

Meeting of International Authorities Under the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT)

Twenty-Fourth Session
Reykjavík, February 8 to 10, 2017

REPORT ON THE PREPARATION OF A NEW WIPO STANDARD ON THE PRESENTATION OF NUCLEOTIDE AND AMINO ACID SEQUENCE LISTINGS USING EXTENSIBLE MARKUP LANGUAGE (XML)

Document prepared by the European Patent Office

BACKGROUND

1. The Task Force on Sequence Listings was created by the Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS), at its first session (October 25 to 29, 2010), to deal with Task No. 44 (see paragraph 29 of document CWS/1/10):

“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 proposal of the new WIPO standard should be presented along with a report on the impact of the said standard on the current WIPO Standard ST.25, including the proposed necessary changes to Standard ST.25.”

2. The Task Force was also requested:

“To liaise with the appropriate PCT body with regard to the possible impact of such standard on Annex C to the Administrative Instructions under the PCT.”

3. The principle of differentiating the technical aspects of ST.25 from Annex C (PCT Administrative Instructions) was agreed upon at the eighteenth session Meeting of International Authorities in February 2011 (see paragraphs 88 to 92 of document PCT/MIA/18/16) and at the fourth session of the PCT Working Group in June 2011 (see paragraphs 180 to 188 of document PCT/WG/4/17).

4. The European Patent Office (EPO) was assigned the role of Task Force Leader and has since then held eight rounds of discussions on the Task Force's e-forum and submitted the new Standard to the CWS/4 for consideration and adoption in February 2014 after a public consultation phase. The new WIPO Standard, titled ST.26, was formally adopted during the reconvened fourth session of CWS (CWS/4BIS) in March 2016.

PROGRESS REPORT

5. The Task Force started operating in February 2011 on the basis of drafts prepared by the EPO. Many Offices participated in the process and posted useful comments on WIPO's related wiki.

6. In March 2012, the Task Force finalized a draft of the standard that could be used by the offices to consult their respective public. Several significant issues were raised by public comments and they have been tackled in cooperation with the database providers DDBJ, EBI, NCBI.

7. The sixth round of discussions was finished on September 2013 and the final version of the Standard on the "Presentation of nucleotide and amino acid sequence listings using eXtensible Markup Language (XML)" was named ST.26 and submitted to the CWS/4 for consideration and adoption in February 2014.

8. The Standard ST.26 was informally adopted during the CWS/4 and attained formal adoption during the reconvened fourth session of CWS (CWS/4BIS) in March 2016.

9. The Task Force carried out a seventh and eighth round of discussions, focused on transition matters (ST.25 to ST.26). Due to the technical impact of such a change on IT systems at IP Offices, the Task Force was requested by the CWS to prepare a proposal for the transition provisions from WIPO Standard ST.25 to ST.26, and present it for consideration and approval by the CWS at its fifth session (see paragraph 3 of document CWS/4BIS/8 and paragraph 19 of the Summary by the Chair of the session, document CWS/4BIS/15 Rev.).

ROADMAP

10. Finalize and submit for approval to the CWS/5 the revision of the adopted ST.26 which shall incorporate a new Annex Guidance document and exemplary XML representation, a definition of nucleotide as well as the inclusion of nucleotide analogues and other amendments aimed at improving the comprehensiveness and clarity of the Standard.

11. Carry on the ninth round of discussions aimed at completing the technical assessment of the transition ST.25 to ST.26 and supported by the results of Circular C. PCT 1485/C. CWS. 75, dated November 17, 2016.

12. Complete and submit the technical assessment of the transition ST.25 to ST.26 and corresponding transition provisions to the CWS/5 for consideration and approval.

13. *The Meeting is invited to note the contents of the present document.*

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