



Copyright as a Catalyst: Charting a New Course for the Transmission of Folklore

—Statement at the Fifty-Second Session of the WIPO Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore

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保护创新 共建未来——版权在中国

Copyright in China

Safeguarding Innovation, Shaping the Future Together

日内瓦 2025.07 Geneva July 2025

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Organized by National Copyright Administration of China (NCAAC)
Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China
to the United Nations Office at Geneva and
other international organizations in Switzerland
World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)



Folklore and Copyright: A Subject Worth In-depth Exploration



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National Copyright Administration of the PRC

Folklore and Copyright

In 2000, WIPO established the Intergovernmental Committee (IGC)
to specifically address international negotiations on these issues.

In 2024, the WIPO Diplomatic Conference adopted the *WIPO Treaty on Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge*—

a significant step forward in the protection of traditional resources.

When all parties commit to pragmatic cooperation, it is possible to find balanced solutions to even the most complex of issues.





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Characteristics of Folklore

Traditionality

Non-fixity

Diversity of Expression



**Uncertainty regarding
the time of creation**



**Uncertainty regarding
the creators**



**Variability in the forms
of expression**



China's Practices: Protecting Folklore through Copyright

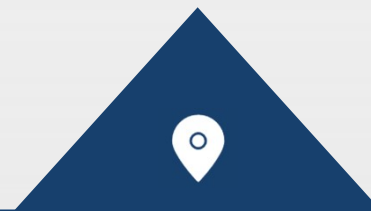


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Copyright's Role in the Folklore Field

Reasonable Utilization

Benefit-sharing



Effective Protection



Transmission and Development



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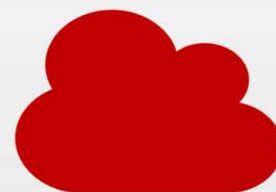
China's Rich Folklore Resources

Traditional Fine Arts and
Craftsmanship

Folk Literature



Traditional Opera and
Quyi (Folk Arts)



Traditional Music and
Dance



Traditional Sports,
Acrobatics, and
Recreation



Traditional Medicine, and
Folklore, Among the Ten Major
Categories





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China's Rich Folklore Resources

As of December 2024,
China boasts **over 100,000 national, provincial, municipal, and county-level** representative ICH items.

A total of **44 items** have been inscribed on the **UNESCO Lists of Intangible Cultural Heritage**.

Among these, **there are 1,557 national-level representative items (comprising 3,610 sub-items)**.

Ranking first in the world in total number



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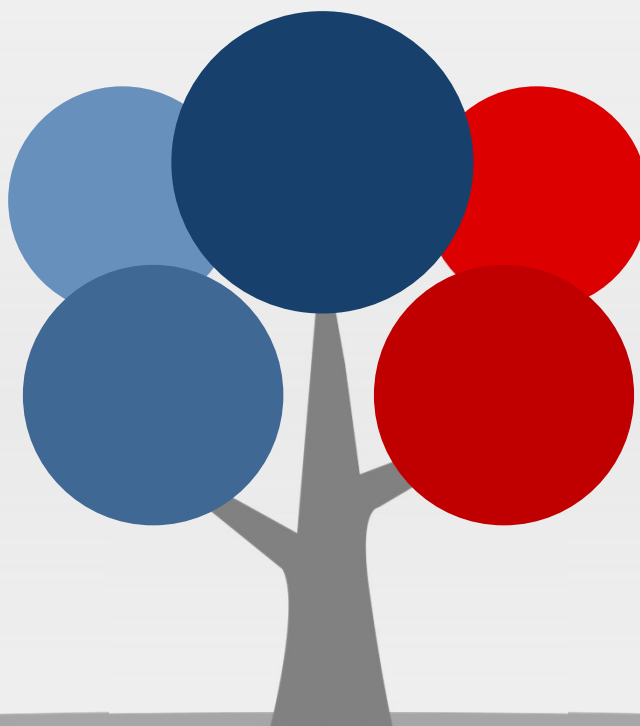
49 Pilot Areas Bring the Concept of Copyright Protection down to Earth

Copyright drives the development of rural industries through folklore

Copyright bridges living folklore traditions with the world stage

Copyright empowers folklore to drive local economic growth

Copyright breathes new life into ancient culture





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Copyright Empowers Folklore to Drive Local Economic Growth



Weifang, Shandong

Annual output value of Weifang kites and related cultural and creative products exceeds 2 billion yuan.

Hezhe Ethnic Group, Heilongjiang

Copyright value of the Hezhe Cultural IP Library is estimated to exceed 30 million yuan.





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Copyright Drives the Development of Rural Industries Through Folklore

Jianshui Purple Pottery, Yunnan

The annual output value has reached 8.5 billion yuan, with tens of thousands of people employed. A large number of craftsmen have gained a stable income through copyright.



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Nanyang Jade Carving, Henan

As one of China's largest jade carving centers, it provides stable employment opportunities for over 300,000 people.



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Copyright Bridges Living Folklore Traditions with the World Stage

Nuo Masks, Nanfeng, Jiangxi

The masks are exported to over 30 countries, bringing an annual revenue exceeding 50 million yuan.



Tibetan-Qiang Embroidery, Sichuan

Traditional elements are licensed to internationally renowned brands.





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Copyright Breathes New Life into Ancient Culture



—
The animated
film *Ne Zha*

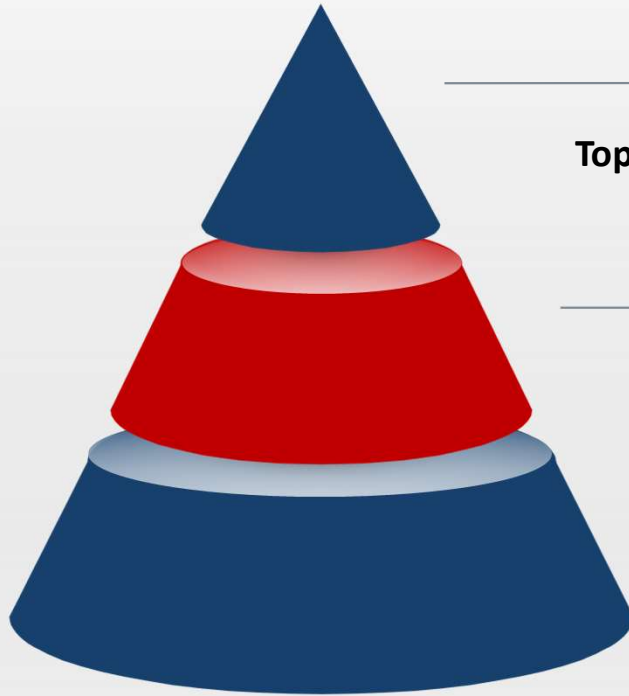


—
The game *Black Myth:
Wukong*



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Behind These Stories: Collective Commitment and Exploration



Top-level design has set a clear direction.

**Specialized legislation is progressing steadily,
establishing legal safeguards for copyright protection.**

**Multi-stakeholder collaboration has built
synergy.**



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Behind These Stories: Collective Commitment and Exploration



On June 1, 1991, China's first *Copyright Law* came into effect.

Article 6 stipulates that measures for the protection of copyright in works of folklore shall be formulated by the State Council. Subsequent revisions (Oct 27, 2001; Feb 26, 2010; Nov 11, 2020) of the law left this provision unchanged.



In 2008, the State Council promulgated the *Outline of the National Intellectual Property Strategy*.

It proposed "timely legislative work for the protection of folklore" and to "strengthen the protection of folklore to promote its development."



In 2011, the *Intangible Cultural Heritage Law of the People's Republic of China* came into effect.

Article 44 states that where the use of intangible cultural heritage involves intellectual property rights, relevant laws and administrative regulations shall apply.



Collective Commitment and Exploration

Understanding copyright, exercising copyright—making copyright protection a shared consensus.



In 2020, the *2020-2021 Implementation Plan for Strengthening Intellectual Property Protection* was issued by the National Intellectual Property Administration.

It explicitly proposed studying and formulating measures for copyright protection of works of folklore, with a deadline of end-2021.



The *Outline for Building an Intellectual Property Powerhouse (2021-2035)*

proposed strengthening the construction of systems for access to and benefit-sharing of folklore.



The *14th Five-Year Plan for Copyright Work*

proposed promoting the synergy between domestic legislative practice and international promotion of folklore copyright protection.



In 2021, the National Copyright Administration launched the pilot work for copyright protection and promotion of folklore.

By 2025, a total of 49 pilot areas were selected at the provincial (autonomous region), municipal, and county (district) levels.



**Joining Hands to Build a New
Ecosystem for Global Folklore
Copyright Governance**



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China Continues to Deepen Institutional Development

01

Deepening Pilot Practices

02

Accelerating the Legislative Process

03

Improving the Benefit-sharing System





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Sincere Exchanges and Joint Exploration

**Promoting Cross-border
Cooperation and Cultural
Dissemination**

**Supporting the IGC Platform
in Playing Its Core Role**



**Actively Sharing China's
Practical Experience**



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Appreciate the culture and values of others as do to one's own, and the world will become a harmonious whole.





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Thank You