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UN agency spotlights role of design in building a better future



26 April 2011 – Design has a vital role to play in ensuring a sustainable future by reducing the costs of basic production and decreasing humankind’s impact on the environment, the head of the United Nations World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) said today.

In a [message](#) marking [World Intellectual Property Day](#), whose theme this year is “Designing the Future,” WIPO Director General Francis Gurry said design will take on an increasingly important role in the years ahead as ecologically sound living becomes more important.

“Sustainable design processes can help lower production costs and reduce environmental impact,” he said. “The designs of the future will necessarily be green, and the intellectual property system will encourage designers to produce them, by helping to protect original designs against unauthorized copying and imitation.”

Mr. Gurry noted that companies need to be able to protect their designs quickly and affordably, particularly given the increasing globalization of trade today.

Last year there was a 30 per cent rise in the number of international applications through WIPO’s Hague System for the International Registration of Industrial Designs, which aims to simplify the process of protecting designs.

World Intellectual Property Day, which has been observed since 2000, marks the day in 1970 when the convention establishing WIPO entered into force. Competitions, exhibitions and public discussions are being held in at least 30 countries in honour of the Day.

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