**CONVENTION FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF THE  
INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE**

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR THE  
SAFEGUARDING OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE**

**Fourteenth session**

**Bogotá, Republic of Colombia**

**9 to 14 December 2019**

**Item 10.c of the Provisional Agenda:**

**Examination of proposals to the  
Register of Good Safeguarding Practices**

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| **Summary**  The present document includes the recommendations of the Evaluation Body on proposals to the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices (Part A) and a set of draft decisions for the Committee’s consideration (Part B). An overview of the 2019 files and the working methods of the Evaluation Body is included in document [LHE/19/14.COM/10](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-19-14.COM-10-EN.docx).  **Decision required:** paragraph 3 |

1. **Recommendations**
2. The Evaluation Body recommends that the Committee select the following programmes as best reflecting the principles and objectives of the Convention:

| **Draft Decision** | **Submitting State** | **Proposal** | **File No.** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| [14.COM 10.c.1](#_DRAFT_DECISION_14.COM) | Colombia | Safeguarding strategy of traditional crafts for peace building | [01480](https://ich.unesco.org/en/10c-register-01099#10.c.1) |
| [14.COM 10.c.3](#_DRAFT_DECISION_14.COM_1) | Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) | Biocultural programme for the safeguarding of the tradition of the Blessed Palm in Venezuela | [01464](https://ich.unesco.org/en/10c-register-01099#10.c.3) |

1. The Evaluation Body recommends to the Committee to refer the following programme to the submitting State:

| **Draft Decision** | **Submitting State** | **Proposal** | **File No.** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| [14.COM 10.c.2](#Decision_10c2) | Panama | Ecological and cultural programme associated with the Armila Sea Turtle Festival | [01481](https://ich.unesco.org/en/10c-register-01099#10.c.2) |

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

# **DRAFT DECISION 14.COM 10.c.1**

The Committee,

1. Takes note that Colombia has proposed **Safeguarding strategy of traditional crafts for peace building** (No. 01480) for selection and promotion by the Committee as a programme, project or activity best reflecting the principles and objectives of the Convention:

The safeguarding strategy of traditional crafts for peace building addresses the weakening of traditional crafts through a system of intergenerational transmission of knowledge between master and apprentice based on the non-formal ‘learning by doing’ method. The safeguarding strategy aims to train different sectors of the population, create labour connections and foster cultural entrepreneurship. It establishes a link between bearers of traditional crafts and skills who are recognized by their communities for their empirical knowledge of the peculiarities of their region and apprentices aged between fourteen and thirty-five who become builders of peace by learning a skill or craft, seeking to transform their situation of vulnerability. The safeguarding strategy is therefore geared at: allowing for the qualification of traditional crafts, thereby improving employment opportunities; implementing a Traditional Crafts Policy to guide and ensure continuity in the transmission and practice of these crafts; and enhancing the Workshop Schools Programme. Priority is accorded to young people who are exposed to the effects of armed conflict, a lack of opportunities, school desertion and unemployment. Training is also combined with work, guaranteeing apprentices’ future employability. The strategy thus aims to foster the safeguarding of traditional crafts as a tool for social inclusion, employment and cultural entrepreneurship. In turn, the community can recognize the cultural and societal value of safeguarding different traditional skills and crafts.

1. Considers that, from the information included in the file, the programme responds as follows to the criteria for selection as a good safeguarding practice set out in paragraph 7 of the Operational Directives:

P.1: The programme aims to strengthen safeguarding measures that ensure the viability of traditional crafts throughout the country. A comprehensive strategy of adequate safeguarding measures has been developed. This includes: support systems that give due recognition to bearers’ knowledge; the implementation of an inter-institutional Traditional Crafts Policy based on the apprenticeship model; and the enhancement of the existing Workshop Schools Programme to guarantee continued practice and transmission. Furthermore, in order to strengthen traditional craftsmanship and guarantee the sustainability of the bearers’ practice, the programme promotes the creation of employment from the perspective of social inclusion.

P.2: The strategy promotes the coordination of safeguarding efforts at the national and international levels. At the national level, the policy for traditional crafts has allowed for the creation of eleven traditional crafts and skills development centres and new spaces are about to become accessible throughout the country, in its post-conflict phase. At the international level, cooperation with other countries from the Latin American region and beyond has proven to be a good example of South-South cooperation.

P.3: The objectives of the programme focus on enhancing the recognition of and respect for cultural diversity, ensuring the continual transmission of traditional skills and know-how and promoting the contribution of intangible cultural heritage to peacebuilding. These are fully in line with the principles and objectives of the Convention. The programme also underlines the importance of the social appropriation of intangible cultural heritage by fostering social bonds and employment opportunities for vulnerable populations affected by armed conflict.

P.4: Since 2009, the implementation of the safeguarding strategy has provided more than 24,000 young people with skills and knowledge with support from the established traditional crafts and skills development centres. This has been effective in ensuring the viability of craftsmanship in the country and promoting the values of local cultures.

P.5: The programme has been implemented with the participation of the bearers and communities concerned, with their free, prior and informed consent. Along with the letters of consent provided by the communities, a large number of documents are presented, demonstrating the active involvement of local actors and national institutions that work together with the communities to implement a collective strategy to revitalize traditional crafts.

P.6: The safeguarding strategy could be adapted in different local, regional and international contexts as a model of transmission and learning to ensure the viability of intangible cultural heritage. The ‘learning by doing’ model may be replicable as a means of encouraging intergenerational transmission through everyday master-apprentice relationships and providing greater opportunities for employment and social inclusion. The strategy is especially replicable in areas affected by conflict, marginalization and socio-economic exclusion.

P.7: The file demonstrates the commitment of various stakeholders that would cooperate in the dissemination of the strategy. These include public institutions, such as the Ministry of Culture of Colombia and the National Program of Traditional Crafts for Peace Building, as well as the bearers and masters of the practice and current and former apprentices. Other ways of sharing the knowledge and experience through public workshops are foreseen. Strategic alliances would also be established to further disseminate the programme in other countries.

P.8: Interinstitutional coordination mechanisms exist within the programme, which develop monitoring indicators for all the traditional crafts and skills development centres. Based on these indicators, each centre submits quarterly reports to the general coordination unit providing data on their activities, including the results of the apprenticeship courses and the number of apprentices enrolled. More accurate indicators beyond the number of trainees could be envisaged to facilitate the assessment of the results.

P.9: The safeguarding strategy of traditional crafts for peace building, which promotes the transmission of knowledge and skills related to crafts, clearly responds to the needs of developing countries, especially with regards to vulnerable populations affected by socio-economic exclusion. In addition, it could serve as an effective model for populations affected by armed conflict in post-conflict countries.

1. Decides to select **Safeguarding strategy of traditional crafts for peace building** as a programme, project or activity best reflecting the principles and objectives of the Convention;
2. Commends the State Party for its first selection and for proposing an exemplary file that presents a safeguarding programme deeply grounded in community development and social inclusion, which contributes to the sustainable livelihood of communities and serves as a model for peacebuilding in other countries, especially in post-conflict situations.

## DRAFT DECISION 14.COM 10.c.2

The Committee,

* 1. Takes note that Panama has proposed **Ecological and cultural programme associated with the Armila Sea Turtle Festival** (No. 01481) for selection and promotion by the Committee as a programme, project or activity best reflecting the principles and objectives of the Convention:

The ecological and cultural programme associated with the Armila Sea Turtle Festival takes place in the town of Armila. The priority accorded to safeguarding this tradition arises from the guna people’s world vision, which is centred on the interconnection of the elements of the world – human beings, plants, animals and spirits – forming part of a bigger system called ‘Nabgwana’ (Planet Earth). This guna word – which describes nature in its broadest sense – is celebrated throughout the Armila Sea Turtle Festival, which includes elements such as stories, folktales, songs and crafts. Due to increased pressure on the sensitive marine ecosystem, the community of Armila identified a marked need to protect the survival of new-born sea turtles and the biological richness of the region and launched the Armila Sea Turtle Festival in 2007. Since 2007, the festival has taken place annually. The activities undertaken during the festival include beach clean-ups, monitoring and patrolling to guard the nests. The programme is geared at safeguarding the culture associated with the turtles and the local environment, as well as the related cultural practices, including oral traditions, celebrations, dances and gastronomic practices. The Armila Sea Turtle Festival is an example of a community working together to protect its beaches, safeguard biodiversity and strengthen its traditions.

* 1. Considers that, from the information included in the file, the programme responds as follows to the criteria for selection as a good safeguarding practice set out in paragraph 7 of the Operational Directives:

P.1: Although the community plays an important role in the Armila Sea Turtle Festival and the festival includes many cultural activities such as dance, crafts and gastronomic practices, the main focus of the programme seems to be ecological. Very few elements of intangible cultural heritage are mentioned in connection with the sea turtles. Moreover, the file lacks a coherent description of the ecological and cultural programme and the link between the cultural expressions and environmental protection, either now or before the festival was launched in 2007. The community’s spiritual system, which seems to be important for the development of the programme, is described in general terms, with no reference to the role that sea turtles play in it.

P.2: There is no proof that coordinated efforts for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage at the regional or international levels have been promoted. The project is strictly local in scope and its coordination and impact at the subregional level still need to be clarified. Even if it has been publicized on international forums and Armila welcomes foreign visitors, including scientists, no formal coordination at the regional level exists.

P.3: The community plays a major role in the Armila Sea Turtle Festival, which was created as a result of their concerns about the sea turtles. It promotes guna cultural heritage in general and establishes a dialogue between traditional and scientific knowledge, which is effective in the protection of sea turtles. However, the festival focuses far more on the conservation and promotion of nature than on the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage. As such, the file lacks a coherent description of activities that reflect the principles of the Convention, and it is therefore impossible to assess in which ways the objectives of the Convention are achieved.

P.4: It is not clear how the programme would contribute to the viability of intangible cultural heritage. It lacks a specific focus on living heritage and is intended to protect and safeguard cultural heritage in general in the short term. Furthermore, it is aimed at ensuring the viability of the festival itself, which is very different from that of intangible cultural heritage. The festival approach adopted could result in the decontextualization of intangible cultural heritage.

P.5: Since its creation in 2007, one of the leaders of the community has played a central role in the Armila Sea Turtle Festival, having mobilized the community around the festival. While the term ‘community’ is sometimes used to refer to the inhabitants of an area and sometimes to the stakeholders involved in the programme, they are all actively involved in the festival. This includes men and women, teachers, young people, elders and the local authorities, among others.

P.6: The file lacks a clear explanation of how the model could be replicated or used in other contexts. According to the explanation given, the model focuses on practices for the conservation of nature; the connection with intangible cultural heritage is not demonstrated. There is no description of the festival as a good practice for safeguarding living heritage.

P.7: The Armila community is keen to cooperate in the dissemination of its experience and to set an example at the regional, national and international levels about good conservation practices involving active community participation. The leader and promoter of the ongoing festival project and annual programme has visited several countries as a guest, explaining how the community embraces the turtles as part of its culture.

P.8: The programme features experiences that are susceptible to an assessment of their results as everything in the festival can be measured. For instance, a daily record is kept of the number of turtles that made it to the coast to lay their eggs. Furthermore, each year school teachers make a list of all the children who have participated in the discussions, narratives, folktales, murals, mock-ups, crafts and recycled material decorations, awarding gifts to the contest winners. Records are also kept of the number of visitors and children that arrived in Armila by boat, and the number of boats used, as well as of those that arrived at Puerto Obaldia by land.

P.9: The example of Armila can be seen as a model of how communities overcome problems and limitations through community organization as families cooperate by collecting leatherback new-borns that nest and hatch on the local beaches and guiding them towards the sea.

* 1. Decides to refer **Ecological and cultural programme associated with the Armila Sea Turtle Festival** to the submitting State Party and invites it to resubmit the proposal to the Committee, focusing on the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage, for examination during a following cycle.

## DRAFT DECISION 14.COM 10.c.3

The Committee,

* 1. Takes note that the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has proposed **Biocultural programme for the safeguarding of the tradition of the Blessed Palm in Venezuela** (No. 01464) for selection and promotion by the Committee as a programme, project or activity best reflecting the principles and objectives of the Convention:

The activities associated with the biocultural programme for the safeguarding of the tradition of the Blessed Palm in Venezuela involve gathering several palm species in a specific group of mountains. After receiving a blessing during the religious ceremony, the ‘palmeros’ go up to the mountain, where they spend several nights, undertaking different activities: they tell stories, stop at specific points as if going through the Stations of the Cross, take care of the trails and plant and prune palm trees. These palm leaves – blessed as part of Holy Week – are then distributed within several communities. The tradition was close to disappearing three decades ago as the palmeros did not have reforestation plans in place, and national park authorities saw them as a threat to the environment. Aware of the need to change how the palm was collected, the palmeros started pruning the plant rather than cutting it completely. Several innovative measures were designed as part of the biocultural programme, including educational projects for young people and cultural activities for the wider community. The biocultural programme has encouraged hundreds of children and young people to get involved, and its educational component could be seen as a model for other communities engaged in gathering the Blessed Palm during Holy Week, or indeed any living heritage practices where culture and nature are closely connected.

* 1. Considers that, from the information included in the file, the programme responds as follows to the criteria for selection as a good safeguarding practice set out in paragraph 7 of the Operational Directives:

P.1: The programme has applied several different kinds of safeguarding measures, mostly focusing on education and training. These include an educational and training programme on the environment, a tourism education programme, a nursery management plan and many cultural activities, all of which involve children, young people, school teachers and university professors. Furthermore, the programme established a creative interconnection between safeguarding and nature conservation based on the concept of biocultural heritage.

P.2: Although there is no proof that the coordination of efforts to safeguard intangible cultural heritage at the regional or international levels has been promoted, the programme is a good example of cooperation and collaboration among communities, a large number of public institutions in the country (the National Guard, the Instituto Nacional de Parques (Inparques), the Civil Defense and others), universities and non-governmental organizations.

P.3: The programme has supported the safeguarding of local traditions, contributed to strengthening community cohesion and a sense of belonging among its bearers and creatively supported the interconnection of the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage with the protection of natural diversity. Furthermore, the vitality of the tradition relies on dialogue, cooperation and, in particular, community participation, reflecting the principles and objectives of the Convention.

P.4: The programme has proven effective in contributing to the viability of intangible cultural heritage. This is demonstrated by the change in mentality of the tradition bearers and by the fact that children and young people have been encouraged to get involved. They are now more aware of and committed to the reforestation of the palm tree, assuming greater responsibility in this regard. The programme has also helped revitalize people’s interest in the importance of the Blessed Palm for their cultural lives and raised awareness of the importance of taking care of it to ensure the viability of related traditions. Without this programme, these traditions would probably have disappeared due to the strict approach to nature conservation, the extinction of certain plant species, or the lack of interest of the younger generations.

P.5: The community was involved in the programme through the associations of palmeros. The programme has gathered together masters of the tradition, known as Palmeros Mayores, men and women in charge of logistics, as well as children, young people and members of the community. The Palmeros Mayores have been involved in the practice for many years but are no longer physically able to hike up the mountain or can only do so up to a certain altitude. Instead, they are fully engaged in the educational activities designed for the Palmeritos, as well as in the activities of the educational plant nurseries. They have played a key role in the programme, as they are the pillars of the oral transmission of the related knowledge. The file includes letters of free, prior and informed consent both from representatives of the associations and from representatives of municipalities, schools and other cultural institutions.

P.6: The programme could serve as a model, particularly in relation to the following aspects: the gathering of palm fronds without depleting the population of palm trees, the nurseries of palm specimens and the strong educational component. It could also serve as a model for other communities engaged in gathering natural resources at the base of cultural traditions and where the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage is closely related to nature conservation practices. The approach could serve as a model not only at the regional and subregional levels but also worldwide.

P.7: The community and individuals concerned are clearly committed to cooperating in the dissemination of the programme. This is demonstrated both by the experiences of the Association of Palmeros, the members of which have communicated their desire to pass on their experiences gathered during the development of the biocultural programme, and by the statements of teachers, biologists and journalists who have participated in the programme. The dissemination will be based on cooperation among these individuals and inspired by the many efforts at dissemination already undertaken.

P.8: The programme includes concrete, formal examples of the measurement and assessment of its progress and results, based on elaborate standards and procedures. These have been carried out through external reports prepared by Inparques and through internal assessments based on objective formal criteria. The file also lists a number of examples of how the programme could be assessed by other agencies in the future. Moreover, the proposed safeguarding plan for the tradition of the Blessed Palm will be an important tool for monitoring and assessing the activities of the biocultural programme as a good practice.

P.9: The programme could be applicable to the needs of developing countries. In particular, it could serve as a model for other communities that face similar issues with palms or other types of natural assets related to cultural traditions. It could contribute to the recovery of endangered species, fostering appropriate behaviour in protected natural areas and supporting programmes on human rights and the conservation of the biosphere. The main aim of the programme was to turn citizens into agents of transformation; this idea could be applied in both developing and developed countries.

* 1. Decides to select **Biocultural programme for the safeguarding of the tradition of the Blessed Palm in Venezuela** as a programme, project or activity best reflecting the principles and objectives of the Convention;
  2. Commends the State Party for its first selection and for proposing an exemplary file that sheds light on the fundamental role intangible cultural heritage plays in relation to sustainable development and protecting the environment, with an impact on a wide community, whose citizens have become agents of transformation;
  3. Encourages the State Party to share its experiences and know-how in relation to the safeguarding of the tradition of the Blessed Palm, notably when it comes to raising awareness about biocultural issues.