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

**Expert meeting in the framework of the global reflection on the listing mechanisms under the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage**

**BREAKOUT GROUP REPORT**

**GROUP 3 – THEME A**

**11, 18 and 20 May 2021  
Online, 13:00 – 16:00 (Paris time / UTC+2)**

**ISSUES DISCUSSED**

Theme A: Global approach to listing mechanisms

1. Priorities for reforming the current listing system
2. System to be envisaged for the reformed listing mechanisms
3. Sunset clause for elements to be included on the Representative List
4. Priorities and annual ceiling of files
5. Under-utilization of the Urgent Safeguarding List
6. Purpose and intent of the Representative List
7. Making the Register more useful

**MEMBERS**

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| **1. Priorities for reforming the current listing system** |
| Our group notes:   * A saturation of the listing system; * A politicization of the nomination system (attempts to establish national ownership) and the listing system (non-compliance with recommendations of the Evaluation Body); * An imbalance between the mechanisms of the Convention (Representative List, Urgent Safeguarding List, Register of Good Safeguarding Practices, International Assistance)   At the same time, the following points must be taken into account:   * Further clarify the purpose and aims of each mechanism of the listing system; * Create a real connection between safeguarding and sustainable development at national level so as to reduce the potential negative effects of international recognition, particularly the frustration of communities, groups and individuals; * Enable a true appropriation of the Convention by communities, groups and individuals and the transversality of its implementation in State policies; * Reforming the listing system in the long term involves greater use of the national systems for the implementation of the Convention, particularly inventories.   Regarding the question concerning the **listing system**, Group 3 recommends the following two options (see Item 2 below):  **Option 1**: undertake a fundamental overhaul of the listing system.  **Option 2**: reform the current listing system throughreadjustments. |

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| **2. System to be envisaged for the reformed listing mechanisms** |
| Our group recommends:   * Simplifying and streamlining the procedure for inscription on the Representative List to allow for a greater number of inscriptions; * Refocusing the listing system on the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage.   At the same time, the following points must be taken into account:   * Ensure that the listing system does not lose credibility, including with regard to human rights, respect between communities and sustainable development; * Strengthen the role of communities, groups and individuals within the reformed listing mechanisms; * Introduce a provision within the Operational Directives specifying that the inscription of an element on the lists of the Convention does not in any way imply the exclusive ownership of this element by a State or a community nor a designation of origin associated with this State or its territory; * Encourage and support States Parties in carrying out participatory inventories with communities to place communities at the heart of the process in advance; * Maintain the criteria (even revised) and the nomination form due to its importance in allowing States to work with communities and vice-versa.   Regarding the question concerning the **reform of the nomination system**, Group 3 recommends the following two options:  **Option 1**: introduce an independent system for inscription on the Representative List   * Three nominations per State and per year, based on the inventory forms and on the information supplied by the State on its inventories in the periodic reports; * The criteria would be kept to a minimum. The Committee inscribes the elements without going through an evaluation body, ensuring that the elements are included in the inventory in accordance with the Convention (which involves the participation of the communities) and do not go against human rights, mutual respect between communities and the requirements of sustainable development; * The nomination form would also be reduced to the minimum with a descriptive summary of the element, as well as an explication of the element’s compliance with the requirements of sustainable development and human rights. * The form could be drafted and submitted in the language(s) of the community or communities concerned, accompanied by a descriptive summary of the element in English or French and an explanation of the element’s compliance with Article 2 of the Convention; * The Committee also promotes capacity-building to carry out participatory inventories and to control their successful implementation through periodic reports; * The procedure for the other three mechanisms (Urgent Safeguarding List, Register of Good Safeguarding Practices, and International Assistance) remains unchanged with a ceiling of 50 nominations per year, maintaining the current order of priority.   **Option 2**: introduce a new listing system with alternate cycles   * Two cycles alternating from one year to the next with a cycle dedicated to the visibility mechanisms (Representative List and Register of Good Safeguarding Practices) on the one hand, and a cycle dedicated to the safeguarding mechanisms (Urgent Safeguarding List, and granting of International Assistance of over USD 100,000) on the other hand. |

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| **3. Sunset clause for elements to be included on the Representative List** |
| Our group recommends:   * Not introducing a sunset clause for elements to be included on the Representative List, which would risk devaluing the Representative List and sending a negative message to communities; * Ensuring closer monitoring of the elements inscribed, particularly by reinforcing the credibility of the Periodic Reports mechanism to represent the voice of the communities, groups and individuals concerned and allow for the updating of safeguarding measures.   At the same time, the following point must be taken into account:   * Continue and step up capacity-building so as to anchor the Convention at national level.   Regarding the question concerning **monitoring of the Representative List**, Group 3 recommends the following two options:  **Option 1**: remove the obligation of a Periodic Report for each element inscribed on the Representative List and propose a global report per State Party, with a focus on certain elements due to their specific evolution;  **Option 2**: introduce the preparation of Periodic Reports for the Representative List by communities, with the support of the States Parties. |

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| **4. Priorities and annual ceiling of files** |
| Our group recommends:   * Allowing more inscriptions on the Representative List using a simplified and streamlined process (see Item 2 above, option 1) which would allow for a separate ceiling from nominations to the Representative List; * Reducing the waiting time for nominations with a view to reducing the constraints imposed by the annual ceiling (see Item 2 above, option 2)   At the same time, the following point must be taken into account:   * The Representative List is important for the visibility of intangible cultural heritage and maintaining its credibility is crucial.   Regarding the question concerning the **priorities and the annual ceiling regarding the reform of the listing mechanisms**, Group 3 recommends the following two options:  **Option 1**: In the case that the current system is retained, it is not possible to consider a change in the priorities and the annual ceiling given the workload of the bodies of the Convention.  **Option 2**: In the case that the procedure for the Representative List is simplified, and is treated separately, a separate ceiling could be established for this list (see Item 2 above, option 1), as the system of priorities would have no further justification. |

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| **5. Under-utilization of the Urgent Safeguarding List** |
| Our group recommends:   * Building the capacities and awareness of the States Parties, communities and other stakeholders regarding the Urgent Safeguarding List; * Enhancing the attractiveness of the Urgent Safeguarding List – for example, by dedicating a cycle to the Urgent Safeguarding List or by allowing the Evaluation Body to allocate more time to the Urgent Safeguarding List – without penalizing the other listing mechanisms.   At the same time, the following points must be taken into account:   * The under-utilization of the Urgent Safeguarding List is linked to the attractiveness of the Representative List and to the confusion with the List of World Heritage in Danger; * The reinforcement of the use of the Urgent Safeguarding List must go hand in hand with the reform of the entire listing system. |

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| **6. Purpose and intent of the Representative List** |
| Our group recommends the following:  General recommendations   * Conduct a study on the Representative List among Sates Parties, communities, NGOs, facilitators and other interested parties, in particular to better understand the **impact of inscription** on the viability of the elements and for the communities and to ascertain whether inscription meets the expectations of the communities; * **Strengthen the dialogue** at the international and local level as the third objective of the Representative List, for example, by considering the creation of a network of elements inscribed on the Representative List; * Invite the States Parties to adopt an **inclusive approach** to the elements put forward for inscription on the Representative List both in terms of the most appropriate identification, on the one hand, and in terms of the participation of the communities concerned on the other hand; * Clarify with the States that the Representative List is **not a means of staking ownership or claiming a geographic origin** of an element of intangible cultural heritage.   Recommendations concerning the **role of communities**   * Invite the States Parties to place communities at the heart of the process leading to the inscription of an element on the Representative List; * Invite the States Parties to ensure the widest possible publicity for nominations in order to involve all of the communities, groups and individuals interested; * Invite the States Parties to act as transmission belt between UNESCO and the communities that are bearers of elements inscribed on the Representative List;   At the same time, the following points must be taken into account:   * Although the Representative List contributes to the visibility of the(?) intangible cultural heritage and to awareness of its importance, it does not sufficiently foster dialogue (see Article 16.1 of the Convention); * It is important to ensure the **capacity-building** of the communities that are bearers of elements inscribed on the Representative List so that they can best grasp the objectives, even *a posteriori*; * The Representative List does not take into consideration the **level of viability** of an element and could cover elements in “good condition” as well as elements which transmission needs to be strengthened. |

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| **7. Making the Register more useful** |
| Our group recommends the following:  Within the framework of the **selection of good practices** for the Register   * Reform the system of priorities and enhance the visibility of the Register so that proposals for the Register are not in competition with the two lists (Representative List and Urgent Safeguarding List); * Put in place a procedure allowing civil society to suggest examples of good safeguarding practices to States before putting them forward for selection in the Register, with the help of accredited NGOs, facilitators and the academic sphere;   Within the framework of the **promotion of the Register**   * Strengthen the promotion of the good practices selected for the Register and their utility for other communities, for example, by organizing meetings between the leaders of the programmes selected and interested communities.   At the same time, the following points must be taken into account:   * It is important to ensure greater credibility of the selection process for good safeguarding practices; * The Register could be used as a tool to promote **international cooperation**, particularly with regard to intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development with the help of Category 2 centres, UNESCO Chairs, facilitators and accredited NGOs. * The Register could also be used as a platform for **cooperation at national level**, particularly between the cultural sector and other sectors of sustainable development.   Regarding the question concerning the **link between the Urgent Safeguarding List and the Register**, Group 3 recommends the following two options:  **Option 1**: automatically select safeguarding plans for the Register that have allowed for elements to be removed from the Urgent Safeguarding List due to their improved viability;  **Option 2**: subject nominations for safeguarding plans applied to elements removed from the Urgent Safeguarding List to the same procedure and to the same criteria applied to the programmes, projects and activities put forward for selection for the Register. |