

## TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE

### Intellectual Property and the Governance of Traditional Knowledge, Genetic Resources and Traditional Cultural Expressions

Fostering Innovation and Improving Lives

Traditional knowledge (TK), genetic resources (GRs) and traditional cultural expressions (TCEs) constitute an important part of the cultural assets of Indigenous peoples, providing enormous cultural and economic possibilities for their daily lives. The importance of traditional knowledge to modern society has grown, along with an increased recognition of its role in modern innovation, biodiversity conservation, the sustenance and livelihoods of Indigenous peoples and, increasingly, economic development and adaptation to climate change. Protecting traditional knowledge is a key issue for policy makers, academics and a wide range of stakeholders and Indigenous communities within national and international contexts.

The Centre for International Governance Innovation's (CIGI's) International Law Research Program has launched a new project supported by a Traditional Knowledge Expert Group: *Intellectual Property and the Governance of Traditional Knowledge, Genetic Resources and Traditional Cultural Expressions: Fostering Innovation and Improving Lives*. Its central goal is to establish a leading research hub at CIGI offering policy analysis, technical assistance and capacity building and intellectual leadership for the governance of traditional knowledge, genetic resources and traditional cultural expressions.

The traditional knowledge project will:

- issue research papers on various topics associated with the protection of TK, GRs and TCEs;
- map and analyze case studies of national regimes for traditional knowledge protection;
- collaborate with Canadian Indigenous communities for the identification and improvement of governance models adopted in Canada;
- examine various options in support of international instruments for traditional knowledge being considered at the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Intergovernmental Committee (IGC);
- convene several high-level meetings to assist policy makers in building consensus on issues related to international protection of traditional knowledge, and the domestic implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and/or the Nagoya Protocol; and
- conduct studies on the development and human rights concerns of traditional knowledge holders within the existing network of overlapping treaties.

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# Centre for International Governance Innovation

The CIGI Traditional Knowledge Expert Group (TKEG) is composed of five internationally renowned key thinkers in the field, who offer strategic guidance to the project.

**Ruth Okediji**, TKEG Chair, William L. Prosser Professor and McKnight Presidential Professor, University of Minnesota Law School

**Margo Bagley**, CIGI Senior Fellow and Asa Griggs Candler Professor of Law, Emory University School of Law

**Graham Dufield**, Professor of International Governance, Faculty of Law, Leeds University

**Kathy Hodgson-Smith**, Canadian Indigenous Lawyer, Métis Communities

**Jerome Reichman**, CIGI Senior Fellow, and Bunyan S. Womble Professor of Law, Duke Law School

The project incorporates three main areas of expected outcomes:

- a defined traditional knowledge research project agenda focusing on comparative case studies over the next 18 months;
- capacity building and awareness raising for Canadian Indigenous communities initiatives; and
- a structured dissemination plan, including an outreach strategy for policy makers and Indigenous communities.

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For more information, contact the CIGI ILRP project members:

**Bassem Awad**

Deputy Director for Intellectual Property and Innovation  
bawad@cigionline.org

**Oluwatobiloba Moody**

Post-Doctoral Fellow  
omoodyc@cigionline.org

[www.cigionline.org/tk](http://www.cigionline.org/tk)

## CIGI's International Law Research Program

The Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI) is an independent, non-partisan think tank with an objective and uniquely global perspective. Our research, opinions and public voice make a difference in today's world by bringing clarity and innovative thinking to global policy making. By working across disciplines and in partnership with the best peers and experts, we are the benchmark for influential research and trusted analysis.

CIGI's International Law Research Program (ILRP) strives to be the world's leading international law research program, with recognized impact on how international law is brought to bear on significant global issues. The program's mission is to connect knowledge, policy and practice to build the international law framework — the globalized rule of law — to support international governance of the future.