

## IV. Relevant Organisations

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### 1. Governmental Organisations

Government organizations mandated to preserve and promote Palau's cultural knowledge and practices are aligning under the Ministry of Community and Culture.

#### **Ministry of Community and Culture**

Address: P.O. Box 100, National Capital Ngerulmud  
Melekeok, Republic of Palau 96937

Phone: (680)6-767-1126

Email: [mcca@palaunet.com](mailto:mcca@palaunet.com)

#### **Bureaus**

- Bureau of Arts and Culture  
Director: Dwight Alexander  
Address: P.O. Box 100, Koror, Republic of Palau 96940  
Phone: (680)488-2489  
Email: [histpres@palaunet.com](mailto:histpres@palaunet.com)  
Field of concentration: Collect and document cultural heritages in Palau  
Advisory Body: Palau Society of Historians &  
Cultural Advisory Board ICH experts
- Bureau of Aging and Gender  
Director: vacant  
Minister: Faustina Rehuher-Marugg  
Address: P.O. Box 100, Koror, Republic of Palau 96940  
Phone: (680)488-2575  
Email: [adminaging@palaunet.com](mailto:adminaging@palaunet.com)  
Field of concentration: Traditional Arts & Expressions with elderly  
Advisory body: Senior Citizens Council  
ICH experts, advisory committee: none

- Bureau of National Archives  
 Director: Naomi  
 Address: P.O. Box 100, Koror, Palau 96940  
 Phone: (680)488-4720  
 Email: archive@palaunet.com  
 Field of concentration: any national documents of importance  
 Advisory body: none  
 ICH experts, advisory committee: none

#### **Line Agencies**

- Belau National Museum  
 Director: Olympia Morei  
 Phone: (680)488-4079  
 Email: bnm@palaunet.com  
 Field of concentration: Cultural Materials, Natural History, Palau Pottery  
 Advisory body: Board of Directors  
 ICH experts, advisory committee: none

At this point in time there are no existing associations for intangible cultural heritage preservation. There are groups of men and women, and other non-governmental organizations that participate in intangible cultural heritage preservation, but not associations. Some of the known organizations have been listed in the below table. Similarly, Palau does have any UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Although there are organizations of knowledge holders that the Bureau of Arts and Culture consult with for advice and approval of projects and documentation of Palau cultural heritage, whether its tangible or intangible, they have yet to develop rules or regulations for its membership. At current a request letter is sent to the State government to identify and endorse a knowledge holder for a seat in the 16 member organization as a known and trusted knowledge holder. The members meet regularly or as needed to review and advice on draft documentations of Palau's heritage both tangible and intangible. This organization is a potential registrant to the Living Human Treasures System, once the required processes are fulfilled. The groups are locally known as Palau Society of Historians.

From the various ethnographic studies of Palau's culture, Kramer's Results of the South Pacific Expedition 1908-1910 is probably referenced the most as the earliest and most complete description of Palau's culture at the time. Following

Dr. Kramer's ethnology of Palau's culture is Hizigata Hisakatsu, a Japanese artist and an ethnographer, who travelled throughout Palau recording his observations and experiences in Palau's culture. His work provides another earlier analogy of Palau's society and its cultural heritage. In his collective work, it is clear that in comparison to what Dr. Kramer has witnessed and wrote about of Palau's culture is changing rapidly. For instance Kramer mentions practices of "war, hunting, fishing, care of the trees, collecting for palm wine, woodwork, construction of houses and canoes, navigation, rope-making and preparation of fibers, and the drilling of money as men's labor and the women in charge of: taro patch, weaving mats, pottery, making clothes, tattooing, cooking." Eventually Palau becomes part of UN Trusteeship Agreement with the United States and by then western life style has drastically taken over the lifestyle of Palauan and the competition is getting motor powered boats, building plywood and tin roof houses, getting a car, etc. By then the cultural practices and knowledge are beginning to take less precedence while the indigenous people strive to acquire a taste of the western life.

## **2. Non-governmental Organisations**

Non Governmental Organizations with efforts focusing on preservation and promotion of cultural heritage include Belau National Museum, Ebiil Society Inc., and Mechesil Belau.

### **Belau National Museum**

Belau National Museum was established in 1955 by a group of local Palauns with interest in preserving Palau's culture's and has evolved to its current status as a line agency to the Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs, still maintaining its autonomous governance by a Board of Directors. As mentioned before it has over 6000 cultural materials, a natural history section with a botanical garden and herbarium, a pottery training program and display, and a major research library.

### **Ebiil Society**

Ebiil Society is a new organization only 8 years old provides education of indigenous knowledge for youth during the summer when school is out, and during the school year as an internship program for young people. The summer camp has average participants of 30 in the State of Ngarchelong with recent expansion into the State of Ngaraard. Year 2012 provided training of various indigenous knowledges to 72 participants in both States, a research program for

high school and college students in ethnobotany (10 participants), SCUBA Diving certification (10), and Fishing epistemology (10). Please refer to attached monograph.

### **Palau Potters Organization**

Palau Potters Organization represents the newly trained potters who have become trainers of new students and have begun to develop a new market in the arts and craft area. The organization is one year old.

### **Mechesil Belau**

Mechesil Belau is an organization of Palau traditional women's group and is also participating in the promotion and preservation of Palau's culture. Further details of the organization are mentioned in the section below on meetings. The organization has been conducting an annual conference for 18 years.

Table5. Non-governmental Organisations

<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Field of Concentration</b>	<b>Advisory body</b>	<b>Project details</b>	<b>Person in charge</b>
<b>Belau National Museum</b>	Koror, Palau	Natural History Cultural Material Exhibition Cultural training programs	Board of Directors	Multi projects and year round	Olympia Morei
<b>Ebiil Society Inc.</b>	Ngerchelung, Palau	Youth Education on Indigenous Knowledge towards conservation	Board of Directors	Multi projects/ year round	Ann K. Singeo
<b>Palau Potter Org</b>	Koror, Palau	Revival of Palau's pottery	Board of Directors	Palau Pottery; 2 yrs	Meked Besebes
<b>Mechesil Belau</b>	Koror, Palau	Safeguarding of Palau's culture	Female Head of State	Cultural Expressions and processes- Once a year conference and exhibition	Bilung, Gloria Salii