ARBITRATION
AND
MEDIATION CENTER

WIPO
WORLD
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
ORGANIZATION

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION
L'Oréal v. Huang Baochuan, 黄保传
Case No. D2026-4154

1. The Parties

The Complainant is L'Oréal, France, represented by Dreyfus & associés, France.

The Respondents are huang Baochuan, China; and 黄保传, China.

2. The Domain Names and Registrars

The disputed domain name <ceraveitalia.com> is registered with Guizhou Zhongyu Zhike Network Technology Co., Ltd.

The disputed domain name <ceravesaustralia.com> is registered with EU Technology (HK) Limited (Collectively referred as the "Registrar".)

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed in English with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the "Center") on September 16, 2026. On September 17, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain names. On September 18, 2026, the Registrar transmitted by email to the Center its verification response disclosing registrant and contact information for the disputed domain names which differed from the named Respondent ("Sichuan, China and Hong Kong, China") and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on September 22, 2026, with the registrant and contact information of nominally multiple underlying registrants revealed by the Registrar, requesting the Complainant to either file separate complaint(s) for the disputed domain names associated with different underlying registrants or alternatively, demonstrate that the underlying registrants are in fact the same entity and/or that all disputed domain names are under common control. The Complainant filed an amended Complaint in English on September 23, 2026.

On September 22, 2026, the Center informed the Parties in Chinese and English, that the language of the Registration Agreement for the disputed domain name is Chinese. On September 23, 2026, the Complainant confirmed its request that English be the language of the proceeding and provided the additional arguments in support of English as the language of the proceeding. The Respondents did not submit any comment on the Complainant's submission.

The Center verified that the Complaint together with the amended Complaint satisfied the formal requirements of the Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the "Policy" or "UDRP"), the Rules for Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the "Rules"), and the WIPO Supplemental Rules for Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the "Supplemental Rules").

In accordance with the Rules, paragraphs 2 and 4, the Center formally notified the Respondents in English and Chinese of the Complaint, and the proceedings commenced on September 24, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was October 14, 2026. The Respondents did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondents' default on October 15, 2026.

The Center appointed Francine Tan as the sole panelist in this matter on October 23, 2026. The Panel finds that it was properly constituted. The Panel has submitted the Statement of Acceptance and Declaration of Impartiality and Independence, as required by the Center to ensure compliance with the Rules, paragraph 7.

4. Factual Background

The Complainant, L'Oréal, is a French company founded in 1909 by a French chemist by the same name. Since then, the Complainant has become one of the world's largest groups in the cosmetics business. It has a portfolio of 36 brands, 86,000 employees and is present in 150 countries.

CERAVE is a skincare brand which was established in 2005. The CERAVE brand and two other brands were acquired by the Complainant from Valeant, its previous owners in a USD 1.3 billion purchase.

The Complainant owns CERAVE trademark registrations worldwide, and the mark enjoys an international reputation in connection with cosmetic products. The Complainant is the owner of the following trademark registrations for CERAVE, all covering goods in Class 3:

- European Trademark Registration No. 016162752, filed December 14, 2016 and registered June 21, 2017;

- Chinese Trademark Registration No. 11187245, filed July 10, 2012 and registered November 28, 2013; and

- Australian Trademark Registration No. 1102930, registered from March 10, 2006.

- In addition, the Complainant operates, among others, the following domain name reflecting its trademark in order to promote its products:

- <cerave.fr>, registered on July 19, 2017.

The disputed domain names are:

- <ceraveitalia.com>, registered May 21, 2026; and
- <ceravesaustralia.com>, registered May 18, 2026.

The disputed domain names resolved to online stores that reproduce the Complainant's CERAVE trademark and offer goods bearing the Complainant's mark for sale at a discount. Additionally, the sites feature customer reviews and copyright notices, "Copyright © 2026 CeraVe Italia" and "Copyright © 2026 CeraVe Australia" ("the Copyright Notices").

The Complainant made efforts to resolve this matter amicably, sending notifications to the Registrar and hosting providers of both disputed domain names, requesting the blocking of the disputed domain names and deactivation of the infringing websites. However, despite reminders, no response was received.

5. Parties' Contentions

A. Complainant

The Complainant contends that it has satisfied each of the elements required under the Policy for a transfer of the disputed domain names.

Notably, the Complainant contends that:

- The disputed domain names are identical or confusingly similar to a trademark or service mark in which the Complainant has rights. The disputed domain names reproduce the CERAVE mark in its entirety, and neither the addition of a geographical term, in this case "Italia" and "Australia", nor the ".com" extension prevents a finding of confusing similarity. The public would therefore reasonably assume that the disputed domain names are owned by, endorsed by, or otherwise connected with the Complainant.

- The Respondents have no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain names. The Respondents are not affiliated with the Complainant, have not been authorized to use the CERAVE mark or to register domain names incorporating it, and are not commonly known by the disputed domain names. The Complainant's rights in the CERAVE trademark predate the registration of the disputed domain names by a number of years. The addition of the terms "Italia" and "Australia" heightens the risk of confusion, as Internet users are likely to believe that the disputed domain names lead to the Complainant's official websites for those markets. Rather than a bona fide offering of goods or services, the disputed domain names resolve to websites that imitate the Complainant's official website, reproduce its mark and visuals, and offer purported CERAVE products for sale. Users purchasing these goods are required to provide their name, address and banking information, which presents a high risk of phishing.

- The disputed domain names were registered and are being used in bad faith. Given the worldwide reputation and high distinctiveness of the CERAVE mark, it is implausible that the Respondents were unaware of the Complainant when they registered the disputed domain names, and they did so to divert Internet traffic to their websites. The Complainant's trademark registrations significantly predate the disputed domain names. Under paragraph 2 of the Policy, the Respondents were obliged to ensure that their registrations would not infringe third-party rights, whereas a basic search for "Cerave" would have revealed the existence of the Complainant and its trademarks. The Respondents' failure to do so contributes to a finding of bad faith.

- The disputed domain names resolve to nearly identical online stores offering CERAVE-branded cosmetic products and purporting to be affiliated with the Complainant. Without the Complainant's authorization, the Respondents' websites reproduce the CERAVE mark, the Complainant's official logo, and the layout and overall presentation of the Complainant's official websites, giving the false impression that they are operated or endorsed by the Complainant. The Copyright Notices together with claims of product authenticity and official status, reinforce this impression and imply the existence of a licensed local entity. The Respondents are thereby intentionally attempting to attract Internet users for commercial gain by creating a likelihood of confusion with the Complainant's mark.

B. Respondents

The Respondents did not reply to the Complainant's contentions.

6. Discussion and Findings

6.1. Preliminary Issues

A. Consolidation: Multiple Respondents

The amended Complaint was filed in relation to nominally different domain name registrants. The Complainant alleges that the domain name registrants are the same entity or mere alter egos of each other, or under common control. The Complainant requested the consolidation of the Complaint against the multiple disputed domain name registrants pursuant to paragraph 10(e) of the Rules.

The disputed domain name registrants did not comment on the Complainant's request.

Paragraph 3(c) of the Rules states that a complaint may relate to more than one domain name, provided that the domain names are registered by the same domain name holder.

In addressing the Complainant's request, the Panel will consider whether (i) the disputed domain names or corresponding websites are subject to common control; and (ii) the consolidation would be fair and equitable to all Parties. See WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Select UDRP Questions ("WIPO Overview 3.1"), section 4.11.2.

As regards common control, the Panel notes that the registrant details of record for both disputed domain names disclose substantially corresponding postal addresses. The registrant of the disputed domain name <ceraveitalia.com> is identified in Chinese characters as 黄保传 (in Pinyin: Huang Baochuan), whereas the registrant of the disputed domain name <ceravesaustralia.com> is identified in Latin script as "huang baochuan". The Panel further notes that the same telephone number is recorded for both registrants.

Further, the disputed domain names resolve to virtually identical online stores, which reproduce the Complainant's CERAVE trademark, logo and overall visual identity. The composition of the disputed domain names is also very similar; they both feature the CERAVE trademark combined with a geographical term, and were registered only three days apart.

As regards fairness and equity, the Panel sees no reason why consolidation of the disputes would be unfair or inequitable to any Party.

Accordingly, the Panel decides to consolidate the disputes regarding the nominally different disputed domain name registrants (referred to below as "the Respondent") in a single proceeding.

B. Language of the Proceeding

The language of the Registration Agreements for the disputed domain names is Chinese. Pursuant to the Rules, paragraph 11(a), in the absence of an agreement between the parties, or unless specified otherwise in the registration agreement, the language of the administrative proceeding shall be the language of the registration agreement.

The Complaint was filed in English. The Complainant requested that the language of the proceeding be English for several reasons including the following:

- The Complainant is based in France, has no knowledge of Chinese, and would face undue delay and translation costs likely exceeding the cost of the proceeding itself.

- It further contended that the Respondent understands English, since the disputed domain names consist of Latin characters and resolve to English-language websites,[1] and that English is a working language of the Center and the primary language of international relations.

The Respondent did not make any submissions with respect to the language of the proceeding

In exercising its discretion to use a language other than that of the registration agreement, the Panel has to exercise such discretion judicially in the spirit of fairness and justice to both parties, taking into account all relevant circumstances of the case, including matters such as the parties' ability to understand and use the proposed language, time and costs (see WIPO Overview 3.1, section 4.5.1).

Having considered all the matters above, the Panel determines under paragraph 11(a) of the Rules that the language of the proceeding shall be English.

6.2. Substantive Issues

A. Identical or Confusingly Similar

It is well accepted that the first element functions primarily as a standing requirement. The standing (or threshold) test for confusing similarity involves a reasoned but relatively straightforward comparison between the Complainant's trademark and the disputed domain names. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 1.7.

The Complainant has shown rights in respect of a trademark or service mark for the purposes of the Policy. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 1.2.1.

The Panel finds the mark is recognizable within the disputed domain names as the disputed domain names each reproduce the Complainant's mark CERAVE in its entirety, combined with a geographical term. Accordingly, the disputed domain names are confusingly similar to the mark for the purposes of the Policy. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 1.7. As regards the disputed domain name <ceravesaustralia.com>, the addition of the letter "s" between the CERAVE mark and the geographical term does not remove the confusing similarity with the Complainant's CERAVE mark.

The Panel finds the first element of the Policy has been established.

B. Rights or Legitimate Interests

Paragraph 4(c) of the Policy provides a list of circumstances in which the Respondent may demonstrate rights or legitimate interests in a disputed domain name.

Although the overall burden of proof in UDRP proceedings is on the complainant, panels have recognized that proving that a respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in a domain name may result in the difficult task of "proving a negative", requiring information that is often primarily within the knowledge or control of the respondent. As such, where a complainant makes out a prima facie case that the respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests, the burden of production on this element shifts to the respondent to come forward with relevant evidence demonstrating rights or legitimate interests in the domain name (although the burden of proof always remains on the complainant). If the respondent fails to come forward with such relevant evidence, the complainant is deemed to have satisfied the second element. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 2.1.

[1] The Panel notes from the case record that the website at the disputed domain name <ceraveitalia.com> is predominantly in Italian, while the website at the disputed domain name <ceravesaustralia.com> is in English.

Having reviewed the available record, the Panel finds the Complainant has established a prima facie case that the Respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain names. The Respondent has not rebutted the Complainant's prima facie showing and has not come forward with any relevant evidence demonstrating rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain names such as those enumerated in the Policy or otherwise.

Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegitimate activity here, claimed as applicable to this case namely, copycat sites or passing off can never confer rights or legitimate interests on a respondent. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 2.13.1.

The Panel finds the second element of the Policy has been established.

C. Registered and Used in Bad Faith

The Panel notes that, for the purposes of paragraph 4(a)(iii) of the Policy, paragraph 4(b) of the Policy establishes circumstances, in particular, but without limitation, that, if found by the Panel to be present, shall be evidence of the registration and use of a domain name in bad faith.

Given the length of time of registration and use of the Complainant's CERAVE mark, and its distinctiveness and reputation, as well as the content of the Respondent's websites, the Panel is persuaded that the Respondent knew of the Complainant and its CERAVE trademark at the time it registered the disputed domain names and deliberately registered the disputed domains. Therefore, in the present case, the Panel finds that by registering and using the disputed domain names, the Respondent intentionally attempted to attract, for commercial gain, Internet users to its websites by creating a likelihood of confusion with the Complainant's mark, which constitutes bad faith (paragraph 4(b)(iv) of the Policy).

Paragraph 4(b) of the Policy sets out a list of non-exhaustive circumstances that may indicate that a domain name was registered and used in bad faith, but other circumstances may be relevant in assessing whether a respondent's registration and use of a domain name is in bad faith. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 3.2.1. The Panel is persuaded that the Respondent's registration of the disputed domain names incorporating the Complainant's mark CERAVE plus geographic terms "Italia" or "Australia" was done in bad faith to mislead Internet users or customers of CERAVE products into thinking that the Respondent's websites are officially affiliated with the Complainant and meant to serve customers in those specific countries.

Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegitimate activity here, as applicable to this case namely, copycat sites or passing off constitutes bad faith. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 3.4. Having reviewed the record, the Panel finds the Respondent's registration and use of the disputed domain names constitutes bad faith under the Policy.

The Panel finds that the Complainant has established the third element of the Policy.

7. Decision

For the foregoing reasons, in accordance with paragraphs 4(i) of the Policy and 15 of the Rules, the Panel orders that the disputed domain names <ceraveitalia.com> and <ceravesaustralia.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Francine Tan/
Francine Tan
Sole Panelist
Date: November 5, 2026