



COORDINATED BORDER MANAGEMENT

Single Window: WCO Reform and Modernization – Monitoring Activities and Projects (RAM-MAP) and Single Window Interactive Map (SWIM) - Progress report -

(Item II. b) on the Agenda)

Background

1. In late 2016, the WCO initiated a project to build an interactive repository of information on capacity building activities and Single Window environments, replacing an earlier initiative which was originally named Project Map. RAM-MAP/SWIM is a joint project of the Compliance and Facilitation and Capacity Building Directorates. It has been supported since the start of implementation by the Customs Cooperation Fund Korea.
2. This paper provides information on four main Maps: International Conventions; Reform and Modernization – Monitoring Activities and Projects (RAM-MAP); News Feed (Crawlers); and Single Window Interactive Map (SWIM) – Trade Facilitation Measures. There is also a Countries Map, but this will not be covered since it generally gives only a few lines of information, and more can be obtained by accessing the links provided for each country. The concept behind the Maps is that each will complement the others with relevant information on WCO and stakeholder activities, on progress which countries are making regarding trade facilitation, and on the international legal environment.
3. The business need for such a platform was to address issues of transparency and provide WCO Members with up-to-date information on WCO capacity building activities, reform and modernization. Later on, due to continued demand from Members, it was expanded to include the need to provide donor organizations with clear and up-to-date information regarding Customs administrations' progress on modernization. Single Window implementation has been a consistent part of Customs'

strategic modernization plans for the last thirty years or more. Implementation of Single Window systems impacts almost all areas of the cross-border environment and has a direct effect on almost every aspect of Customs business, including almost all procedures, processes, information flows, commodities, modes of transport and passenger flows. The complexity of Single Window environments thus calls for consistent collaborative efforts with all Cross-Border Regulatory Agencies to deliver sophisticated, added value e-services to the private as well as to the public sector. Consequently, the maturity of Single Window systems may also be considered an indicator of progress regarding Customs administrations' modernization efforts. Up-to-date information on each Member's Single Window environments, system features and capabilities and e-services has therefore been part of the project's development from the start. The Single Window Interactive Map will make available all the information on Single Window environments which has been provided by Members.

Short description of upcoming functionalities for International Conventions

4. The business need is to provide up-to-date information on WCO Members involved in international conventions which have, or can have, an impact on the cross-border movement of goods, modes of transport and people. The Conventions Map will provide a short description of the conventions, annexes, the area that is impacting the cross-border environment, Customs processes, and of the countries concerned. The Map will display countries and their corresponding status (e.g. acceded, ratified, part of annex). This approach will provide a clear overview of the region and of neighbouring countries, and show the possible positive impact of conventions – and potential challenges – in terms of the smooth flow of international transactions.
5. The Conventions Map will also provide simple and succinct information on WCO tools designed or able to support implementation of these conventions. As a complement, the RAM-MAP will provide information on conventions-related WCO activities, whether these are at international level and involve other stakeholders, or relate to implementation of a specific convention or annex.
6. The Conventions Map is a transverse tool, i.e. it will provide information not only on international conventions with a global reach, but also on regional integration processes. These include ASEAN Single Window and associated countries, EU DGs' Single Window projects, EFTA agreements, plus any other regional project and the countries involved. The information will cover a description of the specific project and of the regional agreement which (potentially) impacts at regional level on the cross-border movement of goods, where information flow is an integral part.

Short description of currently available and upcoming relevant functionalities of the RAM-MAP

7. As mentioned above, the RAM-MAP aims to provide Members with up-to-date information on historic, planned and ongoing capacity building activities, including technical assistance, WCO Secretariat activities involving other international stakeholders, and forums and conferences where WCO contributes. As the project progresses, it is envisaged that it will provide end-to-end visibility of these activities. Accordingly, it follows the logical flow of capacity building activities: collection of information on needs, planning, delivery, evaluation, and monitoring. Capacity building activities may originate from various sources, such as diagnostics, the Mercator Programme or donor coordination. However, the primary source is the annual "Needs Assessment" which the WCO Secretariat gathers from each Member. End-to-end principles envisage the collection of Members' needs by electronic means, in a user-friendly interface. The electronic submission of "Needs Assessment" will enable

Members, and possibly donors as well, to choose between two options: electronic or paper-based. This innovative approach will enable there to be a structured historic database for Members, making it possible to check previous data submitted and make any amendments within a dedicated timeframe. Members may also circulate in their administrations a template XML for subsequent upload to the system. The WCO Secretariat will also benefit by having an additional tool for analysis (especially Regional Development Managers), which will speed up response times in the Capacity Building Directorate as a whole. Once planned testing of electronic collection is carried out in 2020 by the Capacity Building Director, the WCO Secretariat will enable full-scale implementation and collection for all Members.

8. The information provided by the RAM-MAP will be accessible to users with different access policies and levels of information. Any user, including users who are not logged in, will have access to titles of WCO capacity building activities. Members, delegates and experts, as registered users on the WCO Members webpage, will have automatic access to the RAM-MAP and be able to view a wider range of information, such as event documents, event presentations and event images that have been uploaded by the WCO Secretariat and/or by the publisher (Member contact point).
9. As delegates may be aware, all WCO activities, national/regional workshops, training, etc. involve evaluation (unless there are confidentiality issues concerning technical assistance on enforcement and security). The evaluation forms collected by experts, regional training centres and local organizers have so far all been paper-based, which makes analysis challenging for managers in the WCO Secretariat. Upgrading the RAM-MAP will introduce a new approach, with extensive automation not only of development/feedback, but also of data analysis. Automation of tasks will help internal WCO users, facilitating their preparations, while Members will receive a link for user-friendly data input (initially, by email only), which can be used on any mobile device. All standardized parts of the evaluation form will enable unprecedented analysis and data download by region, country and topic, as well as by experts' performance.

Currently available functionalities of News Feed (Crawlers)

10. The News Feed Map is designed to bring together information from Members' Customs administrations, from Single Window platforms, and from other international stakeholders' websites, on progress in building a Single Window environment. It will also provide information on the progress of regional programmes and on implementation of any other trade facilitation measures. The News Feed Map will complement the SWIM-TFM, which is dedicated specifically to accurate information on Single Window environments and overall trade facilitation measures at national or cross-border level. The News Feed Map will be accessible to all users of the online platform.

Short description of currently available and upcoming functionalities of the SWIM-TFM

11. Currently, information on trade facilitation efforts and implementation of Single Window systems is split across many publications by different international stakeholders. By the time a publication is available, new Single Window systems are being implemented, or current ones have onboarded new agencies, added new e-services or developed new features. In addition, a quick scan of the different publications, using different criteria, may give rise to discrepancies in information from one publication to another.

12. The SWIM-TFM will address the challenges in finding a holistic yet clearly structured, up-to-date database of all Single Window environments or projects involving the implementation of Single Window solutions. The platform will be updated by direct input from the WCO Secretariat; any Member who has given publisher (contact point) details to the Secretariat will also be able to directly update information.
13. The SWIM-TFM will enable any user, including users who are not logged in, to access the information by clicking on a country on the Map. The SWIM provides information about multifaceted aspects of Single Window environments. Current categories of information are: “General Information”, “Participating Governmental Agencies/Other Agencies”, “Information Services”, “Checkpoint Services”, “Services for Cargo Operations”, and “Other Features/Services”. The information covered includes: status of maturity of a SW environment, lead agency, operator of the system, address of the website of the platform, repository of agencies (if available), regulatory requests for import/export and transit, duties, fees, calculating capability, and tracking services. A full list of types of information can be found in the Annex to this document. The categories of information, and e-services or business processes under each category, are based on the “taxonomy of services” in the WCO Single Window Compendium “Building a Single Window Environment”, and on Members’ suggestions. However, the list of categories and types of information is not exhaustive and should be expanded further to cover all possible services provided by a SW platform, including B2B services. The next meeting of the Information Management Sub-Committee (IMSC) in November may discuss some additional e-services and features of a SW system for inclusion in the SWIM. Members’ suggestions are welcome.
14. The forthcoming planned upgrade of the SWIM-TFM may also include information on implementation of trade facilitation measures. Member publishers and the WCO Secretariat would be able to upload any pertinent documents or case studies which they are willing to share and which describe in detail the implementation of a trade facilitation measure, SW e-service, or other service.
15. The information available in the current version of the system derives from the June 2016 WCO survey on a Single Window environment. At the time, feedback was received from more than 50 Members, and information published on the Single Window environments of 40 Members. As stated earlier, the platform is undergoing a full-scale upgrade to make it more user-friendly and to solve some persistent technical challenges related to interoperability with other WCO systems, websites and the open-source data capturing mechanism. The upgraded system, in pilot testing format with full functionalities, will be available to present to PTC delegates. The final delivery of the product is planned for 29 November 2019.

Preliminary results of the Single Window (SW) survey

16. The WCO Secretariat, based on guidance from the 75th Meeting of the IMSC, developed another survey which it sent to Members in May 2019, with a view to updating information on the upgraded SWIM platform. The deadline was extended to 15 September 2019. Feedback has been received from more than 85 Members. Some of the preliminary information from the survey is presented below for Members to read. All the information will be uploaded on the SWIM as soon as all inputs are available. The platform is designed to enable publishers to have easy access, and Members can increasingly take ownership of relevant updates. The platform notifies of the latest update performed on a dedicated SWIM-TFM page for Members. The role of the WCO Secretariat will merely be that of website administrator.
17. Once collection of feedback from the SW survey has been finalized and the available data consolidated, a study report will be published to summarize the current state of play and provide a comparative analysis of National Single Windows. The

document will focus the SW business models, persistent challenges, efficiencies of governance structures, different and new approaches for the Single Window Maturity Models, typologies of SW architectural systems, interoperability challenges on national level with legacy systems of public and private sector as well on international level, regional SW approaches, legal enablers. Another relevant area that will be addressed within the report is the eventual opportunities, pros and cons of new technologies, their scalability in the cross border environment and especially in the Single Window environment.

18. The survey is aimed at collecting relevant information on regulatory services, business processes and other features included in Members' Single Window environments and/or Automated Clearance Processing environments. The survey is based on "Explanatory Notes" developed for Single Window Interactive Map, following Members' suggestion (Annex I, to this document). Additional questions have been added to the original "Explanatory Notes" of SWIM to fully capture related aspects, and to gather relevant information for further elaboration/analysis and for potential inclusion in a possible update of the SW Compendium. The added elements will also be considered for inclusion in the upgraded online platform.
19. In order to facilitate the submission of information, the survey has been provided in three languages (English, French and Spanish), with online, electronic and hard copy versions distributed to Members.
20. Figures 1, 2 and 3 below show selected preliminary findings. They provide general information on automation of processes, maturity of a SW environment, and lead agency.

Figure 1

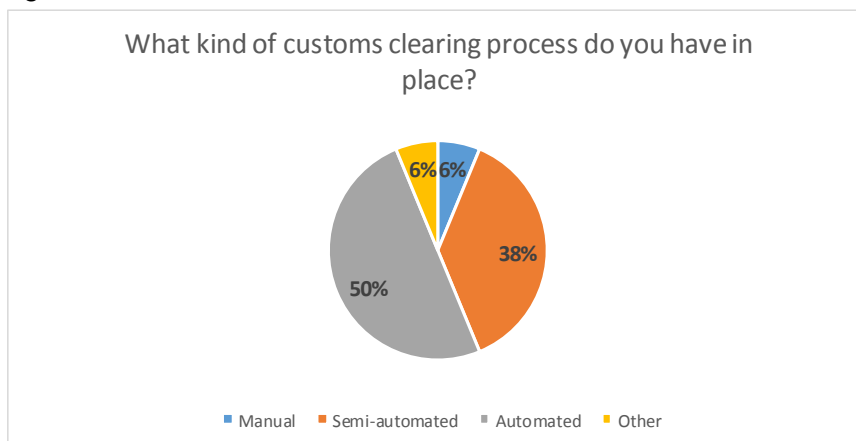


Figure 2

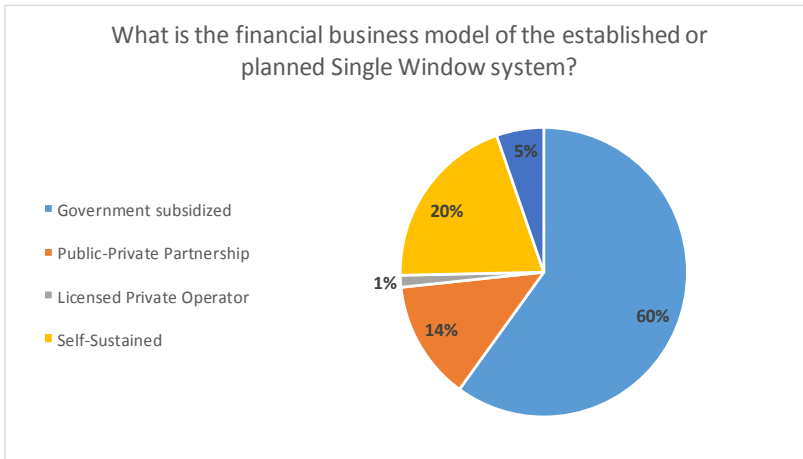
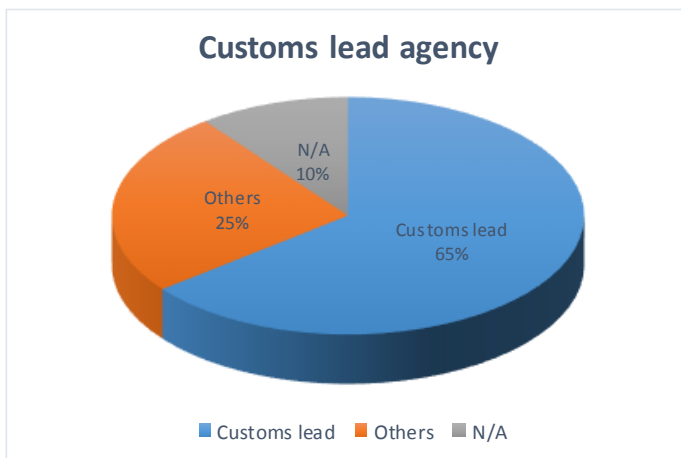


Figure 3



Actions required

21. The PTC is invited to:

- take note of the progress made and the live demonstration of the upgraded RAM-MAP/SWIM platform;
- provide possible input and suggestions for future development of the platform;
- provide suggestions on promoting the platform and making it a useful tool for Member administrations; and
- discuss possible Single Window services or features of the system that can be part of future updates of the SWIM.