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2023 WCO Technology Conference

Break-out session C3. Unlocking the Power of Data Exchange:
Maximizing Efficiency through the Use of the WCO Data Model

10 to 12 October 2023, Ha Noi, Viet Nam

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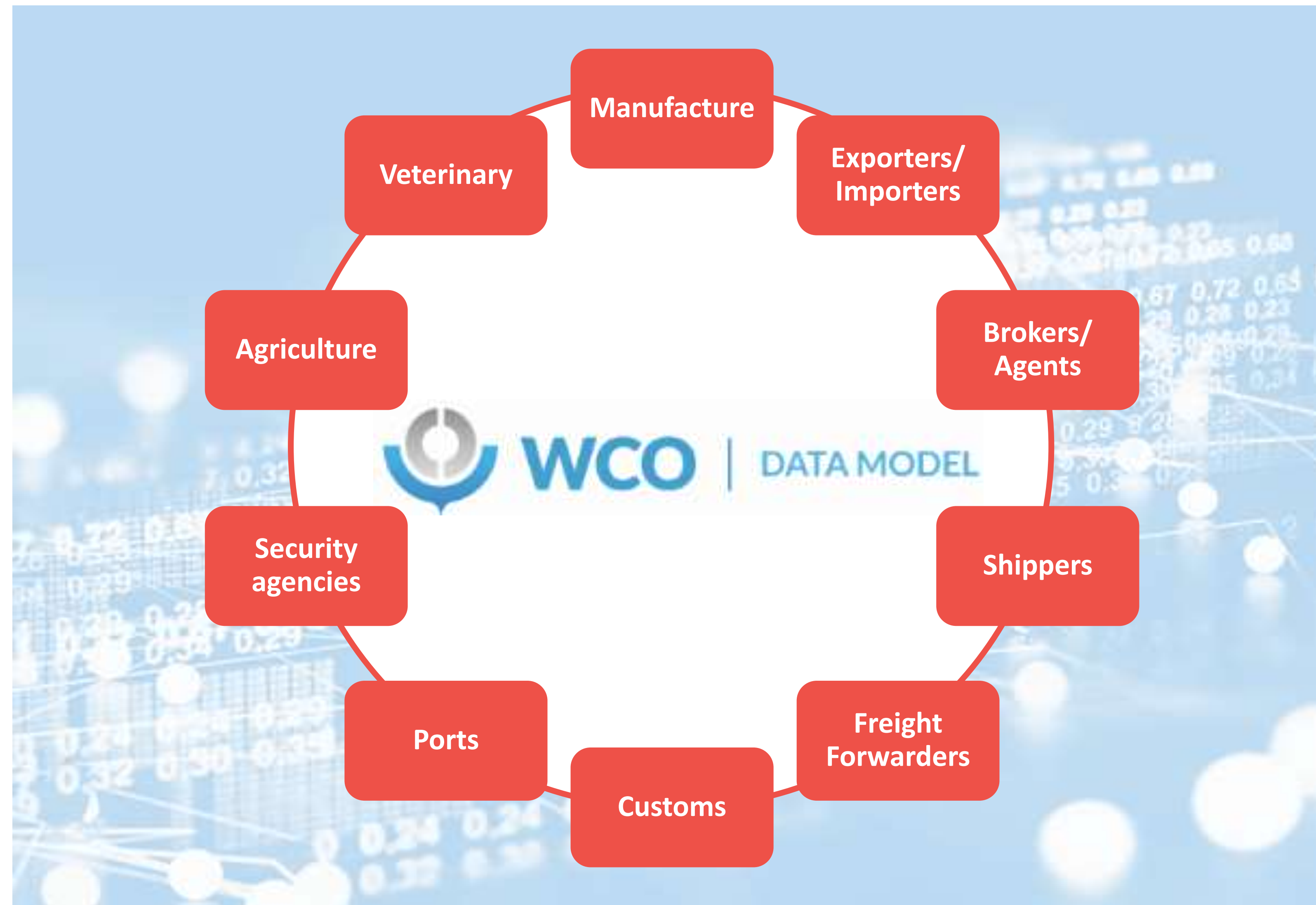netcompany

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While the WCO Data Model can be an excellent starting point for bringing International Customs IT implementations closer, solution vendors need to address flexibly the numerous challenges of marrying the WCO DM with National needs and legacy

Benefits of building around the WCO Data Model

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The **obvious benefits**
- A standardization blessing…
- Global applicability
- Common language for all stakeholders

The **hidden bonuses**
- Enables vendor investment on standard patterns
- Objective and unbiased
- Technology neutral
- Open to evolution

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Objective difficulties

- Legacy systems in place
- Historical data
- Compatibility/Mapping issues
- Project fragmentation
- Multiple stakeholders (some not easily reachable)

Facing the cost of change

- Resistance to change
- Migration cost
- Hesitation to address Trader Community

Data model changes are an organization-wide challenge. However, a vendor or SI usually does not control the full ecosystem of developed systems within the project scope, thus attempts to establish a new DM is often limited and occasionally undermined.

Same data structure, different use:
- Alternative/improper usage of fields
- loose interpretation of terms
- Varying validation & conformance rules

Data Model changes often point to different ways of collecting and keeping information. This creates a prerequisite of a legal and alignment preparation Framework reaching outside the technical project scope. in most cases, this preparation Framework does not exist. This leads to: Delays, miscommunication, wrong budgeting and in many cases project failure (or substantial compromises)

Suggestions to the vendor community…

- **Try to use and maintain a pure WCODM based exchange of data with the Trader Community**

- **A more "relaxed" solution/product internal model that is WCODM-driven might be needed to act as a bridge between:**

  - Trader Community pure WCODM messages and

  - Country systems that will continue to act on legacy data structures

- **A strong, easy and flexible mapping mechanism must be created/used to maintain:**

  - Data mapping between internal & external models allowing both to change dynamically

  - Semantic/XSD Validation may differ per country

  - Business-level data Validation

- **Maximize options/data-elements offered by the WCODM for extensions**

- **Do not compromise with easy workarounds, have your analysts exhaust proper use of the WCODM structure branches**

- **Stay aware of International best practices applicable and WCODM changes**

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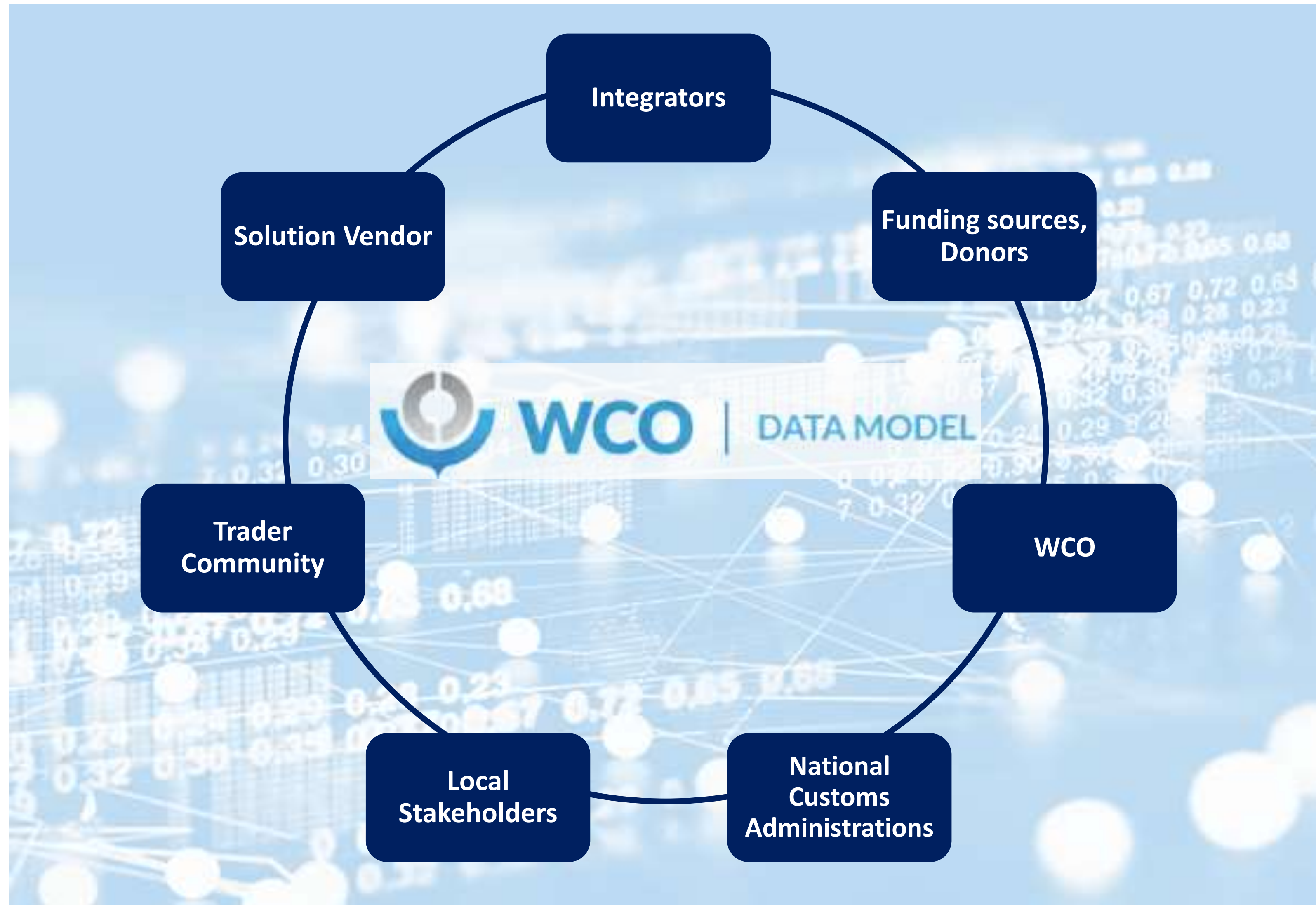
Suggestions to National Administrations…

▪ **Build change management and support for the Trader Community including:**

   - Early awareness for planning and preparation
   - Training
   - Trader Conformance Test Environment
   - Early-bird Pilot Traders program
   - Trader Migration Strategy
   - Model Mapping Tools
   - Migration Strategy Stopgap solution

▪ **Create a preparatory Framework for easier National convergence to WCODM friendly information forms and structures. This project needs to start prior to the relevant implementation projects**

▪ **Allow enough time and budget for proper preparation and implementation**

…and some Suggestions for WCO's consideration…

Stay open to suggestions from the vendor community for enhancements of the data model. Some examples coming from recent work in the EU:

▪ **Higher standardization of country-to-country message exchange is needed**

▪ **WCODM does not include intra-customs messages for risk and control results exchange**

We all need to contribute

Vendors & implementors
- Flexibility on mapping
- Future proof upkeep
- COTS readiness

WCO
- Stay open to suggestions

National Authorities & stakeholders
- Embrace, prepare and endorse the change

Trader Community and donors
- Make the extra investment towards standardization

Thank you!