

## The Effects of Protecting Geographical Indications: Ways and Means of their Evaluation

The protection of the geographical indications (GI) gives rise, on the international level, to profound differences and animated discussions, especially within the World Trade Organization (WTO). Certain countries have been convinced for a long time of the usefulness and indeed the necessity of protecting GIs, mainly in order to ensure the protection of the lawful manufacturers against unfair competition and of the consumers against fraud. These countries have developed GIs as a legal tool with regard to definition, control and protection. Furthermore, since the introduction of the first designations of origin in Europe, more specific positive effects have been ascertained and are indeed expected with regard to rural development, collective organisation of the manufacturers, etc.

During the last ten years, more and more countries have become interested in geographical indications on account of its potential effects, and have acquired both legal and institutional frameworks enabling the recognition and protection of these rights. It is in this context - both of dispute concerning the GI on the international level and the adoption of this tool in an increasing number of countries - that the evaluation of the effects of protection of the IG has recently emerged as an important scientific and political question.

The Federal Institute of Intellectual Property (IPI), which is active in international cooperation with regard to GIs, wishes to contribute to the consolidation of this scientific debate by means of the publication: «The Effects of Protecting Geographical Indications: Ways and Means of their Evaluation» (pdf 2.3 MB). An analysis of the question, with regard to methods and results, precedes a methodology developed according to a pragmatic approach within a technical cooperation project between Jamaica and Switzerland. The IPI makes this methodology available to all actors in the development of the GI with the purpose of creating an application which is as wide as possible. The accumulation of the evaluations in various countries should permit the comparison of concrete experiences on this subject and promote an implementation of the protection of the GI which optimizes the positive effects for the manufacturers, the consumers and the regions concerned.