Letter of Support

We, the members of the board of the International Association of Timber Raftsmen (IATR), support the nomination of timber rafting for the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

The International Association of Timber Raftsmen (IATR) is the umbrella organization of 38 members associations from 12 countries in Europe and Canada. It is an essential multinational platform to exchange current experiences of timber rafting, primarily with the objective to transfer knowledge to the next generations. In summary, around 8,000 raftsmen and raftswoman are engaged in this craftsmanship in Europe and Canada.

At the General Assembly of the International Association of Timber Raftsmen (IATR) in August 2019 in Austria, member associations from all countries including those where timber rafting was not inscribed in the national inventory, were informed about the plan to submit a multinational nomination. A resolution to support this process was unanimously accepted by all members of the IATR. It was decided that all countries involved would form a working group to prepare the nomination form. The General Assembly supported the efforts of board of the IATR and the national associations of the nominating countries with personal and financial resources for a successful nomination.

The joint nomination of timber rafting highlights the benefits of international cooperation across linguistic and national boundaries. The bearers from all submitting countries support the idea of a shared heritage connecting people with various backgrounds. Its goal is to promote the international exchange of skills and experience, safeguard the element and transmit the knowledge and skills to the next generations. First of all, they will do it through their annual meetings, workshops, and festivals, considering that it is essential to pass on knowledge and skills to the generations also through international cooperation.

For more than 10 years, the nomination process has been discussed at IATR's annual international meetings. In this process, the International Association of Timber Raftsmen (IATR) is an important cultural actor in raising awareness and encouraging dialogue on intangible cultural heritage through their meetings, workshops and festivals.

The IATR Board received information on the current status of the nomination process at its regular meetings.

Bernd Kramer
Acting President

February 18th, 2021