Cover image: Dewi Sri, rice and fertility goddess of Indonesia, figurine created for the SEAMEO SPAFA seminar/performances in May 2015 on the spiritual dimensions of rice culture in Southeast Asia.
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Throughout the year 2014-2015, the Governing Board was very pleased to take note of the fact that SEAMEO SPAFA has continued to implement a wide range of regional projects, which included workshops, seminars, forums, publications, and collaborations with other organizations, under its well-established flagship programmes of archaeology, fine arts, and conservation. As envisioned in the Regional Centre’s 6th Five-Year Plan, which the Governing Board had approved with great enthusiasm in 2011 in the belief that this would facilitate new and dynamic initiatives of regional scope and importance under the administration of the present Centre Director, the entire annual programme has indeed, we believe, further consolidated the organization as a knowledge-based institution focused on archaeology and fine arts in Southeast Asia. It has, moreover, earned further recognition for SEAMEO SPAFA as a regional stakeholder in the efforts of protecting and developing the cultural heritage of the Centre’s member states and peoples, as well as among international partners who are committed to similar concerns on behalf of the wider world.

We have also taken great pleasure in noting that yearly performance indicators show that SEAMEO SPAFA accomplished much in key result areas such as regional leadership and international visibility, and that the Centre has strengthened linkages with many other organizations by, for example, placing maritime archaeology on the agenda in regional discussions; that the Centre has also promoted dialogues and co-operation on repositioning museums in Southeast Asia to meet new challenges; and has undertaken initiatives in areas that have not received adequate attention, such as projects that disseminated knowledge regarding vernacular architectures and the conservation of palm-leaf Buddhist manuscripts.

Another key result area the Governing Board has appreciated was the promotion of awareness of cultural diversity, shared values, and peaceful co-existence, with the activities carried out in this area including: advancing cross-cultural understanding through the spiritual arts workshop; imparting knowledge and appreciation of the history, as well as the spiritual and cultural dimensions of rice in Southeast Asia; producing educational materials; and engaging schools in documenting cultural heritage through the SEAMEO Cultural Week region-wide campaign.

Concerning the sharing of good practices and promoting community involvement, we have been informed that SEAMEO SPAFA has been facilitating the development of leadership knowledge and skills of youth leaders from Southeast Asian countries, and that the Centre is also expanding mangrove/environment conservation education from Thailand to other parts of the region by supporting a number of schools in carrying out projects related to mangrove conservation and environmental protection that can benefit communities interested in enhancing environmental awareness and education. These initiatives have our strong approval and support, in the realization that we are exposed to common environmental vulnerabilities that might possibly be answered, eventually, by a common response grounded on the very same sense of shared cultural identity that the Centre, uniquely, does so much to foster among us.

Accomplishments in management and organizational efficiency were also clearly evident to the Governing Board, which noted that the Centre is better than ever before placed to develop and capitalize on innovations and reforms to enhance significantly its overall organizational performance, and we appreciate that capacity-building within SEAMEO SPAFA to increase knowledge management and skills in programme management and efficient communication and work-flow continues to strengthen and become increasingly institutionalized.

Looking ahead to the 2015-2016 annual programme, SEAMEO SPAFA will be aiming for its international conference on Southeast Asian archaeology, which will be held for the second time, to become the premier archaeological conference in the region; I take great pleasure here in stating that this is an objective that the entire Governing Board supports in the strongest terms, anticipating that the Centre will reinforce its regional influence in this field by providing a platform for the dissemination of research and findings, and increasing co-operation among Southeast Asian and international archaeologists active throughout the region, and that these efforts will be boosted by the continued development of the Southeast Asian Maritime and Underwater Cultural Heritage (SEAMUCH) database to which SEAMEO SPAFA has given strong support, and which the Centre hopes will function as a research tool to enhance regional capacity in maritime and underwater archaeology and the management of sites and artefacts.

A research project, highly significant in our view, will also be launched to document in detail the so-called “invisible paintings” discovered on the walls of the Angkor Wat complex in Cambodia that will increase appreciation of Khmer history and mural art.

The Centre will also strive to facilitate the establishment of the Museums of Southeast Asia Network (MUSEAN) together with an associated website and online portal, something that we in the region unanimously regard as long overdue.

In the area of heritage conservation, SEAMEO SPAFA will organize training on disaster risk management to enhance protection of cultural heritage in times of disaster, as part of the Centre’s continuing concern for strengthening disaster risk management capacity in cultural heritage conservation, a concern that is shared by all the members of the Governing Board.

All the initiatives of the Centre for the past year, summarized in the annual report, have received the strong support of the Governing Board, and it is our hope that, as its current five-year plan nears its conclusion and the 7th Five-Year Plan is presently being drafted, SEAMEO SPAFA will continue to make progress in realizing an increasingly important role in the region in capacity-building, and initiating partnerships to focus on issues and imperatives which are not only of common interest but also of truly regional importance with respect to its mandate.

Indeed, the Centre’s performance in the past year, and its strong continuing commitment to its established vision and institutional purposes, evoke great pride among us as the appointed representatives of the SEAMEO member nations to the Governing Board of this singular institution, on behalf of which I am privileged to represent here in this message.

I hereby have the honour, therefore, of once again extending our collective congratulations, together with deep expressions of gratitude and admiration, to the Centre Director and all the SEAMEO SPAFA officers and staff, and all who have been involved as partners and collaborators, for the attainment of so many significant accomplishments and milestones that have redounded to the collective benefit of the nations and peoples of Southeast Asia. Along with our friends and partners throughout the world, we wish you all the best in the year to come. As we in the Philippines say: Mabuhay!
As ASEAN integration was reaching another landmark in 2015, SEAMEO SPAFA’s performance has been outstanding in presenting the shared spiritual traditions and values of the ASEAN Community during the fiscal year July 2014-June 2015 through its “Sacred Universe” Flagship Programme.

Just as the symbol of combined rice stalks represents the unity of the ASEAN Community, the traditional beliefs and rituals related to rice culture in the region reflect the diverse expressions of respect for rice as the life-force that is invariably personified most of the time as “mother” or male deity who is both a protector and giver. These practices were born out of the reality of thousands of years of rice cultivation that supported the communities and states of Southeast Asia to the present days. With this focus on shared spiritual traditions and values, SEAMEO SPAFA organized a 3-day event in Bangkok, Thailand, entitled the “Spiritual Dimensions of Rice Culture in Southeast Asia: Seminar and Performances” which comprised presentations of academic papers by 22 experts on traditional beliefs and rituals of the rice cycles. In addition, 190 performing artists from local communities in Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam showcased community ritual practices rarely seen before outside their countries. The day-seminars drew in a total of 355 participants, and the evening-performances attracted over 700 people in the audience. It is hoped that the rituals, many of which are dying out because of the technological changes in rice production, will be revived and made meaningful again. The continuing important role of rice in binding Southeast Asia’s pluralistic communities together for a better life and in maintaining the precious natural resources of the region cannot be overlooked. This event should encourage further researches and regional collaboration.

Buddhism and Buddhist art constitute the other shared traditions of Southeast Asia. It is estimated that the region hosts over 163 million Buddhists who account for more than 33% of the world’s Buddhist population. While Theravada Buddhism is a powerful force in Thailand, Myanmar, Cambodia, and Lao PDR, its expressions in arts and architecture vary and have become increasingly eclectic. The workshop on “Buddhist Art in Southeast Asia” held in November 2014 introduced the participants to the scriptural foundations of Theravada Buddhist art and iconography, as well as the Mahayanist and Zen traditions that co-exist in all Southeast Asian countries, especially in urban areas. The Buddhist places of worship in these countries house invaluable artistic works of art inspired by centuries-old commitment to the teachings of the Lord Buddha that now attract visitors from all over the world. Unfortunately, not enough has been done to explain to the general public the symbolisms behind the masterpieces. The workshop provided an essential foundation for a better general understanding of Buddhist artistic heritage.

The “Sacred Universe” Flagship Programme carries the spiritual elements found in both tangible and intangible forms of Southeast Asian cultural traditions that cut across present-day national boundaries. They make up the regional identities and shared characteristics. The cultural performances in particular continue to make a big impact on Southeast Asian citizens, especially those that live abroad and have lost touch with their homeland. The performances available on SPAFA YouTube have been watched by over 90,000 people in 148 countries worldwide.

Shared heritage in music, dances and rituals is beginning to be recognized as an important tool in forging ASEAN solidarity and presenting to the world the region’s unique civilization.

A better understanding of the different religious beliefs and practices in the region should also reduce religious and cultural conflicts. Exchanges and cooperation among culture experts, anthropologists, folklorists, musicians, performers, and those interested in spiritual rituals in Southeast Asia should continue to increase as a result.

Promoting cross-cultural understanding and mutual knowledge among Southeast Asians remains a main concern in SEAMEO SPAFA’s annual activities. One mechanism towards that is stimulating closer contacts between Southeast Asian museums to bring about a better sense of shared heritage, identity, and diversity. SEAMEO SPAFA’s museum forum provides a platform for major museums in the region to discuss and define their roles in the context of the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community. It has the potential in stimulating new policies and alternative methods that will make museums more attractive, especially to young people, through exchanges of ideas and good practices. Through working groups, several ideas have been put forward, such as all objects should be interpreted in a contemporary way, and that is easy to understand; a guideline manual of best practices in museum management should be developed and shared; and in relation, Guidelines to Museum Disaster Management should also be developed, etc...

Cooperative projects were also held with most museums in the region, including Korea, focusing on the use of paintings depicting cultural heritage in these countries for cross-cultural understanding and the resource material, “100 Everyday Objects”, which describes objects in museums that reflect the local cultures and shed light on the unique characteristics of each country while demonstrating the region’s shared materials, techniques, and everyday practices. The researches, publications, educational materials, and website related to these projects were kindly supported by the Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU).

These programmes and activities succeeded in promoting awareness of cultural diversity, shared values, and peaceful co-existence. We have reasons to believe that SEAMEO SPAFA is regarded as the most important and reliable regional supporter of human resource development for Southeast Asians who work in the fields of archaeology and cultural heritage. SEAMEO SPAFA continues to attract new collaborators and partners, especially in the areas of visual art, music, and performing arts of the region. These ties will accelerate the building of the ASEAN Social and Cultural Community and ASEAN identity.
**Organization Profile and Mission**

**SEAMEO SPAFA**, the Regional Centre for Archaeology and Fine Arts, is part of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education organization (SEAMEO). As one of SEAMEO regional centres based in Bangkok, SEAMEO SPAFA promotes skills, knowledge, and the preservation of cultural heritage by:

- Cultivating awareness and appreciation of cultural heritage through collaboration in information dissemination and relevant programme activities;
- Promoting and helping to enrich archaeological and cultural activities in the region;
- Furthering professional competence in the fields of archaeology and fine arts through the sharing of resources, experience, and skills within the framework of regional programmes and activities; and
- Advancing mutual knowledge and understanding among the countries of Southeast Asia through regional programmes in archaeology and fine arts.

**History**

1971
Initiation of ARCAFA (Applied Research Centre for Archaeology and Fine Arts) by SEAMEO

1978
Launch of SPAFA (SEAMEO Project in Archaeology and Fine Arts) and its co-ordinating unit

1981
Approval of SEAMEO SPAFA as a permanent project

1985
Establishment of the SEAMEO Regional Centre for Archaeology and Fine Arts (in Bangkok, Thailand)

**Member Countries**

- Brunei Darussalam
- Indonesia
- Malaysia
- Philippines
- Thailand
- Vietnam
- Cambodia
- Lao PDR
- Myanmar
- Singapore
- Timor-Leste

**Associate Member Countries**

- Australia
- Canada
- France
- Germany
- New Zealand
- Spain
- The Netherlands
- The United Kingdom

**SEAMEO**

The Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) is a regional intergovernmental organization established in 1965 among governments of Southeast Asian countries to promote regional cooperation in education, science, and culture in the region.

As an organization that nurtures human capacities and explores the peoples’ fullest potential, SEAMEO maintains its work and aspirations for development with peoples of the region to make lives better in quality and equity in education, preventive health education, culture and tradition, information and communication technology, languages, poverty alleviation, agriculture, and natural resources.

The organization’s highest policy-making body is the SEAMEO Council, which comprises the education ministers of the eleven member countries. Its Secretariat is based in Bangkok, Thailand.
1. **Pengiran Dr. Karim Bin Pengiran Haji Osman**  
   Director  
   Brunei Museums Department  
   **Brunei Darussalam**

2. **Dr. Bong Sovath**  
   Rector  
   Royal University of Fine Arts  
   Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts  
   **Cambodia**

3. **Dr. I Gede Arya Sugiartha, SS.Kar., M.Hum**  
   Rector  
   Institut Seni Indonesia (ISI) Denpasar  
   **Indonesia**

4. **Mr. Viengkeo Souksavatdy**  
   Deputy Director-General,  
   Department of Heritage  
   Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism  
   **Lao PDR**

5. **Dr. San Shwe**  
   Professor  
   Department of Archaeology  
   University of Yangon  
   **Myanmar**

6. **Mr. Jeremy R Barns**  
   Director  
   National Museum of the Philippines  
   **Philippines**

7. **Ms. Jean Wee**  
   Director  
   Preservation of Sites and Monuments  
   National Heritage Board (NHB)  
   **Singapore**

8. **Mr. Borvornvate Rungrujee**  
   Director-General  
   The Fine Arts Department  
   Ministry of Culture  
   **Thailand**

9. **Mr. Abilio Da Silva**  
   National Director for Museum  
   c/o Ministry of Education  
   **Timor Leste**

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**Note**  
Designation of Malaysia's and Vietnam's governing board member is in process.
Our Role

SEAMEO SPAFA aims at being the world’s reference and authoritative knowledge centre on Southeast Asian archaeology and fine arts through:

- **Capacity-building workshops, training and seminars, and making alliances and networking with academics, resource persons, and institutions specialized in these fields**

- **Expansion of the Centre’s Library and electronic resources relating to archaeology and fine arts**

- **Providing e-contents related to cultural issues for educational purposes**

- **Promotion and regular support of archaeological and cultural activities in the region, with the focus on regional relevance in meeting the changes and needs of social and economic integration in Southeast Asia**

- **Innovation activities that combine different artistic elements or mixed media**

- **Reaching out to the global public through the Centre’s website and mass media**

- **Capacity-building workshops, training and seminars, and making alliances and networking with academics, resource persons, and institutions specialized in these fields**
SEAMEO SPAFA organizes and supports programmes and activities within the framework of its 3 Flagship Programmes:

Archaeology
Advancing Southeast Asian Archaeology

- International Conference on Southeast Asian Archaeology
- Underwater Archaeology
- Rock Art Studies

Fine Arts
Sacred Universe

- Spiritual and Religious Arts
- Southeast Asian Performing Arts and Oral Traditions

Heritage and Conservation
Conservation in the Tropics

- Conservation of Documentary and Tangible Heritage (with emphasis on the relevancy and applicability of traditional conservation methods and the role of local communities)
- Southeast Asian Vernacular Architecture Studies

SEAMEO SPAFA acts as the regional co-ordinator for professionals and practitioners in its fields of concern by organizing meetings, forums, training, seminars, workshops, and performances. These activities highlight both the cultural diversity and uniqueness in the Southeast Asian region, and promote mutual understanding and collaboration to contribute to a better quality of life, as well as meaningful dialogues within the ASEAN community:

- **Training Programmes/Workshops** to expand knowledge and improve skills in Southeast Asia. Both students and specialists are brought together to share experiences and information in cultural heritage and preservation, archaeology, and fine arts.

- **Conferences/Seminars/Forums/Meetings** for experts, practitioners, and those interested in archaeology, fine arts, and heritage and conservation to share knowledge, explore new ideas and technologies, develop alliances, and build networks in the fields of archaeology and fine arts.

- **Information dissemination** among the general public through the Centre’s website, mass-media, social networks, and its journal (available online), and by providing e-contents.

- **Publications** in the areas of archaeology, fine arts, and cultural heritage conservation to educate and expand knowledge. The publications can also be accessed through or downloaded from the Centre’s website.

- **Library/Documentation services** that provide reference materials on archaeology and arts.

- **Internships** for participants to gain experience, knowledge, and skills pertaining to archaeology, fine arts, and cultural heritage conservation in Southeast Asia.
IN ITS FISCAL YEAR 2014-2015, SEAMEO SPAFA carried out a total of sixteen programme activities that involved more than 750 beneficiaries and participants. Costing a total of US$474,907, the annual programme consisted of five activities under the ‘Advancing Southeast Asian Archaeology’ flagship programme; two under the ‘Sacred Universe’ flagship programme (related to Southeast Asian fine arts); two under the ‘Conservation in the Tropics’ flagship programme; and seven under ‘Collaborations’. The activities have benefitted experts and practitioners as well as educators and students, in various fields, whilst also further strengthening the Centre’s position as a regional – and global – reference and authoritative knowledge centre on Southeast Asian archaeology, fine arts, and cultural heritage conservation.

Advancing Southeast Asian Archaeology Flagship Programme

The first of the five ‘Advancing Southeast Asian Archaeology’ programme activities for the fiscal year 2014-2015 was The 2nd Consultative Meeting on Southeast Asian Collaborative Programme on Underwater Archaeology, which was a follow-up to the first one conducted in Chonburi, Thailand (1-4 September 2012). This second consultative meeting (12-13 October 2014) was held at Thien An Riverside Hotel in Quang Ngai, Vietnam, in conjunction with a symposium on Southeast Asian underwater cultural heritage (organized by the Institute of Archaeology of Vietnam). The meeting included participants who had also been invited to the symposium, and twenty-two participants who had attended the initial consultative meeting. As a continuation from the first consultative meeting, outstanding issues were raised, such as insufficient data on commercial salvage works, and the lack of underwater archaeology practice in some countries in Southeast Asia. At the meeting, two levels of training were recognised: basic training in diving and recording, and advanced methods, including riverine archaeology and post-salvage stabilization of artefacts. At this meeting, SEAMEO SPAFA decided to launch an educational component in developing a curriculum on the subject to assist universities in the region that do not offer formal education in underwater archaeology.
The Database of Southeast Asian Maritime and Underwater Cultural Heritage (SEAMUCH) – the second ‘Advancing Southeast Asian Archaeology’ programme activity – is an ongoing database project. It is a project resulting from the first Consultative Meeting on Southeast Asian Collaborative Programme on Underwater Archaeology held in Thailand in September 2012. This database would enhance knowledge in maritime and underwater cultural heritage while promoting awareness on the protection of the heritage in the Southeast Asian region.

During the initial phase of the SEAMUCH database project, the scope and outline of the database were established together with partners from SEAMEO countries. During the current phase, the project is focused on data gathering, data inputting, as well as building the database system without yet launching it online.

The architecture of the database was presented and commented upon at the second consultative meeting in Quang Ngai, Vietnam. There were difficulties in seeing the utility of the database when there was no actual data to work on. A large part of the delay was due to the time needed in urging partner institutions to sign the information-sharing agreement which lays out the framework for sharing such information. Currently, only two partner institutions have signed up to the database, the National Museum of the Philippines (NMP) and the Institute of Archaeology of Vietnam. Work on such a large set of information and with a large number of institutions will necessarily take time before results can be seen. However, upon the successful completion of the SEAMUCH database, the region will have available consolidated and updated information on maritime and underwater cultural heritage in Southeast Asia, whilst regional cooperation in underwater archaeology and proper protection and management of underwater cultural heritage will be enhanced.

The 1st SEAMEO SPAFA International Conference in Southeast Asian Archaeology (2013, Chonburi, Thailand) brought together some 200 archaeologists and students, with over 100 presenting papers on their research. The conference proceedings, titled Advancing Southeast Asian Archaeology 2013, has been published, and contains 37 papers concerning archaeology in the region, with contributions from scholars, researchers, and practitioners.
In the fourth activity under the ‘Advancing Southeast Asian Archaeology’ flagship programme, SEAMEO SPAFA organized the Second SEAMEO SPAFA Museums Forum on Southeast Asian Museums and the Challenges of the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (21 November 2014, Yogyakarta, Indonesia). This meeting was attended by 19 museum directors, museum professionals and experts, and coincided with the international museum conference “Museum of our Own: In Search of Local Museology for Asia” (18-20 November 2014, organized by Gadjah Mada University).

Under the concept of ‘unity based on diversity of Southeast Asia’, museums in Southeast Asia discussed cultural identity, indigenous wisdom, and collective identity of Southeast Asia. Participants also discussed Southeast Asian museums joining hands in the conservation of cultural heritage, sharing their common work experiences and best practices, and enhancing their capacity in protecting cultural resources, display designs, and interaction with the youth and the public. The meeting resulted in the establishment of “Working Groups” to move forward the plans for collaborative action, as well as the decision to develop a museum website that displays artefacts from Southeast Asian museums pertaining to a specific type of artefact.

This second forum was a continuation of the initial forum that promoted dialogues and explored areas of collaboration, as well as formed an international network of museums relating to the cultural heritage and identity of Southeast Asia. The first Museum Forum: Southeast Asian Museums and the Challenges of the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) was held on 14-15 January 2013 in Bangkok, Thailand, with the focus on the role of Southeast Asian museums in the development of the ASCC.

The fifth project of SEAMEO SPAFA’s ‘Advancing Southeast Asian Archaeology’ flagship programme is the Training in Underwater Archaeology (14 June 2015 to 12 July 2015, Hoi An, Vietnam). It was initiated in the previous fiscal year of the Centre, and concluded within the current fiscal year. This international training course, which was a collaboration between SEAMEO SPAFA, the Institute of Archaeology of the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed (Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands), and UNESCO, was conducted by the Institute of Archaeology of the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences of Vietnam. The course consisted of lectures, hands-on exercises, and fieldwork. The lectures focused on an introduction to underwater archaeology, underwater surveying, guidelines, and best practices regarding the management of underwater cultural heritage, as well as the UNESCO Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage. The training took place in Hoi An Ancient Town, a World Heritage Site, that is a well-preserved example of a traditional Asian trading port and an outstanding material manifestation of the fusion of cultures over time in an international maritime commercial centre. The training programme included fieldwork around the Cham islands, a group of eight small islands in Quảng Nam
province, which form a part of the Cu Lao Cham Marine Protected Area, a world Biosphere Reserve recognized by UNESCO. A total of fifteen participants attended this training course, eight of whom were direct beneficiaries of SEAMEO SPAFA’s contribution to the field school.

**Sacred Universe Flagship Programme**

Two activities were carried out under the ‘Sacred Universe’ flagship programme. The first was the workshop on **Buddhist Art in Southeast Asia** (12-15 November 2014, Bangkok, Thailand). This is the second in a series of regional workshops on the spiritual arts of the Southeast Asian region, with the first being ‘Islamic Art of Southeast Asia’ (20-24 February 2012, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia).

The four-day intensive workshop on Buddhist Art in Southeast Asia (at Royal Princess Larn Luang Hotel, Bangkok) involved 15 participants from SEAMEO-member countries. The participants heard lectures from experts on Buddhist art, visited temples and art exhibitions, and participated in hands-on Buddhist art activities. Beliefs and practices of the main religions of Buddhism, Islam and Christianity, form the core of the peoples’ lives in the Southeast Asian region; the workshop thus facilitated a better understanding, especially among educators and professionals in the fields of cultural heritage and fine arts.

SEAMEO SPAFA promoted the shared cultural heritage of the spiritual aspects of rice culture by organizing a seminar and performances on **The Spiritual Dimensions of Rice Culture in Southeast Asia** (11-14 May 2015, Bangkok, Thailand) at the Srinakharinwirot University. The events related to the following themes: ‘The Rice Goddess in Southeast Asia’; ‘Rituals of the Rice Cycle in Southeast Asia’; and ‘Navigating Rice Culture in the Contemporary World’. Twenty-two speakers from 9 countries in Southeast Asia presented papers on traditional beliefs in rice deities and related rituals, the ceremonies of the rice cycle, and the present efforts in maintaining the cultural dignity of rice and its role in forging social cooperation and natural balance. In addition, 190 performing artists from local communities in Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam showcased community ritual practices rarely seen before outside their countries. The day-seminars drew in a total of 355 participants, and the evening-performances attracted about 700 participants.

While traditional rituals may still be practised in some parts of Southeast Asia, rice agriculture has become a veritable industry across the region, thus progressively losing its cultural and spiritual character and value. The activity helped to bring to light the spiritual and cultural dimensions of rice, especially for the young and urban populations, raising awareness of the rich culture that surrounds their staple food so that it may be viewed as more than mere food for consumption. The Centre appreciates the importance of documenting these practices and beliefs so that they may not be lost over time.

With the ASEAN community integration under way, SEAMEO SPAFA recognizes its role as a catalyst
in forming a stronger cultural bond within the community. This seminar and series of performances on the shared heritage of rice culture is a continuation of SEAMEO SPAFA’s endeavours to help build cultural bridges between the countries of Southeast Asia, which is in keeping with the objectives of the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community.

**Conservation in the Tropics Flagship Programme**

Under SEAMEO SPAFA’s flagship programme, ‘Conservation in the Tropics’, a publication, seminar, and study tour on **Mon Palm-leaf Manuscripts: Compilation, Conservation, and Digitisation** were outputs resulting from activities that had been initiated in 2011. The Centre has been involved in the compilation and conservation of traditional Mon palm-leaf manuscripts kept at Mon Buddhist monasteries around Thailand, and has produced a publication of selected documents on Buddhist ethics and morality that were composed by Mon scholars, Ajarn Aswhoh and Nai Klai (translated from the original Mon language into Thai). The publication was launched at the seminar (25 June 2015, The Siam Society, Bangkok) that was followed by a study tour (26 June 2015 Ratchaburi province, Thailand) of three places related to Mon heritage and culture. The seminar was attended by a total of 46 participants, and 51 persons went on the study tour. Through this project, the rare works of Mon scholar Ajarn Aswhoh are better known, and there is increased public awareness in the importance of old Mon palm-leaf manuscripts and the need for their preservation.

The other project was the **Southeast Asia’s Vernacular Architecture – Lao PDR (Research/Publication on Lao PDR’s Vernacular Architecture)**. It is an ongoing research project that forms part of the study and documentation of vernacular architecture in SEAMEO countries using the community-based approach to preserve and protect built heritage, as well as to expand the knowledge of vernacular architecture in the region. The activity contributes to capacity building for the local staff involved in the project, and promotes the community-based approach in heritage conservation.

Vernacular architecture forms a significant part of heritage in Southeast Asia; however, the local building materials, especially wood, do not last in the tropical area. With the changing environment and socio-economic conditions, vernacular architecture is rapidly dwindling, and in many cases, not properly documented. This is a loss of irreplaceable wisdom; the project is thus carried out to document the vernacular architecture of the region, and, through the process, encourages the long-term preservation of Southeast Asia’s vernacular architecture through community involvement.
The first research project of the series, planned in Thailand and Lao PDR, aimed at conducting a comparative study of vernacular architecture between the two countries. This ongoing activity, started in September 2014, is a collaboration between the Department of Heritage, Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism, Lao PDR; local community members from Thailand and Lao PDR; and SEAMEO SPAFA.

**Collaborations**

Among collaborations with partners during the fiscal year was the conference on *Research on Chinese Export Ware found in Thailand during the Past Three Decades*. In partnership with the Southeast Asian Ceramics Museum of Bangkok University, Third Regional Office of Fine Arts in Ayutthaya, and Thammasat Chalermprikan Museum of Thammasat University, Thailand, the conference was held in Woraburi Ayothaya Convention Resort, Ayutthaya, Thailand (1-2 August 2014). It was attended by 180 participants (173 from Thailand, 2 from Japan, 1 from Malaysia, 2 from Cambodia and 2 from America) and one keynote speaker each from Australia and Lao PDR.

Chinese export ware found in Southeast Asia has received much attention and been acknowledged as important archaeological evidences, and this has been the case in Thailand. For archaeologists in Thailand, the analysis of Chinese export ware helps them in their surveys and excavations of archaeological sites. Likewise, for Thai curators and art historians, the patterns on Chinese export ware assist them in finding the source of inspiration for creating Sukhothai, Lanna and Ayutthaya art. Chinese scholars, too, are interested in studying the role that Chinese export ware has had within the various branches of art in the region. Unfortunately, there is a lack of scholars in Thailand who are able to connect ancient Chinese export ware to Chinese or Southeast Asian history. It is for this reason that SEAMEO SPAFA and the various partners organized this conference to provide an update on the dating and provenance of Chinese ware to archaeologists, curators, and academics.

In 2015, the Centre completed the project *Khlong Phitthaya Longkorn School: Mangrove Conservation – Publication of Booklet*. As part of its social responsibility efforts, SEAMEO SPAFA produced two booklets (one in the English language, and the other in Thai) publicising the efforts and work of Khlong Phitthaya Longkorn Primary School (Bangkok, Thailand) in mangrove conservation and environmental protection. For several years now, the Khlong Phitthaya Longkorn School authorities and students have been engaged in preserving the mangrove environment next to the school, with the aim of replenishing depleted natural resources. As part of their endeavour, the curriculum and daily activities in the school incorporate environmental issues integral to the school community for developing awareness in conservation. This project has allowed the Centre to co-operate with a school and local community in raising awareness of environmental conservation through educational and practical activities. It has also helped to publicise the experience of the school in environmental conservation, and promote its practices as a way to motivate other schools.
Since 2005, the Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU) has co-operated with the SEAMEO Secretariat and SEAMEO SPAFA to develop educational materials for multicultural education. Previous collaborations included “Telling Tales from Southeast Asia and Korea”, which presents folktales in the form of books and audio-visual DVDs for use in classroom settings. Another collaboration was the publication of ‘Cultural Understanding through Paintings from Southeast Asia and Korea’ that reproduced images of paintings from Southeast Asia and Korea to help foster cultural understanding and artistic literacy among secondary school students.

Cultivating the values necessary for living together in the 21st century (peace, democracy, human rights, cultural diversity, and sustainable development) among the younger generations should be made a priority as education is the key to building mutual understanding and acceptance. It is in this context that the partners have created educational materials to promote cultural understanding. This fiscal year, the project titled Paintings from Southeast Asia and Korea (Phase 2) – Board Game Project: ART EXPLORER, focused on developing a board game by making use of a set of selected paintings from museums, galleries, and private collections from Southeast Asian countries and Korea. The unique board game (showcasing national treasures), is considered edutainment that blends educational information with amusement. The board game involves answering questions and quizzes on the paintings, allowing students to explore diverse aspects of culture and history in an entertaining way. This project is the first of two components of the 2014 SEAMEO-APCEIU collaboration on Educational Material Development for Cultural Understanding.

The other component project of the 2014 SEAMEO-APCEIU collaboration was the publication, 100 Everyday Objects from Southeast Asia and Korea. This project, with the support of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea (ROK), aimed at unearthing a collection of representative everyday objects of ASEAN member states and the ROK, and shed light on their distinct, and sometimes shared, cultural and historical aspects. The anthropological, historical, and artistic values of material culture provide a glimpse into everyday lives and objects that can be an invaluable educational resource to learn about one another’s culture.

SEAMEO SPAFA invited 10 resource persons from ASEAN member states working in museums and in the field of anthropology to participate in this project. Participants were asked to submit a selection of everyday objects representative of their respective culture and to write brief descriptions of each object with basic historical, anthropological, and artistic information. The project benefitted from the participation of a representative from the ROK and nearly every ASEAN member state.

Categorized into food, clothing, household, recreation, and various other groupings, information relating to the hundred selected objects were compiled in a sourcebook for secondary schools...
SEAMEO Cultural Week is a collaboration among the SEAMEO Secretariat and a number of SEAMEO Centres in commemorating the Golden SEAMEO 50th anniversary by offering an online video- and comment-sharing platform via YouTube for participating schools. Students were invited to create video documentation of a local cultural heritage practice, and submit it for dissemination and viewing during the celebratory week. It may be a dance, song, traditional craft-making, cooking a traditional dish, storytelling through drawing/painting, playing a traditional game. SEAMEO Centres and Ministries/Departments of Education across the region publicized the project and collected the videos in schools across Southeast Asia. In so doing, each participating country and school had the opportunity to share their cultural heritage with viewers across the region and beyond.

During the SEAMEO Cultural Week (2-6 November 2015), videos from two to three countries were published over five days. SEAMEO Centres and Ministries/Departments of Education promoted the screening of these videos in schools during classroom periods (homeroom, cultural studies, history, geography, arts, physical education, etc.). After viewing the videos, educators and students were asked to engage in a discussion to answer the mini-essay questions posted by SEAMEO/SEAMEO SPAFA. Prizes were disbursed to the school of the students who had submitted winning ‘comments’.

Celebrating SEAMEO’s 50th anniversary, the ‘Cultural Week’ project enhances understanding of Southeast Asia’s cultural diversity and traditions.

“Celebrating SEAMEO’s 50th anniversary, the ‘Cultural Week’ project enhances understanding of Southeast Asia’s cultural diversity and traditions.”
Whilst celebrating SEAMEO’s 50th anniversary, this project activity also aimed at enhancing the understanding of Southeast Asia’s cultural diversity and traditions. It also strengthened collaborations among schools, education ministries, and SEAMEO Centres across the region in promoting interactive platforms for Southeast Asian youths to appreciate the region’s culture. Youths of Southeast Asia were able to exchange knowledge and information of each other’s respective cultures through the creation of this interactive media platform, which will be hosted on SEAMEO SPAFA’s YouTube Channel (https://www.youtube.com/user/SEAMEOSPAFA).

On 1-4 October 2014, SEAMEO SPAFA conducted the 1st SEAMEO Youth Leadership Forum, which is part of the SEAMEO College initiative of the Asian Development Bank, the Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction, and SEAMEO. The four-day forum (held at the Holiday Inn, Bangkok, Thailand) involved 33 selected youth leaders (out of over 500 candidates) from 11 SEAMEO-member countries.

It allowed them to develop skills and knowledge in relation to leadership, ethics, critical regional issues, civic responsibility, and inter-cultural understanding. The forum invited 16 speakers and facilitators from a wide range of specializations to participate and make presentations.

The forum also included two site visits to The Royal Chitralada Projects and the Kudi Chin community. At The Royal Chitralada Projects, the youth participants observed, first-hand, projects related to sustainable development and economic sufficiency as initiated by His Majesty, The King of Thailand. At Kudi Chin community, they were able to see how different races and religions thrive harmoniously within a small community.

At the end of the four days of speeches, interactive workshops, discussions, and site visits, the participants gained a better understanding of what leadership entailed so that they, in the near future, could better serve their community, nation, and the Southeast Asian region.
Invited by Mahasarakham University (MSU), Thailand, SEAMEO SPAFA participated in the **Art of Storytelling Workshop and the Third MSU International Storytelling Festival in Thailand** (20 - 25 January 2015). The events took place in three northeastern provinces of Thailand, namely Surin, Sakon Nakhon, and Maha Sarakham. The Centre sponsored 3 Southeast Asian storytellers to participate in the workshop, “Connecting ASEAN through Travel, Trade, Food, Cultural Heritage, Religions and Arts”, who shared folk stories from their respective countries. The storytellers, together with other international, local, and youth storytellers, took part in storytelling concerts. They told stories to university students and kindergarten children so as to broaden the audience’s basic understanding of the ASEAN Community through folktales and storytelling in English, as well as provide cultural exposure for students, and bridge cultural gaps. Participants comprised approximately 200 Surindra Rajabhat University students and professors, 300 Sakon Nakhon Rajabhat University students, 150 kindergarten children from Sakon Nakhon Buddhist’s Way School, 34 international storytellers and 6 local storytellers, and approximately 600 MSU students and teachers. Through this workshop, Southeast Asian storytellers were able to share their wisdom, cultural values, beliefs, and ways of life through local folktales and encouraged the use of storytelling as an educational tool.

“Cultivating the values necessary for living together in the 21st century (peace, democracy, human rights, cultural diversity, and sustainable development) among the younger generations should be made a priority.”

**IN TERMS OF ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH** and development, SEAMEO SPAFA has also been making improvements in **knowledge management (KM)**. It held a KM training to enhance efficiency and effectiveness in communicating with the public through tools such as Mail Merge and Mail Chimp. Over the last two years, KM has become entrenched in the Centre’s work processes, such as AAR (After-action Review) practice (review of completed projects) and improved file management and sharing of information. KM practices have resulted in the outputs of a central repository (holding project documents, templates, precedents, etc); a server (LAN system) for sharing images; standardised AAR reports; and orientation programme for interns. The practices have clearly influenced staff members’ attitude and habits in learning and sharing knowledge, skills, and lessons learnt; and improved work co-ordination (benefiting from cloud services). Most positively, better communication and more efficient performance of repetitive activities within the organization indicate that the centre staff appreciate the role of KM, and are embracing it in their daily professional activities.
Summary of Expenditure Implemented Programmes/Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Funding Source</th>
<th>Expenditure (USD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>The 2nd Consultative Meeting on Southeast Asian Collaborative Programme on Underwater Archaeology</td>
<td>Consultative Meeting</td>
<td>Govt. of Thailand</td>
<td>34,377</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>The 2nd SEAMEO SPAFA Museum Forum on Southeast Asian Museums and the Challenges of the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (Museum Forum)</td>
<td>Forum</td>
<td>Govt. of Thailand</td>
<td>19,100</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Buddhist Art in Southeast Asia</td>
<td>Workshop</td>
<td>Govt. of Thailand</td>
<td>27,136</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Spiritual Dimensions of Rice Culture in Southeast Asia</td>
<td>Seminar and Performances</td>
<td>Govt. of Thailand</td>
<td>306,892</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Mon Palm-leaf Manuscripts: Compilation, Conservation, and Digitization</td>
<td>Publication, Seminar, Study Tour</td>
<td>Govt. of Thailand</td>
<td>7,691</td>
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</table>
# COLLABORATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Funding Source</th>
<th>Expenditure (USD)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Research on Chinese Export Ware found in Thailand during the Past Three Decades</td>
<td>Conference</td>
<td>Govt. of Thailand</td>
<td>5,647</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Mangrove Conservation Education</td>
<td>Publication</td>
<td>Govt. of Thailand</td>
<td>4,817</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>SEAMEO-APCEIU Collaboration on the Educational Material Development for Cultural Understanding: Paintings from Southeast Asia and Korea (Phase 2) – Board Game</td>
<td>Forum and Publication</td>
<td>APCEIU, Korea</td>
<td>20,300</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>SEAMEO College: Southeast Asian Youth Leadership Forum</td>
<td>Forum</td>
<td>ADB</td>
<td>41,035</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Govt. of Thailand</td>
<td>2,397</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>Art of Storytelling III</td>
<td>Workshop</td>
<td>Govt. of Thailand</td>
<td>5,515</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>474,907</strong></td>
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# SEAMEO SPAFA

## Grants and Incomes FY 2014–2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Unit in USD</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government of Thailand</td>
<td>678,594</td>
<td>89.79</td>
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<tr>
<td>APCEIU, Korea</td>
<td>20,300</td>
<td>2.69</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asian Development Bank</td>
<td>41,035</td>
<td>5.43</td>
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<td>Interest income</td>
<td>10,932</td>
<td>1.45</td>
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<td>Sale of SEAMEO SPAFA Publications</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>0.01</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>4,818</td>
<td>0.64</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>755,789</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Grants and Incomes Diagram

- Government of Thailand: 89.79%
- APCEIU, Korea: 2.69%
- Asian Development Bank: 5.43%
- Interest income: 1.45%
- Miscellaneous: 0.64%
- Sale of SEAMEO SPAFA Publications: 0.01%
Organizations in Collaboration with SEAMEO SPAFA

Governmental/Non-Governmental Organizations

- Asia Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU), Republic of Korea
- Institute of Archaeology, Vietnam
- Department of Heritage, Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism, Lao PDR
- National Museum of the Philippines, Philippines
- Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed (Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands), Netherlands
- SEAMEO Secretariat, Bangkok, Thailand
- SEAMEO Centres, Southeast Asia
- The Third Regional Office of Fine Arts, Ayutthaya, Thailand
- Underwater Archaeology Division, Fine Arts Department, Thailand
- UNESCO, Thailand
Organizations in Collaborations with SEAMEO SPAFA

Academic Institutions

- Bangkok University (Southeast Asian Ceramics Museum), Thailand
- Khlong Phittaya Longkorn School, Thailand
- Mahasarakham University, Thailand
- Sakon Nakhon Rajabhat University, Thailand
- Srinakharinwirot University, Thailand
- Surindra Rajabhat University, Thailand
- Thammasat Chalerm Prakiet Museum, Thammasat University, Thailand
SEAMEO SPAFA operates as an autonomous and international institution with an organizational structure that consists of a Governing Board, whose executive power is vested in the Centre Director (supported by professional and general service staff).

Professional Staff

Dr. M.R. Rujaya Abhakorn (Centre Director)
Dr. Noel Hidalgo Tan (Senior Specialist in Archaeology)

Advisors

1. M.R. Chakarot Chitrabongs
2. Dr. Prapatpong Senarith
3. Mr. Grienggrai Sampatchalit
4. Prof. Dr. John Miksic
5. Dr. Chularat Tanprasert
6. Mrs. Monthira Horayangura Unakul

General Service Staff

1. Mr. Nyunt Han Senior Researcher
2. Ms. Wilasinee Thabuengkarn Administrative Officer
3. Ms. Supa Thanasakulprasert Finance Manager
4. Mr. Ean Lee Publication Manager
5. Ms. Ratchapor Tesjeeb Computer Manager
6. Ms. Linh Anh Moreau Programme Officer
7. Mr. John Paul Nino Itao Communications Officer
8. Mr. Kanal Khiev Assistant Documentation Officer
9. Ms. Patcharee Kunasarn Researcher
10. Dr. Alongkorn Jutagate Researcher
11. Ms. Vassana Kerdupap Programme Secretary
12. Ms. Wanpen Koogpoo Library Staff
13. Mr. Nipon Sud-Ngam Audio-Visual Technician
15. Mr. Prapai Meekrit Driver I
16. Mr. Chaiyot Chanthien Driver II
17. Mr. Soros Jenjai Technical Staff
Performances organized by SEAMEO SPAFA in May 2015
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