

CONGRATULATORY REMARKS

I would like to take this opportunity to deliver my congratulations for publishing *Traditional Knowledge and Wisdom: Themes from the Pacific Islands*, the result of a two-year ICHCAP safeguarding project undertaken in cooperation with six countries across the Pacific region.

As a valuable inheritance handed over through many generations, traditional culture is said to be at the heart of national identity. At the same time, however, it is sometimes denigrated as an archaic legacy to be left behind. In this sense, this publication takes on a critical value in not only transmitting traditional knowledge to coming generations but also establishing this knowledge as a bridge connecting the past with the future. What is described here provides a genuine look into the traditional culture of Pacific islanders and further describes their wisdom and cosmology as evidenced in their traditional practices.

This publication spans a wide range of the traditional practices and customs of Pacific communities, including their methods for open-water navigation, agricultural techniques, and stories of communal reconciliation. All of these cultural elements epitomize traditional wisdom and knowledge as transmitted across generations and show the value assigned to both humans and nature. I hope that it will offer us clues for solving some of the problems facing humanity today.

Some would assert that no harm can come from being unaware of traditional culture in this rapidly changing society and that it is more beneficial to focus on learning about the new. However, the past and the traditional can serve as the basis for learning about the new, and it can also be a treasure trove for inspiring creativity and originality that can enrich the future.

Traditional knowledge is like a precious gem passed down from our ancestors. It is the adamant duty of the current generation to refine, polish, and help it to shine for transmission into the future.

I hope that this publication will contribute to enhancing the visibility of the intangible cultural heritage of the Pacific and will open the gate to further opportunities for identifying and disseminating traditional knowledge in other parts of the world.

I offer my congratulations on the successful publication of this book, and please accept the sincere gratitude that I feel for all the staff of the ICHCAP involved in this project. I hope that this will spark new opportunities for the organization as it develops a network for safeguarding traditional culture in the Pacific region.



Sun-hwa Rha
Administrator
Cultural Heritage Administration of Korea

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I am most honored to have been asked to make some brief remarks for this important publication, *Traditional Knowledge and Wisdom: Themes from the Pacific Islands*. I would like to commend ICHCAP for creating the conditions that brought together these articles, written mainly by Pacific islanders, who are all in some way or another working to safeguard their heritage for the well-being of their future generations.

As a center operating under the auspices of UNESCO, ICHCAP has a core mandate to promote networking and information sharing for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in the Asia-Pacific region, and making this publication allowed for important networking and information-sharing events among Pacific islanders. The themes of the book cover fundamental aspects of Pacific cultures, including worldviews and social relationships, landscapes and seascapes, harvesting and ocean voyaging, and arts and technologies. Indeed these themes point to the fact that intangible cultural heritage represents much more than just performances or ceremonies but lies at the heart of people's economic, political, spiritual, and social lives.

By coming together from the different parts of the Pacific and sharing experiences on efforts made to safeguard their living cultural heritage, the people of Oceania will have a better chance of responding to the challenges of the twenty-first century. By safeguarding the wisdom and knowledge passed on from ancestors, future generations will continue to have a strong identity and knowledge of themselves and their environment. It is our hope that this publication can contribute to that process of sustaining intergenerational transmission of intangible cultural heritage.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate ICHCAP and all the contributors for their efforts and work.



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