



Council of the  
European Union

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**NOTE**

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From: General Secretariat of the Council  
To: Delegations  
Subject: EU-China Bilateral GI Agreement  
- Information from the Commission

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Delegations will find in the Annex a note from the Commission on the above-mentioned subject, to be dealt with under "Any other business" at the Council (Agriculture and Fisheries) on 18 November 2019.

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENT, AOB ON EU-CHINA AGREEMENT ON THE PROTECTION OF  
GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS, AGRIFISH COUNCIL 18 NOVEMBER 2019**

Commissioner Hogan will present the recent conclusion of the negotiations on the agreement on the protection of geographical indications (GI) between China and the EU.

Commissioner Hogan and trade Minister Zhong Shan confirmed the conclusion of the negotiations on 6 November in Beijing. President Macron and President Xi witnessed this ceremony, giving an additional political weight to the future agreement.

EU-China cooperation on GIs began in 2006 resulting in the registration and protection of 10 GIs on both sides in 2012 in line with respective domestic legislations. Bilateral negotiations started in 2010 and 22 rounds took place before the end of the negotiations.

100 GIs on each side are to be protected at entry into force of the Agreement. A second list of 175 GIs on each side will be protected within four years after entry into force. The Agreement provides for at least equivalent protection under Article 23 of the TRIPS Agreement, which provides for a very high level of protection.

This agreement will be a milestone in EU-China cooperation and in their trade relation. Both sides have fulfilled a common commitment taken at the last EU-China Summit in April this year. By doing so, China and the EU show the importance they attach to the engagement they take during such meetings. This lends credibility and legitimacy to the EU-China Summit joint statement and will hopefully pave the way for more of the commitments to be fulfilled.

China is a growing market for our GI products, notably wines, cheeses and other products. It is thus very important that the geographical indications are protected against misuses in China. Intellectual property can be a difficult issue to address with China, and this agreement is a step towards a better protection for European right owners in China. The Agreement protects the most commercially valuable and iconic European GI's.