



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



Intangible  
Cultural  
Heritage

INTANGIBLE CULTURAL  
HERITAGE  
**BEST SAFEGUARDING  
PRACTICES**

**2012**

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**2013**







INTANGIBLE CULTURAL  
HERITAGE  
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PRACTICES**

**2012**

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**2013**



# Foreword

**IRINA BOKOVA**  
DIRECTOR-GENERAL  
OF UNESCO



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No society can flourish without culture – and no development can be sustainable without it. Culture holds answers to many of the questions that societies face today. Intangible cultural heritage has a vital role to play in this respect, as the living cultural practices, expressions and knowledge systems that provide meaning to communities, that explain the world and shape it.

The power of intangible cultural heritage is still far too overlooked – despite the benefits demonstrated by numerous studies, showing that communities around the world rely on living heritage to tackle a wide range of challenges, from food scarcity, environmental change and health to education, conflict prevention and reconciliation.

The 2013 celebration of the tenth anniversary of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage was an opportunity to highlight the power of intangible cultural heritage across globe. This celebration provided an empowering platform for dialogue and cooperation, where all communities were able to share experiences and reflections on an equal footing. This publication opens a window onto some of these community practices.



To safeguard this living heritage, UNESCO has designed a global capacity-building strategy to help countries create institutional and professional environments that encourage the sustainable safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage and that promote wider public understanding and support. We are working for the long term, through a multifaceted approach that engages the widest possible range of actors. In this, we assist countries in revising policies and legislation, in redesigning institutional infrastructures, in developing inventory methods and systems and in fostering the technical skills to safeguard intangible cultural heritage.

At the seventh and eighth sessions of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage held in Paris (December, 2012) and in Baku (December, 2013), the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding and the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity were enriched with new elements. New programmes were also selected on the Register of Best Safeguarding Practices. These inscriptions have generated a wave of enthusiasm from States and communities across the world, proud to see their cultural identities and safeguarding efforts recognized at the international level. I see this as the spirit of the Convention in action.

As we celebrate the Convention and its anniversary, I believe that we must redouble efforts to ensure that the viability of intangible cultural heritage remains at the centre of our mission and that the practicing communities, groups and individuals continue to be the Convention's leading force and primary beneficiaries. In this same spirit, we must all reaffirm our commitment to strengthening the contribution of intangible cultural heritage to fostering creativity, dialogue and mutual respect.

As the international community shapes a new global sustainable development agenda to follow 2015, let us recognize the power of culture, including intangible cultural heritage, as a driver and an enabler of inclusive and sustainable development. This has always been the core idea guiding the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, and it remains our message today.

**As we celebrate the Convention and its anniversary, I believe that we must redouble efforts to ensure that the viability of intangible cultural heritage remains at the centre of our mission and that the practicing communities, groups and individuals continue to be the Convention's leading force and primary beneficiaries.**





# Introduction

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) – a specialized agency of the United Nations with a mandate in international cooperation in the fields of education, science, culture and communication – maintains a global Register of Best Safeguarding Practices for intangible cultural heritage. What is the purpose of such a Register, and how have the projects and activities that are included there been selected?

In 2003, UNESCO’s General Conference adopted the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, which has since been ratified by more than 150 countries in every part of the world. Resulting from several decades of previous work at UNESCO and several years of negotiation among its Member States, the Convention has four primary goals:

- To safeguard intangible cultural heritage.
- To ensure respect for the intangible cultural heritage of the communities, groups and individuals concerned.
- To raise awareness and appreciation of the importance of intangible cultural heritage at the local, national and international levels.
- To provide for international cooperation and assistance.

When the drafters of the Convention debated its text, they had to reach broad consensus on what they meant by ‘intangible cultural heritage’, what it would mean to ‘safeguard’ it, and how best the international community could work together towards that goal.

The term ‘intangible cultural heritage’ is defined in the Convention as ‘the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces, associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage’ (article 2.1). Intangible heritage takes an infinite number of forms among different communities, including oral expressions and traditions; performing arts; social practices, rituals and festive events; knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; and traditional craftsmanship.

## Article 2 : Définitions

For the purposes of this Convention,  
1. The ‘intangible cultural heritage’ means the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity. For the purposes of this Convention, consideration will be given solely to such intangible cultural heritage as is compatible with existing international human rights instruments, as well as with the requirements of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals, and of sustainable development.

Essential in the Convention's definition is the fact that only the communities, groups or individuals concerned can determine what constitutes a part of their heritage – and consequently, it is only they themselves who can decide whether to continue to practise and transmit it.

When they turned to 'safeguarding', the Convention's drafters defined it as 'measures aimed at ensuring the viability of the intangible cultural heritage' – that is, ensuring to the greatest extent possible that tomorrow's generations would continue to have the opportunity to enjoy the practices, expressions and knowledge that constitute intangible cultural heritage, just as we do today. The will of the community is a necessary condition for safeguarding, but it is not alone sufficient. The Convention recognizes that in today's world – a world characterized by globalization and rapid social transformation – intangible cultural heritage may face 'grave threats of deterioration, disappearance and destruction', despite the best efforts of the communities concerned and of the States in which they live. In the view of the Convention's drafters and the many States Parties that have since ratified it, international cooperation is the key to counterbalancing such threats and reinforcing the viability of intangible cultural heritage.

Among the several tools for international cooperation that the Convention created, the Register of Best Safeguarding Practices has a special place. The Convention's two lists – the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding and the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity – are perhaps better known, but the Register can be said to lie at the very heart of the Convention, demonstrating the belief of its framers that international exchanges of good experiences can allow countries and communities to learn from one another and thereby to strengthen their own safeguarding efforts.

## **REGISTER OF BEST SAFEGUARDING PRACTICES**

Established in accordance with Article 18 of the Convention, the Register of Best Safeguarding Practices aims to identify and promote national, subregional and regional programmes, projects and activities for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage that the Intergovernmental Committee – one of the Convention's two governing bodies – considers best reflect the principles and objectives of this Convention, taking into account the special needs of developing countries. Each year, the Committee can select one or more such best practices from among those put forward by States Parties to the Convention.

The Register of Best Safeguarding Practices is expected to serve as a platform for sharing practices that can serve as a source of inspiration to States Parties, communities and anyone interested in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. Learning more about effective safeguarding measures with proven success across various types of intangible cultural heritage, and in different geographic regions, can help those concerned to develop their own appropriate safeguarding measures.



The selection process begins with a State Party's conviction that a programme, project or activity on its territory can offer lessons to others who might learn from its experience. In the Convention's spirit of international cooperation, countries and communities that aspire to safeguard their intangible cultural heritage may discover what other countries and communities have done in similar – or not so similar – circumstances and then adapt the successful methods and approaches to their own contexts.

Those who had been involved in implementing the project that is proposed for recognition must be willing to share their experience in the event that it is selected by the Committee. One of the primary means of disseminating such experience is the present publication.

Once a complete proposal has been submitted to UNESCO, it undergoes two assessments. First comes an evaluation by a specially constituted Consultative Body – numbering six accredited non-governmental organizations and six individual experts – that makes an initial determination whether the submitting State has adequately demonstrated that the programme, project or activity satisfies the relevant criteria. The Body formulates a recommendation to the Committee – composed of 24 States from the different regions of the world, elected to represent the entire membership of the Convention. The Committee, meeting at the end of each year, examines the proposal together with the recommendation of the Body, and decides finally whether the activity proposed best represents the principles and objectives of the Convention and should be selected for the Register of Best Safeguarding Practices.

What are the criteria that the Consultative Body and Committee consider when determining whether a programme, project or activity should be selected for the Register? From among the possibilities proposed to the Committee by States Parties, only those that best satisfy the following criteria are selected:

.....  
**Criterion P.1** — The programme, project or activity involves safeguarding, as defined in Article 2.3 of the Convention.  
.....

.....  
**Criterion P.2** — The programme, project or activity promotes the coordination of efforts for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage on regional, subregional and/or international levels.  
.....

.....  
**Criterion P.3** — The programme, project or activity reflects the principles and objectives of the Convention.  
.....

.....  
**Criterion P.4** — The programme, project or activity has demonstrated effectiveness in contributing to the viability of the intangible cultural heritage concerned.  
.....

.....  
**Criterion P.5** — The programme, project or activity is or has been implemented with the participation of the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned and with their free, prior and informed consent.  
.....

.....  
**Criterion P.6** — The programme, project or activity may serve as a sub-regional, regional or international model, as the case may be, for safeguarding activities.  
.....

**Criterion P.7** — The submitting State(s) Party(ies), implementing body(ies) and community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned are willing to cooperate in the dissemination of best practices, if their programme, project or activity is selected.  
.....

**Criterion P.8** — The programme, project or activity features experiences that are susceptible to an assessment of their results.  
.....

**Criterion P.9** — The programme, project or activity is primarily applicable to the particular needs of developing countries.  
.....

Once a programme, project or activity has been selected for the Register of Best Safeguarding Practices, the Committee and the UNESCO Secretariat take on the task of calling attention to it and sharing its experiences more widely. The present publication presents the three projects that were selected as best practices by the Committee in 2012 and 2013. It provides a description of each project, the challenges that faced those responsible for implementing it, and the lessons that can be drawn from it. More detailed information – including the proposals, community consents, photographs and videos – is available for consultation on UNESCO’s website (<http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/lists/>).

While many of us are committed to safeguarding intangible cultural heritage so that it can contribute to cultural diversity and sustainable development, it is important to note that the primary responsibility of guardianship and safeguarding must always rest with the communities concerned. The Register of Best Safeguarding Practices – like the other mechanisms for international cooperation established by the Convention – aims to support and strengthen such community-level action.

UNESCO is aware of the intricate and complex nature of safeguarding as well as its own limited reach at the local level. Moreover, as an intergovernmental organization, UNESCO cannot single-handedly safeguard the world’s living heritage. What it hopes to do is to fulfil its role as a catalyst to foster international cooperation so that those communities and States that demonstrate commitment and a willingness to safeguard their endangered intangible heritage, but may require technical know-how or financial support, can receive assistance in order to carry out their safeguarding plans.





# Intangible Cultural Heritage Best Safeguarding Practices 2012 - 2013



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1. Strategy for training coming generations of Fujian puppetry practitioners (2012)

## **MEXICO**

2. Xtaxkgakget Makgkaxtlawana: the Centre for Indigenous Arts and its contribution to safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage of the Totonac people of Veracruz, Mexico (2012)

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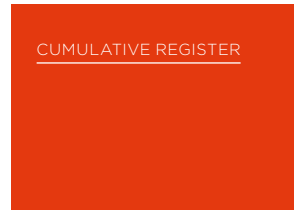
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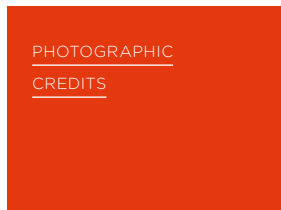
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Methodology for inventorying intangible cultural heritage in biosphere reserves: the experience of Montseny



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# 1

COUNTRY

**CHINA**

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

**2012**

## Strategy for training coming generations of Fujian puppetry practitioners

Fujian puppetry is a Chinese performing art consisting mainly of string and hand puppetry. Puppetry in Fujian Province in south-eastern China has developed a set of characteristic techniques of performance and crafting puppets, as well as a large repertoire of plays and music. As a result, the art of Fujian puppetry is cherished by the local communities where it forms an integral part of cultural life. Over recent decades, however, changes in lifestyles and in the basis of the economy, combined with globalization, have led to a drop in the transmission of Fujian puppetry. This trend has been exacerbated by the long and painstaking practice required to perfect the highly elaborated performance techniques. As a result, younger generations are reluctant to invest time and effort in acquiring the requisite skills and know-how.









# 1

COUNTRY

**CHINA**

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

**2012**

## .../... Strategy for training coming generations of Fujian puppetry practitioners

Given the gravity of the situation, the communities concerned, together with associations and representative bearers, have formulated a strategy designed to train future generations of Fujian puppeteers and promote the safeguarding of Fujian puppetry. A professional body called the Fujian Province Intangible Cultural Heritage Safeguarding Centre coordinates the various parties working to promote the transmission and development of Fujian puppetry through school education, apprenticeships and training of puppetry troupes. It also compiles teaching materials on Fujian puppetry and helps to produce and disseminate popular written, video and audio material on puppetry in order to encourage training, knowledge and appreciation among the community at large. It has provided encouragement and financial support to bearers and promoted their accreditation; established new puppetry performance venues, training institutes and exhibition halls; worked to develop regional and international cooperation through artistic exchange programmes; and established research centres to promote the art of puppetry and puppet-making.



This strategy has benefitted from the wide participation of local communities, ordinary people and related educational institutions. Its training programmes are aimed at future generations of practitioners and are implemented through both formal and non-formal education. Over the four years it has been in operation, the strategy has fostered the safeguarding of Fujian puppetry and enhanced its sustainability. As a result of the strategy and the combined efforts of stakeholders, 200 potential practitioners have received professional training in art colleges and schools; about 20 public state puppetry groups have been established; and 15 practitioners have been accredited as national-level representative bearers of Fujian puppetry, 25 at the provincial level and 83 at the municipal level.



# 1

COUNTRY

**CHINA**

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

**2012**

**More than fifty communities and schools have set up cooperative relationships with professional puppetry troupes.**

## .../... **Strategy for training coming generations of Fujian puppetry practitioners**

The strategy has also resulted in a significantly greater number of Fujian puppetry performances, both at home and abroad. Some one thousand shows are put on every year by more than ten amateur puppetry troupes under the direction of representative bearers. In particular, the Quanzhou Puppetry Troupe, Zhangzhou Puppetry Troupe and Jinjiang Hand Puppetry Troupe have toured extensively, performing Fujian puppetry across more than ten regions and countries. To stimulate the interest of younger students and children, they also organize an annual event entitled ‘100 Puppetry Shows on Campus’, with the active support and assistance of schools and kindergartens. The troupes have also taken on several dozen puppetry practitioners as apprentices in order to revitalize the tradition.

The strategy provided that an inventory of Fujian puppetry should be undertaken as a key safeguarding measure. A database was specially designed for this purpose: it now houses material relating to some fifty-nine repertoires and seventy bearers. Representative bearers, together with personnel from the communities concerned, collected and collated traditional repertoires, as well as writing and publishing academic works and reading materials – this has resulted in better conditions for the teaching and dissemination of Fujian puppetry. In addition, the Quanzhou Puppetry Troupe is taking urgent steps to rescue and restore a lost masterwork of classical Fujian puppetry, *Mu Lian Jiu Mu*.

The aforementioned activities have all played a significant role in popularizing puppetry and increasing awareness and appreciation of it among local communities. As a result, the number of new students enrolling in puppetry has risen sharply, with the Quanzhou Puppetry Troupe, Zhangzhou Puppetry Troupe and Jinjiang Hand Puppetry Troupe each enrolling around sixty new students.

The strategy has proved to be a practical model of cultural heritage safeguarding that other regions can use as a reference for safeguarding their own traditional performing arts. It has been jointly developed and implemented by all the stakeholders, with the participation of communities, professional institutions and local governments, under the direction of the Fujian Province Intangible Cultural Heritage Safeguarding Centre. Legal and policy measures for the implementation of the strategy are provided in the Law for Intangible Cultural Heritage of the People’s Republic of China and the Fujian Province Regulations for the Safeguarding of Ethnic and Folk Culture.



The mobilization of wide public support and participation envisioned in this strategy could be a useful model for developing countries seeking to enhance awareness and appreciation of traditional culture. Since its implementation, more than fifty communities and schools have set up cooperative relationships with professional puppetry troupes. The strategy also stresses the need for educational resources to be used effectively. Developing countries wishing to promote the training of future generations of practitioners by capitalizing on those countries' educational facilities and resources may learn from its experience. By fully mobilizing the resources of professional institutions, it will encourage the establishment of similar institutions, and also provide effective examples when other coordinated, cooperative training mechanisms are set up.



# 2

COUNTRY

**MEXICO**

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

**2012**

**The Centre was established in the face of a decline in creative practice and production among Totonac communities.**

## **Xtaxkgakget Makgkaxtlawana: the Centre for Indigenous Arts and its contribution to safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage of the Totonac people of Veracruz, Mexico**

The Centre for Indigenous Arts was established in the face of a decline in creative practice and production among Totonac communities. The educational institution was designed to safeguard cultural heritage and its concepts and forms as part of regional development and to preserve traditional Totonac practices and teachings. The centre is linked to a number of traditional and arts organizations and depends on the broad participation of elders, children, young people, women, artists, researchers, academics, students and some 100 traditional teachers, as well as more than 1,000 students and apprentices at the centre itself.

Its chief objectives are to strengthen indigenous identity and safeguard the community's cultural heritage; provide favourable conditions for indigenous creators to develop their art; strengthen the models for artistic and cultural creation through initiatives geared towards training and the transmission of traditional know-how; promote community development through the communities' own cultural resources; and encourage the centre's use as a space for intercultural dialogue.

Initial community consultations among traditional teachers, cultural promoters, representatives of indigenous organizations and anthropologists of the region identified several key priorities. Among these were: fostering respect for and appreciation of elders; the recovery and promotion of the Totonac language; traditional pottery, textiles and embroidery; traditional music, dance and rituals; the production of natural dyes and paint; traditional medicine; the performing arts; and traditional gastronomy. This laid the groundwork for the structure and content of the centre and its constituent House-Schools.



# 2

COUNTRY

**MEXICO**

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

**2012**

## .../... **Xtaxkgakget Makgkaxtlawana: the Centre for Indigenous Arts and its contribution to safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage of the Totonac people of Veracruz, Mexico**

The centre resembles a settlement, with each House-School focusing on a particular field of artistic endeavour. The first House-School to be set up was the house of the elders, or Kantiyán, which constitutes the core of the project: it teaches a common syllabus that all the apprentices must follow before choosing their house of specialization. The Kantiyán is composed of twelve elders, the main bearers of Totonac knowledge and values. These elders, through giving counsel and guidance, sustained by tradition, help students in their academic studies, educate children and young people, and resolve conflicts or differences.

The House-Schools are centred around workshops and laboratories for research and artistic activities. This helps the transmission of knowledge and ensures that it is grounded in indigenous conceptions, which in turn strengthens the pedagogy. The model for the centre is truly innovative – it stems from the Totonac cosmology, which embraces creative practice as something intrinsically linked to one's spiritual nature. Learning is equivalent to preparing oneself for life. Education in the Totonac arts is a route to introspection, promoting the preservation of intangible cultural heritage from the roots upwards.

One of the centre's key aims is cultural regeneration: this is understood as meaning the revitalization of cultural practices that incorporate new knowledge and thus contribute to the culture's viability. Using the Totonac language as the vehicle for teaching is one way of revitalizing the language itself as a means of conveying know-how and knowledge. Reforestation and replanting the trees and plants needed for cultural practices, recovery of forgotten traditional techniques, production of artistic works, and re-establishment of traditional governing bodies and community schools all embody the project's approach to strengthening Totonac social fabric.

The centre also undertakes initiatives designed to create better conditions for the development of indigenous communities. These include: financial and material support; information campaigns and the promotion of indigenous arts and culture; and a publishing programme with books, recordings, videos and support for projects that generate income and establish the grounds for sustainability. The centre promotes ongoing cooperation with creators and cultural agencies from other Mexican states and foreign countries. It also organizes events that promote intangible cultural heritage from the artistic standpoint, thus reaffirming the importance of creativity and cultural exchange.





**Learning is equivalent to preparing oneself for life. Education in the Totonac arts is a route to introspection, promoting the preservation of intangible cultural heritage from the roots upwards.**

# 2

COUNTRY

**MEXICO**

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

**2012**

**Designed to regenerate ancestral know-how about art and its relationship to the deities, instilling a sense of community and developing transmission mechanisms.**

## **.../... Xtaxkgakget Makgakxlawana: the Centre for Indigenous Arts and its contribution to safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage of the Totonac people of Veracruz, Mexico**

The centre can be a model for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage at the regional, subregional and international levels. It was established as a public body in which the bearers of intangible cultural heritage are the actors and conduits for the planning, follow-up and evaluation of programmes. The leadership and decision-making processes receive support from collegiate bodies that are traditional in nature – this ensures the continuation of the project. Bearers of cultural heritage are an integral part of the programme: they take part in running the centre, helping to determine not only its range of activities, but also its goals.

Although the centre promotes traditional education, it never undermines the value of formal education. It is designed to regenerate ancestral know-how about art and its relationship to the deities, instilling a sense of community and developing transmission mechanisms. Language is embraced as a means of transmitting symbolic thought, thus ensuring the protection of heritage from the roots. The centre is also a space for intercultural, respectful and open dialogue among indigenous and non-indigenous creators. Its educational model can be applied to the transmission, establishment and continuity of many other manifestations of intangible cultural heritage.

Lastly, the centre encourages projects that generate an income and lay the groundwork for self-management within communities. In this way, the Centre for Indigenous Arts model has become a creative option that boosts the economy and encourages community development.







# 3

COUNTRY

**SPAIN**

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

**2013**

## Methodology for inventorying intangible cultural heritage in biosphere reserves: the experience of Montseny

Initiated by the UNESCO Centre in Catalonia, a non-governmental organization, the project focuses on the inventorying of intangible cultural heritage in a biosphere reserve. The 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage pays particular attention to the identification of intangible cultural heritage and the drawing up of inventories with a view to safeguarding this heritage. The UNESCO Centre in Catalonia decided to undertake a project to develop a methodology for such inventories, based on practical experience.

The project focuses on the Montseny massif in the Autonomous Community of Catalonia, and incorporates the current biosphere reserve as well as the adjacent territories proposed for its expansion, collectively known as the historical territory of the Montseny. It concentrates especially on the biosphere reserve, a space established to promote sustainable relationships between humans and the natural environment.



**It concentrates especially on the biosphere reserve, a space established to promote sustainable relationships between humans and the natural environment.**



The first action undertaken by the UNESCO Centre was to contact the Montseny Biosphere Reserve and National Park and the Museu Etnològic del Montseny as local stakeholders and institutions connected to the community. The local body responsible for the implementation of the Convention, the Centre for the Promotion of Traditional and Popular Catalan Culture (later renamed the Directorate General of Popular Culture, Associations and Cultural Actions), was also invited. These four institutions collectively make up the project's governing board.

Aiming to contribute to the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage as a fundamental part of sustainable development, the project had three objectives: to design a methodology for the preparation of inventories of intangible cultural heritage in biosphere reserves; to draw up an inventory; and to prepare a document on the contribution of intangible cultural heritage to sustainable development. Through fieldwork and a participation plan, the project sought and encouraged the involvement of the local population in identifying its own intangible cultural heritage.

# 3

COUNTRY

**SPAIN**

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

**2013**

## .../... **Methodology for inventorying intangible cultural heritage in biosphere reserves: the experience of Montseny**

Among the safeguarding measures defined by the Convention, the project focused on identification, documentation, research, promotion and presentation. It began with the identification of intangible cultural heritage and the preparation of an inventory, as a starting point for other safeguarding measures. The project team undertook to develop a methodology for the identification of practices, representations, expressions, knowledge and skills for inclusion in the inventory, building on knowledge acquired during a prior inventory of Montseny's ethnological heritage undertaken between 1995 and 1999. New research was also undertaken at the documentation centres of the Museu Etnològic del Montseny and the Centre for the Promotion of Traditional and Popular Catalan Culture. This was combined with the results of fieldwork, as well as more in-depth documentation of elements that had already been identified.

The focus on the intangible cultural heritage in a biosphere reserve could be used as a model by other biosphere reserves, natural parks and reserves wishing to establish similar programmes to develop their own inventories by applying the experience and practical guidelines learned from the project. The project could also encourage future coordination among reserves – the exchange and sharing of experiences might enable them to deal with challenges in a more comprehensive manner.

Key to the project's approach are, first, the involvement of a broad spectrum of society in the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage and, second, an acknowledgment of the role played by this heritage in the development of the community where it is located – two principles embedded in the Convention. The project shows how civil society organizations can play a role in promoting initiatives for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. Several local actors have been actively involved in the project from the beginning. In particular, two anthropologists from the University of Barcelona, in partnership with the Museu Etnològic del Montseny, helped to define the project's initial methodology.

**Several local actors have been actively involved in the project from the beginning.**







# 3

COUNTRY

**SPAIN**

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

**2013**

## .../... Methodology for inventorying intangible cultural heritage in biosphere reserves: the experience of Montseny

The project's main outcomes can be consulted on the Internet in several languages (<http://www.unescocat.org>). Furthermore, through the participation of 150 individuals, organizations and institutions, the project has contributed to a wide appreciation of the importance of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and the purposes of the Convention. The visibility of the project has been enhanced by presentations at meetings, seminars and symposiums on intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development. Finally, the National Plan for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Spanish Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports has promoted the project as an example of good practice.

The methodology developed for this project could be used as a model, both regionally and internationally, for preparing inventories in biosphere reserves. Furthermore, the document on the contribution of intangible cultural heritage to sustainable development reflects multidisciplinary approaches that could encourage actions to promote cultural heritage for environmental protection and income generation. This is especially relevant for countries that urgently need to find ways to improve the conditions of their populations through safeguarding intangible heritage and nature, without compromising the prospects of future generations.

The project also addresses the needs of developing countries by allowing them to apply an existing, developed methodology as a starting point for the safeguarding process, thus potentially accelerating inventory preparation while saving time and resources.





**The visibility of the project has been enhanced by presentations at meetings, seminars and symposiums on intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development.**



# Cumulative Register of Intangible Cultural Heritage Best Safeguarding Practices

## **BELGIUM**

- Programme of cultivating ludodiversity: safeguarding traditional games in Flanders (2011)

## **BOLIVIA (PLURINATIONAL STATE OF), CHILE AND PERU**

- Safeguarding intangible cultural heritage of Aymara communities in Bolivia, Chile and Peru (2009)

## **BRAZIL**

- Call for projects of the National Programme of Intangible Heritage

## **CHINA**

- Strategy for training coming generations of Fujian puppetry practitioners (2012)

## **HUNGARY**

- Táncház method: a Hungarian model for the transmission of intangible cultural heritage (2011)

## **INDONESIA**

- Education and training in Indonesian Batik intangible cultural heritage for elementary, junior, senior, vocational school and polytechnic students, in collaboration with the Batik Museum in Pekalongan (2009)

## **MEXICO**

- Xtaxkgakget Makgkaxtlawana: the Centre for Indigenous Arts and its contribution to safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage of the Totonac people of Veracruz, Mexico (2012)

## **SPAIN**

- Methodology for inventorying intangible cultural heritage in biosphere reserves: the experience of Montseny (2013)
- Revitalization of the traditional craftsmanship of lime-making in Morón de la Frontera, Seville, Andalusia (2011)
- Centre for traditional culture - school museum of Pusol pedagogic project (2009)

# Photographic credits

## CHINA

### 1 Strategy for training coming generations of Fujian puppetry practitioners

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Zhang Yuzhou

## MEXICO

### 2 Xtaxkgakget Makgkaxtlawana: the Centre for Indigenous Arts and its contribution to safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage of the Totonac people of Veracruz, Mexico

- © 2009, Cumbre Tajín/  
Rafael Silverio
- © 2007, Cumbre Tajín/  
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## SPAIN

### 3 Methodology for inventorying intangible cultural heritage in biosphere reserves: the experience of Montseny

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United Nations  
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Intangible  
Cultural  
Heritage

## INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE BEST SAFEGUARDING PRACTICES 2012 - 2013

Article 18 of the 2003 Convention stipulates that the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage periodically selects, among proposals submitted by States Parties, programmes, projects and activities for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage considered to best reflect the principles and objectives of the Convention. Once selected, the

Committee promotes these initiatives as best safeguarding practices and accompanies their implementation for wider dissemination. The Register of Best Safeguarding Practices is expected to act as a platform for sharing best practices and to serve as a source of inspiration for States, communities and anyone interested in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. Learning more about

effective safeguarding measures with proven success across various types of intangible cultural heritage in different geographic regions will help the parties concerned develop their own appropriate safeguarding measures.

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