

The 4th International NGO Forum on World Heritage at Risk

Villa Decius, Krakow, 30 June - 1 July 2017

Resolution

On Dangers to the Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage Site

The World Heritage Site Upper Middle Rhine Valley is in danger. The participants of the 4th International Civil Society Forum on World Heritage at Risk, having met on 30 June - 1 July 2017 in Krakow, Poland, considers decisions to preserve the universal heritage as absolutely essential:

1. With the expansion of the railway lines from Geneva to Rotterdam, at least 600 trains will be driven daily through the Middle Rhine Valley. A proposal for building a new railway line to shift freight transport away from the Rhine valley has not been taken up by the German Federal Government.

Planning for a permanent Rhine crossing at St. Goar in the form of an infrastructure project has been resumed by the regional parliament. This Middle-Rhine bridge connects two interregional transport networks to the left and right of the Rhine. Experts confirm the classification as a supra-regional road. The high environmental impacts caused by the railway add to considerable noise and vibration from the road.

Requests

- We ask for a transport concept for the Middle Rhine to be developed; it should improve the living conditions for people on the Rhine
 - The plans for the construction of a bridge should be abandoned. Traffic volume and traffic noise from railways and roads should be significantly reduced.
 - Ferries should become an integral part of the World Heritage Site.
2. The Loreley plateau is currently under construction. A new hotel with 200 beds will be built on a site of 28.000 square metres. New car parks and roads will be built, a panorama trail and a nature park are planned, and some old buildings have already been demolished. Several hundred trees have already been felled. The reconstruction of the Loreley stage is already well advanced and is now widely visible in the Rhine valley.
The Loreley rock is the central point of the World Heritage area, enhanced by enchantment, the songs of Loreley, myths and fairytales. The combined considerations of protecting a historic monument and conserving nature, and the value to tourism of an intact cultural landscape, have so far protected the Middle Rhine valley from being subjected to radical change. Any further development of the rock requires utmost care. All changes must harmonise with the landscape and compliment it. The plateau should not be sacrificed to the demands of the present time.

Requests

- The further development of the Loreley Plateau requires special care. All changes must harmonize with the landscape.
- Construction work on the Plateau should be halted until a development plan has been prepared which includes guidelines for appropriate building designs and layout for the long term future of the World Heritage Site.

Krakow, 1 July 2017