

Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS)

Tenth Session

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REPORT BY THE BLOCKCHAIN TASK FORCE (TASK NO. 59)

Document prepared by the International Bureau

INTRODUCTION

1. At its sixth session in 2018, the Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS) created Task No. 59, established the Blockchain Task Force to carry out the Task and designated the Delegations of Australia and the Russian Federation as co-leaders of the new Task Force (see paragraphs 33 to 35 of document CWS/6/34). The Blockchain Task Force reported its activities to the CWS at its seventh, eighth and ninth sessions.

2. The Task Force continued to work under the description of Task No. 59, which was revised at the seventh session of the CWS, and the agreed scope statement of the new standard on Blockchain for IP is as follows:

Description of Task No. 59:

- Explore the possibility of using blockchain technology in the processes of providing Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) protection, processing information about IP objects and their use;
- Collect information about Intellectual Property Office (IPO) developments in the use of and experience with blockchain, assess current Industry Standards on blockchain and consider the merit and applicability to IPOs;
- Develop reference models of using blockchain technology in the IP field, including guiding principles, common practice and use of terminology as a framework supporting collaboration, joint projects, and proofs of concept; and
- Prepare a proposal for a new WIPO Standard supporting the potential application of blockchain technology within the IP ecosystems.

Scope Statement of Standard:

“This Standard aims to guide the Intellectual Property Offices (IPOs) and other Organizations that need to manage, store, process, exchange and disseminate IP data using Blockchain. It is intended that by using this Standard, the implementation of Blockchain can be simplified and accelerated in an interoperable manner within the IP ecosystem.”

(See paragraph 3 of document CWS/9/7.)

3. The CWS noted that the Blockchain Task Force agreed on the following four sub-tasks which would be led by the International Bureau, the IP Australia and Rospatent respectively:

- Regulatory, which is focusing on exploring the harmonization of regulatory frameworks (led by the International Bureau);
- Governance, which is focusing on the compatibility between blockchain governance structures for interoperability among blockchain-based solutions (led by the International Bureau);
- Technical Standards, which is focusing on the establishment of common technical standards, especially technical standardization of blockchain technology within the IP ecosystem (led by Rospatent); and
- Use cases, which is focusing on the collection of potential blockchain use cases, describing their benefits (led by IP Australia).

(See paragraph 6 of document CWS/9/7.)

4. The CWS also noted that the Task Force had discussed public and private partnership models and considered opening another forum taking into account the significant benefits of working in collaboration with the private sector, universities and non-governmental organizations (see paragraph 7 of document CWS/9/7).

5. The Task Force reported on its progress on developing a new standard on blockchain, which covers standard terminologies and definitions, guidance on issues with high-level configuration and areas of blockchain development to make this system sustainable (see paragraph 13 of document CWS/9/7).

6. The CWS noted that the Blockchain Task Force participated in the [WIPO webinar on blockchain for IP](#), which was organized by the International Bureau in September 2021. The webinar explained the contents and scope of the draft white paper and discussed the potential use cases of blockchain technology in the IP space that the whitepaper detailed. The webinar also presented the draft text for the proposed new standard with a view to seeking feedback and input for a wider audience. (See paragraph 12 of document CWS/9/7.)

PROGRESS REPORT

7. The International Bureau published the document “Blockchain technologies and IP ecosystems: A WIPO white paper” in February 2022 on the WIPO website at: <https://www.wipo.int/cws/en/blockchain-and-ip.html>, the preparation of which the Blockchain Task Force contributed to. This white paper explored potential applications and opportunities presented by blockchain technologies to IP ecosystems. It also identified the challenges and issues that should be addressed to determine the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of utilizing such technologies for the benefit of all IP stakeholders. It is expected that the white paper should help IPOs and other interested parties with their strategic policy and decision making on the adoption of blockchain technologies in their businesses, as well as providing information for

further discussions and collaborations among interested parties. This white paper suggests that the primary considerations of using blockchain in IP ecosystems are technical standards, regulatory framework, blockchain-network governance, and capacity building.

8. As the lead of two sub-tasks, i.e., Governance Interoperability and Regulatory Interoperability, as referred to paragraph 3 above, the International Bureau prepared a working draft “Analysis of UNICITRAL Model Law on electronic transferable records for Blockchain uses in IP ecosystems” for consideration by the Blockchain Task Force. Several members of the Task Force provided comments. Taking into account the feedback received, the International Bureau is working on the revised draft document at the time of preparing the present document. The International Bureau is also drafting a document on governance for consideration by the Blockchain Task Force.

9. The CWS is invited to note the content of the present document.

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