

Committee on Development and Intellectual Property (CDIP)

Twenty-Eighth Session
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REPORT ON THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND DEVELOPMENT – INNOVATION IN GREEN TECHNOLOGIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (NOVEMBER 22-23, 2021)

Prepared by the Secretariat

1. The Committee on Development and Intellectual Property (CDIP), at its 22nd session, took a decision to convene three consecutive one-day biennial International Conferences on Intellectual Property (IP) and Development, starting from the 23rd session.¹ The first of such conferences was held on May 20, 2019, on the first day of CDIP/23, with the theme “IP and Development: how to benefit from the IP system”. A factual report was presented to the 24th session of the Committee (document [CDIP/24/5](#)).

2. The second International Conference was held on November 22 and 23, 2021, on the first two days of CDIP/27, with the theme “Innovation in Green Technologies for Sustainable Development”.² This report presents a summary of the main elements of the Conference, for information of the Committee.

I. ORGANIZATIONAL ASPECTS

3. The Conference took place on November 22 and 23, 2021, from noon to 2.30pm CET each day, in hybrid mode (participants and speakers joining both online and in person), due to the restrictions linked to the COVID pandemic.

¹ Paragraph 8.1. of the [Summary by the Chair of CDIP/22](#).

² The theme of the Conference was decided by the Committee at its 24th session (paragraph 8.5 of the [Summary by the Chair](#)).

4. The event was open to participation from Member States representatives, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academics, policy-makers and civil society. Onsite participation was limited to WIPO Member States and Observers; the remaining participants joined the meeting via an online platform.

5. Interpretation was available, for both online and onsite participants, in English, French, Spanish, Russian, Chinese and Arabic.

II. STRUCTURE OF DISCUSSIONS

6. The Conference was organized along three panels and a concluding dialogue, all of them followed by a Questions and Answers (Q&A) session. Each of the panels was composed by a main speaker, who made a presentation, and two discussants, who commented on it. In the concluding dialogue, selected speakers from the previous panels exchanged views on the main debates held during the Conference, in a free and dynamic manner.

7. The themes of the three panels were the following:

- How can green innovation contribute to achieving sustainable development?
- The role of IP in the field of green technology
- Green innovation in developing countries: how to address the challenges

8. The first day of the Conference opened with the Welcome Address of Mr. Daren Tang, Director General of WIPO. Panels 1 and 2 followed. The second day started with the Keynote Address, delivered by H.E. Ms. Yasmine Fouad, Minister of Environment of the Arab Republic of Egypt. This was followed by panel 3 and the concluding dialogue. The Conference finished with the Closing Remarks delivered by Mr. Hasan Kleib, Deputy Director General, Regional and National Development Sector of WIPO.

III. SPEAKERS AND MODERATORS

9. Nine speakers participated in the Conference. They represented different geographical regions and professional backgrounds: academia, IGOs, NGOs, and private sector. Following the decision of the Committee, the Secretariat organized this Conference “on the basis of the principles of balance and fairness, including in the selection of speakers and format.”³ In particular, the selection of speakers was done taking into account the need for geographical balance, appropriate expertise, and balance in perspective and gender.⁴

10. The Conference discussions were moderated by two Geneva-based Ambassadors, one day each. On the first day, panels 1 and 2 were moderated by H.E. Ms. Tatiana Molcean, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Mission of the Republic of Moldova to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva. Panel 3 and the concluding dialogue, on the second day, were moderated by H.E. Mr. Salim Baddoura, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Mission of the Lebanese Republic to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva.

11. The profile of speakers and moderators is available on the [Conference web page](#).

³ Para. 8.1 of the [Summary by the Chair of CDIP/22](#).

⁴ These guidelines were included in the original proposal of the African Group ([CDIP/20/8](#)) which led to the Committee’s decision to hold three biennial Conferences.

IV. PARTICIPANTS

12. The event was attended by more than 1,300 participants, most of which joined via the online platform. The audience represented different professional backgrounds, including government officials, academics, IGO and NGO staff, and private sector actors.

13. Participants engaged actively during the Conference, sharing views and raising questions via the chat box of the online platform. These were addressed both in writing by the Secretariat via the chat and orally by speakers. The moderators and the Secretariat attempted to maximize the number of questions answered in the short time available, by merging similar questions into clusters. Nevertheless, some remained unanswered due to time constraints.

14. A satisfaction survey was made available for all participants at the end of the event. A summary of the results of the survey is presented in the Annex to this document.

V. PROMOTION AND COMMUNICATION

15. Before the event, a [dedicated web page](#) for the Conference was launched in the six UN official languages, providing all relevant information, including registration, program, and speakers' profiles. After the Conference, the slide decks of the speakers' presentations, as well as the link to the video recording of the event, were made available on that web page.

16. An external communications expert was engaged to produce case studies of start-ups in the field of green technology in different parts of the world. The case studies highlighted how those companies used IP to leverage their assets, as well as the contribution of their innovative solutions to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. They were also posted on the [Conference web page](#).

17. In addition, the Conference was promoted by the Secretariat amongst a wide audience, using different means: newsletters, mailing lists and flyers, and social media. The event was also announced in the context of WIPO's participation in COP26 and other related events held prior to the Conference, such as webinars organized by the Organization.

18. After the Conference, a news item was published on [WIPO's web site](#) and included in the December edition of the Organization's flagship newsletter [WIPO Wire](#). The photographs taken during the event were published on the [Organization's flicker account](#).

VI. HIGHLIGHTS OF DISCUSSIONS

19. Below is a brief summary of the highlights of the Conference discussions.

A) PANEL 1

20. The first panel addressed the overarching question behind the Conference's theme: how innovative and creative ideas can contribute to finding synergies between the pursuit of development goals and the adoption of green policies. The panel opened with the presentation of Ms. Rose Mwebaza, Director and Advisory Board Secretary of the UNFCCC Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN). Ms. Mwebaza highlighted that we were facing an extreme planetary crisis, with enormous consequences for all spheres of our lives, which had been caused by the failures of our systems. Innovative solutions were vital to transform those systems and reduce pressure on our planet. Innovation, however, was not only dependent on science and technology, but also on institutional changes. Aside from the need to channel more capital to innovation, efforts should aim at ensuring a balanced IP system and a more balanced

research and development (R&D) sector, where developing countries would play a bigger role in leading green innovation. Ms. Mwebaza also emphasized the potential of innovation in helping to decouple economic growth from the depletion of natural resources.

21. The discussants commented on that presentation. First, Mr. Paul Ekins, Professor of Resources and Environmental Policy and Director of the Institute for Sustainable Resources of University College of London, drew on the ideas stemming from the work of the [Green Innovation Policy Commission](#).⁵ Mr. Ekins reiterated the essential role of business models and institutions in our efforts to speed up green innovation and get green solutions to market. The task of making innovation work for sustainable development was a complex one, where policy recommendations were multifaceted: (i) create demand for innovative green products and services; (ii) boost green innovation investments; (iii) align regulations with environmental goals and ensure their enforcement; (iv) nurture ecosystems, supporting cross-sectoral collaborations and balanced R&D; (v) make infrastructure work for a greener economy; and (vi) build new governance mechanisms to foster a green recovery. Mr. Ekins highlighted a series of gaps identified in different sectors that were holding up green innovation, such as the limited demand for green technologies in the food sector or the unambitious regulation in the construction sector.

22. Mr. Alejandro Ortega, co-founder and Chief Executive Officer of Sibö, underlined the barriers faced by entrepreneurs in the field of green innovation, drawing on the experience of his own company, which produced food ingredients from insect components using an innovative method with no waste and a social supply chain. Challenges varied from outdated regulations and lack of flexible policies to lack of capital, limited access to the necessary tools and equipment to develop ideas, expertise as regards the protection of intellectual property, business modeling and other technical capacities. Efforts should aim at creating and reinforcing bridges between the developed and developing world to overcome those challenges. They should aim at encouraging green innovation from those peoples who are the most vulnerable to the environmental crisis, in order to harvest innovation for the current needs. The assistance provided by the [Accelerate 2030](#) program, seeking to scale the innovative solutions of entrepreneurs in developing countries contributing to the achievement of the SDGs, was a good example of those efforts.

B) PANEL 2

23. The second panel addressed the role of different IP rights in the field of green technology. The speaker, Mr. Mikael Rüdlinger, Inventor and President of the Board of BNL Clean Energy, presented the IP-related experience and practice of his company BNL, which developed and produced zero-emission, zero-residue power plants and water treatment technologies. Owner of more than 400 patents, BNL invested heavily on the protection of intellectual property related to different types of sustainable technologies. The enforcement of IP rights was key; companies in the green technology sector seeking grants or subsidies should be required to be in compliance with IP regulations. Mr. Rudlinger also stressed the importance of making green innovation accessible to all, which could be achieved through the development of certified and standardized technologies, as well as the key role of green securities.

24. The discussants commented on that presentation. First, Ms. Elisabeth Eppinger, Professor of the Berlin University of Technology and Economics, addressed the topic on the basis of the findings of the research project "[IP models to accelerate sustainable transitions](#)", which sought to better understand the debates around the use of IP for sustainable growth with the help of evidence from the ground. Some of those findings were the following: actors in the field of innovation almost always relied on collaboration and on the IP of others in the early

⁵ A commission that brings together business and leading academics in the United Kingdom to identify how policy can better support green innovation and reward innovators, entrepreneurs and investors.

stages of the innovation process; different IP models were used in market diffusion; very few used and thought of IP as a tool to increase sustainability impact; IP was used to attract investments and acquisitions; and some took a differentiated approach to licensing in developing countries in order to facilitate economic development. In general, innovators were willing to share more, but businesses tended to focus on developing their products and took little or no action on sharing. Hence, efforts should be made to incentivize them, supporting the infrastructure and intermediaries, and raising awareness about the benefits of sustainability impact.

25. Mr. Rafael Carmona, Chief Technology Officer of Green Momentum, a Mexican private company supporting entrepreneurs in the field of clean technology development, provided examples of how those entrepreneurs used IP for their benefit and the challenges they encountered. From lack of resources to limited capacity, multiple barriers prevented them from making the most out of the IP system to protect their innovations. Some ongoing initiatives helped to incentivize innovation in the field of green technology, such as “Cleantech Labs” – where entrepreneurs could access state-of-the-art infrastructure to develop their technology–, or the “Energy Sustainable Fund” –which financed R&D in clean technology and aimed at creating synergies between the academic and private worlds to ensure that green solutions were brought to market. Other ideas on how to foster innovation in this field went from the promotion of an IP culture at an early stage of technology development to awareness raising on the digital services offered by the national IP offices, the reduction of legal barriers for licensing patents, or the strengthening of international cooperation among green technology inventors.

C) PANEL 3

26. Panel 3 explored the challenges faced, particularly by developing countries, in fostering, accessing and using green innovations, as well as policies and other initiatives that could be adopted to address them. The speaker, Mr. Raghunathan, Chief Executive Officer of the Singapore Office of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), presented the challenges faced by ASEAN countries in the area of green innovation, as well as some initiatives that offered hope for the way forward. Countries in the region were facing multiple and diverse environmental challenges, from food insecurity in Indonesia to loss of biodiversity in Cambodia and risks for populations living below the sea level in Singapore. Different innovative solutions were emerging to address them. An example was an artificial intelligence tool that helped rangers to monitor the presence of animals in Cambodian forests, predicted their movements and the risk of poaching. Another was a platform in Indonesia that channeled funds from investors to farmers to buy seeds and harvest, helping to ensure the food supply. More innovative solutions at accessible prices should be available for people in this area. There was a need to identify the inventions that responded to the particular challenges faced and that could really impact the populations at large; enable financing; encourage businesses, innovators and communities to work together; and put in place policies for faster commercialization of IP.

27. The discussants commented on that presentation. First, Ms. Amy Dietterich, Director of the Global Challenges Division of WIPO, highlighted that despite the huge market opportunity in the clean technology space, 90% of green innovation took place in OECD countries. There was hence an urgent need for initiatives to strengthen domestic innovation ecosystems in developing countries; technology transfer; and licensing and collaborative development agreements. To contribute to that process, WIPO GREEN, a platform aiming at accelerating the global transition to greener technologies, connected seekers of innovative solutions to those producing them; offered a network of green technology experts; and provided services and tools for SMEs in the field, particularly in developing countries. Lastly, Ms. Dietterich shared her thoughts on how frugal, low technology innovation could often be as important as cutting-edge high technology; on the importance of boosting demand for green innovative solutions; and on the relevance of developing tailored strategies to support innovators and markets in developing countries.

28. Ms. Leena Pishé Thomas, Director of Global Business Inroads (GBI), shared the experience of GBI in trying to address the challenges mentioned during the Conference debates, in particular the unbalanced access to green technologies in the developed and developing world. Focusing on providing consultancy services on technology and innovation management, GBI sought to facilitate clean technology access and deployment in India. Some of the challenges faced by that country in its quest for sustainability referred to the difficulties in defining key indicators; financing; monitoring and ownership of the implementation process; and measuring progress. A vast number of projects and programs on green growth, however, had emerged and succeeded, leading to a reduction in emissions and a decrease of the country's dependence on fossil fuels. Large investments had been channeled to incubators of clean technologies, emphasis had been put on supporting women entrepreneurs, and governments at different levels had been proactive and coordinated. The challenge for the future was to be able to scale up those successes to a higher level. Working in networks remained key in that process.

VII. CONCLUSION

29. Overall, the Conference can be considered a successful event. The pertinence and currency of its topic attracted a large number of diverse participants. The level of engagement of the audience, and the feedback received from speakers, moderators, WIPO staff, and participants who responded the satisfaction survey or who informally shared their views during the event reaffirmed this view. The speakers' presentations, video recording of the discussions and other material available on the [Conference web page](#), will hopefully continue to be of benefit for Member States and other interested stakeholders in the future.

30. The CDIP is invited to take note of the information contained in the present document.

[Annex follows]

ANNEX: RESULTS OF SATISFACTION SURVEYS

DAY 1 (based on 352 responses)

	Government / IP Office	Academia	IGO / NGO	Private	Other
Business Field	117	104	8	90	30

	Extremely satisfied	Satisfied	Not sure	Partially satisfied	Not at all satisfied
1. Overall, how satisfied are you with the Conference?	118	219	7	5	0
2. How would you rate the design of the Conference based on the following:	Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor
Aspects of the organization (logistics)	192	146	8	2	0
Content / Program of the Conference	169	163	14	2	0
3. Would you recommend other colleagues to attend, if a similar event is organized in the future?	Extremely likely	Likely	Not Sure	Unlikely	Extremely Unlikely
	38	148	6	1	0
4. How did you hear about the Conference	WIPO Website	Social Media	E-mail/newsletters	Colleagues	Others
	76	42	196	24	12

DAY 2 (based on 313 responses)

	Government / IP Office	Academia	IGO / NGO	Private	Other
Business Field	131	91	11	59	20

	Extremely satisfied	Satisfied	Not sure	Partially satisfied	Not at all satisfied
1. Overall, how satisfied are you with the Conference?	155	152	4	0	0
2. How would you rate the design of the Conference based on the following:	Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor
Aspects of the organization (logistics)	204	101	4	0	0
Content / Program of the Conference	181	123	5	1	0
3. Would you recommend other colleagues to attend, if a similar event is organized in the future?	Extremely likely	Likely	Not Sure	Unlikely	Extremely Unlikely
	200	106	4	0	0
4. How did you hear about the Conference	WIPO Website	Social Media	E-mail/newsletters	Colleagues	Others
	74	21	187	21	9

[End of Annex and of document]