

*(Submission from Australia)*

Attached is Australia's submission on the GAP ANALYSIS ON THE PROTECTION OF TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE.

As appropriate, amendments have been included in revision mode largely for clarification or to correct minor typographical errors. Comments have also been inserted throughout the document to suggest further changes for the Secretariat to consider.

Amendments or comments have therefore been inserted in the Contents pagination and also at paragraphs 3, 6, 7, 10, 12 - 14, 16 - 18, 21, 29, 30, 34 - 37, 39, 42, 43, 45, 47 (noting that this paragraph covers 6 pages), 51, 53, 55, 56, 59, 61, 63 - 65, 67, 69, 72, 73 and the Annex.

May 30, 2008

WIPO INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE ON  
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND GENETIC RESOURCES,  
TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND FOLKLORE

DRAFT

GAP ANALYSIS ON  
THE PROTECTION OF TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE

*Document prepared by the Secretariat*

SUMMARY

1. At its twelfth session, the Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore (the Committee) decided that the Secretariat will, taking into account the previous work of the [Committee], prepare, as the working document for the [thirteenth] session of the [Committee], a document that will:
  - (a) describe what obligations, provisions and possibilities already exist at the international level to provide protection for TK;
  - (b) describe what gaps exist at the international level, illustrating those gaps, to the extent possible, with specific examples;
  - (c) set out considerations relevant to determining whether those gaps need to be addressed;
  - (d) describe what options exist or might be developed to address any identified gaps, including legal and other options, whether at the international, regional or national level;
  - (e) contain an annex with a matrix corresponding to the items mentioned in sub-paragraphs (a) to (d) above.
  
2. The Secretariat was required to “make explicit the working definitions or other bases upon which its analysis is conducted.” The document was to “be made available by the Secretariat in draft form by May 31, 2008.” Participants in the Committee were to “have the opportunity to comment on the draft before June 30, 2008, after which a final draft of the document will be published by August 15, 2008 for further consideration by the Committee at its thirteenth session.”

3. This document comprises the first draft of the gap analysis on the protection of traditional knowledge (TK). It therefore contains the following elements:

- (a) obligations, provisions and possibilities that already exist at the international level to provide protection for TK;
- (b) gaps that exist at the international level, illustrating those gaps, to the extent possible, with specific examples;
- (c) considerations relevant to determining whether those gaps need to be addressed;
- (d) options that exist or might be developed to address any identified gaps, including legal and other options, whether at the international, regional or national level;

Annex I provides a matrix corresponding to the items mentioned in sub-paragraphs (a) to (d) above. This draft gap analysis also sets out working definitions and other bases on which the analysis is conducted.

Committee participants are invited to comment on this draft gap analysis, preferably by forwarding comments to the email address [grtkf@wipo.int](mailto:grtkf@wipo.int). A final draft of the gap analysis, taking account of comments received, will be published by August 15, 2008, as document WIPO/GRTKF/IC/13/5(b).

## CONTENTS

I.	INTRODUCTION .....	6
II.	WORKING DEFINITIONS AND OTHER BASES FOR ANALYSIS .....	6
	(a) Working definitions .....	6
	(b) Other bases upon which analysis is conducted.....	8
	(i) <i>The concept of ‘protection’</i> .....	8
	(ii) <i>Linkage with the TCE gap analysis</i> .....	9
	(iii) <i>Diverse characteristics of TK</i> .....	9
	(iv) <i>The nature of ‘gaps’ to be identified</i> .....	10
III.	EXISTING OBLIGATIONS, PROVISIONS AND POSSIBILITIES FOR PROTECTION.....	11
	(a) Protection under existing international instruments in the field of intellectual property.....	11
	(i) <i>positive patent protection of TK</i> .....	11
	(ii) <i>defensive protection of TK within the patent system</i> .....	12
	<i>TK-specific disclosure requirements</i> .....	13
	(iii) <i>undisclosed TK</i> .....	14
	(iv) <i>unfair competition</i> .....	15
	(v) <i>distinctive signs</i> .....	17
	(vi) <i>industrial design law</i> .....	17
	(vii) <i>copyright and related law</i> .....	18
	(b) Within other areas of public international law .....	18
	(i) <i>Convention on Biological Diversity</i> .....	19
	(ii) <i>FAO International Treaty</i> .....	19
	(iii) <i>Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples</i> .....	19
	(iv) <i>UN Desertification Convention</i> .....	20
IV.	GAPS EXISTING AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL .....	21
	(a) Gaps in the definition or identification of TK to be protected .....	21
	(b) Gaps in the objectives or policy rationales of protection: .....	23
	(c) Gaps in the existing legal mechanisms .....	24
	(i) <i>Subject matter not covered under existing IP law</i> .....	24
	<i>TK that is not covered by existing forms of IP protection.</i> .....	24
	<i>Innovation that is cumulative and collective over generations within the one community</i> .....	25
	(ii) <i>beneficiaries or right holders not recognized</i> .....	25
	<i>Recognition of collective rights, interests and entitlements within a TK system</i> ..25	
	(iii) <i>forms of misuse and other illegitimate actions that cannot be prevented under existing law</i> .....	26
	<i>An express norm against illegitimate patenting of TK</i> .....	26
	<i>A specific disclosure requirement relating to TK</i> .....	27
	<i>Protection against unjust enrichment or misappropriation of TK</i> .....	27
	<i>Prior informed consent</i> .....	28
	<i>A right of acknowledgement and integrity</i> .....	28
	(iv) <i>absence of entitlement to obtain remuneration or other benefits.</i> .....	28

V. CONSIDERATIONS RELEVANT TO DETERMINING WHETHER THOSE GAPS NEED TO BE ADDRESSED .....	30
(a) Substantive considerations .....	30
(i) <i>International law and policy</i> .....	30
(ii) <i>Social, cultural, political and economic considerations</i> .....	32
(iii) <i>Significance of TK protection for broader policymaking and regulatory contexts</i> .....	32
(b) Process or formal considerations .....	33
(i) <i>Specific process or formal considerations</i> .....	33
(ii) <i>Considerations specifically weighing against addressing gaps</i> .....	33
VI. OPTIONS THAT EXIST OR MIGHT BE DEVELOPED TO ADDRESS ANY IDENTIFIED GAPS.....	34
(a) Legal and other options at the international level:.....	34
(i) <i>A binding international instrument or instruments</i> .....	34
(ii) <i>interpretations or elaborations of existing legal instruments</i> .....	35
(iii) <i>A non-binding normative international instrument</i> .....	36
(iv) <i>high level political resolution, declaration or decision</i> .....	37
(v) <i>Strengthened coordination through guidelines or model laws</i> .....	38
(vi) <i>Coordination of national legislative developments</i> .....	39
(vii) <i>Coordination and cooperation on capacity building and practical initiatives.</i>	
40	
<i>Capacity building and substantive materials for legal and policy processes</i> .....	40
<i>Strengthening practical capacity of TK holders</i> .....	40
<i>Building and guiding institutions</i> .....	41
<i>Interagency cooperation and coordination within UN system</i> .....	41
<i>Awareness and capacity-building for the general public</i> .....	42
(b) Legal and other options at the regional level: .....	42
(c) Legal and other options at the national level:.....	42

## ANNEX: MATRIX OF THE GAP ANALYSIS

### SUMMARY OF MATRIX

- A. EXISTING MEASURES
- B. GAPS EXISTING AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL
- C. CONSIDERATIONS RELEVANT TO DETERMINING WHETHER THOSE GAPS NEED TO BE ADDRESSED
- D. OPTIONS THAT EXIST OR MIGHT BE DEVELOPED TO ADDRESS ANY IDENTIFIED GAPS:

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The following document contains the present brief introduction and four sections, corresponding with the elements required in the decision of the Committee at its twelfth session, namely:

Section II: the working definitions or other bases upon which the analysis is conducted;

Section III: obligations, provisions and possibilities already existing at the international level to provide protection for TK (sub-paragraph (a) in the decision);

Section III: gaps existing at the international level, illustrating those gaps, to the extent possible, with specific examples (sub-paragraph (b) in the decision);

Section IV: considerations relevant to determining whether those gaps need to be addressed (sub-paragraph (c) in the decision);

Section V: what options exist or might be developed to address any identified gaps, including legal and other options, whether at the international, regional or national level (sub-paragraph (d) in the decision).

The Annex provides a matrix corresponding to the items mentioned in these sections (i.e. (sub-paragraphs (a) to (d) in the Committee' decision).

## II. WORKING DEFINITIONS AND OTHER BASES FOR ANALYSIS

### (a) Working definitions

2. There is no internationally accepted definition of 'traditional knowledge' as such. Other international instruments refer to related concepts, such as:

- knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity<sup>1</sup>
- traditional knowledge relevant to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Art 8(j), Convention on Biological Diversity

<sup>2</sup> Art 9.2(a), International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.

- cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, as well as the manifestations of their sciences, technologies and cultures, including human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora, oral traditions, literatures, designs, sports and traditional games and visual and performing arts<sup>3</sup>

3. This draft gap analysis is required to be prepared for ‘traditional knowledge’ as such, and not any more specific concept such as biodiversity related traditional knowledge, knowledge relevant to plant genetic resources, or traditional knowledge held by indigenous peoples (also known as ‘indigenous knowledge’); these more precise concepts may be seen as fitting within the broader concept of ‘traditional knowledge’ as such. However, as a distinct gap analysis is required for ‘traditional cultural expressions,’ this suggests that the analysis should focus on traditional knowledge in the strict sense (TK *stricto sensu*), rather than the broader concept of traditional knowledge that has sometimes been used as a general term. Accordingly, for the purposes of this analysis only, the term “traditional knowledge” refers to the content or substance of knowledge resulting from intellectual activity in a traditional context, and includes the know how, skills, innovations, practices and learning that form part of traditional knowledge systems, and knowledge embodying traditional lifestyles of indigenous and local communities, or contained in codified knowledge systems passed between generations.

It is not limited to any specific technical field, and may include agricultural, environmental and medicinal knowledge, and knowledge associated with genetic resources.<sup>4</sup>

4. The gap analysis also proceeds on the assumption that in order to be protected through specific legal mechanisms, traditional knowledge may need to be:

(i) generated, preserved and transmitted in a traditional and intergenerational context;

(ii) distinctively associated with a traditional or indigenous community or people which preserves and transmits it between generations; and

(iii) integral to the cultural identity of an indigenous or traditional community or people which is recognized as holding the knowledge through a form of custodianship, guardianship, collective ownership or cultural responsibility. This relationship may be expressed formally or informally by customary or traditional practices, protocols or laws.<sup>5</sup>

**Comment [sb1]:**

It is acknowledged that the Gap Analysis is required to make clear the definitional bases.

If the list of inclusions is not exhaustive and are examples, the definition is very broad - “traditional knowledge refers to the content or substance of knowledge resulting from intellectual activity in a traditional context”.

It would seem that the Gap Analysis does not use this definition, but rather, uses the description of legally protectable traditional knowledge in paragraph 4 as a definition.

<sup>3</sup> Art 31, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, document WIPO/GRTKF/IC/12/INF/6

<sup>4</sup> Source: WIPO/GRTKF/IC/8/5

<sup>5</sup> Source: WIPO/GRTKF/IC/8/5

5. In other words, to be eligible for protection, rather than being described in general terms as being ‘traditional knowledge,’ it may be necessary for knowledge to be intergenerational in character, to have an objective link with the community of origin, and to have a subjective association within that community, so that it forms part of the community’s own self-identity.

Some specific examples of TK include:

- Traditional medical knowledge – knowledge about the medicinal uses of certain genetic resources, but also knowledge about medical treatments that do not involve the use of genetic resources (such as traditional massage)
- Biodiversity-related knowledge that is ‘relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity’<sup>6</sup>
- Agricultural related knowledge that is traditional knowledge relevant to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture<sup>7</sup>

(b) Other bases upon which analysis is conducted

*(i) The concept of ‘protection’*

6. The gap analysis is required to address ‘protection’ of TK. To some extent, analyzing gaps in protection naturally requires a concept of what ‘protection’ means, as this clarifies

- the scope of relevant protection:
  - what subject matter is currently protected (e.g. a patentable invention),
  - what that subject matter is protected against (e.g. against certain uses by third parties),
  - what it is *not* protected against (e.g. patentable inventions are not protected against non-commercial research in many countries),
  - and *how* it is protected (e.g. ~~it may be considered a ‘gap’ if~~ protection is limited in time, if it is subject to formalities, or if it is subject to other conditions, such as a requirement for protection of undisclosed information to be dependent on the information having commercial rather than cultural or spiritual value);
- and on the other hand what subject matter is *not* protected (e.g. in many countries mere discoveries or publicly disclosed knowhow are not protected).

**Comment [sb2]:**  
The identification of gaps is the subject of Part IV and this consideration should be dealt with in that section. It is acknowledged that it is helpful to identify the concept of protection as a base upon which the analysis is conducted, but this should not pre-empt the identification of a gap.

**Formatted:** Strikethrough

7. The word ‘protection’ takes on many different meanings in relation to TK. It could in principle include physical protection of records against their degradation or loss

<sup>6</sup> CBD, 8(j)

<sup>7</sup> FAO, IGPRFA 9.2(a)



(e.g. restoring ancient texts containing TK). For the purposes of this draft gap analysis, ‘protection’ is taken to mean the kind of protection that is most often considered in intellectual property contexts, that is to say legal measures that limit the potential use of the protected material by third parties, either by giving the right to prevent their use altogether (exclusive rights), or by setting conditions for their permitted use (e.g. [terms in a patent licence agreement](#), subjecting it to equitable compensation or a right of acknowledgement). Accordingly, protection is taken to refer to protection against unauthorized use or inequitable exploitation of the protected subject matter.

**Comment [sb3]:**

It would be very useful if these “intellectual property contexts” were explicitly identified here. It would appear that the neighbouring rights of copyright are emphasized (the protections of “equitable compensation” and “a right of acknowledgement” are relevant to that intellectual property context). Perhaps the meaning of “protections” could also be developed by having regard to other intellectual property contexts, such as patents.

(ii) *Linkage with the TCE gap analysis*

8. For the sake of clarity in this gap analysis, and in line with the general operational approach taken in the Committee, TK is distinguished from traditional cultural expressions (TCEs). Some forms of protecting TCEs will have the indirect effect of also protecting TK – for instance, in the protection of recordings of traditional songs and narratives that are used to maintain and pass on TK within a community, or handicrafts that embody distinctive TK methods or knowhow. But these forms of protection are properly dealt with in the complementary TCE gap analysis, and are only briefly noted in this gap analysis on TK.

(iii) *Diverse characteristics of TK*

9. The following assumptions are made about the general characteristics of TK:

- TK may include specific elements of knowledge, including innovations made by a member of a traditional community, or it may include a broader systematic body of knowledge. No assumption is made as to whether ‘traditional knowledge’ should be limited to specific elements of knowledge or a knowledge system.
- No assumption is made as to whether certain TK is necessarily patentable or necessarily not patentable; elements of TK may be either. Simply because an innovation occurs in a traditional context, this does not in itself make it unpatentable (provided the patent is granted to the true inventor, the traditional innovator(s), or to their true successors in title). In other words, the mere fact that certain knowledge is ‘traditional’ does not exclude it from patentability. Even so, there may be legal uncertainty over how to apply the standards of novelty, inventive step and utility for claimed inventions that are TK as such, or derived from TK, or developed within a traditional knowledge system. Further, there may be uncertainty as to how the appropriate applicant should be determined, for instance when patentable TK is developed within a traditional community or other collective.
- TK is not necessarily considered to be publicly disclosed, or undisclosed; it may be either. There may also be legal uncertainty over whether TK disclosed within

a local or indigenous community can be considered ‘undisclosed’, or not to be in the public domain.

- TK may be subject to diverse forms of ownership, custodianship, entitlement and equitable interests. These interests may vest with an individual within a community, with a community collectively (whether or not legally recognized as such), or with a state (either in its own right or in trust for individuals or communities). Certain aspects of TK may be identified with a particular individual within a community, even where the body of TK overall is held and maintained by the community as such.
- *Indigenous knowledge* is identified as a more precise body of knowledge than TK, being developed, maintained and disseminated by indigenous peoples recognized as such. TK may be held by other local and cultural communities who are not recognized as being indigenous. Some approaches to gap analysis may need to address possible differences in treatment between indigenous knowledge and the broader concept of traditional knowledge – noting, for instance, that rights of indigenous peoples relating to traditional knowledge have recently been identified in an international declaration (discussed below).

(iv) *The nature of ‘gaps’ to be identified*

10. Views are likely to differ as to what is a true ‘gap’ in protection, in part because the term ‘protection’ may have very broad connotations or very precise legal applications. The draft gap analysis deals with these different perspectives by covering a wide range of possibilities for considering what a ‘gap’ should be; these different possible assumptions are made clear in [Part IV](#).

**Comment [sb4]:**

It is agreed that the analysis must have regard to differing perspectives on what is a gap.

In Part IV(c) of the analysis possible gaps are listed with Examples. It may be helpful to have differing perspectives within the Examples so that the different assumptions on perspectives are made clear. This could take the structure of Example: *describe scenario – from one perspective there is a gap – from another perspective there is not a gap.*

**Deleted:** the following text

### III. EXISTING OBLIGATIONS, PROVISIONS AND POSSIBILITIES FOR PROTECTION

11. This section deals with ‘obligations, provisions and possibilities that already exist at the international level to provide protection’. The analysis considers in detail the form of protection available in accordance with the main international instruments in the general field of intellectual property protection, and in less detail the international instruments in other fields of public international law that refer directly to traditional knowledge and its protection. For the sake of brevity and clarity, it does not analyse or discuss the specific legal instruments directly (these have been extensively discussed in the Committee’s previous documentation).

#### (a) Protection under existing international instruments in the field of intellectual property

##### *(i) positive patent protection of TK*

International instruments referred to: World Trade Organization Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT).

12. While considerable flexibility and differences exist in their interpretation and application at the national level, in general the international patent law standards would allow for patent protection to be extended to specific innovations developed within a traditional context, provided the innovations are:

- novel or new;
  - inventive or non-obvious;
  - useful or industrially applicable;
- and generally meet the definition of ‘invention’.

Deleted: at the TK inventions

13. None of these criteria is formally defined in a binding legal manner in international instruments. Accordingly, their application to traditional knowledge is a matter of potential flexibility within national law.

Flexibility exists concerning the definition of ‘invention’ as against a discovery, which may for example be relevant for TK that is considered to be a discovery of a principle of nature rather than an invention as such.

Flexibility exists as to whether TK should be considered inherently patentable subject matter in the event that the traditional knowledge constitutes:

- an invention the prevention the commercial exploitation of which is necessary to protect *ordre public* or morality, including to protect human, animal or plant life or health or to avoid serious prejudice to the environment, provided that this exclusion is not made merely because the exploitation of the invention is prohibited by their law; or
- a diagnostic, therapeutic and surgical method for the treatment of humans or animals;
- a plant or animal other than micro-organisms, and essentially biological processes for the production of plants or animals other than non-biological and microbiological processes.

Flexibility also exists as to how conventional patentability criteria are construed in relation to traditional knowledge – in particular, novelty (for example, whether oral traditions passed on relatively privately within an indigenous or local community are considered to be disclosed prior art relevant to the determination of patentable novelty) and non-obviousness (for example, whether a practitioner of a traditional knowledge system would be considered a person skilled in the art for the assessment of obviousness).

14. Also, the observation that a practitioner of traditional knowledge has developed an innovation that would be considered patentable clearly does not imply that the practitioner would necessarily wish it to be patented, or would have the necessary resources to proceed with the patenting process; in other words, being patentable in principle does not mean TK is actually *patented*. The lack of practical use of the patent system, or a choice not to use it because the form of protection is out of line with TK holders' requirements, may also be viewed as a gap, even where some elements of TK are technically patentable.

**Comment [sb5]:**

The use of the patent system is relevant to analysing protection.  
The identification of a gap should be analysed in Part IV(b) "Gaps in the objectives or policy rationales of protection".

(ii) *defensive protection of TK within the patent system*

International instruments referred to: PCT, International Patent Classification

15. Defensive protection concerns measures to forestall or to reverse the illegitimate grant of patents over elements of TK. The protection of TK within the patent system has more frequently been considered from a defensive point of view, rather than in terms of positively seeking patents over TK. Existing obligations, provisions and possibilities at the international level are directly relevant to defensive protection. These include legal and practical defensive measures within conventional patent law, as well as proposals to revise international patent law standards to create specific disclosure measures regarding TK (in conjunction with genetic resources).

16. Defensive protection of TK within existing international patent law standards includes the following measures:

- The right of the inventor to be mentioned as such in a patent, as established under the Paris Convention.
- The expansion of PCT minimum documentation to include a range of traditional knowledge publications. This has the effect of ensuring that significant amounts of already published traditional knowledge will systematically be taken into account at an early stage in the life of many patents, and will be included in published international search reports before a patent application even enters the national phase.
- The revision of the International Patent Classification [in 2006](#) to extend and focus its coverage of [a specific type of traditional-knowledge related material, by describing inventions that are “medicinal preparations of undetermined constitution containing material from algae, lichens, fungi or plants, or derivatives thereof, e.g. traditional herbal medicines” \(A61K 36/00\)](#). This revision recognizes the intellectual and technological importance of traditional knowledge systems. It increases the likelihood that relevant TK-related documents will be located during patent [search](#) procedures, thus increasing the practical basis for defensive protection of TK.

[The IGC has developed the following standards, guidelines and portal tool that are not within existing international patent law standards, however are relevant for defensive protection:](#)

- Adoption by the Committee of standards for documentation of traditional knowledge, standards that recognize the need to record and respect the conditions of access to and use of documented traditional knowledge.
- Preparation within the Committee of guidelines for examination of TK-related patents, the application of which would significantly enhance the likelihood that illegitimate patents would not be granted over traditional knowledge.
- The development under the direction of the Committee of a portal for recognition of recorded traditional knowledge in the course of patent procedures, further increasing the likelihood that relevant traditional knowledge will be respected in the course of patent procedure

**Comment [sb6]:**

As these are measures developed by the IGC and are not part of the existing international patent law standards, it may be useful to discuss these measures in Part VI(a).

*[Proposed TK-specific disclosure requirements](#)*

17. With the aim of strengthening the defensive protection of TK, a number of proposals have been submitted within the WTO and within WIPO for strengthened international patent law standards requiring specific forms of disclosure relating to traditional knowledge and genetic or biological resources. [These proposals represent](#)

significant forms of defensive protection of TK, and are thus relevant to the present analysis. For the present, none have been adopted internationally in the form of binding law. However, the Bonn Guidelines, which are not binding but may be considered ‘provisions’ or ‘possibilities’ in the terms of reference for this analysis, encourage CBD Contracting Parties to consider:

**Comment [sb7]:**

It would be helpful to provide an analysis of how TK specific disclosure requirements do or do not represent significant forms of defensive protection for TK.

Measures to encourage the disclosure of the country of origin of the genetic resources and of the origin of traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities in applications for intellectual property rights;

A number of countries have introduced such measures in their national laws. The range of ‘provisions’ or ‘possibilities’ have been explored in some detail in two studies prepared by WIPO at the invitation of the CBD.<sup>8</sup>

(iii) *undisclosed TK*

International instruments referred to: Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property (Paris Convention), TRIPS

18. Where TK has not been publicly disclosed, it may be covered by the existing international standards governing the protection of undisclosed or confidential information. The general international minimum standards, set by the WTO TRIPS Agreement, require that to be protected, information should:

Deleted: be

be secret in the sense that it is not, as a body or in the precise configuration and assembly of its components, generally known among or readily accessible to persons within the circles that normally deal with the kind of information in question;

Deleted: Be

have commercial value because it is secret; and

have been subject to reasonable steps under the circumstances, by the person lawfully in control of the information, to keep it secret.

19. Protection extends to information “being disclosed to, acquired by, or used by others without their consent in a manner contrary to honest commercial practices,” which is defined as meaning “at least practices such as breach of contract, breach of confidence and inducement to breach, and includes the acquisition of undisclosed information by third parties who knew, or were grossly negligent in failing to know, that such practices

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.wipo.int/tk/en/genetic/proposals/index.html>

were involved in the acquisition.” This is potentially relevant to much traditional knowledge, where it is not necessarily the original person who accessed the information, but a downstream commercial or industrial interest, who actually commercializes the TK.

20. This international standard is described as a means of ‘ensuring effective protection against unfair competition as provided in Article 10bis of the Paris Convention (1967).’ The duration of protection is effectively unlimited, provided the conditions remain (for instance, protection would not be available after the holder of the knowledge publicly disclosed it).

21. This international standard would clearly apply to considerable amounts of traditional knowledge, but equally clearly considerable amounts would not be covered. Some of the considerations that could arise in applying this standard include:

- when would TK disclosed within a defined traditional community still be considered to be ‘secret’?
- what is the possible role of the customary law or customary practices of a community in determining whether the conditions for protection apply? There are examples at the national level, where courts have recognized that customary law of indigenous communities may be sufficient to meet the standard of confidentiality.
- would knowledge that has spiritual and cultural value to the community, but not commercial value for the community, still be protected if a third party realizes commercial benefit in their use of the knowledge.

**Deleted:** (

**Comment [sb8]:**  
Might be useful to briefly describe which countries are being referred to here.

**Deleted:** )

**Deleted:** when

**Deleted:** terms

22. As this is a minimum standard, possibilities exist for broader forms of protection under national law that would ensure, for instance, that TK only disseminated within a specific community could still be recognized as undisclosed and thus subject to protection. The spiritual and cultural value of knowledge could also be considered a relevant factor (so that commercial value alone may not be necessary for protection), and the role of customary law could be recognized (for instance, in establishing the ‘reasonable steps to protect’).

(iv) *unfair competition*

International instruments referred to: Paris Convention, TRIPS

23. The Paris Convention requires “effective protection against unfair competition,” stipulating that “[a]ny act of competition contrary to honest practices in industrial or commercial matters constitutes an act of unfair competition.” This conception of unfair competition is therefore expressed in general terms, but there is a specific focus on:

- acts that create confusion with the establishment, goods or industrial or commercial activities of a competitor;
- false allegations in the course of trade to discredit a competitor's establishment, goods, or industrial or commercial activities;
- indications or allegations liable to mislead the public as to the nature, the manufacturing process, the characteristics, the suitability for their purpose, or the quantity, of goods.

24. These more precise characterizations of unfair competition would apply, for instance, to commercialization of TK-related products that falsely or confusingly suggest that they are genuine products of an indigenous or local community when they are not, or falsely or confusingly suggests they are endorsed or authorized by such a community.

25. One possible reading of these international standards (which are also given effect through the TRIPS Agreement) is that they could cover broader forms of protection, beyond the specific acts of confusing, false or misleading representations cited in particular. According to one commentary on this provision:

What is to be understood by 'competition' will be determined in each country according to its own concepts: countries may extend the notion of acts of unfair competition to acts which are not competitive in a narrow sense ... Any act of competition will have to be considered unfair if it is contrary to honest practices in industrial or commercial matters. This criterion is not limited to honest practices existing in the country where protection against unfair competition is sought. The judicial or administrative authorities of such country will therefore also have to take into account honest practices established in international trade. If a judicial or administrative authority of the country where protection is sought finds that an act complained of is contrary to honest practices in industrial or commercial matters, it will be obliged to hold such act to be an act of unfair competition and to apply the sanctions and remedies provided by its national law. A wide variety of acts may correspond to the above criteria.<sup>9</sup>

26. Accordingly, it may be possible to read into this provision protection against other forms of use of traditional knowledge that are considered to be contrary to honest practices. It remains a possibility to determine at national level that acts of unfair competition can include unjust enrichment from the use of traditional knowledge and deriving commercial benefit from illicitly acquired TK.

---

<sup>9</sup> G.H.C. Bodenhausen, *Guide to the Application of the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property* (1968), at 144 (footnote omitted).



(v) *distinctive signs*

International instruments referred to: TRIPS, Madrid Agreement and Protocol, Lisbon Agreement on Protection of Appellations of Origin, Paris Convention

27. The protection of distinctive signs under international instruments includes

- conventional trademarks (including service marks)
- certification and collective marks
- geographical indications

28. Such protection cannot protect knowledge as such. However, it can indirectly provide protection, by providing a means of protecting distinctive signs, symbols, motifs and geographical indications, as well as providing certification of community endorsement or authenticity, when these are applied to products and services based on or using traditional knowledge.

29. Such distinctive signs can also be defensively protected through these legal mechanisms, in particular through the opposition or legal challenge of registrations that amount to a misleading or deceptive use of TK-related signs, symbols, or words, or TK-related geographical references. International standards apply for refusal or invalidation of marks that are contrary to morality or public order. In some cases, these prohibitions have been applied to refuse or revoke trademarks that would create cultural or spiritual offence to indigenous communities. (See TCE gap analysis for discussion of defensive protection of TCEs in the trademark system).

(vi) *industrial design law*

International instruments referred to: TRIPS, Berne Convention, The Hague Agreement Concerning the International Deposit of Industrial Designs, Paris Convention

30. Protection of designs does not address the content of knowledge as such, and is more relevant to the protection of traditional cultural expressions than for TK (see the complementary gap analysis on TCEs). Nonetheless, international standards on design protection may provide some indirect protection for some TK, particularly when designs are closely associated with a particular TK system, such as a way of producing tools, [musical instruments](#) or handicrafts. Protection is available for industrial designs that are new or original, but it is possible to exclude protection for designs dictated essentially by technical or functional considerations.

**Comment [sb9]:**

The cross reference to the TCE Gap Analysis is not clear. Defensive protection in the trademark system is discussed at  
i) Part III “The meaning of gaps” paragraph 33  
ii) Part IV A “Indigenous and traditional names, words and symbols” paragraph 51  
iii) Part IV B “Indigenous and traditional names, words and symbols” paragraphs 64 to 67  
iv) Part IV D “Use of unfair competition principles to combat misappropriation of reputation associated with TCEs (“style”)” paragraph 94  
v) Part IV D “Indigenous and traditional names, words and symbols” paragraph 107.

(vii) *copyright and related law*

International instruments referred to: TRIPS, Berne, WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty (WPPT)

31. Protection of copyright deals with the form of expression and does not address the content of knowledge as such, and it is therefore more relevant to the protection of traditional cultural expressions than for TK (see the complementary gap analysis on TCEs). Nonetheless, international standards on copyright and related rights may be seen as one way of providing indirect protection of TK. In particular, copyright may apply to descriptions of TK included in a database, as well as compilations of TK which are protected as compilations when they “by reason of the selection or arrangement of their contents constitute intellectual creations.” However, such indirect protection of TK through copyright would not extend to the content of the TK as such; hence the knowhow and substantive content of TK could be taken and used by third parties even if included in a copyright protected database.

32. In general, when TK is communicated through TCEs, the protection of TCEs may be seen as an indirect protection of the TK (for instance, a sound recording of a traditional performance used to transmit TK within a community can be protected as a recording of a TCE; this would limit the distribution of and access to the recording, which indirectly would limit access to and dissemination of the TK communicated through the TCE); for details, see the complementary gap analysis on TCEs.

(b) Within other areas of public international law

33. The present gap analysis concentrates on international standards specifically concerning intellectual property law and its relationship with TK. However, broader standards of public international law, such as environmental protection, plant genetic resources and indigenous peoples’ rights may be considered relevant to the general international legal and policy framework. These standards are briefly reviewed here.

International instruments referred to: Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), FAO , UNDRIP, Bonn Guidelines, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)

(i) *Convention on Biological Diversity*

34. A specific domain of traditional knowledge [relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity](#) is governed by [Article 8\(j\)](#) of the Convention on Biological Diversity, which requires that a Contracting Party shall:

Subject to its national legislation, respect, preserve and maintain knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and promote their wider application with the approval and involvement of the holders of such knowledge, innovations and practices and encourage the equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of such knowledge, innovations and practices;

**Comment [sb10]:**  
The exact text of this Article should be used when relevant eg. Part V(a)(i) Paragraph 51.

35. *The Bonn Guidelines on Access to Genetic Resources and Fair and Equitable Sharing of the Benefits Arising Out of Their Utilization* which are described [in the Executive Secretary's Introduction to the Guidelines](#) as 'not legally binding ... [but [were adopted unanimously by some 180 countries and have](#)] a clear and indisputable authority' provide for some protection of traditional knowledge in recommending that '[p]roviders should: ... Only supply genetic resources and/or traditional knowledge when they are entitled to do so' and that 'Contracting Parties with users of genetic resources under their jurisdiction ... could consider, inter alia... [m]easures to encourage the disclosure of the country ... of the origin of traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities in applications for intellectual property rights'

**Deleted:** ing

(ii) *FAO International Treaty*

36. Similarly dealing with a specific domain of traditional knowledge [relevant to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture](#), the FAO International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) provides that "each Contracting Party should, as appropriate, and subject to its national legislation, take measures to protect and promote Farmers' Rights, including: (a) protection of traditional knowledge relevant to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture...."

(iii) *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*

37. Traditional knowledge held by indigenous peoples as such is covered by the recently adopted United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,<sup>10</sup> which as a declaration may be considered a 'provision' or 'possibility' existing at the international level. The Declaration stipulates that:

**Deleted:** at

<sup>10</sup> WIPO/GRTKF/IC/12/INF/6 (February 15, 2008)

Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their ... traditional knowledge ... as well as the manifestations of their sciences, technologies and cultures, including human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora, oral traditions, literatures, designs, sports and traditional games and visual and performing arts. They also have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over such ... traditional knowledge...

It further provides that '[i]n conjunction with indigenous peoples, States shall take effective measures to recognize and protect the exercise of these rights.'

(iv) *UN Desertification Convention*

The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) provides that Parties shall protect, promote and use relevant traditional and local technology, know-how, and practices and, to that end, shall undertake to "make inventories of such technology, knowledge, know-how and practices and their potential uses with the participation of local populations, and disseminate such information, where appropriate, in cooperation with relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations" (Article 18.2(a)). It provides further that regional activities may include "preparing inventories of technologies, knowledge, know-how and practices, as well as traditional and local technologies and know-how, and promoting their dissemination and use" (Article 6(b)).

#### IV. GAPS EXISTING AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

*illustrating those gaps, to the extent possible, with specific examples;*

38. In considering the protection of TK at the international level, possible ‘gaps’ are considered at two levels:

- gaps in the *objectives* of protection expressed at the international level
- gaps in the international *legal mechanisms* that have been established to address such objectives

However, a preliminary consideration is the scope of the concept of ‘traditional knowledge’ that is the subject of gap analysis, and this is considered first.

##### (a) Gaps in the definition or identification of TK to be protected

39. The working assumptions upon which this gap analysis is based, drawing in turn on the Committee’s own extensive review of these questions, include the following distinctions:

(i) The distinction between:

- ‘traditional knowledge’ as a broad description of subject matter, generally the intellectual and intangible cultural heritage, practices and knowledge systems of traditional communities, including indigenous and local communities (TK in a general sense or *lato sensu*), and
- ‘tradition knowledge’ as the specific subject of rights and entitlements, with a more precise focus as the content and substance of knowledge as such (TK in a precise sense or *stricto sensu*), to be distinguished for example from traditional cultural expressions (TCEs)/expressions of folklore (just as the Committee has commissioned distinct but complementary gap analyses on TK in the precise sense and on TCEs)

(ii) The distinction between:

- what can be generally characterized as TK, and
- those elements of TK that are or should be especially subject to legal

**Comment [sb11]:**  
Should the word “protection” be here?

In line with the working assumptions above, the work of the Committee has applied these distinctions. Concerning the first distinction ((i) immediately above), the term “traditional knowledge” is used in the more precise sense as referring to

the content or substance of knowledge resulting from intellectual activity in a traditional context, and includes the know how, skills, innovations, practices and learning that form part of traditional knowledge systems, and knowledge embodying traditional lifestyles of indigenous and local communities, or contained in codified knowledge systems passed between generations. It is not limited to any specific technical field, and may include agricultural, environmental and medicinal knowledge, and knowledge associated with genetic resources.<sup>11</sup>

40. TK in this sense is broader than the more specific areas of knowledge (medicinal, biodiversity-related, or relating to plant genetic resources) identified in other areas of public international law and policy.

41. Concerning the second distinction ((ii) immediately above), the Committee has considered at length the principle that in order to be *protected* through specific legal mechanisms, TK may need to be:

(i) generated, preserved and transmitted in a traditional and intergenerational context;

(ii) distinctively associated with a traditional or indigenous community or people which preserves and transmits it between generations; and

(iii) integral to the cultural identity of an indigenous or traditional community or people which is recognized as holding the knowledge through a form of custodianship, guardianship, collective ownership or cultural responsibility. This relationship may be expressed formally or informally by customary or traditional practices, protocols or laws.<sup>12</sup>

42. This would mean that, to be eligible for protection, rather than being described in general terms as being ‘traditional knowledge,’ knowledge should be intergenerational in character, ~~have an objective link with the community of origin, and have a subjective association within that community, so that it forms part of the community’s own self-identity.~~

Deleted: to

Deleted: to

<sup>11</sup> Source: WIPO/GRTKF/IC/8/5

<sup>12</sup> Source: WIPO/GRTKF/IC/8/5

(b) Gaps in the objectives or policy rationales of protection:

43. Gaps in the policy objectives that have been expressed, though not universally accepted, at the international level include:

- Recognizing the intrinsic value of traditional knowledge systems, and their contribution to conservation of the environment, food security and sustainable agriculture, and the progress of science and technology;
- Recognizing that traditional knowledge systems are valuable forms of innovation
- Promoting respect for traditional knowledge systems and the cultural and spiritual values of the holders of traditional knowledge
- Respecting the rights of holders and custodians of traditional knowledge
- Promoting conservation and preservation of traditional knowledge
- Strengthening traditional knowledge systems, including supporting continuing the customary use, development, exchange and transmission of traditional knowledge;
- Supporting continuing innovation within traditional knowledge systems and encouraging innovation derived from the traditional knowledge base;
- Supporting the safeguarding and preservation of traditional knowledge;
- Repress misappropriation and unfair and inequitable uses of traditional knowledge, and promoting equitable benefit-sharing from traditional knowledge;
- Ensuring that access and use of traditional knowledge is subject to prior informed consent
- Promoting sustainable community development and legitimate trading activities based on traditional knowledge systems;
- Curtailing the grant or exercise of improper intellectual property rights over traditional knowledge

44. Several of these general objectives are addressed to some extent through existing international instruments, but these instruments only address a subset of the full range of traditional knowledge – for example, the CBD promotes respect for and preservation of TK relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, but doesn't expressly address other forms of TK such as codified medical knowledge systems. The FAO ITPGRFA recognizes “the enormous contribution that the local and indigenous communities and farmers ... have made and will continue to make for the conservation and development of plant genetic resources which constitute the basis of food and agriculture production throughout the world.”

45. By contrast, the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples recognizes the rights of indigenous peoples in particular (in contrast with other holders of traditional knowledge) to “maintain, control, protect and develop their ... traditional knowledge” and “to maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over such ... traditional knowledge”, with the range of TK referred to being far broader in scope than in other existing instruments.

**Comment [sb12]:**

It is important to clarify here that the Declaration does not create new rights under international law - it is a non-binding instrument designed to guide States in their relationship with Indigenous peoples.

(c) Gaps in the existing legal mechanisms

46. Intellectual property protection, in its precise legal sense, consists of defining the entitlement of the right holder to object to others' use of the protected material, or at least to derive an equitable benefit from its use, as well as rights to object to lack of acknowledgement or distortion (loss of integrity). In other words, protection consists in giving the right holder the authority to prevent unwanted forms of use or distribution of knowledge, or illicit access to it, or else an entitlement to receive equitable remuneration (including a compensatory liability regime). Intellectual property protection therefore concentrates on the rights to object to or to prevent a third party's way of using the protected material.

47. Therefore, gaps in protection of TK in specific legal mechanisms can be characterized in terms of:

**Comment [sb13]:**  
Minor editorial note - para 47 runs over 6 pages.

subject matter not covered under existing IP law;

beneficiaries or right holders not recognized;

**Deleted:** ¶

forms of use and other actions that cannot be prevented;

absence of entitlement to obtain remuneration or other benefits.

(i) *Subject matter not covered under existing IP law*

*TK that is not covered by existing forms of IP protection.*

Comment: A gap can clearly be identified for that traditional knowledge which is excluded from the conventional forms of IP that are identified in [Part III \(a\)](#) above. In some cases, such TK may be protected under existing national IP laws within the flexibilities provided under international IP law. But an indicative list of such unprotected knowledge would logically include:

**Deleted:** item A

- TK which is considered not novel, by virtue of having being disclosed to the public in a relevant manner;
- TK which is considered obvious, to [persons skilled in the relevant art, which may include](#) practitioners or holders of traditional knowledge, with reference to other knowledge already available to the relevant public;
- TK which has been publicly disclosed and otherwise doesn't meet the criteria for protection of confidential information, trade secrets, or undisclosed information

**Deleted:** , including obvious

**Deleted:** as persons skilled in the relevant art,



*Innovation that is cumulative and collective over generations within the one community*

Comment: A characteristic of traditional knowledge as defined for the purposes of this analysis is that it is developed and evolves over generations within the one community. Some elements of TK are developed by individuals within the community, and they may have specific entitlements within the community as well as responsibilities to that same community. But on the whole protection of TK relates to the protection of cumulative knowledge that is collectively held, unless it is considered undisclosed or confidential information.

Deleted: One defining

Such knowledge may be considered to be covered by the CBD (TK related to relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity) and the FAO (TK related to plant genetic resources), with an obligation to protect expressed in broad terms. These provisions don't

Comment [sb14]:  
This sentence is unfinished.

Gap: Protection does not extend to cumulative, collectively held and intergenerational traditional knowledge, unless it meets criteria for undisclosed or confidential information. Direct means do not exist to protect such traditional knowledge as an object of protection in itself.

Gap: Protection does not extend to an integrated traditional knowledge system as such, and at best existing protection may only extend to certain, isolated elements of knowledge within a TK system.

Example: A community has developed a range of useful applications for a medicinal plant, and has developed a systematic understanding of how that plant should be cultivated, harvested and then used (including in synergistic combination with other plant extracts) to treat a range of diseases. This system of knowledge is distinctively associated with that community and is maintained within the community through customary practices. International standards do not allow for this community to prevent others from taking and using elements of this knowledge for industrial and commercial use without any acknowledgement and without providing equitable benefits in return (apart from elements of that knowledge which are patented or comply with the criteria for undisclosed information).

(ii) *beneficiaries or right holders not recognized*

*Recognition of collective rights, interests and entitlements within a TK system*

Comment: Current legal mechanisms typically base the entitlement of IP rights on an individual or small group of individuals (such as a recognized inventor or inventors). To some extent, some forms of IP can recognize a collective entity as being entitled to exercise and benefit from rights over protected subject matter – for instance, geographical

indications, collective trademarks and protection of undisclosed information, when a collective entity, including a legally recognized indigenous or local community, may be owner or beneficiary. But in general, there are no systems of recognizing collective or community ownership, custodianship or other forms of authority or entitlement over their knowledge, or distinct elements of the knowledge.

This gap is addressed in part through the UNDRIP, which provides that “Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their ... traditional knowledge ... [and] ... the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over such ... traditional knowledge.” However, in view of its status as an international non-binding instrument, this is a general statement of rights, rather than a specific legal mechanism directly applicable to address this gap in practice.

Deleted: i

Gap: Recognition of the collective rights of an indigenous or local community as such as having rights, authority, custodianship or other entitlements over knowledge within a traditional knowledge system that is distinctively associated with them

Example: In the example above, the community concerned would not currently have, as a community, any collective right to take action against forms of misuse or misappropriation of their knowledge.

(iii) *forms of misuse and other illegitimate actions that cannot be prevented under existing law*

*An express norm against illegitimate patenting of TK*

Comment: It is not permissible under existing international patent law principles legitimately to obtain a patent on an invention when the applicant is not the actual inventor or has not obtained the right to apply directly from the actual inventor. In addition, the inventor is entitled to be mentioned on the patent document. It is also not possible to obtain a valid patent if the claimed invention is not novel or is obvious. But there is no express norm specifically articulated against illegitimate patenting of TK, even though such an express norm may be consistent with these international principles.

Deleted: such

Deleted: this is

Gap: There is no formal international expression that specifically identifies traditional knowledge as a subject matter for which patents should not be illegitimately obtained, as such, either when the traditional knowledge is not novel or would be obvious to a traditional knowledge practitioner as a person skilled in the art, or when the traditional knowledge is a valid invention but the traditional practitioner is not acknowledged as inventor and proper title has not been obtained from him or her.

Comment [sb15]:

Suggested amendments are to further clarify the situation given there are international principles preventing patenting of knowledge that is not novel or is obvious, when the applicant has not derived title from the true inventor, or the true inventor is not acknowledged.

Deleted: on traditional

Deleted: knowledge

e.g. A person obtains valuable traditional knowledge when visiting an indigenous community. He files two patent applications on this knowledge, citing

himself as inventor, without making any further significant improvements to it, and without informing the TK holder from whom he obtained the knowledge. One patent application is a genuinely patentable invention: in this case the applicant has no right to apply for a patent, as the true inventor is the original TK practitioner, and the applicant has not based the application on a legal title obtained from the true inventor. The other patent application claims TK which has been publicly disclosed: in that case, the patent would be also invalid for lack of novelty.

*A specific disclosure requirement relating to TK*

Comment: A number of countries have established specific defensive protection mechanisms relating to TK (as well as genetic resources, not covered in this gap analysis), in the form of enhanced disclosure requirements in their national patent laws. These require the patent applicant to disclose the source or origin of TK used in the claimed invention, and in some cases also to provide evidence of prior informed consent and conclusion of arrangements for equitable sharing of benefits. Such a requirement has not been established under international law, although a proposal has been made and supported by a number of countries to revise the TRIPS Agreement to introduce such a requirement, and several proposals for such a requirement have also been made in WIPO.

Gap: There is no specific international requirement for applicants for patents to disclose the source or origin of TK used in the claimed invention, and information on prior informed consent and equitable benefit sharing.

Deleted: A

Deleted: .

Deleted: as well as potentially

*Protection against unjust enrichment or misappropriation of TK*

Comment: There are different analyses of the full scope of the existing international standard in the Paris Convention requiring the suppression of unfair competition. The required scope of unfair actions to be suppressed under this standard is likely to cover at least some forms of misappropriation or misuse of TK, but equally is likely not to cover all such acts, including all commercial and industrial uses of TK that would be considered either contrary to honest commercial practices or contrary to equity.

Gap: There is no explicit international requirement to suppress unjust enrichment from or misappropriation of TK.

Deleted: An

Example: In the example above, this gap concerns the entitlement to object or to obtain remedies when a community's TK is used by a third party, for example to produce 'natural product' remedies, or medicines that are directly derived from that knowledge and directly use the known properties of the biological materials employed in that knowledge.

*Prior informed consent*

Comment: The CBD recognizes a right of prior informed consent over genetic resources, and the Bonn Guidelines suggests that this may apply also to TK associated with biodiversity. However, there is no explicit international norm expressly recognizing a right of prior informed consent over all traditional knowledge.

Gap: An express principle of free prior informed consent over TK held by a recognized indigenous or local community.

Example: An ethnobotanical researcher is undertaking a field research program concerning the traditional knowledge of a certain community. The researcher is under no obligation to seek the consent of the community before collecting the knowledge, which would then be freely available for her to share with others, and others to use it commercially or industrially.

*A right of acknowledgement and integrity*

Comment: A user of traditional knowledge is normally under no obligations to acknowledge the provider or source of the knowledge. Moreover, the user is under no obligation to treat the knowledge with respect, such as when certain uses cause cultural offence, or when the traditional knowledge is used in a way that impairs its authenticity or integrity.

Gap: right to object to the use of TK without explicit acknowledgement of the community which is the source of the knowledge.

Gap: right to object to the use of TK when the use creates cultural or spiritual offence, or otherwise impairs its integrity.

Example: traditional knowledge that is distinctive of a certain community is used in a commercial product by a third party; ~~there is no acknowledgement of the community as the source, developer or traditional custodian of the knowledge. Alternatively, such a product is presented and distributed in a way that disparages or offends the original community (the latter concern is partially covered by the Paris Convention, article 10bis).~~

Deleted:

(iv) *absence of entitlement to obtain remuneration or other benefits.*

Comment: By analogy with the right of equitable remuneration in some IP systems, and according to theories of 'compensatory liability' and the principle of equitable sharing of benefits, it has been proposed that holders of TK should be entitled to an equitable share of the benefits that others derive from the use of their knowledge, particularly when this use entail financial or commercial gain. (Yet the benefits need not be financial or

monetary in themselves, especially when this runs contrary to the values or express wishes of the community concerned).

Gap: A collective right to entitlement to equitable remuneration or other equitable benefit-sharing from the commercial use of TK or other derivation of benefits from TK

Example: The traditional medical knowledge of a certain community is used to develop a successful line of consumer medical products. Apart from other considerations (such as the right to be acknowledged), the community may be entitled to a share of the benefits from this commercial activity: this need not be in strictly financial terms (and the community may not welcome such monetization of their knowledge), but may be in terms of non-financial benefits such as involvement in research activities, culturally appropriate community level development, and sustainable harvesting of the materials used.

V. CONSIDERATIONS RELEVANT TO DETERMINING WHETHER THOSE GAPS NEED TO BE ADDRESSED

48. The considerations relevant to determining whether the gaps identified need to be addressed may be classed as:

- institutional/process-oriented considerations, and
- substantive considerations.

Institutional/process considerations include whether an existing international process is already addressing a particular gap, and what this means for further work addressing the same gap. An example is the question of enhanced disclosure requirements for TK in the patent system which are being considered in several forums. Apart from the discussion about the substantive issue, there is also a process-related debate about which should be the appropriate forum or forums for dealing with such a question.

49. By contrast, substantive considerations include considering whether there are compelling policy reasons for a particular gap to be addressed. For example, there may be a legal ‘gap’ in principle over the protection of TK against non-commercial private use, but this may not be seen as a policy priority, in contrast at least to profitable commercial uses of knowledge.

50. Further considerations may relate to determining not whether but how a gap may be filled – for instance, whether binding international law, political encouragement or a model law may best fill an identified gap. These are discussed largely in the final section of this gap analysis.

(a) Substantive considerations

*(i) International law and policy*

51. The emerging framework of international law and policy touching on TK may create an expectation that standards of intellectual property protection may need to be adjusted to address perceived gaps. In other words, shifts and outcomes in international public law may be seen as a ‘consideration’ relevant to determining whether gaps should be filled – a legal or political outcome in a related area may potentially be viewed as highlighting a gap at the level of detail in the system of IP law. Relevant developments – which cover both binding international law and other policy guidance, such as declarations - include:

- The conclusion and entry into legal force of the CBD article 8(j), which provides for respect, preservation and maintenance of biodiversity-related traditional knowledge;
- The adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which articulates a wide range of rights with direct bearing both on traditional knowledge as such, and IP related to TK;
- The conclusion and entry into legal force of the FAO ITPGRFA which requires protection of traditional knowledge relevant to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture;
- The increasing recognition of traditional knowledge as a vital policy consideration for public health policy (notably in the report of the World Health Organization Commission on Intellectual Property Rights, Innovation and Public Health and the Global strategy on public health, innovation and intellectual property adopted by the World Health Assembly in May 2008)
- The UNCCD provides obligations to protect, promote and use relevant traditional and local technology, know-how, and practices.
- Given the linkages between TK and TCEs, the development of stronger legal and policy outcomes concerning the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage and the promotion of cultural diversity may have bearing on TK protection (although these areas of policy are more directly relevant to TCE protection as such – accordingly, the gap analysis on TCE protection should be referred to concerning this policy domain).

**Comment [sb16]:**  
It is important to use the actual language of CBD Article 8(j).

**Deleted:** recognition,

**Deleted:** promotion and protection

**Comment [sb17]:**  
Again it is important to further explain here that the Declaration does not create new rights for Indigenous peoples given its non-binding nature.

**Deleted:** global

52. Within WIPO, two particular considerations may be viewed as relevant to the filling of some of the gaps identified in this process:

- In the context of the WIPO Development Agenda, under consideration by the Committee on Development and Intellectual Property (CDIP) (see, e.g., document CDIP/1/3), proposal 18 is as follows:

To urge the IGC to accelerate the process on the protection of genetic resources, traditional knowledge and folklore, without prejudice to any outcome, including the possible development of an international instrument or instruments.

- The WIPO General Assembly, meeting in September 2007, also decided, in renewing the mandate of the Committee, that “its new work will focus, in particular, on a consideration of the international dimension of those questions, without prejudice to the work pursued in other fora ... no outcome of its work is excluded, including the possible development of an international instrument or instruments” and the IGC was urged “to accelerate its work”.

(ii) *Social, cultural, political and economic considerations*

53. Social, cultural, political and economic considerations that may be viewed as potentially relevant include:

- The emphasis laid by many community representatives and many governments on claims of the inequities arising from misappropriation and misuse of TK
- The role of TK in sustainable, grass roots development
- The linkages between protection of TK and the continuing cultural and social identity of indigenous and local communities
- The increasing uptake of TK in a host of industrial and commercial applications
- The value and practical application of TK [relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity](#) in dealing with environmental change and climate change
- The increasing use of TK in a range of regulatory contexts, such as in making environmental impacts and assessing the safety and efficacy of medicines

(iii) *Significance of TK protection for broader policymaking and regulatory contexts*

54. As evidenced by the range of legal and policy outcomes listed above in section (i), TK is increasingly referred to and actively used in many policymaking contexts; these include:

- Protection of biodiversity, and equitable use of its benefits;
- Recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples;
- Promoting food security and promoting diversity of food crops;
- Ensuring culturally appropriate access to health;
- Sustainable grass roots development;
- Climate change abatement and mitigation;
- The increasing overlap between traditional knowledge as such and formal disciplines of biotechnology;



- The contribution of traditional knowledge systems to innovation and cultural diversity.

(b) Process or formal considerations

*(i) Specific process or formal considerations*

55. Apart from these broader policy questions, there are more specific considerations that may be viewed as relevant to addressing identified gaps; these include:

- The fact that many national or regional processes are already developing stronger protection of TK, suggesting that development on an international dimension may provide a common platform for otherwise diverse national or regional TK protection systems;
- The possible systemic implications from lack of clarity in the international law of IP in areas where it is relevant to TK and traditional knowledge and innovation systems;
- The possible gains from a reduction in legal uncertainty associated with concerns about possible ownership or custodial responsibilities relating to TK;
- The costs and benefits arising from a common international approach towards TK protection issues.

*(ii) Considerations specifically weighing against addressing gaps*

56. The Committee's work has also seen suggestions of particular considerations that might weigh against addressing the gaps identified; these include:

- The possibility that it is premature to fill certain gaps at international level, even when gaps are clearly identified, in view of the need for more national experience to be developed and shared as a precondition for clearer international outcomes;
- The diversity of TK and the communities holding TK, which may set limits to the international dimension of norm-setting
- Uncertainty over rights and entitlements of foreign right holders, such as TK holding communities in dramatically different cultural and social contexts;
- The possible need for stronger, more diverse consultative processes before moving towards high profile political and legal outcomes that would be difficult and costly to revisit once concluded.

**Comment [sb18]:**  
It is suggested that this sentence is clearer after deletion of the text "there may be difficulties, impediments or other obstacles if there is no" as it is not clear what subject the difficulties are acting on and it has not been shown what the difficulties are.  
The term "may" has been retained from the deleted text.

**Deleted:** there may be difficulties, impediments or other obstacles if there is no

**Deleted:** to

**Comment [sb19]:**  
It may be relevant to state here that diverse protection systems may be appropriate for diverse circumstances.

**Comment [sb20]:**  
This does not appear to be a specific process or formal consideration.

VI. OPTIONS THAT EXIST OR MIGHT BE DEVELOPED TO ADDRESS ANY IDENTIFIED GAPS

*legal and other options, whether at the international, regional or national level;*

57. At the international level, document WIPO/GRTKF/IC/12/6 and the preceding documents in that series identified the options as including:
- (i) a binding international instrument or instruments;
  - (ii) authoritative or persuasive interpretations or elaborations of existing legal instruments;
  - (iii) a non-binding normative international instrument or instruments;
  - (iv) a high level political resolution, declaration or decision, such as an international political declaration espousing core principles, stating a norm against misappropriation and misuse, and establishing the needs and expectations of TCE/TK holders as a political priority.
  - (v) strengthened international coordination through guidelines or model laws
  - (vi) coordination of national legislative developments.
  - (vii) Coordination and cooperation on capacity building and practical initiatives.

These are discussed in turn below.

(a) Legal and other options at the international level:

*(i) A binding international instrument or instruments*

58. A binding instrument addressing any specific gaps in protection would oblige Contracting Parties to apply the prescribed standards in their national law, as an obligation under international law. Possible vehicles include stand-alone legal instruments, protocols to existing instruments or special agreements under existing agreements. Past WIPO treaties have become binding under international law through the choice of the parties concerned to adhere to the treaties; other states are not bound by the treaty as such (in some cases, they have chosen to apply the standards created by a treaty without formally adhering to it as a matter of law, for instance in the field of industrial property classifications). A distinct treaty-making process would be required (typically, a diplomatic conference) to negotiate such an instrument. The treaty would become binding only on those countries which elect to adhere to them through a distinct act of ratification or accession.

59. Binding instruments must be properly developed as they have the character of framework or policymaking conventions, providing a basis or policy platform for further normative development and for greater convergence and transparency of national policy initiatives. Specific international legal mechanisms with more precise obligations may then be negotiated as protocols under the original framework agreement.

**Deleted:** may

**Comment [sb21]:**

It may be relevant to state here that diverse protection systems may be appropriate for diverse circumstances.

IGC context: Many delegations have called for the development of international binding instrument or instruments as the ultimate outcome of the Committee's work, and an outline for such an instrument has been tabled by a regional group (WIPO/GRTKF/IC/6/12). The Committee and the WIPO General Assembly do not themselves have the capacity to create binding international law, and a distinct process would be necessary both to conclude such a text and for such a text to enter into force with legal effect on those countries which adhere to it.

Examples in related fields: Convention on Biological Diversity, Convention on the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, FAO International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, ILO Convention 169, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

Examples in intellectual property: Singapore Trademark Law Treaty, Patent Law Treaty, WIPO Copyright Treaty, WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty.

(ii) *interpretations or elaborations of existing legal instruments*

60. Authoritative or persuasive interpretations of existing legal instruments may require, guide or encourage the interpretation of existing obligations to fulfil in part any identified gaps in protection of TK. Options range from a legal protocol to an existing treaty to a non-binding persuasive statement. This option may create binding law but need not be binding in itself. It may nonetheless be influential in interpreting treaty standards and in giving practical guidance to domestic policymakers on the basis of agreed international standards. It may give more precise guidance on how to implement international standards, without creating distinct obligations. Without reflecting on the precise legal status of this text, it may be noted that, among other things, the Doha Declaration on TRIPS and Public Health includes guidance on how the TRIPS Agreement should be interpreted.<sup>13</sup>

IGC context: The Committee has considered the possibility of interpreting or adapting existing international general rules against unfair competition explicitly to include acts of misappropriation, which may be done through a form interpretation or extension of the Paris Convention Article 10*bis* by analogy.

Examples in related fields: General Comment No. 17 (2005) The right of everyone to

<sup>13</sup> Paragraph 5(a): In applying the customary rules of interpretation of public international law, each provision of the TRIPS Agreement shall be read in the light of the object and purpose of the Agreement as expressed, in particular, in its objectives and principles.

benefit from the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he or she is the author (article 15, paragraph 1 (c), of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights).

Examples in intellectual property: Joint Recommendation Concerning Provisions on the Protection of Well-Known Marks; Agreed statements of the Diplomatic Conference that adopted the Treaty (WIPO Diplomatic Conference on Certain Copyright and Neighboring Rights Questions).

(iii) *A non-binding normative international instrument*

61. A non-binding (“soft-law”) instrument could recommend or encourage States to give effect to certain standards in their national laws and in other administrative and non-legal processes and policies, or could simply provide a framework for coordination among those States which chose to follow the agreed approach. Options could include an authoritative recommendation or a soft-law instrument. Other international organizations have developed such instruments in areas of relevance to the work of the Committee, listed below. Several of such instruments were subsequently developed into binding instruments. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was drafted as a non-binding instrument. The concept of a non-binding or soft-law instrument may overlap with political declarations and other forms of political commitment. There is considerable overlap between a non-binding instrument and related outcomes such as model laws and provisions.

**Comment [sb22]:**

This overlap may require further analysis. Are there relevant political instruments to be considered? – such as the examples in the analyses in III above.

IGC context: As noted, no instrument emerging from the Committee or adopted by the General Assembly could have binding legal effect in itself. The Committee has done extensive work on objectives and principles of protection of TK, on options and mechanisms for protection of TK, on guidelines for examination of TK-related patents, and on guidelines for IP aspects of access and benefit sharing, material which may in some form be forwarded to the WIPO General Assembly and other WIPO bodies for adoption or recognition as non-binding guidance and as the basis for further normative development.

Examples in related fields: Universal Declaration of Human Rights, UNESCO Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights, FAO International Code of Conduct for Plant Germplasm Collecting and Transfer, Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, UNESCO declarations on bioethics and cultural diversity; FAO International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources and resolutions on issues such as farmers’ rights; Decisions of the Conference of Parties of the CBD, including the Bonn Guidelines.

Examples in intellectual property: Mataatua Declaration on Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights of Indigenous Peoples, WIPO-UNESCO Model Provisions for National Laws on the Protection of Expressions of Folklore against Illicit Exploitation and other Prejudicial Actions.

(iv) *high level political resolution, declaration or decision*

62. One option, discussed in earlier documents, would be a high-level resolution, declaration or joint declaration by relevant WIPO assemblies. The themes of such a declaration might reflect current work on objectives and principles and it may in part address the gaps identified in this analysis or in other work by the Committee; for instance, it could recognize the value and significance of TK; stress the need to empower their traditional holders or custodians to defend their interests regarding TK and to use them as the basis for sustainable cultural and economic development; establish core objectives and principles for protection; call on Member States actively to apply these objectives and principles as they work towards enhanced national and international protection; and establish goals for future work including more specific instrument or instruments. Such an approach need not preclude nor retard subsequent development of binding international law, and in some cases such outcomes have been used as the basis for negotiations on binding instruments (one example is the development of the FAO International Treaty from the past non-binding International Undertaking). Past WIPO joint recommendations have been widely applied and followed, for instance in the field of trade marks, and have been recognized and given effect in other legal instruments.

IGC context: The possibility of such an outcome has been raised in general discussion in the Committee. Options include a recommendation for a decision to be taken by the WIPO General Assembly (possibly jointly with other WIPO bodies) that would make a high level political statement, acknowledging the progress made to date, and would set the agenda for WIPO's future work in these fields.

Examples in related fields: Declaration of Alma-Ata International Conference on Primary Health Care; FAO International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.

Examples in intellectual property: United Nations General Assembly Resolution 60/184 on International trade and development; Resolution 2000/7 of the Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights on intellectual property rights and human rights; Joint Recommendation Concerning Trademark Licenses; Mataatua Declaration on Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

(v) *Strengthened coordination through guidelines or model laws*

63. Model laws or guidelines have in the past been used to express a shared international approach, to assist in the coordination of national laws and policy development, and in particular to address gaps such as those identified in this analysis, without the adoption of a specific international instrument. This can provide the basis for cooperation, convergence and mutual compatibility of national legislative initiatives for the protection of TK, and can also lay the groundwork for more formal international instruments. In practice, it may be difficult to distinguish between model laws or guidelines and the kind of soft-law norms discussed above. Several guidelines, frameworks and model laws already exist in areas of direct relevance to the work of the Committee.

**Comment [sb23]:**

Again, it may be relevant to state here that diverse protection systems may be appropriate for diverse circumstances.

64. A number of other influential international instruments on the protection of TK have been prepared as non-binding instruments with potential capacity to determine the legal obligations established under national laws (these include the African Model Legislation for the Protection of the Rights of Local Communities, Farmers and Breeders, and for the Regulation of Access to Biological Resources, established in 2000, and the Pacific Regional Framework for the Protection of Traditional Knowledge and Expressions of Culture of 2002). These models have in turn contributed to the discussion and review of protection within the Committee and therefore to the development of the draft objectives and principles currently under consideration. In the past, it has been noted that “while this is very plainly a matter for Committee members to consider and determine, experience in other domains suggests the possibility of a phased approach, in which one mechanism for framing international standards and for promoting the desired approach to protection in national standards leads in turn to further elaborated or revised mechanisms, with increasing expectation of compliance and increasing legal effect.”

**Comment [sb24]:**

The overlap referred to in VI(a)(iii) may also be relevant to this type of option.

IGC context: The objectives and principles for protection of TK, developed on the basis of the Committee’s work and with its direction, have already been used widely as benchmarks for protection at the level of regional instruments, international processes and national legislation and policy processes. While not adopted or agreed in their current form, they may provide content for any guidelines or model laws. The Committee earlier declined a proposal to prepare model provisions for patent disclosure mechanisms relating to genetic resources and TK. The Committee has agreed upon principles for the development of guidelines for IP aspects of access and equitable benefit sharing from genetic resources, and has reviewed successive drafts of the guidelines. The Committee has reviewed successive drafts of guidelines for examination of TK-related patents.

Examples in related fields: *Akwe: Kon* voluntary guidelines for the conduct of cultural, environmental and social impact assessment, Bonn Guidelines on Access to Genetic Resources and Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising out of their Utilization; African Model Legislation for the Protection of the Rights of Local Communities,

Farmers and Breeders, and for the Regulation of Access to Biological Resources; FAO International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides; UNIDO Code of Conduct for Environmental Release of GMOs.

Examples in intellectual property: Tunis Model Law, WIPO-UNESCO Model Provisions for National Laws on the Protection of Expressions of Folklore against Illicit Exploitation and other Prejudicial Actions, Pacific Regional Framework for the Protection of Traditional Knowledge and Expressions of Culture; OECD Guidelines for the Licensing of Genetic Inventions.

(vi) *Coordination of national legislative developments*

65. Many countries are currently engaged in the development of new laws and policies in the protection of TK (in some cases also addressing TCEs/folklore). Those doing so have expressed strong interest in learning from other governments and regional bodies concerning their choices, and experiences in implementing such measures. This is to ensure the application of “best practice” but also to promote consistency and comity between national laws, given the need for different national legal systems to interact appropriately. One effect of even draft international materials may be to encourage and support such coordination of national and regional initiatives, where this is desired by the governments concerned. Informal feedback and an increased level of requests for capacity-building support and input has suggested that many governments have chosen to move forward as a priority on developing national protection for TK, but that they are concerned to ensure a consistent approach in which governments can share experiences in a structured way, ensure reasonable consistency, and avoid conflicting approaches. Some form of non-binding instrument may be a means to assist in this process. While drawing essentially on domestic laws, even distillations of national legislation and related texts can have a “soft-law” influence at the international dimension, by promoting coherence and compatibility between national laws, and strengthening the common basis for collective protection at the international level.

**Comment [sb25]:**

It may be relevant to state here that diverse protection systems may be appropriate for diverse circumstances.

**Deleted:** on

**Comment [sb26]:**

It is noted that this type of option is discussed under VI(a)(iii), and it may be helpful to analyse the overlap and interaction between the types of options.

IGC context: The objectives and principles for protection of TK to a large extent represent a distillation of actual practice of Member States legislating to protect aspects of TK through IP and IP-related mechanisms – the documents provide extensive references explaining the sources in Member States’ laws. Extensive analyses of how Member States have implemented these principles and objectives are provided in WIPO/GRTKF/IC/9/INF/5 (protection of traditional knowledge). Other resources developed for the Committee include a Comparative Summary of *Sui Generis* Legislation for the Protection of Traditional Cultural Expressions (WIPO/GRTKF/IC/5/INF/3); a Comparative Summary of Existing National *Sui Generis* Measures and Laws for the Protection of Traditional Knowledge (WIPO/GRTKF/IC/5/INF/4); a first study prepared for the CBD on patent disclosure mechanisms relating to genetic resources and TK, based

**Comment [sb27]:**

It would be useful to identify which of the objectives and principles are sourced from which Member States’ laws, and those that are not sourced from such laws.

on an extensive survey of Member State practice; and questionnaires on protection of folklore/TCEs and TK.

Examples in related fields: National Reports under the CBD (<http://www.biodiv.org/reports/list.aspx>); Ethics Related Legislation and Guidelines, Global Ethics Observatory, UNESCO.

Examples in intellectual property: Survey of practices regarding biotechnological inventions (WIPO/GRTKF/IC/1/6).

(vii) *Coordination and cooperation on capacity building and practical initiatives.*

66. The gap analysis is required to cover 'legal and other options'. Since the effective protection of TK would require a range of capacity building and practical measures to implement or supplement legal measures, a full gap analysis may need to address the need, if any exists, for international steps to coordinate, cooperate and practically deliver such capacity building and practical measures. A WIPO Round Table convened in December 2007 reviewed the capacity building needs of communities and appropriate strategies to meet them. Possible capacity and practical measures could be considered within the following categories:

*Capacity building and substantive materials for legal and policy processes*

67. Work has proceeded on developing materials to support policymakers, negotiators and legislators seeking to deal with the identified gaps, including:

- Resources for legislation and policy development, including model provisions, databases of laws and policy instruments, and analysis of policy options and legal mechanisms, to support and assist policymaking and legislative processes
- Analysis of legal questions such as IP law and practice with bearing on TK protection, and the recognition of customary law, to provide background information for legislators and policymakers
- Review of possible approaches to appropriate community consultation when developing options, policies and legislation,

**Comment [sb28]:**  
It would be very useful if this list of legal questions was elaborated and expanded.

**Deleted:** and  
**Deleted:** ve development

*Strengthening practical capacity of TK holders*

68. In line with the general observation that no legal instrument and no set of legal norms, whether existing or envisaged, will be effective in meeting the needs of TK holders unless the necessary capacity and resources are made available to those TK



holders in order to ensure the principles are carried out in practice, work has proceeded on developing materials to support TK holders, including:

- Models and databases of community protocols, licenses and agreements for access to TK, to strengthen the capacity of TK holders to develop protocols, licenses or other agreements governing access to their TK
- Support for communities in identifying and promoting their interests during the documentation of TK, including in the form of the TK documentation toolkit project
- Models, databases and guidelines on equitable benefit sharing for access to TK and associated genetic resources
- Awareness raising materials, case studies and legal analysis on issues such as recognition of customary law tailored to the needs of communities holding TK

#### *Building and guiding institutions*

69. Since national, scientific and educational institutions and other authorities such as patent offices are frequently called upon to play an active role in ensuring that practical gaps in the protection of TK in the interests of TK holders [are addressed](#), work has proceeded in developing practical materials for such institutions and authorities, such as:

- Model protocols, recommended policies and best practice guidelines for institutions with responsibility for collecting or maintaining collections of TK, such as museums, ethnographic institutions, national authorities and research and educational institutions.
- Guidelines and recommendations for the examination of TK-related patents
- Guidance on measures to ensure that communities can identify and promote their interests during the documentation of TK, including in the form of the TK documentation toolkit project
- Standards for documenting TK, including measures to ensure the identity and requirements of the TK holder are documented together with the TK itself
- Studies on policy and legal questions such as patent disclosure mechanisms and bioethics standards with bearing on TK

#### *Interagency cooperation and coordination within UN system*

70. Coordination and cooperation on capacity building and practical initiatives at the international level would include the kind of interagency cooperation, coordination and exchange of technical information and other materials that has been undertaken by WIPO in cooperation with other international agencies, such as the CBD, the FAO, South Centre, UNCTAD, UNEP, UNESCO and the WHO, as well as with NGOs and other international actors dealing with TK and related issues.

*Awareness and capacity-building for the general public*

71. One clear gap is the substantial lack of awareness and understanding of TK, TK systems, and their cultural and intellectual context on the part of the general public and international policymakers, business representatives, and civil society organizations.

Filling this gap would entail initiatives such as:

- Case studies, analyses and briefings
- Fact-finding missions and consultations
- Educational and training activities
- Surveys of national experiences,
- Overviews of legal and policy options

(b) Legal and other options at the regional level:

**Comment [sb29]:**

Regional measures must play a role, and this section would benefit from more analysis.

72. Some measures to fill identified gaps may be especially appropriate to the regional or subregional context, reflecting the benefits of building common norms, institutions and practical measures that reflect shared or overlapping legal cultures and traditional knowledge systems. In addition, a number of regional organizations already play active roles both in developing new legal instruments and in undertaking practical capacity building work to strengthen the protection of TK. Many of the international measures identified above would apply equally well to the regional level. Several examples are cited in the above review of international measures. The general categories of possible measures include:

- Legal instruments concluded at the regional, subregional or bilateral level, including *sui generis* instruments and conventional IP law
- Political or policy-level declarations proclaimed at the regional, subregional or bilateral level
- Model laws and other forms of legislative guidance adopted at the regional level
- Model protocols, guidelines and best practice recommendations adopted at the regional or subregional levels
- Regional, subregional and bilateral initiatives and programs to support community capacity building relating to TK

(c) Legal and other options at the national level:

**Comment [sb30]:**

National measures must play a role, and this section would benefit from more analysis.

73. Many States, and communities within those States, have undertaken specific initiatives to develop and implement legal and other options in order to address gaps in

the legal protection of TK. A full survey is not attempted in the present gap analysis. However, briefly, these include:

- Legislation to protect TK, including *sui generis* instruments and adaptations or revisions of conventional IP law
- Policy frameworks and administrative mechanisms to promote and protect TK, including within specific domains such as medicine and public health, the environment, and agriculture
- Model protocols, guidelines and best practice recommendations adopted either by national authorities or other institutions
- National initiatives and programs to support community capacity building relating to TK

Full details of these options are set out, for example, in document WIPO/GRTKF/IC/9/INF/5

[Annex follows]

## ANNEX (*Submission from Australia*)

### GAP ANALYSIS MATRIX

This matrix corresponds to the items mentioned in sub-paragraphs (a) to (d) of the decision of the twelfth session of the WIPO Intergovernmental Committee, as required by that decision. Following a summary table, the full matrix includes the material covered in the gap analysis above.

### CONTENTS OF ANNEX

#### SUMMARY OF MATRIX

- A. EXISTING MEASURES
- B. GAPS EXISTING AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL
- C. CONSIDERATIONS RELEVANT TO DETERMINING WHETHER THOSE GAPS NEED TO BE ADDRESSED
- D. OPTIONS THAT EXIST OR MIGHT BE DEVELOPED TO ADDRESS ANY IDENTIFIED GAPS:

I. SUMMARY OF MATRIX

Aspects of protecting TK	(a) existing measures	(b) gaps identified	(c) and (d) considerations and options
Objectives and principles of IP protection applied to TK	Existing public international law (non-IP) instruments on indigenous peoples' rights, the environment (including biodiversity and genetic resources), agriculture.	Authoritative statement on the role of IP law and policy in addressing public policy issues relating to TK	<p>International treaty or declaration establishing framework for TK protection in IP system that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- expresses objectives of protection</li> <li>- articulates general principles of protection</li> </ul> <p>Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- role of hard law and soft law instruments</li> <li>- political as against legal aspects of issues</li> <li>- coordinated international approach as against autonomous national initiatives</li> <li>- benefit of firmer policy basis and general settled principles for further work on legal protection</li> </ul>
Definition of protectable TK	TK covered in existing non-IP legal instruments without precise legal definition  Working definition in IGC	Working definition of TK: - in general - as precise object of legal protection	Binding legal definition of TK - legal certainty and clarity, but may not capture full diversity of TK and knowledge systems, and TK holding communities - linked to question of scope of protection and scope of beneficiaries Agreed international characterization of TK, without binding legal force - higher level of clarity, firmer basis for work - not prejudging deeper legal and policy questions

**Comment [sb31]:**  
Generally, it would be useful if all the entries in this Summary table were as clear as that for "Undisclosed TK" on the following page. For that entry, there is a clear correlation of the topics (i) to (iii) across the row. Also, it is not clear for some entries that separate options are being discussed within the same row (eg. "Defensive patent protection").

**Comment [sb32]:** It is not certain that all the relevant content of the analysis has been included in this summary.

**Comment [sb33]:**  
The analysis also identifies other options (such as those described in Part VI(a)(ii) and (iv) to (vii) and these must also be addressed in the Matrix.

Aspects of protecting TK	(a) existing measures	(b) gaps identified	(c) and (d) considerations and options
Positive patent protection	Established patent system, including standards and procedures in TRIPS and PCT	No protection for: (i) Collective, cumulative and intergenerational innovation (ii) TK systems as such <u>unless it is part of a claimed invention and has satisfied existing requirements for patentability</u>	Review or adapt patentability criteria and standards to recognize TK systems and collective interests: - internationally for coordinated approach <u>And/or</u> - nationally/regionally for maximum flexibility  Establish <i>sui generis</i> protection (see below)
Defensive patent protection	Specific PCT, IPC, IGC measures to recognize TK	No agreed international norm for specific disclosure mechanism for TK and associated genetic resources - several proposals (CBD, WTO, WIPO)	Introduce disclosure mechanisms for TK - internationally for coordinated approach <u>And/or</u> - nationally/regionally for maximum flexibility  Strengthen framework of contractual obligations governing access to TK under national law to require disclosure and other conditions of access to TK
Undisclosed TK	TRIPS standards on the protection of undisclosed information in general	No explicit standards on: (i) TK disclosed within a defined community (ii) TK that community values culturally/	Clarify or adapt existing standards to ensure: (i) Restricted dissemination within a defined community does not amount to full public disclosure (ii) Protected even if source community values for

		spiritually not commercially (iii) Disclosure of TK constrained by customary law	non-commercial reasons (iii) Constraints of customary law and practices deemed to be sufficient to preserve confidentiality/ 'secret' quality
<b>Aspects of protecting TK</b>	<b>(a) existing measures</b>	<b>(b) gaps identified</b>	<b>(c) and (d) considerations and options</b>
TK-related signs and symbols	Law of trademarks (including collective and certification marks) and geographical indications	Defensive protection of TK-related signs and symbols against third party appropriation	Special registers of TK-related material Strengthened measures against TM registration contrary to morality (see TCE gap analysis)
TK subject matter covered by conventional IP system	Some TK or elements of TK are potentially covered: - <i>directly</i> by patents, undisclosed information, unfair competition law and - <i>indirectly</i> by copyright and related rights, TCE protection, TM and GI protection, design protection and unfair competition law.	TK not covered by existing IP protection, e.g.: - non-novel TK; - not patentably inventive TK; - publicly disclosed TK or TK otherwise ineligible for trade secret/confidentiality	<i>Sui generis</i> protection of subject matter not already covered: - internationally for coordinated approach - nationally/regionally for maximum flexibility  Adaptation of existing IP measures, e.g. - interpretation or adaptation of existing international standards to address TK subject matter more appropriately - national legislative and administrative initiatives (and judicial evolution of law) to recognize distinct TK systems within IP system

<b>Aspects of protecting TK</b>	<b>(a) existing measures</b>	<b>(b) gaps identified</b>	<b>(c) and (d) considerations and options</b>
Rights and interests of communities in their cumulative, collectively held and intergenerational TK, and their integrated traditional knowledge systems as such	Limited protection, mostly as confidential information	<p>Direct recognition of collective rights and interests in cumulative, collectively held and intergenerational TK</p> <p>Protection of the integrity of traditional knowledge systems as such.</p>	<p>Specific protection of collective rights and interests in traditional knowledge as such (rather than separately IP-protectable elements):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- internationally for coordinated approach</li> <li>- nationally/regionally for maximum flexibility</li> </ul> <p>Specific protection of rights and interests of communities in traditional knowledge systems as such :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- internationally for coordinated approach</li> <li>- nationally/regionally for maximum flexibility</li> </ul>
Specific mechanisms of TK protection against certain prejudicial acts and acts of misappropriation	<p>None in conventional IP law.</p> <p>May be protected in part through contract and broader doctrine of unfair competition and unjust enrichment.</p>	See detailed elements below	



<b>Aspects of protecting TK</b>	<b>(a) existing measures</b>	<b>(b) gaps identified</b>	<b>(c) and (d) considerations and options</b>
		<p>Norm against unjust enrichment, misappropriation, or acts contrary to honest commercial behaviour regarding TK</p>	<p>Specific norm articulated at international level to promote coordinated approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- binding law if timely for precise international norm</li> <li>- political declaration if legal essence of norm is still being formulated</li> </ul> <p>Specific norm articulated nationally/regionally for maximum flexibility and legal evolution and diversity.</p>

<b>Aspects of protecting TK</b>	<b>(a) existing measures</b>	<b>(b) gaps identified</b>	<b>(c) and (d) considerations and options</b>
		<p>Explicit statement of the principle of prior informed consent over TK held by a community</p>	<p>Specific norm articulated at international level to promote coordinated approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- binding law if timely for precise international norm</li> <li>- political declaration if legal essence of norm is still being formulated</li> </ul> <p>Specific norm articulated nationally/regionally for maximum flexibility and legal evolution and diversity.</p>

Aspects of protecting TK	(a) existing measures	(b) gaps identified	(c) and (d) considerations and options
		<p>Norm requiring explicit acknowledgement of source community <u>when using</u> TK distinctively associated with a community.</p>	<p>Specific norm articulated at international level to promote coordinated approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- binding law if timely for precise international norm</li> <li>- political declaration if legal essence of norm is still being formulated</li> </ul> <p>Specific norm articulated nationally/regionally for maximum flexibility and legal evolution and diversity.</p>
		<p>Norm against use that creates cultural or spiritual offence, or impairs integrity of TK</p>	<p>Specific norm articulated at international level to promote coordinated approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- binding law if timely for precise international norm</li> <li>- political declaration if legal essence of norm is still being formulated</li> </ul> <p>Specific norm articulated nationally/regionally for maximum flexibility and legal evolution and diversity.</p>

Deleted: in use of

Aspects of protecting TK	(a) existing measures	(b) gaps identified	(c) and (d) considerations and options
<p>Illegitimate patenting of TK</p>	<p>Existing patent law requires application based on true inventor(s) and genuine invention</p> <p>Paris Convention requires express mention of true inventor</p>	<p><u>- Possible ambiguity in patent system for determining the inventive contribution of TK holder.</u></p> <p>Explicit norm against:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- patenting of traditional knowledge as such without consent and involvement of TK holder</li> <li>- patenting of invention made possible by the misappropriation of traditional knowledge</li> </ul>	<p>At international level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Internationally binding norm</li> <li>- Authoritative interpretation of existing norms</li> <li>- Political declaration</li> </ul> <p>At national level:</p> <p>Specific amendments to national patent law</p>
	<p>Specific disclosure requirements for TK:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- national/regional laws</li> <li>- proposals in CBD, WTO, WIPO</li> </ul>	<p>Prior informed consent over TK</p>	<p>At international level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Internationally binding norm</li> <li>- Authoritative interpretation or extension of existing norms</li> <li>- Political declaration</li> </ul> <p>At national level:</p> <p>Specific amendments to national patent law</p>

Deleted: A



A: EXISTING MEASURES

*Obligations, provisions and possibilities that already exist at the international level to provide protection for TK*

Form of protection	Extent of coverage	Factors considered
Positive patent protection of TK	<p>Some elements of TK potentially protected under existing patent principles, but not TK systems as such.</p> <p>Title needs to be obtained from true inventor(s), including TK holder(s)</p> <p>Valid protection requires active steps on part of true holders of patentable TK.</p>	<p>Considerable flexibility exists in international standards relevant to patentability of TK, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- defining ‘invention’</li> <li>- interpretation of criteria for protection (novelty, inventiveness, utility) when applied to TK</li> <li>- public policy exclusions of patentable subject matter</li> </ul>
Defensive protection of TK within the patent system	<p>Much TK is protected in principle from illegitimate assertion of patents, e.g. when patent applicant seeks rights over TK developed by others</p> <p>Specific measures include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- improving access to TK as prior art during patent procedures without facilitating misappropriation of TK (e.g. including TK in PCT minimum documentation, TK documentation standards, IPC coverage of TK)</li> <li>- guidelines for examination of TK-related patents</li> <li>- portals, gateways and appropriate databases of TK and related genetic resources for use in patent procedures</li> </ul>	<p>Concerns over making available TK for patent procedures may trigger unwanted misappropriation by third parties.</p>

	<p>Specific patent disclosure mechanisms for TK and related GR, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- disclosure of source or origin of TK</li> <li>- disclosure of prior informed consent</li> <li>- disclosure of equitable sharing of benefits</li> </ul>	<p>Considerable international discussion and analysis of specific disclosure requirements for TK</p> <p><a href="#">Patent disclosure requirements have not been shown to prevent misappropriation</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CBD Bonn Guidelines</li> <li>- proposals for new requirements in WTO, WIPO</li> </ul>
Undisclosed TK	<p>Protection is available for TK which is secret, has commercial value because it is secret; and has been subject to reasonable steps to keep it secret.</p>	<p>Specific issues concern:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- when disclosure within a community is considered 'secret'</li> <li>- the role of the customary law or practices</li> <li>- protection of knowledge that has spiritual and cultural value to the community, but not commercial value for the community.</li> </ul>
Protection against unfair competition	<p>Protection against</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• acts creating confusion</li> <li>• false allegations in the course of trade</li> <li>• indications or allegations liable to mislead the public.</li> </ul>	<p>Flexibility over interpreting measures against unfair competition to include broader rule against unjust enrichment and misappropriation</p>
Protection of distinctive signs	<p>Applicable not to TK as such but to distinctive signs and symbols associated with TK-related products, in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- trademarks for goods and services with a TK component</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- collective or certification marks</li> <li>- geographical indications</li> </ul>	
Industrial design law	Industrial designs that are new or original	Possibility of excluding protection for designs dictated essentially by technical or functional considerations.
Copyright and related law (including protection of databases and performances of expressions of folklore).	No protection for knowledge as such but for means of recording and transmission of TK, especially protectable TCEs.	See gap analysis on TCEs
Public international law	<p>CBD and Bonn Guidelines: TK <a href="#">relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity</a>.</p> <p>FAO ITPGRFA: TK related to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture</p> <p>UNDRIP: indigenous peoples rights relating to TK</p>	

**Deleted:** Biodiversity-related

**Comment [sb34]:**  
 As stated previously it should be noted here that the Declaration is a non-binding instrument and representative of 'possibilities' rather than 'obligations'.



## B. GAPS EXISTING AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

Aspect of protection	Identification of gap in protection	Specific considerations
Identification or definition of TK eligible for protection	<p>No formal definition of TK that should be protected, although TK is referred to in several international instruments (within particular domains of TK)</p> <p>Elements of a definition developed in IGC work</p>	
Gaps in the express objectives of protection	<p>Intrinsic value of TK systems</p> <p>TK systems as valuable forms of innovation</p> <p>Respect for TK systems and cultural and spiritual values of TK holders</p> <p>Respect rights of TK holders and custodians</p> <p>Conserving TK</p> <p>Strengthen TK systems,</p> <p>Support innovation within TK systems</p> <p>Support safeguarding and preservation of TK;</p> <p>Repress misappropriation and unfair and inequitable uses of TK, and promoting equitable benefit-sharing from TK;</p> <p>Ensure access and use of TK is subject to prior informed consent</p> <p>Promote sustainable community development and legitimate trading activities based on TK systems;</p> <p>Curtail the grant or exercise of improper IP rights over TK</p>	

<i>Gaps in existing legal mechanisms</i>		
Subject matter not covered	TK not covered by existing forms of IP protection, such as: - TK that is not novel; - TK that is non-inventive; - TK that is publicly disclosed or otherwise not eligible for protection as undisclosed information.	See Item A above
	Cumulative, collectively held and intergenerational TK that does not meet criteria for undisclosed or confidential information.	
	Integrated traditional knowledge system as such	
Beneficiaries or right holders not recognized	collective rights, interests and entitlements within a TK system	
Forms of use and other actions that cannot be prevented under existing law	express norm against illegitimate patenting of TK	
	Specific disclosure requirement relating to TK	
	Protection against unjust enrichment or misappropriation of TK	

A right of acknowledgement and integrity	Prevention against the use of TK without explicit acknowledgement of the source community.	
	Prevention against the use that creates cultural or spiritual offence, or impairs integrity of TK	
Prior informed consent over TK	<p>No express recognition that TK holders have prior informed consent over access to certain forms of TK.</p> <p>Clarification of protection of undisclosed information as a means of implementing right of prior informed consent</p>	Need to clarify principle of prior informed consent for knowledge that is shared with other TK holders, and that has been already disclosed beyond the community with the (tacit or express) consent of the community, or without consent.
Right of equitable benefit sharing	Absence of entitlement to obtain equitable remuneration or other benefits (including culturally appropriate and other non-financial benefits).	Potential role of customary law in determining what benefits are equitable and appropriate

## C. CONSIDERATIONS RELEVANT TO DETERMINING WHETHER THOSE GAPS NEED TO BE ADDRESSED

	<b>Nature of consideration</b>	<b>Details</b>
<i>Substantive considerations</i>	International law and policy	Including legal obligations and policy settings relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- conservation of biodiversity and the combat against desertification</li> <li>- rights of indigenous peoples</li> <li>- sustainable health policy and access to medicines</li> </ul>
	Social, cultural, political and economic considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasis on claims of inequity arising from misappropriation and misuse of TK</li> <li>• role of TK in sustainable, grass roots development</li> <li>• link between protecting TK and cultural and social identity of communities</li> <li>• industrial and commercial uptake of TK</li> <li>• value of TK in dealing with environmental and climate change</li> <li>• reference to TK in a range of regulatory contexts</li> </ul>
	Role of TK protection in broader policymaking contexts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection of biodiversity, and equitable use of its benefits;</li> <li>• Recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples;</li> <li>• Promoting food security and promoting diversity of food crops;</li> <li>• Ensuring culturally appropriate access to health;</li> <li>• Sustainable grass roots development;</li> <li>• Climate change abatement and mitigation;</li> <li>• The increasing overlap between traditional</li> </ul>

		<p>knowledge as such and formal disciplines of biotechnology;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The contribution of traditional knowledge systems to innovation and cultural diversity.</li> </ul>
	<p>Specific legal and policy considerations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The fact that many national or regional processes are already developing stronger protection of TK, suggesting that there may be difficulties, impediments or other obstacles if there is no development on an international dimension to provide a common platform for otherwise diverse national or regional TK protection systems;</li> <li>- The possible systemic implications from lack of clarity in the international law of IP in areas where it is relevant to TK and traditional knowledge and innovation systems;</li> <li>- The possible gains from a reduction in legal uncertainty associated with concerns about possible ownership or custodial responsibilities relating to TK;</li> <li>- The costs and benefits arising from a common international approach towards TK protection issues.</li> </ul>
	<p>Considerations specifically weighing against addressing gaps</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The possibility that it is premature to fill certain gaps at international level, even when gaps are clearly identified, in view of the need for more national experience to be developed and shared as a precondition for clearer international outcomes;</li> <li>- The diversity of TK and the communities holding, which may set limits to the international dimension of norm-setting</li> <li>- Uncertainty over rights and entitlements of foreign right holders, such as TK holding communities in dramatically different cultural and social contexts;</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The possible need for stronger, more diverse consultative processes before moving towards high profile political and legal outcomes that would be difficult and costly to revisit once concluded.</li></ul>
--	--	---

## D. OPTIONS THAT EXIST OR MIGHT BE DEVELOPED TO ADDRESS ANY IDENTIFIED GAPS:

Options at different levels	Specific considerations that apply
<b>International level</b>	
(i) a binding international instrument or instruments;	What specific norms are sufficiently established in substance and timely to express as binding international law? - regarding the protection of TK directly; - regarding recognition of TK in the patent system and other areas of IP law
(ii) authoritative or persuasive interpretations or elaborations of existing legal instruments;	What existing provisions and legal principles may be suitable for authoritative interpretations vis-à-vis TK? For example: - unfair competition; - patent law standards and other areas of IP law; - undisclosed information or law of confidentiality.
(iii) a non-binding normative international instrument or instruments;	What norms, standards and political priorities may be agreed in the form of a non-binding instrument at the international level?
(iv) a high level political resolution, declaration or decision,	What norms, standards and political priorities may be agreed in the form of a political resolution at the international level?
(v) strengthened international coordination through guidelines or model laws	
(vi) coordination of national legislative developments.	

<p>(vii) international cooperation on practical measures</p>	<p>Existence of programs, materials and initiatives already aimed at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- capacity building and substantive materials for legal and policy processes</li> <li>- strengthening practical capacity of TK holders</li> <li>- building and guiding institutions</li> <li>- interagency cooperation and coordination within UN system</li> <li>- awareness and capacity-building for the general public</li> </ul>
<p><b>Regional level</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal instruments concluded at the regional, subregional or bilateral level, including <i>sui generis</i> instruments and conventional IP law</li> <li>• Political or policy-level declarations proclaimed at the regional, subregional or bilateral level</li> <li>• Model laws and other forms of legislative guidance adopted at the regional level</li> <li>• Model protocols, guidelines and best practice recommendations adopted at the regional or subregional levels</li> <li>• Regional, subregional and bilateral initiatives and programs to support community capacity building relating to TK</li> </ul>	



**National level**

- Legislation to protect TK, including *sui generis* instruments and conventional IP law
- Policy frameworks and administrative mechanisms to promote and protect TK, including within specific domains such as medicine and public health, the environment, and agriculture
- Model protocols, guidelines and best practice recommendations adopted either by national authorities or other institutions
- National initiatives and programs to support community capacity building relating to TK

[End of Annex and of document]