

V. Conclusions

The inventory of intangible cultural heritage included in this report should not be seen as an exhaustive list, a project that must be on-going and concentrated on individual islets. Rather, the aim of this report has been to provide a brief description of the types of intangible cultural heritage found on the different regions of the FSM and issues related to this heritage. The greatest repositories of ICH in the FSM may be seen in the main island of Yap which maintains a culture quite different from the other islands and more similar to Palau as exhibited in its unique language and history, the outer island of Yap and Chuuk which maintain traditional knowledge of sailing, navigation, and fishing, and Pohnpei, which maintains its traditional title system and the respect ceremonies that support it. These three areas demand particular focus. Further it would appear the greatest potential for tourism development around ICH lies in Yap and Pohnpei.

Some conclusions have presented themselves to help assist in the safeguarding of the ICH in these as well as the other islands of the FSM.

- + The strongest tool for the preservation of ICH is the continuation of cultural festivals. These celebrations are opportunities to document ICH on a large-scale in an efficient manner.
- + The development of performances for the tourist market should be accompanied by an effort to document the nature of its ICH.
- + To ensure the roles of the traditional leadership are respected those roles should be clarified more specifically within legislation. This will both allow traditional leaders to have greater involvement and the government regulations to be better enforced from the bottom up.
- + Traditional and customary use exemptions must be clearly defined in regulations otherwise illegitimate examples of traditional culture may be abused to subvert the law and the exact nature of traditional practices will be lost.

- + The Nagoya Protocol must be ratified if any inventory of traditional medicine is to be created.
- + Certain traditions which preclude the safeguarding of ICH must be re-assessed if those traditions are to be survived.

The creation of cultural inventories are difficult given the limited resources of the state governments of the FSM. It is hoped that the conclusions provided above will give the state Historic Preservation Offices an idea of where they can start.