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| ITEM 8 OF THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA |
| **Report of the Evaluation Body on its work in 2020** |
| Fifteenth session, Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage  (Online – 14 to 19 December 2020) |

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| **Summary**  At its fourteenth session, the Committee established a consultative body responsible for the evaluation in 2020 of nominations to the Urgent Safeguarding List and to the Representative List, proposals to the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices and requests for International Assistance greater than US$100,000 ([Decision 14.COM 18](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/14.COM/18)). This document constitutes the report of the Evaluation Body, which includes an overview of the 2020 cycle (Part A), observations and recommendations on working methods and a number of cross-cutting issues (Part B), an overview of recurring issues (Part C) and a draft decision for the Committee’s consideration (Part D).  **Decision required**: paragraph 78 |

1. In conformity with paragraph 27 of the Operational Directives, the evaluation of nominations for inscription on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding (hereinafter, ‘the Urgent Safeguarding List’) and on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (hereinafter, ‘the Representative List’), proposals for the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices and requests for International Assistance greater than US$100,000 is accomplished by a consultative body of the Committee established in accordance with Article 8.3 of the Convention, as well as Rule 20 of its Rules of Procedure, known as the ‘Evaluation Body’.
2. By its [Decision 14.COM 18](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/14.COM/18), the Committee established the present body at its fourteenth session (Bogotá, Republic of Colombia, 9 to 14 December 2019). The Evaluation Body is composed of six experts qualified in various fields of intangible cultural heritage representative of States Parties non-Members of the Committee and six accredited non-governmental organizations. As indicated in [Decision 9.COM 11](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/9.COM/11), a system of rotation among the seats has been established, according to which the Committee reappointed nine continuing members and elected three new members – Mr Limeneh Getachew Senishaw (Ethiopia), Workshop intangible heritage Flanders and European Association of Folklore Festivals – at its fourteenth session. They were elected by the Committee taking into consideration equitable geographical representation and their qualifications in various domains of intangible cultural heritage. The twelve members are:

**Expert representatives of States Parties non-Members of the Committee**

EG I: Mr Pier Luigi Petrillo (Italy)

EG II: Ms Ľubica Voľanská (Slovakia)

EG III: Ms Sonia Montecino Aguirre (Chile)

EG IV: Ms Hien Thi Nguyen (Viet Nam)

EG V(a): Mr Limeneh Getachew Senishaw (Ethiopia)

EG V(b): Mr Saeed Al Busaidi (Oman)

**Accredited non-governmental organizations**

EG I: Workshop intangible heritage Flanders

EG II: European Association of Folklore Festivals

EG III: Erigaie Foundation

EG IV: Korea Cultural Heritage Foundation (CHF)

EG V(a): Association pour la sauvegarde des masques (ASAMA)

EG V(b): Egyptian Society for Folk Traditions

1. Following the submission and presentation of the report on its work to the fifteenth session of the Committee, the present Evaluation Body shall cease to exist with the establishment of the next Body. Following the requirements described in [Decision 14.COM 18](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/14.COM/18), a new Evaluation Body will be established at the fifteenth session of the Committee.
2. The report of the Evaluation Body consists of five working documents, as follows:
3. The present document [LHE/20/15.COM/8](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-8-EN.docx) constitutes the general report of the Evaluation Body with an overview of all the 2020 files (Part A), general observations and recommendations on working methods and a number of cross-cutting issues (Part B), an overview of recurring issues in the 2020 cycle (Part C) and a draft decision for the Committee’s consideration (Part D);
4. Document [LHE/20/15.COM/8.a](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-8.a-EN.docx) concerns nominations for inscription on the Urgent Safeguarding List as well as combined nominations for inscription on that List together with requests for International Assistance to support the implementation of the proposed safeguarding plan. It includes an assessment of the conformity of the nominations with the inscription criteria as provided in Chapter l.1 of the Operational Directives, including an assessment of the viability of the element and of the feasibility and sufficiency of the safeguarding plan and the risks of it disappearing, as provided in paragraph 29 of the Operational Directives, as well as recommendations to the Committee to inscribe or not to inscribe the nominated elements on the Urgent Safeguarding List or to refer the nominations to the submitting State(s) for additional information. For files that also include a request for International Assistance, the document includes an assessment of the conformity of the request with the selection criteria, as provided in Chapter l.4 of the Operational Directives, as well as recommendations to the Committee to approve or not to approve the requests or to refer the requests to the submitting State(s) for additional information;
5. Document [LHE/20/15.COM/8.b](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-8.b-EN.docx) concerns nominations for inscription on the Representative List. It includes an assessment of the conformity of the nominations with the inscription criteria, as provided in Chapter l.2 of the Operational Directives, as well as recommendations to the Committee to inscribe or not to inscribe the nominated elements on the Representative List or to refer the nominations to the submitting State(s) for additional information;
6. Document [LHE/20/15.COM/8.c](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-8.c-EN.docx) concerns proposals to the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices. It includes an assessment of the conformity of the proposals with the selection criteria, as provided in Chapter l.3 of the Operational Directives, as well as recommendations to the Committee to select or not to select the proposals or to refer the proposals to the submitting State(s) for additional information;
7. Document [LHE/20/15.COM/8.d](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-8.d-EN.docx) concerns requests for International Assistance greater than US$100,000. It includes an assessment of the conformity of the requests with the selection criteria, as provided in Chapter l.4 of the Operational Directives, as well as recommendations to the Committee to approve or not to approve the requests or to refer the requests to the submitting State(s) for additional information.
8. As requested in [Decision 14.COM 18](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/14.COM/18), the abovementioned nominations, proposals and requests are presented in their respective reports in the English alphabetical order, with the files of States whose names begin with the letter Q. The files evaluated by the Evaluation Body for the 2020 cycle are available on the website of the Convention at: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/files-2020-under-process-01053>.

**A. Overview of the 2020 cycle**

1. In accordance with paragraph 54 of the Operational Directives, the deadline for the submission of files for the 2020 cycle was 31 March 2019. The Operational Directives provide that ‘the Committee determines two years beforehand, in accordance with the available resources and its capacity, the number of files that can be treated in the course of the two following cycles’ (paragraph 33). At its thirteenth session in Port Louis, Republic of Mauritius (2018), the Committee determined that in the course of the 2020 cycle a total of fifty files could be treated for the Urgent Safeguarding List, Representative List, Register of Good Safeguarding Practices and International Assistance greater than US$100,000 ([Decision 13.COM 15](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/13.COM/15)).
2. Following the above-mentioned [Decision 13.COM 15](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/13.COM/15) to have at least one file per submitting State processed over the two-year period 2020–2021 and applying the priorities set out in paragraph 34 of the Operational Directives, the Evaluation Body was informed that the Secretariat had treated a total of fifty-three files, as follows:

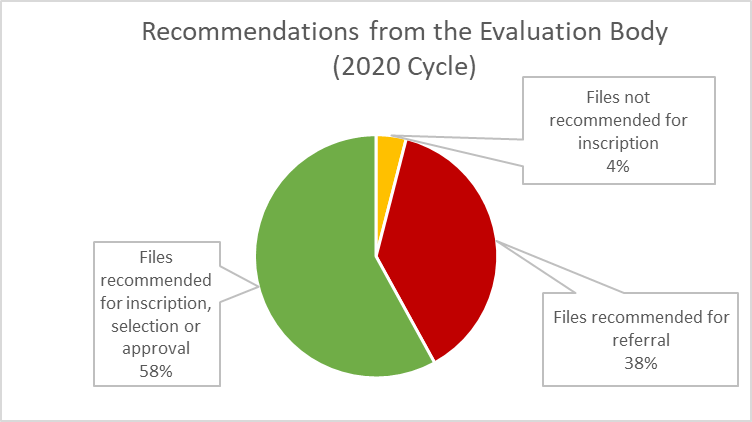
By level of priority:

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| **Reference** | **Type of file** | **Number** |
| Decision 13.COM 15 – priority (0) | Files from States that did not have a file treated for the 2019 cycle | 35 |
| Paragraph 34 of the Operational Directives – priority (i) | Files from States having no elements inscribed, good safeguarding practices selected or requests for International Assistance greater than US$100,000 approved | 0 |
| Nominations to the Urgent Safeguarding List | 2 |
| Paragraph 34 of the Operational Directives – priority (ii) | Multinational files | 16 |
| Paragraph 34 of the Operational Directives – priority (iii) | Files from States with the fewest elements inscribed, good safeguarding practices selected or requests for International Assistance greater than US$100,000 approved | 0 |
| **Total** |  | **53** |

1. The Secretariat processed each of the fifty-three files and contacted the submitting States in June 2019 about any further information required for the files to be considered as technically complete. Following this completeness check by the Secretariat, fifty-two files were considered as technically complete, whereas one file was withdrawn by the submitting State concerned before its transmission to the Evaluation Body.
2. A total of fifty-two files were completed by the submitting States in time for their evaluation by the Evaluation Body. These include sixteen multinational files, four files referred in a previous cycle, two files not inscribed in a previous cycle, three files withdrawn before examination by the Committee in a previous cycle and three files submitted in previous cycles that remained in the backlog. Four States Parties with no inscribed elements, good safeguarding practices selected or requests for International Assistance greater than US$100,000 approved, submitted a nomination, proposal or request in this cycle, all four of which submitted a file for the first time. The breakdown of the fifty-two files by mechanism is as follows:

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| Urgent Safeguarding List | 2 |
| Urgent Safeguarding List combined with International Assistance | 2 |
| Representative List | 42 |
| Register of Good Safeguarding Practices | 4 |
| International Assistance (greater than US$100,000) | 2 |
| **Total** | **52** |

1. The Evaluation Body met for the first time at the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris on 27 and 28 February 2020. While ten members were able to be physically present in Paris, two members had to participate remotely due to the COVID-19 health crisis that had already started to affect some regions. After consultation, the Body elected Mr Saeed Al Busaidi (Oman) to serve as its Chairperson, Mr Leonce Ki (Association pour la sauvegarde des masques - ASAMA) as Vice-Chairperson and Ms Ľubica Voľanská (Slovakia) as Rapporteur.
2. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak and the subsequent impossibility of organizing the second meeting of the Body as an *in-presentia* meeting in June, the twelve members and the Secretariat agreed to plan for the meeting to be held online. To this end, a preparatory meeting was held online on 12 June 2020, two weeks prior to the second meeting of the Body, to finalize the working methods to be applied during the meeting.
3. As was the case for preceding cycles, the Secretariat established a password-protected, dedicated website through which members could consult the documents of the meetings as well as the files to be evaluated, together with any accompanying documentation. An email distribution list facilitated communication among members of the Evaluation Body. Every member of the Body evaluated each file online and prepared individual opinions and recommendations explaining whether and how it responded to the applicable criteria. Furthermore, in order to facilitate consultations among the members before and during the meeting and encourage consensus-building, the Secretariat developed new features in the online interface. These additional features allowed the Evaluation Body to exchange outside of the meeting, consult each other’s evaluation texts and engage in written discussions up to sixteen days before the online meeting.
4. The Evaluation Body met online from 29 June to 3 July 2020. Due to the considerable time differences between the members as well as the constraints inherent in an online meeting, the duration of the meeting was reduced from thirty to fifteen hours over five days (three hours per day). Even though the working methodology remained largely the same as in previous years, its implementation had to change significantly. The quality and depth of the interactions was influenced by the need to carry out the meetings online. The Body faced difficulties in engaging in the in-depth debates that usually provide the basis for its evaluations and for reaching a consensus among all its members. The online modality, combined with the technical difficulties encountered by some members and the reduced time available for the discussions, made it more difficult to reach a consensus. In order to achieve a similar approach for evaluating, more time and effort were required on the part of both the Body and the Secretariat during and between the online meetings scheduled. Nevertheless, the Body succeeded in reaching a consensus in its recommendations for all files and criteria as well as for the cross-cutting issues and successfully finalized its evaluation of the fifty-two files. This was made possible only thanks to the intense preliminary work carried out by the members of the Body through the online interface, which also resulted in a substantial increase in the workload for the Secretariat. Based on the discussions held during the meeting and online, the Rapporteur prepared a draft decision for each file, as well as general observations and recommendations by the Body.
5. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the eighth session of the General Assembly was postponed from June 2020 to 8–10 September 2020. In order to allow sufficient time for the submitting States concerned to provide the information requested and for the Evaluation Body to assess the answers provided by the States in time for the present session of the Committee, the Evaluation Body decided to launch the dialogue process on an anticipatory basis, when it considered that a short question-answer process could influence its overall recommendation for a file. The eighth session of the General Assembly adopted the revisions of the Operational Directives, which formalized the dialogue process ([Resolution 8.GA 10](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/8.GA/10)).
6. The 2020 cycle is the first cycle in which the dialogue process has been fully implemented. In this cycle, the dialogue process was applied in eleven cases, including nine nominations to the Representative List, one nomination to the Urgent Safeguarding List and one proposal to the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices. In five cases, the Body asked questions on more than one criterion and on as many as three criteria. The questions from the Evaluation Body were sent to the submitting States concerned on 17 July 2020 with a four-week deadline to provide the information requested in the two working languages of the Convention. The questions from the Evaluation Body and the answers from the submitting States are attached to their respective nomination files on the [15.COM webpage](https://ich.unesco.org/en/15com).
7. The Evaluation Body subsequently organized its third meeting, online, from 22 to 24 September 2020, to validate the draft decisions and adopt the reports. Although it again faced difficulties in engaging in the extensive debates that usually provide the basis for reaching a consensus among all its members, the Body finalized its recommendations on the eleven files concerned by the dialogue process based on the answers provided by the States Parties concerned. In conformity with paragraph 55 of the Operational Directives duly amended, the outcome of the dialogue process has been directly included in the draft decisions presented to the Committee. All fifty-two draft decisions presented in the five respective reports therefore represent the consensus of the Evaluation Body.
8. Out of the fifty-two files[[1]](#footnote-1) examined by the Evaluation Body in this cycle, a total of thirty files (58 per cent) are recommended for inscription, selection or approval, twenty (38 per cent) are recommended for referral and two (4 per cent) are not recommended for inscription. A dialogue process was initiated by the Evaluation Body for eleven files, ten of which are recommended for inscription and one for referral, as follows:

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1. Compared to the previous cycle (2019), the number of files recommended for referral has increased from 23 per cent to 38 per cent. The number of files recommended for inscription has decreased from 61 per cent to 58 per cent.
2. Out of the eighteen nominations that were referred or not recommended for inscription on one of the two Lists, 89 per cent were referred or not recommended for inscription on multiple criteria, as follows:

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|  | **Urgent Safeguarding List** | **Representative List** |
| **Number of files referred or not recommended on only one criterion** | - | 2 |
| **Number of files referred or not recommended on multiple criteria** | 2 | 14 |

1. Among the files that were referred or not recommended for inscription on the Urgent Safeguarding List or the Representative List, the recommendations of the Evaluation Body were based on issues concerning the following criteria:

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| **Criteria** | **Number of files in which the criterion was referred or considered as not met** |
| U.1/R.1 | 9 |
| U.2 | 1 |
| R.2 | 14 |
| U.3 | 2 |
| R.3 | 14 |
| U.4/R.4 | 12 |
| U.5/R.5 | 9 |

1. **General observations and recommendations**
2. This part of the report explains the working methods of the Evaluation Body and outlines the main issues, observations and conclusions that arose during its work. Although some of these issues are recurrent, members of the Body discussed them with the utmost attention and due diligence.

***Working methods***

1. **Collective decision-making**. The twelve members of the Evaluation Body, representing different geographic areas and areas of expertise, evaluated each file individually and then shared their individual evaluations through the dedicated online interface. The new functionalities enabled the Body members to work more effectively (see paragraph 12). It would in fact have been impossible to manage the workload within the shortened timeframe without the hard work of the Secretariat as well as of all the Evaluation Body members, who flexibly adapted to the exceptional circumstances of the 2020 cycle. During the online discussions that followed, the individual members explained their positions and the reasons behind them. The ensuing wide-ranging and in-depth discussions represented an integral step towards reaching the necessary consensus on each criterion of each file. It follows that the Body speaks with one voice.
2. **Neutrality of the members of the Evaluation Body**. To ensure neutrality and equity, and as has been the custom in previous cycles, a member of the Body did not participate in the evaluation of a nomination submitted by their own country of nationality. The same principle was applied to files submitted by States where the non-governmental organization he or she represents is located and operates. In this cycle, this was the case for seven of the fifty-two files examined.
3. **Evaluation of the content of the files**. The members of the Evaluation Body focused their evaluations on the content of the files, based on the information provided by the submitting States Parties. They also avoided using any external knowledge of the element in question. It is important to note that the Body evaluated the information in the file rather than the element in its own right, thereby avoiding making any value judgments about it and its practice. In its discussions regarding the future of the listing mechanisms, the Body acknowledged that its evaluations could, in some cases, benefit from the possibility to consider information outside of the nomination files. However, in the current evaluation system, the Body expresses concerns on its ability to adequately take into account extra information and on the impact that this could have on the fairness of the evaluation process.
4. **Consistency of the evaluation within and across the files in this cycle**. The Evaluation Body paid attention to the consistency of information provided within the different sections of a file. At the same time, the members respected [Decision 7.COM 11](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/7.COM/11), according to which ‘information placed in inappropriate sections of the nomination cannot be taken into consideration’. Furthermore, the Evaluation Body treated all files equally, thereby ensuring consistency across all its recommendations to States Parties.
5. **Consistency with previous Committee decisions**. The Evaluation Body took into consideration previous Committee decisions pertaining to nominations submitted in previous cycles. In this cycle, the members noted improvements in the information provided on criterion U.5/R.5 following the changes made to the nomination forms. However, as some States Parties still found it difficult to provide comprehensive information, the Body remained consistent with previous recommendations for criterion U.5/R.5 and did not recommend a referral merely on the basis that only a small part of the information related to the periodicity of updating of the inventories was missing.
6. **Consistency with previous Bodies**. The Evaluation Body recognized the importance of being consistent with the approach adopted by Bodies in previous cycles. At the same time, however, the members of the Evaluation Body took into consideration the particularities of each file and the specific contexts within which the element of intangible cultural heritage at hand is safeguarded. Furthermore, the members discussed the issue of the evolving character of the interpretation of the Convention, which also needs to be reflected in the evaluation process.
7. **Use of the referral option**. In cases where information in the nomination file was missing or insufficient to decide whether or not a particular criterion was met, the Body opted to refer the file. States Parties, and in particular members of the communities concerned, might perceive the referral of a file as a failure. However, the idea behind a referral is to give an encouraging signal to the submitting States to invite them to improve the quality of the file, including in terms of how the element and its safeguarding are presented to the wider public.
8. **Position on previously referred files**. In this cycle, the Evaluation Body discussed nine resubmitted files that were previously recommended for referral or not to inscribe/select, or that were withdrawn before their examination by the Committee. When treating files referred in previous cycles, the Body evaluated them as new files. The Body encountered a number of issues that specifically arose in those cases. Firstly, the letters of consent enclosed with the file were the same as those provided with the previous nomination and therefore did not reflect the new situation of the element being nominated. Furthermore, some previous recommendations of the Committee to improve the quality of the files had not been applied. The members of the Evaluation Body tried to explain very clearly what information was missing in the files, in the hope that specific recommendations might help the States Parties to review the files before resubmitting them. However, as some files were resubmitted in the cycle immediately following their examination by the Committee, the States Parties only had a short period of time to review the information and apply the recommendations. States Parties are encouraged to assess the recommendations carefully and reserve sufficient time to act upon them.
9. **Use of the ‘No’ option**. The Evaluation Body used the option of not to inscribe, not to select or not to approve a specific file, programme or International Assistance request when the file provided enough information to show that a criterion or several criteria had clearly not been met.
10. **Combined mechanism**. The following procedure was used to evaluate combined nominations for inscription on the Urgent Safeguarding List together with requests for International Assistance to support the implementation of the proposed safeguarding plan: for the Urgent Safeguarding List, when a single criterion was not satisfied, the decision was made to refer the entire file; however, in the case of requests for International Assistance, an overall appreciation was required. As in previous cycles, both parts of the submitted files were evaluated separately: hence the Body considered that a recommendation for referral on the nomination/request did not necessarily imply a recommendation for referral on the other part. However, it was clear to the Body that some shortcomings in core parts of the nomination (such as in the definition of the element or of the practising communities) could have an impact on the assessment of the International Assistance request.
11. **Experiences with the dialogue process**. TheEvaluation Body used the dialogue process in cases where the file did not include sufficient information to assess whether the criterion was satisfied. However, unlike in the case of the referral option, the dialogue was limited to specific questions requiring a specific response. Dialogue can only be used when there is a minor lack of information or a confusing statement, which the Body considered could be clarified through a simple question and answer exchange with the submitting State(s).
    1. The Body considered initiating dialogue only when the answer could potentially help change a recommendation for referral to a recommendation for inscription.
    2. In this cycle, following the discussions and suggestions from States Parties during the fourteenth session of the Committee in 2019, the Body used the option of the dialogue process in more cases and with more complex questions than in the previous cycle. However, as in the previous cycle, the dialogue process was not used for every nomination file in which one criterion was recommended for referral, because in some cases the issues or problems relating to missing or unclear information could not be resolved with a simple question and answer exchange and the text would need to be completely redrafted.
    3. Dialogue was applied in eleven cases: in one case, the Body sent one question while in the remaining ten cases multiple questions were sent, for a total of thirty-one questions. Two questions concerned confusing formulations in the description of the element (R.1); ten related to the safeguarding plan (U.3) or safeguarding measures (R.3); and four related to community participation and consent in the nomination process (R.4/P.5). Fifteen questions concerned the modality and periodicity of updating of the inventories (R.5).
12. **Correspondence regarding ongoing nominations**. As in previous cycles, the Body took note of the letters received regarding the following two nominations to the Representative List. In both cases, in accordance with the guidelines for the treatment of correspondence from the public or other concerned parties with regard to nominations ([Decision 7.COM 15](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/7.COM/15)), the Secretariat transmitted the letter to the submitting State(s) concerned and forwarded their response, back to the original sender. As per [Decision 14.COM 14](https://ich.unesco.org/en/d%C3%A9cisions/14.COM/14), the correspondence is summarized below, while the letters are made available to the Committee on the website of the fifteenth session of the Committee:
    1. *‘Art of miniature’* (submitted by Azerbaijan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Turkey and Uzbekistan). In April 2019, the Tajikistan National Commission for UNESCO sent a letter to the Secretariat regretting that it had not been informed by the submitting States of the preparation of the nomination. It also expressed the wish to join the multinational nomination. In April 2020, the four submitting States acknowledged that the element was practised in other countries of the region and responded by welcoming the inclusion of Tajikistan or any other State Party interested in taking part in a future extension of the nomination.
    2. *‘Musical art of horn players, an instrumental technique linked to singing, breath control, vibrato, resonance of place and conviviality’* (submitted by France, Belgium, Luxembourg and Italy). In August 2019, a non-governmental organization based in France denounced, through a letter, the close links between the element (particularly as enacted in France) and traditional hunting practices. While acknowledging that the element was originally linked to hunting practices in the seventeenth century, in February 2020 France responded that the nomination specifically focuses on a musical practice and that the development of the element was now independent from hunting activities.

***General comments***

1. **Good examples**. The Evaluation Body is pleased to recommend the following nominations from this cycle as good examples:
2. **Register of Good Safeguarding Practices – Overall files**

*‘Polyphonic caravan, researching, safeguarding and promoting the Epirus polyphonic song’,* proposed by Greece, is an exemplary file presenting a safeguarding programme that arose thanks to an initiative by individuals and a non-governmental organization. The programme also presents a highly adaptive, creative approach to safeguarding, which has facilitated the adjustment of the element in an ever-changing social context and its transition from rural to urban environments. The approach is also underpinned by the active participation of young people.

1. **Register of Good Safeguarding Practices – Specific aspects**

The programme *‘Craft techniques and customary practices of cathedral workshops, or Bauhütten, in Europe, know-how, transmission, development of knowledge and innovation’*, proposed by Germany, Austria, France, Norway and Switzerland, presents an exemplary demonstration of the importance of multinational cooperation in the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage. The proposal describes clearly how the five submitting States encourage the bearers of the element to work together through the organization of training activities and knowledge-exchange initiatives.

1. **Representative List – Overall files**

*‘Traditional skills, techniques* and *knowledge for the conservation and transmission of wooden architecture in Japan’*,nominated by Japan, is a well-prepared file that demonstrates how the inscription of an element on the Representative List can contribute to ensuring the visibility and awareness of the significance of intangible cultural heritage in general. The nominated element highlights the intrinsic relationship between intangible cultural heritage and tangible or built heritage, which is also in line with sustainable development.

*‘Yeondeunghoe, lantern lighting festival in the Republic of Korea’*, nominated by the Republic of Korea, is a well-prepared file that can serve as a good example of how the inscription of an element on the Representative List can contribute to ensuring the visibility and awareness of the significance of intangible cultural heritage in general. The file proposes a set of safeguarding measures aimed at preventing any unintended effects of the inscription of the element on the Representative List.

*‘Craftsmanship of mechanical watchmaking and art mechanics’*, nominated by Switzerland and France, is a well-prepared file that can serve as a good example of how the inscription of an element on the Representative List can contribute to ensuring the visibility and awareness of the significance of intangible cultural heritage in general. The nomination concerns a cross-border element of living heritage and has been carried out in a cooperative, thorough manner, with a well-developed process of participation and collaboration.

*‘Hawker culture in Singapore, community dining and culinary practices in a multicultural urban context’*, nominated by Singapore, is a well-prepared nomination file which reflects the spirit of the Convention in many ways in terms of its celebration of intangible cultural heritage, diversity, dialogue and sustainability. The file presents exemplary working methods regarding participation, inclusion and the involvement of a wide variety of actors, as well as safeguarding approaches that foster a viable approach to the practice of intangible cultural heritage.

1. ***Representative List – Specific aspects***

*‘Knowledge, know-how and practices pertaining to the production and consumption of couscous’*, nominated by Algeria, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia, is a well-prepared multinational file that can serve as a good example of how the inscription of an element on the Representative List can contribute to ensuring the visibility and awareness of the significance of intangible cultural heritage in general.

*‘Nar Bayrami, traditional pomegranate festivity and culture’*,submitted by Azerbaijan, could serve as a good example of how the inscription of an element on the Representative List can contribute to ensuring the visibility and awareness of the significance of intangible cultural heritage in general.

*‘Pilgrimage to the St. Thaddeus Apostle Monastery’*, nominated by the Islamic Republic of Iran and Armenia, is a multinational file that demonstrates how the practice of the element fosters friendly cooperation between the two States Parties, helping to build solidarity and respect for cultural diversity and the communities’ cultural heritage.

*‘The art of glass beads’*,nominated by Italy and France, is a well-prepared file that can serve as a good example of how the inscription of an element on the Representative List can contribute to ensuring the visibility and awareness of the significance of intangible cultural heritage in general. It also demonstrates how the communities concerned can play an active role in safeguarding the element and throughout the whole nomination process.

*‘Tree beekeeping culture’*, submitted by Poland and Belarus, demonstrates a deeply-rooted awareness of the need to safeguard the element as a means of ensuring the sustainable development of the local communities concerned, ecological balance, and the safeguarding of the natural and cultural landscape.

*‘Charfia fishing in the Kerkennah Islands’*,submitted by Tunisia, clearly illustrates how the inscription of an element on the Representative List can contribute to ensuring the visibility and awareness of the significance of intangible cultural heritage in general. The file has a clear focus on the interconnections between intangible cultural heritage and the natural environment, contributing to the maintenance of biodiversity and the sustainable use of natural resources. The file also highlights how the communities concerned are engaged in the sustainable practice of the element and how they participated in all stages of the nomination process.

1. **Titles of elements**. The members of the Evaluation body discussed the importance of titles referring to the know-how associated with the item, product, artefact or musical instrument in question. The titles need to better reflect the nature of the element: more stress should be given to the associated knowledge and skills as well as the cultural practice related to the given item. Furthermore, the Body noted a certain disparity between the title and the description of the element in some nomination files. Sometimes the Body also noticed that the file unnecessarily provided information that was not directly linked to the element as defined in its title. The accumulation of information not directly linked to the element may cause some confusion in the presentation of the element itself. Finally, although the inclusion of a location may help determine the geographical situation of the element, the Evaluation Body recommends avoiding references to geographic origin or original location in the title of nomination files, as this may imply exclusiveness or ownership of the element (when using wording that points to an element being of/belonging to a particular country).
2. **Applicability of the domains of intangible cultural heritage selected**. The Body discussed the connection between the title, the description of the element and the domains of intangible cultural heritage selected. In several cases, the indications made in the boxes covered too many domains, whereas information was lacking in the nomination form. On the other hand, the domains were not always ticked in a comprehensive manner. It is important that the boxes selected accurately reflect the description provided in the nomination form, as this contributes to the overall understanding of the nature and scope of the element.
3. **Issues connected with the quality of the text in nomination files**. The Evaluation Body noted that the quality of nomination files remains variable; many of the deficiencies seen in this cycle have already been identified in previous cycles:
4. **Linguistic quality of the files**. In some cases, the linguistic quality of the nomination files was inadequate, which made the evaluation process more difficult. Moreover, as the nomination files constitute a public presentation of the element concerned, it is important to provide comprehensive information so that the nature of the element is fully understood. However, the Evaluation Body was pleased to conclude that, overall, the linguistic quality of the files submitted has improved slightly.
5. **Lack of coherence and consistency of information and/or conflicting information within the files**. While paying attention to the consistency of the files as a whole, the members of the Evaluation Body noted that the information provided under different criteria was in several cases contradictory.
6. **Unclear or vague information**. The Evaluation Body noted certain cases in which information was placed in inappropriate sections of the nomination form, or the same text was repeated in different sections.
7. **Use of inappropriate vocabulary**. The Evaluation Body noted the use of terms such as ‘authentic’, ‘unique’ and ‘country brand’, suggesting the exclusivity of an element of intangible cultural heritage. Such terms are contrary to the principles and spirit of the Convention. The use of the term ‘label’, which refers more to the singling out of a commercial product than to the safeguarding of an element, is also considered to be inappropriate. In some cases, this may be the result of an incorrect or inconsistent translation of certain key terms, related to diverse interpretations of these notions. The significance and implications of such notions might be understood differently by different people. One such example could pertain to the notion of ‘authentic’, which might be understood either in the sense of ‘real’ for practitioners today, or in the sense of ‘original/traditional’ from an outsider’s perspective, including by experts in cultural heritage.
8. **The use of isolated assertions or statements instead of more detailed explanations and demonstrations throughout the file as a whole**. This was particularly apparent in the sections of the nomination files dedicated to how the inscription of the element would contribute to ensuring the visibility and awareness of the significance of intangible cultural heritage in general (criterion R.2).
9. **Repetition of the question in answers**. In numerous nomination files, the questions in the nomination form are simply repeated rather than being answered; the concepts in question are merely restated without any demonstration of how they are met. This issue emerges clearly in relation to criteria R.2 and R.4.
10. **Disparity between the four mechanisms**. As in previous cycles, the members of the Body noted an inequality in the nomination files submitted in this cycle. The Representative List was accorded by far the most importance by submitting States, while the other three mechanisms were underused.
11. **The definition of intangible cultural heritage**.The Evaluation Body welcomes the rich diversity of elements nominated, which display the broad range of forms that intangible cultural heritage can take. However, over the past years, the Evaluation Body has encountered certain difficulties when assessing the understanding of intangible cultural heritage presented in certain nomination files:
12. **Social functions and cultural meanings**. Nomination files should clearly identify the social functions and cultural significance of the element in question. It is necessary for the States to pay great attention to this aspect, which is essential for determining whether the element corresponds to the understanding of intangible cultural heritage set out in the Convention.
13. **Description of well-known elements**.States Parties sometimes consider that the element being nominated is so well-known that it is not important to provide a clear, basic description of it. In several cases, the members of the Body had difficulty assessing the nature of the element when such information was missing. The Body wishes to remind submitting States that an international audience will not necessarily be familiar with its cultural context and that nominations should therefore be sufficiently self-explanatory.
14. **Focus on historical data**.In the definition of the element, several nominations included extensive information on its historical aspects and the development of the element in the past, rather than focusing on its current dynamics, social functions and cultural meanings for the communities, groups and individuals concerned. Submitting States are reminded that nominations should place the emphasis on the present-day status of the element rather than on its historical evolution.
15. **Focus on an item, product, instrument**.One recurrent issue that the Body encountered in the description of elements was an excessive focus on the material aspects of the element rather than on the practice itself and its social functions and cultural meanings for the communities concerned. The members of the Evaluation Body felt that the description should focus on the practice of making the product, playing the instrument, the knowledge transferred through the element, and so on, rather than on the product or instrument itself. This focus should also be reflected in the development and drafting of the safeguarding measures.
16. **The boundary between intangible cultural heritage and professional practice**. The members of the Evaluation Body encountered a problem when nomination files focused on a professional practice related to the element concerned, rather than on its practice as an expression of intangible cultural heritage.
17. **Multinational nominations**. The Evaluation Body was pleased to examine sixteen multinational nominations in this cycle, which highlight the diversity of shared intangible cultural heritage. Thanks to the number of such files submitted, the members of the Body were able to assess a variety of approaches to compiling and drafting a multinational nomination. Although the Evaluation Body recognizes the complexity of preparing multinational nominations, it applied the same standard of evaluation as for nominations submitted by a single State Party. As similar debates and comments had been raised in previous cycles, the members of the Body discussed the potential need for guidelines related to multinational nominations in the future, including to prevent an ‘unjustified’ use of multinational nominations. The discussions revolved around several points:
18. **Growing number of multinational files.** The Evaluation Body appreciates the growing number of multinational files and their expansion to include additional countries and invites States Parties to consider working towards the possibility of joint nominations. However, the Body wishes to stress that when preparing a multinational nomination, it is important to focus on the quality of the process of collaboration and exchange leading to the submission of the multinational file, enabling or encouraging dialogue among the communities concerned. Equally, it is important to pay attention to the possibility of engaging in dialogue with multiple parties, with a view to ‘ensuring mutual respect’.
19. **Definition of the element**. While the members of the Body are aware of the challenges involved in preparing multinational nomination files, the Body urges States Parties to continue improving the quality of these files in terms of the description of the element. In some nominations, two or more different definitions of the element were provided by the individual States Parties. In such cases, the Body was unsure which definition should be discussed. The members of the Body considered that if an element is shared, its presentation should focus not only on the diversity of expressions it encompasses but also on the shared aspects and interconnections among its practice in different countries, including in relation to its social functions and cultural meanings.
20. **Collaboration**. In this cycle, the Body welcomed a number of examples of bi- or multinational nominations that clearly demonstrate the principles of international cooperation and the promotion of mutual understanding among countries. However, the Evaluation Body also noted a worrying trend of multinational files that seem to have been prepared by simply combining several individual nomination files. In such cases, the cooperation between the submitting States seems to have been formal, rather than involving a close collaboration throughout the nomination process. The lack of collaboration and sharing among submitting States of the same nomination highlights the missed opportunities for facilitating and strengthening intercultural dialogue among communities and countries, which should be one of the functions of multinational nominations. This appears to be a significant problem, especially in light of the decisions by the Committee concerning the priority to be accorded to multinational files. Such a trend should not be encouraged.
21. **Top-down approach**. In multinational nominations, which involve a difficult process of collaboration, the involvement of institutions at the state level seems to be much more apparent than in other kinds of nominations. However, upstream joint efforts and the involvement of the communities concerned in the nomination process should be equally present in such files. The commitment to a multinational nomination should be demonstrated not only by the national authorities but also through the agreement of all the communities concerned regarding the shared nature of the element being nominated.
22. **Safeguarding measures**. The members of the Evaluation Body recognize the specificity of the situation of each State and appreciate the fact that diversity is one of the core principles of the Convention. However, the Body reflected that there must be a balance in multinational nominations between individual safeguarding measures (at the state level) and joint ones. Such a balance ensures that the element is safeguarded as a shared practice, creating ties between different communities and countries. Moreover, the development of joint safeguarding measures presents an opportunity for mutual inspiration and ways to share safeguarding experiences that could be beneficial for ensuring the viability of the element and for the communities concerned in both/all States Parties involved.
23. **Imbalance in the presence of different States Parties in the nomination file**. In some multinational nominations, there is an imbalance in the share of information presented by the different States Parties. Such a lack of information in relation to one or more submitting State(s) risks affecting the evaluation of the nomination as a whole.
24. **Issues concerning the identification of communities concerned**. The description or definition of the communities, groups or individuals concerned seems to be an ongoing challenge. The discussions revolved around several points:
25. **Definition of the communities concerned**. When the definition of the community is confused (for instance; when there is no clear distinction between the State Party itself and the specific community) or too general, it is difficult to assess the participation in and relevance of the safeguarding measures described. However, the Evaluation Body sought to welcome large-scale processes as much as those with smaller and more easily definable and delineated communities of bearers. Moreover, in this cycle the Body was pleased to see carefully developed methods of participation in the case of elements with a wide-ranging, extensive scope and scale, for example covering the whole population of a country or even extending abroad.
26. **The role of communities and States Parties**. In some nominations, it was difficult to identify the communities concerned as they appear to correspond to the State Party at large. In other cases, files suggest that the community corresponds to public administration bodies (such as ministries or government agencies), which poses a serious problem regarding the involvement of the bearers of the element themselves. Often, a clear demonstration of the role of the communities in safeguarding the element is lacking in the nomination files, or it is mixed with the role of the State Party.
27. **Standard letters of consent and petitions**. In many files, the letters provided by the State Party to attest to the consent of the communities are presented in a standard format, often identical or with only minor variations. Standard letters should be avoided because they do not allow the Evaluation Body to identify the active and informed participation of the community and its representatives in the nomination process. Likewise, petitions, as a collection of signatures under the same text, can be of some help for determining the community's participation, but they cannot replace letters from the community.
28. **Top-down approaches**. In many cases the widest possible participation of the communities concerned does not appear to have been adequately ensured, and/or there seems to be no real or carefully developed process related to the collaborative nature and planning of safeguarding strategies and measures. Often, the process of identifying and developing the nomination files seems to have been carried out by experts, with the communities, groups or individuals concerned only participating to a minor extent. This issue also emerges very clearly when reading the letters from the communities, which are often pre-compiled or prepared in a standard format. The Evaluation Body wishes to highlight the importance of collaborative processes of participation with different stakeholders and communities involved in every single step of the nomination process, as well as of devoting an adequate amount of time to ensuring the quality of the participatory processes undertaken.
29. **Safeguarding measures**. The Evaluation Body wishes to underline that it is important for States Parties to identify the measures put in place by their authorities and communities to safeguard the proposed element before submitting the nomination. It is equally important for States Parties to define the safeguarding processes to be put in place both during the nomination process and subsequently, indicating the financial resources required and the focal point in charge of their implementation. The safeguarding measures identified must be specifically related to the element in question, including its social functions and cultural meanings, instead of focusing on aspects or issues that relate to it at a general level only. When States and communities consider that there is no specific threat to the viability of the element, the Evaluation Body would at least expect safeguarding measures that take into account the potential unintended effects of inscription (see paragraph 68).
30. **Videos**. The members of the Evaluation Body underlined the importance of the mandatory videos, as they allow for a better understanding of the nature and scope of the element. In some cases, the information provided in the video sheds light on the information provided in the text of the nomination file. Furthermore, as the videos are part of the public presentation of the nomination files, they provide the wider public with a chance to better understand the element. However, at times the videos present the element in a stylized form on the stage or during a special filming occasion designed as part of the nomination process, which may not adequately represent the element in its context and in line with the description and presentation in the written text of the nomination. In relation to the content, some videos capture the element in its entirety, presenting the community of bearers and highlighting its social functions and cultural meanings. However, other examples focus on a single aspect of the element, often presenting it in a very limited way. Furthermore, in some videos the translation or captions were missing, which hinders the Evaluation Body as well as future viewers from fully understanding the presentation of the element.

***Thematic issues***

1. **Links between tangible and intangible heritage**. The Evaluation Body particularly appreciated several nominations which emphasized the links between intangible cultural heritage and the tangible environment within which its practice is associated. However, States Parties are reminded of the importance of taking specific heed of the impact of increased, undue tourism on the safeguarding of the element that could be caused by the promotion of the element, within a particular space.
2. **Environmental sustainability**. The Evaluation Body was pleased to examine an increased number of nominations of elements related to knowledge and skills concerning nature and the universe which promote environmental sustainability.
3. **Animal** **rights**. In this cycle, the Body evaluated nominations that describe elements involving animals. In this regard, the members of the Body discussed the need to remain focused on animal welfare when planning and implementing safeguarding measures. As in previous cycles, the Body reminds submitting States that practices that might be acceptable at the local or national level might generate misunderstandings when proposed for recognition at the international level ([Document ITH/14/9.COM/10](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-14-9.COM-10+Add.3-EN.doc) Add.3).
4. **Intangible cultural heritage and sports**. When discussing sports as expressions of intangible cultural heritage, the Evaluation Body repeatedly noted that States Parties focused their explanations on the system of organization related to such sports rather than on the associated cultural practices and values. In one particular case, the members of the Evaluation Body stressed the problems involved in promoting a practice that seems to encourage violence against other human beings or animals, especially when children of a young age were involved.
5. **Role of gender**. TheEvaluation Body discussed the importance of clearly identifying the roles of different genders when describing the involvement of the communities concerned. The members would have welcomed more information about female members in certain files that specified the important role played by women and girls in maintaining and developing the practice. In some cases, there was a lack of participation by women in the safeguarding plan or the letters of consent provided: women were approached but no clear evidence of how they actually participated in the activities was provided. However, in other cases, the files included inspirational explanations of the procedure devised for enhancing the role of female members in the communities concerned in the preparation of the nomination file.
6. **Intangible cultural heritage in the agricultural field**. A priori, safeguarding an agricultural product, could be seen as an expression of knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; however, the information provided in the files was often not sufficient to fully explain this relationship. Frequently, there was a focus on the economic development of the products rather than on the associated cultural practice. In such cases, the descriptions focused on the know-how or production process related to the element, whereas the social functions and cultural meanings surrounding the food were not clearly described.
7. **Nationalistic aspirations**. When discussing mutual respect among communities, the Evaluation Body expressed concerns regarding some nomination files that risk exalting nationalistic ideas in the context of intangible cultural heritage. Certain statements, albeit valid, could potentially exacerbate a nationalistic idea if misused. These include: the pride of the nation; the sense of duty to maintain a national character; the feeling of being members of a nation; and the desire to contribute to the development of society. Members of the Body noted the repetition of essentialist notions as well as an increased focus on nationalisms and the construction or validation of the ‘image of the country’ through intangible cultural heritage. The Evaluation Body was concerned by the use of the Convention to claim historical, cultural, geographical and political ownership and invites States Parties to show respect for the spirit of collaboration and sharing, which is a founding and guiding principle of the Convention.
8. **Tourism**. Due to the risk of over-commercialization, folklorization, ‘ossification’ and decontextualization of an element, the management of tourism is one of the main challenges for stakeholders in safeguarding elements of intangible cultural heritage. In some nomination files, the potential risk of extensive tourism was often underestimated, and insufficient attention was given to corresponding safeguarding measures to mitigate the impact of such a situation. On the other hand, some nomination files demonstrated the empowering potential of sustainable tourism for living heritage and the communities concerned.
9. **Over-commercialization**. The Evaluation Body raised concerns about measures that may encourage the over-commercialization or over-exploitation of an element. In some cases, such measures were related to the development of tourism (see paragraph above), while in other cases, the potential over-commercialization was linked to the production of crafts and the need to foster income-generating opportunities. In this regard, the Body considered the request made by the Committee in 2019 for the development of a guidance note on commercialization and the prevention of decontextualization of intangible cultural heritage to be timely ([Decision 14.COM 10](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/14.COM/10)). At the time of drafting the present report, the Body was informed that the Secretariat is currently working on the development of such a guidance document.
10. **Festivals**. The Evaluation Body discussed the relationship between intangible cultural heritage and festivals on several occasions. While in some cases festivals play a clear role in safeguarding the element concerned, in others they do not. As such, it is not possible to apply a blanket rule to all cases in which festivals are part of the element or are included in the safeguarding measures. For example, the Evaluation Body was unsure about the inclusion of safeguarding measures that seem to decontextualize the element or seem unrelated to the element, such as an international festival in a small village. The Body also wishes to stress that festivals associated with cultural tourism leading to the folklorization or museification of an element are not in line with the spirit of the Convention.

***Specific issues related to requests for International Assistance greater than US$100,000***

1. **Requests inspired by previous requests**. The Evaluation Body wishes to draw attention to the text of one request for International Assistance that seems to have been largely copy-pasted from a previous file submitted by another country. States Parties are reminded that expressions of intangible cultural heritage are tied to special contexts in different countries and are advised against copying information without tailoring it to their specific situation.
2. **Sustainability of projects proposed**. The members of the Evaluation Body discussed an ongoing issue relating to concerns about the sustainability of projects when the International Assistance has ended. Sustained interventions tend to give better results in terms of capacity building. The Body therefore takes into consideration in its assessment the wider context of the project, including past capacity-building initiatives undertaken, results obtained and the relevance of the newly proposed project in this regard.
3. **Government officials as the main beneficiaries (criterion A.1)**. The assessment of one request led the Body to a discussion about the final recipients of the capacity-building programme. The planned activities as well as the funding for the capacity-building programme were allocated to officials rather than to community members. States Parties are invited to provide sufficient information about how the communities, groups and individuals concerned will benefit from the capacity-building programme.
4. **Budget-related issues (criterion A.2)**. The members of the Evaluation Body carefully assessed those requests for which the overall budget seemed inappropriately high in relation to the planned activities, especially when the allocation of resources was unclear. Furthermore, the Body raised concerns when there was a lack of evidence of community participation in the budget. Approving a budget that is not sufficiently well formulated for one project could establish a negative precedent.
5. **Combined nominations**. Whenassessing nominations for the inscription of an element on the Urgent Safeguarding List combined with requests for International Assistance, the Evaluation Body noticed a trend wherein requests were linked more to general capacity building and did not focus on support for the proposed safeguarding plan developed in the nomination for the Urgent Safeguarding List. It is suggested that the purpose of these combined requests could be included in the ongoing global reflection on the Listing mechanisms.

***Specific issues related to criteria for selection for the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices***

1. **Heritage and decolonization**. The Evaluation Body wishes to stress the need for a reflexive approach and sensitivity regarding current debates concerning heritage and decolonization. In different regions, communities and groups are engaging in efforts to ‘decolonize’ heritage processes. The Body wishes to highlight the need for greater awareness of the related processes of heritage appropriation, governance, involvement and participation, including in relation to the listing processes within the framework of the Convention. In this regard, over the past few cycles the Evaluation Body has discussed issues raised by criterion P.9 (applicability of safeguarding practices to developing countries) in the evaluation of proposals to the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices.
2. **Appropriateness for selection on the Register**. The Body recognizes that States Parties and communities have the sovereign right to select the most appropriate listing mechanism for their nominations and proposals. However, for some files, the members of the Evaluation Body felt that the element proposed would be more appropriate for inscription on the Representative List. There were also cases in which the proposal seemed to have initially been prepared as a nomination for the Representative List.
3. **Letters of consent referring to the ‘wrong’ List (criterion P.5)**. The issue of ensuring that all nomination documents, including letters of consent, refer to the correct listing mechanism under the Convention was also the subject of dialogue for some files in previous cycles. The Evaluation Body would like to remind States Parties of the need to provide information attesting to the community’s prior and informed consent to and support for the correct List or register.

***Specific issues related to criteria for inscription on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity and on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding***

1. **The definition of an element (criterion R.1/U.1)**. In this cycle, nine files were recommended for referral or not to inscribe as a result of the evaluation of criterion R.1/U.1. The Evaluation Body expressed concerns about the rising number of files that focus on the commercial aspects of the element concerned. Furthermore, the description provided in some files presented a folkloric version of the element, where it is preserved unchanged or in a standardized way, rather than as an element of intangible cultural heritage, which must by definition be dynamic and ever-changing.
2. **Links between criteria relating to the insufficient definition of the element (criterion R.1/U.1)**. The Evaluation Body paid close attention to the consistency of the files as a whole. Similarly to previous cycles, it concluded that if criterion R.1 is not met, it is very difficult to consider that criterion R.2 is met, since it is unclear how an element defined in an ambiguous way can contribute to the visibility of intangible cultural heritage in general. The same is true for the communities identified under criterion R.1/U.1. These communities should be the same as those involved in the development and implementation of the safeguarding measures/plan under criterion R.3/U.3, as well as those that provide free, prior and informed consent under criterion R.4/U.4.
3. **Link between criteria R.1 and R.5**. Should it decide that there is a lack of information under criterion R.1 or that this criterion is not satisfied, the Evaluation Body still considered it possible to evaluate criterion R.5 positively. As per Ethical Principle for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage No. 6, even if R.1 is not met, R.5 can still be considered to be satisfactory, because the fact that an element is a part of an inventory does not necessarily mean that it can be considered as intangible cultural heritage in the sense of Article 2 of the Convention (as expressed in criteria R.1/U.1) and that it is suitable for inscription on one of the Lists of the Convention. What is more, sometimes a clearer understanding of the practice is provided by the information presented under the section dedicated to criterion R.5.
4. **Challenges with R.2**. In this cycle, despite the use of the revised Form ICH-02, with a revised Section 2, the Evaluation Body again noted that many States Parties had difficulties answering the questions under criterion R.2. Often, their answers were merely a repetition of the questions in the nomination form, taking the form of a statement without further explanation. Most of the nomination files provided information about the possible impact of the inscription on the visibility of the element itself, but failed to demonstrate how this would impact intangible cultural heritage in general.
5. **Significance of R.2**. In the past, the Evaluation Body has reflected on the problems associated with R.2. In this cycle, the members of the Body discussed the nature of the information being requested. While under all other criteria States Parties are expected to focus on the support for the inscription of the element on the part of the communities, groups or individuals concerned, the questions related to criterion R.2 take an external point of view. In this section, the cooperation among all the stakeholders concerned – including experts on intangible cultural heritage – seems to be crucial for drafting a joint response to the criterion. While remaining consistent with the approach adopted by bodies in previous cycles – for example if a referral was based solely on criterion R.2, the Body took a more favourable approach – the Body wishes to underline the importance of this criterion, which relates to the very purpose of the Representative List. The Evaluation Body considered that a more in-depth discussion, as part of the ongoing global reflection on the listing mechanisms, is required in order to reconsider what is expected of States Parties under criterion R.2.
6. **Difference and confusion between the Urgent Safeguarding List and the Representative List (criteria R.3 and U.3)**. Sometimes, when elements of intangible cultural heritage are viable and have a strong place among the communities concerned (since they are safeguarded through their continued and widespread practice), unnecessary safeguarding measures could cause more harm than good. However, although a detailed safeguarding plan is not required for criterion R.3, States Parties must identify how the safeguarding measures will counteract the possible negative consequences of the inscription of the element on the Representative List. Unfortunately, this information was often missing in some of the nomination files evaluated in this cycle. For criterion U.3, on the contrary, safeguarding measures should address the specific threats identified under U.2, and a detailed safeguarding plan – including a budget and timeframe – is required.
7. **Lack of correspondence between the proposed safeguarding plan and its mode of implementation (criterion U.3)**. In some files in this cycle, the Evaluation Body noted a lack of correspondence between the proposed safeguarding plan and how it is to be implemented by the State Party. The Body encourages submitting States to explain clearly how the proposed safeguarding plan is foreseen to be implemented in order to demonstrate concretely and coherently that the States and communities will indeed be able to implement the proposed plan.
8. **Overly general safeguarding measures (criteria R.3 and U.3)**. The members of the Evaluation Body wish to stress the importance of including specific information on safeguarding measures under criterion R.3/U.3. In some files evaluated in this cycle, the proposed safeguarding measures seem more like a generic wish list than concrete measures specifically tailored to the element concerned.
9. **Community involvement in drafting the safeguarding measures (criteria R.3 and U.3)**. The Body discussed a serious concern related to the lack of information in several files concerning the involvement of the communities during the process of drafting the safeguarding measures. Such files do not clearly identify key pieces of information regarding the participation of the community throughout the process, for example the meetings undertaken by various stakeholders with the community concerned, the number of people present, where and when such meetings took place, and their objectives. In many cases, very few meetings are mentioned. Furthermore, they were carried out in a very short period of time. This raises concerns about the necessary involvement of the communities, groups and individuals concerned in the proposed safeguarding process, and their sense of ownership of this process. As such, it calls into question the successful implementation and sustainability of the safeguarding measures. The members of the Body also stressed the importance of a variety of actors being involved in the drafting and implementation of the safeguarding measures.
10. **Confusion between the participation of communities in relation to criteria R.3/U.3, R.4/U.4 and R.5/U.5**. In many cases in this cycle, the Body noted a confusion between the description of the community’s participation in the development of the safeguarding plan/measures and the proposed plan/measures (criterion R.3/U.3) and their participation in the nomination process as a whole (criterion R.4/U.4). Moreover, in many files the Body also noted a confusion in relation to these two criteria in the description of the community’s participation in the development of the inventory (criterion R.5/U.5).
11. **The importance of including free, prior and informed consents with nominations (criterion R.4/U.4)**. The Evaluation Body welcomes innovative forms of consent such as the use of videos or online tools relying upon various social networks, which allow more community members to express their ideas. However, there were some recurring issues in this cycle:
12. A lack of consistency in the information presented in the letters of consent and in the file itself;
13. Letters of consent that were not up-to-date;
14. A missing description of the process of obtaining the informed consents;
15. Insufficient quality of translation of the letters of consents;
16. A lack of differentiation between letters of support from institutions or individuals and the informed consent of the communities concerned. When there are consents signed by representatives, tribal chiefs, directors of non-governmental organizations or organizations, documents provided should specify who these organizations or individuals represent. This is because the support or commitment of an institution does not guarantee all its members actively participated in the process;
17. Letters of consent referring to the ‘wrong’ List.
18. **Major concerns regarding the inventories**. The Evaluation Body welcomed the progress made in terms of the quality of the information provided in relation to criterion R.5/ U.5 following the changes made to the nomination form. However, some questions concerning the periodicity and modality of the updating are still not answered adequately, including in relation to the specific involvement of the community concerned in the inventorying process. Regarding periodicity, responses continue to state that the updating is carried out ‘frequently’, without any specific details regarding the yearly frequency. Furthermore, often no reference is made to the updating of the content of the inventoried elements themselves, but only to the updating of the inventories in general, for example concerning the inclusion of new elements in the inventory as a whole.
19. **Monitoring and follow-up**. The Evaluation Body discussed the necessity of setting up a system for monitoring inscribed elements. This monitoring system would identify if the proposed measures have been implemented, if the States’ commitments towards the communities and the safeguarding of the element have been respected, if the plans have worked (in particular in the case of urgent safeguarding), and if new difficulties have arisen in relation to the viability and sustainability of the element. In light of the current global pandemic and its effects on intangible cultural heritage and the communities concerned, such a monitoring system seems even more urgent.
20. **Overview of recurring issues in the 2020 cycle**
21. **Positive aspects**. Based on its evaluation of the fifty-two files in the present cycle, the Evaluation Body wishes to highlight several positive aspects that have already been mentioned in previous decisions and working documents of the Committee. These are as follows:

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| **Issues** | **Most recent reference decisions or documents of the Committee** |
| Benefits of the referral option | [Decision 12.COM 11](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/12.COM/11) (paragraph 7) |
| Importance of multinational nominations and the need to further encourage nominations of shared intangible cultural heritage | [Decision 14.COM 10](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/14.COM/10) (paragraph 11) |
| Contribution of the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage to sustainable development | [Decision 11.COM 10](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/11.COM/10) (paragraph 21)  [Decision 14.COM 10](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/14.COM/10) (paragraph 12) |
| Progress made thanks to the use of Form ICH-01 and Form ICH-02 containing a revised Section 5 | [Decision 13.COM 10](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/13.COM/10) (paragraph 7) |

1. **Recurring challenges**. The Evaluation Body would also like to point out that it identified a number of challenges faced by submitting States, to which previous decisions and working documents of the Committee have already referred on several occasions:

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| **Issues** | **Most recent reference decisions or documents of the Committee** |
| Limited number of nominations to the Urgent Safeguarding List and of proposals for the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices | [Decision 14.COM 10](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/14.COM/10) (paragraph 5) |
| Use of inappropriate expressions or vocabulary that are not in line with the Convention in nomination files and titles of elements | [Decision 12.COM 11](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/12.COM/11) (paragraph 6) |
| Lack of coherence between information provided under different criteria for inscription in submitted files | [Decision 11.COM 10](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/11.COM/10) (paragraph 14) |
| Importance of providing a clear identification and definition of the element | [Decision 14.COM 10](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/14.COM/10) (paragraph 8) |
| Challenges related to criterion R.2 | [Decision 14.COM 10](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/14.COM/10) (paragraph 9) |
| Lack of attention to gender considerations and to the diversity of gender roles in enacting and safeguarding intangible cultural heritage | [Decision 8.COM 8](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/8.COM/8) (paragraph 8) |
| Possible negative impacts of commercialization and increased tourism | [Decision 12.COM 11](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/12.COM/11) (paragraph 13) |
| Risk of the potential decontextualization and jeopardization of an element as a result of over-commercialization | [Decision 14.COM 10](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/14.COM/10) (paragraph 13) |
| Confusion between inscriptions on the Lists and the establishment of a system of ownership | [Decision 12.COM 11](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/12.COM/11) (paragraph 9) |
| Concerns linked to a top-down and centralized approach in the elaboration of safeguarding plans and the preparation of nominations | [Decision 14.COM 10](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/14.COM/10) (paragraph 15) |
| Absence of safeguarding measures to monitor the impact of inscription | [Decision 11.COM 10](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/11.COM/10) (paragraph 18) |
| Importance of audiovisual materials to demonstrate consent from communities and illustrate the social and cultural values of an element without contradicting the rest of the file | [Decision 8.COM 8](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/8.COM/8) (paragraph 16)  [Document ITH/17/12.COM/11](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-17-12.COM-11-EN.docx) (paragraph 26) |
| Confusion between the different purposes and criteria of the 2003 Convention and other programmes and Conventions of UNESCO | [Decision 13.COM 10](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/13.COM/10) (paragraph 9) |
| Uncertainty regarding the representativeness of the communities | [Decision 13.COM 10](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/13.COM/10) (paragraph 12) |
| Need for multinational nominations to demonstrate the awareness of communities regarding the shared nature of the element and their participation and mutual cooperation in safeguarding measures | [Decision 10.COM 10](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/10.COM/10) (paragraph 15) |
| Mention of ‘wrong’ listing mechanism in consent documents | [Document LHE/19/14.COM/10](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-19-14.COM-10-EN.docx) (paragraph 46) |
| Concerns regarding the development and updating of inventories | [Decision 14.COM 10](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/14.COM/10) (paragraph 10) |

1. **Draft Decision**
2. The Committee may wish to adopt the following decision:

DRAFT DECISION 15.COM 8

The Committee,

1. Having examined documents [LHE/20/15.COM/8](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-8-EN.docx), [LHE/20/15.COM/8.a](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-8.a-EN.docx), [LHE/20/15.COM/8.b](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-8.b-EN.docx), [LHE/20/15.COM/8.c](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-8.c-EN.docx) and [LHE/20/15.COM/8.d](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-8.d-EN.docx), as well as the files submitted by the respective States Parties,
2. Recalling Chapter I of the Operational Directives and [Resolution 8.GA 10](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/8.GA/10),
3. Expresses its satisfaction with the work of the Evaluation Body and the assistance of the Secretariat to facilitate the work of the Evaluation Body;
4. Takes note of the unprecedented circumstances arising from the COVID-19 pandemic and appreciates the measures taken by the Evaluation Body and the Secretariat to ensure the timely evaluation of nominations as part of the 2020 cycle;
5. Welcomes the first full implementation of the dialogue process in the evaluation of nominations, notes that the Evaluation Body initiated a dialogue process for eleven files and further appreciates the positive results from this process;
6. Congratulates, in particular, those submitting States that presented nominations that could serve as good examples for future nominations;
7. Further takes note of the observations and recommendations made by the Evaluation Body concerning the progress made and the challenges identified in the 2020 cycle, recognizes that many of the issues raised in its previous decisions continue to prevail in the 2020 cycle, as summarized in paragraphs 76 and 77 of the present report and reiterates its invitation to States Parties to address these issues when submitting future nominations;
8. Also appreciates the high increase in the number of multinational nominations examined in the 2020 cycle, stresses that multinational files should strike a balance in terms of the quantity and quality of information provided by the different States Parties concerned and underlines that such files should demonstrate collaboration between States Parties and between communities, in particular in the development of joint safeguarding measures;
9. Recommends that relevant issues, concerns and recommendations raised by the Evaluation Body in the 2020 cycle be taken into consideration, as appropriate, in the ongoing global reflection on the listing mechanisms of the Convention.

1. . This figure includes two nominations to the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding combined with a request for International Assistance. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)