INDIALAW

Geographical Indications & Traditional Knowledge

Geographical Indications and Traditional Knowledge Law Firm in India

PRACTICE PROFILE • OCTOBER 2026

Overview

Our Geographical Indications & Traditional Knowledge practice focuses on protecting products with unique geographical origin and cultural significance. We help communities, producer associations, and businesses secure legal protection for distinctive products tied to specific regions, traditional methods, or cultural heritage, creating value while preserving authenticity.

Our Services

Geographical Indication Registration

- GI application preparation and filing
- Specification development
- Stakeholder coordination
- Registration strategy development

Traditional Knowledge Protection

- Documentation of traditional knowledge
- Defensive protection strategies
- Community rights recognition
- Benefit-sharing mechanisms

Enforcement & Defense

- GI infringement actions
- Border enforcement measures
- Authorized user protection
- False origin claims prosecution

Regulatory Compliance

- Interface with food safety regulations
- Agricultural product compliance
- Quality control system development
- Certification mechanisms

Biodiversity Compliance

- Biodiversity Act compliance
- Access and benefit-sharing
- Prior informed consent documentation
- Traditional knowledge digital libraries

International Protection

- Multi-jurisdictional GI strategies
- International agreements use
- Foreign GI recognition
- Global enforcement coordination

Key Professionals



Shiju P V
Managing Partner



Vinod P.V.
Senior Partner

Frequently Asked Questions

Q1 **What does a geographical indications and traditional knowledge practice cover?**

This practice helps communities, producer groups, and businesses secure legal protection for products linked to a specific geographic origin or traditional method. It spans GI registration, traditional knowledge documentation, enforcement against misuse, and compliance with biodiversity and benefit-sharing frameworks.

Q2 **When should a producer group or community seek GI protection for a product?**

The right time is when a product with distinct regional qualities faces imitation, dilution, or unauthorized commercial use. Early registration prevents third parties from misappropriating the product's reputation. It is also critical before entering export markets where origin branding carries commercial value.

Q3 **Which Indian statutes govern geographical indications and traditional knowledge?**

GI registration is governed by the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999, administered by the GI Registry in Chennai. Traditional knowledge protection draws on the Biological Diversity Act, 2002 and the National Biodiversity Authority. The Patents Act, 1970 also contains defensive provisions.

Q4 **How long does the GI registration process typically take in India?**

A GI application filed with the Chennai Registry generally takes 12 to 24 months, depending on examination queries, opposition proceedings, and the complexity of the product specification. Key cost drivers include field surveys, stakeholder consultations, and preparing the detailed product specification document.

Q5 **What documents are needed to file a geographical indication application?**

Applicants typically need a detailed product specification covering origin, quality, production methods, and the link to geography. Supporting documents include proof of the applicant body's authority, a map of the defined territory, historical evidence of the product's reputation, and inspection or quality control protocols.

Q6 **What common mistakes do applicants make in GI and traditional knowledge matters?**

A frequent error is drafting an overly narrow or vague product specification, which weakens enforcement later. Another is failing to coordinate with all stakeholder communities, leading to opposition. Some applicants also neglect benefit-sharing obligations under the Biological Diversity Act, risking penalties from the National Biodiversity Authority.

Related Practice Areas

Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) | Intellectual Property Disputes | IP Transactions & Commercialization | Trade Secrets & Confidential Information | Design Services | Copyright | Trademark | IP Enforcement & Litigation