

oriGIn newsletter



From the President

Dear oriGIn Members, dear GI Friends,

A few months after my election as President of oriGIn, I would like to share with you a few thoughts on the Organization I have the honour to run.

First of all, my sincere thanks go to my predecessor, Mr. Luis Fernando Samper, for his tremendous work, which brought oriGIn to a level of excellence which I am fully committed to maintain and consolidate.

As a matter of fact, 2009 has been another excellent year for our organization. At the Teruel General Assembly, we have had our largest gathering ever of producers and specialists. A special thank to our friends of the "Consejo Regulador de la Denominación de Origen Jamón de Teruel" for the organization of such an event.

The adoption of "Teruel Declaration", which expresses oriGIn's full support for the "WTO Majority Proposal" on GI Extension and the Multilateral Register for all products currently discussed at the WTO, was in my opinion the General Assembly key moment. We are delighted to note that the Teruel Declaration was formally endorsed, among others, by one of our members in the USA - the Kona Coffee Farmers Association (KCFA). The KCFA called on the State of Hawaii and the United States Federal Government to actively support the principles of the Teruel Declaration. oriGIn has been following and encouraging the creation of a national GI movement in the USA. I am glad to announce in this respect that early next year, as a result of the collaboration with various American experts, oriGIn will launch a publication on the GI potential in the USA.

In 2009, we have also welcomed several new members from Jamaica, India, Portugal, Honduras, the USA, Brazil, Mexico, Italy, Vietnam, Kenya, France, Peru, Indonesia, Serbia and Morocco. This confirms once again to what extent GIs are a truly global phenomenon.

I am also extremely grateful to all our members for their participation and involvement in the XV Anniversary of the "Consejo Regulador del Tequila", recently celebrated in Guadalajara. I have been impressed by the number of associations of producers and

institutions that participated and contributed to the success of this event.

Having said that, 2010 will be an extremely challenging year: the Doha Round talks might be revamped following the 7th WTO Ministerial Conference celebrated in December this year, the debate on quality policy within the EU will be translated into legislative proposals that will affect GIs, the issue of trademark registrations containing geographical names will be debated and practical solutions will have to be found.

I feel confident that through our global network we will be able to have a say in the discussions on the most urgent issues for the future of GIs.

I take this opportunity to wish all of you and your families my best wishes for the forthcoming holiday season.



Ramón González Figueroa

Unity is Strength!

In 2009, oriGIn developed a number of strategic partnerships with prestigious counterparts.

We supported the Stephen Rayner Award of the International Association of Independent Law Firms (INTERLEGES). The 2009 Award went to a Swedish student who is completing his legal studies at the University of Stanford, for an excellent paper on "Geographical Indications and Trademarks: Synergies and Conflicts".

oriGIn became a partner of two prestigious post-graduate programs: the Master in Fine Food & Beverage (MFFB) of the SDA Bocconi and the Master in Intellectual Property and Information Society Law (LL.M.) of the University of Alicante. Following those agreements, we were asked to provide expertise on GIs within the framework MFFB as well as to offer internship opportunities to the LL.M. students who wish to complete their program through a practical experience in the field of GIs.

Always in 2009, we launched an E-Forum on GI-related issues in collaboration with the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Development ACP-EU (CTA), an institution of the ACP Secretariat and the EU working in the field of information for development.

Finally, we organized a number of international events in cooperation with various partners, such as a round table at the European Parliament in Brussels on the future of the EU quality policy in cooperation with the Conseil National des Appellations d'Origine Laitières (CNAOL), the Confédération Nationale des Producteurs de Vins et Eaux-de-Vie de Vin à Appellations d'Origine Contrôlée (CNAOC), the Conferencia Española de Consejos Reguladores Vitivinícolas (CECRV), the Confederazione Nazionale dei Consorzi Volontari per la Tutela delle Denominazioni dei Vini Italiani (Federdoc), the Instituto dos Vinhos do Douro e do Porto IVDP and the Associazione Italiana Consorzi Indicazioni Geografiche (AICIG).

Cooperation makes the partners mutually stronger and, in this respect, oriGIn will continue and strengthen such a policy in 2010.

Massimo Vittori, Secretary General

oriGIn set ambitious targets for the next biennium

Ida Puzone, oriGIn

Over the years Teruel, the city in which Mudejar art found one of its most magnificent expression, maintained not only its historical and artistic heritage but also the gastronomical and agricultural identity. The *Jamón de Teruel*, produced in this area, is an example of success stories among the appellations of origin worldwide.

The city of Teruel was the ideal place to celebrate the IV General Assembly of oriGIn on 24-26 June 2009. This international meeting of Geographical Indications (GIs) generated much enthusiasm in the region. The Prince and Princess of Asturias, from the Spanish Royal Family, welcomed a delegation of oriGIn.



The Prince and Princess of Asturias welcome a delegation of oriGIn in Teruel

At the General Assembly, oriGIn had its largest gathering ever of GI producers and specialists. Over 150 participants from some 40 countries like South Africa, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, China, Colombia, Croatia, Cuba, USA, Egypt, Georgia, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya, Morocco, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Sudan and Venezuela among others, attended the event.

It was a unique opportunity for producers to exchange experiences, celebrate their common achievements and set new goals for the future.

During the three-day conference key issues concerning GIs were discussed. The debate highlighted the urgent need to fight misappropriations of protected GI names as well as their use to market fake products. Moreover, the session on "Reconciling the Protection of Trademarks and GIs" raised the problems generated by the practice of various national offices of not refusing ex officio trademarks containing protected geographical names.



With respect to the crucial subject of the international protection of the GIs, the Assembly adopted the Teruel Declaration, in which the members of oriGIn, recognizing that the GIs play a fundamental role in the economy and the development of the nations, renewed their total support for WTO "Majority Proposal" on GI Extension and the Multilateral Register.

The full text of the Declaration is available at:

http://origin.technomind.be/fileadmin/origin/PDFs/English/OriGIn_in_Action/OriGIn_Events/Teruel_2009/Teruel_Declaration.pdf

During the plenary session were renewed the bodies of the Organization and Mr. Ramón González Figueroa, Director General of the "Consejo Regulador del Tequila (CRT)" was elected by consensus as new President of oriGIn. "I wish to express my deep appreciation for the trust given to the CRT to lead oriGIn, an organization that plays such an important role for worldwide GI producers. I am fully committed to work for our values and, with your support, take the Organization to new heights", said Mr. Ramón González Figueroa following his election.

The General Assembly concluded its works with a special event: the *First oriGIn Culinary Award*. The "Palacio de Exposiciones y Congresos de Teruel" became a *big kitchen* where eight Chefs from restaurants from the county of Teruel prepared various dishes based on the 52 GI products from different parts of the world. A Jury, chaired by Mr. José Manuel Varó, a famous Chef from Alicante, selected the menu prepared by Mr. Kamal Robati, Chef at the restaurant "Botero", as the winner of the award. The evaluation was based on the ingredients' combination as well as taste and creativity of the various dishes.

The success of the First oriGIn Culinary Art Award showed how quality and gastronomy have become important in our society. Such activities raise public awareness on the quality of ingredients and increase interest in origin food. Typical products are not only guarantee of origin and quality but also a way to rediscover local identity and traditions in a globalized society.

Between History and Legend: Chronicle of an Expected Celebration

Team of Consejo Regulador del Tequila (CRT)

It took nine months of careful planning and preparation to celebrate 15 years of work. Nine months during which the *Consejo Regulador del Tequila* (CRT) took special care on every detail so that this celebration would not be just any other party, but an occasion for giving thanks to everyone who has supported the development of this institution and organizing an event in which the prestige that Tequila has today in Mexico and in the whole World would be highlighted.



Mr. Miguel Angel Dominguez Morales, President of the CRT, during the official opening of the event in Guadalajara

On November 3rd and through November 7th, the National Chamber of Commerce (CANACO), the Hospicio Cabañas and the Tequila Trail on the Agave Landscape, hosted this "Tequila Celebration". It brought together art, culture, knowledge, opportunities, success stories and, of course, a lot of flavour!

In the spirit of the event the CRT organized an International Seminar on Geographical Indications. It comprised of panels discussions on relevant GIs issues in a national and international perspective. Speakers of over 40 institutions from 20 countries participated in this celebration, including personalities from the Mexican Government, foreign authorities, and representatives of several GI groups from all over the world. Important national and international organizations attended the Seminar: among others, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the World Customs Organization (WCO), the African Regional Intellectual Property Organization (ARIPO), the Organization for an International Geographical Indications Network (oriGIn) - actually the CRT holds its Presidency - the National Chamber of the Tequila Industry (CNIT), the Mexican Institute of Industrial Property (IMPI) and ORIGEN España, the Spanish Association of Appellations of Origin.

In order to promote and better protect GIs in the region, oriGIn, together with Mexican and Latin American GIs groups, held a meeting with the representatives of the Regional Cooperative Program for the Technological Development of the Coffee Culture in Central America (PROMECAFE), the Brazilian Institute of Cachaça, the Ministry of Agriculture of Brazil, the National Institute for the Defense of Competence and Protection of Intellectual Property (INDECOPI) from Peru and the Mexican Regulatory Councils. In this context, oriGIn presented its objectives and activities and each Council shared its current situation, as well as the interest to become member of the GI global network. As a result of this meeting, oriGIn welcomed as new members *Café Marcala* from Honduras as well as *Chile Habanero de la Peninsula de Yucatán*, *Café de Veracruz* and *Consejo Regulador del Queso* from Mexico. The meeting concluded with a proposal agreed by participants to establish a national GI association, led by the CRT, aimed to strengthen GIs in Mexico.

Later on, the CRT signed six fundamental agreements with other national and international Regulatory Councils and other organizations relating the protection of Tequila in other regions.

Moreover, the CRT staff collected 1,201 Tequila bottles and exhibited the many varieties of Tequila. The number of Tequila bottles set a new record that was recognized and certified by Guinness World Records adjudicator, Ralph Hannah, during the Gala Dinner of the XV Anniversary on November 6th. The Gala Dinner took place at the Hospicio Cabañas, recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. During the Gala Dinner more than 40 GI products from different countries were used to prepare the menu dishes exclusively based on GI products were served.

Finally, on Saturday November 7th, 100-persons-tour in different distilleries was organized to show the elaboration process of Tequila. Guests lived the Tequila Trail and discovered all of the region's riches.



The 15th Anniversary of the Consejo Regulador del Tequila was an inclusive event and an opportunity to show the whole world what Mexico has to offer, emphasizing the elements of territory, traditions and culture. The perfect combination of innovation and modernity with tradition and ancestral customs make the Agave-Tequila production chain a unique experience. Cheers!

oriGIn defends the interest of GI producers: the Green Paper on Quality

David Thual & Fanny Lossy, oriGIn's experts on EU issues

Since the launch of the reflection on the future of the quality policy and in particular of the geographical indications, in the European Union (EU), oriGIn got strongly involved in the defense of the interests of the geographical indications (GI) producers.

At the end of 2008, oriGIn was one of the first European associations to participate to the public consultation on the Green Paper on the agricultural product quality policy published in October 2008 by the European Commission. oriGIn took position on several essential issues concerning the protection and the promotion of GI in the EU. oriGIn then became involved in the discussions on the subject which took place in the European Parliament (EP). We notably co-organized, on 3rd December 2008, a round table on the theme of *the future of the GI in the European Union* in collaboration with the Rumanian MEP Maria Petre (EPP-ED) who was given by the EP the responsibility to write a draft report on the Green Paper. We also tabled several amendments to the final report which were adopted in March 2009.

Following the Green Paper, the Commission published, on 28 May 2009, a communication on the agricultural product quality policy which specified its strategic orientations on the possible modification of the quality policy. oriGIn immediately reacted to the proposals and published, the same day, a press release to remind its positions. We notably emphasized that the European legislation should recognize a role of the organizations in charge of the management of the GI in the management of the production, the protection and the protection of the GI. We also defended the fact that the two concepts of Protected Denomination of Origin (PDO) and Protected Geographical Indications (PGI) should be maintained as such, while supporting a closer link between the three currently existing systems (wines, spirits and other food products) and preserving the respective specificities of each system. oriGIn supported the European Commission's proposals aiming at clarifying the relationships between trademarks and GIs, and concerning the use of GI in the sale denominations of transformed products.

On international matters, oriGIn encouraged the EU to continue to play a strong role at the international level to obtain a better

protection of GIs, notably at the WTO as well as through the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA) and bilateral agreements.

Finally, oriGIn campaigned for the EU to launch specific initiatives to promote GIs in third countries through technical assistance and promotion programs so that they could assess the socio-economical interest of this protection tool.

To make sure its voice was heard, oriGIn co-organized, on 29 September 2009, another round table at the European Parliament on the theme: *"the Future of the EU quality policy: can we guarantee the quality without managing the production?"* This round table gathered more than 150 participants, of whom Member of the European Parliament, representatives of the Commission and of the Member States.



Round table at the European Parliament on: *"the Future of the EU quality policy: can we guarantee the quality without managing the production?"*

In September, the EP gave Mr. Giancarlo Scottà (EFD, Italy) the responsibility to write a draft report on the communication of the Commission. oriGIn and its members actively worked with Mr. Scottà in order to incorporate several elements in his report. We also tabled several amendments, notably on the management of the production volumes and the use of GI as ingredients in prepared food. In the meantime, oriGIn presented its opinion on the Commission's communication to the rapporteurs of two other institutions which also work on the subject: the Committee of the Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee.

Since the publication of the Green Paper in 2008, oriGIn has been playing a leading role in the defense of the interests of GI producers in the European Union, whether it is towards the policy makers or the media. Thanks to its actions, the crucial support of the European Parliament on essential subjects for the sector was obtained. The Commission should published legislative proposals in this subject at the end of 2010.

oriGIn will thus keep on working in this subject so that these proposals reflect the interests and the needs of GI producers.

oriGIn and the CTA launch an E-forum on GIs

Monique NGO Bagal, oriGIn

In African Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP), only few GIs are formally protected, while several origin products exist. In light of this, and following a workshop on GIs in the context of ACP countries organized in Montpellier in March 2009, oriGIn and the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) launched an electronic forum on GIs in June 2009.

At regular intervals, modules on technical information on GIs are posted. Based on predefined topics, the modules work in the following way: providing key definitions relating GIs and clarifying issues linked to national and international legal frameworks as well as regional systems (in particular potential export markets for ACP GIs such as the European Union). Each topic opens a one-month delay for participants to submit questions and/or comments on it. At the close of this period, oriGIn distributes an "outcome of discussion" so that a digest of the main points raised is available. In 2010, the operational aspects in setting-up a GI and «success stories» in this field are to be discussed.

Some 200 members from 52 different countries are currently enrolled in the Forum. Around fifty questions and comments were posted so far concerning the setting-up of GIs in structuring agricultural fields. As an example, Kenyan coffee producers who are based in the central and eastern part of the country, mentioned their concerns for the registration of the GI «Coffee from Kenya», notably given the challenges to identify a common geographical zone of production. How can all the producers of Kenyan coffee be protected by the same GI irrespective of the region of production? On the legal side, the structure of national and international norms was discussed within the Forum: for the countries members of OAPI, like Niger, is it necessary to elaborate other internal legal texts on the top of the international Bangui Agreement?

Moreover, the E-Forum is an ideal platform for posting articles and breaking news on GIs. As a way of example, the information on seizure of imitations of the cheese «Parmigiano-Reggiano» issued on October 14th by the Court of Cologne (Germany) on an important "Food and Beverages" Fair", was promptly posted by oriGIn.

By virtue of its diverse composition, the E-Forum is a tremendous opportunity for exchange, networking, knowledge as well as experiences and good practices sharing.

The theoretical and practical duality of this Forum reinforces its efficacy and increases the chances of repercussions on the group of stakeholders: ACP producers, representative of

producers and policy-makers. For more information, see oriGIn website at: <http://origin.technomind.be/525.0.html>

GIs Magna

Angela Garcia Medina, oriGIn

Has been a consensus in the global market to denominate certain special products by the name of their origin place; such products are identified as "Geographical Indications" (GIs). Such an instrument gives protection against the use of geographical names by unauthorized parties. A Geographical Indication distinguishes special productions among the ones of their kind. The geographical name calls not only for the origin place but also identifies a special and unique product of intrinsic value. Likewise, a GI recognizes local producers' efforts, who leverage from key characteristics or determined quality of their geographical area, to realize unique goods.

It is fair to recognize the effort of all GI producers, who find and have to face multiple challenges in their paths. The process to obtain a GI requires constant dedication. Moreover, the process to protect a GI call for a proactive approach on matters related to the legal protection. In fact the threat of not-authorized parties taking an unfair advantage from the reputation of well-known GIs is alarming, as the international legal framework remains insufficient and weak. Without doubts, achieving effective protection for a GI is indeed a challenge.

Even though the legal component is fundamental, it is not the only factor to understand the GI phenomenon. For artisans, spirits or agricultural producers, GIs are tools for sustainable development. The multiplicity of active roles displayed by a GI includes not only commercial issues but also social and environmental ones; it involves the creation of jobs opportunities (including in related sectors such as tourism) and all this enriches the geographical area.

On the other hand, a product which carries a GI brings about incomparable benefits for the consumers. A GI identifies a certain quality in a market of globalized products; stands out traditions, enriching welfare and health; and above all, certifies products that develop their origin places and promotes a legitimate trade, characterized by fair benefits.

oriGIn carries out an integral work that concerns not only campaigns for the establishment of an efficient international legal system of protection, but also activities touching upon the multiple aspects related to the sustainable development of GIs. Thanks to the oriGIn's network, producers work together in those areas that play a key role for the quality and sustainability of GIs.