MEMORY OF THE WORLD COMMITTEE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC
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Regional Committee

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MOWCAP NEWS

Message from the Chair

MR KWIBAE KIM

MOWCAP Chair Dr Kwibae Kim

Dear MOWCAP Community,

June 2026 has been an extraordinary month of momentum, showcasing the vital dynamism of documentary heritage preservation across the Asia-Pacific region.

In Beijing, our colleagues co-hosted a landmark international symposium on China's documentary heritage. The event highlighted the nation's successful three-tier list system and explored innovative digital transformation efforts, colourfully exemplified by the hit film *Dear You*.

Simultaneously, Southeast Asia became the global epicentre for audiovisual archiving. The 30th SEAPAVAA Conference in Ipoh, Malaysia, tackled the integration of Artificial Intelligence into workflows while keeping archives rooted in social cohesion. Meanwhile, Bangkok hosted the 3rd Global Audiovisual Archiving (GAVA) Conference, moving "Outside of the Frame" to champion inclusive, localized curatorial voices. Both conferences fittingly paid tribute to our foundational former Chair, Dr Ray Edmondson.

Finally, Vietnam demonstrated exceptional leadership in heritage administration. In Hanoi, an international forum assessed the immense scientific and cultural potential of the 40,000-item EFEO photo collection, laying the groundwork for a future inscription dossier. Soon after, Hue celebrated the 10th anniversary of its inscribed royal architectural poetry, hosting a critical training workshop focusing on criteria, dossier building, and climate change resilience.

By embracing technological innovations like AI while honouring local histories, our region continues to ensure that the memory of humanity is robustly protected and accessible to all.

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International conference on China's documentary heritage & MoW held in Beijing

On 10 June 2026, the Municipal Archives of Beijing and the National Archives of China organized the international symposium on China's Documentary Heritage and the Memory of the World Programme. The conference brought together twelve experts and scholars from both China and abroad to deepen international exchange and cooperation in the safeguarding, academic research, and potential of China's documentary heritage for the Memory of the World Programme.

During the event, Wang Shaozhong, Director of the National Archives Administration of China, highlighted China's journey toward active engagement in the Memory of the World Programme. He noted that China has successfully established a three-tier list system spanning national, regional, and international levels, in alignment with Memory of the World recommendations.

Echoing this commitment, Zhao Lei, Secretary-General of the Beijing Municipal Committee, emphasized Beijing's role as a vital cultural repository that embraces diversity. UNESCO Beijing Director Prof. Dr Shahbaz Khan congratulated China for its dynamic and diverse participation in MoW, and referred to the success of 2026 film "Dear You", based on China's MoW and MOWCAP inscriptions.

Clockwise from top-left: IAC Chair Mr Jan Bos, UNESCO Documentary Heritage Programme Specialist Ms Dian Kuswandini, MOWCAP Vice-Chair and IAC Member Dr Vu Thi Minh Huong, and MOWCAP Secretary-General Ms Linh Anh Moreau at the international conference on China's documentary heritage and MoW on 10 June 2026. Images courtesy of the Municipal Archives of Beijing and National Archives of China.

International speakers included the International Advisory Committee(IAC)'s Chair Mr Jan Bos who shared an overview of MoW and its objectives, emphasizing that documentary heritage belongs to all humanity. Register Sub-Committee Member Ms Nada Itani highlighted the prominent role that regional committees can play in enhancing MoW through joint nominations. MOWCAP Vice-Chair and IAC Member Dr Vu Thi Minh Huong shared significant examples and advice on best practices when engaging with MoW. IAC Member Prof. Ramesh Gaur presented inspirational ideas for nominations and mutual support. Ms Dian Kuswandini from UNESCO's Documentary Heritage Unit and MOWCAP Secretary-General Ms Linh Anh Moreau shared reflections on the global and regional progress of MoW, including trends, gaps and opportunities.

Among national speakers, Dr Helen Ieong from the MoW Knowledge Centre of Macau shared the institution's impactful educational outreach activities. Dr He Yalan from the Academy of Social Sciences discussed scripture preservation at Yunju Temple, and Dr Li Tianhong of Wuhan University reviewed writings from early excavated bamboo and wooden slips.

Regional (SEAPAVAA) & global (GAVA) audiovisual archives conferences held in Malaysia and Thailand

In June 2026, Southeast Asia became the global epicentre for audiovisual archives preservation as back-to-back conferences in Malaysia and Thailand addressed the future of our shared moving image and sound heritage. Together, these events established a cohesive narrative on how modern archives must adapt to technological evolution while bridging regional and global divides.

Prof. Dr Martino Cipriani (Bangkok University), Ms Linh Anh Moreau (MOWCAP), Ms Karen Chan (Asian Film Archive), Ms May Zin Myo and Mr Okkar (Save Myanmar Film), Mr Mengchun Tsai (AV Archivist, Taiwan), Ms Lisabona Rahman (FIAF) and Mr Sanchai Chotirosseranee (Thai Film Archive) at the 3rd GAVA Conference on 17 June 2026.

The circuit commenced in Ipoh, Malaysia, where the National Archives of Malaysia hosted the landmark 30th SEAPAVAA Conference. Under the theme of "Redefining Audio-Visual Archives: Relevancy, Technology and Unity," the gathering served as a regional forum for capacity-building across the Asia-Pacific. A major focal point was the inevitable integration of Artificial Intelligence into archival workflows. Institutions shared successful case studies leveraging AI for automated metadata generation, transcription, and digital asset management, proving that emerging tech can drastically scale up preservation efficiency. Amid these high-tech discussions, Malaysia's Ministry of National Unity emphasized that archives remain fundamentally tied to social cohesion and national identity. Delegates also engaged in a technical workshop on cost-effective digital strategies for resource-limited institutions.

The momentum then shifted seamlessly to Salaya, Bangkok, where the Thai Film Archive hosted the 3rd Global Audiovisual Archiving (GAVA) Conference. Moving "Outside of the Frame," this biennial traveling platform deliberately confronted the geographical, economic, and digital gaps separating global archival traditions. The dialogue focused heavily on how film programming and heritage collections must evolve to survive changing socio-economic and political landscapes. Rather than adhering to conventional, Western-centric frameworks, presentations highlighted diverse narratives—from forgotten female directors in Indonesia to the African Film Heritage Project and non-institutional archival practices in Latin America.

Ultimately, the successive staging of SEAPAVAA and GAVA underscored a unified truth for the international archival community: safeguarding collective human memory requires a balanced approach. True archival resilience relies equally on embracing advanced digital tools like AI and fiercely championing localized, inclusive curatorial voices. Both events paid homage to the lifetime work of MOWCAP Chair (2005-2014) Dr Ray Edmondson, the inspiration behind diversifying the practice of audiovisual archiving and celebrated in the recent publication *Ray Edmondson: The Troublemaking Professional: A Festschrift* (SEAPAVAA 2026).

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International conference "EFEO Photo Collection – Heritage Potential" held in Hanoi, Vietnam

On 15 June 2026 in Hanoi, the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences (VASS), in collaboration with the French School of Far Eastern Studies (École Française d'Extrême Orient - EFEO) in Paris and the UNESCO Hanoi Office, organized an international conference on the "EFEO Photo Collection – Heritage Potential". This was an important academic forum to comprehensively assess the historical, cultural, significance and documentary heritage potential of the EFEO photo collection, and to provide a scientific basis for guiding the development of a nomination dossier to submit to UNESCO for inscription of this special collection as a documentary heritage.

The conference was chaired by Dr Dang Xuan Thanh, Vice President of the VASS, Vice President of the Vietnam National Committee for UNESCO; Assoc. Prof. Dr Philippe Le Failler, Head of the EFEO Hanoi Office; Assoc. Prof. Dr Vu Hung Cuong, Director of the Institute of Social Sciences Information (ISSI).

Institutional representatives and international researchers shared the potential of the EFEO Photographic Collection as potential documentary heritage for MoW. Image courtesy of Institute of ISSI/VASS.

International experts included Dr Joie Springer, Chair of the Register Sub-Committee of IAC, Prof. Dr Mitsuru Haga, MOWCAP Vice-Chair, Dr Vu Thi Minh Huong, MOWCAP Vice-Chair, Member of the International Advisory Committee, and member of the Vietnam National Council for Cultural Heritage.

The workshop was also attended by representatives from the UNESCO Office in Hanoi, the French Embassy, the Japanese Embassy, representatives from central agencies, leaders of units directly affiliated with the Academy, and domestic and international researchers. Participating online were Prof. Nicolas Fiévé, Director of EFEO in Paris, and Mr Jonathan Wallace Baker, Head of the UNESCO Office in Vietnam.

The EFEO photo collection, currently housed at ISSI, comprises nearly 40,000 photographs taken from the late 19th century to the mid-20th century. This is an exceptionally valuable source of documentation, vividly reflecting the social life, culture, beliefs, architecture, history, and heritage of Vietnam and many regions of Indochina during a crucial historical period.

According to Dr Dang Xuan Thanh, the EFEO photographic archive currently held at ISSI/VASS is a treasure trove of important information serving scientific research and heritage preservation. With its authenticity, uniqueness, and high level of integrity, the collection is not only an important source of reference for archaeology, ethnology, history, architecture, and heritage preservation, but also has practical significance in developing a future nomination dossier for Vietnamese heritage sites.

In his closing remarks, Assoc. Prof. Dr Vu Hung Cuong, Director of the Institute of Social Sciences Information, stated that the presentations and academic exchanges provided important arguments for the preparation of the documentary heritage dossier. The workshop contributed to clarifying the historical, cultural, scientific value, international significance, and uniqueness and rarity of the collection photographs of Vietnam and Indochina, and laid the foundation for the preparation of a nomination dossier for UNESCO to inscribe the EFEO photo collection, currently preserved at the Institute of Social Sciences Information to the MoW Register.

Article written by Dr Vu Thi Minh Huong.

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10th anniversary of the MOWCAP inscription celebrated in Hue, Vietnam

On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the UNESCO inscription of "Poetry and Literature on Hue Royal Architecture" on the MOWCAP Register (2016-2026) on 19 June 2026, the Department of Cultural Heritage (Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism) in coordination with the Hue City Department of Culture and Sports organized a training conference on documentary heritage to raise awareness and professional knowledge for human resources in Hue City.

The training conference was chaired by Mr Nguyen Viet Cuong, Deputy Director of the Department of Cultural Heritage, and Dr Phan Thanh Hai, Director of the Hue City Department of Culture and Sports. Attending the training were representatives from the Departments of Culture and Sports of provinces and cities; museums, management boards, conservation centres, and historical sites.

International documentary heritage experts included Dr Joie Springer, Chair of the Register Sub-Committee; Prof. Dr Mitsuru Haga, MOWCAP Vice-Chair and Dr Vu Thi Minh Huong, MOWCAP Vice-Chair and Member of the International Advisory Committee, who focused on the following topics: identifying and the process of building nomination dossiers for documentary heritage to be submitted to UNESCO for inscription; Management, protection, and preservation of documentary heritage in the face of climate change impacts - the experience of Japan; Guidance on methods for identifying the outstanding value of documentary heritage; and criteria for evaluating nomination dossiers for documentary heritage to be included in the National Register as stipulated in the 2024 Law on Cultural Heritage.

During their time in Hue, the Hue Monuments Conservation Center welcomed experts to visit the Hue Palace, "Poetry and Literature on Hue Royal Architecture," and "Nine Dynastic Urns" (Cửu Đỉnh) – both inscriptions on the MOWCAP Register. In Da Nang, the People's Committee of Ngu Hanh Son Commune welcomed the delegation to visit the "Ma Nhai (Inscriptions) on the Marble Mountain, Da Nang City" – inscribed also on the MOWCAP Register, and reported on the preservation and promotion of the value of this documentary heritage after its inscription.

The experts highly appreciated the sense of responsibility and the efforts of the local authorities in bringing heritage closer to the community, attracting domestic and international tourists, especially the younger generation from within and outside the province.

MOWCAP Vice-Chair Dr Vu Thi Minh Huong, MOWCAP Vice-Chair Prof. Dr Mitsuru Haga and Register Sub-Committee Chair Dr Joie Springer shared their expertise at the MoW training conference in Hue. Vietnam on 19 June 2026.

Article written and images provided by Dr Vu Thi Minh Huong.

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11th MOWCAP General Meeting and the international seminar "The World of Water"

2-6 November 2026
Jakarta, Indonesia

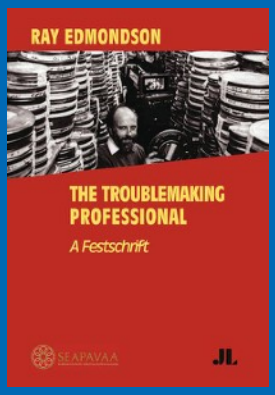
Hosted by Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia

Stay tuned for information on the MOWCAP website and social media!

NEW PUBLICATIONS

Ray Edmondson The Troublemaking Professional: A Festschrift

by SEAPAVAA
John Libbey Publishing



From National Register to Memory of the World: The Construction and Experience of China's Nomination System for Archival Documentary Heritage

by Ruibo Kong, Guanyan Fan, Advances in Applied Sociology, Vol.16 No.4, April 2026

*View and download the publication on **here**.*

ANY NEWS TO SHARE?

If you have an upcoming or recent activity, publication or news on documentary heritage in Asia-Pacific to contribute to the MOWCAP Newsletter, submit to mowcapinfo@gmail.com.