



FICPI INFORMATION DOCUMENT

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CET INFORMATION DOCUMENT

<p>TITLE: <i>Report on WIPO Worldwide Symposium on Geographical Indications (GI) Bangkok, Thailand, 27-29 March 2013</i></p> <p>DRAWN UP BY: <i>Commission d'Etude et de Travail (CET) Work & Study Commission Benjamin Thompson, CET 1</i></p> <p>PURPOSE: For information and publication in the library section of FICPI's website</p>	
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This Symposium was organized by WIPO and the Department of Intellectual Property (DIP) of Thailand. The attendees were mainly Government officials and GI owners. FICPI's presence at the Symposium was deemed necessary as it was not quite certain whether the Symposium would in fact discuss or announce new measures which would impact our profession or the interests of our clients in regards to this particular Intellectual Property Right.

The topics covered in the Symposium were:

1. Recent Developments in the Field of GI
2. GI – Where do we Stand Today?
3. An International Register for GI's
4. Managing GI's – Some Administrative Aspects
5. GI's in Branding Strategies
6. GI's for Non-Agricultural Products
7. Marketing and Protecting GI's Around the World
8. Open Discussion – An International Agenda for GI's.

The Speakers were drawn from the following sectors:

Government / Non-Governmental Organization:

- i. National IP Organizations of Chile, Georgia, Morocco, Panama, Ethiopia, Thailand and China
- ii. Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development of the European Commission; GI Committee of ECTA (European Communities Trade Mark Association); GI Team of MARQUES
- iii. WIPO - International Appellations of Origin Registry; Brands & Designs Sector
- iv. Organization for an International GI Network (origin)
- v. UNIDO (United Nations Industrial Development Organization) SME Export and Origin Consortia Programme
- vi. WTO Intellectual Property Division

GI Owners / Representatives:

- i. Consorzio del Formaggio Parmigiano-Reggiano
- ii. Sri Lankan Tea Board
- iii. Napa Valley Vintners / International Wine Law Association
- iv. Forge de Laguiole knife manufacturing company (France)



- v. Scotch Whisky Association
- vi. Malaysian Pepper Board

Detailed presentation slides of the various speakers are available at http://www.wipo.int/meetings/en/details.jsp?meeting_id=28143

It will be seen that the Symposium's primary objective was to create awareness of GI's and their economic value among the attendees who were mainly Ministers, government officials, existing and potential GI owners from Thailand and across the world. Exhibition Halls adjacent to the Symposium venue featured Thai GI's and International GI's.

Accordingly, what was predominantly shared by the Speakers, and by attendees during the Q&A sessions, were practical problems faced in the development and registration of their GI's. There was a common complaint by GI owners, who were attempting to obtain global protection, about the high costs of registering GI's and the inconsistent success of their efforts at the various GI Registries due to different rules or interpretation of rules by the various national offices.

As a practitioner, what was exceptionally an eye-opener was the role of the various agencies of the WTO and the United Nations (especially UNIDO) in using GI's as a method of alleviating poverty among impoverished communities. Organizing a GI system in a particular region often results in a higher and more stable income for the primary producer of the produce, while at the same time setting the stage for more consistent quality, and thereby higher prices, for the GI products.

There was therefore no necessity for FICPI to take any positions during this Symposium.

*Reported by:
Benjamin Thompson*

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