

World Rowing policy on natural/mixed World Heritage sites

1 World Heritage sites

1.1 UNESCO

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) seeks to encourage the identification, protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage around the world considered to be of outstanding value to humanity. This is embodied in an international treaty called the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, adopted by UNESCO in 1972.

1.2 Natural heritage

Natural heritage refers to outstanding physical, biological and geological formations, habitats of threatened species of animals and plants and areas with scientific, conservation or aesthetic value. Sites selected for World Heritage listing are inscribed on the basis of their 'Outstanding Universal Value' as the best possible global examples. World Heritage sites inscribed on the World Heritage List of sites¹ under natural criteria reflect the wealth and diversity of the Earth's natural heritage.

1.3 World Rowing natural World Heritage site policy

World Rowing understands the value and importance of natural / mixed World Heritage sites and commits to respect and preserve their Outstanding Universal Value. This will be achieved through the careful assessment of any potential impact on the conservation of the sites and their buffer zones arising from World Rowing-sanctioned events, development and other official activities. Additionally, World Rowing will raise awareness across the wider sport of rowing (beyond World Rowing-sanctioned activities) so that National Federations, governing bodies, clubs and regattas understand how to avoid negative impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value of natural World Heritage sites and their buffer zones.

1.4 Investigative processes and due diligence

- World Rowing policies, including bidding and operational guidelines, require a designated authority - including World Rowing's agents, Organising Committees, bid companies, national governing bodies and rowing clubs - to investigate whether any proposed World Rowing-sanctioned activity (and associated developments) is in or near to a natural / mixed World Heritage site or associated buffer zone².
- Where a proposed activity (and associated developments) is near to a natural/ mixed World Heritage site or its buffer zone, the UNESCO World Heritage Centre and IUCN should be consulted regarding any potential impact. If necessary, a report should be provided demonstrating that the Outstanding Universal Value of the natural / mixed World Heritage site will not be compromised by the proposed activity.
- If it is not possible to make the checks and investigations outlined above, the presumption should be that the rowing activity (and associated developments) cannot take place in that location

¹ <http://whc.unesco.org/en/about/>

² <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/?&type=natural>

1.5 Existing venues, courses, events and training camps

World Rowing, including its agents, Organising Committees and similar bodies, should find new locations for rowing activities (and associated developments) unless identified risks of conflict with natural / mixed World Heritage sites can be fully addressed, with verification by UNESCO World Heritage Centre and IUCN.

1.6 New facilities, venues, and development proposals

World Rowing, including its agents, Organising Committees and similar bodies, should reject proposals for new locations for rowing activities (and associated developments) where potential of impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of natural / mixed World Heritage sites has been identified.

1.7 Tentative natural World Heritage sites

Where new or existing rowing activities (and associated developments) are planned in an area that has been identified on the Tentative World Heritage List³, World Rowing (or its agents, Organising Committees and similar bodies) should work with the national government where the site is situated to investigate whether rowing use (and associated developments) is compatible with the natural heritage value of the nominated site.

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³ <http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/>