

GreenCustoms

Report of the Fifth Green Customs Initiative Partners Meeting

Brussels, 26 - 27 January 2009



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Executive Summary

The Fifth Green Customs Initiative (GCI) Partners meeting was held on the 26th and 27th January 2009. The meeting was hosted by the World Customs Organisation at their headquarters in Brussels, Belgium and was included as part of the International Customs Day celebrations, the theme of which was: “Customs and the Environment: Protecting our Natural Heritage”.

The meeting was opened by WCO Secretary General Mr Kunio Mikuryia. The annual meeting provided an opportunity for GCI Partners and the Green Customs Secretariat to provide an update on activities over the year and discuss progress and plans for the coming year. A workplan for GCI training/awareness raising workshops was provisionally agreed (contingent on funding). Various other relevant issues were discussed, including the pressing need for funds, particularly to support a GCI coordinator position, potential side events and outreach opportunities, improving and updating the materials used in workshops and identifying ways to effectively cooperate with other organisations. A number of action points were agreed for the forthcoming year and a post-meeting evaluation was used to seek the views of Partners.

Participating Partners were representatives from the secretariats of the Basel Convention, the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, CITES, the Montreal Protocol, the Rotterdam Convention, the Stockholm Convention, as well the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, UNEP and the World Customs Organization. The Partners to the Green Customs Initiative welcomed the participation, for the first time, of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in the meeting.

1. Participants

Juliette Kohler - Secretariat of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal

Kathryn Garforth - Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

Stephen Nash - Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

Gilbert Bankobeza - Secretariat of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer

Kalimi Mworira, Steve Wade, Bernard Amoh - Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)

Laura Meszaros - Secretariat of the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade. Also representing the Secretariat of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants

Hui Fu, Ed de Jong, Thibault Hermes, - World Customs Organization (WCO)

Rajendra Shende, Ezra Clark, - OzonAction UNEP- Division of Technology Industry & Economics (DTIE)

Nicole Maric - United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

Apologies:

David Higgins, Interpol General Secretariat

Arnold Kreilhuber, Elizabeth Mrema - UNEP- Division of Environmental Law and Conventions (DELIC)

2. Introduction

The Fifth Green Customs Initiative Partners meeting was held on the 26th and 27th January 2009. The meeting was hosted by the World Customs Organisation at their headquarters in Brussels, Belgium and was included as part of the International Customs Day celebrations, the theme of which was: "Customs and the Environment: Protecting our Natural Heritage". A number of Partners attended these celebrations, which were held on the morning of the 26th January, prior to the Partners meeting. Highlights included speeches by the WCO Secretary General Mr Kunio Mikuryia, and other distinguished guests, an exhibition by Belgium Customs of seizures of endangered species, a demonstration by German Customs of the use of sniffer dogs in identifying smuggling of such items.

The partners to the Green Customs Initiative were very grateful for the opportunity to participate in this event and for the support and hospitality of the WCO in hosting the Green Customs Partners meeting. The Partners to the Green Customs Initiative welcomed the participation, for the first time, of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in the meeting.

The agenda for the meeting is provided in Appendix I.

3. Introductory addresses

Rajendra Shende, Head, OzonAction UNEP DTIE, welcomed the Partners and thanked Mr. Kunio Mikuriya, Secretary General of the World Customs Organization (WCO) for opening the meeting.

Mr. Kunio Mikuriya gave an opening address focusing on environment protection and cooperation. He highlighted the global responsibility customs has for safety, health and environment, in responding to the needs of globalisation and at the same time for protecting society, in addition to the traditional customs role as a revenue collection agency.

He indicated that the GCI partnership was valuable to customs officers on the frontline as it aims to raise the awareness of these officers to trade-related environment issues. He highlighted the essential role played by customs in the cross-border movement of goods, indicating that frontline officers in many customs administrations lack accurate information and experience on how to deal with environmentally sensitive goods and highlighting the need for training and emphasising the importance of communication and cooperation between customs and the other competent authorities and stakeholders to tackle this problem.

Mr Mikuriya recalled that Customs has done much to contribute to protect the environment over the years. He stated that environment protection is a cross-cutting agenda, which covers a wide range of areas such as CITES, ozone depleting substances, hazardous wastes, etc and hence needs more joint operations based on risk analysis to identify environmentally sensitive goods. He stressed that Partners should work together on methodologies of how to seize and how to deal with seizures, recognizing customs has the authority to inspect goods and frequently need more specific information and assistance in dealing with these type of commodities. In this regard, he stated that under the GCI framework, Partners have jointly organised workshops, prepared training material, and provided a platform for cooperation on common problems.

Finally, the Secretary General mentioned the importance of the partnership in a time of global economic crisis, by acting together. He suggested we can help protect our natural heritage for future generations as the crisis could offer both positive and negative impacts and influences on environment protection. He concluded that we should live up to our responsibility and highlight the issue of environment from the point of view of customs and cooperation between Partners.

Following the opening address by Secretary General of the WCO, Mr Shende introduced the expected results of the Partners Meeting and described the organisation of work. He described how in 2008 much effort had been placed on resource mobilisation and fundraising and how completion of many tasks involved in production of materials and for smoother running of the Initiative had been achieved, enabling the Initiative to really move to the next phase, with all Partners recognising the achievements and lessons learned and allowing the common development and improvement of approach to training techniques and materials.

This was followed by a roundtable where all Partners introduced themselves and their organisations.

4. Activity report by Secretariat

A presentation was made by the GCI Secretariat reporting on activities and accomplishments since the last Partners meeting (in January 2008) relative to the 2008 workplan. The GCI Secretariat reported that the Green Customs Guide was completed in September 2008 and translation of the guide into Spanish and French has already been carried out and checking and review is taking place, and that translation into Russian and Arabic are currently underway.

For the purpose of creating a transparent and systematic approval process for the GCI for workshops, a “Proposed Procedure for Deciding Priorities and Budget Allocations” was prepared.

The Green Customs Secretariat reported that significant time was spent in 2008 on fundraising. A number of concept notes, project proposals, etc. were made. While some of these were unsuccessful, there were some successes in securing funds and some funding proposals are awaiting confirmation.

It was reported that two Green Customs Initiative workshops were held in 2008, in Venezuela and Ethiopia, respectively. Additional workshops were planned but delayed until 2009 for logistical as well as financial reasons. The Secretariat also participated in a number of other training/awareness raising and outreach events:

- A Training course for customs officers and representatives from the relevant environment ministries of CAFTA-DR countries. (9-12 June 2008)
- The GCI Secretariat made a joint presentation with the WCO Secretariat on the Green Customs Initiative and Progress in International Initiatives against Cross-Border Environmental Offences at the 27th Session of Enforcement Committee held on the 25-29 February 2008 at the WCO headquarters in Brussels.
- A side event at the 4th meeting of the COP serving as the meeting of Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (COP-MOP 4) was held on the Green Customs Initiative (5 May 2008).
- A side event on the Green Customs Initiative was held at the 4th Rotterdam Convention COP in Rome (29th October 2008)
- A two day kick-off meeting for the INECE Seaport Environmental Security Network held at Interpol's headquarters in Lyon (9-10 October, 2008).
- The GCI Secretariat attended Interpol's 6th International Conference on Environmental Crime, incorporating the 20th Meeting of the Wildlife Crime Working Group and the 14th Meeting of the Pollution Crime Working Group which was held at Interpol, France 13-17 October 2008.
- The Green Customs Secretariat was also invited by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) to give a presentation on the GCI and CAP's policy and enforcement work. (26-27 October 2008).
- The GCI Secretariat participated in the Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) Conference and made a presentation on the GCI. (13-14 November 2008)
- UNEP-DTIE customs training workshops and initiatives, such as the training workshops organised for customs officers and network meetings for National Ozone Officers as part of the activities for the UNEP-DTIE Compliance Assistance to Programme to assist developing countries to comply with their commitments under the Montreal Protocol.
- UNEP-DTIE Compliance Assistance Programme 2008 Policy and Enforcement Officers' (PEOs) Meeting held in Paris on 26-27 June 2008.

The Secretariat reported on the development of interactive e-learning modules being developed in cooperation with the WCO (see below).

The Secretariat presented the updated GCI website and explained that a complete redesign of the website, including a Partners-only restricted access intranet, was carried out in 2008. He welcomed suggestions and comments from Partners to further improve the site and to promote it as a tool for communication between Partners.

Several Partners responded that they considered the Initiative to have reached a "turning point" in that all the necessary basic materials have been produced, the Initiative is frequently receiving good recognition and the Partnership is strong – recognising the advantages of cooperating between MEAs and other organisations. With the completion of the Guide, updated website and increased recognition it was suggested that it was now appropriate to take steps into more detailed skills

training as well as general awareness raising to develop and outreach the next phase of the Green Customs Initiative.

5. Activity reports by Partners

Each Partner made a short presentation on their past and planned activities related to the GCI including ongoing activities with customs and enforcement personnel and regional activities on enforcement.

Basel

The representative of the Basel Convention explained that there were essentially three ways in which the Basel Secretariat currently interacted with customs officers: in developing a directory of training institutions aimed at improving capacity for the detection, prevention and prosecution of cases of illegal traffic; in working with the WCO on HS code issues; and on specific enforcement related project activities. It was recognised that the issue of HS codes related to hazardous waste, particularly relating to e-waste, was an ongoing effort that was expected to be completed in 2012. It was reported that Basel COP 9 (in June 2008) adopted a recommendation of the *Ad hoc Joint Working Group on Enhancing Cooperation and Coordination Among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions* on enhanced cooperation and coordination among the three conventions at the administrative and programmatic levels. This recommends close coordination with respect to combating illegal traffic and trade in hazardous chemicals and wastes, and it invites development by UNEP and FAO of: “...programmatic cooperation in the field that would support implementation of the three conventions in areas of common concern such as sustainable development, trade, customs (for example through the Green Customs Initiative), transport, public health, labour, environment, agriculture and industry.”

CBD

The representative from the CBD Secretariat reported that the Secretariat’s involvement in the Green Customs Initiative continued to focus on the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. In this regard, it was stated that references to GCI were incorporated into a number of the pre-sessional documents prepared for the Biosafety Protocol’s COP-MOP-4 held in May 2008. Furthermore, the CBD Secretariat and the Green Customs Secretariat had collaborated to organise a side event during COP-MOP-4. Regarding COP-MOP outcomes, it was reported that reference to GCI was incorporated into two decisions from the MOP, on cooperation and in relation to the budget (enabling voluntary donation of funds for GCI involvement) and that the GCI is referenced in the reporting to Parties of the Secretariat’s activities for 2008. The representative from the CBD Secretariat reminded Partners that these decisions and information was circulated to Partners in July 2008.

It was mentioned that the CBD Secretariat had recommended resource persons and provided slides for Green Customs workshops in Caracas, Venezuela and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in 2008. The CBD Secretariat had distributed GCI flyers at the 4th Coordination Meeting for Governments and Organizations Implementing or Funding Biosafety Capacity-Building Activities (held in February 2008).

For 2009, the CBD Secretariat is planning to mobilise seed funding from the EU to hold a regional workshop for Africa on documentation and identification of living modified organisms. The proposal to the EU included a Green Customs component and the CBD Secretariat wishes to involve the Partners in this project.

CITES

The representative from CITES provided an update on recent activities and on materials recently produced. It was reported that a CD ROM was completed in 2008 entitled: “*Course for enforcement officers and information module for Prosecutors and the judiciary*”. An update of the customs course (“*An introduction to CITES for Customs*”) is currently being developed.

It was mentioned that CITES is launching web-based courses on CITES, in partnership with the International University of Andalusia, under an initiative termed the ‘virtual college’. The objective of the programme is to provide easy access to CITES training. Various other capacity-building tools and resources under development were described, which include identification training (‘hands-on modules’), and the CITES identification manual (using a ‘wiki’ approach so users can update and add information)

The CITES representative described a capacity building project funded by the EU; this is to be a two year project which will include five regional workshops, and in there is scope to include customs and enforcement officers. It was also mentioned that there are a number of capacity building activities planned in the Middle East and Central America in partnership with the US Government.

The presentation was concluded by the CITES representative informing that the CITES Secretariat had completed a training CD on “Presentation skills training for CITES trainers” (the GCI Partners benefited from this expertise at the last Partners meeting where a one day workshop on improving presentation techniques was facilitated by the CITES representative). Copies of the presentation skills CD-ROM, Customs training CD-ROM, and enforcement officers training CD-ROM were distributed to the Partners.

Ozone Secretariat

The representative from the Ozone Secretariat began his presentation by suggesting that the Montreal Protocol was in a rather different situation from the other conventions in that most countries have established import/export licences (only 16 out of 194 do not) and as the final phase out of CFCs for example is approached at the end to the year we may expect to see an increase in illegal trade. It was stressed that by 2010 it is important that all countries have an effective licensing system to control the import and export of ozone-depleting substances.

Participation in customs training workshops under the Green Customs Initiative on the secretariats behalf was carried out by UNEP’s Compliance Assistance Programme (CAP) programme funded by the Multilateral Fund for the implementation of the Montreal Protocol. It was described how the training and awareness raising delivered under the GCI should continue as the format is successful and there is increasing recognition at the national and international level that such coordinated training is valuable. The funding provided by the Multilateral Fund is important in implementing the GCI. The Ozone Secretariat offered to circulate copies of the Green Customs Guide and recently completed Montreal Protocol customs training manual to all parties to the Montreal Protocol as these were considered valuable publications to facilitate customs training work.

OPCW

The representative from the OPCW stressed that coordination by Parties at the national and international levels to prevent illegal trade is important. In this regard it was suggested that comprehensive measures should be established, including: providing training to all customs officers and evaluation of their training; enhancing import/export monitoring of ozone-depleting substances.

He then described that the OPCW had hosted six workshops/ training program events for customs officials in 2008, in Sri Lanka, Yemen, Bangladesh, Serbia, Southeast Asia (Malaysia), and GCC (Qatar). It was reported that the OPCW is scheduled to have 10 events in 2009 - national training courses for customs officials and Sensitization Workshop for National Authorities. It was mentioned that a number of publications and support tools had been created, including the contribution to the Green Customs Guide and that several more publications are in the pipeline.

Rotterdam and Stockholm

The representative of the Secretariat for the Rotterdam Convention reported that a side event on the Green Customs Initiative was held at the 4th Rotterdam Convention COP in Rome to provide an introduction to and explanation of the Initiative and its activities, discussing the involvement of the Rotterdam Secretariat in the Initiative. The event was held during the lunch break on Wednesday 29th October, and was organised by the Rotterdam Convention Secretariat. The newly published Green Customs Guide was presented and copies were given to interested parties and the Green Customs Initiative flyer was also distributed.

It was reported that the Rotterdam COP also adopted the recommendation of the *Ad hoc Joint Working Group on Enhancing Cooperation and Coordination Among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions* on enhanced cooperation and coordination among the three conventions at the administrative and programmatic levels (see above).

The COP approved working with customs officers as a high priority (one of 9 priorities).

Some funding will be sought for carrying out customs training workshops focusing on the RC and it was suggested that these be carried out in partnership with the Green Customs Initiative.

Two case studies prepared by the Rotterdam Secretariat describing how customs authorities implement the convention in two contrasting situations (Jamaica and Switzerland) were described and it was noted that these had generated much interest. It was suggested that these could be included in the GCI materials (GCI 'suitcase') to be used as a resource in workshops etc.

The representative from the Rotterdam Secretariat also described how it was working with the WCO on issues relating to the assignment of HS codes to RC chemicals.

WCO

Representatives for the WCO provided an overview of activities and focussed on three main areas: a summary of results of the global survey on Customs environmental enforcement conducted by the WCO Secretariat in September 2008, with emphasis on the GCI and capacity building; an overview of activities on capacity building; and an update on recent and planned work on the WCO Harmonized System.

It was noted that environment was high on the agenda at the WCO Enforcement Committee at its 2008 meeting. A number of activities and initiatives on Environment were described including a real-time information exchange platform ('EnvironNet'), which is currently in the testing phase; a one day global intensive control operation called "Operation CITES" in which 90 Customs offices participated to focus on illegal trade in endangered species – more than 90 seizures were made; and the results of a global survey of customs administrations. This survey received responses from 75 customs administrations and provided information based on experiences and statistics related to trade issues of environmentally sensitive commodities. It was explained that the purpose of this presentation was to inform of the operational role of the WCO in the future, and trigger some thoughts on how Partners can work together in supporting competent agencies' operational activities

and explore the idea of setting up a model of collaboration in this area. The Partners were very interested in the results of the survey and it was agreed that the WCO Secretariat would provide partners with a copy of the survey analysis and the presentation slides would be circulated by the GCI Secretariat.

Regarding the HS codes, it was informed that there is a five year cycle for amendments to HS codes. Certain amendments came the week prior to the Partners meeting. It was noted that the WCO had received a request to create separate HS codes to cover a selected number of HCFCs (controlled by the Montreal Protocol). It was also noted that there was a need to update a number of HS codes relevant to the Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions. A description of the information available on the WCO web site was given highlighting the 'interconnection table' and list of those codes covered by international conventions.

UNODC

The representative of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime provided an introduction and overview of the UNODC, describing its mandate, the relevant UN conventions and an outline of the technical assistance activities provided by the organisation (anti-corruption, asset recovery, money laundering, drugs trafficking, forensics, support and facilitation of regional & cross-border activities). A description was given of a number of computer-based training modules that were developed by the UNODC including risk analysis, searching vehicles and planes, and identifying 'risky individuals', etc.

The link between trans-national organised crime and environmental crime was discussed and it was mentioned that there were many areas of common interest and concern where the work of the UNODC and the GCI Partners could benefit each other. While noting that currently environment was not the most active of areas from UNODC, the importance of this was certainly recognised and several project ideas were being developed including those on timber, wildlife, natural resources, and precious metals.

The example of the UNODC-WCO Container Control Programme (CCP) was presented to highlight the links with environmental crime where for example many seizures of environmentally sensitive items were made, including shark fin, protected timber and chemicals.

The Partners expressed their thanks for the presentation and expressed great interest in the activities of the UNODC, recognising that there were many clear links between the activities and plans of the GCI and UNODC. The representative agreed to provide the slides of the presentation to the Secretariat to circulate to the Partners.

It was recommended that further cooperation be initiated and UNODC consider joining the GCI as a Partner.

ACTIONS:

- Partners to share all information on planned trainings
- Secretariat to display this information on the GCI website
- Secretariat to provide GCI Guide and Montreal Protocol training manual to the Ozone Secretariat for electronic distribution to Parties.
- Rotterdam Secretariat to provide Switzerland and Jamaica case studies for inclusion in 'suitcase'
- WCO Secretariat to circulate results of customs survey
- GCI Secretariat to circulate WCO customs survey presentation slides
- GCI Secretariat to circulate UNODC and OPCW presentation slides
- Secretariat to maintain contact with UNODC and follow up on their joining the Initiative

6. Funding issues

The representative of the Secretariat reiterated that much activity of 2008 was dedicated to fundraising. He provided a brief outline of efforts for resource mobilisation and gave details of funds already committed, funds available for 2009-10 and details of expected future funds. He described that although there were still concerns about the funding levels, there were now some funds available (and expected) to allow for a number of workshops, events and material production etc. The Secretariat highlighted the fact that the most serious problem was that of not having a coordinator for the Initiative. It was stressed that funding for this post remains a problem; that there are no funds currently to support this post and the expected funds cannot be used for this purpose.

The Partners in turn reported on the possibilities of direct or indirect funding for the initiative from their respective organisations. The representative from the Ozone Secretariat indicated that further funding could be sought from the Montreal Protocol's Multilateral Fund, if other Partners were also to contribute to the Initiative. The Secretariat explained that some funds had been secured and others were expected from bilateral contributions and from UNEP. The other Partners indicated that direct funding for the Green Customs Initiative from their organisations was not possible at present.

There was discussion of alternatives to providing direct funding such as the in-kind support provided by the Partners and of effectively using events and workshops organised by the Partners to outreach the Initiative and provide awareness raising. The Partners agreed to provide details of planned trainings to the Secretariat to be shared in identifying opportunities for common activities. It was further suggested that Partners estimate/compile contributions to GCI staff time, and materials etc including attaching a financial value to this, as this would enable the Secretariat to better assess in-kind contributions to the GCI.

The issue of seconding a person from a customs authority or from the MEA/Partner organisation secretariats was discussed. The response from the majority of Partners was that this was not possible due to high workloads and limited resources. It was agreed that the possibility of seconding a customs officer could be an idea worth pursuing.

A number of Partners agreed to bring to the attention of the UNEP ED the issue of the pressing need for funds to support a GCI coordinator position.

ACTIONS:

- Partners estimate/compile contributions to GCI (staff time, materials etc)
- Partners raise issue of need for GCI coordinator with UNEP ED
- Partners and Secretariat to identify opportunities for joint workshops/events
- Secretariat and WCO to further consider the idea of secondment to GCI

7. Activities in 2009 - Workshops and training

The Secretariat presented an outline of the requests for Green Customs Initiative workshops/capacity building activities, highlighting the main priorities for 2009. It was explained that this information was collated based on requests from countries and input from UNEPs region offices. The priorities suggested also took into account the workshops already held and build on the lessons learned in terms of the methodology and nature of the workshops, for example the relative benefits of holding workshops at national or sub-regional level.

The Partners welcomed this ambitious plan and gave their general approval for the proposed workplan, on the understanding that it was contingent on receiving additional funds to allow the plan to be implemented. The Partners would, as was previously established, be contacted by the

Secretariat prior to each workshop with an invitation to their organisations to participate or to suggest regional experts, to comment on the agenda and concept note and to supply materials as appropriate.

One of the objectives of the GCI is to work with countries and the WCO to have the Green Customs Guide and overall objectives incorporated in countries' national customs training curricula, thereby ensure sustainability of the project. It was mentioned that there was a need to develop a strategy/methodology to achieve this; collecting data on relevant training institutes and working with customs authorities and the WCO to facilitate this and to promote cooperation with existing enforcement networks (e.g. WCO RILO - World Customs Organization Regional Intelligence Liaison Offices). Development of a strategy and information gathering was included as an activity to be funded by the UNEP Environment Fund expected in February.

The possibility of GCI Secretariat and or Partners attending training workshops arranged by the OPCW and WCO workshops on MEAs was discussed. It was agreed that WCO and OPCW would provide the Secretariat with a list of planned training events. The Secretariat will produce a consolidated list to start a dialogue to synergise efforts.

ACTIONS:

- Secretariat to work with UNEP regional offices and Partners to facilitate workshops as indicated in the workplan
- Secretariat to upload information on planned workshops on the intranet for monitoring and review
- WCO and OPCW provide the Secretariat with a list of planned training events
- Secretariat to add relevant details to website calendar to assist with decision making/prioritisation.

8. Activities in 2009 - Outreach and other events

The Secretariat informed the Partners that a number of outreach activities were already planned for 2009. These include:

- A side event at the twenty-fifth session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum of the United Nations Environment Programme jointly hosted by the Government of the Czech Republic (17 February 2009).
- Presentation at the 28th Session of The WCO Enforcement Committee (23 to 27 February 2009, in Brussels) on "Working with governments and the private sector to achieve responsible behaviour, positive investment and a cleaner environment".
- UNEP DTIE under its CAP programme is holding a two day tripartite workshop to allow relevant authorities from Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan to identify any obstacles and needs regarding harmonizing regulatory measures, with special attention on controlling and monitoring ODS trade in the region and between the three countries and their neighbouring countries. Partners may wish to consider participation in this meeting (and future similar high level dialogues) to present other issues on illegal trade and enhancing control measure which are a problem in the region in question.

Various other possibilities for side events or other outreach activities in the coming year were suggested:

- Stockholm Convention COP (4-8 May 2009)
- WCO council session (June 2008)
- WCO RILO annual meetings (an invitation was extended to all Partners to participate in these meetings, or to distribute documents)
- Montreal Protocol MOP (November 2009) and OEWG (July 2009)

- Extraordinary Meetings of the Conferences off the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions aimed at giving high-level political support to the process of enhancing cooperation and coordination among the three conventions (April 2010 – tbc)
- (UNODC) Eighteenth session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, Vienna, 16-24 April 2009
- CBD Biannual newsletter, could run an article on GCI, depending on the theme of the issue.

ACTIONS:

- Partners to provide details of COPs/MOPs and other relevant meetings for consideration for outreach and side events
- Secretariat to add details to website calendar to assist with decision making/prioritisation.

9. The Outreach of GCI Guide into UN languages

Translation of the Guide into Spanish and French has already been carried out and checking and review is taking place. Translation into Russian (funded by GEF and coordinated by ECA network) and Arabic are now also underway. It was requested by Partners that they have an opportunity to review the translated texts prior to completion. The Secretariat will provide the translated text to Partners in each for their review. The layout and design will closely follow that of the original English version

ACTIONS:

- Secretariat to provide Partners translated texts of GCI guide for review
- Partners to review the text, or inform if they do not wish to review

10. GCI Materials

It was agreed at the last meeting that the standard package of Green Customs materials for use at workshops is an important resource. It was reiterated that there is a need to have carefully produced standardised materials (in local languages as appropriate). Following the recommendations from the last meeting, the Secretariat created an intranet page ('GCI suitcase') on the GCI website to accommodate all the materials and presentations provided by the Partners. Since the GCI guide is now complete and will be circulated at workshop (in paper or electronic format) it was felt that the standard presentations from the Partners may now require some re-focusing. It was recommended that the Partners review their materials and update and modify where necessary.

Partners were also encouraged to submit additional materials and presentations to include in the 'GCI suitcase'. Such additional materials would be used as resources for workshops etc and may allow for these workshops to be better tailored to focus on the specific requirements of the relevant region or country.

The representative of the CITES Secretariat made a short presentation indicating how the CITES presentations were being modified. He mentioned that the aim was to make the best use of the GCI guide, rather than duplicating the information. It was explained that the new CITES materials consist of 12 presentations, including an introductory presentation and 11 presentations being subject specific, allowing for tailoring to the specific needs of the workshop. Four examples of these new presentations were circulated to the Partners for their perusal. This initiative was welcomed by the Partners and it was suggested that similar modules could be developed by the other Partners.

ACTIONS:

- Partners to review and update the standard presentations used in workshops, as appropriate.

- Partners to provide additional materials to include in the ‘suitcase’ of materials for workshops.
- Secretariat to upload the CITES modules on the intranet (in ‘GCI suitcase’)

11. Case studies

It was suggested that collation of a number of case studies providing examples of problems and challenges encountered by customs offices could be incorporated into Green Customs Training Package (as part of the GCI ‘Suitcase’) and outreach to relevant customs administrations. The Secretariat informed the Partners that collection of Green Customs Initiative case studies was included as an activity to be funded by the UNEP Environment Fund expected in February. It was further suggested that Partners may wish to consider preparing or contacting the relevant enforcement and environment agencies to prepare/provide information on relevant case studies. Inclusion of photographs and video would make such case studies more appealing. In parallel with the collection of case studies, it was suggested that the creation of an inventory of seizures in the form of a database, which could be maintained by the Secretariat would be useful.

The issue of the definition of ‘illegal trade’ was discussed and how the meaning and emphasis put on this differed between the different Partners organisations. It was indicated that positive actions such as facilitation of trade should also be collected, so as to not only focus on the negative aspect of the common work.

The GCI Secretariat announced that UNEP Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (UNEP ROAP) provides current news on a weekly basis on global environmental crime issues. It was mentioned that Partners who wish to receive this update should inform the Secretariat and Partners are also requested to submit relevant information on seizures, prosecutions, etc. to be included.

12. E-learning modules

The Green Customs Secretariat reported that following discussion with the WCO, an agreement was signed between UNEP and the WCO to cooperate on the development of an interactive e-learning module on the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (based on the recently updated Customs training manual) and a general introduction and ‘chapeau’ to the Green Customs Initiative (based on the Guide). It was explained that this module will be similar to the WCO-CITES module integrated into WCO’s online training system. The WCO Secretariat then gave a presentation describing the WCO e-learning programme. It was described how access was limited to registered customs officers and that a number of general courses exist including customs controls, HS codes, integrity etc.

The representative then described the CITES course which is composed of seven course modules and seven assessment modules, which is approximately 16 hours for training and provided two languages: English and French (with Spanish to follow).

The outline for the new Montreal Protocol and Green Customs Initiative modules was explained and it was suggested that further modules for covering the MEAs/treaties of other GCI Partners could be developed under the umbrella of Green Customs to provide a good platform for outreach and for consistency of training. As participants requested, the WCO Secretariat confirmed that it would provide details to allow Partners to access the WCO e-learning module.

ACTIONS:

- WCO Secretariat to send username and password for WCO e-learning module to Partners

- Secretariat to complete the interactive e-learning module on Montreal Protocol and GCI into WCO online training system

13. GCI video

The Secretariat reported that the allocation of a small amount of funding from the Montreal Protocol Multilateral Fund to contribute to the creation of a Green Customs Initiative video with some additional small funds soon expected. Partners discussed the issue and suggested that, despite not having funding to contribute, their organisations could provide interviews or footage (seizures, customs/experts in actions etc- although many indicated they did not have such footage available) to enable the creation of this video.

ACTIONS:

- Secretariat to further research possibility of creating GCI video, and contact Partners for their specific input.

14. Green Customs award

Partners briefly discussed the creation of a Green Customs award to recognise exemplary efforts and operations conducted by customs officers. This was raised at the last meeting where it was discussed that it could be a means to collect a number of case studies providing examples of problems and challenges. It was however expressed at the current meeting that the award would be better not linked to the collection of case studies (recognising the different classifications of illegal activities, prioritisation of seizures as an indication of success and reluctance of customs authorities to release such information) but rather to simply recognise the successes to a particular customs agency. It was suggested that the award could be presented by the WCO at a relevant event.

ACTIONS:

- Secretariat and WCO to further develop the idea with the aim of awarding the first award in 2009.

15. Focal points

There was a short discussion on creating a database of MEA focal points for all the organisations represented in the GCI. The idea was debated and it was decided that considering these lists already exist on many of the Partners websites, and the frequency with which focal points change, that the most effective solution would be to provide a list on the GCI website which linked to the focal point lists of the relevant organisations.

ACTIONS:

- Partners to provide links to focal point information
- Secretariat to compile links on GCI website.

16. Registration of Green Customs name

The GCI Secretariat introduced the ideas of protecting/ registering the GCI name since it was explained that there have been some instances where the title “Green Customs” is used to describe various customs training activities. It was suggested that there may be a need to distinguish between these various initiatives and ‘genuine’ Green Customs Initiative workshops. The Secretariat carried out some preliminary research on WIPO registration; this was felt to be more relevant to protecting a

logo rather than name. It was concluded that this was not a priority at present and an issue to be revisited if more issues arose, and furthermore if it was perceived as a significant problem.

17. Customs ‘Single Window’ concept

The issue of the Customs ‘single window’ concept was briefly raised at the last meeting, but time did not allow a discussion of this. At the present meeting the WCO Secretariat made a short presentation to clearly explain the concept of the ‘single window’. A summary document on this is also available from the WCO and was circulated to partners as the last meeting.

It was recognised that this was to be a very important development that would have a great impact on all the Partners in the near future in relation to trade in the commodities covered by the various conventions and treaties. Some Partners informed that they were already preparing for the introduction of the single window. It was agreed that this issue would be discussed again at the next meeting.

18. Judiciary and prosecution

No specific activities were carried out in 2007 or 2008 on the issue of prosecutor/judiciary awareness raising (following the guidance from Partners), and it was decided at the last meeting that at present in this stage of the GCI it was not a priority for GCI to move on these activities. This recommendation was also reiterated at the current meeting as most Partners felt the GCI should maintain its target on customs.

However while it was recognised that it was important for some organisations represented to provide information to judiciary and prosecution, it was noted that was most effective when not presented as ‘training’. It was mentioned that while some very successful training is carried out by UNEP in this area, it was not at present a priority for GCI although there may be some opportunities to provide information and advice. It was recommended that the issue be further discussed and the input from UNEP DELC in this area would be most welcome.

19. Paperless meeting

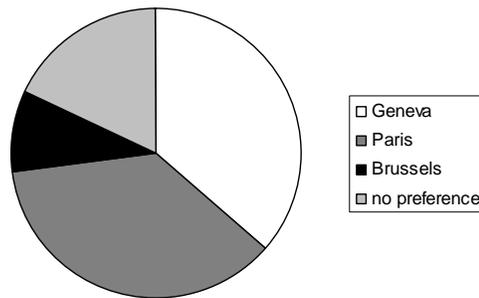
The Secretariat informed of the recent ‘paperless MOP’ of the Montreal Protocol held in Doha in 2008 and suggested that the GCI consider having their next Partners Meeting as a paperless event. There was general support for the idea and the Secretariat will consider how this is best achieved.

20. Feedback/evaluation

Seven completed evaluation/feedback forms were returned. The feedback was generally very positive in relation to the preparations, organisation and facilitation of the meeting. Main points were:

Logistics

- A meeting of 1.5 to 2 days duration was considered appropriate
- Time for next meeting: early 2010 preferred (not in January to avoid clash with CITES COP)
- Geneva and Paris were most popular suggestions for the 6th meeting:



Suggestions

- Include discussion of GCI strategy to ensure all Partners better understand future direction and better integrate GCI with Partners work; would also assist in fundraising.
- Handouts on presentations by Partners on activities should be distributed during the meeting, *(this would also greatly assist the Secretariat in preparing the report)*
- Deadlines provided for Action Points, assigning to specific Partners were appropriate, emails/phone calls to remind those responsible to follow up
- Partners meeting report should be short; maximum 5-10 pages and include a short executive summary
- Background Documentation to be sent out prior to meeting (2-4 weeks in advance if possible)
- During the meeting, some sessions could be moved on a bit quicker, moderator to more actively keep people on schedule.
- Partners need to stay active and involved in the Initiative throughout the year
- Could consider mid-year summary to consider/promote progress
- Encourage the use of the Intranet for communication between Partners
- The idea of a paperless meeting was generally supported for subsequent meetings

Appendix I - Agenda

Agenda - Green Customs - Fifth Partners' Meeting 26-27 January 2009, Brussels, Belgium



Monday 26 January 2009

Welcome 15:00 – 15:30 Hrs	OPENING ADDRESS - WCO Secretary General INTRODUCTION, EXPECTED RESULTS of the PARTNERS' MEETING, ORGANISATION OF WORK – Rajendra Shende- UNEP INTRODUCTION OF PARTICIPANTS								
Session 1 15:30 – 16:00 Hrs	2008 SECRETARIAT ACTIVITIES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief presentation of secretariat activities (Docs GCI/2009/PM5/2 & 3) • Questions/ discussion on secretariat activity report • Demonstration of new GCI website 								
Session 2 16:00 – 18:00	2008 PARTNER ACTIVITIES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief presentation by Partners on activities: <table style="margin-left: 20px; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="padding-right: 20px;">- Basel</td> <td>- OPCW</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- CBD</td> <td>- Stockholm & Rotterdam</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- CITES</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>- Montreal Protocol</td> <td>WCO</td> </tr> </table> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Customs survey on environmental enforcement 2. Activities on capacity building 4. HS' work 	- Basel	- OPCW	- CBD	- Stockholm & Rotterdam	- CITES		- Montreal Protocol	WCO
- Basel	- OPCW								
- CBD	- Stockholm & Rotterdam								
- CITES									
- Montreal Protocol	WCO								
18:00 – 18:30	PRESENTATION ON WCO E-LEARNING PROGRAMME <i>(this item is from Session 5, but will be considered here)</i> Discussion								

Tuesday 27 January 2009

Session 3 09:00 – 10:00 Hrs	<p>INTRODUCTION AND ACTIVITIES OF UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime)</p> <p><i>A Representative of UNODC will be requested to make a short (15-20 min) presentation which will introduce their organisation and explain their main activities with a focus on issues of common interest to the Partners to the Green Customs Initiative, for example relating to environmental crime and facilitation of legal trade in environmentally sensitive commodities.</i></p> <p>Discussion of potential cooperation with GCI</p>
Session 4 10:00 – 11:00 Hrs	<p>FUNDING ISSUES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on resource mobilisation (Secretariat) (Doc GCI/2009/PM5/5) • Report on resource mobilisation (Partners) <p><i>Partners report on consultations regarding possible direct and indirect contribution and identification of funding opportunities and estimates of contributions to GCI (staff time, materials etc).</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future plans for resource mobilisation <p>Discussion</p>
11:00 – 11.30 Hrs	Coffee Break
Session 5 11:30 - 13:00 Hrs	<p>2009 ACTIVITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moving towards sustainability – incorporating GCI in national trainings • Collection of case studies • Green Customs award • <i>[E-learning in cooperation with WCO] moved to session 2</i> • GCI video • GCI ‘suitcase’ (compilation of GCI information and materials) • Performance indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events and outreach in 2009 (side events etc)
13:00 – 14:00 Hrs	Lunch Break
Session 6 14:00 – 15:30 Hrs	<p>2009 PLAN FOR WORKSHOPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of requests/regional priorities for workshops (Doc GCI/2009/PM5/4) • Discussion of priorities for workshops • Agreement on 2009 GCI workshops workplan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Method for consulting Partners and agreeing workshops
15:30 – 15:45	Coffee Break

Session 7 15:45 – 16:45 Hrs	OTHER ISSUES <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased involvement of Partners – promoting a proactive approach• WCO real-time information exchange platform• WCO operation DEMETER• Protecting/registering the GCI name• Customs ‘single window’ concept• Judiciary and prosecutor training
16:45 – 17:00 Hrs	CLOSURE OF THE MEETING