

# **WCO Mercator Programme**

## ***A Strategic Initiative to Support Trade Facilitation***

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The World Customs Organization's (WCO) international instruments and tools are used worldwide by Customs administrations to better facilitate global trade. Moreover, the WCO delivers tailor-made technical assistance and capacity building to support Customs reform and modernization for an improved trade environment.

*Building on its substantial record, the WCO announces the launch of the WCO Mercator Programme to support implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA).*

### **About the Programme**

The WCO Mercator Programme is aimed at assisting governments worldwide to implement the TFA expeditiously and in a harmonized manner by using core WCO instruments and tools.

Of particular note is the WCO Revised Kyoto Convention on the simplification and harmonization of Customs procedures (RKC), which includes a full range of trade facilitation measures that form the basis for modern Customs operations. While the RKC is central to TFA implementation, many other WCO instruments and tools play a vital role in supporting enhanced trade facilitation.

With a wealth of expertise and experience in global Customs technical assistance and capacity building, including a network of accredited experts at its disposal and comprehensive donor engagement mechanisms, the WCO is fully equipped to comprehensively support TFA implementation.

The WCO Mercator Programme will also ensure connectivity at borders and along international trade supply chains in order to provide a consolidated platform for advancing the smooth flow of goods being traded around the world.

The WCO Working Group on the Trade Facilitation Agreement will serve as the Mercator Programme's support and monitoring vehicle.

### **Main Components**

- Extensive donor funding through the WCO Customs Co-operation Fund (CCF)
- Implementation of TFA using the WCO's international Customs instruments and tools
- Global network of Customs experts for in-country assistance
- Technical assistance and capacity building focused on needs assessment, strategic planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation
- Training of government officials and the private sector, including the use of WCO e-learning
- Awareness raising through regional workshops and outreach
- Evidence-based solutions and consideration of local conditions
- Use of performance measurement and results-based management
- Supporting stakeholder engagement at the National Committees on Trade Facilitation to ensure Coordinated Border Management and Customs-Business partnerships

## **Key Objectives**

- Support implementation of TFA provisions
- Ensure connectivity through the adoption of global standards
- Simultaneously enhance trade facilitation and revenue collection
- Promote trade facilitation, whilst ensuring compliance

## **Prime Benefits**

- Reduced trade costs and time
- Improved trade environment and expanded trade volumes
- Growth of national economies through enhanced economic competitiveness
- Increased Customs revenue collection

## **Core Instruments and Tools**

- Revised Kyoto Convention
- SAFE Framework of Standards, including Authorized Economic Operators (AEO)
- Time Release Study Guide
- Risk Management Compendium
- Post Clearance Audit Guidelines
- Single Window Compendium
- WCO Data Model
- Coordinated Border Management Compendium
- Transit Handbook
- Customs-Business Partnership/Engagement Guidance
- Capacity Building Strategy, including ownership approach
- Capacity Building Diagnostic Framework
- Performance Contracts Guide
- Leadership and Management Development and other Human Resource Programmes

## **TFA Implementation Guidance**

- An online Web resource
- Links all relevant WCO instruments and tools to the TFA

<http://www.wcoomd.org/en/topics/wco-implementing-the-wto-atf/atf.aspx>

## **A fast way forward**

The WCO Mercator Programme embodies the international Customs community's strong commitment to trade facilitation, in particular the implementation of the TFA following a structured and harmonized approach, using WCO instruments and tools as a fast way forward.

## **More Information**

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