

WTO: Talks On GI Register Start, Tied To Other Negotiations In July 2015 Deadline

Posted By [Catherine Saez](#) On 12/12/2014 @ 3:57 pm In [Biodiversity/Genetic Resources/Biotech, Enforcement, English, IP Policies, Language, Subscribers, Themes, Trademarks/Geographical Indications/Domains, Traditional and Indigenous Knowledge, Venues, WIPO, WTO/TRIPS](#) | [No Comments](#)

An informal meeting of World Trade Organization members on a long-discussed register on geographical indications of wines and spirits today showed that member states are committed but not yet inclined to delve into the issues until they have a clearer picture of other sensitive topics of the Doha Round.

On 12 December an "open-ended" informal Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Special Session was convened to discuss the register again, after [discussions in April](#) ^[1] showed that member states were not ready to move forward, according to the WTO.

The TRIPS "special sessions" relate to the negotiations on a multilateral register for geographical indications of wines and spirits. In TRIPS, wines and spirits enjoy a higher level of protection than other geographical indications.

Discussions on the register have been going on for a number of years, with no agreement.

The discussions have been revived after a new deadline of July 2015 was set to lay down plans on how to complete de Doha Round talks, to which the register is part of. The new deadline was spurred by a breakthrough in the General Council on 27 November.

According to a WTO official, today's meeting chair, Ambassador Dacio Castillo of Honduras, told participant that time is short. But member countries did not seem ready to start the "hard talking" until they have a clearer picture of other key subjects of the negotiating round, the source said. Those subjects include agriculture, non-agricultural market access, and services.

"1 July 2015 is only 200 days away — we will have to think concretely about how to structure our work next year and how to get back to the substance of our mandate," Dacio Castillo was quoted as saying.

Following a proposal by Castillo, an informal information meeting is expected to be convened in February 2015, with a summary of what had happened up to 2011, when special sessions ceased to be convened regularly, according to the WTO official.

He added that the February meeting could also include "information on developments outside the WTO that might have a bearing on the talks, such as bilateral or regional trade agreements, and the proposed revision of the [World Intellectual Property Organization Lisbon Agreement for the Protection of Appellations of Origin and their International Registration]."

During today's meeting, according to the official, one group repeated its position that talks on the register should be part of a package that includes a proposal to extend the higher protection to other geographical indications, and a proposal to require in particular that patent applications disclose the origin of genetic resources and any associated traditional knowledge.

This group, including Brazil, China, the European Union, and Switzerland, sponsored a document in July 2008 on the subject.

A number of other WTO member states who had sponsored a joint proposal in March 2011, restated their view that the special session negotiations should focus only on the geographical indications register. This group includes Argentina, Australia, the United States, Japan, and New Zealand.

Related Articles:

- [WTO Back At The Discussion Table On GI Register](#) ^[3]
 - [New Chair For WTO GI Register Talks Seeks New Ideas](#) ^[4]
 - [WTO GI Register Draft Report Sees Areas Of Convergence](#) ^[5]
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URLs in this post:

[1] discussions in April:

http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news14_e/trip_01apr14_e.htm

[2] Flickr – Uncalno Tekno:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/uncalno/8538709738/in/photolist-e1x7Vq-5wTWD6-7zMAwp-7zMAV4-xPeM8-ChrFA-dbN7kZ-7u5Ng2-7YkVTR-mFAzP-5E5NEu-5ZFXQf-DWRfp-4oVpgX-4qncir-7Kik6e-8csXJ2-gxkmN-9DJrdR-eL74rj-JgU4t-29dEH-xDLWk-kEQVe4-5zbE2c-aCR5E4-8GTsat-oWPTCy-DPxjE-pRtN9n-8sZ2r4-mTHwyS-ndCvN-a7FVzV-2bvGBS-t2Wf-hKtLN1-4oH85H-96WykC-53GNZf-a5DFej-bpV1ef-X2NR-dejDX1-d78h3m-65dNk7-hFgAmC-dx5Yv8-5egq2z-4jKc56>

[3] WTO Back At The Discussion Table On GI Register : <http://www.ip-watch.org/2014/12/08/wto-back-at-the-discussion-table-on-gi-register/>

[4] New Chair For WTO GI Register Talks Seeks New Ideas : <http://www.ip-watch.org/2012/03/23/new-chair-for-wto-gi-register-talks-to-seek-new-ideas/>

[5] WTO GI Register Draft Report Sees Areas Of Convergence : <http://www.ip-watch.org/2009/11/23/wto-gi-register-draft-report-sees-areas-of-convergence/>