



World Customs Organization
Organisation mondiale des douanes

SUMMARY REPORT

Global Forum on Origin Interconnectivity

3 – 4 FEBRUARY 2025
WCO Headquarters, Brussels





The World Customs Organization (WCO) successfully convened the WCO Global Forum on Origin Interconnectivity at its Headquarters, in Brussels, Belgium on 3 - 4 February 2025.

Supported by the Korea Customs service, and the European Union (EU), through the EU-WCO Programme for Rules of Origin in Africa, this event attracted around 300 in-person participants from 112 countries, including representatives from Customs administrations (52%), the private sector (26%), academia, and international organizations, and numerous online participants consolidating its prominence as a global forum for origin-related processes.

The two-day event organized under the theme «Facilitating Trade with Origin Interconnectivity: From Framework to Implementation,» featured 32 speakers across five panel sessions, thus allowing participants to discuss advancements in Origin digitalization and interconnectivity.

Facilitating Trade with Origin Interconnectivity: From Framework to Implementation



In his opening address, the WCO Deputy Secretary General, Mr. Ricardo Treviño Chapa noted that the forum would serve as a vital platform for knowledge exchange and collaboration, stating, «*this event provides a space to share experiences, foster partnerships, and advance discussions on the digitalization and interoperability of Origin-related processes*».

Emphasizing the importance of strengthening Origin interconnectivity to facilitate trade, the Deputy Secretary General thanked the Korea Customs Service (KCS) and the European Union (EU), through the EU-WCO Programme for Rules of Origin in Africa, for co-funding this Forum to provide this valuable opportunity.

Additionally, Mr. Treviño Chapa presented updates on the WCO's efforts on digitalizing origin data exchanges. Since 2022, the WCO has conducted research on origin-related processes, resulting in a Feasibility Study aimed at



establishing an Interconnectivity Framework for Certificates of Origin. This initiative, endorsed by the WCO Council, aligns with the WCO Strategic Plan 2022-2025 and aims to improve automation and interoperability.

The opening ceremony also included two distinguished speakers, Dr. Im Hyuncheol, Customs Attaché at the Embassy of the Republic of Korea to Belgium and the European Union, Ms. Isabel Garcia Catalan, Head of Unit of DG TAXUD A6 at the European Commission, who

both shared the importance of enhancing digital connectivity and trade facilitation.

Ms. Gael Grooby, Acting Director of the Tariff and Trade Affairs Directorate, and Mr. Brendan O'Hearn, Acting Director of the Compliance and Facilitation Directorate, moderated the opening session because the Forum was a result of the collaborative work between the Origin and Facilitation Sub-Directorates of the WCO Secretariat.



Session 1: Relevance/Importance of Origin Interconnectivity

Day One
Monday 3 February

Session 1 focused on the significance of Origin Interconnectivity, emphasizing its role in streamlining origin certification processes through digitalization and interoperability. The discussion highlighted the need for seamless coordination among key stakeholders, including the private sector, issuing authorities, Customs administrations, and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to enhance efficiency and transparency in trade operations.

Moderated by Mr. Badr MOUHCINE, Head of EU-WCO Programmes HS and RoO Africa, from the WCO Secretariat, the session explored the needs, opportunities, and challenges associated with implementing Origin Interconnectivity, particularly in the context of trade facilitation.

Speakers emphasized that digitalization plays a key role in reducing administrative burdens, improving trade facilitation, and enhancing transparency. Ms. Louise Wiggett, Chief Executive Officer of the Global Trade Solution, highlighted the need for digitization & interconnectivity from the private sector's perspective by highlighting the benefits of digitization and benefit of interconnectivity in terms of facilitation and compliance. She also emphasized the need for strong government and private sector collaboration. From a Customs perspective, Ms. OUK Chansopheap, Deputy Director of the Department of International Customs Cooperation, General Department of Customs and Excise of Cambodia, shared Cambodia's national practice on enhancing trade efficiency and regional integration. Ms. Asmaa Saidi, from the Customs and Excise Administration of

Morocco, shared the national experiences and perspectives on integrating digital solutions for origin certification. From a regional standpoint, Ms. Aissata Koffi Yameogo, Programme Officer for

Rules of Origin and Management of Community Preferential Regime at ECOWAS presented the journey of implementation of the ECOWAS Electronic Certificate of Origin.





Session 2: Interconnectivity of the Certificate of Origin (CO)

Day One
Monday 3 February

Session 2 focused on the interconnectivity of Certificates of Origin (CO) and the adoption of best practices to enhance the efficiency, security, and reliability of origin certification systems. The session showcased various national and regional approaches aimed at facilitating seamless CO exchange among players like, Customs administrations, issuing authorities, and economic operators.

Moderated by Ms. Sun Hwa CHO, Assistant Director, External Relations Division, Korea Customs Service (KCS), the panel discussion highlighted key practices and experiences on CO interconnectivity from different regions.

Mr. Nitas Polachai, Senior Officer, Digital Economy Division, ASEAN Secretariat, presented the practices related to ASEAN SINGLE WINDOW including Regional Agreements and Protocols, Technical Solution & Practice, and how the ASEAN e-Certificate of Origin is exchanged of via ASEAN single window.

Mr. Antonino De Lorenzo, Senior Expert, and Ms. Svetlana Raudonen, Policy Officer, DG TAXUD, European Commission, co-presented the EU's project for the digitalization of proofs of origin; the e-PoC system, highlighting its role in facilitating electronic proof of origin under the Pan-Euro-Mediterranean Convention.

Ms. Fiorella Cagnone Clavero, Chief of Valuation and Origin Division, Uruguay Customs, presented Uruguay's experience related to interconnectivity of the certificate of origin.



Ms. Nelisiwe Nxumalo, Manager of Origin, Eswatini Revenue Service (ERS), shared Eswatini's national practices in implementing the e-CO in

the context of SADC and COMESA, detailing the challenges and progress made in streamlining origin certification within the continent.



Session 3: Digitalization of the Declaration of Origin (DO)

Day One
Monday 3 February

Session 3 focused on the digitalization of the Declaration of Origin (DO) and the adoption of various digital practices to enhance transparency, traceability, and efficiency in origin declaration processes. By integrating digital solutions, countries and organizations can achieve faster verification, reduced administrative burdens, and a more secure exchange of trade-related information, ultimately facilitating smoother cross-border trade.

Moderated by Mr. Darlan F. Marti, Trade Policy Specialist, WTO Market Access Division, and Secretary of the WTO Committee on Rules of Origin (CRO), the panel featured experts' presentations on innovative approaches to digitalizing DO systems and self-declaration mechanisms.

Mr. Sebastian Agustino Macias, International Relations Officer, DG TAXUD, European Commission, presented the Registered Exporter System (REX), an EU initiative that streamlines self-declarations by registered exporters and possible areas of future work. Mr. Martin Van Der Weide, Policy Advisor on Origin at the Netherlands Chamber of Commerce and Chair of the ICC/World Chambers Federation International Certificate of Origin Council, presented the ICC verification platform, which is also available for the Preferential Statement. Mr. Chao Wu, Deputy Section Chief, Customs National Supervision Bureau for Duty Collection (Shanghai), General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China (GACC), introduced China Custom's digital approach to Declaration of Origin data exchange, highlighting the use of Customs systems to facilitate real-

time information sharing. Mr. Godsway Smile Agbemenu, Chief Revenue Officer, Customs Policy and Programme, Ghana Revenue Authority, discussed Ghana's self-declaration systems,

particularly within the EU-Ghana steppingstone EPA framework. He highlighted the benefits of digital platforms such as ICUMS in enhancing efficiency, compliance, and trade facilitation.





Session 4: WCO Tools on Origin Interconnectivity

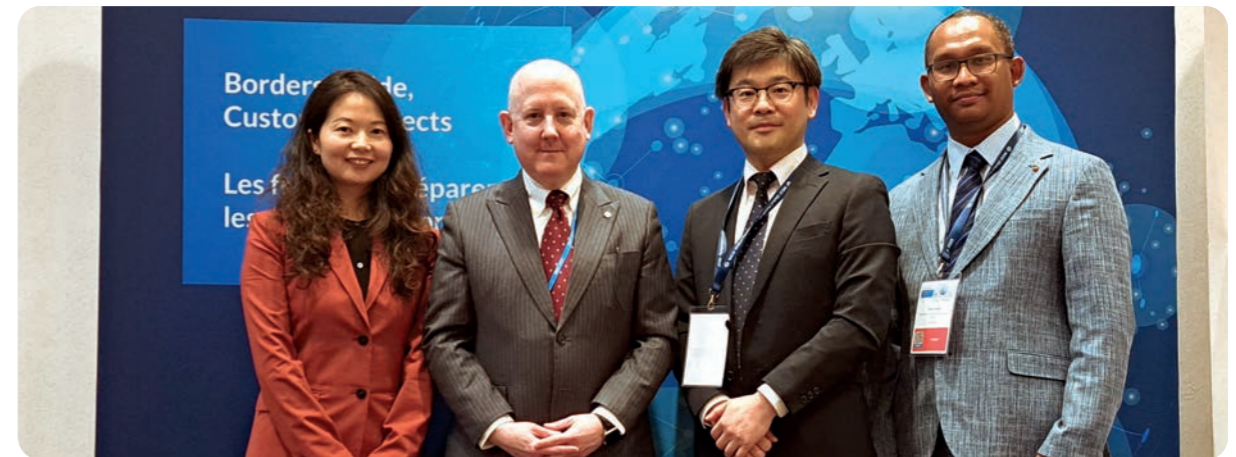
Day Two
Tuesday 4 February

Panel Discussion 4 focused on the WCO Tools on Origin Interconnectivity, presenting the outcome of the WCO recent study: feasibility study on the interconnectivity framework for certificates of origin, and its role in facilitating seamless, automated data exchange between exporting authorities and importing Customs administrations. The session highlighted four key elements of the WCO Interconnectivity Framework for the Certificate of Origin, namely the dataset for e-CO, the business process model, the legal framework and the technological structures.

The session was moderated by Mr. Brendan O'HEARN, Acting Director, Compliance and Facilitation Directorate, WCO Secretariat, and divided into two parts, each covering essential components of the WCO's interconnectivity framework for certificate of origin.

Ms. Chunxiao XU, Technical Attaché, Origin Sub-Directorate, Tariff and Trade Affairs Directorate, WCO Secretariat, presented the WCO's *Feasibility study on the Interconnectivity Framework for Certificates of Origin*, highlighting the need for automated data exchange and interoperability in origin certification processes. The study underscored the benefits of reducing manual processing, improving compliance, and ensuring secure and efficient trade operations. Mr. Tejo Kusuma, Policy Analyst, Directorate General of Customs and Excise, Indonesia, outlined the dataset for e-CO for a standardized e-CO system, which is included as a package of the WCO Data Model. He emphasized the need for harmonization with existing international standards to ensure interoperability among different systems. Mr. Atsushi TANAKA, Deputy Director, Office of Rules of Origin, Customs and Tariff Bureau, Ministry of Finance, Japan, discussed the business process model for CO interconnectivity. He highlighted how digital workflows and automated verification mechanisms can optimize origin certification procedures, reducing processing time and increasing efficiency.

Mr. Donggeun KIM, Technical Attaché, Facilitation Sub-Directorate, Compliance and Facilitation Directorate, WCO Secretariat, addressed the legal considerations for establishing a robust interconnectivity framework. His presentation focused on aligning legal frameworks across jurisdictions to facilitate cross-border electronic certification, ensuring data security, privacy, and regulatory compliance. Mr. Fachry R.



Oemar, Deputy Director, Information System Planning, Indonesia National Single Window Agency, shared insights on the technical aspects of interconnectivity, including system architecture, cybersecurity, and interoperability standards. He emphasized the importance of secure data transmission protocols and real-time data exchange to enhance efficiency in trade

operations. Additionally, the Session showcased ASEAN-ROK Regional e-CO Exchange Platform (EODES). Dr. Seung Hyun CHA, General Manager, Consulting Team, Customs UNI-PASS International Agency made a presentation on how a regional approach could enhance trade facilitation, reduce administrative burdens, and increase transparency in origin certification processes.





Session 5: Way Forward: Global Collaboration on Origin Interconnectivity

Day Two
Tuesday 4 February

The final panel discussion focused on the way forward for global collaboration on origin interconnectivity, emphasizing the need for international cooperation, regulatory harmonization, and technological advancements. The discussion highlighted the importance of capacity building and governance structures in supporting a more efficient, transparent, and integrated origin certification system, ultimately contributing to global trade facilitation and economic growth.

The session was moderated by Ms. Gael GROOBY, Acting Director, Tariff and Trade Affairs Directorate, WCO Secretariat, and featured diverse perspectives from Customs administrations, private sector representatives, regional organizations, and development agencies.

Ms. Kelly Morgero, Secretaria Especial da Receita Federal do Brasil, presented the Brazilian Customs' electronic certificate of origin and emphasized the need for strengthened collaboration between Customs authorities, leveraging digitalization to improve real-time information exchange and risk management. Mr. Nelson Brens, President of Asociación Int'l Agentes Profesionales de Aduana (ASAPRA), shared the perspective that digitalization and the interconnectivity of origin represented a step forward for international trade, but its success depended on collaboration between the public and private sectors. Customs Single Windows can serve as a point of convergence to ensure security and efficiency in the exchange of certificates of origin. He emphasized that dialogue between companies and Customs administrations was essential for this transition to occur harmoniously. Mr. Pedro Gomes Estevão, Principal Program Officer, Trade Facilitation, AfCFTA Secretariat, provided insights on the African Continental Free



Trade Area (AfCFTA) and its efforts to implement digital trade solutions. He emphasized that leveraging advanced technologies, regulatory harmonisation and standardisation, as well as capacity building are essential to achieve seamless origin integration. Mr. Stefano Inama, Chief Technical Assistance, Trade and Customs in the Division on African and Least Developed Countries (LDCs), UNCTAD, discussed the models of certification and administration of rules of

origin, highlighting the need for multilateral action. Ms. Mette Azzam, Lead Origin Expert, EU-WCO RoO Africa Programme, WCO Secretariat emphasized the benefits of self-declaration of origin and the importance of building trust among different stakeholders, such as Customs, other governmental bodies, the private sector, and regional entities to drive efficient and reliable origin interconnectivity.



Closing



In the closing, Ms. Gael Grooby, Acting Director, Tariff and Trade Affairs Directorate, WCO Secretariat, reflected on the key takeaways from the forum and expressed gratitude to the stakeholders who had contributed to its success.

The Closing Session of the WCO Global Forum on Origin Interconnectivity marked the conclusion of two days of engaging discussions, knowledge sharing, and collaboration on the future of origin interconnectivity and digitalization.

More Information:

Presentation of the Global Forum

<https://origin2025.wcoevents.org/en/presentations>



