

Louise Buckingham – ‘Traditional Knowledge and the Public Domain: an overview’

In this paper I will review (some) of the recent literature about the relationship between Traditional Knowledge and the Public Domain for the purpose of examining the history, development and present location of this “new” discourse.

I will then examine the apparent incongruity and tension between ideas underlying the public domain, and those underpinning the notion of traditional knowledge.

Central questions that arise include: who has framed the parameters of these discussions, debates and discourses, and why? What is the significance of the terminology used? What role have international legal institutions and law played in shaping the contested space?

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