

Information Session on Geographical Indications

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INFORMATION ON SPEAKERS

prepared by the Secretariat

FILIPPO ARFINI



Filippo Arfini holds a PhD and is a Full Professor in Agricultural Economics at the Department of Economic and Management Science of the University of Parma, Italy.

His research focuses on the assessment of Agricultural and Rural Development Policies, Food Policies, and the Economics of Food Quality Schemes, with particular emphasis on Geographical Indications. He has participated in numerous research projects within the European Research Framework (from FP4 to Horizon Europe), several of which specifically address Geographical Indications.

From 2023 to 2025, he served as the national coordinator for SPOKE 1 of the ONFOODS project within the Italian PNRR framework. His research findings have been published in several Italian and international scientific journals.

Professor Arfini has held significant leadership positions in professional organizations. He served for six years as a Board member of the European Association of Agricultural Economists (EAAE). From 2020 to 2022, he continued his leadership role as President of the Italian Association of Agriculture and Applied Economists (AIEAA).

MARÍA JOSÉ BUCHELI SILVA



María José Bucheli Silva is a public official at the *National Service of Intellectual Rights (SENADI)* of Ecuador, the national authority responsible for intellectual property matters.

She has over eight years of experience in the technical management and analysis of appellations of origin and geographical indications. Her responsibilities include the examination of applications, follow-up of administrative procedures, and providing support to producers throughout the protection process. In the course of her work, she has collaborated extensively with producers and public institutions involved in the development of geographical indication systems.

María José Bucheli Silva has participated in training activities, technical discussions, and conferences at both national and international levels related to the protection of appellations of origin and geographical indications. She has also contributed to regional cooperation processes within the Andean Community, focusing on the development and strengthening of the legal framework for appellations of origin.

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, Sciences Po Paris, the University of Melbourne, Singapore University of Social Sciences, National Law School Delhi, Bocconi University, the Royal University of Law and Economics of Cambodia, and Stanford University.

Irene Calboli is a past Fulbright-Hanken Distinguished Chair in Business and Economics in Finland and a Fulbright Specialist Scholar in Cambodia. She is a prominent and well-known authority on the law of Geographical Indications (GIs) worldwide. She has published 12 books and more than 100 articles, book chapters, and policy reports, which 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 U.N. International Trade Center. In this capacity, she has reviewed national legislations, participated in developing national IP strategies, delivered technical assistance, and implemented programs for professional and executive training.

Irene 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.

MARTIN EKVAD



Martin Ekvad is Director of Legal Affairs at the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV) since October 2023, bringing extensive expertise in intellectual property rights and plant variety protection.

He served as President of the Community Plant Variety Office (CPVO) from 2011 to 2021, leading the European Union Agency responsible for granting intellectual property rights for new plant varieties valid throughout the EU territory. Prior to his presidency, he was Head of Legal Unit at the CPVO from 2003 to 2011, where he developed deep expertise in plant variety rights and EU regulatory frameworks. Between 2021 and 2023, Martin Ekvad founded Ekvad Consulting, providing specialized advice primarily in intellectual property rights and EU regulatory affairs. His earlier career includes seven years as a lawyer (Avocat) with leading international law firms: Linklaters in Brussels and Magnusson Wahlin Advokatbyrå in Stockholm (1996-2003), where his principal areas of practice were intellectual property rights and competition law.

Martin Ekvad holds a law degree from the University of Lund, Sweden, and an LL.M. from King's College London.

GABRIELA ESPÁRRAGO CASALES



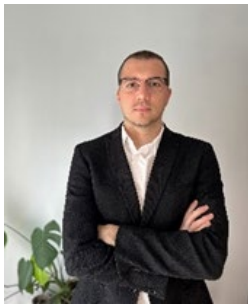
Gabriela Espárrago Casales is a notary public and holds a degree from the University of the Republic of Uruguay (UDELAR).

She has over 25 years of experience at the National Industrial Property Directorate (DNPI) of the Ministry of Industry, Energy and Mining, where she has served as Head of the Distinctive Signs Department since 2015. Throughout her career, she has developed expertise in industrial property through various advanced courses, in-person seminars, and legal refresher courses offered by the Postgraduate School of the Faculty of Law at UDELAR.

Gabriela Espárrago Casales is specialized in managing technical teams, streamlining examination systems, and spearheading national legislative reforms. She serves as Uruguay's technical representative in national and international forums on industrial property matters.

Prior to joining the Ministry of Industry, Energy and Mining, she taught undergraduate courses on public management and administrative regulations at the Administrative Law School of the Faculty of Economics at UDELAR. She also gained experience working as a notary in private law and accounting firms, where she managed notarial and legal matters.

MATEVŽ FORTIN



Matevž Fortin is a Legal Advisor at the Community Plant Variety Office (CPVO).

In this role, he provides legal support in administrative and legal proceedings related to the EU plant variety protection system, including matters before the CPVO and its Board of Appeal. He is also involved in legal issues concerning variety denominations at the EU level, contributing to the examination, assessment, and policy development related to denomination requirements within the Community plant variety rights framework.

Matevž Fortin holds a Bachelor of Laws (LL.B.) and a Master of Laws (LL.M.) from the Faculty of Law at the University of Ljubljana, as well as an LL.M. in Intellectual Property from the University of Turin, completed in cooperation with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

Prior to joining the CPVO, he worked at the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) and in private law firm in Slovenia, where he focused on intellectual property law, particularly trademarks, designs, and other IP rights, advising clients on protection, enforcement, and regulatory matters.

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, Allen 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, Allen 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.

LI YUE



Li Yue works at the Geographical Indications and Official Signs Protection Division, Intellectual Property Protection Department, China National Intellectual Property Administration (CNIPA), where he serves as in-house counsel.

He holds two bachelor's degrees in Business Administration and Food Quality and Safety, respectively. He also holds three master's degrees, comprising a Master of Administration, a Juris Master, and an LL.M. in International Law. Additionally, he has obtained the qualification of

Economist.

Li Yue has over 20 years of experience in the field of geographical indications. He participated in the establishment of China's geographical indications legal framework and promotes the geographical indications system domestically. He has been actively engaged in the implementation of bilateral geographical indications agreements between China and other countries. As a speaker, he frequently participates in activities related to geographical indications at the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

IRMA VERA P. MORCILLO



Atty. Irma Vera P. Morcillo is Division Chief of Trademarks Examination Division 1 (TMED 1) at the Bureau of Trademarks of the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines (IPOP HL), where she also serves as Head of the GI Team.

In this role, she oversees the examination of GI applications and leads initiatives to strengthen the development, protection, and promotion of geographical indications in the Philippines. Her work includes policy and legislative initiatives relating to GIs, particularly the refinement of the proposed Philippine GI legislation. She also participates in discussions on GI matters as part of the Philippine delegation in the ongoing Philippines–European Union Free Trade Agreement (PH-EU FTA) negotiations. She has worked with producer communities and stakeholders across the Philippines to support the development and protection of local products through geographical indications.

Prior to joining IPOP HL in 2011, Irma Vera P. Morcillo served as Securities Counsel at the Securities and Exchange Commission and worked with the Supreme Court of the Philippines' Program Management Office on projects funded by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Irma Vera P. Morcillo holds a Bachelor of Laws from the University of Santo Tomas and a Master of Laws from Ateneo de Manila University.

JOHN POWER



John Power has over 20 years of experience negotiating the protection of GIs.

Between 2003 and 2007, he was a key member of the team that negotiated the Australia-European Union Agreement on Trade in Wine. He subsequently led the implementation of this agreement, which included amendments to the Australian Wine and Brandy Corporation Act.

During his tenure with the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF), he led the Australian delegation to the International Organisation of Vine and Wine. Since 2007, John Power has provided expert advice to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade on GI-related aspects of numerous free trade agreements, including Australian free trade agreements with the United States, China, Japan, Malaysia, and the United Kingdom, as well as the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

Most recently, from 2017, he served on the Australian team negotiating the GI sections of the proposed Australia-EU Free Trade Agreement.

John Power regularly speaks at national and international conferences on GI-related topics, including the development of an Australian sui generis food and agriculture GI system.

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