

Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS)

Sixth Session
Geneva, October 15 to 19, 2018

REPORT ON TASK NO. 44 BY THE SEQUENCE LISTING TASK FORCE

Document prepared by the Sequence Listing Task Force

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):

“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.”

2. 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.”

3. The European Patent Office (EPO) was assigned the role of Task Force Leader and the new standard, entitled WIPO Standard ST.26, was formally adopted during the reconvened fourth session of CWS (CWS/4BIS) in March 2016.

4. At its fifth session held from May 29 to June 2, 2017, the CWS adopted the revised WIPO Standard ST.26, version 1.1 and noted the document regarding potential added or deleted matter presented by the Delegation of the United States of America.

5. Based on the recommendation for the transition provisions from Standard ST.25 to ST.26 presented by the Task Force, the CWS reached also an agreement on:

- (a) the “big bang” scenario as the option for the transition for all IPO’s,
- (b) the international filing date as the reference date, and
- (c) January 2022 as the transition date.

6. The International Bureau informed the CWS that it would develop a new common software tool to enable applicants to prepare sequence listings and verify that such sequence listings are in compliance with WIPO Standard ST.26 (to the extent determinable by a computer); this tool would also facilitate the processing of the application containing the sequence listings in IPOs.

7. At its fifth session, the CWS agreed on the modified description of Task No. 44: “Support the International Bureau by providing users’ requirements and feedback on the ST.26 authoring and validation software tool; Support the International Bureau in the consequential revision of the PCT Administrative Instructions; and Prepare necessary revisions of WIPO Standard ST.26 upon request by the CWS.”

PROGRESS REPORT

8. Following the revision of Standard ST.26 during the Fifth Session of the CWS, approval of the recommendations for transition from ST.25 to ST.26 and announcement by the International Bureau that it would develop the new common software tool to support the Standard, the Task Force carried out several activities to further improve the Standard and to specify the requirements for the new tool.

9. The Task Force created a new WIKI page for collaboration activities related to development of the Authoring/Validation tool and carried out several online meetings for preparation of the requirement specifications and Proof of Concept for the new Authoring / Validation tool;

10. The IB, in its role as funder and coordinator of the development of the new Authoring / Validation tool within the scope of Task No. 44, has successfully completed the Proof of Concept, the requirement specifications and has initiated the development project.

11. The Task Force carried out Round 10 of discussions, focused on topics related to the actual implementation of Standard ST.26 by IPOs and subsequent revision to further facilitate a common understanding and a smoother deployment by applicants and Offices.

12. The Task Force in particular worked on a second revision of WIPO Standard ST.26. The proposal for the revision of Standard ST.26 is submitted for consideration and approval at this session of the CWS, including amendments to the ST.26 main body and Annexes I to IV and VI and a new Annex VII. Further detailed information on the proposed revision can be found in document CWS/6/16.

13. The Task Force took note of the document PCT/WG/11/24 prepared and submitted by WIPO to the Eleventh Session of the PCT Working Group in June 2018 on the PCT legal framework (Rules, Administrative Instructions and Annex C) regarding sequence listings.

ROADMAP

14. The Task Force plans to:

- (a) obtain approval for the second revision of Standard ST.26 by the CWS during the Sixth Session (15-19 October 2018);
- (b) support the International Bureau of WIPO by participating in the development and testing of the pilot Authoring / Validation Tool;
- (c) provide support to WIPO for the consequential revision of the PCT Administrative Instructions; and
- (d) work on any further revision of WIPO Standard ST.26, if required, to further facilitate the implementation of Standard ST.26 by Offices and Applicants.

15. *The CWS is invited to:*

(a) note the contents of this present document; and

(b) taking into account paragraph 14(d) of the present document, consider the modification of the description of Task No.44 by removing the wording “upon request by the CWS” and approve the proposed new description that would read “Support the International Bureau by providing users’ requirements and feedback on the ST.26 authoring and validation software tool; support the International Bureau in the consequential revision of the PCT Administrative Instructions; and prepare necessary revisions of WIPO Standard ST.26”.

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