

Regional Organizations Cooperation Mechanism for Trade Facilitation (ROC-TF) NEWSLETTER

IN FOCUS:

ADB - ESCAP Asia Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum 2013

The Asia Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum will be organized for the Fifth consecutive year on 10-11 September 2013 at the China International Electronic Commerce Centre (CIECC) in collaboration with ADB and CIECC. This year the Forum theme is "Towards more efficient and inclusive supply chains: public and private sector perspectives". This year, the Forum will begin its substantive discussion with a high level panel on the theme. The panel is expected to include a number of Ministers and Deputy Ministers, and representatives of private sector. The sessions will cover the following topics : trade logistics for inclusive development, integrating SMEs into international supply chains through trade finance, enabling supply chain integration using paperless trade and evolving national single window for efficient supply chains. Like every year, a multimedia exhibition will be organized in parallel with the Forum, participated by leading private sector service providers and international organizations. In addition, a number of back to back events will be organized including a study tour to Tianjin port.

For registering online, participating at the exhibition or more information about the Forum and side events, please visit: <http://www.unescap.org/tid/projects/tfforum13.asp>

ESCAP - WCO UNNExT Masterclass 2013: Implementing Single Window and Paperless Trade

The ESCAP-WCO UNNExT (United Nations Network of Experts for Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific) Masterclass is an intensive two-week capacity building programme intended to build the capacity of Governments to simplify trade procedures and implement paperless trade systems, including single window facilities. It is delivered by experts and practitioners with extensive experience on trade facilitation and paperless trade in English. Jointly organized by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the World Customs Organization (WCO), in collaboration with the Korea Customs Service (KCS), the Masterclass combines lectures with group discussions, hands-on use of paperless trade applications and field studies to maximize learning and interactions among course participants. Training will be delivered by a team of carefully selected senior UNNExT/WCO/KCS experts with practical experience in relevant area. Upon successful completion of the course, UNNExT certificates will be issued to the participants.

Dates: 7 – 18 October 2013

Venue: Customs Border Control Training Center, Korea Customs Service, Cheon-an, Republic of Korea
For more information please visit: <http://www.unescap.org/tid/unnext/mc2013.pdf>

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Regional Organizations Cooperation Mechanism for Trade Facilitation (ROC-TF): UPDATE

ROC-TF UPDATE

Regional Organizations Cooperation Mechanism for Trade Facilitation or ROC-TF, into its third year, is a cooperation mechanism for the sub-regional, regional, UN and other international organizations involved in Trade Facilitation activities in the Asia Pacific region. The overall goal of the mechanism is to facilitate exchange of information, identify synergies and collaborate for effective implementation of Trade Facilitation initiatives.

The mechanism was established following up on the explicit recommendation of the ESCAP Member States to the Secretariat in July 2011 to support the creation of a region-wide coordination mechanism, bringing together representatives of key regional organizations active in trade facilitation.

Since its inception in 2011, ROC-TF generated interest among international organizations to share more information about their activities, projects and knowledge products. As a result, participating organizations are now sharing a common 'calendar of events' related to trade facilitation. The calendar is only shared among ROC-TF participating organizations and updated every 2-3 months. ESCAP has received a (Guest) status to attend APEC SCCP (Sub committee on Customs Procedures) meetings. ADB is supporting organization of ROC-TF annual meetings every year. Furthermore, ESCAP is acting as secretariat of the mechanism and brings out a newsletter bi-annually. A number of organizations including Asian Development Bank (ADB), Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Secretariat, UNCTAD, the World Customs Organization (Regional Office for Asia-Pacific), the World Bank, the Asia-Pacific Center Council for Trade Facilitation and e-Business (AFACT), South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) are regular contributors to the newsletter.

The ROC-TF Annual Meeting 2013

The ROC-TF Annual Meeting will be organized on 9 September 2013 at the China International Electronic Commerce Centre (CIECC) in Beijing, immediately before the Asia Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum 2013. The meeting is expected to bring together many participating organizations, some of which have already confirmed their attendance. This year, the annual meeting will discuss updates of the mechanism, individual updates from the organizations on their activities related to trade facilitation and ways for further synergy and cooperation among the participating organizations. For more information about the event, please visit: <http://www.unescap.org/tid/projects/roctf2013.asp>

ECE-ESCAP Regional Workshop on Trade Facilitation Implementation Guide (TFIG)

In October 2012, UNECE launched its Trade Facilitation Implementation Guide (TFIG): a web-based and interactive tool to help countries better access global value chains, through easier and faster trade procedures. UNECE, in collaboration with ESCAP, will organize a regional workshop to disseminate the Guide in the Asia Pacific region on 18-22 November 2013 at the United Nations Conference Centre, Bangkok, Thailand during the Trade and Investment Week, organized by the Trade and Investment Division of ESCAP.

The workshop aims to train participants on how to use the Guide for Trade Facilitation reform efforts in their own country. It is also designed to stimulate the sharing of national practices and the discussion of opportunities for regional cooperation in Trade Facilitation areas covered in the Guide (Documents simplification and data harmonization, Single Window implementation, Consultation and cooperation for TF, Cross border management, etc.).

The workshop is expected to be participated by policy makers from Asia Pacific developing countries including ministries of commerce/trade, Customs, inspection agencies etc.

The guide is available online at: <http://www.unece.org/trade/tfig>.

More information about the event will be available at this webpage in a few weeks:

<http://www.unescap.org/tid/tiweek-home.asp>



PROJECT/ACTIVITY UPDATE

Selected project/activity update from ROC-TF organizations on Trade Facilitation

ADB – SASEC (South Asia Sub-regional Economic Cooperation): Trade Facilitation and Transport Working Group Workshop

Senior officials responsible for trade facilitation and Customs from the SASEC countries were joined by representatives from the Maldives and Sri Lanka for a 3-day SASEC trade facilitation workshop, and the inception meeting of the SASEC Customs Subgroup. Proceedings and discussion focused on



- Findings and next steps in the ADB-ESCAP Business Process Analysis study for SASEC region;
- Issues and challenges of trade facilitation in SASEC countries and development of SASEC regional trade facilitation road map;
- Information and experience sharing on Customs standards, international best practice on Customs administration and national electronic single window; SASEC Customs Subgroup terms of reference and Action Plan 2013–2015.

For more information: <http://sasec.asia/web/index.php/en/news-events/news/205-sasec-trade-facilitation-week>

ADB-SASEC Officials in TRS Training

39 participants from 23 Asia Pacific region Customs administrations attended this Time-Release Study (TRS) Workshop, organized by the World Customs Organization (WCO) and hosted by Japan Customs Cooperation Fund. Eight representatives attended from SASEC member countries. The workshop

- Introduced and discussed TRS concepts and application tools;
- Shared experience in TRS implementation;
- Drafted the process map; and
- Introduced WCO TRS software.

Participants from Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Nepal presented their national Customs procedures and process maps.

For more, see <http://sasec.asia/web/index.php/en/news-events/news/212-sasec-officials-attend-time-release-study-workshop>

Integrated Trade Facilitation "At the Border" and "Behind the Border": Reforms and Implementation, A Learning Opportunity for CAREC Decision Makers, Republic of Georgia: 10-13 April 2013



National Focal Points, customs officials, and representatives of border management agencies from CAREC countries participated in a program that highlighted Georgia's reforms to facilitate trade. Presenting the scope and impact of specific reforms adopted by Georgia aimed to serve as a demonstration effect of the potential value in CAREC countries of replicating some or all of the reforms.

Site visits to the Batumi Seaport and Customs Clearance Zone and the Sarpi Customs Border Crossing Point allowed participants to observe first-hand the impact of these reforms. At Sarpi, for example, participants observed how technology enables transparent and efficient customs procedures, minimizing the time required for goods to cross between Georgia and Turkey.



PROJECT/ACTIVITY UPDATE

Selected project/activity update from ROC-TF organizations on Trade Facilitation

Briefings by Georgian officials covered Georgia's Customs institutional reforms, border management strategy, and other integrated trade facilitation measures. Participants also shared experiences in similar reform initiatives by their respective governments during the discussions. Discussions highlighted the importance of technology to modernize customs and of measures to enhance transparency and integrity in the customs procedures.

The learning opportunity was organized jointly by CAREC Institute, the CAREC Secretariat, ADB's Resident Mission in Georgia, and the CAREC Trade Facilitation team, co-sponsored by the ADB Institute, and supported by experts from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, European Union-United Nations Development Program Border Management Programme in Central Asia, and the World Customs Organization as resource speakers.

For more information: <http://www.carecprogram.org/index.php?page=integrated-trade-facilitation-seminar-and-site-visits>

Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) of Asian Development Bank (ADB): Regional Improvement of Border Services Project in the Kyrgyz Republic and the Republic of Tajikistan

The project supports the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) Transport and Trade Facilitation Strategy, which aims to streamline transport, trade logistics, Customs, and other border control operations to increase cross-border trade in Central Asia. The envisaged impact of the project is accelerated trade growth within the CAREC region and with the rest of the world. The expected outcome is a faster, more predictable and cost-efficient cross-border transport and trade. The project outputs includes the (i) development of national single windows (NSWs) based on international standards and requirements to ensure regional interoperability and serve as an effective tool for harmonizing data and (ii) improvement of the physical infrastructure at the border crossing points (BCPs) along priority CAREC corridors in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan.

To maximize the benefits of NSWs, coverage should be extended to include cross-border electronic data exchange. Many CAREC governments—supported by business communities—are designing NSWs to accommodate eventual CAREC-wide interoperability. Two road BCPs have been selected under the project: the Karamyk in the Kyrgyz Republic and the Guliston in Tajikistan. The BCP selection is based on the governments' priority, their special significance for regional trade, complementary development on both sides of the border, and minimal safeguard impacts.

The project supports the construction and renovation of BCPs in cases where investments to upgrade complementary facilities on the other side of the border have been completed or are nearing completion. The benefits of good BCP infrastructure and NSWs can only be fully realized when countries on both sides of the border fund complementary investments, and border control agencies cooperate. As landlocked countries, the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan need to develop predictable and transparent trading environments, improve trade facilitation, and leverage more transit and international trade to increase competitiveness and sustain inclusive growth. By modernizing BCP infrastructure and developing electronic trade platforms like NSWs, they can improve the performance of CAREC corridors, minimize negative impacts of geographic isolation, foster more diverse economic activity, and realize their economic potential.

For more information: <http://www.adb.org/projects/documents/carec-regional-improvement-border-services-project-rrp>

For more information about ADB's Trade Facilitation activities, please contact, Mr. Shintaro Hamanaka (shamanaka@adb.org)



PROJECT/ACTIVITY UPDATE

Selected project/activity update from ROC-TF organizations on Trade Facilitation

APEC Workshop on Building and Enhancing FTA Negotiation Skills on E-commerce

The workshop on building and enhancing FTA (free trade agreements) negotiation skills related to electronic commerce was organized by APEC on 27-28 June 2013 in Medan, Indonesia. The meeting was opened by Mr. Nianlu Zhang, Secretary-General, APEC e-Commerce Business Alliance. A number of specific themes were discussed in the sessions including E-Commerce development in APEC region and FTA Negotiation on E-Commerce. Public and private sector perspectives were shared by respective stakeholders, followed by recommendations for future cooperation. The participants included senior officials from governments, UN and other international bodies, and representatives from private sector and academia.

UNCTAD: Strengthening Capacities of Developing Countries in Africa and Asia to Support Their Effective Participation in Negotiating Bilateral, Regional and Multilateral Trade Facilitation Arrangements

The project covers six landlocked and transit developing countries in East Africa and South Asia: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. It is to be executed from 2011 to 2013, in collaboration with the ECA, ESCAP, ECE and other regional and sub-regional organizations in Africa and Asia. The project is divided in national, regional and interregional phases.

In the national phase of the project in 2012, UNCTAD has assisted several countries in South Asia and East Africa in the elaboration of their National Trade Facilitation Implementation Plans. It has also trained over 300 Trade Facilitation (TF) stakeholders on the current measures being negotiated in the World Trade Organization.

The regional phase of the project has been launched and continue throughout 2013. The objective of this phase of the project is to provide a platform for countries to think about possible regional solutions to trade facilitation.

The following forums have been successfully organized:

- UNCTAD EAC Forum on Trade Facilitation, 22-26 April 2013 - The forum focused on single window and border agency cooperation. The event included a training provided by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe on the recently developed Trade Facilitation Implementation Guide and a technical visit to the brand new One Stop Border Post between Burundi and Rwanda.
- UNCTAD South Asian Forum on Trade Facilitation, 28-30 May 2013 - The forum, organized in cooperation with the Indian Center for WTO Studies, focused on transparency measures to encourage trade facilitation, risk management and expedited shipments. The event included a visit to the New Delhi's dry port.

Two follow up workshops will be organized this year in Arusha and Kathmandu. By the end of the year, an East Africa - South Asian Interregional Forum will be organised in Geneva. The aim of this event will be to create a platform for South-South exchange of good practices as well as continue the training activities already developed throughout the project.

For more information, please contact : Ms Arántzazu Sánchez Belastegui (Arantzazu.Sanchez@UNCTAD.org)



PROJECT/ACTIVITY UPDATE

Selected project/activity update from ROC-TF organizations on Trade Facilitation

Implementation of ESCAP Resolution 68/3: Enabling paperless trade and cross-border recognition of electronic data and documents

The ESCAP secretariat, with the support of UNNExT, has continued implementation of ESCAP Resolution 68/3. With successful delivery of a regional study on regional arrangements for the facilitation of cross-border paperless trade in February 2013, the secretariat organized expert review on findings of the regional study and proposed regional arrangement through two rounds of Expert Group Meeting over the period of March to May 2013, resulting in refinement of the proposed draft text of regional arrangement.

Based on the outcomes of expert review, the secretariat also moved towards member consultation, as mandated by the Resolution itself, by organizing three subregional meetings on development of regional arrangements for the facilitation of cross-border paperless trade in the month of July 2013: Southeast Asia on 9, South and South West Asia on 12, and East and North-East Asia on 24. The secretariat is organizing an Ad Hoc Meeting on Development of Regional Arrangements for the Facilitation of Cross-border paperless on 12 September 2013 in Beijing, China, back-to-back with the Asia Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum 2013, to maximize the participation of interested Member States in the development of the arrangements, in particular those member states that could not join one of three subregional meetings.

Based on the outcome of member consultation through three subregional meetings and the Ad Hoc Meeting, the secretariat will present the results on development of regional arrangements to the ESCAP Committee on Trade and Investment at its third session on 20-22 November 2013 for next step.

For more information, please contact Mr. Sang-Won Lim (lim6@un.org).

SATNET Asia Project: National Stakeholder Consultations for Agricultural Trade Facilitation in South and Southeast Asia



Participants at the National Stakeholder Consultation in Yangon, Myanmar, 7 May 2013

The Trade and Investment Division (TID) of United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (ESCAP) is co-implementing a project titled: Network for Knowledge Transfer on Sustainable Agriculture Technologies and Improved Market Linkages in South and Southeast Asia (SATNET Asia), funded by the European Union. The Trade Facilitation work package of the project aims at identifying trade facilitation measures that may particularly contribute to poverty reduction, promote intra-regional learning and building capacity of developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region to implement them. In order to identify the bottlenecks of trade processes and recommend a set of Trade Facilitation measures for agriculture or food products, TID has commissioned Business Process Analysis Studies in five South and Southeast Asian countries (Lao PDR, Bangladesh, Nepal, Cambodia and Myanmar) on export and import of agricultural or food products. In this context, five national

stakeholder consultations have been organized during February to May 2013 in Vientiane, Dhaka, Kathmandu, Phnom Penh and Yangon.



PROJECT/ACTIVITY UPDATE

Selected project/activity update from ROC-TF organizations on Trade Facilitation

The National Stakeholder Consultations provided an opportunity to share the findings of the studies, validate them and most importantly, identify few recommendations that will make trade processes more efficient for these and similar products. About 150 stakeholders from these countries participated in these events. Stakeholders included senior officials from ministries of commerce, agriculture, inspection agencies, quarantine offices, Customs, exporter or importer associations, sea or land port authorities, researchers and so on. There were several important comments and feedback by the participants based on which the studies are being revised currently.

The BPA study in Lao PDR analyzed export of maize to Thailand and import of wheat from China. For Bangladesh, it covered import procedures of wheat from India and export of jute bags to India. The study in Nepal examined the export procedures of cardamom and import of wheat from India. In Cambodia, export of maize and cassava to China was the topic of the study. Finally in Myanmar, export of rice to West Africa, mango to China and import of palm oil from Malaysia was analyzed. Some key recommendations emphasized during the national stakeholder consultations to improve trade facilitation in agriculture were reduction of inspection of goods and adoption of a risk management system for perishable goods; simplify trade financing procedures in particular, letter of credit; and establishing one-stop service for certain products. The studies will be finalized and published online in October 2013.

For more information, please contact Mr. Khan Salehin (salehin@un.org).

World Bank Extends Support to Trade Facilitation in Lao PDR

The World Bank Board of Executive Directors today approved US\$6.5 million in additional grant financing for the Customs and Trade Facilitation Project in Lao PDR. The grant builds on the achievements of the original International Development Association (IDA) credit of US\$6 million, which was approved in 2008.

The newly approved financing compliments the Bank's support for the program which is aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of customs administration and simplifying customs processes and procedures to eliminate duplication, redundancy, reduce transaction costs and time to clear goods. The Customs and Trade Facilitation Project also aims to support government objectives in achieving high rates of economic growth that translate into meaningful poverty reduction, increased transparency and accountability.

The Customs and Trade Facilitation Project forms part of an ambitious and integrated country trade program supported by the World Bank in partnership with Australia, the European Union, Germany and Ireland. This includes a related IDA and Multi Donor Trust Fund financed project – the Second Trade Development Facility Project – as well as a National Single Window Non-lending Technical Assistance activity. The proposed additional financing will assist the Lao Customs Department to play a major role in furthering the government's wider trade facilitation and national competitiveness agenda.

This additional grant will focus on providing further support in the key areas that are designed to ensure full and effective implementation of the new Customs Law and its translation into modern and business-friendly systems and procedures. It will support the preparation of a series of implementing regulations and procedures consistent with international standards and accepted good practice approaches. It will also support the development of a sustainable capacity for the Lao Customs Department to train and develop its own personnel. In addition, it will support the further functional expansion and geographical rollout of the Automated System for Customs Data and will strengthen the Lao Customs Department capacity to effectively maintain its ICT systems and infrastructure.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.worldbank.org/projects/P130512/lao-pdr-second-trade-development-facility-project?lang=en>



KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS (PUBLICATIONS)

FEATURED KNOWLEDGE PRODUCT

ESCAP BPA + (plus): Towards Integrated and Sustainable Trade and Transport Facilitation Performance Monitoring Systems

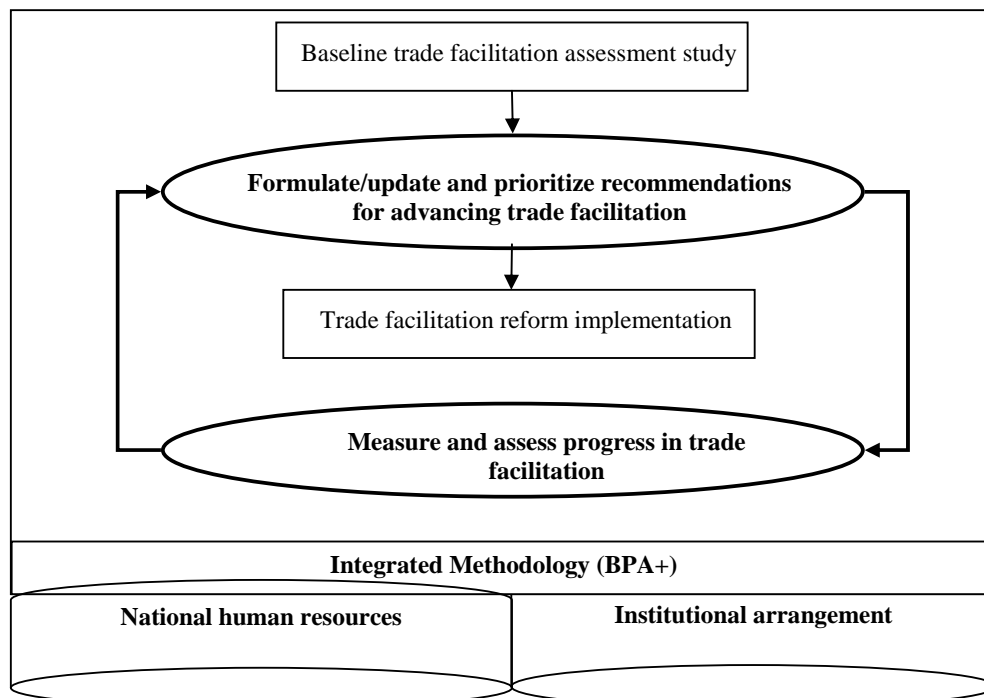
Introduction

Regular and systematic monitoring of progress and impact of trade facilitation reforms is essential to ensure that the trade facilitation strategy and implementation can be adapted according to changing national, regional and global environments. To this end, the trade facilitation monitoring system should provide sufficiently concrete and detailed information. In that context, the concept of a national integrated and sustainable trade and transport facilitation performance monitoring and improvement system (hereafter it is referred to as 'System') is developed, building upon the Business Process Analysis (BPA) methodology and other relevant tools and recommendations.

Key Functions of the System

The 'System' has two inter-related functions: (a) to formulate, update and prioritize recommendations for trade facilitation; (b) to measure and assess progress in trade facilitation. As shown in figure 1, once an initial set of recommendations has been formulated and prioritized for implementation, typically through a first (baseline) trade facilitation assessment study, progress in trade facilitation is measured and assessed on a regular basis by the System.

Figure 1. A national integrated and sustainable trade and transport facilitation monitoring and improvement system



The key outputs of the 'System' can be categorized as (1) performance indicators; (2) process and procedure descriptions; and (3) recommendations for improvement. Examples of typical outputs generated by the System are shown in table 1.

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KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS (PUBLICATIONS)


Table 1. Typical outputs of the ‘System’

Performance indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time and cost needed to complete the various activities part of the import/export/transit process (e.g., “obtain import license”) for selected/strategic products; • Average time taken from the arrival of the goods to their release (by Customs) and breakdowns of each operation between arrival and release • Average time and cost involved in moving a shipment along a specified route/corridor
Process and procedure description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use case and activity diagrams (i.e., standardized process and procedures maps); Time-procedures chart; and Time/Cost -distance charts • Process descriptions, including a list of agencies and stakeholders involved as well as a list of , trade forms and documents and related laws, rules and regulations; • A list of identified bottlenecks
Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An analysis of the bottlenecks and identification of possible solutions to address them • Actionable and prioritized list of recommendations for implementation

Integrated Methodology: BPA”+”

A Business Process Analysis “Plus” (BPA+) approach is proposed, where the System builds on the UNNEXt Business Process Analysis methodology, supplemented by ESCAP Time-Cost-Distance (TCD) and WCO Time Release Studies (TRS) methodologies. Indeed, while BPA was initially designed to document and evaluate an import/export process at a given point in time, its relative simplicity combined with the fact that it specifically includes measuring the time and cost of the complete range of procedures as one of the main output of the analysis, makes it suitable as the basis /core of a trade facilitation monitoring and improvement system. TCD and TRS methodologies, which focus on a subset of procedures covered by BPA (See Figure 2) and provide for alternative data collection methods, would be used to verify and supplement the data and outputs from the standard BPA.

Figure 2. Parts of the supply chain covered by BPA, TCD and TRS Methods

Trade-related procedures before cargo movement	Cargo origin		Border crossing point		Border crossing point		Cargo destination	Trade-related procedures after cargo arrival
			TRS		TRS			
TCD								
BPA								

Sustainability of the System

Institutionalizing the System is a prerequisite to ensuring its sustainability. An executive body is required to be established. In principle, the executive body should comprise representatives of all stakeholders related to trade and transport facilitation.

As part of ensuring the sustainability of the System, national human capacity needs to be developed and maintained. National experts, rather than international experts, should be used to conduct the assessment and performance studies, with project resources available for establishment of the System allocated essentially to building national capacity.

At least in the long term, the operation of the System is likely to be underpinned by national resources, rather than external assistance from development partners or donors. While an adequate and separate budget may be provided by the Government for operation of the System given its broad social and economic benefit, innovative solutions towards system sustainability may be examined, such as key government agencies providing qualified staffs on a part-time or full-time basis to conduct the studies. A Public-Private Partnership (PPP) modality could also be envisaged.



KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS (PUBLICATIONS)

ADB

Asian Development Bank Trade Finance Survey: Major Findings, Paper and Briefs, Published in March 2013 (6 pages)



The ADB survey suggest that trade finance gaps exist and need to be addressed because of the strong links between trade finance, business expansion, and job creation. The survey underscores the importance of further study and collaboration among MDBs, government, financial institutions, and companies to ensure maximum financial support to trade is available, given that the interlinked component parts of trade finance, business expansion, and jobs need coordination to create as much growth and poverty reduction as possible.

Available online at <http://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/pub/2013/trade-finance-survey-major-findings.pdf>

Modernizing Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures to Facilitate Trade in Agricultural and Food Products, Published in May 2013 (96 pages)



This project study was initiated by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) as part of the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) Transport and Trade Facilitation Strategy. Its objective is to identify areas for improvement in the administration and application of sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) regulations, procedures, and standards in the CAREC region. The study involved a wide-ranging assessment of current procedures for animal and plant quarantine, veterinary inspection, food safety inspection, and risk analysis and assessment, assessing conformity with internationally accepted standards.

Available online at <http://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/pub/2013/modernizing-sps-measures-facilitate-trade.pdf>

APEC

APEC's Ease of Doing Business - Interim Assessment 2009-2012, (1255.62KB, 45 pages)



The report assesses the progress made by APEC in the priority areas included in the Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) initiative: 1) Starting a Business; 2) Getting Credit; 3) Enforcing Contracts; 4) Trading Across Borders; and 5) Dealing with Construction Permits. Based on the World Bank's Doing Business database, APEC's collective progress in the EoDB initiative was equal to 11.5 percent between 2009 and 2012, exceeding the 2012 pro rata improvement target of 10 percent.

Available online since July 2013 at http://publications.apec.org/publication-detail.php?pub_id=1436

Report of Workshop "Best Practices on Educating Food Safety Standards to SMEs", (19159.50KB, 123 pages)



This workshop became an unprecedented meeting to discuss the importance of SMEs in the safety of food being supplied, produced, traded and consumed by APEC economies. It became apparent that SMEs receive awareness, education and training in food safety to enable better adherence and conformity to regulations. This report provides summary, recommendations and some presentations of the above workshop held in Indonesia in April 2013.

Available online in May 2013 at http://publications.apec.org/publication-detail.php?pub_id=1428



KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS (PUBLICATIONS)

ESCAP

Trade Facilitation and Paperless Trade in Asia: Results from an Expert Survey, (768 KB, 56pages)



This paper presents the results of an expert survey on the progress 26 Asian countries have made in implementing various trade facilitation and paperless trade measures, and reveals that all countries have implemented at least some trade facilitation measures listed in the WTO draft consolidated negotiating text on trade facilitation. To further progress trade facilitation, the respondents of the survey have identified some key areas on which Asian countries may focus, such as enhancing cooperation and coordination among different actors involved in trade transactions and building human resource capacity.

Available online in May 2013 at <http://www.unescap.org/tid/publication/swp113.pdf>

Agricultural trade costs in Asia and the Pacific: Patterns, compositions and determinants, Staff Working Paper 02/12 (560 KB, 28 pages)



When the analysis is focused only on trade costs between ASEAN and OECD countries, the importance of geographic distance and tariff costs in explaining trade cost differences across countries vanish while the importance of both maritime logistics services and non-tariff measures such as SPS/TBT requirements become the key determinants. These results clearly suggest a need for many individual Asian developing countries to enhance maritime and other international logistics services while further building capacity to comply with non-tariff measures.

Available online since November 2012 at <http://www.unescap.org/tid/publication/swp212.pdf>

ICC

ICC Global Survey on Trade Finance, Published on 24 June 2013 (7.29 MB, 69 pages)



The International Chamber of Commerce reveals that developing economies remain the drivers of international trade growth despite the ever-rising level of regulation in the wake of the financial crisis and a clear trade finance gap for small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the southern hemisphere. The 2013 survey also received the participation of two new partners: the International Trade Centre (ITC), to cover credit constraints and non-tariff measures in trade; and Factors Chain International (FCI) providing business trends in factoring.

Available online at <http://www.iccwbo.org/Products-and-Services/Trade-facilitation/ICC-Global-Survey-on-Trade-Finance/>

OECD

Trade Facilitation Indicators, OECD, Published on 16 May 2013

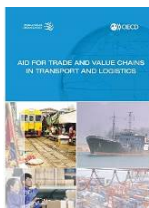


To help governments improve their border procedures, reduce trade costs, boost trade flows and reap greater benefits from international trade, OECD has developed a set of trade facilitation indicators that identify areas for action and enable the potential impact of reforms to be assessed.

Available online at

[http://www.oecd.org/tad/facilitation/OECD Trade Facilitation Indicators updated-flyer May 2013.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/tad/facilitation/OECD_Trade_Facilitation_Indicators_updated-flyer_May_2013.pdf)

Aid for Trade and Value Chains in Transport and Logistics, (3.57 MB, 71 pages)



The case studies examined in this paper show that the best results are achieved when multilateral and bilateral donors, as well as partner countries and the private sector, are all engaged in improving transport and logistics performance. It is important for the process to be driven by partner country priorities, with the private sector playing a key role in their development. In terms of donor collaboration and coordination, transport and logistics work is inherently multi-dimensional. It therefore requires coordinated input from a range of sources.

Available online at http://www.oecd.org/dac/aft/AidforTrade_SectorStudy_Transport.pdf



KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS (PUBLICATIONS)

UNECE

Overcoming Trade Barriers in the Republic of Kazakhstan, Published in July 2013



This study is especially timely as Kazakhstan's recent advances in the area of regional and multilateral integration promise to create new opportunities for trade development. Kazakhstan is currently implementing a comprehensive reform effort to ensure the successful implementation of its Customs Union with Belarus and the Russian Federation and to achieve complete adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) administered multilateral trading system.

Available online at

http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/trade/Publications/ECE-TRADE_407E-Kazakhstan.pdf

Transport Trends and Economics 2011-2012, Published in June 2013



This year's publication is dedicated to Transport trends and economics in 2011-12. It looks into questions like: What are the short-term trends in inland transport and how do they relate to the mid- and long-term trends? What were the major achievements or challenges in the course of the past 12 months and what expectations do the UNECE governments have for the upcoming 12 months? These were the broad questions we sought to answer both through the detailed questionnaires to the UNECE governments and through our own review and analysis.

Available online at

http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/trans/doc/2013/wp5/TRANSPORT_TRENDS_AND_ECONOMICS_2011_2012.pdf

WCO

WCO News Illicit Trade, Published in June 2013, (52 pages)



In order to facilitate the sharing of information between frontline Customs officers and the private sector, the WCO developed IPM, a tool which serves as an interface between these two critical partners. IPM contains specific and up-to-date information on genuine goods, such as their technical descriptions, routings and packaging. So far, over 50 countries are using the tool which currently references 600 brands, with many other Customs administrations and companies showing interest in becoming part of the IPM family.

Available online at <http://www.wcoomd.org/en/media/wco-news-magazine/~media/67D7093EC3204ACBAC6764E38BC95CF1.ashx>

WORLD BANK



Trade Costs in the Developing World 1995–2010, Policy Research Working Paper 6309, (40 pages)

The authors use newly collected data on trade and production in 178 countries to infer estimates of trade costs in agriculture and manufactured goods for the 1995–2010 period. The data show that trade costs are strongly declining in per capita income. Moreover, the rate of change of trade costs is largely unfavorable to the developing world: trade costs are falling noticeably faster in developed countries than in developing ones, which serves to increase the relative isolation of the latter.

Available online since January 2013 at

<http://elibrary.worldbank.org/docserver/download/6309.pdf?expires=1375167493&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=12929BC0B90C4421255871D805857A07>

Trade Dimensions of Logistics Services: A Proposal for Trade Agreements, Policy Research Working Paper 6332 (731.4Kb, 31 pages)



This paper illustrates the importance of logistics services, their trade dimension, and how regulatory issues act as perhaps one of the most significant barriers to competitiveness. The paper discusses recent developments and the role and benefits of logistics services and argues that from a trade agreement standpoint, logistics is a network industry that ultimately provides one service to a final client. It analyzes logistics services from a services trade perspective and proposes that trade

agreements should ensure access to and use of the infrastructure required to provide these services recognizing their interconnectedness.

Available online since January 2013 at

<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/12155/wps6332.pdf?sequence=1>

Kazakhstan: Assessment of Costs and Benefits of the Customs Union for Kazakhstan: First Report under the Study of International Practice of Integration/Customs Union, (670.4Kb, 94 pages)



In 2010, Kazakhstan entered into a customs union with Belarus and Russia. The first, relatively easy step in the implementation of the customs union was accomplished in 2010 with the adoption of a common external tariff, with varying exceptions in each of the three member countries. It is the intention of the customs union to eliminate the exceptions, in phases, by 2015. In fact, the goals of the customs union are much more ambitious than implementation of the common external tariff.

Available online since November 2012 at

<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/12299/NonAsciiFileName0.pdf?sequence=1>

[ence=1](https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/12299/NonAsciiFileName0.pdf?sequence=1)

Facilitating International Production Networks: The Role of Trade Logistics, Policy Research Working Paper 6224 (936.9Kb, 33 pages)



This paper shows that networked trade in parts and components is more sensitive to the importing country's logistics performance than is trade in final goods. In the baseline specification, the difference between the two trade semi-elasticities is around 45 percent, which suggests that the effect is quantitatively important. In addition, the analysis finds that logistics performance is particularly important for trade in the Asia-Pacific region, which is exactly where the emergence of international production networks has been most pronounced over recent years.

Available online since October 2012 at

<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/12061/wps6224.pdf?sequence=1>

WTO

Aid for Trade at a Glance 2013: Connecting to Value Chains, Published on 8 July 2013 (410 pages)



This joint WTO-OECD publication puts a spotlight on aid for trade to assess what is happening, what is not, and where improvements are needed. The analysis is focused on trends in aid-for-trade policies, programmes and practices. It shows that the Aid-for-Trade Initiative is delivering tangible results in improving trade performance and bettering people's lives, notably those of women, in developing countries. The report highlights that aid for trade plays an important role in enabling firms in developing countries to connect with or move up value chains. In fact, the emergence of value chains strengthens the rationale for aid for trade.

Available online at http://www.wto.org/english/res_e/booksp_e/aid4trade13_e.pdf



UPCOMING EVENTS

REGIONAL

- SAARC Eighth Meeting of SAFTA Committee of Experts, Colombo, 22 August 2013
- Seventh Meeting of SAFTA Ministerial Council, Colombo, 23 August 2013
- ADB-CAREC Federation of Carrier and Forwarder Associations (CFCFA) Annual Meeting and Working Group Meetings, Tashkent, Uzbekistan , 23 August 2013
- SAARC Seventh Meeting of SAFTA Ministerial Council, Colombo, 23 August 2013
- ADB Subregional Workshop on Establishment of National Trade Facilitation Committee, September 2013
- ROC-TF Annual Meeting, Beijing, China, 9 September 2013
- ADB – ESCAP Asia Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum, Beijing, China, 10 - 11 September 2013
- ADB – ESCAP Capacity Building Workshop: Designing and Implementing Trade Facilitation in Asia and the Pacific, Beijing, China, 12 September 2013
- UNNEXt Advisory Group Meeting on Paperless Systems for Agricultural Trade Facilitation, Beijing, China, 12 September 2013
- Ad-hoc Meeting on Regional Arrangements for Trade Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade, Beijing, China, 12 September 2013
- Seminar on Future Research Agenda for Trade Facilitation and Inclusive Growth, Beijing, China, 12 September 2013
- SATNET Regional Workshop on Traceability and Market Access for Agricultural Trade Facilitation, Bangkok, Thailand, 24-26 September 2013
- APEC Train the Trainers & ILS (International Logistics Support) Network Development Colloquium, Indonesia, September or October 2013
- ESCAP – WCO UNNEXt Masterclass 2013: Implementing Single Window and Paperless Trade, Cheon-an, Republic of Korea, 7-18 October 2013
- UNCTAD Workshop on Trade Facilitation in South Asian Countries, Kathmandu, Nepal, September 2013
- Third Asia-Pacific Trade and Investment Week, ESCAP, Bangkok, Thailand, 18-22 November 2013
 - Committee on Trade and Investment, Third session, 20-22 November 2013
 - ECE – ESCAP Global Trade Facilitation Forum, Bangkok, Thailand, 18-19 November 2013
 - ECE - ESCAP Regional Workshop on Trade Facilitation Implementation Tools, 19 – 22 November 2013



APEC-SINGAPORE

APEC Ministers to advance trade facilitation in Surabaya, 13 April 2013

Regional growth in the Asia-Pacific region is placing new demands on infrastructure and connectivity, behind-the-border barriers, sustainability and equity - all priorities for APEC Indonesia 2013. APEC Trade Ministers will address these issues when they meet in Surabaya on 20-21 April 2013. In preparation for the APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade Meeting, over the next two weeks in Surabaya, Indonesia, APEC officials will prepare initiatives to ensure a seamlessly connected, resilient and equitable Asia-Pacific. Briefing the APEC Business Advisory Council meeting in Singapore ahead of next week's meeting, John Larkin, Chair of the APEC Committee on Trade and Investment, said that APEC will continue to move forward some significant work streams mandated by ministers. "We will be intensifying work to address chokepoints to regional connectivity through targeted capacity building and concrete steps to make supply chains more reliable, transparent and efficient," said Larkin. "Building capacity will facilitate progress towards attaining our goal of 10 percent improvement of supply chain performance by 2015."

<http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/WO1304/S00134/apec-ministers-to-advance-trade-facilitation-in-surabaya.htm>

ASEAN

ASEAN holds meeting of Customs Heads, Philippines Information Agency, 7 June 2013

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) recently held the 22nd Meeting of the ASEAN Directors-General of Customs on June 4-6 in Singapore. Singapore Customs Director-General Fong Yong Kian chaired the meeting attended by all ASEAN states. Peter Ong, Head of Civil Service and Permanent Secretary (Finance) of Singapore said in his opening address that customs have an important role in facilitating intra-ASEAN as well as international trade. The meeting reviewed the work of the ASEAN customs working groups. Highlighted in the meeting are key achievements of ASEAN customs in 2012 such as the implementation of the ASEAN Harmonised Tariff Nomenclature (AHTN) by all 10 ASEAN states, completion of the ASEAN Single Window Pilot Project Component 2, and the commencement of the ASEAN Customs Transit System component under the ASEAN Regional Integration Support by the European Union Programme.

<http://www.pia.gov.ph/news/index.php?article=271370578458>

CHINA

China issues trade facilitation measures, China Daily, 25 July 2013

China rolled out measures on Wednesday to stabilize weak trade as its economy undergoes restructuring. "China faces a complex and challenging environment, with exports and imports easing their pace of growth. We need to advance innovative mechanisms to enhance trade facilitation and enterprises' competitiveness," Premier Li Keqiang said at a meeting of the State Council. Measures for simplifying clearance through customs will be carried out gradually in ports with the theme of "one-time declaration, one-time inspection and one-time clearance". Operation and management charges will be adjusted, and administrative fees will be reduced. Inspection fees will be temporarily scrapped and the number of export items needing inspection will be cut down with manufactured exports, in principle, free from inspection. A plan for reforming the country's inspection system is also being studied, according to a State Council news release. Financial institutions are encouraged to strengthen support for enterprises with orders and good performance, including providing short-term export credit insurance.

<http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90778/8340503.html>

China to expand imports from ASEAN, China Daily, 24 July 2013

China pledged to increase its imports from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations as bilateral trade started to favor China in the second half of 2012, Vice-Minister of Commerce Gao Yan said. China will enhance trade facilitation through cooperation with ASEAN members in areas including customs and quality checking while sending purchasing groups for agricultural products from ASEAN members, Gao said. In addition, exhibitions, including the 10th CAEXPO to be held September 3-6 in Nanning, Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region, will serve as opportunities for ASEAN exporters to expand their sales to China, she added.

<http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90778/8338978.html>



China must facilitate trade, China Daily, 13 July 2013

Nation still needs to improve market access, ministry official says. China is actively open to advancing trade facilitation because not only is it in accordance with the country's reforms to its economic system but also helps it enhance its participation in global trade, a commerce official said on Friday. "In terms of promoting trade facilitation, China holds an actively open stance," Chai Xiaolin, director-general of the Department of World Trade Organization Affairs at the Ministry of Commerce, told a forum on trade facilitation held by the ministry and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. "Trade facilitation is in line with China's future reforms in economic systems. In addition, China also needs an open and inclusive world trade mechanism for further expanding trade and participating in global governance," she added. China's is the world's largest exporter and second-largest importer, but exports from the world's second-largest economy have been falling in recent years amid sluggish world demand and rising costs at home. In June, Chinese exports declined 3.1 percent from a year earlier after a 1 percent rise in the previous month.

http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/bizchina/2013-07/13/content_16770694.htm

ESCWA

Dubai hosts ESCWA the Regional Training Workshop on Trade Facilitation, Infrastructure and Trade Cost, WAM, 6 April 2013

UN Economic and Social Commission for West Asia (ESCWA) organizes in cooperation with the Islamic Development Bank "Regional training Workshop on Trade Facilitation, Infrastructure and Trade Costs Policies in ESCWA region" in Dubai, during 10-11 April 2013. The workshop will offer the countries in the region an opportunity to discuss the concept of trade costs, methods of measurement and policy priorities for reducing this cost. The workshop will aim at building technical capacity of nationals dealing with behind the border trade facilitation with a view to enhancing trade flows and promoting growth. The overall objective of the workshop is to enhance the capacities and capabilities of ESCWA member countries in significantly reducing trade costs, determining trade facilitation actions/ strategies and identifying the most efficient policies that will reduce trade related costs, with a view to maximizing trade benefits and its competitiveness, promoting economic growth and sustainable

development, which will result in reducing poverty and improving national well fare.

<http://www.wam.org.ae/servlet/Satellite?c=WamLocEnews&cid=1290004049766&p=1135099400124&pagina me=WAM%2FWamLocEnews%2FW-T-LEN-FullNews>

EU

EU To Support Developing Countries Realize WTO Trade Facilitation Deal Benefits, RTT News, 8 March 2013

EU Development Commissioner Andris Piebalgs and Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht have joined forces to help secure a WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement as part of global efforts to increase trade's contribution to development. The European Union's support responds to demands from Least-Developed Countries (LDCs) for help to make the most of the deal, which could be agreed at

the WTO's 9th Ministerial Conference in December 2013, the European Commission said in a press release on Friday. "I see only good opportunities," said De Gucht. "Trade facilitation is about better customs procedures, cutting red tape, fighting corruption, and cutting costs for business. Cutting the cost of trade by just one percent would increase worldwide income by over EUR 30 billion and two thirds of this would go to developing countries. Getting agreement in the WTO on trade facilitation would also send a powerful signal about the strength of the multilateral trade system and its ability to produce tangible results for the international community."

http://www.rttnews.com/2073200/eu-to-support-developing-countries-realize-wto-trade-facilitation-deal-benefits.aspx?type=gn&utm_source=google&utm_campaign=sitemap

FIJI

Region discuss maritime issues, Asia Pacific Star, 23 July 2013

A High level meeting on strengthening inter-island shipping and logistics in the Pacific Island Countries started in Suva this morning. The meeting is organised by United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in collaboration with the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC). Some issues to be discussed at the three-day meeting, attended by Pacific islands as well as several Asian states, are the efficiency



of ports, and the issues of hub ports. - See more at: <http://www.asiapacificstar.com/index.php/sid/216001284/scat/7b9fd5fd3be1c082#sthash.Dg0QsNJ1.dpuf>

INDIA

Inclusion of trade facilitation reforms in FTP a welcome move for logistics sector: DHL Express, IRIS, 18 April 2013

Commerce Minister and Sharma announced on Thursday various measures to boost export sectors in the annual supplement to the Foreign Trade Policy. Malcolm Monteiro, SVP & area director, South Asia said, DHL Express said, "The focus on giving low-cost credit to key export industries and extending the benefit of incentive schemes to greater number of sectors is a very welcome move as it would provide some stability to our exporters in an uncertain global environment. The focus on rewarding value-addition is also very welcome as it creates greater incentives for the integration of our entrepreneurs into global value-chains. Logistics sector is especially heartened by trade facilitation reforms included in the FTP such as the decision to dispense with the requirement to submit hard copy of EP copy of shipping bills as they have a direct positive impact on our operation costs."

<http://www.myiris.com/newsCentre/storyShow.php?fileR=20130418173513043&dir=2013/04/18>

India seeks funds for poorer nations to upgrade ports, customs, The Hindu Business Lines, 9 April 2013

India has reiterated that the trade facilitation package for upgrading customs and port infrastructure being worked out at the World Trade Organisation should be soft on poorer countries and provide them with technical and financial support. In a meeting with key Ambassadors to the WTO in Geneva on Tuesday, Commerce and Industry Minister Anand Sharma pitched for a balanced package in the forthcoming Ministerial meet in Bali that has the interest of Least Developed Countries and developing countries at its core. The Minister said that while India was not opposed to trade facilitation, there has to be adequate special and differential treatment for developing countries and LDCs and Small and Vulnerable Economies. "Emerging economies have to carry a disproportionate burden of poverty and huge income disparities and they therefore merit a special and preferential treatment," Sharma said. He also made a case for providing technical and financial support to such economies so that they benefit from

trade facilitation. Sharma supported a LDC package including Duty Free Quota Free market access, which countries such as India and China have already implemented, and said it must be part of the Bali package.

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/industry-and-economy/india-seeks-funds-for-poorer-nations-to-upgrade-ports-customs/article4598746.ece>

JAPAN

Japan files WTO dispute against Russia over car import levy, Reuters, 24 July 2013

Japan has filed a trade complaint against Russia over a fee it levies on car imports, the World Trade Organization (WTO) said on Wednesday, following a similar move by the European Union. Russia says the fee offsets the cost of recycling cars but its critics say it is effectively an illegal tax on imports since it does not apply to cars made in Russia, nor Belarus and Kazakhstan, which have a customs union with Russia. The WTO complaints, the first against Russia since it joined the world trade body in August last year, reflect a global battle between governments desperate for economic growth. Russia's objections to opening up its car market, Europe's second biggest, were already a major sticking point in its 18 year negotiation to join the WTO. Firms such as General Motors, Ford, Renault and Fiat are betting on Russian car demand growing, but Russia now expects it to shrink by up to 4 percent this year, making the fight for market share even more fierce. If Russia cannot deal with the EU and Japanese complaints over the negotiating table within 60 days, the complainants could ask the WTO to adjudicate, with an end goal of forcing Moscow to change its rules or face trade sanctions.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/07/24/us-wto-japan-idUSBRE96N0NI20130724>

KAZAKHSTAN

DP World to invest \$1bn in Kazakhstan, Arabian Supply Chain, 28 April 2013

Dubai-based port operator DP World is planning to invest \$1bn in the development of the "Khorogos-Eastern Gates" freezone and Aktau Port in Kazakhstan, a visiting Kazakh official told Zawya. During the visit, key members of the Kazakh delegation, led by deputy prime minister Aset Isekeshiev, and the Kazakh railway monopoly Kazakhstan Temir Zholy signed an agreement with DP World to cooperate in the management of the seaport



and social economic zone. The official told Zawya on condition of anonymity that DP World will use its experience running the Jebel Ali port and free zone to make Khorgos-Eastern Gates "the largest logistics centre of Eurasia".

<http://www.arabiansupplychain.com/article-8642-dp-world-to-invest-1bn-in-kazakhstan--reports/>

Direct rail link opens between Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan Azerbaijan, Baku, Trend, 11 May 2013

Kazakh and Turkmen Presidents Nursultan Nazarbayev and Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov took part in the opening ceremony of the Bolashak- Serhetyaka transborder rail section on Saturday, Kazinform reported. The Bolashak-Serhetyaka section is the shortest railway link between the two countries. This section is a part of the transnational rail corridor, which will connect Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Iran and allow the delivery of different goods to the Persian Gulf region.

<http://en.trend.az/regions/casia/kazakhstan/2149292.html>

MALAYSIA

Mini package' push to complete DDA, the Malaysian Reserve, 23 July 2013

Malaysia will be joining Asean member countries in working towards "mini package" deliverables of the Doha Development Agenda (DDA) for the upcoming 9th Ministerial Conference in Bali in December this year. The agenda on the "mini package" will emphasise focus on trade facilitation, elements of agriculture which include tariff rate quota administration, food security and export competition and on development such as monitoring mechanism and special and differential treatment flexibilities. "Malaysia sees a positive outcome in Bali as a stepping stone towards a full conclusion of the Doha Round and as a trading nation, the country would like to have a trade facilitation agreement that would further integrate into the global value chain and to restore business confidence in the World Trade Organisation (WTO) as the guardian of the multilateral trading system. "Areas of negotiations in WTO would strengthen Asean's own internal and external integration in the global supply chain particularly with the aim of realising the Asean Economic Community in 2015," secretary general in the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) Datuk Dr Rebecca Fatima Sta Maria told The Malaysian Reserve.

<http://themalaysianreserve.com/main/news/corporate-malaysia/4203-mini-package-push-to-complete-dda>

NEPAL

Nepal gets transshipment facility for overseas imports, The Republica, 2 June 2013

India has agreed to allow transshipment of third-country cargos via Kolkata and Haldia ports directly to Nepali border points through international shipping companies. Nepali officials had been demanding for the facility since 2005. At present, Nepali importers have to change the shipping companies to transport goods from Kolkata and Haldia ports before transporting to Nepali border points. More than 90 percent of country's third-country imports reach Birgunj dry port through Kolkata or Haldia ports.

"Indian side agreed to allow international shipping lines to take consignments up to Nepali customs points via Kolkata and Haldia ports during a recent meeting of customs officials of both countries in New Delhi," Mukti Narayal Poudel, director general of Department of Customs, told Republica on Sunday. "Administrative and other hassles will come down significantly once the new facility is enforced." Poudel also said the government would soon initiate the process to formulate the guidelines to implement the transshipment facility. "We will be in a position to immediately take advantage of the transshipment facility once related guidelines are formulated. We will initiate consultation with stakeholders in this regards," Poudel said at an interaction on 'Trade Facilitation, Customs Modernization, International Commercial Terms (InCo Terms) and Nepal-India Railway Agreement' organized here on Sunday. The program was organized by NITDB in collaboration with Nepal Freight Forwarders Association (NEFFA) and the European Economic, Trade, Commerce and Industries Association-Nepal. Nepal had first sought transshipment facility with India in 2005. During the meeting of trade officials of both countries held in Kolkata in 2012, India had agreed in principle to grant transshipment facility to Nepal in line with the international practice.

http://www.myrepublica.com/portal/index.php?action=news_details&news_id=55567

Trade infrastructure, quarantine issues Nepal's top agenda, Republica, 11 July 2013

Trade officials of Nepal and China are meeting in the second week of August to thrash out half a dozen pending issues on bilateral trade, including quarantines and administrative hassles in cross border movement of good. The Ministry of Commerce and Supplies (MoCS) has sent invitation to Chinese officials for the talks which is proposed to be held in Kathmandu on August 11 and



12. "After holding series of consultation with the stakeholders, we have listed around half a dozen issues to discuss in the 4th Nepal-China-Tibet Trade Facilitation Committee (NTTFC) meeting," a highly placed source at the MoCS told Republica. "We will soon sit with the private sector to finalize the agenda." The third meeting of NTTFC was held in Lhasa of Tibet on July 4 and 5 last year. At the meeting, both the neighbors had signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) that paved the way for exporting Nepali citrus fruits -- oranges and sweet oranges -- to Tibet. This time, Nepali officials are requesting the Chinese side for support of the northern neighbor in development of trade infrastructure. "As infrastructure development is crucial for trade between the two countries, we are requesting China to extend support for building an ICD in Rasuwagadi and improving Kathmandu-Tatopani road at the joint-secretary level talks," the source said.

http://www.myrepublica.com/portal/index.php?action=news_details&news_id=57613

PAKISTAN

WB mission gets briefing on Pak-India land route trade, Daily Times, 23 July 2013

A 12-member World Bank (WB) mission Monday got briefing on Pak-India trade through land route during a visit to the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The WB team headed by South Asia

Regional Integration (SARI) Senior Operations Officer Ms Diep Nguyen-van Houtte spent well over an hour at LCCI to gather views of LCCI members about facilities at Wagah. Ms Houtte said that the information given by the chamber would help the WB finalise a trade facilitation policy between India and Pakistan. She said that the proposals and suggestions would help a lot in early development of much needed infrastructure at the crossing points between Pakistan and India. The LCCI Senior Vice President Irfan Iqbal Sheikh presented the address of welcome while former senior vice president Sohail Lashari, former vice presidents Aftab Ahmad Vohra, Shafqat Saeed Piracha, Saeeda Nazar, executive committee member Mian Zahid Javed and former executive committee member Rehmatullah Javed also spoke on the occasion. Sheikh said that Pakistan and India are the two countries in the region which can play a very important role in the economic development and trade in this area. The government of Pakistan is very keen to have strong trade ties with its neighbors especially with India.

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2013%5C07%5C23%5Cstory_23-7-2013_pg5_11

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Putin urged to seek greater trade openness ahead of G20 Summit in Russia, Fresh Plaza, 21 June 2013

CEOs from the G20 Advisory Group of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) met in Saint Petersburg with more than 400 other business leaders and top government officials, including Russian President Vladimir Putin. The meeting was held in conjunction with the Business-20 (or "B20") sessions taking place under the theme "B20-G20 Partnership for Growth and Jobs" in preparation for the G20 Summit to be held in Strelina, Russia from 5-6 September 2013. ICC Chairman-elect Harold (Terry) McGraw III, serving as co-chair of the B20 task force on trade, and Chairman of the ICC G20 Advisory Group Marcus Wallenberg, serving as co-chair of the B20 task force on investments and infrastructure, were among those who met Mr Putin and put forward priorities on behalf of international business. "We are here to encourage the G20 to take a leadership role to lower trade barriers and unlock jobs and growth."

http://www.freshplaza.com/news_detail.asp?id=110539#SlideFrame_1

SRI LANKA

A Giant step in Customs automation, News Lanka, 2 May 2013

The Sri Lanka Customs Department under the leadership of Jagath P.Wijeweera, has announced several new procedures and will further introduce new trade facilitation measures in May 2013. A team of officials from Customs, Treasury and the private sector have installed a process to submit and receive approvals online for export cargo, whereby physical documents will be removed and trade will be facilitated along with E – CUSDECs and E- Cargo Dispatch Note (CDN). Exporters and service providers will have to adapt to the new system and register with customs; the process will reduce the documentary process and will reduce physical movements between various departments. For the first time the Customs will launch the fully automated export documentation system in May 2013. Given the complexity of various exporters' needs and processes involved, a step by step approach will be implemented to facilitate both non BOI and BOI clients. The department is also planning to introduce the electronic Cargo Dispatch Note (CDN), in the month of



May. The launch will be held on the 6th of May at the Kingsbury Colombo to educate the trade on the new changes. The event will be jointly organised by the Joint Apparel Association Forum (JAAF) and Shippers Academy Colombo (SAC). The trade is requested to get in touch with JAAF or SAC for registration information from, All companies involved in exports and international trade and services, logistics, shipping companies are requested to attend the launch as the process will be explained by Director General and his team from Sri Lanka Customs, comprising of legal, exports divisions long with SAGT introducing e-clearance for containers. <http://www.news.lk/news/sri-lanka/4981-a-giant-step-in-customs-automation>

WCO

Improving Trade Facilitation, Security With WCO Border Management Approach, Leadership, 4 June 2013

Worried by security issues plaguing most countries all over the world today, the World Customs Organisation (WCO) is seeking ways for the governments of member customs administrations to transform their approaches to border security whilst improving trade facilitation. To this end, the organisation with Dubai customs as co-host, organised a three-day WCO IT conference and exhibition with the theme: "Effective Solutions for Coordinated Border Management," in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, from May14-16, 2013. The conference explored various ways that modern information technology (IT) could transform governments' approach to border management through greater collaboration and cooperation between relevant agencies. In the view of the WCO, better coordinated border management (CBM) implies that a large number of agencies involved in border security and regulatory requirements must find new ways to work effectively in order to enhance connectivity.

<http://leadership.ng/blog/040613/improving-trade-facilitation-security-wco-border-management-approach>

WORLD BANK

World Bank Extends Support to Trade Facilitation in Lao PDR, 4 Traders, 31 May 2013

The World Bank Board of Executive Directors today approved US\$6.5 million in additional grant financing for the Customs and Trade Facilitation Project in Lao PDR. The grant builds on the achievements of the original

International Development Association (IDA) credit of US\$6 million, which was approved in 2008. The newly approved financing compliments the Bank's support for the program which is aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of customs administration and simplifying customs processes and procedures to eliminate duplication, redundancy, reduce transaction costs and time to clear goods. The Customs and Trade Facilitation Project also aims to support government objectives in achieving high rates of economic growth that translate into meaningful poverty reduction, increased transparency and accountability. The Customs and Trade Facilitation Project forms part of an ambitious and integrated country trade program supported by the World Bank in partnership with Australia, the European Union, Germany and Ireland. This includes a related IDA and Multi Donor Trust Fund financed project - the Second Trade Development Facility Project - as well as a National Single Window Non-lending Technical Assistance activity. The proposed additional financing will assist the Lao Customs Department to play a major role in furthering the government's wider trade facilitation and national competitiveness agenda.

<http://www.4-traders.com/news/World-Bank-Group-World-Bank-Extends-Support-to-Trade-Facilitation-in-Lao-PDR--16918995/>

WTO

Signing of WTO trade facilitation deal vital for global value chain: OECD, Business Standard, 5 May 2013,

Signing of the much-hyped pact on trade facilitation under the Doha round of global trade talks in World Trade Organization (WTO) is crucial for the development of global value chains, which is gradually emerging as a predominant factor for seamless global trade concerning both the developed and developing worlds. An agreement on trade facilitation basically refers to reduction in red tape and enhancing customs cooperation. For the first time in last 12 years, since the talks have started in 2001 in Doha (Qatar), there is going to be an agreement on the issue of trade facilitation. According to WTO director general Pascal Lamy there is "considerable progress" happening in trade facilitation agreement and a deal on this might result in a \$1 trillion boost to world economy, while the OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) says that trade facilitation can reduce the cost of trade by 15%. "Trade facilitation reduces one% of world trade cost. Right now the Doha talks are at an impasse but an



agreement on trade facilitation can reduce the cost by 15%," said Richard Boucher, deputy secretary general, OECD.

http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/signing-of-wto-trade-facilitation-deal-vital-for-global-value-chain-oecd-113050500339_1.html

The Trade Taskforce of the Business 20 urges the G20 leaders to sign the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, Steel Guru, 3 March 2013

The Trade Taskforce of the Business 20 with Alexey Mordashov, CEO of Severstal, as a co chairman, calls for the G20 leaders to complete the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement negotiations in 2013 to help jump start the global economy. Mr Alexey Mordashov during the working meeting of the B20 Trade Taskforce said that "G20 countries should intensify their efforts to bring the Trade Facilitation Agreement to a conclusion by the Bali WTO Ministers meeting in December. This Agreement would facilitate international trade and global GDP growth. This is a win-win-win proposition because these improvements benefit all countries: rich, developing and least developed, with trade facilitation improvements to particularly benefit small and medium businesses." He added that "What we need now is leadership by all parties to push this through at a time when growth is desperately needed. We urge to complete the draft of the agreement in advance of the G20 Leaders' Summit in Saint Petersburg on September 5 to 6." The B20 Trade Taskforce is putting a heavy emphasis on Trade Facilitation as one of its key recommendations for generating economic growth. The Trade Facilitation Agreement would simplify and streamline customs and other administrative procedures at the border that add time and cost to international trade. A World Economic Forum study published in January demonstrates that trade facilitation measures have the potential to increase GDP by a factor six times greater than would result from eliminating tariffs, and that.

http://www.steelguru.com/international_news/The_Trade_Taskforce_of_the_Business_20_urges_the_G20_leaders_to_sign_the_WTO_Trade_Facilitation_Agreement/304412.html

ICC sees WTO deal on trade, phasing out of farm sops at Bali meet, *the Gulf Times*, 22 April 2013

The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) expects a WTO agreement on trade facilitation and phasing out of farm subsidies as well as removal of food export

restriction and trade barriers to IT as "tangible outcomes" this year as governments meet at Bali, Indonesia in December to revive the stalled Doha Round negotiations. These were highlighted at a consultation paper of the ICC Business World Trade Agenda (WTA), which is being held today, in conjunction with the World Chambers Congress, which will begin tomorrow at the Qatar National Convention Centre. The WTA - which aims for business to define, in partnerships with the governments, a 21st century world trade agenda to stimulate growth and job creation - has also called for completing the Doha Development Agenda (DDA) to advance beyond Doha. It feels global and trade and investment liberalisation could provide a debt-free and much needed boost to global economic growth. The ICC, along with the Qatar Chamber, has suggested a five-point initiative, which includes encouragement to establish a high-standard multilateral framework on investment; liberalisation in trade in services; fostering greener economic activity through trade; reforming the WTO dispute settlement system and multilateralising trade liberalisation under WTO framework. On the "tangible deliverables" by the 2013 Bali Ministerial, the consultation paper said a WTO agreement on trade facilitation is expected to deliver gains of at least \$130bn annually with most of the gains benefiting developing countries. An agreement on trade facilitation would "significantly" reduce costs, speed up and streamline administrative and other official procedures and create a more transparent, predictable and efficient environment for cross-border trade, it said.

<http://www.gulf-times.com/business/191/details/349963/icc-sees-wto-deal-on-trade,-phasing-out-of-farm-sops-at-bali-meet>

SAARC

SAARC and GIZ sign a Memorandum of Understanding, SAARC, 28 June 2013

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH signed a Memorandum of Understanding aimed at promoting trade and economic collaboration in South Asia yesterday. H. E. Mr. Ahmed Saleem, Secretary-General of SAARC and H. E. Dr. Roland F. Steurer, Country Director, GIZ, Nepal, signed the MoU on behalf of their respective institutions. The signing ceremony took place over a function organized at the SAARC Secretariat in Kathmandu that was attended by representatives of SAARC and GIZ and its partners. Also



present on the occasion were the resident Ambassadors of Pakistan and Sri Lanka to Nepal. Prior to the signing of the MoU, H. E. Mr. Saleem addressed the modest gathering present on the occasion. In his address, he stated, "We are at a crucial stage in SAARC for deepening economic, trade and financial cooperation among the member countries.

<http://saarc-sec.org/2013/06/28/news/SAARC-and-GIZ-sign-a-Memorandum-of-Understanding/121/>

OTHER REGIONS

AFRICA

ECOWAS, WAMI to launch trade facilitation support project, World Stage Group, 9 March 2013

Economic Community of West Africa (ECOWAS) and the West African Monetary Institute (WAMI) are to launch a trade facilitation support project for the sub-region in order to address the barriers militating against intra-community trade so as to enable the region realise its full trade potentials and benefits. This follows a study directed in October 2012 by Ministers of Trade of the four-nation West African Monetary Zone (WAMZ), which is working to create a second currency as part of the process for a single regional monetary union. Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Liberia are the WAMZ Member States. The project will specifically enable the WAMZ countries address the deficiencies identified in a 2012 joint study by ECOWAS and WAMI which assessed the capacity of the monetary zone countries to effectively implement national and regional trade integration policies in line with the region's common market and monetary integration aspirations.

<http://www.worldstagegroup.com/worldstagenew/index.php?active=news&newscid=7908&catid=3>

CARIBBEAN

The capital to host congress on international trade security, Dominican Today, 23 July 2013

Representatives from Central America and Caribbean governments, private sector and technical assistance agencies of the region will discuss the challenges facing global trade's supply chain security, during the 8th International Security and Trade Facilitation Congress, July 25 and 26. The president of Basc Dominican Republic, Kai Schoenhals made the announcement of the event he called an academic gathering of experiences among the export sector's stakeholders, to deal with issues such as port development, security and

risk management in the supply chain. The gathering is slated for Crowne Plaza Santo Domingo, hosted by the Inter-American Commission for Drug Abuse Control (OAS-CICAD), of the OAS and certification agencies Basc World Organization and Basc Dominican Republic.

<http://www.dominicantoday.com/dr/economy/2013/7/23/48393/The-capital-to-host-congress-on-international-trade-security>

Ministry of Trade wins UN Public Service Award for TTBizLink, The Embassy of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, 28 June 2013

Senator the Honourable Vasant Bharath, Minister of Trade, Industry and Investment and Minister in the Ministry of Finance and the Economy, publicly thanks all employees and collaborating agencies for their support in successfully implementing the Single Electronic Window known as TTBizLink. This initiative of the MTII is aimed at improving the ease of doing business in Trinidad and Tobago. Your cooperation and commitment were critical to the Ministry achieving the highest and most prestigious International Award for Excellence in Public Service. " I am pleased to congratulate your organization on winning the 2013 United Nations Public Service Award, First Place, in the category of "Promoting Whole-Of-Government Approaches in the Information Age" for the initiative "TTBIZLink".Your institution's outstanding achievement has demonstrated excellence in serving the public interest and I am confident it has made a significant contribution to the improvement of public administration in your country. Indeed, it will serve as an inspiration and encouragement for others working for public service."

http://www.ttembassy.org/index.php?mact=News,cntnt01_detail,0&cntnt01articleid=184&cntnt01origid=15&cntnt01detailtemplate=ttdetail&cntnt01returnid=70

OECS

OECS Trade Policy Unit Conducts Final Leg Of National Consultations On Trade Facilitation In The Federation Of St. Kitts And Nevis On Tuesday, OECS Secretariat, 14 May 2013

Tuesday -Specialists from the OECS Secretariat will be in Basseterre this week for a consultation on national and regional measures to better facilitate trade in keeping with the emerging commitments being negotiated on Trade Facilitation in the World Trade Organisation. This will be the final in the current series of national consultations which began in February 2013. Trade



NEWS

Facilitation refers to the processes and procedures involved in moving goods across borders. These include the fees required and time it takes to carry out such payments, notification of new measures, the use of customs brokers, compliance with border procedures and the time taken to have matters regarding processes and procedures relating to the clearance of goods redressed. The objective of the process is to simplify and harmonize international trade procedures such as payment of fees, access to information and cooperation between customs and other authorities. The series of consultations within the Member States opened in Saint Lucia and continued in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, and Grenada. Trade Facilitation is a key element of the OECS Economic Union and this work is expected to advance regional efforts towards the creation of the single economic space as well as informing the OECS' engagement in the WTO negotiations. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) is assisting this effort, as part of the UNCTAD project on Implementation Plans for WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement in Developing Members, financed by the European Union and Norway. <http://www.barnaclegrenada.com/index.php/regional-news/2785-oecs-trade-policy-unit-conducts-final-leg-of-national-consultations-on-trade-facilitation-in-the-federation-of-st-kitts-and-nevis-on-tuesday>

