

The Geological Heritage in Accepted and Proposed World Heritage List (WHL) Sites in Russia

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In Russia five Natural Heritage sites have been accepted in the WHL yet. All of them include following important geosites, though not in equal proportions:

1. Komi Virgin Forests WHL site (accepted in 1995) – a unique almost continuous PZ section from G_3 to P_2 with abundant and diverse fossils on the River Kozhim and the Kozhim Dome-shaped Circular Morphostructure (astrobleme?).

2. Volcanoes of Kamchatka WHL site (1996) – Avachinsky, Ichinsky, Kizimen, Kronotsky, Ksudach, Mutnovsky and other active volcanoes, the Caldera of the Uzon Volcano, the Valley of Geysers, the K_2 Volcanic Ultramafic Complex of the Valanga Ridge, etc.

3. Lake Baikal WHL site (1996) – first of all, the Lake Baikal Rift Depression, the world's largest water-filled continental rift depression (685 km long, 60 km wide, 1637 m deep), and also Olkhon Island and its environs with a great diversity of AR metamorphic and metasomatic rocks, svyatonossite bodies in the Svyatoy Nos Peninsula, and the Slyudanka Ore Mining Region.

4. Golden Mountains of Altai WHL site (1998) – the Teletskoe Lake Rift (?) Depression, East Altai Tectonic- Petrological and Kalguta Volcanic-Plutonic complexes;

5. Western Caucasus WHL site (1999) – the Vorontsovskaya Carst Cave System, the largest (15 km) and the deepest (more than 1600 m) one in Russia.

Among proposed WHL sites in Russia of most interest in terms of geology is the Green Belt of Fennoscandia owing to the great diversity of PG metamorphic complexes well exposed in the site.