

## Work Plan for FY 2016

### 1. Activity Focus

Work Plan for FY 2016 is developed under IRCI's new Medium-term Programme (FY 2016-2020), which is subject to approval at The 4th Governing Board Meeting of IRCI (25 September 2015) and underscores the directions and major focuses of IRCI's research activities in the next five years. For the period from FY 2016 to 2020, IRCI intends to implement a series of projects around the "Mapping Project" (Activity Focus I). At the same time, IRCI will embark on new projects focusing on ICH and natural disasters (Activity Focus II).

#### I. Mapping Studies on the Safeguarding of ICH

IRCI has been conducting since FY 2013 a project based on the collection and mapping of research information pertaining to the ICH safeguarding in the Asia-Pacific region. This "Mapping Project" aiming at instigating the research for ICH safeguarding in the Asia-Pacific region constitutes the very core of IRCI's research activities, which is in accordance with IRCI's objectives and functions specified in the Article 4 of the Agreement<sup>1</sup>:

*(The objective of the Centre will be) to enhance safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region, while developing and mobilizing research as a tool for safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage (Article 4.1b)*

*(the function of the Centre will be) to instigate and coordinate research into practices and methodologies of safeguarding endangered intangible cultural heritage elements present in the Asia-Pacific Region, while cooperating with universities, research institutions, community representatives and other governmental and non-governmental organizations in Japan and elsewhere in the Region; (Article 4.2a)*

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<sup>1</sup> Agreement between the Government of Japan and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

In the next 5 years corresponding to IRCI's new Medium-term Programme (FY 2016-2020), Mapping Project will be strengthened for the effective enhancement of research activities and the development of researchers' community encouraging international and interdisciplinary cooperation in the field of ICH safeguarding in the Asia-Pacific region. Specific activities to be implemented under this scheme will be:

- 1) international conferences and experts meetings
- 2) research data collection (research database) and optimization of its use
- 3) periodical publication (journal/monograph) specialized in ICH safeguarding in the Asia-Pacific region

There is also a potential that ideas for new research projects will be proposed as outputs of the Mapping Project. Such ideas could be further developed by IRCI to be implemented as individual research projects.

It is expected that these activities under the Mapping Project contributes significantly to ER6 (national capacities strengthened and utilized to safeguard ICH) of UNESCO's MLA2 (37C/5), especially its performance indicator, *"knowledge produced by all stakeholders involved in the implementation of the Convention available through the knowledge-management"*<sup>2</sup>.

## **II. Research on ICH safeguarding and the Disaster-Risk Management**

This focus has been devised in consideration of ongoing activities of NICH (National Institutes for Cultural Heritage) under National Task Force for the Japanese Cultural Heritage Disaster Risk Mitigation Network, as well as UNESCO's concern on post-conflict and post-disaster situations (PCPD) as described in its Medium-Term Strategy 2014-2021 (37C/4). As indicated in 37C/5 (para.04008)<sup>3</sup>, projects to be implemented under this theme could

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<sup>2</sup> Potentials of the Mapping Project has been remarked in the draft report "Review of the International Research Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia Pacific Region (IRCI)" submitted to UNESCO by the independent evaluator (AHMS 2015).

<sup>3</sup> "Although activities under each of the MLAs have been clearly associated to the achievement of one of the two strategic objectives of the Medium-Term Strategy, in certain cases they may also contribute to the achievement of both. The role of World Heritage in promoting creativity or of intangible cultural heritage in preventing and recovering from disasters are cases in point." (para.04008)

contribute to the achievement of MLAs for both Strategic Objectives 7 and 8.

One of the objectives of NICH's National Task Force for the Japanese Cultural Disaster Risk Mitigation Network is on the international cooperation concerning the disaster mitigation and rescue of cultural heritage. IRCI, as an organization under NICH, intends to explore the impact of natural disasters upon the transmission of ICH, as well as the cases of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in the Asia-Pacific region that were affected by such disasters. Japan's current international cooperation for the post-disaster recovery processes largely deals with tangible heritage, and strategies in the field of ICH are yet to be developed. IRCI's projects will be an important step for the effective heritage management in future. Cooperation with National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo (an organization under NICH), as well as international organisations in related fields, will be sought for effective implementation of project activities.

Natural and other disasters are one of the major factors threatening the transmission of ICH. At the same time, the cultural diversity embodied by ICH assures community's resilience. Given that many countries in the Asia-Pacific region are vulnerable to various natural disasters such as earthquakes, tsunamis, cyclones, floods and volcanic eruptions, it would be critical for ICH safeguarding to be integrated into the disaster risk management strategies leading to sustainable development. By examining in detail the situations of ICH in the Asia-Pacific region that were impacted by natural disasters, and cases of safeguarding such ICH elements, IRCI aims to contribute to UNESCO's Strategic Objectives 7 and 8 (37C/4), and specifically to MLA2 and ER6 (37C/5)<sup>4</sup>. The role of ICH on disaster mitigation, community's resilience and social recovery is also a sub-theme that could be investigated in the course of programme activities.

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<sup>4</sup> ER6 (37C/5): National capacities strengthened and utilized to safeguard the intangible cultural heritage, including indigenous and endangered languages, through the effective implementation of the 2003 Convention.

## 2. Outline of Individual Project Plans

The following projects are planned FY 2016:

Project title	Activity Focus under IRCI's medium-term programme	Expected funding source
<Mapping project 1> The 1st IRCI International Conference on ICH Safeguarding in the Asia-Pacific Region	I. Mapping Studies	Agency for Cultural Affairs, plus NICH, Sakai City
<Mapping project 2> Literature Survey on ICH Safeguarding Researches in the Asia-Pacific Countries	I. Mapping Studies	Agency for Cultural Affairs
<Mapping project 3> Research Data Collection on ICH Safeguarding in the Asia-Pacific Region and Optimization of its Use	I. Mapping Studies	Agency for Cultural Affairs
Preliminary Research on ICH Safeguarding and the Disaster-Risk Management in the Asia-Pacific Region	II. ICH and natural disasters	MEXT
Study of Legal Systems related to Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Greater Mekong Region	*II. Endangered ICH (to be carried out as the final year of the 4 year project)	Agency for Cultural Affairs

### Activity Focus I: Mapping Studies on the Safeguarding of ICH

During FY 2013-2015, three international meetings and a systematic collection of available literature on ICH safeguarding researches were conducted for more than 20 countries, and areas of theoretical and practical approaches in need of fostering and enhancement were identified, shared, and discussed among the experts who participated in the activities of Mapping Project. As a next step to enhance research activities for ICH safeguarding in the Asia-Pacific region, IRCI aims to achieve the following points:

- a. Discuss methodologies and approaches for effective ICH researches through international conferences and experts meetings
- b. Enhance connection and stimulus among ICH researchers
- c. Launch publications to function as an arena for discussions on ICH safeguarding researches

### **I.1. <Mapping Project 1> The 1st IRCI International Conference on ICH Safeguarding in the Asia-Pacific Region**

In FY 2016, the first international conference of IRCI is organized, in cooperation with National Museum of Ethnology (Minpaku). This is the first effort under the Mapping project to bring together ICH researchers working in the Asia-Pacific region for academic discussions. While major participants are leading researchers in the subject, participation of young researchers would encourage the development of human resources in the Asia-Pacific region. It is also expected that the conference becomes the first step for the dialogue and sharing viewpoints between researchers and ICH practitioners.

Period: FY 2016

Activity details:

1. Set up the planning committee for the conference.
  - a) The committee is responsible for the organization and the programme of the conference.
  - b) The committee is comprised of IRCI research staff and the Minpaku researchers, and is in the process of discussing the conference structures.
2. Hold the first international conference of IRCI.
  - a) The conference is held for 2 days in Japan, in FY 2016.
  - b) The conference is comprised of a series of sessions, which is developed by the planning committee.
  - c) Some young researchers on ICH are invited.
  - d) Certain public events are programmed in cooperation with Sakai City.
3. Publish the conference proceedings. This could be further edited for an official IRCI publication in the following years.

Output: Conference proceedings

See attached PDM (IRCI/2015/4GB/4/Annex 2(1)) for the detailed project design.

### **I.2. <Mapping Project 2> Literature Survey on ICH Safeguarding Researches in the Asia-Pacific Countries**

The literature survey conducted in FY 2015 under “<Mapping Project 1> International Experts Meeting: Mapping Project for ICH Safeguarding in Asia and the Pacific Countries” yielded valuable basic information regarding ICH

safeguarding researches in the Asia-Pacific region including the country-by-country analysis of research trends. However, there are many countries in the region that are yet to be surveyed, and the lack of systematic information in these countries is limiting the range of analysis in the broader perspective. Therefore, the systematic literature survey is set up as a research project, to cover major countries in the Asia-Pacific region in the following 3 years.

Period: FY 2016-2018

Activity details:

1. Conduct surveys on existing literatures related to ICH safeguarding researches in the Asia-Pacific countries. In FY 2016, 10 countries in the region are systematically surveyed.
  - a) Surveys are conducted in cooperation with research institutions and researchers, by signing contracts, following the same procedure as the survey in FY 2015.
  - b) Information regarding research institutions and researchers on ICH safeguarding is also collected.
  - c) Concepts, practices, and methodologies of ICH safeguarding is analysed country-by-country, and researchers under contract are expected to submit the survey paper and literature annotation sheets summarizing each publication.
2. Hold a meeting to discuss the survey results.
3. Papers submitted by the survey participants are edited for final publication.

Output: Project report; collected literature information is added to the research database (see <Mapping Project 3>).

See attached PDM (IRCI/2015/4GB/4/Annex 2(2)) for the detailed project design.

### **I.3. <Mapping Project 3> Research Data Collection on ICH Safeguarding in the Asia-Pacific Region and Optimization of its Use**

As part of the Mapping Project, IRCI has been continuously collecting information on ICH safeguarding researches, and launched in FY 2014 the current version of research database (“Research Database on ICH safeguarding in the Asia-Pacific Region”). It is still elementary, and there is much room for improving its performance, while more publications including those written in various languages in the region have to be fed into the database. This project

aims to upgrade the research database so that it could function effectively as a data source for ICH researchers and experts. Collaboration with IT and database/archive specialists is sought for the effective implementation of the project. It is expected that the refined database significantly enhance information sharing among ICH researchers, leading to increased cooperation for various research activities.

Period: FY 2016-2019

Activity details:

The following activities will be implemented in the following 4 years:

1. Continue data collection related to ICH safeguarding researches in the Asia-Pacific region.
  - a) Information collected in the above <Mapping Project 2> is added to the database. This enables the addition of literatures that are written in local languages.
  - b) Cooperation of National archives, libraries, and other relevant organizations in the Asia-Pacific region might be sought for collecting research information.
2. Review and refine database functions and usability in cooperation with ICH researchers (possible users) and information scientists.
  - a) A questionnaire is distributed to selected ICH researchers for collecting comments regarding desirable functions to be equipped to the database system.
  - b) Hold review meetings with IT specialists and ICH researchers, to discuss the improvement the performance of research database.

Activities in FY 2016 specifically focus on (1) the adding of new entries through the information collected in the literature survey (<Mapping Project 2>), and (2) the review of current database.

Output: Refined database

See attached PDM (IRCI/2015/4GB/4/Annex 2(3)) for the detailed project design.

## **Activity Focus II: Research on ICH Safeguarding and the Disaster-Risk Management**

### **II.1. Preliminary Research on ICH Safeguarding and the Disaster-Risk Management in the Asia-Pacific Region**

IRCI starts to implement a new research project under the theme of “ICH safeguarding and the Disaster-Risk Management” (see descriptions in Activity Focus II above). Natural and other disasters are one of the major factors threatening ICH. Given that many countries in the Asia-Pacific region are vulnerable to various natural hazards, developing effective risk-management and recovery strategies incorporating ICH safeguarding would be critical for ensuring the transmission of ICH.

While long-term project plans are yet to be developed, activities in FY2016-2017 focus on collecting (a) information on research trends related to ICH and natural disasters, and (b) information on the cases of ICH in the Asia-Pacific region that were affected by past and recent natural hazards. In so doing, impacts caused by the event, supports received/needed, and the roles ICH played in the recovery process will be assessed. This will provide a baseline for further project directions and activities in the following years.

Period: FY 2016-2017 (The project continues after FY2017, and further plans are drafted reflecting the outputs of this preparatory phase.)

#### Activity details:

1. Conduct archival surveys to collect research information dealing with ICH and natural disasters.
2. Collect basic disaster-impact information in the Asia-Pacific region.
3. Set up a working group to discuss issues related to the subject. Further project plans including research methodologies are developed in cooperation with the group members.
4. Further information might be collected by holding working group sessions, or through field researches in selected countries.
5. Draft the summary report, including plans for further project activities.

Output: Project summary report, including further project plans

See attached PDM (IRCI/2015/4GB/4/Annex 2(4)) for the detailed project design.



## **\*Activity Focus II. Research for the Safeguarding of Endangered ICH**

(\* This is an activity focus under IRCI Medium-term Programme 2013-2015)

### **II.2. Study of Legal Systems related to Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Greater Mekong Region**

While Southeast Asia is particularly rich in ICH, little is known on how the countries in this region have institutionalized or formalized the safeguarding of their ICH. It is also mentioned in many available literatures that legal systems related to cultural heritage are not fully developed in the countries in the Mekong region. In this context, IRCI in collaboration with experts of Kyushu University (Graduate School of Law) has been implementing this research project investigating legal mechanisms for ICH safeguarding in the Mekong region and other countries in Southeast Asia from a comparative perspective. Thus far, basic information regarding the current legal conditions in 9 countries was compiled via an intensive questionnaire, as a quantitative survey. The results of this survey was intensively discussed in the workshop held in December 2014. As a next step, a qualitative survey should be conducted to identify possible schemes and processes/procedures to establish legal instruments for the safeguarding of the ICH in the region. For this purpose, another workshop is currently in preparation (to be held in December 2015 in Tokyo), and if necessary, the field research might be conducted in several countries for collecting more detailed information.

Period: FY 2013-2016 (final year of the 4-year project)

Activity details:

1. Conduct field researches to collect detailed information.
2. Hold international experts meetings to discuss and review the results of the comparative analysis.
3. Create a kind of "tool-kit for planning legal mechanisms" that could be utilized by member states.
4. Publish the final report containing research papers from experts, and the above "tool-kit."

Output: A collection of research papers as a project report; "Tool-kit for planning legal mechanisms"

See attached PDM (IRCI/2015/4GB/4/Annex 2(5)) for the detailed project design.

### **3. Cooperation with Sakai City**

IRCI will contribute to the following projects carried out by Sakai City to promote intangible cultural heritage for the general public.

#### **3.1. The Tokyo Symposium 2016 on Safeguarding Cultural Heritage**

Date: May/June 2016

Venue: Tokyo National Museum (to be confirmed)

Organizer: Sakai City, National Institutes for Cultural Heritage (to be confirmed)

Cooperating Body: IRCI (to be confirmed)

Approved at  
4GBM of IRCI