
GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS (GI) IMPACT IN INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS (ECONOMIC AND LEGAL PURPOSES)

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Abstract

Geographical Indications (GIs) have become a crucial branch of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR), safeguarding products possessing unique characteristics linked to their geographical origin. As a collective right, GI protection promotes authenticity, prevents misappropriation, and ensures fair recognition for indigenous producers. This paper critically examines the evolution of the GI regime under international frameworks such as the TRIPS Agreement, alongside the Indian Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999. It evaluates the role of GIs in rural economic development, brand differentiation, sustainable livelihood creation, and global trade competitiveness. Further, it addresses contemporary challenges such as digital counterfeiting, weak enforcement, producer unawareness, and transboundary GI disputes. Through legal analysis and case studies, the paper emphasizes how GIs contribute to preserving traditional knowledge, enhancing market value, and strengthening national economies. The study concludes that an integrated policy approach and global cooperation are essential to maximize the socio-economic and legal benefits of GI protection.

KEYWORDS: Geographical Indications, Intellectual Property Rights, TRIPS, Economic Development, Traditional Knowledge, Brand Protection, Rural Sustainability.

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INTRODUCTION:

Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) form the cornerstone of innovation and creativity in modern economies, providing legal mechanisms that safeguard creations of the mind from unauthorized exploitation. Traditionally, IPR has encompassed patents, trademarks, copyrights, industrial designs, and trade secrets each catering to specific types of intellectual creations. However, with the evolution of global trade and the emerging recognition of the socioeconomic significance of traditional knowledge and community-based innovations, Geographical Indications (GIs) have become one of the most dynamic and transformative components of the IPR ecosystem. Unlike individualistic forms of IP, GIs are anchored in community ownership, reflecting the collective reputation, skills, and cultural heritage of producers belonging to a particular region. A GI denotes products whose distinct qualities, characteristics, or reputation are directly attributable to their geographical origin, encompassing not only natural and environmental factors such as climate, soil, and topography but also human elements such as traditional craftsmanship and inherited production techniques. This symbiotic relationship between place and product makes GIs a unique legal category in IPR protection. In the era of globalization, origin-based branding has gained strategic importance for nations seeking competitive differentiation in a crowded international marketplace. Consumers today exhibit heightened awareness of authenticity, sustainability, ethical production, and cultural relevance. Products linked to a specific place of origin such as Darjeeling Tea, Champagne, Parma Ham, or Banarasi Sarees carry a symbolic value that extends far beyond their functional attributes. These goods are perceived as embodying heritage, skill, and exclusivity, leading to premium pricing and enhanced market recognition. Thus, GIs act not only as legal tools but also as powerful instruments of marketing and economic development. They contribute to value chain enhancement, rural employment, tourism promotion, and export growth by converting local identity into global economic advantage. The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) have increasingly emphasized GIs as a means to promote fair trade, safeguard indigenous knowledge, and strengthen consumer confidence in product authenticity. In developing countries like India, GIs play a particularly crucial role in empowering marginalized communities engaged in traditional occupations. TRIPS Agreement provisions reflect this need by setting a global baseline for GI protection while allowing national legislations to adopt stronger frameworks based on local priorities. India's Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999, thus emerges as a robust legal mechanism supporting one of the largest GI regimes in the world.

International Legal Framework Governing Geographical Indications

The legal protection of Geographical Indications (GIs) has progressively evolved as a core concern within international Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) governance. GIs safeguard the unique qualities and commercial value of origin-based goods, yet their legal treatment varies significantly across jurisdictions. The need for an internationally harmonized approach led to the development of multilateral agreements, particularly under the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). Central among these are the TRIPS Agreement (1994), Paris Convention (1883), Lisbon Agreement (1958), and the Geneva Act (2015). Together, they establish the baseline standards and compliance obligations for countries aiming to protect and enforce GIs. This section critically examines these global frameworks, their complementary roles, and the contrasting protection models adopted in major regions such as the European Union (EU) and the United States (US).

TRIPS Agreement (Articles 22–24) and its Implications

The Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) marks the most comprehensive and binding multilateral instrument governing GIs. Articles 22, 23, and 24 define the substantive obligations of WTO member states.

“Article 22 provides **general protection** for all goods bearing GIs. It obligates members to prevent deceptive or misleading use of geographical names that could misrepresent product origin.”¹ The emphasis here is on preventing consumer confusion and unfair competition. For example, using a famous GI name on goods not originating from the place may dilute the reputation of the authentic product and economically harm legitimate producers.

Article 23 introduces **higher protection** specifically for wines and spirits, regardless of whether consumers are actually misled. Even qualified uses such as “style,” “type,” or “kind” are prohibited.² This enhanced protection arose primarily from lobbying by European wine-producing countries to safeguard prestigious alcoholic products like Champagne and Scotch Whisky. Under this rule, a product labeled “California Champagne” would be impermissible even with a disclaimer of origin.

¹ Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights art. 22(1)(2), Apr. 15, 1994, 1869 U.N.T.S. 299.

² Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights art. 23(1)(2), Apr. 15, 1994, 1869 U.N.T.S. 299.

Article 24 addresses **exceptions and future negotiations**, including the coexistence of prior trademarks, generic terms, and grandfathering of earlier good faith uses. Despite being progressive, Article 24 remains a contested space, delaying global alignment on enhanced GI protection for other product categories such as handicrafts, agricultural goods, or traditional foods.³ The TRIPS Agreement thus establishes the **minimum global standard** for GI recognition but leaves room for national flexibility. The disparity between general and enhanced protection under TRIPS continues to generate international policy debates, particularly between developed and developing countries whose economies increasingly depend on non-spirit GI products such as coffee, tea, spices, textiles, and artisanal crafts.

Conceptual Foundations of Geographical Indications within IPR

Geographical Indications (GIs) constitute a distinct category of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR), protecting product names that derive value from their **geographical origin, quality, and traditional production practices**. Unlike trademarks that protect individual commercial identifiers, GIs safeguard **collective rights** belonging to communities that share reputation and skills rooted in a locality. The World Trade Organization (WTO), through the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), legally established GIs as enforceable IPR requiring protection against misleading public practices and unfair competition.⁴ The rationale behind GI protection lies in its dual ability to prevent deceptive commercial exploitation and to secure recognition of products tied to heritage and environmental uniqueness. Early jurisprudence such as *Tea Board of India v. I.T.C. Ltd.* reinforced the notion that GIs cannot be commodified as private appropriation independent from their geographical identity, establishing the principle that commercial branding must respect territorial authenticity.⁵ Thus, GIs extend IPR beyond traditional concepts of innovation toward **identity-based economic entitlement**.

Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration & Protection) Act, 1999 (GI Act), only **authorized users** from the specific region may legally label their goods with the GI,

³ Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights art. 24(1)(6), Apr. 15, 1994, 1869 U.N.T.S. 299.

⁴ Smita Sahu, Shweta Singh & Dr. Ritu Meena, *WTO & Intellectual Property Rights (2023)*, Wisdom Press, <https://www.wisdompress.co.in/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/WTO-Intellectual-Property-Rights.pdf>.

⁵ Case Study: *Tea Board of India vs. ITC Ltd.*, Mondaq Trademark & IP (May 11, 2020), <https://www.mondaq.com/india/trademark/785150/case-study-tea-board-of-india-vs-itc-ltd>.

thereby limiting supply and maintaining quality standards.⁶ This creates a scarcity effect and preserves the exclusivity of GI-branded goods, allowing producers in the GI region to charge higher prices than comparable non-GI products. Economically, this premium supports rural livelihoods, enabling small-scale farmers and artisans to secure better margins for their genuine products. Coupled with the pricing advantage, GIs foster **market differentiation** by distinguishing origin-linked goods from generic or mass-produced items. The GI Act defines infringement in terms of misuse of the GI or unfair competition, including **passing off** by unauthorized users.⁷ This legal protection ensures that only those who actually produce within the geographic area, and follow defined quality standards, can benefit from the GI's market identity. For instance, in *Tea Board of India v. ITC Ltd.*, the Calcutta High Court rejected the Tea Board's claim against ITC for using "Darjeeling" in its lounge name, ruling that the GI rights under the GI Act were confined to **tea goods** only not to services such as hotel lounges.⁸ By clarifying the scope of GI usage, the court reinforced that GI protection is not a universal monopoly over the name, but a tailored right that preserves the **distinctiveness of goods** from the GI region.

The protection granted by GI law also cultivates **consumer trust** in the origin and quality of goods. Because GIs are regulated through a certification mechanism (where the GI office or governing body authorizes users and often monitors quality), consumers have greater confidence that the product genuinely originates from the claimed region. This trust helps prevent **misrepresentation** and **dilution** of the GI's value. In the *Tea Board v. ITC* case, the court considered whether consumers would actually be misled by "Darjeeling Lounge." It concluded that guests of a high-end lounge would likely distinguish between a luxury service and actual Darjeeling tea products, thereby ruling out passing-off or dilution risk. This decision underscores the importance of **consumer perception** and the need for a close nexus between the GI and the goods for which it is registered. Legally, the GI Act sets out detailed provisions to protect this linkage. The Act further empowers GI proprietors to take **civil action**, claim **damages**, and even seek **criminal prosecution** against counterfeiters, thereby strengthening

⁶ Altacit Global, *The Protection of Geographical Indication in India*, ALTACIT, <https://www.altacit.com/resources/gi-geographical-indications/the-protection-of-geographical-indication-in-india> (last visited Nov. 18, 2025).

⁷ Amshardul Legal Insights, *The Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999: An Overview*, Amshardul (Nov. 13, 2023), <https://www.amshardul.com/insight/the-geographical-indications-of-goods-registration-and-protection-act-1999-an-overview/>.

⁸ *Tea Bd. of India v. ITC Ltd.*, C.S. No. 250 of 2010, Calcutta High Court (Feb. 4, 2019)

the enforcement of authenticity standards.⁹ These legal tools ensure that price premiums are not undermined by fake or misleading products, and that the **integrity of the GI brand** is preserved. From an economic-development perspective, the combined effect of premium pricing, market differentiation, and consumer trust helps GI regions to gain upward mobility in value chains. Producers in these regions gain bargaining power, since their goods are no longer seen as commodity-grade but as premium origin-products. As a result, GI protection promotes **sustainable development**, by giving local communities a stable and economically rewarding incentive to maintain their traditional production practices, invest in quality control, and uphold the geographical reputation of their region.

GIs as Tools for Market Differentiation and Value Addition

Geographical Indications (GIs) function as powerful instruments of market differentiation by linking a product's identity, quality, and reputation to a specific geographical origin, thereby distinguishing it from generic or mass-produced alternatives. In increasingly globalized and competitive markets, consumers are often confronted with standardized goods that lack distinctiveness. GI protection addresses this challenge by creating a legally recognized marker of authenticity that signals to consumers that a product possesses unique characteristics derived from its place of origin, traditional methods of production, and localized expertise. This differentiation enables GI-tagged products to stand out in domestic and international markets, fostering consumer trust and preference and transforming geographical identity into a valuable economic asset.¹⁰

GI products are governed by defined standards and specifications that regulate production methods, raw materials, and geographical boundaries. Compliance with these specifications ensures consistency and preserves the distinctive qualities associated with the product. Over time, this consistency builds a collective reputation that cannot be easily replicated by producers outside the designated region. For example, products such as Darjeeling Tea, Kanchipuram Silk, and Alphonso Mango are not merely identified by their

⁹ Maheshwari & Co., *Geographical Indications in India* (Aug. 27, 2025), **Maheshwari & Co. Blog**, <https://www.maheshwariandco.com/blog/geographical-indications-in-india/maheshwariandco.com>

¹⁰ Sitaram Sukthankar et al., *Drivers of Geographical Indication (GI) Tags' Adoption Among Cashew Feni Producers: Extending the Theory of Planned Behaviour Using PLS-SEM*, 6 *World* 119, (Sept. 1, 2025), <https://doi.org/10.3390/world6030119>.

names but by a set of quality expectations deeply rooted in geography and tradition.¹¹ Such reputation-driven differentiation allows GI products to command consumer loyalty and recognition, which is particularly valuable in markets where brand trust plays a decisive role in purchasing decisions.

GIs also play a critical role in value addition by enabling producers to obtain premium prices for their goods. The assurance of origin and quality associated with GI products often justifies higher pricing compared to non-GI or generic equivalents. This price premium directly benefits local producers, artisans, and farmers, many of whom operate on a small or marginal scale. By elevating the perceived value of traditional products, GIs convert cultural and natural attributes into economic returns.¹² This process of value addition is especially significant in rural and agrarian economies, where GI protection can enhance incomes, reduce dependence on intermediaries, and promote equitable distribution of economic benefits within the producing community. Beyond price premiums, GIs facilitate value addition through improved market access and branding opportunities. GI registration provides a formal identity that can be leveraged in marketing, packaging, and export promotion. Governments and trade bodies increasingly use GI tags as tools for regional branding, integrating them into initiatives aimed at promoting local products in national and global markets. Schemes such as India's **One District One Product (ODOP)** illustrate how GI recognition can be aligned with broader economic policies to strengthen supply chains, improve packaging and labeling standards, and enhance visibility in e-commerce and international trade fairs.¹³ As a result, GI products are no longer confined to local markets but gain access to high-value segments of global value chains.

Another important dimension of value addition through GIs lies in the preservation and commercialization of traditional knowledge and skills. GI protection incentivizes the continuation of time-tested production techniques that might otherwise be displaced by industrial methods. By legally recognizing the link between product quality and traditional practices, GIs encourage producers to maintain authenticity rather than shift toward cost-cutting standardization. This not only sustains cultural heritage but also adds intangible value

¹¹ Tarit Kumar Datta, *Darjeeling Tea, India* in Food & Agriculture Org. of the United Nations, *RAP Publication 2010/04: Geographical Indications and Rural Development – Case Studies* 113–14 (2010), <https://www.fao.org/4/i1592e/i1592e03.pdf>.

¹² Guanbing Zhao & Kuijian Zhan, *Research on the Evolutionary Game of Quality Governance of Geographical Indication Agricultural Products in China: From the Perspective of Industry Self-Governance*, 17 *Sustainability* 3414 (Apr. 11, 2025), <https://doi.org/10.3390/su17083414>.

¹³ Abhishek Tiwari & Akhilesh Chandra Pandey, *Innovation, Quality and Visibility: Strategic Imperative for ODOP*, 10 *J. Mgmt. Research & Anal.* 196, 196–200 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.18231/j.jmra.2023.035>.

to the product, as consumers increasingly associate GI goods with craftsmanship, sustainability, and ethical production. Such attributes resonate strongly with modern consumers who are willing to pay a premium for products that reflect social and environmental responsibility.

GIs further contribute to market differentiation by protecting producers against unfair competition and misappropriation. Unauthorized use of geographical names can dilute product reputation and undermine consumer confidence. Legal protection ensures that only authorized users within the designated geographical area can use the GI name, thereby preventing deceptive practices and preserving the distinct market identity of the product. This exclusivity reinforces the value of the GI as a collective brand and ensures that economic benefits accrue to legitimate producers.¹⁴ In this sense, GIs function not merely as identifiers but as strategic economic tools that safeguard market position and long-term value. GIs in differentiation and value addition is being further enhanced through technological and institutional innovations. The use of traceability mechanisms, such as QR codes and digital certification, strengthens consumer confidence by providing verifiable information about origin and production processes. Additionally, increased awareness campaigns and institutional support have improved the visibility and commercial viability of GI products. These developments indicate a shift from viewing GIs solely as instruments of cultural preservation to recognizing them as dynamic drivers of competitiveness and economic growth.

Legal Framework and Judicial Enforcement: India and TRIPS Compliance

India's commitment to GI protection strengthened after TRIPS obligations. This culminated in the enactment of the **Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999**, which provides registration rights, infringement remedies, and authorized user recognition.¹⁵ One of the landmark Indian GIs, **Darjeeling Tea**, became the first registered GI in 2004, and has since been central to anti-counterfeiting enforcement initiatives. In *Tea Board of India v. Republic of Tea*, U.S. authorities recognized the misrepresentation risks involved in GI misuse, highlighting the importance of transnational legal enforcement for trade reputation.¹⁶ Indian courts have also addressed GI-trademark conflicts, as demonstrated in that "Scotch" refers exclusively to whisky produced in Scotland,

¹⁴ What Are Geographical Indications?, ETB Law (Nov. 25, 2025), <https://www.etblaw.com/what-are-geographical-indications/>.

¹⁵ Kluwer Trademark Blog, *India: Limitations of geographical indication ... Tea Board v. ITC Limited* (May 8, 2019), <https://legalblogs.wolterskluwer.com/trademark-blog/india-limitations-of-geographical-indication-and-certification-trademarks-tea-board-v-itc-limited-2019>.

¹⁶ *Tea Bd. of India v. Republic of Tea*, No. 10-50218 (N.D. Cal. filed June 17, 2010).

thereby protecting foreign GIs in Indian jurisdiction.¹⁷ The cumulative judicial trend shows a shift from territorial protection to **global cooperative safeguarding**, ensuring GIs' inclusion in the mainstream IPR litigation landscape.

Economic Impact and Rural Development:

GIs significantly enhance commercial value by establishing reputational premiums in domestic and global markets. Research in international trade demonstrates that consumers pay higher prices for origin-verified goods because they trust their **authenticity, quality, and cultural uniqueness**.¹⁸ This creates **value addition** and strengthens rural development, especially in countries like India where traditional industries dominate local economies. GI-tagged goods such as **Pochampally Ikat, Kanchipuram Silk, and Basmati Rice** have received increased export demand, improving livelihoods and preserving craft clusters. A notable legal dispute in *Agricultural & Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) v. Krbl Ltd.* addressed the misuse of "Basmati" and demonstrated how protection ensures economic returns remain rooted in **origin communities**.¹⁹ Moreover, GIs encourage **fair-trade practices, employment generation, and tourism development**, creating broader multiplier effects on regional economies. The commercialization of GIs exemplifies democratization of intellectual property, shifting economic benefit from corporate monopolies to **grassroots producer communities** that historically lacked access to IPR markets.

Geographical Indications (GIs) function as potent instruments of **market empowerment**, particularly for rural producers, artisans, and small-scale farmers, by legally anchoring their products to origin and thereby enabling premium pricing and enhanced market access. Under the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999, India grants collective rights to authorized producers of region-specific goods, ensuring that only those with legitimate connection to the geographical territory may use the GI.²⁰ This legal protection prevents unauthorized use, thereby safeguarding the reputation and quality associated with the origin. From a framework perspective, the sui generis GI regime deviates from individualistic IP models unlike patents or trademarks, GIs recognize community-based ownership, which

¹⁷ *Scotch Whisky Ass'n v. Pravara Sahakar Shakar Karkhana Ltd.*, 2011 (47) P.T.C. 232 (Bom.).

¹⁸ World Intellectual Property Organization, *Geographical Indications: The Economics of Geographical Indications*(EconomicResearchWorkingPaperNo.35,2020),<https://www.wipo.int/publications/en/details.jsp?id=4599>.

¹⁹ *Agricultural & Processed Food Products Export Dev. Auth. v. Krbl Ltd.*, 2019 SCC OnLine Del 8238.

²⁰ Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, No. 48 of 1999, § 21 (India).

inherently fosters **economic inclusivity and cooperative action**.²¹ The TRIPS Agreement under the WTO further bolsters this empowerment model by mandating member states to provide protection for GIs and thereby helping rural economies obtain a framework for fair trade and sustainable development.²² Economically, GI designation enables producers to command a **price premium**: consumers are willing to pay more for authenticity and traceability, which strengthens the value chain and redistributes profits to origin communities.²³ For example, communities involved in GIs like Darjeeling Tea or Pochampally Ikat benefit not simply from recognition but from a **structured legal and economic system** that can collectively enforce standards, bring in export opportunities, and integrate with global markets.²⁴ The legal enforcement mechanisms under Indian GI law such as civil suits for infringement, damages, and even criminal penalties for falsification empower producer associations to defend the integrity of their product in domestic and international marketplaces.²⁵ Furthermore, GI law often encourages the forming of producer associations, quality-control mechanisms, and marketing collectives, which enhances bargaining power and internal capacity for value addition.²⁶ From a social justice standpoint, GIs thereby act as a corrective to historical neglect: artisanal and agricultural communities, often marginalized, gain legally sanctioned recognition and economic leverage, enabling them to sustain traditional practices rather than being subsumed into commodity chains dominated by intermediaries. However, effective realization of this empowerment depends on **awareness, institutional support, and capacity-building** for enforcement and commercialization.²⁷ In sum, GIs are not just labels of origin they are **legal and economic levers** that democratize intellectual property, restore agency to traditional producers, and transform geographical heritage into a marketable, protected, and culturally rooted asset.

²¹ The Law Institute, "Cornerstones of India's GI Act: Protection, Rights, Enforcement," *TheLaw.Institute*, <https://thelaw.institute/trademarks-domain-names-geographical-indications/indias-gi-act-protection-rights-enforcement> (last visited Nov. 17, 2025).

²² Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights art. 22, Apr. 15, 1994, 1869 U.N.T.S. 299.

²³ Jyothy Meenakshi K. et al., *The Impact of Geographical Indications on Sustainable Rural Development: Economic and Cultural Insights from Wayanad, Kerala*, *Int'l J. of Rural Dev.*, 03, Issue 02, 18, 25 (2025).

²⁴ Akanksha Rana, *Geographical Indications in India: Strengthening Legal Protection and Empowering Rural Communities*, *Indian J. of Legal Review*, 5 (1) 898, 900–901 (2025).

²⁵ *Id.*; see also Genecampaign, "Are Geographical Indications Better Suited?", 7 (2014), https://genecampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Are_Geographical_Indications_Better_Suited.pdf.

²⁶ Rachana Wadhera & Raina Midha, *Protecting Origins: Infringement and Remedial Measures in India's Geographical Indications*, *Research Ambition J.*, at 5–6 (2023).

²⁷ Mondaq, "Geographical Indications Laws in India: Challenges and Issues," *Mondaq Trademark & IP News* (Apr. 2024), <https://www.mondaq.com/india/trademark/1048832/geographical-indications-laws-in-india-challenges-and-issues>.

Cultural Sustainability, Future Challenges, and Way Forward

Beyond commercial interests, GIs preserve **cultural identity**, **traditional knowledge**, and **biodiversity**, placing them at the intersection of heritage protection and intellectual property law.²⁸ The recognition of **Madhubani Paintings** and **Warli Art** as GI-recognized crafts helps prevent cultural appropriation and safeguards indigenous artistic expression. However, despite strong legal recognition, challenges persist including: lack of producer awareness, inadequate branding capacity, digital counterfeiting, and limited international enforcement outside well-structured jurisdictions such as the European Union.²⁹ Case law like *Tea Board of India v. I.T.C. Ltd.* also illustrates internal conflicts where corporate commercialization could weaken GI distinctiveness if not carefully regulated.³⁰ To fully realize GI potential, India must strengthen **global registration**, adopt **technology-enabled traceability** (QR, blockchain), and promote capacity-building among artisanal groups. As consumer markets grow more sensitive to authenticity and sustainability, GIs will serve as **future-driven IPR instruments** that integrate economic equity with cultural sovereignty, thereby enhancing the legitimacy of the global intellectual property regime.

Conclusion

Geographical Indications (GIs) as transformative in the broader Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) ecosystem by safeguarding the unique identity, cultural heritage, and economic value of origin-based products. They function as collective rights that not only differentiate goods in competitive markets but also empower rural producers, ensure fair competition, and preserve traditional knowledge systems. Legally, GIs strengthen consumer protection by preventing misuse and deception, while economically they generate premium pricing, global branding, and sustainable regional development. Countries like India have seen significant success through GI protection for products such as Darjeeling Tea, Kanchipuram Silk, and Basmati Rice, which have enhanced export prospects and built international recognition. Nevertheless, challenges remain in enforcement, global harmonization of GI protection, awareness among stakeholders, and combating counterfeiting. Further, governments should

²⁸ World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), *Geographical Indications: An Introduction* 5–7 (2017), https://www.wipo.int/edocs/pubdocs/en/geographical/952/wipo_pub_952.pdf.

²⁹ European Commission, *Strengthening GI Protection in Third Countries: Report on the Protection of Geographical Indications Outside the EU*, COM (2021) (noting policy measures for third-country GI protection).

³⁰ *Tea Bd. of India v. I.T.C. Ltd.*, supra note 2, at 575.

integrate GI protection with sustainable development policies, tourism, and rural livelihood enhancement. A coordinated, holistic approach will ensure that GI-protected products continue to contribute meaningfully to both legal protection and economic empowerment in the IPR framework.

