

EUROPE / NORTH AMERICA

THE ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

WORLD HERITAGE NOMINATION – IUCN COMMENTS TO ICOMOS

THE ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT (UNITED KINGDOM)

IUCN provides the following brief comments to ICOMOS based on six external desk reviewers and a review of the nomination by the IUCN World Heritage Panel. The external reviews were also shared directly with ICOMOS in order to contribute to their detailed reflections on this nomination.

British national parks are areas that have been significantly transformed by agriculture and other human activities and their management objectives accommodate this ongoing interaction between humans and the landscape. Therefore, their management does not reflect the IUCN Category II (National Park); instead, these parks fall under IUCN Category V (protected landscape/seascape).

Concerning the argument on criterion (vi) included in the nomination dossier, and as recorded in IUCN's Management Guidelines for IUCN Category V Protected Areas (Phillips, 2002¹), the Panel confirms the important role the nominated property played in contributing to the origin, and philosophical basis, of IUCN Category V protected areas. The site is cited in protected areas literature as a classic example of this category and has provided the basis for the application of the concept of Category V in other parts of the world. This value should be more strongly emphasized.

The Panel made note of the discussion on quarrying / mining heritage in the nomination, noting that former mining areas are a part of the nomination. The Panel questioned whether mining landscapes that have been highly modified by extractive industries are conceptually appropriate to consider within cultural landscapes under the Convention, as the interaction that took place between people and nature involved substantial and destructive alteration of the environment. In relation to the active extractive industry that is continuing inside the nominated property², IUCN recalls the World Heritage Committee has a clear and long-standing policy regarding the incompatibility of extractive industry within World Heritage Sites, and that the International Council on Mining and Metals' commitments extend to all World Heritage Sites³. IUCN is of the view that it is not appropriate for World Heritage cultural landscapes to be inscribed if they include areas of active extractive industry, and that such nominations should be designed to avoid such incompatible land-uses. As IUCN has mentioned in the past, the altered flora and fauna in previously mined areas, as well as areas of semi-natural vegetation in the region, whilst of nature conservation importance at the national level, cannot be considered to present a phenomenon that is, of itself, contributing to Outstanding Universal Value for nature conservation. IUCN considers this matter should be considered further by ICOMOS in its evaluation.

In relation to protection and management issues, the Panel raised some concern about the statement included in the nomination dossier that "there is no need for a buffer zone" (page 43). There is mounting evidence that buffer zones and buffering arrangements, including for IUCN category V, should be more effective to support nature conservation objectives⁴. Therefore, the Panel discussed the need to better understand how the surrounding areas provide an additional layer of protection for the nominated property. Furthermore it will be important to better understand the foreseen planning requirements to address, for example, climate change and overall development pressures, as presented in the dossier (including the nuclear power plant west of the Lake District and its associated energy transportation infrastructure).

The Panel also raised concern over tourism pressure (the nomination dossier mentions over 15 million annual visitors) and potential adverse impacts from tourism that may affect the balance of culture-nature in the Lake District, in particular erosion produced by heavily impacted walking trails in forested areas. The Panel reinforced the need for the State Party to implement long-term monitoring of tourism impacts (among other threats to the cultural landscape and specifically its natural components).

¹ Phillips, A (2002) *Management Guidelines for IUCN Category V Protected Areas: Protected Landscapes/Seascapes*. Best Practice Protected Areas Guidelines Series No. 9. IUCN and IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas, Gland, Switzerland. 122pp

² Elterwater and Spout Cragg Quarry, which "have been working more or less continually using modern methods and are both currently operated by Burlington Slate Limited. The slate quarries still provide a high quality product for domestic and international markets..." (page 20, Volume 2 of the nomination dossier) and the "extensive industrial site...the Honister slate quarry...which is still producing high quality roofing slate" (page 273 Volume 2 of the nomination dossier)

³ <https://www.icmm.com/en-gb/members/member-commitments/position-statements/mining-and-protected-areas-position-statement>

⁴ <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2351989414000948> Shafer Cautionary thoughts on IUCN protected area management categories V–VI