**REPORT ON THE REVISION OF WIPO STANDARD ST.26 BY THE SEQL TASK FORCE**

*Document prepared by the European Patent Office (EPO)*

## BACKGROUND

1. The Task Force on Sequence Listings was created by the Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS), at its first session (October 25 to 29, 2010), to deal with Task No. 44 (see paragraph 29 of document CWS/1/10):
2. “Prepare a recommendation on the presentation of nucleotide and amino acid sequence listings based on eXtensible Markup Language (XML) for adoption as a WIPO standard. The proposal of the new WIPO standard should be presented along with a report on the impact of the said standard on the current WIPO Standard ST.25, including the proposed necessary changes to Standard ST.25.”
3. The Task Force was also requested:

“To liaise with the appropriate PCT body with regard to the possible impact of such standard on Annex C to the Administrative Instructions under the PCT.”

1. The European Patent Office (EPO) was assigned the role of Task Force Leader and the new WIPO Standard, titled ST.26, was formally adopted during the reconvened fourth session of CWS (CWS/4BIS) in March 2016.
2. A modified description of Task No. 44 was approved by the CWS at the Reconvened Fourth Session (March 21 to 24, 2016), which now reads:

“Prepare recommendations for the transition provisions from WIPO Standard ST.25 to ST.26; and a proposal for the revision of WIPO Standard ST.26, if needed”.

## PROGRESS REPORT

1. Following the adoption of the ST.26 at the Reconvened Fourth Session of the CWS, the Task Force carried out two rounds of discussions, Round 8 focused on how to further improve the adopted Standard to ensure its effectiveness once implemented and Round 9 on transition matters (ST.25 to ST.26). The Task Force held during this period several WebEx and two informal meetings in Geneva (March 23 and September 9, 2016).
2. The Task Force in particular worked on a revision of the adopted ST.26 aimed at facilitating its implementation by applicants and Offices. The revised ST.26, submitted to CWS/5 for approval, encompasses the following main changes:

- clarification of Peptide Nucleic Acids (PNA’s) and Variant Sequences within the Standard;

- incorporation of a Guidance Document (Annex VI) to facilitate the harmonization of practice and interpretation among Offices and applicants;

- update of Annex I – Controlled Vocabulary for alignment with INSDC Feature Table V.10.6 released in November 2016;

- addition/rewording of comments inside the Annex II (DTD) for clarification and alignment with INSDC DTD v1.5.

- improvement of the general text of the Standard based on the public consultations carried out by EPO, JPO and USPTO in 2016/2017.

## ROADMAP

1. Obtain approval for the amended/added texts of ST.26 at the CWS/5.
2. Obtain approval for the “Recommendations for the transition provisions from WIPO Standard ST.25 to ST.26” at the CWS/5.
3. Support the International Bureau of WIPO by providing users’ requirements and feedback on the Authoring tool.
4. Provide support to WIPO for the consequential revision of the PCT Administrative Instructions.
5. Work on any further revision of WIPO Standard ST.26. It is suggested that future revisions to the Standard be triggered by CWS members and not follow a pre-defined schedule.

[Annex II follows]