Terms of Reference

Consultancy assignment to develop Business Process Models and harmonize Certificate of Origin (CO)- Dataset for the Feasibility Study on Interconnectivity Framework for CO

Assignment Reference: WCO Global Knowledge: Origin

CALL FOR PROPOSALS
Deadline: 12 October 2023
To submit by email to: ori@wcoomd.org
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1. BACKGROUND

i. Beneficiaries / Eligible countries

All WCO Member administrations, other government agencies involved in matters related to the Interconnectivity for Certificate of Origin (CO), international organizations and private sector.

ii. Contracting Authority

World Customs Organization (WCO), EU-WCO Rules of Origin Africa Programme

iii. Relevant background

The certificate of origin is a specific form, in which the authority or body of the exporting country empowered to issue it certifies expressly that the goods to which the certificate relates originate in a specific country. This certificate may also include a declaration by the manufacturer, producer, supplier, exporter or other competent person. In general, a claim for preferential tariff treatment is required to be supported by a proof of origin, which must be presented to the Customs authority of the importing country upon request.

Traditionally, origin certification processes are manual, paper-based, slow and cumbersome. Manual origin certification processes are prohibitive to trade and not in line with trade facilitation objectives. In addition, paper-based origin certification is prone to fraud.

There is increased interest from different stakeholders in managing origin-related procedures of international trade through digitalization. Taking into account the needs relating to digitalization of the certificate of origin, Customs administrations are strengthening both operational and organizational capacities to improve efficiencies within the cross-border trading environment. One of the key components of the digitalization of the certificate of origin is to support system interconnectivity. This will ensure that systems are interconnected in order to enhance cooperation for automated data exchange between the exporting authorities and importing Customs administrations, enabling the simplification and harmonization of border procedures, streamlining the entire process, and saving time and effort for the businesses and government agencies involved.

In this regard, the Technical Committee on Rules of Origin (TCRO) discussed and considered the inclusion of a feasibility study on establishing an interconnectivity framework for CO in its Work Programme at its meeting in February 2023. The Work Programme was subsequently approved by the Council in June 2023.

The feasibility study report is intended to be published as WCO instruments and tools for references when Members aim to develop interconnectivity for certificates of origin with other contracting parties.

Regarding the development of the feasibility study, the GNC methodology will be considered as the primary reference for establishing the interconnectivity framework.

Globally Networked Customs (GNC) aims to enhance Customs cooperation by providing an overarching framework in which WCO Members can apply a common, disciplined and coordinated methodology to develop and perfect strategic and operational blueprints based on WCO tools and instruments. GNC facilitates interconnectedness among Customs administrations through exchange of information arrangements. This principle can be applied across all aspects of work undertaken by WCO committees and the Secretariat.

GNC is an interconnectivity framework containing a set of principles necessary for establishing cross-border interconnectedness. It is a voluntary arrangement between two or more Members to exchange cross-border information seamlessly using a standardized approach based on existing WCO instruments. GNC is gradually moving away from the current, individually tailored method.
for negotiating international agreements, towards using a disciplined and common methodology to industrialize the process.

The GNC concept includes the Utility Block (UB), a functional subset of the GNC offering a tangible value proposition to Customs administrations by meeting specific needs through the sharing of information. A UB addresses some of the interconnectivity aspects relevant to a specific part of Customs’ business and describes what is needed for information exchange, including the reasons for following this approach, listing the specific data elements required, the alignment of processes, the necessary communication mechanisms and IT interface and message specifications.

GNC-UBs contain key harmonized/standardized components: 1. Business case and legal framework (name of the UB, purposes, benefits and legal basis), 2. Process alignment (business rules, trigger, entities and data cluster), and 3. Technical interoperability (service interface, communication and integration).

The Action Plan of the Feasibility Study consists of two main stages: the first stage will address Process Alignment: The Business Process Models and dataset of CO. The second stage will address the interconnectivity framework, focusing on legal frameworks and the business case for interconnectivity.

**Business Process Models** for business rules, trigger, entities GNC-UB segments and CO data harmonization for data cluster segment are the scope of the consultancy assignment. The business process models consist of use case story, use case diagram and activity diagram.

iv. **Target audience**

The *Feasibility Study Report* will primarily address the following target audiences:

- Managers in charge of establishing interconnectivity for CO;
- Front-line Customs officers responsible for origin-related procedures;
- Officials of other government agencies involved in interconnectivity for certificates of origin;
- Officials of international organizations; and
- Private sector stakeholders involved in international trade.

2. **DESCRIPTION OF THE ASSIGNMENT**

i. **Overall objective**

The overall objective of this assignment is to establish an interconnectivity framework for CO as a means of enhancing the efficiency of origin certification processes, to contribute to the enhancement of knowledge, skills and capacities in the area of the interconnectivity for CO.

ii. **Specific objective**

The specific objective of this assignment is to initiate the Business Process Modelling (BPM) and to harmonize CO Dataset which will include:

1. Conduct study related to the steps and procedures of certificate of origin appliance and issuance in exporting countries; the steps and procedures of claiming and granting/denial of tariff treatment in the importing countries; the steps and procedures of data transmission.
2. Compile and analyze the Questionnaire and dataset Form collected from the involved Members.
4. Examples and case studies to illustrate each Business Process Models.
5. Submission of the final report of the assignment.
iii. Outputs

- Output 1: Draft of the Business Process Model (use case story, UML use case diagram, UML activity diagram) for interconnectivity for certificates of origin in Visio – UML Diagram format (use case diagram, activity diagram), and MS Word format (use case story)

- Output 2: Harmonized CO dataset in spreadsheet (MS excel) format

- Output 3: GNC – UB Segments (entities, business rules, triggers, and data cluster) in MS Word format

iv. Requested services

Under this assignment, the expert(s) to be contracted are requested to:

- Compile and analyze the practices related to interconnectivity for certificates of origin (data exchange/transmission systems) based on research and Questionnaire provided by the WCO Secretariat and collected from Members.

- Develop Business Process Models and harmonized dataset for interconnectivity for certificates of origin as per the present ToRs.

- Prepare a final brief report on the assignment providing an overview of the activities undertaken and the results achieved.

The Report developed under this assignment will fall under the copyright of the WCO.

The assigned expert(s) will be provided with relevant base information, Questionnaire responses, dataset form collected and relevant materials.

v. Support to the experts

The assigned expert(s) will work in close cooperation with the WCO Feasibility Study team (Origin Sub-Directorate and Facilitation Sub-Directorate).

3. EXPERTS’ PROFILES

i. Profiles required

This assignment will be conducted ideally by business analyst expert(s) in close cooperation with the team of the WCO Feasibility Study on the interconnectivity framework for certificates of origin.

ii. Minimum Qualifications and Skills

- Bachelor or master’s degree in International Trade, Trade and Development, Economics, Customs Administration, Business Administration, Computer science, or related area;
- Understanding of the relevant WCO Instruments and tools: GNC, Utility Block, WCO Data Model;
- Proficient computer literacy (standard Microsoft packages, Visio, Unified Modelling Language (UML));
- WCO DM App (https://datamodel.wcoomd.org)
- Strong analytical and synthesis skill;
- Excellent writing, editing and oral communications skills;
- Fluency in English.
iii. Professional Experience

- Extensive experience in international trade and Customs procedures, Customs digitalization, knowledge of origin certification, verification, and Customs declaration and clearance as well as international best practices in the area of Rules of Origin is essential;
- Proven experience in origin determination, origin certification, and origin verifications.
- Proven experience in undertaking business analysis and data harmonization.
- At least ten (10) years of work experience in rules of origin, Customs procedures, trade in goods, etc.;
- Experience in developing analytical reports and studies; and
- Relevant working experience in Customs would be considered an asset.

4. DURATION, PAYMENT AND LOCATION

i. Commencement date and Duration

The tentative commencement date is **23 October 2023** and the period of execution of the contract will be maximum **60 calendar days from the date of commencement, with an estimated total of 20 working days.**

**Suggested Milestones and Submission Dates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestone/Output</th>
<th>Due date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Briefing meeting with WCO</td>
<td>By signature of the contract</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. First draft of the Business Process Model for interconnectivity for certificates of origin in MS Visio’s UML format and harmonized CO dataset</td>
<td>7 November 2023</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Final draft the Business Process Model for interconnectivity for certificates of origin in MS Word format and harmonized CO dataset</td>
<td>24 November 2023</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Presentation of the final report on the assignment providing an overview of the activities undertaken and the results achieved</td>
<td>10 December 2023</td>
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ii. Payment

The daily rate is five hundred euros (€ 500) per day.

Payment will be made upon satisfactory completion and submission of outputs/deliverables as per the timeline above, corresponding to an estimated total of 20 working days.

The expert(s) is/are solely responsible to apply and pay any applicable tax in relation to the agreement, and it is their responsibility to declare and pay the relevant taxes. The expert(s) should have a duly incorporated, organized and validly existing company/registration under the laws of their home country.

iii. Location

All working days can be delivered remotely.
5. APPLICATION PROCESS

Interested candidates are invited to submit their applications to the World Customs Organization (EU-WCO RoO-Africa Programme) by e-mail ori@wcoomd.org by 12 October 2023.