

UNESCO decides: Erzgebirge/Krušnohoří Mining Region awarded World Heritage status / ID 243

Text zum Artikel

06.07.2019

First reactions from Baku: Congratulatory words from Saxony's Minister-President and jubilation among the Erzgebirge delegation

Dresden/Baku (6th July 2019): We did it! At 4:40pm (local time Baku) today in Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, an announcement was made at the 43rd session of UNESCO by the World Heritage Committee that the Erzgebirge/Krušnohoří Mining Region has been awarded World Heritage status. There were 36 candidates nominated for consideration this year. The Erzgebirge now joins 1,092 other sites in 167 different countries on the World Heritage List. There are 44 World Heritage Sites located either partially or entirely in Germany.

Michael Kretschmer, Minister-President of the German Free State of Saxony, went to Baku in person in order to show his active support for the application at the decisive meeting of the World Heritage Committee. He expressed his delight at the positive outcome and had these words of appreciation for the Erzgebirge team: "Today is a great day for the whole of the Erzgebirge region and for Saxony in general. I congratulate all those who have contributed to the successful application for inclusion of our historic mining region on the World Heritage List, in particular the members of the World Heritage Erzgebirge Mining Region Association, but also numerous other colleagues in Saxony and the Czech Republic. The many years of commitment and the tireless efforts of so many people have finally paid off. Over the centuries, mining for precious metals in the Erzgebirge mountains has created a unique cultural landscape which has now achieved recognition by UNESCO. We need to capitalise on the newly conferred World Heritage status to further enhance the attractiveness of the Erzgebirge region, as a place to both live in and to visit. In this regard, the region can count on the support of the state government."

Also present in Baku to hear the decision of the World Heritage Committee were the

following representatives of the Montanregion Erzgebirge/Krušnohoří joint application committee: Volker Uhlig (Chairman of the World Heritage Erzgebirge Mining Region Association), Professor Helmuth Albrecht (TU Bergakademie Freiberg University), Friederike Hansell (World Heritage commissioner of the Free State of Saxony and member of the World Heritage Project Group at the TU Bergakademie Freiberg Institute for Industrial Archeology, IWTG) and Matthias Lisske (Managing Director of Wirtschaftsförderung Erzgebirge GmbH business development council and project coordinator for the World Heritage Erzgebirge Mining Region Association).

“This is very special day for us and, of course, for everyone who has been part of the World Heritage project over recent years,” commented Volker Uhlig. “It is not only an acknowledgement of the work that we have put in on this application over the past twenty years but also of the incredibly valuable nature of the heritage that has accumulated during more than 800 years of mining history. Over the centuries, the landscape has taken on a unique character, and this has now been granted special status to preserve it for future generations.”

Matthias Lisske concurred: “It is the fact that our heritage is still so visible that makes it unique – the traditions, customs and high level of academic interest. To have been granted World Heritage status means a lot to us; it will raise the profile of the Erzgebirge as a mining region and as a place to do business and for tourists to visit, but above all, it will enhance our image as a region with an excellent quality of life.”

The application, submitted by the Erzgebirge and endorsed by the experts of the International Council of Monuments ICOMOS, met with general approval among the members of the World Heritage Committee.

More than 800 years of history, two countries, a common world heritage: what began 20 years ago with the inclusion of the Montan- und Kulturlandschaft Erzgebirge (Erzgebirge mining and cultural landscape) on the official German tentative list has now borne fruit after ten years of intensive work putting an application together. More than a thousand people have been involved in this ‘bottom-up’ project – from the general public to association members, and from town councils to official bodies at state level. The newly conferred World Heritage status is an acknowledgement of the deep and abiding love for their homeland that is felt by people from Altenberg in the east to Hartmannsdorf in the west of the Erzgebirge region.

Saxony and Bohemia are now linked by a special relationship between 22 constituent sites – 17 on the German side of the border and five on the Czech. Each one of them embodies the criteria of World Heritage status in its own unique way, but it is only in combination that all 22 components come together to constitute world heritage in the sense of a cross-border community of values. The sum total of these components produces an ‘Outstanding Universal Value’ (OUV), the prerequisite to obtaining the World Heritage mark of distinction.

There were no fewer than 36 sites on the nomination list this year, three of them either wholly or partially located within Germany. The two other German candidates were the Augsburg Water Management System and the Danube Limes, i.e. the northern border of

the Roman Empire (Western Section of a joint transnational application with Austria, Slovakia and Hungary).

Pictures from the 43rd Session of the World Heritage Committee and of the Saxony delegation can be downloaded from the Saxony media service at <https://www.medienservice.sachsen.de/medien/pictures>.

Additional statements, background information and photo materials about the Montanregion Erzgebirge/Krušnohoří World Heritage Site can be found in the digital press kit at www.montanregion-erzgebirge.de/pressemappe.

Contact:

Matthias Lisske

Managing Director WFE GmbH

Coordinating the Erzgebirge/Krušnohoří Mining Region application for UNESCO World Heritage status

Tel: 03733 145 0

E-mail: kontakt@wfe-erzgebirge.de

Lea Mock

Deputy spokesperson for the Saxony State government

Tel: +49 351 564-10310

Mobile: +49 172 350 3738

lea.mock@sk.sachsen.de