

WIPO Questionnaire on the Draft Program and Budget for the 2010/11 Biennium

Response from Australia

General Comments

Australia was supportive of the WIPO budget and the direction being taken under the nine strategic goals. However, the global financial crisis and the impact it is having on WIPO, and IP offices more generally, requires an reassessment of priorities and programs of activity. Undertaking financial restraint should be a key priority for WIPO in coming months. Member States should accept that not all activities may be accommodated at this time and some rescheduling or downsizing of activities is likely. We encourage WIPO to continue to identify practical ways to adjust to the current financial crisis.

Mindful of financial constraints, we consider Strategic Goals I, II, V and VII should remain high priorities for WIPO with continued progress towards patent reform a key ambition. Similarly, Australia continues to support Strategic Goal III with a focus on achieving real benefits for Member States.

In the changing global environment we look to WIPO to refocus on core activities within WIPO's strategic realignment while seeking a balance with Member State aspirations for the IP system.

Strategic Goals	Comments
I. Balanced Evolution of the International Normative Framework for IP	Ongoing support for the program of activity under this strategic goal is essential if WIPO is to continue to move forward as the pre-eminent IP forum. It is still essential though that cost saving measures are applied here as with all other activities to ensure WIPO is well prepared to ride out the financial crisis with minimal effect to its operations.
II. Provision of Premier Global IP Services	For Australia patent reform is a significant priority. Users of the IP system need WIPO to continue to be innovative and strategic in its operations, committed to improving quality, effectiveness and management of its operations and service delivery. Reassessing priorities within program activities will be vital in seeking to deliver services with a reduced income flow.
III. Facilitating the Use of IP for Development	Mindful of the constraints needed in the current financial climate, the integration of Development Agenda principles into WIPO's work program must continue to be an imperative in the realignment of activities. Australia seeks real benefits coming out of the current work program with concrete, actionable and deliverable activities. As with other programs, an assessment should still be made as to where cost savings may be made in the short term.
IV. Coordination and Development of Global IP Infrastructure	Australia looks to continued efforts to support Strategic Goal II in this program of activities. Notwithstanding this, an assessment should be made as to whether any activities can be re-scheduled or delayed in the short term.

<p>V. World Reference Source for IP Information and Analysis</p>	<p>Australia supports the focus of Strategic Goal V and views it as a high priority for WIPO. However priorities within the program should be reassessed in light of the global financial crisis and any non-essential activities should be rescheduled.</p>
<p>VI. International Cooperation on Building Respect for IP</p>	<p>As with other programs, activities should be reassessed in the light of cost savings measures or rescheduling.</p>
<p>VII. Addressing IP in Relation to Global Policy Issues</p>	<p>Australia considers this strategic goal to be a high priority for WIPO and, subject to other priorities, fully supports efforts to enhance WIPO's capability to address global policy issues. As with other programs, WIPO should seek to identify cost-saving measures.</p>
<p>VIII. A Responsive Communications Interface between WIPO, its Member States and all Stakeholders</p>	<p>Notwithstanding comments relating to other areas of activities, these programs will play an important role in keeping Member States appraised of the financial situation. WIPO is encouraged to continue to run these areas as efficiently and effectively as possible within overarching financial constraints.</p>
<p>IX. An Efficient Administrative and Financial Support Structure to Enable WIPO to deliver its Programs</p>	<p>These programs will play a key role in the continued financial viability of the organisation while the impact of global crisis continues to affect IP activity. Programs, such as those relating to the New Construction, should be critically reviewed to ascertain what is not essential in the short term and where the greatest risks to the organisation exist in changing priorities.</p>