## GLOBAL CHALLENGES OF SYNTHETIC DRUG TRAFFICKING

- The emergence and trafficking of illicit synthetic drugs is a global phenomenon that affects all regions of the world. Both the manufacture and use of these drugs continue to expand.
- Synthesis laboratories can be set up anywhere. The precursor chemicals required for production are inexpensive and readily available. Production is cheaper, quicker and more versatile than for plant-based drugs and is increasingly attractive to organized criminal groups.
- Just a few grams of a synthetic opioid can produce thousands of doses. Microscopic quantities are easy to conceal and send by post.
- The infiltration of trade and e-commerce supply chains puts legitimate business and economic activity at a disadvantage.

## THE WCO DRUGS AND PRECURSORS PROGRAMME

The Synthetic Drugs Detection Project (SDDP) falls under the WCO Drugs and Precursors Programme.

Illicitly produced synthetic drugs threaten the health, security and wellbeing of people and societies around the world, jeopardizing the economic development of States. Trafficking is inevitably connected to other illegal activities, while the proceeds are utilized by organized criminal groups potentially linked to terrorist organizations.

The WCO Drugs and Precursors Programme combats global illegal trade by targeting the cultivation, production, distribution and sale of all substances subject to drug restriction and prohibition laws.

WCO | DRUGS AND PRECURSORS PROGRAMME

**FIND OUT MORE**

Visit wcoomd.org

Contact sddp@wcoomd.org

World Customs Organization

# Synthetic Drugs Detection Project

World Customs Organization

DoS INL

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Funded by

DoS INL

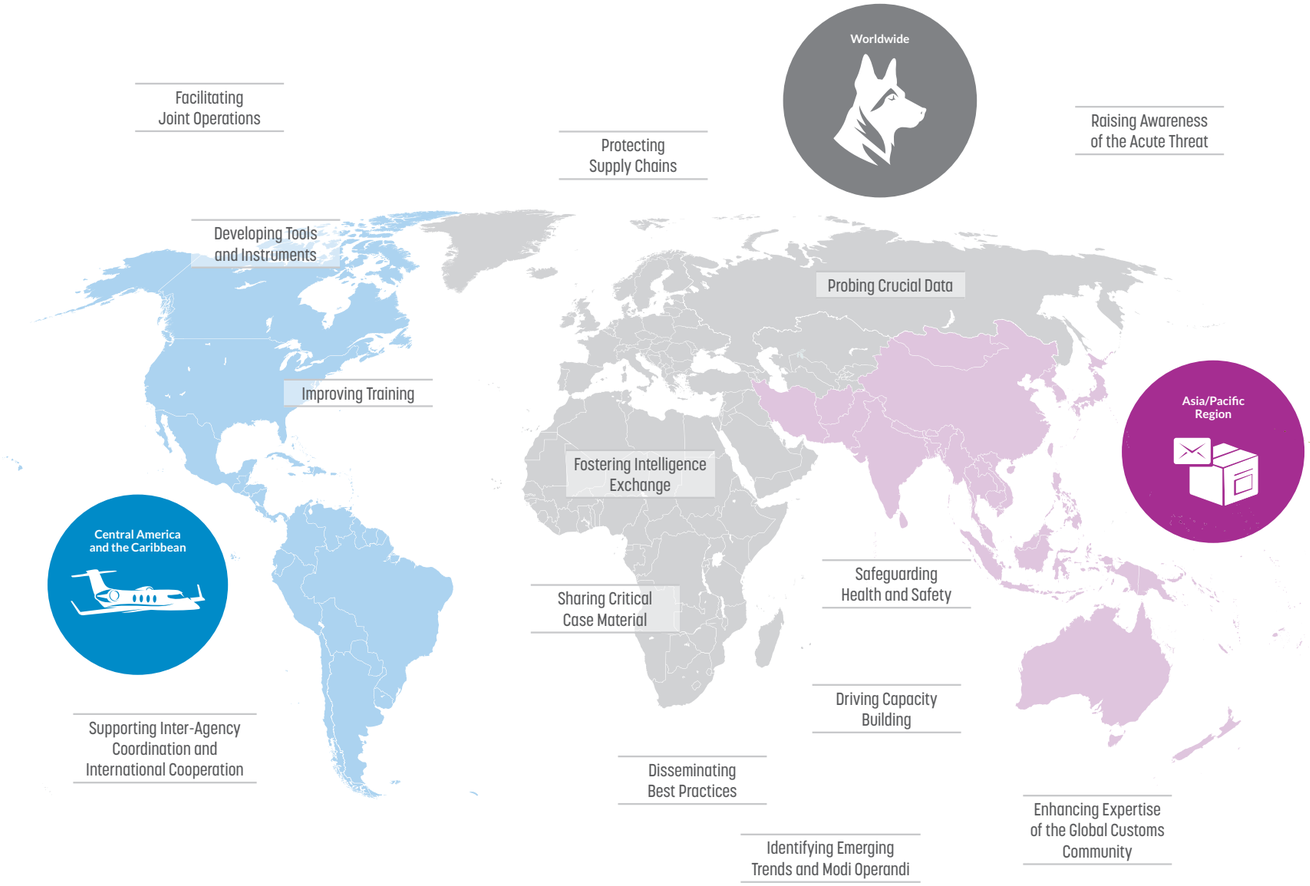
# STATUS OF THE THREAT

**PROLIFERATING**
Over 1,000 new psychoactive substances have emerged on illicit drug markets in recent years and new compounds continue to appear.

**DEADLIER**
Synthetic drugs are often engineered to increase potency. Potentially lethal substances of unfamiliar pharmacology can be cut into traditional narcotics and other products, thereby posing a grave risk for society and public safety.

**SUPRANATIONAL**
Dark web anonymity, international digital platforms and transnational crime syndicates necessitate international cooperation.

# PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION
## Stepping Up Controls to Combat Synthetic Drug Trafficking




# AN INNOVATIVE PROJECT
## With three Key Components in Targeted Regions

**GENERAL AVIATION (GA)** – Central America and the Caribbean
- Tackling the multiple vulnerabilities of GA in order to curb mass synthetic drug trafficking.
- Fostering inter-agency coordination and international cooperation.
- Embedding collaboration and interaction in an enduring approach.

**MAIL CHANNEL** – Asia/Pacific Region – WCO-UPU-INCB joint effort
- Boosting detection capacities to pinpoint trafficking within the ever-rising tide of postal and e-commerce items.
- Bringing together Customs, Postal and Narcotics expertise during tailored workshops.
- Fostering sustained coordination between Postal and Customs officials.

**CANINE FORCES** – Global
- Strengthening the capacity of Customs canine forces to detect synthetic drugs.
- Sharing expertise and experience from teams at the vanguard of canine detection.
- Updating and upgrading canine detection capabilities.

# A WCO INITIATIVE

DoS INL

Funded by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL)

The SDDP is being implemented as part of the WCO Strategic Plan: *"Protect society, public health and safety and contribute to combating crime and terrorism"* (Compliance and Enforcement Package), and in accordance with the role of Customs in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the United Nations in 2015, in particular SDG 16: *Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.*