

LATVIA

Response to Question 1 : Existing intellectual property laws have not yet been used to protect traditional knowledge.

Response to Question 2 : There is no specific law providing for intellectual property protection of traditional knowledge in Latvia.

Response to Question 27 : Since we do not have in Latvia such groups of people which could be designated as "indigenous people" or like and which use in their everyday life traditional knowledge we have not faced with problems of abusive use of these knowledge and therefore we have not felt necessity to develop some form of protection of such knowledge.

Traditional knowledge has been explored and collected since about the 18th century and this work in a form of scientific exploration is still going on. Traditional knowledge of Latvian people and earlier of Baltic tribes is well documented, described, analyzed, maintained in several museums and other collections, and published in books a lot. Traditional knowledge is taught in schools. Many people are engaged in different hobby collectives dealing with maintenance of these knowledge. So these knowledge are considered in Latvia as being in public domain.

Works derived from or based on traditional knowledge can be protected as intellectual property according to IP standards if they meet requirements for protection provided for in these laws. The only wish would be to get some financial assistance in order to be able to convert into computerized form collections of traditional knowledge (particularly in fields of medicinal plants, medical and agricultural methods and devices) and make them searchable which now are kept in our museums in traditional form and therefore are unlikely to be used in examination of patent, trademark and design applications.