



Promoting and Safeguarding Traditional Sports and Games in ASEAN: Challenges, Opportunities, and Strategies





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The ASEAN Secretariat
Jakarta

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FOREWORD

In an increasingly interconnected world, where cultures and technology evolve at a rapid pace, it is essential to preserve and promote the rich diversity of traditions that define our unique identities. ASEAN represents a region with a heritage of traditional sports and games, in particular, they reflect the values, characteristics, and way of life of a given group. They are an intangible heritage and lie at the very foundation of our cultural traditions.

This report on the *Promoting and Safeguarding Traditional Sports and Games in ASEAN: Challenges, Opportunities, and Strategies* initiated by Cambodia is proof of the commitment of our member states to uphold and celebrate the diverse cultural heritage that unites ASEAN. Through this comprehensive study, we explored the challenges faced by traditional sports and games in the modern era. It is not only the passage of time that poses a threat but also the allure of new, globalised forms of entertainment that pull our youth away from the traditions that have shaped our societies.

Through these challenges, there are boundless opportunities. By understanding the unique values, skills, and knowledge embedded in our traditional sports and games, we can craft innovative strategies to ensure their continuity. These traditions hold not just the echoes of our past, but the seeds of our future where cultural diversity and the wisdom of our ancestors coexist harmoniously with the dynamic evolving world.

As we embark on this journey to safeguard and promote our traditional sports and games, let me recognise the role they play in fostering unity, understanding, and mutual respect among and between our member states. I believe this report serves as a foundation for collaborative efforts, a source of inspiration for policy-makers, educators, as well as experts, and a reminder that the preservation of our cultural heritage is not limited to duty but a shared privilege.

I extend my heartfelt appreciation to the support provided by the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) and ASEAN Secretariat as well as the researchers, experts, and stakeholders who contributed to this fruitful study. May their dedication and insights guide ASEAN in our quest to ensure that our traditional sports and games remain vibrant as our shared identity for generations to come.

DR. HANG CHUON NARON

Deputy Prime Minister

Minister of Education, Youth and Sport

AMMS Minister of Cambodia



FOREWORD

Traditional sports and games hold a special place for the peoples of ASEAN, serving as a vibrant tapestry that weaves together the diverse cultural heritage of the region. In recognition of its significance, ASEAN took a momentous stride towards safeguarding and promoting traditional sports and games by adopting the ASEAN Declaration on Fostering ASEAN Identity through the Safeguarding of Traditional Sports and Games in the Modern World at the 40th and 41st ASEAN Summits in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, in November 2022, when Cambodia held the ASEAN Chairmanship.

This ASEAN Declaration stands as a testament to the paramount importance ASEAN places on preserving traditional sports and games at the local, national, and regional levels, and to harness their potentials as a catalyst for growth and transformation within the sports industry. Aligned with the ASEAN Work Plan on Sports 2021-2025, this Report sheds light on the critical roles of traditional sports and games in Southeast Asia's rich cultural landscape, emphasising the need to nurture and preserve these cherished traditions. Traditional sports and games have also helped foster social harmony and contribute to the development of closely-knit communities and, most importantly, contributed to peace and unity within communities. By continuing to support and emphasize these practices in sports diplomacy, ASEAN ensures that traditional sports and games remain a cherished aspect of our intangible cultural heritage.

At the same time, it is worth acknowledging that not all traditional sports and games enjoy the same level of recognition and appreciation as modern sports and activities, which could potentially impact their sustainability. Therefore, it becomes imperative to prioritise the promotion of cultural diversity and cross-cultural understanding, as well as to leverage technology to maintain and celebrate these invaluable traditional practices.

As such, this Report provides a comprehensive examination of the current state of traditional sports and games in ASEAN, and identifies the challenges associated with preserving and promoting traditional sports and games, as well as highlighting best practices that are worthy of emulation and preservation. It also offers invaluable guidance to policymakers, practitioners, and all other stakeholders on how to effectively preserve and promote this cherished aspect of our intangible cultural heritage.

As one of the most pressing issues in conserving traditional sports and activities in raising awareness and understanding of their cultural relevance, especially among the youths, I am delighted that one of the recommendations of this Report is to increase public understanding and knowledge of traditional sports and games through educational programs in schools and community outreach initiatives.

I would like to commend Cambodia for its leadership in spearheading this initiative, and I am equally appreciative of the unwavering support provided by the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) in developing this Report. I am confident that this publication will significantly contribute to our continuous endeavours of safeguarding traditional sports and games in Southeast Asia and beyond, and especially encourage all players and actors to value all different types of sports equally in the spirit of sportsmanship and friendship.

DR. KAO KIM HOURN
Secretary-General of ASEAN



FOREWORD

Our world is undergoing rapid transformation. Modernisation and globalisation bring tremendous benefits, particularly in the realms of socio-economic and political development within societies. Nevertheless, these advancements also pose a profound threat to the protection, preservation, and promotion of our world's rich intangible cultural heritage – traditional sports and games (TSG). The allure of modern sports, e-games, and technological innovations play pivotal roles in the decline, and extinction of many TSG worldwide. Recognising these concerns, the ASEAN region has embarked on a mission to safeguard and promote TSG, not only to foster community spirit and unity, but also to nurture pride in our culturally diverse heritage. This endeavour serves as a catalyst for peace and sustainable development in the region.

ERIA's research project, 'Promoting and Safeguarding TSG in ASEAN: Challenges, Opportunities, and Strategies,' represents a significant stride towards addressing the growing apprehensions surrounding the preservation and protection of TSG in our region. As a collective effort amongst ASEAN TSG experts, this study stands as the first up-to-date report on ASEAN TSG, providing comprehensive insights into the status of TSG in our region. It delves into the issues concerning awareness of TSG and the pivotal role played by government policies and programs in safeguarding the cultural heritage of the ASEAN region.

As an international think-tank, ERIA firmly believes that bridging the knowledge gap is paramount to enhancing the efficacy of policymaking. To establish TSG as an integral part of ASEAN's intangible heritage, it is imperative to develop knowledge, share information, and raise awareness regarding the contribution of TSG to national and regional identities.

Thus, we hope that this report will serve as an invaluable resource for policymakers and other stakeholders, aiding in comprehending the constraints and challenges associated with safeguarding TSG. We trust that this understanding will empower them to formulate appropriate policies, strategies, and interventions to ensure that TSG continue to thrive as an integral aspect of the cultural development of our region and ASEAN Member States.

PROF. TETSUYA WATANABE

President

Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Traditional sports and games (TSG) are recognised by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as an intangible cultural heritage that must be protected and promoted. The growing threat of extinction – brought about by modernisation and globalisation, amongst other reasons – is a key challenge for the survival of TSG and the future development of both sports and societies.

Cognisant of the challenge, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) community, with its diverse cultures, acknowledges the significant role of TSG as an instrument to further community spirit, bring people together, and instil a sense of pride. The importance of TSG in promoting cultural diversity and protecting various identities at local, national, and international levels should be strongly defended.

This study provides a comprehensive assessment of TSG in the ASEAN region that focusses on the challenges, opportunities, and strategies of preserving, protecting, and promoting TSG in ASEAN Member States (AMS). The study aims to (i) provide an understanding of the state of ASEAN TSG, including analysis of issues, challenges, and opportunities in each AMS and the region; (ii) examine why TSG are becoming extinct or endangered; (iii) identify strategies, measures, and solutions to promote and to safeguard TSG; and (iv) analyse the extent to which the contribution of TSG is being leveraged to promote development in ASEAN, achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and encourage regional cooperation and integration.

The study finds that overall, TSG play a significant role in promoting cultural diversity, pride, and identity amongst AMS. Their contributions as instruments for mutual understanding and integration are evident. However, the threat of extinction is growing, requiring collaborative efforts in safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage of the region. Several challenges were evident in AMS and the region, including (i) low awareness of TSG, particularly amongst the younger generation; (ii) decline in TSG participation; (iii) popularity of modern sports; (iv) advent of advanced information and communications technology; (v) lack of government support; (vi) lack of TSG programmes and promotion; and (vii) urbanisation and changing lifestyles.

The following recommendations are presented for the safeguarding and promotion of TSG in the ASEAN region: intensify government roles; develop mechanisms and strategies to promote TSG; include TSG in school curricula and activities; use media and information technology; build human resources capacity; establishment TSG centres; create a balance between modern sports and TSG; and enhance awareness, appreciation, and active participation of TSG.

A call to action for ASEAN in ensuring the survival of intangible cultural heritage entails developing frameworks, mechanisms, and policies on TSG; establishing an ASEAN TSG commission; establishing country TSG centres and an associated ASEAN regional centre; strengthening ASEAN cooperation through cultural exchanges on TSG; intensifying TSG promotion and awareness-raising campaigns; including TSG in school curricula; establishing ASEAN Games for All; organising TSG conferences; strengthening TSG research and development; strengthening TSG human resources; encouraging government funding for TSG; and promoting gender equality and youth empowerment through TSG.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Traditional sports and games (TSG) refer to sports, games, or activities inherent to various indigenous cultural communities that reflect the rich cultural heritage, traditions, and customs handed down from generation to generation that have become part of a community's way of life. A key component of universal cultural heritage, TSG remain intertwined into the daily lives of indigenous peoples, supplementing each community's unique identity. They can include dances, ball games, water sports, and board games engaged in individually or as teams; participation is often for fun and not competition. TSG represent a past that is inimitable and often in danger of being forgotten. Those that have survived are threatened due to the globalisation and harmonisation of the world's sports. It is also important to note that many modern sports evolved from TSG, such as archery, wrestling, dragon boat racing, and various martial arts.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is working to protect and to promote TSG throughout the world with a view towards furthering community spirit, bringing people together, and instilling a sense of pride in cultural roots. TSG are vital to promoting diversity and to protecting cultural identities and legacies at the local, national, and international levels.

Throughout the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region, TSG form part of the history and identity of ASEAN peoples; they also can serve as levers to foster peace and sustainable development throughout the region. Various efforts, including the *ASEAN Work Plan on Sports, 2021–2025*, have highlighted the promise of TSG to promote mutual understanding, friendship, and sportsmanship amongst ASEAN Member States (AMS) in advancing socio-cultural development and promoting peace. More strategies and actions are crucial, however, to save TSG in the region from extinction.

Against this background, Cambodia's Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport requested that the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) examine TSG in the region. This study supports the *ASEAN Declaration on Fostering ASEAN Identity through the Safeguarding of Traditional Sports and Games in the Modern World* (ASEAN, 2022a). It aims to provide a comprehensive assessment of TSG through the ASEAN region with a view towards their promotion and safeguarding. Objectives are to (i) provide ASEAN officials responsible for youth, sports, and education with a better understanding of TSG, including analysis of related issues, challenges, and opportunities in each AMS and the region; (ii) examine the reasons that TSG are becoming endangered or extinct, and identify strategies, measures, and solutions to promote and to safeguard TSG; and (iii) analyse the extent to which TSG are being leveraged to promote development in ASEAN, including social development (e.g. Sustainable Development Goals [SDGs]) and regional cooperation and integration.

The study adopts a descriptive analysis and qualitative approach as in the standard academic literature. This includes citing primary and secondary sources, such as literature and online surveys; focus group discussions (FGDs); interviews; and consultations with various stakeholders from relevant governmental agencies on youth and sports, sports federations and associations, TSG organisations, academia, and nongovernmental organisations (NGOs).

To undertake country case studies of TSG in each AMS, country experts were identified. These experts conducted surveys, FGDs, and direct consultations with various stakeholders,

submitting in-depth analyses of issues, challenges, data, and materials. Questions for the FGDs were formulated for consistency of information across all AMS. Similarly, a TSG survey questionnaire was developed to gather data and to assess the current state of TSG in each AMS. It was distributed electronically amongst relevant governmental, youth and education sector, and TSG organisations.

For the final report, data from country papers submitted to ERIA were collected. Results of this study are thus presented in three parts:

- (i) **Overview of TSG in AMS.** This includes an updated literature review of the current state of TSG throughout ASEAN; descriptive analyses of different TSG; strategies, interventions, and policy frameworks developed to promote and to preserve TSG; and a look at other in-country issues related to TSG.
- (ii) **Comprehensive analysis of key issues, challenges, and opportunities of TSG.** This comprises reasons for extinction of TSG, how to revitalise TSG, how to preserve TSG vis-a-vis promotion and protection of cultural identity, and how to leverage TSG for development.
- (iii) **Policy recommendations and practical solutions.** These include recommendations focussing on promotion of TSG to enhance regional social ties and cultural diversity, contribution of sports (particularly TSG) to SDGs, and strategies to conserve TSG to promote cultural diversity and development in the region.

1.2. Overview of TSG in ASEAN Member States

Key findings of AMS country papers are presented in this section, including the results from FGDs, various interviews, and surveys on the status of TSG in each AMS; reasons for TSG extinction; programmes and strategies implemented for TSG protection and promotion; and policy recommendations for TSG being leveraged to promote development in the region.

1.2.1. Brunei Darussalam¹

The TSG of Brunei Darussalam are expressions of the cultural capital that can be explained through the lens of three states: (i) habitus, which is embodied knowledge, behaviours, and thoughts that contribute to its people's understanding of the world; (ii) objectification, which can be found in cultural artifacts and goods such as books, schools, clothing, and smartphones; and (iii) institutionalisation, which is a form of objectification and includes qualifications, merits, awards, and social realisation.

The objectives of Brunei Darussalam's 1995 national cultural policy focus on the importance of political culture and social culture in nation building. It implies the intimacy of the self, society, and the nation; a sense of identity; and an inner sense of social well-being². The Brunei culture is shaped by the political culture, the Malay Islamic Monarchy (*Melaju Islam Beraja*), which was proclaimed in 1984, but its roots can be traced back as early as the first Sultan of Brunei's conversion to Islam in the 15 century.

The TSG in Brunei Darussalam is a cultural expression as can be seen from its cultural artifacts, such as the *Pasang* board game which can only be found in Brunei. Other examples include, different forms of top spinning games by the seven ethnic groups (i.e. Belait, Bisaya, Brunei Malay, Dusun, Kedayan, Murut, and Tutong). They have their own dialects, cultural expressions and TSG. Collectively, these groups are referred to as the Malays of Brunei, as stated in the Constitution, Section 82a(ii) (Jalaluddin & Norsimah, 2008).

¹ This section is extracted from Damit (2023).

²



TSG have long served as powerful social tools, fostering connections, promoting cultural identity, and nurturing a sense of community among individuals. These activities are deeply rooted in cultural heritage and often carry a sense of nostalgia, bringing people together across generations. These activities create a shared space for individuals to bond, communicate, and collaborate. Through participation in traditional games, people not only engage in physical exercise but also transmit cultural values, norms, and stories. These games often embody cultural symbolism and historical narratives, offering a unique platform for passing down traditions to younger generations. Such communal TSG includes traditional boat racing, kite flying, tug-of-war, top spinning, children's games and indoor games such as pasang (board games) and congkak.

In Bruneian societies, traditional sports and games play a role in celebrating festivals, holidays, and special occasions. They serve as a common ground where people from diverse backgrounds can interact, learn from one another, and build bridges of understanding. Moreover, traditional games often require cooperation and teamwork, strengthening social ties and encouraging mutual respect in the society. The inclusion of TSG during these festivities provides the opportunity to promote and preserve the rich cultural heritage of the country to the society including to the younger generation. To further promote TSG to the newer generation, initiatives such *Muziumku Warisanku* has been implemented and provide outreach programme and workshop on TSG to secondary schools, government agencies and private sectors.

Although these festivities and outreach programme assist in promoting and reviving TSG to the society, the nature of TSG, as they are mostly recreational activities contribute to the low interest amongst the public. Threats to the preservation and promotion of TSG in Brunei Darussalam include changing lifestyles, the attractiveness of computer games and the advance of modern sports and the need for a national strategy and programme for TSG protection, preservation, and promotion.



1.2.2 Cambodia³

TSG in Cambodia originated from the daily activities of Cambodians. Some evidence of their past has been found in ancient temple sculptures from the Angkorian era. Sculptures of *ouk chaktrong*, a form of chess, and wrestling can be seen on the walls of the ancient Bayon temple, and the Elephant Terrace temple in Siem Reap features friezes of a kind of elephant polo. Today, many TSG are still played by Cambodians at different festivals and events, especially during the Khmer New Year in April. Since 2013, playing TSG during the Khmer New Year has gained momentum due to the encouragement of the government, especially the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts, and youth volunteers lead and participate in their organisation. There are also a number of other traditional sports, including *kun Khmer* (boxing), *bokator* (martial arts), Khmer wrestling, bull racing, horse racing, buffalo racing, and boat racing.

TSG remain parts of Khmer cultural heritage and identity. They promote social ties, mutual understanding, and peaceful behaviour. They have been also used to empower youth, including young girls. By teaching life skills, encouraging physical activity, building confidence, encouraging creativity, promoting cultural understanding, and empowering children from marginalised communities, TSG can help children to become well-rounded individuals who are prepared to succeed in life.

³ This section is extracted from Pa (2023).

Although some TSG are popular in Cambodia, it is difficult to preserve them. There is a lack of awareness and resources to promote TSG, a rise in modern technology and entertainment, and a decline of rural communities where TSG are mostly played. However, there are ways to revitalise and safeguard TSG in Cambodia, such as by documenting them; raising awareness; teaching children how to play; incorporating TSG into modern entertainment; promoting festivals and events dedicated to TSG; and using TSG to promote social and cultural understanding amongst schools, communities, provinces, and beyond borders.



1.2.3 Indonesia⁴

Indonesia has multiple and diverse TSG characterising the traits of its various cultures. Amongst the most commonly played are *galasin/gobak sodor/ga lah* (played between teams trying to cross lines/boxes), *gasing* (tops), *bentengan* (a team game with the aim of capturing the opponents' fortress), *cublak-cublak suweng* (a guessing game involving an object's location), and *congklak* (a game similar to *sungka* of the Philippines and *congkak* of Malaysia).

TSG exhibitions and competitions are often held on Indonesia's Independence Day. As one of the most highly anticipated and important holidays in Indonesia, the inclusion of TSG during Indonesia's Independence Day festivities provides the opportunity to promote and to preserve the rich cultural heritage of the country while building unity and cooperation amongst the population. Moreover, some TSG are regularly taught and/or conducted in schools, while some have local, regional, and national competitions, like *makepung* (buffalo races), *pacu jalur* (rowing), and *pencak silat* (martial arts).

Public interest in TSG has, however, dropped (Rachmawati, Muhyi, Wiyarno, 2020). Data showed that only 23% of all youth now participate in TSG (Budiman, 2021). Unquestionably, the

⁴ This section is extracted from Moedanton and Suwanda (2022).

widespread existence of modern sports poses a challenge (Adiati, 2016). Popular sports such as basketball, football/soccer, volleyball, badminton, and motocross attract more participation; the challenge of the modern sports makes them more attractive. TSG are considered old, and the focus on fun makes them less appealing. Nasution and Daulay (2021) stated that the greatest obstacles to TSG are the absence of community socialisation, lack of public interest, and lack of interest in competing in sustainable manners.

According to research, TSG have many positive values, including prompting honesty, responsibility, healthy lifestyles, discipline, hard work, fun, logic, creativity, obedience, respect, democracy, empathy, awareness of social surroundings, nationalism, social development, and respect for differences. TSG also help develop friendships, self-management, and better academic behaviour, and decrease antisocial behaviours (Nur, Ma'mun, Fitri, 2020).



Although Independence Day TSG are conducted enthusiastically, this is only a once-a-year activity. The lack of their promotion by the government and media contribute to their low popularity. With the influence of Western culture, impact of globalisation, and lack of interest from both sports activists and youth, the future of TSG in Indonesia is uncertain (Moedanton and Suwanda, 2022)

1.2.4 Lao People's Democratic Republic⁵

The Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) is a multi-ethnic nation known for its rich culture and traditions, including TSG. In general, the population are great sports enthusiasts; sports, both traditional and modern, are integral parts of life.

⁵ This section is based on input from Mr. Khamphath Phetlasy, Deputy Director-General of Sports for all, Physical and Arts Education, Ministry of Education and Sports.

The Lao PDR has 50 ethnic groups, which have diverse cultural and traditional festivals in all seasons that feature TSG. The government, through the Ministry of Education and Sports, has been supporting the preservation of TSG by including into objectives number 3: "Organise annual sports for all and arts competition, both inside and outside the school, traditional sports and commemorate important national and international days" (ESSDP, 2020).

The Ministry of Education and Sports has identified key strategies to promote traditional sports to be implemented nationwide. The main activities are to Organise annual sports competition and traditional sports competition for instance: boat racing festival (Organise during the end of buddhist lent), Lao hockey (during Thatluang Festival), Muay Laiy Lao (Lao Boxing). Besides that, toy-top spinning, crossbow, Mak Lae has also been included in the National Games. Other traditional games are also well known and played until now such as Mak Khone Game (Hmong NewYear), Water boxing etc. The aforementioned sports and games aim to involve the people from all social strata in traditional festivals, promote TSG from grass-root to central-level, create TSG clubs, encourage the participation of people with disabilities in TSG, enhance training of TSG at all levels, and support the procurement of necessary equipment for TSG. By implementing the aforementioned priorities, traditional sports and games will be sustained in our society through organising traditional sports and games.

Although the idea of TSG in the Lao PDR has considerably expanded, such growth has not yet reached all target localities as expected. Some types of TSG are not well-known to the general public due to lack of information dissemination and promotion to the community especially among new generations. Moreover, some traditional sports do not have clear standards or competition rules. Some TSG constraints facing the nation can be observed through insufficient number of TSG-skilled personnel, poor infrastructure, and limited budget allocation for TSG promotion and development."

1.2.5. Malaysia⁶

Malaysia has a distinct multi-ethnic and multicultural makeup; about half of the population is Malay, with the rest comprising Chinese, Indian, and indigenous peoples. TSG have long been a component of Malaysia's unique community culture. Malaysian TSG have been recognised as intangible cultural heritage by the government, necessitating a preservation effort. The National Department for Culture and Arts, under the supervision of the Ministry of Tourism and Culture, has listed *batu seremban* (knucklebones), *congkak* (a mancala game), *gajah panjang* (a children's game), *gasing* (tops), *guli* (marbles), *sepak bulu ayam* (kicking a feathered ball), *sepak takraw* (kick volleyball), and *wau* (kites), as TSG (JKKN, 2018).

In view of its multi-ethnic makeup, Malaysia has sought to foster a national culture through deliberate, detailed planning, with the aim of creating a distinct Malaysian way of life. In 1970, the National Cultural Policy was adopted, which aims to strengthen national unity through culture, foster and preserve national identity, and improve socio-economic growth. One of its action plans is to restore, preserve, and develop culture towards strengthening national culture. Parties involved in the implementation of this policy, in addition to the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, include the Ministry of Youth and Sports (Lis, 2013). TSG are thus subject to this policy.

⁶ This section is extracted from journals focusing on the exploration and documentation of Malaysia's traditional games: "Traditional Games in Malaysia: Types of Games, History and Equipment" authored by Pn. Siti Noor Aishah Mohd Hasan, Prof. Madya Dr. Kamaruzaman Jusoff, and Mohd Amin Mohd Yusof, and "Malaysian Traditional Games: An Insightful Exploration of the Game's Features" authored by Norzila Abdul Aziz and Mohd Mahzan Awang



Under this policy, Malaysia has worked to promote its TSG, which has influenced their growth and conservation. Many governmental, commercial, nongovernmental, and corporate organisations like the Malaysia Leisure and Recreation Council, Malaysian Youth Council, and Ministry of Youth and Sport, and are involved in organising contests, courses, seminars, and festivals to impart TSG information and experience to the country. The National Department of Culture and Arts, Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, for instance, organises the Malaysian Games Festival, an annual festival that highlights TSG with thousands of participants from both public and private sectors. An estimated 10,000 people visit the festival each year (Coconuts KL, 2022). TSG are also included in the national preschool curriculum, and teachers arrange for TSG to be held during physical education and extracurricular activities in the elementary and secondary schools.

The advancement of technology in entertainment is expanding, and newer formats such as digital games and e-sports have grown popular, taking attention away from TSG. TSG, which have been recognised for their relevance in society and the ability to instil cultural values in children, have received insufficient attention and are gradually being forgotten (Zulkifli, 2022). Furthermore, physical areas reserved for TSG are being overtaken by those for modern sports or commercial use, such as for soccer/football, basketball, and tennis. To attain the main aims of the National Cultural Policy, more government appropriations and financing assistance from stakeholders are needed.



1.2.6. Myanmar⁷

Myanmar comprises more than 100 ethnic groups; all have traditional festivals, which are tied to TSG. The Shittaung Pagoda Festival features traditional dances, boxing matches, and rowing competitions; Naga New Year Festival highlights traditional sports amongst its activities; Waso Chinlone Festival pays tribute to the ancient royal game of *chinlone*; and Regatta Festival features traditional boats and rowing races (Liem, 2023).

The government has been supporting the development of TSG as an instrument to promote cultural pride and identity and to enhance health and fitness. One national social objective is the 'uplift of health, fairness and education standards of the entire nation'. The Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs oversees the promotion and development of sports throughout the country, including the preservation and promotion of TSG. In addition, the Myanmar Traditional Sports and Games Federation was formed in 2021, with the objective of safeguarding and conserving TSG. Various TSG federations have also been established, and programmes and activities are conducted to preserve and to promote the rich cultural heritage of the people.⁸

Threats to the preservation and promotion of TSG in Myanmar include the attractiveness of computer games, declining encouragement of schoolchildren to participate, lack of sustainability to nurture competent athletes, and changing lifestyles. However, thanks to strong government support, laws and policies for TSG conservation, active TSG federations, and citizen support, TSG in Myanmar have a brighter future compared to those around the world (Kyi, 2022).

⁷ This section is extracted from Kyi (2022).

⁸ Government of Myanmar, Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs, [https://wikimili.com/en/Ministry_of_Sports_and_Youth_Affairs_\(Myanmar\)](https://wikimili.com/en/Ministry_of_Sports_and_Youth_Affairs_(Myanmar))



1.2.7. Philippines⁹

The Philippines, with more than 7,107 islands consisting of more than 100 indigenous peoples and communities, takes pride in the rich, colourful, and diverse cultural heritage of its people. Indigenous communities are distributed throughout the major island groups, comprising 61% of the population in Mindanao, 33% in Luzon, and 6% in Visayas (UNDP, 2013). TSG in the Philippines are representations of indigenous peoples' ways of life from planting, harvesting, hunting, to settling disputes. They bring communities together in celebration and act as venues for showcasing their skills and talents.

The colonial experience of the Philippines has greatly influenced the nation's cultural heritage. Colonisation by Spain and the United States forced Filipinos to disregard many of their traditional practices, contributing to cultural identity loss (Cruz, 2019). Today, globalisation and modernisation are impacting the culture as well. The strong appeal of modern or popular sports, video games, e-sports, and the lack of interest amongst youth in TSG are contributing to the loss of the Filipino cultural heritage.

TSG in the Philippines can be categorised into two parts: (i) sports and games common amongst the colonised population (e.g. *patintero* [a children's game], *shatong* [a stick game], and *sungka* [a mancala game], which is also played in India and other South-East Asian countries); and (ii) sports and games of uncolonised indigenous peoples rooted in their customs, traditions, and ways of life (e.g. *kasipa* of the Maranao, *sinnepdak* of the Igorots, and *sosopot* of the Manobos). Some played by colonised people are also played by indigenous peoples, particularly the younger generation, as they are exposed to these TSG at school and in their communities. However, most TSG of indigenous peoples are unknown to most of the population.

⁹ This section is extracted from Daut (2022).

The Constitution explicitly recognises the rights of indigenous peoples and ensures their economic, social, and cultural well-being as well as the protection, preservation, and promotion of their rich cultural heritage, including their TSG (Government of the Philippines, 1987). The National Commission for Culture and the Arts was established in 1987 for overall policymaking, coordination, and funding for the preservation, development, and promotion of Philippine arts and culture.¹⁰ Moreover, the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act seeks to preserve and to develop the cultures, traditions, and institutions of indigenous peoples (Government of the Philippines, Congress of the Philippines, 1997); Traditional Games and Sports Act (Villar, 2013) stipulates the inclusion of TSG in physical education programmes; and Philippine Indigenous Games Preservation Act (Revilla, 2020, Estrada, 2022) mandates the inclusion of TSG in the curriculum for basic education and TSG events in schools and at the national level.

Governmental and nongovernmental agencies and organisations have also implemented programmes and activities that aim to preserve the rich cultural heritage of TSG. The Indigenous Peoples' Games of the Philippine Sports Commission, launched in 2018, is a celebration of the intangible cultural heritage of indigenous peoples occurring through TSG.¹¹ *Laro ng Lahi* or Games of Our Heritage is another activity that aims to promote greater awareness and appreciation of indigenous peoples' cultural heritage and history. It was created by the Department of Education during the 2019 *Palarong Pambansa* or National Games and is a national sports competition for elementary and secondary school student-athletes (Government of the Philippines, DOE, 2019). In 2013, the Philippine Olympic Committee began the Indigenous Tribal Games that aims to preserve the culture and environment of indigenous peoples in Luzon through sports (Queri, 2019). The *Larong Pinoy* (Filipino Games) programme of the nongovernmental organisation, Magna Kultura Foundation, began in 2003 to reintroduce TSG to the population.¹² Other programmes for TSG preservation and promotion are manifested in annual festivals held across the country showcasing traditional dances, music, songs, arts, food, and sports and games. These include the Ati-Atihan Festival in Aklan, Sinulog Festival in Cebu, Kadayawan Festival in Davao, and Dinagyang Festival in Iloilo City.

Despite these efforts, many TSG are disappearing because of globalisation; technological advances; the popularity of modern sports; lack of awareness and promotion; lack of a national strategy and programme for TSG protection, preservation, and promotion; and the growing interest of the younger generation in computer and e-games. There is a need to enhance the awareness, appreciation, and active participation in TSG – particularly amongst youth – to ensure their survival. There are many TSG in the Philippines that were never documented; only the more popular and common TSG are currently promoted, such as *dama* (Filipino checkers), *kadang kadang* (a game involving bamboo stilts), *patintero*, *piko* (hopscotch), *shatong*, *sungka*, *trompo* (tops), and *tumba preso* (a children's game).

1.2.8. Singapore¹³

Singapore is a melting pot of different ethnicities and hosts many diverse cultures, each bringing different TSG. These cultures brought a multitude of TSG that today are either rooted in or have left an imprint in Singapore, from five stones, *chaptah*, *gasing* (tops), and kites to pick-up sticks, snakes and ladders, tangrams, *ludo*, and the yoyo (OneDollarOnly, n.d.). However, the extent to which TSG are preserved, promoted, or propagated by the government and stakeholders representing different sectors is unknown. Modernisation has indeed contributed

10 Government of the Philippines, NCCA, <https://ncca.gov.ph/about-ncca-3/history-and-mandate/>

11 PSC, Indigenous Peoples Games, <https://www.psc.gov.ph/index.php/psc-programs/indigenous-peoples-games>

12 Magna Kultura Foundation, <https://kulturapilipinas.webs.com/about-magna-kultura>

13 This section is extracted from Koh, Joel, & Zheng (2022).



to the loss of some of Singapore's socio-cultural heritage. Economic, social, and environmental changes – such as the disappearance of closely-knit *kampongs* and villages – has undoubtedly led to the demise of some TSG. In 1983, the Singapore Sports Museum was established to preserve and to showcase Singapore's sporting heritage (Teck, Hwee, Jinming, 2022).

The awareness of law and policies, as well as organisations and agencies, in preserving, promoting, and propagating TSG is low. A lack of awareness, knowledge, and understanding – as well as structure and strategies – often leads individuals or organisations to operate on an ad-hoc basis owing to their subjective interpretations regarding how TSG should be promoted. Consequently, a robust structure or system that can penetrate the public and popularise TSG is not a feature in Singapore. The promotion of TSG appears to be driven by individuals or schools on an unstructured basis. Government-funded national sports associations demonstrate a greater ability to develop and to promote TSG in this country (Teck, Hwee, Jinming, 2022).

There are many challenges that constrain the promotion of TSG. Many youth in Singapore do not have the knowledge of specific TSG and associate them with specific ethnic groups such as Chinese, Malays, and Indians (Teck, Hwee, Jinming, 2022). Individuals' exposure to TSG, their own learned experiences, as well as how accurate TSG information is provided are key factors in enhancing people's knowledge and understanding of TSG. The lack of publicity, economic reasons, a need to move with time, as well as political will are the main stumbling blocks to TSG preservation, promotion, and propagation.



1.2.9. Thailand¹⁴

The country's TSG reflect the unique art and culture of Thailand, passed down and developed from generation to generation. Moreover, sports are, in general, an integral part of the life of every Thai national. Thai people enjoy both traditional games as well as modern international games. Some Thai TSG have become world famous, such as *muay thai*, and are now promoted as part of tourism. However, many are being threatened by various trends such as globalisation; abuse, misapplication, and disrespect for traditional culture, persons, or communities as owners; development of large industries; increased tourism; and migration of rural peoples to big cities.

The Ministry of Culture is mandated to protect, sustain, enhance, disseminate, and promote the religious, art and cultural affairs of the nation, and to contribute to maintaining the ultimate symbols of Thai social values including nation, religion, and the monarchy (Asia–Europe Foundation, 2011). The Department of Cultural Promotion is charged with promoting and preserving Thai culture through studies, research, rehabilitation, development, dissemination of information, and support to those engaged in cultural works. It also aims to enhance awareness of the value and wisdom of ancestors, promote cultural pride and identity of communities, show ownership of intangible cultural heritage, and keep pace with the global movement for protection of intangible cultural heritage (Government of Thailand, 2017).

¹⁴ This section is extracted from Sirimongkolkasem and Isakura (2022).

The most recent act of legislation regarding intangible cultural heritage – Act on the Promotion and Preservation of Cultural Heritage (2016) – details the duties and responsibilities of government officials towards this goal as well as what constitutes intangible cultural heritage (Government of Thailand, 2016). Intangible cultural heritage is categorised into cultural performance arts; traditional artisanship; traditional literature; traditional sports; social practices, rituals, and festivals; knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; and languages. The Department of Cultural Promotion has additionally classified TSG into three categories: (i) traditional games, which are fun voluntary activities that can foster connection and camaraderie; (ii) traditional sports, which comprise activities that involve competition with clear winners per local rules; and (iii) martial arts, which are fighting arts that may include the use of weapons and training means that have been passed down (Government of Thailand, 2016).

The use of TSG as tourism attractions in Thailand provides opportunities for economic development. *Muay thai* is one form of cultural tourism popular in Thailand (TDRI, 2022). Regulations of the Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage on Criteria for Preliminary Listing of Intangible Cultural Heritage 2017 (B.E. 2560) is tasked with surveying, identifying, and documenting available intangible cultural heritage, such as *muay thai* (Government of Thailand, Ministry of Culture, 2017).

As part of the *Sixth National Sports Development Plan (2017–2021)*, Thailand National Sports University, which is responsible for sports development throughout the country, is emphasising the development of knowledge and innovation related to all sports, including TSG (Sukdee, Khjaornsilp, Mahaniyom, 2020). Yet many TSG are being lost due to the shifting social, culture, and urban landscape. Some – which are tied to certain seasonal occasions or are not on par with modern sports in term of competitiveness or profitability – are becoming obsolete. Moreover, urban planning in Thailand does not prioritise public green spaces nor traditional architecture. A close-knit community is no longer the standard, as more accommodations are shifting towards greater privacy and streets are becoming more car-centric.

Efforts have been made to preserve certain TSG through school curricula, most notably *krabi-krabong*, an armed martial art deriving from ancient sword fighting. Indeed, there is a consensus that an effective way to preserve TSG is through schools, particularly by requiring *krabi-krabong* in physical education (Unique Retreats, 2021). However, the policies in Thailand do not create an atmosphere that encourages people to be innovative with the preservation of their heritage. Especially for Thailand whose economy is reliant on tourism, TSG can open a market within the tourism sector, bringing economic benefits.



1.2.10. Viet Nam¹⁵

Thanks in part to its 53 ethnic minorities, Viet Nam has diverse, long-rooted TSG, especially evident in the highland and mountainous areas. Nguyen (1994) identified nearly 100 TSG in Viet Nam, the majority of which are movement games that have been widely practiced by many generations in daily life for thousands of years. Vietnamese traditional martial arts were developed in parallel with the nation's struggle to build and to defend itself; they not only focus on physical skills and self-defence but also on physical and mental harmony.

TSG, a common childhood memory of many Vietnamese people, are gradually fading away. Many children now prefer computer games and online entertainment. However, they are being introduced more at museums, cultural houses, children's spaces, schools, and festivals, and businesses specialising in promoting TSG for children have seen some initial success (Anh, 2020). Production and sale of toys such as tops, kites, marbles, lanterns, and other TSG equipment that are traditional handicraft products have educational value, promote TSG, and bring economic value to workers in traditional craft villages.

Over the years, many policies, strategies, and documents have been issued to preserve and to promote the national values and traditions of the Vietnamese people, including TSG (Nguyen, Dinh, Dam, 2022). Article 12 of the Ordinance on Physical Training and Sports in Vietnam (2000) mandated that the Physical Training and Sports Committee coordinate with the Ministry of Culture and Information, various sectors, and localities to develop interest in TSG. In 2010, a strategy for the development of physical training and sports detailed 'introducing

¹⁵ This section is extracted from Nguyen, Dinh, Dam (2022).

the collection, statistics and classification of folk games in the annual festivals of ethnic minorities into a task of collecting, preserving and promoting the intangible cultural heritage of the ethnic groups of Viet Nam' (Vanbanphapluat, 2006). The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism issued a circular in 2014 supporting the collection, research, protection, preservation, and dissemination of TSG. Thus, the sports sector in Viet Nam is actively coordinating with relevant stakeholders to restore TSG across the country. As another example, the National Ethnic Minority Sports Competition is held every 2 years and has gathered many athletes together to compete in TSG.

The Viet Nam Sports Administration is also developing a project on preserving TSG by creating a single policy on the development of physical training and sports in general and the preservation and development of national sports, folk games, and Vietnamese traditional martial arts in particular. The project also aims to ensure enforceability; improve management; and guide the conservation, restoration, promotion, and maintenance of cultural identity. This project is playing an important role in the development of the sports sector, which is a component of the master plan of Viet Nam's physical training and sports (Dan, 2021).

The conservation and promotion of traditional cultural values, particularly TSG, should be identified as an important task at all levels. A regular organisation is needed to encourage youth to help preserve their culture (Nguyen, Dinh, Dam, 2022). More efforts are needed to preserve these invaluable pieces of cultural heritage for future generations (Anh, 2020).

2. Analysis of Key Issues, Challenges, and Opportunities Involving TSG in ASEAN

Safeguarding and promoting TSG both as sports practices and intangible cultural heritage are major challenges for their future development and preservation of cultural identity throughout ASEAN. Faced with growing threats to the survival of TSG in the ASEAN region, a collaborative and comprehensive action plan amongst AMS is needed. Findings from six participating AMS FGDs, interviews, and online surveys are presented in this section.

2.1. Awareness of Laws and Policies

The FGDs and interviews indicate low levels of awareness of TSG preservation laws and policies in Indonesia and Singapore, with low to moderate levels of awareness in the Philippines and Thailand. Only Myanmar and Viet Nam cited moderate to high levels of awareness of TSG preservation laws and policies. In Singapore, such 'lack of awareness, knowledge and understanding of structures and strategies often lead individuals or organisations to operate in an ad hoc and haphazard way on how TSG should be promoted or propagated' (Teck, Hwee, Jinming, 2022). Indonesia cited that 'the government is more focused on modern sports [so] less attention is given to TSG' (Moedanton and Suwanda, 2022). Lack of information dissemination, publicity, and promotion of TSG laws and policies are the major reasons behind the low levels of awareness cited.

Thailand's TSG-related preservation policies are 'restrictive and do not create an atmosphere that encourages people to be innovative with existing heritage' (TDRI, 2022). Thailand has long been conservative regarding the protection of its cultural heritage, opting for the preservation of heritage only in its most authentic forms. Legislation does not allow anyone to make use of cultural heritage in such a way that the sanctity of the nation's major institutions

and good morals are threatened. This sentiment – shared by many adults – has caused many young people to feel pushed away from anything viewed as ‘traditional’. In addition, the Act on Promotion and Preservation of Cultural Heritage has been a topic of contention due to some aspects that are deemed to ‘[give] preferential treatment toward certain cultural heritages’ (TDRI, 2022).

The Philippines has several laws and policies related to culture as well as institutions and commissions related to culture and the arts – but not specifically to TSG. While bills there have been submitted on the preservation and promotion of TSG, they have yet to be signed into law (Daut, 2022).

In Myanmar, ‘the government has strong laws and policies on TSG conservation and provides funding, facilities, and direction to establish TSG federations as well as sport villages’ (Kyi, 2022). Likewise, in Viet Nam, ‘government authorities at all levels increasingly acknowledge the value of TSG in Vietnamese culture and daily life, and efforts of both government authorities and social organisations in preserving, popularising, and developing TSG have been intensified over the years’ (Nguyen, Dinh, Dam, 2022).

In the absence a policy, clear definition, knowledge, and understanding of TSG, it is difficult to preserve, promote, and eventually propagate TSG in a country (Teck, Hwee, Jinming, 2022). Lack of direction and strategies in preserving, protecting, and promoting TSG in AMS were reported by a majority of AMS.

2.2. Awareness of Governmental Agencies or Institutions

Among the six participating AMS, only Myanmar expressed a high level of awareness of governmental agencies or institutions related to preserving TSG, while the Philippines and Viet Nam have moderate awareness levels, and Indonesia, Singapore, and Thailand expressed low levels.

In Myanmar, various associations and federations related to TSG have been established, such as those for *chinlone*, kickboxing, martial arts, and traditional rowing (Kyi, 2022). In the Philippines, government agencies that promote culture and arts, including TSG, include the Department of Education, Department of Tourism, and National Commission for Culture and Arts. Other agencies involved in promoting TSG are the Philippine Sports Commission, Philippine Olympic Committee, National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, and various national sports associations. However, it was noted that the National Commission for Culture and Arts is focussed on general culture and arts, and the Department of Tourism tends to emphasise dance, music, food, and arts – not TSG. The Department of Education has initiated the inclusion of TSG in some of its physical activities in schools. Some national sports associations do support TSG, including those for martial arts such as *arnis*, *pencak silat*, *sepak takraw*, and *sikaran* (Daut, 2022).

Governmental authorities at all levels in Viet Nam have been increasingly acknowledging the value of TSG in Vietnamese culture and daily life, which also have made valuable contributions to the country’s socio-economic development (Nguyen, Dinh, Dam, 2022).

Indonesia, Singapore, and Thailand reported a lack of knowledge of government agencies or institutions responsible for TSG in their respective countries (Moedanton and Suwanda, 2022; Teck, Hwee, Jinming, 2022; TDRI, 2022).

2.3. Sustainable Programmes and Activities

Low levels of sustainable TSG programme implementation were reported in Indonesia, Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand. Only Myanmar and Viet Nam reported moderate to high levels of sustainability, as the active and direct involvement of their governments to ensure sustainable TSG programme implementation, particularly for martial arts when included in international competitions.

Sports associations or federations in Myanmar are also responsible for the promotion of TSG through races and competitions. However, these events are normally spearheaded by village or state leaders – not by national-level authorities and federations (Kyi, 2022). Vietnamese traditional martial arts also have a federation, which conducts regular activities with a view towards participation in international competitions. The Vietnam Sports Administration and Ministry of Education and Training direct the inclusion of TSG in national physical education curricula (Nguyen, Dinh, Dam, 2022).

Moreover, in Viet Nam, there are 7,966 festivals conducted around the country, which often feature TSG (Nguyen, Dinh, and Dam, 2022). Such TSG events take place on important dates and celebrations in each community – births; hunting rituals; harvest parties; thanks for abundance and food; and other manifestations concerning nature, seasons, and life (Durand, 2012). The festivities promote the physical engagement of the whole community in a single event (Merleau-Ponty, 1962). The notions of dialogue and sharing are thus enriched by the experience of interculturality (Coelho, 2003).

Although Singapore reported that ‘the extent the TSG are preserved, promoted or propagated by the government and other stakeholders remains enigmatic’, Racial Harmony Day enables students to participate in various TSG (Teck, Hwee, Jinming, 2022). Thailand reported on using TSG as part of tourism, such as for *muay thai* (TDRI, 2022).

2.4. Awareness of Government Programmes

Indonesia, Singapore, and Thailand reported low levels of awareness of TSG, indicating few TSG programmes implemented in these countries. Indonesia did identify the Independence Day programme, during which TSG events are held. Similarly, Racial Harmony Day in Singapore incorporates TSG. Myanmar and the Philippines reported moderate levels of awareness, with regular cultural festivals featuring TSG both from indigenous peoples (e.g. Taguinay, 2013; Murillo, 2021; Lanao del Sur Government, 2022) and others (e.g. Barbosa, 2003) noted in the Philippines. The Indigenous Peoples Games is another venue where Filipinos participate in TSG (Daut, 2022). Myanmar’s martial arts and traditional sports were also documented (Kyi, 2022).

Viet Nam cited a high level of awareness, reporting an increasing demand for TSG thanks to their importance in its festivals (Nguyen, Dinh, Dam, 2022). Popular folk and locomotor games in Viet Nam are well documented.

Singapore cited that ‘many participants are devoid of knowledge of specific TSG...and perceived TSG as inextricably associated with specific ethnic groups’ (Teck, Hwee, Jinming, 2022). In Indonesia, it was noted that ‘public interest in TSG has dropped,’ and ‘the growth of TSG in Indonesia is declining, suggesting that they are now less appealing’ (Rachmawati, Munyi, Wiyarno, 2020).

2.5. Significance of TSG on Cultural Identity

All six participating AMS cited high levels of significance of TSG on cultural identity. In Indonesia, 'TSG are a source of cultural wealth and assets that need to be maintained and incorporated into the national identity' (Moedanton and Suwanda, 2022). Myanmar considers TSG rooted in the traditions, beliefs, and values of different ethnic groups and is proud of its TSG tied to its cultural background (Kyi, 2022).

TSG in the Philippines are also considered highly significant to cultural identity, as they reflect the ways of life, beliefs, customs, and traditions handed down that must be preserved, protected, and promoted for future generations to enjoy (Daut, 2022). While the focus in Singapore is more on modern sports, respondents acknowledged the important role that TSG play in binding people from different sectors together (Teck, Hwee, Jinming, 2022).

In Thailand, respondents cited that TSG 'require the population to have an appreciation of their own traditional cultures' (Sirimongkolkasem and Israngkura, 2022). Similarly, the values of TSG are increasingly acknowledged as significant in Vietnamese culture and daily life (Nguyen, Dihn, Dam, 2022).

2.6. Reasons for TSG Decline and Extinction

All six AMS agreed that TSG in their respective countries are declining in participation rates and are under threat of extinction. They also believed that TSG must be safeguarded and promoted to ensure the legacies of their ancestors. The reasons for extinction cited reflect similar experiences and challenges in the protection, preservation, and promotion of TSG throughout the ASEAN region: (i) awareness and interest, (ii) globalisation and modern technology, (iii) popularity of modern sports, (iv) policies, (v) programmes, (vi) promotion, (vii) funding, (viii) human resources, and (ix) urbanisation and changing lifestyles.

Awareness and interest. Lack of awareness of TSG – particularly amongst youth – was a major reason cited for the decline in participation and the extinction of many TSG. Surveys showed that 50.8% of respondents from the six AMS have low or no knowledge and awareness of TSG, 38.4% have moderate knowledge and awareness, and only 10.8% have high to very high knowledge and awareness.

In Indonesia, this is because 'traditional sports have been undermined by globalisation and the development of technology' (Rumawatine, 2020). In Singapore, as previously noted, 'many participants are devoid of knowledge of specific TSG as [they are] perceived as inextricably associated with specific ethnic groups' (Teck, Hwee, Jinming, 2022). The Thailand Development Research Institute (2022) reported that 'TSG lack visibility compared to modern or popular sports'.

There is also a low awareness of the values of TSG and their benefits. In the surveys, lack of interest and awareness were ranked as the second and third reasons for TSG decline and extinction. Other reasons included lack of knowledge of TSG/not familiar with TSG, not included in school curricula, lack of equipment, or lack of reference to TSG.

Globalisation and modern technology. Globalisation refers to the process of international integration arising from the exchange of world views, products, ideas, and other aspects of culture. Modernisation has transformed society into being technology-dependent, even for physical activity. The availability of gadgets and internet access and the attractiveness

of online games and e-sports were cited as major contributing factors to the decline of TSG participation. In Indonesia, it was noted that the influence of Western culture has contributed to the decline of public awareness of TSG, as well as the lack of interest from both sport activists and communities, especially youth (Moedanton and Suwanda, 2022).

Modernisation has also resulted in declining interest and participation in something old and traditional in favour of modern equipment and technology that make life easier. Thus, many of the world's TSG have been modernised, resulting in deviation from their origins (Boro, Daimary, Naizaree, 2015). New equipment is used, such as the change from a natural (i.e., rattan) to synthetic ball for *kasipa*, a kicking game in the Philippines; rules are revised to make a TSG more competitive; and different playing surfaces are used (i.e. from natural settings to modern concrete facilities). Technological advances have also made communications and participation in sports and recreation possible within the confines of the home. Survey results showed the advent of technology ranked the highest amongst the reasons for TSG extinction.

Popularity of modern sports. Modern sports are diverting interest away from TSG participation. All AMS cited a greater focus on modern sports by their respective governments as well. The attraction of modern sports for their economic benefits outweighs the cultural value of TSG. Viet Nam cited the popularity of professional sports and events as a contributing factor to the decline of interest and extinction of TSG.

Access to the internet, television, and other technology have allowed many to view professional sports games at the expense of physical engagement in TSG. Moreover, modern sports have created the phenomena of sports heroes, which are lacking in TSG, and the proliferation of modern sports programmes in all AMS reflects the imbalance in the support and attention.

Programmes. Lack of sustainable TSG programmes and activities were noted across all AMS. Most TSG programmes cited include festivals, cultural events, and competitions that are often organised by the private sector and/or NGOs. While some are held regularly, most are not sustained. Examples include Independence Day (Indonesia), Racial Harmony Day (Singapore), various cultural festivals (Viet Nam, Myanmar, Philippines), and martial arts tourist events (Thailand).

The inclusion of TSG in the South East Asian (SEA) Games is a step towards TSG preservation, protection, and promotion within the ASEAN region. In the 2017 SEA Games held in Kuala Lumpur, four TSG were introduced: *sepak takraw* (Malaysia), *chinlone* (Myanmar), *pencak silat* (Indonesia), and *wushu* (China) (Ram, 2017). Kickboxing (Thailand), *kurash* (Central Asia), *sambo* (Russia), *jujutsu* (Japan), floorball (Sweden), and netball (United Kingdom) were added in the 2019 Manila SEA Games (Gavilan, 2019). The 2023 SEA Games saw the entry of *bokator* (Cambodia), *teqball* (Hungary), and *arnis* (Philippines) (AFP, 2023). To ensure the survival of TSG in the region, sustainable TSG programmes and activities must be established.

Promotion. All six AMS cited the lack or limited promotion of TSG in their respective countries. The non-inclusion of TSG in school curricula was also cited as one of the reasons for the decline and extinction of TSG.

However, in Viet Nam, many schools have introduced several movement games into the curricula. Teachers have integrated games into classes to make students more confident and interested in learning. In addition, children also play TSG at recess (Nguyen, Dinh, Dam, 2022). The Department of Education in the Philippines incorporated TSG in *Larong Pinoy* (Filipino Games)/*Laro ng Lahi* (Games of Heritage) in some school activities as part of cultural

preservation and promotion. However, FGD participants from the Philippines still cited a limited ability to engage in TSG, a light emphasis by the government, lack of strong government initiatives, no institutionalised TSG competitions, and poor TSG leadership (Daut, 2022).

In Thailand, efforts have also been made to preserve TSG through school curricula, mostly focussed on martial arts (TDRI, 2022). Low publicity and promotion of TSG in Indonesia – especially amongst youth – have impacted their culture and identity. TSG promotion by institutions there is not optimal; exposure on social media has not been comprehensive and strong enough to increase awareness (Moedanton and Suwanda, 2022). Singapore additionally cited a lack of publicity on TSG due to their low or limited economic viability compared to modern sports (Teck, Hwee, Jinming, 2022).

The survey noted the types of TSG that should be promoted: those that endorse cultural identity, develop teamwork, develop health and fitness, strengthen community spirit, provide equal opportunities, promote peace and justice, promote understanding, and preserve the environment.

Funding. There is limited funding support for TSG in all AMS. In Indonesia, it was noted that more funding is given to modern sports (Moedanton and Suwanda, 2022). Yet Kyi (2022) stated that Myanmar’s government has been providing the budget, facilities, and direction to establish TSG associations and a sports village. An appeal for a greater degree of corporate sponsorship during festivals was recommended in Thailand as part of finding support for TSG programmes (TDRI, 2022). The Philippines stated that there is no specific budget allocation for TSG programme implementation, as there is no clear government-led intervention for TSG-related programmes (Daut, 2022).

Many AMS rely on sponsorships from corporations and individuals for the funding of TSG programmes and activities, such as telecommunications (e.g. Globe and Smart) and beverages (e.g. Gatorade, Milo, and Pocari).

Human resources. Lack of human resources for TSG – such as leaders, facilitators, researchers, and volunteers – is common amongst AMS. Lack of professional training for TSG staff and role models in schools and communities was cited by Indonesia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, and Viet Nam. Results from FGDs also revealed a dearth in manpower resources responsible for the preservation and promotion of TSG.

In Viet Nam, inadequate human resources pose a particular concern. Most staff working in culture and sports in localities are part-time and lack professional qualifications, skills, and knowledge. The coordination amongst departments, branches, and localities has been inconsistent, which has resulted in insufficient strategic and sustainable development plans for national sports and physical training in general and TSG in particular (Nguyen, Dinh, Dam, 2022). Physical education teachers, while having backgrounds in teaching physical activities, often lack the knowledge and skills to teach TSG.

Recommendations include the formation of a pool of TSG experts and facilitators to provide leadership and guidance for TSG programmes and activities in each AMS. Development of training programmes for TSG facilitators and volunteers and exposure to cultural communities are necessary for qualified and competent TSG experts, facilitators, and volunteers.

Urbanisation and changing lifestyles. Another reason cited for the extinction of TSG is urbanisation. This results in changing lifestyles, affecting not only ways of life but also TSG. Specific reasons cited include the ‘changing societal context’, ‘work culture’, and ‘urban development’ (Thailand); ‘lack of space and exposure of young children to TSG’ (Viet Nam);

‘economic reasons’ and ‘relevancy’ (Singapore); ‘migration to urban centres’, ‘busy with work’, ‘lack of budget’, ‘strong influence of other cultures’, ‘assimilation to urban culture’, and ‘communication of undesirability of [indigenous] cultures’ (Philippines); ‘changing lifestyles’, ‘less space for TSG’, and ‘financial burdens’ (Myanmar); and ‘increased urbanisation’ and ‘influence of Western culture’ (Indonesia).

In the Philippines, migration to urban centres has resulted in the adaptation of and assimilation to modern culture, influence of other cultures, and domination of non-indigenous cultures by communicating the undesirability of indigenous cultures. These have led to a decline in specific cultural practices, including TSG (Daut, 2022). Thailand cited the shifting of social, culture, and urban landscapes that has led to an environment that is no longer relevant to many cultural activities. Urban planning in Thailand does not give much priority to the provision of public green spaces nor the conservation of traditional architecture. A closely knit community is no longer the standard, limiting the practice of TSG as people become busy with work with less time for engaging in recreation (TDRI, 2022).

2.7. Role of Families, Communities, Schools, Governmental, Nongovernmental Organisations, and Media

AMS identified sectors that play significant roles in the preservation, protection, and promotion of TSG in their respective countries. Indonesia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam all agreed that families, communities, schools, governments, NGOs, and the media play significant roles in safeguarding and promoting TSG. The government was identified as the main source of policy development, funding, and promotion of intangible cultural heritage.

Family. All participating AMS cited the importance of family in the preservation and promotion of TSG in their respective countries. Introduction of cultural practices, including TSG, are generally initiated by parents and caregivers. Parents in Myanmar are considered to highly influence a child’s education, health, social skills, and support for engagement in sports and TSG. Participants from the Philippines stated that the family introduces a child to TSG, which is then nurtured by the community.

As emphasised by Tran Huu Son, chair, Viet Nam Folk Arts Association, ‘Games are inseparable parts of childhood.... By introducing folk games at home, at schools, at residential areas, common places, and even online, it’s possible to get children interested in such games’ (Ahn, 2020).

Community. The role of the community in safeguarding and promoting TSG is vital to enhancing community spirit, cooperation, pride, and cultural identity, according to all AMS. TSG form the backbone of a community, further community spirit, bring peoples together, and instil a sense of pride. Local government units are primarily responsible in ensuring the availability of safe and secure spaces and facilities for TSG.

Proactive communities and NGOs contribute to safeguarding and promoting TSG in Singapore (Teck, Hwee, Jinming, 2022). TSG can help ease inter-ethnic contacts and create social cohesion in a society as a tool for peace and reconciliation (Anastasovski et al., 2016). According to the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries in the Philippines, communities that participate in sports and recreation develop strong social bonds, are safer places, and contain citizens who are generally healthier and happier.¹⁶

¹⁶ Government of Philippines, DLGSCI, Sport and Recreation Helps Unite and Strengthen Communities, Research and Policy, <https://www.dlgsc.wa.gov.au/sport-and-recreation/benefits-to-the-community>.

Schools. Schools can introduce TSG as part of the physical education activities. Inclusion of TSG in the physical education and sports curricula, particularly at the primary school level, is an effective instrument in the preservation, promotion, and propagation of TSG.

Thailand especially emphasised the roles of schools and tourism in TSG preservation. It stated that the fundamental right of movement, sports, and games as a constituent of the quality of life and development of a whole personality must be guaranteed, both within the educational system and in other aspects of social life.

Governments. Governments are sources of policy development, funding, and promotion of the direction and strategies in safeguarding and promoting intangible cultural heritage. The government – through laws, policies, and directives – plays a significant role in the preservation and revitalisation of TSG according to all AMS. Singapore identified the government and schools as having pre-eminent roles in preserving, promoting, and propagating TSG.

Throughout the region, there is a need to review and to strengthen existing laws and policies, and to provide clear direction on how to safeguard the intangible cultural heritage of a country. The establishment or creation of national and regional coordinating bodies and centres for TSG preservation, promotion, and propagation is necessary to provide leadership and direction. Enactment of laws mandating the inclusion of TSG in school curricula is relevant. There is also a need for collaboration amongst AMS in developing action plans and strategies to promote TSG for mutual understanding, closer relations, and cultural development. Funding for TSG preservation and promotion should be increased in all AMS.

NGOs. In Myanmar, for example, NGOs are sources of funding support for TSG, while the government is tasked with awareness raising (Kyi, 2022). Indeed, most of the funding and material support for the conduct of festivals and cultural celebrations in AMS are provided by corporate sponsors and private individuals.

Undeniably, NGOs play an important role in the sustainability of TSG programmes and activities. They provide human resources, funding, and promotion necessary to ensure the success of preserving, protecting, and promoting TSG. NGOs advocating the preservation and promotion of TSG are vital partners of any government endeavour to safeguard and to promote cultural heritage.

Media. AMS noted that the advancement of information and communications technology (ICT) has adversely affected participation in TSG, particularly amongst younger generations; however, it can also be used to preserve, promote, and propagate TSG. Recommendations are to use social media influencers to promote TSG, create television programmes and ads for greater visibility, and increase coverage of TSG programmes and activities (Daut, 2022). UNESCO and the largest Chinese technology company, Tencent, developed an open digital library, focussed on the preservation and dissemination of TSG through e-games (UNESCO, 2016).

2.8. Sustainable Development Goals

Key findings from FGDs and interviews identified good health and well-being, quality education, gender equality, peace, justice, and strong institutions, and building partnerships as areas in which TSG significantly contribute to promoting and achieving SDGs. Singapore stated that participation in TSG promotes physical, mental, social, and spiritual development,

while Myanmar posited that TSG focus not only on physical strength but also on soft skills such as having fun, cooperation, negotiation, team spirit, leadership, perseverance, decisiveness, and dedication.

TSG were considered significant in building partnerships through cultural exchanges; they also help promote good health and well-being as part of physical activity, recreation, and social interaction in the community that can mobilise sustainable cities. The Philippines and Myanmar also highlighted that gender equality, peace, justice, and strong institutions are promoted through TSG, as more women can engage when rules are modified.

According to UNESCO (2015), TSG promote global health, placing players in an intersection between the past and future, reaffirming the specific identity of peoples in the age of globalisation, while their recurrences and similarities reveal universal themes. Physical activity is vital to the holistic development of young people, fostering their physical, social, and emotional health. The benefits of sports reach beyond the impact on physical well-being. Changes can be seen in motor skills development, performance, and educational potential, demonstrating the positive relationship between being involved in physical activities such as TSG and psychological development (United Nations, 2003). In addition to entertainment, TSG help players improve their mental acuity.

They create wonderful opportunities for children to have fun with their friends (Ahn, 2020). It is in this way that games promote peace through intercultural and corporal dialogue. Saura and Zimmermann (2018) expressed that 'sports and games have been presented as a fruitful dialog for the culture of peace'. Regardless of the complexity of the rules and the competitive nature, a TSG's dialogic character is a main characteristic. This character protects ethics and requires players to be fully present. Furthermore, the impediments of age, sex, those who teach or learn, languages, social classes, and different cultures are mitigated (Zimmerman and Morgan, 2011).

Safeguarding and promoting TSG build temporal and cultural paths that can lead to intercultural and intercommunity dialogues. TSG promote the understanding of contemporary cultural, societal, and sports practices and anticipate their future evolution. TSG give governments, communities, and individuals the chance to express both cultural pride and richness. Building intercultural dialogue and promoting ethical values through TSG foster youth empowerment and peace between and within communities and societies (UNESCO, 2015).

Regarding gender equity, it is possible to empower women through TSG. Sports programmes that assure women and girls active membership in leading positions, equity, financial means, and participation in decision-making and strategic planning are likely to be more successful in producing lasting change in the self-perception and self-confidence of female participants in such programmes.

Modifying existing games, changing certain rules, and focussing on participation and fun rather than on competition and performance can be effective in achieving an inclusive approach.¹⁷ Cooperation in the sports sector focusses on skills development programmes targeting coaches and sports officials, workshops and training in sports management, development of leadership skills amongst ASEAN youth leaders to enable them to advocate for healthy lifestyles and to prevent youth crime, as well as to promote the increased participation of women and girls in sports.

17 International Platform on Sport and Development, Youth Development and Education, Thematic Areas, <https://www.sportanddev.org/en/learn-more/sport-education-and-child-and-youth-development>

Results of the TSG surveys indicate the recognition of high to very high contributions of TSG to achieving and promoting SDGs from 49% of respondents. About 42.0% believed in their moderate to significant contributions to SDGs, and only 7.8% indicated low contributions to SDGs. SDG contributions from TSG included good health and well-being, quality education, peace and justice and strong institutions, gender equality, reduced inequalities, and sustainable cities and communities.

2.9. Social Ties, Mutual Understanding, and Peace

TSG are considered cultural practices that can promote intercultural ties, develop social cohesion, and serve as tools for peace and reconciliation at all levels in a society (Anastasovski et al., 2016). Promoting intercultural dialogue through TSG creates opportunities for greater awareness, better appreciation and understanding, recognition of the cultural diversity of the world, and the importance of keeping traditional practices alive in communities. TSG that are part of festivals gather individuals of different cultures and backgrounds together; social and cultural barriers are broken as children are more interested in the games and activities, encouraging them to play together (Saura and Zimmermann, 2020).

TSG are often identified by Western political leadership and policymakers as a field of action that improves the spirit of unity and promotes intercultural understanding. The social power of sports is reflected in the fact that they have been key to intercultural relations and social stability within Europe (Anastasovski et al., 2016). Participation in TSG has resulted in increased tolerance, strengthened unity, and mutual respect amongst diverse participants. The role of TSG is often highlighted in social and ethnic cohesion, inclusion, and integration in post-conflict situations.

Using TSG as an intervention, youth can understand how to interact with others. Peer relationships enable students to be involved in conflict management, empathise, and build social skills contributing to peaceful behaviours (Nur, Ma'mum, Fitri, 2019). For example, the Philippine Sports Commission's Children's Games in 2018 demonstrated the role of sports in promoting resilience and peaceful co-existence among Muslims, Christians, and Lumads (i.e., indigenous peoples) after the Siege of Marawi, developing respect and cooperation in the spirit of fun, fitness, and friendship through their participation in TSG (Sunstar, 2023).

Amidst the diversity of cultures in the world and the impact of globalisation, sports in general – and TSG in particular – provide a means to promote mutual understanding amongst cultures, communities, and nations. The social power of sports is reflected in them becoming a significant factor in intercultural relations and social stability, enhancing the spirit of unity and promoting intercultural understanding and mutual respect.

2.10. ASEAN Regional Cooperation and Integration

The Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam considered TSG as relevant to promoting ASEAN regional cooperation and integration. The recreational aspect of TSG can be a powerful cohesive force in bringing people together for regional cooperation and integration. Culture that cuts across AMS is a good way to come together; TSG can be used as a constructive platform to present a common ASEAN heritage.

Thailand stated that TSG can provide a common ground for collaboration, while the Philippines acknowledged that shared commonalities in TSG can be an instrument for ASEAN cooperation and integration. However, Myanmar noted that the relevance of various TSG to all cultures, as well as the origins of TSG, can be a hindrance in fostering cooperation and integration.

Sporting activities held during ASEAN Day are bringing ASEAN communities together in the spirit of sportsmanship and showcasing the cultural diversity of ASEAN. ASEAN ministers of sports have endorsed several new initiatives to advance cooperation in sports across ASEAN, including revitalising TSG, promoting the participation of women and girls in sports, and leveraging sports for development of life skills among youth (ASEAN, 2017). In 2021, the Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN for ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community expressed that the ASEAN sports sector will work to strengthen cooperation towards an active ASEAN community where sports grow with integrity and serve as an essential means in advancing socio-cultural development and promoting peace, guided by the *ASEAN Work Plan on Sports, 2021–2025* (ASEAN, 2022b).

A study on the role of sports in fostering social integration amongst different ethnic groups in South African schools showed that several factors contributed to sports being successful in bringing about exchange and building relationships between different groups, including non-verbal means of communication, a means to engage in collective experience and to establish direct physical contact, and ability to transcend class divisions.¹⁸

The importance of this intangible cultural heritage relies on the intergenerational and intercultural dialogues that maintain these traditional practices. Building intercultural dialogue and promoting ethical values through TSG foster youth empowerment and the development of peace between and within communities and societies, thereby empowering people towards peaceful societies (UNESCO, 2015).

2.11. Analyses and Results of Country Surveys

Recommended measures to protect, preserve, and promote TSG in AMS signify the urgent need to act in preventing the further decline and extinction of the rich intangible cultural heritage of AMS. All participating countries cited the need for governments to take the lead in safeguarding and promoting TSG by enacting laws; formulating policies and clear directions; and establishing agencies or institutions that will take responsibility for preserving, protecting, and promoting TSG. Awareness-raising activities also need to be intensified on the value, significance, and role of TSG in promoting cultural identity; supporting SDGs; and strengthening regional cooperation and integration.

Inclusion of TSG in school curricula, particularly in physical education, is vital. Institutionalised TSG competitions at various levels – local, regional, national, and international – to encourage wide participation and refined training on TSG are also needed. Human resources training and development of TSG leaders, facilitators, teachers, coaches, and volunteers were also cited as vital in the promotion of TSG. TSG research and documentation should be encouraged, as well as the use of social media to preserve and to promote TSG. Open spaces and facilities in urban areas for TSG activities should be provided.

Below are recommendations from the six participating AMS from the TSG surveys.

Intensify government role in preservation and promotion. All six participating AMS agreed that governments should take a bigger role in safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage of each country. Myanmar cited the need for governments to develop policies and strategies for TSG protection and promotion, provide funding for TSG programmes, and establish collaboration between government agencies and other sectors in developing action plans for TSG preservation. The Philippines noted the need for the government to enact laws specific to TSG and for their inclusion in school curricula and community activities, allocate a budget for TSG-related programmes and activities, develop more sustainable programmes, and promote cultural exchanges on TSG within ASEAN.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

Singapore emphasised the necessary establishment of clear policy and direction for TSG that will provide focus for preservation and promotion. Similarly, Viet Nam suggested the importance of developing mechanisms and policies for TSG protection, preservation, and promotion and to increase public investment. Thailand recommended providing appropriate urban planning and public spaces for TSG. All six AMS also identified the need for governments to promote greater awareness of the values and benefits of TSG.

Governments and NGOs should also extend support for planning and organising festivals and consider the specific needs of groups like older persons, people with disabilities, children, and youth.

Develop mechanisms and strategies to promote TSG. The safeguarding and promotion of TSG must go beyond festivals. Strategies to preserve, protect, and promote TSG in the region require inclusion of sustainable programmes and activities. Responsible agencies or organisations need to be identified, and systematic programming and promotion must be put in place.

TSG have their own regulations and standards. Due attention should be given to their values, originality, and the needs of those practicing them. They should also be protected from any kind of commercialisation that affects cultural heritage and values. TSG, while not needing expensive facilities and equipment, should be promoted in all parts of the world, especially where resources are low (MENAFN, 2019).

Include TSG in school curricula and activities. The role of schools as instruments for TSG preservation, protection, and promotion was emphasised. Indonesia recognised the importance of the inclusion of TSG in school curricula. Furthermore, it was suggested that schools provide scholarships for students excelling in TSG. The Philippines recommended the development of an indigenous peoples' games curriculum; provision of incentives for TSG research and programmes; production of TSG materials, references, handbooks, and manuals; and hosting of seminars, conferences, and fora on TSG for greater awareness, understanding, appreciation, and promotion. Singapore and Viet Nam cited the need to maximise the role of schools in the preservation, protection, and promotion of TSG by incorporating TSG into school programmes.

The inclusion of TSG as a component of physical education is an effective way of ensuring the preservation of TSG. The many values from participation in TSG – cultural awareness and understanding, respect, appreciation, unity, peace building, pride, and identity – as well as physical values justify the inclusion of TSG in school curricula. They also contribute to logical thinking, mathematical acuity, and civic education.

Institutionalise TSG competitions. Sports competitions are exciting and encourage participation. The lack of established TSG competitions is seen as a reason why TSG are not gaining attention and support. All six AMS thus recommended the institutionalisation of TSG competitions. Indonesia also identified the need for rewards and incentives for participation, while Myanmar called for increasing the number of TSG to be included in various local, regional, national, and international competitions. Thailand emphasised the need to highlight the importance of fun, excitement, and 'coolness' of TSG participation.

While modern sports have year-round competitions and exhibitions, TSG are highlighted only during festivals as objects of entertainment. Compared to modern sports where participation is highly organised and requires intensive training, TSG are often simple and do not requiring intensive training. Competitions can be used as vehicles to promote cultural

identity, awareness, understanding, and appreciation and to help build unity and cooperation, peace and understanding, and cultural exchange.

Use media and ICT. The role of media in the promotion and preservation of TSG cannot be ignored. Media is a powerful tool in publicity and promotion. The needs to enhance social media promotion and to use social media influencers to promote TSG were cited by Indonesia. Similarly, the need for wider coverage and attention on TSG promotion was acknowledged by the Philippines. The inclusion of TSG in entertainment media to increase awareness and participation by creating programmes that will provide information to a wider population was suggested by Thailand.

The attraction of youth to technology and the proliferation of online games and e-sports have impacted participation and preservation of TSG. All participating countries identified the need to adapt technology in the promotion and preservation of TSG by developing programmes and applications that will introduce people to TSG. Indeed, it will be exciting to see the development of an application that will transport TSG into the technological age. The creation of TSG into apps can create awareness, develop interest and appreciation, and eventually lead to actual participation.

Build human resources and capacity. The dearth of TSG experts, researchers, leaders, facilitators, and volunteers is limiting the promotion and protection of TSG. Trained TSG personnel are important to the delivery of programmes and services. While physical education teachers can provide instruction on popular sports, there are very few who are knowledgeable about TSG. The inclusion of TSG in school curricula requires knowledge and competence in their teaching.

Indonesia and Myanmar suggested the need to train more TSG professionals and leaders to ensure qualified and competent leaders, facilitators, researchers, and volunteers for TSG programmes and activities. The Philippines recommended the establishment of a pool of TSG experts and volunteers to provide much-needed manpower for research, extension, leadership, and management of TSG programmes and activities.

Establish TSG centres and associations. The identification, documentation, and preservation of TSG are important components in safeguarding the cultural heritage of a country. Researchers play significant roles in the collection and preservation of TSG through publications of articles, research, and handbooks. TSG leaders organise events, teach authentic TSG, and promote the significance and values of TSG.

The Philippines proposed the establishment of TSG centres as a response to the need for regional and national offices/centres that will be handled by competent TSG experts. The centre should facilitate the coordination, implementation, and promotion of TSG in the country and region. Likewise, TSG museums will serve as repositories of TSG materials, equipment, artifacts, and documents for educational and promotional purposes.

Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam proposed the provision of facilities and spaces for the conduct of TSG as well. The migration of ethnic groups into urban centres requires appropriate urban planning that will incorporate public spaces and facilities for TSG.

To ensure sustainable TSG programmes, Viet Nam recommended the establishment and consolidation of TSG associations, federations, and organisations to provide leadership, direction, and programmes for the preservation, protection, and promotion of TSG.

Create a balance between modern sports and TSG. An overemphasis on modern and popular sports has contributed to the decline in participation and extinction of many TSG. TSG must be adopted or implemented in recognised sports programmes to promote their popularity and survival (MENAFN, 2019). One of the challenges is to find a balance between the old and beloved, and the new and desired. One idea is to take parts of tradition, parts of history, and parts of values in these organisations and venues and bring modern amenities to them to encourage younger generations to engage in TSG (Kane, 2021). While it is necessary to retain the originality of the games, it is also important to make some adjustments in terms of equipment, facilities, and rules that can make them more interesting and fun. However, it is important that the nature of the original games is introduced and made known to the participants.

Awareness, appreciation, and active participation. Results of the TSG survey show that 59.1% of the respondents had low to no involvement in TSG, 32.0% had moderate involvement, and only 8.9% had high involvement. Amongst those involved, only 48% were participants, while 27% were spectators, and 20% were facilitators. Lack of awareness, knowledge, and skills in TSG can lead to lack of appreciation. When the value and significance of an activity is not well understood, there is less appreciation. With popular sports and online games providing higher levels of excitement and satisfaction, TSG are viewed as outdated. According to Hall (1976), to preserve the cultural aspect and to escape the constraint of naturalised culture, one must become actively involved in the aspects of one's existence that is most natural.

To enhance appreciation of and active participation in TSG, the following interventions are recommended: (i) encourage families to introduce the games of their ancestors to their children as part of family recreation; (ii) create programmes and activities for TSG to be introduced to communities by organising TSG days; (iii) institutionalise the inclusion of TSG in school curricula and intramurals at all levels; (iv) establish local, regional, and national levels of competitions to motivate youth to train in competitions; (v) provide spaces and facilities where people can engage in TSG; (vi) promote TSG through print, broadcast, social media, and television; (vii) use public figures, such as popular artists and personalities, as models for TSG engagement; and (viii) organise interest groups to form clubs and competitions and to advocate for participation.

3. POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

AMS have long traditions of cooperation in social, political, economic, and cultural areas. Most share cultural links that create opportunities for cooperation and understanding. Some TSG are also shared amongst AMS, like *penkak silat*, *sepak takraw*, *sipa*, and *sungka*. The significance of TSG as a vehicle for regional understanding and cooperation is very promising. It is therefore relevant to develop policies and programmes that will strengthen regional cooperation through TSG as an instrument for unity, peace, cooperation, and solidarity. Below are the recommendations for policy consideration in the preservation, protection, and promotion of TSG in the ASEAN region.

3.1. Develop TSG Frameworks, Mechanisms, and Policies

The effectiveness of any effort in safeguarding and promoting the intangible cultural heritage of the region starts with the development of an appropriate framework in which all programmes and activities are linked. Mechanisms and policies to preserve, protect, and promote TSG must be given importance to guide the organisations and people involved. Coordination should be promoted amongst governments, NGOs, and the private sector to build trust, thereby promoting the development of festivals and other events and multiplying the mass sports movement in general, including TSG.

Policies should be proposed to mobilise investment from both the public and private sector. Physical foundations and equipment should be built and preserved for TSG. Moreover, TSG governance should be strengthened in the ASEAN region through the organisation of consultations and summits where key stakeholders address strategic challenges in an interdisciplinary approach to safeguard and promote TSG. There is also a need to strengthen the ASEAN framework on TSG towards regional development and peace.

3.2. Establish ASEAN TSG Commissions

To effect the mandate of TSG protection and promotion in the ASEAN region, a commission, composed of representatives/experts from each AMS, should be created. The commission will be tasked with planning, organising, coordinating, and implementing programmes and activities on TSG in the region. It will develop standards and guidelines for programmes towards TSG preservation, promotion, and propagation. Likewise, each AMS will establish its own country commission to coordinate with the regional commission. The ASEAN TSG commission will be composed of one representative from each AMS with the chair selected from amongst the representatives.

3.3. Establish ASEAN TSG Centres

An ASEAN TSG centre should be established to facilitate effective coordination, communication, and delivery of TSG services to AMS. Each AMS should also establish its own TSG country centre for the same purposes. Centres will house the offices of the TSG country commissions, with facilities and equipment for meetings, seminars, and training. These will serve as operations centres in coordinating the implementation of programmes and activities and as sources of information and dissemination of TSG-related matters in the region. The ASEAN TSG centre will serve as the official coordinating home of the ASEAN TSG Commission, with a library and facilities for seminars, meetings, and other functions.

3.4. Strengthen ASEAN Cooperation through Cultural Exchanges

To foster greater understanding in the ASEAN region, cultural exchanges on TSG to include experts, researchers, teachers, and leaders are important to strengthening partnerships and collaboration in the preservation and promotion of this intangible cultural heritage. For example, visiting professors on TSG can be included in the programme. Collaboration on TSG research can be encouraged amongst universities in the ASEAN region as well.

TSG are part of intangible heritage and a symbol of cultural diversity. They are also a means for conveying values of solidarity, diversity, inclusiveness, and cultural awareness. Moreover, TSG create a bridge between cultures for better mutual understanding.

3.5. Intensify Promotion and Awareness Raising

Safeguarding and promoting TSG require developing knowledge, sharing information, and raising awareness on intangible cultural heritage (MENAFN, 2019). The low awareness level of TSG in the ASEAN region is a by-product of their lack of promotion. Programmes and activities are thus needed to create awareness of the significance of TSG. Dissemination of informational materials to guide the practice, significance, and benefits of TSG – using ICT – can help increase the level of awareness and appreciation and enhance TSG participation, particularly amongst the younger generations.

3.6. Include TSG in School Curricula

Inclusion of TSG in school curricula can foster deeper understanding of the cultures of other AMS, thereby enriching cultural understanding and appreciation. This will promote greater awareness, better understanding, and appreciation of the unique cultures of the region, while taking pride in one's culture being introduced to other places.

The International Charter of Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport states that 'the diversity of physical education, physical activity, and sport is a basic feature of their value and appeal [that] express the world's rich cultural heritage and must be protected and promoted' (UNESCO, 2015).

3.7. Establish TSG Games for All

AMS are known for their tourist attractions. Establishing an ASEAN TSG Games for All event can help promote the diverse cultural legacies of sports and games in the region. It can be hosted with or in parallel to the SEA Games to add a cultural touch to the modern games. While TSG are already included in the SEA Games, a specific TSG event is important to highlight the diverse cultures of the region.

3.8. Organise TSG Conferences and Workshops

Sharing of information, knowledge, and skills on TSG can be facilitated through seminars, workshops, training, and conferences to present research on TSG as well as to demonstrate TSG to promote interest. An annual TSG conference will create opportunities to discuss problems, issues, and concerns in safeguarding and promoting TSG in the region. Increasing the numbers of TSG facilitators, coaches, teachers, and volunteers is important in ensuring that adequate qualified and competent TSG human resources are available.

3.9. Strengthen Research and Development

Identifying existing TSG and recovering those that are extinct are part of the research that needs to be carried out to safeguard TSG. One project is for ASEAN TSG mapping to identify existing and extinct TSG in the region. The creation of an encyclopedia of country and ASEAN TSG can serve as reference for schools, institutions, and historians. Moreover, development of resource materials, apps, and videos are necessary to ensure the preservation and promotion of TSG.

TSG contribute to the world heritage of sports culture. Research, preservation, and promotion of TSG must be at the centre of a global policy on culture and sports. Research into TSG and their contribution to the knowledge of the various cultures and humankind must be intensified, supported by governments and NGOs. Establishment of an ASEAN TSG research and development centre and the provision of training to researchers on TSG will ensure authenticity and validity of outputs. An ASEAN research forum to provide a venue for research presentation and discussion of issues, concerns, and challenges facing TSG preservation and promotion will also contribute to the safeguarding and promotion of TSG in AMS.

3.10 Strengthen Human Resources

Safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage of the region requires the involvement of qualified and competent TSG leaders, facilitators, researchers, and volunteers. The pooling of TSG experts from AMS and the provision of training, certification, and exposure to the region's TSG are steps towards ensuring that those responsible for the preservation, protection, and promotion of this intangible cultural heritage are professionally prepared.

Training programmes and courses should be established that will prepare TSG implementors with knowledge and skills. Likewise, capability building on planning and organising TSG programmes and activities are important components of human resources development through regular professional training in organising, implementing, and managing festivals.

Establishment of an ASEAN TSG certification programme will ensure the development of qualified and competent TSG manpower resources to include leaders, researchers, teachers, coaches, and volunteers. This will provide necessary competencies and training for those wanting to assist in the protection and promotion of TSG in AMS and the region.

3.11. Encourage Government Funding

The decline of participation, low level of awareness, and the lack of sustainable TSG programmes and activities are the effects of the limited funding given to TSG. TSG preservation, protection, and promotion require considerable funding to ensure TSG survival for future generations. Thus, governments should provide a balance between support for popular sports and TSG. While popular sports may have economic benefits, TSG are an investment in cultural heritage.

3.12. Promote Gender Equality and Youth Empowerment

Sports encourage physical and mental well-being. They also promote education, communication, negotiation skills, and leadership, necessary for the advancement and empowerment of women. TSG have often been successful in promoting parity between the sexes. Modifying and updating relevant laws and rules and focussing on participation and enjoyment can be effective in adopting an equitable approach to gender equality in TSG. Likewise, programmes and activities on TSG should encourage gender equality in the areas of leadership and management.

Developing programmes and activities that will attract new players to participate in TSG, especially increasing the participation of women and girls, are important. Games can be modified to allow more women or children to participate, learn, and experience the games of their ancestors. TSG can empower people and ensure inclusiveness and equality.

CONCLUSION

Safeguarding and promoting TSG as intangible cultural heritage are a major challenge. The protection, preservation, and promotion of TSG in the ASEAN region and the world is being challenged on different fronts. Modernisation and globalisation have impacted their survival; technological advances and accessibility have drawn people away from TSG and into the more popular modern sports and online games available today. Poor awareness; limited support for TSG preservation and promotion; a dearth of TSG leaders and role models; few sustainable TSG programmes, activities, and competitions; cultural migration; urbanisation; and environmental factors are also contributing to the decline in participation and possible extinction of TSG.

Safeguarding and promoting TSG and reviving interest amongst younger generations require the involvement of all sectors of society. Stronger measures and strategies are necessary to ensure the survival of intangible cultural heritage and to serve as instruments for intercultural and regional cooperation and integration. The vital role of governments in ensuring their survival cannot be ignored. Establishment of clear policies, mechanisms, and strategies – supported with appropriate funding, facilities, and human resources – are necessary to sustain programmes and activities that will preserve, protect, and promote the intangible cultural heritage of the region.

Building intercultural dialogues and promoting ethical values through TSG create a fertile ground for empowering youth; promoting understanding, mutual respect, and cultural pride; and encouraging peace between and within communities and societies. The significance of TSG as instruments in promoting mutual understanding and integration amongst AMS, their contributions to achieving SDGs, and help empowering youth and women are well documented. The relevance of TSG to increased cooperation and integration of AMS and to ASEAN's SDGs – most notably to good health and well-being, gender equality, peace and justice, and quality education – are highlighted in the study.

However, the process of safeguarding the TSG should avoid protectionism that defends the heritage of TSG at the expense of other sports, as both TSG and modern or emerging sports should not be perceived as a zero-sum game. The promotion of TSG is about exposure and interchanging of cultures, and this should be an attitude shared in the promulgation of sports across ASEAN, in bringing people closer together. Additionally, institutionalising the promotion of TSG must be realistic about the potential for increased participation, due to the increasingly divergent and rapid evolution in sports and games. Therefore, it is crucial to stay grounded in expectations.

Policymakers in the ASEAN region are encouraged to take necessary steps to ensure the preservation, protection, and promotion of TSG across the region as well. Recommendations include the establishment of TSG commissions and centres, strengthening of cultural exchanges on TSG, intensification of awareness raising campaigns, inclusion of TSG in school curricula, establishment of ASEAN TSG Games,

organisation of ASEAN TSG conferences, strengthening of research and human resources development, encouragement of government support and funding, and promotion of gender equity and youth empowerment through TSG.

UNESCO has sounded the alarm on the threats of extinction to civilisations' rich intangible cultural heritage and made a call for safeguarding and promotion. It is time that the ASEAN region heed this call and take necessary action to ensure that future generations will celebrate, enjoy, and engage in the games of their ancestors as significant part of their cultural heritage, identity, and pride.

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APPENDIX: SUMMARY OF COUNTRY FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Table A1: Summary of the Focus Group Discussions of Indonesia

Topic	Results
Awareness of Government Laws/ Policies on TSG	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Low awareness of government laws and policies amongst students 2. TSG are becoming extinct. 3. Low awareness of TSG amongst professionals 4. Low to medium awareness of sports activists 5. Not published in the news and media 6. Medium awareness of government policies and laws on TSG amongst sports departments 7. Medium awareness of government policies and laws on TSG amongst ministries
Awareness of Government Agencies/Institutions for TSG	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No knowledge of government agencies, institutions, organisations tasked to preserve and promote TSG 2. Government agencies and organisations for TSG preservation and promotion not optimal
Degree of Implementation of Sustainable TSG	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sustainable TSG implementation is low amongst students. 2. Only played once a year during Indonesia Independence Day. 3. Lack of motivation from government to propagate TSG 4. Government makes little to no effort to preserve TSG. 5. Degree of implementation is medium to low. 6. Programmes are rare and uninteresting. 7. Degree of implementation is low. 8. Exposure in social media is not comprehensive nor strong enough to increase awareness. 9. Low degree of implementation of sustainable TSG programmes
Awareness of Country TSG	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not many Indonesian youth are aware of TSG. 2. There are many Indonesian TSG that need to be given spotlight/ importance. 3. Knowledge of very few TSG and not their details 4. Low publicity and promotion of TSG can influence Indonesia, especially youth, in acknowledging their own culture and identity. 5. Students are aware of TSG and those from each province. 6. Know only some TSG that are commonly played
Awareness of TSG Programmes/ Activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No specific programme developed to preserve TSG. 2. Government focusses more on modern sports due to their publicity and sponsorships. 3. No knowledge of government TSG programmes and activities. 4. Low awareness of TSG programmes, as government focusses more on modern sports. 5. Ministry of Education has plans to include TSG in elementary and junior high school curricula.
Significance of TSG in Cultural Identity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. TSG significantly affect Indonesian cultural identity. 2. TSG reflect cultural identity and show the diversity of Indonesia. 3. TSG are important as part of the Indonesian identity and necessary to develop the young generation's character and social life.

Topic	Results
Reasons for TSG Extinction	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. People are more interested in modern sports. 2. Most of the funds are used on modern sports. 3. Lack of will of the people to preserve TSG due to modernisation 4. Perception of TSG as old-fashioned 5. TSG are played only in rural areas. 6. People believe that there are more benefits to modern sports, causing TSG to be forgotten. 7. Decrease of interest in TSG amongst youth 8. Decline or absence of TSG professionals for training 9. Low promotion of TSG 10. Government promotes modern sports over TSG. 11. Low role of government in creating interesting content 12. Low promotion to the public 13. Motivation to preserve TSG is low. 14. Influence of Western culture 15. Impact of globalisation 16. Declining public awareness and sensitivity in preserving and maintaining TSG 17. Lack of interest from both sports activities and community in TSG, especially amongst youth 18. Technology development 19. Many parents entertain their children with technology. 20. Children do not understand their own culture due to lack of interaction. 21. Booming urbanisation causes people to focus on work and have less time for activities, including TSG.
Role of Various Sectors on TSG Preservation and Promotion	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. TSG need support from various sectors. 2. Communities, schools, and nongovernmental agencies have the motivation to preserve TSG. 3. Families and the government make low contributions to TSG preservation. 4. Promotion of TSG needs participation from every sector. 5. Youth are key to the preservation and promotion of TSG. 6. Families, communities, and schools make high contributions to TSG preservation. 7. The government's role is very important to highlight programmes specific to TSG. 8. Provision of scholarships for youth who excel in TSG 9. Nongovernmental agencies can help promote TSG through social media. 10. TSG promotion needs the support of families, communities, schools, and governmental and nongovernmental agencies. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. TSG should be included in the schools. 2. All sectors play a role in the preservation and promotion of TSG. 3. Family is the first to introduce TSG. 4. Schools are the place to give TSG lessons and training through curricula and physical education. 5. People no longer play TSG. 6. People are more attracted to smart phones. 7. Laziness and lack of motivation to play 8. The government can promote TSG equally with modern sports. 9. Families, communities, schools, and governmental and nongovernmental agencies have roles in preserving and promoting TSG.

Topic	Results
Relevance of TSG to SDGs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. TSG benefit peoples' quality of life through good health and well-being, quality education, gender equality and peace, justice, and strong institutions. 2. TSG promote good health and well-being, quality of education, gender equality and peace, justice, and strong institutions. 3. TSG provide benefits for quality of life. 4. TSG bring good health and well-being, quality education, gender equality and peace, justice, and strong institutions. 5. TSG promote character building and development.
Relevance of TSG on ASEAN Regional Cooperation and Integration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reintroducing TSG in ASEAN is an important strategy to preserve Indonesian culture. 2. Low relevance of TSG in ASEAN regional cooperation and integration
Measures to Preserve, Promote, and Propagate TSG	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide rewards for TSG participation 2. Encourage youth to participate in TSG 3. Build interactive platforms on TSG 4. Make TSG a mandatory subject in physical education/curricula in schools 5. Use social media to make TSG presence stronger 6. Need a grand stage for TSG to be promoted 7. Use of social media influencers to penetrate youth and to promote TSG 8. Re-introduce TSG through programmes dedicated to TSG as part of Indonesia's culture and identity 9. Common ASEAN TSG can bridge countries to attain political gains through friendly matches or leagues. 10. Create interesting programmes on social media 11. Conduct matches or competitions 12. Build training sites for TSG 13. Introduce TSG regionally 14. Provide equal opportunities for TSG and modern sports 15. Increase government role in making innovation and collaboration with TSG and modern sports without losing cultural identity 16. Need for youth to study and learn more about Indonesian culture to prevent extinction of TSG 17. Conduct national TSG events for people around the country 18. Conduct TSG exhibitions regularly in local communities and have children participate

ASEAN = Association for Southeast Asian Nations, SDG = Sustainable Development Goal, TSG = traditional sports and games.

Table A2: Summary of Focus Group Discussions Findings of Myanmar

Topic	Results
Awareness of Government Laws/ Policies on TSG	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Medium to high level of awareness 2. Government laws and policies are strong for conservation of TSG. 3. Recognise that the government provides budget and facilities and establishes sports federations 4. Establishment of sports village in Nay Pyi Taw
Awareness of Government Agencies/Institutions for TSG	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. High level of awareness, with some region having low awareness 2. Noticed various associations/federations on TSG such as rowing, kickboxing, chinlone, and martial arts 3. Establishment of Myanmar Traditional Sports Federation 4. These federations are trying to propagate Myanmar TSG. 5. They recovered 2 TSG – race of releasing the kite and race of excessive power pulling. 6. Chinlone Association, Football Academy, Myanmar Martial Arts Association, and Rowing Association 7. Some regions have low awareness because athletes rely on private sport organisations for support. 8. Cited the need to promote TSG at the community level
Degree of Implementation of Sustainable TSG	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rated medium to high degree of implementation 2. Degree of implementation is high at the national and divisional level. 3. Implementation is initiated. 4. National races or ethnic groups have a strong desire to sustain their cultural and TSG. 5. They sustain the traditions of celebrating sports competitions at cultural festivals. 6. Universities are the most relevant places to manage TSG competitions accompanying festivals. 7. Promotion of TSG was rated low by some. 8. Students become weak in academics by focussing on sports. 9. Need for collaboration between Ministry of Education and Ministry of Sports in the implementation of the TSG programmes
Awareness of Country TSG	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rated medium to high level of awareness 2. High awareness due to festivals celebrating TSG in various ethnic group areas 3. Awareness due to regular holding of festivals 4. There are seasonal festivals every month in Myanmar. 5. There is strong desire for ethnic groups to preserve their TSG. 6. TSG originating from religions and values 7. Older people tend to know more about types of TSG than younger people. 8. Varying degree of awareness according to family encouragement 9. Families that are not open to sports will have low levels of TSG familiarity. 10. Names of TSG vary in different regions.
Awareness of TSG Programmes/Activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rated medium level of awareness 2. They know that government ministries, particularly Ministry of Health and Sports, helps hold TSG on significant national days.
Significance of TSG on Cultural Identity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rated medium to high level of significance 2. TSG should be promoted at university as well as at the primary, middle, and high school levels. 3. Universities have facilities and trainers, and a government budget is allocated to universities for facilities and buildings. 4. Should allow primary, middle, and high school to practice at university playgrounds and buildings/facilities.

Topic	Results
Reasons for TSG Extinction	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Medium level of knowledge of TSG extinction 2. Do not think that Myanmar TSG are becoming extinct 3. Know that Myanmar TSG are well preserved at the divisional level but are becoming extinct at the national level <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Effect and attractiveness of computer and internet games <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Players can immediately know their performance easily. ○ Internet games are exciting with the challenge of every level. ○ Myanmar TSG are not played by level. ○ Myanmar TSG have same challenge. b. Decline in encouragement at the primary, middle, and high school levels <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Change in school time from whole day to half day ○ Sports performance is not linked to education performance. ○ Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health and Sports should collaborate in promoting Myanmar TSG. c. Lack of sustainability (long-term plan) to nurture competent athletes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Government and TSG federations should set effective policies to train, develop, and retain athletes starting from childhood to develop competent athletes for national and international competitions. ○ Need for recordkeeping of athletes' performances d. No encouragement of TSG by family e. Changing lifestyle <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ More people are living in apartments. ○ Less spaces for outdoor activities and games ○ Fewer festivals and sports events to promote TSG in schools ○ Influence of stereotypes in doing sports by Myanmar parents ○ Parents believe that doing sports will not make their children rich f. Influence of international sports g. Struggles with financial burdens/problems (need to work than play) 4. Few professionals play TSG.
Role of Various Sectors in TSG Preservation and Promotion	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. High/significant role of families, communities, schools, and governmental and nongovernmental agencies in TSG preservation and promotion. 2. Family's role is very important because of high influence of parents in Myanmar on child's education, health, and social skills. 3. Parents provide time and funds for playing sports with their children, encourage their children to join sports clubs at universities, provide requirements for sports to practice, and join national and international competitions. 4. Parents who are financially disadvantaged cannot encourage their children to participate in sport competitions. 5. Role of primary, middle, and high school very significant 6. Schools can provide training and develop skills for competitions. 7. Schools can also manage lower levels of competitions by collaborating with the community. 8. Community role is important as a source of support for funding. 9. The government can provide public awareness and standards of competition. 10. Private agency support through funding is very important for athletes and schools or universities.

Topic	Results
Relevance of TSG to SDGs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. TSG are relevant to good health and well-being, quality education, gender equality, peace, and justice and strong institutions. 2. High degree of relevance on good health and well-being and gender equality. 3. Medium/moderate degree on quality education and peace and justice and strong institutions. 4. Myanmar TSG not only focus on physical strength but also on soft skills like fun, cooperation, negotiation, team spirit, leadership, perseverance, decisiveness, and dedication. 5. Myanmar TSG are relevant to good health and well-being. 6. Relevant for gender equality; men and women can participate in martial arts, Myanmar Traditional Sports (Lethwei) kickboxing, rowing, chinlone. 7. Disagreement that TSG can be for quality education 8. Most of Myanmar TSG are intended to make athletes healthy, fit, and be for fun. 9. Most parents have negative perceptions regarding playing sports and games. 10. Parents are worried about their children's educational performance. 11. Parents want their children to focus on passing exams and gain high marks. 12. There is a need to change the perception of parents. 13. Sports performance should be linked with academic performance. 14. Myanmar TSG are not supporting peace, justice, and strong institutions as competitions result in fighting against each other. 15. When competitions have the objective of building friendly relationships, they can support peace and justice amongst athletes, federations, and associations.
Relevance of TSG on ASEAN Regional Cooperation and Integration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rated low to medium on ASEAN regional cooperation and integration. 2. Standards and ground rules of Myanmar TSG are different. 3. Issues with other countries on the origin of kickboxing. 4. Some TSG may not be relevant due to different cultural values (<i>kyat pha khut</i>). 5. Myanmar TSG are relevant for ASEAN regional cooperation and integration with rules/standards that can be adjusted and easily adapted by athletes from ASEAN Member States. 6. There are similar TSG amongst ASEAN Member States that could enhance cooperation and integration.
Measures to Preserve, Promote, and Propagate TSG	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identification of number of sports and games that are eligible for national races/competitions 2. Identification of the number of sports and games eligible for international races 3. Identification of number of sports and games eligible for ASEAN regional races 4. Measures should be taken to observe number of competitions to be held locally or internationally, types of sports to be played in the community, number of training sessions, and budget and funding by the government.

ASEAN = Association for Southeast Asian Nations, SDG = Sustainable Development Goal, TSG = traditional sports and games.

Table A3: Summary of Focus Group Discussions Findings of Philippines

Topic	Results
Awareness of Government Laws/ Policies on TSG	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Low to medium level of awareness 2. Constitution 3. Indigenous Peoples Rights Act 4. Indigenous Peoples Games Preservation Act
Awareness of Government Agencies/ Institutions for TSG	National Commission for Culture and the Arts, Indigenous People's Rights Act Law, national sports associations, Philippine Sports Commission, National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, Department of Tourism, Department of Education
Degree of Implementation of Sustainable TSG	Low to medium
Awareness of Country TSG	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Medium to high 2. Non-indigenous person TSG 3. Traditional games played by lowlanders
Awareness of TSG Programmes/Activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cultural festivals 2. Community fiestas 3. Local government units 4. Philippine Sports Commission's Indigenous Peoples Games
Significance of TSG on Cultural Identity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Medium to high 2. TSG as representative of culture and ways of life 3. Cultural pride and identity
Reasons for TSG Extinction	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Availability of technology/gadgets 2. Young generation more into online games 3. Influence of modern technology 4. Popularity of modern games, e-sports 5. Modernisation 6. Lack of promotion 7. Limited exposure to TSG, particularly amongst the younger generations 8. Not emphasised by the government 9. Lack of strong initiatives by the government 10. Non-inclusion of TSG in school curricula 11. No institutionalised TSG competitions 12. No clear government intervention on TSG promotion and preservation 13. TSG as subject for entertainment 14. No TSG role models 15. Lack of awareness and interest amongst young generation 16. TSG importance and values not taught 17. Lack of budget for TSG 18. Lack of TSG leadership 19. Busy with work for survival 20. Cultural differences 21. Strong influence of other cultures 22. Migration to urban centres 23. Ideological issues 24. Intrusion of foreign cultures 25. Assimilation of indigenous persons to urban culture 26. Communicating undesirability of indigenous persons' culture 27. Relevance of TSG not recognised or understood

Topic	Results
Role of Various Sectors on TSG Preservation and Promotion	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Families, schools, communities, government, non-government, and media play significant roles 2. Government through laws and policies 3. Schools through inclusion of TSG in curricula, physical education, and sports activities 4. Community use of TSG to promote unity, cohesion, peace, and development 5. Nongovernmental sector for support and promotion 6. Media for publicity and promotion
Relevance of TSG to SDGs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Good health and well-being 2. Quality education 3. Gender equality 4. Peace and justice and strong institutions 5. Building partnerships
Relevance of TSG on ASEAN Regional Cooperation and Integration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. TSG as instrument for ASEAN cooperation and integration 2. Shared commonalities in TSG
Measures to Preserve, Promote, and Propagate TSG	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Government should take lead role in preserving and promoting TSG 2. Ensure safe, secure, and peaceful indigenous communities 3. Enact laws for the inclusion of TSG in school curricula and community activities 4. Institutionalise TSG competitions at the local, regional, and national levels 5. Promote cultural exchange in the regions 6. Provide funding support to TSG programmes and activities 7. Provide incentives for TSG programmes and research 8. Create clear policies to preserve, promote, and propagate TSG 9. Require schools to incorporate TSG into physical education and sports activities 10. Coordinate with indigenous persons for partnerships in preservation and promotion 11. Develop and include TSG in school curricula 12. Create TSG materials, references, videos, apps, manuals, and handbooks 13. Increase awareness and appreciation of TSG through seminars, fora, conferences, trainings, and demonstrations 14. Encourage greater exposure of TSG in media 15. Create TSG programmes on television 16. Feature TSG in newspapers and magazines 17. Use social media influencers for TSG advocacy

ASEAN = Association for Southeast Asian Nations, SDG = Sustainable Development Goal, TSG = traditional sports and games.

Table A4: Summary of Focus Group Discussions Findings of Singapore

Topic	Results
Awareness of Government Laws/Policies on TSG	Lack of knowledge of government laws and policies on TSG
Awareness of Government Agencies/Institutions for TSG	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Low 2. ActiveSG, Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth, Ministry of Education, national sports associations 3. Many TSG in Singapore trace their origins to other countries. 4. Cannot identify agency or institution directly responsible for TSG
Degree of Implementation of Sustainable TSG	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Low 2. Limited implementation of sustainable TSG programmes
Awareness of Country TSG	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Low awareness 2. Dragon dance 3. Rarely noticed in Singapore 4. Games are associated with different ethnic groups
Awareness of TSG Programmes/Activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Low 2. Racial Harmony Day
Significance of TSG on Cultural Identity	TSG are related to culture, identity.
Reasons for TSG Extinction	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No teachers to take charge of co-curricular activities 2. Lack of knowledge and awareness of TSG 3. Lack of support from different sectors 4. TSG are not given importance or focus 5. Lack of publicity 6. Economic reasons (i.e. not much economic value) 7. Distractions due to mobile devices and social media 8. Availability of electronic devices 9. Attraction to e-sports with high entertainment value 10. Relevancy 11. Political will 12. Gamification of TSG 13. Dearth of political will/endorsement 14. Policy on inclusiveness – focus on homogeneity
Role of Various Sectors on TSG Preservation and Promotion	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of support from different sectors 2. Government and schools play significant role in TSG preservation and promotion 3. Important role of Ministry of Education and regulating co-curricular activities 4. Proactive actions of the community, non-governmental agencies
Relevance of TSG to SDGs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. High degree of relevance 2. Good health and well-being 3. Quality education (history, culture, identity) 4. Utility to strong institutions 5. Peace and justice 6. Gender equality

Topic	Results
Relevance of TSG on ASEAN Regional Cooperation and Integration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. TSG recreational aspects can be a powerful cohesive force to bring people together and to promote ASEAN regional cooperation and integration. 2. Ethnic culture that cuts across Asian countries is a good way to come together. 3. TSG have potential to strengthen cooperation. 4. TSG can be a constructive platform to present to the world the common heritage of ASEAN. 5. Promote cohesion, cultural heritage, and ethnicity collaborations and communications amongst ASEAN Member States 6. Problem with hosting South East Asia Games when host introduces TSG that are not familiar to other members
Measures to Preserve, Promote, and Propagate TSG	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Need to consider the evolution of TSG to avoid being obsolete. 2. TSG should evolve and change. 3. Creation of greater awareness at different levels – community, schools 4. Clear policy and direction by the government and relevant agencies 5. Formulation and enforcement of a deliberate policy document with clear guidelines and strategies 6. Identify apposite individuals and organisations to promote TSG 7. Government provision of strategies and best practices 8. Government active involvement through campaigns, promotion 9. Conduct of TSG activities 10. Inclusion of TSG in school curricula 11. Establishment of annual TSG carnivals 12. Identification and documentation of TSG 13. Encourage communities to own TSG programmes 14. Funding of TSG by the government

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Table A5: Summary of Focus Group Discussions Findings of Thailand

Topic	Results
Awareness of Government Laws/Policies on TSG	1. Act on Promotion and Preservation of Cultural Heritage (2015) 2. Very few
Awareness of Government Agencies/Institutions for TSG	1. Low awareness 2. Not familiar
Degree of Implementation of Sustainable TSG	1. Low 2. Focus on tourism 3. Highlights Thai martial arts
Awareness of Country TSG	Low to moderate
Awareness of TSG Programmes/Activities	1. Low 2. Sports tourism
Significance of TSG on Cultural Identity	1. Local and national identity 2. Community building/cohesion
Reasons for TSG Extinction	1. Urban development 2. Lack of constantly visible tangible cultural heritage 3. Low engagement 4. Modernisation 5. Changing societal context 6. Work culture 7. Gender role 8. City growth 9. Technology
Role of Various Sectors on TSG Preservation and Promotion	1. School – inclusion of TSG in curricula 2. Tourism promoting TSG
Relevance of TSG to SDGs	Collective goals towards SDGs
Relevance of TSG on ASEAN Regional Cooperation and Integration	Common ground bridging nations for collaboration
Measures to Preserve, Promote, and Propagate TSG	1. Strong support for <i>muay thai</i> 2. Promote the practice of martial arts 3. Publicity 4. Need for evolution, compatible for competition 5. Through school system – inclusion of TSG in school curricula 6. Providing facilities and spaces for TSG participation 7. Differentiating passive versus active conservation 8. Use of memes and social media 9. Assess types of TSG and their potential in the current context 10. Adapt to current societal and cultural context 11. Perpetuate cycle of popularity 12. Authentic presentation and level of engagement 13. Appearance in social media 14. Promote fun and excitement, coolness of TSG 15. Use of ASEAN institutions and events like South-East Asia Games 16. Provide funding 17. Urban planning and public spaces considerations

ASEAN = Association for Southeast Asian Nations, SDG = Sustainable Development Goal, TSG = traditional sports and games.

Table A6. Summary of Focus Group Discussions Findings of Viet Nam

Topic	Results
Awareness of Government Laws/ Policies on TSG	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Many policies, strategies, and documents issued on TSG 2. Ordinance of Physical Training and Sports (2022)
Awareness of Government Agencies/ Institutions for TSG	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism 2. Vietnam Sports Administration
Degree of Implementation of Sustainable TSG	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Festivals 2. Continuing preservation of Vietnamese traditional martial arts 3. Preservation and development of national sports, folk games, and traditional martial arts until 2030
Awareness of Country TSG	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Well-documented lists and descriptions of Vietnamese TSG/folk and locomotor games 2. Documents on Vietnamese traditional martial arts
Awareness of TSG Programmes/Activities	World Federation of Viet Nam Vocotruyen (WFVV)
Significance of TSG on Cultural Identity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. TSG are a unique part of the treasures of Viet Nam's cultural heritage. 2. It reflects the concept of the universe and human life and contains imprints of the historical process of ethnic groups and ways of life. 3. Contribute to improving spiritual life 4. Promote unique cultural values of the people and country 5. Recognition of historical milestones in the process of forming and developing a nation
Reasons for TSG Extinction	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Internet and technology video games, violent depraved movies provoke aggression amongst youth and curiosity of children 2. Little break space and time to organise recreational games 3. Appearance of modern games 4. Lack of space and exposure of children to TSG 5. Lack of attention on the value of children's play 6. Lack of personnel working for TSG promotion 7. Lack of professional training of TSG staff 8. Awareness of the value and role of TSG preservation is very weak/low/ incorrect/not fully understood 9. Lack of coordination between local and national agencies/departments 10. Low state funding for TSG 11. Mobilisation of resources for TSG is very low and difficult compared to modern sports.
Role of Various Sectors on TSG Preservation and Promotion	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. General Department of Sports and Ministry of Education and Training direct improvement of physical education to include the teaching of TSG at all levels. 2. TSG promote strong family and community relationships
Relevance of TSG to SDGs	
Relevance of TSG on ASEAN Regional Cooperation and Integration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Any TSG that are not harmful to health do not require high level of expertise. 2. Emphasis on participation and inclusion and not only for competition but recreation and exercise activities 3. Balance between preservation and development of TSG 4. Need to consider globalisation in TSG preservation 5. Establishment of ASEAN Federation of National Sports and ASEAN Folk Games Federation 6. Encourage more women to participate by developing mechanisms and policies for women in TSG

Topic	Results
Measures to Preserve, Promote, and Propagate TSG	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop mechanisms and policies <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop coordination programme between state management agencies, social organisations, and businesses with festival organising committees b. Research and propose policies to mobilise and attract investments for TSG programmes/festivals c. Central government coordinates and directs localities to build and upgrade physical foundations and equipment for conservation. d. Develop specific policies suitable for each urban, rural, and mountain areas 2. Promote propaganda and awareness raising <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Disseminate materials to guide practice of ethnic sports and folk games b. Integrate into weekend events organised by local communities and businesses c. Propagate and promote festival's history and origins and benefits of folk games – radio, news, schools, teachers 3. Human resources training <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop plan for team of festival managers, guides, administrators, collaborators, synchronise structures and standardise qualifications and regulations b. Recruit qualified and experienced staff and professionals c. Provide training for organising, implementing, and managing festivals and sports competitions d. Offer annual professional training course for festival management and administration 4. Consolidate and establish federations/associations/social organisations and expand operational models <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop 2–3 ethnic sports, folk games with their own national identity, and connect to festival and cultural activities for tourism in the locality b. Establish 2–3 federations amongst national sports that focus on TSG c. Identify 2–3 ethnic sports to be included in school extracurricular activities d. Establish system of competition at all levels – local and regional 5. Increase public investment budget and call for socialisation budget <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Increase state budget for TSG b. Mobilise resources of the society for infrastructure development and TSG festival activities c. Invest, upgrade, build facilities for festivals 6. Promote scientific research on gender equality <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Conduct more research on ethnic minority women and the role of TSG on equality b. Increase women participation in skills training c. Organise festivals to honour women, and create playgrounds for women 7. Preserve and develop traditional martial arts <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Study the construction of the national traditional martial arts exercises for training needs of society b. Build a system of traditional martial arts for women and girls for gender equality and honouring women c. Promote traditional martial arts internationally through cooperation and competition d. Bring traditional martial arts into the schools e. Send well-trained coaches to other countries for promotion and training 8. Integrate games into the school curriculum and extracurricular activities

Table A7: Reasons for Extinction and Recommendations for TSG Protection, Preservation, and Promotion amongst ASEAN Member States

Country	Reasons for Possible Extinction	Recommendations
Indonesia	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. People are more interested in modern sports. 2. Most funds are used on modern sports. 3. Lack of will of the people to preserve TSG due to modernisation 4. Perception of TSG as old-fashioned 5. TSG are played only in rural areas. 6. People believe that there are more benefits to modern sports. 7. Decrease of interest in TSG amongst Indonesian youth 8. Decline or absence of TSG professionals to give training 9. Low promotion of TSG in Indonesia 10. Governments promote modern sports more than TSG. 11. Low role of government programmes in creating interesting content 12. Low promotion in public 13. Promotion and motivation to preserve TSG are low. 14. Influence of Western culture 15. Impact of globalisation 16. Declining public awareness and sensitivity in preserving and maintaining TSG 17. Lack of interest from both sports activities and communities in TSG, especially amongst youth. 18. Technology development 19. Many parents entertain their children with technology. 20. Children do not understand their own culture due to lack of interaction. 21. Booming urbanisation in Indonesia cause people to focus on work and have less time for activities to include TSG. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide rewards for TSG participation 2. Encourage youth to participate in TSG 3. Build interactive platforms on TSG 4. Make TSG a mandatory subject in physical education/curricula in the schools 5. Use social media to make TSG presence stronger 6. Need for a grand stage for TSG to be promoted 7. Use social media influencers to penetrate youth and to promote TSG 8. Re-introduce TSG by making specific programmes dedicated to TSG as part of Indonesia's culture and identity 9. Common ASEAN TSG (like sepak takraw) can bridge countries to attain political gains through friendly matches or leagues. 10. Create interesting programmes on social media 11. Conduct matches or competitions 12. Build training sites for TSG 13. Introduce TSG regionally 14. Provide equal opportunities for TSG and modern sports to be promoted 15. Increase government role in innovation and collaboration with TSG and modern sports without losing cultural identity 16. Need for youth to study and learn more about Indonesian culture to prevent extinction of TSG 17. Conduct national TSG events for people around the country 18. Conduct TSG exhibitions regularly in local communities, and have children participate
Myanmar	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Influence of internet and computer games 2. Lack/decline in encouragement amongst younger generations 3. Lack of sustainable programmes to nurture TSG 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase the number of sports and games included at national races 2. Increase the number of sports and games included at international levels 3. Increase the number of games and sports at the ASEAN level 4. Increase the number of competitions locally and internationally 5. Increase the number of training sessions, budget, and funding by the government 6. Include TSG in the type of sports and games being played in the community

Country	Reasons for Possible Extinction	Recommendations
Philippines	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Technology <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Prevalence of technology, gadgets b. Young generations more into online activities c. Influence of modern technology d. Popularity of modern games e. Rapid modernisation 1. Promotion <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Lack of promotion b. Limited exposure to engage in TSG c. Not given much emphasis by government d. Lack of strong government initiatives e. Non-inclusion of TSG in curricula f. No institutionalised TSG competitions g. Lack of programmes for promotion h. No clear government intervention for TSG programmes i. Lack of exposure to indigenous communities j. TSG are used as objects for entertainment. k. No TSG role models l. Lack of interest from the new generation m. TSG significance/importance not taught n. No budget for implementation o. Lack of TSG leadership p. Busy with work for survival 2. Cultural differences <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Cultural differences b. Influence of other culture c. Migration d. Ideological Issues e. Intrusion of other foreign culture f. Assimilation of indigenous persons to urban and modern culture g. Domination of nonindigenous culture communicating undesirability of indigenous cultures/TSG h. Relevance of TSG not recognised and understood by the wider population i. Stringent rules/process in the conduct of research on indigenous cultures 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Government <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Protect traditional areas of indigenous persons b. Ensure safe, secure, and peaceful indigenous communities c. Enact laws for TSG inclusion at all levels of schools and in communities d. Institutionalise Indigenous Peoples Games as national games for TSG e. Promote cultural exchange within ASEAN region f. Establish TSG museums and centres g. Provide funding support for inter-cultural exchange on TSG locally and internationally h. Develop more programmes for TSG implementation i. Allocate budget for TSG-related programmes and activities j. Provide incentives for TSG research and programmes k. Create policies to preserve, promote, and propagate TSG l. Involve indigenous peoples in the planning and conduct of TSG programmes and activities 2. School <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Require TSG in the school curricula b. Establish regional and national TSG competitions c. Coordinate with indigenous persons for partnership in TSG preservation and promotion d. Develop an indigenous curriculum on TSG e. Create TSG materials, references, handbooks, and manuals f. Increase awareness and appreciation of TSG through hosting/organising of TSG seminars, fora, and conferences 3. Media <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Encourage media to give wider attention to TSG promotion

Country	Reasons for Possible Extinction	Recommendations
Singapore	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of awareness of government policies 2. Lack of publicity 3. Lack/limited economic viability 4. Availability of gadgets/technology 5. Higher entertainment value of e-sports 6. Moving on with time/adapting to change/modernisation 7. Perception of not cool/old-fashioned 8. Inclusivity 9. Evolution of games 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Awareness of the existence of TSG 2. Introduction to community and carnivals 3. Make facilities available 4. Inclusion in the school activities 5. Community must own it 6. Government support
Thailand	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Views on modernisation 2. Superficial participation and low engagement 3. Urban-planning issues (kite flying) 4. Alternative form of aesthetic competition overtaking popularity (Betta fish fighting) 5. Relation with Malaysia/Indonesia (pencak silat) 6. Gender issues 7. Financial aspect 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adapt to current societal and cultural context for survival 2. Perpetuate cycle of popularity 3. Authentic presentation and level of engagement 4. Promote fun, excitement, coolness 5. Use ASEAN institutions and South-East Asia Games 6. Urban planning and public space consideration
Viet Nam	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Internet and technology 2. Limited time and space for TSG in schools 3. Development of entertainment technology and modern games 4. Access to modern sports 5. Problem of space and exposure for younger generation on TSG 6. Lack of staff working in TSG 7. Lack of training and competence in TSG 8. Low level of awareness 9. Limited state funding 10. Limited attention given to some TSG 11. Lack of written records of TSG, mostly oral 12. Lack of national level of actions/programmes to preserve and promote TSG 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop mechanisms and policies between government and other stakeholders 2. Promote propaganda and awareness raising 3. Human resources training 4. Consolidate and establish federations/associations/social organisations 5. Increase public investment budget and call for socialisation budget 6. Promote scientific research on gender equality 7. Establish regular organisations to create a lifestyle closely related to life and attract the attention of the community 8. Organise ethnic competitions amongst ASEAN Member States 9. Initiate ethnic/traditional games held alternately in different countries

ASEAN = Association for Southeast Asian Nations, SDG = Sustainable Development Goal, TSG = traditional sports and games.

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