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Page: 1/6

**Council for Trade-Related Aspects of
Intellectual Property Rights**

Original: English

**TECHNICAL COOPERATION ACTIVITIES: INFORMATION FROM
OTHER INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS**

WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION (WCO)

At its meeting of 14-15 June 2023, the Council for TRIPS agreed to invite intergovernmental organization observers to the Council to update the information on their technical and financial cooperation programmes relating to the implementation of the TRIPS Agreement.

The present document reproduces the information which has been received from the World Customs Organization (WCO) by means of a communication dated 13 September 2023.

**1 OVERVIEW OF WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION (WCO) ACTIVITIES AND TOOLS OF
RELEVANCE TO THE TRIPS AGREEMENT**

1. The Intellectual Property Rights (IPR), Health and Safety Programme of the World Customs Organization (WCO) maintains its resolve to protect consumer health and safety, and continues to combat counterfeiting and piracy through a variety of activities described in the following paragraphs. The WCO experience in this field is in line with the other international organizations working in the field of IPR enforcement. There seems to be a shift of the *modus operandi* towards the use of small consignments thus reducing the numbers of large seizures, but there does not seem to be any significant fall in the number of counterfeits traded globally. The WCO's main activity is to raise awareness about customs work in this area either towards other international organizations or by promoting capacity building activities for our member administrations. The capacity building consists of two factors; training through workshops and education and training through operational activities. A list of the WCO activities is attached in the Annex.

1.1 Operations

2. The WCO organizes simultaneous enforcement activities with multiple customs administrations. These operations are aimed at knowing the scale of global counterfeiting whilst providing participating customs officers with hands-on experience. Operations, which quantify and qualify the impact of counterfeit activities, can also serve as an excellent opportunity to strengthen Customs' enforcement capacity. Participating members are able to learn about practical border enforcement measures through our Accredited Experts and gain hands-on experience using WCO tools, such as the IPR CENcomm Group.

3. The IPR CENcomm Group is a secure communication tool used for data exchange on IPR enforcement, enabling real time sharing of information between WCO members. WCO Operation STOP and STOP II respectively held in 2020 and 2021 to 2022, was for fighting against illicit medicines and medical products linked to the COVID-19 pandemic. Participating members used the IPR CENcomm Group to report their seizures and the WCO secretariat shared information alerts to members through the platform.

1.2 National/Regional seminars

4. The WCO delivers extensive capacity building activities, mainly in the form of legislative training, document targeting training and product identification training, with private sector cooperation. But the organization also performs diagnostic missions. In the diagnostic missions, WCO experts visit the country and assess the Customs administrations capabilities in the domain of fighting counterfeits. The evaluation includes both the legal base and practical and procedural arrangements, and leads to a recommendation from WCO. The WCO conducted several training seminars/workshops for officers from a number of WCO member administrations in this reporting period.

1.3 Counterfeit and Piracy Group (CAP) meeting

5. The annual WCO Counterfeiting and Piracy (CAP) Group meeting provides a forum for customs and related law enforcement agencies to exchange information, experiences and best practices on combating counterfeiting and piracy. During this meeting, members shared their experiences and exchanged practices on fighting counterfeits.

1.4 E-learning module (CLiCK)

6. By using the WCO's internet-based e-learning module 'CLiCK', customs officers can acquire practical knowledge on border enforcement related to IPR. They can train themselves on intellectual property (IP) agreements, such as the TRIPS Agreement, and on practical, risk-based document targeting.

ANNEX¹

Name of programme or project	National Workshop on Combating Counterfeiting and Piracy
Date and end date	26 September 2022 - 30 September 2022
Beneficiary Member(s) or observer(s)	Lao People's Democratic Republic
Brief description	From 26 to 30 September 2022, the World Customs Organization (WCO) delivered a national workshop on the protection of intellectual property rights (IPR) in Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR). The workshop was attended by 28 officials from Lao Customs
Beneficiary institution or audience	
Technical cooperation provider(s)	
Outputs or impact	Participants had the opportunity to become familiar with the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), the theoretical concepts surrounding IPR and the broad spectrum of the most frequent IPR infringements committed during the COVID-19 pandemic. They also received information on the WCO's tools and instruments relevant for managing IPR-related risks, which resulted in some interesting discussions among participants as well as with speakers.
Website for further information	https://www.wcoomd.org/en/media/newsroom/2022/october/wco-workshop-on-ipr-protection-held-in-lao-pdr.aspx
Contact point for further information	IPRteam@wcoomd.org .

¹ In English only.

Name of programme or project	National Workshop on Combating Counterfeiting and Piracy
Date and end date	28 November 2022 - 2 December 2022
Beneficiary Member(s) or observer(s)	Philippines
Brief description	From 28 November to 2 December 2022, the World Customs Organization (WCO) delivered a national workshop on the protection of intellectual property rights (IPR) in Manila, Philippines. The workshop was attended by 28 officials from Philippines Bureau of Customs (BOC)
Beneficiary institution or audience	
Technical cooperation provider(s)	
Outputs or impact	Participants broadened knowledge on IPR enforcement including other WCO members practices and international treaties.
Website for further information	https://www.wcoomd.org/en/media/newsroom/2022/december/wco-national-workshop-for-the-philippines-bureau-of-customs-on-the-protection-of-ipr.aspx
Contact point for further information	IPR.Team@wcoomd.org

Name of programme or project	National Workshop on Combating Counterfeiting and Piracy
Date and end date	28 November 2022 - 2 December 2022
Beneficiary Member(s) or observer(s)	Ecuador
Brief description	From 28 November to 2 December 2022, the World Customs Organization (WCO) delivered a national workshop on the protection of intellectual property rights (IPR) in Guayaquil, Ecuador. The workshop was attended by 20 officials from Ecuador Customs and was facilitated by an expert from the WCO Secretariat along with two pre-accredited experts from Argentina and the Dominican Republic.
Beneficiary institution or audience	
Technical cooperation provider(s)	
Outputs or impact	Participants learned about the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs), the theoretical concepts surrounding IPR and the broad spectrum of the most frequent IPR infringements encountered during the COVID-19 pandemic. They also received information on relevant WCO's tools and instruments for managing IPR-related risks, which resulted in some interesting discussions among participants as well as with the speakers.
Website for further information	https://www.wcoomd.org/en/media/newsroom/2022/december/ecuador-welcomes-wco-workshop-on-ipr-protection.aspx
Contact point for further information	IPR.Team@wcoomd.org

Name of programme or project	National Workshop on Combating Counterfeiting and Piracy
Date and end date	6 December 2022 - 8 December 2022
Beneficiary Member(s) or observer(s)	Papua New Guinea
Brief description	From 6 to 8 December 2022, the World Customs Organization (WCO) organized an online National Workshop on Combatting Counterfeiting and Piracy for the Papua New Guinea (PNG) Customs Service, supported by the Customs Cooperation Fund of Japan (CCF Japan). More than 30 participants from the PNG Customs Service attended the Workshop.
Beneficiary institution or audience	
Technical cooperation provider(s)	
Outputs or impact	Participants were made aware of the challenges faced by PNG Customs and of the important role played by Customs in securing borders and safeguarding society, by preventing counterfeit and illicit items from entering their country.
Website for further information	https://www.wcoomd.org/en/media/newsroom/2023/january/wco-national-workshop-on-combatting-counterfeiting-and-piracy-for-the-papua-new-guinea.aspx
Contact point for further information	IPR.Team@wcoomd.org

Name of programme or project	National Workshop on Combating Counterfeiting and Piracy
Date and end date	8 May 2023 - 12 May 2023
Beneficiary Member(s) or observer(s)	Viet Nam
Brief description	From 8 to 12 May 2023, the World Customs Organization (WCO) conducted a five-day national workshop focusing on intellectual property rights (IPR) protection of in Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam. The workshop was attended by 26 Vietnamese Customs officials
Beneficiary institution or audience	
Technical cooperation provider(s)	
Outputs or impact	Participants got broaden knowledge on IPR enforcement including other WCO members practices and international treaties.
Website for further information	https://www.wcoomd.org/en/media/newsroom/2023/june/wco-ipr-workshop-organized-for-vietnamese-customs-officials.aspx
Contact point for further information	IPRteam@wcoomd.org .

Name of programme or project	National Workshop on Combating Counterfeiting and Piracy
Date and end date	8 May 2023 - 12 May 2023
Beneficiary Member(s) or observer(s)	Mali
Brief description	From 8 to 12 May 2023, at the invitation of the Mali Directorate General of Customs, the World Customs Organization (WCO) delivered a national workshop on combatting counterfeiting and piracy in Bamako (Mali). This five-day workshop, which was attended by 20 officials from Mali Customs, comes under the umbrella of the WCO's Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Strategy, which gives pride of place to capacity building activities in this area for Member Customs administrations.
Beneficiary institution or audience	
Technical cooperation provider(s)	
Outputs or impact	The main aims of this workshop were to (i) provide an overview of best practices in combatting counterfeiting and piracy; (ii) present the details of the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS); and (iii) familiarize the participants with risk analysis and targeting techniques to detect counterfeit goods, as well as the functionalities of the WCO's "IPR CENcomm" secure communication tool.
Website for further information	https://www.wcoomd.org/en/media/newsroom/2023/may/wco-holds-a-national-workshop-on-combatting-counterfeiting-and-piracy-for-mali-customs.aspx
Contact point for further information	IPRteam@wcoomd.org

Name of programme or project	Sub-regional Workshop on Combatting Counterfeiting and Piracy
Date and end date	31 May 2023 - 2 June 2023
Beneficiary Member(s) or observer(s)	Argentina; Plurinational State of Bolivia; Chile; Paraguay; Uruguay
Brief description	From 31 May to 2 June 2023, the World Customs Organization (WCO) held a sub-regional workshop on combatting counterfeiting and piracy in Iguazú, Argentina, located in the "Triple Frontier", or tri-border area, between Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay. The three-day workshop was attended by 26 customs officials from Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay
Beneficiary institution or audience	
Technical cooperation provider(s)	
Outputs or impact	Workshop sought to strengthen cooperation between the customs administrations of the region in order to boost the efforts undertaken by each country to provide better protection for intellectual property rights (IPR).
Website for further information	https://www.wcoomd.org/en/media/newsroom/2023/june/wco-sub-regional-workshop-on-combatting-counterfeiting-and-piracy-for-mercosur-countries.aspx
Contact point for further information	IPRteam@wcoomd.org .