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منظمة
الأغذية والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

Fourteenth Session

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Written reports from relevant international organizations - The World Customs Organization (WCO) Overview

Agenda item 14.3

Prepared by the WCO

English only

1. The World Customs Organization (WCO), established in 1952 as the Customs Co-operation Council (CCC) is an independent intergovernmental body whose mission is to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of Customs administrations.
2. Today, the WCO represents 183 Customs administrations across the globe at all stages of social and economic development that collectively process approximately 98% of world trade. They are divided into 6 regions. As the global center of Customs expertise, the WCO is the only international organization with competence in Customs matters and can rightly call itself the voice of the international Customs community. The WCO provides an ideal forum for Customs administrations and their stakeholders to hold in-depth discussions, exchange experiences, and share best practices on a range of international Customs and trade issues.
3. The WCO's work can be categorized into five main areas: setting standards for a number of diverse but inter-linked Customs procedures; promoting international cooperation including information exchange; managing risk; building sustainable capacity including the delivery of quality technical assistance through Customs officials; and enhancing the image of Customs as a core function of a state service by emphasizing its contribution to national economic prosperity and social development.

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4. Traditionally, to mark International Customs Day each year, the WCO Secretariat dedicates a theme that is pertinent to the challenges facing the global Customs community. The WCO is dedicating 2019 to the swift and smooth cross-border movement of goods, people and means of transport, with the slogan “SMART borders for seamless Trade, Travel and Transport.” At a time when the number of passengers and the volume of freight crossing borders is expected to increase exponentially, and technology has transformed the economic landscape in which Customs is evolving, WCO Members are encouraged to look at how they can best ensure the swift and smooth cross-border movement of goods, people and means of transport.

I. WCO-IPPC SECRETARIATS COLLABORATION

II. Agreement

5. There are several matters which are of common interest to the WCO and the IPPC Secretariat to help facilitate the international trade of plants and plant products in a safe and efficient manner. With the purpose of promoting cooperation on these matters of common interest pertaining to the their respective mandates and helping implement related decisions by the two respective governing bodies, the FAO on behalf of the IPPC Secretariat and the WCO have agreed to establish a formal relationship for bilateral collaboration and signed an Agreement at the WCO Headquarters in Brussels on 19 June 2018.

A. Joint Work Plan

6. Based on the Agreement signed in June 2018, the WCO and IPPC Secretariats have agreed to develop a joint work plan for three years, July 2019 – June 2022, which addresses major activities for bilateral cooperation between the Secretariats and explores further areas of joint work between the two Secretariats. The work on the preparation of the first WCO-IPPC joint work plan is about to be completed.

B. IPPC SCTF

7. According to the Terms of Reference of the IPPC Sea Container Task Force (SCTF), a representative from the WCO Secretariat, upon approval by the Implementation and Capacity Development Committee (IC), has invited and participated the 1st and 2nd meetings of the IPPC SCTF in 2017 and 2018 as an ‘invited expert’. The IC has also approved a WCO Technical Officer as the WCO permanent representative to the SCTF.

C. IPPC ePHYTO Project

8. The WCO is a member of the “ePhyto Project Advisory Committee (PAC)” and has participated the 2nd PAC in December 2017 and 3rd PAC in July 2018. The WCO Secretariat, together with the IPPC Secretariat is aligning the International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPM) No. 12 on Guidelines for Phytosanitary Certificates with the WCO Data Model in order to enable seamless exchange of information and digital collaboration within the context of Single Window environment.

D. Participation of the WCO to the CPM

9. Dr. Kunio Mikuriya, Secretary General of the WCO, participated to the 12th Session of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM-12) and delivered the keynote address on Plant Health and Trade Facilitation, outlining the role of Customs in facilitating global trade and inviting IPPC members to engage with WCO members, seeking synergies for collaboration at national entry points, with the possibility of assistance for support to Phytosanitary Services as needed.

10. At the CPM-12, a special topics session was held on the issue of “E-Commerce”. There was also a representative of the WCO among the representatives of NPPOs, relevant international organizations and stakeholders involved in e-Commerce who gave presentations at the meeting.

11. The WCO participated the 13th Session of CPM and also has been invited and will participate to the 14th Session of CPM (CPM-14) as an observer.

E. Participation of the IPPC Secretariat to the WCO meetings

12. The IPPC Secretariat has been invited to participate as an observer to appropriate WCO meetings such as E-Commerce Working Group, WCO WTO TFA Working Group, Permanent Technical Committee.