Mining projects in the vicinity of the World Heritage property Laponian Area, Sweden

Dear Dr Mechtild Rössler,

The Swedish National Heritage Board and the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency has received the letter from Ms Elenaria Amanda Gydemö Östbom expressing concerns about the application to the Mining Inspectorate for an exploitation concession for rights to mine iron ore at Kallak (Gällok). The concerns expressed in the letter concerning the potential impact on reindeer herding are considered in the current application process. The Swedish National Heritage Board, in agreement with the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency would like to update the World Heritage Centre regarding the question of a mining project at Kallak near the World Heritage property the Laponian Area.

Previous correspondence with the World Heritage Centre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February 4th 2013</td>
<td>A landowner and members of three Sami communities write to the World Heritage Centre expressing concerns about the mining project at Kallak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 12th 2013</td>
<td>World Heritage Centre T/WHC/6155/SE/JSW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 18th 2013</td>
<td>Swedish National Heritage Board and Swedish Environmental Protection Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 10th 2014</td>
<td>Swedish National Heritage Board and Swedish Environmental Protection Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 11th 2014</td>
<td>ICOMOS Technical Review for WH property Laponian Are</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
December 3rd 2015
Swedish National Heritage Board
3.5.1-1035-2013

February 26th 2016
ICOMOS and IUCN Technical Review for
WH property Laponian Area

August 2nd 2017
World Heritage Centre
CLT/HER/WHC/EUR/17/9982

Current situation
When we last informed the World Heritage Centre the case was under review by the Swedish Government. The Swedish Government decided that the case should be referred back to the Swedish Mining Inspectorate for further consideration (October 30th 2016). The Swedish Government also indicated in its decision that the potential impact on the World Heritage property Laponia should be considered in that upcoming and renewed process.

During the renewed process the Swedish Mining Inspectorate collected opinions from Jokkmokk Iron Mines AB (the company) and the County Administrative Board as well as from the Swedish National Heritage Board and the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency. The Swedish Mining Inspectorate gave the company opportunity to provide additional material. The Swedish National Heritage Board and the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency made a statement – declaring the opinion that the material made available at that particular time wasn’t sufficient (March 27th 2017). The County Administrative Board’s point of view in its subsequent decision was that the potential impact on the world heritage Laponia had not been fully investigated by the company. It deemed that this needed to be done before it could assess whether the company’s Environmental Impact Assessment was sufficient for a decision according to the Environmental Code (June 16th 2017).

Since the County Administrative Board did not provide the required assessment of the Environmental Impact Assessment, the Swedish Mining Inspectorate was unable to issue an exploitation concession. The Swedish Mining Inspectorate therefore referred the case back to the Swedish Government (June 30th 2017).
The Swedish Government has different possibilities to close the case. It will either issue an exploitation concession, or it could deny to issue such a concession. A third possible alternative is that the Swedish Government would refer the case back to the Swedish Mining Inspectorate a second time.

As of yet, no decision has been made, and no timetable for the process of consideration has been presented by the Swedish Government. We would like to emphasize that the Swedish Government indicated, in its previous decision (October 30th 2016), that the potential influence on the World Heritage property Laponia should be considered in the current renewed process. Furthermore, the Swedish Government has asked the County Administrative Board for an additional statement (October 6th 2017). The statement should include, among other things, an assessment of the potential influence on the World Heritage property. Current deadline for this statement is December 1st 2017.

With this information we hope that we have explained the developments since 3 December 2015. The Swedish National Heritage Board and the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency would like to thank the World Heritage Centre for the inquiry and welcome a response to this update.

Qaisar Mahmood
Swedish National Heritage Board

Copy:
Swedish Ministry of Culture
Swedish Ministry of the Environment and Energy
Swedish Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation
County Administrative Board of Norrbotten
Sweden's Permanent Delegation to UNESCO, Paris
Swedish Mining Inspector Åsa Persson
Jokkmokk Municipality
ICOMOS Sweden
Swedish National Commission for UNESCO
Laponiajuottjudus