historic rural environment, reduction of biodiversity and homogenisation of the landscape are clearly present at the property. The mission considers in this context that the event of the BUGA 2029 is an opportunity for the sustainable development of the property (especially with regard to tourism infrastructure) but also a potential danger for the long-term preservation of its OUV.

Recommendations of the mission for the special attention of the World Heritage Committee

With regard to the analyses and conclusions, the mission recommends the World Heritage Committee to request the State Party the following.

Concerning the management system, the Management Plan and the territorial areas of the property:

- i. Revise and further develop the attributes that convey the Outstanding Universal Value of the property in line with the retrospective Statement of OUV and other research resources.
- ii. Evaluate the effectiveness of the current site management system of the property and enforce the protection and management capacities and measures both for the property and the buffer zone in order to prevent the degradation of the cultural landscape, excessive urban expansion and the disappearance of the historic rural landscape. To this mean:
 - a. Restrict land conversion and urban sprawl within the property.
 - b. Revise the regulations for the buffer zone to control the impact of developments related to urban expansion as well.
- iii. Establish a process of continued monitoring and evaluation (linked to the management system and the Management Plan) in order to follow the overall state of conservation of the property.
- iv. Consider revising the buffer zone boundaries with the result of the vulnerability assessments in progress or conducted in the future.

Concerning the overall state of conservation of the property as a cultural landscape:

- v. Consider all tangible and intangible attributes conveying the OUV when assessing potential impacts of planned changes and projects, and not just the values related to visual qualities.
- vi. For planned and proposed changes and project, apply consistently the processes described in paragraphs 110, 118bis and 172 of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention and ensure that all projects are handled through these processes. In addition, continue using impact assessments as a proactive tool throughout project development processes, assessing alternatives in an integrative manner with the aim of avoiding negative impacts on the OUV of the property, and develop processes for project planning to assess cumulative impacts.
- vii. Find solutions, as soon as possible, for limiting the speed of freight trains between Rüdeshheim/Bingen and Koblenz (to 50 km/h if feasible), and continue finding long-term solutions, as a matter of urgency, for diverting the freight trains from the property altogether.
- viii. Ensure that the projects proposed and implemented within the framework of the BUGA 2029 do not result in negative impacts for the property and ensure that the event is

managed as a possibility for heritage conservation and growth of cultural tourism, furthermore, for establishing good practices for sustainable development that respect the property's OUV and aligning the projects with a well-established sustainable tourism strategy.

Concerning specific implemented and planned changes/projects:

- ix. Approve the expansion plans of the Sooneck open pit quartzite mine only if the implementation of this project will not impact adversely the OUV of the property. In addition, implement bioengineering works in order to re-integrate the already exploited open mine areas in the natural environment.
- x. Concerning the plans for a permanent river crossing over the Rhine, continue implementing Decision **44 COM 7B.155**, that requests "the State Party to involve the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, at the earliest possible stage in the appraisal of options undertaken in a wide regional strategic context, but focusing on developing solutions for local needs, and before any decisions are taken;"
- xi. Ensure that the development of the project options for the permanent river crossing are subject to an appropriate impact assessment process focusing on impacts on the OUV and attributes of the property. Submit the proposed project option to the World Heritage Centre before any irreversible decision is made.
- xii. Redesign the 'valley station' of the cable car in Koblenz, relocating it to another area that excludes the vicinity of the St. Kastor Church.
- xiii. Revise the plans for the rehabilitation of the *Koblenzer Brauerei* area and the transformation to a new residential use excluding the reuse of the tank-building and with a reduced density and number of storeys of the buildings between the main road and the valley slope.
- xiv. Finalise the construction of the exhibition hall in the Loreley Culture and Landscape Park with a flat skylight and without the foreseen 'crystal rock' on top of it.
- xv. Stop extending the operation permit of the Summer Bobsleigh Run next to the Loreley Landscape and Culture Park on its current location, and fully rehabilitate this area after its dismantling.
- xvi. In relation to the planned hotel project on the Loreley plateau, continue implementing Decision **44 COM 7B.155** (paragraph 8) of the World Heritage Committee.

Concerning wind energy infrastructure:

- xvii. Continue harmonising the legal regulations and processes of the states Rhineland-Palatinate and Hesse for constructing wind energy and large-scale photovoltaic energy infrastructures that concerns both the property, its buffer zone and its wider setting, and ensure maintaining in the long-term the policy, in both states, to exclude the area of the property and the buffer zone from the construction of these infrastructures and to identify areas in the wider setting where their construction is prohibited due to their negative impact on the OUV.
- xviii. Extend the 'Exclusion Zones for Wind Turbines Outside the Buffer Zone of the Upper Middle Rhine World Heritage Site' document to the areas of the wider setting of the property in Hesse as well and develop a similar vulnerability assessment for photovoltaic projects as well.
- xix. Do not grant permit for the repowering of wind farms that have a negative impact on the OUV of the property and ensure that they are dismantled after their operation license expired and their area is fully rehabilitated.

Concerning the tourism management strategy of the property:

- xx. Develop a sustainable tourism strategy for the property (including a comprehensive programme for sustainable tourist mobility) that supports and ensures the protection and long-term preservation of its OUV for future generations and include the strategy in the new World Heritage Management Plan of the property.

The mission considers that the issues assessed in the frame of this mission and the recommendations to be implemented by the State Party in the future cover many areas of the property and are highly important for its state of conservation. For this reason, the World Heritage Committee might wish to consider following up these issues in the coming years with a further Reactive Monitoring Mission, in order to verify the progress.

The specific recommendations of the mission to the State Party are included in relevant parts of chapter IV. In addition, the full set of recommendations is provided as part of the Executive Summary of the report.

VI. ANNEXES

Annex 1

Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value 'Upper Middle Rhine Valley'

Brief synthesis

The strategic location of the dramatic 65km stretch of the Middle Rhine Valley between Bingen, Rudesheim und Koblenz as a transport artery and the prosperity that this engendered is reflected in its sixty small towns, the extensive terraced vineyards and the ruins of castles that once defended its trade.

The river breaks through the Rhenish Slate Mountains, connecting the broad floodplain of the Oberrheingraben with the lowland basin of the Lower Rhine. The property extends from the Bingen Gate (Binger Pforte), where the River Rhine flows into the deeply gorged, canyon section of the Rhine Valley, through the 15km long Bacharach valley, with smaller V-shaped side valleys, to Oberwesel where the transition from soft clay-slates to hard sandstone, results. In 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), and then up to the Lahnstein Gate (Lahnsteiner Pforte), where the river widens again into the Neuwied Valley. The property also includes the adjoining middle and upper Rhine terraces (Upper Valley) which bear witness to the course taken by the river in ancient times.

As a transport route, the Rhine has served as a link between the southern and northern halves of the continent since prehistoric times, enabling trade and cultural exchange, which in turn led to the establishment of settlements. Condensed into a very small area, these subsequently joined up to form chains of villages and small towns. For over a 1,000 years the steep valley sides have been terraced for vineyards.

The landscape is punctuated by some 40 hill top castles and fortresses erected over a period of around 1,000 years. Abandonment and later the wars of the 17th century left most as picturesque ruins. 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.

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 fostered a cultural landscape of great beauty which has strongly influenced artists of all kinds - poets, painters, and composers - over the past two centuries.

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.

Integrity

The extensive property contains within its boundaries all the key attributes - the geological landscape, the sixty towns and settlements, the forty castles and forts, the vineyard terraces that define this prosperous and picturesque stretch of the Rhine valley and encompass all the key views that influenced writers and artists.

Authenticity

Thanks to the relatively modest leeway given by the natural landscape of the Middle Rhine Valley to the people inhabiting it, this section of the river has undergone fewer changes than others. As a result, but also thanks to various early attempts to protect the landscape and its historical monuments, the landscape has remained largely untouched. As a result, many of the features and elements that lend the area its authenticity have been preserved.

However the railways that run along the valley contribute to the noise pollution in the Valley which is a problem that needs to be mitigated.

Protection and management requirements

In Rhineland-Palatinate the monuments are covered by the 1978 Cultural Monuments Protection Law (Denkmalschutzgesetz) and the 1998 Building Ordinance (Landesbauordnung Rhineland-Pfalz). The landscape values are protected by the 2000 Forest Law (Landeswaldgesetz), 2005 Landscape Conservation Law (Landesgesetz zur nachhaltigen Entwicklung von Natur und Landschaft), 2003 Planning Law (Landesplanungsgesetz), 2004 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 2002 Hesse Building Ordinance (Hessische Bauordnung) also has a significant role to play in monument protection. The landscape values are protected by a series of statutes, such as the 2002 Hesse Forest Law (Hessisches Forstgesetz), the 2006 Nature Protection and Landscape Conservation Law (Hessisches Gesetz über Naturschutz und Landschaftspflege), the 2002 Planning Law (Hessisches Landesplanungsgesetz), and the 2005 Water Law (Hessisches 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.

Since 2005, the property has been run by the Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage Association, which comprises representatives from all the local and 'county' authorities falling within the region, as well as including officials from the federal states of Hesse and Rhineland-Palatinate. The association also provides the property's World Heritage manager.

In 2004, the job of monitoring the implementation of the management plan in Rhineland-Palatinate was transferred to the state's Structural and Approval Directorate in Koblenz. The measures taken in the property serve primarily to preserve historical castles and towns, uphold the tradition of winegrowing on the steep slopes of the valley, secure habitats for rare animal and plant species, and generally ensure that the state of the environment remains unaltered. These measures are also designed to underpin the region's economic viability in a bid to dissuade people from moving away and prevent the average age of the region's inhabitants from rising.

To conciliate economic development to benefit local communities and the safeguarding of the Outstanding Universal Value of the property a Master Plan for the further sustainable development of the Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage Site is about to be compiled.

Annex 2**Decision 43 COM 7B.83**

Upper Middle Rhine Valley (Germany) (C 1066)

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/19/43.COM/7B,
2. Recalling Decision **41 COM 7B.45**, adopted at its 41st session (Krakow, 2017),
3. Noting the recommencement of planning for a permanent river crossing, reiterates its request to the State Party to involve the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, at the earliest possible stage in the appraisal of options undertaken in a wide regional strategic context, but focusing on developing solutions for local needs, and before any decisions are taken;
4. Welcomes the State Party's continuous commitment to reduce rail-related noise levels in the property, notes however with regret that no effective result was achieved so far, and notes with concern the plans to upgrade railway tunnels between St. Goar and Oberwesel in a manner that could potentially harm the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, therefore, encourages the State Party to develop long term solutions for diverting freight train traffic from the property or effectively reduce their traffic flow;
5. Also welcomes the decision to withdraw the application for the installation of the wind farm project on Ranselberg Hill, near the municipality of Lorch, and strongly encourages the State Party:
 1. to reject the application for the extension of the wind farm on the Kandrich Hill, near the municipality of Oberdiebach,
 2. to harmonize its legislative tools and criteria for the assessment of the impact of wind farms on the OUV of the property and its buffer zone, and develop systematic mapping for identifying sensitive areas within the property, its buffer zone and beyond, also considering culturally significant visual aspects, key views, viewpoints, panoramas, silhouettes and other factors related to its OUV;
6. Also encourages the State Party to provide revised detailed plans with a spatial assessment document that includes a Visual Impact Assessment on the cultural landscape for the Holiday Resort Sankt-Goar-Werlau, to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies, and before any irrevocable decisions are taken;
7. Commends the State Party for its effort to update the Management Plan of the property into a consolidated document with the Master Plan, and also requests the State Party to provide the draft consolidated document to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies, in order to ensure that its recommendations and comments can be appropriately taken into account in the final document;
8. Further welcomes the initiative of the State Party to invite an ICOMOS Advisory mission to the property in 2019 to assess the extension of the Koblenz cable car operating permit, nevertheless, further requests the State Party to invite instead a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to assess the impact of already implemented changes and provide expert advice on how to assess, mitigate or avert the potential cumulative adverse impact on the OUV of the property of prospective projects, including the upgrading of three railway tunnels, and the Federal Horticultural Show 2029;
9. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2020**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session in 2021.

Annex 3**Decision 44 COM 7B.155**

Upper Middle Rhine Valley (Germany) (C 1066)

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B,
2. Recalling Decision **43 COM 7B.83**, adopted at its 43rd session (Baku, 2019),
3. Commends the State Party for its progress made to update the Management Plan of the property, as well as conducting a study that will facilitate impact assessments related to the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) and attributes of the property, and requests the State Party to ensure that:
 1. the Management Plan includes a thorough inventorying of the attributes of the property and its constituent parts, or makes provision for a short-term creation of such an inventory as baseline for impact assessments,
 2. the document includes a shared vision by stakeholders for the protection and management of the property,
 3. the Management Plan is adequately embedded in the national and federal legal system,
 4. the draft consolidated document is submitted to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, in order to ensure that its recommendations and comments can be appropriately taken into account in the final document;
4. Notes the delay of the planning process for a permanent river crossing and reiterates its request to the State Party to involve the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, at the earliest possible stage in the appraisal of options undertaken in a wide regional strategic context, but focusing on developing solutions for local needs, and before any decisions are taken;
5. Also notes the State Party's efforts to reduce rail related noise pollution, especially from freight trains and encourages the State Party to continue to find long-term solutions for diverting these trains from the property;
6. Notes with concern that a wind farm in Boppard-Weiler and two turbines near Wiebelsheim, in the setting of the property, were granted approval, despite the findings of the line of sight study of the project, which considered them incompatible with the OUV of the property; and, in order to avoid adverse impact from these projects to the OUV of the property, urges the State Party to:
 1. Find legally grounded solutions that will allow the refusal of applications for wind energy projects which would potentially have a negative impact on the OUV of the property and its attributes,
 2. Declare a temporary moratorium on wind energy developments in the buffer zone and setting of the property,
 3. Develop a strategic spatial framework for wind energy developments that is based on a sensitivity mapping for the property, its attributes, its buffer zone and its wider setting, related to the OUV of the property (including potential visual impacts), and which can form the basis of wind energy development siting in the future,
 4. Ensure that the developed spatial framework is assessed through a Strategic Environmental Assessment that provides means for looking at cumulative impacts and enables to address them at the earliest stage of decision making,
 5. Ensure that the above documents are submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Centre and the Advisory Bodies;
7. Further notes that a number of projects are planned or proposed for approval, which have the potential to impact on its OUV, therefore, also requests the State Party to keep the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies informed of all major project

design options planned for implementation within the property, its buffer zone and its wider setting in line with Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*, and ensure that impact assessments are carried out for these and that irreversible decisions are not taken before the relevant documentation has been reviewed by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies;

8. Welcomes the cancellation of the hotel project on the Loreley plateau, and further requests the State Party to develop an appropriate spatial framework for the future use of the Loreley plateau, based on a thorough assessment of the relevant attributes that convey OUV and supporting their critical contribution to it, and test this spatial framework through an independent Visual Impact Assessment and Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) before the framework is given legal status and any new proposals are developed following on from the framework;
9. Notes furthermore that the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission has been postponed to September 2021, if the sanitary conditions will allow it; and nevertheless encourages the State Party not to make any final or irreversible decisions for major projects before the planned mission has visited the property, and to provide in the meantime a status update on the extension of the Koblenz cable car operating permit to the World Heritage Centre;
10. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session.

Annex 4**Terms of Reference**

Joint WHC/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission
'Upper Middle Rhine Valley' (Germany)
9-12 May 2022

Background:

The World Heritage property 'Upper Middle Rhine Valley' (Germany) was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in 2002 under criteria (ii), (iv) and (v).

The World Heritage Committee requested the State Party to invite a Reactive Monitoring Mission in its Decision **43 COM 7B.83** (Baku, Azerbaijan, 2019). In September 2019, the State Party informed the World Heritage Centre that a new management plan is being prepared for the property, in which the challenges and development projects are being addressed. The State Party considered that the draft management plan should be the basis for a mission and therefore, considered the invitation of the mission for late summer 2020. In August 2020, the State Party asked for the postponement of the mission due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In April 2021, the mission was invited by the State Party to be carried out between 20 and 24 September 2021, which has also been acknowledged by the World Heritage Committee in Decision **44 COM 7B.155** (Fuzhou, China/online meeting, 2021). However, the mission was postponed again due to the severe floods that hit the Rhineland-Palatinate region during the summer 2021. The new potential dates for the mission are under discussion, for spring 2022.

The main objectives of the Reactive Monitoring mission:

The World Heritage Committee in Decision **43 COM 7B.83** requested the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to assess the impact of already implemented changes and provide expert advice on how to assess, mitigate or avert the potential cumulative adverse impact on the OUV of the property of prospective projects, including the upgrading of three railway tunnels, and the Federal Horticultural Show 2029. In addition, in Decision **44 COM 7B.155**, the Committee encouraged the State Party not to make any final or irreversible decisions for major projects before the planned mission has visited the property.

With regard to the main objectives, the Mission shall:

1. Assess if the overall management system of the property adequately ensures the safeguarding of its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) and review the updated draft Management Plan as well as the updating process;
2. Assess if the management system of the property adequately accommodates the essential contribution of the territorial areas covered by the buffer zone and the wider setting of the property to the maintenance of the OUV of the property;
3. Assess the overall state of conservation of the property as a cultural landscape, especially with regard to changes (due to projects and developments) since its inclusion on

the World Heritage List, and review already implemented and planned projects that have or will potentially have an impact on the OUV of the property. Among these projects, the

- Koblenz cable car and its operating permit;
- developments on the premises of the '*Koblenzer Brauerei*';
- new residential quarters at '*An der Königsbach*' in Koblenz;
- developments at Ehrenbreitstein Fortress from 2011;
- developments on the Loreley plateau (especially the landscape park, the Loreley-Bob, the Loreley open-air stage, the new visitor centre, the potential hotel project and the car park projects);
- Holiday Resort Sankt-Goar-Werlau;
- permanent river crossing (Middle Rhine Bridge);
- local bypass at Braubach (regional road no. L335);
- removal of the level crossing/construction of a grade-separated intersection at Rüdesheim;
- options from diverting the freight train traffic from the property (feasibility study on alternative railway tracks, re-routing all freight train traffic away from the entire Middle Rhine Valley);
- upgrading the railway tunnels at Sankt Goar and Oberwesel;
- wind energy facilities in the property, the buffer zone and its wider setting (with regard to regulations concerning the planning applications in Rhineland-Palatinate and Hesse, and individual projects, especially the expansion of the Kandrich wind farm, and the wind farms near Himmighofen/Kasdorf, in Boppard-Weiler and near Wiebelsheim);
- 2029 Federal Horticultural Show (current state of planning);
- Osteinscher Park near Rüdesheim.

4. Identify already implemented and planned projects that have eroded or are eroding the OUV of the property since its inclusion on the World Heritage List, make recommendations to address them within the context of the maintenance of the OUV and assess the possibilities for an integrated and cumulative impact assessment procedure for project proposals in the property, including protocols (triggers) for when impact assessments are required, and the criteria for evaluation of impacts;

5. Assess the tourism management strategy of the property.

The State Party (through its relevant national, regional and local organisations and authorities) should ensure that the mission team receives all relevant information and documents that enable the assessment and review of the issues listed in items 1-5, and that the mission team can carry out on-site visits for a comprehensive inspection of all relevant sites. The State Party should organise the working meetings and consultations between the mission team and the relevant authorities/organisations and all other stakeholders, including the representatives of the local communities and NGOs.

To enable the mission's preparation, the State Party should cooperate with the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS for preparing the detailed programme of the mission, and in addition, preferably no later than one month prior to the mission, provide the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS with any relevant updates concerning the state of conservation of the property that have not been transmitted to the World Heritage Centre in the past or have become available since the latest state of conservation report submitted by the State Party in November 2020 for this property, including documents, legislative tools and policies (translated where necessary), specifically the relevant current:

- a) Federal legislation on the protection and management of World Heritage properties and legislation related to the property in Rhineland-Palatine and Hessen,
- b) institutional framework for the management of the property,
- c) Management Plan / description of the management system.

Following the on-site mission, the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS will prepare a report for review by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session. The mission team may request additional information from the State Party following the mission for the preparation of the mission report. The mission report will be made available to the State Party to comment on potential factual errors.

Annex 5

Composition of mission team

Réka Viragos	UNESCO World Heritage Centre, Europe and North America Unit, Paris
Bernhard Furrer	ICOMOS International (Switzerland)
Roberto Bobbio	ICOMOS International (Italy)

Annex 6**Programme of the joint UNESCO/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission****9-12 May 2022****Monday, 09.05.2022**

Time	Programme	Speaker
09:30 – 09:45	Welcome and introduction of participants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome Introduction and background Mission programme Introduction of the participants Organisational matters 	Secretary of State Nicole Steingaß
09:45 – 10:00	Greetings	Secretary of State Jens Deutschendorf
	Greetings	Dr. Birgitta Ringbeck
10:00 – 10:30	World Heritage Site Upper Middle Rhine Valley <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short presentation of the World Heritage Site Upper Middle Rhine Valley Goals for the World Heritage Site Upper Middle Rhine Valley 2030 Achievements to date Current status Implementation and protection instruments 	Secretary of State Nicole Steingaß
10:30 – 11:15	Protection and Management of the World Heritage Site Upper Middle Rhine Valley <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protection of World Heritage in Germany Legal Measures of the Federal States Rhineland-Palatinate and Hesse Coordination of the legal measures Stakeholders and Management 	Dr. Stefanie Hahn
11:15 – 11:45	Current Management System I <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage Association History of the Association Pooling of municipal interests Site Management 	Volker Boch
11.45 – 12.00	Q&A	
12:00 – 12:45	Planning procedures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning procedures Example: Middle Rhine crossing 	Secretary of State Nicole Steingaß Roland Johst
12:45 – 13:00	Q&A	
14:00 – 18:00	Boat trip from Bingen to Koblenz - Perception of the World Heritage Site Upper Middle Rhine Valley from the Rhine River Bingen: World Heritage property, area of the Regional Horticultural Show 2008 with park at the Mouse Tower Rüdesheim: Rhine riverbank and park, Osteinscher Park Castles: Conservation through use, public, private ownership, castles of Reichenstein and Rheinstein Trechtingshausen: Sooneck Quarry/Sooneck Castle Lorch: Lorch Hilchenhaus, the most significant Renaissance building in the Middle Rhine Valley, building culture Bacharach: Rhine riverbank and park, city wall, Werner chapel, economic stimulus package for national World Heritage Sites Kaub: New exhibition in Pfalzgrafenstein Castle, youth hostel, revitalisation of village centre Oberwesel: Upgrade of the Rhine riverbank, city of towers, cultural house and foundation, building association Viticulture: Oelsberg, land consolidation, reactivation, climate change, transverse terracing, research at Geisenheim University Loreley and Loreley plateau St. Goar / St. Goarshausen: Rhine riverbank design Wellmich/Fellen:	

	Middle Rhine Bridge Locations Hirzenach: Renovation of Hirzenach Priory Kamp-Bornhofen: Churches on the Middle Rhine, Pilgrimage Monastery, Hostile Brothers Boppard: Renovation of the Old Castle Filsen / Osterspai: Conservation of cultural landscape, biodiversity, large-scale nature conservation project, orcharding, Middle Rhine cherries Spay: Landscape structure, dry stone walling, traditional techniques, community involvement, volunteering Braubach: Marksburg, castle gardens concept, implementation of lighting master plan Tourism: Tourism strategy, gentle tourism, gastronomy and recreation, hiking, cycling, Rheinbetten project, certified World Heritage Hosts	
--	---	--

Tuesday, 10.05.2022

08:30 – 08:45	Agenda for the day <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome Summary of Day 1 Outline of the day's programme Introduction of new participants 	Dr. Stefanie Hahn
08:45 – 09:00	Management Plan II <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction of the Management Plan (MP) Goals of the MP Background of the Attribute Mapping Background of the Sensitivity Mapping Background of the Cultural Landscape Compatibility Study (CLCS) 	Dr. Stefanie Hahn
09:00 – 09:30	Presentation of Attribute Mapping <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of key attributes Tabular and cartographic mapping Key topics and action fields 	Prof. Dr. Michael Kloos
09:30 – 09:45	Q&A	
09:45 – 10:15	Development of the Cultural Landscape Compatibility Study (CLCS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development 3D model Possible applications 	Prof. Dr. Michael Kloos
10:15 – 10:30	Q&A	
10:45 – 11:15	Sensitivity Mapping <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction Continuation of the Regional Development Programme IV Development of the Sensitivity Mapping Exclusion areas 	Roland Johst Prof. Dr. Michael Kloos
11:15 – 11:30	Q&A	
13:30 – 14:00	Application of the Cultural Landscape Compatibility Study (CLCS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction Implementation Example: grade-separated intersection at Rüdesheim 	Prof. Dr. Michael Kloos Jürgen Falkenhahn
14:00 – 14:15	Walk to the railway crossing	
14:15 – 14:45	On-site inspection	
14:45 – 15:00	Return to meeting room	
15:00 – 15:30	Q&A	
15:30 – 16:00	Drive to the Niederwald monument	
16:00 – 17:30	Niederwald monument and Osteinscher Park (approx. 2 km walk) with park buildings	Kirsten Worms Dr. Inken Formann

Wednesday, 11.05.2022

08:30 – 08:45	Agenda for the day <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome • Summary of Day 2 • Outline of the day's programme • Introduction of new participants 	Dr. Stefanie Hahn
08:45 – 09:00	Wind energy and renewable energies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction 	Secretary of State Nicole Steingaß
09:00 – 09:45	Wind energy and renewable energies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Development Programme IV of Rhineland-Palatinate • Regional Plan of Hesse 	Roland Johst Florian Ismaier
09:45 – 10:00	Q&A	
10:00 – 10:20	The Loreley plateau <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction • Summer bobsleigh run 	Secretary of State Nicole Steingaß
10:20 – 10:50	The Loreley plateau <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development on the Loreley Plateau • Possible development on the area of the former hotel project 	Mike Weiland Nadya König-Lehrmann
10:50 – 11:00	Q&A	
11:00 – 11:10	Federal Horticultural Show (BUGA) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction 	Secretary of State Nicole Steingaß Helmut Eigemann
11:10 – 11:40	Federal Horticultural Show (BUGA) Presentation of the current planning status of the Federal Horticultural Show How will the Federal Horticultural Show contribute to the implementation of the World Heritage Site Upper Middle Rhine Valley's 2030 vision Prototype for the application of newly developed procedural structures World Heritage compatible and sustainable planning in defined planning areas World Heritage compatible planning for the Loreley plateau	Rainer Zeimentz
11:40 - 11:50	Q&A	
12:30 – 14:00	Transfer to the Loreley (ferry); Stop at view Point Maria Ruh	
14:00 – 15:30	Tour of the Loreley plateau	Armin Schaust
16:00 – 16:30	Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage Association <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Involvement 	Nadya König-Lehrmann
17:00 – 19:00	Meeting with citizens' initiative groups	

Thursday, 12.05.2022

08:30 – 08:45	Agenda for the day <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome • Summary of Day 3 • Outline of the day's programme 	Dr. Stefanie Hahn
9:00 – 9:45	Bus transfer to Braubach (Bypass around Braubach)	Roland Johst
9:45 – 10:15	Transfer to Koblenz / Ehrenbreitstein Fortress	
10:15 – 10:30	Federal Horticultural Show 2011 as a positive example	Thomas Metz
10:35 – 11:30	Tour and Introduction to Ehrenbreitstein fortress	Dr. Heike Otto

		Prof. Dr. Andreas Schmauder
11:30 – 12:00	Introduction to the cable car Cable car ride into the valley	David Langner Frank Hastenteufel
12:00 – 12:20	Inspection of the valley station	
12:30 – 13:00	Applying the Cultural Landscape Compatibility Study (CLCS) for the cable car <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significance of the cable car for the city • Significance of the cable car for local public transport • Application Result • Conclusion 	Frank Hastenteufel
13:00 – 13:15	Q&A	
14:00 – 14:30	Planning status of Koblenzer Brauerei and residential quarters at An der Königsbach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction • Planning status 	Frank Hastenteufel
14:45 – 15:15	Inspection of the brewery premises	
15:30	Final Q&A session	Dr. Birgitta Ringbeck Dr. Stefanie Hahn

Annex 7**Peoples met during the joint UNESCO/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission****9-12 May 2022**

Name	Prename	Institution	Function	Contact - Mail	Contact - Phone
Dr. Ringbeck	Birgitta	Federal Foreign Office	World Heritage Coordinating Body	603-9-ext@auswaertiges-amt.de	+49 (0) 3018174784
Steingaß	Nicole	Ministry of Interior and Sport Rhineland-Palatinate	Secretary of State / State Government Representative for World Heritage in Rhineland-Palatinate	Nicole.Steingaß@mdi.rlp.de	+ 49 (0) 6131 16-3701
Deutschendorf	Jens	Ministry of Economics, Energy, Transport and Housing – State of Hesse	Secretary of State / State Government Representative for the World Heritage Upper Middle Rhine Valley in Hesse	VorzimmerStSD@wirtschaft.hessen.de	+ 49 (0) 611 815-2003
Dr. Hahn	Stefanie	Ministry of Interior and Sport Rhineland-Palatinate	Chief of the Unit monuments protection and World Heritage protection	Stefanie.Hahn@mdi.rlp.de	+ 49 (0) 6131 16-3564
Müller	Vera	Ministry of Interior and Sport Rhineland-Palatinate	Deputy Head of Department Regional Planning	Vera.Mueller@mdi.rlp.de	+ 49 (0) 6131 16-3185
Johst	Roland	Ministry of Interior and Sport Rhineland-Palatinate	Chief of the Unit state spatial planning, urban and regional development	Roland.Johst@mdi.rlp.de	+49 (0) 6131 16-3191
Ismaier	Florian	Ministry of Economics, Energy, Transport and Housing – State of Hessen	Chief of the Unit state spatial planning and regional planning	florian.ismaier@wirtschaft.hessen.de	+49 (0) 611 815-2916
Weber	Martin	Ministry of Economics, Energy, Transport and Housing – State of Hessen	Head of Department Road and Traffic System	Martin.Weber@wirtschaft.hessen.de	+49 (0) 611 815-2800
Brückner	Kathrin	Hessen Mobil – Road and Transport Management	Head of Department Planning and Construction	kathrin.brueckner@mobil.hessen.de	+ 49 (0) 611 366-0
Falkenhahn	Jürgen	Hessen Mobil – Road and Transport Management	Section Manager	juergen.falkenhahn@mobil.hessen.de	+49 (0) 661 49953267
Dr. Fischer	Christian	Ministry for Environment, Climate Protection, Agriculture and Consumer Protection	Head of the Unit Plant Production, Horticulture and Viticulture including Process Engineering and Environmental Issues, Plant Protection, Renewable Growing Raw Materials	Christian.fischer@umwelt.hessen.de	+49 (0) 611 815-1710
Eigemann	Helmut	Ministry for Environment, Climate Protection, Agriculture and Consumer Protection	Plant Production, Horticulture and Viticulture including Process Engineering and Environmental Issues, Plant Protection, Renewable Growing Raw Materials	helmut.eigemann@umwelt.hessen.de	+ 49 (0) 611 815-1703
Dr. Otto	Heike	General Directorate for Cultural Heritage Rhineland-Palatinate	General Director	Heike.Otto@gdke.rlp.de	+ 49 (0) 6131-2016 202
Prof. Dr. Schmauder	Andreas	General Directorate for Cultural Heritage Rhineland-Palatinate	Director Ehrenbreitstein Fortress	andreas.schmauder@gdke.rlp.de	+ 49 (0) 261 66 75-15 02
Dr. Fritz-von Preuschen	Markus	General Directorate for Cultural Heritage Rhineland-Palatinate	Deputy Head of Conservation of Rhineland-Palatinate	Markus.fritz-vonPreuschen@gdke.rlp.de	+ 49 (0) 6131-2016-207
Hoffmann	Nadine	General Directorate for Cultural Heritage Rhineland-Palatinate	Project member	nadine.hoffmann@gdke.rlp.de	+ 49 (0) 6131-2016-213
Boch	Volker	Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage Association	Deputy Chairperson of Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage Association	volker.boch@rh-einhunsrueck.de	+ 49 (0) 6761 82-101
Bathke	Hans-Jörg	Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage Association	Deputy Chairperson of Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage Association	hjbath@web.de	+49 (0) 170 5869142
König-Lehrmann	Nadya	Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage Association	Site Manager	n.koenig-lehrmann@zvwelterbe.de	+ 49 (0) 6771 40 399 -31
Melchior	Nico	Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage Association	Project Manager	n.melchior(at)zvwelterbe.de	+ 49 (0) 6771 40 399 -34
Renzler	Sara	Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage Association	Project Manager	s.renzler@zvwelterbe.de	+ 49 (0) 6771 40

Neizert	Kristina	Romantic Rhine Tourismus Organisation	Managing Director	kristina.neizert@romantischer-rhein.de	399 -37 + 49 (0) 261 97 38 47 - 0
Prof. Dr. Kloos	Michael	Michael Kloos planning and heritage consultancy	Commissioned to draw up the Management Plan	info@michaelkloos.de	+ 49 (0) 241 9199 288 0
Worms	Kirsten	Castles and Gardens Administration of Hesse	Director	Kirsten.Worms@schloesser.hessen.de	+ 49 (0) 6172 9262-101
Dr. Formann	Inken	Castles and Gardens Administration of Hesse	Historic Garden Conservation	inken.formann@schloesser.hessen.de	+ 49 (0) 6172 9262-116
Weiland	Mike	Municipal Association Loreley	Municipal Major Loreley	m.weiland@vg-loreley.de	+ 49 (0) 6771 919-110
Schaust	Armin	Municipal Association Loreley	Structural Development	a.schaust@vg-loreley.de	+ 49 (0) 6771 919-113
Zeimentz	Rainer	Federal Horticultural Show in the Upper Middle Rhine Valley gGmbH	Managing Director	zeimentz@ea-rlp.de	+ 49 (0) 6131 490 82 21
Jöckel	Andreas	Federal Horticultural Show in the Upper Middle Rhine Valley gGmbH	BUGA Publicist	andreas.joeckel@buga2029.de	+ 49 (0) 6131 49082 30
Metz	Thomas	Federal Horticultural Show in the Upper Middle Rhine Valley gGmbH	Member of the supervisory board Buga 2029	Thomas.metz@buga2029.de	+49 (0) 171 7670581
Langner	David	City of Koblenz	Major of City of Koblenz	OB@stadt.koblenz.de	+ 49 (0) 261 129-1000
Flöck	Bert	City of Koblenz	Head of the Building Division	bert.floeck@stadt.koblenz.de	+ 49 (0) 261 129-3000
Hastenteufel	Frank	City of Koblenz	Head of the Office for Urban Developments and Building Regulations	frank.hastenteufel@stadt.koblenz.de	+ 49 (0) 261-129 3151
Rippel	Thomas	City of Koblenz	Head of the Department for Urban Development	thomas.rippel@stadt.koblenz.de	+ 49 (0) 261-1293167
Haller	Michaela	Denkmal Dolmetschen	Interpreter	mail@sprachlicht.com	+ 49 (0) 721 96 87 76 98
Hoffmann	Charlotta	Denkmal Dolmetschen	Interpreter	hoffmann@dolmetschen-ffm.de	+ 49 (0) 69-20167040

Participants of the Citizen's Initiatives

Frank Gross; Andreas Stüber	Pro Rheintal	info@pro-rheintal.de
Klaus Thomas, Mario Pott	Rheinpassagen	kontakt@rheinpassagen.de
Jens Güllering	Pro Brücke	bernd.zorn@t-online.de
Joachim Müller, Mike Weiland, Dr. Heinz Gemmer; Markus Fischer	Braubach lebenswerter e.V.	info@braubach-lebenswerter.de
Dr. Christian Fuchs, Burkhard Hühlein	#gegenReede 2.0 Bad Salzig	info@gegenreede.de
Maren Hoffmann, Dr. Karl Weis	Oberwesel 22	info@oberwesel22.de
Hartmut Fischer	Rheinischer Verein für Denkmalpflege und Landschaftskunde	rheinischer-verein@lv.r.de

Annex 8

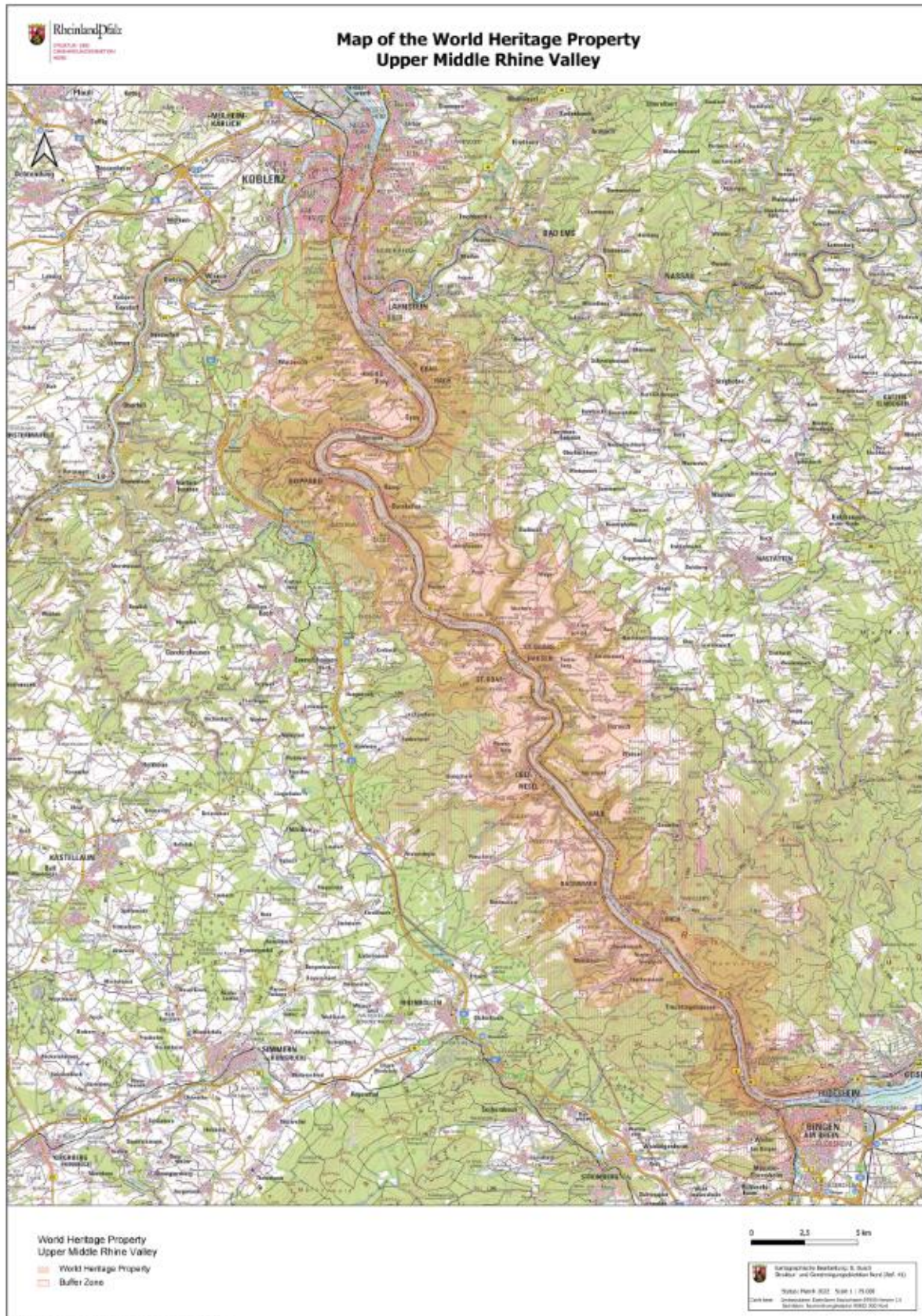
List of attributes conveying the OUV

identified by the State Party during the development of the Management Plan

Attributes and Key Attributes of the Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage Site (as of 13 January 2022)		
<p>State level: Germany Site: Middle Rhine Valley cultural landscape stretching from Bingen/Rüdesheim to Koblenz (Upper Middle Rhine Valley)</p> <p>Definition according to Article 1 of the World Heritage Convention / Annex III of the Operational Guidelines: cultural landscape / organically-evolving landscape / continuing cultural landscape</p>		
<p>Key Attributes:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geology and geomorphology: terraces and valley sections • Land use: settlement structure, transport infrastructure, vineyard terraces • Elements in the cultural landscape: hilltop castles, significant cultural and natural monuments • Views and viewpoints: viewpoints with special cultural-historical relevance for Rhine Romanticism • A [cultural] region worth living in: sustainable transport, commerce and cultural exchange making this region worth living in on both sides of the Rhine 	
<p>In 2002 the Upper Middle Rhine Valley was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List based on the criteria (iii), (iv) and (v) defined in the Operational Guidelines.</p>	<p>Criterion (ii): values and influences 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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport route in a strategic location: has been facilitating economic and cultural exchange between Southern and Northern Europe for more than 2,000 years. • One of the longest rivers worldwide: bears testimony to countless events of human history • Rhine Romanticism: The Rhine formed a cultural landscape of great beauty (dramatic landscape), which not only influenced artists of all kinds but also the way many restorations and reconstructions were carried out as well as the development of a systematic approach to conserving historic monuments. • Views, viewpoints and perception patterns relating to Rhine Romanticism: view corridors (ship, railway, road); viewpoints from the riverbank; panoramic views
	<p>Criterion (iv): typology 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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse cultural landscape: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Terraces: the Rhine and its banks, low terraces, middle terraces, high terraces - Valley sections: Bingen Gate, Bacharach Valley, St. Goar Narrow Valley, Boppard Loops, Lahnstein Gate • Land use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Settlement structure: Middle Rhine urban landscape, small-town settlement landscape, agricultural settlement landscape - Transport infrastructure: water-bound, road-bound, rail-bound - Vineyard terraces: small and large-scale vineyard terraces as well as fallow vineyard terraces • Elements in the cultural landscape: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hilltop castles: castles, palaces, ruins; Other significant cultural monuments: sacred buildings, monumental sites, natural monuments
	<p>Criterion (v): interaction between humans and the environment 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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evolving way of life and means of communication in a narrow river valley. • Evolving wine-growing tradition: The wine-growing tradition on the steep slopes has been influenced by many different cultures for over 1,000 years and is still thriving today. • Evolving tourism tradition: In conjunction with Rhine Romanticism, the strategic and convenient transportation route has led to a tradition in tourism spanning over 250 years which continues to this day.

Annex 9

Map of the property



Photos



The open-pit quartzite quarry next to Sooneck Castle (photo: Réka Viragos)



Camping ground by the river Rhine within the property (photo: Roberto Bobbio)



View from the Loreley Culture and Landscape Park on an open-air deposit of industrial materials (photo: Roberto Bobbio)



Water infrastructure by the Rhine at Bingen (photo: Roberto Bobbio)



View of Bingen from the Osteinscher park, showing signs for loss of cultivated land and degradation of the historic rural landscape (photo: Réka Viragos)



Example for urban sprawl in the Rhine Valley (photo: Roberto Bobbio)



Freight train next to the Rhine within the property (photo: Réka Viragos)



Historic railway tunnel within the property (photo: Réka Viragos)



The planned location of the new bridge at the side of Fellen (photo: Bernhard Furrer)



The planned location of the new bridge at the side of Wellmich (photo: Réka Viragos)



The area of the 'valley station' for the cable car in Koblenz (photo: Réka Viragos)



'Valley station' of the cable car in Koblenz with the basilica of Saint Kastor (photo: Bernhard Furrer)



View of the Koblenzer Brauerei and the area of the planned new residential quarters 'An der Königsbach' in Koblenz (photo: Bernhard Furrer)



The Culture and Landscape Park (Visitor Centre by the entrance) at the Loreley plateau (photo: Réka Viragos)



The Culture and Landscape Park (exhibition hall) at the Loreley plateau (photo: Bernhard Furrer)



The Culture and Landscape Park at the Loreley plateau with the exhibition hall (in the background), on top of which the crystal rock is planned to be placed (photo: Réka Viragos)



View from the property on an existing wind farm that is partly in the buffer zone (photo: State Party)

Annex 10**List of key legislation, spatial planning documents, and other plans, programmes, guidelines that are relevant for the protection and management of the World Heritage property 'Upper Middle Rhine Valley'**

level of legislation/plan/programme/guidelines	name/topic of legislation
federal	2008 Federal Spatial Planning Act (Raumordnungsgesetz - ROG)
federal	1960 Federal Building Code (Baugesetzbuch - BauGB)
federal	1962 Federal Land Utilisation Ordinance (Baunutzungsverordnung - BauNVO)
federal	1990 Environmental Impact Assessment Act (Umweltverträglichkeitsprüfung - UVPG)
federal	2009 Federal Act on Nature Conservation (Bundesnaturschutzgesetz - BNatSchG)
federal	1968 Federal Waterway Act (Bundeswasserstraßengesetz - WaStrG)
state (Rhineland-Palatinate)	Constitution of the Federal State Rhineland-Palatinate (1947)
state (Rhineland-Palatinate)	2003 State Spatial Planning Act (Landesplanungsgesetz – LPIG)
state (Rhineland-Palatinate)	2015 State Act on Environmental Impact Assessment (Landesgesetz zur Umweltverträglichkeitsprüfung – LUVPg)
state (Rhineland-Palatinate)	1998 State Building Ordinance (Landesbauordnung – LBauO)
state (Rhineland-Palatinate)	1978 Monuments Protection Act (Denkmalschutzgesetz - DSchG)
state (Rhineland-Palatinate)	2015 State Act on Nature Conservation (Landesnaturschutzgesetz – LNatSchG)
state (Rhineland-Palatinate)	1978 State Ordinance on the 'Protected Landscape Rhine Area from Bingen to Koblenz' (Landesverordnung über das „Landschaftsschutzgebiet Rheingebiet von Bingen bis Koblenz“ – NatSGRhein V RP)
state (Rhineland-Palatinate)	2008 State Development Programme (Landesentwicklungsprogramm – LEP IV)

state (Rhineland-Palatinate)	2015 Regional Spatial Development Plan Rhein Hessen-Nahe
state (Rhineland-Palatinate)	2017 Regional Spatial Development Plan Middle Rhine-Westerwald
state (Rhineland-Palatinate)	2021 – 2026 Coalition Agreement of the Rhineland-Palatinate State Government (consisting of the parties SPD, Bündnis 90/Die Grünen and FDP)
state (Hesse)	Constitution of the Federal State of Hesse (1946)
state (Hesse)	2012 State Spatial Planning Act (Landesplanungsgesetz – HLPG)
state (Hesse)	2018 State Building Regulation (Landesbauordnung Hessen – HBO)
state (Hesse)	2016 Monuments Protection Act (Hessisches Denkmalschutzgesetz – HDSchG)
state (Hesse)	2010 Hesse Implementation Law to the Federal Act on Nature Conservation (Hessisches Ausführungsgesetz zum Bundesnaturschutzgesetz - HAGBNatschG)
state (Hesse)	2000 State Development Plan (Landesentwicklungsplan Hessen – LEP)
state (Hesse)	2010 Regional Plan South Hesse/RegFNP
state (Hesse)	2019 – 2024 Coalition Agreement of the Hesse State Government (consists of the parties CDU and Bündnis 90/Die Grünen)
UMRV WH property	2008 Cultural Landscape Development Concept (Kulturlandschaftsentwicklungskonzept – KLEK)
UMRV WH property	Local Integrated Rural Development Strategy (Lokale integrierte ländliche Entwicklungsstrategie – LILE) <i>(under updating)</i>
UMRV WH property	2012-2013 Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage Master Plan
UMRV WH property	2012-2017 Action Programme Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage Association <i>(to be replaced by the updated World Heritage Management Plan)</i>

UMRV WH property	Guidelines on Building Culture
UMRV WH property	Guidelines on Colour Schemes (<i>for buildings typical for the region of the UMRV</i>)
UMRV WH property	Guidelines on Road Space Design (<i>streets and square designs for the UMRV region, accessibility of public spaces, etc.</i>)
UMRV WH property	Lighting Master Plan (<i>for use, design, etc, of lights during the night within the UMRV</i>)
UMRV WH property	Framework Concept for the Valorisation of castle Gardens (<i>for the 39 castles within the UMRV</i>)