

**Regional Committee for Asia Pacific (MOWCAP)
of the
Memory of the World**

REPORT

This report covers the main activities of MOWCAP since the previous IAC meeting in 2009.

MOWCAP comprises the delegates of the national MOW committees and equivalent bodies in the Asia Pacific region, as defined in the MOWCAP statutes. MOWCAP relates to, and is accredited by, the UNESCO Regional Office in Bangkok, Thailand.

MOWCAP's statutes, minutes of meetings, and other documentation are available on its website at www.unesco.mowcap.org

Background

MOWCAP embraces UNESCO's Asia-Pacific area – that is, the 45 countries bounded by Mongolia in the north, New Zealand in the South, the Pacific island countries in the east, and Iran and the “stan” countries in the west. Notable characteristics of the region are:

- Political, linguistic and cultural diversity
- Economic disparity: first world to third world.
- Population size ranging from the world's largest (China at 1.3 billion) to smallest (Niue at 2000)
- Its size and the tyranny of distance. Much of the Asia Pacific is ocean, many countries are islands, travel and communication is costly.
- Cultures of great richness and antiquity, yet many nation states are relatively young in their present form. A general history of colonization creates particular issues in the repatriation of documentary heritage.
- Many countries are tropical, with temperature/ humidity destructive of documentary heritage.
- Archives, libraries and museums often lack adequate funds, infrastructure and skills.
- Contains almost 50% of the world's population and 25% of UNESCO member countries.

MOWCAP membership

Current members are Australia, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Fiji, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Krygyzstan, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, New Zealand, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Thailand, Vanuatu, Vietnam. In addition, at the 4th General Meeting, in March 2010, delegates from Hong Kong SAR, Macau SAR, Laos, Brunei Darussalam and Samoa attended as observers.

Participants in the January 2010 workshop in Tehran, Iran came from Azerbaijan, Iran, Kyrgyzstan, Turkey, Kazakhstan as well as Zimbabwe. Participants in the March 2011 workshop in Jakarta, Indonesia were from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Fiji, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Timor Leste.

In summary, in the course of the last two years, MOWCAP has directly interacted with 32 of the 45 countries in the region.

Meetings

The 4th General Meeting of MOWCAP was held in Macau SAR, China on 17-18 March 2010. It attracted 57 participants and was hosted by the Macau Foundation and the Macau Documentation and Information Society. The Bureau met in Hanoi on 2-4 February 2011, hosted by the UNESCO National Commission of Vietnam. The 5th General Meeting is scheduled for March 2012 in Bangkok, Thailand.



4th MOWCAP General Meeting

Bureau

The current Bureau, elected at the 4th General Meeting, comprises:

Chair: Ray Edmondson

Deputy Chairs: Carmen Padilla, Li Minghua, Setareki Tale

Secretary General: Helen Swinnerton

Regional UNESCO Advisor: Dr Susanne Ornager

Register subcommittee chair and Goodwill Patron: Dr Rujaya Abhakorn

Publications subcommittee chair: Richard Engelhardt

Special advisors: Sarah Choy, Simon Chu, Jinsung Jeon

. The Bureau was elected by the members for a 4 year term.

Asia Pacific MOW Register

There were 8 new inscriptions to the Asia Pacific Register at the MOWCAP General Meeting in March 2010, chosen through secret ballot by voting members. The ceremony for presentation of certificates was part of a celebratory dinner hosted by the Macau Foundation, and received excellent media coverage. The inscribed items are:

China: *Compendium of Materia Medica* and *The Yellow Emperor's Inner Canon*

Fiji: *Documentary heritage of the Indian indentured labourers*

Macau SAR: *Archives and materials of the Macau Diocese from the 1550s to 1800s*

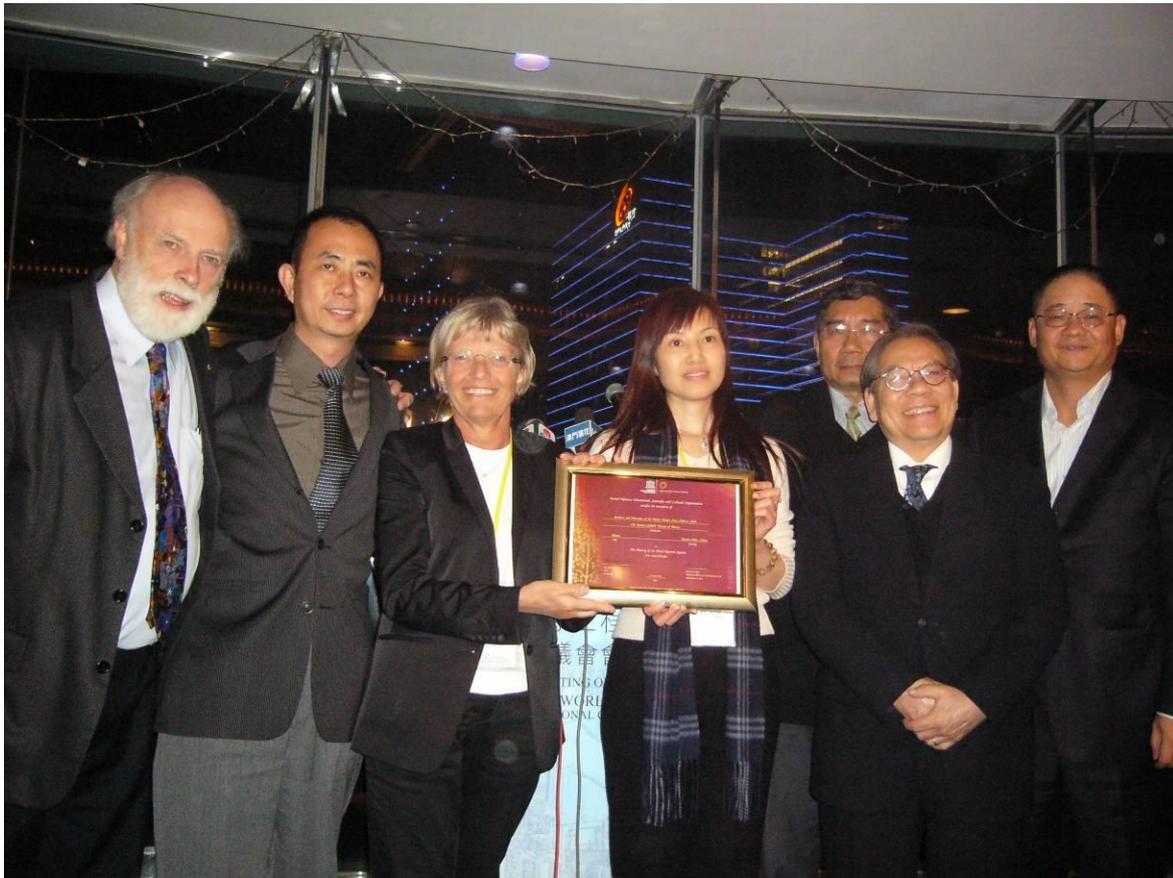
Mongolia: *Lu. "Altan Tobchi"*

New Zealand: *The Tokyo War Crimes Trials 1946-1948*

Philippines: *Presidential papers of Manuel Luis Quezon*

Vietnam: *Stone stele records of Royal Examinations of the Le and Mac dynasties 1442-1779*

Of particular interest was the inscription of the *Archives and materials of the Macau Diocese*, representing the first time that Macau has been recognised on a MOW Register. On a subsequent occasion, some Bureau members were able to inspect the collection, which is held in the house of the Bishop of Macau. The Macau Documentation and Information Society has published a colourful explanatory booklet about the collection.



Presentation of certificate of inscription for the Archives and Materials of the Macau Diocese



The Bishop of Macau showing some of the collection to Helen Jeong (Macau Documentation and Information Society), Simon Chu and Sarah Choy (MOWCAP Special Advisors)

“Memory”

This is the working title of a coffee table book celebrating the documentary heritage of Asia Pacific. It is the first major project of the Publications Subcommittee, and is now being prepared in conjunction with a commercial publisher in Hong Kong and with financial assistance from the MOW Committees of China and Australia. It is envisaged as a “pilot” for a series that might eventually encompass MOW in other parts of the world.

The core of the book will be illustrated articles on all items from the region currently inscribed on the International and Asia Pacific registers. The editor is Philippines scholar Nick Deocampo, who has shared the task of gathering the textual and pictorial content with the UNESCO Regional Office in Bangkok. The present intention is to close off the content of the book following the 2011 IAC meeting and proceed towards a publication date in 2012.

Other publications

Translations of the *General Guidelines* into Khmer and Chinese were completed, respectively, by the UNESCO office in Phnom Penh and the State Archives Administration of China.

An occasional **MOWCAP newsletter** has been established. This is distributed electronically about 3 times a year to members and other interested recipients, both inside and outside the Asia Pacific region.

Workshops and events

September 2009 - The UNESCO National Commission for **Cambodia** hosted a workshop in Phnom Penh, preparatory to setting up a national MOW committee. The workshop included a particular focus on a preservation strategy for the Tuol Sleng archive, which is inscribed on both the Asia Pacific and International MOW registers. Resource persons included Dr Rujaya Abhakorn, Dr Susanne Ornager and Mr Ian Cook.

September 2009 – The *Regional workshop on the preservation and utilization of digital heritage* was held in **Cheongju City**, Korea in conjunction with the ceremony to present the Jikji prize to the National Archives of Malaysia. The workshop involved the participation of representatives from 11 countries across the Asia Pacific region.

October 2009 – A one day MOWCAP workshop for **Pacific** countries was held in Brisbane in conjunction with the PARBICA conference. Resource persons were Roslyn Russell, Ray Edmondson and Ian Cook.

October-December 2009 – Cash prizes were awarded to winning school students in **Thailand, Philippines** and **Singapore** who participated in a MOW competition to make short videos featuring a particular item of documentary heritage. The competition was organised by the regional UNESCO office in Bangkok.

January 2010 – The National Library of Iran hosted a 3-day *MOW workshop on audiovisual media* in **Tehran**. Resource persons were Ray Edmondson and Belina Capul. Most of the 70 participants came from across Iran; there were also several participants from neighbouring countries.



Participants in the audiovisual workshop

*March 2010 – A Training program on MOW awareness raising and advocacy was held in **Manila** and was led by Belina Capul. Participants were drawn from across the region.*

*June 2010 – Memory of the World Initiation Meeting An awareness-raising gathering of interested parties in **Wellington** which was the springboard for setting up a national MOW committee in New Zealand. Ray Edmondson participated as a resource person, and the occasion was hosted by the UNESCO National Commission for New Zealand.¹*

*November 2010 – Public seminar in **Hong Kong**, organised by the Archives Action Group: *From memory, archives and heritage: the UNESCO Memory of the World programme*. Speakers were Dr Luciana Duranti, Dr Lothar Jordan, Dr Rujaya Abhakorn and Ray Edmondson.*

*November 2010 – Regional seminar in **Macau** *World Documentary Heritage and the Memory Programme* organised by the Macau Documentation and Information Society. Participants included several members of the MOWCAP Bureau.*



Jakarta workshop group photo – formal attire courtesy of the Indonesian hosts!

*March 2011 - Korean National Commission for UNESCO, in cooperation with the National MOW Committee for Indonesia and other supporters, hosted the second 3-day Asia Pacific MOW Training Workshop, held in **Jakarta** .The purpose was to coach and mentor countries which are not yet represented on an MOW register to develop nominations. 10 participants were selected from a larger pool of applicants, and came to the workshop with draft nominations. Mentors were Roslyn Russell, Joie Springer, Rujaya Abhakorn, Prof. Kyung Ho Suh and Ray Edmondson.*

At the time of writing, further events are projected for PARBICA in **Apia**, Samoa and **Busan**, Korea.

A MOW Convention: follow up from Fourth International MOW Conference

At the conference just held in Warsaw, the chair presented a paper outlining the need for a MOW

Convention. As indicated in our 2009 report to the IAC, this is an issue that has been on MOWCAP's agenda for some time and resonates with members in Asia and the Pacific. It was most recently assessed at the MOWCAP Bureau meeting in February this year. Following that meeting, MOWCAP members were circularised about the Bureau's view in favour of a convention, and were subsequently sent an advance draft for comment of the paper since presented in Warsaw, to ensure that the opinions presented did reflect the views of the whole MOWCAP membership.

Attached to this report is a copy of the indicative outline of a possible MOW Convention as prepared by Sarah Choy, special adviser to the MOWCAP Bureau, along with the covering letter sent to MOWCAP members. **It is recommended that the IAC proceed with definite action** to assess the advantages and disadvantages of a MOW Convention, and to establish what steps would be necessary to achieve it.

Goodwill Patron

Dr Rujaya Abhakorn has a roving brief to represent MOWCAP and assist the growth of MOW committees in the region. In view of the paucity of travel funding, his visits to countries in the region have to be opportunistic and either done in the course of other professional work or with the sponsorship of the receiving countries.

Among his activities during the last two years, Dr Abhakorn has represented MOWCAP in the celebrations for the 1000 year anniversary of Hanoi, has conducted a MOW workshop in Brunei, and has given an information session on registering documentary heritage in Ulaan Bator, Mongolia.

Other regional issues and perspectives

Important issues canvassed at the Bureau and General meetings included:

- **Legal status** of MOWCAP: it was ultimately established that MOWCAP is a subsidiary body of the IAC and cannot have a legal personality. This impacts on its ability to raise and manage sponsorship funds.
- **Growing membership** suggested the need to increase the number of vice chairs on the Bureau from one to three, each vice chair having a brief to build a relationship with the group of national MOW committees assigned to them. This would also facilitate regular annual reporting and the updating of contact information in each country.
- The national MOW committee of Iran has proposed the establishment of a sub-region among the countries of **central Asia** and this proposal is being assessed by the Bureau.
- To encourage greater use of the **MOW logo**, the role and discretion of regional MOW committees in authorising its use has been identified as a matter to be discussed with the Paris secretariat.
- The issue of **coordinating** MOW with the Intangible Heritage and World Heritage has continued to be a focus, and an intern at the UNESCO Bangkok office has conceptually

developed a data base to detail all the MOW, IHC and WHC inscriptions in Asia Pacific. The purpose is to understand the possible geographic and thematic synergies with the intention of pursuing better coordination and linking resource management. It is suggested that research centres at universities might identify intellectual themes, while national MOW committees could look at national links.

- A MOWCAP page on **Facebook** has been established with the intention of engaging young people with MOW and the documentary heritage.

National committees

This report does not cover the individual activities of national MOW committees in the region...that would make it far too long. National reports are added to the MOWCAP website as agenda papers for General and Bureau meetings.

Regional office support and financing

MOWCAP's operating resources come from many quarters – from the immense amount of volunteer time devoted to its work, and the substantial costs in cash and kind absorbed or donated by individuals and supportive institutions, as well as UNESCO itself. Certain direct costs have been met by UNESCO's Regional Office in Bangkok, including travel by some MOWCAP officers and some other meeting participants, and other expenses. It maintains MOWCAP's "budget line" in its system.

To all members of MOWCAP

During the MOWCAP General Meeting in Macau, in March 2010, there was a discussion on whether or not MOW should seek to gain an international UNESCO convention, so that it would stand on the same footing as the complementary World Heritage and Intangible Heritage programmes (refer section 19 in the minutes of the meeting – on the MOWCAP website – for the discussion). I summed up the discussion by noting that MOWCAP should try to reach a formal stance on the issue in advance of the International MOW Conference in Warsaw, in May 2011, at which I have since been invited to deliver a paper on the issue.

The subject was further discussed at the MOWCAP Bureau meeting in Hanoi last month. The Bureau reached a clear view in favour of seeking a convention to support the programme, and also felt it was time to get the issue firmly on the action agenda rather than continuing to simply talk about it. Subject to feedback from MOWCAP members, this is the view that I intend to put to the conference and to the meeting of the MOW International Advisory Committee, which immediately follows the conference.

As we discussed in Macau, this is not a simple issue. Being supported by a convention would greatly strengthen the status of the programme, the stature and force of its registers, and would bring an added layer of international protection where documentary heritage is vulnerable to neglect and political whim in the absence of well established and secure archives and libraries. It would give the documentary heritage equal status with the built, natural, intangible and other forms of heritage, and attract more support from governments. It should also enhance MOW's very slim budget and staffing base, an issue which is becoming critical as the programme keeps expanding.

On the other hand, the process of gaining a convention involves several approval stages which would probably take some years. Once approved, it would require ratification of a specified number of countries before coming into force. It may involve changes to the current committee structure of the programme. In the first instance, therefore, the matter needs to be thoroughly researched so all national and regional committees are fully informed about the possible effects of such a change. Attached is an **indicative** outline of what a possible MOW convention might provide for.

If you have views on this subject, please let me have them by 17 April so they can be reflected in my paper. I want to be sure I accurately represent the views of the membership in the discussion in Warsaw.

Yours sincerely .



Ray Edmondson OAM
Chair, MOWCAP

7 April 2011

Possible UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of Documentary Heritage

This document explains in brief the elements of a possible Convention. It provides a framework to help members understand what the proposed Convention may include. It is indicative only: the actual substance (the articles) to be drafted would be subject to further research and consultation.

The Convention would logically comprise the following:

1. **Background or Preamble** explains why there is the need for the Convention and what matters, related issues and circumstances have been considered.
2. **Objectives and Guiding Principles** elaborate the purpose of having the Convention and the legitimate grounds/reasons on which it is based.
3. **Scope of Application** spells out the parties, areas and matters to be governed by the Convention to ensure consistency and certainty.
4. **Definitions** explain the major terms used throughout the Convention.
5. **The Structure:** explain the organs that are responsible for performing the functions and business prescribed by the Convention, their membership, terms and mechanism of formation. This may involve the creation of a general assembly which represents all party states which sign and ratify the Convention. A committee (with sub committees) may be required to serve as the executive board of the general assembly for running the business and activities arising from the Convention. There may also be the need for a secretariat to be provided by UNESCO.
6. **Functions and Power** explains the legal obligations and responsibilities of the party states, the general assembly and the committee (intergovernmental) and/or sub committees (professional) to be set up and their relation with UNESCO in implementing the policy, the day-to-day management and other matters specified by the Convention.
7. **Rules of Procedures** lay down the binding rules and procedures for election, how decisions are made in the general assembly and the committee(s) and how disputes are settled, etc. It is common to empower the general assembly and the committee(s) to make or change their own rules where specified conditions are met.
8. **Measures/Programs** state what are required in protecting and promoting documentary heritage. This article would also elaborate the work to be done by the each member state, the general assembly, the committee(s) and international cooperation. The MOW registers, conservation and preservation activities, various educational and promotional workshops and development or exchange programs at national, regional and international levels may be included.
9. **Funding** provides the sources of income for discharging the functions and activities under the Convention. These may include establishing a designated fund (and its forms) which is entitled to receive [annual membership fees], contributions and gifts from member states and donors.
10. **Report and Audit** describes the types and periods of reports, targets of report submission and follow-up action.
11. **Advisory Body** gives the name, the component and functions of the advisory body as well as defining who are eligible as members, their terms of office and how members are included or accredited.
12. **Sanctions** specify the kinds and extent of penalty for violating provisions of this Convention.

13. **Rules for Amendment** stipulate the rules for amending the Convention.
14. **Accession, Ratification and Denunciation** explain the standard rules and procedures for such incidents
15. **Relation with other UNESCO Conventions and Treaties** provides that member states in performing their legal obligations under other legal instruments must recognize the duties imposed by this Convention.
16. **Entry into Force** determines when and how the Convention will be effective.
17. **Authoritative Text** specifies the languages in which the text of the Convention will be written and the equal weight they carry.
18. **Transition Clauses**
19. **Schedules** are for anything else not included in the main text but warrant further elaboration