

origin

Organisation for an International Geographical Indications Network

The birth of the GI family

Report on the GI Days :
Geneva, June 10th-11th, 2003

June 10 - 9:00 am. Geneva: open sky and temperature around 22°C. The sun is rising slowly when a bunch of Asian, Latin-American, African and European faces slowly approach the doors of the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO), just a few yards away from the quiet waters of the lake Lemman. They seem a bit lost. They do not know it is going to be a hot day...

Geographical Indication (GI) producers coming from more than 25 countries around the world met at the wonderful building of the WMO. Rapidly, delegates set up their stand, displayed their products and started to exchange views and experience on Geographical Indications.

At 3 pm, more than 60 GI producers met for the official opening of the GI Days. All delegates introduced themselves and made a short presentation of their products. This was an intense moment as everyone was conscious that history was being written. ⇒



Cécé Kpohomou,
Maurice Kamano (Guinea) and
Tomislav Galovic (Croatia).
Photos: Per Atteslander

Foreword of the president

It is now about three weeks that we all met in Geneva to create ORIGIN, but I feel it is time to say a word to you all.

June 10th and 11th witnessed a group of producers from all over the world writing history: we created the first international organisation that represents the views of producers and right-holders of Geographical Indications. You will find in this issue an account of our days in Geneva so we can all revive the magic of that moment.

We all made tremendous efforts to be in Geneva, we all travelled many miles to be there... but it paid off: we were all there, at the cradle of international trade and we made our voice heard loud and clear. The WTO listened to us. The WIPO listened to us. The European Commission listened to us. We should congratulate ourselves for this.

We all have now been vested with the collective responsibility of defending our traditions, our knowledge, our culture... who we are. We are just beginning to do this: ORIGIN is just the vehicle and our meeting in Geneva, just the beginning. The task ahead of us is daunting, but I am, as Commissioner Lamy said of himself, neither optimistic, nor pessimistic: I am resolved and we will get there.

My vice-presidents and myself are working hard on a number of projects that I will present to your consideration in November in Alicante, Spain, for our second meeting of ORIGIN. In this occasion, I want to thank my vice-president for Europe, Mr Enrique Garrigos, President of the Tujon de Jijona and Alicante, for kindly volunteering to organise such an event.

Some of these projects and priorities are outlined elsewhere in this newsletter. You will see that we remain ambitious. ORIGIN does not deserve less than that.

We will try to have an issue of this newsletter every three months. But I will be grateful for your suggestions and contributions that you can send me at info@origin-gi.com.

Pedro Echeverria, president of Origin



⇒Three groups (English, French and Spanish) started working on a draft declaration while the group of spokesmen and women prepared their presentations to the WTO and WIPO for the next day.

At 6.30 pm, the plenary session was re-convened. After discussing proposed amendments - surprisingly very similar among the working groups -, participants unanimously adopted the Origin Declaration (see www.origin-gi.com) calling for a better protection and promotion of GIs at international level.

They also agreed to the creation of ORIGIN (ORganisation for an International Geographical Indications Network) and designated Pedro Echeverria, as the organisation's President for the coming 6 months. Pedro is a producer of Antigua coffee from Guatemala and the President of the Asociacion de Productores de Café Genuino Antigua.

Calling for results in Cancun: meeting with the WTO

June 11 - 9 am. A delegation representing Africa, Asia, Latin and North America, Eastern and Western Europe met with Deputy Director General Thompson-Florès of the World Trade Organisation.

ORIGIN in the media

The creation of ORIGIN was echoed in many radio and TV programmes as well as in numerous media press stories (most of them are on Origin's website), including:

- Financial Times
- Le Figaro
- EFE
- El Economista
- Dow Jones International
- Etc...



Agnes Nyaga, (Tea Board of Kenya) explained that GIs are important for all countries around the world, not only for economic and social reasons, but also for keeping diversification and passing tradition and knowledge to future generations. She pointed out that this is one of the only files discussed before the WTO in which there is no North-South division.

Anna Magyar for the Hungarian Salmi producers stressed that better GI protection will benefit consumers who must be properly informed and not mislead as to the true origin of products. She insisted on the employment created in her region thanks to the GIs.

Marie Anne Rainville from Canada said: «It is time to stop considering GIs as a European privilege». She explained that many producers in her country are looking into developing GIs and this is why they want a better protection of the savoir-faire through intellectual property rights at international level.

Bernard Pellicier, producer of French cheese Beaufort, told WTO representatives that GI producers deserve to be protected against abuses of their name. He explained how GI products are rooted in particular regions which give them their specificity. He called for a specific and efficient GI protection system that

would complement the one that exists for trademarks.

Brigadier Anil Adlakha, representing Basmati Rice producers, made a plea for help. He explained that GI producers need a better protection of GIs at international level, in particular the extension of the protection currently granted to wines and spirits to all products. He insisted on the urgency for WTO members to agree to launch negotiations on the extension at the next ministerial meeting in Cancun. «It is now or never», he concluded.

Pedro Echeverria stressed the importance of ORIGIN as a vehicle to promote the views of GI producers around the world. He insisted on the need for the WTO to deliver on this issue in Cancun because «GIs are essential parts of our culture that we want to keep».

Mr. Francisco Thompson-Florès said that he had heard the message: «This is a question of life or death for some regions and developing countries». He concluded by saying that he expected Cancun to bring good news to GI producers: «I hope this time it will be different because developed countries know that it is an important issue for developing countries».

Getting organised: one ORIGIN Representative by Continent

After hearing a short report on the WTO visit, more than 150 GI producers agreed to a proposal for a way forward made by ORIGIN's President, Pedro Echeverria. He nominated representatives of the organisation for each continent to assist him in the daunting task of giving a body to a very lively new entity: ORIGIN. The following Vice-Presidents were appointed:

- VP Asia: Brig. Anil Adlakha (India)
- VP Africa: Agnes Nyaga (Kenya)
- VP Eastern Europe: Tomislav Galovic (Croatia)
- VP Western Europe: Enrique Garrigos (Spain)
- VP North America: Marie Anne Rainville (Canada)

Sharing GI producers' concerns with the world: meeting the press

Representatives of ORIGIN gave a press conference at 11 am. The Ambassadors from India, the European Communities and Switzerland also joined the meeting with the press to express their support to a better protection of Geographical Indications.

Pedro Echeverria, Brig. Anil Adlakha, Marie Anne Rainville, Anna Magyar, Leo Bertozzi (for the Parmesan producers) and Maurice Kamano (producer of pineapples from Guinea Conakry) explained to more than 30 journalists the importance of GIs for countries all over the world. Through concrete examples, they highlighted the fact that the current protection of GIs is inadequate as it does not fence off legitimate producers from usurpation and does not prevent consumers from being misled.

not producing it in the specific area of origin. The WTO Members, in Cancun, have a unique opportunity to improve the protection of our products».

The Indian, European Communities and Swiss Ambassadors welcomed the creation of ORIGIN and stressed their commitment for better protection of GIs in the context of the WTO Doha Development Round.



As all the participants, Agnes Nyaga from Kenya signed the Origin Declaration

countries and regions. Commissioner Lamy answered to questions from GI producers on the likelihood of positive results in Cancun, technical assistance to developing countries, the TRIPs Agreement discrimination between GI wines and spirits and the other GI products.

He concluded by saying: «The European Commission will be at your side. And our door is open to your representatives to continue the dialogue.» (Read the full speech of Pascal Lamy on our website, www.origin-gi.com)

ORIGIN to become an NGO and official partner to work with WIPO

A large delegation of GI producers (Canada, India -Basmati Rice-, France -Cheeses-, Guinea -pineapples-, Italy -Parma ham-, Kenya, Macedonia, Mauritius -Rodrigues Honey-, Morocco -Argan Oil-, Spain -Jamón

Join ORIGIN in action

Representatives of ORIGIN will seek to strongly defend ORIGIN's position at a number of international events in conformity with our Geneva Declaration.

If other ORIGIN members would like to participate in any of those events (see page 6), please do not hesitate to let us know by email at: info@origin-gi.com

Pedro Echeverria pointed out to the urgency of showing unity among producers in view of the forthcoming WTO Ministerial Conference in Cancun. He illustrated this need with a real life experience concerning the Antigua denomination: «The producers of Antigua coffee are held back from fully realizing the reputation of their specific product because of other producers using the name of Antigua for their coffee while

Getting Support: EU Trade Commissioner Lamy Welcomes the Creation of ORIGIN

Early afternoon, EU Trade Commissioner Lamy talked to GI producers through videoconference. He congratulated producers on the creation of ORIGIN, «the ideal platform to make known the quality expectations of agricultural producers, as well as the ideal forum to facilitate transfers of technology and know-how, which developing country producers need so much». He stressed the importance of geographical indications, as a tool for development, a wealth multiplier and as an instrument to encourage a more balanced distribution of added value. He underlined that they stimulate quality and consequently strengthen competitiveness while contributing to the identity of the heritage of our

WIPO's Facts

- WIPO is one of the main providers of technical assistance for developing countries on Intellectual Property including geographical indications

- WIPO also administers an arbitration system that permits to expunge domain names that include or consist of a trademarks. Yet, GIs cannot use that system.

de Teruel- and Thailand -Thai rice and silk-) met representatives of the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) at 4 pm, spearheaded by WIPO Director Ernesto Rubio. Through concrete examples, GI producers illustrated the importance of GI protection. In particular, Mr. Buntoon Wongseelashote, representing Thai products, explained how repeated abuses of the name «Jasmin Rice» has forced Thai Rice

producers to change the name of their product to «Hom Mali Rice». He said, «we have lost ourselves, we have lost our identity. We have lost the loyalty of consumers, therefore markets. However, we felt that only by changing name and protecting it through a GI, we would be able to secure our future».

Asked how WIPO could help to better protect and promote GIs, Ernesto Rubio and his colleagues (D.Croze, M.Geuze, K.Lee Rata and M.Hopperger) explained all the work that is being done by WIPO on GIs. E.Rubio congratulated GI producers for the creation of ORIGIN and proposed Origin to request to be admitted as a Non Governmental Organisation observer at WIPO. He went further saying, «I hope this is just the beginning of our dialogue». He invited ORIGIN to take an active part in the work of the Special Committee on Trademarks, Industrial Designs and Geographical Indications (SCT) as well as in the work of the Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore.

Exchanging experience and expertise: the producers forum

Meanwhile, producers were exchanging experience and expertise in the context of the producers' forum that took place between 3 and 5 pm at the WMO. Delegates listened to several presentations made by experts. (Find some of the presentations on our website).

- B.O'Connor, lawyer and author of «GIs in national and international law» on the legal protection granted to GIs at national and international level.
- Helena Lejtnarova, Budweiser



Guatemala, Julius Kinoti for the Coffee Board of Kenya and Carlo Simonetti, UCODEP, for the Jamao coffee experience in the Dominican Republic clearly outlined that GI is a good vehicle to distinguish specialty coffees from the bulk of coffee production. The concrete experience of both Café de Antigua and Kenyan Coffees clearly underline the impact of coffee ap-

- Budvar, Czech Republic.
- Guendalina Bellavita et Max Hool, Fédération Horlogère Suisse, Switzerland
- Anna Magyar, Pick Szeged Rt, Hungary
- Agnes Nyaga, Tea Board of Kenya
- N.K. Das, Tea Board of India, Darjeeling Tea
- H. De Alwys, Sri Lanka Tea Board, Ceylon Tea

pellations on price output. The case of Jamao coffee was also worthy of note, since it showed that the development of the geographical indication was a vehicle to harmonize the standards of production for coffee around the mountain of Jamao (Dominican Republic). The Jamao Coffee Consortio that manages the GI also provided with a structure to manage a system of micro-credits (permitting that the producers could be paid at the moment that they delivered their coffee beans) and a direct link with the Italian processors, which fully enables fair trade. Last but not least, Coffee GIs, because of the added value, clearly illustrated the case of GIs as being a tool to stop rural migration, improve employment conditions and safeguard the rural and environmental landscape.



Among all products, a local one: the «longeole», a typical sausage from Geneva

Sharing food for thoughts: reception of WTO and WIPO delegates

The GI Days concluded around an exceptional buffet of GI products from all over the world prepared by Hervé Mons, Meilleur Ouvrier Fromager de France. This took place in a very friendly atmosphere where the GI family regrouped around products accompanied by the Choir of the Gruyère Swiss. Many WIPO and WTO delegates joined the

Round table on GIs and coffee

In this round table, Pedro Echeverria, for Antigua Coffee producers from



To open the evening buffet with origin's president Pedro Echeverria, Swiss Ambassador Mr. Luzius Wasescha and Kenyan Ambassador, Ms. Amina Chawahir Mohamed.

Some products represented in Geneva

- Brasil: Cachaça, cheeses, fruits, etc.
- Bulgaria: Mineral Water
- Canada: Ice Cider from l'Île-aux-Coudres, Sturgeon caviar from Temiscamingue Lake, etc.
- Croatia: Slavonski paprika sausages.
- Dominican Republic: Jamao Coffee.
- France: cheeses, Prunes of Agen.
- Germany: Knives and Co from Solingen.
- Guatemala: Coffee de Antigua.
- Guinea: Pineapples from Guinea, banana from Conakry, Chili from Mamou, dried mangoes.

reception, including Mr. Supachai, Director General of the WTO. Swiss Ambassador Mr. Luzius Wasescha, Delegate of the Swiss Government for Trade Agreements and Kenyan Ambassador, Ms. Amina Chawahir Mohamed, opened the reception by stressing the importance of this gathering of GI producers. They indicated their willingness to achieve results in Cancun in order to secure better protection of GI products at International level.

Pedro Echeverria, President of ORIGIN, thank all the participants for their participation and support. He stressed that ORIGIN will be present and vocal in the debate on GIs in the coming months and years to come.



The surprise of the day: the visit of Mr Supachai Panitchpakdi, General director of the WTO.

- Hungary: salami, paprika.
- India: Basmati rice, Darjeeling tea
- Italy: Parma Ham, Parmigiano Reggiano.
- Kenya: coffee, tea.
- Macedonia: cheeses, wines, mineral water.
- Mauritius: honey, little chili, pickles, red chili pasta, etc.
- Morocco: argan oil.
- Romania: mineral water.
- Spain: Teruel Ham, Tujon de Jijona, Tujon de Alicante.
- Sri Lanka: tea.
- Switzerland: cheeses, spirits, meat, bread, watches, wines, etc.
- Czech Republic: beer, honey.
- Thailand: silk, Hom Mali Rice.
- Tunisia: mosaic, tapestry, etc.
- Turkey: Erzincan copper engravures, Mersin cezerye, Sümer carpets, apricots, etc.

ORIGIN priorities for the coming months

In the coming months, ORIGIN will focus on lobbying International Organizations and national governments to get better protection of GIs in the WTO framework. The focus will be mainly on the WTO Ministerial meeting of Cancun, September 10-14, where the question of the extension of the protection will be discussed.

We will therefore:

1. Prepare a position paper on WTO negotiations on geographical indications
2. Take part in all relevant meetings on GIs (see list below)
3. Continue press presence

We will also work on improving communication for ORIGIN members and with all stakeholders, requesting the admission of ORIGIN as observer in international organisations dealing with GIs and expanding ORIGIN's membership.

Finally, we will work hard to ensure that our second ORIGIN meeting is a success. Please already put these dates in your agendas!

An Indian Brigadier's farewell... with a twist!

At the end of the meeting at the WTO, the GI producers offered Mr Thompson-Flores a basket containing many delicious GI products coming from all over the world... with a promise to bring a bigger one if the WTO would deliver! Brig. Adlakha dixit.

ORIGIN in action

Date	Place	Organiser	Nature	ORIGIN Representatives
9-11 July 2003	San Francisco, US	WIPO	International Conference on Geographical Indications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Luis Berenguer: Tujon de Jijona and Alicante • Gilles Besse: Association pour la promotion des AOC-IGP (Switzerland), spirits producer • Mr.Naba Kumar Das: Chairman, Tea Board of India, Kolkata • Pedro Echeverria: President - to be confirmed
21st July 2003	Bangkok, Thailand	EC	Conference on Geographical Indications and Thailand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Luis Berenguer: Tujon de Jijona and Alicante • Sopan Manathanya Bangsue: Thai Rice producers • Buntoon Wongseelashote: Thai Silk producers
October 2003	Isquia, Italy	EC	Conference on Intellectual Property. Session «IP North-South »	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be decided
End of 2003 - Beginning of 2004	Beijing, China	EC	Seminar on Geographical Indications in China	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be decided

Second ORIGIN Meeting
Alicante • Spain • November 27-28, 2003