



Ten.

10 YEARS OF SAFEGUARDING INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE IN THE NETHERLANDS



Intangible Cultural Heritage

MY ICH HAS ...

- ... educational value
- ... inclusive value
- ... unifying value
- ... economic value
- ... sustainable value

**EDUCATION / INCLUSIVITY
/ ECONOMY / ECOLOGY /
PARTICIPATION**

Adapting > passing on >
keeping alive

TEN. COMPLETED

TEN. 10 years of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in the Netherlands is a one-off magazine published by the Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage. It highlights (and celebrates!) what has been achieved in the Kingdom of the Netherlands since the Unesco Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage was ratified in 2012.

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KENNISCENTRUM

IMMATERIEEL

ERFGOED

NEDERLAND



WHAT ARE WE DOING?

Since 2012 the Dutch Centre has been coordinating the implementation of the Unesco Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Netherlands. The Dutch Centre helps practitioners of intangible cultural heritage with the safeguarding (development, promotion and passing on) of this heritage, including by means of the Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Netherlands. In addition, it is working to develop knowledge to support the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in practice.

INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE CONNECTS

Us

A

As an 8-year-old boy I took part in the local Avondvierdaagse walking event for the first time with my football club. I remember the excitement and joy all around me, as well as the strong sense of solidarity. 'Intangible cultural heritage runs through the whole of society and that makes it valuable,' says Christianne Mattijssen, Director of Heritage and Arts at the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, in an interview in this magazine. She believes that now, more than ever, there is an important role for traditions, rituals, festivals and stories that connect people and groups

who would otherwise not come into contact so easily.



Ten years ago the Kingdom of the Netherlands ratified the Unesco Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. Over the intervening period our country has achieved a lot. In this festive magazine we celebrate these achievements with pride and also look forward with a great deal of optimism.

For the past ten years the Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage has been working extremely hard to help communities keep their heritage alive. I would like to mention two facts that are worth celebrating: in 2022 we achieved the 200th inscription on the Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Netherlands and there are now also three examples of intangible cultural heritage from the Netherlands on Unesco's international Representative List. You can read all about this in this magazine.

What makes me so optimistic when I look ahead to the next ten years? It is clear to me that intangible cultural heritage is advancing within our society, first and foremost amongst the many millions of practitioners of traditions, celebrations and crafts in the Netherlands. It is estimated that more than 8 million Dutch people practise a form of intangible cultural heritage that is included on the Inventory or are involved as a volunteer. Each year, almost 270 million people also visit festivals or events, or enjoy this heritage in another way. Furthermore, I can see advances being made in the area of policymaking – and not just in the cultural sector. Over the past ten years more and more municipalities and provinces have become aware of the importance of living heritage. Or as Roy de Witte from the province of Overijssel so nicely puts it: 'Stories bring people together and we don't want to lose them. Intangible cultural heritage contributes to the quality of life in the province.' Over the next ten years, here at the Dutch Centre we will, of course, continue to support communities. We are currently researching, for example, how living heritage can help make the world more environmentally sustainable and make society more inclusive – the major challenges of our time. Fortunately, all the signs are that many other parties will also be working to support intangible cultural heritage in the Netherlands. Will you get involved too? I hope you find this magazine an enjoyable and inspiring read!

Marco van Baalen is Director of the Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage

10 years of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in the Netherlands

– LOOKING BACK AND LOOKING FORWARD

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Hooray!

Ten years since ratification

Timeline of the highlights for the Netherlands.

The
convention



2012

- Official ratification by the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Paris in May. State Secretary Halbe Zijlstra signs the Convention at a ceremonial signing held during the Zundert Flower Parade in September
- Inscription of the first three examples of intangible cultural heritage on the National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage: **Bloemencorso Zundert**, **Boxmeerse Vaart** and **Sint Maartenviering in Utrecht**
- Netherlands Centre for Folk Culture (NCV) becomes Netherlands Centre for Folk Culture and Intangible Cultural Heritage (VIE)
- VIE accredited as an NGO under the Unesco Convention



2014

- 🎉 50th inscription on the Inventory: **Carbide Shooting in Drenthe**
- The Dutch Centre starts working together with the province of Overijssel

2016

- 🎉 100th inscription on the Inventory: **Rotterdam Summer Carnival**



2018

- Launch of first Crafts Lab: **Chair Caning**
- The Netherlands starts its four-year term as a member of Unesco's Intergovernmental Committee

2020

- Presentation of results of 2017-2020 Knowledge Agenda. *Intangible cultural heritage as a testing ground for a globalising society*
- Launch of Knowledge Bank



2022

- 🎉 200th inscription on the Inventory: ?*
- *Not yet known at time of publication

2003

Unesco adopts the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

2013+ 2014

Years of Crafts, in cooperation with the Cultural Participation Fund

2015

Netherlands Centre for Folk Culture and Intangible Cultural Heritage appointed to Unesco's Evaluation Body of the Convention

2017

- Netherlands Centre for Folk Culture and Intangible Cultural Heritage (VIE) becomes Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage (KIEN)
- New way of listing intangible cultural heritage, in three circles:
 1. Network of Intangible Cultural Heritage
 2. Inventory Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Netherlands (name changed)
 3. Register of Inspiring Examples of Safeguarding
- **Craft of the miller** becomes the first example of intangible cultural heritage from the Kingdom to be inscribed on Unesco's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity ('the international Unesco list')

2019

- Signing of Declaration of Intent on collaboration on Intangible Cultural Heritage by Sint Maarten, Curaçao, Aruba and the Netherlands
- 🎉 150th inscription on the Inventory: **Pride Amsterdam**

2021

Parade Culture and **Falconry** inscribed on the international Unesco list



CHRISTIANNE MATTIJSSSEN, DIRECTOR OF HERITAGE AND ARTS,
REFLECTS AND LOOKS AHEAD TO THE FUTURE

‘Intangible cultural heritage runs through the whole of society and that makes it valuable’

In 2012 the Netherlands ratified the Unesco Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. What benefits has this delivered? And what challenges and opportunities lie in store over the coming years? We reflect and look ahead to the future with Christianne Mattijssen, Director of Heritage and Arts at the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. ‘Traditions are no longer sneered at.’



Do you practise any intangible cultural heritage yourself? ‘When I was a student in Maastricht I took part in the carnival there. What’s special about intangible cultural heritage is that it’s often about specific local expressions of heritage. The carnival in Maastricht is completely different from the one in Sittard, which is not that far away. If you turn up in Maastricht in a smock, you’ll be a laughing stock. In Breda it’s fine, though. Intangible cultural heritage shows where you belong. Sometimes on a local level, while sometimes it’s more a case of: I’m in the Netherlands, this is what we do.’

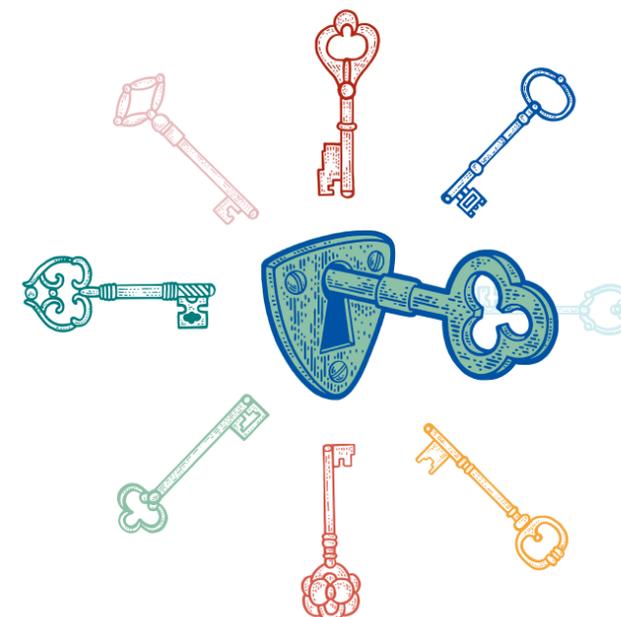
Why is intangible cultural heritage important?

‘Today, focusing on intangible cultural heritage is more relevant than ever. I’m really concerned about the disintegration of society, the fact that we are meeting

each other less and less. Traditions, rituals, festivals and stories connect people and groups who would otherwise not come into contact so easily. Intangible cultural heritage runs through the whole of society and that makes it valuable. After all, in a society where churches and clubs are finding it more and more difficult to hold on to people, there is a risk that we will lose this contact. Intangible cultural heritage is therefore of real social value.’

What benefits have resulted from ten years of ratification?

‘It’s important that the Netherlands has ratified the Unesco Convention. Because of this, the Convention and the concept of ‘intangible cultural heritage’ are no longer unfamiliar in the Netherlands. More importantly still, though, traditions are no longer sneered at. The Convention delivers added value for society and the communities concerned. The fact that it has been ratified means the Dutch government has a role to play in supporting and facilitating awareness of intangible cultural heritage.’



The
convention



Can you give an example of this role?

‘One of the obligations under the Convention is that every country has to identify the intangible cultural heritage within its territory by drawing up an inventory. At the time, the decision was taken, in consultation with the Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage, the Cultural Participation Fund and the Meertens Instituut, to compile the inventory from the bottom up. The Netherlands is known internationally for the accessible way in which communities register their practices and traditions themselves and draw up a safeguarding plan. Supported by the Dutch Centre, communities do this with the aim of keeping their heritage up to date and future-proofing it. This is entirely in keeping with the spirit of the Convention.’

What challenges do you envisage over the coming years?

‘One thing that could be improved is to make the importance of intangible cultural heritage visible: why do we want to cherish it and pass it on? We need to explain the arguments better. The Inventory is a list of extremely disparate practices: from the Metworst Races in Boxmeer through to traditional grassland irrigation. These are completely different things. The Metworst Races are an important festival for the community

concerned and of great social value, while grassland irrigation is a traditional custom that can help resolve current problems, such as climate-proofing the landscape and protecting biodiversity. The Netherlands is therefore involved in the multinational nomination of grassland irrigation for inscription on the Convention’s Representative List.

Sometimes the disparate nature of traditions complicates the discussion about intangible cultural heritage. We could improve this situation by providing a greater insight into the background and context of these diverse intangible cultural heritage practices and demonstrating that it is all about the associated knowledge and skills, and the social value of practising this heritage. By increasing visibility, we can better communicate the diversity and importance of intangible cultural heritage, also at international level.’

Another challenge is engaging young people.

What is your view on this?

‘The Inventory in its current form is not that inviting for young people. Perhaps we would reach youth cultures better if, instead of assuming that they need to adapt to existing methods, we found ways of broad-

‘THE NETHERLANDS IS KNOWN INTERNATIONALLY FOR THE ACCESSIBLE WAY IN WHICH COMMUNITIES REGISTER THEIR PRACTICES AND TRADITIONS THEMSELVES’

'INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE IS OF REAL SOCIAL VALUE IN A SOCIETY WHERE CHURCHES AND CLUBS ARE FINDING IT MORE AND MORE DIFFICULT TO HOLD ON TO PEOPLE'

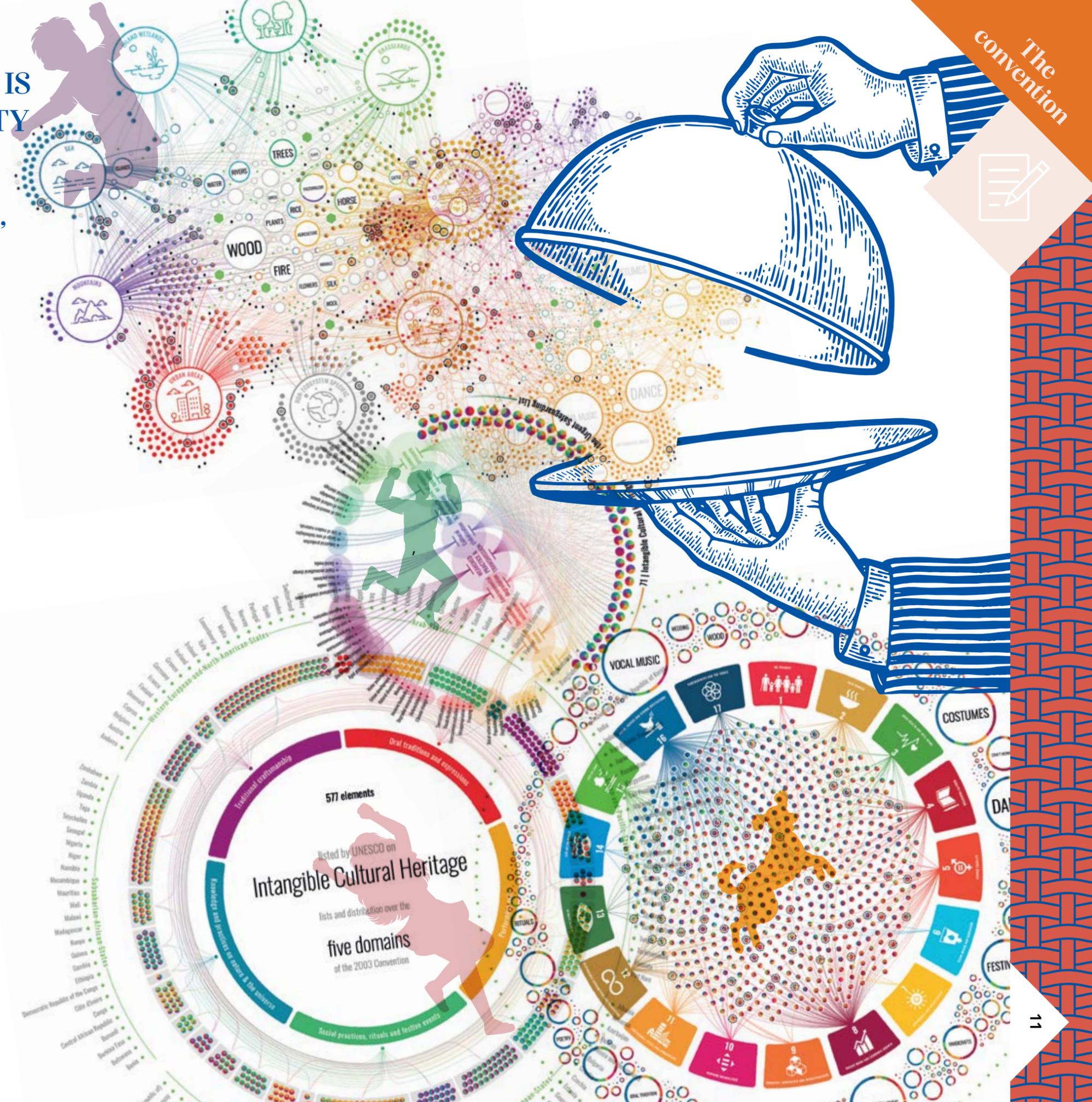
ening these methods and making them attractive. So that the street football community or graffiti artists, for example, feel we are talking to them too. These are interesting communities with very distinct customs and ways of transferring knowledge and skills. These contemporary forms of intangible cultural heritage are not currently visible on the Inventory and that's a shame. Mainly because young people represent the future of intangible cultural heritage.'

What opportunities can you see for the years ahead?

 'On the Unesco Convention website you will find the digital tool *Dive into Intangible Cultural Heritage*, which was developed with financial support from the Netherlands. In this interactive space, which has been designed to look like a universe filled with celestial bodies, you can navigate between the expressions of heritage on the international lists. For all kinds of different themes, such as dance, fire and urban intangible cultural heritage, you see interconnections between intangible cultural heritage practices right across the globe. It is these unexpected relationships that make it particularly fascinating. It may be worth considering doing something similar for the Inventory in the Netherlands.

When it comes to further developing intangible cultural heritage policy we can take advantage of the many different areas of overlap between expressions of intangible cultural heritage and other policy domains, such as education, spatial development, and healthcare and well-being. If we develop and consolidate these connections through policy, intangible cultural heritage, which has already become a fully fledged policy area in its own right, can be strengthened even further.'

Another opportunity is recognising and valuing the intangible cultural heritage on the Dutch Caribbean islands. There, the experience of traditions, festivals and music is part and parcel of everyday life. Nominating Caribbean intangible cultural heritage for one of the international Unesco lists is an interesting challenge that we are working towards. ✕



CARING FOR ALL OUR HERITAGE TOGETHER

FROM EGYPTIAN TEMPLES TO ROTTERDAM'S SUMMER CARNIVAL



The
convention



Everyone is familiar with Unesco's World Heritage Convention of 1972. In 2003 this was supplemented by the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. Why was this introduced and what lies at its heart? Marieke Brugman, Deputy Secretary General of the Netherlands National Commission for Unesco, reflects and looks ahead to the future.

The World Heritage Convention came into being following a successful international collaboration to save Egypt's famous and ancient Abu Simbel temples. These temples were at risk of being flooded due to the construction of the Aswan Dam. Unesco took the initiative to relocate these temples to higher ground. The Convention and accompanying World Heritage List were a resounding success and became Unesco's most well-known tool across the world. Obtaining a place on the list brought prestige and ensured better protection for built and natural heritage. World heritage proved to be a good way of highlighting how cultural heritage connects people. It showed how people agree that certain buildings and natural areas need to be preserved for future generations and that, via the World Heritage List, you can learn about other cultures.

Inadequate

This success was not without its issues, however. Over the years the list was largely filled with heritage from Europe and North America, whereas the intention had been to highlight the diversity of the cultural heritage of all humanity. Africa, Asia and South America were able to demonstrate this better through festivals, music, dance, oral traditions, rituals and knowledge about the natural world. However, these intangible forms of heritage were not compatible with the World Heritage List, on which only built or natural heritage was inscribed. In order to address this issue, in 1989 Unesco adopted a *Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore*. However, experts and academics considered this inadequate to cover the breadth of intan-

'THE SUCCESS WAS NOT WITHOUT ITS ISSUES'

gible cultural heritage. Furthermore, a recommendation has less legal force than a convention, meaning that Member States could brush it aside more easily.

Under pressure

In the meantime, intangible forms of cultural heritage were coming under considerable pressure. Traditions and crafts were disappearing due to modernisation. Languages were disappearing too and, with them, storytelling traditions, folk wisdom and specific knowledge. Intangible cultural heritage is fragile: it is a collection of processes and practices that depend on the people who perform them. If you still have the words and melody to a song, but there is no longer anyone who sings it, it is no longer the same. You cannot keep intangible cultural heritage in a museum or an archive – it is something that changes over time and survives by being practised, performed and passed on. And this can only be done by the community for whom that heritage forms part of its common identity.

Bottom up

It was for this reason that the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage was introduced at the beginning of this century – to make such heritage visible and allow it to be cherished. Intangible cultural heritage is all around us. It doesn't



‘TRADITIONS AND CRAFTS WERE DISAPPEARING DUE TO MODERNISATION’

need to be recorded on a list or inventory to be given that name. This is in contrast to world heritage, which may only be referred to as such if it is included on the World Heritage List.

In keeping with the nature of this form of heritage, it is up to the communities themselves to decide whether they want to nominate their intangible cultural heritage for inclusion on an inventory or an international representative list. Unesco calls this the bottom-up process, where the community itself is in control. Both the text of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and the operational directives explicitly state that the communities should have as much involvement as possible.

Collaboration

Not everything falls to the communities, of course. The Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage coordinates the inventory for the Netherlands and provides training sessions and assistance with writing safeguarding plans. And if, as a Member State of Unesco, our country decides to make an international nomination, this takes place collaboratively between the community, the Dutch Centre and the government.

Working from the bottom up, participation and co-creation are the foundation stones on which the Convention is built. Without an active contribution from and the approval of the communities involved, the Craft of the miller, Falconry and Corso culture: Dutch flower and fruit parades would not now be included on the international Unesco list.

Power of heritage

It is a good idea to think of intangible and world heritage in combination in order to do justice to the richness of both. In the Netherlands, for example, we have the windmills of Kinderdijk on the World Heritage List and the craft of the miller on the International Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. In this way, we can consider the power of heritage in all its forms. ✕

Marieke Brugman is Deputy Secretary General of the Netherlands National Commission for Unesco.



HOW DOES THE UNESCO CONVENTION RELATE TO THE FARO CONVENTION?

The Netherlands is planning to ratify the Faro Convention (Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society). According to this Convention, people's active participation plays a major role in ensuring a broad and diverse approach to cultural heritage. There is a great deal of common ground between the Faro Convention and the Unesco Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. Both Conventions emphasise the social and unifying value of cultural heritage. They both put people at the centre, rather than the heritage itself or the implementation of heritage policy by experts, and both view heritage as a resource and reference point when it comes to social developments.

THE 5 BIGGEST MISCONCEPTIONS

IT'S **something to do with clogs,** **ISN'T IT?**

At the Dutch Centre we often encounter misconceptions about intangible cultural heritage. Here we present the top five misconceptions that we have come across most frequently over the last 10 years. Do you recognise them?

INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE...

The
convention



1 ... is always centuries old
No, that's definitely not the case. Pride Amsterdam and the Rotterdam Summer Carnival, for example, are less than 50 years old. Other intangible cultural heritage may have historical roots, but it always belongs to people today who keep it alive, keep it up to date and want to pass it on to future generations! Practitioners of Staphorst dotwork, Marken embroidery and chair caning, for example, reinvigorate their heritage by working together with contemporary designers.

4 ... is people's experiences, memories and stories
No, that's not true. According to Unesco's definition, intangible cultural heritage is something that is actively practised and expressed in rituals or cultural practices, for example. Just as with tangible heritage, there may of course be a story behind this, but that story is not the intangible cultural heritage itself.

2 ... must be typically Dutch
No, absolutely not. It is about what groups or communities in the Netherlands themselves believe to be valuable heritage. This may concern traditions that have been practised in the Netherlands for many years, such as making clogs by hand, but it can also include traditions that have been introduced to our country more recently, such as henna art or the Indonesian rice table tradition.

5 ... is a quality label
Inscription on the Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Netherlands is definitely not a quality label. In the case of a quality label an expert determines whether something is of sufficient quality. When it comes to the Inventory, however, it is a question of whether people themselves believe their traditions to be valuable, are keeping them alive and want to pass them on to future generations. ✘

3 .. is about traditional crafts
Not at all, intangible cultural heritage is about much more than crafts. It can also include festivals, life cycle rituals, knowledge about the natural world and performing arts. Of course, a craft can be intangible cultural heritage too, but only if the craft is actively practised and if people want to pass it on to future generations. Take the new, young millers being trained to keep our windmills turning, for example.

THIS IS UNESCO'S OFFICIAL DEFINITION

The term 'intangible cultural heritage' is defined very precisely in the Unesco Convention as '[...] the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills - as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith - that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, [...].'



**UNESCO'S INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY OF THE CONVENTION,
TIM CURTIS, REFLECTS ON THE PAST AND LOOKS AHEAD TO THE FUTURE**



In 2023 the Unesco Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage celebrates its 20th anniversary. What has been achieved at international level over this period and what challenges remain? We reflect on the past and look ahead to the future with Tim Curtis, Secretary of the Convention and head of the Intangible Heritage Section. 'The emphasis on communities is unique and is not found in any other United Nations convention.'

'I think it's important to work more inclusively'

'THE CONCEPT OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE HAS MATURED AND IS STANDING ON ITS OWN TWO FEET'

'Personally, I have too much on my plate to really get involved in practising a specific tradition', says Tim Curtis, head of the Intangible Heritage Section and Secretary of the Convention. 'But I do enjoy going to street parades, carnivals and festivals. And I'm in the fortunate position of being able to see all kinds of intangible cultural heritage in countries all around the globe.'

Tim Curtis has been working for Unesco for over twenty years. 'At the time, the text was prompted in distinction to the 1972 World Heritage Convention', he recalls. 'Initially, the new Convention created a gap between North and South. European countries, for example, stayed silent or were against such a Convention. This disparity in outlook has now disappeared. The concept of intangible cultural heritage has matured and is standing on its own two feet.'

Cheerleaders

Today, the Convention has been ratified by more than 180 countries worldwide. 'The Convention is a great success', asserts Tim. Looking back, what does he consider the most important achievements? 'Prior to 2003 there were perhaps a few countries that had developed a little bit of policy relating to folk culture or folklore, but there was no serious recognition of living heritage. The Convention put the concept of intangible cultural heritage and the safeguarding of this heritage firmly on the map. It became a policy area, financial support was made available and institutions were set up to provide expert knowledge.'

However, he stresses that the most important achievements are the safeguarding activities that have been implemented at *national* level. 'The international lists of intangible cultural heritage are somewhat like

'THE INTERNATIONAL LISTS ARE LIKE CHEERLEADERS AT A FOOTBALL MATCH'



What challenges does Tim Curtis envisage for intangible cultural heritage on an international level?

Climate change: HERITAGE IS BOTH VULNERABLE AND POWERFUL

‘Climate change has become an urgent issue when it comes to safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. ‘Intangible Cultural Heritage and emergencies’ was a theme on which the Convention has been focussing on for several years now. Everyone was asking: what does this Convention do about intangible cultural heritage in the event of armed conflicts and natural disasters? Are you going to give cookery lessons in refugee camps? Well, no, that wasn’t the way to go. On the one hand, intangible cultural heritage is vulnerable in the event of natural disasters and climate change, but, on the other, it can play a role in climate adaptation and can help communities recover from disasters.’ Guidelines relating to this have been formulated in the Operational Principles and Modalities (Unesco 2019).

Education: MINISTRIES ON BOARD

‘We have experimented with intangible cultural heritage in formal and informal education. The question we now face is: how

can we ensure that countries see the link to education as being in their own interests? We are keen to get ministries of education on board.’

Commercialisation: YES AND NO

‘The economic dimension of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage can have its positives and negatives. It can decontextualise and distort a form of intangible cultural heritage, but it can also help keep something like a craft alive, for example. For poorer countries that is important. We will be drawing up a guidance note on this topic.’

Big cities: HUGE DIVERSITY

‘Urban centres worldwide are facing a major influx of migrants from rural areas. They come to the city to work and want to practise their traditions. Here there is a link to urban planning: how do you think not only in terms of buildings, but also in terms of spaces for communities and their traditions: music, dance, etc.? That is a topical and interesting question for all Member States.’

Nominations: RAPIDLY EXPANDING LISTS

‘In recent years we have held discussions as part of the ‘Global reflection on the intent and purpose of the listings mechanisms’. These discussions could have resulted in a less strict, more open-ended Representative List and a more accessible Safeguarding List. That was a step too far for some experts and Member States, however. The rapidly expanding lists continue to present a challenge. We have insufficient funds and manpower to deal with all the nominations that countries are making.’

Platform: INVOLVING CITIZENS

‘This year sees the start of the international discussion between Member States on Article 18 of the Convention: lighter ways of sharing good safeguarding experiences. How do we develop a mechanism to involve citizens? An online platform, an open space for exchanging information with communities and social organisations outside the mechanism of the lists, could be a good idea. If countries so wish, the ‘Register of good safeguarding practices’ could be maintained.’

cheerleaders at a football match, but the match itself, the establishment of safeguarding policies at country level, is really what it’s all about. Unesco’s international Representative List has certainly served its purpose in terms of putting intangible cultural heritage in the spotlight. But I’m particularly keen to find out what the inscription and recognition of the heritage has done for the communities themselves: what impact has this had and what are their experiences?’

Work in progress

In 2023 Unesco is celebrating the 20th anniversary of the Convention. Although it can be considered a great success, that does not mean the Convention is ‘finished’. ‘It’s a work in progress’, explains Tim. ‘We are still reworking it in all kinds of ways.’ And, in his view, that is necessary. ‘At my first intergovernmental committee meeting in Addis Ababa in 2016 I was astonished by the emphasis placed on the technocratic side of the inscription process when it came to assessing nominations. The focus was mostly on questions such as: has the file been put together properly? Have the right formulations been used for the nomination? Countries that can hire in technical expertise get everything inscribed, while countries without it find themselves at a disadvantage. I think it’s important to work more inclusively. We shouldn’t forget that behind the nominations there are communities.’

More money

One improvement that has already been made is the introduction of a more accessible procedure for applying for International Assistance (IA) from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund. Tim explains that a lot of money was being left untouched. ‘Now we can deal with all applications quickly. That means countries that need it can get hold of funding more easily to implement safeguarding programmes for intangible cultural heritage that is under threat or to prepare inventories.’ Another improvement that he is pleased about is the new form for the six-yearly report that countries submit on the implementation of the Convention. ‘Last year South America and Europe submitted their new reports. The number of submissions is much higher than under the old system and the quality of the data is also pretty good.’

INITIALLY, EUROPEAN COUNTRIES STAYED SILENT OR WERE AGAINST THE CONVENTION

Antisemitic jokes

What else would he like to improve? ‘In my opinion, it would be better if we also considered information outside the nomination file. We need to base decisions on reality rather than just a piece of paper.’ As an example he refers to the Aalst Carnival, which drew criticism in 2019 as a result of antisemitic caricatures on the floats and was subsequently removed from the international list. Tim: ‘In their file they referred to ‘jokes’ of communities. If, when assessing the nomination in 2010, we had also drawn on information from outside the file, it would have been immediately clear that sometimes these involved antisemitic stereotypes. Imagine for a moment that Unesco had not reacted to this. The global message then would have been: we approve of this kind of practice.’

Sometimes there is friction in other areas too.

‘Communities need to be visible and have the opportunity to speak within the Convention’s governing bodies. But that doesn’t mean that everything communities do is acceptable. Not all intangible cultural heritage practices are compatible with human rights. And that is a condition laid down by the Convention. At the Convention’s General Assembly last July it became clear that the States Parties have very different views on how big a role communities and NGOs should play in the Convention.’

Dynamic

He envisages plenty of challenges for the international Convention moving forward (see box). Tim: ‘We are learning and making adjustments as we go along. Overall, you could describe this Convention as dynamic, like living heritage itself.’ ✕





The first

3



THE FIRST THREE ON THE INVENTORY - 10 YEARS ON

Saturday 13 October 2012 was a historic day. The Boxmeer Procession, St Martin Celebration in Utrecht and Zundert Flower Parade traditions became the first three communities in the Netherlands to gain a place on the brand-new Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage. How do those who were involved at the time look back on that special moment 10 years on? And what effect did this place on 'the list' have?

This is for my father!' These were the words of Wim Goossens in 2012 when the director of the Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage called him up to the stage to tell him that

the Boxmeer Procession had been inscribed on the Inventory. And he really meant it. As the master of the procession, Wim's father had witnessed at first hand the disastrous impact that the secularisation of the 1960s and 1970s had had on the religious festival in Boxmeer. Wim: 'When I took on this voluntary role after his death in 1979, I knew that 'the Procession' had to be taken out of the religious sphere in order to survive.'

The Boxmeer Procession was one of the first three examples of intangible cultural heritage to gain a place on the Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Netherlands. The announcement was made during a celebratory event organised by the Dutch Centre at Fort Voordorp on the outskirts of Utrecht, shortly after the Netherlands had ratified the Unesco Convention in September 2012.

Emotional moment

'It was an emotional moment for me', remembers Wim. 'I knew, of course, that we had gained the inscription thanks to our own hard work, but it felt like a kind of recognition, a tremendous honour. It was an extra incentive for us to keep going.'

Inscription on the Inventory was also a memorable occasion for the Zundert Flower Parade. 'It was the crowning glory of all our hard work', explains Paul Bastiaansen. 'In addition, it really helped to raise awareness in Zundert that we were doing something special. All too often we still tended to think that our flower parade was nothing out of the ordinary. Our inclusion on the Inventory meant that local people suddenly appreciated that it is something to cherish.'

Initiator Chris van Deventer was delighted when the St Martin celebrations in Utrecht were inscribed, recalls Rien Sprenger. 'Right up until he died in 2016, his life's work had been to bring the St Martin festival up to date. It makes me happy that since then we have succeeded in creating a fantastic event year after year with the help of local volunteers and for all residents of Utrecht.'

**'THE BOXMEER PROCESSION
IS THRIVING LIKE NEVER
BEFORE AND THE
COMMUNITY SPIRIT AS
A WHOLE HAS GROWN
BECAUSE OF IT'**



'THE PEOPLE OF ZUNDERT SUDDENLY APPRECIATED THE FACT THAT OUR FLOWER PARADE IS SOMETHING TO CHERISH!'

A reason to live

After all, all these volunteers are ultimately doing what they do for the people of the city, emphasises Rien, himself a volunteer with the Utrecht St Martin Foundation. 'The patron saint has been brought back to life through a contemporary spiritual-secular festival for all the people of Utrecht.' One particularly poignant story for Rien concerned a man who had accidentally stumbled upon the St Martin celebration in the city centre. 'The feeling of solidarity and the lights of the parade gave him extra confirmation that he wanted to live. He realised that he was no longer 'entrapped' in his previous suicidal thoughts.'



WHICH WERE THE FIRST TREE?

The **Boxmeer Procession** is a colourful procession that passes through the streets of Boxmeer each year, 14 days after Whitsun. This socio-cultural event has religious roots stretching back to the miracle of the Holy Blood in around 1400.

The **St Martin celebration in Utrecht** is a collection of activities and events relating to the figure of St Martin, the city's patron saint. All the activities revolve around sharing and light.

One of the most famous activities is the big lantern parade through Utrecht.

The **Zundert Flower Parade** is a parade involving giant floats decorated with dahlias, which people of all ages create together. It passes through the streets of Zundert on the first Sunday of September.

The **Corsokoepel** is an association of Dutch parades. It organises a conference each year on current issues relevant to parades, such as sustainability. The Zundert Flower Parade was one of the initiators of this umbrella organisation.

Buzz

The Boxmeer Procession is also a flourishing tradition once again. Since Wim took over the reins from his father it has grown into a social, cultural and historical 'walking' monument with its roots in religion. He explains that the decision not to make the procession exclusively religious has had a positive effect. 'From having just 34 volunteers back then, we now have 275. Following the inscription on the Inventory we quickly set up a shadow committee of young volunteers. This gave them the opportunity to get to know the organisation really well and to make suggestions for improvement. And we genuinely listened to them.' The results speak for themselves: when he stepped down from his role as Chairperson, Wim was succeeded by a 27 year old. 'The procession is thriving like never before, there is a buzz about it again and the community spirit in Boxmeer as a whole has grown because of it', he says with pride.

Education

Making sure people are engaged with your tradition is also one of the key issues for the Zundert Flower Parade, says Paul, who was involved in the PR for the parade at that time. 'We have always been very good at passing on our cultural heritage to the next generation. We always involve young people and encourage them if they come forward with new ideas. It's just like in education: you've got to have the courage to leave something up to the youth of today.'

'ST MARTIN HAS BEEN BROUGHT BACK TO LIFE, FOR ALL THE PEOPLE OF UTRECHT'

Absolute highlight

In 2021 parade culture in the Netherlands gained a place on Unesco's international Representative List. 'Naturally, that was an absolute highlight', laughs Paul. He emphasises that setting up the Corsokoepel in 2018 (see box) was another important step. 'Not just as a driving force behind the international application, but also in terms of promoting collaboration between the various parades in the Netherlands. They have worked together to make the construction of the parade floats more sustainable, for example.'

On the subject of collaborations, the Boxmeer Procession also works together with German and

Belgian Holy Blood processions and with other intangible cultural heritage in the local area. The Utrecht St Martin Foundation is involved in various international collaborations, including within the framework of the *Via Trajectensis*, a European route for walkers and cyclists, known more commonly in the Netherlands as the 'Martinusroute'. It is also currently setting up a collaboration with the French and Dutch parts of the Leeward island of Saint Martin. Rien beams: 'There's plenty to be getting on with for the future!' ✕



'INVALUABLE HELP' FROM THE DUTCH CENTRE

Wim from the Boxmeer Procession: 'Over the last 10 years, the Dutch Centre has always given us great support with its advice and the workshops it offers during the meeting and networking days.' Paul Bastiaansen from the Zundert Flower Parade and the Corsokoepel: 'The Dutch Centre has not only helped us write our first safeguarding plan, but has also provided us with invaluable help and support relating to our nomination for the international list.'

2 ISLANDS

2 TERRITORIES

THE CARIBBEAN APPROACH

2012
Signing of the Convention by the Kingdom and ratification by Aruba

2014
Sint Maarten ratifies the Convention

2015
The six islands jointly set up the Dutch Caribbean ICH Committee: a joint initiative in the area of intangible cultural heritage

2016
Curaçao ratifies the Convention

2018
Each island works independently on implementation. Some islands have inventories of intangible cultural heritage

2019
Ministers of the four countries and representatives of the three public bodies sign a declaration of intent to strengthen collaboration in the area of intangible cultural heritage

2022
Bonaire, Sint Maarten, Aruba and Curaçao launch websites on their intangible cultural heritage

Timeline: collaboration within the Kingdom
The Kingdom of the Netherlands is made up of four countries: the Netherlands, Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten. Bonaire, Saba and Sint Eustatius are public bodies of the Netherlands. These three islands are also referred to collectively as the Dutch Caribbean islands. Since the Convention was signed, we have been working together within the Kingdom to make intangible cultural heritage visible and to safeguard it. A joint intangible cultural heritage training week was organised annually between 2014 and 2018.





SINT MAARTEN

'WE HAVE WON OVER THE HEARTS OF PUPILS'

HOW SINT MAARTEN CARES FOR ITS INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

The Ponum Dance, the official dance of Sint Maarten, is an expression of resistance and rebellion against the system of slavery. How do you ensure that future generations will also be familiar with this historic dance? Or that traditions such as *wire bending* do not disappear? Sint Maarten has opted for its own unique approach.

'On Sint Maarten we believe it's important that our inventory of intangible cultural heritage truly comes from the communities themselves', explains Marcellia Henry, Secretary General of the Sint Maarten National Commission for Unesco. 'It shouldn't be something that is compiled by Unesco.' For this reason, her commission organised widespread national consultations on the island from as early as 2014. 'The aim was to identify our intangible cultural heritage and talk about it with the older people in the communities.'

Public involvement

On Constitution Day 2019 the time had come. The inventory was offi-

cially presented and recognised by the island's Minister of Culture. But that was not all. Marcellia: 'Right from the outset we gave presentations on intangible cultural heritage to secondary schools and to the University of Sint Maarten. We also asked for feedback about the structure of the inventory. Afterwards, an extensive online questionnaire was also distributed to the general public. Everyone was able to register their cultural heritage.'

Resistance and rebellion

How are young people involved? 'They help with recording and documenting cultural heritage, including, for example, the official dance of Sint Maarten, the Ponum Dance. In this dance resistance and rebellion against the system of slavery are represented through movement and song.' The Ministry of Culture invited all islanders to learn the

'YOUNG PEOPLE ARE INVOLVED IN THE OFFICIAL DANCE OF SINT MAARTEN'

dance and increase their awareness of its historic value, she explains, in preparation for the celebration of Emancipation Day on 1 July. 'On this day we honour our ancestors who fought to become free people by celebrating the anniversary of the Proclamation of the Abolishment of Slavery. We are keen to nominate the Ponum Dance for the international Unesco list in the future.'

Tourists and hurricanes

Keeping intangible cultural heritage alive is not only important for the inhabitants of Sint Maarten, but also for tourism on the island. 'Tourists want to learn about our customs and traditions. A booklet on this subject that we can hand out is going to be published soon', says Marcellia. Another reason to safeguard cultural heritage is the considerable risk that climate change and natural disasters pose to the island. Hurricane

Irma in 2017 is one example. 'More consideration needs to be given to intangible cultural heritage in crisis management', she believes. 'When recovering from disasters, rituals, songs and stories can be a source of support for communities.'

After-school programmes

The commission is also taking action in the area of education. In collaboration with the Ministry of Culture, it publishes magazines and posters for all kinds of target groups, including schools. And at the university you can take a course in intangible cultural heritage and its history. Marcellia: 'I give the lectures myself at the moment, but we cannot continue to do everything ourselves. We are now training lecturers to take up the baton.' Unesco also provided financial support for after-school programmes. Various schools start-

ed offering opportunities to learn about two traditions that are at risk of disappearing: wire bending and stilt walking. 'It seems we have won over the hearts of pupils with these traditions', she reveals enthusiastically. 'The skills that you need for the craft of wire bending have been given a new lease of life.'

New milestone

In October 2022 a new milestone will be reached. On Constitution Day, Sint Maarten is launching its own website, which will present the Inventory, as well as film and documentary material. A list of sayings and proverbs will be included as a new addition. According to Marcellia, the website will provide a good incentive to revisit communities and ask how the safeguarding of their traditions is going. 'And, of course, we are extremely proud of the result.' ✕

BONAIRE



'MANY OLDER PEOPLE HAVE BEEN INTERVIEWED OVER THE PAST 30 YEARS'

HOW BONAIRE CARES FOR ITS INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

Curious about how you can make music using a donkey's jawbone (*Kachete di buriku*)? Or what the people of Bonaire celebrate on *Dia di Rincon*? You can read about these traditions and watch film clips on the fantastic intangible cultural heritage website that Bonaire launched in 2022. How did they go about recording their unique heritage?

No fewer than 21 examples of intangible cultural heritage have been included on the website [Patrimonio Kultural Intangibel Boneiru](#), which was presented in the capital of Bonaire in March 2022. Here you will find interesting background information on all the island's traditions, sometimes in the form of film clips or even documentaries. Liliane de Geus, head of the Unesco working group for Bonaire, coordinated the content and construction. 'The website featuring the inventory has been received enthusiastically on the island. The island council still needs to adopt the inventory and therefore recognise it officially, but that is certain to happen.'

Local delicacies

The list has been created in close collaboration with the Bonairian community, explains Liliane. 'We set up a focus group made up of representatives from all the communities on Bonaire, including the Venezuelan and Chinese communities. This group put forward elements for inclusion in the inventory. The Sinterklaas festival was not nominated, for example, as people do not regard it as current or as something that comes from us.' The selection process focused in the first instance – with the agreement of the group – on Bonairian heritage. 'A good example is Rincon Day, a day that the whole of Bonaire celebrates in the island's oldest settlement, with dance, music and local delicacies.'

Important source

Fortunately, a great deal of documentation had already been collected by FuHiKuBo, an organisation that documents the history of Bonaire together with volunteers and, since 2020, has been an accredited NGO under the Unesco Convention. 'A real driving force behind this collection is Bòi Antoin', says Liliane. 'As a journalist and author he has interviewed older people over the last 30 years to record their knowledge and memories, creating an important source of information for future generations. This provided a good basis for the website.'

Climate adaptation

In order to make the interplay within cultural heritage visible, there is also a knowledge bank with links to the tangible heritage of Bonaire, for example. Intangible cultural heritage

'WE ARE INVOLVING REPRESENTATIVES FROM ALL COMMUNITIES ON BONAIRE'

and topical issues are also brought together. Under 'Natural Disasters', for example, you will find [a documentary featuring interviews with inhabitants of Bonaire](#), including farmers and fishermen, who have lived through the hurricanes over the past few years. When it comes to climate adaptation, drawing on cultural-historical knowledge is not an obvious step, admits Liliane. 'But it's a missed opportunity, as our heritage offers solutions that are sustainable and readily available to us.'

Growth in support

The website and inventory are by no means finished. Additions will be made to the information in the future and traditions from other communities will also be included. 'I see working on the content of the website as a learning process for Bonaire. We are getting to know

our heritage better, learning how important it is to safeguard it for the future and gaining respect for its practitioners.' She emphasises that this growth in support for preserving and recognising Bonairian intangible cultural heritage is important.

Next generation

How do they engage young Bonairians with their heritage? 'They need to be made more aware of it. After all, they are the next generation who can keep our heritage alive. That's why the link with education is so important.' She is already making a considerable contribution in this area herself. As a lecturer in Cultural Education on the course for primary school teachers, she gives lectures on the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of Bonaire. 'Using this knowledge, in turn, they are able to enthuse their pupils.' ✕

My ICH ...
... develops
people

'I HAVE LEARNED A LOT PROFESSIONALLY FROM THE SHOOTING CLUB'



Bernie van Lierop joined the ceremonial shooting club as a six-year-old boy. Today he is a councillor in Venray, a position he has held for many years now. 'My experiences with the shooting club and the courses I have taken part in have definitely helped me in this role.'



ICH-ID

WHO: Bernie van Lierop

ROLE: Secretary of the Old Limburgian Shooters' Festival (OLS)

PARTICIPATION: 'At least 15 to 20 types'

ICH-MOMENT: 'When we were given the opportunity to organise Prince's Day in The Hague in 2015'

FAVOURITE ICH: 'All ICH!'

Bernie, how important is education for the shooting club? 'For a long time education has been an important part of the Old Limburgian Shooters' Federation. That's certainly the case if you see education as passing on our tradition to the next generation. There are 160 ceremonial shooting clubs from Dutch and Belgian Limburg affiliated to our federation. All of them offer educational activities to both younger and older members. As a federation we also have our own education committee, which provides general courses. These include a course for club committee members, a jury course and a weapons master course.'

Educating is therefore really part of your heritage?

'Definitely. We are constantly looking out for promising young people who stand out on our courses. We then offer them a role in our organisation. This is important, as our centuries-old guilds and cultures will only survive if we invest in our young people. A key part of our activities within ceremonial shooting clubs is shooting with weapons. This often appeals to young people, but is subject to firearms legislation. As a weapons master or jury member this is something you need to become well versed in.'

What does development with a ceremonial shooting club give you as a young person?

'A great deal. Our courses are not only useful for participating in shooting activities, but can also be of benefit in your professional career. That's how I started out too: I came to the shooting club when I was six, and here I am now, forty years later, serving my third term as a councillor in Venray. I owe this in part to my experiences with the shooting club and the courses I have taken part in.'

There is a preconception that ceremonial shooting clubs are male-dominated organisations. Are women also welcome?

'There are lots of opportunities for girls and women. We have really moved with the times in this respect. Last year, for example, a group of women aged between 18 and 20 started an exercise platoon. And we recently got a new president, a 49-year-old woman, who has been involved with the shooting club for forty years.'

Are your courses well received?

'Yes, very well. An increasing number of young people have registered for the commander and exer-

'WE ARE ALSO KEEN TO EDUCATE NEWCOMERS FROM OUTSIDE LIMBURG'

cise courses in the past two years. You can clearly see an increase in the number of youngsters getting involved. Sometimes it's difficult to hold on to young people, when they go off to study for example, but if they join the shooting club at a young age and come back once they've finished their studies, you often find that they take up a position again.'

Do you have any plans for the future in the area of education?

'Yes, we certainly do. Education is an essential part of our Future Vision, which we have drawn up together with the province. We want to continue to strengthen our heritage and bring it to people's attention. To introduce it to young people, but also to newcomers from outside Limburg. A number of residence permit holders from Turkey and Ukraine have joined the federation, for example. Everyone is welcome. When you join a ceremonial shooting club you become part of the family!' ✕

3 X EDUCATION: THESE EXAMPLES OF ICH ALSO ATTACH GREAT IMPORTANCE TO EDUCATION

It is not only the Old Limburgian Shooters' Federation that provides training and courses.

- The Parade Academy, an initiative of the Zundert Flower Parade, also offers a complete programme allowing anyone from the age of 14 to learn about all the different aspects involved in designing a parade float.
- The Jan Klaassen Academy trains puppeteers and theatre makers in the ins and outs of the Jan Klaassen puppet play (the Dutch equivalent of Punch and Judy).
- The Staphorst dotwork training course teaches students all there is to know about the craft, from its history and development through to techniques, materials and all kinds of applications.





5 X CLEVER SAFEGUARDING INITIATIVES

From picture books to flag-throwing innovations

Intangible cultural heritage lives in the hearts, hands and minds of people. That means it can also 'die out'. Unless you work together to keep it alive - by developing it, promoting it and passing it on to future generations. Five inspiring, real-life examples of safeguarding.



SAFEGUARDING: HOW TO 'PROTECT' LIVING HERITAGE

How do you ensure intangible heritage survives? In its Convention, Unesco uses the keyword 'safeguarding'. We favour this term over 'protecting', which is too strong and suggests preserving something in its current form. Safeguarding means that people take action to pass on, develop and promote their heritage. These actions are part of the safeguarding plan that communities write for the Inventory with support from the Dutch Centre.

1 Boxtel's 'Happy Box'

In Boxtel new parents receive a beautiful picture book about the giant Jas de Keistamper when they register the birth of their new baby at the town hall. This giant appears at the market in Boxtel every King's Day. He embodies the craft of road-making and the perseverance of the people of Boxtel. The book enables parents to pass on Boxtel's intangible cultural heritage to their children in a fun way. Nurseries, crèches, preschools and toddler groups also use it. Even if you do not have children, you will come across the giant on postage stamps, cards, figurines, beer, biscuits, rucksacks and T-shirts. In this way the Boxtel Forward Foundation manages to keep its local giant visible all year round.

2 Testing the ice

As soon as the temperature drops below zero, Dutch skating enthusiasts all want to know one thing: where is the ice thick enough to skate? Experts on natural ice (ice masters) make sure the ice is sufficiently thick and of good enough quality to allow people to skate on it safely. Despite the popularity of skating on natural ice, however, there was a risk of a shortage of ice masters. In 2021 the Royal Dutch Skating Federation (KNSB), together with the food brand Unox, therefore launched a recruitment campaign: 'Ice masters wanted! Have you got what it takes?' No fewer than eight hundred applications were received. After obtaining their diplomas, the brand-new ice masters were admitted to the Dutch Ice Masters Guild.

3 Flag-throwing innovations

Is flag throwing still relevant today? This question is being examined by the St Hubertus Federation of Gelderland Shooting Clubs and Guilds, to which 62 shooting clubs and guilds are affiliated in Gelderland. How can we make flag throwing more attractive for participants and spectators? Would it be possible to create new movements with the flag, for example? Throw flags to different styles of music? Come up with new forms of flag throwing? The working group is made up of people of different ages. In this way the federation is involving more young people, while also ensuring that older people do not drift away.

4 Dancing to gamelan

How do you combine the Surinamese-Javanese gamelan tradition with modern pop music? The gamelan tradition in Suriname was developed by Javans who the Dutch brought to the country from the Dutch East Indies during the colonial period to work as contract workers. In recent years, gamelan groups in the Netherlands have experimented to give the tradition a contemporary twist. Gamelan meets Pop, a musical event, has also been organised by The Hague's Rukun Budi Utama Foundation. In addition, there has been a successful musical collaboration with Mantje Karso, a musician and arranger in Suriname. Besides Surinamese gamelan groups, this collaboration also involved the Dutch gamelan groups Bangun Tresna Budaya, Witing Klapa and Trisno Soeworo. You can really hear the gamelan, kendang (drum) and suling (flute) as well as the modern instruments. Let's gamel-dance!

5 Write your own sea shanty

*'Wij zijn altijd op zoek naar een plek.
(We're always looking for a place.) Flexen,
jongens, flexen. (Hotdesk, guys, hotdesk.)
Al dat geluid maakt ons knettergek. (All
that noise gets us red in the face.) Flexen,
jongens, flexen.'*

Surprisingly, these lines were written -and sung- to the melody of the well known Dutch sea shanty 'Douwe Jongens Douwe' ('Heave Boys Heave') by... council workers who attended a workshop held by Shantykoor Het Kraaiennest (The Crow's Nest Sea Shanty Choir). In days gone by, the work required on board ships was made a little easier by singing sea shanties. There are currently around four hundred choirs in the Netherlands, comprising some fifteen thousand singers and musicians.

The Netherlands Sea Shanty Foundation encourages affiliated groups to inspire new generations and target groups through new initiatives. Thanks to these activities, a number of youth choirs have also now been set up, the first of which was the Rotterdamsche Scheepsmaetjes (Rotterdam Shipmates). The foundation also supports the 'Write your own sea shanty' workshop at the Rotterdam Sea Shanty Festival and is planning to offer this workshop itself. In short, the future of the sea shanty is flexible! ✘

FACTS & FIGURES FOR THE INVENTORY AND NETWORK

10 years!



Ten years on from the signing of the Unesco Convention, many practitioners of intangible heritage signed up at the Dutch Centre. In 2022 the Inventory of Intangible Heritage in the Netherlands includes 200 elements of intangible heritage. Here we present the latest facts and figures at a glance.*

59

National & local

The Inventory includes 59 national traditions, such as King's Day, making farmhouse cheese, Ketj Koti and the Child Welfare Stamps Campaign. The other 141 inscriptions are examples of local heritage, such as pigeon flying in The Hague, the Relief of Groningen, Parchment Making in Wierden and the Nijmegen 4Days Marches.

Inventory & Network

All these traditions have been registered by practitioners themselves. For the purposes of the Inventory they have written a safeguarding plan, the aim of which is to ensure the intangible cultural heritage has a future.

NETWORK 378,
WHEREOF INVENTORY 200



*Autumn 2022

8 million

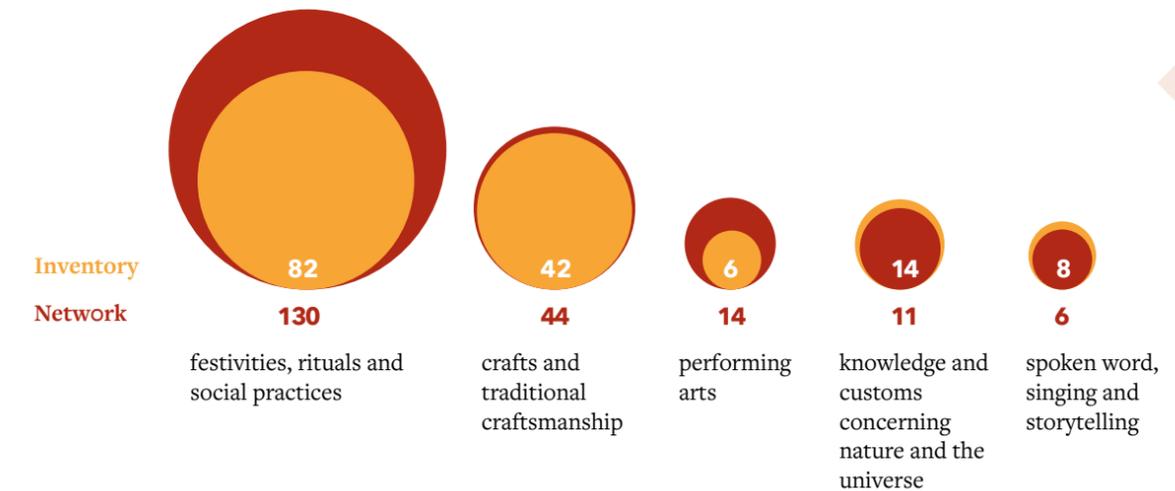
Who's joining in?*

More than 8 million Dutch people practise intangible cultural heritage included on the Inventory themselves or are involved as a volunteer. Each year, almost 270 million people visit festivals or events, or enjoy the intangible cultural heritage on the Inventory in another way.

* Totals based on estimates by communities taken from their evaluations and safeguarding plans.

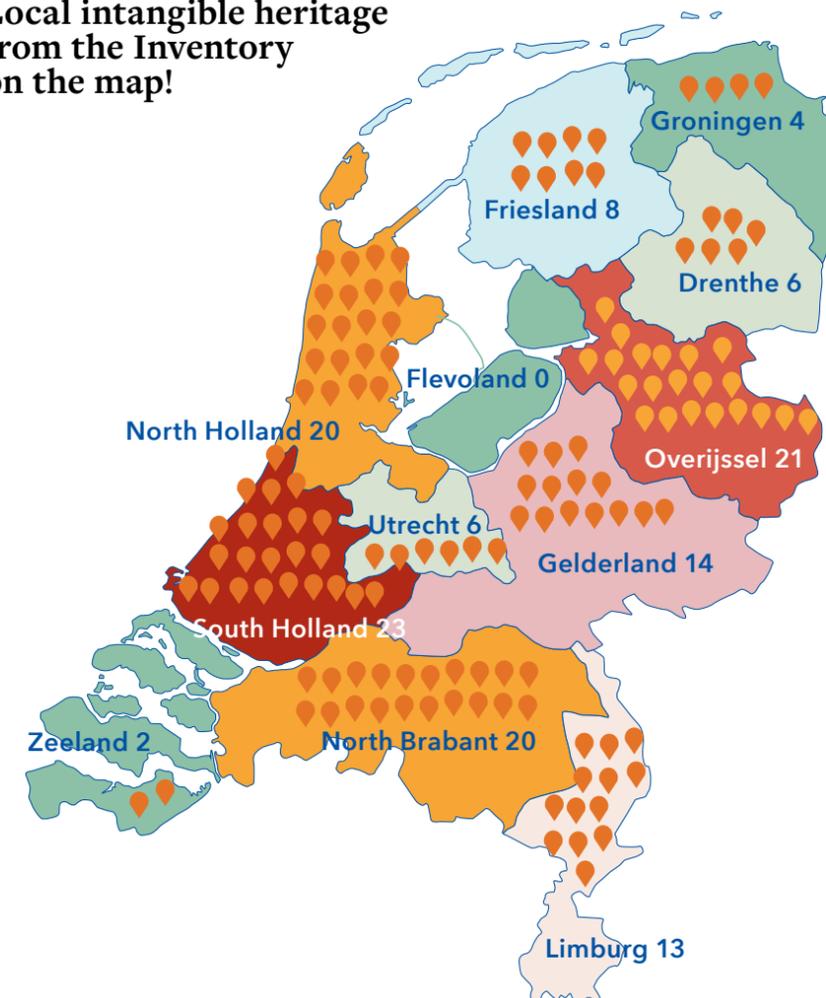
What types?

The intangible cultural heritage included on the Inventory is divided up into five categories.*



*Heritage can fall into several categories and therefore be counted more than once.

Local intangible heritage from the Inventory on the map!



Gone...

Intangible cultural heritage is living heritage. Over the last ten years, five examples of heritage have been removed from the Inventory, as practitioners were no longer able or did not want to take on the task of caring for the heritage in question. The Voorburg-West bonfire, for example, has not been organised for a number of years.

My ICH ...
... gives people
an income

'IT'S GREAT TO HAVE THESE FIGURES IN BLACK AND WHITE'

'Money is important', says Fred Eggink, a former journalist at the newspaper De Gelderlander. Without money there's no event and without an event there's no money. The Tiel Fruit Parade therefore continues to come up with creative innovations: from a grocery store savings campaigns to an Apple Day. 'Our stands are also jam-packed in the evenings.'



ICH-ID

WHO: Fred Eggink

ROLE: PR assistant for the Tiel Fruit Parade and Corsokoepel volunteer

PARTICIPATION: '10 types'

ICH-MOMENT: 'Experiencing the international inscription on the Unesco list together with the Corsokoepel'

FAVOURITE ICH: 'Flower parade culture'

Fred, what is the economic value of your heritage?
'It's big. The Fruit Parade brings in a lot of money for the town and region. Research carried out for us in 2019 by students at the HAN University of Applied Sciences showed that the parade generates 36,000 overnight stays and more than EUR 150,000 in daytime spending. The total economic impact for the Rivierenland region is around EUR 300,000. It's great to have these figures in black and white. They also help us when it comes to attracting sponsors and in our conversations with the municipality.'

Is the economic value an added bonus or is it part of your heritage?

'Nowadays, the Fruit Parade is a socio-cultural event, but it has its origins in the region's fruit growing. It was a way of bringing attention to products from the region and promoting them. Its purpose was therefore economic. For a long time this aspect has been pushed into the background, but that is changing. This year, for the first time, we are organising an Apple Day, where we will promote all kinds of fruit and fruit products through a range of activities. After sixty years, we have in fact returned to our roots.'

How do you ensure you are so successful economically?

'There was a time when things were not going so well financially and the Fruit Parade was at risk of going under. It was then that we decided to change track. The route was relocated to the town centre and we introduced paid tickets. That saved us, but we continue to innovate. Money is important for keeping our heritage alive.'

Can you give us an example of an innovation?

'In 2019 we started 'Parade by night'. In collaboration with regional Albert Heijn supermarkets we set up a savings card campaign. A full savings card earned you a five euro discount on a ticket for 'Parade by night'. The daytime parade was already sold out, with tickets having been snapped up by visitors from all over the country through coach packages. Our campaign worked out very well. It raised awareness of our event within the region and the stands were jam-packed in the evenings too.'

How did people react to your savings cards?
'Very positively. Dutch people are savers, after all. Therefore, if you can save for a discount on an event in your own backyard, it's a good thing. The campaign also generated a lot of goodwill. And Albert Heijn has pledged to conduct the campaign again next year.'

'DUTCH PEOPLE ARE SAVERS, AFTER ALL'

Do you have further plans to increase the economic value in the future?

'We are always working on innovations. For example, we are currently experimenting with a special natural adhesive, so that the fruit and vegetables can still be used once the event is over. We are also looking into whether we can use second- or third-class fruit and vegetables, rather than first-class ones. This will mean less waste, making the parade both more sustainable and economically smarter.' X

3 X ECONOMIC VALUE: THIS ICH ALSO BRINGS IN MONEY

The Tiel Fruit Parade is certainly not the only example of intangible cultural heritage with economic value.

- In Beesel the 'Dragon Slaying' theatre spectacle takes place every seven years. 'Beesel Dragon Village' keeps its heritage alive all year round for both local people and tourists, for example with special dragon walks, dragon artworks and even dragon drain covers.
- Many craftspeople, such as practitioners of decorative painting techniques, generate income for themselves by selling the products they make.
- Each year Pride Amsterdam attracts hundreds of thousands of participants and visitors from both the Netherlands and abroad, who stay overnight and spend money in the region.





ON THE REMARKABLE ADAPTABILITY OF TRADITIONS

KEEPING THE

FLAME ALIVE

What is more in keeping with the age we live in: killing birds or protecting them? An all-white-male or a diverse management team? What we consider 'normal' as a society changes over time. The same goes for intangible cultural heritage: every new generation makes changes to it. Moving with the times is what keeps it alive. Here we present seven striking examples of the adaptability of traditions from the past 10 years.

Playing with fire creatively
The municipality of Espelo is famous for its huge Easter bonfires. In 2012 they broke their own record by building a bonfire to an impressive height of 45.98 metres, once again earning the municipality an entry in the Guinness Book of Records. Forty thousand visitors, a record number, watched on as the stack went up in flames.

But fires are not without risks. Who can forget the images of sparks raining down at Scheveningen's New Year fire in 2019? Think also about the wildfires that can start at times of extreme drought and the air pollution that they cause. In the past you could build a bonfire with relatively few restrictions, but for a number of years now tighter environmental and safety rules have been in place. These relate, for example, to the height and structure of the stack, which has to have a wide base. The downside of this development is that the competition that naturally arises between different villages or districts when lots of bonfires are built was at risk of being lost. Organisers of Easter and New Year fires therefore had to rack their brains.

In Espelo they came up with an excellent solution when, in 2019, the Easter fire was threatened with cancellation due to the extreme drought. Espelo created a smaller bonfire in the shape of a tankard. 'If we can't go bigger than 500 m³, we get creative instead!', they reported on their Facebook page, together with images of the tankard and its proud builders. 'The sense of solidarity is the most important thing', says Arjan Stevens, one of the organisers. 'We don't have a village centre or a pub and our school recently closed. This is something we really

value: it connects me and my peers, the whole village and even the entire area.'

Shooting (for people with balls)

Carbide shooters in Drenthe have also taken safety measures. Traditionally, locals would see the New Year in with a 'bang' by creating an explosion in an old milk churn. But carbide shooting has its risks: it can damage your hearing, or the lid, which is blown off with great force, can cause accidents. This example of intangible cultural heritage therefore acquired a negative image. 'We wanted to inspire people to practise their tradition in a responsible way', explains José Reinholdt from the Board of the Drenthe Carbide Shooting Foundation. 'With this in mind, we tried to come up with a light-hearted campaign, without pointing the finger.' In the end they opted for a variation of the slogan used in the Netherlands' anti-drink-driving campaign, which had been successful for many years: 'Wie is de BOB?' ('Who is the Consciously Sober Driver?') became 'Wie is de BOCK?' ('Who is the Consciously Attentive Carbide Shooter?'). José: 'The BOCK does not drink any alcohol, has 'balls' – in other words, uses safer plastic balls instead of milk-churn lids – and wears earplugs to prevent hearing damage.'

Bird netters with a mission

Intangible cultural heritage is not just faced with restrictions. Declining biodiversity and the changing climate are resulting in new applications for old knowledge and skills. Sometimes this requires a radical change of mindset on the part of the practitioners. One surprising example of such a change is the Frisian tradition known as *wilsterflappen*. This translates as 'plover netting'

**'THE PLOVER NETTERS ARE A SILENT
FORCE BEHIND INTERNATIONAL
RESEARCH INTO MIGRATORY BIRDS'**



‘IF WE CAN’T GO BIGGER THAN 500 M³, WE GET CREATIVE INSTEAD!’

(*wilster* is Frisian for the European golden plover and *flappen* refers to the net used to catch them). Whereas in the past the birds were killed and sold, nowadays thousands of migratory birds – not only golden plovers, but also birds such as bar-tailed godwits – are ringed, weighed, measured and described. Some are fitted with a transmitter. All birds that are caught are released again. To catch the birds, the catchers use a method that dates back centuries, involving clap nets, decoy birds and imitated bird sounds. ‘The plover netters are a silent force behind international research into migratory birds’, says Theunis Piersma, professor of migratory bird ecology in Groningen. The data that these citizen scientists collect is shared with biologists at institutions including the University of Groningen and BirdEyes, as well as the Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research on Texel.

Protecting nests

Another excellent example from Friesland is the radical change that has taken place within the tradition of *aaisykje*, or searching for lapwing eggs. *Aaisykje* mostly involves crouching down at the edge of ditches and watching carefully. Working out where the nest is located from the lapwing’s behaviour is something of an art. In the past the eggs were taken, but the process of searching for the nests now has a new purpose: to protect them. The data is also used for research. Around 3,500 volunteers mark the nest locations and pass this information on to the farmer who owns the land. In this way they protect the eggs, chicks and meadow birds. The loss of any eggs or chicks is a cause of much distress for them. Another important aspect of the tradition has remained the same: the finders of the first lapwing egg are still honoured by the King’s Commissioner or the mayor. Nowadays, they only take a photo of the nest as evidence.

Cactus fence building

When it comes to water regulation too, the knowledge and dedication of locals can make a real difference. On the Caribbean island of Bonaire, for example, people have long built cactus fences. An important function of these traditional cactus fences is to absorb and retain water. As a consequence of climate change, this old skill is very much gaining in importance again on the island. An example from the Netherlands are the old water mills in the south of the country. It is only since the floods that Limburg experienced in 2021 and the increasingly extreme weather we have been witnessing that public authorities have started to think about how a miller can use weirs to raise or lower the water level around the mill. This makes it possible to carry off any excess water more quickly or retain water for longer in the event of drought.

Pyt becomes Aldemar

Dutch society is becoming more and more diverse: young people and migrant and LGBTQ communities, for example, are gaining in prominence and making their voices heard. Perhaps the most well-known example is the debate surrounding Black Pete (Zwarte Piet), the companion of St Nicholas and a character traditionally portrayed with a completely blackened face. Piet’s colour has become part of an international reassessment of racist stereotypes and discrimination. While some Dutch towns and cities have adapted the tradition of St Nicholas’ arrival in response to the public debate, the Frisian town of Grou has gone a step further and come up with a completely new character.

The people of Grou traditionally do not celebrate St Nicholas, but instead celebrate the name day of St Peter, around 21 February. It was not until 1903 that a St Peter character, based on St Nicholas, was introduced at this

centuries-old spring festival, together with a helper: Swarte Pyt (Black Pete). An interesting point to note is that this innovation was thought up by a kindergarten teacher from Brabant. Prompted in part by demonstrations by the Kick out Zwarte Piet action group, the organising committee held discussions with the residents of Grou and the municipality of Leeuwarden. These culminated in Swarte Pyt being replaced by Aldemar in 2020. This brand-new helper is a cross between a nature lover and a rather scruffy gentleman from the nineteenth century. A light-hearted campaign was used to help Aldemar quickly become ‘integrated’ in Grou.

Bee-friendly verge management

Bees are essential for pollination. Over the course of the last century, due to the scaling-up of agriculture and horticulture, bee colonies were in great demand. Whereas, in the past, bees had mainly been kept by farm-

ers and amateur beekeepers, commercial ‘pollination beekeepers’ now appeared on the scene. Other commercial beekeepers focused on large-scale honey production. Bee colonies that had to feed for long periods of time on the nectar from a single type of plant, became malnourished. To help strengthen them, they were moved to nature reserves on a massive scale to allow them to search for food. As a result, wild bee species and other pollinators had less food and came under threat. Fortunately, nowadays various beekeepers focus on bee-friendly verge management and the planting of flowers.

Jet Bakels is a researcher at the Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage. This article is a public version of an essay on changing heritage and sustainability written for The 2021-2024 Research Agenda, the Dutch Centre’s scientific agenda.

CUSTOMISATION: HOW DOES THE DUTCH CENTRE HELP?

The seven examples in this article highlight the adaptability of intangible cultural heritage. New generations add contemporary elements to ensure their tradition keeps up with the times, i.e. *their time*. How does the Dutch Centre help communities deal with change? How do we encourage ‘adaptability’?

The first step involves identifying changes and making them visible. At the Dutch Centre we aim to provide an insight into the environment within which we and our heritage exist. By shining a light on developments from different perspectives, we bring nuance to the debate. This calls for research and customised approaches. One example that highlights how we identify changes and make them visible is our publication [Erfgoed in Beweging. Immaterieel erfgoed rondom vuur](#) (Heritage in motion. Intangible heritage around fire). In

this we demonstrate how the different traditions in the Netherlands are dealing with tighter fire regulations. Communities that work with fire will also find advice, tips and inspiring examples.

Another way in which we help communities deal with change is by encouraging debate on relevant issues. A useful tool here is the [Choice Compass](#), which we developed following the Finnish model. Taking eight themes, with questions and points for discussion, as a basis, groups of two

or more people can enter into discussion about their heritage and any areas of ‘friction’ within it. Another good example is the exhibition [Dier, Mens & Traditie](#) (Animal, Human & Tradition), which the Dutch Centre developed together with the Natural History Museum in Rotterdam. This gave heritage communities a platform to present their traditions involving animals to a wide audience. At the same time, they reflected on their own accepted truths and visitors had the chance to discuss them.

10 YEARS OF PUTTING INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE IN THE SPOTLIGHT

I see ICH ...

A beautiful church or an eye-catching monument is there for people to see all year round. A parade or procession, on the other hand, can often only be experienced once a year. Familiarity breeds popularity. How can you raise awareness of intangible cultural heritage? This is how we have been putting ICH in the spotlight for the past 10 years.



Is this ICH too?!

Do you know how many forms of intangible cultural heritage you participate in? If you don't, you're not alone. In 2019 we therefore launched our social media campaign #ditook?! (#thistoo?!), which we use to present engaging film clips and recognisable examples of ICH. Our aim is to make people aware that some of the things they do in their day-to-day lives are forms of intangible cultural heritage. And, above all, to make them aware that this heritage is important.



Spot ICH yourself!

Anyone who visits a region, village or city will want to experience the local highlights. Thanks to signs featuring a QR code, you can now 'spot' intangible cultural heritage right across the Netherlands. Through film clips and photos, you can



experience the St Martin's Day celebrations in Utrecht or the blowing of the midwinter horn in Gelderland, for example, all year round.

Take a look at [all the heritage communities who are already participating in this initiative.](#)



Blowing out candles ... HUH?



But Grandad, traditions are just for old people, aren't they? Our colourful comic strip [Immaterieel erfgoed. HUH?](#) (Intangible cultural heritage. HUH?) helps you explain to young people in an engaging way what intangible cultural heritage is.



Jitters on the ice



Another useful tool for education: the animation [Wat is immaterieel erfgoed?](#) (What is intangible cultural heritage?) explains exactly what intangible cultural heritage is in just 1 minute. And that it can give you a warm feeling.



From Summer Carnival to the New Year's Day swim

Intangible cultural heritage: what is it, who takes part in it and why is it important? In this [cool magazine](#) we present intangible cultural heritage to the general public and policymakers.



What do you know about ICH?

Curiosities, old crafts... sometimes policymakers have preconceptions about intangible cultural heritage and the Inventory. This booklet debunks them in a light-hearted way. [Test your own knowledge of ICH!](#)



New convention, new magazine

A new policy area deserves a new magazine. Between [2012 and 2016](#) we published [Immaterieel Erfgoed](#) (Intangible Cultural Heritage) [four times a year](#), a publication packed with information about communities, the latest developments and policy.

Inspiration for museums

As a museum (= tangible cultural heritage), how do you create a link to intangible cultural heritage? The [special edition of the magazine Museumpeil on the subject of Intangible Cultural Heritage and Museums](#) provides plenty of inspiration.



Watch a film!

In 2017 the Amsterdam Film Foundation made our first film for the international nomination of the Craft of the Miller. You can now find many more on our [YouTube channel](#), including films about Staphorst dotwork, Kopro Beki and midwinter horn blowing.



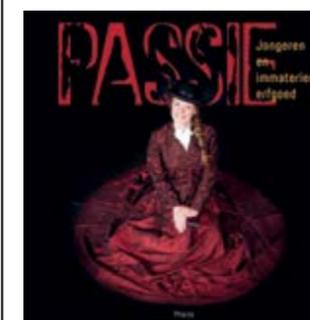
WATCH ALL THE MOVIES ON OUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL!



Distil your own genever?

Want to paint your own pottery, make your own parchment or distil your own genever? Documentary maker Wendy van Wilgenburg works with us to create ['how to'](#) videos that capture the skills of experts.

Book corner



In the past years we published various books. Like this one, about young people with a passion for intangible cultural heritage.



My ICH ...
... brings people
together

'THE REACTION OF THAT BLIND GIRL GAVE ME GOOSE BUMPS'



How do you make a visit to the circus a first-rate experience for people who are blind and visually impaired? Arlette Hanson is putting her heart and soul into making this happen - with great success. 'One blind woman said at the end of the performance: 'Now I understand what I've been missing all these years.'



ICH-ID

WHO: Arlette Hanson

ROLE: Director of Wintercircus Hanson, founder of the Komt het Zien! Foundation, Circuspunt committee member

PARTICIPATION: 'Five types'

ICH-MOMENT: 'A blind girl who said at the end of the show: 'Mum, I want to be a circus director!''

FAVOURITE ICH: 'Circus'

Arlette, how important is inclusivity for your heritage? 'In the circus we really want everyone to enjoy themselves. That's why the circus world has always made an effort to make sure everyone can come along to a circus performance. In addition to performances for disabled people, the elderly and deaf people, there are also circuses that put on special sensory-friendly performances for people and children with hypersensitivity.'

Inclusivity and the circus really do go hand in hand then?

'Yes, diversity and inclusivity are normal in the circus. Naturally, I think it's great that these issues are now being given special attention in society and are on the agenda, but it should really be normal that we think about everyone. It has to come from the heart.'

At your circus you make sure that people who are blind and visually impaired also have a fantastic time. How did this come about?

'Years ago, a teacher from a school for the blind called me to ask whether she could bring her class to the show. I thought it was a great idea, but worried that I didn't have much to offer the children. After all, the circus is a very visual thing. I decided to dive into this topic and it opened up a new world for me. In 2014 I set up the Komt het Zien! Foundation and introduced live audio description in the Netherlands.'

How does that work?

'During a performance an audio describer explains what is happening live. If you are blind or visually impaired, you hear this via an earpiece. You will already have been given information about the performance in advance. And you can also feel all kinds of materials and objects from the show at the 'touch station.'

Do you get good reactions to the audio describers?

'Fantastic. As the circus director I was involved in the finale, wearing a kind of fairytale dress with sparkles and tulle. At the end of the show a blind girl came up to me and said 'When I grow up I want to be a circus director so I can wear such a pretty dress too!' She stroked her hand over the satin and shiny stones. It gave me goose bumps.'

'IT SHOULD REALLY BE NORMAL THAT WE THINK ABOUT EVERYONE'

That's why you do it!

'Yes. I once spoke to a woman with a severe visual impairment who loved the circus. She always went to the Christmas circus with her husband. After our winter circus, she said: 'Now I understand what I've been missing all these years. It's only now that I know what the circus really is.' Simply laughing at something at the same time as the rest of the audience is very special for most people.'

Do you have further plans to increase inclusivity in the future?

'Yes, I am currently developing Komt het Zien! further. We are the only ones in the Netherlands who offer this kind of audio description. The great thing is that our services are now very much in demand for other performances too, in theatres for example. And even for a flower parade.' ✕

3 X INCLUSIVITY: THIS ICH ALSO INCLUDES EVERYONE

Apart from the circus, other examples of intangible cultural heritage are also focusing increasingly on inclusivity.

- At the 2022 Sint Jans klooster Flower Parade a stand for blind people was set up for the first time with a live audio description.
- In the past, the Rijssen Wooden Village and Lichtenvoorde Flower Parade have actively involved asylum seekers in their heritage.
- The Eight of Chaam cycling event consulted with the local organisation for people with a disability. Now it has been made accessible for people in a wheelchair, disabled toilets are available and it is possible to park nearby.

10 YEARS OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

What do you do if your procession risks turning into a commercial festival run by managers? How do you get more young people interested in your tradition – and what do they themselves consider *their* cultural heritage? These questions and others have been the subject of research by the Dutch Centre's Research & Development team. A discussion focusing on the highlights from 10 years of research.

FROM **slow** tourism **TO** gaming

WE STILL TALK TOO MUCH ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE RATHER THAN WITH THEM

The Dutch Centre started carrying out research in 2013. 'From the outset, our research was based on talking to heritage communities: what challenges and issues do they face? That's where we focus our research.' These are the words of Sophie Elpers, a former researcher within the Dutch Centre's Research & Development team and now a researcher in ethnology at the Meertens Instituut in Amsterdam and a professor of intangible cultural heritage and ethnology at the University of Antwerp.

Blocked

These conversations revealed, for example, that some heritage was being placed under pressure – often unintentionally – as a result of municipal planning policy. 'A historic procession route that is blocked by a new road. A parade that loses its float-building sites as a result of new construction. A windmill that will no longer catch the wind due to planned high-rise buildings. These are all examples of how the planning policy of municipalities can have a negative impact on the survival of intangible cultural heritage', says Sophie. In 2020 the results of the research were incorporated into two brochures packed with tips for municipalities (see also page 60). Sophie: 'In this way we increase awareness amongst civil servants and highlight ways in which they can positively support intangible cultural heritage in their municipality, for example by taking advantage of the possibilities available under the new Environment Act.' Researcher Susanne Bergwerff-Verburg says that it is great

WHAT KIND OF RESEARCH DOES THE DUTCH CENTRE CARRY OUT?

One of the Dutch Centre's core activities is conducting research. The main goal of all our research is to support the process of passing on intangible cultural heritage to future generations. To realise this goal, we undertake two different types of research: applied research, which has direct value for the communities, and more abstract, analytical research, which is important in academic circles.

Our research is always participative: we involve heritage communities through interviews, surveys, sounding-board groups or co-creation, for example. Internationally, such an approach is known as 'participatory research'. In this way, we are working on the basis of the Unesco Convention, which attaches importance to involving groups, communities and individuals in all aspects of safeguarding, and therefore also in research.

Want to read more?

[2017-2020 Research Agenda](#)
[Results of 2017-2020 Research Agenda](#)
[2021-2024 Research Agenda](#)





Slow tourism

In recent years, the head of the Research & Development team, Albert van der Zeijden (see page 52), carried out research on topics including the relationship between tourism and intangible cultural heritage. How do you stop your intangible cultural heritage becoming a gimmick for tourists? On the other hand, how can you as a practitioner benefit from tourism? 'Within this line of research Albert focused in particular on how intangible cultural heritage can respond to the demand for sustainable or slow tourism', explains Susanne. 'Intangible cultural heritage has a lot to offer tourists when it comes to experiences. A student from Saxion University of Applied Sciences, for example, developed a route that takes in Easter traditions in Overijssel. The traditions were also linked to local catering outlets, which also gives an economic boost to the region. These are interesting ideas for the future of intangible cultural heritage, combined with a more sustainable form of tourism.'

Superdiversity

Another study in which Albert was closely involved was that focusing on superdiversity: how do you safeguard intangible cultural heritage in a superdiverse environment, such as West-Kruiskade in Rotterdam? Researcher Mark Schep: 'One of the answers is to identify the networks within which a community finds itself. Within these networks cultural brokers, such as Stadslab RAUM in Utrecht, can play a powerful role. They can facilitate festivities linked to people with a migration background, allowing people to come into contact with other people's cultures. In Utrecht, local residents celebrated Divali with Hindustani expats, for example.'

Gaming and inline skating

The future of intangible cultural heritage is sometimes closer than you think. Old traditions quickly spring to mind when we think about these things, but new examples of intangible cultural heritage are being created right under our nose. Take gaming or inline skating, for example. The research carried out on youth cultures considered how young people experience and safeguard their cultural expressions. What motivates them to get involved in a group and what challenges do they come up against? Susanne: 'Many young people are really passionate about what they do, but they often encounter prejudices. Take the example of gamers. Everyone immediately thinks of antisocial computer game addicts. But gamers are not antisocial at all. They come together to form groups – which they refer to themselves as clans – and they communicate a lot, using new digital methods.' One major challenge facing intangible cultural heritage

is: how do we reach young people? This question was also covered during the research. 'We really need to change the way we think about working with young people', explains Susanne. 'People still talk too much *about* young people rather than *with* them. If you consciously take young people's ideas into account and also make them personally responsible for putting them into practice, you bind them to your heritage. Look at scouting, for instance. Young scouts are put in charge of a group and teach things to each other.' The insights gained from the research into young people were incorporated into a practical section on working together with young people in the brochure for heritage communities 'Houd je immaterieel erfgoed springlevend' ('Keep your intangible cultural heritage alive').

Controversial heritage

The future of traditions can also come under pressure due to changing insights and debates within society. Take the calls from ophthalmologists to ban the sale of fireworks to consumers or from animal welfare organisations to ban the use of animals, for example, or think about the people who are raising the issue of emissions from fires. Which examples of heritage are in the firing line and how should you deal with this? Researcher Jet Bakels: 'We noticed pretty quickly that the name we had given to our line of research, 'controversial intangible cultural heritage', was not going down well. It's not a term that people want to be associated with. For that reason we started calling it 'heritage in flux'. Encouraging dialogue was an important starting point: how do you enter into dialogue and how do you adapt to change?' The results of the research included a Choice Compass, which is designed to promote discussion between practitioners or with other stakeholders. Jet: 'A striking aspect of this research was the creativity that practitioners showed in dealing with criticism from the outside world. This is something other communities could learn from.' (See also the article by Jet Bakels on page 40.)

Changes within society

Which topics are high on the research agenda over the coming years? Susanne: 'We will be studying the two major social topics that are relevant right now in relation to intangible cultural heritage: diversity and sustainability. Dutch society is becoming increasingly diverse. And young people are attaching themselves less and less to one specific group. These developments present both challenges and opportunities for intangible cultural

to see that the brochures have now been downloaded many times. 'People from the traveller community, for example, told us that they used them in discussions with the municipality about the location of their caravans.' The brochures are also distributed as standard to participants in the *Erfgoed, een kennismaking* (Heritage, an introduction) course offered by the Erfgoed Academie (Heritage Academy), which is intended for employees of municipal and provincial authorities. Susanne: 'Our research therefore contributes directly to the safeguarding of heritage.'

Incorporating emotions into museums

A lot of intangible cultural heritage is not only linked to the world around us, but also to museological objects. What opportunities are there in the area of intangible cultural heritage and museums? The Dutch Centre has also carried out research on this theme. Sophie: 'We can see a whole host of opportunities for museums. By adopting a participatory approach when working with practitioners of intangible heritage, they can incorporate more personal stories and emotions into their museum presentations. At the same time, visibility at a museum gives practitioners a chance to find new practitioners and encourage dialogue.' (See also page 70.)

'WE ARE KEEN TO SHARE THE GOOD EXAMPLES FROM HERITAGE COMMUNITIES WITH OTHER PARTIES'

heritage. How do you involve new generations and new target groups in your intangible cultural heritage to ensure it survives into the future? How do you move with the times, for example when it comes to gender and inclusion? Is it time to allow women into the 'jonkheden', groups traditionally reserved for unmarried men? What can the Dutch Centre do to help safeguard more heritage from migrant communities and more young people's heritage? We will be looking for answers to these and other questions.'

Sustainable Pride

Over the coming years Jet's research will focus on sustainability. 'Biodiversity is declining rapidly and the climate is changing. Intangible cultural heritage communities hold all kinds of keys that could open the door to a sustainable future and deserve the attention of policymakers and the wider public. Take the technique of traditional grassland irrigation, the knowledge that beekeepers have about bees or the skill of hedge layers,

for example. Then there are the river anglers who are increasing the chances of eels mating. Using good examples, we want to demonstrate how intangible cultural heritage can help us make our society more sustainable.' Another important question is how heritage communities can make their own heritage more sustainable, to ensure it lives on in the future. Jet: 'To inspire other communities, we are collecting examples of good practice from communities that organise their event as sustainably as possible. Take Pride Amsterdam, for example, which has worked hard to come up with alternatives in the areas of waste, advertising, decoration and catering.'

Other planned research relates to methods of assessment and has more of an 'internal' focus. 'Ten years on, it's important to determine the practical effect that the Inventory is having: what impact has inscription had for communities?', explains Sophie. 'This will enable us to make improvements in the future, where these are needed.' ✕

A network of EXPERTS

Research

The Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage is by no means the only organisation that has conducted research into intangible cultural heritage over the past 10 years. Increasing attention is being paid to research in this area. Who else is carrying out research in the Netherlands and Caribbean? Here is a brief overview of our network of experts.

Meertens Instituut
The Meertens Instituut focuses on language and culture in everyday life in the Netherlands. Like the Dutch Centre, it is involved in the international Odeuropa research project. This project is examining the role of smell in culture in the past and in the area of intangible cultural heritage.

Sciences are carrying out research into what tourism means for intangible cultural heritage. In collaboration with the Dutch Centre, the University of Utrecht has created a Research Fellowship in Intangible Heritage Studies. Together, we are also setting up the Heritage and Public History Lab (epglab.sites.uu.nl), which will include intangible cultural heritage as one of the four core subject areas.

LKCA
The Dutch National Centre of Expertise for Cultural Education and Amateur Arts (LKCA) works to promote cultural and creative development for all. Together with the Dutch Centre, it regularly organises meetings of experts, for example on the subject of young people and (intangible) cultural heritage in 2019 and 2023.

Universities in the Caribbean
The University of Curaçao has organised courses on intangible cultural heritage, safeguarding and intangible cultural heritage management within its Cultural Studies programme. 'Traveling Caribbean Heritage' is a kingdom-wide research project that is focusing on migration between the Netherlands and Curaçao, Aruba and Bonaire as well as (intangible) cultural heritage and its influence on identity. The University of Sint Maarten has set up a kingdom-wide research project 'Island(er)s at the Helm' in collaboration with the Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies (KITLV) and the University of the Virgin Islands. This project combines traditional and contemporary knowledge from intangible cultural heritage as part of the co-creation of sustainable and inclusive strategies for social adaptations necessitated by climate change.

Boekman Foundation
The Boekman Foundation is an independent centre of expertise focusing on art, culture and policy. It gathers, analyses and disseminates information and knowledge through debates, lectures and the publication of a journal. The foundation also carries out the Culture Monitor, of which intangible cultural heritage forms part.

Universities and universities of applied sciences
Various universities and universities of applied sciences work together with heritage communities and the Dutch Centre in their academic research. Wageningen University & Research and the University of Groningen are researching the positive impact on the soil of traditional grassland irrigation. InHolland University of Applied Sciences and Saxion and Zuyd Universities of Applied

Quantitative research
In 2019 the Netherlands Institute for Social Research (SCP) published *Denkend aan Nederland* (Thinking of the Netherlands), which incorporated research into the Dutch identity, centred around the Dutch language, symbols and traditions. ✕

IN MEMORY OF ALBERT VAN DER ZEIJDEN



Dr Albert van der Zeijden (1957-2021) was as a historian involved in the field of intangible cultural heritage and folk culture for almost 35 years. In recent years Albert worked as head of the Research & Development team at the Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage. Previously, he had been employed as a researcher at the predecessor organisations NCV and VIE.

Thanks to his passion for intangible cultural heritage, Albert was always identifying new possibilities for collaboration, enabling him to build up an extensive national and international network. Under his enthusiastic leadership the Dutch Centre's first research programme, the *2017-2020 Research Agenda*, was developed, within which he focused on research into sustainable tourism and intangible cultural heritage.

Albert put a number of high-profile themes on the international research map. His research into superdiversity on Rotterdam's West-Kruiskade, a street where many different cultures live alongside and influence each other, drew international acclaim. In addition, he made a major contribution to the inter-

national research and debate on the role of the cultural broker.

By publishing studies and essays, Albert contributed to the visibility of intangible cultural heritage within the national and international academic community. He also worked for almost twenty years as a member of the editorial team of the Flemish-Dutch academic journal *Volkskunde* and from 2013 was an editor of the international online journal *#HeritageAlive*, which is linked to the ICH-NGO Forum.

Albert's contribution to the Dutch Centre's development was invaluable. The same can also be said of his work for Unesco's international ICH-NGO Forum, within which he coordinated the Research working group and represented the Dutch Centre.

My ICH ...
... connects
people

‘INFORMAL CARE? WE’VE ALREADY BEEN DOING THAT FOR CENTURIES!’



Travellers refer to non-travellers as ‘citizens’. Their culture is characterised by a close-knit community in which people look after each other. Piet van Assendorp: ‘We are astonished at how you treat your grandmothers and grandfathers.’



ICH-ID

WHO: Piet van Assendorp

ROLE: Chairperson of the Society for the Preservation of Traveller Culture in the Netherlands

PARTICIPATION: ‘40 types’

ICH-MOMENT: ‘When the certificate was signed in 2014 the director of the Dutch Centre said, ‘If only the whole of the Netherlands was a traveller site.’ That left a deep impression on me.’

FAVOURITE ICH: ‘Traveller culture. Visit our Facebook page or the *Samen op reis (Travelling together)* festival. There we talk about our history and explain our traditions to the citizens population.’

Piet, how important is a sense of connection for your heritage? ‘Connectivity in fact lies at the heart of our culture. In the past, when we were still travelling, your family was the only constant in your life. This made it the most important thing. For us, everything revolves around the strong bond we have with one another, and the family bond in particular. It happens automatically, you grow up with this mindset.’

Where do you see this sense of connection?

‘People talk today about ‘informal care’. We’ve already been doing that for centuries. On the traveller sites, whole families live together and look after each other when necessary. Each family is in its own mobile home, but we’re close to each other and there’s no doorbell. Grandads, grannies, great grandparents, nephews, nieces, grandchildren: we help each other to continue living at home for as long as possible. A person only moves into a nursing home when this is absolutely necessary, from a medical point of view.’

So looking after your parents well is genuinely part of your heritage?

‘Yes, indeed. It’s part of our culture, part of who we are. And, it’s also something we’re proud of. When we look at how ‘citizens’, as we call non-travellers, treat their grandmothers and grandfathers, we’re astonished. There’s still so much you can learn from old people and so much love they can give you.’

What role do women play in passing on your culture?

‘It’s our custom that when a man marries, he goes to live on the site where his wife’s family live. The woman is the boss in the mobile home, in fact, while the man provides the money. Nevertheless, it’s becoming more and more common these days for women to work too. In this case, the grandparents look after their grandchildren. Through the stories they tell, they automatically bring the children up with the values of our traveller culture.’

And what happens if a traveller marries a ‘citizen’?

‘Often it takes a bit of getting used to for a non-traveller. The lack of privacy, in particular, can be difficult. But it’s also a good thing always to have help at hand and love around you. Loneliness is not some-

‘AROUND HERE NOBODY WOULD LIE DEAD UNNOTICED FOR 2 YEARS. NOT EVEN 10 MINUTES WOULD GO BY!’

thing we know about. Around here nobody would lie dead in their mobile home unnoticed for two years. Not even ten minutes would go by!’

How do you see the future? Is your sense of connection becoming diluted in these individualistic times?

‘No, our sense of connectivity continues to be very important. We’re also seeing some changes, of course. It’s become more common in recent times for our children to continue their studies, for example. This is mainly down to the government policy that no longer permits us to travel. I’m not scared that our customs will change because of it, though. We still form a close-knit community in which people look after each other.’ ✕

3 X CONNECTION: THIS ICH ALSO CONNECTS GENERATIONS

Traveller culture is not the only example of intangible cultural heritage that connects people.

- Village festivals, such as the one in Goor (Overijssel), and parades often organise activities for all age groups, from school-children to the elderly.
- The rites of passage of people of Surinamese descent ensure a strong sense of connection.
- Hanukkah is a Jewish festival that connects people and is celebrated in different cities together with passers-by.





STUDENTS HELP COMMUNITIES
THROUGH RESEARCH

A fresh look at cheese carrying and hedge laying



RESEARCH FOR THE ALKMAAR CHEESE CARRIERS' GUILD

This is how you deal with 'pressure' from the municipality

The city of Alkmaar is synonymous with cheese. As a community with its own intangible cultural heritage, how do you handle the tension between tourism and that heritage?

In his dissertation *Een traditie om door te geven (A Tradition to Pass On)* Jeffrey van Gelder identifies all the stakeholders involved in Alkmaar's heritage and provides an overview of the success and risk factors. 'It offers an excellent overview and we have certainly gained something from it', says Engel Hopman, secretary of the Alkmaar Cheese Carriers' Guild committee and foreman of one of the four groups of cheese carriers.

Insight from outside
Engel considers the clear emphasis the dissertation places on the unique value of their heritage to be even more important to his community. 'For us, it's nothing out of the ordinary. We enjoy doing it and believe it's important to practise our tradition and pass it on, but it's definitely intangible cultural heritage. We're carrying it on our shoulders. If we stop, it will disappear. Sometimes it takes an outsider looking in for you to see that you are doing something special.'

More tourists
The research also highlights the tension between heritage and tourism. This is something Engel can identify with. 'If the municipality had asked us to hold a cheese market more often to cater for more tourists, I would have been inclined to go along with that. But now we think: hang on a moment! We are heritage, not a tourist

COURSE: Tourism Management at InHolland University of Applied Sciences
DISSERTATION: Jeffrey van Gelder (2017) *Een traditie om door te geven (A Tradition to Pass On)*.
REACTION: Engel Hopman, secretary of the Alkmaar Cheese Carriers' Guild committee

DR ALBERT VAN DER ZEIJDEN DISSERTATION PRIZE

The Dutch Centre encourages (and sometimes also oversees) research into intangible cultural heritage by students. From 2022, in memory of Dr Albert van der Zeijden, the Dutch Centre will be awarding a prize of EUR 1,000 and a unique ICH trophy for outstanding dissertations. This prize will go to research that is academically relevant and valuable in terms of keeping intangible cultural heritage alive.

Research into intangible cultural heritage really is pioneering work. There is still a great deal of practical research that needs to be carried out within this young discipline. Here are two examples of students who took up the challenge. What fresh insights has their research provided for the communities involved?



a Unesco Biosphere Reserve. This area with its Meuse-style hedging is the only site in the Netherlands to have this status.’
In addition, the municipality subsidises the *Meuse Hedges Ambassador* course, which is organised for people who run businesses such as campsites and bed and breakfasts in the area, he explains. It also encourages new hedge planting. ‘We still get requests from municipalities in the region to plant hedges that will be suitable for laying.’

Hard work
Winning the inaugural national Heritage Volunteers Prize of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science in 2020 has certainly also raised the profile of hedge laying, suspects Marius. ‘We are getting more and more successful at attracting young people and are focusing on those aged around 17 or above. It’s hard work and you have to be able to cope with that.’ Marius already has a subject in mind for follow-up research: ‘How do you keep hold of young hedge layers? Continuity is very important for our heritage.’ ✕

‘IT’S HARD WORK AND YOU HAVE TO BE ABLE TO COPE WITH THAT’

HEDGES AS A SAFE HAVEN
The ancient landscape of East Brabant with its Meuse-style hedging is unique in western Europe. The Meuse hedges form a special ecosystem and are a safe haven for – in some cases rare – plants, insects, birds and small mammals. In days gone by, the dense, prickly hawthorn hedges were laid to separate livestock. Nowadays, the hedges are valued primarily for the fact that they contribute towards biodiversity and an attractive landscape.



attraction. We want to move with the times and develop our tradition, but it has to come from us, the cheese carriers.’

The solution that Jeffrey proposes is to look for a compromise or alternative. Engel: ‘And that’s what we’ve done, in fact. The municipality wanted to hold another cheese market in the evening, in addition to the Friday daytime cheese market.’ It was too much on a Friday evening, too much to do in one day, he explains, but they found a good compromise. ‘Now we put on an extra market on Tuesday evenings in July and August, on a voluntary basis. After all, the municipality needs us and we need the municipality.’

Cheese barrows
He also has ideas for further research: ‘The cheese market lasts from 10 a.m. to 12.45 p.m. and there’s a fixed routine, with a bell that is rung, the inspectors who inspect the cheese, and the traders. This is all over by around 11 a.m. Tourists who arrive at 11.30 a.m. or so only see the running with the cheese barrows at the end. How can you make it interesting for those tourists?’

‘HANG ON A MOMENT! WE ARE HERITAGE, NOT A TOURIST ATTRACTION’

ALMOST 700 YEARS OF CHEESE IN ALKMAAR
The cheese carriers at the Alkmaar cheese market are known throughout the world. Everyone is familiar with their colourful straw hats, white clothes and the wooden barrows they carry the cheese on. There have been cheese weighing scales in Alkmaar since as early as 1365 and the city laid down the rights and obligations of the cheese carriers in 1593. Nowadays, the market is a popular tourist attraction, with the cheese carriers playing the lead role.

RESEARCH FOR THE BOXMEER MEUSE-STYLE HEDGE LAYERS

This is how you recruit young hedge layers

Hedge laying is hard work and you do it voluntarily. So how do you attract young hedge layers? Fun fact: the young researcher herself became an enthusiastic hedge layer.

COURSE: Cultural Heritage at Reinwardt Academy
DISSERTATION: Ilse Zuidinga (2020) *Naar een nieuwe generatie Heggenvlechters (Towards a new generation of hedge layers)*
REACTION: Marius Grutters, committee member of the Boxmeer Landscape Management Foundation

In her dissertation *Naar een nieuwe generatie Heggenvlechters (Towards a new generation of hedge layers)* Ilse Zuidinga interviews young people about what motivates them to participate in Meuse-style hedge laying. She found that the main reasons were the social side and the challenge of the Championship.

‘We are happy with her research’, declares Marius Grutters, committee member of the Boxmeer Landscape Management Foundation and a core team member of the Dutch Meuse Hedge Laying Championship.

Incentive prize
The subject of the dissertation was not something that came out of the blue. ‘We had also been taking active steps to attract young people. For example, we have a number of very enthusiastic youth groups, including students from Wageningen and Nijmegen. Ilse has suggested some other valuable ways of attracting young people. We are currently thinking about a prize that we can award to young people as an incentive, for example, and are looking at dividing the Championship into different age groups or categories depending on your level.’

New planting
Another recommendation from Ilse’s research is to increase the visibility of Meuse hedging in the area so that it becomes part of the local identity. Marius: ‘This recommendation links in with something that Boxmeer has already been working on for a number of years. In 2019, the municipality successfully applied to become

5 X TIPS FOR AND FROM MUNICIPALITIES

Who is actually the expert here?

Me?

She?

You?

We!



How do you ensure intangible cultural heritage flourishes in your municipality? How do you come up with smart policy to enable this? Here are five excellent examples of municipalities that have taken up the challenge in earnest, plus tips from Mark Schep, researcher at the Dutch Centre.

From fairs to processions, Diwali to Chinese New Year, intangible cultural heritage brings people together regardless of their age, gives people a sense of identity, demonstrates cultural diversity and attracts tourists. It is not surprising then that an increasing number of municipalities have discovered the power of intangible cultural heritage over the past ten years.

1 Don't work from an ivory tower

Schiedam malt wine distillation is an extremely old craft. The local municipality works together closely with the Schiedam Jenever Guild *Het Gulden Glaasje* and the Jenever Museum to keep the craft alive and to promote Schiedam. As part of this a jenever festival is organised each year.

Mark: 'Always involve the people who are practising the intangible cultural heritage. They are the experts, after all, and they are the ones who are keeping the heritage alive in your municipality. Ask how exactly you can support them. Sometimes it's a question of something small, like putting up fences or taking away rubbish. But you can only come up with appropriate policy if you have a clear picture of their needs and the challenges they are facing.'



2 Inventory- together with your residents

Residents of the municipality of Alphen aan den Rijn are able to put forward their heritage themselves and have it 'recognised' in a municipal register. The practitioners themselves decide what is their intangible cultural heritage. Before setting up the register, the municipality first organised an information evening for residents, followed by a brainstorming session.

Mark: 'Before you go ahead and make policy, it's a good idea to inventory what intangible cultural heritage is being practised in your community. Ideally, you should involve your residents in this process too.'



The time for sneering is over

COLUMN RIET DE LEEUW



Sceptical. That was the initial attitude of the Dutch government and a good number of heritage professionals towards the Unesco Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. 'Intangible cultural heritage' was a new idea and concepts such as safeguarding and revitalisation led to misinterpretations.

Was the intention to place living culture under a bell jar? To preserve clog making? And should central government actually have a role in keeping alive what used to be called 'folk culture' and mainly concerned local activities? Furthermore, the culture sector had, and still has, a stubborn tendency to make distinctions between Culture with a capital 'C' and culture with a small 'c'. Folk culture was seen more as something 'from the olden days' rather than anything of real significance.

Now, ten years on from the ratification of the Convention, we have left the sneering stage behind us. The introduction of the Convention, which affords a leading role to 'communities, groups and individuals' as custodians of their heritage practices, signalled a turning point in how heritage was thought about and handled. Working on the Convention demonstrated the power of intangible cultural heritage – of people participating in, being involved in and giving meaning to their heritage. It resulted in innovative ways of keeping heritage alive, as well as respect for the rich diversity of practices. The Convention set the wheels of a process in motion: putting people at the centre is now an approach that is supported

more and more across the whole of the heritage sector and by public authorities. In the Caribbean parts of the Kingdom too, with their vibrant singing and dancing traditions and their knowledge of foods and traditional medicines, the ratification has had a considerable impact.

Ten years of ratification does not mean that politicians, heritage institutions and the press are now familiar with the inspiring text of the Convention. You still don't have to look too hard to find examples of essentialist thinking with notions about 'centuries-old', 'authentic' traditions or about expressions of 'typically Dutch' culture. By contrast, in its definition Unesco avoids the relationship with national identity and only talks about the sense of identity for communities. That means there is certainly still room to increase knowledge of the spirit and aims of the Convention. Awareness within society of the positive impact that intangible cultural heritage can have in relation to current issues, such as cultural diversity and sustainability, could also be improved.

Over the past ten years, the Netherlands has pursued its intangible heritage policy, learning and developing it along the way. Now it's time to draw conclusions: what has worked well and what could be done better? Using

this analysis as a basis, we can decide on an up-to-date policy and link this even more strongly to relevant policy areas, such as education, social inclusion, welfare, the living environment and sustainable development. Working together with new and existing partners is crucial here, such as the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Fishing, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy, research institutions, provincial heritage centres and museums.

There is also another challenge – and a huge opportunity: it is essential that all kinds of groups see themselves represented in the Inventory. After all, the Inventory is not just a list; it is an invitation to a world of intercultural dialogue, multiperspectivity and mutual understanding. Polarised viewpoints surrounding the Sinterklaas festival, for example, demonstrate that such a dialogue is necessary. The atmosphere of violence is not compatible with Unesco's principles of human rights and mutual respect. Engaging in a good conversation therefore remains a necessary step.

It is also high time that a Caribbean practice is nominated internationally. The rich diversity, creativity and commitment of the island communities can then obtain well-deserved representation in a worldwide context. In short: here's to the next 10 years. There are still plenty of challenges ahead! ✘

As Senior Policy Advisor for the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science's Heritage and Arts Department.

3 Seeing is believing

Een schatkist met toekomstwaarde (A treasure chest with future value) is the name of a book about local heritage that the municipality of Neder-Betuwe has put together in collaboration with local residents. They are given a free copy of the book. A beautiful poster has also been produced on which you can see all the area's heritage, tangible and intangible, at a glance.

Mark: 'Heritage practitioners are proud of what they do and are keen to share it with others. Make sure, therefore, that you make your heritage visible. This also increases the chance of communities obtaining a grant or sponsors.'

4 Take it into account in all your policy

'Intangible cultural heritage is at least as important as tangible cultural heritage', says the municipality of Krimpenerwaard in its heritage policy document. The municipality of Steenberg also pays attention to its intangible cultural heritage in its heritage policy document, including salt extraction, peat extraction and prize-dancing in Nieuw-Vossemeer.

Mark: 'Don't just make intangible cultural heritage a permanent part of your heritage policy document; take a look at all your municipal policy: where can you support this heritage in the area of permits, for example, in your environmental plan or your tourism policy document?'

5 Give the mayor a role

When the Voorschoten Horse Days were inscribed on the Inventory, the mayor of Voorschoten was the co-signatory. It was a celebratory moment for all the people involved! ✘

Mark: 'Many communities involve the mayor in their heritage. This means a lot to the practitioners. Get the mayor to open a festive event or craft workshop, hand out a prize or make a speech at an event that is important to the community, for example.'



TWO GUIDES FULL OF INSPIRATION

Would you like more tips on how you as a municipality can create a favourable climate for intangible cultural heritage? If so, you can download these two practical guides produced by the Dutch Centre:

- How can you incorporate intangible cultural heritage smartly into all your municipal policy? In *Beleidsronde immaterieel erfgoed* (Policy relating to intangible cultural heritage) you will find a handy step-by-step plan, a wealth of tips and inspiring examples from other municipalities.
- Markets, crafts in historic premises, parade routes: many forms of intangible cultural heritage are inextricably linked to a place. How can you take intangible cultural heritage into account within the context of the Environment Act that will come into force in 2023? In *Ruimte voor Immaterieel Erfgoed* (Space for Intangible Cultural Heritage) you will find an explanation, tips and examples.



THE DNA

MEMBER OF THE PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE
ROY DE WITTE ON CARING
FOR THE HERITAGE OF OVERIJSSSEL

OF OVERIJSSSEL

Midwinter horn blowing, the Low Saxon regional dialect and the big Roma Fair – the province of Overijssel has many remarkable examples of intangible cultural heritage. And it looks after this heritage well. Member of the Provincial Executive Roy de Witte: ‘It contributes to the quality of life in Overijssel.’



For years he sat on the committee of the local carnival association himself. ‘That’s where I learned how to

run things’, explains Roy de Witte, who since 2019 has been a Member of Overijssel’s Provincial Executive with responsibility for ‘liveable countryside, culture and social quality’. ‘Other members of the Provincial Executive have a similar background’, he laughs. ‘Intangible cultural heritage is therefore essential for a future career in public administration!’

Overijssel

When the Netherlands signed the Unesco Convention ten years ago, the province of Overijssel set to work energetically. Firstly, it identified the wealth of practices that were alive and well in the province. Subsequently, since 2013, it has been actively supporting local people in keeping their regional crafts, festivals, social practices and stories in local dialects alive through its grant scheme *The Story of Overijssel*. The province is now an inspiring role model for other provinces and municipalities. Roy: ‘Overijssel believes it is important that the story of our province is told. Heritage contributes to the quality of life in our province and paves the way for social interaction and cohesion. We also use our intangible cultural heritage and stories for tourism.’ The ‘Story of Overijssel’ is not only expressed through monuments and archaeological excavations, but also through intangible cultural heritage.

Bottom up

The grant scheme has since been updated to *The Story of Overijssel 2.0*, which has also seen a good uptake. In addition, the Overijssel Heritage Platform was launched

last year. This platform supports smaller heritage organisations by providing advice in areas including legislation and regulations. ‘Our policy has developed just as it should – from the bottom up’, Roy emphasises. The province gives communities the space to get involved in conferences and committees, and appear in magazines.’

**‘WE ARE KEEN TO
SHARE OUR TRADITIONS
WITH OUR CHILDREN’**

AGREEMENTS WITH THE DUTCH CENTRE

The province of Overijssel made agreements with the Dutch Centre back in 2014 on active support for Overijssel’s intangible cultural heritage communities. Initially, this support consisted of a voucher for communities who were inscribed on the Inventory or aspiring to secure a place on it. Together with the Dutch Centre they identified the actions that were needed to involve new target groups and generations. Over the years, the focus shifted to providing support through knowledge sharing, in the areas of professionalisation, policy relating to volunteers and marketing, for example. In order to satisfy the numerous requests for assistance being received from communities, in 2022 the province expanded the Dutch Centre’s task.

Agreements on cultural education have also been made with primary and secondary schools. ‘We are keen to share our traditions with our children’, he explains.

Roma Fair

As a member of Overijssel’s Provincial Executive, he sees strong links with another policy area for which he is responsible: social quality. ‘Intangible cultural heritage practices promote social cohesion in communities and between generations. One example is the annual Roma Fair. This is a strong tradition that attracts many other Roma communities. It is not a requirement to register formally for the Inventory, but we are nevertheless having the conversation: how are you going to pass on this wonderful tradition to the next generation?’ Regional dialects are another example. They are part of Overijssel’s intangible cultural heritage, he explains. ‘We now have programmes in the local dialect in nursing homes as a way to combat loneliness.’ He still speaks Low Saxon himself. ‘I also use it to have conversations with farmers, for example.’

‘WHEN IT COMES TO TACKLING THE NITROGEN PROBLEM WE CAN ALSO INVITE LOCAL HISTORY GROUPS TO THE TABLE’

Tackling the nitrogen problem

How does the province deal with traditions that are increasingly becoming the subject of discussion, such as Easter bonfires? ‘Communities know they have to comply with legislation and regulations and need to engage in dialogue in advance of the event. Looking after the area is part of their own heritage management plan. However, they are dependent on volunteers. Sometimes these volunteers have to deal with complicated applications, regulations and permits, matters they have no expertise in. It’s therefore important to provide information, communicate and offer support. This results in mutual respect.’

He sees the significant spatial redevelopment plans that are in the pipeline for the coming years as a major challenge. In his view, the province needs to give greater



‘WE HAVE PROGRAMMES IN THE LOCAL DIALECT IN NURSING HOMES AS A WAY TO COMBAT LONELINESS’

consideration to local stories, traditions and history in these plans. ‘They give meaning to the physical environment we live in. They make up the DNA that we will use to build the future. The central thread running through our environmental vision. When it comes to tackling the nitrogen problem, we can also invite local history groups to the table, for example. As a provincial government, we need to show at all times that intangible cultural heritage matters. Stories bring people together and we must not lose them.’

Vulnerable, smaller communities present another challenge. ‘It’s difficult for them to draw up a complex safeguarding plan with the aim of passing on their knowledge and skills. These communities are reliant on volunteers. That’s something we need to be mindful of.’

Climate change

Roy believes the future is bright for intangible cultural heritage. ‘The policy area of intangible cultural heritage will only become more relevant and topical.’ In some cases intangible cultural heritage can offer a solution for existing problems, such as climate change and declining biodiversity, he explains. ‘Take watermills and drought, for example, or the inspiring example of traditional grassland irrigation in Haaksbergen. This shows that existing traditional systems and knowledge can be extremely relevant. It’s great that the Netherlands is part of the multinational ‘traditional grassland irrigation’ application that was sent to Unesco in March 2022.’

Wish for the future

Does he have a wish for the future? ‘I’ve agreed with the Dutch Centre that we will put intangible cultural heritage on the agenda for an inter-provincial consultation. Friesland, Groningen, Drenthe, Zeeland and Limburg have all now included intangible cultural heritage in their policy plans. It would be wonderful if all twelve provinces agreed on a common mission and funding to support communities and groups in keeping their practices alive.’ ✖



WHAT IS THE ROLE OF HERITAGE CENTRES?

Due to the value of intangible cultural heritage in bringing people together, heritage policymakers focus on this topic at provincial level. The same applies to heritage centres (*erfgoedhuizen*). Increasingly, heritage centres – such as those in South Holland, North Brabant and Gelderland – are opting to provide ‘broad’ support. This means the involvement of people – professionals, volunteers or heritage communities – are the centre of the heritage approach. The distinction between tangible and intangible cultural heritage is slowly disappearing.

My ICH ...
... contributes to
sustainability

'MY MOTTO IS: 'THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS



Traditionally, waste materials, such as rags, were used as the raw material in paper making. Leo Hoegen is restoring this sustainable cycle. Whether it's prunings, grass clippings or waste from yucca plants, he turns it into paper. 'People come to me specifically for birth announcement cards.'



ICH-ID

WHO: Leo Hoegen

ROLE: Handmade paper maker

PARTICIPATION: '40 types'

ICH-MOMENT: 'The Dutch Centre's market at Fort Voordorp where I demonstrated paper making and bookbinding with my son Arthur (+)'

FAVOURITE ICH: 'All crafts'

Leo, how important is sustainability when it comes to traditional paper making?
'As a traditional paper maker I am keen to minimise any impact on the environment and nature. I only use 'waste' as a raw material, although my motto actually is 'There's no such thing as waste'. I use cheap raw materials, such as prunings, grass clippings and sawdust. These are then transformed into something of value. I also don't work with chemicals; that is a conscious choice.'

How does your traditional approach differ from that of a paper factory?

'A paper factory has to leave its machines running day and night. Any change to the raw material costs money, as that means stopping and reprogramming the machines. For me it's much simpler, as I work in smaller runs and can easily switch to other materials. That means I'm able to experiment with new raw materials and techniques.'

Can you give us an example of an experiment with sustainable materials?

'For the Meuse hedge layers in Boxmeer I made paper from the prunings from their hawthorn hedges. They used this paper to make certificates for the winners of the national hedge laying championship. This was a particularly enjoyable job, as their heritage is also on the Inventory and they work in a very sustainable way too. I got to know the hedge layers during an information day organised by the Dutch Centre, where I talked about paper making.'

Working sustainably therefore really is part of your heritage?

'Definitely. Traditionally, waste materials, such as rags or old paper, were used as the raw material in paper making. Commercial forests for paper production only came into being when paper making was industrialised and grew in scale. You don't need them for traditional paper making. The great thing is that there are so many different types of raw material that you can use. I find it really interesting to try them all out. I regularly visit developing countries to advise small paper companies. There I experiment with raw materials such as waste from rice, yucca or abaca plants. This results in a win-win situation: the companies have access to a cheap raw material and I gain new knowledge and experience.'

'I DON'T WORK WITH CHEMICALS; THAT'S CHOICE'

Is your paper well received?

'Yes, people come to me specifically because of the way I work. For example, they ask me to make paper for birth announcement cards or wedding invitations using specific plants or flowers, as they have a particular significance for them. The paper then acquires even more value: it is personal, unique and environmentally responsible. Regular customers even collect my handmade and hand-printed Christmas cards.'

Any plans for the future in the area of sustainability?

'I certainly do. I'm planning to teach people at care farms how to make paper from fruit tree prunings, for example. That way, in the winter, when there's not much to do outside, they'll be able to make paper and cardboard. They can then use this to make bags and boxes for the fruit they sell over the summer. A perfect cycle!' ✕

3 X SUSTAINABLE: THESE EXAMPLES OF ICH ALSO CONTRIBUTE TO A SUSTAINABLE WORLD

Besides paper making, there are many other examples of intangible cultural heritage with a particular focus on biodiversity and sustainability.

- Limburg's syrup makers only use local, untreated fruit - old Limburgian varieties of apples and pears - harvested from standard fruit trees. They heat their pans using wood from fruit trees and wood from their own forests.
- Shepherds often work with old breeds of sheep that have traditionally lived in their area. Thanks to their genetic make-up, these breeds are able to survive on heathland and poor-quality grassland. Their grazing helps to maintain the cultural landscape.
- River anglers are contributing to research into and the recovery of fish stocks. For example, they catch eels swimming near pumping stations and hydroelectric power stations and release them further downstream. This allows the eels to swim to the Sargasso Sea to spawn.



NOTHING BEHIND GLASS

IS IT STILL APPROPRIATE TODAY TO USE LIVE ANIMALS AS PART OF YOUR HERITAGE?

ENCOURAGING DIALOGUE

SWIMMING DOGS X NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM
Dogs that swim impressive distances, Surinamese songbirds that sing in just the right rhythm, decorated horses that gallop through the sea – all wonderful traditions, but is it still appropriate today to use live animals as part of your heritage? The exhibition *Dier, mens & traditie* (Animal, Human & Tradition) gave communities a platform to share their passion with a wide audience through texts and objects. Why are they so enthusiastic about their heritage? What does it involve? And what has changed in recent years? At the same time, visitors were given the chance to discuss issues and dilemmas with each other at a specially designed dialogue table, with animal welfare an underlying theme.
Natural History Museum and Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2021

At one time the approach taken by museums was: 'we choose and you can look - behind glass'. Nowadays, participation and co-creation are very much in vogue. After all, living heritage gives museums the perfect opportunity to connect with society and the things that matter to their visitors. For the heritage itself, cooperating in this way means visibility and the safeguarding of traditions. Here we present a selection of interesting co-creations from recent years.

INVESTIGATING TRADITION

SAYA AND KOTO X IMAGINE IC
On Sundays and public holidays many people in South-East Amsterdam put on their Sunday best. Here you will often see women wearing Caribbean clothing: a saya or koto. These garments have been made with skill and creativity and sometimes they also reveal special family histories. During the participatory project and exhibition *Saya en Koto - lagen van stof en van tijd* (Saya and Koto - layers of fabric and time) Imagine IC and the RCMC/Tropenmuseum, together with wearers of sayas and kotos, as well as people who do not (or do not yet) wear these garments, went in search of their meaning and rituals. What is the importance of tradition and what are the limits when it comes to innovation? The colonial history was also covered during the discussions. How will the koto and saya move forward into the future?
Imagine IC, 2019

INNOVATING WITH CRAFTS

PAPER CUTTING X HOLLAND OPEN AIR MUSEUM
Chair caning, paper cutting, Frisian wood carving – how do you take traditional crafts forward into the future? The Crafts Lab brings craftspeople, vocational education students and designers or artists together at a museum to promote cross-fertilisation. The aim is to come up with innovative ideas together to further develop the craft, including by using the museum collections as a source of inspiration. Many successful labs have already been organised. Want to find out more? Take a look at our *Crafts Lab Handbook*.

Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage, since 2018

INTERNATIONAL LEARNING

PUPPETEERS X ITALIAN PUPPET MUSEUM
It is not just in the Netherlands that museums are working together with practitioners of intangible cultural heritage. This is happening right across Europe. How do you shine the spotlight on living traditions and how do you approach co-creation and participation? During the international Intangible Cultural Heritage and Museums Project more than fifty excellent examples were collected. These included the collaboration between an Italian puppet museum and puppeteers. All the literature, workshops and guidelines, as well as many inspiring examples, including numerous films, www.ichandmuseums.eu/en have been brought together in the form of an online toolkit.
Intangible Cultural Heritage and Museums Project, 2017-2020



LOW BARRIERS HIGH VALUE

WHAT DO YOU
DO IF YOU CAN'T
CELEBRATE
THE BIG PARTY
OF THE YEAR
TOGETHER?

Imagine you come up with a fantastic idea: this is how you're going to keep your heritage alive! This is how you're going to pass it on to the next generation! Unfortunately, everything costs money. Luckily, however, the Cultural Participation Fund (Fonds voor Cultuurparticipatie) is there to help. This organisation supports intangible cultural heritage communities who have a good idea that will promote accessible cultural participation. Here we present a selection of excellent participation projects from recent years.

NO VIOLENCE
- ST CATHERINE'S DAY DANCE PARADE
The International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women is held on the feast day of St Catherine of Alexandria. In Utrecht the St Catherine's Day Dance Parade passes through locations that are linked to the legend of St Catherine. The story of her life and ideas is told in a contemporary way, allowing the figure of St Catherine to acquire meaning in the modern age. The parade brings together residents of different cultures and genders. In this way, drawing on religion, a new, festive ritual has been created for the city.
Catharina Nu Foundation, 2022

SLAVERY PAST - FREE HERI HERI FOR ALL
Heri Heri is a famous Surinamese dish. During the pandemic the whole country was invited to sample this dish to mark Keti Koti, ("broken chains", a gathering commemorating and celebrating the abolishment of slavery). The project 'Free Heri Heri For All' aims to make the commemoration and celebration of Keti Koti inclusive. In this way, everyone who feels Dutch will be able to identify with this day, the heritage and the history.
KIP Republic Foundation, 2020



DO-IT-YOURSELF CARILLON
- CARILLON HANDS
What is a carillon and how do you play this instrument? As part of the 'Carillon hands' project a 'Do-it-yourself carillon' has been developed together with carillonists. Children can assemble the instrument themselves in thirty minutes and then try their hand at playing it. The aim of this project is to bring the carillon and its culture closer to people and in this way increase knowledge about and support for this instrument amongst both children and adults. The association wants to acquire a number of build-it-yourself carillons and loan them out to carillonists and other interested parties.
Royal Netherlands Carillon Association, 2020

BLOWING - MIDWINTER HORN
How do you build a midwinter horn and how do you blow it? The Eibergen Midwinter Horn Group organises two courses for secondary school pupils. Members of at least three midwinter horn groups are also being trained to work with young people within their own association. The group is working together with various midwinter horn groups in the region, local secondary schools and the local music association.
Eibergen Midwinter Horn Group, 2020-2022

MOBILE - ROTTERDAM CHINESE NEW YEAR
What do you do if you can't celebrate the big party of the year together? To allow the Chinese New Year celebrations in Rotterdam to go ahead during the coronavirus pandemic, the celebrations were taken to the people, instead of the other way round. Over a fifteen-day period you could experience a small-scale version of the New Year party somewhere within the Rotterdam region. Organisations, institutions, schools and other small groups were involved and were given the chance to contribute to the transfer of knowledge about Chinese cultural heritage.
China Festivals Rotterdam Foundation, 2021

CULTURAL PARTICIPATION: THE KEY TO INNOVATION

The Cultural Participation Fund supports projects that make culture accessible to all. Accessibility is not only of value to society, but is also the key to innovation within the cultural landscape. The Fund focuses on cultural participation, intangible cultural heritage and cultural education. Since 2012 it has been offering various subsidy schemes with the aim of increasing participation in the practising of (intangible) cultural heritage.

FROM THE BOTTOM UP

Intangible cultural heritage is a living thing and is never complete. That means the Unesco Convention does not want us to folklorise, preserve or musealise this heritage. So what approach should you take? You need to ensure the participation of and co-creation with communities. Working 'from the bottom up' is therefore in the Dutch Centre's DNA. Here are a number of examples of how we go about this.

NETWORK – WHAT IS YOUR ICH?

Would you like to make your performing art, knowledge of nature, oral tradition or artisan technique more visible? Then simply register it with the Intangible Cultural Heritage Network. Working from the bottom up is one of the Dutch Centre's guiding principles. To put it simply, practitioners themselves take the initiative. As a practitioner, you decide for yourself what is intangible cultural heritage (see box).

[Register with the Network](#)

TRAINING

– WRITE YOUR OWN PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

What action can we take to make sure our heritage has a future? During our *Develop a safeguarding plan* training course, heritage communities work on this very question. In three meetings they reflect on their intangible cultural heritage, under the guidance of a heritage safeguarding advisor. What is the most important element? How has it developed? How do you attract volunteers? This intensive period of reflection results in a safeguarding plan: a plan for the future of the intangible cultural heritage, written by practitioners themselves. The heritage is also added to the Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Netherlands.

FILMS – YOU SET THE SCENE

How do you bring dynamic heritage into focus? The result of co-creations between the Amsterdam Film Foundation and various heritage communities shows how this can be done. In almost twenty 10-minute films the emphasis is placed not on the intangible cultural heritage itself, but on the practitioner. Heritage communities also decide for themselves which aspects of their heritage are shown and how. How do they perceive their intangible cultural heritage? Why do they want to pass it on to the next generation?

[Watch the films produced on behalf of the Dutch Centre](#)

SYMPOSIUM – YOUNG AND ENGAGED

In 2015 a small group of young people aged 30 and under launched the Erfgoed Jong! (Young Heritage!) platform. Together with them and other young people, in 2018 the Dutch Centre, the provincial heritage organisations Erfgoed Brabant and Erfgoed Gelderland, and the province of Overijssel organised the international symposium *The Future is Heritage*. The starting point was that this should be an event organised for and by young people. During the symposium young people debated questions such as: to what extent is heritage important to young people? What do young people consider cultural heritage? Erfgoed Jong! has since widened its focus from intangible cultural heritage to heritage in general. [See the report](#) ✕



HOW DO YOU ATTRACT VOLUNTEERS?



WHY DO WE TAKE A PARTICIPATIVE APPROACH?

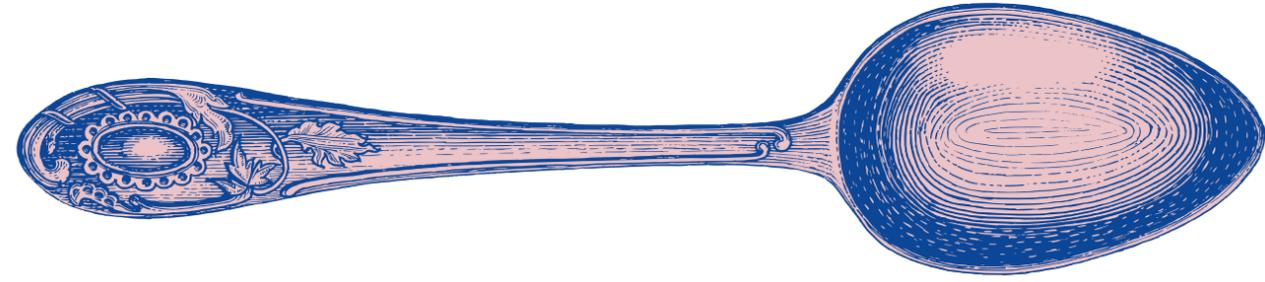
Which examples of intangible cultural heritage are of value is not a decision taken by Unesco, the Dutch Centre, museums, historic building organisations or public authorities, in contrast to what often happens in the area of tangible cultural heritage. People decide this themselves. In this way, intangible cultural heritage stays where it belongs: at the very heart of society. What does this mean for the way the Dutch Centre works?

NETWORK – Without participation from practitioners you cannot create an inventory. That is why everyone in the Netherlands can register their intangible cultural heritage themselves for inclusion in the Intangible Cultural Heritage Network.

INVENTORY – Inscription on the Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Netherlands is not an aim in itself, but a way of safeguarding the heritage. It is therefore a condition of every inscription that the right community is involved. They decide for themselves which heritage they want to inscribe on the inventory and how they want to pass it on. Without them it won't succeed!

NEW WAYS of enthusing the next generation

From mother to daughter, from father to son. At one time an interest in traditions, crafts and customs was kindled at an early age. Nowadays, working out how to pass on valuable knowledge to new generations is a major challenge for communities. In this article we focus on the next generation of millers, committee members and henna artists.



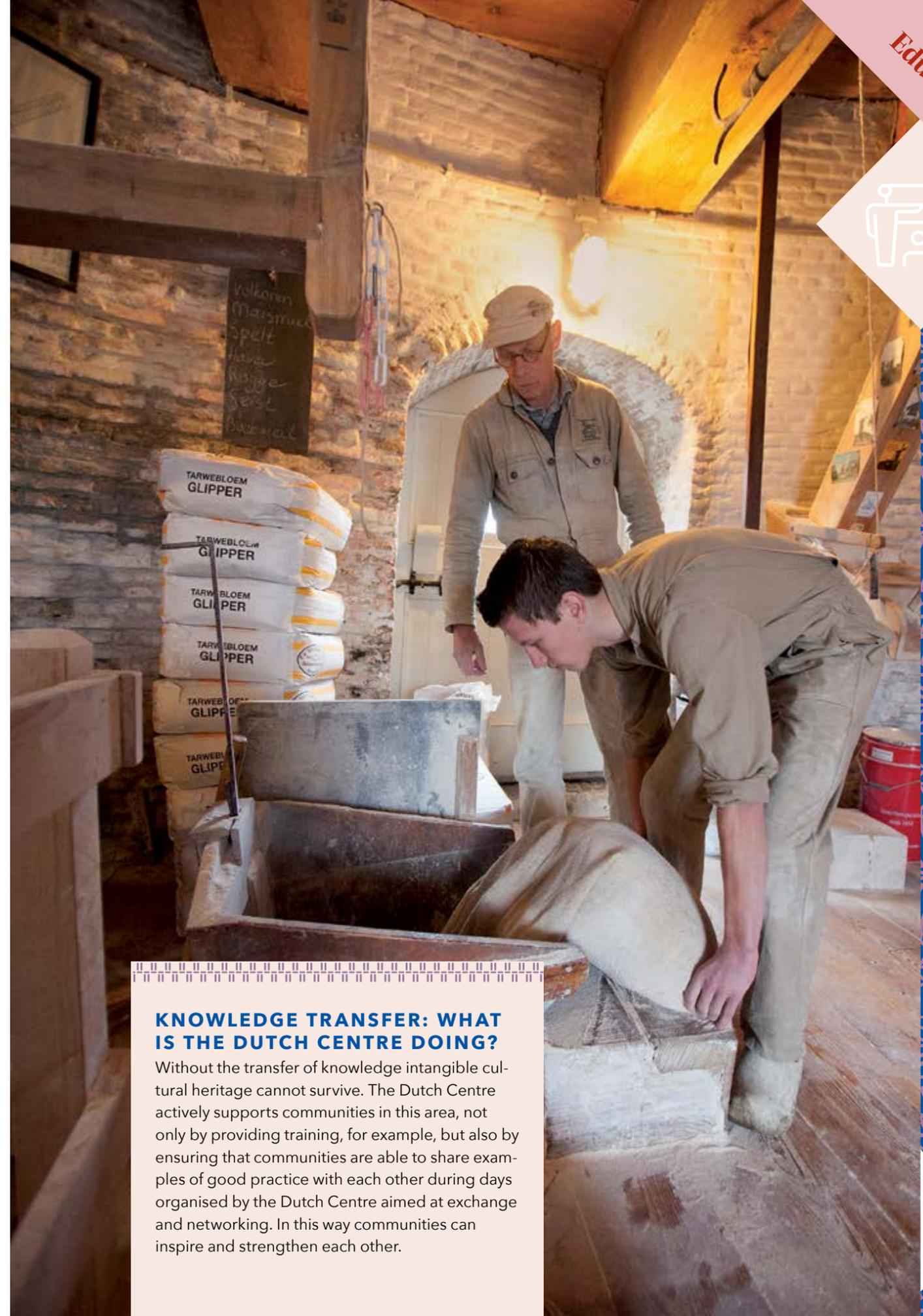
Delfzijl – an ordinary Dutch town. The sails of its windmill stand out clearly against the blue sky, which is peppered with white, fluffy clouds. Turning rhythmically in the wind, the sails cast a shadow on shoppers on Molenberg. The Adam tower mill in Delfzijl is open to the public every Saturday and, since it was purchased by the municipality of Delfzijl in 1954, has been used as a museum mill. Volunteer millers still mill grain here.

Empty mills?
The mill in Delfzijl is one of more than twelve hundred windmills that are still in operation in the Netherlands. This figure has fallen significantly over the years. In their heyday there were around nine thousand mills across the country. With the advent of mechanisation and industrialisation, these wind-powered structures,

'YOU MUST BE MINDFUL OF TRADITIONS AND ALSO ALLOW SCOPE FOR INNOVATION'

which were once so highly valued, gradually became obsolete. The number of mills declined sharply, as did the number of millers. Many millers also retired without passing on their craft from father to son, as people had done for centuries. The question now was: who will keep the wheels of this valuable cultural heritage turning? How do we keep the craft alive?

Empty shell
This is by no means the only tradition facing this challenge. Whereas, in the past, an interest in intangible cultural heritage was kindled in all children at an early



KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER: WHAT IS THE DUTCH CENTRE DOING?
Without the transfer of knowledge intangible cultural heritage cannot survive. The Dutch Centre actively supports communities in this area, not only by providing training, for example, but also by ensuring that communities are able to share examples of good practice with each other during days organised by the Dutch Centre aimed at exchange and networking. In this way communities can inspire and strengthen each other.





HOW DO YOU PREVENT IT FROM BECOMING AN EMPTY SHELL?

age, which meant this knowledge was passed on automatically, that can no longer be taken for granted today. Even when a close-knit community passes on traditions, as in the case of Staphorst dotwork, knowledge about the tradition's background and history is becoming diluted. How do you prevent specific aspects or skills from being forgotten or even disappearing completely? Or how do you stop heritage becoming nothing more than an empty shell – a touristy exterior with no substance on the inside? Transferring knowledge is extremely important to prevent this from happening.

Young people and women

The millers managed to stop the downward spiral in time. Fifty years ago they founded the Guild of Volunteer Millers, which offers its own miller training course. Within the Guild there is also the *Jong ambacht* (Young Craft) group, an initiative of six young mill enthusiasts who are keen to get more young people interested in the world of milling. To mark the Guild's fiftieth anniversary, in 2022 the campaign 'Milling, a dusty old profession? Not at all!' was launched and a special youth fund was established. Dozens of young people have already registered for the training course and women are also gaining an interest in the craft. The Guild's Utrecht branch is throwing the spotlight on thirteen female millers with an 'audio theatre tour'.

Not a 'dull' committee role

Another excellent example of successful knowledge transfer is the Rotterdam Summer Carnival. The

carnival originated in 1988 and some committee members have already been in their posts for thirty years. Although the carnival's popularity was continuing to grow, young people were becoming less enthusiastic about taking on 'dull' committee roles. How could the committee ensure that the knowledge and experience it had built up over many years was passed on to the young generation?

The committee members set to work examining and reallocating their tasks. In this way they not only created scope for new committee members, but also for a completely new role: project managers. This active, more operational role did prove popular and they managed to recruit young people to carry it out. These newcomers were partnered with an older committee member so they could learn about the history, customs and values of the Summer Carnival. Vice-Chairperson Ryansley Haize: 'You need to respect traditions and communicate the standards, values and core elements on which the carnival is based, while leaving young people with enough freedom to test out their own input and ideas.'

Thanks to their operational roles, the young project managers have a good insight into what is happening within the organisation. Together with former committee members and experienced volunteers, they make up a think tank that advises the committee. And when the time comes for the older committee members to stand down, the next generation will be well versed in their administrative responsibilities.

17.7 K followers

Passing on knowledge and skills is vitally important for crafts in particular. One example of such a craft is henna art. The henna tradition in the Netherlands often has Turkish or Moroccan origins and has adapted to Dutch society over the years. Nowadays, henna is used not just to decorate hands, but also the tummies of pregnant women, for example. Although the decorations are extremely popular, the centuries-old symbolism, history and specific techniques are at risk of being forgotten. One person who has made it her mission to pass on this knowledge is the internationally renowned henna artist Fatima Oulad Thami. 'My passion for henna art was sparked when I underwent my first henna ritual in Morocco at the age of four. I still have vivid memories of this experience', she writes in a column in the Dutch journal *Museumpeil*. Fatima passes on her knowledge through workshops, her website, Instagram (17.7 K followers) and many other channels. Following her workshop that was part of the exhibition *Groeten uit de Oriënt* (Greetings from the Orient), she wrote on her Facebook page: 'A great opportunity for me to share the authentic



'I HAVE PAVED THE WAY FOR A NEW GENERATION OF HENNA GIRLS'

story behind Moroccan Henna Art with visitors, as my craft is often dismissed as a 'Henna Tattoo'. That diminishes what this art form actually involves and disregards the rituals and traditions behind it. Time to restore the narrative.'

Squeeze 'n flow

While many craftspeople are struggling to find interested apprentices, Fatima makes the transfer of knowledge part of her business plan. At her Henna Academy you can follow workshops, masterclasses or individual lessons, and even take a one-year course to become an all-round henna artist. The course does not focus only on mastering techniques and styles, such as shading, squeeze 'n flow and piping. It also covers the cultural backgrounds, stories and traditions of henna art.

During the coronavirus pandemic she converted her workshop programme into e-learning modules, including film clips, background information and a live, online question hour. After paying a fee, participants gain access to modules ranging from basic techniques through to complex techniques for more experienced henna artists. The Dutch Centre has described her digital teaching methods as an 'inspiring example'.

Henna girls
Fatima's efforts are now paying off. In 2019, for example, the first new generation of Dutch henna artists took their master craftsman's exam. They were presented with their diploma during a festive meeting organised by the Dutch Centre at the Open Air Museum in Arnhem. Fatima: 'By putting henna on the map in the Netherlands, I have paved the way for a new generation of aspiring henna girls.' ✕

WANT TO LEARN A CRAFT YOURSELF?

Would you like to learn how to weave or make woodworking joints, or try your hand at goldwork embroidery or basket weaving? Crafts Council Nederland organises regular workshops and masterclasses during which master craftspeople pass on their skills. Members of the public can also follow craft workshops and masterclasses during the *Ambacht in Beeld* (Craft in Focus) Festival.





HOW EDUCATION TRANSFERS KNOWLEDGE

ARE YOU

'Black Pete (zwarte piet) is racism!' 'No, it's our tradition!' When it comes to heritage, emotions can run high, and that applies in the classroom too. This is an ideal opportunity to get pupils talking about their own heritage and identity. How do you make children 'heritage savvy'? And which subjects can intangible cultural heritage be integrated into? Here we present some inspiring examples from practice.

HERITAGE SAVVY?



WHAT IS 'HERITAGE SAVVINESS'?

A good lesson on the subject of intangible cultural heritage makes pupils 'heritage savvy'. They learn that different groups attach different meanings to heritage, that heritage is a living thing that changes over time, and that it therefore tells us more about the present than the past. They learn to look at heritage critically and from different perspectives. In this way they develop their own vision and can discuss it with others.

ADOPTING A GRAVE TOGETHER WITH PUPILS GIVES THE WAR AND LIBERATION A FACE

ENRICH THE CURRICULUM!



In education there is already a wealth of teaching materials, as well as countless learning objectives. How do you get lessons on intangible cultural heritage to tie in with existing attainment targets relating to people and society, citizenship, and art and culture? The Dutch Centre sets out the possibilities in a series of films.

INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE IS OFTEN CLOSELY LINKED TO THE EXPERIENCES OF SCHOOLCHILDREN

PEOPLE AND SOCIETY

Intangible cultural heritage helps pupils develop a way of thinking about history. You can show them differences and similarities between the past and present and help them understand how things change dynamically over time. This makes them aware of the fact that how we celebrate or commemorate something today says more about the present than the past.

Carnival in the ‘Cabbage City’

Every February the whole of Oldenzaal is decked out in the colours yellow and blue. The city celebrates its carnival in extravagant fashion. But where does this tradition actually come from? Why does Oldenzaal celebrate it and what does its nickname ‘Boeskoolstad’ (‘Cabbage City’) mean? With the help of a teaching package, pupils get to know the history and traditions associated with the carnival in Oldenzaal. The carnival association also has plans to develop a general educational package that can be used throughout the North-East Twente region.

CITIZENSHIP

One pupil may identify with Pride, another with Ketj Koti and another still with the Remembrance Day commemorations and Liberation Day celebrations on 4 and 5 May. At first glance these appear to be very different traditions. Can pupils see the similarity: that all three are about celebrating freedom? Intangible cultural heritage is often closely linked to the experiences of schoolchildren and therefore lends itself perfectly to use as a theme in citizenship studies. After all, good citizenship education trains pupils to become critical citizens in a democratic society, helps them form their identity and enables them to look at social issues from different perspectives.

Adopt an American war grave

What is war? And what does freedom mean? In the educational programme developed by the Netherlands American Cemetery and Memorial Grave Adoption Foundation primary and secondary school pupils learn more about war, freedom and the history of the Second World War. One of the tasks involves visiting the war grave cemetery in Margraten. The programme can be used via the website www.beleefdevrijheid.eu.



The teaching package comes with a special feature. When using it, the school also immediately ‘adopts’ a grave. The tradition of adopting a grave at the American cemetery involves visiting the grave of the adopted soldier several times a year. During these visits you lay flowers and reflect on the significance of his or her sacrifice. Adopting a grave together with pupils gives the war and liberation a face and ensures the tradition is both practised and safeguarded.

Exploring your own district

Over the years the Dutch Centre has developed various educational products. Recently, we devised the method *Intangible cultural heritage in my own district*. This involves pupils interviewing residents of their district on the subject of intangible cultural heritage and why they consider it important. Taken together, the results of these interviews highlight the diversity of the district in which they live.

ART AND CULTURE

Dance, music, song and crafts: these are creative forms of intangible cultural heritage that are ideal for practical lessons and for reflection on the creation of art and culture. Take the fanfare orchestra, Tambú music or the Anansi storytelling tradition, for example. Practical lessons could also be prepared on crafts such as weaving, making farmhouse cheese, hat making, wood carving or pottery painting.

Relief of Alkmaar lantern

A lantern parade is great fun, but it’s even more fun if you can join in with your own self-made lantern. The Relief of Alkmaar 8 October Association has created a practical handbook for primary school pupils. Together they can build their own lantern in the classroom in a style in keeping with the festival. On [the website](#) you can also find information about all kinds of ways to teach children more about the history of the Relief of Alkmaar and the associated City Anthem.

Wiser with Iron

It may not be *in* the classroom, but you can also experience intangible cultural heritage on location *with* your class. A good example is the *‘Wijzer met IJzer’* (‘Wiser with Iron’) project run by the Pronk Forge. Working in small groups, pupils in their final year of primary education try their hand at forging and make their own keyring.

CREATIVE VOCATIONAL TRAINING

Besides primary and secondary education, intangible cultural heritage can also play a role in vocational education. In the Netherlands, for example, there are seven MBO (senior secondary vocational education) programmes that



carry the label ‘creative craftspeople’. These include the stained glass course at the SintLucas college in Boxtel and the cabinetmaker course at the Woodworking, Furniture and Interior Design College (HMC) in Amsterdam. A creative craftspeople uses his or her skill to make exclusive products, such as furniture, bags, hats or crockery. The courses therefore place an additional emphasis on material-related knowledge, techniques and skills. This traditional knowledge is often passed on by master craftspeople from the field.

INTERNATIONAL INSPIRATION

The Netherlands are not the only one taking steps in the area of heritage education. Similar developments are happening right across Europe. In 2019 and 2020 teachers and pupils from various European countries worked together on projects that linked intangible cultural heritage to school subjects. On the basis of this project, Unesco developed a toolkit packed with inspiring ideas on how to use intangible cultural heritage in the classroom. In this toolkit you will find [ten case studies](#) from schools all around Europe. In Belgium, for example, all pupils from a class researched intangible cultural heritage within their own families. This living family heritage was brought together in an exhibition that provided an insight into the cultural diversity of the school. During maths lessons in Cyprus, teachers focused attention on intangible cultural heritage by teaching with it rather than about it. ✘





... BUT THAT DOESN'T YET MEAN
YOU HAVE THE WIND IN YOUR SAILS

The Netherlands has every right to be proud. Over the past 10 years the craft of the miller, falconry and parade culture have acquired a place on Unesco's international Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. What does inscription on the list do for you as a community?

WIND IN YOUR SAILS 'MILLERS THE WORLD OVER FEEL RECOGNISED'



ICH-ID

ICH: Craft of the miller operating windmills and watermills, 2017
WHO: Nicole Bakker
ROLE: Director of The Dutch Mill Association (De Hollandsche Molen)

The Netherlands: a country of mills. It is not surprising that the craft of the miller was the Netherlands' first nomination for inscription on the international Unesco list. Since their craft was added to the list in 2017 have millers had the wind in their sails? We asked Nicole Bakker, Director of The Dutch Mill Association.

A key benefit of inscription on the international list is that it boosts cooperation at the national and international level, according to Nicole. 'In 2019 an international network of millers was established. This was one of the safeguarding measures we had referred to in our Unesco nomination. In it we set out our ambition of sharing our miller training programme and the knowledge and skills of the craft worldwide.'

From Canada to Korea

Over the past two years the millers' network has held regular online meetings. The themes they have discussed include the training offered to aspiring millers and volunteers who work in mills. The network has expanded rapidly and now boasts around five hundred members

from almost thirty different countries, stretching from Europe to places as far afield as Canada, Iran, Egypt and Korea. Nicole: 'In countries with small miller communities, such as Denmark, this has led to a sense of recognition. It reinforces their own belief that the craft of the miller is special and valuable.'

Local actions

Even though there is a great deal of support for mills and the craft of the miller in the Netherlands, she acknowledges that there are definitely also headwinds. 'In this country too we need to work hard to raise awareness of the fact that millers are important. It is clear that provinces and municipalities do not always take mills and millers into account as a matter of course, for example when it comes to the energy transition and the environmental visions drawn up under the new Environment Act. In many cases local actions are needed to obtain recognition amidst all the other interests at play in the area of spatial development.'

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE: Newcomers and network

- In 2023 The Dutch Mill Association will be celebrating its hundredth anniversary. To mark this, activities are being developed with the aim of reaching a bigger audience. For newcomers to the Netherlands a special programme is being devised with language-coaching organisation 'Het Begint met Taal' (It starts with language).
- Training courses are being prepared on specialist areas of the miller's work.
- Existing knowledge is being documented better, the handbook on safe and healthy working in a mill is available online, and films are uploaded by British partners. These initiatives will further strengthen the international network.



HITTING NEW HEIGHTS

‘THE RECOGNITION IS A HUGE SOURCE OF MOTIVATION FOR FALCONERS’



ICH-ID

ICH: The practice of falconry in the Netherlands, 2021

WHO: Philippe König

ROLE: Chairperson of NOVO, the umbrella organisation of falconry associations in the Netherlands

In 2021 the practice of falconry in the Netherlands was inscribed on the international Unesco list within the existing file ‘Falconry, a living human heritage’. Has the moment now arrived when falconry will really hit new heights? We asked Philippe König, Chairperson of the umbrella organisation of falconry associations in the Netherlands.

One direct result of the inscription on the international list is a sense of solidarity amongst falconers, according to Philippe. ‘The three Dutch falconry associations and unaffiliated falconers came together this summer to celebrate the inscription. What struck me was the sense of unity and of being valued that stemmed from it. The recognition by Unesco is a huge source of motivation for falconers to focus even more on consolidating and passing on their knowledge and skills.’

Falconry training

In his opinion, the inscription has clearly boosted collaboration within the umbrella organisation of falconry associations. ‘Collective interests are being given even greater prominence. For example, we are working together to further improve falconry training.’ The Unesco file ‘Falconry, a living human heritage’ covers 25 countries and their falconry traditions. Philippe: ‘Falconers are also managing to find each other more easily on an international level.’

Hunting ban

There is a risk that falconry will not yet be able to spread its wings fully in the coming year. As a result of the declining rabbit population, a ban on hunting rabbits will be in place in all provinces over the 2022-2023 season. These regulations also apply to falconry. ‘This is a huge blow for falconers’, Philippe confirms. ‘Not just for existing falconers, but also for the new generation to whom we are passing on the tradition. We now cannot begin this process and the worry is that the delay will become permanent.’

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE Education and archiving

- The umbrella organisation of falconry associations has plans to create a Falconry Heritage Centre, a central repository for information that may otherwise be lost. The aim is to properly archive historical material and allow it to be accessed digitally, including correspondence, photos, films, educational material and objects.
- The organisation is also working hard to improve falconry training. In the Netherlands, if you want to obtain a falconry certificate, you need to get a falconry diploma. Due to the rigorous training requirements, falconers have a high level of knowledge, not only about care, feeding and hygiene, but also about hunting with birds of prey. During the training course this knowledge is passed on to aspiring falconers.
- An educational plan is also being developed for the education sector and the general public to provide an insight into traditional and contemporary hunting methods. A teaching package for schools is already available. In the classroom the falconer demonstrates the art of hunting and talks about the tradition’s long history and the protection of birds of prey.



IN BLOOM ‘THE PARADES HAVE ATTRACTED A GREAT DEAL OF PUBLICITY’



ICH-ID

ICH: Flower Parade culture, 2021
WHO: Claudia Lassche
ROLE: Secretary of Corsokoepel,
treasurer of Vollenhove Flower
Parade

In 2021, on behalf of 21 Dutch flower and fruit parades, parade culture was inscribed on the international Unesco list. Does this mark the dawning of a new successful era for the parades? We asked Claudia Lassche, secretary of Corsokoepel.

First and foremost, inscription on the international list has strengthened solidarity between the parades in the Netherlands, according to Claudia. ‘There is a real sense of recognition from the international Unesco community and a great deal of publicity has stemmed from it.’ In the lead-up to the nomination the Corsokoepel was established, an alliance of parades in the Netherlands. She explains that this umbrella organisation is growing: ‘Smaller parades are now joining too. They can see that exchanging knowledge and experiences gives them a boost.’

Flower carpet

Knowledge is also being exchanged at an international level, for example, with parades in Belgium, Spain and the United States, and also with the flower carpet community in Poland. The latter got in touch to ask: how did you approach the nomination and how do you safeguard your heritage? The parades are learning from each other. Claudia: ‘In October, once all the parades have taken place, we share examples of good practice. A few parades would like to create an online ‘parade experience’, to allow the general public to experience the fascination that all volunteers feel during the creative and social process associated with the parades.’

Dropping out

The future is not entirely rosy. Claudia: ‘Permits are becoming increasingly complex. That means volunteers need specialist expertise and it also demands a lot of their time. In some cases this can lead to volunteers dropping out. This is a major risk for the parades, also in terms of safeguarding this heritage for the future. Often municipalities and provinces are not sufficiently aware of the social and inclusive value of parades. In Vollenhove, for example, there are hardly any kids hanging around on the streets – they all have something to do in the construction tent.’ ✕

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE Increasing sustainability

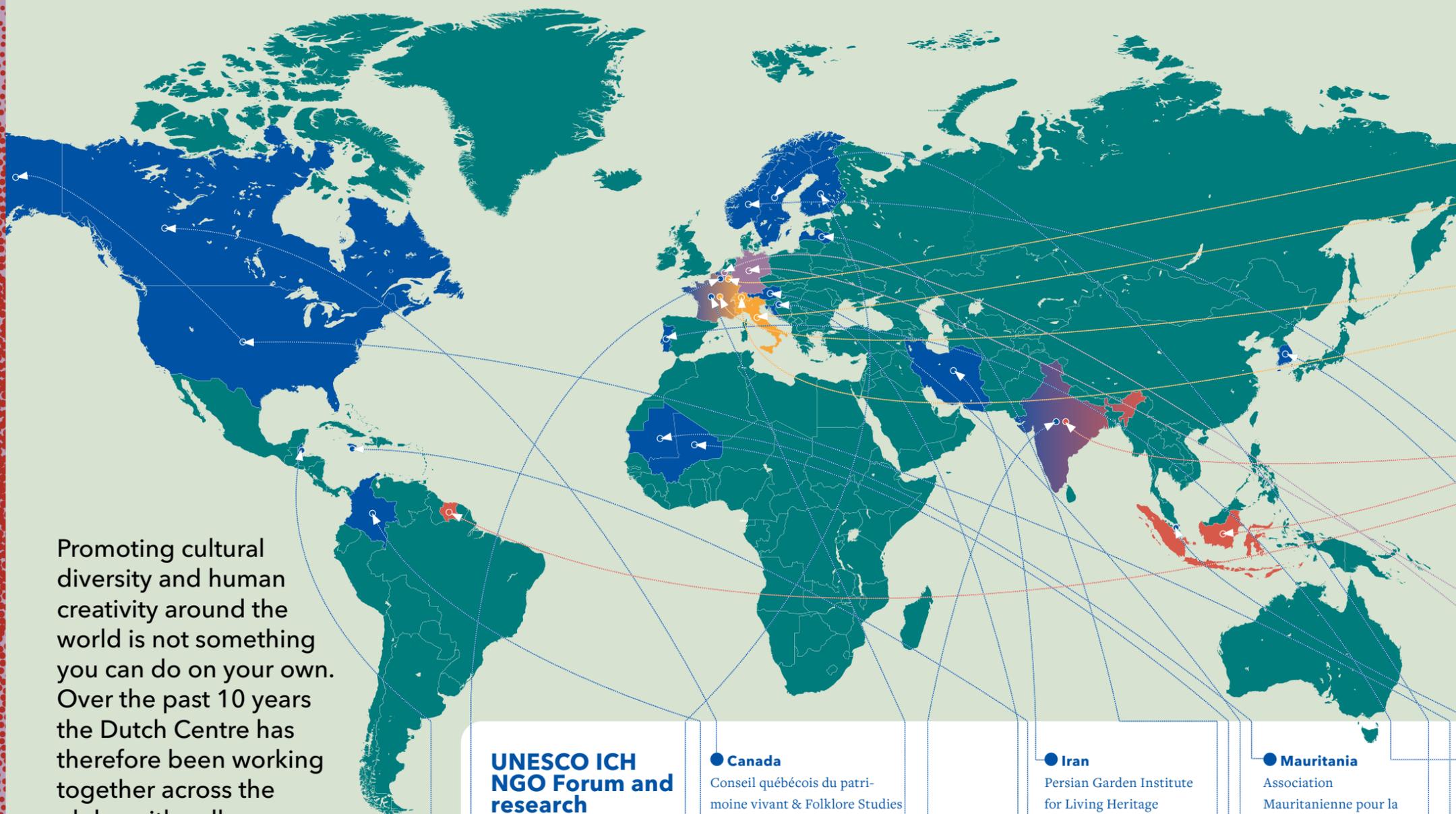
On the Corsokoepel website there are tips for ways to increase the sustainability of the parades: from growing flowers without chemicals through to the use of solar panels and sustainable materials.

IN THE PIPELINE

We have also been working hard on two other international files. In 2022 the file for the multinational nomination of traditional grassland irrigation was discussed. This is an unusual nomination, as it is a collaboration between Austria, Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Italy and the Netherlands. The nomination of the Rotterdam Summer Carnival is also on the agenda for 2023. With this nomination the practitioners are keen to emphasise how the Summer Carnival highlights cultural diversity and connection.

OUR GLOBAL COLLABORATIONS

OUR ICH-PARTNERS



TYPE OF COLLABORATION

- = UNESCO ICH NGO Forum and research
- = Intangible Heritage and Museums Project
- = International Heritage Collaboration Project
- = Assessment committee

Intangible Heritage and Museums Project

- **Belgium**
Werkplaats immaterieel erfgoed
- **Italy**
Società Italiana per la museografia ei beni demotnoantropologici (OR: Italian Society for Museum and Heritage Anthropology)
- **France**
Centre français du patrimoine culturel immatériel
- **Switzerland**
Verband der Museen der Schweiz

International Heritage Collaboration Project

- **India**
- **Indonesia**
- **Suriname**

Assessment committee

- **Germany**
- **Flanders**

Promoting cultural diversity and human creativity around the world is not something you can do on your own. Over the past 10 years the Dutch Centre has therefore been working together across the globe with colleagues in countries that have signed the Unesco Convention. See who we work with on ICH!

UNESCO ICH NGO Forum and research

- **Belgium**
Werkplaats immaterieel erfgoed, Centrum voor Agrarische Geschiedenis (CAG), ETWIE, PARCUM, CEMPER, Histories, Sportimonium, FARO Vlaams Steunpunt voor Cultureel Erfgoed
- **Belize**
National Institute of Culture and History (NICH)

- **Canada**
Conseil québécois du patrimoine vivant & Folklore Studies Association of Canada
- **Colombia**
Erigaie Foundation
- **Finland**
Finnish Heritage Agency
- **France**
UNESCO HQ (Convention Secretariat) & Association Île du Monde
- **India**
Banglanatak.com

- **Iran**
Persian Garden Institute for Living Heritage
- **Jamaica**
UNESCO Cluster Office for the Caribbean & Jamaica Creative
- **Croatia**
Association House of Batana
- **Latvia**
Latvian National Centre for Culture

- **Mauritania**
Association Mauritanienne pour la sauvegarde du patrimoine culturel immatériel
- **Mali**
Mali Cultural Heritage Agency
- **Norway**
Norwegian Crafts Institute
- **Austria**
Immaterielles Kulturerbe

- **Portugal**
Memória Imaterial
- **Singapore**
National Heritage Board
- **United States**
Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage
- **South Korea**
International Information and Networking Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region (ICHCAP)

- **Sweden**
Institute for Language and Folklore Department for Archives and Research
- **Internationaal**
International Society for Ethnology and Folklore

