

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Geneva, 14 May 2015

Contact Massimo Vittori  
[massimo@origin-gi.com](mailto:massimo@origin-gi.com)

## **Negotiations for the Reform of the Lisbon Agreement:**

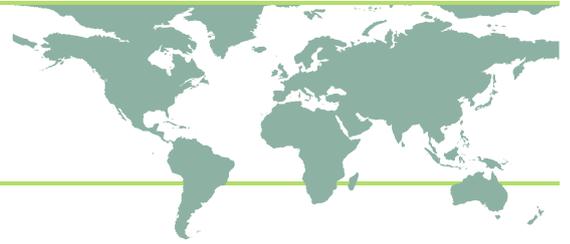
### **International Protection of GIs Crucial to Capture their Sustainable Development Potential**

On May 14, within the framework of the World Intellectual Property organisation (WIPO) Diplomatic Conference for the Adoption of a New Act of the Lisbon Agreement for the Protection of Appellations of Origin and their International Registration, the Republic of Moldova and oriGIn organized a luncheon presentation on "Geographical Indications (GIs) & Sustainable Development".

Before some 100 delegates from the WIPO Member States attending the Diplomatic Conference, Ms. Lilia Bolocan, Director General of the State Agency on Intellectual Property (AGEPI), the public authority responsible for GI registration in Moldova, opened the event by stating that *"Sustainable development is one of the main goal pursued by the Republic of Moldova. In light of this, taking into account the positive impact of GIs especially in rural zones, Moldova attaches great importance to the development of, and adding value to, its GI products"*.

With respect to Asia, the experience of the Intellectual Property Offices of Cambodia and Laos, both responsible for the administration of their respective national GIs, were presented. *"In the experience of Cambodia, where we have already recognised "Kampot Pepper" and several others will soon follow, GIs represent a strategic tool to preserve cultural heritage and foster national identity"*, declared Mr. Lao Reasey, Deputy Director of the Department of Intellectual property (DIP) of Cambodia. Likewise, Dr. Khanlasy Keobounphanh, Director of the Lao Department of Intellectual Property stated that *"GIs have a tremendous potential for the socio, economic and cultural development of Laos. The first 19 potential GI products we have identified at the national level are all part of our traditional knowledge and heritage"*.

Two African cases were also presented at the seminar. A recognised GI – *Argane* – which contributes in a crucial way to the economic, social and environmental development of the Sous



Massa Dra region in Morocco, was presented by Mr. Abdelwahed El Aazoum, Project Manager at the *Association marocaine de l'indication géographique de l'huile d'argane (AMIGHA)*. And a potential GI – *Karité du Bénin* – presented by Ms. Carole Tawema, founding partner of a company involved in its production. *“Among the various tools available to the Karité industry, we believe that GIs is the one that suits most the interests of producers in Benin and will help them to preserve the biodiversity and cultural heritage associated with the Karité production”.*

*“In light of the crucial role played by GIs in responding to some of the most urgent issues brought about by sustainable development goals as well as the challenges for producers and consumers worldwide represented by GI infringements, at the Diplomatic Conference for the Adoption of New Act of the Lisbon Agreement WIPO Member States have a historical opportunity to establish a robust and truly international system for the protection of GIs”*, declared Mr. Massimo Vittori, Managing Director of oriGIn, in concluding the event.