



Open letter of OriGIn on the ongoing WTO negotiations on Geographical Indications

Better GI Protection must be part of the Doha Agreement

Geneva, 1 June 2007

As the WTO negotiations are gathering pace, OriGIn members who are producers of Geographical Indications (GIs) from all over the world, call for concrete progress on the enhancement of GI protection in the context of the Doha Development Round.

Geographical Indications are an important intellectual property tool for producers of typical products that are rooted in a specific territory. They contribute to the economical, social and cultural dynamics of many regions across the world and promote sustainable development in developed and developing countries. Unfortunately, the TRIPs Agreement currently does not offer a sufficient protection for GIs. As a result, millions of GI producers are ill equipped to prevent the abuses of their GI names.

OriGIn members consider that the TRIPs Agreement should offer the same level of protection to all GI products in accordance with the non-discrimination principle which is a cornerstone of the WTO system. Therefore, we urge WTO negotiators to agree on the modification of Article 23 TRIPs with a view to provide all GI products with the level of protection currently given to GI wines and spirits. We also fully support the establishment of a multilateral register on GIs that would be open to all products.

The future of millions of producers depends on a decision to guarantee better protection of their GI names in the international trade context. We consider that progress made on this issue in the coming months will determine WTO members' ability to meet their Doha commitments to provide for a genuine Development agenda.

Signed by the President and all Vice-Presidents of OriGIn to show that this is a truly international request.

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