

Spatial Dataset of 3610 Items of China's National Intangible Cultural Heritage in Five Packages

Guo, Y.¹ Yao, Y. F.¹ Yan, J. Y.¹ Wang, Z. B.^{2*} Li, J. X.³

1. School of Geography, Nanjing Normal University, Nanjing 210023, China;

2. Institute of Geographic Sciences and Natural Resources Research, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing 100101, China;

3. School of Ethnology and Sociology, Minzu University of China, Beijing 100081, China

Abstract: The intangible cultural heritage of the Chinese nation is the crystallization of its wisdom and civilization, and strengthening the research into and protection of such heritage is very important for enhancing the soft power of national culture and strengthening cultural confidence. The spatial dataset of 3,610 national intangible cultural heritages of China in five packages was developed based on lists published by the State Council of China in 2006, 2008, 2011, 2014, and 2021, as well as data integration between geo-location and related attribute records. The dataset includes the spatial geo-location data, identification number, name, category, publication time, type, declared region or unit, protection unit, and province of 3,610 items of intangible cultural heritage. The dataset is archived in .shp data format and comprises eight data files with a data size of 15.1 MB (compressed to a single file of 292 KB).

Keywords: intangible cultural heritage; spatial distribution; national level; China

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Dataset Availability Statement:

The dataset supporting this paper was published and is accessible through the *Digital Journal of Global Change Data Repository* at: <https://doi.org/10.3974/geodb.2021.12.01.V1> or <https://cstr.escience.org.cn/CSTR:20146.11.2021.12.01.V1>.

1 Introduction

Intangible cultural heritage (ICH) was first proposed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and it has produced a huge international response. Since China acceded to the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2004, it has actively promoted the protection of ICH. By taking ICH as an important basis for protecting traditional culture, China's ICH protection has achieved

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***Corresponding Author:** Wang, Z. B., Institute of Geographic Sciences and Natural Resources Research, Chinese Academy of Sciences, wangzb@igsnrr.ac.cn

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remarkable success. In 2006, 2008, 2011, 2014, and 2021, the State Council of the People's Republic of China published five batches of national representative ICH projects, with a total of 3,610 sub-items. The Intangible Cultural Heritage Law of the People's Republic of China, which was promulgated and implemented in 2011, provides legal support for promoting and protecting China's traditional culture. Since then, China has gradually expanded from single protection of ICH to regional overall protection of ICH. As of June 2020, seven national cultural ecological protection zones and 17 national cultural ecological protection experimental zones had been established, involving 17 provinces. As an important part of China's excellent traditional culture, ICH is an important foundation for continuing historical context, connecting national emotions, enhancing cultural self-confidence, and maintaining the unity of the motherland^[1,2].

Based on learning from international conventions and combining the characteristics of its nationality, history, culture, and national conditions, China divides its ICH into ten categories: (i) folk literature, (ii) traditional music, (iii) traditional dance, (iv) traditional opera, (v) Chinese folk art forms, (vi) traditional art, (vii) traditional skills, (viii) traditional medicine, (ix) folk customs, and (x) traditional sports, entertainment, acrobatics, etc., and it has formulated a four-level "national–province–city–county" protection system. To date, ICH has attracted extensive scholarly attention, with the research scales being mainly at regional^[3,4], provincial^[5,6], and municipal^[7,8] level. The little research that has been done at national level has involved only the third and fourth batches of ICH projects^[9,10], and there has been a lack of exploration of the spatial distribution of the fifth batch of national ICH projects. In terms of research content, the focus has been expanded from the overall spatial distribution to the specific types of ICH projects^[11,12], and many studies have been carried out from the perspective of developing ICH and tourism resources^[13–15]. However, ICH research is still in the initial stage of development, and there is still much content that needs to be explored extensively, this often being inseparable from the spatial distribution of ICH projects.

Therefore, the dataset reported herein provides (i) the latest spatial distribution data on China's ICH projects at national level and (ii) information about the specific categories, provinces, and geographical divisions of the projects. It offers basic data support for relevant research and can make positive contributions to promoting research into protecting ICH.

2 Metadata of the Dataset

The Spatial dataset of 3610 national intangible cultural heritages of China in five packages^[16] is summarized in Table 1. It includes the dataset full name, short name, authors, year of the dataset, temporal resolution, spatial resolution, data format, data size, data files, data publisher, and data sharing policy, etc.

3 Data Development Method

The basic data used in this study were taken from the China Intangible Cultural Heritage network¹. From this website, we obtained 3,610 sub-items of the five batches of national project lists published by the State Council in 2006, 2008, 2011, 2014, and 2021 and recorded the identification number, name, category, publication time, type, declaration area or unit, protection unit, and province of each ICH project. However, the list of ICH projects

¹ China Intangible Cultural Heritage network. <http://www.ihchina.cn>.

Table 1 Metadata summary of the Spatial dataset of 3610 national intangible cultural heritages of China in five packages

Items	Description
Dataset full name	Spatial dataset of 3610 national intangible cultural heritages of China in five packages
Dataset short name	lhchina_2006-2021
Authors	Guo, Y., School of Geography, Nanjing Normal University, 2528814571@qq.com Yao, Y. F., School of Geography, Nanjing Normal University, stoncity2000@163.com Yan, J. Y., School of Geography, Nanjing Normal University, njnuyanjiyao@qq.com Wang, Z. B., Institute of Geographic Sciences and Natural Resources, Chinese Academy of Sciences, wangzb@igsnr.ac.cn Li, J. X., School of Ethnology and Sociology, Minzu University of China, lijx.18s@igsnr.ac.cn
Geographical region	China, except Taiwan
Years	2006–2021
Data format	.shp
Data size	15.1 MB
Data files	3,610 ICH records
Foundation	Chinese Academy of Sciences (Y99P0262YT)
Data publisher	Global Change Research Data Publishing & Repository, http://www.geodoi.ac.cn
Address	No. 11A, Datun Road, Chaoyang District, Beijing 100101, China
Data sharing policy	Data from the Global Change Research Data Publishing & Repository includes metadata, datasets (in the <i>Digital Journal of Global Change Data Repository</i>), and publications (in the <i>Journal of Global Change Data & Discovery</i>). Data sharing policy includes: (1) Data are openly available and can be free downloaded via the Internet; (2) End users are encouraged to use Data subject to citation; (3) Users, who are by definition also value-added service providers, are welcome to redistribute Data subject to written permission from the GCdataPR Editorial Office and the issuance of a Data redistribution license; and (4) If Data are used to compile new datasets, the ‘ten per cent principal’ should be followed such that Data records utilized should not surpass 10% of the new dataset contents, while sources should be clearly noted in suitable places in the new dataset ¹⁷⁾
Communication and searchable system	DOI, CSTR, Crossref, DCI, CSCD, CNKI, SciEngine, WDS/ISC, GEOSS

published on the aforementioned website does not contain geographical coordinates, so instead we obtained the corresponding coordinates (longitude and latitude) on Google Earth according to the attributes of the declared areas or units of those ICH projects for which spatial location information was available; for the coordinates of those ICH projects that were difficult to find on a map, we selected the administrative center of the county as the corresponding spatial location. After obtaining the spatial point data of the ICH projects, the data were corrected by combining Google map images and administrative division data to ensure the accuracy at county level. Having checked the accuracy of the data, we carried out the corresponding coordinate transformation and other operations as required to form a data file in .shp format.

4 Data Results

4.1 Data Composition

This dataset contains 3,610 sub-items of the five batches of national project lists published by the State Council in 2006, 2008, 2011, 2014, and 2021, the spatial point data are stored in .shp format. The recorded attribute fields are given in Table 2.

Table 2 Attribute fields in datasets

Number	Field name	Examples field content
1	FID	0, 1, 2, 3, ..., 3609
2	Proj_num	I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X
3	Name_CN	Miao ancient songs, Jingxi Taiping drum, Kunqu opera, ...
4	Name_EN	Miao ancient songs, Jingxi Taiping drum, Kunqu opera, ...
5	CategoryCN	Folk literature, traditional music, traditional dance, ...
6	CategoryEN	Folk literature, traditional music, traditional dance, ...
7	Time	2006, 2008, 2011, 2014, 2021
8	Type_CN	New project, extension project
9	Type_EN	New project, extension project
10	Place_CN	Taijiang county, Guizhou province, Zuoquan county, Shanxi province, ...
11	Place_EN	Taijiang county, Guizhou province, Zuoquan county, Shanxi province, ...
12	Unit_CN	Taijiang Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Center, Mentougou District Cultural Center of Beijing Municipality, ...
13	Unit_EN	Taijiang Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Center, Mentougou District Cultural Center of Beijing Municipality, ...
14	X	108.317,039, 109.477,313, 116.216,927, ...
15	Y	26.670,931, 28.575,298, 39.905,382, ...
16	ProvinceCN	Guizhou, Hunan, Shanxi, Beijing, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, ...
17	ProvinceEN	Guizhou, Hunan, Shanxi, Beijing, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, ...
18	Region4CN	Eastern China, Central China, Western China, Northeast China
19	Region4EN	Eastern China, Central China, Western China, Northeast China
20	Region7CN	Northeast China, North China, Central China, South China, Northwest China, Southwest China, Hong Kong and Macao
21	Region7EN	Northeast China, North China, Central China, South China, Northwest China, Southwest China, Hong Kong and Macao

4.2 Data Results

At provincial level, as shown in Figure 1, Zhejiang province has the most national ICH projects in China. The provinces whose ICH projects number in the second echelon include Shandong, Beijing, Guangdong, Hebei, Jiangsu and Fujian in the Eastern China, Shanxi, Hubei, Hunan and Henan in Central China, and Guizhou, Sichuan, Yunnan and Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region in Western China (Table 3). There are relatively few national ICH projects in the other provinces. Overall, there are more national ICH projects in the eastern region than in the central and western regions.

Table 4 shows that the numbers of national ICH projects are ordered as Eastern China > Western China > Central China > Northeast China according to four geographical divisions and East China > North China > Southwest China > Central China > Northwest China > South China > Northeast China according to seven geographical divisions. Therefore, there are great regional differences in the spatial distribution of national ICH projects in China.

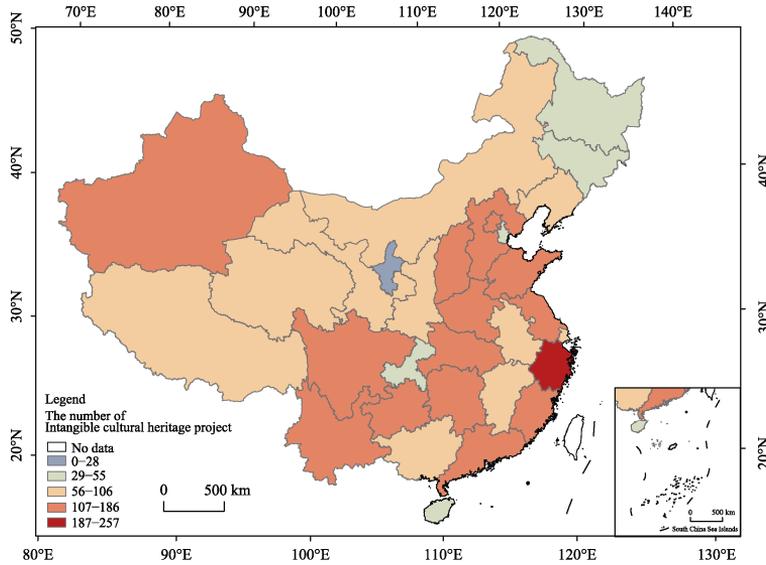


Figure 1 Spatial distribution map of number of national ICH projects in each province

Table 3 Statistics of China’s national ICH projects by province and batch

Province	The first batch	The second batch	The third batch	The fourth batch	The fifth batch	Total	Province	The first batch	The second batch	The third batch	The fourth batch	The fifth batch	Total
Zhe-jiang	46	97	60	30	24	257	Shaanxi	24	30	11	13	13	91
Shan-dong	27	93	33	20	13	186	Qinghai	19	38	7	9	15	88
Shanxi	33	69	43	23	14	182	Jiangxi	19	16	11	24	18	88
Beijing	32	71	18	18	25	164	Gansu	23	30	8	7	15	83
Guang-dong	42	56	30	18	18	164	Liaoning	22	31	7	7	9	76
Hebei	39	78	15	16	14	162	Shang-hai	9	26	19	9	13	76
Jiangsu	37	62	27	19	16	161	Guang-xi	22	10	9	12	18	71
Guizhou	40	61	24	15	19	159	Jilin	5	22	11	6	11	55
Sichuan	27	78	15	19	14	153	Chong-qing	13	16	10	5	9	53
Xinjiang	25	61	31	18	14	149	Tianjin	7	10	5	11	14	47
Fujian	44	51	19	17	15	146	Hainan	13	16	6	5	4	44
Hubei	21	60	25	21	18	145	Heilong-jiang	9	12	6	7	8	42
Yunnan	36	47	22	17	23	145	Ningxia	3	5	2	8	10	28
Hunan	29	41	29	19	19	137	Hong-Kong	2	0	4	4	2	12
Henan	26	56	13	18	12	125	Macau	2	1	3	2	3	11
Inner-Mongolia	18	38	14	19	17	106	Taiwan	/	/	/	/	/	/
Tibet	23	36	16	13	17	105	Total	571	1,089	448	334	303	2,745
Anhui	26	34	14	14	11	99							

Note: There is a lack of data on intangible cultural heritage (ICH) projects in Taiwan Province, and statistics are not yet available.

Table 4 Regional distribution of national ICH projects in China

Four geographical divisions	Number	Seven geographical divisions	Number
Northeast China	173	Northeast China	173
Eastern China	1,430	North China	661
Central China	776	Eastern China	925
Western China	1,231	South China	302
/	/	Central China	495
/	/	Northwest China	439
/	/	Southwest China	615

The nuclear-density tool in ArcGIS was used to produce a nuclear-density spatial distribution map of national ICH projects, as shown in Figure 2. As can be seen, the areas of concentrated national ICH projects are mainly in the Beijing–Tianjin–Hebei region centered on Beijing, the Yangtze River Delta region centered on Shanghai, and the Pearl River Delta region centered on Guangzhou. The sub-intensive areas are mainly in the border areas of (i) Shanxi, Hebei, Shandong, and Henan, (ii) Hunan, Jiangxi, and Hubei, (iii) Hunan, Guizhou, and Guangxi, and (iv) the coastal areas of Guangdong and Fujian. In addition, there are relatively independent intensive areas of national ICH projects in the provincial capitals and city centers of Liaoning, Shaanxi, Gansu, Qinghai, Xinjiang, Tibet, Sichuan, Chongqing, Yunnan, and Hainan.

Relevant studies have shown that the formation and spatial distribution of national ICH projects are affected by both natural geographical conditions and socio-economic environment^[3]. Important influencing factors are topography, climate, hydrology, politics, economy, culture, nationality, and history, and these have certain differences in how they influence the spatial distribution of national ICH projects^[1,3,4,9,10]. As the core economic areas of China, the Beijing–Tianjin–Hebei, Yangtze River Delta, and Pearl River Delta regions—with their dense distributions of national ICH projects—have suitable natural-environment conditions and high levels of socio-economic development. The material needs of the residents of these regions are well met, and the pursuit of higher levels of spiritual and cultural life is the key factor in promoting the spatial agglomeration of ICH projects. The junction area of Shanxi, Hebei, Shandong, and Henan is located in the middle and lower reaches of the Yellow River and is the birthplace of Chinese civilization. As the political, economic, and cultural center of China, this region has a long cultural history and strong cultural accumulation, which are conducive to the generation and spread of ICH projects. The border areas of Hunan, Jiangxi, Hubei, Hunan, Guizhou, and Guangxi are prone to form rich ICH projects because of the distribution of ethnic minorities and frequent cultural exchanges in the provincial border areas. The coastal areas of Guangdong and Fujian have historically been affected mainly by population migration, and the local residents there attach great importance to cultural inheritance, so ICH projects have been fully protected and carried forward. Most of the central and western regions are sparsely populated, and limited by the natural environment and economic development level, the spatial distribution of national ICH projects there is relatively sparse, so it is difficult to form a concentrated and contiguous distribution of ICH projects. However, the provincial capitals and downtown areas of the central and western provinces have long been regarded as the political, economic, and cultural centers of the region, having a strong agglomeration effect on ICH projects within the provinces and cities and forming relatively independent intensive areas of national ICH project.

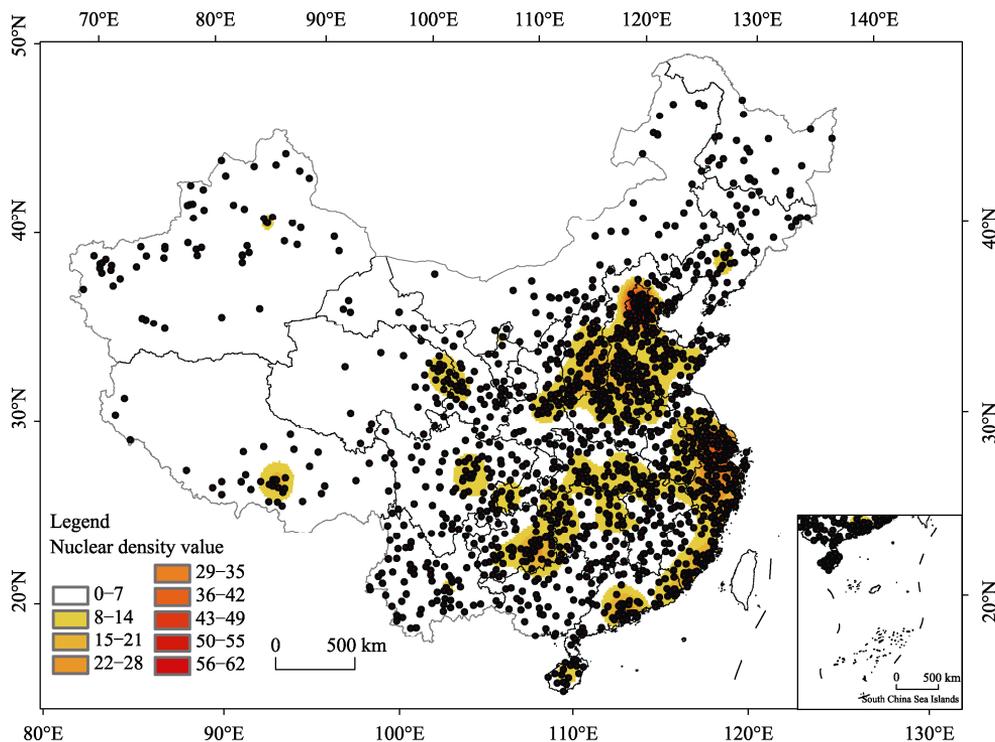


Figure 2 Nuclear-density spatial distribution map of national ICH projects in China

5 Conclusion

Understanding the spatial distribution of national ICH projects is very important for the in-depth study, overall protection, reasonable development, and relevant policies of Chinese traditional culture represented by ICH. The dataset reported herein covers five batches of national ICH projects published by the State Council from 2006 to 2021, with a total of 3,610 sub-items, and it contains detailed attribute information about the identification number, name, category, publication time, type, declared area or unit, protection unit, and province of each ICH project. The present study analyzed the spatial distribution of all national ICH projects and concluded that it is characterized by agglomeration in the eastern coastal areas and regional economic and social centers. However, research is required on the other attribute information in this dataset, and we hope that the detailed attribute information about national ICH projects provided by this dataset, such as category, publication time, type, declaration area or unit, protection unit, and province, can provide reference and data bases for further discovering and analysis in related research fields.

Author Contributions

Guo, Y. designed the algorithms of the dataset and drafted the paper. Yan, J. Y. and Li, J. X. contributed to the data processing and analysis. Wang, Z. B. and Yao, Y. F. modified the paper.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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