

REPORT ON THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE SAFEGUARDING OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE, SEOUL, KOREA – NOVEMBER 3rd – 4th, 2009

THEME: HOW TO APPLY INFORMATION & NETWORKING

Organised by: Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre for Asia and the Pacific

Sponsored by: Cultural Heritage Administration, Republic of Korea

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Cultural heritage is considered to be a source of creativity and cultural diversity of humanity, which is the spirit of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural heritage. The convention is a motivator for promoting the safeguarding and transmission of cultural heritage which has both increased awareness and the implementing of various safeguarding measures. In light of this, the three centres in the Republic of Korea, Japan and China will be established for the safeguarding of intangible cultural under the auspices of UNESCO. The 35th session of the General Conference approved the International Information and Networking Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region as a category II centre. The Centre upholds the spirit of the Convention and contributes to the enhancement of regional capacity for intangible cultural heritage safeguarding. In addition, it will support the promotion of cultural diversity as well as sustainable development in the region through the strengthening of cooperation at both the international and regional levels. The theme of the conference was 'How to Apply Information and Networking for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage. By sharing, listening and engaging in active discussion, the opinions generated from the conference among high respected individuals and interested parties will help to pave the way providing some clarity to the direction of the centre.

1.2 The participants were **Chan Kim** (Deputy Administrator, Cultural Heritage Administration, Republic of Korea), **Cecile Duvelle** (Chief, Intangible Heritage Section, UNESCO, France), **Seong-Yong Park** (Executive Director, Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre for Asia and the Pacific, Republic of Korea), **Noriko Aikawa-Faure** (Advisor to the Assistant Director-General, Cultural Sector, UNESCO, France), **Dawnhee Yim** (Advisor, Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre for Asia and the Pacific, Republic of Korea), **Gaura Mancacaritadipura** (2nd Secretary, Indonesian National Kris Secretariat, Indonesia), Tim Curtis (Culture Advisor, UNESCO Bangkok Office), **Simione Sevudredre** (IILC Fiji), **Amareswar Galla** (Professor, University of Queensland, Australia), **Diego Gradis** (co-founder & Executive President, Traditions for Tomorrow, Paris, Geneva, Washington, Guatemala), **Wend Wendland** (Director, Traditional Knowledge Division, World Intellectual Property Organisation, Swiss), **Sangmee Bak** (Professor, Division of International Studies, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Republic of Korea), **Norov Urtnasan** (Secretary-General, Mongolian National Commission of UNESCO), **Alisher Ikramov** (Secretary-General, National Commission for the Republic of Uzbekistan for UNESCO), **Minsun Song** (Director, Research Division of Intangible Cultural Heritage, National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage, Republic of Korea), **Le Thi Minh Ly** (Deputy Director, Department of Cultural Heritage, Ministry of Culture, Sports & Tourism, Vietnam), **Shigeyuki Miyata** (Director, Department of Intangible Cultural Heritage, National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo, Japan), **Jiang Dong** (Executive Director, Preparatory Office, Asia-Pacific Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre, China).

2.0 SUMMARY OF PRESENTATIONS

- 2.1 The first presentation and keynote speech was presented by Cecile Duvelle who presented on the prospects and challenges in the field of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage.
- 2.2 The second presentation by Seong-Yong Park was on the tasks and vision for the UNESCO Category 2 centre for the safeguarding of ICH in Asia and the Pacific region.
- 2.3 In the first plenary session, Noriko Aikawa-Faure presented on the challenges to the implementation of the 2003 Convention.
- 2.4 The presentation after this by Dawnhee Yim was on the strengthening regional capacity-building and international cooperation for the safeguarding of ICH.
- 2.5 Gaura Mancacaritadipura from Indonesia was the last speaker in the first session and he presented on building public awareness, particularly among the youth regarding ICH safeguarding.
- 2.6 Tim Curtis was the first speaker for the afternoon session and presented on mobilizing communities to document their intangible cultural heritage
- 2.7 Next was Wend Wendland who presented on Intellectual Property Rights in Intangible Cultural Heritage.
- 2.8 The final speaker for the day was Simione Sevudredre who presented on Fiji's Cultural Mapping Program.
- 2.9 The 3rd session held on the second day had 3 speakers. The first was Amareswar Galla who spoke on Community Networks for the Strengthening of ICH.
- 2.10 This was followed by Diego Gradis who presented on the role and tasks of non-governmental organisations relating to the safeguarding of ICH.
- 2.11 The final presentation was read out due to the non-attendance of its presenter, Sudha Gopalakrishnan whose presentation was on ICH inventory making and the establishment of information systems initiatives from India.



Delegates of the International Conference in Seoul, Korea

3.0 SUMMARY OF CONCERNS RAISED IN THE CONFERENCE

- 3.1 Clarification of Intellectual Property and Safeguarding was raised. The former (IP) was more on the legal protection which was not the same as Safeguarding. The latter had more to do with material protection.
- 3.2 That documentation of ICH is not an end and does not protect ICH. To copyright and safeguard are aimed more at protecting creative activity with the latter focusing more on the environment of ICH. The former focuses more on protecting output.
- 3.3 Concern was also raised on the extent IP blocked access. Is IP meant to take away or provide access to all in fair means? Some regulation is needed on the use of ICH so as not to restrict fair access.

- 3.4 That ICH is to be documented from the subjects' point of view, ie, what they think is appropriate. Concern was raised for the decolonizing of the mindset. ICH is not defined through colonial eyes but on what/how the indigenous define as ICH.
- 3.5 Since custodians of ICH are predominantly the elderly, the question on how youths could be enthused was raised. Concern was raised on facilitation of ICH through informal and traditional forms of education without destroying the oral methods of instruction and probably supplemented by 'packages' to be part of main school curriculum or as extra curricular.
- 3.5 Teaching ICH is meaningless unless youths are given a chance to learn, know, & perform ICH (ie, active awareness instead of passive) thereby having 'live' performances towards the realising of safeguarding ICH.
- 3.6 That snakes regularly shed their old skins. Artefacts in a museum are figuratively the snakeskin. ICH is the actual snake that has moved on. Documentation is a means and not an end. Neither is tourist culture ICH. Hence, there is a need for continuity and the sustainability and viability of ICH. It is imperative therefore to steer away from preserving which undermines the assumption of ICH.
- 3.7 That standardization of documentation is a threat to ICH (no one size fits all).
ICH safeguarding is deemed intangible.
- 3.8 That in order to foster intercultural relations, bilingualism is imperative. Indigenous issues will be respected and appreciated from outside if a bridge is extended (eg translation of legends). "We are not the only one, nor are we only the best."
- 3.8 That indigenous communities be allowed to organised themselves into their own 'renaissance' and be mindful that binary stereotypes or constructs of ICH into tangible and intangible are western concepts.



**Delegates presenting in the 2nd Session on Day 1
of the Conference, 03/11/09.**

4.0 STRENGTHS OF THE CONFERENCE – A Summary

4.1 That throughout the whole Pacific region, the Fiji government had agreed in principle to ratify the UNESCO 2003 Convention along with the current inventorying on Traditional Knowledge and Expressions of Culture (TKEC) as carried out by the Institute of Indigenous Culture (IILC) as the implementing arm of the Department of Culture & Heritage (DCH) is foremost the strength. On this platform, Fiji will continually be invited to workshops and seminars to countries which not only came under the umbrella of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre Asia-Pacific (ICHCAP) but are also key players in the international socio-economic and political scene. Furthermore, in this regard given the current momentum as far as ICH and IPR are concerned, key stakeholders in Asia (Korea,

China, Japan) are keen to network, provide training and technical assistance with Fiji to further realise its vision and goals in this area.

5.0 THE ESTABLISHMENT IN THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA OF AN INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION AND NETWORKING CENTRE FOR INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION UNDER THE AUSPICES OF UNESCO (CATEGORY 2).

5.1 ICHCAP Korea hosted delegates to a dinner at the end of day 1 of the conference. The occasion also marked the signing ceremony to mark Korea's establishment as ICHCAP Asia-Pacific.



Officials from UNESCO and ICHCAP Korea at the signing ceremony on the occasion of UNESCO's approval – 03/11/09

- 5.2 During dinner, there was a live performance from one of Korea's Living Human Treasures (LHT) on 'pansori'. It is a long vocal and percussive music played by one singer and one drummer. The lyrics tell one of five different stories, but are individualized by each performer, often with updated jokes and audience participation.



Special performance by Korea's LHT on the pansori at formal dinner 03/11/09, Seoul Korea.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 This trip was on the recommendation of the Permanent Secretary in my capacity as AO – Research but I had barely been two months in the position. I declined twice deferring to those with much more experience but to no avail. The conference was attended nonetheless but preparation was in haste due to clarifications on whom to go until the eleventh hour. It is but a minor recommendation for indecision at senior levels to be minimised as the brunt would be borne by those towing the line.
- 6.2 That Fiji maximise the partnership with Korea with regards to their training capacity under their newly established Category 2 Centre as far as ICH is concerned.
- 6.3 That stakeholders in Fiji realise that preservation of ICH and sustaining it are different, and be more proactive towards enthusing its youth in their ICH especially with the live performances of ICH aspects. The basic assumptions between preservation and sustainability may need to be redefined. This would better safeguard ICH and its continuity for the custodians are mostly the elderly.
- 6.4 That stakeholders consider appointing representatives from each district for capacity building to act as ‘ambassadors’ for the IILC into each respective district. These ambassadors could be on a pro-rata basis but whose sole role is to communicate the aims and objectives of the 2003 UNESCO Convention into the local dialect.

Conclusion

I thank ICHCAP Korea for the invitation to the conference and the Permanent Secretary Indigenous Affairs, for the privilege to attend on the Ministry's behalf.

S. Sevudredre

AO - R, IILC



Traditional Korean Dinner at the Korean
Arts Theatre, 04.11.09

APPENDIX

PROGRAMME

1. Main theme of the Conference

How to Apply Information and Networking to the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage

2. Duration

3 – 4 November 2009

3. Venue

Grand Hilton Seoul, Convention Centre

4. Organising Bodies

Organiser: Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre for Asia and the Pacific (ICHCAP)

Sponsor: Cultural Heritage Administration (CHA)

5. Aims and Objectives

The International Conference on information and networking aims to develop practical methods to apply information and networking to the safeguarding of ICH in Asia and the Pacific by:

- Examining the present status of ICH in Asia and the Pacific region by identifying and assessing the significance along with searching for effective ways for safeguarding ICH by strengthening the relevant information and knowledge system;
- Facilitating cooperation and coordination for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in Asia and the Pacific region through networking among experts and related organisations;
- Fostering community involvement and awareness-raising of the importance of ICH safeguarding among future generations;
- Commemorating the Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre for Asia and the Pacific, which will be acknowledged in October 2009 as a category 2 centre under the

auspices of UNESCO, and seeking guidance in setting the strategic directions for the Centre's medium and long term projects.

6. Anticipated Outcomes

- gain a clearer understanding of the current status of safeguarding ICH in Asia and the Pacific region, and the problems being faced due to various factors such as rapid industrialisation and urbanisation
- emphasise the importance of international cooperation through the Convention and endeavour to ensure the participation of communities, groups and individuals that create, maintain and transmit ICH and involve them actively in its management
- Share information regarding the current situation of ICH safeguarding in Asia and the Pacific region, and the issues and tasks being confronted in the search for solutions
- Develop and disseminate practical methods to apply information and networking to the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage at regional and international levels.

7. Schedule

DATE	TIME	ACTIVITIES		
3 rd Nov. (Tues)	08:30			
	09:00	Registration		
	09:00			
	09:15	Opening Speech		
	09:15	Keynote Speech 1	Prospects and Challenges in the Field of Safeguarding ICH in Asia and the Pacific	
	10:00	Keynote Speech 2	The Tasks and Vision for the UNESCO Category 2 Centre for the Safeguarding of ICH in Asia and the Pacific	
10:00				
	10:15	Coffee Break		

	10:15 11:45	Session 1	<p>2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage and International Cooperation</p> <p>Topic 1: Challenges to the Implementation of the 2003 Convention</p> <p>Topic 2: Strengthening Regional Capacity-Building and International Cooperation for the Safeguarding of ICH</p> <p>Topic 3: Building Public Awareness, Particularly Among the Youth, Regarding ICH Safeguarding</p>
	11:45 13:00		Discussion
	13:00 14:30		Lunch
	14:30 16:00	Session 2	<p>Establishment of ICH Information Systems and Information Sharing</p> <p>Topic 1: Mobilizing communities to document their intangible cultural heritage</p> <p>Topic 2: Intangible Cultural Heritage Inventory-Making and the Establishment of Information Systems: Initiatives from India</p> <p>Topic 3: Cultural Mapping Program: Fiji's Inventory-Making and the Establishment of the Traditional Knowledge & Expressions of Culture (TKEC) Information System</p>
	16:00 16:15		Coffee Break
	16:15 17:30		Discussion

	08:30		
	09:00		Registration
4 th Nov. (Wed)	09:00	Session 3	<p align="center">Construction of a Cooperative Network for the Safeguarding of ICH</p> <p>Topic 1: The past is not a foreign country: Community Networks for the Strengthening of ICH Transmission Activities</p> <p>Topic 2: The Role and Tasks of Non-Governmental organisations relating to the Safeguarding of ICH</p> <p>Topic 3: Intellectual Property Right in Intangible Cultural Heritage</p>
	10:30		
	10:30		Discussion
	11:45		
	11:45		Coffee Break
	12:00		
	12:00		Comprehensive Session Discussion
13:00			
13:00			Closing