

GREEN CUSTOMS ACTION PLAN¹

Short-term objective (end of financial year 2022-2023)

The WCO develops its thinking on Green Customs through a dedicated Action Plan.

Medium-term objective (Strategic Plan 2022-2025)

The WCO implements its Green Customs Action Plan.

Long-term vision

The **“Green Customs” focus area in the Strategic Plan 2022-2025 has been transformative for the WCO and its Members.**

Green Customs has become common practice, and the measures taken by the WCO and its Members are framed in the context of the related United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

At the WCO, Members **have shared information** on how they developed their Green Customs policies, and the Green Customs agenda has been developed in an **inclusive way**, respecting the different pace followed by the Members, providing capacity building where needed, and defining ambitious but realistic goals.

On the international stage, the WCO is facilitating the global transition to green trade and reducing its own environmental footprint.

At the national level, Customs administrations are now key players in national environment policy.

Definition of “Green Customs”

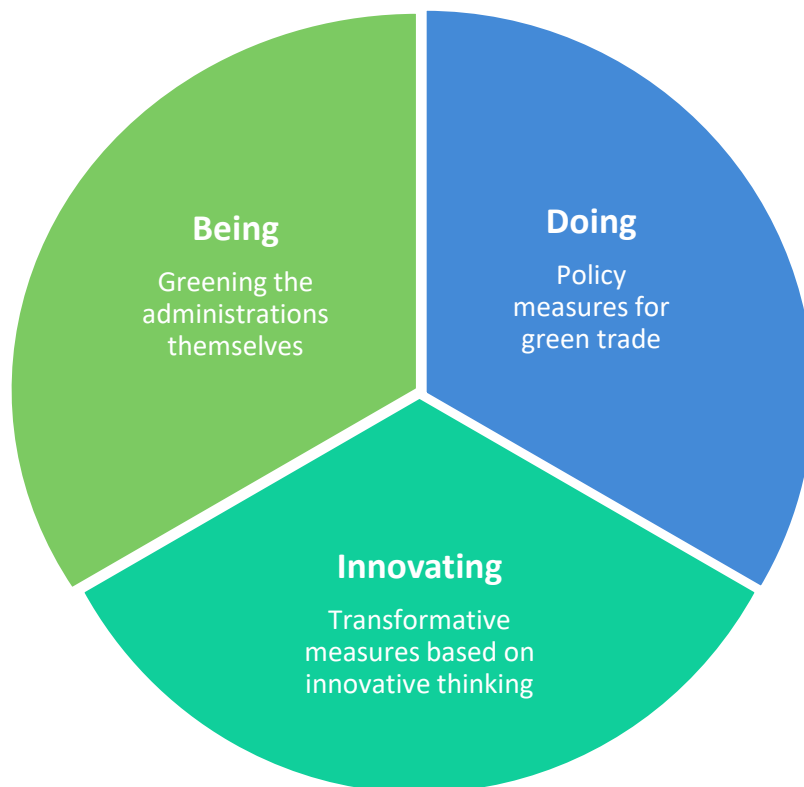
Green Customs refers to the measures that Customs administrations can take or develop to reduce their own environmental footprint (“being”), to protect the environment and facilitate green trade (“doing”), and to test transformative ideas towards sustainability excellence (“innovating”), and by doing so drive progress on the related United Nations Sustainable Development Goals².

¹ The Green Customs Action Plan was endorsed by the 88th Session of the Policy Commission and 141st/142nd Session of the Council. It is to be considered as a living document which will be regularly updated and will include additional activities based on the future plans defined by the Secretariat in cooperation with Members.

² <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

The building blocks of Green Customs

Figure 1: Building blocks of Green Customs



“**Being**” concerns measures to green the Customs administrations themselves.

“**Doing**” concerns Customs measures to green trade.

“**Innovating**” concerns innovative thinking and transformative measures in Customs. The measures to foster innovative thinking should be seen as immediate actions with a long-term result or impact. Part of those measures can be pilot projects. This is crucial to direct attention and resources to the needs of the (near) future.

To successfully implement the measures in each building block it is crucial **to educate staff** about reducing their environmental footprint, **train staff and trade** with respect to the policy measures in place to green trade, and provide guidance for the **cultural change** necessary for the green transition.

Overview of the Green Customs Action Plan (GCAP)

Being

- Carrying out a stocktake of practices
- KPIs and tools to measure environmental performance
- Capacity building to green the Customs administrations themselves
- Guide to educate staff on how everyone's contribution counts
- Familiarize Customs officials with the principles of sound environmental management

Doing

- Carrying out a stocktake of measures to green trade
- Greening WCO tools
- Incorporating green objectives in the work programmes of WCO working bodies
- Raise awareness of the circular economy, waste, IPR, and improve the related capabilities
- Enhance collaboration with other regulatory agencies
- Foster regional cooperation
- Joint operations
- Promote the use of the WCO Customs Enforcement Network (CEN)

Innovating

- Collect experiences in implementing green disruptive technology and innovative working methods to promote intelligence-led cooperation
- Study on Circular Economy and the implications for Customs administrations
- Research workshop on Customs and the environment to prepare for COP28
- Explore key topics in partnership with academia
- Share experiences on the impact on Customs of implementing mechanisms to reduce carbon leakage

| No | Strategic objective | | Area/Topic | Objective | Actions | Building Blocks | Timeframe | KPI |
|--------|---------------------|-----|----------------------------------|--|---|-----------------|-----------|--|
| GCAP-1 | SO1 | SO2 | Performance measurement | To assess Customs performance in green matters | Develop Green Customs KPIs to measure the current performance and progress of the environmental footprint reduction, for inclusion in further versions of the Performance Measurement Mechanism | Being | Long term | Usage of this PMM KPI by Members |
| | SO3 | SO4 | | | | | | |
| GCAP-2 | SO4 | | Greening Customs administrations | To assess Customs performance in green matters | Develop, together with Members, understanding and guidance on performance in green matters in order to identify common parameters that could lead to the creation of a Green Customs assessment tool (similar to the GEOAT) for self-assessment (depending on available funding and resources) | Being | Long term | Green Customs assessment tool presented at the CBD, EC and PTC |
| GCAP-3 | | | Greening Customs administrations | Enhance knowledge of measures to reduce the Customs environmental footprint | Carry out a stocktaking exercise: collect good practices and draft a catalogue of Customs measures taken to reduce the Customs environmental footprint (depending on available funding and resources) | Being | Long term | Catalogue of measures to green trade presented at the PTC |
| GCAP-4 | | | Greening Customs administrations | Raise awareness of staff on how everyone's contribution counts towards reducing the carbon footprint | Draft a guide on how everyone's contribution counts towards reducing the carbon footprint of the administration (depending on available funding and resources) | Being | Long term | Guide presented at the CBD/PC |

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|--------|---------------------|-----|--------------------------|---|--|--|------------|---|
| GCAP-5 | SO1 | | Waste | Enhance knowledge of the issues related to waste management and the potential responses to be made by Customs | Undertake Business Process Mapping of transboundary movement of waste with Members to harmonize the most relevant processes in the context of CBM and Single Window implementation | Doing | Short term | Harmonized Business Process Mapping presented to the PTC and EC, and the updated CBM Compendium endorsed |
| GCAP-6 | | | | | Develop specific GNC Utility Blocks for transboundary movement of waste | Doing | Short term | Presentation (s) on UBs delivered to the PTC and EC |
| GCAP-7 | | | | | SO3 | Develop standard operating procedures (SOPs) for waste consignments, including SOPs on safety, storage and handling of hazardous waste | Doing | Short term |
| GCAP-8 | SO1 | | Environmental compliance | Enhance collaboration with other regulatory agencies | Discuss potential guidelines/tools to enhance collaboration with other regulatory agencies to ensure environmental compliance under Pillar III of the SAFE FoS | Doing | Short term | Potential guidelines/tools on enhancing collaboration with other regulatory agencies to ensure environmental compliance discussed and endorsed by the PTC |
| GCAP-9 | SO1 | SO2 | | Enhance knowledge on the environmentally sensitive issues | Develop and update SOPs on ozone depleting substances for SADC and EAC countries (Sida project) | Doing | Short term | SOPs drafted |

| No | Strategic objective | | Area/Topic | Objective | Actions | Building Blocks | Timeframe | KPI |
|---------|---------------------|-----|--------------------------|---|--|--|--|---|
| | SO3 | SO4 | | | | | | |
| GCAP-10 | SO2 | | Greening WCO instruments | Provide forums for discussion on potential opportunities to Green the HS | - Follow on from the report to the March 2023 HSC on the outcomes and concepts raised in the Greening the HS Symposia series, further research into possible HS updates that facilitate Members implementing environmental policies - Submission of reports to the HSC, including potential areas of change for consideration | Doing | Continuous activity | HS updates to facilitate implementation of environmental policies and proposals for potential areas of change for consideration |
| GCAP-11 | | | | | Develop a report on the outcomes of the symposia, incorporating suggestions received during these sessions and issues (needs, problems, gaps and possibilities) identified within the symposia series, along with any discussions from the HSC that are able to be shared, and the Secretariat's observations on the symposia | Doing | Short term | Publication of the report |
| GCAP-12 | | | | Sensitize and familiarize Customs laboratory officials with environmentally sensitive substances | Update the Customs Laboratory Guide to include the list of environmentally sensitive substances controlled under certain conventions to enable Customs laboratories to better understand and control the substances. | Doing | Short term | Update the Customs Laboratory Guide |
| GCAP-13 | | | | Enhance the capability to store and treat samples and residues from Customs laboratories in an environmentally safe way | Update the Customs Laboratory Guide to include guidelines on environmentally safe storage and district of samples and residues from Customs laboratories. | Being | Short term | Update the Customs Laboratory Guide |
| GCAP-14 | | | | SO1 | SO2 | Incorporating greening objectives in every | Incorporating Green Customs policy initiatives into Work Programmes of WCO working bodies to ensure that | Doing |

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|---------|---------------------|-----|----------------|--|--|---|------------|--|--|
| | SO3 | SO4 | | WCO working body via the work programmes | they are addressed in both planning and operations of the WCO | | | | |
| GCAP-15 | SO3 | | | Enhance the knowledge of the circular economy and identify what the role of Customs could be in this context | Develop the Enforcement Handbook to enable Members to tackle environment issues and contribute to the goals of the circular economy | Doing | Short term | Handbook developed and presented to EC and Council | |
| GCAP-16 | | | | | Update the Enforcement Handbook to enable Members to tackle environment issues and contribute to the goals of the circular economy | Doing | Short term | Handbook finalized and presented to EC | |
| GCAP-17 | | | | IPR, Health and Safety | Raise awareness and familiarize Customs officials with the principles of sound environmental management | Develop Guidelines on “Environmentally safe storage and destruction of intellectual property infringing goods” | Being | Short term | Guidelines on “Environmentally safe storage and destruction of intellectual property infringing goods” adopted and published |
| GCAP-18 | SO1 | SO4 | Greening trade | Enhance knowledge of measures to green trade | Carry out a stocktaking exercise: collect good practices and draft a catalogue of Customs measures taken to green trade (depending on available funding and resources) | Doing | Long term | Catalogue of measures to green trade presented at the PTC | |
| GCAP-19 | SO1 | | Greening Trade | Enhance knowledge and capabilities with respect to measures to green trade | Develop guidelines on facilitation measures for return-refill containers and packaging (depending on available funding and resources) | Doing | Long term | Guidelines on facilitation measures for return-refill containers and packaging adopted | |
| GCAP-20 | SO1 | SO2 | SO3 | Waste | Foster regional cooperation on waste-related matters | Develop a Regional Joint Action Plan regarding border management of recyclable plastic materials and plastic waste within the framework of the Asia Pacific Plastic Waste Project | Doing | Short term | Regional Joint Action Plan taken note of by EC and Regional DG Meeting AP |

| No | Strategic objective | Area/Topic | Objective | Actions | Building Blocks | Timeframe | KPI | |
|---------|---------------------|------------|--|--|--|------------|---|--|
| GCAP-21 | | | | Organize a Regional Workshop on border management of recyclable plastic materials and plastic waste, within the framework of the Asia Pacific Plastic Waste Project | Doing | Short term | Organization of the Workshop | |
| GCAP-22 | SO2 | Origin | Enhance collaboration with other regulatory agencies | Include a specific session on origin and environmental issues in the programme of the next WCO Global Conference on Origin | Doing | Short term | Specific session on the place of rules of origin in the green transition during the WCO Global Conference on Origin | |
| GCAP-23 | SO3 | CBM | Conduct joint operations in key areas to streamline and improve the coordination of operational activities on the global and regional levels with Customs and other law enforcement partners | Prepare and implement an operation on wildlife trafficking | Doing | Short term | Operation and final report delivered | |
| GCAP-24 | | | | Prepare and implement an operation on environmentally sensitive commodities (in the same format as Operation DEMETER on waste and substances controlled under the Montreal Protocol) | Doing | | Operation and final report delivered | |
| GCAP-25 | SO1 | SO3 | Disruptive technologies | Intelligence-led enforcement cooperation | Collect experiences in implementing disruptive technology and innovative working methods to promote intelligence-led cooperation | Innovating | Long term | Discussion at the WCO Technology Conference |
| GCAP-26 | SO1 | SO2 | International cooperation | Share best practices internationally | Contribute to collective efforts in green matters through the sharing of best practices and integrate knowledge from other leading organizations | Doing | Continuous | Consideration of green matters in agreements and MoUs with other organizations |
| | SO3 | SO4 | | | | | | |

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|---------|---------------------|--|---|---|-----------------|------------|--|
| GCAP-27 | SO3 | Waste | Raise Members' awareness and capacities | Raise awareness and enhance Member capacities in the area of waste, in particular plastic waste, in the Asia Pacific Plastic Waste Project (APPWP) beneficiary countries | Doing | Short term | APPWP agreement deliverables |
| GCAP-28 | | | | Train the Trainer Inter-Regional Workshop for Sida project beneficiaries on the Basel Convention and Montreal Protocol Agreements | Doing | Short term | Sida project agreement deliverable |
| GCAP-29 | | Countering illegal wildlife trafficking and forest logging | | Raise awareness and enhance Member capacities in the area of countering illegal wildlife and forest logging through the INAMA and Sida projects. The Asian, Sub-Sahara African and South American regions are targeted for project engagements | Doing | Continuous | INAMA and Sida Projects agreement deliverables |
| GCAP-30 | | | | Raise awareness and enhance Member capacities in the area of countering Illicit Wildlife Trafficking through the ICCWC project with a focus on operational capacity-building, interagency cooperation and case preparation. Beneficiary countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, Southeast Asia and South America | Doing | | ICCWC Project agreement deliverables |
| GCAP-31 | | Hazardous substances and goods | | Capacity building for EAC and SADC countries on management of regulatory inspections of hazardous substances and goods under Customs control (Sida project) | Doing | Short term | Sida project agreement deliverable |
| GCAP-32 | | Ozone depleting substances | | Conduct capacity building support in prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of ozone depleting substances and/or waste trafficking | Doing | Short term | Capacity building support conducted |

| No | Strategic objective | Area/Topic | Objective | Actions | Building Blocks | Timeframe | KPI |
|---------|---------------------|--|---|---|-----------------|------------|---|
| GCAP-33 | SO3 | Customs exchange of information networks | | Promote the use of the WCO Customs exchange of information networks such as CENcomm and the RILOs to improve risk management for enforcing environmental legislation (depending on available funding and resources) | Doing | Continuous | Awareness raising and capacity building support conducted |
| GCAP-34 | SO4 | Greening Customs administrations | | Provide capacity building on greening the Customs administrations and trade based on the results of the Green Customs assessment tool and the PMM | Doing | Long term | Capacity building support conducted |
| GCAP-35 | SO4 SO2 | Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) | | Subject to funding, conduct workshops for Customs officials on identification of substances controlled by MEAs (wastes, ozone depleting substances, hazardous chemicals, CITES, etc.) | Being | Long term | Workshops delivered |
| GCAP-36 | ORG | Research | Conduct research on Green Customs matters | Research workshop on Customs and the environment to prepare for COP28 (subject to the recruitment of a new Technical Officer (TO) in the Research and Policy Unit) | Innovating | Short term | Organize and conduct the research workshop |
| GCAP-37 | SO1 SO2 SO3 SO4 | Circular economy | | Study on Circular Economy and the implications for Customs administrations | | Short term | Presentation of the study to the April 2023 PTC and PC |
| GCAP-38 | SO1 SO2 SO3 SO4 | Research | Conduct research on Green Customs matters | According to the outcomes of the Research workshop on Customs and the environment, agree on key topics to be further explored in order to adequately prepare Customs for their role in the future, in partnership with academia | Innovating | Long term | Research papers delivered on key topics |
| GCAP-39 | ORG | WCO influence | Position the WCO in international discussions | Prepare a WCO position (policy note) for COP28 (subject to the recruitment of a new TO in the Research and Policy Unit) | Doing | Short term | WCO Policy note for COP28 |

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|---------|---------------------|-----|---------------------|--------------------------------------|--|-----------------|-----------|--------------------------------------|
| GCAP-40 | SO1 | SO2 | Sharing experiences | Publication on Green Customs matters | Share experiences on the impact on Customs of implementing mechanisms to reduce carbon leakage and emissions from imported goods | Innovating | Long term | Publication in the WCO News Magazine |
| | SO3 | SO4 | | | | | | |
