

# Overview on IP System in Lao PDR



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# Introduction

In today's competitive environment of free trade and globalization, the protection of IP as well as patent has become an increasingly important international issue. The emergence of a new global economy propelled by rapid technological advance and worldwide information communication technology has placed patent in the mainstream of the national development policy in many countries. So, that's why patent protection is considered to be one important element of the Lao Government policy.

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# Background

- Since 1993, the Department of Intellectual Property Standardization and Metrology of the Ministry of Science and Technology(MOST) was in charge of Intellectual Property matters in Lao PDR.
- Member of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in 1995.
- Joined Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property in 1998.
- Joined Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) in 2006.

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- Joined the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and ASEAN Working Group on IP Cooperation (AWGIPC) in 1997.
- In the process of negotiation for the Accession of the Lao PDR to the World Trade Organization (WTO).

## IP Legislation

- Decree on Patent, Petty Patent and Industrial Designs No 01/PM dated January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2002.
- Regulation the Implementation of Patent, Petty Patent and Industrial Designs No 322/STEA-PMO dated February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2003.
- Law on Intellectual Property No 08/NA dated December 24<sup>th</sup>, 2007.
- Draft Decree on the Implementation of Law on Intellectual Property.

# Agency administering IP Legislation

DISM under MOST is the only government body, having responsibility to advise the government on IP system including Copyright issue and its main functions are as follows:

- Administrate IP activities in the whole country.
- Encourage and promote inventiveness and creativeness, trade and investment.
- Draft legislation on IP rights and submit to high Authorities concerned for consideration.

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- Implement these legislations and strength IP enforcement with line Ministries concerned
- Make Gazettes and Publication of IP Registration.
- Organize public awareness campaigns.
- Lecture and Train knowledge and Information on IP to educational Institutions and so on.
- Cooperate with International Organization concerned and other IP bodies

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# Current issues and Future plans

Lao Government through MOST and other Ministries concerned has a great intention to strengthen IP system, but we are still facing with some issues:

- Lack of experience and skill manpower staffs.
- Lack of Financial Resource.
- Lack of Infrastructure and Office Instrument (Automation or Computerizing).
- Less knowledge on Legal framework.
- Limited Public Awareness.

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- Measure for Infringement.
- Acceding to other Conventions and Protocols
- International Cooperation and so on...

To resolve these above difficulties, the future plan that DISM should be concentrated are as follows:

- Request more government financial support to invest into IP activities.
- Urgent to protect IP rights by Law soon as possible.
- Organize workshops and Seminars on several field of IP at National and Provincial Level

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- Upgrade IP system by Automation and Computerizing (Using WIPONET & Updating Lao IP WEBSITE).
- Strengthen absolutely Measure for infringement by Law.
- Stimulate Government acceding to other Conventions and Protocols.
- Improve ability to cooperate with national and International.
- Continue to attend workshops and Seminars which are provide by WIPO or other IP Bodies.

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## Conclusion

- So, one of our priority task is to develop Lao IP system because we wish to speed up our Economic, Scientific and Technical development. Lao PDR hopefully requires more assistance from Developed and Developing Countries and International Organization so as to identify how to work with these above future plans.

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Thank you

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