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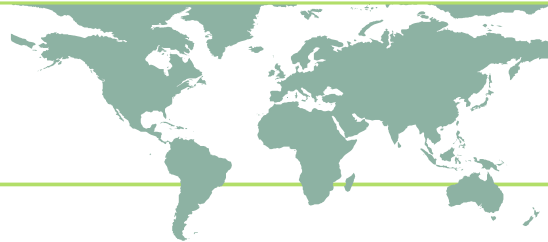
**oriGIn faces the challenges of the post-covid scenario with renewed enthusiasm:
announced the election of a new President and a donation to oriGIn by the CRT as a
sign of recognition of its international status as leading NGO in the field of
Geographical Indications**

Two hundred participants from 35 countries have registered for oriGIn 2021 Biannual Meeting, which started today with the organization's Statutory Assembly and will continue tomorrow with a conference on the latest Geographical Indications trends at the international level. Both events are held in a virtual mode. This shows once again the tremendous interest generated by Geographical Indications at the global level. Over the last two years, in a context marked by the COVID-19 pandemic, Geographical Indications producers, transformers and retailers have been making tremendous efforts to maintain the supply of quality products to consumers. Meanwhile, as the agri-food sector is largely composed of small producers and small and medium-sized companies, they have been facing unprecedented challenges. The pandemic has also accelerated the debate over sustainability, with the urgency to find new development models, which combine economic growth with environmental and social value.

"In these unprecedented circumstances, oriGIn has reinvented its way of working to remain relevant. That's why in the last biennium we have pursued our advocacy and best-practices exchange objectives mainly through webinars and online meetings. In presenting the last biennium activities report to our worldwide membership, which counts now 575 groups for 40 countries, we are proud to note that oriGIn has reinforced its role as global reference on Geographical Indications, both in terms of protection and legal issues as well as cooperation among groups with respect to emerging topics of common interest, such as sustainability", **said Massimo Vittori, oriGIn Managing Director.**

During the Assembly, the "Consejo Regulador del Tequila" (CRT) announced it will donate 50.000 euros to oriGIn, as a sign of recognition of its international status as leading NGO in the field of Geographical Indications and its capacity to support members in the protection of GIs worldwide.

"For the CRT, it is important to defend some crucial principles, like the integrity of GIs controls, the implementation of bilateral agreements as well as fighting against the risks of misleading consumers and abusing the reputation of GIs. The work of oriGIn and its members is fundamental to reaffirm those principles as well as the strategic value of common actions for



the GIs sector. In doing this donation, we encourage oriGIn to pursue its objectives and continue effectively to defend GIs worldwide”, **said Lic. Miguel Angel Domínguez Morales, President of the CRT.**

The oriGIn Statutory Assembly was also the opportunity to renew the organization’s bodies – with the election of Riccardo Deserti, Director of Consorzio Parmigiano Reggiano, as new oriGIn President – and define a Strategic Plan for 2022-2023.

“I am honored to take up the mantle and serve as oriGIn President for the next biennium. I would like to thank my predecessor – Claude Vermot-Desroches – for his excellent work, which has been instrumental to consolidate oriGIn role as a key stakeholder in the international scene, as the donation by the CRT clearly shows. I would like to thank as well the CRT for its trust and generosity. We will continue working on the issues of worldwide protection with renewed energy. Several challenges lie ahead of us – such as ensuring that oriGIn remains relevant in post-covid scenario offering to its members new services and opportunities of cooperation, consolidating oriGIn partnerships, expanding the international protection of GIs through the WIPO Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement and monitoring the reform of the GIs system in the EU, which might have repercussions beyond the European borders – just to name a few. I will work with passion to help oriGIn tackle these issues and strengthen its impact with policy-makers and donors. Likewise, I look forward to seeing again our members in person, to nurture the bonds and friendship which characterize our global network”, **concluded the newly elected President Riccardo Deserti.**