

Mr. Francis Gurry
Director General
World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)
34, chemin des Colombettes,
Geneva, Switzerland

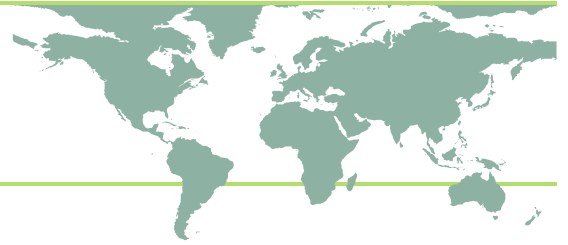
Geneva, 13 March 2017

Re: Presence of the CCFN at the Information Session on Geographical Indications and in other WIPO events

Dear Mr. Gurry,

With respect to the forthcoming Information Session on Geographical Indications, organised on 28 March within the WIPO Standing Committee on the Law of Trademarks, Industrial Designs and Geographical Indications (SCT), we would like to thank you for the invitation to oriGIn and some of its members to discuss from a practical perspective the different protection systems available at national and regional level as well as the emerging issues related to the Internet and the domain name environment.

Meanwhile, we would like to express puzzlement at the presence of the Consortium for Common Food Names (CCFN) at the Information Session on Geographical Indications. Of course we believe that all institutions should have the chance to present their ideas and perspectives. But this should be done in the framework of existing and internationally recognised Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) principles. The CCFN does not limit itself to argue that genericity is an exception to IPRs – Geographical Indications in this case – to be assessed on a case by case at the national level. This would be perfectly compatible with the current international IPRs system. The CCFN goes much further by arguing that “common food names” should be of free use in all jurisdictions worldwide. In other words, the alleged genericity of a name in a given jurisdiction would create “rights” internationally. This is the critical point, which in our view contradicts well established IPRs principles. This is why we are surprised to see the CCFN systematically invited in all WIPO events on Geographical Indications and Trademarks.



In light of the above, should the presence of the CCFN confirmed at the forthcoming Information Session on Geographical Indications, as well as in other WIPO events, we would like the Secretariat to take an official position, to clarify the articulation between IPRs and genericity, and in particular the absence of legal basis in claims arguing any international recognition of the genericity of some food names.

We thank you in advance for the kind attention you will give to this matter. Meanwhile, should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Massimo Vittori in blue ink.

Massimo Vittori
Managing Director of oriGIn

Handwritten signature of Fatima Amheri in blue ink.

Fatima Amheri
President of *Association Marocaine de l'Indication Géographique de l'Huile d'Argane (AMIGHA)* and President of oriGIn

Handwritten signature of Riccardo Deserti in blue ink.

Riccardo Deserti
Director of the *Consorzio Parmigiano-Reggiano* and Vice-President of oriGIn for Europe

CC: Ms. Binying Wang, Deputy Director General, Brands and Designs Sector (WIPO), Mr. David Muls, Senior Director, Law and Legislative Advice Division, Brands and Designs Sector (WIPO), Ms. Alexandra Grazioli, Director of the Lisbon Registry, Brands and Designs Sector of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)