

Intangible Cultural Heritage (Protection and Management) Bill

Legislative Timeline Update

1. Initial Bill Drafting — by Ministry

- ▶ From a Committee being formed, under the coordination of Dr. Suresh Suras Shrestha, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, pursuant to a Minister-level decision, to prepare the draft Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Act — 15 September 2022 (30 Bhadra 2079)
- ▶ To a Committee meeting on the Concept Paper for the proposed Act — 13 December 2022 (27 Mangsir 2079)

The Committee decided the Concept Paper should address the need for a new law (constitutional/international obligations, court decisions, government policy), expected outcomes, existing laws and why amendment would be insufficient, comparable/model laws from other countries, relevant studies, the estimated financial burden, institutional needs, required consultations, and the principal matters to be covered.

- ▶ To the Ministry's proposal submission to the Council of Ministers (OPCOM) seeking in-principle approval to draft the Bill — 5 April 2023 (12 Chaitra 2079)
- ▶ To the Government of Nepal (Council of Ministers) first approving the drafting of the Bill — 16 May 2023 (2 Jestha 2080)
- ▶ To the Committee's clause-by-clause discussion of the draft Act, prepared by Member-Secretary Ms Punya Maya Guragain, and the decision to finalise the draft for submission to the Ministry Secretary — 14 July 2023 (29 Ashadh 2080)

Numerous Committee meetings, chaired by Dr. Suresh Suras Shrestha, were held throughout the drafting process on: 27 Mangsir 2079; 3 Poush 2079; 25, 27 & 29 Ashadh 2080; 7 Ashoj 2081; 21 Kartik 2080; 15 Mangsir 2080; 13 Poush 2080; 14 Magh 2080; 23 Falgun 2080; 1 & 2 Chaitra 2080; 2 Baisakh 2081; and 23 Baisakh 2081.

- ▶ To the Ministry of Finance's concurrence to the draft Bill, based on the Deputy Prime Minister-level decision — 25/26 August 2023 (9 Bhadra 2080)
- ▶ To the Ministry of Law's concurrence, based on the Minister-level decision — 23 February 2024 (20 Magh 2080)
- ▶ To an Orientation Programme on Nationally Designated ICH, organised in Butwal, Bagmati Province (Avocado and Orchid Resort, Hetauda-2, Makwanpur) — 11 April 2024 (29 Chaitra 2080)

Stakeholders consulted included:

- Tamang Ghetun Sanga
- Hetauda Sub-Metropolitan City
- Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation
- F.N.C.
- Jalpa Devi M. Kendra, Nepal
- Magar Sangha – Jilla Samanya Sangha Samiti, Makwanpur

- Ministry of Finance
 - Press Center Nepal, Chitwan
 - Sahikhabar.com / Rajdhani Dainik
 - Manhari-04, Nawalpur
 - MOEAP
 - Nepal Television
 - Annapurna Post Dainik
 - Manav Sewa Ashram
 - Makwanpur Paryatan Bikash Samiti
 - Sahid Smarak Bikash Samiti
 - Pragya Mahabir
 - Nagar Paryatan Samiti
 - Ratopati.com
 - Naya Patrika
 - News 24 Television
 - Samajik Bikash Mantralaya
 - Hetauda Ramdan Mandali Samaj
- To a National Consultation Workshop on periodic reporting under the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage — 2–4 June 2024 (20–22 Jestha 2081)

Stakeholders consulted included:

- Nepal Academy
- UNESCO
- Ministry of Culture
- Nepal Copyright Register Office
- MOCTA
- Indigenous Nationalities Commission
- Curriculum Development Centre
- DOA
- National Numismatics Museum, Chhauni
- National Art Museum
- National Academy of Art and Drama
- PDRC
- Language Commission Nepal
- National Archives
- TU Culture Department
- National Statistics
- RSS
- Changu Narayan Municipality, Bhaktapur
- LMC
- Hanuman Dhoka Durbar
- Nepal Heritage Society
- Cultural Corporation
- Panauti Municipality
- The Rising Nepal

- The CDC
 - CIPN
 - NPL
 - NFDIN
 - Fair Nepal Online
 - ACORAB / CIN
 - Fine Art Academy
 - Kathmandu Metropolitan City
 - Patan Museum
 - Guthi Sansthan
 - NNS
 - Kirtipur Municipality
 - National Museum
 - Bhaktapur Municipality
 - Narayanhiti
 - National Airlines
 - MOEST
 - SAI — University of Heidelberg
 - NPC
 - and other national and international institutions
- To an interaction and discussion programme at Hotel Mona Lisa to finalise the draft Intangible Cultural Heritage (Preservation and Management) Act, 2081 — 14–15 June 2024 (32 Jestha / 1 Ashadh 2081)

Dignitaries consulted included:

- Suresh Surash Shrestha
 - Bhim Nepal
 - Rajkumar Suwal
 - ShivRaj Regmi
 - Nawraj
 - Pushpa Raj
 - Madhu Prasad
 - Lal Bahadur
 - Bhisma Baskota
 - Nima Chapaguain
 - Nina Rai
 - Samjhana Pudasini
 - Sharmila Tiwari
 - Kumar Dulal
 - Subhadra Bhattraai Ghimire
 - Sabita Kumari Joshi
 - Surendra Shrestha
- To the Committee submitting the final draft Intangible Cultural Heritage (Protection and Management) Act, 2081 to the Ministry — 25 June 2024 (11 Ashadh 2081)

- ▶ To the Ministry of Finance granting approval — 25 August 2024 (9 Bhadra 2081)
- ▶ To the Ministry of Law granting approval — 2 February 2025 (20 Magh 2081)
- ▶ To a Consultation Programme, in collaboration with the Cultural Corporation, with representatives of individuals, families, groups and communities for the inventorying of ICH — 5 September 2025 (22 Bhadra 2082)

Stakeholders consulted: representatives of individuals, families, groups and communities engaged in ICH inventorying (organised jointly with the Cultural Corporation); the draft Bill was discussed and deliberated upon.

- ▶ To a further Consultation Programme, in collaboration with the Cultural Corporation, with representatives of individuals, families, groups and communities for the inventorying of ICH — 27 November 2025 (11 Mangsir 2082)

Stakeholders consulted: representatives of individuals, families, groups and communities engaged in ICH inventorying (organised jointly with the Cultural Corporation); the draft Bill was discussed and deliberated upon.

- ▶ To an Orientation Programme on Intangible Cultural Heritage in Hetauda, Makwanpur, Bagmati Province — 12 April 2026 (29 Chaitra 2082)

Stakeholders consulted: local stakeholders, communities and groups in Hetauda, Makwanpur; the draft Bill was discussed and deliberated upon.

2. Upper House (National Assembly)

- ▶ From registration of the Bill in the National Assembly (Upper House) — 14 May 2025 (31 Baisakh 2082)
- ▶ To the Bill first being tabled in the National Assembly (Upper House) — 12 August 2025 (27 Shrawan 2082)
- ▶ To the principle discussion in the Upper House — 22 August 2025 (6 Bhadra 2082)
- ▶ To discussion in the Upper House Committee — 28 January 2026 (14 Magh 2082)
- ▶ To the Legislation Management Committee submitting its committee report to the National Assembly — 13 May 2026 (30 Baisakh 2083)
- ▶ To the Bill being passed by the Upper House — 22 May 2026 (8 Jestha 2083)

3. Lower House (House of Representatives)

- ▶ From the Bill being tabled in the Lower House (House of Representatives) — 27 May 2026 (13 Jestha 2083)
- ▶ To the principle discussion in Parliament — 12 June 2026 (29 Jestha 2083)
- ▶ To 61 amendments being submitted by 17 MPs — 15 June 2026 (1 Ashad 2083)
- ▶ To the first in-committee meeting — 10 July 2026 (26 Ashad 2083)

- ▶ To the committee's first Expert Hearing — 10 July 2026 (26 Ashad 2083)

Presentations were given by:

- UNESCO ICH Experts Bhim Nepal
 - Dr Som Dhimal
 - Prof. Dr Nilkamal Chapagain
 - Dr Govinda Tandon
 - Jaco Du Toit, Country Representative, UNESCO Nepal
 - Hon. Dr Min Bahadur Shrees, Member, Indigenous Nationalities Commission
- ▶ To a stakeholder discussion held by ACORAB (Association of Community Radio Broadcasters Nepal)- 20th July 2026 (4 Shrawan 2083)

Similar stakeholders participated, with the addition of representatives from NEFIN, who shared their insights.

- ▶ To two discussions with MPs who had submitted amendments, in which they shared their rationale and suggestions — 12 and 13 August 2026 (27 and 28 Shrawan 2083)

The drafting team is now at the final stages of preparing its recommendation report on this Bill for the House of Representatives.

4. Areas Covered by the Bill and Discussions

The Bill, and the discussions to date, are organised under the following areas (ICH = Intangible Cultural Heritage):

- Name of the Bill
- Definitions
- Categorisation of ICH
- Record-keeping of ICH
- Listing — national and international
- Recommendation Committee — rights and duties
- Rights and responsibilities of listed ICH
- Intellectual Property Rights — consent and community beneficiaries
- Financial — how practitioners, especially of endangered ICH, can be economically incentivised

5. Share Your Recommendations

Recommendations on this Bill can be emailed to anushkainservice@gmail.com, or shared on social media using #ICHbill2026.