



United Nations  
University

**INTECH**

Institute for New Technologies

## Book Overview

### **Regulating Bioprospecting** *Institutions for Drug Research, Access and Benefit-Sharing*

By Padmashree Gehl Sampath (UNU Press, forthcoming)

Biodiversity prospecting, or the search for useful bioactive compounds and genes in nature, has been the focus of international negotiations for over a decade now. Starting with the Convention on Biological Diversity, 1993 and the Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, 1995 the debate on the terms for access to genetic resources and traditional knowledge in the bioprospecting process is far from settled.

This book employs an interdisciplinary law and economics methodology to derive optimal property rights structures and institutional mechanisms for regulating bioprospecting for drug research. The focus of the analysis is on the economics of contracts in the drug discovery and development process using genetic resources to show that the rights that are exchanged at each stage of the process are complementary to one another. Attempts to define and enforce the rights on access to genetic resources and traditional knowledge in isolation with the drug discovery and development process result in a failure to realize the economic potential of bioprospecting for sustainable development and biodiversity conservation in host countries. These analytical results are substantiated by examples of bioprospecting collaborations in several countries and a critique of the institutional and contractual factors that led to their success/ failure.

One of the first of its kind to address the contractual complexities of bioprospecting for drug research, the book will appeal to policy makers and practitioners, university scholars and students in the areas of law, economics, ethnobotany, anthropology and environmental sciences.

“The author examines, with outstanding analytical capabilities, complex economic issues of particular importance to developing countries and the drug industry. The book offers stimulating insights in a both rigorous and accessible manner. It will be of great value for researchers, policy makers, managers and all those concerned with the protection and sustainable use of biodiversity.”

*Prof. Carlos M. Correa, University of Buenos Aires, Argentina*

“Dr Gehl Sampath’s book is a welcome contribution to an important but highly polarized debate. It offers an objective and academically rigorous treatment of what is a highly complex subject, and in doing so should contribute to fairer and more effective bioprospecting regulation.”

*Graham Dutfield, Senior Research Fellow, Queen Mary Intellectual Property Research Institute, University of London*

For more information, please contact

**Wangu Mwangi**  
**Editor/Communications Coordinator**

**UNU-INTECH**

Keizer Karelplein 19

6211 TC Maastricht

The Netherlands

Tel: (31-43) 350-6300

Fax: (31-43) 350-6399

[mwangi@intech.unu.edu](mailto:mwangi@intech.unu.edu)

Website: <http://www.intech.unu.edu/>

---