



WCO WORKING GROUP
ON THE WTO TRADE
FACILITATION
AGREEMENT
INCLUDING THE JOINT
SESSION WITH THE 11TH
MEETING OF THE
CAPACITY BUILDING
COMMITTEE
-
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-
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Brussels, 06 February 2020.

**SINGLE WINDOW AND TRADE FACILITATION: REPORT ON RESEARCH FINDINGS AND
RELATED INNOVATIONS**

a) Study Report on Single Window: Current state of play

**b) “Reform and Modernization – Monitoring Activities and Projects” (RAM-MAP) and
“Single Window Interactive Map” (SWIM)**

(Item VI on the Agenda)

I. Background

1. The WCO Secretariat has written a draft Study Report on the Single Window (SW) and Automated Clearance Processing environments in Members’ national economies. The Report is based on the WCO SW Survey 2019. Feedback was received from 106 Members. The scope of the SW Survey was to update the upgraded version of the RAM-MAP/SWIM platform. An overview of the Study Report is provided below under sub-item (a). However, taking into consideration the substantial data from the Survey, current technological innovations shaping some key features of the cross-border environment, as well as recent developments in the international cross-border legal environment, additional analysis is required to clearly outline the features and the evolution of Single Window solutions. This analysis will serve as the basis for further refining the WCO Single Window Maturity Model. The document will be presented at next autumn’s PTC meeting for endorsement. The current state of play of the Single Window environment in Members’ administrations is presented in Annex II.
2. The Secretariat recently launched an upgrade of the RAM-MAP/SWIM platform. This is an innovative and breakthrough solution by the WCO and is designed to provide WCO Members with up-to-date data on WCO activities; to facilitate interaction between

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WCO Members, the Secretariat and the WCO regional bodies; and, to provide up-to-date data on Members' achievements on facilitated trade procedures, focusing on Article 10.4 of the WTO TFA. The latter relates to the building of Single Window environments, which have a significant impact on the efficiencies of national economies and cross-border trade.

3. Last but not least, the RAM-MAP/SWIM's available and upcoming features digitize several internal standard operating procedures, which will have a direct positive impact on WCO deliverables overall. Below, under sub-item (b), is a short description of current functionalities of the newly launched platform. The Secretariat will give a live demonstration during the upcoming joint session of the TFAWG-CBC. The Project has been supported since its inception by the Customs Cooperation Fund Korea.

a) Study Report on Single Window: Current state of play

4. The Survey aimed to collect relevant information on regulatory services, business processes and other features included in Members' Single Window environments and/or Automated Clearance Processing environments (see Annex I, "Explanatory Notes"). All the available information was uploaded onto the SWIM. In order to ensure that the SWIM is continuously updated, the contact points granted "publisher" access can validate and/or update the uploaded information, as well as upload any pertinent documents and case studies.
5. The Secretariat has used the information collected to develop a Study Report as well, which is available at Annex II to this document. The outcome of the Survey may also be useful in clearly detailing the features of a Single Window environment and its evolution by further refining the WCO Single Window Maturity Model. The work proposed to develop a refined approach to the SW Maturity Model will take into account emerging SW business models, persistent challenges, efficiencies of governance structures, the typologies of SW architectural systems, interoperability challenges on a national level with legacy systems of the public and private sector, interoperability challenges on a regional and international level, as well as legal enablers. Other areas that will be included are opportunities, pros and cons of new technologies, and their scalability for the cross-border and Single Window environments.

b) RAM-MAP/SWIM

6. 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 and reform and modernization activities. This paper provides information on four main Maps: International Conventions; Reform and Modernization – Monitoring Activities and Projects (RAM-MAP); News Feed; and Single Window Interactive Map (SWIM) – Trade Facilitation Measures. The concept behind the Maps is that each will complement the others with relevant information on WCO and stakeholder activities, progress that Members are making regarding trade facilitation, and on the international legal environment.
7. More information maps, such as Convention Maps, Single Window Interactive Maps and News Feed Maps, have been integrated in the Project, based on Members' requests, as well as the need to provide donor organizations with clear and up-to-date information regarding Customs administrations' progress on modernization.

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

WCO Global Activities

8. A dedicated Map provides Members with up-to-date information on historic, ongoing and planned capacity building activities, including technical assistance, WCO Secretariat activities involving other international stakeholders, forums, conferences and working groups where the 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.
9. 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, if registered on the WCO Members webpage, will have automatic access to the RAM-MAP after the first log in, or if directly registered on RAMMAP-SWIM, will have access to a wider range of information, such as event documents, event presentations and event images that have been uploaded by the WCO Secretariat, WCO regional bodies and/or by publishers (Member contact points).

e-Needs Assessment

10. The electronic submission of a “Needs Assessment”, which is being piloted in financial year July 2020 to June 2021, will enable WCO Members, and possibly donors as well, to have the additional option of choosing between electronic or paper-based submission. This will make it possible to check previously submitted data and make amendments within a dedicated timeframe. Members willing to pilot an additional functionality of the RAM-MAP/SWIM platform have been enabled to collect the needs from the other departments of their administrations, verify, consolidate and eventually validate the needs, based on their internal approval procedures. ROCB contacts (especially Regional Development Managers) and the WCO Secretariat will also benefit by having an additional tool for analysis, which will speed up response times in the Capacity Building Directorate as a whole.

e-Evaluation Forms

11. 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.

Short description of the SWIM-TFM Map and upcoming functionalities

12. 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.
13. 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 and/or any Member registered as a contact point (publisher) on the platform.
14. The SWIM-TFM will enable any user, including users who are not logged in, to access the information 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 Annex II to this document. 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.

International legal instruments: Conventions Map

15. The Conventions Map provides up-to-date information on WCO Members involved in international conventions – whether on a bilateral, regional or global level – which have, or can have, an impact on the cross-border movement of goods, modes of transport and people. The Conventions Map provides 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 may also provide simple and succinct information on WCO tools designed or able to support implementation of these conventions. 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. Considering the large number of international legal instruments, new maps will be identified and added as well, based on Members’ suggestions.

Currently available functionalities of News Feed (Crawlers)

16. 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 and on any relevant news generally that may have an impact on cross-border trade. 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.

II. Action required

17. The delegates at this meeting are invited to:
- take note of the information on the latest WCO initiatives in the area of the SW and RAM-MAP/SWIM;
 - offer any further suggestions on how to promote the platform's use and provide added value services for Members; and,
 - take note of the findings from the Study Report and provide any potential guidance, with particular reference to the need to correspondingly revise the SW Maturity Model to enable Members to clearly identify and assess the maturity of a Single Window environment.
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