

Checklists for energy sector professionals and utility-scale project proponents

Energy sector professionals and proponents of large-scale project are key actors in shaping the renewable energy transition. Their decisions on site selection for utility-scale projects, design, and technology choice can significantly affect World Heritage properties. Awareness about the World Heritage system, information about World Heritage that might be impacted by specific projects, and early dialogue with World Heritage stakeholders, could largely support informed decision making, and ensure the timely and cost-effective project planning and implementation.

Project Phase	Proposed Location and Alternatives	Information Sources	Approvals Process (incl. Impact Assessment)
1. Concept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have you checked if the planned project area has a connection with a World Heritage property (including its buffer zone or wider setting)? - Are alternative locations being considered to avoid negative impacts on World Heritage? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have you consulted relevant national/regional heritage databases (that include information also on World Heritage properties) to inform site selection? - Have you reviewed World Heritage guidance materials and technical tools? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are risks to the OUV of World Heritage properties identified and flagged for heritage-sensitive projects? - Are you aware of the need to notify authorities and the World Heritage Centre where relevant?
2. Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are site and technology alternatives evaluated using a mitigation hierarchy (in order to avoid or minimize negative impacts on OUV)? - Are landscape-scale impacts and cumulative effects on OUV considered in choosing project location? - Has transmission infrastructure been considered in addition to the energy project area? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have you taken into consideration the OUV and attributes of the World Heritage properties your project might affect? - Is the relevant information about the World Heritage property concerned and local planning guidance included in the project's design analysis? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have you confirmed whether a World Heritage focused impact assessment is required? - If yes, does it conform to the 2023 'Guidance and Toolkit on Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context' (See also the 'Assessing Impacts' section of this guidance) including consideration on indirect and cumulative impacts?
3. Construction (Installation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do decisions for installation (including transport of infrastructure components) avoid damage to tangible and intangible attributes of heritage (including sensitive flora/fauna, archaeological heritage, historic building fabric, social processes, sense of place, etc.)? - Have heritage sensitive construction techniques been specified? - Have you ensured that all contractors and sub-contractors are aware of necessary measures to preserving World Heritage through 'Environmental and Social Management Plans' and other site management tools? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have construction teams been briefed on site-specific sensitivities and mitigation measures identified during the impact assessment procedure? - Are they trained in heritage-friendly construction practices? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is compliance with mitigation and monitoring plans (that are outcomes of the impact assessment procedure) included in contractual and permitting obligations? - Are relevant updates reported to local authorities and heritage managers?
4. Operation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are operational practices in place to minimize identified visual, acoustic, and ecological impacts in the context of World Heritage properties? - Are buffer measures in place to reduce risk of technological intrusion into heritage settings, including of World Heritage properties? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have those responsible for operation been required to monitor actual impacts on heritage (including World Heritage) and compare them to predictions made identified during the impact assessment process? - Are there indicators in place that trigger an action when monitored impacts cause concern? - Are changes in visibility, noise, and cumulative effects tracked and reported to the relevant authorities? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are operations reviewed regularly for compliance with heritage-related permit conditions? - Are there triggers for adaptive management if impacts exceed thresholds?
5. Repowering / Replacement / Decommissioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is the project being re-evaluated before upgrading or replacement to assess evolving impacts on heritage, including World Heritage? - Are decommissioning plans minimizing disturbance to heritage assets, including World Heritage? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are the findings of relevant impact assessments revisited with updated data to assess current risks and ensure preservation of heritage values, including the OUV of World Heritage properties? - Are best practices shared across project portfolios? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are decommissioning actions aligned with national heritage and sustainability goals? - Is there provision for recycling and minimal impact removal strategies, aligned with the recommendations of relevant impact assessments?
6. Recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are former infrastructure sites restored to their natural or cultural condition, in alignment with World Heritage protection goals? - Are visual scars and access routes rehabilitated? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are results of restoration and lessons learned communicated to heritage stakeholders and professional networks? - Are outcomes documented for future planning reference? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are post-project evaluations shared with authorities, including compliance reporting on impact assessment outcomes? - Is the site free of residual impacts on heritage (including World Heritage)?