



NATIONAL IPR COORDINATION CENTER



Operation Pangea Fact Sheet

The National Intellectual Property Rights Coordination Center (IPR Center) is leading the government's response to intellectual property theft (IP theft), a crime that costs American industries lost revenue and jobs every year. Unregulated websites providing counterfeit pharmaceuticals are a growing global phenomenon in the area of IP theft. Patients and consumers around the world are suffering from the negative side effects of counterfeit medications. Operation Pangea (*Pangea*) was organized to target the advertisement, sale, and supply of counterfeit and illicit medicines and medical devices that threaten worldwide public health and safety.

The objectives of *Pangea* are to:

- Safeguard public health
- Raise public awareness of risks of buying medicines from fraudulent websites;
- Seize counterfeit and illegal products and remove them from the market;
- Identify the producers and distributors of counterfeit and illegal medical products and the criminal networks supporting them;
- Close down fraudulent websites;
- Prosecute those responsible, where appropriate, and seize their assets; and
- Enhance cooperation amongst agencies combating the illicit trade of counterfeit and illegal medical products.

Quick Facts:

Purpose: To use enforcement actions to raise awareness of the dangers posed by counterfeit medicines and medical devices being sold on the Internet

Start: 2008

End: ongoing

In 2008, the Permanent Forum on International Pharmaceutical Crime (PFIPC) and Interpol initiated *Pangea*, the first international activity targeting the illegal advertising, sale, and supply of medicines over the internet. *Pangea* coordinates enforcement actions by law enforcement, customs, and drug regulators across the globe with the goal of raising public awareness to the dangers of purchasing counterfeit and illicit pharmaceuticals and medical devices on the Internet.

Conducted on a yearly basis, the intent of each *Pangea* operation is to build upon the best practices identified from previous operations and collectively develop a collaborative approach to combat the illicit trade of counterfeit and illicit medical products worldwide, particularly products that represent a serious risk to public health. In addition to the individual countries participating in *Pangea*, other major international organizations have joined the effort as well, including the Universal Postal Union (UPU) and the World Customs Organization (WCO).

The IPR Center coordinates the U.S. Government's participation in *Pangea*. Led by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) and Food and Drug Administration, Office of Criminal Investigation (FDA-OCI) personnel assigned to the IPR Center, five U.S. agencies collaborate to target the websites engaged in the online sales and smuggling of counterfeit drugs and medical devices into the U.S.

For more information about the IPR Center's efforts in *Pangea*, please contact the Outreach & Training Unit by phone at 1-866-IPR-2060, by email at IPRCenter@dhs.gov, or by U.S. mail at National IPR Coordination Center, 2451 Crystal Drive Stop 5105, Arlington, VA 20598-5105 attn: Outreach & Training Unit Chief.

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