

MSI Seminar

# Intellectual property protections and indigenous knowledge

**Craig Hammer**  
World Bank

1–2 pm, Wednesday, 22 June 2011  
Lecture Theatre L2, Building 12 (Law), Clayton Campus

All welcome. No RSVPs necessary.

## Abstract

Because many of the world's biodiversity 'hotspots' include the traditional lands of indigenous peoples, indigenous or traditional knowledge can be a source of niche solutions to biodiversity management problems. This role of traditional knowledge has in recent years captured international attention and resulted in varying perspectives about the intellectual property (IP) rights and entitlements of indigenous peoples.

The global IP law regime, through the World Trade Organization's Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights has codified minimum standards of IP protections. However these protections are out of reach for many, if not most, indigenous communities.

A proposed collaboration with the Yorta Yorta of northern Victoria seeks to add value to the continuing debate on IP protections for traditional knowledge. The project will work toward the development of a roadmap to enhance the IP protections for the Yorta Yorta deep knowledge of country, and will better enable them to leverage this for improved local biodiversity management and other public goods.

## Speaker Bio

Craig Hammer (B.A., J.D.) is a governance specialist and team leader with the World Bank with current activities in Burundi, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda. In these countries, Mr. Hammer leads diagnostic missions to review institutional frameworks supporting government transparency and accountability and to scale up the voices of underserved segments of society in local and national government.

Mr. Hammer also acts as a pro bono legal advisor for the Shuar in Ecuador, the Khoisan in Southern Africa and the Coordinating Body for the Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon Basin. The focus of his pro bono work is to collaboratively address the problem of external appropriation of traditional knowledge, including for bioprospecting.

Much of this work centres on the promulgation of protections for real and intellectual property for indigenous peoples at the national and sub-national levels. He plans to develop a new program at the World Bank which focuses on these important issues