

## **Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS)**

**Reconvened Fourth Session  
Geneva, March 21 to 24, 2016**

### **PROGRESS REPORT ON TASK NO. 44 BY THE SEQL TASK FORCE**

*Document prepared by the Secretariat*

1. The Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS), at its first session held in October 2010, agreed to create Task No. 44 for the preparation of recommendations on the presentation of nucleotide and amino acid sequence listings based on eXtensible Markup Language (XML) for adoption as a new WIPO standard. The CWS also decided to establish a task force to handle this Task (SEQL Task Force). The European Patent Office (EPO) was designated as the Task Force Leader. (See paragraphs 27 to 30 of document CWS/1/10 and Task No. 44 in document CWS/3/12).
2. The EPO, as the Leader of SEQL Task Force, has prepared a progress report on the work carried out by the Task Force, along with a roadmap, that is reproduced as the Annex to this document for consideration by the CWS. At the time of writing this document, the SEQL Task Force plans to conduct the eighth round of discussions aimed at completing the technical assessment of the transition from ST.25 to ST.26 including the completion of the Guidance Document.
3. If the CWS adopts new WIPO Standard ST.26, the current description of Task No. 44 should be modified to carry out remaining work that the SEQL Task Force is conducting. The International Bureau proposes the new wording for Task No. 44 that would read "Task No. 44: Prepare recommendations for the transition provisions from WIPO Standard ST.25 to ST.26; and a proposal for the revision of WIPO Standard ST.26, if needed". The International Bureau also proposes that the SEQL Task Force will carry on the revised Task No. 44.

4. *The CWS is invited to:*

*(a) note the progress report on the work of the SEQL Task Force provided in the Annex to the present document; and*

*(b) consider and approve the modification of Task No. 44 and assignment of the modified Task No. 44 to the SEQL Task Force as proposed in paragraph 3, above.*

[Annex follows]

## PROGRESS REPORT ON TASK NO. 44 BY THE SEQL TASK FORCE

*Document prepared by the European Patent Office (EPO)*

### BACKGROUND

1. The Task Force on Sequence Listings (SEQL Task Force) was created by the Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS), at its first session, held from 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 SEQL 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 European Patent Office (EPO) was assigned the role of Task Force Leader and has since then held seven rounds of discussions on the Task Force's e-forum and submitted a final draft for public consultation.

4. The principle of differentiating the technical aspects of ST.25 from Annex C (PCT Administrative Instructions) was agreed upon at the eighteenth session the 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).

### 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 the Task Force's e-forum.

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 finished in 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 for consideration and adoption to the fourth session of the CWS, which took place in May 2014.

8. WIPO Standard ST.26 was informally adopted by the CWS at its fourth session, but this session was adjourned without agreement on the agenda. It is expected to attain formal adoption when the fourth session is reconvened.

9. In 2014 and 2015, the Task Force has carried out a seventh round of discussions, which has focused on transition matters (ST.25 to ST.26), including the preparation of a draft Guidance Document.

## ROADMAP

10. Attain the formal adoption of Standard ST.26 at the reconvened fourth session of the CWS to be held on March 21 to 24, 2016.
11. Continue the eighth round of discussions aimed at completing the technical assessment of the transition from ST.25 to ST.26 including the completion of the Guidance Document and minor improvements to the Standard not affecting Annex II of ST.26 – Document Type Definition for Sequence Listing (DTD).
12. Complete and submit the technical assessment of the transition from ST.25 to ST.26 to the next session of the CWS in 2017 for consideration and approval.

[End of Annex and of document]