



## Africa IP SME Helpdesk Webinar

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### A guide to customs recordal in West Africa

13 December 2023

10:00-11:00 CET



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## Summary

### How is the OAPI relevant for my business in West Africa?

The OAPI is an intergovernmental body in Africa specialising in intellectual property (IP) matters. The organisation acts as the sole IP governing body for its Member States and represents over 100 million inhabitants.

OAPI Member States apply a uniform law, providing a common administrative procedure that gives rise to unitary IP rights across all 17 countries:

Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, and Togo.

### Webinar description

Customs recordal refers to the process of recording intellectual property rights with customs authorities. By registering with customs, rights holders provide authorities with information about their intellectual property, such as trade marks. Customs officials can then monitor and detain shipments that may contain counterfeit or infringing goods.

Participants will learn about the OAPI and its role, the importance of customs recordals, best practices, real-world examples, and success stories to help them understand the key challenges and opportunities in the region.

The seminar will be structured as follows:

- **Introduction and role of OAPI:**  
The webinar will provide an overview of OAPI and its mission, helping participants understand the significance of OAPI in the African region. It will analyse Intellectual Property (IP) protection and its importance, as well as how OAPI facilitates and enforces IP rights.
- **Importance of customs recordal:**  
IP experts will explain the role of customs recordal procedures in protecting intellectual property and how customs recordals contribute to preventing counterfeit goods and ensuring compliance.
- **Real-world examples:**  
Case studies on the impact of effective IP protection and highlighting instances where customs recordals played a crucial role in preventing IP infringement will be showcased.
- **Challenges in IP protection:**  
Common challenges faced by businesses in the region and strategies for overcoming these challenges and improving IP protection will be discussed.
- **Interactive sessions:**  
IP experts will be at the disposal of participants to answer any questions and clarify doubts on this subject.

**The webinar will be delivered in English, but French interpretation will be available.**

## Programme

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10:00 – 10:05

**Welcoming remarks and introduction to the  
Africa IP SME Helpdesk**

*Andrea IORI, Project Manager Africa IP SME  
Helpdesk, European Union Intellectual Property  
office (EUIPO)*

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10:05 – 10:55

**Customs recordal in West Africa**

*Marius SCHNEIDER, Attorney-at-law at the  
Brussels Bar and Legal Adviser in Mauritius,  
IPvocate Africa  
Nora HO TU NAM, Partner, IPvocate Africa*

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10:55 – 11:00

**Closing remarks**

*Andrea IORI, Project Manager Africa IP SME  
Helpdesk, European Union Intellectual Property  
office (EUIPO)*

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