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Indigenous Knowledge and Sustainable Development in Brazil

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ABSTRACT Biodiversity conservation, exploitation of natural resources, patents, and intellectual rights are key issues on the international political agenda. From being the subject of discussion in a number of international conferences that officially began with the First Congress for the Protection of Nature, held in Paris from May 31st to June 3rd, 1923, it is nowadays the object of a complex network of national and international conflicting laws. Although much progress has been achieved in cooperation between governments, the overall situation remains critical. Definitions and concepts must be improved and perfected if we want to establish a reasonable and fair system of compensation for native societies who hold traditional knowledge that is the source of highly valuable products.