

# Recent Developments regarding trademark policies in Japan

WIPO NATIONAL WORKSHOP (in JAKARTA)

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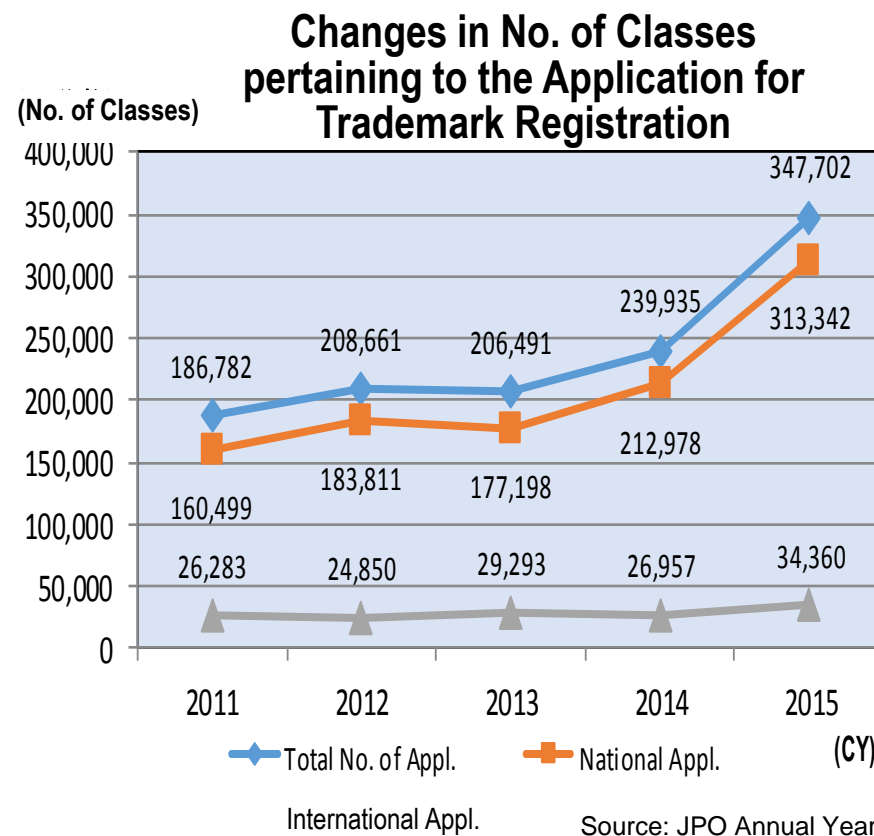
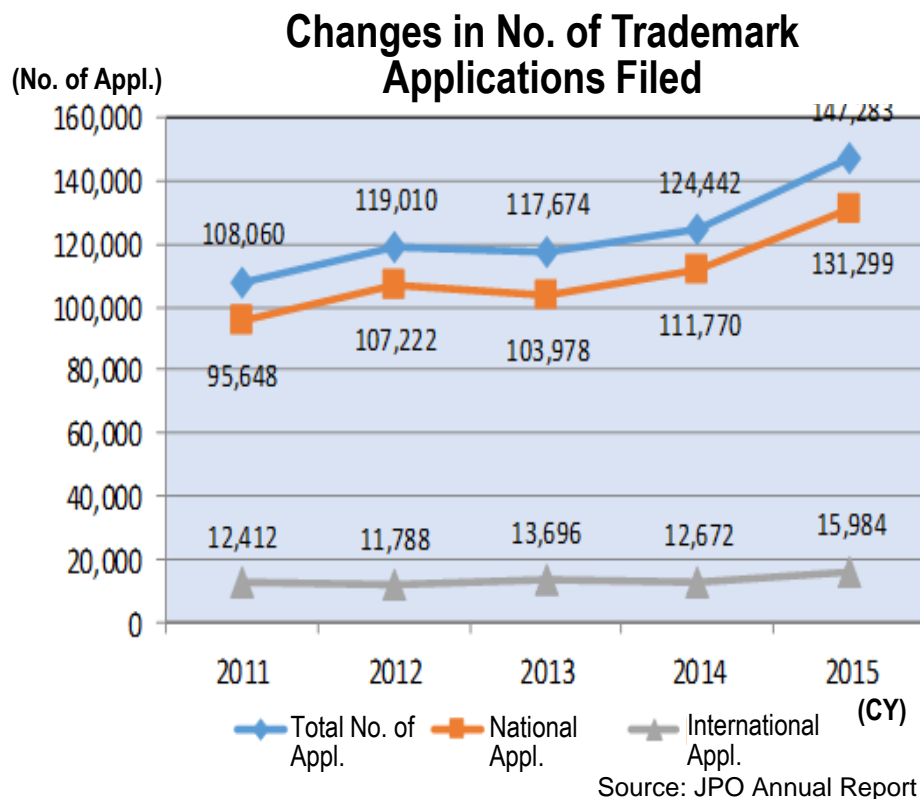
Japan Patent Office

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# 1. Trademark Applications/Processing Status (1)

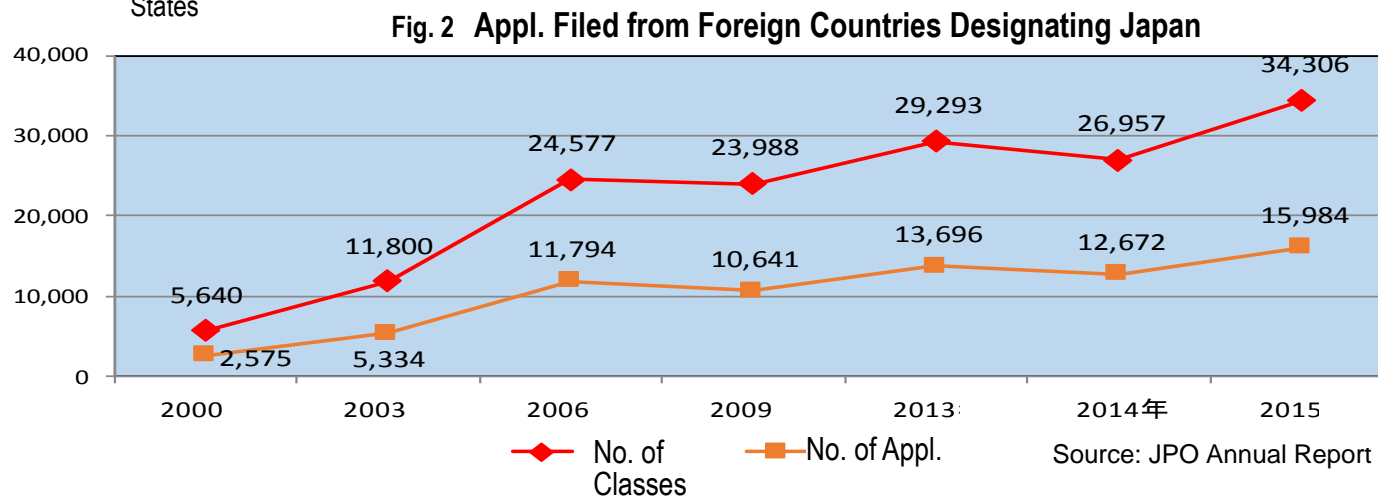
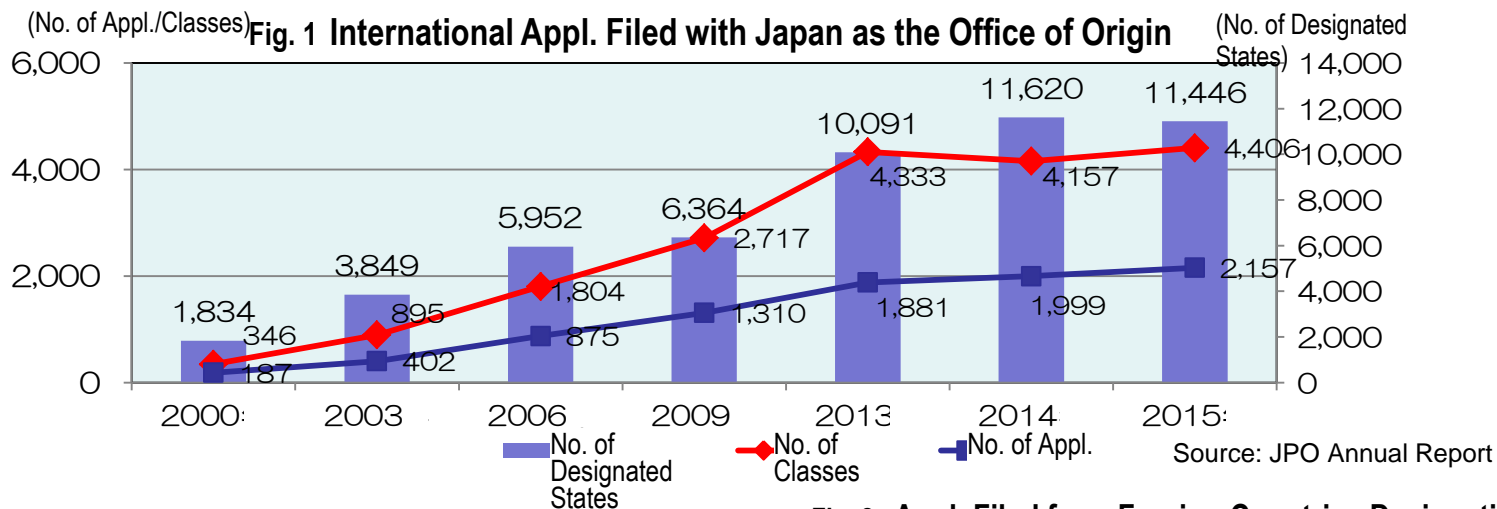
■ The number of applications filed in FY 2015 was 131,000\* (a year-on-year increase of 18.4%). The average number of classes per application was 2.36 (1.93 in FY 2014). The number of applications filed to register international trademarks was 16,000 in 2015, which was a marked increase of 26.1% compared with the previous year.

(\*excludes international filings)



# 1. Trademark Applications/Processing Status (2)

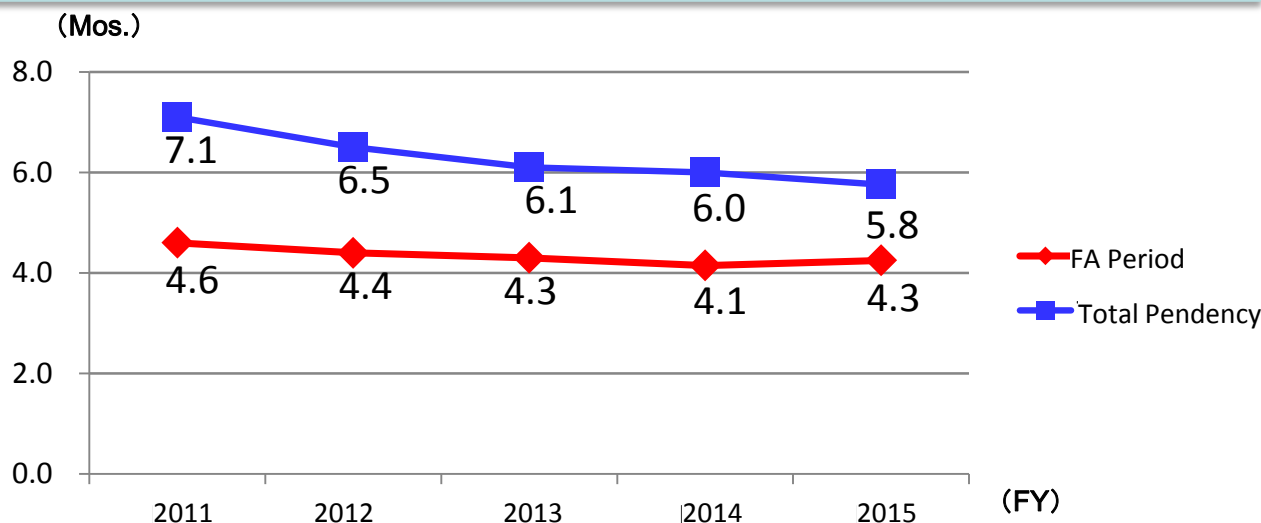
■ Since Japan acceded to the Madrid Protocol in 2000, the number of international applications from/to Japan under the Madrid Protocol system has been increasing.



# 1. Trademark Applications/Processing Status (3)

- As a result of improving the examination ability of each examiner, and advancing computerization and utilizing the private sector when possible, the average time from the filing date to the date a First Office Action is mailed (FA) and that to the date a final disposition is made, i.e., total pendency (TP) is decreasing.
- In FY 2015, the FA period was 4.25 months because of a high increase in the number of filings.

## Changes in the average FA/TP periods of trademark examination



## Some 2016 Targets set for the JPO

■ Average FA pendency※ Less than 4.9 mos.

■ Average TP pendency※ Less than 7.2 mos.

※New types of trademark applications are excluded in the computation. For computing the average TP pendency, there are exceptional cases in which applicants are allowed to make amendments within a certain period of time under the system and then to be required to further respond again by the JPO.

## 2. Revision of the Trademark Act

### (1) Non-Traditional Trademarks (i) (Protection started from April 2015)

- The JPO revised its trademark system to enable non-traditional trademarks, such as sound marks and motion marks, to be registered at the JPO. These had been already protected in Europe, the U.S. and other countries. The JPO did this to protect companies' brand messages, which go beyond language, and support diversified branding strategies at companies.

### Five types of trademarks that became eligible for protection

#### Sound trademarks

Trademarks consisting of music and sounds, which are recognized by auditory perception  
(Examples: sound logo marks of commercial messages, etc.)

#### Position trademarks

Position marks constituting trademarks are characters and/or figures, for example, which are placed on products in specific positions

#### Motion trademarks

Trademarks, in which characters and figures change as time passes  
(Examples: changing characters and figures, which are shown on television)

#### Hologram trademarks

Trademarks consisting of characters and figures, which display different, changing images depending on the angle as which they are viewed

#### Trademarks consisting of only colors

Trademarks consisting solely of a single color or a combination of colors (Examples: colors arranged on wrapping paper, colors used on signboards, etc.)

## 2. Revision of the Trademark Act

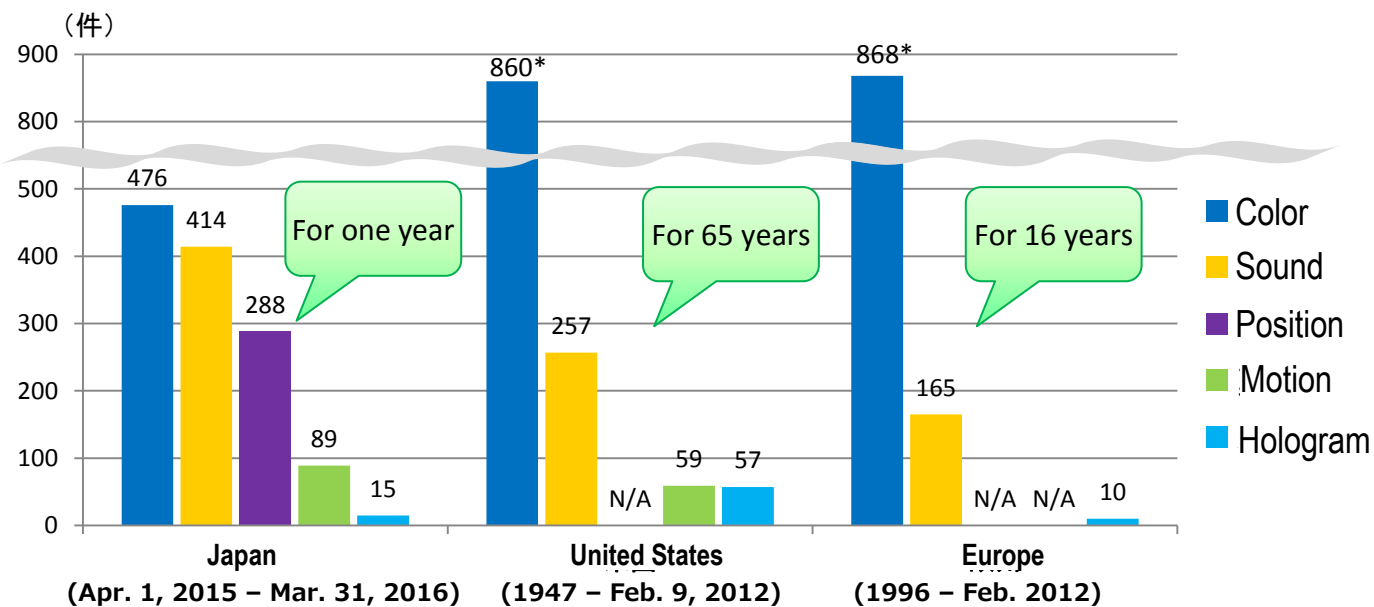
### (1) Non-Traditional Trademarks (Filing & Registration Status)(ii)

#### Filing & Registration Status of Non-Traditional Trademarks

(As of Jun 30, 2016)

	Total	Breakdown by Type				
		Sound	Color	Position	Motion	Hologram
No. of Applications Filed	1,329	446	478	295	94	16
No. Registered	86	39	0	9	36	2

#### Comparison with Foreign Applications



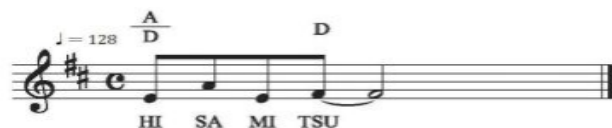
\* May include trademark applications for words or figures in colors in addition to color trademarks.

## 2. Revision of the Trademark Act

### (1) Non-Traditional Trademarks (Registration examples)(iii)

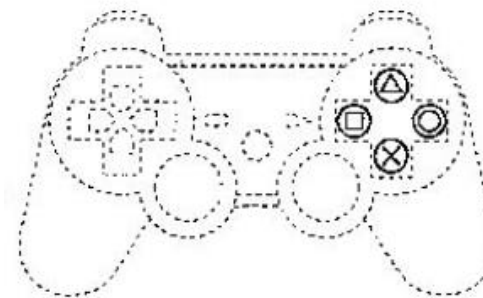
- On Oct. 27, 2015, the JPO announced that 43 Non-Traditional Trademarks had been registered.
- As of the end of May 2016, 71 trademarks (32 sound, 30 motion, 8 position, and one hologram marks) have been registered.

#### <Sound Trademarks>



Registration No. 5804299  
Right holder: Hisamitsu  
Pharmaceutical Co., Inc.

#### <Position Trademark>



Registration No. 5858802  
Right holder: Sony Interactive Entertainment Inc.

#### <Motion Trademark>



Registration No. 5804316  
Right holder: Wacoal Corporation

#### <Hologram Trademark>








Registration No. 5804315  
Right holder: Mitsui Sumitomo Card Corporation



- Search terms for non-traditional trademarks were assigned by slightly changing those of the Vienna Classification.
- The JPO subdivided Category 29 COLOURS.
- The JPO established its classification according to the type of non-traditional trademarks for Category 40s.
- The JPO will make necessary changes to the classification in order to respond to filings in Japan.

## Category 29 COLOURS

-  29.1.1.2 Red (figures)
-  29.1.1.4 Pink (figures)
-  29.1.1.6 Orange (figures)
-  29.1.2.2 Yellow (figures)
-  29.1.3.2 Green (figures)

JPO Original

## Category 40

- 40 Three-dimensional Mark
- 41 Sound Mark
- 42 Motion Mark
- 43 Hologram Mark
- 44 Color Per Se Mark
- 45 Position Mark
- 50 Any Other Types of Non-

Examples:

Sounds are further subdivided by types of sounds.

41.1.1 Sound made by a human voice

41.1.1.1 Sound made by a human singing or speaking words

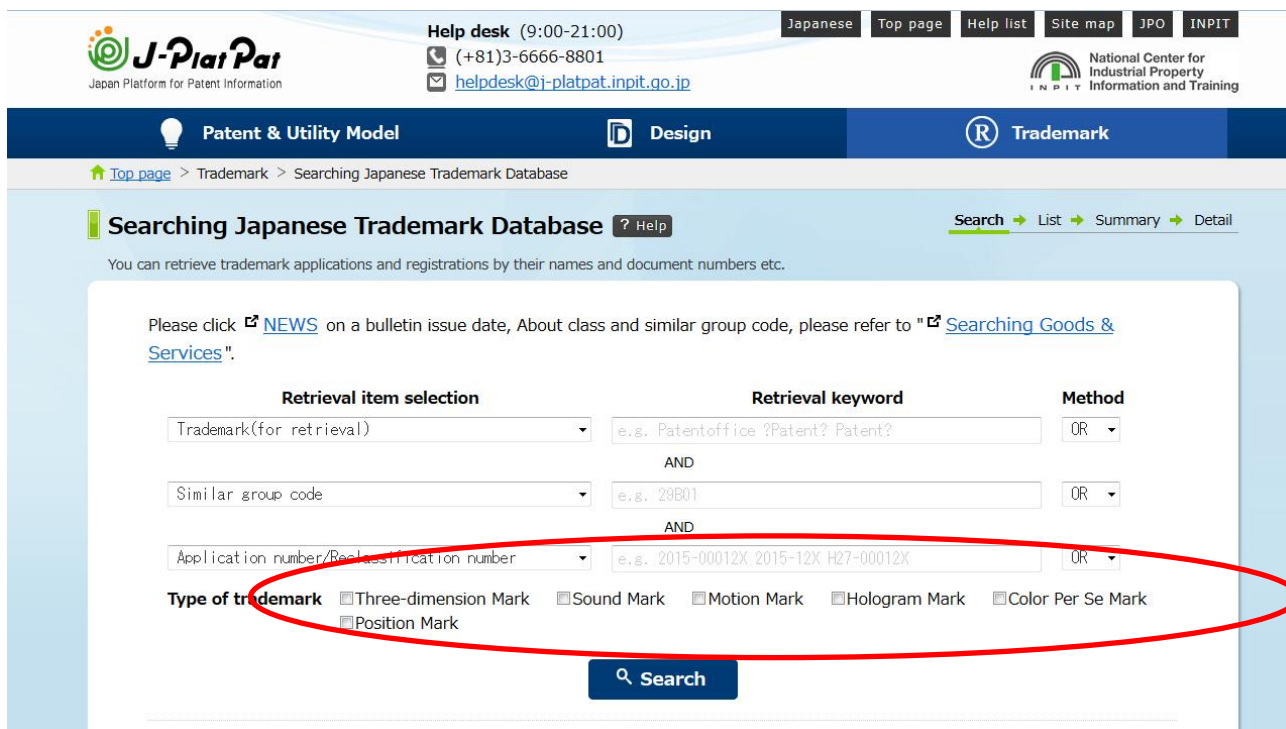
41.1.1.2 Sound made by a human when crying

41.1.1.3 Sound of applause, Sound made by a human clapping hands, Sound made by a human striking with his/her hands

# (Reference) Searches for Non-Traditional Trademarks (ii)

The JPO started a new service platform called the Japan Platform for Patent Information (J-PlatPat), which enables users to conduct searches for information on trademark applications and registrations. By using the J-PlatPat, users are also able to search for non-traditional trademarks by type.

\* The J-PlatPat uses information on types of trademarks, which are written in application forms.



Help desk (9:00-21:00)  
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helpdesk@j-platpat.inpit.go.jp

Japanese Top page Help list Site map JPO INPIT

National Center for Industrial Property Information and Training

Patent & Utility Model Design Trademark

Top page > Trademark > Searching Japanese Trademark Database

### Searching Japanese Trademark Database ? Help

Search → List → Summary → Detail

You can retrieve trademark applications and registrations by their names and document numbers etc.

Please click [NEWS](#) on a bulletin issue date, About class and similar group code, please refer to "[Searching Goods & Services](#)".

Retrieval item selection	Retrieval keyword	Method
Trademark(for retrieval)	e.g. Patentoffice ?Patent? Patent?	OR
	AND	
Similar group code	e.g. 29B01	OR
	AND	
Application number/Reclassification number	e.g. 2015-00012X 2015-12X H27-00012X	OR

**Type of trademark**

Three-dimension Mark  Sound Mark  Motion Mark  Hologram Mark  Color Per Se Mark  Position Mark

Search

Three-dimension Mark  Sound Mark  Motion Mark  Hologram Mark  Color Per Se Mark

Position Mark

## 2. Revision of the Trademark Act

### (2) Regional Collective Trademark System

#### Outline of the System

- The regional collective trademark system was introduced in April 2006 in order for local business operators to maintain and improve the reliability of their local products/services as well as to strengthen Japan's industrial competitiveness and revitalize local economies by protecting regional brands. On June 17, 2016, "Hiba Beef" was registered as the 600<sup>th</sup> Regional Collective Trademark.
  - When the system was first introduced, entities entitled to register regional collective trademarks were limited to agricultural cooperatives, fishery cooperatives, etc. However, because associations, chambers of commerce and industry, and incorporated non-profit organizations (NPOs) were also playing an important role in promoting new regional brands, so the Trademark Act was revised in order for these organizations also to be eligible to register regional collective trademarks. (The Act went into effect in August 2014.)
- ※Five products were registered by the new eligible entities (Commerce and Industry Association (1), Chamber of Commerce and Industry (3), NPO (1))

#### Examples of registered trademarks by business associations

##### Agricultural cooperatives

###### Hiba Beef

(Shobara Agricultural Cooperative)  
Reg. No. 5859218



##### Fisheries cooperatives

###### Echizen Crab

(Fisheries Cooperative Associations of Fukui Prefecture)  
Reg. No. 5089307



##### Business cooperatives

**Nagasaki Castella** (sponge cake)  
(Confectionary Industrial Association of Nagasaki Prefecture)  
Reg. No. 5003044



#### Examples of registered trademarks by associations/chambers of commerce and industry, and NPOs

##### Commerce and Industry Association

###### Ujiie Udon (wheat flour noodles)

(Ujiie Commerce and Industry Association, Tochigi Prefecture)  
Reg. No. 5817109



##### Chamber of commerce and industry

###### Nakatsu Karaage (deep-fried chicken)

(Nakatsu Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Oita Prefecture)  
Reg. No. 5817143



##### NPO

###### Shodo-shima (Shodo Island) Olive Oil

(Association of Shodoshima Olives, Incorporated NPO, Kagawa Prefecture)  
Reg. No. 5800807



# Regional Collective Trademark = the names of regions + the names of regional goods or services

- The system eases restrictions for registering trademarks that consist of characters, such as regional collective trademarks that are a combination of “regional names” (which are often used as “regional brands”) and the product names of the regional goods or services.

#### Four Major registration requirements

1. Entities entitled to register  
Business cooperatives, such as agricultural cooperatives; associations and chambers of commerce and industry; and incorporated non-profit organizations (NPOs) (which have provisions guaranteeing freedom to join in accordance with the fundamental law of establishing a cooperative, etc. for any person qualified to be a member of the applicant.)

2. Components of trademarks:  
Trademarks need to consist of characters in which “names of regions” and “names of goods or services” are combined.

3. Relationships between “names of regions” and goods or services:  
The “names of regions” in trademarks need to have a close relationship with the goods or services, such as the fact that these regions are the places of origin of the goods or services.

4. Well-known nature of trademarks  
A trademark, as a result of its being used by an applicant or collective members, needs to be well known among consumers as a trademark connected with the business of the applicant or collective members.

## 2. Revision of the Trademark Act

### (3) Legal Revisions in 2015 (to accede to the Singapore Treaty)(i)

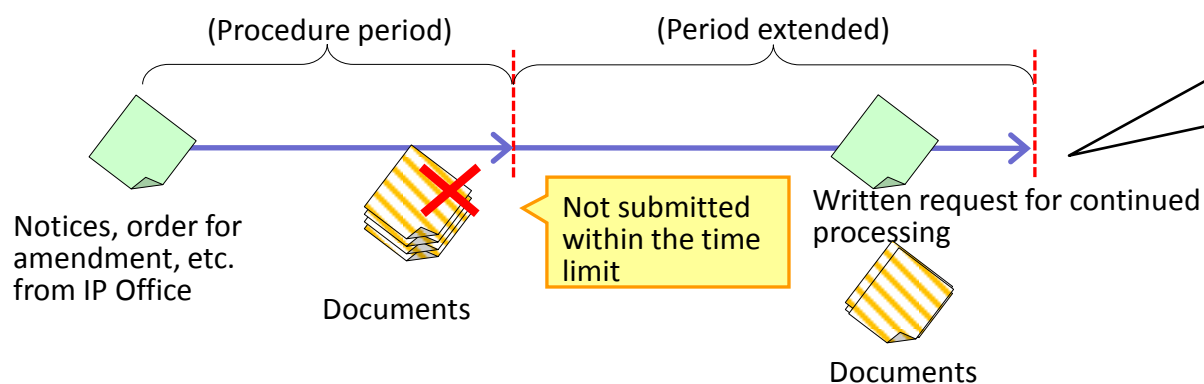
#### Outline of the Singapore Treaty

- The Singapore Treaty on the Law of Trademarks was adopted in March 2006 and came into force in March 2009.
- Number of Member Countries: 42 (As of February 2016)
- The Treaty incorporated the content of the Trademark Law Treaty (TLT) which had been in force since 1996 and has the objective of standardizing and simplifying the procedures for trademark registration applications that are different in each country, to improve user-friendliness, and reduce the burden on applicants.

#### Revision of the Trademark Act of Japan

- Japan acceded to the TLT in 1997. As a result, the provisions of the Singapore Treaty except for the provision on the Relief Measures in Case of Failure to Comply with Time Limits (Article 14 (2), Singapore Treaty) are already provided for under the Trademark Act.
- In order to accede to the Singapore Treaty, we revised the Trademark Act in July 2015 for implementing the Treaty, by adding a new provision on relief measures in case of failure to comply with time limits regardless of the legal term or designated time limit (in view of Article 14 (2) (ii), Singapore Treaty) in the Trademark Act.
- The revised Trademark Act was into force on April 1, 2016.

#### Conceptual Diagram of Relief Measures



It is possible to file a written request for continuing the processing and take other procedures (of submitting documents) during the period extended.

\* Period for taking actions with the Trial and Appeal Dept. etc. is an exception to the rule on relief measures. (Rule 9 (4), Regulations under the Singapore Treaty)

## 2. Revision of the Trademark Act

### (3) Legal Revisions in 2015

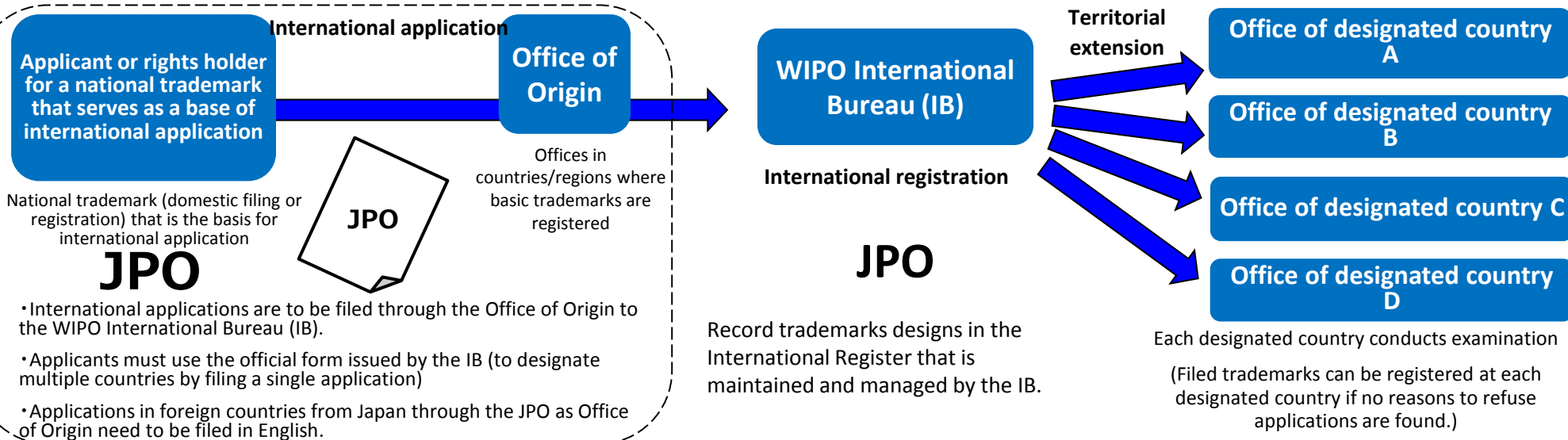
#### (Revision of registration and renewal fees and actions to be taken) (ii)

#### Revision of trademark registration and renewal fees

- The JPO considered revising its fee structure for the purpose of reducing the burden on users, strengthening the corporate competitiveness and promoting economic revitalization through further use of trademarks.
- We lowered trademark registration fees by about 25% and trademark renewal fees by about 20%.
- The revised Trademark Act was into force on April 1, 2016.

	Current Fee	New Fee	Provision (Japanese Trademark Act)
Registration Fee (For 10 years)	JPY37,600 X No. of Classes	<b>JPY28,200</b> X No. of Classes	Article 40 (1) Article 68-30 (1) (ii)
Registration Renewal Fee (For 10 years)	JPY48,500 X No. of Classes	<b>JPY38,800</b> X No. of Classes	Article 40 (2) Article 68-30 (5)

# (Reference) Outline of the Madrid system (Madrid Protocol)



The Protocol Relating to the Madrid Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Marks (the Madrid Protocol) is an international trademark system under which applicants are able to protect their trademark rights simultaneously in multiple Contracting parties (designated member countries) by filing international applications, based on their trademarks being filed or registered in a member country, to record their trademarks in the International Register at the WIPO International Bureau (IB). Also, under the Madrid system, all of the registered international trademarks can be maintained and managed collectively.

The Madrid Protocol came into force on March 14, 2000. The number of member countries has increased to 97 as of December 31, 2015. The number of international applications being filed through the Offices of Origin (OOs) to the WIPO IB was 49,273 in 2015. Among them, a total of 2,167 were filed from Japan through the JPO as OO, ranking seventh in the world according to the statistics.

## Actions to be taken for the Madrid Protocol

### (1) Solve fundamental issues of the Madrid Protocol

⇒ Advance discussions at the WIPO Working Group on the issues of basic requirements (basic applications and registrations are required for filing international applications) and interdependency (international registrations and basic applications/registrations are interdependent for a certain period)

### (2) Improve the operating practices from the perspective of promoting wider use of the Madrid System

⇒ Ease the requirements for certifying basic registrations, especially in order to deal with the specific issues in member countries using non-Latin languages

### (3) Deal with the increase in number of member countries, including Asian countries

⇒ Provide assistance for countries' activities involved with acceding to the Madrid Protocol as well as support for human resources development and enhancing IT infrastructure

# 3. Quality Management of Trademark Examinations

■ The Subcommittee on Examination Quality Management was established in fiscal year 2014.

\*Members: 11 Experts (University professors, lawyers, patent attorneys, business operators, quality management professionals, etc.)

■ From the viewpoints of experts, the Subcommittee gives its objective reviews and evaluations on the JPO's examination practices, current state of implementation, and systems for ensuring quality management of examinations; as well as to make recommendations for improvements. The JPO is required to reflect the Subcommittee's evaluations and recommendations in its internal initiatives, in order to strengthen its quality management system.

■ A variety of initiatives to assure and verify the quality of trademark examinations

Initiative 1: Establish the Quality Policy that outlines the JPO's fundamental principles of quality management for examinations and the Quality Management Manual; as well as notify all examiners of these documents

• The JPO formulated and published its documents that outline the quality management system of trademark examinations, the systems for implementing quality management activities, and best possible procedures for ensuring higher quality examinations.

Initiative 2: Quality Assurance

- Directors are to check and approve all examinations conducted by examiners.
- Examiners are consulting with directors on their examinations.
- Examiners conduct interview examinations with applicants or provide support services by telephone to promote better communications among them

Initiative 3: Quality Verification

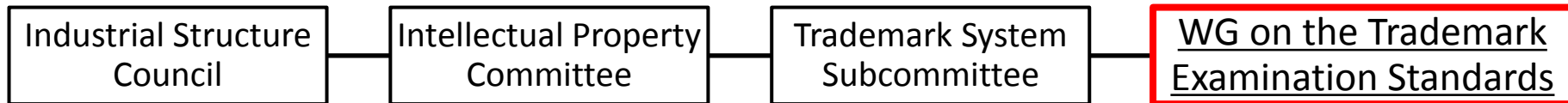
- Conduct quality audits for examinations based on sample checks, which were checked and approved by directors
- Conduct user satisfaction surveys on the quality of trademark examinations as a whole or the details of specific examinations
- Conduct analysis on the reasons for discrepancies in judgments among examination results and trial decisions





# 4. Revision of Trademark Examination Guidelines

- The Working Group on the Trademark Examination Standards was established in 2012, in order to discuss the amendment and formulation of the “Examination Guidelines for Trademarks.”
- From fiscal year 2015 to 2016, the Working Group has been discussing the overall revision of the Guidelines.



## Issues that were discussed in fiscal year 2015

The Examination Guidelines were revised, focusing on distinctiveness of trademarks under Article 3 of the Trademark Act. The revision was done by reviewing the details and case examples based on the recent trial decisions and court decisions, in order to clarify and simplify the descriptions on the following matters:

- Title of books, etc. (Article 3 (1) (iii))
- Mottos and catch phrases (Article 3 (1) (vi))
- Distinctiveness as a result of continuous use (Article 3 (2))
- Trademarks that are identical with or similar to famous marks indicating states or local governments (Article 4 (1) (vi))

## Issues to be discussed in fiscal year 2016 starting April 1, 2016

- Revision of the Examination Guidelines for reasons for unregistrability of trademarks under Article 4
- As is the case with the revisions to Article 3 of the Trademark Act, the JPO will revise the Examination Guidelines based on user needs and the recent trends in court decisions; as well as review the provisions of Article 4 by organizing judgment standards on the requirements, in order to clarify the descriptions.

## 5. Initiatives on Classification of Goods and Services

The JPO is working to advance the following international initiatives on harmonizing operational practices for the indications of goods and services. These will be done, aiming to (i) enhance convenience to users in Asia; (ii) reduce workload of users in filing trademark applications; and (iii) reduce the examination workload at IP offices:

### Relation with users

- The JPO reflected the needs of Japanese user associations (25 associations) in Japan's proposals for the "Revision of the Nice Classification" and the "Expansion of the ID List".

(Examples of entries accepted in the Nice Classification: Randsels (Class 18), Yakitori (Class 29) and Ramen (Class 30))

### Use of Similar Group Codes

- The Similar Group Code is a code for groups of Goods/Services that are presumed to be similar to each other.
- Using the Similar Group Codes will improve the predictability of examination results relating to prior trademarks.
- It is possible for users to use the Similar Group Code as the search key for the trademark search database in the J-PlatPat.

(URL : [https://www3.j-platpat.inpit.go.jp/cgi-bin/ET/TM\\_AREA\\_E.cgi?1447029573681](https://www3.j-platpat.inpit.go.jp/cgi-bin/ET/TM_AREA_E.cgi?1447029573681))

- A concordance list between the Similar Group Codes in Japan and Korea was developed and published.

(URL : [http://www.jpo.go.jp/sesaku\\_e/j-k\\_codes2016.htm](http://www.jpo.go.jp/sesaku_e/j-k_codes2016.htm))

- The JPO will introduce the Similar Group Codes to developing countries/emerging countries and provide support.

### Cooperation to the WIPO/MGS

- The JPO provided data on Japanese translation of indications of Goods/Services, acceptance/rejection of indications, and Similar Group Codes to the WIPO as data for the MGS (database for searching Goods/Services).
- Schedule for Similar Group Code data to become available on the MGS: March 11, 2016

## 5. What are similar group codes? (i)

Similar group codes are the codes in which groups goods/services that are presumed to be similar to each other in trademark examination are classified together.

- In examining whether or not the trademark application applied for registration falls under Article 1(11), the JPO judges similarity between the designated goods or services of the filed trademark and the designated goods or services of the registered trademark of another person, based on the “Examination Guidelines for Similar Goods/Services”.
- In the Guidelines, goods/services that are presumed to be similar to each other are classified in groups. A common code is assigned to goods or services in the same group. This is a similar group code.
- Goods or services with the similar group codes are recognized to be similar during the examination process.



- During trials, however, similarity of goods/services are judged under specific and individual conditions.

## 5. What are similar group codes? (ii)

### Advantages of judging similarity of goods/services by using similar group codes

(For Applicants/Representatives)

- Trademark searches prior to filing the application can be done for goods/services.
- A higher degree of predictability in examination results of applications filed to register trademarks will be possible.
- It will become easier for applicants to amend their designated goods/services in order to avoid conflicting with earlier registered trademarks.

(For the JPO)

- Integrity will be ensured in terms of assuring similarity between goods/services.
- Expeditious examination will be possible by conducting efficient searches.
- Any revision of the Nice classification (Change in classification of goods/services) will not affect searching methods, etc.

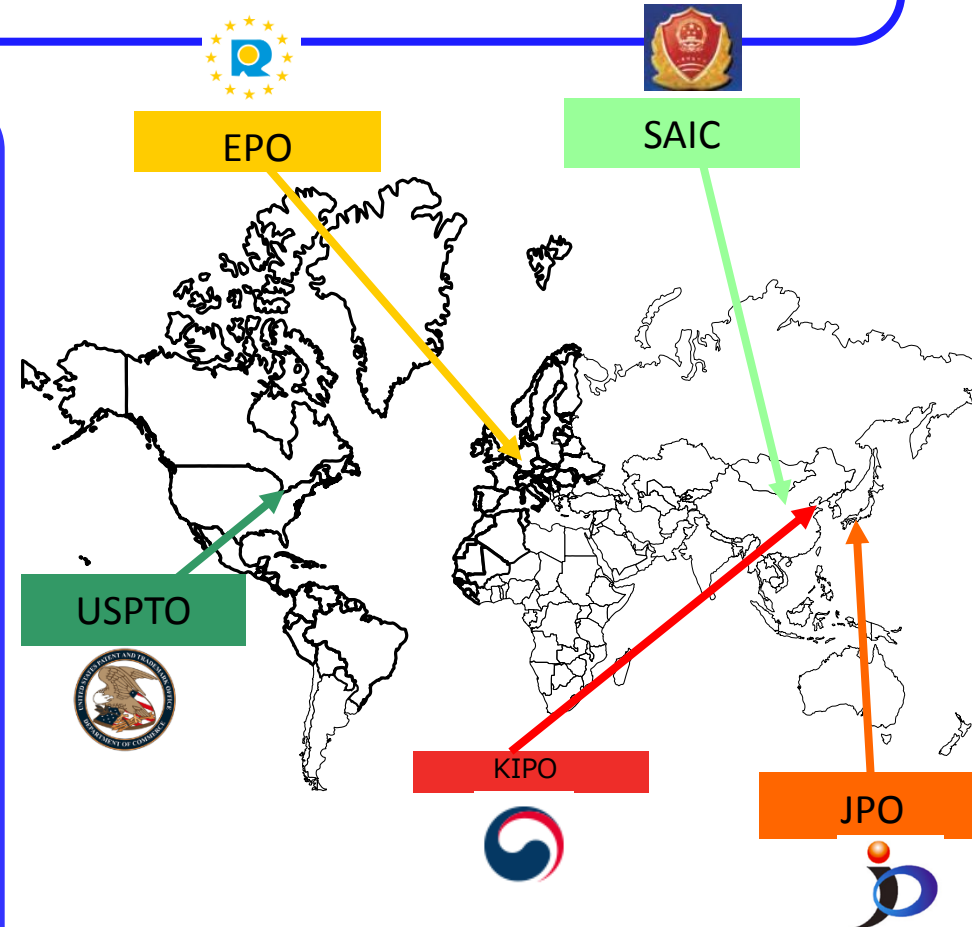
# 6. International Cooperation in the Field of Trademarks

## (1) TM5 Meeting (Outline)(i)

■ The TM5 Meeting (TM5) is a cooperation framework that was established by five trademark offices (JPO, USPTO, EPO, SAIC and KIPO) in 2012. TM5 is designed to support global business activities of companies through international cooperation, in order to further ensure that users' trademarks are appropriately protected and utilized around the world. The TM5 is currently engaged in 13 projects.

### Projects

- (1) Bad-faith Trademark Filing Project (JPO)
- (2) Image Search of Figure Trademarks (JPO)
- (3) Improving User-friendliness of International Trademark Applications (JPO)
- (4) TM5 Website (KIPO)
- (5) Comparative Analysis of Examination Results (KIPO)
- (6) Common statistics Index (EPO)
- (7) TM View (EPO)
- (8) Taxonomy and TM Class (EPO)
- (9) Indexing Non-traditional Trademarks (USPTO)
- (10) ID List (USPTO)
- (11) Common Status Indication (USPTO)
- (12) TM Users' Participation Project (EPO and JPO)
- (13) Providing information on description of goods/ services (KIPO)



## 6. Initiatives Involving International Cooperation

### (1) TM5 Meeting (ii) Ongoing Projects Led by the JPO

#### Bad Faith Trademark Filing Project

- “Bad faith trademark filings” generally mean that some third parties have filed trademark applications in bad faith by taking advantage of the fact that some trademarks of other persons remain unregistered in some countries/regions, and then taking it upon themselves to register such trademarks as their own.
- The purposes of the Project are (1) to deepen understanding and knowledge about bad faith trademark filings by exchanging information and opinions on laws/regulations and their operational practices at the Offices; and (2) to seek and take possible measures in order to solve this problem.
- Until now, the JPO held three “TM5 Seminars on Bad Faith Trademark Filings” in 2013 (Tokyo), in 2015 (Hong Kong), and in 2016 (Tokyo). In addition, the JPO prepared and uploaded a report on “Laws and Examination Guidelines/Practices of the TM5 Offices against Bad-Faith Trademark Filings” on the TM5 website and the JPO website.
- Going forward, the JPO plans to prepare a “Compilation of Bad Faith Trademark Filing Cases” by the end of fiscal year 2016 ending March 31, 2017.

#### Image Search Project of Figure Trademarks

- The Project aims to promote the development of image search engines capable of being used for figurative trademark examinations.
- At the 3rd TM5 Annual Meeting, the JPO prepared a report on issues and their solutions in conducting image searches for figurative trademarks. The JPO published the report on the TM5 website and the JPO website.

#### Project to Improve User-Friendliness of International Trademark Applications (under the Madrid System)

- The Project aims to promote wider use of the international trademark application system.
- The JPO will prepare users information guidelines on the Madrid Protocol procedures at the TM5 Offices and upload them on the TM5 website. Going forward, the JPO, in cooperation with the WIPO, will provide information on trademark system and procedures at each designated country to which users file their applications.



第3回TM5悪意の商標出願セミナー  
The Third TM5 Seminar on Bad Faith Trademark Filings

Third TM5 Seminar on Bad-faith Trademark Filings  
(Tokyo)

## 6. Initiatives Involving International Cooperation

### (2) Cooperative Activities for the ASEAN Region

- In rapidly growing developing countries and regions such as the ASEAN region, urgent and collective actions are needed to create a framework in which trademarks of Japanese companies can be adequately protected.
- Based on the ASEAN IPOs-JPO IPR Action Plan 2015-2016 that was concluded in May 2015 at the 5th ASEAN-JAPAN Heads of Intellectual Property (IP) Offices Meeting, the JPO has been conducting support activities on human resources development, enhancing IT infrastructures, and helping ASEAN countries to accede to the Madrid Protocol.

### Major achievements of the JPO's training programs in fiscal year 2015

#### Major training courses and countries from which the JPO welcomed trainees (Number of trainees)

Malaysia, Thailand, and other six countries: OJT for Madrid Protocol filings (20) / Viet Nam: Training program for trademark examiners (10) / Myanmar: Training course on trademark examinations (9) / Indonesia: Training course on trademark examinations

#### Major countries and seminars, to which the JPO sent its experts (Number of JPO officials)

Cambodia: Workshop on the Madrid System (1) / Viet Nam: Seminar on bad-faith trademark filings (1)  
Myanmar: Training program conducted by trademark examiners (2) / Malaysia: Training program conducted by trademark examiners (2)

### Future Plans

- The JPO will enhance its support activities for improving the organizational infrastructure and system for conducting trademark examinations based on each country's needs. Major future plans are:
  - Help accession to the Madrid Protocol and the Singapore Treaty
  - Conduct support activities on establishing management system to speed up the examination process
  - Share expertise on classification examination and help develop examination standards for goods or services
  - Share examination practices for new types of trademarks

# 6. International Cooperation in the Field of Trademarks

## (3) Initiatives in the WIPO and Two Offices

### Working Group (WG) Meetings on Legal Development of the Madrid System

#### ■ The Madrid Protocol

Member states: 97 (as of June 2016)

- WG meetings are held once a year to discuss ways to improve user-friendliness of the Madrid system and implement future visions.
- At the 14<sup>th</sup> WG Meeting (in June 2016), a proposal was made to amend common regulations. The Meeting also resulted in agreement on the themes to be discussed in the future, including identity of marks, in order to further advance the Madrid system.

### Cooperation for Madrid Goods and Services Manager (MGS)

- Providing the WIPO with information on Japanese translations of the indication of goods and services/adoption or rejection/similarity group codes as the data to be used for MGS (Search database for goods/services)
- MGS starts using the information on similarity group codes: March 2016  
(URL: <http://www.wipo.int/mgs/?lang=jp>)

### Committee of Experts of the Nice Union

#### ■ The Nice Agreement

Member states: 84 (as of June 2016)

Number of countries that have adopted the Nice Classification System: Approx. 150

- A meeting is held once a year to review and discuss the Nice classification.
- Reflecting Japanese user organizations' needs on the Nice classification
- At the 26<sup>th</sup> Committee of Experts (in April 2016), "Artificial Intelligence (AI) based humanoid robot" (Class 9), "Audio Mixer" (Class 9), "Providing Japanese foods" (Class 43), etc., were adopted.

### Initiatives in the Two Offices

- Between the KIPO and JPO, Experts Group Meetings and Examiner Exchange Programs are held once a year. In addition, correspondence lists of JPO-KIPO similar group codes are prepared and published, and lists of regional collective trademarks and geographical indications are exchanged between the two offices.
- Between Taiwan and Japan, the Examiner Exchange Program is held once a year. In addition, correspondence lists of Japan-Taiwan similar group codes are prepared and published, and lists of geographical names are exchanged between the two offices.
- Between China and Japan, the Japan-China Joint IP Working Group is held once a year.



**Terima Kasih**  
**Thank you!!**  
**ありがとうございました!!**