



Biodiversity is life



Biodiversity is our life

Traditional Knowledge, Innovation and Practices

Traditional knowledge is the knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities around the world. It is experience gained over centuries, transmitted orally from generation to generation, taking the form of stories, songs, proverbs, beliefs and culture, most often linked to agriculture, animal husbandry, fisheries, health, horticulture, forestry and nature in general.

This knowledge is vital for the conservation of plants and animals, their genetic diversity and for managing the local environment. It can make a solid contribution to sustainable development and allow a sustainable future for all humans.

Traditional knowledge is also widely used by the aromatic, flavouring, food, cosmetic and health industries. Plant-based traditional medicine has often been used to identify and fast-track the development of modern medicines and drugs, not to mention the vast array of cosmetic products.

Most of the world's population relies on traditional knowledge for health needs, whether this is in health shops in developed countries, or in the services of traditional healers in many developing countries.

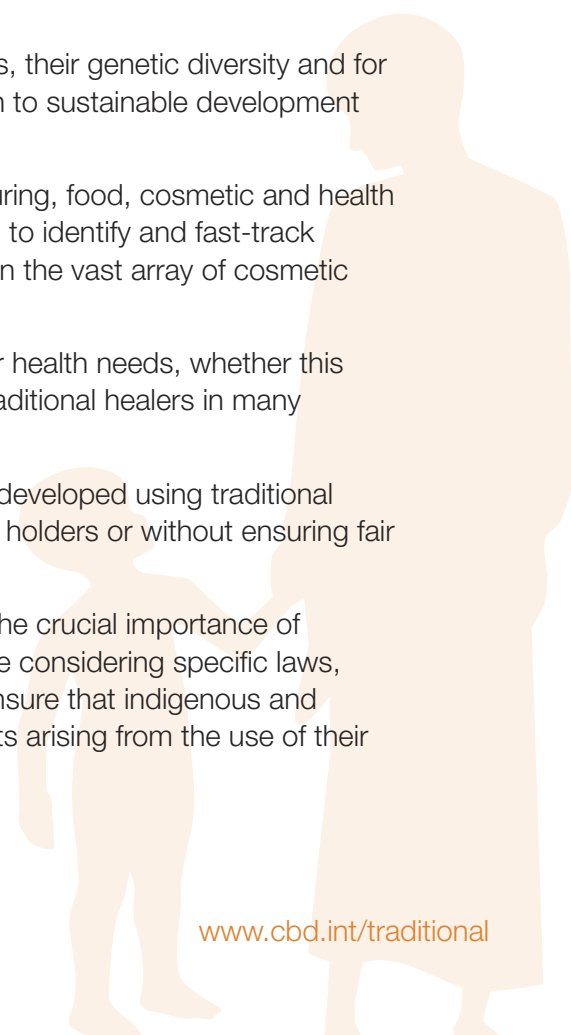
Unfortunately, new agricultural and industrial products are often developed using traditional knowledge without the prior informed consent of the knowledge holders or without ensuring fair and equitable sharing of the benefits with them.

The Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity recognize the crucial importance of traditional knowledge to the objectives of the Convention and are considering specific laws, policies and programmes to protect and to promote it, and to ensure that indigenous and local communities obtain a fair and equitable share of the benefits arising from the use of their knowledge.



Convention on
Biological Diversity

www.cbd.int/traditional





Fast Facts

- ▶ Traditional medicine adopted by other populations (outside its indigenous culture) is often called alternative or complementary medicine
- ▶ In some Asian and African countries, 80% of the population depend on traditional medicine for primary health care
- ▶ Herbal medicines, the most lucrative form of traditional medicine, generate billions of dollars in revenue
- ▶ More than 100 countries have regulations for herbal medicines
- ▶ Traditional medicine can treat various infectious and chronic conditions: new anti-malarial drugs were developed from the discovery and isolation of artemisinin from *Artemisia annua* L., a plant used in China for almost 2000 years
- ▶ Counterfeit, poor quality or adulterated herbal products in international markets pose serious safety threats
- ▶ Indigenous people (a significant part of the world's population) depend on renewable resources and ecosystems for their wellbeing.

Learn More

Chapter 26 of Agenda 21

- ▶ www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=52&ArticleID=74&I=en

Convention 169 of the International Labour Organization on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples ▶ www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/convde.pl?C169

UN Declaration on the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples, 13 September 2007

- ▶ www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/drip.html

The Inter-American Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

- ▶ www.oas.org/consejo/CAJP/Indigenous%20special%20session.asp

European Bank for Reconstruction and Development ▶ www.ebrd.com

Asian Development Bank ▶ www.adb.org

African Development Bank ▶ www.afdb.org

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) ▶ www.undp.org

World Bank ▶ www.worldbank.org

World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) ▶ www.wipo.int/portal/index.html.en

World Trade Organization ▶ www.wto.org

UN Forum on Forests ▶ www.un.org/esa/forests

Commission on Human Rights Working Group on Indigenous Populations

- ▶ www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/indigenous/groups/groups-01.htm

UN Conference on Trade and Development ▶ www.unctad.org

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