

The Nordic Clinker Boat Charter

Charter for the safeguarding of Nordic clinker boat traditions
Presented at the conference on Nordic clinker boat traditions
Roskilde and Holbæk, 21 – 22 September 2023

The Nordic steering group for the inscription of Nordic clinker boat traditions on UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity has adopted the following:

Introduction/preamble

- The Nordic clinker boat traditions are an essential part of the cultural heritage of the peoples in the Nordic countries including indigenous peoples and minorities.
- The Nordic clinker boat traditions shall be safeguarded as living cultural heritage.
- Safeguarding measures of the Nordic clinker boat traditions shall be based on the principles of UNESCO's Convention for the safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.
- Safeguarding measures for the Nordic clinker boat traditions shall be based on the UNITED Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals.
- Safeguarding measures for the Nordic clinker boat traditions as living cultural heritage shall be based on best practice through sustainability and a supportive environment.
- Parts of the Nordic clinker boat heritage are threatened. Urgent safeguarding measures with relevant resources and support must be put in place.

Aim

Article 1 Aim

The purpose of this charter is to help safeguarding Nordic clinker boat traditions as living cultural heritage.

Article 2 Guiding principles

The guiding principles for the transfer and transmission of the Nordic clinker boat traditions must be jointly designed on Nordic level. They shall contribute to the safeguarding of local clinker boat traditions with a focus on local boatbuilding craft and knowledge and practice about using the clinker boats.

Definitions

Article 3 The clinker boat

Clinker boat builders all over the region use the same basic techniques. Relatively thin planks are fastened to a backbone of keel and stems; the overlapping planks are held together with

metal rivets, treenails or lashings. The shell of the boat is stabilized and strengthened by frames. Finally, the boats are protected with varnish or other traditional products such as pine tar and linseed oil. Knowledge about the maintenance of the clinker boats is an important aspect. Today, as in the past, the shape of the boat is governed by key measurements, the builder's eye and the boat's planned use. Shape and seaworthiness are also determined by the maritime and coastal environment the boats are used in. Proximity to the right natural resources is key; boatbuilders themselves often source the trees they will use.

Article 4 Intangible culture and living tradition

Nordic clinker boat traditions are to be understood as an intangible cultural heritage. These living traditions have been passed down from generation to generation developed in the Nordic countries over several thousand years. The traditions are diverse and are adapted to local conditions and use. Today, traditional boat builders, local associations, museums, vocational schools and other communities throughout the Nordic countries pass on the knowledge of boatbuilding and use through activities such as trips, rowing, sailing, regattas, fishing and environmentally friendly outdoor activities.

Article 5 Additional knowledge

The traditional knowledge and skills of craftspeople who produce ropes, sails, metal parts, tar, hemp, linseed oil, tools and other materials needed for building or maintaining clinker boats are also parts of clinker boat traditions.

Article 6 Geographical location and range

The maritime environments, from inland waters to the open sea, from fjords to archipelagos, define the people and associated organizations which practice, organize and transmit the Nordic clinker-built traditions, in the fullest and broadest sense. These heritage bearers are to be found in Denmark, the Faroe Islands, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and Åland. Sami and Kven bearers are found in the arctic and sub-arctic areas of Finland, Norway and Sweden. While clinker boats are used all over the region, their construction and maintenance are concentrated in numerous boatyards, boathouses, workshops, boat preservation centres and museums. Clinker boat traditions similar to those in the Nordic countries can be found along the coasts of nearby countries in the Baltic and North Sea regions.

Article 7 Detailed definition in the nomination document

The main source for a comprehensive definition of Nordic clinker boat traditions can be found in the document Nordic clinker boat traditions, inscription:
"UNESCO, 16.COM 8.b., section 1. Identification and definition of the element".

Article 8 Tradition bearers as stewards of the cultural heritage

The intangible cultural heritage related to the clinker boat tradition is managed and transmitted by the bearers of the tradition and the practitioners themselves. They have the right to recognize the Nordic clinker boat traditions as part of their cultural heritage. This must form the basis on which principles for safeguarding measures are founded.

Safeguarding through use

Article 9 Safeguarding through use

The main principle for the transfer of knowledge about the Nordic clinker boat traditions is safeguarding through use.

Article 10 Traditional knowledge

The knowledge of the Nordic clinker boat traditions has been transmitted from generation to generation. This perspective will form the basis of the future work on safeguarding. As far as possible, the craft of boatbuilding and boat use must be based on traditional local knowledge.

Article 11 The market

For the tradition to live on, boat builders must be able to make a living of the building of boats. For this, commercial activities within the sector should be developed and supported. The charter shall encourage programs for sales and marketing and maintenance, thus promoting the building of more clinker-built boats and their use.

Resources, support and underlying conditions

Article 12 Resources, support and underlying conditions

To ensure best practice in promoting clinker boat traditions, local communities must be fully supported through the provision of good provenance, a clear structure, and adequate support. It should also include learning arenas such as boathouses, workshops and areas for maintenance, that provide a sound basis to acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and learning practices.

Article 13 State parties are formally responsible

According to the UNESCO Convention of Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, the state parties in the Nordic countries have the formal responsibility for taking the necessary measures to ensure the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage found on its territory. Safeguarding means here the measures to ensure the viability of the Nordic clinker boat traditions, including identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement, transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education. They must do this with the greatest possible participation from local communities, groups and individuals who create and maintain knowledge and practice related to Nordic clinker boat traditions. This applies to Nordic clinker boat traditions.

Article 14 Urgent safeguarding

Parts of the Nordic clinker boat heritage are threatened. Immediate measures with relevant resources and support must be put in place to ensure full and proper safeguarding.

Article 15 Authoritative documents

Alongside UNESCO's Convention on the protection of the intangible cultural heritage, the Nordic Clinker Boat Charter is based on the inscription of Nordic clinker boat traditions on UNESCO's representative list of humanity's intangible cultural heritage. With reference to the

document: "Nordic clinker boat traditions, inscription, UNESCO, 16.COM 8.b".

These two, the Convention and inscription text, are to be understood as the authoritative governing documents for future work on the safeguarding and management of Nordic clinker boat traditions.

Article 16 Nordic and national conservation plans

The provisions in this charter must be followed up with periodic safeguarding plans at both Nordic and national levels. Such plans must follow the state party's schedule for reporting to UNESCO. It must be made clear which measures and programs have been implemented. This, then, ensures proper safeguarding and the proper management of the Nordic clinker boat traditions under the auspices of the responsible authorities and communities.

Following persons took part in the work of the Steering group for drafting the Nordic Charter for the Safeguarding of Nordic clinker boat traditions:

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The charter is drawn up in the following Nordic languages; Danish, Finnish, Faroese, Icelandic, Swedish, Northern Sami, Norwegian and Swedish. The charter has also been translated into English and French. All versions have the same validity.

5. September 2023, The Nordic steering group for the inscription of Nordic clinker boat traditions on UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity