

# WORLD HERITAGE AGRICULTURAL LANDSCAPE OF SOUTHERN ÖLAND

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ADMINISTRATION AND  
DEVELOPMENT PLAN  
2017 - 2023

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## CONTENTS

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 What is a World Heritage?
- 1.2 UNESCO World Heritage Convention
- 1.3 What is required to become a World Heritage?
- 1.4 Support from the local population

### 2. The World Heritage Agricultural Landscape of Southern Öland

- 2.1 Administration Plan
- 2.2 World Heritage site
- 2.3 Universal values of the Agricultural Landscape of Southern Öland
- 2.4 The Agricultural Landscape of Southern Öland from a Nordic perspective
- 2.5 Administrative responsibilities
- 2.6 Administrative council
- 2.7 Working group for the World Heritage

### 3. Vision

- 3.1 Current development work
- 3.2 Development work 2017- 2023

### 4. Follow-up – Periodic reporting



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 What is a World Heritage?

A World Heritage is a cultural or natural heritage which is so valuable that it is important for the whole of humanity. It is a place, environment or object that testifies to the history of the earth and mankind in an absolutely unique way.

### 1.2 UNESCO World Heritage Convention

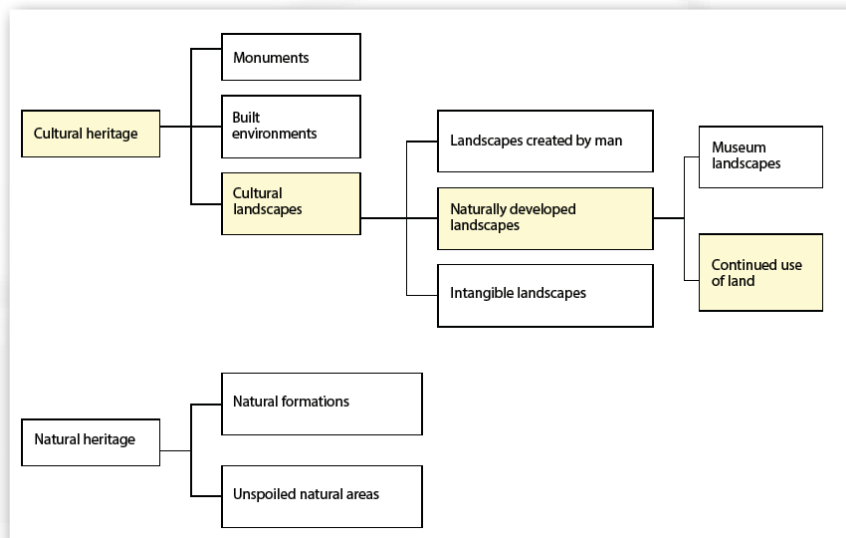
The World Heritage Convention was adopted at the UNESCO General Conference in 1972 to protect the world's most valuable cultural and natural environments against destruction and decay. Those states which have signed the Convention have undertaken to comply with its requirements and obligations. Sweden ratified the Convention in 1985. By signing the Convention, each country undertakes to preserve and protect World Heritage areas in its own territory forever. The Convention also states that countries undertake to support other countries in their efforts to preserve our common heritage. Countries that do not have their own funds can obtain financial support from the World Heritage Fund.

### 1.3 What is required to become a World Heritage?

A cultural or natural heritage that is nominated to the World Heritage list must have a universal value. UNESCO judges that a cultural heritage has a universal value if it meets at least one of the following criteria. Criteria iv. and v. apply to the Agricultural Landscape of Southern Öland:

- i. to represent a masterpiece of human creative genius;
- ii. to exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design;
- iii. to bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared;
- iv. to be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or techno-logical ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history;
- v. to be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change;
- vi. to be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance. (The Committee considers that this criterion should preferably be used in conjunction with other criteria);
- vii. to contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance;

World Heritages are divided into two main groups: cultural heritages and natural heritages. There is one additional category called mixed areas, which contains both natural and cultural heritages. Cultural and natural heritages within each main group are divided into sub-groups.



*Categorisation of World Heritages under the UNESCO World Heritage Convention.*

#### **1.4 Support from the local population**

A proposed World Heritage must have support from the local population before the World Heritage Committee can approve it. In the case of a living cultural landscape, this is a prerequisite since the users' participation is necessary for the values to be maintained. The municipality and the county administrative board sent out comprehensive information to the local population in 1998 and 1999, when work with the application was being carried out. All the farmers involved were invited to several information meetings, where they were told that their votes would be decisive. They realised that being designated as a World Heritage would mean that the Swedish government took responsibility for the agricultural landscape of Southern Öland being preserved for the future. In the spring of 1999, the Southern Öland farmers voted on the World Heritage issue in each of their union's departments and the result was positive. According to LRF (the Federation of Swedish Farmers) no previous issue has been treated more democratically in the municipal group than the question of the World Heritage nomination.

The discussions around the nomination also led to the formation of a consultation group to deal with questions relating to World Heritage values, later named the World Heritage Council for the Agricultural Landscape of Southern Öland.

The World Heritage Convention emphasises the importance of education in World Heritage areas and in Article 27 it states that:

1. The States Parties to this Convention shall endeavour by all appropriate means, and in particular by educational and information programmes, to strengthen appreciation and respect by their peoples of the cultural and natural heritage defined in Articles 1 and 2 of the Convention.
2. They shall undertake to keep the public broadly informed of the dangers threatening this heritage and of the activities carried on in pursuance of this Convention.

## 2. WORLD HERITAGE AGRICULTURAL LANDSCAPE OF SOUTHERN ÖLAND

The agricultural landscape of Southern Öland was inscribed in the World Heritage list in 2000 at the World Heritage Committee meeting in Cairns, Australia. The area meets the UNESCO criteria iv. and v.

### The World Heritage Committee's motivation:

#### Criterion iv

The landscape of Southern Öland takes its contemporary form from its long cultural history, adapting to the physical constraints of the geology and topography.

#### Criterion v

Södra Öland is an outstanding example of human settlement, making the optimum use of diverse landscape types on a single island.

By signing the World Heritage Convention, Sweden as a state is bound to do everything in its power to ensure the continued use of the land and land division on southern Öland, and to leave the World Heritage in good condition for future generations.

### 2.1 Administration Plan

The members of the World Heritage Council have decided on an administration plan for the Southern Öland World Heritage site in accordance with UNESCO guidelines. The plan is partly based on previous agreements within the Council and provides overall information on the World Heritage and its values. The plan will also serve as a tool to protect and develop the site's values for present and future generations.





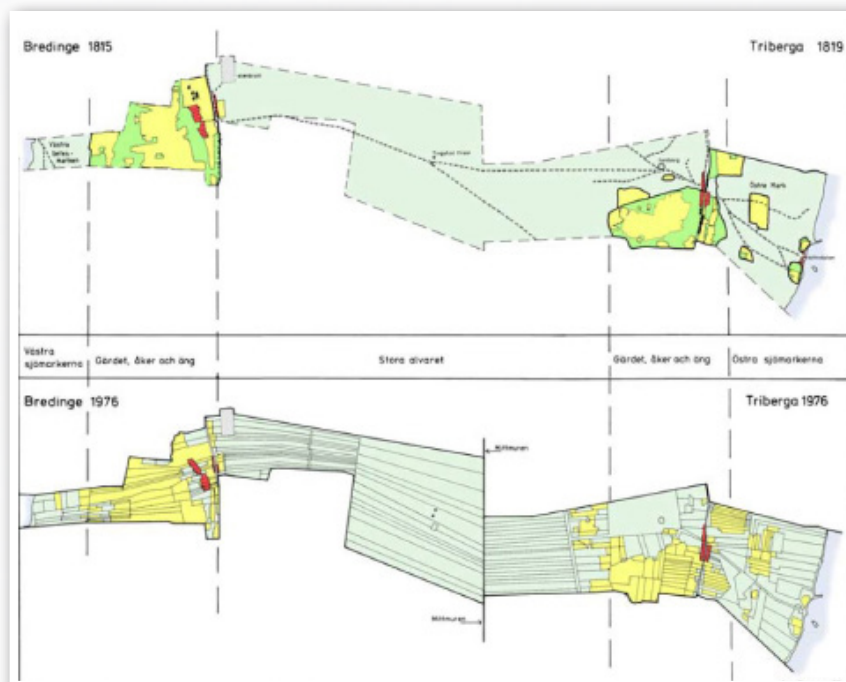
## 2.2 World Heritage site

The Agricultural Landscape of Southern Öland is a cultural heritage and a living cultural landscape that has formed the basis of the local population's way of life for thousands of years. The landscape has been formed by the interaction of nature and man. The modern agriculture which is now in use will continue to evolve.

The natural conditions are dominated by lime bedrock and the island's climate. Öland is a limestone plate in the Baltic Sea, 140 kilometres from north to south and not more than 20 kilometres across at its widest point. Along the entire length of the west coast of the island is a coastal plateau, around 20-40 metres high. On the eastern side there is a considerably lower and less prominent plateau, made up of old dykes built in different stages in the Baltic Sea's history. Öland has a dry climate, with many hours of sunshine and low rainfall.

The whole of Öland's topography is strongly influenced by its farmers, whose work has formed and changed the Öland landscape for thousands of years. It is precisely this continuity of close interaction between man and nature which is the reason for its nomination as a World Heritage site. The little earth that is cultivable is crucial for the use of the land; most of the island is not fertile and has been used for grazing instead. The current division of land goes back to the middle ages, when most of the villages were established in their present locations. Öland farmers still cultivate the earth that was cultivated many generations ago, and graze the land that has been grazed for thousands of years.

Present day farmers and their ancestors have created the agricultural landscape of southern Öland. For the unique natural and cultural values to remain, agriculture must also stay alive in the future. A living, modern agriculture that maintains and develops World Heritage values is a necessity for the future.



*The maps show the principles of how villages developed on Öland. The upper map shows the appearance of the landscape at the beginning of the 19th century. Bredinge and Triberga had looked like this from the middle ages until the first half of the 19th century. The west side, including Mörbylångadalen, is typical grain country, while the east side has primarily livestock farming. Despite the different conditions, the use of the land and land division are the same on the west and east sides. The agricultural landscape of southern Öland is thus symmetrical, as the landscape is divided into two mirror images.*



*The World Heritage area includes the entire southern third of Öland, from coast to coast. The boundary line around the coast is the sea's 5-metre depth contour.*

### **2.3 Universal values of the Agricultural Landscape of Southern Öland**

UNESCO formulates a short description of each World Heritage site. This is the description of the Agricultural Landscape of Southern Öland:

The southern part of the island of Öland in the Baltic Sea is dominated by a vast limestone plateau. Human beings have lived here for some five thousand years and adapted their way of life to the physical constraints of the island. As a consequence, the landscape is unique, with abundant evidence of continuous human settlement from prehistoric times to the present day.

## **2.4 The Agricultural Landscape of Southern Öland from a Nordic perspective**

The Nordic countries cooperate on World Heritage issues through the Nordic Council of Ministers. The aim of this cooperation, which has proved to be very successful, is to illustrate Nordic nature and culture through the World Heritage sites that are promoted by the Nordic countries. However, each state is responsible for World Heritage sites in its own country.

The Agricultural Landscape of Southern Öland is the only agricultural World Heritage in the Nordic countries where land use and land division are included in a living agricultural landscape.

## **2.5 Administrative responsibilities**

The responsibility that Sweden has taken on by signing the World Heritage Convention governs the administration of the Agricultural Landscape of Southern Öland. The designation of World Heritage site does not involve any specific restrictions in land use, and there is no specific legislation applicable to any of the Swedish World Heritage sites. The values in the World Heritage site that have been identified through the nomination will be protected by applying existing laws, protection regulations and municipal plans.

The various areas within the World Heritage are governed by different laws and plans. One and the same area may also be governed by several laws, regulations and plans. The World Heritage site application gives a brief presentation of the legislation relating to the different parts of the World Heritage site. The World Heritage site is mainly governed by the Environmental Code, the Planning and Building Act and the Cultural Environment Act. Large parts of the World Heritage area are in national areas of interest for natural and cultural conservation as well as outdoor activities, which are regulated in the Swedish Environmental Code. Large areas are also included in the European network, Natura 2000. At the local level, the governing instrument is the comprehensive plan of Mörbylånga municipality and its area regulations.

## **2.6 Administrative council**

In conjunction with the submission of the World Heritage site application in 1999, a consultation group called the World Heritage Council was formed to deal with issues relating to the World Heritage. The County Administrative Board in Kalmar County, Mörbylånga municipality, the Federation of Swedish Farmers (LRF) and the Regional Union (RF) in Kalmar County are currently included on the Council.

The Administrative Council of the World Heritage Agricultural Landscape of Southern Öland is responsible for ensuring that World Heritage values are preserved and that agriculture can be carried out and developed in a financially feasible manner. The Council is also responsible for ensuring that World Heritage efforts promote local and regional development and overall policy issues. The Council is not a legal entity; its work is based on mutual agreements instead. All decisions are taken in each member organisation.

The County Administrative Board is responsible for supervision, follow-up and reporting on the World Heritage. The County Administrative Board is also responsible for maintaining and safeguarding the values of the World Heritage. Within its area of responsibility, the County Administrative Board may initiate, support and finance the development projects. The World Heritage site is a priority area for the County Administrative Board's work with the natural and cultural environment. The County Administrative Board will promote the World Heritage site in regional contexts as well as using the World Heritage to highlight the regional and national profile.



Mörbylånga municipality will safeguard, develop, clarify and make accessible the values of the World Heritage. This includes local and regional profiling and cooperation with the region as a whole. The municipality is responsible for local support and marketing. Mörbylånga municipality is the convening body for the World Heritage Council and the World Heritage working group.

The Federation of Swedish Farmers (LRF) represents many land owners who safeguard and develop the values that the World Heritage stands for. It is important that their activities can be developed in accordance with the conditions of the agricultural sector.

The land owners are responsible for the ongoing care of the World Heritage. LRF will promote the World Heritage in a regional context as well as using the World Heritage for regional and national profiling. The World Heritage will be used to show the members' history and to highlight current local, regional and national issues.

The Regional Union has the task of working for sustainable development and positive growth. The Regional Union will initiate, support, coordinate and finance development projects and promote the World Heritage brand, taking into account the unique nature of the World Heritage. The Regional Union will promote the World Heritage in a regional context as well as using the World Heritage for regional and national profiling.

## **2.7 Working group for the World Heritage**

The working group for the World Heritage will endeavour to realise the wishes and visions of the World Heritage Council. Kalmar County Museum, Linnaeus University and Kalmar County Council are participating, in addition to the parties already included in the World Heritage Council.

Kalmar County Museum provides the working group with expertise in several useful development areas within the World Heritage, such as educational methods, exhibition activities, archaeology and building care. Kalmar County museum operates Eketorp Fort, which is an important tourist destination in the World Heritage.

Linnaeus University contributes to the development of the World Heritage site through education, research and various forms of cooperation with the other actors involved. Linnaeus University can help with an international perspective on World Heritage and cultural heritage issues.

Kalmar County Council is responsible for culture in the region, starting from the national cultural policy objectives and the regional cultural plan. The cultural plan describes how regional culture can meet the needs of municipalities and civil society and present new opportunities. The cultural heritage is one of the priority areas in the cultural plan, as well as the development of cultural and creative commerce. The cultural plan supports the development of the World Heritage site in Southern Öland and cooperation between regional and local culture, the tourist industry and other commercial activities.

### 3. VISION

World Heritage Agricultural Landscape of Southern Öland.  
Agriculture interacting with nature in a living cultural heritage.  
A driving force in regional development.

#### 3.1 Development work at present

Work with the World Heritage Agricultural Landscape of Southern Öland is ongoing and currently includes:

- Living, modern and sustainable agriculture which manages and develops World Heritage values.
- Over 100 kilometres of footpaths providing access to the landscape.
- A logotype for the World Heritage Agricultural Landscape of Southern Öland.
- Information materials (online and printed) in Swedish, English and German.
- A World Heritage site coordinator employed by Mörbylånga municipality.
- Work started on creating an information centre for the World Heritage.
- A school culture plan for Mörbylånga municipality, where all pupils learn more about the World Heritage during their education.
- Continuous work on events and exhibitions.
- Publications on field boundaries in the World Heritage site based on an inventory of the 14 parishes there.
- A pilot study with the Curonian Spit in Lithuania and Russia, the Słowiński National Park in Poland, the Naval Port of Karlskrona and the EUCC in Germany, to apply for the Southern Baltic Sea Programme for developing World Heritage, cultural heritage and natural heritage.

#### 3.2 Development work 2017 - 2023

- In-depth dialogue on the development of agricultural companies and other business in relation to the World Heritage site.
- Continued work on temporary exhibitions and events.
- Making the landscape even more accessible by developing footpaths, cycle paths and riding paths.
- Continuously reviewing and developing information material such as brochures, signs, the World Heritage site's official website, etc.
- Brand building and product development – promoting and developing new products from the World Heritage.
- Work with brand building and product development for foodstuffs from the World Heritage site in accordance with the Foodstuffs Strategy for Kalmar 2016-2025.
- Increasing knowledge about the World Heritage site in schools in the region.
- Work to establish an information centre that also operates as a meeting place for the World Heritage. The information centre will work as a hub that encourages visitors into the agricultural landscape.
- Establish closer cooperation with Ottenby naturum.

#### 4. FOLLOW-UP – PERIODIC REPORTING

Periodic reporting is the model that UNESCO has developed to monitor what is happening at World Heritage sites. Periodic reporting is obligatory and shared by all World Heritage sites. It consists of a number of questions and is divided into two parts. The first part is answered by the Swedish National Heritage Board, while the second part is answered by the County Administrative Board in cooperation with those involved in the administration of the World Heritage site.

The first Periodic Report for the World Heritage Agricultural Landscape of Southern Öland was drawn up in 2012. The World Heritage Agricultural Landscape of Southern Öland is very complex. Since it is a living cultural landscape and its values are dependent on active agriculture, the question arises: How do you preserve what is inherently changing? A follow-up programme has been developed as a guide and a basis for answering the questions in the Periodic Report.





Världsarvet Södra Öland



Mörbylånga  
kommun



SYDOST



Länsstyrelsen  
Kalmar län

REGION FÖRBUNDET  
I KALMAR LÄN

