Traditional Shipbuilding Techniques
Over the past few months, ICHCAP has been conducting many projects to safeguard and raise awareness about ICH in the Asia-Pacific region. First, there was the 2016 Sub-Regional Meeting for ICH Safeguarding in Northeast Asia from 10 to 12 October 2016, which was held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, to explore the role of the media in safeguarding ICH. ICHCAP, the UNESCO Beijing Office, and the Mongolian National Commission for UNESCO co-organized the meeting to deal with the topic for the first time in the sub-region. It was an opportunity for experts and media professionals from key media outlets in Northeast Asia to discuss constructing a media network in the region for safeguarding ICH and other ways of using the media in safeguarding efforts.

The participants recognized the importance of media participation and use in ICH safeguarding and proposed holding regular meetings among broadcast media professionals and actors in the ICH field and constructing interpersonal networks as part of such cooperation.

In addition, two other meetings were held to explore the role of NGOs in community-based ICH safeguarding and new challenges for NGOs in relation to the UN’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals. The 2016 South Asia Sub-Regional Meeting on NGO Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage for Sustainable Development jointly organized by ICHCAP, banglantak dot com, and the UNESCO New Delhi Office, was held in Goa, India, on 25 and 26 August with the participation of over thirty NGOs from India, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka, who shared case studies of their ICH safeguarding activities.

Over two days, the participants resolved to promote the values of ICH that contribute to achieving the sustainable development goals, such as social integration, development, and poverty alleviation. They also agreed that the ICH NGOs’ activities in South Asia should be continuously monitored to ensure that their activities make real contributions to the quality of life in communities. To this end, ICHCAP, banglanatak dot com, and the UNESCO New Delhi Office plan to jointly publish a collection of case studies from South Asian NGOs that are successfully contributing to the sustainable development of their communities.

ICHCAP hosted the 2016 Asia-Pacific ICH NGO Conference in Jeonju, Republic of Korea, from 3 to 5 November with support from the City of Jeonju and the Cultural Heritage Administration. The conference was planned as an event to discuss the role and tasks of NGOs in the relationship between ICH safeguarding and sustainable development. Four group sessions on the respective topics of ‘Forming Discourses on ICH Safeguarding’, ‘Education and Awareness-Raising on ICH’, ‘Urban Renewal and Community Development’, and ‘Cultural Industry and Sustainable Tourism’ were held, during which over fifty NGOs of the Asia-Pacific region shared case studies of their activities and the direction for future development. Participants put forth the opinion that the conference should become a regular event to strengthen the solidarity among NGOs and share information on ICH safeguarding.

With respect to the premise that ICH contributes to the sustainable development of communities, in this issue of the ICH Courier, we look at maritime culture of the Asia-Pacific region, specifically examining traditional shipbuilding techniques that have helped sustain Asia-Pacific communities for millennia. Through these examples, we can see how shipwrights have used available resources to develop unique shipbuilding skills and designs.
The Role of the Media in Raising Awareness about ICH

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The Asia-Pacific region has been called a treasure house of ICH because of the region’s diverse heritage and rich cultural environment. However, economic and social change in the region has been threatening the survival of ICH. With younger generations abandoning traditional knowledge and ways of life for more modern or western approaches, it has become necessary to rethink the role of the media to promote ICH as a mode of sustainable development. To examine this issue, ICHCAP held the 2016 Sub-regional Meeting for Intangible Cultural Heritage Safeguarding in Northeast Asia in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, from 10 to 12 October 2016. During the meeting, representatives from the broadcasting field, government bodies, and NGOs shared their visions on the role of the media in raising awareness about ICH and the 2003 Convention. As a representative of academia, my presentation was on the use of broadcasting media for raising awareness about the importance of ICH.

I stressed the relationship between intangible culture and identity as well as common experiences and communities. One example I gave on these relationships was aitysh, which was inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2015. Aitysh, a cultural heritage element of Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, is a contest centered on improvised oral poetry spoken or sung to the accompaniment of traditional musical instruments. The performer must have demonstrated musical skills, rhythm, originality, resourcefulness, wisdom, and wit. The most meaningful and witty expressions in aitysh often become popular sayings. Today, aitysh is a very popular cultural component in the multi-ethnic societies of Kyrgyz and Kazakh and constitutes a vital part of the identity of bearer communities. Interestingly, the knowledge and skills older performers teach and transmit to younger generations used to be aired on radio and television, and the audience could indirectly learn and share a common experience. Through this media experience, people can join imagined communities, which could be as large as the nation. And this idea is related to Benedict Anderson’s observation that a nation is imagined because “the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the images of their communion” (1983, 5). This process of imagining nations into existence or reproducing their legitimacies have been possible mostly by the use of highly developed communication tools and systems. Broadcasting in contemporary society takes on a significant role of connecting culture and people.
Few things exist as paradoxically as ICH does. While ICH is an identifier of humankind in that it taps into the spiritual and diverse nature of what it means to be human, the immaterialness of ICH also makes it highly vulnerable to damage and extinction because it isn’t something that can be seen or touched. In examining this paradox, one of the central discussions has revolved around ways of making the immaterial spirituality of ICH visible, which will allow us to be more aware of ICH. In this context, different media present the greatest potential. Audiovisual media may be the most ideal because it allows viewers to more concretely experience ICH.

The Convention calls on States Party to endeavor, by all appropriate means, to raise awareness about ICH to improve safeguarding efforts. Among these are educational, awareness-raising, and information programs aimed at keeping the public informed of the dangers threatening ICH and of the activities being carried out in pursuance of the Convention. Based on these calls to action, an initial draft of directives on raising awareness was proposed at the third session of the Intergovernmental Committee in 2008. However, the draft was criticized for not adequately reflecting the original intentions of the agenda and for being biased toward the roles and activities of the states. The General Assembly responded by requesting that the Secretariat consult with various actors on raising the visibility of ICH. The Secretariat then drafted a fifteen-question survey on raising awareness about ICH to collect the opinions of States Party and NGOs.

The revised directives reflecting these responses were once again discussed at the fourth session of the Intergovernmental, which was held in 2009 in Abu Dhabi. The revised directives were adopted by the General Assembly in June 2010 and put into Chapter IV, “Raising Awareness about Intangible Cultural Heritage and Use of the Emblem of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage,” of the Operational Directives.

The directives present guidelines for the following measures for raising awareness about ICH:
- formal and non-formal education measures
- community centers, associations, museums, archives, and other similar entities
- communications and media
- commercial activities related to intangible heritage

All four measures encourage the use of audiovisual media content, and such usage is more specifically detailed in the Communications and Media section, which also emphasizes the production of quality television and radio programs as well as documentaries to spread information. However, the directives also caution about the dangers of using the media, requesting that parties take care to ensure that they do not decontextualize or denaturalize the ICH, disparage the concerned communities, groups, or individuals concerned for not participating in contemporary life; or cause harm by spreading incorrect or distorted information. In the same vein, the question of whose perspective to take in understanding and representing ICH is an important issue that should continue to be considered and discussed.

The addressable objectives of the media and ICH in making a tight cooperative relationship are solidarity, cooperation, and communication. The four key agents involved with ICH—UNESCO, governments, civil society, and communities—should agree and promise to sustain organic solidarity and regular communication via the media. Consequently, I would suggest practical levels that have different strategies to accomplish the objectives. The first involves short-term strategies to build up mutual communication windows is important. At the next level are two sub-goals—special production and programming and digital archiving of ICH. Co-producing the projects and negotiating matters related to potential conflicts, such as copyrights and patents, are also significant goals to move on to the next level, and the key agents should collaborate to achieve this. Finally, constructing permanent organization for regular ICH programs would increase the participation at the individual, group, and community levels as well as an international level. As much as is practically possible, broadcasting programs should be widely distributed because stable distribution and production will influence the long-term production and discovering potential of ICH and help build toward sustainable ICH safeguarding.

References

In fact, mass communication and mass media has changed our lives. Due to the digital revolution, we do not feel the gap of time and space. Everywhere is connected by the Internet, and the information and intangible contents accessed through multiple channels dominate our cultural experience, like the global village. McLuhan (1962) described. During the middle of the twentieth century, television was the most powerful medium because it was available anytime and everywhere and delivered everything. Television easily dominated social attention and affected society in many ways. Information and knowledge that was once acquired through reading books changed to watching television—television became teacher, entertainer, and important messenger.

In terms of education, knowledge, information, tradition, cultural life, and communication, the media and ICH share a number of commonalities, and they both need a cooperative relationship. When the media operates as a communication tool, it has synergetic effects, as described in the list below:

- When the media helps us understand ICH, people can understand different cultures.
- When the media educates people about ICH, it is a form entertainment.
- Finding possible means of safeguarding ICH ultimately saves traditional values.
- When the media encourages people to appreciate ICH and participate in safeguarding ICH, it creates a greater sense of familiarity that can help eradicate cultural conflicts in the future.
- Inheriting ICH values saves our identity and humanity.
- The media help us discover the potential ICH has as an agent in creating sustainable futures for the next generation.

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Introduction: Conflicting Heritage Narratives

Social media has become a powerful means to record and disseminate global intangible cultural heritage (ICH). YouTube specifically provides an avenue for a range of users to distribute ICH videos on this commercial platform. YouTube is essentially designed to monetize the labor and communication of users through algorithms and business models. With the aim of making corporate profits, this platform simultaneously offers a social service by distributing diverse ICH representations in video format. In light of the paradox of disseminating ICH on a commercial platform, the issue is raised as to whether YouTube’s diffusion of heritage videos transmits community expressions of ICH that are not recognized by nation-states. Communities produce ICH within the boundaries of nations, yet the practices of given communities may be excluded from national heritage narratives. The narratives addressed here are those that have been put forward by state representatives through UNESCO. Since 2003, UNESCO has safeguarded ICH through the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (Convention). This research is approached through the case study of the Mevlevi Sema (Whirling Dervish Ceremony) of Turkey, recognized as official ICH by UNESCO in 2005. Representatives of the Turkish state safeguard the Sema as a practice that is linked to Sunni Islam and performed in public ceremonies only by men. This national safeguarding renders the Sema a political tool to realize the ruling government’s nationalist agenda of privileging Sunni Islam above other religious affiliations (Aykan, 2012). This safeguarding through the Convention leads to the exclusion of other Sema communities, particularly a community known as the Foundation of Universal Lovers of Mevlana Jelaluddin Rumi (EMAV), which has allowed women to perform in public ceremonies since 1993 (Pietrobruno, 2014).

Social Media and Heritage: Theoretical Issues

The countering of official ICH through the dissemination of community expressions arises because YouTube archives ICH videos uploaded by UNESCO as well as other institutions, individuals, and communities. The storing of UNESCO and user-generated ICH videos is creating informal and dynamic archives that are constantly changing in accordance with user-generated content and algorithms. Despite this continuous fluctuation, certain videos remain at the top of a search engine results page (SERP) over time. Social archiving can call into question the UNESCO-sanctioned narratives of intangible heritage advanced by national governments through the stories transmitted in user-generated videos, metadata, and posted texts. This archiving can further challenge national heritage stories by positioning specific videos on shifting lists as well as stable lists assembled by search engines through algorithms and user-generated input. The theorizing of YouTube as an archive and the role that narratives play in this archiving draws from media archaeology work on the digital archive (Chun, 2012; Ernst, 2012; Parikka, 2011) and on the role of narrative in the digital archive (Hayles, 2012).

YouTube’s capacity to counteract UNESCO-supported narratives of ICH nevertheless yields to the politics of code. This platform is under the authority of algorithms and policies that Google designs to convert the labor and social interaction of users into corporate profits. Google does not disclose the ranking algorithms that structure the tabulation of YouTube videos under different search terms. Yet some details are rendered explicit. For instance, videos on YouTube are
generally ranked in accordance with their performance as determined through user-generated content and activities, including watch time, view count, comments, and relevance of textual information or metadata. Videos whose metadata correspond to the search term have a better chance of being included on the first SERP. The metadata that are connected to a video is fundamental, as YouTube's ranking algorithms are not capable of listening to or watching videos. Because sounds and images are not discernible to crawlers, textual information is deployed by crawlers to index videos. Google's algorithms are hierarchical and generally privilege the more popular uploaders in their ranking mechanisms. Videos can rank higher as promoted videos via paid searches, which are linked to keywords in search queries (Van Dijck, 2013: 116, 117). The deployment of algorithms created by Google joins forces with user-generated content and user communication to structure the ranking of videos under specific search terms. Through this process, the YouTube distribution of ICH content under given search terms fosters a diversity of heritage videos that are continuously changing rank in accordance with algorithms and user-generated content. Analyzing the continuous shifting of ICH videos over time is inspired by a methodology put forward by Christine Hine in Virtual Ethnography (Hine, 2000). A selection of these videos also prevails at the top of a SERP in accordance with the hierarchical structure of YouTube's ranking. Analyses of videos at the top of SERPs show that search engines create cultural hierarchies by privileging the heritage perspectives that have been put forward by dominant heritage organizations, including UNESCO (Rogers, 2013: 86). Analyzing ICH videos at the top of SERPs is inspired by a methodology put forward by Richard Rogers in Digital Methods (Rogers, 2013).

UNESCO videos of community expressions combine with videos from a variety of sources potentially challenge official ICH narratives. This possible challenge emerges through the visual content of videos. Images in videos offer an evasion of corporate surveillance whose algorithms may be reinforcing the ranking of official social media. Arguments have been made that the top of SERPs (Rogers, 2013) as well as YouTube (Fuchs, 2014) cannot produce a diversity of content.

**Content of videos or the actual stories recounted through images can challenge dominant heritage narratives.**

Heritage institutions at the top of SERPs. This research demonstrates that the content of videos or the actual stories recounted through images can challenge dominant heritage narratives by escaping to a certain extent the ranking and sorting performed by the algorithms of YouTube's search engine. As mentioned, visual data are invisible to search engines, which rely on metadata to classify and rank videos on YouTube. Therefore, the flow of data on YouTube, which brings audiences into contact with images that can evade the indexing of search engines, may become part of the narratives forged by audiences as they find meaning in the juxtaposition of images and texts that can counter dominant heritage narratives. That the content of videos, such as the ICH of Mevlevi Sema communities, can counter official and dominant representations of ICH, such as the one put forward by the Turkish nation-state through UNESCO, disproves claims made in contemporary analyses of search engines and social media. Arguments have been made that the top of SERPs (Rogers, 2013) as well as YouTube (Fuchs, 2014) cannot produce a diversity of content.

**Methodology: Combining Theory, History, Ethnography, and Digital Methods**

The methodology of this research combines critical heritage with performance studies, media studies, and software studies as well as historical and contemporary analyses of the Sema. Theoretical and historical approaches are interconnected with ethnographic work conducted in 2012 on the EMAV community in Istanbul (Pietrobruno, 2013), interviews with UNESCO heritage practitioners (2012, 2015), ongoing virtual ethnographies of YouTube Sema videos, and analyses of the SERPs of YouTube Sema videos conducted during interrupted periods since 2012.

**Conclusion: YouTube, Intangible Cultural Heritage, and Politics**

This research interconnects culture and politics in the arena of intangible heritage and social media. It further demonstrates how the ranking of dominant national ICH videos, which are maintained through technical protocols on a mainstream platform, can be challenged. In the case study of the Sema, the algorithms designed to monetize user communication privilege videos that feature dominant ICH institutions by stabilizing their position at the top of SERPs as well as recirculating them more extensively in shifting list patterns. Despite this privileging of official representations of the Sema that promote the practice as one exclusively performed by men, an in-depth analysis of the actual content of Sema videos, even ones that rank at the top of SERPs, reveals alternative community expressions: women performing alongside men in public performances. Such expressions counter dominant ICH representations put forward by nation-states through UNESCO.

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Traditional craft skills and ingenuity have always been influenced by the environmental resources available to a given community. In this issue of the *ICH Courier*, we explore how traditional craftspeople in Japan, the Philippines, Indonesia, and the Solomon Islands developed their own unique shipbuilding skills and designs by using the resources available to them.
Pinisi: The Art of Indonesian Shipbuilding

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S
ince times immemorial, Indonesia’s seas have been natural crossroads of migration, communication and commerce. Human conquest of the Pacific began here millennia ago and unified seafaring and trade among diverse peoples and cultures into a cultural zone once known as the Malay world. The vehicles powering these developments were the *perahu*, the countless types of indigenous sailing vessels, the legacy of the perhaps most sophisticated maritime traditions of our world. Indonesian sailing vessels are classified by two terms, one for the rig and sails and another for shape and type of the hull. The *pinisi* (**p**eenesek), which today epitomizes Indonesian perahu shipping, refers only to the vessel’s rigging, a sail-plan of seven to eight sails recalling the western schooner-ketch that came into use by the end of the nineteenth century. Yet, a pinisi’s hull would be constructed following traditions that contravene modern western naval architecture: It is not assembled around a framework sheathed with planks, but built as a shell of planks connected to one another with wooden dowels, into which frames are only later inserted. One could call the pinisi a hybrid vessel, were it not the truly indigenous arrangement and handling of the sails, the two long rudder blades that substitute the single central rudder used on western ships, and the harmony of hull and sail plan that mark the pinisi as a type of its own.

Still today, pinisi are constructed in the villages of Tana Beru and Ara, for centuries a main hub of shipbuilding on the southern coast of Sulawesi, an island in the center of the archipelago. Here, the age-old art of indigenous shell-first assembly developed into sophisticated blueprints that pre-determine arrangements, lengths, and forms of the many planks needed, establish the positions of the hundreds of dowels used to fit the planks together, and precise the places where frames will be inserted. When the first local vessels were to be rigged as pinisi, the modified schooner sails were set on hulls constructed by a plan called *tatta tallu* (three-times-cut) enlarged by additional plank-stakes. However, the stepped bow and overhanging aft deck of the resulting *lopi* (ship) *salompong* are in more or less the same style already found on portrayals of Indonesian ships recorded by the first western intruders: the shipwrights continued a centuries-old tradition, now modified to produce the sharper form of a *salompong palari* (running salompong) that could better handle the driving power of the new sails. Sometime in the late 1930s, the people of Ara developed a new pattern for the pinisi, the ‘four-times-cut, allowing for larger hulls with a more flexible plank pattern that avoided the salompong “step” on the bows and better integrated the aft-deck, the genuine palari.

Today, true pinisi are all but gone. In the 1970s the once biggest fleet of sailing merchantmen left in this world was motorized, and soon the pinisi’s sails became a mere support for the engine. With increasingly bigger engines, the canvas was reduced in size, and by the end of the 1980s the mizzen masts of the few remaining ships were removed, thus rescinding the very definition of the ships’ name. Using many big sails requires many hands, and in modern times labor and wages have become more important factors, even in seemingly traditional economies. Today, the picturesque vessels available for holiday charters, which are marketed as ‘pinisi’ due to some obscure pronunciation issues, carry masts much too short to move the ship with sails alone. Almost none of these ships use the genuine palari because an engine requires proper fastenings for its propeller-shaft and midship rudder, features the traditional sailing hull cannot provide. An alternative became the *lambo*, a square-sterned hull that copies European designs developed in the 1930s for small, sloop-rigged (nude) traders that would carry a central rudder. However, patterns used to construct a lambo are not overly different to those used to build a palari or salompong: To achieve a technically sound structure, positions of dowels, planks, and frames have to be defined before the building process commences, while form and sizes may vary, the applied routines use the same concepts, terminologies, and solutions.

Unquestionably, the complexity of these approaches mark the art of Indonesian shipbuilding, and their very adaptability helped such traditions survive into our computerized age. The biggest vessels recently built in southern Sulawesi reached lengths of over fifty meters with cargo capacities of a thousand metric tons, yet alongside these leviathans were small *pajala* (net-fishing boats) constructed according to the tatta tallu pattern. As demonstrated by comparable patterns for positioning dowels and arranging a hull’s planks on two recently found shipwrecks of the seventh and the ninth centuries CE, such procedures must have also governed the construction of the sailing craft depicted on the Borobudur: The construction of a seagoing vessel has always involved highly specialized knowhow and sophisticated cognitive efforts, the very substance of intangible heritage.

A pinisi lying off the bridge at Tonrang, South Sulawesi, c. 1937 © Koninklijk Nederlandsch Indisch Archief

An eighth century Indonesian ship, depicted on panel 1.86 on the Borobudur Temple © Horst Liebner
Lepa: The Sea as Home

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As sea gypsies, the Sama Dilaut of the Philippines are known for living on the sea throughout most of the year. Part of the Sama ethnic group of Southeast Asia, they crisscrossed the islands of the coral triangle until recently when they chose more permanent settlements along the coast.

The Sama’s decision to live among the waves can be traced to the end of the last Ice Age when the rising sea levels provided opportunities to traverse the eastern Pacific on houseboats. It was a long tradition that touched the lives of the forefathers of some of today’s Southeast Asians.

In Tawi-Tawi, Sitangkai, and the Sulu Islands, the houseboat is called lepa and is considered one of the most beautiful traditional boats of the Philippines. The lepa is the most complex of the buggoh-dugout boats, which can be paddled for sturgeon or poling by fishermen to get them to areas where they spearfish or dive. Buggoh construction differs from that of other boats in that the ends of the planking at the prow (munda) and stern (buli) are attached to end blocks (tuja) rather than to stem posts.

The lepa, designed to navigate shallow waters and to accommodate families living on the sea, ranges from 9 to 15 meters long and 1.5 to 2.2 meters wide. The primary resource used in constructing the lepa is the Teak tree (Tectona grandis). Different parts of the lepa are made from specific parts of the tree. The side of the felled tree that hits the ground is used to make the hull. The buttress root is carved to make the prow, and the treetop to make the stern.

A shallow dugout, called tadas or lunas, serves as the keel, and it is wider than any one of the strakes. It is flat in the center and curves vertically towards the prow and stern blocks. The parts of the upper hull come from the tree trunk. Because the hull tapers smoothly toward both ends, it is necessary for the bow and stern ends of the tadas to be demounted mast that goes to the forward deck. The Y posts and roofing can be removed when sailing. For some lepa with permanent housing structures, the hull is integrated into the roofing.

Other lepa adornments include thwarts with ornately carved ends that protrude upward beyond the hull on the fore and aft, as well as Y-shaped branches on their upper surface to hold poles, fishing spears, masts, and other paraphernalia. Presently, very few Sama communities in Southeast Asia live in the lepa (Abrahamsson & Schagatay, 2014).

References


Ancestral Voyaging Canoe

A completed tepuke on display at the Ethnological Museum Berlin CC BY SA 3.0 Bin im Garten

Pepena Vaka o Lata: Building Our Ancestral Voyaging Canoe

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Around four thousand years ago, Austronesian-speaking people sailed from Taiwan into the greater Pacific. A thousand years later, they were the first people to land in Vanuatu and Tonga. Then these Austronesian voyagers mixed with Papuan populations in what is now Papua New Guinea, and those people later became the Polynesian voyagers. Evidence now suggests that the extent of Austronesian and Polynesian voyaging was greater than once thought, ranging from Madagascar to Brazil—over two-thirds around the globe. The seafaring vessels of the greatest human migration ever made.

However, when the Europeans colonized the Pacific, the ancient voyaging networks and traditional shipbuilding practices collapsed. But no practical or affordable technology has ever replaced them. Then after over forty years of near isolation, the Polynesian people of Taumako in the southeast Solomon Islands made themselves a new voyaging canoe. Young Taumakans began to make the designs and use the methods, tools, and materials of their ancestors. During the last twenty years, they completed three tepuke and three te alo lili.

The building processes the Taumakans employ today are based on the ones that their ancestors used in building tepuke. Each step in the building process is based on extensive knowledge of marine environments, materials, tools, and culture. One learns to build this vessel experientially as key measurements and methods are not written down. They are shown and executed in practice and cannot be learned by studying words.

Community, Resources, and Culture

The tepuke building process is a community endeavor that incorporates many traditional food rituals. As such, before building even begins, the community plants seven to ten large gardens to grow food, which will be eaten as part of the daily feasting rituals. It is only after the gardens are ready that the builders begin their work.

First they collect coconut husks and soak them in tidal sand before pounding and gathering fibers. When fibers are ready, they are twisted and braided into different cordage that will later be used for lashing. The bark of hau trees (Hibiscus tilia-ceus) are cut into strips and twisted into lines for rigging and hauling.

Before felling a tree for the hull, the builders wait for the Te Ube bird to choose the right tree. Once the tree is selected, it is felled and barked, and the workers roughly shape the main hull. When it is ready, a hundred people join together and chant while hauling the hull to the shore. When they arrive, they have a feast. To protect their work and themselves from sun and rain, the Taumakans build a roof over the partially constructed tepuke. And with the hull in place near the sea, it is dug out to a thickness of two-thirds around the globe. The seafaring vessels of the greatest human migration ever made.

When the crossbeams, end risers and outrigger platforms are in place, the builders install the primary connectives (hakatu), secondary connectives (aukauni), and primary floats (utongi and ama). Attaching the primary connectives involves driving two pairs of sticks into the crossbeams and primary floats while the primary floats are connected to the outrigger platform frames. The secondary connectives connect the floats to the outrigger platform frames. The horizontal stringer (opoula) connects the crossbeam to the float ends strut.

The next few steps involve a lashing with the builders first lashing the riser box parts together by cutting holes in the vertical ends of the taupou, matai, and papalova. After that, they use the hakatu connectives to lash the ama floats to the crossbeam.

The women use sago leaves to make the leaf panels for the roof and walls of the tepuke housing unit (haehale). To erect the haehale, the builders lash the wedge-shaped Betle wood frame to the kaete.

After the haehale is in place, the builders make and attach nine windlasses. Four hold the crossbeams to the hull, three hold the riser box, and two span the crossbeam outboard and under the platforms. While the windlasses are being installed, the children pound coconut husks to make caulking, which is then later used with breadfruit sap putty for waterproofing. The final step in preparing the tepuke body is for the builders to carve a figure of the Te Ube bird in the moamoa.

The finishing touches involve sewing the sail panels together to create the full sail (te la), cutting the sail mast, and running the rigging lines as well as installing the steering blades with a smaller one for the floats and a bigger one for the hull. The final product is then put through vigorous testing before being delivered.

Sailing at sunset © The Vaka Taumako Project
The history of ships in the Japanese archipelago begins with rafts and logboats (hollowed boats), which developed into semi-built-up ships made by connecting planks to a hull, and further into built-up ships made solely of planks. Strong aspirations for larger ships and advancements in lumbering and shipbuilding techniques made it possible for this gradual development. However, it was in no way a linear development.

Throughout the archipelago, ships of various forms and in different stages of this evolutionary development were in use alongside each other until recently. Small wooden boats that were used for inshore fishing, in particular, displayed regional characteristics and took on diverse styles to match the features of each region, such as coastal topology, the roughness of the waves and currents, fishing methods and types of catches, and the availability and characteristics of natural boat materials.

Small wooden boats were mostly made by dedicated craftsmen called funadaiku (shipwright). These shipwrights differed fundamentally from homebuilders in that they needed special skills to create watertight and curvilinear constructions. Producing curves required the most experience. With logboats and some semi-built-up ships, curves were produced by gouging the wood to make dugouts, but as ships became more structured, curves construction required skills to bend the wooden planks. The most common method of bending planks involved using heat and steam. Flames and steam were directly applied to a plank while the shipwright gently bent it in the desired direction using the force of a heavy weight or vice. The bow of the boat in particular required the most advanced skills and experience as the left and rights sides had to have symmetrical twisted curves. To increase watertightness, shipwrights used a basic procedure to press the connection of two planks closely together, such as by sawing down the joints where the two planks meet to eliminate any unevenness and evenly tapping their edges with a hammer to bring them closer together. Incidentally, with this method, the compressed parts swell by absorbing moisture, and thus make the joins even more watertight. There were also methods in which ship nails were used to connect the planks, particularly in the Seto Inland Sea area where the technique is said to have originated. A related method involves connecting planks with rivets and wooden plugs and sealing them with lacquer, as characteristically seen in the western coastal areas of Japan. Additionally, for connections with the ship’s bottom and other parts that especially required watertightness, shipwrights employed creative measures, such as beating cypress or podocarpus bark to soften it into a fabric oakum that could be packed on the inside.

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The tarai-bune was invaluable to inshore fishing in the western coastal areas, such as in Niigata, Toyama, and Ishikawa prefectures, because it was able to make sharp turns in reef areas, displayed high stability, and was lightweight and inexpensive. However, it now exists only on Niigata’s Sado Island. The techniques for making taru (tubs) is similar to those applied to the boat, such that planks are connected with bamboo nails and tightened with a truss hoop to firmly fix them. However, while grained planks with excellent watertightness are used in the same manner as tubs, the tub boats incorporate additional creative measures. That is, the water-resistant heart side (the inner side of the tree) is faced inward in the case of tubs, but it faces outward in the case of tub boats. Today, the tub boats take visitors on sightseeing tours and are an important tourism resource in Sado. The city also plays a central role in holding craftsmen training courses and tub boat competitions and otherwise making efforts to promote the technical tradition and strengthen social recognition of the tub boats.

These techniques and skills were rapidly lost when plastic boats became popular in the late 1960s, and the number of shipwrights also decreased dramatically. A survey on the whereabouts of shipwrights conducted by the Toba Sea Folk Museum (Mie Prefecture) in 2002 reported the presence of roughly 170 people with shipbuilding skills (including retirees), but it is assumed that the number has further decreased over the past fifteen years. In this context, Japanese shipbuilding techniques in the Tsugaru-kaikyo Strait and surrounding areas and the tarai-bune (tub boat) ship building techniques of Ogi, Niigata Prefecture, were designated as Important Intangible Folk Cultural Properties (Folk Techniques) in 2006 and 2007, respectively, as the first shipbuilding techniques to be so designated, in the ongoing effort to pass on the techniques to future generations.
A Community Safeguarding Its Living Heritage, Lkhon Khol

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On the east bank of the Mekong River about fifteen kilometers from Phnom Penh is Wat Svay Andet, a Buddhist monastic community mainly supported by two villages, Ta Skor and Pean Ek of Veal-em District, Kandal Province. Wat Svay Andet is home to lkhon khol, a kind of theatre with recitation in which actors are all males, wear lacquer masks, and perform only scenes from Reamker, a Cambodian version of the Sanskrit Ramayana epic. This dance drama is accompanied by pinpeat, a traditional orchestra of percussion instruments. Although the dance is performed by villagers, the costumes and ornaments are as magnificent as those of classical court dance.

Based on epigraphic studies, scholars believe that Lkhon khol originated from the Khmer theater. It is a form of dramatic entertainment with a narrative told by reciter and has existed since the Angkor period (9–14 centuries CE). Although lkhon khol has also survived in other places and sometimes with different names, the lkhon khol of Wat Svay Andet has been preserved with its own unique application that has been firmly integrated into local tradition and has played important and inseparable roles in daily life of the community. It is performed once a year, shortly after the rice harvest season.

Traditionally, the lkhon khol is transmitted orally within a family and through informal master-apprentice relationships. Community leaders, masters, and the temple patriarch also encourage younger generations to learn lkhon khol skills to ensure that the art form remains part of the community’s living cultural practice.

Apprentices have historically learned their preferential skills at their masters’ house at night, a time they were free from their agriculture work. While the same practice continues, recently amateurs are learning their art skills in groups during the day on Sundays or occasionally Thursday at the temple compound.

Past and Current Efforts to Safeguard the Community’s Living Heritage

Although the community has been strong in its struggle to safeguard their living heritage, Lkhon khol is also able to survive today through the joint support of the royal palace, the state, individuals, and local and international organizations. Before the decade of war (1970s), the Svay Andet dance troop was connected to and partly supported by the royal palace, which lent all dance costumes, ornaments, and masks. During the war years, all performances were stopped. As of the early 1980s, the few masters who survived the Khmer Rouge regime gathered and tried to commence their tradition again. The performance was then supported by villagers and temples, and the then Ministry of Culture lent costumes.

In 2000, UNESCO donated a set of pinpeat, costumes, and masks and built a dance stage for the community since the village’s dance hall was in poor condition and later fell into the river. There was also some support from an NGO called Good Fund to repair musical instruments and offer some compensation to masters. Today, however, the costumes and masks UNESCO provided are in bad condition, and the dance hall is occupied by local villagers, who have no land on which to live.

In 2016, the performance space was moved inside the temple compound with the stage covered by temporary plastic tent. The community’s dance drama has caught the attention of both local and international researchers, so it has been documented, and many books and articles have been produced. And various parties have been promoting initiatives to keep the tradition alive. The dance drama has been engaged in the temple and during state events to promote the art form and keeps the performers physically and psychologically dynamic. Fundraising will take place to build the dance stage. The state will allocate a budget to contribute to the troop’s costumes and masks.

Conclusion

The safeguarding and promotion initiatives of the community and the government are not enough to ensure the viability of Lkhon khol. The influence of globalization leads people, especially the young, to be more excited with new forms of entertainment, which can result in the loss of traditional art forms. In addition, the performances produce no income, so would-be performers opt to engage in other activities to earn a living. Without a sustained mechanism, which requires resources and financial support, safeguarding initiatives will be difficult to implement. Therefore, the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts is cooperating with the community and relevant organizations to nominate the Lkhon khol of Wat Svay Andet for inscription on UNESCO’s ICH lists. This inscription would open opportunities of receiving financial support and thus would guarantee the well-being of the community’s living heritage.
Folkland, International Centre for Folklore and Culture is a nonprofit NGO devoted to promoting folklore and culture. Headquartered in Kerala in southwestern India, Folkland has three main centers and several chapters in India and associations with other organizations abroad through MOUs and collaborative partnerships. Folkland has been affiliated with the UNESCO ICH sector since 2010.

Folkland envisions a society that respects cultural heritage by conserving arts and cultural traditions and transmitting them to future generations. As such, Folkland is proudly dedicated to promoting Indian culture and values with a focus on intangible cultural heritage. The center provides access to knowledge and information about intangible cultural heritage and is known for promoting indigenous culture that inspires audiences to explore the cultural and artistic heritage of Kerala.

The main domains covered by Folkland are performing arts; oral traditions and expressions; social practices, rituals, and festivals; and traditional crafts. Folkland documents oral traditions and practices and extends training to younger generations to revitalize old and near-extinct traditional art forms. One ICH element of particular interest to Folkland is tolpaavakoothu (shadow puppetry).

### Tolpavakoothu

Originating in the ninth century BCE, tolpavakoothu is a form of shadow puppetry involving leather puppets. Tol means “leather,” pava means “puppet,” and koothu means “play” in the Malayalam language. The figures or characters of the play are made from leather, and the performance takes place by projecting these leather puppets’ shadows on a white screen in koothumadams (traditional temple theaters).

The tolpaavakoothu storyline is adapted from the Kamba Ramayanam epic, which recounts the life and battles of King Rama of Ayodhya. The play is presented in twenty-one episodes spread over twenty-one days. According to legend, tolpaavakoothu was first performed on the request of Goddess Bhadrakali who could not witness the war between Rama and Ravavana as she was engaged in slaying the demon Darika. To propitiate Goddess Bhadrakali, tolpavakoothu is performed as a temple ritual, and devotees believe that their goddess watches the performance and is pleased by it.

### Making the Puppets

Tolpavakoothu puppets were traditionally made with deerskin, but now goatskin is often used for this purpose. After stretching and drying the animal skin, the puppet makers remove all the hair on the skin by scraping the surface with a sharp-edged piece of bamboo. The puppet maker then draws figures on the skin, cuts them out, and embellishes them with dots, lines, and holes to create ornamentation and different dress designs.

Using natural dyes, the puppet makers decorate the puppets in different colors. Traditional red, magenta, and yellow dyes are made by boiling tree bark. Black dyes come from mixing tree gum and black soot, which is drawn from a coconut oil lamp. Blue dyes made by boiling tree leaves in water while green dyes are prepared from the juice of tree leaves.
After the dyes are dry, the puppets are fastened to thin strip of bamboo. Some puppets are given movable joints. For some of the more important characters, like Rama, the puppet makers create puppets in more than one pose. So some characters might be shown in sitting, walking, and fighting postures.

**Practitioners and Transmitters**

Artists of tolpaavakoothu are from traditional families. The master of a tolpaavakoothu troupe is called pulavar, which means “scholar.” The pulavar prepares the performance text and pass it on to the next generation. Since the text is a mixture of Ramayana and other literature taken from oral traditions and written knowledge, the prose and verse of tolpaavakoothu is called adalppatt, where adal means “acting” and patt “joining together.” Performers are at liberty to add lib by adding additional stories to convey moral values during their performance. Many of the basic performance texts are written on palm leaf manuscripts that are preserved in the homes of the puppeteers. To illustrate and interpret the meaning of the verses, tolpaavakoothu performers used to add stories, episodes, explanations, and dialogues.

Puppeteers learn the tolpaavakoothu narrative by heart and teach it to their disciples who, in turn, learn and transmit it to the coming generation. In the oral texts, each performer shows his originality and alters or elaborates earlier versions and interpretations, depending on his caliber and wisdom. The verses are recited at precise moments during the performance and in a tone and accent that fully bring out the feelings and thoughts of the characters shown in the screen.

**Folkland Safeguarding Tolpaavakoothu**

Folkland’s main safeguarding measures include safeguarding tolpaavakoothu puppetry traditions by identifying and inventorying the traditions in Kerala as well as introducing promotional activities.

**Inventorying**

As part of its inventorying efforts, Folkland conducted a detailed survey of koothumadams spread over the Palakkad, Thrissur, and Malappuram districts of Kerala. Out of the 108 koothumadams that once existed in these districts, only 80 survive, and some these art forms are fast deteriorating due to the low patronage levels. The inventory prepared by Folkland contains an itemized list of the puppets and manuscripts that the tolpaavakoothu artistes have as well as a detailed list of practitioners.

**Promotional Activities**

Folkland believes that without promotional activities, tolpaavakoothu traditions will be extinct within a few years. Accordingly, Folkland has started promotional activities both inside and outside of India. Folkland has organized festivals in several cities in India, such as Mysore, Chennai, Bhopal, and in other places like Kasargod, Kanhangad, Payyanur, and Edayilekkad. Other activities include bringing tolpaavakoothu practitioners to international events and festivals, such as the China International Folk Crafts & Cultural Products Festival in Guizhou, China, and the Myungju Puppet Festival in Gangneung, Republic of Korea.

**Transmission, Training, and Revitalization**

Folkland understands that art forms that are in the verge of extinction can survive only by transmitting the traditions from one generation to the next. As such, Folkland has organized workshops to pass on the knowledge to the new generation of practitioners. As part of these efforts, Folkland collaborated with several schools and colleges to introduce puppetry into the school curriculum to expose students to tolpaavakoothu.

Further efforts to sustain and revitalize tolpaavakoothu are initiated by Folkland by extending to training younger generations in the art of puppet making, techniques to manipulate the puppets on screen, and narrative styles required to perform. Folkland has approached several agencies, including the Ministry of Culture, the Sangeeth Natak Academy (the top body of performing arts under the Ministry of Culture), the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (another top-level cultural institution under the Ministry of Culture), and the Centre for Cultural Resources and Training, to provide art education and scholarships to the children of puppeteers.

As a result of Folkland’s efforts, more puppeteers are entering into this art form. After the death of the renowned artist K.L. Krishnankutty pulavar, his three sons—Ramachandran pulavar, Viswanathan pulavar, and Laxmanan pulavar—inherited the legacy, and now they have formed separate performance groups. Entire members of the respective families are involved in this art. Almost half of the traditional performances associated with the temples of this region are under the jurisdiction of these three families. Ramachandra pulavar, the first son of K.L. Krishnankutty pulavar, won the Sangeeth Natak Academy Award in 2015 for his achievements. Further accolades for the family include Ramachandran pulavar winning the Kerala State Folklore Akademi Award in 2012 and Viswanathan pulavar winning the Kerala State Folklore Akademi Award in 2014. Grants for new productions were also given to these families by the Ministry of Culture.

Folkland will continue to work in safeguarding tolpaavakoothu and other traditions so that they can remain with the people of India and the rest of the world for years to come.
Safeguarding the Cultural Heritage of George Town

Dr. Ming Chee Ang  General Manager, George Town World Heritage Incorporated.

As one of the most complete surviving historic city centers with a multicultural living heritage on the Straits of Malacca, George Town was inscribed as a World Heritage Site by the UNESCO World Heritage Committee in 2008, together with Melaka. To manage, monitor, and promote the George Town World Heritage Site, George Town World Heritage Incorporated (GTWHI) was established in 2010 by the state government of Penang.

GTWHI works closely with the council and community to overcome day-to-day challenges with regard to promoting sustainable tourism, revitalizing traditional trades, redefining local market ecology, redefining the use of space, and driving residents back to the city center. We also accumulate baseline data through systematic and scientific research to develop mid- and long-term heritage conservation programs and policies. Our approaches are highly organic and community-based, and we take serious commitments to sustain the coexistence of diversity, which is divided according to geographical area, linguistic groups, religious identity, and social status.

One significant program born and bred by GTWHI is the George Town Heritage Celebration. A theme is adopted to depict a specific aspect of our multifaceted heritage every year. We started off with the theme of ‘Colour, Culture, Tradition’ in 2013 to showcase the diverse arts, crafts, and culture in George Town. In 2014, the celebration took on the premise of traditional crafts in George Town under the theme “Living Legacies”, and in 2015, Heritage Celebrations chose the subject of traditional and ritual foods—undeniably the forte of Penang and arguably the best in the region—with the theme of “Eat Rite”. For 2016, the eighth anniversary of George Town’s inscription, we highlighted the theme of “Traditional Sports and Games” and reintroduced twenty-three types of sports and games to the visitors from 7 to 9 July. We commenced the preparation of this year’s celebration in March and have engaged twenty community organizations in the planning and execution of the celebration.

This year, a team of forty-three project staff was engaged to take up the various roles of project manager, event coordinator, logistic facilitator, volunteer coordinator, and researcher. These individuals worked closely with the participating community and engineered the success of the celebration. The team communicated with the community in shared perspectives and languages. It was through such an interactive process that we identified the “masters” from the communities—individuals who are skillful in their respective cultural heritage. Once we identified the masters, we spent a lot of time persuading these masters to transmit their skills to a group of content facilitators. These facilitators, many of them young volunteers from Penang, were trained and played a role in disseminating the learned knowledge to celebration visitors.

Heritage conservation is a continuous process that is built up through engagement, interaction, and education. George Town Heritage Celebration is one of the platforms we use to engage inner-city residents and visitors in efforts to preserve George Town’s local culture and heritage assets. These programs have established important milestones and empowered the masses to participate in their city’s history interpretation process. Our methodology demonstrated that a bottom-up approach contributes to a deeper layer of cultural and political significance. It also creates a collective identity that belongs to inner-city George Town and the people who care about this place. It unearths the embedded facts and stories of the diversity and uniqueness of George Town’s architectural, cultural, and historical characters. It also empowers the masses by giving them a voice and allowing them to define their own past, present, and future. Meanwhile, financial aid from the state government and its agencies has helped to boost advocates and field workers’ confidence in the heritage conservation mission.

I ask you to pay close attention to George Town’s organic, dynamic, and authentic cultural heritage on your next visit to this city. It is not something that we can afford to take for granted anymore.
2016 Asia-Pacific ICH NGO Conference Adopts Declaration

More than fifty NGO representatives and staff from thirty countries of the Asia-Pacific region participated in the 2016 Asia-Pacific ICH NGO Conference, hosted by ICHCAP at the National Intangible Heritage Center in Jeonju, Korea. The participants adopted the Declaration of the 2016 Asia-Pacific ICH NGO Conference, reaffirming the important contribution of ICH to the sustainable development of humanity while calling for constructing an ICH NGO network.

The conference, held under the theme 'ACHIEVING SDGs through Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage' from 3 to 5 November, was a valuable opportunity to raise awareness about the close relationship between ICH and the SDGs and enhance the ICH NGOs’ capacities by sharing accumulated experience in the field. Director-General Roven Huh gave his opening remarks on 3 November, and Dr. Amarendra Galla, Executive Director of the International Institute for the Inclusive Museum, followed with a keynote speech ‘Achieving SDGs through Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage.’ Ms. Beatrice Kaldun, Director of the International Institute for the Inclusive Museum, opened the topic session with ‘2003 Convention for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage.’

The insights presented at these sessions were once again discussed at the Group Session Result Report and Group Discussion sessions on 5 November, continued on next page.

2016 Northeast Asia Sub-Regional Meeting: The Role of the Media in Raising Awareness about ICH

ICHCAP and the UNESCO Beijing Office jointly organized the 2016 Sub-Regional Meeting for Intangible Cultural Heritage Safeguarding in Northeast Asia. The Role of the Media in Raising Awareness about Intangible Cultural Heritage. The meeting, which was the second of its kind, was hosted by the Mongolian National Commission for UNESCO and was held on 10 and 11 October 2016 in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.

The forty-plus participants at the meeting included representatives of the Northeast Asian states, the UNESCO Beijing Office, the Mongolian National Commission for UNESCO, ICHCAP, and the Chinese and Japanese Category 2 Centers as well as other international experts from other culture-related organizations.

This meeting’s four sessions covered country reports, case studies, thematic presentations, discussions. The country reports were on national policies on using media to raise awareness about ICH while the case studies focused on media professionals producing ICH content and on the media production environment in the respective countries. Director-General Kwon Huh of ICHCAP and Professor Eun Kyung Choe of Hanyang University respectively spoke on ‘The Role of Media in Raising Awareness about the 2003 Convention’ and ‘The Use of Broadcasting Media for Raising Awareness about the Importance of ICH.’

During the discussion session, the participants drafted and adopted a recommendation to further the understanding of the media’s role in raising awareness about ICH while also using appropriate measures in the media to raise the visibility of ICH.

Enabling ICT for ICH: Concerning Possibilities

For the first time, ICH information officers gathered to explore ways of using information and communication technology (ICT) for safeguarding ICH and to lead activities. ICHCAP held the Information Officers Meeting for Safeguarding ICH in the Asia-Pacific Region: Using Information/ICT on 6 November in Jeonju, Republic of Korea. In participation were ICH and IT experts from six NGOs in Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Micronesia, Pacific Islands, Thailand as well as representatives from the UNESCO Dhaka Office, Chonbuk National University of Korea, and the Korea Culture Information Service Agency. Considering the participants as main actors for ICH safeguarding and considering their expertise in ICH and ICT, ICHCAP adopted the term ‘information officers’ and plans to maintain network relationships among them.

The participants agreed that ICT has potential and significance as part of ICH safeguarding activities driven by or targeting toward specific communities. They emphasized that the 2003 Convention and its Operational Directives should be understood before taking action and that there is a need to understand limitations faced by some communities or countries.

In the first session, participants provided case studies, the present conditions, and tasks in using ICT in each country/region. Mr. Saifur Rashid, Consultant Anthropologist from Nagerok Uddyo Foundation, Bangladesh, shared information on his country’s need for establishing a national ICH web portal to enhance information access of Bangladeshi communities and the international communities. Mr. Yeshi Wangchuk, Researcher, Shejun Agency for Bhutan’s Cultural Documentation and Research, introduced their activities on digitalizing ICH resources and publishing them online, and he mentioned issues on data storage, management, and Internet access. Mr. Lokesh Palwal, Project Head, Merijamhumble from India introduced Merijamhumble, a digital information-sharing platform reconnecting emigrant villagers with their home communities and suggested that it can be used for sharing ICH resources and information. Mr. Larry Raigetal, President, Waa’gey, Micronesia, shared his experiences and insights on the limitations on using sacred knowledge. Mr. Dennis Redeker, Co-founder, Island Ark Project Foundation, introduced the Island Ark Project, which aims to digitally safeguard ICH, and he shared project principles, including bottom-up approaches to culture.

During the following session, ICHCAP shared its vision and plan on strengthening the foundation of ICH in the Asia-Pacific region and invited the participants to collaborate in a new project. Currently, ICHCAP focuses more on establishing mechanisms for sharing and diffusing information which produced and existed by various ICH stakeholders rather than producing, collecting, managing, and possessing information by itself. In this context, it introduced the Supporting ICH Website Creation Using Templates project as a relevant measure. Targeting communities, groups, and organizations, this pilot project aims to support model web templates for managing and publishing ICH information. The project will start in 2017 by identifying key collaborators and calling for participants to use template.

The meeting will continue its in-depth discussions on using information for safeguarding ICH and collaborative actions through online or offline communication.
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http://ichcap.org/eng/ek/index.php