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MOWCAP
UNESCO Memory of the World
Regional Committee for Asia/Pacific

Nomination form

Asia/Pacific Memory of the World

Register

Office Use Only	
ID code:	Item or collection short title: The Reamker by Takrut
Institution / Owner:	Country or countries Cambodia
Assessed by: (Rujaya Abhakorn).....(date) .. / .. / (xxxxxx).....(date) .. / .. / (xxxxxx).....(date) .. / .. / (xxxxxx).....(date) .. / .. /	Decision: (circle as appropriate) 1. Recommended 2. Not recommended 3. Recommended subject to the following (attach additional comments if required):

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Introduction

This form should be used to nominate items to the Asia/Pacific *Memory of the World* Register. It sets out, in logical order, the range of information needed. Nominations should be expressed in clear concise language and lengthy submissions are not required.

Supplementary data may be attached. Please clearly label and number every page in the boxes provided.

It is highly recommended that prospective nominees should carefully read the *Guidelines* for nominating items and collections to the Asia/Pacific *Memory of the World* Register for further information before and during preparing a nomination. Nominees should also look at the current *International Memory of the World Register*

http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL_ID=1678&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

and the [Australian Memory of the World Register](#) to see examples of completed nomination forms.

Please submit two complete document sets on paper (one original and one photocopied versions) and one electronically.

Completed nominations should be posted by mail and submitted electronically to reach the following address:

Ms Helen Swinnerton
 Secretary General of MOWCAP,
 1/F Tower 2 & 3, HSBC Centre, 1 Sham Mong Road, Kowloon
 Hong Kong
helen.swinnerton@gmail.com

The nomination form and any accompanying material will not be returned and will become the property of MOWCAP.

MOWCAP maintains a website at <http://www.unesco.mowcap.org>. Questions may be addressed to the MOWCAP Register Subcommittee (rujaya2000@yahoo.com). Please keep a copy of this form for your records and in case we need to contact you.

Please also keep an electronic version of the completed form as we will need this for successful nominations to speed up entries onto the MOWCAP website.

Ray Edmondson
 Chair, MOWCAP

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Nomination form

Asia/Pacific *Memory of the World Register* nomination form

Part A: Essential information

1 Summary (max 100 words)

Give a brief description of the documentary heritage being nominated, and the reasons for proposing it. Highlight the nature, uniqueness and significance of the nominated documentary heritage.

The recordings of the Reamker epic by Trakrut are the only known audio materials of an oral Khmer tradition. Takrut is a storyteller from the 1960s whose exceptional talent made him the most famous storyteller in Cambodia and nominated audio materials capture the country's long oral tradition in its full integrity.

The Reamker resulting from the Indian Ramayana arrived in Cambodia together with Hinduism by at least 2nd century, and has been modified to become one of the principle elements of the Khmer culture. The Reamker is the fundamental epic of the Khmer people and is closely intertwined with the Cambodian memory, perception of the world, history and culture. It is found in almost all Khmer art forms including theatre, literature and dance from the ancient times until today. The Ramayana has profound value in the context of South and Southeast Asia and serve as the basis of literature, culture and arts, and social and political thought in the region. Examining them through the lens of the Ramayana can enrich our understanding of an important component of the world culture.

The recording of the Reamker by Takrut is an exceptional value for at least four reasons: First, it is the most popular and well-known version from the 1960s, Secondly, It is only known version recorded onto audio materials. Thirdly, the art of storytelling nearly die out during the social upheavals of the 1970s and there is an important need to revive this oral tradition. Fourthly, Takrut was a renowned storyteller specializing in Reamker and was widely recognized for exceptional talent in Cambodian society as shown by his name Neay Moha Krut or Master Great Gurada.

(See the attachment of Takrut's biography)

2 Nominator

2.1 Name of nominator (person or organisation)

Cambodian National Commission for UNESCO

2.2 Relationship to the nominated documentary heritage

The Cambodian National Commission for UNESCO is currently responsible for the Memory of the World activities in the country.

2.3 Contact person(s)

H.E. Mme. Tan Theany, Secretary-General, the Cambodian National Commission for UNESCO

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2.4 Contact details

H.E. Mme. Tan Theany 74, Avenue Preah Sihanouk, Phnom Penh

+855 (0) 23 210 369

cambonac@gmail.com

+855 (0) 16 833 997

3 Details of the Nominated Documentary Heritage

3.1 Title of documentary heritage item or collection

The Reamker by Takrut

The nominated audio materials stem from three sources:

1. The studio recording by National Radio of Cambodia

Takrut was the most famous storyteller of this time, a regular presence in the 1960s on the Cambodia national radio. Jacques Brunet, an ethnomusicologist and professor at the University of Fine Arts in Phnom Penh at the time, asked the Radio for a copy of the Reamker in 1965 to study them. Takrut's Reamker was originally recorded onto 6 soundtracks, lasting for 12 hours. These soundtracks, however, are in a very bad state of preservation. They have been donated by Jacques Brunet and Alain Daniel to ARPAA (Association pour la recherche, la production et l'archivage des documents audiovisuels), also known as Bophana Audiovisual Resource Center.

2. A performance in the village of Rokakong in Kandal province

In 1968, Jacques Brunet requested Takrut to tell the Reamker in a public setting in the village of Rokakong in Kandal province, and this resulted in 9 audiotapes which last for 6 hours and 45 minutes. They have been donated by Jacques Brunet and Alain Daniel to ARPAA, also known as Bophana Audiovisual Resource Center.

3. Two CDs of restored and digitized audio files

From these two complementary sources, the Bophana Audiovisual Resource Center in Cambodia was able to reconstruct a complete version, retrieving lost parts of the stories and selecting the best sound quality for each segment. The restored file is around 10 hours. These documents are the only known recording of the Reamker in its totality, and were digitized and restored in 2011, with the support of Cambodian National Commission for UNESCO, UNESCO Office in Phnom Penh and guidance from Professor Alain Daniel.

4. The original tape recording are held in the private hands and regarded as inaccessible and in poor condition. For practical purposes, the digital master files held at Bophana Centre must be regarded as the preservation copy and this copy that is being nominated for the inscription. It is acknowledged that this copy is a compilation from the two original sources and provides the most complete record that it is now possible to obtain.

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3.2 Catalogue or registration details

The Reakmer by Takrut consists of three separate items:

1. 12 hours of sound recording on 6 soundtracks of 6.25 mm reels, originally from the National Radio of Cambodia
2. 6 hours 45 minutes of sound recording on 9 audiotapes from the public performance in Rokakong
3. The restored and digitized files by the Bophana Audiovisual Resource Center, available on CD and on internet

Summary of the restored file:

01. Birth of Krong Vey Reap, Krong Phiphet and Krong Khor
02. Birth of Skrip, Pealy and Angkut
03. Birth of Hanuman
04. Hanuman and Sokrip accompany Preah Ream seeking Sita
05. Bridge construction from Khim Khas Berei to Lanka according to the principle of Mahachoumpou
06. Hanuman reigns and marries Machhanup
07. Hanuman goes to see Sita at Lanka
08. Preah Ream is angry with Hanuman because Hanuman ate three oranges of Sita and sentences him to death, asking service from Preah Leak
09. Krong Vey Reap and Indrajit fight against Preah Ream and Hanuman
10. Mahakhenei kidnaps Preah Ream and water carries Preah Leak to the palace of Mahonsanayoun
11. Hanuman frees Preah Ream, but Hanuman is killed by Mahonsanayoun during the liberation of Preah Ream
12. Angkut and Kesor Choupoupean go to find the arrow "Brahmastr" to save the life of Hanuman
13. The revenge of Sovannmacha Maha Rom El on Neang Neuk Sorya for the death of Hanuman and the departure of Hanuman to free Preah Leak
14. The fight of Mahonsanayoun against Preah Leak and Angkut
15. The evil spell of Krong Vey Reap to kidnap Preah Ream from the belly of Hanuman
16. Hanuman frees Preah Ream from Krong Vey Reap
17. Hanuman destroys the meditation of Krong Vey Reap and his soldiers
18. The battle between Preah Ream and Krong Vey Reap, Indrajit, then Neang Montukiry returns Sita to Preah Ream by carrying Sita on her head
19. The battle between Hanuman and his son, Sovannmacha Maha Romamian El, in the sea
20. Preah Ream is angry with Sita for her betrayal so he sentences her to death, asking service from Preah Leak
21. Birth of Ream Preah Leak and Choub Leak
22. The battle of Ream Preah Leak and Choub Leak against Preah Ream
23. Preah Ream sleeps in coffin for the return of Sita
24. The dream of Sita: Ream Preah Leak will be far away from the palace
25. The hermit Mony Akineth seeks a husband for Boprek Kroob
26. The departure of Ream Preah Leak to find Borek Kroob who is kidnapped by Krong Vey Krai Chak
27. Vey Reap becomes a mountain under the arrow of Preah Ream

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3.3 Photographs or a video of the documentary heritage

- 2 CD of the Reamker by Takrut
 - 4 photographs by Alain Daniel donated to Bophana Audiovisual Resource Center
 - 1 Booklet by Alain Daniel and Bophana Audiovisual Resource Center (Booklet)
 - Some pictures illustrating the influences of the Reamker on Khmer art forms.
 - The biography of Takrut, the storyteller
- (Find in the attached documents)

3.4 History/Origin/Background/Provenance

The recording of the Reamker recited by Trakrut are, as far as we know, the only existing audio recordings of this kind preserved today. The audio recordings were made in two very different settings. One part was recorded around 1965 in the studio of National Radio of Cambodia. Takruat held a recitation session, and Jacques Brunet, a famous Reamker scholar, was able to preserve a copy. The second part of the recordings was recorded at Jaques Brunet's request, in 1968, outdoor and in the public, in the village of Rokakong. Jacques Brunet then wanted to compare the two versions for research. These two different types of setting explain the very different sound ambiances. These recordings were also studied by Alain Daniel from 1968 to 1982. These documents present the Reamker told by Trakrut in its integrity.

Jaques Brunet and Alain Daniel made an donation of the reels and the tapes to Bophana Audiovisual Resource Center. The Centre digitized them from 2011 in WAV and MP3 formats. The WAV format is available at the Bophana Audivosual Resource Center. The MP3 is online on the Bophana Audiovisual Resource Center website.

3.5 Bibliography

- 1- Histoire du Reamker, récit recueilli et présenté par Francois Bizot (E.F.E.O), Phnom Penh; 1973
- 2- Alain Daniel, Etude d'un frangment du Ream Ker (Ramayana cambodgien) dit par un conteur, Université de la Sorbonne Paris III, 1982
- 3- Alain Daniel, Aperçu sur le Ramakerti, scenes du Ramayana, Pagode d'Argent fin XIX début XX siecle, Ministère de la Culture et des Beaux-Arts, 1999
- 4- The Reamker, Painted by Chet Chan, Reyum, 2001
- 5- Khing Hoc Dy, Un épisode du Ramayana Khmer, Rama endormi par les maléfices de Vaiy Rabn, 2004
- 6- San Phalla, Wat Painting in Cambodia, Reyum, 2007

3.6 Names, qualifications and contact details of up to three independent people or organisations with expert knowledge about the values and provenance of the documentary heritage

Dr. Ang Choulean	Professor at Faculty of Archaeology, Royal University of Fine Arts, Phnom Penh, Cambodia	Tel : (+855) 12 534 539 Email : choulean@yahoo.com
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2. Grandmaster in Cambodian Culture and	Former Advisor to Ministry of Culture and	Tel: (+855) 11 516 361
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Arts, Pich Tum Kravel Fine Arts

3. Alain Daniel Former professor of Tel : (+855) 13 708 192
Cambodian language Email : khmerad@gmail.com
and literature at the
University of Fine Arts
in Phnom Penh and at
the Inalco in Paris

4. Jacques Brunet Ethnomusicologist, Email: jhbrunet@free.fr
Former professor at
the University of Fine
Arts in Phnom Penh
and at the University of
Paris VI

I assert that the above named referees have given their written permission for their names and contact details to be used in connection with this nomination for the Asia/Pacific *Memory of the World* Register, and their names to appear on the website. (Contact details will not appear on the website or be disclosed by the MOWCAP to any third party).

Signature

Full name (Please PRINT)

Date

4 Legal information

4.1 Owner of the documentary heritage (name and contact details)

ARPAA (Association pour la recherche, la production et l'archivage des documents audiovisuels), also known as Bophana Audiovisual Resource Center

Mr. Sopheap Chea +855 92 902 543 sopheap.chea@bophana.org

Office +855 23 992 174 arpaa@bophana.org

4.2 Custodian of the documentary heritage (name and contact details if different from the owner)

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4.3 Legal status

Details of legal and administrative powers for the preservation of the documentary heritage

ARPAA (Association pour la recherche, la production et l'archivage des documents audiovisuels), also known as Bophana Audiovisual Resource Center, has the legal and administrative responsibility of the documentary heritage.

4.4 Accessibility

Describe how the item(s) / collection may be accessed

All access restrictions should be explicitly stated below:

It is impossible to give access to the original audio recordings because of its bad state of preservation.

These recordings of the Reamker by Takrut have been restored by Bophana Audiovisual Resource Center offer access to the restored audio files in the following ways:

1 - on internet:

http://www.bophana.org/site/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=58&Itemid=137

2 - Bophana Center's database

3- 1000 CDs have been produced and distributed to the public.

4.5 Copyright status

Describe the copyright status of the item(s) / collection

1. The copyright of the part recorded around 1965 in studio of the National Radio of Cambodia are shared by three parties:

- The Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts in Cambodia
- ARPAA (Bophana Audiovisual Resource Center) as owner of the original audio recording materials
- Legal inheritors of Takrut of the artist rights (Takrut's daughter, Krut Morn who is now 74 years old and living in Kampong Cham province.)

2. The copyright of the second part of the recording from 1968 are shared by two parties:

- ARPAA (Bophana Audiovisual Resource Center) was owner of the original audio recording materials
- Legal inheritors of Takrut of the artistic rights (Takrut's daughter, Krut Morn who is now 74 years old and living in Kampong Cham province.)

3. The copyright of the digitized recordings shared by three parties:

- Cambodian National Commission for UNESCO
 - ARPAA (Bophana Audiovisual Resource Center)
 - Legal inheritors of Takrut of the artistic right (Takrut's daughter, Krut Morn who is now 74 years old and living in Kampong Cham province).
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5 Assessment against the selection criteria

5.1 First criterion: authenticity. Is the documentary heritage what it appears to be? Has its identity and origin been reliably established?

The authenticity of this documentary heritage has been established by well-known Reamker scholars, Professor Alain Daniel and Professor Mr. Jacques Brunet.

5.2 Second criterion: world significance. Is the documentary heritage unique and irreplaceable, something whose disappearance or deterioration would constitute a harmful impoverishment of the heritage of humanity? Has it created a great impact over a span of time and/or within a particular supra-national cultural area of the region? Is it representative of a type, but it has no direct equal? Has it had great influence – whether positive or negative – on the course of history?

To realize the universal importance of this documentary heritage, we have to imagine the impact of the Homeric poems on Western society. Just as Homer's epic poems lie at the beginning of the Western canon of literature, the Ramayana has a profound value in the context of South and Southeast Asia, and serves as the basis of literature, culture and arts and socio and political thought in the region. In Cambodia, the Reamker expounds on the importance of the royal system and the social structure of the country. The opportunity of capturing and preserving the Reamker in its live oral makes this initiative doubly important.

The Ramayana has significant regional value: Ramayana exists in South Asia and Indonesia, Ramaken in Thailand, Preah Ream Preah Lask in Laos. However, they are all derivations of the same tradition, as explored in the Ramayana international festivals and scholarly conferences. The Ramayana is deeply embedded in the cultural and social thinking of the region, and would be an exceptionally important lens through which to examine and discover its arts, cultures and values.

The Reamker, an epic oral tradition, came to Cambodia with the arrival of the Hinduism at least the 2nd century. Even today, Khmer morality is principally guided by the Reamker, and can be found in Cambodian proverbs, daily conversations, humour and epithets. All the characters, for example, represent an important Khmer value: Hanuman represents bravery and honesty, Rama (Ream) represents the truth, Sita (Seda) represents loyalty, Garuda (Krut) represents strength and bravery. In essence, expressed in the Reamker are the universal values of humanity.

In Cambodia, the oral tradition has been the primary method of transmitting knowledge, values and ideas. The recording of the Reamker by Takrut is the only known existing audio recording of this rich Khmer oral tradition, and is an important part of one of the world's major traditions, philosophy of thought and culture.

5.3 Third, world significance must be demonstrated in meeting one or more of the following criteria. Because significance is comparative, these criteria are best illustrated by checking them against items of documentary heritage already inscribed (for example) on the International *Memory of the World Register*:

Time: Is it especially evocative of its time (which may have been one of crisis, or

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significant social or cultural change; it may represent a new discovery or be the “first of its kind”)

Recorded in 1960s, the Reamker by Trakrut shows the state of epic at a certain moment in time, and offers a reflection of the values and thinking of the society. Furthermore, the arts of the 1960s are very significant in Cambodia, as this period is prior the onset of the Khmer Rouge when much of the nation’s artists and art forms were destroyed.

During the 1960s, the arts were flourishing. In the art form of this period, there existed a continuity of the ancient artistic and cultural practices. In order to search for Cambodia’s ancient artistic roots years after the devastating war, one must return to the time period.

Place: Does it contain crucial information about a locality important in the history of the region and its cultures? Or did the location have an important influence on the events or phenomena represented by the documentary heritage? Or is it descriptive of physical environments, cities or institutions since vanished?

The Reamker by Takrut allows for a better understanding of Cambodian history and society from the pre-Angkorian period Funan Empire (Phnom Da), to Chenla (Sambor Prei Kuk) right through to the Angkorian period. Between 9th to the end of the 13rd century, the Angkor Empire covered the most part of the mainland Southeast Asia and at the same time, the influence of the Reamker epic of the Hinduism spread through the region. As the result, the Reamker has been absorbed by the people in the region and continues its existence until today.

The stories of Reamker are expressed on the walls of the Angkor Wat temples, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and today this oral traditon assists the people to understand the roots of the site.

People: Is it related to people in a social and cultural context that reflects significant aspects of human behaviour, or social, industrial, artistic or political development. It may reflect the important roles and impact of key or certain individuals or groups.

This documentary heritage is a significant document that illuminates the social, political and artistic development in Cambodia. It captures the essence of the Khmer social system.

Subject and theme: The subject matter may represent particular historical or intellectual developments in natural, social and human sciences, politics, ideology, sports and the arts.

The subject of this document is the birth of the Khmer society. It is the primary source of Khmer history and continues to be studied by researchers. The document is essential for the rest of the world in understanding the social value system of Cambodia and the region.

Form and style: The item(s) may have outstanding aesthetic, stylistic or linguistic value, be a typical or key exemplar of a type or presentation, custom or medium, or of a disappeared or disappearing carrier or format.

This document heritage has an outstanding aesthetic value as an exemplar of the Cambodian epic and oral tradition which suffered severe loss and was nearly extinguished in the 1970s during the Khmer Rouge era.

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The linguistic value of the Reamker by Takrut comes from the unique vocabulary and dialect of the province of the Kampong Cham in Cambodia. The language is similar to that of a song. Also, the stories represent the different levels of the language in Khmer society, which is not very well understood by the new generations.

This document has a stylistic value as Takrut is the only known storyteller who told the Reamker in its unique form. In the oral tradition, the storyteller is almost as important as the tale itself.

6 Other matters taken into account: rarity, integrity and threat

Rarity Does the content or physical nature of the documentary heritage make it a rare surviving example of its type or time?

The nominated audio materials are rare and unique: Professor Alain Daniel, researcher and scholar of the Reamker, has found no other versions of the recordings existing today.

Integrity Within the natural physical limitations of carrier survival, is the documentary heritage complete or partial? Has it been altered or damaged?

A comparison of the two recordings of the Reamker by Takrut demonstrates the totality and integrity of the audio materials. In the restored files, the complete version from the 1960s exists.

Threat Is its survival in danger? If it is secure, must vigilance be applied to maintain that security? Detail the nature and scope of threats.

The state of preservation of the original audio materials is not good. Some parts of the sound are degraded and even lost. The digitization of the two recordings of the sound files has already been made. The master files (with file extension of WAV) of the digitization are stored at server of the Bophana Audiovisual Resource Center, residing at #64, Street 200, Okhna Men, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The master digital files of the Reamker by Takrut are safeguarded at Bophana Centre's databases (Hanuman Prod database and Hanuman Consult database). Even Hanuman Prod database accidentally has problem, the files must be safe in the Hanuman Consult Database.

Attach a separate statement if space is insufficient!

7 Preservation and Access Management Plan

Is there a management plan in existence for this documentary heritage? Are there strategies to preserve and provide access to it?

YES X NO

If yes, describe or attach a summary of the plan. If no, please provide details about current method of storage and custody of the materials.

A management plan for the digitization and access of this documentary heritage exists. However,

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there is currently no management plan for the preservation of the original audio recordings.

Digitization is already complete. The stage of disseminating the material and making it available to the public is still in progress. 1000 DVDs have been edited and produced. The Reamker is also available online. The plan now is to translate, teach and disseminate to Cambodians and to people of the world about the Reamker of Takrut.

8 Any other information

Please provide any other information that supports the inclusion of this item(s) / collection on the Asia/Pacific *Memory of the World Register*.

Attach a separate statement if space insufficient.

In order to promote the Memory of the World Program, the UNESCO Phnom Penh Office seeks to offer the digitized audio materials as teaching tools to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of Cambodia. Currently, the Reamker is studied by students of all ages in the written form, but it will be just as important to promote the oral tradition to inspire new young storytellers and to inform the future generations about the importance of the documentary and audio-visual heritage.

9 Checklist

Nominees may find completing the following checklist useful before sending the nomination form to MOWCAP.

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | MOWCAP website reviewed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Introduction read |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | summary completed (maximum 100 word) (section 1) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Nomination and contact details completed (section 2) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | If this is a joint nomination, section 2 appropriately modified |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Documentary heritage identified (sections 3.1 – 3.3) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | History/Origin/Background/Provenance completed (section 3.4) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Bibliography completed (section 3.5) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Names, qualifications and contact details of up to three independent people or organizations recorded (section 3.6) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Declaration signed and dated that all referees have given their written permission for their names to appear on the MOWCAP website (section 3.6) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Details of owner completed (section 4.1) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Details of custodian – if different from owner - completed (section 4.2) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Details of legal status completed (section 4.3) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Details of accessibility completed (section 4.4) |

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- Details of copyright status completed (section 4.5)
-
- Evidence presented of authenticity (section 5.1)
-
- Evidence presented of world significance (section 5.2)
-
- Evidence presented against one or more additional criteria (section 5.3)
-
- Information presented on rarity, integrity and threat (section 6)
-
- Summary of Preservation and Access Management Plan completed. If there is no formal Plan provide details about current and/or planned access, storage and custody arrangements (section 7)
-
- Any other information provided - if applicable (section 8)
-
- Sample photographs or VDO prepared for MOWCAP use (if required)
-
- Printed copy of Nomination Form made for organisation's records
-
- Electronic copy of Nomination Form made for MOWCAP use (if required)