

Indicators and Challenges for the Assessment of Life Cycle Impacts on *Intangible Cultural Heritage*

An example of apparel in Peru

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Agenda

- Objectives
- What is intangible cultural heritage?
- Why is it relevant?
- What do we want to measure?
- **How to measure?**
 - *Characteristics and challenges*
 - *Possible indicators*
- Measured indicator examples
- Outlook

Objectives

- Manifold cultures and traditions endangered by globalization (Mass production \leftrightarrow Individual designs and local techniques)
- Especially textile production, agriculture and food sector



Objectives:

- Raise importance for assessing intangible cultural heritage
- Challenges and possible contribution of S-LCA to measure impacts
- Propose and test indicators on textile example

What is intangible cultural heritage?

"[...] It also includes traditions or living expressions inherited from our ancestors and passed on to our descendants, such as oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe." (<https://ich.unesco.org/en/what-is-intangible-heritage-00003?>)

11 elements inscribed

2011: Eshuva, Harákmbut sung prayers of Peru's Huachipaire people (USL)

2011: Pilgrimage to the sanctuary of the Lord of Qoyllurit'i (RL)

2010: Huaconada, ritual dance of Mito (RL)

On-going nomination(s)

2019: Hatajo de Negritos and Hatajo de Pallitas from the Peruvian south-central coastline (RL)



<https://ich.unesco.org/en/what-is-intangible-heritage-00003r> the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts.

Why is it relevant?

Decisive element of social sustainability:

- **Social significance:**
 - **Identity** of individuals, communities and nations → **social cohesion**
 - Symbolic and representative value (e.g. social or economic status), express shared emotions
 - Encourages intercultural respect
- **Knowledge transfer**
 - Valuable **skills** transmitted intergenerationally
 - Ensure survivability and **livelihoods**

What to measure?

Is intangible cultural heritage endangered by production processes?

How does that impact communities?



How to measure?

Characteristics and challenges

- Product/ process can be **directly, indirectly, or not at all** associated with cultural heritage
- **Interwoven** with many other topics (indigenous rights, economic security and development, jobs) → can have countereffects
- Danger: **Commercialization** of “authentic” intangible cultural heritage **vs protection of uniqueness** (→ decoupling from cultural memory and historic context)
- Intangible cultural heritage as a **dynamic concept** → less measurable.



How to assess?

How to measure?

Indicator sources

- **Framework** for indicators taken from "*Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*"
(<https://ich.unesco.org/en/convention#art32>)

Art. 1 – Purposes:

- (a) to **safeguard** the intangible cultural heritage;
- (b) to **ensure respect** for the intangible cultural heritage [...];
- (c) to **raise awareness** at the local, national and international levels of the importance of the intangible cultural heritage [...];
- (d) to provide [support] for **international cooperation** and assistance.

How to measure?

Indicator sources

- **Guidelines:**

Methodological sheets for subcategories in S-LCA
(UNEP/SETAC Life Cycle Initiative (2013))

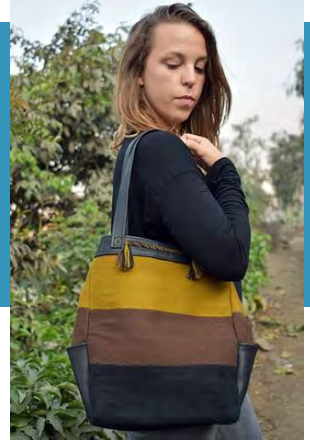
Social Impact Assessment. **Guidance for assessing and managing social impacts of projects** (IAIA 2015)

- Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

- **Case study** of an artisanal apparel brand in Peru, among others

Case study

- S-LCA of apparel products from a Peru-based **brand**
- **Artisans program** developed by an educational NGO in Huaycan (Lima suburb)
- Workers/ artisans work from home, **rather independently**; procure their own materials
- NGO offers **workshops** for community in the neighbourhood: English, yoga, home finances, personal development, coding, reading



How to measure?

Indicators

- **12 indicators defined** (2 for generic assessment, 10 for specific assessment) covering whether intangible cultural heritage is:

- 
- **Relevant** for the process/ country
 - **Respected**
 - **Actively promoted**
 - **Protected**

- **9 indicators** considered relevant for case study
- Data gathered through **interviews, project website**

Indicator example I

Is the productive activity or directly related practices registered at an (inter)national list of intangible cultural heritage?

1 Yes, the productive activity is registered at the UNESCO list of intangible cultural heritage.



...

6 No, the productive activity has a detrimental value to a recognized or potential intangible cultural heritage.

- **Taquile and its textile art** on Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (<https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/taquile-and-its-textile-art-00166>)
- **Techniques from Ayacucho** generally recognized as cultural tradition
- Many Andean and coastal regions have **proper traditional textile production** maintained

Indicator example II

Can employees (or local people) participate and influence in production or design processes?

- Employees and/or local people have **total, or partial control over or no influence** in the production/ design process.

- seamstresses can **influence** materials used, design, applications
- can use **traditional techniques**
- **transmitted** in their families



<https://www.huaywasi.com/pages/the-artisans>

Indicator example III

Are any capacity-building activities on traditional techniques in place for employees and/or communities?

- Yes / No



<https://www.huaywasi.com/pages/the-artisans>

- **General workshops** offered on various topics for employees and neighbours
- However, **no workshops on traditional fabric processing**

Indicator example III

Are (organizational) policies in place to protect intangible cultural heritage?

- Yes / No



<https://www.huaywasi.com/collections/women>



<https://www.huaywasi.com/collections/bags-purses>

- “supporting female **artisans** [...] promote **authenticity** and **diversity** in fashion.” (<https://www.huaywasi.com/>)
- Appreciation of seamstresses: called “artisans”
- Concrete promotion of int. cult. heritage could be offered by workshops

Conclusions and outlook



Bcasterline

- Intangible cultural heritage is **vital element of social sustainability**
- Should be included in **S-LCA**
- *Risk* for int. cult. heritage can be captured and measured by **proposed indicators**
- Main challenges: **How to assess *impacts*?**

Thank you

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