



MINISTRY OF JUSTICE, LEGAL AND  
PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS OF ZIMBABWE



AFRICAN REGIONAL INTELLECTUAL  
PROPERTY ORGANIZATION (ARIPO)



WIPO  
WORLD  
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY  
ORGANIZATION

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## SYMPOSIUM

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**WIPO/GEO/VFA/25/INF/2**  
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## **Worldwide Symposium on Geographical Indications**

organized

by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)

in cooperation with

the Companies and Intellectual Property Office of Zimbabwe (CIPZ), Ministry of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs

with the support of the African Regional Intellectual Property Organization (ARIPO)

**Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe (hybrid), May 1 and 2, 2025**  
**(Times are indicated in Zimbabwe Standard Time)**

### INFORMATION ON SPEAKERS

*prepared by the International Bureau of WIPO*

## TITILAYO ADEBOLA



Titilayo Adebola is the Theme Coordinator for International Intellectual Property and Information Law and Director of the Centre for Commercial Law at the University of Aberdeen. Her current research examines the multifaceted pathways through which geographical indications can foster social and economic development.

Ms. Adebola serves as the Chairperson of the Advisory Board of the African International Economic Law Network, Senior Advisor to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Founding Editor of *Flora IP* and Editor of *Afronomicslaw.org*. She also sits on the Editorial Boards of the *Journal of International Economic Law* and the *Comparative and International Law Journal of Southern Africa*.

Ms. Adebola holds an LLM in International Economic Law and a PhD in Law from the University of Warwick. She is a Barrister and Solicitor of the Supreme Court of Nigeria and a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy in the United Kingdom.

## PAUL ASSANDE



Paul Assande has held the position of Director General of the Ivorian Office of Intellectual Property (OIPI) since February 16, 2020. In this role, he has led the operationalization of the National Committee for Geographical Indications and Collective Trademarks (CMC). He also coordinated all project activities that resulted in the registration of “Attiéké des Lagunes”, “Pagne Baoulé”, and “Café des Montagnes de Man” as Geographical Indications, marking the first three Protected Geographical Indications (PGIs) in Côte d’Ivoire.

Previously, as Technical Advisor, Mr. Assande regularly produced technical notes addressing key issues related to the development of the SME ecosystem in Côte d’Ivoire.

He was a research associate at the National School of Statistics and Applied Economics (ENSEA) for over a decade, at the Economic Policy Analysis Unit of the Center for Economic and Social Research (CAPEC/CIRES) for more than five years and has been affiliated with the Study Group on Education in Africa (GRETAF-CI) for approximately 15 years. Through his consultancy and research work, he has contributed to several major studies. These include the Côte d’Ivoire 2040 prospective study initiated by the Ivorian employers’ association, the 2016 and 2018 public agricultural expenditure reviews, the national capacity-building strategy, the development of higher education statistical directories for countries in the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), and the evaluation of several community-based projects and programs.

He holds a PhD in Management Sciences and a Postgraduate Diploma (DESS) in Statistical Analysis Applied to Development (ASAD).

IRENE CALBOLI



Irene Calboli is Regents Professor of Law at Texas A&M University and holds honorary and visiting appointments, including at the University of Geneva, SciencesPo Paris, University of Melbourne, Singapore University of Social Sciences, National Law School Delhi, Bocconi University, the Royal University of Law and Economic of Cambodia, and Stanford University. She is a past Fulbright-Hanken Distinguished Chair in Business and Economics in Finland and a Fulbright Specialist Scholar in Cambodia.

Ms. Calboli is a prominent and well-known authority on the law of Geographical Indications (GIs) worldwide. She has published 11 books and more than 100 articles, book chapters, and policy reports, which are highly regarded and have been widely cited by policymakers, judges, and practitioners. Her scholarship and advisory activity have helped shape international, regional, and national legislative reforms.

She regularly advises national governments and IP Offices and is an Expert for the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the UN International Trade Center. In this capacity, she has managed large research teams, designed IP curricula, and implemented IP programs for academic, professional, and executive training. She additionally participated in developing national IP strategies and delivering technical assistance on GIs and other IP areas, including countries' accession to international agreements.

Ms. Calboli serves in leadership capacities in several professional associations, including the International Law Association, the European Policy for Intellectual Property Law Association, the International Trademark Association, and the Association of American Law Schools. She is an elected member of the International Academy of Comparative Law, the American Law Institute, and the European Law Institute, where she is the co-chair of the IP special interest group.

She is a graduate of the University of Bologna, Queen Mary University, and the London School of Economics.

SANDRA CARVAO



Sandra Carvão has held the position of Director of Market Intelligence, Policies, and Competitiveness at the World Tourism Organization (UN Tourism) since 2018.

Previously, she held the position of Director of Communications and Publications for eight years, where she was responsible strategic positioning of UN Tourism.

From 2007 to 2010, Ms. Carvão was Deputy Director of Market Trends, Competitiveness and Trade in Tourism of UN Tourism. During this period, Sandra coordinated UN Tourism's Tourism Resilience Committee in the context of the economic crisis 2008-2009.

Prior to joining UN Tourism in 2003, Ms. Carvão was a Market Manager at the Portuguese National Tourist Office in Lisbon.

She holds a degree in International Relations, with specialization in Economics, from Institute of Social and Political Sciences of the Technical University of Lisbon and a postgraduate degree in Marketing from the Complutense University of Madrid.

### DANIEL CAVERO GAMARRA



Daniel Cavero Gamarra is a social communicator with more than 20 years of experience in newsrooms and strategic communication, focused on public relations in the public and private sectors, as well as marketing strategies aimed at promoting Peru.

He has expertise in content editing, the creation and execution of communication strategies, social media and crisis management, particularly on topics related to tourism, exports of non-traditional products, investment, and the Peru country brand, which he has supported since its inception.

In 2023, Mr. Cavero Gamarra joined the Country Brand team at PROMPERÚ, leading the promotional efforts for the Peru Brand, managing national and international advertising campaigns. Since then, he promoted the licensing program for the country brand's use across public and private entities, coordinated the 10th Ibero-American Forum of Country Brands (CIMAP) as Pro Tempore President, and currently works as Commissioner General of Section for Peru's participation in Expo 2025 Osaka-Kansai.

### NOYNITH CHANTHAMITH



Noynith Chanthamith is a national expert for Geographical Indication (GI) silk in Laos and is currently pursuing a PhD at Beijing Forestry University in Beijing, China. His research focuses on "The Prospects and Challenges of Agriculture and Silk Products Under GI Certification (Case Study in Laos)".

Previously, he served as General Manager of Lao Sericulture and Agrology Promotion (Mulberries), where he provided support to farmers and women weavers in rural communities, aiming to promote an ecological, economic, cultural, and socially sustainable Lao silk and handicraft enterprise – ultimately enhancing the livelihood of villagers. The most important aspect of his work was ensuring environmental, cultural, and artistic resources are safeguarded for future generations.

Before entering the silk and agriculture sector, Mr. Chanthamith gained diverse professional experience – from nurse aide in a hospital to roles in the hospitality industry, a golf club, a semiconductor factory, and Director of a language and vocational training center – gaining valuable perspectives and skills that support his current work.

### ANNE CHETAILE



Anne Chetaille has run the Agriculture and Forestry Project for the French Development Agency (AFD) since September 2021. Her mandate includes appraising and monitoring the implementation of support projects to promote geographical indications (such as Facilité IG and PAMPIG). She is also quality label focal point for her division (Agriculture, Rural Development and Biodiversity). Ms. Chetaille led an evaluation of the support provided by AFD for geographical indications over 15 years and the contribution of the latter to sustainable development (Quinze années de soutien de l'AFD aux indications géographiques. Quelle contribution au développement durable? Quelles pistes d'amélioration?). Previously, she was a project manager in the Strategy Department of AFD, in charge of coordinating its sustainable development analysis and advisory services.

Prior to joining AFD, Ms. Chetaille worked for various non-governmental organizations (NGOs), initially with Gret (an international social development NGO) and later with the World Wildlife Fund for Nature (France).

She holds degrees in international economics and environmental economics.

#### MARTHA CHIKOWORE



Martha Chikowore is a consultant in academic development for intellectual property, innovation and business. She retired from WIPO on 30 November 2024, after 21 years of service in the WIPO Academy, including as the Acting Head of Academic Institutions and Executive Programs.

Ms. Chikowore's expertise lies in human resources and skills development in intellectual property, innovation and business. She led the design and implementation of several WIPO Joint Master's Degree programs with universities worldwide. She was a co-founder of the WIPO-WTO Colloquia for IP Teachers and Researchers and served as a member of the editorial board of the WIPO-WTO Colloquium papers.

She co-authored the *Intellectual Property Monograph on Zimbabwe* (2013, 2018) as part of the *International Encyclopaedia of Laws* series. She also contributed chapters to *Intellectual Property Law, Practice, and Management* (Africa University, 2018) and the second edition of the forthcoming *Research Handbook on IP Licensing* (Edward Elgar). Her article on the topic of "Limitations and Strategies for Enhancing the Banjul Protocol on Marks for ARIPO" was published in the *European IP Review* (Vol. 46, Issue 9, September 2024).

Ms. Chikowore holds an LL.M. in IP Law from the University of South Africa, an MBA from St. John's University, New York, USA, and a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration, Marymount Manhattan College, New York, USA. She is currently pursuing a PhD at the University of Geneva, Switzerland, with a dissertation on trademark reforms in Africa, which she is expected to defend before end of 2025.

#### IDRISSA DOMMO GORO



Idrissa Dommo Goro is a visual artist from Mali. From a young age, he was immersed in the ancestral art of *bogolan*, a traditional dyeing technique using natural pigments that is unique to Mali. Driven by a deep passion for this heritage, he pursued higher education in the visual arts, specializing in the use of natural pigments and, in particular, *bogolan*.

As Deputy Secretary-General of the Bôgô Danbe group, he plays a key role in efforts to obtain Geographical Indication (GI) protection for *bogolan*. The aim is to safeguard and promote a technique that is emblematic of Malian cultural heritage.

Through numerous exhibitions in Mali and internationally, Mr. Dommo Goro has brought *bogolan* into the spotlight, not only as a traditional craft but also as a powerful medium for contemporary artistic expression, all while preserving its authenticity and cultural depth. An internationally recognized expert and trainer in traditional Malian dyeing techniques, he has conducted training courses and workshops around the world, sharing his knowledge with a wide range of audiences. Through both his artistic work and dedication to protecting cultural

heritage, he embodies the balance between preserving traditional craftsmanship and innovating within the landscape of contemporary African art.

#### BEATRICE EGULU



Beatrice Asiimire Nakacwa Egulu is an Agricultural Economist with over two decades of experience in policy development and analysis, research and documentation, monitoring and evaluation, learning, and reporting in support of agricultural transformation.

She currently works as a Policy Officer in the Directorate of Agriculture and Rural Development at the African Union Commission in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. In this role, she coordinates the implementation of the African Union Seed and Biotechnology Programme, a strategic framework for the development of Africa's seed sector.

In addition, Ms. Egulu also coordinates the AU-EU Partnership on Agriculture and the Geographical Indications Strategy for Africa, promoting sustainable agricultural development and innovation across the continent.

#### ALEXANDRA GRAZIOLI



Alexandra Grazioli is currently the Director of the Lisbon Registry in the Brands and Designs Sector of WIPO. Her area of supervision involves the management, development, and promotion of the Lisbon System, as well as the development and implementation of projects relating to geographical indications. Since taking up her duties with WIPO in 2014, she has worked as a Senior Counsellor and then as Director in the Office of the Director General.

Before joining WIPO, Ms. Grazioli worked at the Swiss Federal Institute of Intellectual Property first as a trademark examiner, then as a Senior Legal Advisor, where she was responsible for the coordination of WIPO issues and negotiations on geographical indications. Finally, she worked as Counsellor in charge of intellectual property issues at the Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva. As representative and head of the Delegation of Switzerland, she attended several meetings and negotiations in all fields of intellectual property and on issues relating to governance and budgetary issues at WIPO and WTO (TRIPS and Doha Round negotiations).

#### MARCUS HÖPPERGER



Marcus Höpperger is Senior Director of the Department for Trademarks, Industrial Designs and Geographical Indications, Brands and Designs Sector of WIPO. The Trademarks, Industrial Designs and Geographical Indications Department is responsible for the formulation of policies and the provision of strategic direction to preserve and strengthen the role of WIPO as the principal international forum for trademarks, industrial designs and geographical indications. The Department is also responsible for the administration of the Lisbon System for the International Registration of Appellations of Origin.

Since taking up his duties with the World Intellectual Property Organization, he worked in various positions in international industrial property law, including as Director of the Madrid

System for the International Registration of Marks. In his current function, he acts as Secretary to the WIPO Standing Committee on the Law of Trademarks, Industrial Designs and Geographical Indications. Previously, he was also responsible for the preparation and holding of the 2006 Diplomatic Conference adopting the Singapore Treaty on the Law of Trademarks, the 2015 Diplomatic Conference adopting the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement on Appellations of Origin and Geographical Indications and the 2024 Diplomatic Conference for the Conclusion and Adoption of the Design Law Treaty.

#### ALLEN JOHNSON



Ambassador Allen Johnson serves as the Senior International Affairs Advisor for the Consortium for Common Food Names (CCFN). He is also President of Allen F. Johnson & Associates (AFJ) since founding the company in 2005. AFJ has been involved in business and consulting activities in North and South America, Europe, Asia and Africa for companies and trade associations as well as the U.S. government and international organizations. Activities include all aspects of business activity such as strategic planning, business and market assessments, economic and trade analysis, legal and regulatory issues, and trouble shooting and problem solving for clients and partners.

Prior to founding AFJ, Mr. Johnson served as an Ambassador at the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) in the Executive Office of the President from April 2001 until September of 2005. At USTR, Mr. Johnson was responsible for directing all U.S. agricultural negotiations globally, regionally and bilaterally, and resolving bilateral issues and disputes, including issues related to new technologies, with virtually every U.S. trading partner. He coordinated closely with U.S. Departments and regulatory agencies such as the Department of Agriculture, Department of Commerce, Department of State, Environmental Protection Agency, Food and Drug Administration and the White House and National Security Council, in creating federal rules and policies regarding international trade. He also consulted with and testified before Congress extensively.

#### MARIO KALERGIS P.



Mario Kalergis has a strong commercial foundation, particularly in strategic marketing, and has held executive leadership roles in Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay, where he led multidisciplinary teams across South America.

He currently serves as Director and Chief Executive Officer of K&L Consultores Asociados, providing clients with strategic support in innovation management, focusing on short-, medium-, and long-term planning. He is also the co-founder of GeTech Ltda, a company dedicated to helping clients integrate technological resources and innovation into their operational models.

Mr. Kalergis is actively engaged in international consulting for WIPO, in collaboration with Chile's National Institute of Industrial Property (INAPI), under the Origin Seals Program.

He holds a Master's degree in Advanced Marketing Management, a Diploma in Innovation and Entrepreneurship, and is certified in Technology Transfer and Business Innovation Management by Infyde S.A. (Spain). He is certified in technology transfer and business innovation management by Infyde S.A. (Spain), with expertise in designing innovation agendas, developing business portfolios, and guiding organizational transformation toward innovation.

## WOLF MEIER-EWERT



Wolf Meier-Ewert is Counsellor in the Intellectual Property, Government Procurement and Competition Division of the World Trade Organization (WTO), which is responsible for the administration of the Agreement on Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS Agreement). In this capacity he gives legal advice in relation to Intellectual Property and the TRIPS Agreement to Members and Observers of the WTO and deals with TRIPS related dispute settlement cases among WTO Members. He serves as the Secretary to the TRIPS Council, the governing body of the TRIPS Agreement, and to the Special Session of the TRIPS Council, the negotiating group dealing with TRIPS negotiations under the Doha Round. He has widely lectured on TRIPS and WTO-related matters.

Mr. Meier-Ewert has practiced as an attorney at an international law firm in London and Munich focusing on intellectual property law in international corporate transactions and in cross-border infringement litigation. Before that, Mr. Meier-Ewert was a researcher at the Max-Planck Institute for Innovation and Competition in Munich, Germany, where he concentrated on copyright law and private international law.

Mr. Meier-Ewert is a graduate of the University of Oxford, United Kingdom, where he studied Politics, Philosophy and Economics (PPE) and holds a law degree from the Ludwig-Maximilian University in Munich, Germany.

## HAZEL MOIR



Hazel V. J. Moir, Honorary Associate Professor at the Australian National University (ANU) Centre for European Studies, is an economist, with substantial policy advising experience and a PhD in public policy. Over the past two decades her work has focused on the economic impact of IP policy, particularly patent policy and GIs. In addition to research and academic publishing, she makes submissions to both Australian and international enquiries, such as the 2016 UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Access to Medicines. Her work on the economic impact of IP policies also takes her into the field of trade treaties, and she currently takes a particular interest in the Eu-Australia trade negotiations (2018 onwards).

Her work on GIs is largely empirical, focusing on the impact of GIs on producer net incomes. It includes an EU-funded Jean Monet grant "Understanding Geographical Indications" (March 2017 to March 2019) and articles in the *Journal of World Trade* (51(6), Dec. 2017; and 56(6), Dec 2023), *Studies in Agricultural Economics* (120(3), Dec. 2018) and *Sustainability* (12(22), Nov. 2020).

Prior to studying for her PhD in public policy at the ANU, Dr. Moir worked at senior levels in the Australian Public Service for two decades, largely on industry, innovation and trade matters. Earlier she worked in the UK, New Zealand, Indonesia, Thailand and France, largely in the private and non-government organization (NGO) sectors.

She has PhD degrees from Brown University (demography, 1975) and the ANU (public policy, 2010), a European Master's Degree in human rights (University of Padua, 2001) and an honors degree in economics (University of Cambridge, 1969).



PÉTER MOLNÁR



Péter Molnár is an Associate Professor with a PhD in Agriculture, specializing in viticulture. He lives and works in the Tokaj Wine Region of Hungary, one of the oldest protected GIs in the world.

He is currently the Director of the Mathiász Institute of Viticulture and Winemaking at the University of Tokaj. In 2018, he was elected President of the Tokaj Council of Wine Communities, and since 2013, he has been a Board Member of the National Council of Wine Communities of Hungary.

From 2010 to 2014, he served as President of VINDEPENDENT, the Hungarian Association of Independent Winegrowers, which is a member of the European Confederation of Independent Winegrowers (CEVI), advocating for the protection of independent winegrowers' interests.

Between 2008 and 2011, Mr. Molnár led Tokaj Renaissance – Association of Classified Vineyards of Tokaj, focusing on the origin protection and regional promotion of the Tokaj Wine Region.

GERALDO MOSIMANN DA SILVA



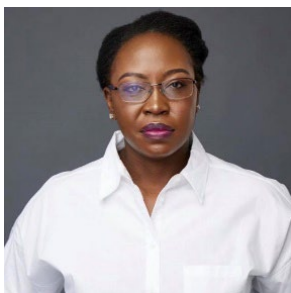
Geraldo Silva is an agronomist with a PhD in Human Geography from the University of Florida. He works as an independent researcher and consultant.

Mr. Silva is an experienced professional working in sustainable rural development and research in interdisciplinary teams, engaging with social and biophysical perspectives. He has long field experience working alongside peasants, Traditional Populations and Indigenous Peoples across the Brazilian Amazon, Atlantic Forest, Caatinga and Cerrado biomes.

For over 15 years, Mr. Silva has been dedicated to valuing the origin of socio-biodiversity products through Geographical Indications and Collective Brands.

In addition, he has conducted applied research on agrobiodiversity management, contributed to educational initiatives, facilitated participatory natural resource management, and coordinated the design and implementation of Protected Area management plans, as well as performed regional analyses. He has extensive experience in all stages of project management, including design, monitoring, evaluation.

CAROLINE NCUBE



Caroline B. Ncube is a Professor in the Faculty of Law at the University of Cape Town, where she holds the Department of Science, Technology and Innovation (DSTI) – National Research Foundation (NRF) Research Chair in Intellectual Property, Innovation and Development. She holds a NRF B2 rating, awarded to researchers who enjoy considerable international recognition for the quality and impact of their recent research outputs.

She is also a Member of the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf). From 2012 to 2022, she lectured in Africa University's Master's Degree in Intellectual

Property, a program jointly offered by WIPO and the African Regional Intellectual Property Organization (ARIPO). She is also an Associate Member of the Centre for Law, Technology and Society at the University of Ottawa.

Ms. Ncube is a member of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Trade and Industrial Development Advisory Council, the African Union Scientific, Technical and Research Commission (ASRIC) Taskforce on IP Protection in Joint Research and Collaboration During Outbreaks, and the African Policy, Research & Advisory Group on Science, Technology and Innovation.

She is a co-leader of the Open African Innovation Research (OpenAIR) partnership and participates in several other research initiatives. She has authored numerous publications on intellectual property, innovation, and development.

#### XAYSOMPHE T NORASINGH



Mr. Xaysomphet Norasingh has been appointed as Director General of Department of Intellectual Property (DIP) since November 22, 2023 and concurrently as the Chairmanship of ASEAN Working Group on IP Cooperation (AWGIPC). Mr. Xaysomphet graduated a Bachelor's Degree from Queensland University of Technology, Australia and pursued his Master Degree from University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, USA. Prior to the appointment as Director General of DIP, Mr. Xaysomphet previously served as Director General of Department of Trade Promotion from February 2018 to November 2023, where he was in charge of both international and domestic market and supervised local entrepreneurs on market access. He also supervised and facilitated entrepreneurs to promote the business at domestic and international exhibitions and trade fairs.

Mr Xaysomphet also served as the Deputy Director General of the Economic Research Institute for Industry and Trade from 2014 – 2017. At the Institute, he extended his research policy skills by attending research methodology workshops, and research forums and conducted joint papers with various professors and external research institutes to understand more about trade policy and the business environment in Laos. His research specialization is trade and SME policy which also focuses on product development, marketing strategy, business innovation strategy, business analysis and production process as well as global value chain.

#### VALÉRIE PIEPRZOWNIK



Valérie Pieprzownik is as an expert in geographical indications for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), working at the Food and Nutrition Division.

She joined the FAO at the beginning of January 2023, following her career at the French Ministry of Agriculture, where she worked as Head of the Wine and Other Beverages Office, overseeing the whole economy of the wine sector. Prior to that, she worked several years as Head of the Quality Office, where she was in charge of all the official product valorisation schemes, including GIs and organic farming.

Ms. Pieprzownik holds Master of Laws and a Master's Degree in Agricultural and Environment Engineering.

ALFREDO RENDÓN ALGARA



Alfredo Carlos Rendón Algara has held the position of Representative of the Government of the State of Michoacán in Mexico City since November 2022, with a focus on managing the state's geographical indications system.

Before taking on his current role, from 1994 to 2022, he worked at the Mexican Institute of Industrial Property (IMPI), the national authority on industrial property matters in Mexico. He concluded his service as Director General of the institution.

In the international context, Mr. Rendón Algara was part of the Mexican delegation for the negotiation of various free trade agreements, including the Mexico–EFTA Agreement (2000), the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (2013), the Free Trade Agreement (2017), the Agreement between Mexico, the United States, and Canada (USMCA, 2018), and Economic Complementarity Agreements, particularly intellectual property chapters, with Japan, Brazil, and Argentina.

In his work with WIPO, he represented Mexico in various committees, including the Diplomatic Conference of the Geneva Act. He also served as Vice-Chair of the Lisbon System Working Group and Chair of the Standing Committee on the Law of Trademarks, Industrial Designs, and Geographical Indications, and led Mexico's accession to the Madrid Protocol.

He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Law from the Technological University of Mexico (1989), with postgraduate studies in Labor Law at the same university and in Intellectual and Industrial Property at the Panamerican University. He also earned a Master's Degree in Business Administration from the Inter-American University for Development.

ALBERTO RIBEIRO DE ALMEIDA



Alberto Ribeiro de Almeida is a jurist and university professor with a PhD in Law (Legal-Business Sciences) from the University of Coimbra. With an academic and professional focus on intellectual property, he has authored several books and numerous articles in national and international journals, particularly in the areas of designations of origin, geographical indications, trademarks, patents, designs, trade secrets, and copyright.

He is a frequent speaker at several international congresses and workshops on intellectual property, European law, competition law, as well as national, European, and international frameworks governing designations of origin and geographical indications.

Mr. Ribeiro de Almeida teaches Intellectual Property and Commercial law at the Faculty of Law of Universidade Lusíada - Centro Universitário Lusíada - Norte (Porto campus). He is also a researcher at the Centre for Legal, Economic, International and Environmental Studies (CEJEIA/UL) at Lusíada University, where he coordinates the Research Group 'Legal-Economic and Environmental Research'.

Additionally, Mr. Ribeiro de Almeida serves as the Coordinator of the Legal Department of the Douro and Port Wine Institute, President of the Commission III of the Organization of Vine and Wine (OIV), Consultant of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), Director at the European Federation of Origin Wines, and Expert for Technical Assistance and Information

Exchange instrument of the European Commission (TALEX). He is a member of several intellectual property associations and regularly reviews for law journals.

#### MAIALEN SARRAUDE



Maialen Sarraude has been the coordinator of the Piment d'Espelette (Espelette pepper) protected Appellation of Origin (AO) for 10 years. Her focus is on developing and promoting the Piment d'Espelette AO by structuring the sector, implementing agro-ecological tools and building cross-border networks of high-quality producers.

Ms. Sarraude was also involved in the concept behind and the establishment of the ETXEA interpretation center, which welcomes more than 25,000 visitors each year to become acquainted with the story of Piment d'Espelette and the territory in which it is grown.

Alongside the 14-member board of directors and backed by her five-person team, Ms. Sarraude oversees the management of strategic projects, the organization of events and institutional communications on the AO.

An engineer by training, Ms. Sarraude began her career in various professional bodies and specialized institutions and went on to management in the farm and agri-food sectors. She has held positions relating to certification, quality and producer support. Her career led her to become an auditor in organic certification and for health and safety for schools, nurseries and retirement homes.

#### SUN MINGXIANG



Sun Mingxiang serves as the Chairperson of the China Yellow River Basin Geographical Indications Industry Alliance, President of the Shandong Geographical Indications Industry Association, the Vice President of the Shandong Intellectual Property Service Promotion Association, Researcher in Geographical Indications at Southwest University of Political Science and Law, Adjunct Professor at Shandong University of Political Science, and Dean of Fangyu Intellectual Property Institute of Shandong University of Political Science.

She has long been dedicated to the practice and legislative research concerning the utilization and protection of GIs. She has actively organized, hosted, and participated in domestic and international exchange and research activities related to the development and protection of GIs, including the First Yunnan - South Asia - Southeast Asia Geographical Indications Exchange Activity, the 8th China - South Asia Expo, and the GIPF China Geographical Indication Products Fair.

Ms. Mingxiang has successively been responsible for formulating China's first provincial - level local standard, *Specifications for the Use and Management of Special Marks for Geographical Indications*, and for compiling the first provincial-level *14th Five-Year Plan for the Protection and Utilization of Geographical Indications*. She has also overseen the key projects such as the *Shandong Geographical Indication Protection Project*, led the planning and operation of the China Geographical Indications Industry Building, and established the first geographical indication exhibition and promotion center in China.

## BENJAMIN VALLIN



Benjamin Vallin is international relations officer at the Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development of the European Commission. His responsibilities include the negotiation of trade arrangements and the management of policy dialogues in relation to agriculture, notably in the field of geographical indications. Since 2023, Mr. Vallin oversees relations with Central Africa, Eastern and Southern Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific regions. In previous similar positions, he worked with a range of other European Union partner countries in America, Europe and North Africa.

Before joining the European Commission in 2009, Benjamin served as an analyst in several agencies of the French ministry of agriculture. He started his career as a scientific cooperation attaché for the French ministry of foreign affairs.

By training, Benjamin is an agricultural economist. He holds a masters' degree from the *Institut national agronomique* Paris-Grignon.

## MASSIMO VITTORI



Massimo Vittori is the Managing Director of oriGIn, responsible for the organization's strategic planning and overall management.

Mr. Vittori previously worked as a legal advisor at the International Trade Center (ITC) – a technical assistance agency of the World Trade Organization and the United Nations – where he oversaw several projects in the field of intellectual property, trade law harmonization, model contracts for SMEs and alternative business dispute resolution mechanisms. He also worked at the United Nations Conference for Trade and Development (UNCTAD), focusing on the improvement of developing countries' investment climate through regulatory reforms.

He holds a Bachelor's degree in International Relations, a Master's degree in International Law from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies of Geneva, and an LL.M. in Intellectual Property from the University of Turin.

Mr. Vittori regularly delivers seminars on GIs, trademarks, and trade-related issues in several European Universities.

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