Introduction

For decades, the world has witnessed the dramatic loss of cultural heritage due to armed conflict, looting, and other forms of cultural violence. The fight against illicit trafficking in cultural goods is far from exhaustive. Illicit traffic has reached alarming proportions in recent years, with nearly all regions of the world affected. Many museum professionals have dedicated themselves to protecting the diversity of cultures, their natural heritage, and their cultural heritage. With 35,000 museum professionals worldwide, ICOM is committed to the protection and promotion of the world's cultural heritage and museum field.

Purpose

The objective of listing cultural objects at risk is to enable the protection of objects at risk by raising awareness, promoting precautionary measures, and encouraging non-acquisition.

The ICOM Red List of Iraqi Cultural Objects at Risk highlights the most threatened objects and showcases the many and varied contributions to the world of Iraq’s, and the region’s, history as well as its natural and cultural heritage, present and future. It presents the country’s cultural heritage to the world in a state of emergency, thanks to the 2003 decision of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 661, Article 3a regarding the situation between Iraq and Kuwait.

The Emergency Red List of Iraqi Antiquities at Risk, currently threatened by destruction, theft, and in view of the persisting threat to the Republic of Iraq’s cultural heritage, ICOM and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) decided to once more formally place the fight against this trend at the heart of its mission. Considering the importance of the country’s heritage to the world, ICOM is grateful for the unwavering commitment of the experts and institutions who generously supported the ICOM 2003 International Conference on Illicit Traffic, treatment or exportation of cultural property in the Event of Armed Conflict. This Red List has been designed to fight the illicit traffic of cultural objects generally for the outstanding contributions of the experts and institutions who generously contributed to the success of the ICOM 2003 International Conference on Illicit Traffic, treatment or exportation of cultural property in the Event of Armed Conflict.

The International Council of Museums (ICOM), created in 1948 and representing museums and museum professionals worldwide, is committed to the protection and promotion of natural and cultural heritage, present and future. It is a member of UNESCO, with a unique network, active in a wide range of fields.

In 2013, ICOM created the first International Observatory on Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods (ICOM-ITWG), once more formally placing the fight against this trend at the heart of its mission. The Observatory illustrates the categories or types of objects at risk and the many and varied contributions to the world of Iraq’s, and the region’s, history as well as its natural and cultural heritage, present and future. Ongoing and future endeavors are encouraged not to acquire such objects and to return objects acquired illegally.

In 2010, ICOM established the ICOM-ITWG, a network of experts and institutions that provides the Observatory with information on trends and risks. The Observatory includes a database of objects at risk and provides a platform to discuss trends, risks, and strategies for action.

Should you suspect that a cultural object originating from Iraq may be stolen, looted, or illegally exported, please contact:

State Board of Antiquities and Heritage (SBAH)
Tel.: +964 7 812 927 164 (mobile)
Fax: +33 1 43 06 78 62
Tel.: +33 1 47 34 05 00
State Board of Antiquities and Heritage (SBAH)
22, rue de Palestro • 75002 Paris – France
E-mail: illicit-traffic@icom.museum - Website: http://icom.museum

For more information, please visit the ICOM-ITWG website: http://icom.museum

EMERGENCY RED LIST OF IRAQI CULTURAL OBJECTS AT RISK
2013 Update

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Architectural elements

Foundation elements > Metal Doric, silver, gold, alabaster figures; Men carrying baskets or on rock; Men with panniers and load animals, doors with bone and/or stone. May have inscriptions. Size: 2-7 x Ø 2-3 cm. [10–12, 15–16]

Gilt figures > Silver, gold, bronze, gilded iron, bone, stone, ivory, shell. May be partly coloured. Height: 8-20 cm. [16–17]

Brass figures > Human, animal, hybrid and/or deity figures, doors, walls, altars, chests. Figures depicted with their heads sideways, or facing forward and legs sideways. Inlaid or painted eyes, eyebrows and hair. Bearded and bald or long-haired individuals. Height: 10-20 cm. [16–17]

Armour, etc. Plain or with carved images (humans, animals, hybrids and/or deities). Armour and weapons may have inscriptions. Height: 10-20 cm. [16–17]

Man-made remains

Jewellery

Metal (copper, bronze, silver, gold, alloy) > Necklaces, pendants, bracelets, rings, earrings, fibulae, filigree, filigree objects, braided chains, necklaces, bracelets, hairpins, pendants, beads, etc.; Hammered, gilded, inlaid or painted. Archaic and Roman periods of the Islamic period can be decorated with inscriptions and signatures. [12–14]

Coins

Pre-Islamic: Mostly Achaemenid gold darics and silver sigloi, Seleucid copper coins, Parthian and Sasanian gold and silver dinars. Plain with anthropomorphic signs and/or images of royal, artistic, religious and/or daily scenes. Archaic and Roman periods of the Islamic period can be decorated with inscriptions and signatures. [12–14]

Islamic: Mostly Abbasid Caliphate gold dinars. With 2-3 lines in Arabic surrounded by inscriptions, or with an inscription on one side and writing on the other. Mint locations written in Arabic. Average size: Ø 19 mm. [35]

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