

2021 Expert Meeting for Building Network on Maritime ICH

Maritime Living Heritage: Coastal Communities in the Asia-Pacific Region and Their Traditional Food System

Concept Note

1. OUTLINE

Date	29 October 2021 (tentative)
Venue	Online
Theme	Maritime Living Heritage: Coastal Communities in the Asia-Pacific Region and Their Traditional Food System <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Session1. Coastal Communities and Their Traditional Food System: Ecocultural Approach- Session2. Coastal Communities and Their Traditional Food System: Socio-Cultural Approach
Language	English
Co-organizers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- International Information and Networking Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region under the auspices of UNESCO (ICHCAP)- Pacific Community (SPC)

2. BACKGROUND

The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage recognizes the importance of intangible cultural heritage (hereafter ICH) as a guarantee of sustainable development, as well as a means of promoting cultural diversity. In an expansive view of ICH as a body of knowledge, belief systems, and practices which pertain to those found on land as well as those exercised in connection to different bodies of water, maritime cultural heritage is defined in this webinar series as natural resources, traditional customs, archeological sites, and established locality thoughts that form cultural practices of coastal communities and people whose cultural and economic lives are informed by a body (or bodies) of water.

In thinking of maritime ICH, it is crucial to remember the Sustainable Development Goal (hereafter SDG) 14 on the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development, and SDG2 on the promotion of sustainable agriculture to achieve food security. These goals constitute a global agenda that mobilizes guidelines and instruments both at the local and international levels to address food production and consumption as a living system that exists in diverse forms in different social contexts. In this light, it is necessary to have a better understanding of the food ways of indigenous peoples and traditional societies for existing policies and highly technological practices to be in place also for the needs of the ecosystem and living heritage in a time of climate change.

Communities have developed traditional food system based on a comprehensive approach to a specific life-style and environmental setting. Traditional food system, therefore, is dynamic and complex, involving knowledge, histories, socialization, and performances. All these areas

of traditional food system should be carefully analyzed in search for food security and quality livelihood particularly in restrictive spaces due to COVID-19 pandemic.

3. HISTORY

For the past few years, ICHCAP has been working with relevant communities and scholars in the pursuit of maritime ICH safeguarding. In 2018, ICHCAP and the National Research Institute of Maritime Cultural Heritage of Korea organized a maritime seminar on [Ship, Navigation and People](#) in the Republic of Korea. Following that in 2019, ICHCAP partnered with the Hoi An Center for Cultural Heritage Management and Preservation to conduct a seminar on [Maritime Traditional Beliefs and Practices](#) in Hoi An, Viet Nam. In 2020, when the global pandemic was wide spread, ICHCAP held the expert meeting online as an ICH Webinar Series in collaboration with UNESCO Apia Office, under the theme of [Maritime Living Heritage – Building Sustainable Livelihoods and Ecosystems in the Asia-Pacific Region](#). Building upon the previous seminars on maritime ICH, ICHCAP and SPC are co-organizing the forth session of maritime seminar on Coastal Communities and Their Traditional Food System.

4. OBJECTIVES

- To improve our awareness of the relation between maritime ICH and the pillars of sustainable development, namely environmental sustainability, inclusive social development, and economic development;
- To explore maritime ICH transmission and safeguarding activities for environmental sustainability and resilience;
- To establish a network of diverse stakeholders for the safeguarding of maritime ICH in the Asia-Pacific region.

5. SESSION DESCRIPTION

The webinar is divided into two sessions, in which scholars, relevant NGOs, and practitioners of maritime ICH are invited to present cases and studies on maritime ICH in the region, as well as relevant safeguarding activities.

Session 1. Coastal Communities and Their Traditional Food System: Ecocultural Approach

The first session of the expert meeting intends to cover issues emanating from the ways in which the ecological environment of a community conditions food production and consumption, and how this human-and-nature relationship shapes a dynamic cultural infrastructure that renders maritime tradition a developing site of knowledge. Human adaptations to ecological transformations brought either by climate change or industrialization have implications not only on how coastal communities protect natural sources of food and livelihood, but also on their existing methods of food preparation and cultivation. Particularly in the area of integrating the use of machines in traditional processes of food-making, this session is interested in efforts to continue or revive the use of more traditional strategies to procure food from marine resources. This session certainly has an eye on questions of food security in coastal area, a disaster-prone world, alternative food sustainability, and measures for environmental healing at the community, national, and regional levels. Moreover, as this session generally perceives traditional food ways of people who are dependent on bodies of water as a living system, there

is a need to discuss how such a living system, specifically in light of traditional heritage, is safeguarded in ways that positively impact the very waters that meet human demands for food. This session also looks into how traditional food system might structurally contribute to poverty alleviation and our global drive to end hunger.

Session 2. Coastal Communities and Their Traditional Food System: Socio-Cultural Approach

The second session aims to explore representations of mutual cooperation, kinship, and social cohesion in traditional food ways to better understand histories of cultural identity, especially indigenous subjectivity, gendered and class-based relationships, and solidarity at the level of community or village. For traditional food system to thrive and survive, people communicate certain ideals in an attempt to maintain social harmony with their environment. In this session, we emphasize the need to hear what these are, and how people commit themselves to the transmission of these ideals through food production and consumption. Congruently, this session is interested in further-exploring social practices, rituals, festivities, and expressions performed around value systems that inform cultural food ways.