



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations

oriGIn

Organization for an International  
Geographical Indications Network

**FAO-oriGIn Series of Webinars on  
"Contributing to SDGs through quality  
linked to geographical origin"**

**"Wrapping-up. The way forward"  
Final meeting**

WEBINAR ORGANIZED ON 2 December 2020, 15:00-17:00 CET

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## Background

Starting in 2017, FAO and oriGIn embarked on a project to support Geographical Indications (GIs) to develop their own sustainability strategies, with the aim of understanding the sustainability dynamics at local level and at the same time taking into account markets and regulatory requirements. Experts were invited to discuss this topic and the way forward, which provided the ground for the Sustainability Strategy for GIs (SSGI), including a roadmap of 4 basic components: Prioritize, Assess, Improve and Communicate. A task force was then established to provide continuous feedback and recommendations for the implementation of SSGI and the tools developed in this framework. After the first tool being developed (a guide and toolkit for producers to identify sustainability topics in their system and to engage in improving them), FAO and oriGIn are now working on relevant indicators to help GI producers in the next SSGI phase related with assessment.

Quality products that are deeply rooted in a given geographical area play a key role in the economy. They can also contribute to social development and the preservation of local resources. Natural features – as well as tradition and culture, typical of certain geographical environments – have the potential to confer products some unique characteristics and reputation, which are valued on the market. Preserving such resources, traditions and quality through Geographical Indications (GIs) can create value (economic, social and environmental) for producers and consumers.

Keeping in mind that the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the point of reference for any strategy towards a more sustainable future, FAO and oriGIn held a series of webinars (October-November 2020) to address how quality linked to geographical origin can contribute to achieve sustainability objectives.

More information about the series of webinars background and objectives @ [https://www.origin-gi.com/images/stories/PDFs/English/Event/2020\\_originfao\\_forum/Sustainability\\_Forum\\_Rev\\_15\\_October2020.pdf](https://www.origin-gi.com/images/stories/PDFs/English/Event/2020_originfao_forum/Sustainability_Forum_Rev_15_October2020.pdf)

[Find out here the series of webinars full calendar and individual programs.](#)

## Objective and agenda

The objective of this final webinar was to present the main findings of each of the 6 thematic webinars of the FAO-oriGIn series, described below with the link to the presentations:

- 27 October 2020,: [Trends in the beverage sector. The case of wine.](#) In collaboration with Equalitas (English).
- 11 November 2020: [How GI strategies can help developing countries pursue sustainability objectives.](#) In collaboration with the Swiss Intellectual Property Institute Switzerland.
- 12 November 2020: [Sustainable management of wild collected products for GIs.](#) In collaboration with European Forest Institute/Incredible network (in English and French).

- 17 November 2020: [Conservation of resources and climate change](#). In collaboration with LIFE TTGG – The Tough Get Going (in English)
- 18 November 2020,: [Contributions of GI to sustainable healthy diets](#). In collaboration with oriGIn-France (in English and French)
- 24 November 2020: [Indigenous people, local communities and traditional knowledge](#). In collaboration with World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) (in English and French)

This webinar intended provide a synthesis of these different perspectives, so as to identify next steps, synergies between projects and possible collaborations between partners to move forward on the GI agenda to contribute to SDGs.

### Agenda :

15:00	Opening Ms. Anna Lartey, Director Food and Nutrition Division, FAO
15:20	<p>Outcomes from the thematic webinars</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Trends in the beverage sector – the case of wine: Mr. Stefano Stefanucci, Equalitas</li> <li>- How GI strategies can help developing countries pursue sustainability objectives: Mr. Erik Thévenod-Mottet, Swiss intellectual Property Office (IPI)</li> <li>- Sustainable management of wild collected products for GI: Mr. Sven Walter, FAO and Mr. Iñazio Martinez, European Forest Institute (EFI)</li> <li>- Conservation of resources and climate change: Mr. Massimo Vittori, oriGIn</li> <li>- Contributions of GI to sustainable healthy diets: Mr. Christophe Chassard, French National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and Environment (INRAE)</li> <li>- Indigenous peoples, local communities and traditional knowledge, Ms. Latha R Nair, Partner, K&amp;S Partners</li> </ul>
16:00	<p>The FAO-oriGIn Sustainability Strategy for GIs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Introduction to the FAO-oriGIn work, Emilie Vandecandelaere</li> <li>- Progress made in the database and toolkits, Luis Fernando Samper</li> </ul>
16:30	Discussion on the way forward
16:55	<p>Wrap-up and conclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Emilie Vandecandelaere, FAO</li> <li>- Massimo Vittori oriGIn</li> </ul>
17:00	End of the meeting

## Main findings

This first edition of the FAO-oriGIn forum on GI sustainability, organized through webinars between October and December in the 2020 edition, was a success with high and lively participation (with some 1000 registered participants). It is expected that knowledge sharing will continue until the next edition, while progressing on the tools developed in the frame of the sustainability strategy for GIs. The FAO-CIRAD international conference planned to be held in Rome will be another opportunity to discuss further the GI sustainability topic initially planned on 6-9 July 2020, it has been postponed to July 2022, and a webinar in July 2020 will introduce the topics).

Rapporteurs from each session informed about the content of the respective sessions and the perspectives that were identified for each topic. It was very valuable to review the main topics discussed in each thematic webinar, acknowledging the rich landscape of potentialities for GI to contribute to SDGs as well as the many issues that can be addressed in a synergic manner. The importance of further investigation for emerging topics such as GIs for healthy diets, for protection of traditional knowledge for indigenous communities was highlighted. Also, the need to continue understanding the effects of climate change on GIs was underlined. In addition, it was felt that specific tools have to be developed to deepen the understanding of important, although still discreet, subsectors such as wild collected products. Finally, in terms of knowledge and experience sharing, the relevance to learn from more advanced sectors or large parts of the economy through GIs for trade and in the wine sector was identified. As for future work, the importance of cooperation was also highlighted: between GI associations and between countries, including south-south cooperation, and the development of knowledge and guidance tools, in particular to support producer strategies for improved sustainability of their GI processes.

## Opening Ms. Anna Lartey, Director Food and Nutrition Division, FAO

Geographical indications represent an interesting tool together with a territorial approach to facilitate rural transformation toward sustainable agriculture and food. The FAO has been supporting member countries in the development of GIs to unleash their potential for sustainable development. The development of a coherent GI sustainability strategy at local and global levels is a natural evolution of this vision.

Since 2017 the FAO has been collaborating with oriGIn to support GI stakeholders and their associations to develop and engage in their own sustainability strategies. A key step in this collaboration was the development of the sustainability strategy for geographical indications (SSGIs) and its adoption by oriGIn members in October 2017. The strategy has three main stages: to prioritize, access and improve. Guidelines on this strategy have been developed and will be presented today.

This webinar series are part of the global strategy to raise awareness and develop knowledge on GI and its relationship with sustainability. Indeed, there are many ways in which GI processes can enhance the

capacity of local stakeholders to preserve and promote social and environmental resources in their territory while ensuring sufficient economic benefits and good governance. For example, the discussion on GIs and Wild Collected Products has shown the need to preserve and add value to neglected products, to benefit from their high level of biodiversity and to contribute to food security and nutrition - an area that is of interest to the FAO.

Today's wrap-up webinar represents the opportunity to learn from the outcomes of each of the webinars that have been held so far. We will also discuss activities and collaborations to embark on going way forward. I strongly believe that GIs can contribute to the objectives of the Decade of Action on Nutrition, which is currently in a midterm review, and also to the UN Food System Summit next year.

Many people have made significant contributions in making these webinars series possible. It is important to thank the speakers for their contributions also thank all the partners for their support in developing each of the topics. I would like to mention Equalitas, the European Forestry Institute, The Swiss Intellectual Property Office, the research project LIFE, oriGIn France, the World Intellectual Property Organization among others. These webinars have also shown that building partnerships is the most effective and efficient way to generate collective knowledge and create synergies.

## Outcomes from the thematic webinars

### Trends in the beverage sector - the case of wine, Mr. Stefano Stefanucci, Equalitas

The webinar on Trends in the beverage sector showed that there are a lot of projects on sustainability in the wine sector as the Italian case study presented showed it during the webinar. The reasons for these initiatives are in most cases reactions as there are a lot of requests related to sustainability from the market. Nevertheless, there is no alignment and uniformity on the meaning of sustainability.

On that point, an initiative by the Nordic alcohol monopolies - Sweden, Norway, Finland, the Faroe Islands and Iceland and Swiss retailer banner, has been very interesting as they commissioned to certification body a benchmark on the main sustainability projects in the wine sector around the world. They selected 35 projects, which were very different from one to another from different perspectives especially regarding the focus on only one pillar of sustainability, while we know that one of the very few shepherd concepts of sustainability is the fact that it is a three pillar concept and that it should be balanced among the three pillars, or the fact that some of these projects foresee at third party certification while in some other cases there was only a self-assessment approach.

Today there is often a schizophrenic approach with every farmer behaving in a different way. On that point, the possibility to have a consortium, a kind of observatory that can manage the efforts on sustainability in the whole territory is key. Our project foreseen the possibility of a territorial approach of certification, that will be based on the efforts that are territorially puts on sustainability, this direction being originated by the consortium (the appellation of origin) (i.e. about pesticide management). This connotation of our standard was also noticed by the OIV, they also consider that there is a potential initiative about the territorial approaches so GIs for sustainability to help in trying to decrease the entropy (i.e. new resolution on sustainability by the OIV).

To conclude, we are not so far from having a shared interpretation in wine sector, but we are still far from having a uniform approach in concrete. Even if the stakeholders are aware of what is sustainability, there is still a wide difference on how strict the requirements of the several projects should be.

*What is the conclusion? What is the next step to do?*

Equalitas, oriGIn and the FAO, are available to promote the convergence on these issues. Therefore, there was an agreement on the fact that the European Union can and should play a crucial role on that, “The Farm to Fork” is just one example of the meaning strategies related to sustainability launched by the European Union, but there are several goals that are clearly related to sustainability, climate change, food safety.

How GI strategies can help developing countries pursue sustainable objectives: Mr. Erik Thévenod-Mottet, Swiss Intellectual Property Office (IPI)

#### Some insights:

- The relations between GIs and sustainability represent a huge potential in the stakeholders hands. Regarding the **localized production system** inherent to GI products for instance, it appears that the GI supply chains have normally a true interest in maintaining and preserving their basic elements, including local resources that generally result from a long established combination between all the local factors (human and natural), the questions related to cultural identity and even the image (i.e. landscape) of the territory and the economic benefits related to it. Also, GI typicity and authenticity often leads to less chemical inputs.
- GIs are in favor, allow and/or defend **fair and sustainable sharing of added value** among the supply chain through the collective governance that is in place in most cases. Also, this collective governance together with the fact that the raw material must generally be sourced from that region, allows more empowerment of less favored producers along the supply chain (as long term contracts and reduction of transaction costs do for instance).
- In most cases, GIs imply **monitoring and certification** that allow an external basic assessment for clean supply chain and coupling with additional controls and labels including environmental or social ones.

#### Going to the current stakes:

- **Environmental issues** were mentioned as climate change, the new concerns about animal welfare among the society, the possible negative impacts of monoculture or intensification, in case successful of GIs from an economic point of view, which may lead to negative environmental impacts ;
- The stakes about GI **labelling** combination with other the labels (i.e. organic label) and the fact that competition is nowadays based not only on the values inherent to GI products but also to

those new horizontal values or demands from the society focusing on environmental and social issues ;

- **De-commoditization** for GIs: economic stability, including the issues on visibility of the GI product on end-market or as ingredient ;
- Finally the discussions also were about the **perspectives** that are between a general evolution of the general legal and institutional framework (i.e. guidelines for registrations or for technical cooperation) towards harmonization, versus the other adaptations that can be decided by each GI organization. Here there are still some things that needs to be further explored between the relation between sectorial approaches or approaches that are really adapted to each GI and based on the GI characteristics (typicity, authenticity...).

Regarding **action means**, there were **three levels** that were identified:

- The **general framework**. The integration of public policies in the administrative and policy approach of GIs (i.e. combination with policies on rural development and sustainable agriculture) ;
- The **GI product specification**. The GIs specification can include very useful requirements on local resources with connections to biodiversity and conservation, and it can allow subcategories of GI products to be distinguished (traditional methods of processing or the use of a special local resource - animal breed or vegetal variety) ;
- The **collective organization** (territorial approach, the connection with other activities, the interest in having a good image with landscaping....) The GI collective organization also serves as a platform for innovation and training (e. g. Café de Colombia). On that point, one can mention specific measures for young generations, internal competition on quality, and environmental policies.

### **The way forward:**

There is a need for more knowledge on the system sustainability issues for GIs, we need to have more success stories and experiences, scientific evidence, but also more clarity assessment methodologies.

### The point of view of the Swiss IP office:

There is also a need for coordination in technical cooperation, more means for the dissemination of knowledge. We are also in favor of South-South transfer of experiences and finally more inclusion of long-established GIs transferring their experience to newly established GIs, so thinking to consider this sustainability issues into new projects for GI recognition in South countries.

Finally, the global reflections are on sustainability labelling for GIs, this is a big issue with many questions that need to be further explored as the integration of GIs in public policies.

[Click here for the full presentation.](#)



## Sustainable management of wild collected products for GIs : Mr. Sven Walter, FAO and Mr. Iñazio Martinez, European Forest Institute (EFI)

Wild Collected Products (WCP) such as medicinal plants, aromatics plant and fruits have an estimated value of some 90 billion US dollars. There are some 1 billion people who depend on them in particular on wild foods, some 80% of the population in developing countries depend on traditional medicines. In Europe, some 100 million people consumed wild collected food in 2015.

### Key points:

- GIs are among a multitude of certification and labeling schemes relevant for WCP. They differ with regard to the complexity, their governance (coming from public initiatives, private sector or civil society initiatives) and their focus on livelihoods of local producers or environmental aspects such as healthy ecosystems;
- The products we were looking at and which are related to GIs, are built on traditions and traditional knowledge and take into account natural factors, human factors, product specification aspects and of course the combination of all (e.g. Thyme de Provence, France);
- WFP are often sourced from communities with limited economic opportunities. Supporting WFP value chains in these regions can have a huge impact on the livelihood of the local populations. These value chains not only build on substantive traditional local knowledge but also on innovations in product development and marketing.
- Also, remaining in Africa and looking at the Madd example in Senegal, it was highlighted that building collective rules to save and promote forgotten species and value chains (“*filères oubliées*”) is among the objectives of GIs and can contribute to improve people’s livelihoods and to preserve forests and other ecosystem.
- Finally, based on the experiences shared from Ecuador, it was highlighted that GIs and the certification process related to GIs helped to improve coordination of territorial governance, addressing issues such as horizontal connection and voluntary participatory processes, which link different institutions and also address the proliferation of schemes.

### Priority areas for future work:

- First is that we need to continue to raise awareness on these products, sometimes called neglected wild products as they are not in the mainstream and not always under the attention, for example, of decision makers. There is a need to highlight their potential and actual contribution to economic development and food security as well as their importance for cultural heritage and the protection of ecological habitats (e.g. ecosystem restoration) ;
- We need to further **strengthen the concerted action among stakeholders** who are involved in the value chain of wild products which include harvesters, collectors, processors leading up to the export market and of course also the consumers ;
- We need to **further identify and promote good practices** for the design of GIs and related certification schemes, addressing in particular the issue of sustainable management of WCP. The issue of traceability is a challenge as we have techniques which do exist but we need to

better understand how to scale them up and to improve the monitoring of the production of and trade in WFP;

- Looking into the private sector we need to have a **better understanding** on the costs and benefits related to (GI) certification of WFP: For which products do markets exist? Who will be the beneficiaries? There may not be a blueprint for all the products and regions, where is it applicable? How can we support decision-making through the provision of relevant data? ;
- **Assess the market potential** for WFP looking at different markets, i.e. the national and the international level ;
- **Support capacity building** to improve adherence to quality standards ;
- Finally, we need to **address the danger of success**. What happens, if certain value chains become very successful, increase the value of the product and bring new stakeholders on the agenda? What are the implications for the local community?

[Click here for the full presentation.](#)

## Conservation of resources and climate change: Mr. Massimo Vittori, oriGIn

### The main lessons

- **Conservation within GIs**

GIs attach a lot of importance to the environment and to the conservation of local resources and the fact that they have been existing for centuries is an evidence of this attention. However, there are some challenges and the GIs presented, PDO Comté in France and GI meat sector in Spain, both sectors are discussing about possibilities to go further.

### Some examples

PDO Comté representative mentioned, when looking at sustainability, it is difficult to just look at one component of sustainability (i.e. the environmental side). Normally when starting to work on this, it generates a virtuous circle which will create positive effects on the environment but also on the social and economic aspects as all dimensions are interlinked. (i.e. For example supply regulations to ensure a steady growth for the production, by putting limitations on the individual productivity to preserving the biodiversity and contributes also to the specific quality of the product).

Then there are some proposals to go further. Sustainability is a process and there is a new awareness among consumers, policymakers soon will act on this topic. That is why the Comté value chain is discussing about introducing additional requirements for the maintenance of family farming and also with respect to the transition towards a more friendly agriculture (further autonomy management of fertilizers, reduce the carbon footprint). On that point, there are also opportunities at the European Union level (i.e. LIFE project) to embark on this process of reducing the carbon footprint.

The Spanish meat sector has a similar approach to sustainability (virtuous circles and interdependency of the positive effects between social, environmental, and economic components). What is actually

already sustainable within the GI meat sector in Spain is the use of local resources, the protection of - insured by the GI - of autochthonous breeds and the sustainable grazing of the animals which contribute to the maintaining the biodiversity and mitigating climate change. In terms of challenges it was mentioned that also improving the grazing and the coexistence with wildlife is something that the sector is looking and trying to improve.

- **The impact of climate change on GIs.**

We had examples from Ukraine and from Algeria, two projects on GIs that have been supported by the FAO and the European Union. In both cases, through GIs, the specific characteristics of those products are influenced by the climate change by drier seasons and their massive reduction of rain. These products that did not need irrigation in the past but because of climate change now they need of water. The issue is the following: *what do we do when the climate change threatens some specific characteristics and some specific processes?* One solution proposed was the use of stronger varieties and the possibility to introduce some irrigation system. But that also has something to do with the moral obligation we have as a society to deal with sustainability because the climate change can affect several GIs and territories, and it can change the quality of life of millions of people around the world. There is an effort that have to be done within the GI sector but also within the society itself to reduce the impact of climate change on our lives.

The main point was the reduction of emissions, specific instruments that GIs can use and on that we had the great example of LIFE projects. The European Union is putting resources to carry out research and come up with practical tools that can help economic actors, companies, GI groups to reduce the impact on the environment. In this case it is the creation of a software that the company can use to assess its impact on emissions and try to improve it overtime. Similar approach used by another similar project called LIFE-DOP which involves two specific PDO from Italy (Parmigiano Reggiano and Grana Padano).

The presentation from the European Union provided the general framework of those LIFE projects and this is something that need to be taken into account, and especially in the light of the European Green Deal, as the European Union is increasing the financial resource available for economic sectors that want to work on sustainability, to assess their impact and reduce their impact on the environment. To think about the possibility to access to these funds is key.

[Click here for the full presentation.](#)

## Contribution of GI to sustainable healthy diets: Mr. Christophe Chassard, French National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and Environment (INRAE)

The first presentation provided us with a restitution of literature review. Mr. Bin Liu (nutrition and food system officer FAO) enlightened the fact that we do not have many studies yet on GIs showing a key impact on human health, we have not enough data regarding the impact on health but also regarding the composition of GIs.

The second presentation (held by Barbara Burlingame, Professor of Nutrition and Food Systems at Massey University, New Zealand) was focused on the importance of biodiversity and local conditions for sustainable diets. She really tried to make the connection between sustainability and biodiversity as an important aspect of it by itself. The keyword was the link between biodiversity and local areas, from the products to taste and an organic component and their impacts on taste. This is important parameter to promote and to explain what GI products provide to consumers.

The third presentation (held by Christophe Chassard, French National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and Environment (INRAE)) was focused on microbiota to show that the microbiome and microbes are also interesting and important to human health and I have taken the example of cheeses and row milk cheeses where we have some data showing that cheeses could be really interesting for health even if we need more knowledge and more data support this idea.

The last presentation (Virginie Amilien and Gun Roos, researchers at Consumption Research NorwaySIFO at OsloMet – Oslo Metropolitan University in Norway) presented interesting data relating to customer behaviors related to GIs and health. Basically the speakers showed us that there are no connections between GIs and health for most of consumers as they do not necessarily buy it for the healthy aspects although there is real understanding on how they can contribute to healthy diets. On that point, huge differences between countries and culture were pointed. The connection between GIs and food processing was then discussed because GI products are less associated with process and ultra-processed food, and that is also an important topic and reemerging topic.

Some priorities of research or knowledge areas related to the three working groups held during the webinar:

- The first point of researching and work is about **food composition**. We should improve quality and quantity of food composition relating to GIs from different aspects (microbiota and nutrient aspects but maybe to microbes or living microbes that could be positive interest). The biodiversity aspect is important, but to demonstrate this there is a need to know more about GIs and characterize them well, through the introduction of concepts (i.e. food processing) that are interesting and probably unique for GIs and that should be in contradiction to ultra-process food.
- We need to get more knowledge or to do some more research getting to GI products consumption on **health** to demonstrate that there are benefits in order to communicate and maybe to interact with health authorities to recommend GIs through healthy and sustainable diets.

- We need more research and then more knowledge to **better communicate** regarding to these aspects as communication is an important parameter. Beyond community communication, education is key as there is a strong connection between food culture and consumption of GI products.

## Indigenous peoples, local communities and traditional knowledge, Ms. Latha R Nair, Partner, K&S Partners

The first session explained the concepts of GIs sticking TCEs and TK, and we also had two speakers who used case studies to illustrate strategies of geographical indications for indigenous peoples. The speakers identified important aspects of the case studies that were discussed, for instance:

- The process of protection has to be collaborative and inclusive and should be more importantly led by the indigenous people on the communities in question. It must align with the values of the indigenous people or the community ;
- It is important to involve multiple stakeholders in the production process so that all perspectives can enrich the production processes and add value to it, which will eventually need for successful product in the market ;
- The role played by NGOs, universities, and other actors is also significant because it helps in avoiding a fragmented approach and address the challenges as a whole ;
- The speakers also mentioned the importance of governments providing an enabling environment towards all of this ;

In the same session there was also a passing reference to failed experiment. Apparently despite the strong start, support towards the local capacity building for grading was not provided anymore by the extension services. At the same time there was a lack of commitment of market intermediaries to purchase and commercialize the specific quality need. There was an attempt from some young readers to organize the distribution channel themselves, but they were lacking in resources for transportation. In the end the GI project was terminated because a viable market linkage was not established. It is very important according to me to look deeper into such failures because they contain a lot of lessons and then can teach us some important distance towards the next successful step. It would be a fruitful exercise to launch a study to understand what went wrong and instances and device strategies in learning from the same.

The next was the case study session, we heard some extremely interesting stories of protection from India, Morocco, and Colombia. These examples talked about the potential of GIs to empower women, build, and develop local communities and economies through culture tourism and their power to take on corporate giants who dare to misappropriate their names.

It is also interesting to note that when predicted GIs have the positive effect of better orienting and organizing communities towards social and economic development but also have environmental benefits (i.e. preservation of local resources).

# The FAO-oriGIn Sustainability Strategy for GIs

## Introduction, Ms. Emilie Vandecandelaere, FAO

The fruitful collaboration between FAO and oriGIn started in 2017 because we had a convergent vision on the importance and the need to support GI producers in engaging on sustainability.

Firstly, because most often, except for the most advanced sectors (such as the wine and cheese sectors), usually stakeholders are not aware of the capacity of GI processes to contribute to not only to economic but also social and environmental sustainability given the strong link to their territory and specifications that are usually rooted in culture and traditions. So, we thought it was important first to raise awareness on this possibility of GIs as tools for sustainable development. Secondly, because more and more consumers expect sustainability credentials, so it is important also that producers are prepared to ensure or improve their GI systems, and to be prepared to document and better communicate on their challenges and achievements. The last point, and I would like to emphasize, from all points of view, is considering GI as a tool for development in which producers, people, are at the center. This means that the local community should have the leadership of the strategy and on developing the framework that can lead to a strong strategy that consults local realities. We want to see producers driving the process instead of being driven by market or either external actors, as is the case in another types of certifications or processes. I would also like to highlight in this collaboration the importance of incorporating the expertise and scientific support of a strong task force of internationally recognized experts. The opportunity to work closely with the task force members has provided very useful input, both during the two expert meetings held and during the conferences that have taken place at the occasion of the last two General Assemblies of oriGIn.

To conclude, there is clearly still work to be done, but we already have presented significant results, we have developed a strong collaboration network, and of course expect to be in touch with you in the near future. Our next step will be to test the tools in the field, which could be an opportunity for important synergies.

## Progress made in the database and toolkits, Luis Fernando Samper, oriGIn/4.0 Brands

Presentation of the update related to the SSGIs that was approved by oriGIn members during the General Assembly of oriGIn in 2017.

We all are aware that we, as GIs, need to engage with the SGDs of the United Nations, that is a common ground. We also have an interest and stake in making sure GIs are sustainable themselves and that means that they should continue having access to the resources they need, which requires a system to preserve the resources that make a GI viable. In other words, as GIs can not delocalize, resource preservation is a key aspect to ensure that the quality of a GI product, linked to the specifications, can be maintained in the future.

In addition to quality preservation, GIs have benefits that go beyond the production of quality foods: in terms of social and economic sustainability, they may help rural communities to be competitive in the marketplace, they can become a tool for differentiation, and they can bring rural development and social stability, particularly in developing countries.

On the other hand, from the demand standpoint, consumers, marketers, distribution channels, retailers are asking questions regarding the production processes, with more explicit and documented information related to the products and their distribution. Clearly they have the right to require this information, in the usual formats of sustainability reports, sustainability indicators or other data that eventually can become part of the buyers consolidated financial reporting. In this sense, sustainability has also become a market access challenge for many GIs, since certain buyers would prefer to abstain from buying products that can not provide sustainability information and content.

Finally, Regarding the definition of their own sustainability pathway, GIs usually are confronted with a buyer driven sustainability approach (i.e. led by retailers or distribution channel priorities), which usually means that the priorities defined may not consult local realities. The aim of the SSGI is to provide tools so that GI organizations can decide by themselves what are their own sustainability priorities, . This is the classic conflict between the top-down versus the bottom up approaches of sustainability. We believe that by counting with their own strategy and goals, GI organizations would be prepared to have a much more fruitful dialogue with buyers on sustainability priorities and objectives. This is why we developed the SSGI taking into account key principles

### The 7 principles of SSGI

- 1) **Sustainability as a pathway and not a state to reach.** This means that Sustainability is not a certification that you comply with. We acknowledge that it is an always challenging topic, which includes evolving issues such as price or climate variability for example, and that GI organizations or producers may not always be able to show progress in all sustainability aspects. There might be situations in which indicators may not improve over one year to the next due to external factors, so we have to think about sustainability as a long term, never ending journey in which the GI organization and its producers have to demonstrate commitment. In this sense, Sustainability is an iterative process that implies the commitment to understand what works and what does not, and learn from the mistakes made, and improve upon that.
- 2) SSGIs must **adapt to GIs specificities.** There are more than 10,000 GIs around the world. Some of them are rather small, some of them are fairly large, some of them have significant resources or have matured over the years, some of them are just starting their GI strategy. They come from different sectors and different continents. The SSGI should be able to help all of them, taking into account these differences.
- 3) No **barriers to Sustainability Endeavors.** A Sustainability strategy must be able to relate to different frameworks and formats of looking at sustainability: the territory level, the farm level, the value chain level, generating information that is useful for a variety of stakeholders that can lead to cooperation and common objectives. We have to recognize that GIs are collective processes, and that these stakeholders are connected and sometimes dependent on a GI success. Collective action efforts need to be reflected in how the GIs are viable in the in the long term. Also, this principle also means that the SSGI should be **available** to any GI interested, no matter their level of maturity. The tools that we provide are adaptable for every GI to be able

to embark in the sustainability journey. The SSGI is really open to any type of GI and not only to recognized GIs, but also to GIs not yet recognized formally or even it can work for sectors, for trade associations that may or may not be interested in obtaining GI recognition.

- 4) Sustainability is **both a collective exercise** and an **individual** exercise. The collective considerations on sustainability should go all the way to the individual producers and the collective goals may in many cases become a sum of individual goals. It is crucial to understand this nature of collective versus individual indicators. Both collective and individual goals may allow to develop alliances and keep producers engaged. In terms of common resources, this also means that GI organizations can reflect on what their objectives are as a collective, from a sustainability standpoint, because many of the resources in the territory may need some kind of collective action.
- 5) **Cooperation is key.** No single stakeholder, not even the famous GIs with strong organizations, cannot do everything by themselves. There must be a stakeholders' dialogue not only internally within producers but also external to other value chain members, governments, territories. It is important to create the conditions for cooperation and SSGI strongly advocates for this by making dialogue possible on joint strategies, joint interests, and cooperation to face identified challenges. GIs should leverage their strongest asset of being a representative, collective organization that takes into account the collective interest of producers. Representing producers is not a minor aspect because, as they can leverage efforts and drive processes and priorities that are articulated between different corporations and governments.
- 6) A **voluntary approach.** Not all GIs and producer members of geographical indications are ready to embark on sustainability at the same time. Some of them are just starting to put together their own certification processes for quality, some of them maybe advanced or make want to tackle the topic later. The SSGI is open and voluntary; they can start their sustainability process whenever they feel that they are ready for it.
- 7) There is a need to have a **sound approach.** This relates not only to other frameworks just as the SDGs, SAFA, which is a system created by the FAO, and the global reporting initiative which is used by many companies around the world. However, the ability of interacting with other frameworks needs to be based on a robust, science based approach. In this sense counting with many of the experts that have contributed with suggestions and initiatives to the work done is crucial, making sure that we engage in sustainability from the commitment perspective and not from the marketing perspective sustainability (no greenwashing).

Those seven SSGI principles are complemented with **four components**:

- We need to develop a system that can help geographical indications to **prioritize** what are the most important challenges for sustainability given their local conditions.
- **Assessing**; once the priorities are identified, there is a need to assess their current standing and shortcomings.
- **Improving** implies defining specific goals and the joint or individual initiatives to reach them.



- **Communicating.** This includes not only external communication but also, and more importantly, internal communication to keep the engagement of producers and of local stakeholders and their commitment to sustainability goals.

The prioritization guide and toolkit is a guide based on the SAFA framework, which can be used by everybody. The SAFA framework was chosen specifically because of its emphasis in governance because GIs are, by definition, an initiative of collective nature and therefore a condition for their success is to have a strong governance. Hence, we believe that a GI strongest assets are the ability to represent producers, and therefore that they need to ensure a good governance that can lead to alliances, to joint programs, and to develop initiatives with a number of stakeholders, such as NGOs, cooperation agencies, governments, value chain actors etc.

The prioritization guide has 7 phases and 16 individual steps. We use the original SAFA structure, which has four pillars and a total of 20 sustainability themes and 58 sub themes. These are the potential sustainability priority topics. We designed a process in which GIs can individually select, out of those 58 topics, which ones are the most important and relevant to them and to the different stakeholders. We piloted the toolkit in Honduras on the Denomination of origin Marcala (coffee) and we felt that this was a straightforward tool that people could use in different formats and was adaptable to different GIs.

The toolkit itself provides a lot of visuals that help drive the discussion and achieve consensus, particularly at the GI board level. The final product of the sustainability prioritization guide is a materiality map that regroups the topics that are the most relevant and important, giving a sense of how far advanced are the existing initiatives that address those topics.

Assessing comes after priority sustainability topics are identified. When the GI organization has defined its own priorities, it must assess each priority. The assessment process consists in finding the appropriate indicators that are relevant for the GI and as well relevant for individual production units to track the current situation and the progress made.

In order to develop an assessment toolkit we started with a broad literature review, from which we built our first sustainability indicator database. This database was presented to the task force experts. They suggested changes in the definitions or some indicators and even added some additional sub themes to the original structure. In terms of the sources, there was a final selection of 24 different sources from scientific literature, GI literature united classifying under different areas for our indicators.

At this point we believe that there are 371 sustainability indicators relevant for GI assessment. For each indicator we have a number of attributes and variables, including the source, the formula, how they can be used in different fields (internal management, external communication), how they can be obtained (from an internal information or from some external actor), if it is a process or impact indicator, if it is a qualitative or quantitative indicator, if we can get classified as an objective or perhaps a subjective perception indicator, among others. We also provide examples and explanations for each indicator.

We also have included the correspondence for most indicators to sustainable development goals and other large sustainability frameworks (i.e. rainforest alliance and other certification labels). Four key GI sectors were selected in which we believe the indicators may be most relevant. Finally, for each indicator we also did a characterization based on its complexity (in terms of cost, effort to understand, resources required to obtain and interpret it - human, internal etc.). We also looked if the indicator is

relevant from a value chain perspective (retailers, processors, firms) and at its application (territorial, the value chain or even society at large). Lastly, if it is collective or individual in nature.

This classification provides a number of considerations for GI organizations to select the sustainability indicators they want to track. For example, those indicators that can relate to several frameworks may help GIs understand what their clients are looking for, making the basis for a dialogue using similar tools and understandings, as a way to building a bridge between bottom up and top down approaches. .

These current 371 indicators are fairly comprehensive as they also relate to sustainable development goals, and also help to create the dialogue around SDGs with territories, governments etc. At this point we are still reviewing the indicators selected, so there might be marginal changes to come in the sustainability indicator database. Once the database is finalized, our intention is to create an assessment and improvement guide to help GI organizations define their pathway to sustainability through alliances. We also expect to be able to pilot these guides and gain some field experience so that we could eventually create a toolkit and its respective application for easier use .

In sum, GIs have a significant potential to contribute to SDGs, we believe that the bottom up approach is crucial for GIs so that sustainability priorities are not imposed upon them, but that producers themselves have a say in determining priorities, leading to a longer term producer commitment to sustainability

Lastly, we believe that the SSGI and its execution will depend on the ability to generate alliances for sustainability. This means that the SSGI needs to be able to engage other stakeholders and interests, and therefore must have a consistent framework with those frameworks used by potential allies to be able to create the necessary conditions for a dialogue. The other key condition for GI organization to develop alliances is a strong governance, a crucial pillar for GI success. This is why Governance is a sustainability pillar on its own within the SSGI. Ultimately, a good governance may lead not only to alliances but also to help access new markets, to comply with evolving regulations and to enhance a GI organization's legitimacy and relevance in the territory.

[Click here for the full presentation.](#)

## Wrap up and conclusion

### **Ms. Emilie Vandecandelaere , FAO**

I would like first to thank the reporters of all webinars; they synthesize well all the discussions that have been held through this series of webinars. It was reflecting what was discussed and especially the recommendations that came from each discussion, while you also propose concrete proposals. I was particularly interested in some elements mentioned in the different presentations. First, the importance of increasing knowledge in each specific or transversal topics that we approached in the various webinars: either crucial topics as the certification with the example in the wine sector or the climate change, or emerging topic with lots of potential, in particular with the topic of healthy diets, traditional knowledge and indigenous communities, or again the potential of GIs for the wild collected products. On all these topics,, the idea of developing more studies and research to identify best practices and knowledge have been highlighted, for example with the possibility to get more funds from EU, more research like LIFE or other funding opportunity. This is why it is really important to organize ourselves through a consortium or other type of collaboration to be able to develop the necessary knowledge in these different areas.

Another important point that was mentioned is the importance of providing tools to guide producers. On that, we look forward to the forthcoming publication by the FAO and oriGIn of the toolkit for prioritization and soon for assessment. It is worth to mention the forthcoming publication by the FAO and the University of Florence about methodology to evaluate GI impact, which can be very useful to contribute to sustainability throughout the process.

Finally, another point that is key in terms of supporting concrete action is to develop more cooperation (i.e. South- south cooperation was mentioned). We already started discussing this with oriGIn during the last General Assembly in Georgia, and we will make progress in our reflection to develop this kind of interaction between countries. For example, Africa and Asia present common issues and ongoing projects where producers or territorial authorities have common interest to share. Cooperation was also mentioned to encourage exchange of best practices and sharing of mature or older experiences in support to emerging ones and go forward with concrete proposals. For each topic we have now some material to put into practice into concrete collaboration and activities.

### **Massimo Vittori, oriGIn**

Mr. Massimo Vittori thanked all the participants, panelists and partners of webinars that were held during this series. He then recalled his hope to continue to work all together and to develop future cooperation and projects. He finally thanked the FAO for the ongoing collaboration, Mr. Luis Fernando Samper (Former President of oriGIn) and all the organizers of the events.

## List of registered participants

94 participants registered for the online event.

Country	Name	Family name	Organization
Algeria	Belmehti	Abdelhafid	Ministry of Agriculture
Belgium	Nathalie	Nathon	EU Commission
Belgium	Amine	Khaldoun	Représentation régionale des Pays de la Loire
Belgium	Giulia	Scaglioni	AREPO
Belgium	Francesca	Alampi	AREPO
Belgium	Bernard	O' Connor	NCTM
Brazil	THOMAZ	FRONZAGLIA	Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (Embrapa)
Cameroun	Esther	Ngah	Université de Ngaoundéré, Ngaoundéré - Cameroun
Cameroun	Monique	Bagal	GI Consultant
Colombia	Luis Fernando	Samper	4.0 Brands
Costa Rica	María Patricia	Sánchez Trejos	CeNAT/CONARE. Área de Gestión Ambiental
Dominica	Ryan	Anselm	FAO National Correspondent
France	Diana	Ugalde Jalenques	Research Unit GRAPPE ESA INRA
France	Sonia	DARRACQ	Embassy of France - Nigeria
France	Delphine	Marie-Vivien	CIRAD
France	Nao	HAYASHI	UNESCO
France	Sibylle	Slattery	FAO
France	Selena	Travaglio	Community Plant Variety Office
France	Meenakshi	Prasad	Community Plant Variety Office
France	Laurent	ROY	Consultant
France	Solène	Blanc	oriGIn
France	Akane	Nakamura	UNESCO - Asia and Pacific Unit
France	Christophe	Chassard	
France	Maite	Puig de Morales	IAMM
France	Sebastien	Breton	oriGIn France
Georgia	Ia	Ebralidze	Elkana
Georgia	Mariam	Jorjadze	ELKANA
Germany	Karola	Schober	Bayerisches Staatsministerium für Ernährung, Landwirtschaft und Forsten
Germany	Hannah	Lindermayer	Bayerisches Staatsministerium für Ernährung, Landwirtschaft und Forsten
Germany	Alexander	Hugel	Kompetenzzentrum für Ernährung – KErn (Competence Center for Nutrition)
Germany	Maryam	Saedi	Eurofins Global Control

Greece	Dimitra	Gaki	Université de Thessalie
Greece	Hristos	Vakoufaris	Ministry of Rural Development and Food
Greece	Lamprini	Diamanti	Region of Thessaly
Grenada	Theodell	Stephens	Agricultural Extension assistant
Grenada	Trishia	Marrast	Ministry of Agriculture
Grenada	Rena	Noel	Ministry of Agriculture
Guinea	Cécé	Kpohmou	BSD/MIPME
India	Latha	Nair	K&S Partners
Indonesia	MIRANDA	RISANG PALAR AYU	Universitas Padjadjaran
Iran	Mona	Kanan	Consultant IPI Project Iran
Iraq	Adham	Maitham	Ministry of Industry and Mineral
Italy	Maria Giulia	Mariani	Consultant
Italy	Barbara	Massicci	University of Parma
Italy	Gennaro	Giliberti	Regione Toscana- Direzione Agricoltura e sviluppo rurale
Italy	Giovanni	Belletti	University of Florence
Italy	Francesca	Ponti	Regione Emilia Romagna
Italy	Emilie	Vandecandelaer e	FAO
Italy	Arianna	Carita	FAO
Italy	Mohammed	Ahdi	FAOLOW
Italy	Florence	Tartanac	FAO
Italy	Valentina	Pizzamiglio	Consorzio Parmigiano Reggiano
Italy	Endo	Yoshihide	FAO (OCB)
Italy	Andrea	PoloGalante	FAO
Italy	Manuel	Anta	FAO
Italy	Florian	Doerr	FAO
Italy	Jacopo	Famiglietti	Politecnico di Milano
Italy	Stefano	Stefanucci	Equalitas
Italy	Sven	Walter	FAO
Italy	Anna	Lartey	ESN-Director FAO
Italy	Nina	Coates	FAO
Jamaica	Sara-Ruth	Allen	Consultant SMEs
Japan	Junko	Kimura	Hosei University
Japan	Herve	Couraye	SGS
Macedonia	Theodore G.	Siogkas	Managing Authority of Western Macedonia O.P.
Mexico	Fernando	Cano Trevino	Consejo Regulador del Tequila (CRT)
Portugal	José	Massuça	University - Universidade de Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro
Portugal	Nuno	Reis	University of Trás-os-Montes and Alto Douro
Portugal	Barbara	Lamolinará	University of Evora and of Trás-os-Montes and Alto Douro
Portugal	Tiago	Pontinha	Utad- Doutoramento Agronegócios e sustentabilidade

Portugal	Michel	Tavares Quinteiro Milcent Assis	University of Évora / UTAD - Portugal
Portugal	Sandra	Ferreira	University UTAD
Portugal	Alexandra	Ribeiro	Cetrad and Growgreen Food Association
Sao Tome Principe	Claudio	Pinto Vicente	Programme des Nations Unies pour le Développement
Spain	Fleur	Leparquier	Consultant
Spain	Veronica	García Chiquero	Region de Castilla-La Mancha
Spain	Mario	Alves	PhD student of Agribusiness and Sustainability
Spain	Inazio	Martinez de Arano	European Forest Institute – Mediterranean Facility
Sri Lanka	Christopher	Fernando	Malwatte Valley Plantations Plc (Ceylon tea)
Sri Lanka	Sarada	De Silva	Ceylon Cinnamon GI Association Sri Lanka
Switzerland	Nathalie	Hirsig	IPI Switzerland
Switzerland	Claire	Philippoteaux	Swiss Contact - COLIPRI
Switzerland	Elise	Tancoigne	University of Geneva
Switzerland	Massimo	Vittori	oriGIn
Switzerland	Erik	Thevenod- Mottet	IPI Switzerland
Switzerland	Ida	Puzone	oriGIn
Switzerland	Alexandra	Grazioli	WIPO
Switzerland	Zeinab	Ghafouri	IPI Switzerland
Switzerland	Alexandra	Nightingale	IPI Switzerland
UK	Barbara	Pick	Consultant (CIRAD, FAO, UN)
UK	Patricia	Covarrubia	University of Buckingham
Uk	Tobi	Orelusi	Isaura Africa
Ukraine	Hanna	Antonyuk	Expert- EU project Support to development of GI system in Ukraine
Ukraine	Iaroslav	Andreiev	EU funded project "Support to the Development of the Geographical Indications System in Ukraine