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## PRESS RELEASE

### Simplification and EU bilateral agreements covering GIs: oriGIn EU sets its policy agenda

Following the decentralization strategy approved by oriGIn 2017 General Assembly, European members gathered today in Brussels to launch oriGIn EU, the Brussels-based antenna of the global GIs groups' alliance.

“Over the years, oriGIn contributed to raise awareness as to the global nature of an intellectual property right – Geographical Indications – which is crucial for the sustainable development of local producers. Fifteen years after the creation of oriGIn, we felt the need to underpin our global action through more targeted regional activities. oriGIn EU will help European GIs groups to strengthen their dialogue and coordinate policy campaigns at the European level”, explained **the President of oriGIn, Mr. Claude Vermot-Desroches**.

“Over the years, the European Union has achieved tremendous results in the recognition and protection of Geographical Indications, both in the internal market as well as in third countries. We believe time is ripe for optimizing such systems, in terms of simplification and fine-tuning certain aspects of the EU bilateral agreements covering GIs, such a better involvement of GIs groups in the negotiations. On behalf of our members, I would like to thank Mr. Paolo De Castro, Vice-Chair of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development and Mr. Michel Dantin, member of the same Committee, for hosting us today at the European Parliament for the launch of oriGIn EU, which will be instrumental to pursue such objectives”, said **the Managing Director of oriGIn, Mr. Massimo Vittori**.

“It is essential that the next reforms of the European policies, notably the CAP, protect the GI system of protection and the tools to manage the supply, as well as simplify the procedures”, declared **Mr Michel Dantin**.

“The EU system for the protection of Geographical Indications dates back to the 1990's, when the process of opening of global markets accelerated. Twenty years down the road, the European Commission considers the recognition of Geographical Indications, crucial to protect the European agri-food heritage, a key element of commercial negotiations. In this context, in the respect of the prerogatives of Member States, involving GIs groups in the trade negotiations which have an impact on the protection of GIs outside the EU borders is of paramount importance, and we strongly believe it will be increasingly crucial in future agreements”, concluded **Mr. Paolo De Castro**.