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## **Meeting of International Authorities under the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT)**

**Thirty-Third Session**  
**Geneva, October 28 and 29, 2026**

### **SEQUENCE LISTINGS TASK FORCE: STATUS REPORT**

*Document prepared by the European Patent Office*

1. The Annex to this document contains a report prepared by the European Patent Office on the work of the Task Force on Sequence Listings created by the Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS) at its first session in October 2010.

2. *The Meeting is invited to note  
the contents of this document.*

[Annex follows]

## WIPO STANDARD ST.26 FOR THE PRESENTATION OF NUCLEOTIDE AND AMINO ACID SEQUENCE LISTINGS

### BACKGROUND

1. The Sequence Listings Task Force was created by the CWS, at its first session (October 25 to 29, 2010), to perform Task No. 44, that is to 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 EPO was assigned the role of Task Force Leader. The Task Force was also requested to liaise with the appropriate PCT body regarding the possible impact of such a Standard on Annex C to the Administrative Instructions under the PCT (see paragraph 29 of document [CWS/1/10](#)).
2. At its reconvened fourth session, WIPO Standard ST.26 was adopted by the CWS in 2016. In October 2021, at the fifty-third session of the PCT Assembly, the amendments to the PCT Regulations to implement WIPO Standard ST.26 in the PCT System were adopted. The WIPO General Assembly approved to delay the “big bang” implementation date of WIPO Standard ST.26 to July 1, 2022, at national, regional and international levels (see document [WO/GA/54/14](#) and paragraphs 178 to 183 of document [WO/GA/54/15](#)).
3. At the eleventh session of the CWS in 2023, the CWS approved a revision of the description of Task No. 44, which reads now as follows:

“Support the International Bureau by testing new releases based on available resources and providing user feedback on the WIPO Sequence Suite; and prepare necessary revisions of WIPO Standard ST.26”.
4. Since its adoption in 2016, WIPO Standard ST.26 has been revised several times, resulting in versions 1.1 to 1.7, with [version 1.7](#) adopted at the eleventh session of the CWS in December 2023.
5. Since the eleventh session of the CWS, the Task Force has focused on two substantive amendments to WIPO Standard ST.26: (i) requiring a subset of nucleotide and peptide analogs to be represented by the corresponding unmodified residue symbol, and (ii) lifting the minimum sequence length requirement, thereby allowing the inclusion in sequence listings of short sequences containing fewer than 10 specifically defined nucleotides or fewer than 4 specifically defined amino acids.
6. Following extensive discussions and, in relation to the proposal to lift the minimum sequence length requirement, the conducting of a user survey, the Task Force submitted to the thirteenth session of the CWS, held in November 2025, for approval a proposal to revise WIPO Standard ST.26 in the form of version 2.0 (see document [CWS/13/16 Rev.](#)). The proposal included the amendments necessary to implement these two substantive changes, together with other editorial amendments aimed at improving the quality of the Standard.

### PROGRESS REPORT

#### ADOPTION OF THE NEW VERSION OF THE STANDARD

7. At its thirteenth session in November 2025, the CWS approved the first major revision to WIPO Standard ST.26 as version 2.0 and approved the date of entry into force as July 1, 2027 (see document [CWS/13/33](#)). The CWS also agreed on the transition requirement as proposed by the Sequence Listings Task Force, as set out in an Editorial Note on the first page of [version 2.0](#) of WIPO Standard ST.26 as follows:

“The Thirteenth Session of the Committee on WIPO Standards decided that version 2.0 of ST.26 will enter into force on July 1, 2027 and apply to all patent applications with a filing date on or after that date.

Exceptionally, paragraph 8 of this Standard will apply as from the date of entry into force of version 2.0, independent of the filing date of the patent application concerned.”<sup>1</sup>

8. The adoption of version 2.0 was reported to the WIPO General Assembly in July 2026 ([WO/GA/60/8](#)).

#### FURTHER WORK CARRIED OUT BY THE TASK FORCE

9. Since the thirty-second session of the Meeting of International Authorities under the PCT (PCT/MIA) in October 2025, the Task Force met once in hybrid format and four times online. Discussions primarily focused on the implementation of version 2.0, the identification of any further improvements that may be required, and progress in the development of the WIPO Sequence Suite.

10. With regard to the implementation of version 2.0, Offices considered the measures necessary to facilitate a smooth transition to the revised Standard. Particular attention was given to awareness-raising initiatives aimed at ensuring widespread knowledge of the amendments entering into force on July 1, 2027. The Task Force also considered the possible impact of the revised Standard on Annex C to the Administrative Instructions under the PCT and provided informal feedback to the International Bureau on the draft amendments, ahead of the official consultation of receiving Offices and International Searching and Preliminary Examining Authorities pursuant to PCT Rule 89.2 (b). Further amendments to the PCT International Search and Preliminary Examination Guidelines may also be required.

11. The Task Force discussed whether transitional arrangements were needed in view of the need to release the new software version ahead of the entry into force of the revised Standard. During the period leading up to entry into force, users, and particularly test users, could inadvertently file sequence listings containing short sequences before version 2.0 becomes effective. However, the Task Force concluded that no specific transitional arrangements were necessary. Delaying the software release until shortly before the entry into force date, combined with timely communication to test users, was considered sufficient.

12. The Task Force also exchanged on further proposals for potential improvement of version 2.0 of Standard ST.26, on the understanding that there was no general support for presenting a new proposal for revision of the Standard to the CWS at its fourteenth session in November 2026. Following receipt of proposals from Task Force members and discussions in the electronic forum (wiki) and during the Task Force meetings, the following issues remain under consideration for potential further improvements of Standard ST.26:

- (a) the removal of the qualifier ID references from the generated sequence listing; and
- (b) further improvements to Annex VI to increase clarity.

13. Finally, the Task Force provided expert support to the International Bureau on its activities as regards improving WIPO Sequence Suite. Members participated in a technical discussion on reviewing the proposals for updates to the functional specifications for the WIPO Sequence Suite and several demonstration sessions forming part of the software development cycle.

#### WORK PLAN

14. The following items are considered a priority in the upcoming year for the Sequence Listings Task Force:

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<sup>1</sup> Paragraph 8 of version 2.0 of WIPO Standard ST.26 concerns the minimum length requirement.

- (a) Facilitating preparations for the entry into force of version 2.0 of WIPO Standard ST.26, and its implementation, including by liaising with INSDC and its members;
- (b) Collaborating on any further revisions of WIPO Standard ST.26, if required, to further facilitate its implementation by Offices and applicants while remaining aligned with the requirements of INSDC and the Universal Protein Resource (UniProt); and
- (c) Supporting the International Bureau by testing new releases and passing on user feedback regarding their use of WIPO Sequence.

[End of Annex and of document]