

WIPO



SCIT/1/5

ORIGINAL: English

DATE: May 28, 1998

WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION
GENEVA

E

STANDING COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES

PLENARY

First Session

Geneva, June 22 to 26, 1998

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY DIGITAL LIBRARIES (IPDLs) PROJECT

Document prepared by the International Bureau

INTRODUCTION

Background

1. The primary objective of this project is to facilitate access to and exchange of intellectual property information by the intellectual property community worldwide by the creation and use of Intellectual Property Digital Libraries (IPDLs). Such access by developing countries will be a tool for technology transfer and economic development to the benefit of these countries and their inventors, industry, universities, and research and development institutions.
2. In implementing this project, WIPO will take full advantage of the WIPO global information network (WIPONET, for further details, see document SCIT/1/4).
3. WIPO and the Standing Committee on Information Technologies (SCIT) will serve as a forum through which offices can concurrently develop IPDLs that will be made accessible to Member States and the general public through WIPONET.

General Concept of Digital Libraries

4. Digital libraries are electronic equivalents to paper collections of records. An Intellectual Property Digital Library is an implementation of the concept of a Digital Library, i.e., an organized collection of electronic information disseminated to a designated community through network technologies providing easy access to data. Provided that a global secure network can be established, digital libraries hold the potential of vastly simplifying the process of providing access to timely and complete collections of intellectual property records maintained by other intellectual property offices. Digital libraries, accordingly, present an attractive alternative to the paper-based collections maintained today by most intellectual property offices.

5. The WIPO Intellectual Property Digital Library is one example of an intellectual property digital library.

THE WIPO INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY DIGITAL LIBRARY (WIPO IPDL) PROJECT

6. The establishment of the IPDLs was recommended by the Permanent Committee on Industrial Property Information in November, 1997 when it discussed long-term policy in the area of industrial property information. The International Bureau studied technical solutions, and in April 1998, as a proactive step to establish the IPDL program, developed a prototype WIPO IPDL featuring an electronic form of the PCT Gazette implemented as a patent information database (PCT Database). The service was launched on April 2, 1998, and is accessible through WIPO's Web site or directly via <http://pctgazette.wipo.int>. The database contains the first page data (bibliographic data, abstract and drawing) of PCT applications published since April 2, 1998. The system provides comprehensive web-based searching, with retrieval and display by users on demand. The first page data of applications published each week in Section I of the Gazette are added to the database immediately following publication. This allows the search and display of the current week or all or any subset of the database as required. It is planned that the coverage of the database will be expanded to include the first page data of applications published in PCT Gazettes issued earlier than April 2, 1998.

7. In the light of the growing importance of PCT data, the International Bureau will explore the possibility of including full text PCT data (possibly related to a recent limited time period) in the WIPO IPDL system if so desired by Member States. To generate the full text data in electronic form, the International Bureau will study possible solutions, taking into account the progress made in PCT automation projects currently planned or underway. The WIPO IPDL would represent a valuable new mechanism for the delivery of this full text data in a rapid efficient and cost-effective manner to all Member States without requiring, in particular, extensive search, retrieval and storage systems to be maintained by developing countries.

Future Plan of the WIPO IPDL

8. WIPO expects to eventually provide, through its IPDL, access to collections of intellectual property information (patent data, trademark data, design data, copyright management data, intellectual property laws, etc.) as well as enhanced search services, such as automatic translation, tools supporting the use of international classifications, automatic delivery of hard copies by facsimile on demand, etc.

Member States IPDLs

9. This project aims at the establishment of distributed global collections of searchable data originally generated by different intellectual property offices and relevant organizations. Any interested intellectual property office is encouraged to participate in this project. The International Bureau will provide those offices with technical assistance to set up their own digital libraries and will establish links between their IPDLs and the WIPO IPDL. In pursuit of globally distributed data collections accessible to and searchable by the intellectual property community and the general public, it is proposed that interested Member States make proposals concerning their participation in this project at the next session of the SCIT plenary meeting.

10. WIPO can assist interested offices in establishing the components of their IPDLs. For example, WIPO could help an office establish a database for application data, patent documents or other records, and make the database accessible to other intellectual property offices by integrating it into a digital library. The International Bureau will study various technical possibilities to facilitate the creation of such national IPDLs and possible seamless linking of those IPDLs using web and web-application technologies, as well as other information systems. WIPO can also support offices through the publication of this data in the WIPO IPDL, should an office not wish to establish its own information server.

Proposed Policies of WIPO IPDL

11. During the creation of the prototype of the WIPO IPDL, it became clear that a coordinated approach must be taken by all participating offices. The current prototype services are being provided according to the following tentative policies, which the SCIT plenary is invited to discuss and decide upon;

(a) to make it easier for as many offices as possible to participate in the project, in principle, technical solutions should follow industry standards supported by open systems and the so-called Commercial Off-the-Shelf (COTS) products,

(b) to take advantage of dynamic activities in the private sector, the WIPO IPDL should provide basic collections of intellectual property data or complementary services to those made available by private database vendors,

(c) to verify proposed technical solutions, pilot projects should be launched and the result should be reflected in the selection and scaling of potential solutions,

(d) a multilingual environment should be taken into account to the greatest extent possible when adopting technical solutions,

(e) a flexible approach should be taken considering the particular circumstances in developing countries,

(f) all services of the WIPO IPDL should be made available to intellectual property offices of Member States free-of-charge, with the access and charging policies to be applied to certain services available to the general public determined by the SCIT.

12. The SCIT Plenary is invited to note and approve the contents of this document.

[End of document]