

# Report of the Fourth Green Customs Initiative Partners' Meeting

Paris, 23 - 24 January 2008

GreenCustoms



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## Participants

A participant list, with contact details is provided in Appendix I.

Mr. Gilbert Bankobeza, UNEP- Ozone Secretariat

Ms. Magda Bauta Solés, Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

Mr Daniel Cardozo, Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

Mr. Hui Fu, World Customs Organisation

Ms Kathryn Garforth, CBD Secretariat

Dr. Arnold Kreilhuber, UNEP Division of Environmental Laws and Conventions (DELIC)

Ms Laura Meszaros, Secretariat for the Rotterdam Convention (also representing Stockholm and Basel conventions)

Mr. Stephen Nash, CITES Secretariat

Participants from UNEP DTIE (for part or all sessions):

Mr Atul Bagai, Regional Network Coordinator, UNEP ROAP

Dr Ezra Clark, Green Customs Coordinator, OzonAction

Mr Jim Curlin, Capacity Building Manager, OzonAction

Mr. Etienne Gonin, former Green Customs Coordinator

Mr Halvart Koeppen Regional Network Coordinator (Europe and Central Asia)

Ms Sylvie Lemmet, Director UNEP DTIE

Mr Kaj Madsen, Senior Programme Officer, Chemicals Branch, UNEP DTIE

Mr. Rajendra Shende, Head, OzonAction

## Introduction

The fourth Meeting of the Green Customs Partners was held at UNEP DTIE, Paris on 23-24 January 2008. An additional workshop was held on 25 January on Improving Presentation Techniques for the Green Customs Initiative (facilitated by Stephen Nash, Chief of the Capacity Building Unit of the CITES Secretariat). The agenda is provided in Appendix II.

Feedback provided by the Partners requested a brief (less than 10 page) meeting report. The following intends to cover the Partners' discussions in a concise manner to meet this request.

## 1. Introductory Addresses

Ms. Sylvie Lemmet, Director UNEP DTIE division delivered the introductory address, welcoming participants and conveying that DTIE was happy to host the meeting. She mentioned that it was very encouraging that the Green Customs Initiative (GCI) was receiving increasing recognition both within UNEP and externally by donors. She encouraged Partners to continue and expand to their work on this excellent initiative. Ms Lemmet briefly summarised the recent work and successes of the GCI and looked forward to the exciting and challenging work which lies ahead. She concluded by wishing the Partners a very successful meeting, fruitful negotiations and discussions and hoped that they would be able to further develop and outreach the Green Customs Initiative in 2008 to raise awareness, and to empower and stimulate customs officers around the world to become more involved in monitoring trade in environmentally sensitive commodities.

Mr. Rajendra Shende, Head of OzonAction made a short introductory address on the objectives and expected results of the meeting. He explained that much had been learned from the Partners over the last year and explained that the GCI was a partnership that inspires others. Mr Shende expressed the hope that in 2008 the GCI will expand, but within the needs of the MEAs and available resources, with an ambitious workplan. He mentioned the importance of securing funding and the need to have performance indicators to monitor the progress of the initiative. Mr Shende then summarised the main objectives of the meeting as:

- Identification of achievements and lessons learned
- Consideration of medium and longer term plans
- Consideration of extending the GCI to the ‘enforcement chain’
- Agree on new training techniques and materials
- Coordinate efforts to secure continued funding

And he outlined the expected results as the following:

- Improved presentation of training materials
- Approval of the national package for Green Customs
- Agreement on ‘Guidelines for Cooperation’
- A strategy for the development of the next phase of the GCI
- Plan of activities for 2008
- Resource mobilisation strategy
- Identification of Performance Indicators

All Partners introduced themselves, and it was noted by one participant that an expert and skilled ‘team’ was present and much could be learned from each other. The increasing recognition of the GCI was mentioned and it was suggested that the GCI is one of the best examples of inter-agency cooperation and an excellent model of working as “One UN” and should be further promoted as such.

## 2. Activity report and Presentation by Partners on Activities

A presentation was made by the GCI Secretariat reporting on activities and achievements since the last Partners meeting (in March 2007) relative to the 2007 workplan. Details of the specific activities are given below.

Partners provided short presentations on their activities and future plans with reference to the context of the GCI. A presentation was made by a representative from UNEP’s Asia-Pacific office (Bangkok) on Regional Initiatives on the GCI. The presentation was supplemented with information presented by UNEP’s Regional Network Coordinator for Europe and Central Asia. This presentation covered Regional Initiatives on Green Customs. The activities described included arranging Green Customs Training Workshops as well as other

initiatives such as the 'Project Sky Hole Patching' (a Joint RILO A/P – UNEP initiative), and Regional Enforcement Networking on MEAs. UNEP and India National Academy of Customs, Excise and Narcotics (NACEN) signed a MOU in 2007. The aim of this was to promote the enforcement of environmental regulations by capacity building, imparting training and enhancing awareness, and it was noted that NACEN would participate in the activities of the Green Customs Initiative.

An outline was given of the GCI developing relationships with the WCO's RILOs. It was explained that the GCI, for example, was presented to annual RILO CIS and RILO ECA meetings. Various other meeting and events at which the GCI was presented were discussed. The representative from UNEP Chemicals Branch gave brief overview of activities under chemicals and a description of the SAICM process. The workshop on illegal trafficking in Chemicals held in Prague in 2006 was discussed.

The Ozone Secretariat gave an illustrated presentation, highlighting that it does not conduct training activities, but supports these and has participated in some GCI trainings in the regions. Two important developments in 2007 were detailed; that illegal trade was recognised as one of the implementation challenges for the Montreal Protocol beyond 2010 with a central role for customs in combating this; and recognition that capacity building for customs as well as the judiciary was needed. The decision on accelerated phase out of HCFCs was presented and it was mentioned that the Parties were open to international partners and processes to help ensure full phase out of ODS proceeds.

CITES mentioned its major contribution to the GCI in 2007 was work put into the guide. It was described how CITES was in the process of creating an interactive CD-ROM training tool that could be of interest to the GCI. CITES also described its targeted information tools, which are stand alone reference tools. It was suggested that these could be issued with GCI branding.

DELDC mentioned the financial contributions it had made to the GCI over the last two years and was confident that funds could be mobilised for 2008. The inputs and participation of DELDC at workshops was described. DELDC urged the GCI to develop a more systematic and concrete initiative with clearer short, medium and longer term planning.

The representative from the CBD Secretariat described the various activities that the CBD was involved in, including the illegal trade workshop in Chatham house, London; the Shanghai customs, and Indian Ocean workshops, as well as the Montreal Protocol 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary award event. It was mentioned that the GCI is included in the 2007 year in review publication which goes to Parties of the CBD as well as in the current issue of Biosafety News.

The representative from the OPCW reported that it had contributed financially to the GCI. The regional meetings and trainings carried out or participated in by OPCW were described. A brief outline of planned activities for 2008 was given. A description was given of the electronic training /awareness raising tools and information packages developed for National Authorities was given. It was stressed that the development of tools such as the electronic self-learning tools was very expensive. It was hoped that in future reference to the GCI could be included in, for example, a booklet produced on transfer provisions of the CWC.

The representative of the Secretariat for the Rotterdam Convention, who was also representing Stockholm and Basel conventions, explained how these conventions were grateful for the value-added that the GCI has provided. It was mentioned that while Basel has some activities in this area, Rotterdam and Stockholm see the GCI as a very important source of customs work. It was explained that none of the three conventions have financial contributions to the GCI and expressed the hope that more staff time could be invested in the future. Support in fundraising efforts was offered. It was described how the activities of the GCI should be complementary to the programme of work of the Secretariats.

The WCO representative detailed the WCO's activities in relation to the GCI, including contributing to the Green Customs and Basel Convention guides. Support for the 'Project Sky Hole Patching' was also discussed. The forthcoming WCO Enforcement Committee meeting was described and it was highlighted there was an entire afternoon was to be dedicated to the issue of environmental crime. The GCI was invited to participate

and it was agreed that the WCO and GCI Secretariat would make a joint presentation at this. A description of the CEN database was given, explaining that this includes CITES and hazardous waste. It was mentioned that there is insufficient reporting to the CEN on environmentally sensitive commodities.

**ACTION:**

- Secretariat and WCO to present GCI on behalf of Partners at the WCO Enforcement Committee

### 3. GCI Guide and flyer

The GCI Secretariat outlined the status of completion of the Green Customs Guide and flyer. Firstly the Partners were thanked for their contributions to the production of the flyer. It was reported by the Secretariat that the flyer was recently completed and printed copies of this were circulated to the Partners. Some Partners took sufficient copies of the flyer to circulate at forthcoming meetings and the Secretariat offered to arrange to provide the flyer to Partners as requested for future meetings.

The Green Customs Guide was then discussed. It was explained that while there was general approval of the text at the 3<sup>rd</sup> GCI Partners meeting, there was specific additional guidance from the Partners and additional content incorporated. The services of a professional editor were employed to improve the consistency and clarity of the guide. It was explained that layout of the guide is in preparation stage and translators have been identified and contracts set up to produce French and Spanish versions. The final version on the guide will be available on the GCI website, and printed and electronic versions of the guide (on CD) will also be available.

Final comments on the text are awaited by some Partners. A foreword for signature by UNEP's ED and WCO's DG is also awaiting approval. It was requested that Partners have the opportunity to review any translations of the Guide.

**ACTIONS:**

- Partners to provide final comments and suggestion on text as agreed
- Secretariat to expedite final editing, layout/design and printing ASAP
- Secretariat to arrange translation of guide into French and Spanish
- Secretariat to provide translated text to Partners for checking
- Secretariat to arrange for dissemination of guide

### 4. Organisation of GCI workshops

While in the past in the planning of GCI workshops, it has been relied on to contact the Partners on an *ad hoc*, pre-meeting basis, with the Partners responding by providing names of suggested trainers/resource persons. A suggestion considered at the last meeting was to establish rosters of training/resource persons that would assist in identifying good people who can be drawn on. However the meeting felt that while useful to have such a list to assist with selecting resource persons, this should not be rigid and should not be publicly available and it should be maintained as an internal resource. It was suggested this could be held on a closed section (limited access) of the website.

It was felt there was a need for the GCI to have a transparent and systematic approval process for workshops that it funds directly or which otherwise use the GCI name. The Secretariat therefore agreed to propose a more formalised methodology for Partners to decide on priorities and approve meetings etc throughout the year to make this an open and documented process.

It was stressed that the GCI should work with institutions to incorporate GCI training into the customs training college curricula.

**ACTIONS:**

- Secretariat to re-initiate compilation of roster of trainers resource persons
- Secretariat to create secure area of website to make this available only to Partners
- Secretariat to propose a system for deciding priorities and budget allocations for GCI

**5. Funding/resource mobilisation**

The current financial situation was presented by the GCI Secretariat. It was made clear that these was a pressing need to locate funds to support the GCI. It was explained that the Multilateral Fund of the Montreal Protocol had provided funding for the GCI (although not with a staff component). DELC mentioned that funds for GCI should be available for 2008. It was mentioned that there were some other potential sources which the Secretariat was following up. Many Partners felt that continuation of a GCI Secretariat was essential to drive the process and that finding funds to support this should be the primary priority.

A number of possible sources of funding were discussed. A generic funding proposal was prepared by the GCI Secretariat to assist Partners in identifying potential funds for the GCI from their own stakeholders or suitable funding institutions. It was also suggested that Partners estimate/compile contributions to GCI staff time, and materials etc including attaching a financial (\$) value to this. This would enable the Secretariat to assess in-kind contributions to the GCI.

Partners were requested to consult with their organisations to see if direct contribution to the GCI is possible.

**ACTIONS:**

- Partners to consult to see if direct contribution possible
- Partners and Secretariat to proactively seek funding opportunities for the GCI as a priority
- Partners estimate/compile contributions to GCI (staff time, materials etc)

**6. GCI Materials**

It was agreed that the standard package of Green Customs materials for use at workshops is necessary. It was reiterated that there is a need to have carefully produced standardised materials that have a global perspective (in local language as appropriate). Another suggestion to improve the running of GCI workshops was to have resource persons arrive a day prior to the meeting to brief them on how best to make the presentation and conduct the training (if funds allow).

It was felt by some Partners that e-learning/video presents a very effective method to deliver training. It was pointed out that developing e-learning tools however is very expensive and time consuming (CITES and WCO had considerable experience in this regard). Such training courses should not be made publicly available, but only be by limited and restricted access. While with current financial constraints it may be possible to create a simple introductory GCI product, at this stage it was thought useful to research e-learning/training developed by other originations (e.g. UNDOC). Some generic training modules already produced by Partners could perhaps be included in the package of materials for use in workshops and their follow-up.

**ACTIONS:**

- Secretariat to work with Partners to create a standard package (or 'GCI suitcase') of materials for use in workshops.
- Partners to provide 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 research e-learning tools available and look into possibility of creating GCI-specific e-learning module and/or GCI video.

## 7. Outreach opportunities

It was decided that in order for all Partners to be informed of upcoming meetings, workshops and events related to their specific activities, or other activities that may present opportunities for outreaching the GCI, a central calendar be built to display these on the GCI website. The collation of this information would assist in making decisions on priorities for side events and outreaching opportunities. Partners were requested to proactively provide to the Secretariat details of meetings and other events to include on this calendar.

It was also recommended that relevant documents related to these meetings should be also made available on the website

### ACTIONS:

- Secretariat to build central calendar on website to clearly display GC workshops as well as other relevant meetings.
- Partners to proactively provide details of meetings and other relevant events to the Secretariat

## 8. GCI guidelines for cooperation (terms of reference)

The draft “Guidelines for Cooperation” were introduced. This issue had been discussed the last Partners meeting and the conference call in December 2007. The decision to keep the GCI at an informal level was reconfirmed and hence this proposed document was termed “guidelines” rather than a “term of reference”. The aim was to agree on some topics which were regularly returned to and to provide a useful document for Partners, particularly if there is any turnover of representatives. It was agreed that this would be an evolving document, and any Partner would have the flexibility to modify these guidelines if needed in the future. It was agreed that this would be an internal document and not to be distributed publicly, but could be used as a basis for preparing communications and funding requests, for instance. The text of the draft was discussed and redrafted to produce a final version to await final approval by Partners. The approved text of the guidelines for cooperation will then be circulated to Partners and posted on the limited access GCI intranet (see below). The text is provided in Appendix III

### ACTIONS:

- Secretariat to circulate final draft for approval
- Partners to respond by Friday 1st February
- Secretariat to circulate final text

## 9. Record of GCI Activities

It was suggested that a review be compiled to indicate the past training and awareness raising activities carried out under the GCI. One suggestion was that this could be displayed on a map uploaded to the GCI website to illustrate the geographical distribution of the GCI activities.

### ACTION:

- Secretariat to compile list of workshops and investigate feasibility of producing a suitable map.

## 10. Green Customs Award

There was a short discussion on the proposal to create a annual Green Customs Award to recognise exemplary efforts and operations conducted by customs officers, in helping to implement a Multilateral Environmental Agreement (MEA) or the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). It was suggested that the system of nominations for the award could be a useful method to collect cases studies. Partners were requested to provide comments on the award proposal document prepared by the Secretariat.

### **ACTION:**

- Secretariat to further develop the award proposal based on comments from Partners.

## 11. Other:

There were several other items that were discussed during the meeting although time did not allow full discussion of all issues raised:

- One general point that was raised was the usefulness of the Partners teleconference which was held in December 2007. It was suggested that such a conference all could be used more frequently and could be used, for example as a mid-term review meeting with Partners.
- The issue of performance indicators was discussed and it was agreed that it was important to establish performance indicators to monitor the progress of the initiative. One Partner mentioned that an excellent indicator of success is an institution taking GCI materials into their training curricula.
- The Secretariat reported that it has started to compile a list of references to GCI by: MOPs/COPs (including decisions, reports of discussions, & Partners' inputs to these processes) etc. Partners were requested to forward to the Secretariat any such suitable references and mentions of the GCI.
- The issue of the Customs 'single window' concept was briefly raised. The WCO circulated a short summary document to provide some background on this concept. It was decided that Partners gather information on this to share at the next meeting
- While no specific activities were carried out in 2007 on the issue of Prosecutor/Judiciary awareness raising (following the guidance from Partners), it was decided at the meeting that at present in this stage of the GCI it was not a priority for GCI to move on these activities. Some felt the GCI should maintain its target on Customs. DELC suggested it could look into whether the GCI is/could be included in judges training material. It was suggested that where appropriate judges/prosecutors could be invited to attend/participate in GCI initiatives.

### **ACTIONS:**

- Partners to provide suitable references and mentions of the GCI in COPs/MOPs etc
- Partners gather information on the 'single window' to share at the next meeting
- Partners and Secretariat seek to identify useful performance indicators for the GCI