

SEVERAL SITES MAY BE REMOVED FROM THE UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE LIST



Venice, Budapest... two European cities very appreciated by tourists and rich in history and culture. But also two cities that seem to be more and more in danger due to demolitions and mass tourism. Both could be soon placed on the list of World Heritage in Danger by UNESCO.

In the city of the Doges, the impact of mass tourism activities is one of the reasons why the organization has asked for its placement on this list of heritage in danger. **In Budapest, the Buda Castle district and the banks of the Danube are the most exposed, especially because of "inappropriate" demolitions and large-scale reconstructions.** Constructions among which those of high buildings would come to denature the historical places.

These recommendations from UNESCO's advisory bodies are being released ahead of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee meeting that will decide whether or not to follow them, in Fuzhou, China from July 16 to 31.

The Great Barrier Reef is threatened with the same fate because of its degradation caused by climate change. If it is put on the list of World Heritage in Danger, it would have serious consequences, not only for Australia's tourism industry. In its report, the World Heritage Committee is "deeply concerned" about the state of the Great Barrier Reef. The long-term prospects for the reef ecosystem had gone "from bad to very bad."

Scientists have been warning for years that the 2,300-kilometer-long reef formation off the coast of Australia is threatened with destruction as a result of global warming and man-made influences. Several underwater heatwaves in rapid succession have led to the death of large areas of coral fields in recent years.

Australian Environment Minister Sussan Ley complained that the World Heritage Committee had "not taken into account the billions of dollars that Australia has already spent protecting the world's largest coral reef". Reef tourism alone provides 60,000 jobs and is responsible for billions of dollars in foreign exchange income.

Concerning the merchant port of **Liverpool**, the decision of UNESCO could be even stronger since it is a question of removing the site completely from the world heritage list. The great development project of the docks of the city of the Beatles, called "Liverpool Waters" would have a profoundly negative impact, especially for historic buildings, according to UNESCO. Despite repeated warnings from UNESCO, the development of this project has not been stopped.

The mayor of Liverpool Steve Rotheram regretted the UNESCO proposal. "It is deeply disappointing. **We are proud of our history but our heritage is a vital part of the revitalization of the city,**" he said in a statement on social networks. "I ask (UNESCO) to accept our invitation to come and visit the city rather than make their decision around a table on the other side of the planet," he added. Another site threatened with the same sanction is the **Selous Nature Reserve in Tanzania**, because of massive poaching.

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