



IRCI

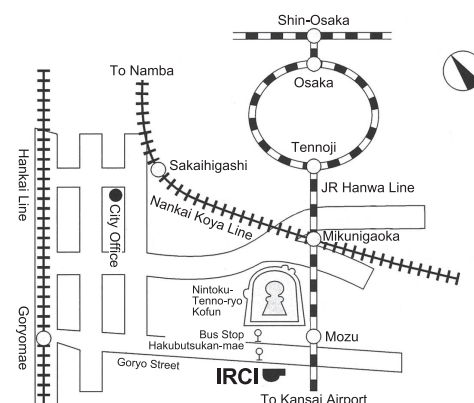
National Institutes for Cultural Heritage, Japan
**International Research Centre
 for Intangible Cultural Heritage
 in the Asia-Pacific Region**

2018



National Institutes for Cultural Heritage, Japan
**International Research Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage
 in the Asia-Pacific Region (IRCI)**

2 cho, Mozusekiun-cho, Sakai-ku, Sakai City, Osaka 590-0802, Japan
 Tel: +81-72-275-8050 Fax: +81-72-275-8151
<https://www.irci.jp>



Contents

IRCI and UNESCO

Introduction of IRCI

Greetings & Overview of IRCI

UNESCO Category 2 Centres

Operation of IRCI

UNESCO's Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage

What is Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH)?

Activities of IRCI

Strategies and Projects for FY 2018

Main Projects

Projects in FY 2018

Promoting Research for ICH Safeguarding

1. Mapping Studies on the Safeguarding of ICH

Collecting Information through the Literature Survey

Constructing and Optimising a Research Database

2. Multi-disciplinary Study on ICH's Contribution to Sustainable Development: Focusing on Education

Research on ICH Safeguarding and Disaster Risk Management

1. Research on ICH Safeguarding and Natural Disasters

2. Study of Emergency Protection of ICH in Conflict-Affected Countries in Asia

Achievements of Past Projects

Research for Safeguarding Endangered ICH

1. Documentation of ICH as a Tool for Community-led Safeguarding Activities

2. Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage for the Promotion of Cultural Identity and Community Resilience in Timor-Leste

3. Research for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage on the Verge of Extinction: Vietnamese ICH Element Dong Ho Woodblock Printing

4. Research for Endangered Traditional Handicrafts in Post-Conflict States (Sri Lanka)

5. Study of Legal Systems related to Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Greater Mekong Region

Cooperative Projects with Japanese Academic Institutions

Cooperation with Universities

Cooperation with National Museum of Ethnology, Japan

Cooperation with Tokyo National Research Institute for Cultural Properties

Cooperative Projects with Sakai City

Annex

Timeline of Research Projects

Website Information

International Meetings and Workshops

Reports and Publications

IRCI and UNESCO

Introduction of IRCI

Greetings & Overview of IRCI

The International Research Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region (IRCI) was established in October 2011 as a Category 2 Centre of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). At the 35th Session of the General Conference of UNESCO held in 2009, the proposal of the “Establishment in Japan of the International Research Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region as a Category 2 Centre under the auspices of UNESCO” was approved. In August of the following year, an agreement was concluded between the Government of Japan and UNESCO, and the Centre officially opened as one of the institutions of the National Institutes for Cultural Heritage (NICH) of Japan. Its office is located in Sakai City, Osaka. IRCI aims to promote the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (the 2003 Convention) and its implementation, as well as to enhance the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) through instigating and coordinating research in the Asia-Pacific region.

ICH such as oral traditions and expressions, performing arts, and rituals is living heritage that is transmitted from generation to generation. It can be said that ICH brings a mainspring of cultural diversity which is a source of unity, innovation and creativity. However, this rich cultural variety is currently endangered due to factors such as globalisation, ageing, disasters and conflicts. The safeguarding of ICH is now undeniably an urgent issue, and cross-border cooperation is crucial.

Based on these concerns, IRCI is working for the safeguarding of ICH in close cooperation with UNESCO and other related institutions such as universities, research institutions, governmental and non-governmental organisations, museums, and communities worldwide as a research hub in the region.

We appreciate your cooperation with the activities of IRCI.




Wataru IWAMOTO
Director-General,
International Research Centre for
Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region




IRCI instigates research for ICH safeguarding in cooperation with various institutions

- Photo Credits and Captions on the front cover (left to right, top to bottom):
- Villagers discussing on their own ICH at a workshop (Gaua, Vanuatu, 2017)
 - A practitioner of Yuki-tsumugi silk fabric in the community (Ibaraki, Japan, 2013)
 - Field visit to an Artisan's weaving studio of Yuki-tsumugi silk fabric (Ibaraki, Japan, 2018)
 - Discussion among researchers at the international symposium “Negotiating Intangible Cultural Heritage” (Osaka, Japan, 2017)
 - A Palmyrah Craft artisan (Batticoloe District, Sri Lanka) ©National Crafts Council
 - A practitioner of Dong Ho Woodblock Printing in the community (Bac Ninh Province, Viet Nam, 2013) ©2013 Viet Nam Institute of Culture and Arts Studies
 - Discussion with local government officials and community members in Nikko City (Tochigi, Japan, 2018)
 - Educational Training at the Caballero Family Museum (Iloilo, Philippines) ©National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA)
 - Interview with local community members during the field survey (Ifugao, Philippines, 2018)




United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Logo of UNESCO



Intangible
Cultural
Heritage

Logo of
UNESCO
Intangible
Cultural
Heritage



International Research Centre
for Intangible Cultural Heritage
in the Asia-Pacific Region

Logo of IRCI

Culture is an important element and heritage that imparts richness to nations. To transmit intangible cultural heritage through generations, connections among people are necessary. The IRCI logo incorporates the Japanese character for “culture” to indicate “people”, who are the bearers of culture. This is symbolic of our vision of culture being transmitted from person to person within communities and groups. The background colours represent the Asia-Pacific region, with green signifying mountains, yellow the land, and blue the ocean.

UNESCO Category 2 Centres

Category 2 Centres are institutions that serve to contribute to the achievement of UNESCO's strategic objectives. There are currently seven UNESCO Category 2 Centres around the world, including Japan, in the field of the safeguarding of ICH. In the Asia-Pacific region, in addition to IRCI, there are Category 2 Centres in China and the Republic of Korea, with which IRCI cooperates and works in tandem. The three centres have different mandates: research for IRCI, information and networking for the International Information and Networking Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region (IHCAP) in the Republic of Korea, and training activities for the International Training Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region (CRIHAP) in China.

Operation of IRCI

IRCI activities are implemented with the approval of its Governing Board. The Governing Board is made up of ten experts and representatives of specialised institutions inside and outside Japan including a UNESCO representative. The Governing Board deliberates and approves all IRCI activities, including long-term and medium-term programmes, work plans, and reports. In addition, when planning research programmes, IRCI's Advisory Body provides their professional perspectives. Furthermore, Mr. Koichiro Matsuura, Former Director-General, UNESCO, was newly appointed as an honorary advisor of IRCI in October 2017 to provide advice and support concerning the operation of IRCI.



UNESCO's Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was founded in 1945 for the purpose of promoting international collaboration in the fields of education, science, culture, and communication. Among its activities is the adoption and implementation of the legal instruments such as international conventions. Regarding culture, there are a total of seven conventions, from the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (World Heritage Convention), which was adopted at the 17th Session of the General Conference (1972), to the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, which was adopted at the 33rd Session of the General Conference (2005). Among them is the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (the 2003 Convention), which was adopted in 2003, about thirty years after the ratification of the World Heritage Convention which aims to preserve and protect tangible cultural heritage.

The 2003 Convention was the outcome of discussions held at UNESCO since the 1950s for the purpose of safeguarding folklore, including oral traditions and folk arts. The Convention has four objectives: (1) to safeguard intangible cultural heritage; (2) to ensure respect for the intangible cultural heritage of the communities, groups and individuals concerned; (3) to raise awareness at the local, national and international levels of the importance of intangible cultural heritage; and (4) to provide for international cooperation and assistance.

Intangible cultural heritage is defined in the text of the Convention as follows: "practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills - as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith - that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognise as part of their cultural heritage" (Article 2(1)). More specifically, they are: (1) oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage; (2) performing arts; (3) social practices, rituals and festive events; (4) knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; and (5) traditional craftsmanship. States Parties to the Convention are required to draw up inventories of their own intangible cultural heritage (Article 12).

There are two organs through which decisions regarding the Convention are made. One is the General Assembly of States Parties, which meets every other year to decide strategic directions to be taken for promoting the objectives of the Convention. The other is the Intergovernmental Committee, which is made up of member states elected by the General Assembly. The Intergovernmental Committee, composed of 24 states, is held once a year and works for the concrete implementation of the Convention. Its most important roles are to deliberate on inscriptions on two lists of intangible cultural heritage and to decide on good safeguarding practices of intangible cultural heritage.

In Articles 16 and 17, the 2003 Convention requires inscriptions on two lists, namely the "Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity" (Representative List) and the "List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding" (Urgent Safeguarding List). The Representative List of the 2003 Convention takes the standpoint of not placing higher value upon one intangible cultural heritage than the other. The Representative List is merely to identify the diverse intangible cultural heritage of humanity around the world, and aims to bring international awareness. In the implementation of the 2003 Convention, more emphasis is placed on the Urgent Safeguarding List than the Representative List, and in this regard, it differs from the World Heritage Convention. The 2003 Convention focuses on the practitioners' daily lives in relation to ICH, and thus encourages the participation of communities to which the practitioners belong (Article 15).

Many member states that have ratified the 2003 Convention currently suffer from poverty, low rates of literacy, a lack of experts, a lack of interest among young people, urbanisation, conflict, and war. For this reason, assistance in developing legal systems, training of human resources, financial assistance, sustainable education, and so forth are seen as necessary. As particular emphasis is placed on the Urgent Safeguarding List laid forth in Article 17, it follows that an appropriate framework for international assistance and safeguarding measures need to be developed.

IRCI has implemented research projects in close cooperation with UNESCO and other related institutions such as universities, research institutions, governmental and non-governmental organisations, museums, and communities worldwide. One example is a community-led documentation of intangible cultural heritage in danger of disappearing since 2012, conducted through discussions with practitioners of arts and craftsmanship and government officials. With a focus on the process by which elements of intangible cultural heritage have become in danger of disappearing, IRCI has used a variety of methodologies to make audiovisual documentation. As a research institution, IRCI aims to share the outcomes of such research with the communities and contribute to safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. This is because, as stated above, the 2003 Convention places strong emphasis on communities, in other words, people who maintain and transmit intangible cultural heritage.

What is Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH)?

ICH is living cultural heritage. Although it transforms over time, it is transmitted from generation to generation and gives us cultural identity and richness. In the text of the 2003 Convention, the following examples of ICH are provided:

Oral Traditions and Expressions



Hudhud chants of the Ifugao (Philippines)
© 2008, by J. Uñalivia/NCCA-ICH,
with the permission of UNESCO



Tradition of Vedic chanting (India)
© Sangeet Natak Akademi, New Delhi, India,
with the permission of UNESCO

Performing Arts



Royal ballet of Cambodia (Cambodia)
© International Research Centre for Intangible
Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region
(IRCI), 2013



Ca trù singing (Viet Nam)
© 2006, Vietnamese Institute for Musicology,
Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism
of Vietnam, with the permission of UNESCO

Social Practices, Rituals and Festive Events



Mask dance of the drums from Drametse (Bhutan)
© 2007, by Institute of Language and Cultural
Studies – Sentsokha Bhutan,
with the permission of UNESCO



Royal ancestral ritual in the Jongmyo shrine
and its music (Republic of Korea)
© National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage,
2008, with the permission of UNESCO

Knowledge and Practices Concerning Nature and the Universe



Acupuncture and moxibustion
of traditional Chinese medicine (China)
© Institute of Acupuncture and Moxibustion,
2009, with the permission of UNESCO



Tuggering rituals and games (Cambodia,
Philippines, Republic of Korea, Viet Nam)
© Vietnam Institute of Culture and Arts Studies,
2013, with the permission of UNESCO

Traditional Craftsmanship



Indonesian Batik (Indonesia)
© Batik Museum Institute, Pekalongan, 2008,
with the permission of UNESCO



Ojiya-chijimi, Echigo-jofu (Japan)
© 1998, by Association for the Conservation
of Techniques for Echigo-jofu, Ojiya-Chijimi,
with the permission of UNESCO

Activities of IRCI

Strategies and Projects for FY 2018

With the purpose of safeguarding ICH in the Asia-Pacific region, IRCI has carried out a range of activities utilising networks both within and outside Japan. In FY 2018, IRCI is pursuing the following four projects under two activity focuses as shown below:

Promoting Research for ICH Safeguarding

1. Mapping Studies on the Safeguarding of ICH (FY 2013 – FY 2019)
2. Multi-disciplinary Study on ICH's Contribution to Sustainable Development: Focusing on Education (FY 2018 – 2019)

Research on ICH Safeguarding and Disaster Risk Management

1. Research on ICH Safeguarding and Natural Disasters (FY 2016 – FY 2018)
2. Study of Emergency Protection of ICH in Conflict-Affected Countries in Asia (FY 2017 – FY 2020)

Risk factors endangering ICH in the Asia-Pacific region

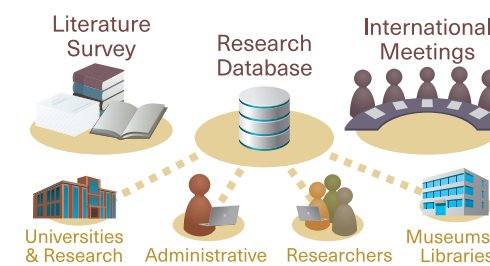
Poverty Lack of Education Conflicts Disasters

Enhance ICH safeguarding

IRCI's Strategies & Projects

Promoting Research for ICH Safeguarding

▶ Mapping Studies on ICH Safeguarding



▶ Multi-disciplinary Study on ICH's Contribution to Sustainable Development :Focusing on Education



Research on ICH Safeguarding and Disaster-Risk Management

▶ Natural Disasters



▶ Conflict-Affected Situations



Main Projects

Projects in FY 2018

Promoting Research for ICH Safeguarding

1. Mapping Studies on the Safeguarding of ICH (FY 2013 – FY 2019)

Since there is currently a lack of information concerning research and experts on the safeguarding of ICH in the Asia-Pacific region, it is necessary to collect information to examine the underlying challenges of safeguarding and to pursue concrete research that aims to resolve these issues. IRCI has been implementing projects to conduct a survey on experts and research activities, to analyse safeguarding measures on a per-topic basis and to develop a public database since FY 2013. The importance of these projects has been shared with UNESCO who recommends continuous implementation of such projects.

The goal of Mapping Studies is to instigate research for ICH safeguarding in the Asia-Pacific region by analysing current trends and challenges. Therefore, it is essential to first understand the overall picture of the safeguarding of ICH, then to promote collaboration and share knowledge among each individual expert. Also, the information must be systematically organised and visualised.

To achieve this goal, IRCI is focusing on (1) organising international conferences, (2) collecting information through the literature survey, and (3) constructing and optimising a database. In FY 2018, IRCI continues to conduct research activities related to the literature survey and the database among the above-mentioned three sub-studies. Further details are described in the following.



Collecting Information through the Literature Survey

The literature survey aims to collect basic information for research on ICH and identify important research issues by conducting a broad and systematic collection and analysis of information on existing literatures, research institutions, and researchers in the Asia-Pacific region. It is carried out principally in collaboration with research institutions/researchers based on the guidelines developed by IRCI. 29 countries and a region in Asia and the Pacific have already been researched and mapped (as of March 2018). IRCI will publish the final report in FY 2018, which will contain a summary of the entire project, its outcomes and lessons learned.

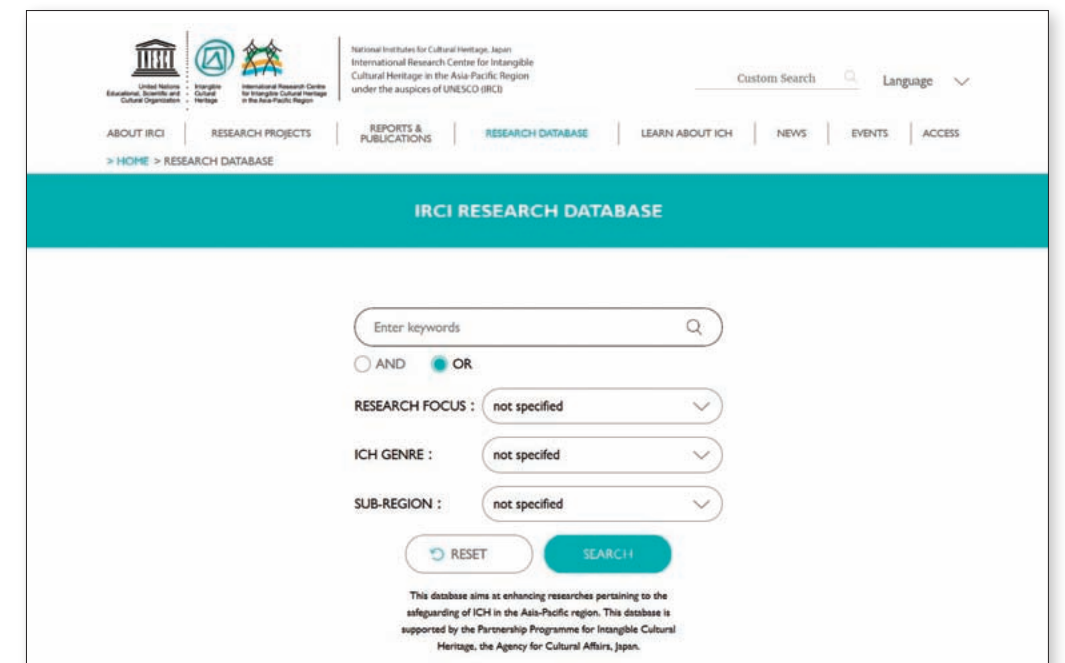
Investigated Countries and Regions :

Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Cook Islands, Fiji, French Polynesia, India, Samoa, Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Philippines, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Palau, Republic of Korea, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Thailand, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Viet Nam (29 countries and a region)



Constructing and Optimising a Research Database

From FY 2014, IRCI has released a research database of information on relevant literature, experts, administrative officials, and institutions who engage in the safeguarding of ICH in Asia and the Pacific. The database, currently storing approximately 2,300 entries (as of March 2018). In FY 2018, new information obtained through the literature survey will be added to the database and a needs assessment of the database will be conducted in the future.



2. Multi-disciplinary Study on ICH's Contribution to Sustainable Development: Focusing on Education (FY 2018-2019)

On 25 September 2015, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted a new agenda including a set of global development targets. This agenda, "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" is built on the successes and lessons learned from the previous Millennium Development Goals and sets 17 universal goals that are collectively called Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that all member states are invited to consider when implementing their national policies, as they seek to shift the world onto a sustainable and resilient path.

Concerning UNESCO's ICH programme, considerable progress has already been made by developing preliminary recommendations on safeguarding ICH and sustainable development at the national level, and, in 2016, by including these recommendations as Chapter IV of *Operational Directives for the Implementation of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*. A similar statement holds true for funding priorities. At the 12th session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2017, a decision was made to dedicate its second funding priority to the safeguarding of ICH in formal and non-formal education, testifying to a growing need for ICH's contribution to SDGs' education benchmark (Goal 4 "Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning"). Among the targets listed in Goal 4, ICH and culture in general are especially relevant to Target 4.7, stating that "by 2030 ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development".

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS 17 GOALS TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD



Jama Mapun weaving mat (Palawan, Philippines)
© National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA)



Meeting at National Commission for Culture and the Arts
(Manila, Philippines, February 2018)

It is against this backdrop that the International Research Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region (IRCI) launched the project that aims to incorporate intangible cultural heritage into teaching and learning practices in formal and non-formal education. The main contribution expected is that students – be it formal or non-formal education – can better appreciate and acquire the value of the intangible cultural heritage present in their own community, leading to a better awareness and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development as prescribed above.

To achieve these objectives, IRCI carries out a range of field activities in the Asia-Pacific countries. The target countries during the first year of project are the Philippines and Viet Nam. For the Philippines, in view of achieving Goal 4 of SDGs, pilot educational guidelines will be elaborated for the flagship programme that has been implemented by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, i.e., School of Living Traditions (SLT). The SLT is a community-managed non-formal learning centre that is geared towards the safeguarding of traditional culture and where a living master teaches traditional knowledge to the children. The SLT, now channelled through IRCI's project, is envisioned to ensure the quality education at all levels in national education policies, curricula, teacher education and student assessment. For Viet Nam, similar guidelines will be established in collaboration with the Vietnam Museum of Ethnology and the Vietnam Institute of Educational Sciences. Such guidelines are especially important since the country has now been experiencing a critical phase in the creation of new national educational programme for the next decades. Because of this curriculum change, there are a considerable amount of opportunities for Vietnamese society to integrate intangible cultural heritage, as well as culturally-related knowledge that it contains, into schools' educational programmes.



Meeting at Vietnam Museum of Ethnology
(Ha Noi, Viet Nam, February 2018)



Demonstration of the traditional way for processing young grains (Ha Noi, Viet Nam)
© Vietnam museum of Ethnology

Research on ICH Safeguarding and Disaster Risk Management

IRCI conducts research on the current status and cases of ICH in the Asia-Pacific region that are endangered by disasters or conflicts, as well as the role of ICH for disaster preparedness and in post-disaster or in the conflict-affected situations.

1. Research on ICH Safeguarding and Natural Disasters (FY 2016 – FY 2018)

Many countries in the Asia-Pacific region are frequently exposed to various natural hazards, which have been a risk for cultural heritage. There has been a growing international awareness concerning disaster risk management (DRM) of cultural heritage; for example, the “Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030” calls for the protection of cultural heritage, and UNESCO’s Medium-term Strategy (2014-2021) emphasises the urgent need to respond to post-conflict and post-disaster situations. However, such efforts are centred on the protection of tangible cultural heritage, while effective measures for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage (ICH) are yet to be developed. Recent discussions on “ICH in emergencies” at the 11th and 12th sessions of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage affirm the importance of ICH in the context of natural hazards and disasters.

Against this background, IRCI started in FY 2016, a two-year project titled “Preliminary Research on ICH Safeguarding and Disaster Risk Management in the Asia-Pacific Region (FY 2016-2017)” in cooperation with various researchers and organisations in countries such as Fiji, Myanmar, the Philippines, Vanuatu and Viet Nam. This preliminary round of research, which included a series of case studies, explored two different dimensions linking ICH and natural hazards: (1) the impact of natural hazards and disasters on ICH; and (2) the active roles of ICH for DRM.

In FY 2018, the “Asia-Pacific Regional Workshop on ICH and Natural Disasters” is programmed to be the final year of this project. This workshop will discuss various issues related to ICH in the context of natural hazards and disasters that were highlighted in the above preliminary research, such as the active involvement of ICH specialists in DRM programmes and enhancing dialogues with DRM specialists; understanding the impact of disasters in the context of long-term transformation and transmission of ICH; and practical directions for mobilising local knowledge and ICH for DRM. The workshop also intends to share with Asia-Pacific participants the experiences in Japan of reviving ICH in the process of recovery after disasters. The workshop is expected to encourage the development of further research and practical programmes focusing on ICH in the context of DRM in the Asia-Pacific region and elsewhere, with active involvement of ICH researchers.

The workshop is organised in cooperation with the Tokyo National Research Institute for Cultural Properties to be held from 7 to 9 December 2018 in Sendai, Japan, inviting researchers and specialists in the fields of ICH and DRM from approximately ten countries in the Asia-Pacific region. The proceedings of the workshop will be published in March 2019.



Villagers discussing their own ICH at a community workshop (Gaua, Vanuatu, July 2017)



Interview with local community members during the field survey (Ifugao, Philippines, January 2018)

2. Study of Emergency Protection of ICH in Conflict-Affected Countries in Asia (FY 2017 – FY 2020)

Many cultural heritage structures have been damaged or destroyed in armed conflicts. Recently, an international framework has been formed for the conservation of “tangible” cultural heritage in danger, as exemplified by the cases of Bamiyan Buddha Statues or Palmyra. On the other hand, little research or discussion exists on the safeguarding of “intangible” cultural heritage in conflict-affected countries or regions. Because ICH is “living” cultural heritage transmitted by people, various factors such as the practitioners’ death, forced migration, or displacement resulting from armed conflict or long-term political instabilities, can cause severe situations. For example, ICH elements including craftsmanship, performing arts, festivals and rituals, which are inherited for generations, face the danger of decline or disappearance. Therefore, the need to promote a study of emergency protection of ICH in danger is increasing.

Recently, more international attention has been paid to the problem because of the recognition that ICH has played important roles in the recovery of solidarity in conflict-affected countries. UNESCO has emphasised the responses to post-conflict and post-disaster situations in its Strategic Objectives and Midterm Strategy. In response to such situations, and based on the experiences in its previous research on ICH in post-conflict situations in Timor-Leste and in the Northern and Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka, IRCI started in 2017, a four-year research project on the protection of ICH on the verge of extinction in conflict-affected countries in Asia.

The preliminary study of the project in FY 2017 clarified that post-conflict situations are considerably different in the targeted countries (Afghanistan, Timor-Leste and Sri Lanka), and that, the research plan should be arranged separately to better reflect the country-specific conditions. Therefore, IRCI held separate workshops in FY 2017, inviting experts from the above mentioned countries to discuss the research plan and methods of a field survey. In FY 2018, based on the results of these workshops, IRCI conducts a field survey in cooperation with local universities and experts to investigate the current status of ICH and to analyse the results, to identify risk factors threatening ICH and to find out possible ICH safeguarding measures.



Meeting with Afghan government officials (Tokyo, Japan, March 2018)



Meeting with government officials of Timor-Leste (Tokyo, Japan, April 2018)



Meeting with government officials of Sri Lanka (Tokyo, Japan, June 2018)



A practitioner of traditional carpet making (Balkh, Afghanistan)
©Archaeology Institute of Afghanistan



Inauguration of the sacred house of Datelu (Manufahi, Timor-Leste)
©Celestino da Silva Mendes Sarmento



A craftswoman with her products (Ampara, Sri Lanka)
©National Crafts Council

Achievements of Past Projects

Research for Safeguarding Endangered ICH

From FY 2012 to FY 2016, IRCI conducted projects with a focus on ICH in danger of disappearing.

1. Documentation of ICH as a Tool for Community-led Safeguarding Activities (FY 2012 – FY 2014)

Audio-visual documentation of ICH is crucial for restoring and reviving ICH that is in danger of disappearing. To ensure the continued transmission of ICH, it is extremely important for the practitioners involved to be aware of and identify endangered elements of ICH, and then to lead the effort to document them, and plan their documentation with a view to utilising that record. Based on this concept, IRCI implemented the project from FY 2012 to FY 2014. This project was created to propose concrete and detailed guidelines that included how to document ICH. In the next step, to verify that the guidelines are of practical use to communities, practitioners of ICH from six communities in five countries were enlisted to look at elements of their communities' ICH currently endangered. They were asked to discuss within the community the best plans for having the practitioners of the community lead efforts to film the parts that were endangered as well as the elements of ICH itself, and how to utilise the recorded footage. Eventually, IRCI held discussions again with practitioners of ICH and researchers concerning plans to utilise documentary footage, and the outcomes of those discussions were compiled in 2016 as a case study.



Presentation by a local officer of Timor-Leste in charge of culture at a workshop (Tokyo, Japan, March 2015)

2. Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage for the Promotion of Cultural Identity and Community Resilience in Timor-Leste (FY 2013)

Timor-Leste is a new country, which became independent in 2002, and its national framework for safeguarding its cultural heritage and its museum infrastructures are still in the development stage. IRCI, in response to an urgent request from the Government of Timor-Leste and the UNESCO Office in Jakarta, from 22 to 26 October 2013, conducted a study tour for governmental officers of Timor-Leste concerning cultural administration.

The nine participants from Timor-Leste visited museums and institutes involved in the good practices of ICH safeguarding, promotion, and transmission by institutions and local communities in Japan (for example, The Tokyo National Museum; The Tokyo National Research Institute for Cultural Properties; The National Theatre; The Namahage Museum, and The Oga Shinzan Folklore Museum, Yuki City and Mashiko City) and held a discussion session with the administrative officers and transmitters engaged in ICH safeguarding. In the final day of the tour, they thoroughly discussed safeguarding measures to resolve the issues of Timor-Leste.

The final report of the tour and their discussions was published in March 2014 and the report is available on IRCI's website.



Discussion on the challenges of transmitting ICH among the participants (Tokyo, Japan, October 2013)

3. Research for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage on the Verge of Extinction: Vietnamese ICH Element Dong Ho Woodblock Printing (FY 2013 – FY 2015)

In the village of Dong Ho in Bac Ninh Province in the north of Viet Nam, woodblock prints have traditionally been created as talismans to decorate the Lunar New Year festivals. However, a decline in the number of woodblock craftsmen as well as rapid urbanisation and industrialisation has brought about changes to the lifestyles of the people of the village, and the transmission of Dong Ho woodblock printing techniques is now in danger. Given these circumstances, the Government of Viet Nam has issued an urgent request to IRCI, and as a result a joint research project for the safeguarding of the woodblock techniques was carried out from FY 2013 to FY 2015. In the project, basic surveys and analysis of critical factors were conducted in cooperation with the Vietnam National Institute of Culture and Arts Studies (VICAS) and visits to crafts studios in Kanazawa city, Japan, created discussion on good practices of ICH safeguarding measures in Japan. In addition, final workshops were organised in Dong Ho village and in Ha Noi. At these workshops, discussions that summarised the outcomes of the project were held among practitioners, researchers, and administrative officials. Japanese experts were also invited to present proposals for transmitting woodblock printing based on examples in Japan of safeguarding and reviving ICH. The proceedings were put together as the result of the project in its final year and published as a report. The most significant accomplishment of this project is that a community museum for practitioner-led sustainable safeguarding is now planned with its establishment underway in Dong Ho village.



A practitioner of Dong Ho Woodblock Printing in the community (Bac Ninh Province, Viet Nam, January 2015)

4. Research for Endangered Traditional Handicrafts in Post-Conflict States (Sri Lanka) (FY 2013 – FY 2015)

In the Northern and Eastern provinces of Sri Lanka, which have been the most affected by the civil war until 2009, the alleviation of poverty and the establishment of sustainable livelihoods are particularly urgent matters. As part of those efforts, IRCI decided to focus on the importance of reviving ICH such as traditional textiles and women's handicrafts that have been passed down to surviving women as a potential way to reconstruct their livelihoods, thus contributing to sustainable peace building. The project was implemented in cooperation with the Government of Sri Lanka with the purpose of reviving these handicrafts. Through the project from FY 2013 to FY 2015, workshops and field surveys were conducted in ten areas and IRCI held numerous dialogues with representatives of the craftswomen and the government officials of Sri Lanka. Also, recommendations for craft revitalisation were made. Furthermore, over a two-year period, IRCI invited practitioners, government officials, and researchers to Japan for intensive discussion sessions on the recommendations. IRCI played a role in providing those stakeholders with common understanding and recognition about further challenges and the key issues for reviving these handicrafts. Sustainable transmission of traditional culture by local people plays a major role in the process of building stability and peace for all countries that have experienced conflict and war. IRCI hopes to use its case study of this project and its practical research on restoration and revitalisation in other countries.



Meeting on further cooperation and sharing the final report with Hon. Minister Douglas Devananda, Ministry of Traditional Industries and Small Enterprise Development (Colombo, Sri Lanka, September 2014)

5. Study of Legal Systems related to Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Greater Mekong Region (FY 2013 – FY 2016)

To safeguard ICH, each country must establish legal systems to suit its own particular circumstances because if such systems do not exist and elements of ICH have yet to be identified, it is difficult to implement measures that lead to sustainable transmission. Some countries are currently trying to draft relevant laws, but because many of them have no experience in creating laws concerning ICH, there is a great need for advice and support from foreign experts with extensive experience. With the cooperation of the Faculty of Law of Kyushu University, IRCI began a project to study the legal systems of the countries in the Greater Mekong region. The aim of the project is to analyse the issues involved in the process of drafting legislation through field research and international workshops, and ultimately to create a “tool-kit” for planning legal mechanisms. In Japan, as a result of the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties, policies to preserve these elements of ICH were implemented. In addition, local government authorities have in place ordinances to safeguard cultural heritage. Since these experiences in Japan are useful for countries now seeking to draft laws, the IRCI international workshop in 2015 aimed to learn ordinances to safeguard ICH and activities for the transmission of ICH by practitioners in Japan. In 2016, IRCI organised the final workshop in cooperation with Vietnam National Institute of Culture and Arts Studies (VICAS) in Viet Nam, where the outcomes of the whole project were produced.



Discussion among experts at the final workshop (Ha Noi, Viet Nam, December 2016)

Cooperative Projects with Japanese Academic Institutions

Cooperation with Universities

Since the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage entered into force in 2006, the spirit and concept embedded in the Convention have been accepted globally as the basic principles for ICH safeguarding. In the process of implementing the Convention, various stakeholders, for example, UNESCO, researchers, states, and communities have been involved and their interactions have been diverse not only at the global level, but also at the local and national levels.

To instigate research for ICH safeguarding through examination and analysis of interactions from not only a global perspective, but also from a local perspective, that is, from a glocal one, IRCI and the Center for Glocal Studies of Seijo University co-organised the International Symposium “Glocal Perspectives on Intangible Cultural Heritage: Local Communities, Researchers, States and UNESCO” from 7 to 9 July 2017. A total of 24 experts and community members, including Mr. Tim Curtis, Chief of the Intangible Heritage Section, UNESCO, were actively involved in the discussions. Furthermore, the way to strengthen the networking among researchers/experts of ICH has been discussed.

The proceedings of this symposium was published in November 2017 in order to share the discussions and achievements with those who engage in ICH safeguarding research.



Discussion among experts of ICH safeguarding at the Symposium (Tokyo, Japan, July 2017)

Cooperation with National Museum of Ethnology, Japan

In research related to the safeguarding of ICH in the Asia-Pacific region, productive and practical discussions have not yet been well advanced due to limited interactions and communication among researchers. Aiming to create a place for academic discussions on research for ICH safeguarding, and to strengthen a network of researchers and the foundation for research, IRCI organised an international symposium entitled “Negotiating Intangible Cultural Heritage” at the National Museum of Ethnology (Minpaku) from 29 November to 1 December 2017 in cooperation with Minpaku and the Agency for Cultural Affairs.

IRCI invited a professor from the University of Ljubljana, who is Vice President of International Council for Traditional Music as the keynote speaker in addition to 12 researchers from eight different countries as presenters, to the symposium, to discuss the ways in which multiple levels of negotiation between various actors/stakeholders affect the safeguarding of ICH by analysing their case studies.

To disseminate the outcome of the discussion and to instigate research for ICH safeguarding, a collection of essays based on the symposium is expected to be published in 2019.



General discussion among researchers at the symposium (Osaka, Japan, December 2017)

Cooperation with Tokyo National Research Institute for Cultural Properties

In FY 2016, IRCI started a three-year research project focusing on ICH Safeguarding and Natural Disasters in cooperation with the Tokyo National Research Institute for Cultural Properties. This project consists of two phases, “Preliminary Research on ICH Safeguarding and Disaster Risk Management in the Asia-Pacific Region (FY 2016 - 2017)” and “Asia-Pacific Regional Workshop on ICH and Natural Disasters (FY 2018)”.

The contribution of the Institute to this project is significant in demonstrating the importance of ICH in the recovery process, based on its experiences of disaster risk management of ICH in Japan.



Preliminary Research on ICH Safeguarding and Disaster-Risk Management in the Asia-Pacific Region: International Working Group Session (Tokyo, Japan, January 2017)

Cooperative Projects with Sakai City

IRCI disseminates information and a clear image of ICH widely to people in Japan, and provides them with various opportunities to learn about ICH in cooperation with Sakai City, Osaka. For instance, Sakai City and the National Institutes for Cultural Heritage have been co-hosting the annual symposium on cultural heritage since FY 2015. At this event, IRCI information panels are displayed in the lobby of the venue and various publications issued by IRCI are distributed to share its missions, roles, activities and achievements with visitors.

Also, the “2016 International Symposium on ICH Safeguarding in the Asia-Pacific Region: Transmitting Art and Spirit of ICH” hosted by Sakai City and IRCI was held in November 2016. This public event included a panel discussion and a performance of the Japanese traditional puppet theatre, *Bunraku*, which attracted more than 200 attendees.

Furthermore, Sakai City continually offers cooperation with IRCI in displaying panels for the introduction of IRCI's activities at Sakai City Museum.



International Symposium on ICH Safeguarding in the Asia-Pacific Region: Transmitting Art and Spirit of ICH (Osaka, Japan, November 2016)

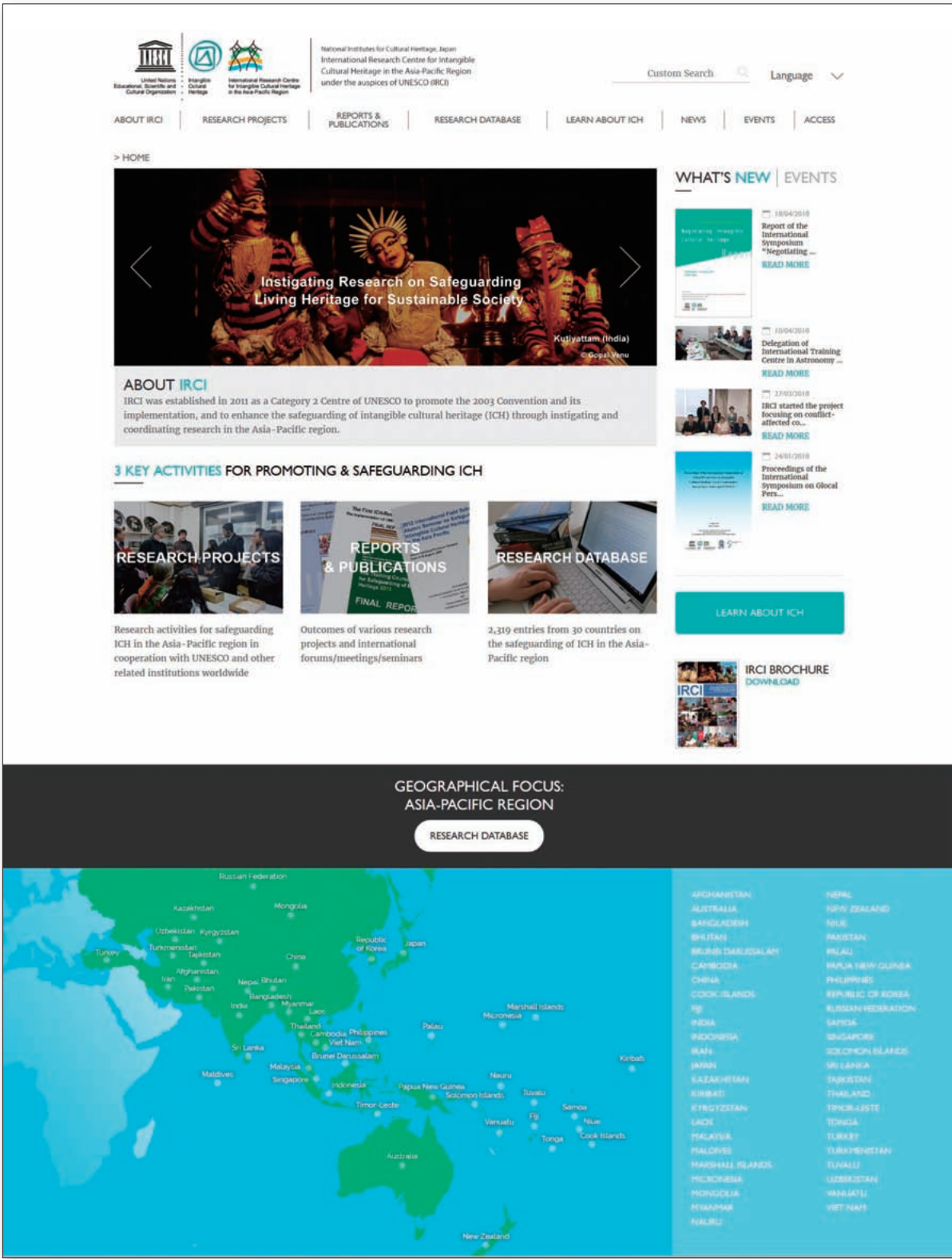
Timeline of Research Projects

	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018
Promoting Research for ICH Safeguarding		1. Mapping Studies on the Safeguarding of ICH					
		Organising International Conferences					
			Collecting Information through the Literature Survey				
			Constructing and Optimising a Research Database				
						2. IRCI Researchers Forum on ICH Safeguarding (International Symposium "Negotiating Intangible Cultural Heritage")	
Research on ICH Safeguarding and Disaster Risk Management							3. Multi-disciplinary Study on ICH's Contribution to Sustainable Development: Focusing on Education
					1. Research on ICH Safeguarding and Natural Disasters		
						2. Study of Emergency Protection of ICH in Conflict-Affected Countries in Asia	
Research for Safeguarding Endangered ICH	1. Documentation of ICH as a Tool for Community-led Safeguarding Activities						
		2. Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage for the Promotion of Cultural Identity and Community Resilience in Timor-Leste					
		3. Research for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage on the Verge of Extinction: Vietnamese ICH Element Dong Ho Woodblock Printing					
		4. Research for Endangered Traditional Handicrafts in Post-Conflict States (Sri Lanka)					
		5. Study of Legal Systems related to Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Greater Mekong Region					

Website Information (<https://www.irci.jp>)

The IRCI Website was redesigned and released in 2018 with the aim of posting new information on IRCI's activities and on ICH by presenting the outcomes of our research projects widely and clearly. The site is also smartphone and tablet device friendly in design and content.

We will continuously improve the IRCI Website to ensure the accessibility and usability.



International Meetings and Workshops

Project/Theme	Year	Month	International Meeting / Workshop	Co-Organiser(s)	Cooperating institution(s) / expert(s) / researcher(s)
Mapping Studies on the Safeguarding of ICH	2017	7	International Symposium "Glocal Perspectives on Intangible Cultural Heritage: Local Communities, Researchers, States and UNESCO"	Center for Glocal Studies(CGS), Seijo University, Japan Agency for Cultural Affairs, Japan	Mr. Tomiyuki Uesugi (Director/Professor, Center for Glocal Studies(CGS), Seijo University)
	2016	11	IRCI Experts Meeting on Mapping Project for ICH Safeguarding in the Asia-Pacific Region		
	2015	12	IRCI Experts Meeting on Mapping Project for ICH Safeguarding in the Asia-Pacific Countries	Aigine Cultural Research Center, Kyrgyzstan	
	2015	1	International Experts Meeting of the Project "Mapping Research on the Safeguarding of ICH in the Asia-Pacific Region"	Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia	
	2014	2	Preliminary Meeting of the Project "Exploring Research for the Safeguarding of ICH in the Asia-Pacific Region"	UNESCO Bangkok Office, Thailand	
Researchers Forum on ICH Safeguarding in the Asia-Pacific Region	2017	11	International Symposium "Negotiating Intangible Cultural Heritage"	National Museum of Ethnology, Japan Agency for Cultural Affairs, Japan	Mr. Yoshitaka Terada (Professor, Center for Cultural Resource Studies, National Museum of Ethnology) Mr. Shota Fukuoka (Associate Professor, Department of Advanced Human Sciences, National Museum of Ethnology) Mr. Taku Iida (Associate Professor, Center for Cultural Resource Studies, National Museum of Ethnology)
Research on ICH Safeguarding and Natural Disasters	2017	1	Preliminary Research on ICH Safeguarding and Disaster Risk Management in the Asia-Pacific Region: International Working Group Session		Tokyo National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Japan
Study of Legal Systems Related to ICH in the Greater Mekong Region	2016	12	IRCI Final Workshop on the Study of Legal Systems Related to ICH in the Greater Mekong Region		Mr. Toshiyuki Kono (Professor, Faculty of Law, Kyushu University, Japan) Ms. Susan McIntyre-Tamwoy (Associate Director, Extent Heritage Pty Limited, Australia) Vietnam National Institute of Culture and Arts Studies (VICAS)
	2015	12	IRCI Second Workshop on the Study of Legal Systems Related to ICH in the Greater Mekong Region		Mr. Toshiyuki Kono (Professor, Faculty of Law, Kyushu University, Japan) Ms. Susan McIntyre-Tamwoy (Associate Director, Extent Heritage Pty Limited, Australia) Ms. Katie O'Rourke (Director, Katie O'Rourke Consulting, Australia) Mr. Steven Van Uytsel (Associate Professor, Faculty of Law, Kyushu University, Japan) Toyama Prefecture, Toyama City, Takaoka City, Kyoto City, Japan NOUSAKU Corporation, Japan Musashigawa Studio, Japan
	2014	12	IRCI First Workshop on the Study of Legal Systems Related to ICH in Southeast Asia	Faculty of Law, Kyushu University, Japan	Mr. Toshiyuki Kono (Professor, Faculty of Law, Kyushu University, Japan) Mr. Steven Van Uytsel (Associate Professor, Faculty of Law, Kyushu University, Japan)
Research for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage on the Verge of Extinction: Vietnamese ICH Element Dong Ho Woodblock Printing	2015	1	Workshop on the Roles of the Community Centre in ICH Revitalization: A Case Study of Dong Ho Woodblock Printing	Vietnam National Institute of Culture and Arts Studies (VICAS)	Government of Viet Nam Bac Ninh Province, Viet Nam Mr. Seishi Namiki (Professor, Kyoto Institute of Technology, Japan)
Research for Endangered Traditional Handicrafts in Post-Conflict States (Sri Lanka)	2015	12	Discussion Meeting on Endangered Traditional Handicrafts in Sri Lanka		UNESCO New Delhi Office, India National Craft Council (NCC), Sri Lanka Ms. Himali Jinadasa (Director-General, Sri Lanka Export Development Board (SLEDDB)) Mr. Seiki Ishii (Product Designer, SEIKI DESIGN STUDIO, Japan)
Documentation of ICH as a Tool for Community-led Safeguarding Activities	2015	3	Intensive Working Session on ICH Documentation as a Tool for Community-led Safeguarding Activities		
	2014	2	Workshop for Community's Young Film Makers for ICH Audio-Visual Documentation		
	2013	2	Workshop on ICH Documentation as a Tool for Community Safeguarding Activities		
	2012	3	Intensive Researchers Meeting on Communities and the 2003 Convention		
Safeguarding the ICH for the Promotion of Cultural Identity and Community Resilience in Timor-Leste	2013	10	Study Tour for ICH Experts of Timor-Leste	UNESCO Jakarta Office, Indonesia	Agency for Cultural Affairs, Japan National Institutes for Cultural Heritage, Japan (Tokyo National Museum, Tokyo National Research Institute for Cultural Properties) Oga City, Akita, Yuki City, Ibaraki, Japan
Research on the 2003 Convention	2013	1	2013 IRCI Meeting on ICH — Evaluating the Inscription Criteria for the Two Lists of UNESCO's ICH Convention		Maison des Cultures du Monde (MCM), France
	2012	6	The First ICH-Research Forum: The Implementation of UNESCO's 2003 Convention	Maison des Cultures du Monde (MCM), France	
Current Status of ICH, in Particular, Research and Studies on ICH in Urgent Need of Safeguarding	2012	8	International Field School Alumni Seminar on Safeguarding ICH in the Asia-Pacific	Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre (SAC), Thailand	
Symposiums in Cooperation with Sakai City, Osaka, Japan	2016	11	2016 International Symposium on ICH Safeguarding in the Asia-Pacific Region "Transmitting Art and Spirit of ICH"	Agency for Cultural Affairs, Japan Sakai City	Japan Arts Council
	2013	8	International Symposium in Celebration of the 10th Anniversary of the Convention for the Safeguarding of ICH	Agency for Cultural Affairs, Japan Sakai City	Japan Arts Council
	2013	2	Symposium on ICH in the Asia-Pacific Region "ICH in the Asia-Pacific Region — Current Status and Important Issues"	Sakai City	National Museum of Ethnology, Japan
	2011	10	IRCI Opening Commemorative Symposium	Agency for Cultural Affairs, Japan Sakai City	Japan Arts Council



International Symposium "Negotiating Intangible Cultural Heritage" (Osaka, Japan, November 2017)



Final Workshop on the Study of Legal Systems Related to Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Greater Mekong Region (Ha Noi, Viet Nam, December 2016)

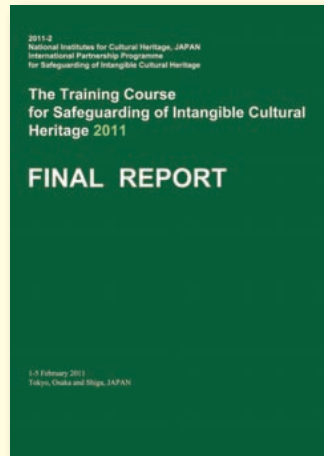


IRCI Experts Meeting on Mapping Project for ICH Safeguarding in the Asia-Pacific Region (Osaka, Japan, November 2016)

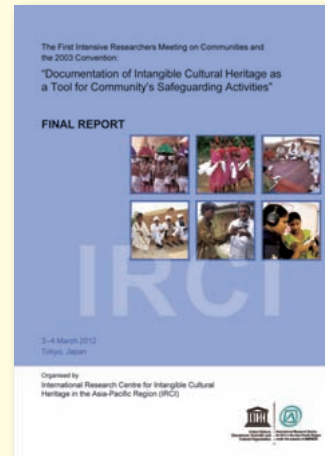


Preliminary Meeting of the Project "Exploring Research for the Safeguarding of ICH in the Asia-Pacific Region" (Bangkok, Thailand, February 2014)

Reports and Publications



The Training Course for Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage 2011 Final Report (2011)



The First Intensive Researchers Meeting on Communities and the 2003 Convention: "Documentation of Intangible Cultural Heritage as a Tool for Community's Safeguarding Activities" (July 2012)



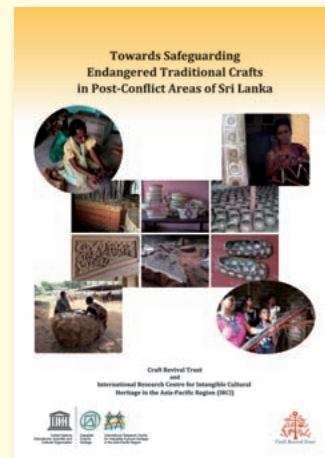
The First ICH-Researchers Forum: "The Implementation of UNESCO's 2003 Convention" (Final Report) (September 2012) ISBN 978-4-9906647-0-1



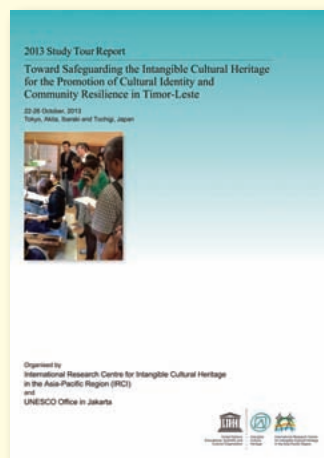
2012 International Field School Alumni Seminar on Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia Pacific (February 2013)



2013 IRCI Meeting on ICH: Evaluating the Inscription Criteria for the Two Lists of UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention (Final Report) (March 2013) ISBN 978-4-9906647-1-8



Towards Safeguarding Endangered Traditional Crafts in Post-Conflict Areas of Sri Lanka (English edition) (September 2014) ISBN 978-4-9906647-3-2



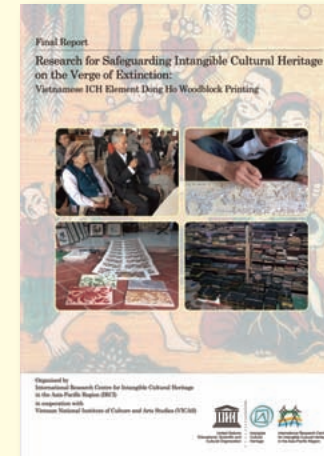
2013 Study Tour Report: Toward Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage for the Promotion of Cultural Identity and Community Resilience in Timor-Leste (March 2015) ISBN 978-4-9906647-5-6



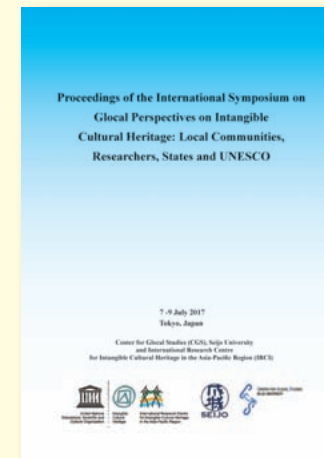
Towards Safeguarding Endangered Traditional Crafts in Post-Conflict Areas of Sri Lanka (Japanese edition) (February 2016) ISBN 978-4-9906647-7-0



Documentation of ICH as a Tool for Community-led Safeguarding Activities (March 2016) ISBN 978-4-9906647-4-9



Research for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage on the Verge of Extinction: Vietnamese ICH Element Dong Ho Woodblock Printing (March 2017) ISBN 978-4-9906647-9-4



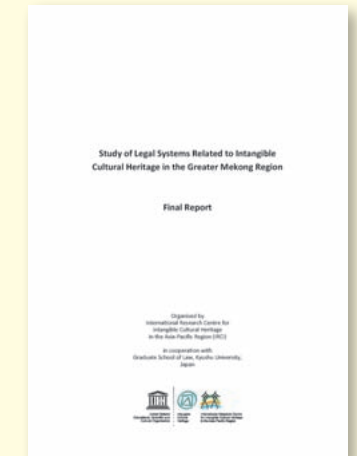
Proceedings of the International Symposium on Global Perspectives on Intangible Cultural Heritage: Local Communities, Researchers, States and UNESCO (November 2017)



International Symposium on ICH Safeguarding in the Asia-Pacific Region: Transmitting Art and Spirit of ICH (March 2017)



Report of International Symposium "Negotiating Intangible Cultural Heritage" (March 2018) ISBN 978-4-9909775-0-4



Study of Legal Systems Related to Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Greater Mekong Region (March 2017)



Preliminary Research on ICH Safeguarding and Disaster Risk Management in the Asia-Pacific Region Project Report for FY2016-2017 (PDF Version) (March 2018)

National Institutes for Cultural Heritage, Japan
International Research Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region 2018

Published by International Research Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region (IRCI)

2 cho, Mozusekiun-cho, Sakai-ku,
 Sakai City, Osaka 590-0802, Japan

Tel: +81-72-275-8050

Printed in August 2018

©2018 International Research Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region (IRCI) Rights Reserved