

Reducing the Burden of Physical Signatures

IP5 Industry Consultation Group Meeting

March, 2022

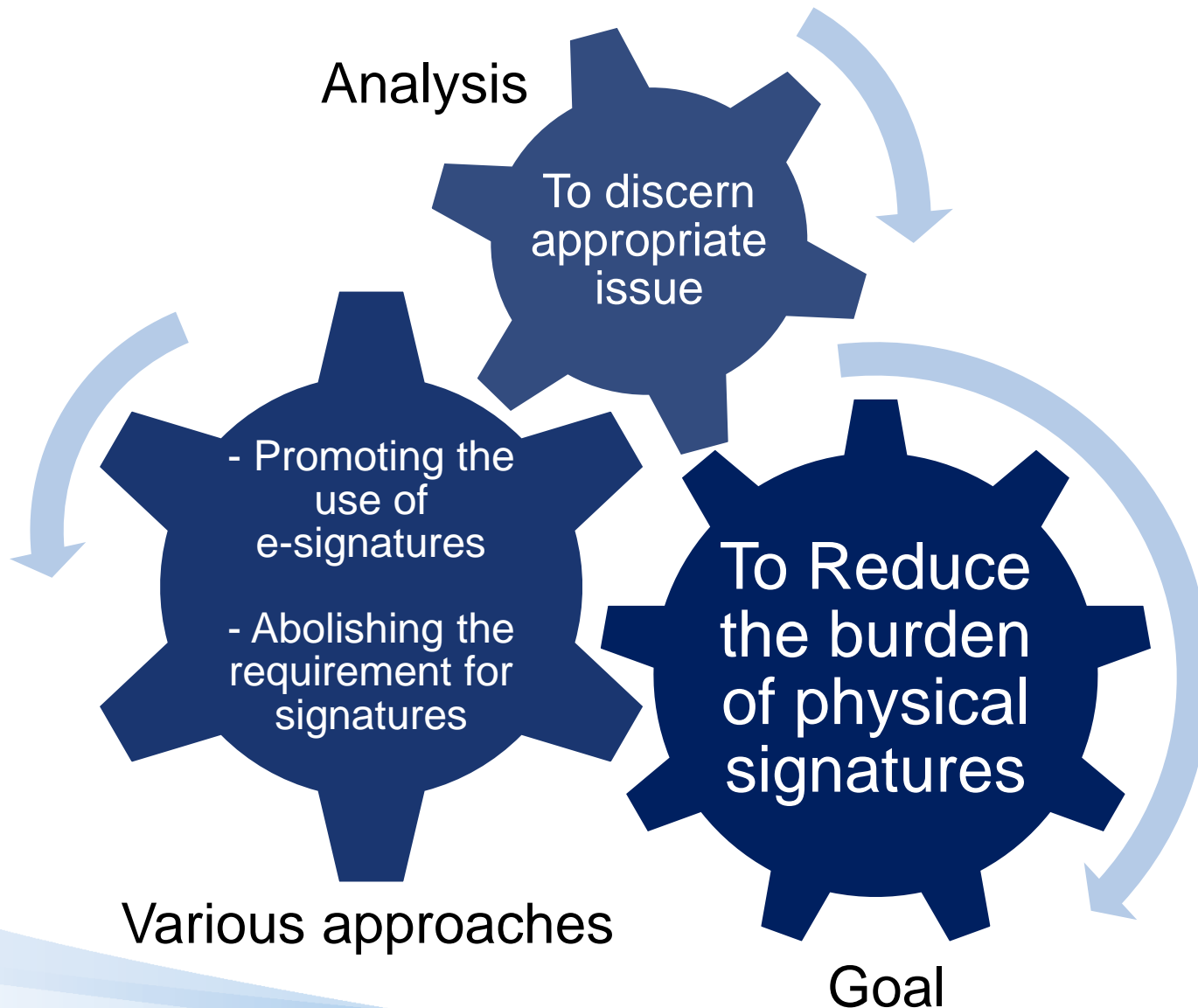
Japan Patent Office



Background

- At the IP5 Heads of Office with IP5 Industry Meeting held in June 2021, there was a request from the Industry regarding reducing the burden associated with physical signatures, specifically encouraging the use of e-signatures.
- The JPO collected the needs of the IP5 Industry on e-signatures through the JIPA and found the following facts.
 - The scope of the discussion on e-signatures is very broad, and it is difficult to extract the common concerns of the IP5 Industry.
 - There are many procedures included in the scope, and it was not possible to identify the areas of interest to the IP5 Industry, but some specific procedures such as assignment of rights were illustrated.

Consideration



Findings of the survey by the JPO, in collaboration with the EPO and the USPTO

- Definitions of "e-signatures" differ greatly among the Offices
- Ways of use of "e-signatures" differ greatly among the Offices
- Compatibility of "e-signatures" among the Offices is remarkably poor

Discussion at the PMG Meeting in December 2021

- The IP5 Offices shared the common understanding at the PMG Meeting.

Purpose	Means
To reduce the burden on users associated with physical signatures and seals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reviewing the procedures• Utilizing e-signatures etc.
Communication with the Industry	Future work
The status of each Office will be reported at the ICG Meeting in 2022.	At least for now, the discussion on the harmonization of e-signatures will not proceed.

Status report – case of the JPO

From the end
of December
2020

- Abolished the requirement of physical seals or signatures for nearly 800 types of procedures

Now

- Requirement of physical seals for only 33 types of procedures

January
2024

- Applicants will be able to conduct all procedures online without any physical seals or signatures.

Next Step / Discussion Point

- The JPO expects that the IP5 Offices other than the JPO will provide status reports.
- Further discussions may be encouraged if the feedback from the IP5 Industry identifies specific scope to be focused in the IP5 framework.



Thank you

