

Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS)

Seventh Session
Geneva, July 1 to 5, 2019

REPORT ON TASK NO.59

Document prepared by the co-leaders of the Blockchain Task Force

INTRODUCTION

1. At its sixth session held in October 2018, the Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS) received two proposals:

- (a) Proposal to develop a new WIPO standard regarding blockchain by IP Australia; and
- (b) Proposal for the creation of a task to study blockchain applications in the field of intellectual property by the Russian Federation.

2. At its sixth session, the CWS considered the proposals submitted by the Delegations of Australia and the Russian Federation and agreed on the creation of the new Task No. 59, the description of which reads:

- “(a) Explore the possibility of using blockchain technology in the processes of providing IP rights protection, processing information about IP objects and their use;
- (b) Collect information about IPO developments in use of and experience with blockchain, assess current Industry Standards on blockchain and consider merit and applicability to IPOs;
- (c) Develop a model to standardize approaches of using blockchain technology in the IP field, including guiding principles, common practice and use of terminology as a framework supporting collaboration, joint projects and proofs of concept; and

(d) Prepare a proposal for a new WIPO standard applying blockchain technology in the processes of providing IP rights protection, processing information about IP objects and their use”.

(See paragraph 30 of document CWS/6/34.)

3. At its sixth session, in order to carry out Task No. 59, the CWS also approved the establishment of a new Task Force named “Blockchain Task Force” and designated the Delegations of Australia and the Russian Federation as co-leaders of the new Task Force. The CWS requested the new Task Force to report progress on Task No.59 at the seventh session of the CWS (see paragraph 31 of document CWS/6/34). The CWS requested that the Secretariat issue a circular inviting Intellectual Property Offices (IPOs) to nominate their experts on blockchain to the Blockchain Task Force. The CWS agreed that the International Bureau organize an event on blockchain in 2019, inviting CWS Members and any interested parties. The CWS also agreed to organize a Blockchain Task Force meeting in person before the next CWS session. (See paragraphs 33 to 35 of document CWS/6/34.)

PROGRESS REPORT

4. In November 2018, the Secretariat issued Circular C.CWS.108 inviting IPOs to nominate their representatives to the Blockchain Task Force. The following 13 IPOs responded to the Circular: Australia, Canada, Chile, China, the Eurasian Patent Office, the European Union Intellectual Property Office, Germany, Japan, Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, and United States of America.

5. The Secretariat established the Task Force wiki to facilitate discussion by the Blockchain Task Force members. In December 2018, the Task Force co-leaders distributed the 2018-2019 work plan in both a visualization and tabular form to start discussion on Task 59. Additionally, a high-level work plan covering the breadth of work was distributed – now named Blockchain Task Force Roadmap.

Results of Task Force Members Survey

6. In January 2019, Round 1 discussions commenced and the Task Force co-leaders and the International Bureau developed a Task Force member’s survey to “Collect information about Task Force members’ developments in use of and experience with Blockchain.”

7. The Task Force members were invited to complete this survey throughout February 2019 comprising seven questions, 1 to 5 being of importance:

“1) What areas do you consider blockchain to be a high value opportunity or potential threat in the field of IP?

2) Blockchain related activities within your organization

3) Blockchain related activities within your jurisdiction

4) Objectives of the blockchain standard considering potential scope items listed below:

- i. Scope Statement
- ii. Terminology and Definitions
- iii. Technologies
- iv. Data
- v. Participation

5) Suggestions on joint project across IPOs.”

8. Significant results include:

(a) Approval of the Standard scope statement to read as follows:

“This Standard aims to guide the Intellectual Property Offices (IPOs) and other Organizations that need to manage, store, process, exchange and disseminate IP data using Blockchain. It is intended that by using this Standard, the development of Blockchain can be simplified and accelerated in a harmonized manner and interoperability among IPOs.”

(b) High Value Opportunities:

- i. Smart Contracts – IP Rights processing, easier licensing and transfer, timeliness improvements etc;
- ii. Immutability / Trusted / Shared Trust- Blockchain-based IP registries: record IP asset issuance, ownership and status change, chain of ownership. Traceability of IP asset. Digital reinvention on IP asset management;
- iii. Data Sharing / Distributed - Data sharing among government agencies to reduce data redundancy and ensure data integrity; and
- iv. Provenance – Proof of ownership e.g., Smart Trade Mark at IPA.

(c) Joint projects should be split into an internal focus and external focus:

- i. Internal Facing
 - Immutable data sharing between offices e.g., Priority data; and
 - Smart contracts e.g., automated renewals processes and record of ownership changes.
- ii. External Facing
 - Blockchain for priority filing;
 - IP Rights Licensing;
 - Customs / border force – anti-counterfeiting; and
 - Establishment of a unified storage/repository of 3D models and images, using Blockchain technology.

(d) Thoughts on Standard inclusions:

- i. Terminology and Definitions
 - Vocabulary dictionary; and
 - Glossary of terms.
- ii. Technologies and Interoperability
 - Platform;
 - Security;
 - Types e.g., Smart contracts; and
 - Coding language.
- iii. Data
 - On chain or off the chain;
 - OPI or non-OPI; and
 - WIPO Standards e.g., ST.3.

- iv. Participation
 - Governance;
 - Consensus;
 - Identity management; and
 - Public, Private, Permissioned.
- v. Standard provides reference models and business cases for application.

WIPO Blockchain Workshop and May face-to-face Task Force Meeting

9. Task Force co-leaders assisted the International Bureau in the organization of the WIPO Blockchain Workshop in addition to presenting at and moderating sessions including:

- (a) Patent landscape in the field of Blockchain technology;
- (b) Blockchain products/services for Intellectual Property; and
- (c) Potential areas and candidates for standardization of Blockchain on IP data.

10. The Blockchain Task Force held a face-to-face Task Force meeting on May 1, 2019. The following six IPOs: IP Australia, the Korean Intellectual Property Office, the Russian Federal Service for Intellectual Property, the Spanish Patent and Trademark Office, Intellectual Property Office of the United Kingdom and the United States Patent and Trademark Office) and the International Bureau of WIPO were present at the Task Force meeting.

11. The Task Force meeting focused on:

- (a) A review of the WIPO Blockchain workshop outcomes;
- (b) Review and Discussion on the objective and scope of a new WIPO standard on blockchain;
- (c) Review and Discussion on Task Force member responses to survey on "Use of and Experience with blockchain";
- (d) Discussion of Standard Objectives and Inclusions for Standard Table of Contents; and
- (e) Future work, Industry guidance and potential Use Cases for proofs of concept projects.

12. Key outcomes following the Task Force meeting included:

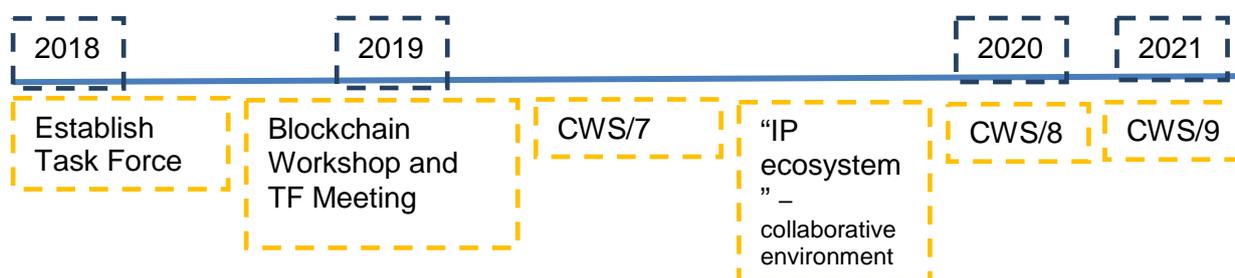
- (a) Proposed modifications to the Task Force objectives;
- (b) Proposed modifications to the proposed draft Standard scope statement;
- (c) Finalising the proposed draft Standard objectives;
- (d) Drafting of proposed Standard title;
- (e) Drafting and modifications to the draft standard Table of Contents;
- (f) Grouping of potential IP sector blockchain Use Cases into relevant themes; and

(g) Agreement to investigate establishment of a collaborative environment to support a diverse group of stakeholders in the IP ecosystem in developing solutions to a range of Use Cases.

13. Task Force members present at the face to face meeting agreed on the following action items:

- (a) Publication for comment on the Task Force wiki of:
 - i. Proposed modifications to the Task Force objectives;
 - ii. Proposed modifications to the proposed draft Standard scope statement;
 - iii. proposed draft Standard objectives;
 - iv. proposed Standard title;
 - v. Refine draft standard Table of Contents; and
 - vi. Use Cases (raw state).
- (b) Request to the International Bureau to contact and coordinate with the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) for inclusion of Blockchain Task Force representation as liaison to ISO and specifically ISO TC/307;
- (c) Refinement and prioritisation of Use Cases; and
- (d) Investigate and establish a collaborative environment for support of Use Cases and Standard development.

BLOCKCHAIN TASK FORCE ROADMAP



DRAFT WORK PLAN 2019/2020

Round	Action	Planned Completion Date	Completed	Deferred
1	Collect information from Task Force members on developments in use of and experience with blockchain including Task Force members business cases for future presentation and discussion	February 2019	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Prepare draft structure and questions of questionnaire on IPO use of and experience with blockchain	March 2019	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Provide working document to CWS	TBC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Hold round 1 Webex with Task Force members	March 2019	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Round	Action	Planned Completion Date	Completed	Deferred
Blockchain Workshop	Present on IPA Blockchain Proof of Concept	April 2019	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Present on candidates for standardization			
	Face-to-face Task Force meeting			
2	Modifications to draft Task Force objectives publication on the wiki	May – June 2019	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Modifications to draft Standard scope publication on the wiki	May – June 2019	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Draft Standard objectives publication on the wiki	May – June 2019	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Draft Standard title publication on the wiki	May – June 2019	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Draft Standard Table of Contents publication on the wiki	May – June 2019	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Use Cases (raw state) publication on the wiki	May – June 2019	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Hold round 2 Webex with Task Force members	June 2019	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CWS/7	Prepare and present Task Force report to the CWS	July 2019	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Provide oral presentation on Task Force work include Task Force members survey results	July 2019	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Hold CWS Task Force face-to-face meeting	July 2019	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Provide 2019/2020 work plan	July 2019	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	WIPO to contact and coordinate with ISO for inclusion of Blockchain Task Force representation as liaison to ISO and specifically ISO TC/307	August 2019 -	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Refinement and prioritization of Use Cases	August 2019 -	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Investigate and establish a collaborative environment for support of Use Cases and Standard development	August 2019 -	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Refine draft Standard Table of Contents	August 2019 -	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

14. The CWS is invited to:

(a) note the content of the present document; and

(b) encourage IPOs to participate in the discussions by the Blockchain Task Force.

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