Proceedings Borneo International Islamic Conference; Vol. 17. 2026; 303-309
Published by Majmuah Enterprise
eISSN: 2948-5045

Preserving Gawai Antu as Iban Living Heritage: Intergenerational Perceptions, Ritual Practices and Community Safeguarding in Sri Aman, Sarawak

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Abstract

Gawai Antu is the culminating Iban mortuary rite through which families honour deceased relatives and ritually complete the relationship between the living and the dead. Its infrequent performance, substantial financial and organisational demands, religious change, urban migration and the declining number of ritual specialists create a significant challenge for intergenerational transmission. This qualitative phenomenological study examines (i) the practices conducted before, during and after Gawai Antu, (ii) perceptions held by younger and older Iban participants and a tukang berayun, and (iii) strategies for safeguarding the rite as living heritage. Eight purposively selected participants from Tanjung Bijat, Sri Aman, Sarawak—four older adults, three younger adults and one tukang berayun—were interviewed face to face using Iban language. Transcripts were translated into English and coded thematically using NVivo 12 Plus. The findings show a coherent ritual sequence centred on collective preparation, *penganan* production, basketry, *sungkup* construction, ritual chanting, *makai cina* and the transfer of memorial objects to graves. Participants described Gawai Antu as emotionally meaningful and identity-affirming, but also costly, labour-intensive and increasingly displaced or reinterpreted following Christianisation and urban lifestyles. All eight participants assigned safeguarding responsibility to government or ministries, while also emphasising elders, *Tuai Rumah*, schools, cultural associations and youth participation. The study proposes a community-led safeguarding framework combining respectful documentation, apprenticeship, curriculum-based learning and institutional support. Preservation should sustain knowledge, consent and community authority rather than freeze the rite as a static performance or detach it from its sacred meanings.

Keywords: Gawai Antu; Iban; intangible cultural heritage; intergenerational transmission; ritual safeguarding; Sarawak

1. Introduction

Intangible cultural heritage is sustained through people: through memories, skills, language, belief, performance and participation that are repeatedly recreated in community life. The UNESCO approach on safeguarding supports the conditions under which communities can continue to recognise, transmit and adapt their living heritage. This distinction is especially relevant to Gawai Antu, an elaborate and sacred Iban mortuary rite whose meanings are carried not only by material forms such as sungkup and woven objects, but also by collective labour, ritual speech, emotion, kinship obligations and specialist knowledge. Gawai Antu honours those who have passed and mark a final ceremonial separation between the deceased and the living. It may be held only after long preparation and collective agreement within a longhouse. Its sequence involves the production of food and ritual objects, reception of guests and ritual specialists, all-night chanting, a final communal meal and the conveyance of memorial items to the graves. Because the rite is rarely held, opportunities for experiential learning are limited. Knowledge that was once acquired through repeated observation and participation can disappear within a single generation when families moved to towns and religious practice changes. Iban material culture similarly agrees that modernisation and relocation may weaken familiarity with inherited cultural knowledge, while showing that longhouses remain important sites of community-based care and transmission (Kiyai et al., 2023). Research on Gawai Antu among Sarawak youth has also identified concerns about discontinuity and sustainability (Abigail et al., 2019). Yet the problem cannot be understood simply as young people rejecting tradition. Participation is shaped by cost, time, work patterns, access to knowledgeable elders, religious commitments and the social legitimacy of particular ritual forms. A preservation strategy on these rites must therefore recognise both continuity and change.

This article draws on an extensive qualitative dataset and contributes a grounded record of the ritual sequence as remembered by participants, compares generational perceptions, and identifies a multi-actor safeguarding model. The study is timely because current international practice increasingly links living heritage with education, youth participation, digital access and sustainable community development (UNESCO, 2022; UNESCO, 2023). At the same time, digital

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documentation must remain community-governed: records may improve access, but it can also decontextualise sacred knowledge when consent, authority and appropriate restrictions are ignored (Alivizatou, 2019; 2021).

2. Literature Review

2.1 Gawai Antu, Iban Identity And Ritual Knowledge

Iban heritage combines tangible and intangible dimensions. Woven textiles, baskets, ritual implements, memorial structures and longhouse spaces acquire meaning through cosmology, oral knowledge and use. Kiyai and Tugang (2019) show that objects accompanying the *tukang sabak* are part of an Iban understanding of the afterlife, while Kiyai et al. (2023) describe traditional care as inseparable from belief, identity and the perceived vitality of cultural artefacts. These studies support an interpretation of Gawai Antu as a system of linked practices rather than an isolated festival. Within that system, the *tukang berayun* or *tukang sabak* holds special performative knowledge. Chanting is not merely entertainment; it mediates memory, grief, social relationships and the ceremonial journey of the deceased. *Sungkup, penganan* preparation and basket weaving likewise encode gendered skills and collective responsibility. The present participants repeatedly described the rite through actions—making, welcoming, chanting, eating and conveying—indicating that knowledge is embodied and procedural. Such knowledge is difficult to preserve through written descriptions alone.

2.2 Intergenerational Transmission Under Social Change

Transmission is threatened when learning occasions become infrequent and when younger community members live and work away from the longhouse. The pressures identified in this study—urban employment, limited time, expense and religious transformation—are consistent with broader research showing that living heritage depends on meaningful opportunities to practise, not merely awareness campaigns. UNESCO's Asia-Pacific education programme demonstrates how elders, practitioners, teachers, learners and policy makers can create locally relevant learning pathways without imposing a single model (UNESCO, 2022). Youth should consequently be treated as co-creators and future custodians rather than passive recipients. Religious change requires particular care. Several participants contrasted ancestral ritual practice according to prayers in Christianity. Their accounts should not be framed as a simple conflict in which one identity replaces another. Some participants maintained that knowledge of customary practice remains important even where ritual observance changes. Safeguarding can therefore include documentation, language learning, history, arts and community dialogue while respecting individuals' present religious commitments. This allows cultural literacy to continue without requiring ritual participation from those who do not choose it.

2.3 Digital Documentation, Education And Community Authority

Digital media can widen access to recordings, oral histories, object catalogues and instructional materials. Alivizatou (2019; 2021) nevertheless cautions that digital inventories and virtual learning reshape how heritage is defined and performed. Technology is therefore a support for transmission, not a substitute for practitioners or community context. For sacred materials, tiered access, prior informed consent, community metadata and restrictions on circulation may be necessary. A community-owned archive could preserve Iban-language recordings and translations while allowing elders and practitioners to determine what is public, restricted or not recorded. Education provides another transmission route. UNESCO (2022) reports that integrating living heritage into formal and non-formal education can strengthen intergenerational learning and make curricula locally meaningful. The participants' suggestions for Iban-language subjects, books and videos align with this approach. Effective programmes should combine classroom resources with visits, demonstrations, oral-history projects and supervised practice. The aim is not to stage sacred rites, but to create ethical settings in which cultural knowledge, vocabulary, roles and meanings can be learned.

3. Conceptual Framework

The analysis was performed according to Hofstede's cultural dimensions, particularly collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, long-term orientation and differentiated community roles. These insights are positioned within a living-heritage safeguarding framework. Hofstede helps describe the collective organisation and long-term orientation visible in Gawai Antu; however, a national-culture model alone cannot explain sacred knowledge, community authority or adaptation within one Indigenous group. The framework therefore places intergenerational transmission at the centre and treats continuity as the product of four interacting capacities: knowledge holders, community participation, enabling institutions and ethically governed documentation.

Framework component	Empirical meaning in this study	Safeguarding implication
Knowledge holders	Tukang berayun, elders, lemambang and experienced longhouse members hold oral, ritual and procedural knowledge.	Urgent recording and apprenticeship, subject to practitioner and community consent.
Community practice	Gawai Antu depends on reciprocal labour, food preparation, weaving, sungkup construction, hosting and collective decisions.	Support participation and learning-by-doing rather than documentation alone.

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Framework component	Empirical meaning in this study	Safeguarding implication
Intergenerational transmission	Younger adults value the rite but face cost, distance, time and limited exposure.	Create flexible learning pathways through families, schools, associations and community programmes.
Institutional enablement	Participants expect ministries, elected representatives and Tuai Rumah to coordinate resources and recognition.	Adopt co-governance, small grants, specialist support and community-controlled heritage plans.
Ethical documentation	Books, video and digital archives can retain memory but may expose sacred knowledge.	Use consent, cultural protocols, local language metadata and graduated access.

4. Research Questions

RQ1: What practices are performed before, during and after Gawai Antu?
RQ2: How do younger participants, older participants and a tukang berayun perceive the continuity and transformation of Gawai Antu?
RQ3: What community and institutional strategies can safeguard Gawai Antu as Iban living heritage?

5. Significance of Study

The study is significant in four ways. First, it consolidates participant accounts into a concise record of ritual sequence and terminology. Second, it places generational viewpoints alongside the testimony of a ritual specialist, revealing both shared concern and differences in experience. Third, it identifies preservation as a governance issue involving families, longhouse leadership, education, cultural associations and government. Fourth, it demonstrates that safeguarding must be culturally responsive: the community should decide how sacred knowledge is documented, taught, adapted and accessed. For the Iban community, the findings can support locally controlled transmission initiatives. For government and cultural institutions, they identify concrete interventions beyond ceremonial promotion. For educators, they provide themes for Iban-language and heritage learning. For researchers, the study offers a qualitative baseline that can be extended across Sri Aman, Betong, Lubok Antu and other Iban areas, with attention to local variation rather than assuming a single uniform form of Gawai Antu.

6. Research Methodology

6.1 Design and Setting

The study adopted a qualitative phenomenological design to explore lived experience, memory and meaning. Fieldwork was conducted in Tanjung Bijat, Sri Aman, Sarawak. Face-to-face semi-structured interviews enabled the researcher to probe ritual practices and observe participants' reactions. Interviews were conducted with the *tukang berayun*, elder participants, and interviews with younger participants were as well conducted.

6.2 Participants and Sampling

Purposive sampling selected participants who could address the study objectives: four older adults, three younger adults and one tukang berayun. The final sample comprised eight Iban participants: seven women and one man. Five participants were associated with Tanjung Bijat, Sri Aman, one with Telagus, Pantu, and two with Kuching. Their characteristics provided leadership, generational, urban-rural and specialist perspectives. Ages, occupations and education levels were not consistently recorded and are therefore not inferred. The small, information-rich sample was appropriate for an in-depth phenomenological inquiry, but it does not represent all Iban communities experience and perspective related to Gawai Antu elements.

Pseudonym	Participant group	Gender	Location	Relevant experience and perspective
Tr. Suyong	Older generation / Tuai Rumah	Male	Tanjung Bijat, Sri Aman	Longhouse leadership, traditional practice and institutional mediation
Rintih	Older generation	Female	Tanjung Bijat, Sri Aman	Traditional-modern comparison and government support
Serena	Older generation	Female	Tanjung Bijat, Sri Aman	Ritual preparation, changing practice and youth continuation
Luya	Older generation	Female	Tanjung Bijat, Sri Aman	Ritual sequence, elders' roles and religious change
Duli	Younger generation	Female	Tanjung Bijat, Sri Aman	Participation experience, emotional meaning and costs
Lia	Younger generation	Female	Telagus, Pantu	Education, association-building and youth learning
Mick	Younger generation	Female	Kuching	Urban work constraints, documentation and grand-festival meaning
Samai	Tukang berayun	Female	Kuching	Chanting apprenticeship, emotional experience and specialist continuity

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6.3 Data Collection And Analysis

The interview protocol covered the full ritual sequence, generational differences, the experience of the tukang berayun and safeguarding responsibilities. Interviews were conducted in Iban language, audio-recorded with participants' consent, transcribed and translated into English. NVivo 12 Plus was used to organise and retrieve coded material. Analysis proceeded through familiarisation, initial coding, comparison across participant groups, consolidation into themes and interpretation in relation to the research questions. Recent reflexive thematic-analysis guidance emphasises that themes are analytically developed patterns rather than automatically generated outputs; accordingly, frequency counts in this article indicate the breadth of a response but do not alone determine its importance (Braun & Clarke, 2021, 2022).

6.4 Research Integrity And Limitations

The article uses the participant labels assigned during data collection. Translated quotations were lightly edited for readability without changing their substantive meaning. Because translation may reduce linguistic nuance, future research should retain parallel Iban and English transcripts and use participant or community review. The study is limited by one main field setting, a predominantly female sample, retrospective accounts, the absence of a pilot interview, and the fact that direct observation of a full Gawai Antu was not reported. These limitations require interpretive rather than statistical generalisation.

7. Findings

7.1 Participant Profile And Overall Pattern

Eight participants contributed complementary knowledge. Older participants recalled customary forms and changes over time; younger participants described limited opportunities, emotional significance and practical constraints; the tukang berayun explained specialist learning and affective experience. Across the dataset, three overarching themes were identified: (1) Gawai Antu as a collective ritual sequence; (2) continuity negotiated through religion, mobility, cost and generational exposure; and (3) safeguarding as shared community-institutional responsibility.

7.2 Theme 1: Gawai Antu as a Collective Ritual Sequence

Participants consistently described Gawai Antu as a long process rather than a single celebratory event. Preparation could begin weeks or much earlier through longhouse deliberation. Women were associated with making penganan and weaving baskets or other items, while men collected bamboo and wood and constructed the sungkup. These roles were interdependent and embedded in collective labour. During the rite, the tukang berayun's all-night chanting connected the ceremonial stages. At dawn, makai cina brought the living and the deceased family members into a final communal meal, after which ritual objects were conveyed to the graves.

Stage	Practice/code	Participants mentioning (n=8)	Illustrative participant response
Before	Preparing penganan, commonly beginning about two weeks earlier	6	"Women in the longhouse need to do penganan before the actual day ... [and] help each other." (Mick)
Before	Constructing and decorating the sungkup	7	"Men ... [collect] wood or bamboo for them to make sungkup." (Serena)
Before	Weaving raga, capan, ma and related memorial containers	5	"Women starting to weave basket such as capan, ma, raga." (Lia)
Before	Preparing clothing and personal objects for the deceased	Multiple accounts	"Any accessories used by humans in this world, the ghosts must have." (Lia)
During	Receiving the tukang berayun and beginning chanting	5 reception; 8 chanting	"Tukang berayun started her chanting and singing ... whole night till dawn." (Rintih)
During	Makai cina communal meal	6	"At dawn, the residences begin with makai cina." (Mick)
During	Pig's head associated with makai cina	4	"Makai cina must include a pig's head." (Lia)
After	Sending memorial objects/accessories to the grave	8	"Ghost's accessories were then sent to the grave." (Mick)

The accounts also revealed local variation. Differences in objects, timing and Christian adaptations show that Gawai Antu is not a mechanically uniform script. Safeguarding should document variants and the reasons communities recognise them as appropriate.

7.3 Theme 2: Emotional Meaning, Cost And Transformation

All three younger participants had attended Gawai Antu, but their opportunities were limited. They characterised it as grand and deeply emotional, while unanimously identifying high cost. Duli described a "very sad moment" because the rite marked a final togetherness and separation. Mick linked grandeur to the number of guests, traditional dress and long preparation. These accounts position Gawai Antu as both affective remembrance and public collective identity.

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Subtheme	Younger generation response	Older generation / specialist response	Interpretation
Emotional and sacred meaning	Duli and Mick described sadness and emotional intensity.	Samai described feeling the presence of the departed while chanting.	The rite mediates grief, memory and relational closure.
High cost and labour	All three younger participants identified substantial expense; urban work reduces time available.	Older accounts recalled extensive collective preparation and reciprocal help.	Economic and temporal pressures constrain enactment even where cultural value remains strong.
Religious transformation	Participants observed greater reliance on Christian prayer.	All four older participants contrasted current Christian practice with sungkup, piring and berayun.	Continuity is negotiated, not simply abandoned; knowledge and ritual observance may follow different paths.
Declining specialist knowledge	Younger participants had limited exposure to complete practice.	Tr. Suyong and Serena noted the scarcity of lemambang and tukang berayun; Samai is ageing.	The specialist transmission chain is vulnerable and time-sensitive.
Commitment to continuity	All three younger participants said youth should learn or preserve Gawai Antu.	Older participants hoped custom would not be eliminated; Samai supported trained continuation.	Positive attitudes exist but require accessible mechanisms and community legitimacy.

The religious dimension was nuanced. Older respondents observed that sungkup, piring and berayun were less common as Christian prayer became more prominent. Yet Luya distinguished faith from cultural knowledge: “If they practise Christianity’s tradition, then they can as well follow. Meanwhile, custom is custom. This traditional custom should not be eliminated.” This indicates a potential safeguarding space in which history, language, artistry and community memory can be transmitted even when families make different choices about ritual observance.

7.4 Theme 3: The Vulnerability Of Tukang Berayun Knowledge

Samai’s account showed that special knowledge was acquired through desire, practice with an expert and repeated participation. Chanting combined learned technique with creative, situational delivery. She stated: “I am learning ... from the trainer who [is] really an expert,” and explained that she could no longer continue because of age. The emotional dimension was equally central: “I feel very emotional when I started singing and chanting for the departed souls; even I cannot see them, but I can feel their existence.” This knowledge cannot be reduced to a written lyric. It includes voice, timing, vocabulary, ritual sequencing, interaction, memory and culturally situated judgement. Samai nevertheless supported carefully written materials and expert teaching for younger people. A safeguarding programme should therefore pair audiovisual documentation with apprenticeship and contextual explanation, while allowing the practitioner and community to determine whether particular chants or meanings are restricted.

7.5 Theme 4: Shared Responsibility For Safeguarding

Safeguarding was viewed as a distributed responsibility. Every participant referred to ministries or government, making institutional support the most widely shared strategy. However, participants did not assign the task to government alone. They also identified youth, elders, Tuai Rumah, elected representatives, schools, Iban associations and publication or video. Their responses imply a network in which public institutions enable resources while cultural authority remains within the community.

Proposed actor/strategy	Participants (n=8)	Representative response	Practical translation
Ministries / government support	8	“The government ... need to play their role to preserve Iban’s custom.” (Samai)	Community-designed grants, documentation support, practitioner recognition and long-term programme funding.
Youth involvement and learning	At least 2 explicit; supported across generational accounts	“The best way ... is the young generation’s involvement.” (Samai)	Youth apprenticeships, oral-history teams, language activities and supervised participation.
Tuai Rumah / longhouse leadership	2	“Tuai Rumah also must play their role.” (Samai)	Convene consent processes, identify knowledge holders and coordinate local safeguarding plans.
Older generation transmission	1 explicit; recurrent across findings	“The older generation plays their roles to share with the young generation.” (Luya)	Mentoring, intergenerational workshops and family-based documentation.
Schools and Iban language	1	“Every single school must have Iban’s language subject.” (Lia)	Locally appropriate curriculum modules, vocabulary, oral history and cultural arts.
Iban cultural association	1	“The best way ... is to form [an] Iban association.” (Lia)	Coordinate practitioners, events, archives and advocacy across communities.
Books and video	1	“Books ... together with a video [can be] a reference for the young generation.” (Mick)	Bilingual, community-reviewed resources with clear cultural-access protocols.

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Proposed actor/strategy	Participants (n=8)	Representative response	Practical translation
Elected representative as mediator	1	"YB is the main mediator." (Tr. Suyong)	Connect community priorities with agencies and funding without displacing local authority.

8. Discussion

8.1 Gawai Antu as Living, Embodied and Collective Heritage

The findings demonstrated that Gawai Antu persisted in memory as an integrated system of ritual practice, material culture and social organisation. Its vitality depended on collective work and situated competence. This supported the contemporary living-heritage view that safeguarding concerns the transmission of knowledge and the social conditions of practice, not only the preservation of objects. It also aligned with Kiyai et al. (2023), who show that Iban artefacts cannot be separated from belief, use and community care.= The ritual sequence also revealed a strong collective orientation consistent with Hofstede's cultural dimensions. Longhouse decisions, reciprocal assistance and shared hosting are central. Yet the empirical data extended beyond Hofstede by showing that collective orientation is enacted through sacred obligations, special authority and emotional relationships with the deceased. A community-based living-heritage framework is therefore more precise for explaining how continuity occurs.

8.2 Continuity Through Adaptation Rather Than Cultural Freezing

Participants' comparisons between ancestral practice and Christian prayer show that Gawai Antu exists within a changing religious landscape. Cultural safeguarding should neither demand the restoration of every past practice nor assume that change equals disappearance. UNESCO's framework recognised that communities continually recreated living heritage. What matters is whether community members retain authority to interpret, transmit and adapt their heritage. Programmes should enable dialogue among elders, practitioners, church members, youth and longhouse leaders about which elements may be taught, documented, practised or respectfully remembered. This distinction prevents two risks. The first is fossilisation: presenting one version as an unchanging authentic script. The second is decontextualisation: extracting chants, objects or performances for tourism or online circulation without their relationships and restrictions. The participants themselves reported variation between Sri Aman, Betong and Lingga. Documentation should consequently identify provenance, variant and community interpretation rather than collapse differences.

8.3 Intergenerational Transmission As An Access Problem

The younger participants did not express indifference. They valued Gawai Antu but faced limited exposure, urban work and substantial costs. The transmission gap is therefore partly structural. UNESCO's education initiatives provide a relevant direction: schools and non-formal learning can create repeated, locally grounded encounters with living heritage (UNESCO, 2022). For Gawai Antu, this may include Iban language, terminology, oral narratives, material arts and community history. Sacred performance should remain subject to community protocols, but related knowledge can still strengthen cultural literacy. Apprenticeship is urgent because specialist knowledge is concentrated in ageing practitioners. Samai's description of learning from an expert confirms that recordings alone will not reproduce competence. A viable model would pair a willing practitioner with a small cohort, fund travel and time, record successive learning sessions, and allow the practitioner to control access. Such a model treats the knowledge holder as an authority and educator rather than merely a source of content.

8.4 A Co-Governance Model For Safeguarding

All participants called for government or ministerial involvement, but their other suggestions show that safeguarding should not be top-down. Institutional actors can provide funding, technical assistance, recognition and links to education; Tuai Rumah and community bodies should govern consent, priorities and cultural access; practitioners and elders should define accurate content; and youth should participate in documentation and learning. This co-governance model distributes capacity without transferring cultural ownership away from the Iban community.

Priority action	Lead and partners	Safeguard	Near-term output
Community inventory of knowledge holders and local variants	Tuai Rumah, elders, cultural association, relevant ministry	Prior informed consent; community ownership; right to withdraw	Verified local inventory and safeguarding priorities
Tukang berayun apprenticeship and oral-history programme	Practitioner, selected apprentices, university, cultural agency	Practitioner controls recording, use and access	Bilingual learning record and trained youth cohort
Living-heritage education modules	Schools, Iban-language educators, elders, youth	Avoid staging restricted ritual; community review	Lesson plans, vocabulary, interviews and cultural-arts activities
Community-controlled digital archive	Cultural association, museum/archive, university	Tiered access; provenance; restrictions for sacred material	Searchable Iban-English archive with public and restricted layers
Microgrants and mobility support	State/federal cultural agencies, elected representatives	Transparent community-led selection	Support for workshops, travel, materials and practitioner time

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Priority action	Lead and partners	Safeguard	Near-term output
Periodic safeguarding review	Community committee with institutional partners	Youth and practitioner representation; documented decisions	Annual review of participation, knowledge transfer and risks

8.5 Theoretical and Practical Contributions

Theoretically, the study reframes preservation from an attitude held by individuals into a transmission ecology. Positive attitudes are necessary but insufficient; continuity emerges when knowledge holders, occasions for practice, learners, community authority and institutional resources connect. Practically, the study translates participant suggestions into a sequenced programme with cultural safeguards. It also challenges deficit narratives about youth by showing that younger participants valued the rite while confronting practical barriers. The findings contributed to cultural sustainability by showing how ritual heritage generated identity, memory, cooperation and local knowledge. These social benefits supported the broader objectives of education, inclusive institutions and sustainable communities. However, heritage should not be instrumentalised solely for tourism or economic return. The primary measure of success is whether Iban communities can exercise authority over meaningful transmission.

9. Conclusion

Gawai Antu remains a profound marker of Iban identity, collective memory and relations between the living and the departed. The eight participants described a detailed sequence of preparation, performance and closure that depends on longhouse cooperation and special knowledge. They also identified a fragile transmission environment shaped by infrequent performance, high cost, migration, religious transformation and the ageing of practitioners. The study concludes that safeguarding should be community-led, intergenerational and institutionally enabled. Immediate priorities are to document knowledge with consent, support apprenticeship, integrate locally reviewed heritage learning into formal and non-formal education, and establish a community-controlled archive. Government, ministries and elected representatives can provide resources and coordination, but cultural decisions should remain with practitioners, elders, longhouse leaders and the wider Iban community. This approach preserves not only information about Gawai Antu, but also the relationships, authority and living processes through which the heritage has meaning. Future research should expand to multiple longhouses in Sri Aman, Betong, Lubok Antu and Saratok; compare local variants; include more male and youth perspectives; examine the role of churches and cultural organisations; and conduct longitudinal evaluation of apprenticeship and education initiatives. Participatory methods, parallel Iban-English reporting and community validation would strengthen cultural and interpretive integrity.

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