

# PCT IMPACT PROJECT TO DELIVER FIRST PHASE



*WIPO stocks millions of pages containing PCT documents received since the beginning of 2000. Some PCT applications number over 5000 pages. WIPO stocks all PCT documents received since the PCT went into effect in 1978 in various warehouses in Geneva.*

Photo: Luis Freitas

The first phase of the IMPACT (Information Management for the Patent Cooperation Treaty) Project, which focuses on the scanning and distribution of bulky PCT-related documents to national offices in electronic form, is set for progressive implementation during the fourth quarter of 2001.



*The centralized scanning room for the IMPACT Project has already started to replace the previous labor intensive cut-and-paste method used in the PCT to process incoming documents.*

Photo: Luis Freitas

The first phase, called Communications On Request (COR), will bring enormous benefits not only to those intellectual property offices that currently receive millions of pages of PCT-related documents but also to WIPO's PCT Office, which has the task of producing and distributing them to most of the 113 States party to the PCT. The present work practices within the PCT Division, which rely heavily on the use of paper, will be progressively adapted to accommodate and take advantage of the new technology that the IMPACT project will deliver.

A substantial investment in hardware and software platforms, as well as in managing the significant changes in the entire PCT process and its effect on staff, has been made to ensure that the implementation of this new system meets the requirements of the PCT. The future phases of the project, which will automate the internal operations and processes of the Office of the PCT and the PCT Receiving Office at WIPO, will utilize the newly installed infrastructure, which is sufficiently scalable to cope with the



*The scanners read the documents at one page per second, the documents then undergo an on-screen quality control before being engraved on a DVD.*



*The IMPACT Project has storage devices that will hold all the PCT related documents online. WIPO is required to store PCT documents for a period of 30 years.*

continued double-digit growth in the number of PCT applications, and takes into account the increasing size of PCT applications, which in some cases can be thousands of pages.

The IMPACT Project is scheduled to be completed at the end of 2002.

## Oman Accedes to the PCT

Oman became the 113<sup>th</sup> Contracting State of the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) when it deposited its instrument of accession at WIPO on July 26. The Treaty will enter into force for Oman on October 26.

Oman's accession means that in any international application filed on or after October 26, applicants may designate Oman (country code: OM) and that nationals and residents of Oman may themselves file PCT applications as from that date. As Oman will be bound by Chapter II of the Treaty, it may also be elected for the purposes of international preliminary examination.

