

# Green Customs Initiative

Global **MEAs** with Trade Provision



UNEP ROWA  
November-2007; Manama, Bahrain

## What is the Green Customs Initiative?

The Green Customs Initiative was created in June 2003 when UNEP and the World Customs Organization signed an agreement to foster stronger ties between the two organizations on environmental enforcement issues.

- **'Green Customs Initiative' (GCI)** is a partnership between UNEP and the Secretariats of the MEAs, the Chemical Weapons Convention, the World Customs Organization and Interpol;
- Focuses on promoting awareness amongst Customs Officers on enforcement and compliance with the MEAs
- Seeks to strengthen the role of Customs Officers in the "enforcement chain" particularly in combating illegal trade in environmentally sensitive commodities.





## GCI Partners

- United Nations Environment Programme
- Secretariats of related MEAs
- World Customs Organization (WCO) and its Regional Intelligence Liaison Offices (RILOs)
- Interpol



## Why GCI ?

- Worldwide, environmental crime and illegal trade is, by some estimates, valued at more than US\$100 billion a year.
- Environmental crime related to MEAs accounts for an estimated US\$22-31 billion annually.
- The illegal traffic of toxic chemicals & waste directly threatens human health and the environment, contributes to species loss, and results in revenue loss for governments.
- Illegal trade in environmentally sensitive commodities is seriously undermines the effectiveness of MEAs.



## The Aim of GCI

- At the national level, customs is but one element of a “compliance and enforcement chain” that includes:
  - Monitoring detection, and seizure of illegal shipments by customs agencies,
  - Prosecution of criminal cases involving such shipments by prosecuting attorneys
  - Appropriate sentencing by the judiciary.
- All three individual links in this chain must be strong for the whole to succeed.
- The **Green Customs Initiative** aims at strengthening compliance and enforcement of multilateral environmental agreements through integrated capacity building for customs officers within the MEA enforcement chain. The aim is to provide customs officers with training that covers several MEAs at the same time.

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## Advantages of GCI

- By sharing expertise, experience and infrastructure, multilateral environmental agreements are working together to present a coordinated customs training front
- This coherent approach to the problem of illegal trade should help ensure the implementation and enforcement of the MEAs in question.



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## GCI & Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs)

### What are MEAs and What is the role of Customs?

- Since 1972, over 300 agreements have been negotiated and ratified
- MEAs are agreements between several parties (States, or in some cases regional economic integration organizations such as the European Union) to take specific measures towards the protection of the environment and the conservation of natural resources.
- The human and financial resources devoted to this enterprise are substantial.



## MEAs covered under GCI

When a MEA enters into force, the member States (usually called Parties) are bound by the provisions stated therein and compliance with the measures is mandatory. The main MEAs with international trade-related provisions are:

1. The **Basel Convention** on the Control of Trans-boundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal
2. The **Cartagena Protocol** on Biosafety
3. The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (**CITES**)
4. The **Montreal Protocol** on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer
5. The **Rotterdam Convention** on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade
6. The **Stockholm Convention** on Persistent Organic Pollutants





## Basel Convention (1989, 1992)

The **Basel Convention** on the Control of Trans-boundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal;

- In response to the concern regarding the transport of hazardous wastes from industrialized countries to developing countries.
- To establish a control system on transboundary movements of hazardous wastes, based on written notifications.
- To treat and dispose of hazardous wastes as close as possible to their source of generation.
- To reduce transboundary movements of hazardous wastes and other wastes to a minimum consistent with their environmentally sound management.
- To minimize and manage hazardous and other wastes in an environmentally sound manner

**Status of ratification by Arab Countries:**

- All Arab countries ratified except for Iraq & Palestinian National Authority

**National contacts and information:** <http://www.basel.int/contact-info/frsetmain.html>



## Cartagena Protocol

**Cartagena Protocol** on Bio-safety to the Convention on Biological Diversity;

The Cartagena Protocol of the CBD specifically aims at protecting both species and ecosystems by promoting the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology.

The Protocol allows Parties to use their domestic regulatory frameworks so long as these are consistent with the Protocol

The Protocol addresses illegal transboundary movements and unintentional transboundary movements of living modified organisms (LMOs)

**Status of ratification by Arab Countries:**

- Only 13 Arab countries ratified the Protocol.

**National contacts and information:** <http://www.cbd.int/information/nfp.shtml>



## CITES

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (**CITES**);

The objective of CITES is to subject international trade in specified endangered or vulnerable species of flora and fauna to a licensing system.

- Appendix I species are those threatened with extinction and trade in these species is only allowed in exceptional circumstances.
- Appendix II species are not necessarily threatened with extinction, but trade is controlled in order to ensure sustainable use.
- Appendix III species are those which are protected in at least one country which has asked the parties for help in controlling the trade. CITES, as a trade instrument, differs from other conventions in that it concerns itself not only with living specimens, but also with dead animals and plants and their parts.

### Status of ratification by Arab Countries:

- All Arab states except Bahrain, Iraq, Lebanon, Oman, and Palestinian National Authority

### National contacts and information:

[http://www.cites.org/common/directy/e\\_directy.html](http://www.cites.org/common/directy/e_directy.html)



## Montreal Protocol

The **Montreal Protocol** on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer;

The Montreal Protocol controls the production and consumption of specific man-made chemicals (like CFCs, halons etc) that destroy the ozone layer, the Earth's protective shield against the UV-B radiation. The production and consumption of all ODS by human activities are now tightly regulated worldwide under the Montreal Protocol.

Each Party to the Montreal Protocol is committed to complying with their target schedule for ODS phase-out and must introduce control measures to ensure that their government will meet its obligations.

Implementing Agencies for the Protocol provide technical and policy assistance to the countries. Each agency collaborates with the Parties on the different aspects of project implementation and compliance issues. These programmes have been designed to help control the production and consumption of ODS, as well as illegal trade in these substances.

### Status of ratification by Arab Countries:

- All Arab countries are Parties except Iraq & Palestinian National Authority

### National contacts and information:

[http://ozone.unep.org/Data\\_Reporting/Focal\\_Points\\_for\\_Licensing\\_Systems.shtml](http://ozone.unep.org/Data_Reporting/Focal_Points_for_Licensing_Systems.shtml)



## Rotterdam Convention (1998, 2004)

The **Rotterdam Convention** on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade;

To promote shared responsibility and cooperative efforts among Parties in the international trade of certain hazardous chemicals in order to protect human health and the environment by:

- Providing early warning of potentially hazardous chemicals
- Providing the basis for decisions regarding of future imports of chemicals (PIC procedure)
- Helping to enforce those import decisions

### Applies to:

- Chemicals banned or severely restricted
- Severely hazardous pesticide formulations (SHPF) - causing problems under conditions of use in developing countries or countries with economies in transition

### Status of ratification by Arab Countries:

- Only 14 Arab countries ratified the Protocol.

### National contacts and information:

<http://www.pic.int/home.php?type=t&id=9&sid=17>



## Stockholm Convention (2001,2004)

The **Stockholm Convention** on Persistent Organic Pollutants

To protect human health and the environment from persistent organic pollutants (12 POPs):

- carbon-based compounds
- remain in the environment for a long time;
- become widely distributed throughout the environment;
- accumulate in fatty tissue of living organisms; and
- are toxic to humans and wildlife.
- Pesticides, Industrial Chemicals & By-products

### Provisions:

- Elimination
- Restriction
- Release Elimination/Reduction
- Trade Related Provision
- BAT/BEP
- Management of Wastes & Stockpiles
- New POPs

### Status of ratification by Arab Countries:

- All Arab Countries ratified, except Somalia, Iraq & Palestinian National Authority

**National contacts and information:** <http://www.pops.int/documents/contactpoints/>



## MEAs & Customs Officers

Common denominator in all the above mentioned MEAs is the important role of Customs Officers



**Why?**



## Green Customs



- Illegal trade in commodities such as ozone depleting substances (ODS), toxic chemicals, hazardous wastes and endangered plant and animal species can seriously undermine the effectiveness of MEAs.
- As any country's first line of defense against illegal trade, building the capacity of Customs Officers is therefore vital.





## Advantages of a Common Platform for Capacity Building

### For the Countries:

- Coordinated capacity building of national Customs Officers
- Most efficient use of national human and financial resources
- Assistance with national compliance under MEAs.



## Advantages of a Common Platform for Capacity Building – Contd. 1.

### For the MEA Secretariats:

Cost effective use of limited financial and human resources;

- Sharing of training infrastructure developed by the Secretariats;
- Improved, effective and sustained compliance with the Conventions;





## Advantages of a Common Platform for Capacity Building – Contd. 2.

### For the Global Environment

- “Greening” the Customs Services
- Decrease in environmental crime
- Better and cleaner environment



## Summary- GCI: Objectives of Integrated Training Approach

- Promote greater awareness and build capacity of Customs officers on several MEAs at the same time
- Provide a holistic view of the common issues and challenges to complement the specific enforcement of and compliance with the MEAs.
- Develop Customs Officers’ reflex to consider cross-cutting issues in dealing with shipments of environmentally-sensitive commodities .
- Improved effectiveness and cost-savings related to implementation of MEAs.
- Increased detection of smugglers and illegally-traded commodities by national customs officers in the context of specific MEA enforcement





# Thank you

