APAA 2026, in Hong Kong
Trademark Committee
Group Report – Sri Lanka

A. Developments

- Sri Lanka's intellectual property framework has undergone significant modernization to enhance enforcement, align with international treaties, and protect local exports. Stronger IP protection is essential for enhancing investor confidence, safeguarding local innovation, and enabling access to higher-value global markets.

- Digitization and Online Filings: Applications have shifted toward a fully digital filing structure to drastically reduce delays and optimize transparency for applicants.

- The National Intellectual Property Office aims to reduce the average time frame of Trademark registration period to about eight months by mid-2027.

- Trademark profile searches have been available online since February 2026, and most IP registration services are expected to become fully online by the year 2027 and the database has been integrated with WIPO Global Brand Database.

- Local administrative backlogs at National Intellectual Property Office of Sri Lanka make it risky to open the floodgates to foreign Madrid applications before local processing speeds and systemic modernization are stabilized.

- The National Intellectual Property Office of Sri Lanka (NIPO) has been working toward accession for several years, following government approval in principle. However, due to the government's change, fresh cabinet approval has to be obtained.

- According to reports published in May 2026, the necessary amendments to Sri Lanka's Intellectual Property legislation are being finalized by the Legal Draftsman's Department. Once finalized, the amendments will proceed through the formal legislative process before accession can occur.

- The National Intellectual Property Office of Sri Lanka (NIPO) has engaged in extensive stakeholder consultations with intellectual property agents, entrepreneurs, and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as part of the ongoing process of preparing for accession to the Madrid Protocol. These consultations aim to identify practical challenges, build stakeholder awareness, and support the development of an effective implementation framework.

➢ Geographical Indication (GI) Registration System

Sri Lanka transitioned from treating GIs solely as certification or collective marks to implementing a dedicated *sui generis* national registry system:

- **The Legislative Foundation:** The **Intellectual Property (Amendment) Act, No. 8 of 2022** introduced a structured domestic framework specifically for registering geographical indications.
- **Operational Regulations:** Comprehensive rules governing applications, examination criteria, and control plans were formalized via the **Extraordinary Gazette issued on October 22, 2024**.
- On **February 27, 2025**, the National Intellectual Property Office (NIPO)—in collaboration with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the Sri Lanka Export Development Board (EDB)—officially launched **Sri Lanka's first-ever Local Geographical Indications (GI) Registry**.

Prior to this milestone, unique domestic goods lacked formal legal safe-keeping at home unless registered as collective or certification trademarks. The new registry offers streamlined, statutory protection tied explicitly to geographical origin.

Operational Framework & Rules

Following the foundational *Intellectual Property Amendment Act No. 08 of 2022*, legal execution became fully functional via targeted guidelines:

- **Prescribed Applications:** Producers and trade groups must submit specialized technical dossiers detailing the exact geographic boundaries, production methods, and reputation links to NIPO's Director General.
- **Control Plans:** Regulations mandate independent auditing and internal verification to ensure that products using the GI name strictly meet quality standards.

Key Target Commodities & Global Expansion

The domestic registry launch heavily focuses on protecting the commercial value of Sri Lanka’s premium commodities:

- **Ceylon Cinnamon:** After achieving milestone European Union (EU) Protected GI status, current efforts are focusing on expanding its GI reach across Latin American regions like Mexico, Colombia, and Peru.
- **Ceylon Tea:** The Sri Lanka Tea Board, with assistance from the French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD), formally submitted its comprehensive GI registration application to the European Commission.
- **Other Essential Goods:** The registry is being leveraged to organize protection frameworks for other valuable commodities, including **Ceylon Pepper** and **Ceylon Sapphire**, to eliminate counterfeit use of the "Ceylon" branding abroad.
- **Key Protection Rules:** Registered GIs are valid for **10 years** and are indefinitely renewable for consecutive 10-year terms. Public opposition must be lodged within a strict **3-month window** following Gazette publication.

B. Statistics

1. The number of new applications

Year	No. of new applications	Increase/Decrease	Previous year
2024	12379	11.46%	11,106
2025	13436	8.54 %	12,379
01.01.2026-31.08.2026	10,132		13,436%

Comments and /or additional statistics:

2. Average timeframe from filing up to registration

Year	Average timeframe from filing up to registration (months)
2024	More than 24 months
2025	More than 24 months

Comments and /or additional statistics:

C. CASES

(Note: At least two (2) representing cases are advisable)

Facts: PUMA SE vs. Counterfeit Retailers.

Plaintiff : *Global sportwear brand PUMA SE*

Defendant: *Four local footwear entities.*

Decision

PUMA secured four enjoining orders from the Commercial High Court of Colombo against retailers unlawfully selling footwear bearing deceptive “PUMA” names and leaping cat logos.