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Susan is an international cultural heritage consultant with 30 years' experience. She is the President of the ICOMOS (the International Council on Monuments and Sites) International Scientific Committee for Intangible Cultural Heritage. With a PhD in archaeology and an undergraduate degree in anthropology, her experience includes a broad range of indigenous and non-indigenous heritage projects, heritage planning, historic site conservation, asset management and cultural heritage research. She is a former president of Australia ICOMOS and she has also served as President of the Australian Association of Consulting Archaeologists. Susan as an expert advisor through ICOMOS to the World Heritage Centre of UNESCO and has also consulted internationally in relation to Intangible Cultural Heritage. Her leadership roles in prominent heritage non-government organisations attest to her strong standing amongst professional peers and her reputation as a strong achiever.

She is currently a Principal Investigator in an Australian Research Council Linkage Project which aims to document the cultural values of the Nakanai Cave Region of East New Britain, Papua New Guinea. She has specialist skills in both tangible and intangible cultural heritage and has worked at a senior level in public policy development, government regulatory and management roles, heritage asset management (including Industrial and historic heritage) and the university research sector.

Transborder ICH and the Challenges for Implementation of the Convention

The UNESCO 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage was conceived as a harmonizing tool that could in part work to mitigate the negative impacts of globalisation while creating opportunities for renewed dialogue amongst communities within and across national borders and thereby maintain the world's cultural diversity. However, it is the State Parties that nominate the elements of ICH proposed for listing and the Intergovernmental Committee is largely comprised of politicians and bureaucrats. Given that the convention is driven by nation states then, it is probably inevitable that politics and politically driven perceptions will affect and to some extent distort the interpretation and implementation of the convention and its original objectives. For example, can we ensure equity of protection and safeguarding activity across ethnic groups especially within ethnically diverse nation states? What tensions arise when 'communities' are spread across state borders, often through time as well as geographic space? And further what about displaced and itinerant cultural groups?

In this presentation I will explore some of the tensions that I have observed relating to the identification and consideration of trans-border ICH. Cultural diaspora is not a new phenomenon and one could argue that it will only increase with the increasing globalisation. What then are the implications for the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*? Is there a risk that the convention may unwittingly exacerbate territorial disputes? What is the relationship that the convention establishes between heritage and territory? How does it address the heritage of itinerant, exogenous and trans-border cultural practices?

A recent study tour of several countries in South East Asia brought some of these issues to the forefront of my mind and set me to exploring the relevant research in this area. I will illustrate my talk with examples and will welcome your thoughts and discussion.



Salt making in Myanmar