



**Asia-Pacific
Economic Cooperation**

2022/SOM1/SCCP/SUM

Summary Report - First Sub-Committee on Customs Procedures Meeting 2022



**First Sub-Committee on Customs Procedures
Meeting
15-17 February 2022**

APEC SUB-COMMITTEE ON CUSTOMS PROCEDURES (SCCP)

15 – 17 February 2022

Virtual Meeting

SUMMARY REPORT **OF THE FIRST SCCP MEETING**

INTRODUCTION

The APEC Sub-Committee on Customs Procedures (SCCP) held its first plenary meeting on 15 -17 February 2022 from Bangkok, Thailand. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting was held virtually using the Microsoft Teams virtual platform. Over 80 delegates from all 21-member economies were present.

The APEC SCCP Secretariat Program Director, the Committee on Trade and Investment (CTI) Chair, and a representative from the SOM Chair Office of Thailand were also present. Representatives from Colombia, the Oceania Customs Organisation (OCO), the World Customs Organization (WCO), WCO Asia Pacific Regional Office for Capacity Building (ROCB AP), and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) attended as guests. Mr. Chaoyut Kumkun, Principal Advisor on Customs Control Development – Thai Customs Department, chaired the meeting. The Thai Customs Department Director-General, Mr. Patchara Anantasilpa, opened the virtual meeting with a welcome and opening speech.

OVERVIEW

A) SCCP1 2022 main activities

- SCCP took note of the Workplan 2022 and the initiatives that will be carried out by members during the year
- SCCP supported the APEC Customs Business Dialogue 2022 theme “Customs and Green Economy” which will take place in the margins of SCCP2 (SOM 3)
- SCCP took note of the CTI tasking to SCCP 2022 regarding the implementation of the MRT Statement and the AMM Declaration 2021, which is focused on 2 workstreams: vaccine supply chains and movement of essential goods.
- SCCP took note of the work that should be carried out this year to support the implementation of the Aotearoa Plan of Action (APA)
- SCCP took note of the Final Report of the “Customs Officer Management During the COVID-19 Pandemic”, prepared by Japan and Mexico and endorsed intersessionally by SCCP on 11 February 2022.

B) Ongoing Activities:

SCCP Strategic Plan 2022 – 2025: Priority 1 - Contributing to economies’ responses to and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic

- SCCP members will continue to implement measures to build up resilience to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. In this context, New Zealand encouraged members to use and disseminate within Customs agencies the *“Trade Facilitation Measures to Mitigate Trade Disruptions: COVID-19 Lessons and Response Toolkit”*, endorsed by SCCP in November 2021 and published on the APEC website (SCCP 01 2021S).
- SCCP members will continue implementing the *“Best Practice Guidelines for APEC Customs Administrations to Facilitate the Distribution of COVID-19 Vaccines and Related Goods”*, endorsed by the SCCP in April 2021, CTI in May 2021, and welcomed by APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade (MRT) as an operational and practical contribution to facilitate the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines and related goods (APEC MRT Joint Statement 2021).
- SCCP members will disseminate the results of the Report on *“Customs Officer Management During the COVID-19 pandemic”*, within Customs agencies. When necessary, SCCP should update or renew its contents and information and share best practices on this matter.
- Thailand drafted a *“Best Practices Guidelines on Customs Control for COVID-19 Related Goods”*. The draft will be circulated for members’ comments and endorsement with the aim to be recognized by the MRT in May 2022.

SCCP Strategic Plan 2022 – 2025: Priority 2 - Accelerating implementation of the WTO TFA

- Following up on the discussions held at SCCP2 2021, New Zealand will undertake a targeted stock take at the SCCP-level of the status and priorities of economies who have not yet fully implemented Customs - related WTO TFA articles. The initiative aims to create avenues for these economies to connect to existing capacity building opportunities that best match their implementation priorities. The proposal will be circulated intersessionally for members’ consideration.

SCCP Strategic Plan 2022 – 2025: Priority 3 - Enhancing supply chain predictability and connectivity in the APEC region

- SCCP and CTI endorsed part 3 of New Zealand’s Self-Funded Project *“Guidelines for Paperless Trade”*, in November 2021 (APEC Digital Publication). SCCP will continue discussing this matter and will intersessionally seek endorsement of the Final Report of the Project in March 2022.
- Thailand presented a Self-Funded Project Proposal *“Workshop on the Tax/Duty Collection and Risk Management for Imports of Low - Value Goods under De Minimis Thresholds”*, which will be circulated for members’ comments and endorsement intersessionally. The Workshop will take place in May 2022 (virtual event) and will develop an APEC Publication on this matter.

SCCP Strategic Plan 2022 – 2025: Priority 4 - Exploring the use of new technology and innovative solutions to secure supply chains

- With the support from SCCP members, Australia plans to launch the final version of the “Digital Dashboard on Future and Border Management” on the APEC Website (SCCP 01 2019S). The Dashboard is meant to be a live platform to build capacity in APEC economies regarding policy and regulation, technology and ICT, industry and supply chains as well as APEC economies’ response to COVID-19.
- Australia presented a Self-Funded Project Proposal on “Measures Used to Secure Cargo Containers from Tampering”, which will be circulated for members’ comments and endorsement intersessionally. A Survey on this matter will be disseminated for members’ completion during March and the results will be presented at SCCP2 2022.

SCCP Strategic Plan 2022 – 2025: Priority 5 - Promoting inclusion and fostering capacity building in the international trading environment

- The SCCP Chair reiterated the importance of members’ implementation of the La Serena Roadmap to ensure the greater integration and empowerment of women in the Asia Pacific region. To reflect this idea, SCCP must help promoting and enabling an environment that actively supports gender equality and women’s empowerment and diversity not only for Customs but for global trade as well.
- SCCP members – led by New Zealand, the United States, and other interested economies, will develop an initiative regarding gender equality in APEC Customs to continue the discussions held at SCCP2 2021.

C) SCCP Intersessional Actions:

- SCCP will discuss how to progress the implementation of the MRT Statement and the AMM Declaration 2021, particularly regarding the vaccine supply chains and the movement of essential goods.
- SCCP will discuss how to support the implementation of the Aotearoa Plan of Action (APA) and report to CTI by the end of the year
- SCCP will follow up the implementation of the activities included in the SCCP Workplan 2022 as follows:
 - 1) Draft Best Practice Guidelines on Customs Control for COVID-19 Related Goods (Thailand)
 - 2) Self-Funded Project “Guidelines for Paperless Trade” (SCCP 02 2021S – New Zealand)
 - 3) Self-Funded Project “The Future of Trade and Border Management Policy Dialogue” (SCCP 01 2019S – Australia)
 - 4) WTO TFA Implementation Acceleration: Priorities and Channels for Adoption of Customs Related Chapters (New Zealand)
 - 5) Draft Self-Funded Project Proposal “Workshop on the Tax/Duty Collection and Risk Management for Imports of Low - Value Goods under De Minimis Thresholds” (Thailand)
 - 6) ACBD 2022 under the theme “Customs and Green Economy: Enhancing Economic Development and Environmental Sustainability” (Thailand)
 - 7) Draft Self-Funded Project Proposal “Measures Used to Secure Cargo Containers from Tampering” (Australia)
 - 8) Gender and Customs workstream (New Zealand and other economies)

D) For CTI to note:

- The SCCP is working together on the “Best Practice Guidelines on Customs Control for COVID-19 Related Goods.” Once the draft Best Practice Guidelines is finalised, Thailand will circulate it to the SCCP economies for endorsement. The SCCP will keep CTI informed on progress.

AGENDA ITEMS – MAIN HIGHLIGHTS

AGENDA ITEM 2: APEC 2022 THEME & PRIORITIES

2.1 Briefing on Thailand 2022 APEC Theme & Priorities

The representative of SOM’s Chair Office outlined Thailand’s priorities for APEC 2022 as follows:

- 1) Open to all opportunities - open trade and investment;
- 2) Connect in all dimensions - enhance connectivity in all dimensions; and
- 3) Balance in all aspects - BCG economy model.

Thailand also introduced how their bio-circular-green (BCG) economy model could jumpstart a long-term strategy for sustainable and inclusive growth in APEC. In addition, they also highlighted the work that they will be contributing to Putrajaya Vision 2040 and the timeline of the 2022 Notional Calendar.

2.2 Sharing by the CTI Chair on CTI's Priorities for 2022 as well as collaboration with SCCP

The 6 CTI priorities in 2022 include: (1) Supporting Thailand’s work, especially the BCG economy model and the Free Trade Area of Asia-Pacific (FTAAP); (2) Supporting the Multilateral Trading System; (3) advancing Regional Economic Integration; (4) Promoting Trade Facilitation, Connectivity, Digitalisation, and Innovation, with the 2 main taskings of *Declaration on Facilitating the Movement of Essential Goods 2020* and *2021 MRT Statement on Vaccine Supply Chains*; (5) Focusing on Sustainability and Inclusion; and (6) Contributing to Putrajaya Vision 2040 and Aotearoa Plan of Action (APA).

The CTI Chair informed the Meeting that in supporting the Multilateral Trading System, SCCP is encouraged to continue the ongoing negotiation. In the area of trade facilitation, SCCP has so far done tremendous works. The key tasks of SCCP, which are important to CTI, included the Statement on COVID-19 Vaccine Supply Chains and the Declaration on Facilitating the Movement of Essential Goods. He further pointed out that the Best Practice Guideline for APEC Customs Administrations to Facilitate the Distribution of COVID-19 Vaccines and Related Goods is the key tangible product from SCCP last year.

The CTI Chair also stressed that SCCP as a sub-forum, should work out on the indicator with the PSU to evaluate the SCCP work according to APA and shall report back to CTI on the SCCP discussion and progress by AMM 2022.

2.3 Outcomes of the SCCP 2021 Meetings and Events

SCCP's theme for APEC 2021 was (1) supply chain security and connectivity; (2) digital trade; and (3) trade facilitation through COVID-19 recovery.

The SCCP Chair hosted two SCCP plenary meetings and two Friends of the Chair meetings throughout the year. The SCCP Chair also led the development of the SCCP Strategic Plan 2022-2025, and the SCCP renewed its Terms of Reference for the same period. Following sub-fora review, APEC Senior Officials renewed the SCCP's mandate for another four years. The New Zealand delegation also

- Hosted the APEC Customs Business Dialogue on the theme of *Encouraging Greater Participation of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Global Trade*;
- Developed the Best Practice Guidelines for APEC Customs Administrations to Facilitate the Distribution of COVID-19 Vaccines and Related Goods. This was endorsed by the SCCP and CTI, and APEC MRT did also commit to advance implementation of the Guidelines;
- Led two self-funded projects: Trade Facilitation Measures to Mitigate Trade Disruptions: Lessons and Response Toolkit and Guidelines for Paperless Trade.

2.4 APEC Secretariat Update

The APEC Secretariat outlined important work that the SCCP would need to progress this year and asked member economies to actively contribute to these workstreams, which are:

- APEC 2021 Overview Deliverables and Tasking Statement (ISOM);
- APEC Projects Update 2021: the APEC Secretariat provided Project Session 1 dates for this year, along with details around funding availability for projects. They provided an overview of current APEC SCCP projects (self-funded projects);
- Aotearoa Plan of Action (APA): the SCCP as a sub-committee is required to work with the PSU to identify relevant indicators to support the evaluation of progress and shall report through the CTI every 2 years. The APEC secretariat suggested that the SCCP has to discuss internally how to implement the Aotearoa Plan of Action (APA), actions, and initiatives as well as the way to develop indicators to measure progress with FOTC participation intersessionally.

AGENDA ITEM 3: SCCP WORK PLAN & ACTIVITIES 2022

3.1 Presentation of the SCCP Workplan 2022

The SCCP chair presented the SCCP Workplan 2022 which was drafted according to the 5 SCCP priorities stated in SCCP Strategic Plan 2022-2025 which are:

- Contributing to economies' responses to and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Accelerating implementation of the WTO TFA;
- Enhancing supply chain predictability and connectivity in the APEC region;
- Exploring the use of new technology and innovative solutions to secure supply chains;
- Promoting inclusion and fostering capacity building in the international trading environment;

According to the above 5 priorities, there are 8 items of projects, initiatives, and activities together listed in the Work Plan, including:

- 1) Draft Best Practice Guidelines on Customs Control for COVID-19 Related Goods (Thailand);
- 2) Self-Funded Project “Guidelines for Paperless Trade” (SCCP 02 2021S – New Zealand)
- 3) Initiative on WTO TFA Implementation Acceleration: Priorities and Channels for Adoption of Customs Related Chapters (New Zealand);
- 4) Draft Self-Funded Project Proposal “Workshop on the Tax/Duty Collection and Risk Management for Imports of Low - Value Goods under De Minimis Thresholds” (Thailand)
- 5) The 2022 APEC Business Dialogue, under the theme of "Customs and Green Economy: Enhancing Economic Development and Environmental Sustainability" proposed (Thailand)
- 6) Draft Self-funded project: Measure Used to Secure Cargo Container from Tampering proposed (Australia)
- 7) Initiative on Gender and Customs proposed (New Zealand);
- 8) Self-funded project: “The Future of Trade and Border Management” Policy Dialogue (SCCP 01 2019S) proposed by Australia

3.2 Introduction of the APEC Customs Business Dialogue 2022 Theme: “Customs and Green Economy”

Thailand introduced the APEC Customs Business Dialogue 2022 Theme: Customs and Green Economy: Enhancing Economic Development and Environmental Sustainability. The Dialogue will bring together Customs Administrations, International Organizations, public and private sectors to discuss their initiatives, exchange viewpoints and identify barriers to achieve the Green Economy throughout this extensive dialogue.

People’s Republic of China provided information regarding Green Economy, saying that the theme of ACBD 2022 – the Green Economy – is aligned with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as well as the key focus of WCO. In addition, they opted for the opinion that Thailand may consider adding an additional topic that touches upon “Sustainable Development” and “Common Development” regarding the theme of Customs and Green Economy across APEC economies.

WCO shared with the SCCP members that Green Customs is one of the WCO focus areas in the financial year 2022-2023.

AGENDA ITEM 4 – SCCP PRIORITY 1: CONTRIBUTING TO ECONOMIES’ RESPONSES TO AND RECOVERY FROM THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

4.1 Update: Trade Facilitation Measures to Mitigate Trade Disruptions: COVID-19 Lessons and Response Toolkit (SCCP 01 2021S)

New Zealand provided an update on the COVID-19 lessons learnt project. The COVID-19 pandemic posed many challenges to global supply chains. During this time, Customs

Administrations have played a key role in facilitating trade. The project identified trade facilitation measures adopted by APEC Customs Administrations during the pandemic.

New Zealand hosted a workshop “Customs Responses to COVID-19 Trade Recovery in the APEC Region: Lessons learnt and future outlook” where SCCP members, academics and the private sector joined to discuss trade facilitation measures that APEC could adopt as the new standard.

Following the workshop, New Zealand developed the *Trade Facilitation Measures to Mitigate Trade Disruptions: COVID-19 Lessons and Response Toolkit* (endorsed by SCCP in November 2021), which contains:

- 1) A framework of measures that could be permanently adopted to increase resilience against future shocks; and
- 2) A toolkit of measures that can be deployed to respond to trade disruptions.

New Zealand also found that adopting the WTO TFA will also help Customs administrations improve resilience against trade disruptions.

4.2 Update: Best Practice Guidelines for APEC Customs Administrations to Facilitate the Distribution of COVID-19 Vaccines and Related Goods

New Zealand provided an update on the *Best Practice Guidelines for APEC Customs Administrations to Facilitate the Distribution of COVID-19 Vaccines and Related Goods*. The Guidelines comprise a set of operational and practicable measures for Customs Administrations to facilitate the flow of COVID-19 vaccines and related goods in a safe, timely and efficient manner across the APEC region. The Guidelines were endorsed by SCCP in April 2021 and by CTI in May 2021. MRT welcomed the Guidelines and committed to advance implementation of the Guidelines through their June 2021 Joint Statement and Annex on vaccine supply chains.

New Zealand then presented the results of the implementation status survey. 16 economies responded to the survey. 11 economies have implemented over 80 percent of the measures in the Guidelines. The feedback showed that the Guidelines were robust, clear and concrete for general application.

4.3 Update: Presentation of Results on Initiative: Customs Management in the New Normal after COVID-19

Japan and Mexico presented the results of the final report, "Survey on the Customs Internal Management in the New Normal after COVID-19". The questionnaire focused on the insight of internal management of the Customs Administration and how they have changed to solve a working condition during the COVID-19 pandemic. Having a mutual understanding will help economies choose appropriate measures against COVID-19 in the short run, and serving as a record of the past for reference in future crises in the long run is the main objective of their initiative. In addition, they provided concrete examples for comprehending the results and the way forward that can be implemented with the SCCP, namely, sharing the deliverables among officers, updating or renewing the contents when a new situation brings, and sharing new contents in the SCCP to be an information source.

4.4 Presentation: United States Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

The United States by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) shared their experiences of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The importance of healthcare and safety measures in supporting the production and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines and related goods and specifically with COVID-19 counterfeit items. CBP is working closely with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the Department of Agriculture and the National Institutes of Occupational Safety and Health, and other agencies to share information on the U.S. government's health and safety standards in order to identify risk indicators and strengthen enforcement capabilities. The U.S. further reiterated the importance of coordinated border management to more effectively respond to crisis. The U.S. has seized a large number of counterfeit COVID-19 items through risk management by utilizing existing data and looking for new importers and trends, including personal protective equipment, test kits, pharmaceuticals, and hand sanitizer, as well as COVID-19 vaccination cards.

4.5 Presentation: E-Longroom Initiative

Canada introduced an overview of the e-Longroom Initiative which is a new service that automates and expedites the process for commercial clients to declare goods and pay applicable duties and taxes. It is also beneficial in coping with COVID-19 with low overhead and quick turnaround. The e-Longroom provides multiple benefits for both CBSA and its clients in several aspects including (1) more efficient, flexible resilient process, (2) reducing face to face interaction in CBSA offices, (3) having comprehensive audit trail with automated tracking of time of receipt, reject and return of documents. Canada further informed that the e-Longroom was a success and is being formalized as a permanent process with the expectation to expand the service to 100 offices by end of 2022.

4.6 Initiative: Best Practice Guidelines on Customs Control for COVID-19 Related Goods

Thailand introduced draft Best Practice Guidelines on Customs Control for COVID-19 Related Goods, aimed as a reference administrative tool for APEC economies to be used when drafting Customs control policy. Thailand further clarified that the draft Best Practice Guidelines is comprised of 3 elements: (1) Customs control principle; (2) risk management and trade facilitation; and (3) cooperation and awareness raising. Thailand further highlighted that such Guidelines is a non-binding instrument. SCCP members may opt to implement only measures which they deem appropriate to their political and strategic contexts.

People's Republic of China suggested that smart technology and innovation approaches, which is in line with SCCP priority 4, should be included in the Best Practices Guidelines and informed that a revised Guidelines was sent to Thailand already. In this regard, Thailand informed People's Republic of China of receiving such email and will work toward the second draft of the Guidelines.

The SCCP Chair also encouraged SCCP members to review the Guidelines and revert to Thailand with all the inputs and comments via email later on, so that they could come up with the Guidelines that serve the best interest of all SCCP member economies.

Chinese Taipei shared their best practice on the Customs measures to mitigate the impact of COVID-19. The example of measures taken by Chinese Taipei are establishing the “Contact Points for Instant Clearance Service” so that importers could consult to Customs officials easily and get a prompt reply; increasing X-ray inspection to reduce cargo inspection time; providing 24-hour clearance service for express air cargos; allowing to submit the carbon copy or fax documents and provide the originals after clearance for urgent cases; publishing COVID-19-related measures and regulations on the website; extending the storage period of bonded goods in duty-free shops and the time limit of duty/tax refund of imported raw materials.

Australia reiterated the importance of trade facilitation and supported health sector as well as border protection. Australia asked New Zealand about WTO TFA as Australia is interested in the implementation of the research that New Zealand referred to private sectors. Australia questioned whether New Zealand has any information or notion about the national committee on trade facilitation which is a useful form that brings private sectors and public sectors together rather than piecemeal approach.

New Zealand responded to Australia that National Committees on Trade Facilitation are good mechanisms for the implementation of the WTO TFA. From the “Lessons learnt” workshop, New Zealand found there was a greater level of cooperation among government agencies and the private sector.

Hong Kong, China appreciated the economies for the collaborative effort in facilitating the cross-border movement of vaccines and medical supplies.

WCO commented that one aspect of WCO Operation STOP II Project is related to the intervention by the U.S., namely cooperation with the private sector in the pharmaceutical industry to explain the characteristics and logistic pattern of the genuine vaccines for COVID-19. The STOP II cooperation aimed at targeting substandard and dangerous COVID-19 related goods, counterfeit medical supplies, and fake medicines.

The SCCP Chair wrapped up Day 1 Meeting by congratulating the outstanding works done by the previous SCCP Chair and New Zealand last year. In addition, the SCCP Chair stressed that the SCCP will be steering forward according to Thailand’s OPEN-CONNECT-BALANCE theme and the BCG model, the direction by the CTI Chair, as well as the suggestion by the APEC Secretariat.

In addition, the SCCP Chair also reiterated the launching of Annual Work Plan this year with 8 interesting projects/initiatives including the ACBD under the theme of "Customs and Green Economy: Enhancing Economic Development and Environmental Sustainability", which will be hosted by Thailand in August 2022, back to back with the SCCP2.

Furthermore, the SCCP Chair thanked all the 6 speakers for their presentations under SCCP PRIORITY 1: Contributing to Economies’ Responses to and Recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic. Apart from stressing the successful works of the Trade Facilitation Measures to Mitigate Trade Disruptions: COVID-19 Lessons and Response Toolkit and the Best Practice Guidelines for APEC Customs Administrations to Facilitate the Distribution of COVID-19 Vaccines and Related Goods by New Zealand, the SCCP Chair also encouraged economies

to support Thailand with inputs and comments on the draft Best Practices Guidelines on Customs Control for COVID-19 Related Goods.

AGENDA ITEM 5 – SCCP PRIORITY 2: ACCELERATING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WTO TFA

5.1 Presentation: Implementation of Thailand’s WTO TFA

Thailand gave an update on its implementation of WTO TFA with the current notification status of 97.1% divided into the implementation rate of Category A 91.60% and Category B 5.50%. Article 5.3 Test Procedures and Article 11 Transit are to be implemented by 22 February 2024, and 22 February 2022 respectively. They expected the full implementation of WTO TFA to be completed in 2024.

Thailand also shared their implementation since the ratification of TFA in 2015 by establishing the National Committee on Trade Facilitation (NCTF), Trade Facilitation Sub-Committee (acting as Thailand NCTF) and the working group under NCTF to ensure the progress of the implementation and coordinate with the other agencies as well as to report any solution to NCTF. In addition, Thailand has developed several action plans especially adopting the electronic system and revised the Customs Act in 2017 for supporting the implementation of TFA.

5.2 Presentation: Current Status of Thailand AEO Program

Thailand presented the SCCP with the current status of its AEO Program. There are recently 392 members comprising of 199 importers and exporters and 193 Customs brokers. Thailand outlined the qualifications, benefits, application process, and validation process of the AEO program. They also updated the Meeting that they have signed the AEO MRAs with Hong Kong, China; Republic of Korea; Singapore; and Australia. Furthermore, Thailand is under AEO MRA negotiation with Malaysia; Japan; ASEAN; People’s Republic of China, and New Zealand

5.3 Presentation: Accelerating Implementation of TFA in the Pacific Region

OCO briefed the meeting with their mission, vision, and framework that focus on the OCO strategic plan 2017-2022 in 5 areas namely; Customs leadership, law enforcement and border security, trade management and facilitation, and revenue mobilisation as well as institutional strengthening of small member administrations. They updated the participation of members of OCO in international organizations that there are 9 economies have ratified the Revised Kyoto Convention of WCO and 5 economies have ratified the WTO TFA. To better understand their current implementation of TFA in the Pacific region, the OCO also explained the challenges they are facing, such as the cost of transportation of smaller economies, regional harmonization and simplification of Customs procedures, standardization of HS codes and documentation requirements, and cooperation and information sharing between Customs Administrations. As a result, they need strong political support from its members and technical assistance on targeting capacity and Information Technology and Communication (ICT) to accelerate WTO FTA implementation in the region.

5.4 Presentation: TFA Implementation: Generating Efficiencies in Customs Clearance with ASYCUDA

UNCTAD shared its roles in supporting TFA Implementation. The UNCTAD representative introduced ASYCUDA, the program initiated in the 1980s to support Customs automation and trade facilitation reforms. At present, the ASYCUDA has been widely used in more than 100 countries and territories. The UNCTAD representative further pointed out that regarding WTO TFA, the ASYCUDA supports the implementation of Customs Related WTO TFA article: Article 1 Publication and Availability of Information, Article 5 Other Measures to Enhance Impartiality, Non-discrimination and Transparency, Article 6: Disciplines on Fees and Charges, Article 7 Release and Clearance of Goods, Article 8 Border Agency Cooperation and Article 10 Formalities Connected with Import, Export and Transit. Finally, the UNCTAD summarised the key principles, such as the importance of Revenue/Customs authorities participating actively in National Trade Facilitation Committees (NTFCs), the importance of including the private sector in NTFCs, and the importance of discussing TFA obligations with all NTFC stakeholders.

5.5 Presentation: Colombia's Experience Implementing the Trade Facilitation Agreement

Colombia shared its experience in implementing WTO TFA. Colombia further informed the SCCP members that the agreement entered into force on 22 February 2017, with implementing Category A, accounted for 96.6%. In addition, Colombia also introduced its foreign trade policy on exportation, comprised of 3 pillars: 1. trade agreement deepening and strategic markets 2. trade facilitation 3. foreign investment attraction. Colombia also introduced Domestic Committee for Trade Facilitation which is a body for public-private coordination. The Committee has its aim to streamline the foreign trade, eliminate rework and simplify operation.

5.6 Initiative: WTO TFA Implementation Acceleration: Priorities and Channels for Adoption of Customs Related Chapters

New Zealand introduced the initiative on the WTO TFA Implementation Acceleration: Priorities and Channels for Adoption of Customs Related Chapters. The objective of the initiative is to undertake a targeted stock take of the status and priorities of economies that have not yet fully implemented Customs related WTO TFA articles. This initiative will draw on existing materials and surveys. The initiative aims to create avenues for economies to connect to existing capacity building opportunities that best match their implementation priorities. Additionally, the initiative seeks to find the gaps on TFA capacity building, which can be used to inform future work. New Zealand is currently scoping out the work and will report on progress at SCCP2 2022. New Zealand welcomed SCCP members interested in this initiative to contact the New Zealand delegation.

Thailand asked Colombia to clarify the difference of roles between the Police and the Customs officer in the physical inspection. Colombia answered that there are four authorities which are the Police, Customs, Agriculture, Medicine and Food Authorities to carry out inspection. The Police Authority is responsible for some of physical inspection and scanner inspection at the entry of the port.

Indonesia expressed their appreciation to achievement of Thailand's implementation of the WTO TFA and the AEO program. Indonesia asked Thailand about its perspective of MSMEs in the AEO program and Thailand responded that they have 2 categories composing of importer/exporter and Customs broker, and do not provide a specific category for MSMEs. Nevertheless, Thailand applied WCO SAFE Framework with some flexible criteria to fit with MSMEs. Indonesia also required Thailand to share their plan to accelerate implementation on Category B, which has not been implemented yet. Thailand responded that the Thai Customs Department has already done for implementing WTO TFA Article 5.3 Test Procedures but the article is related to other relevant agencies such as Food and Drug Administration which is working on amending the Act. Thailand also have a working group having a duty to track the progress of WTO TFA implementation.

The United States shared the experience in the past activities for capacity building focusing on Article 8 Border Agency Cooperation, Article 1, and Article 3. They suggested that the economies should continue to implement and reinvigorate their focus on border agency cooperation. To support border agency cooperation, in August 2021 the U.S. held a workshop highlighting cooperation among border agencies internally as well as cross border. In addition, through US-SEGA they have been working with Peru on the implementation of WTO TFA Article 8, Border Agency Cooperation.

Japan stated that they provided assistances on trade facilitation to other Customs agencies for years in cooperation with international organizations such as WCO and Asian Development Bank (ADB). Japan shared their view that trade facilitation cannot be achieved without international cooperation. In this regard, they expanded the networks of AEO with their partners and helped other economies such as Malaysia which successfully implements WTO TFA on Article 7.8 Expedited Shipments. Japan further expressed that AEO MRA between Thailand and Japan is under negotiation.

AGENDA ITEM 6 – SCCP PRIORITY 3: ENHANCING SUPPLY CHAIN PREDICTABILITY AND CONNECTIVITY IN THE APEC REGION

6.1 Presentation: Digital Trade Transformation and Connectivity (Digital Economy Steering Group: DESG-Thailand)

Thailand presented that all trade-related parties have been working together to digitize trade documents to facilitate both domestic and international trade. They highlighted on Thailand's National Digital Trade Platform (NDTP), explaining to be Thailand B2B integrating data platform for several stakeholders, including importers/exporters, logistics sector, and banks. The platform also links with Thailand Single Window and connects with regional counterparty e.g., APEC.

The platform blueprint and key milestones were shared in the meeting to update about the commercial and transport documents, such as e-invoice and e-Bill of Lading which will be exchanged with the first 2 economies, Japan and Singapore in the first phase of the platform implementation, expected to go live in the third quarter of 2022.

It is also underlined that there was an alignment between the NDTP project and the priorities of the two Working Groups under APEC Business Advisory Council, Digital Working Group

and Finance and Economics Working Group, since both of them are focusing on interoperability of digital trade platforms to promote digitalization, connectivity and inclusivity. DESG also sought comments and inputs from SCCP regarding their project, APEC Digital Trade Transformation Work Program, which is expected to complete in 2022.

6.2 Update: Single Window Systems' International Interoperability Project/CTI

Chile provided an update on its initiative on Supply Chain Integration 4.0 Through Single Window Interoperability Action Plan which was endorsed by CTI in 2019. The objective of the project is to promote interoperability among APEC economies trade electronic Single Window system, taking in to account the importance of the development of domestic Single Window of each member and also the current examples of interoperability in the APEC region and worldwide.

Chile further updated the current status of the project. The participating economies comprises of Chile, Peru and Singapore as pilot participants; and the Republic of Korea, New Zealand as observers. In 2021, the technical group started to develop the technical parameters of the pilot and agreed on the document to be exchanged in the pilot such as the Customs Data Declaration Form. As the first approach, their own Declaration Form should be used in order to familiarize with the design and particularities of the document in each economy.

For the next step in 2022, the participating economies will continue to discuss on the best technology used for interoperability as well as the applicable international regulations or treaties to be used as the standards in the pilot project. Then, the group will work on a Harmonization Matrix and Service Contracts for the document and data to be exchanged.

6.3 Update: Guidelines for Paperless Trade

New Zealand shared an update on the *Guidelines for Paperless Trade* and thanked SCCP members for their support on the work. SCCP endorsed Part 3 of the Guidelines, which contains a set of non-exhaustive measures to assist APEC economies in implementing electronic and paperless Customs procedures.

Part 3 of the Guidelines are grouped into four categories: Automated Systems, Data Standards, Electronic Clearance Procedures, and Publishing of Information. The measures in the Guidelines aim to reduce trade transaction costs, simplify Customs procedures, increase access to global supply chains, and enhance the effectiveness of border agencies on risk management.

New Zealand encouraged SCCP members to continue sharing their best practices on paperless trade to enhance and update the Guidelines in the future.

6.4 Presentation: Updates on the E-commerce Data Pilots

The United States provided the progress of two data pilots in the e-Commerce area which test the utility of accepting advance data directly from non-traditional e-commerce actors and matching it with the information CBP received from traditional carriers to better segment risks. The additional data collected has improved CBP's ability to assess Section 321 risk more

quickly and accurately, including risks that have been associated with COVID-19 counterfeit items.

The United States further shared that in the last 5 years, there has been rapid increase in small packages, which is the reason for CBP to collect information and improve data analysis in this segment. The Entry Type 86 Test is open for all Customs brokers, and self-filers, for more specific shipment information to submit de minimis entries through the Automated Broker Interface (ABI).

The pilots have demonstrated great success, resulting in 260 million filings from Section 321 Data Pilot, and 550 million filings from Entry Type 86. The United States concluded that these strategies will further support e-Commerce goals and ability to respond to threats posed by the rise in e-commerce. They also would like to see global collaboration in this area in the future.

6.5 Self-Funded Project Proposal: Workshop on Tax/Duty Collection and Risk Management for Imports of Low Value Goods under De Minimis Thresholds

Thailand presented its proposal on their self-funded project: “the Workshop on Tax/Duty Collection for Imports and Risk Management of Low Value Goods under De Minimis Thresholds”. While there is a significant growth of the import volume of low value goods from cross-border e-Commerce, tax and duty on such goods are not collected in most economies which could result in the loss of revenue, unfair competition for domestic trade, and border risk.

This project, thus, aims to conduct a virtual workshop to learn practices and experiences in dealing with low value shipments under De Minimis thresholds from SCCP members, in particular from those who have imposed such tax/duty in their economies. The project also seeks to develop a summary report of lessons learned and best practices on tax/duty collection and risk management on imports of low value goods under De Minimis thresholds. Such report will be further developed to a guideline and published on the APEC website which will benefit member economies who wish to implement tax/duty collection for imports of low value goods under De Minimis thresholds in their economies.

Thailand further described the methodology of the project, timeframe, the next steps it intends to take as well as the project evaluation. Thailand expressed its intention to work with all SCCP members to make the project successful and reiterated that this Project does not aim to encourage the collection of revenue or to create any barrier to trade. The project proposal was presented to Friends of the Chair (FOTC) Meeting and has been revised according to the comments received by member economies. Thailand then asked member economies to submit further comments and inputs by 28 February 2022. The developments of the project will be reported in the next SCCP meeting.

Australia supported the United States project on the E-commerce Data Pilots and reiterated the importance of risk assessment on e-commerce which seems to be the significant challenge for Customs.

New Zealand shared its experience on assessing risk in e-commerce supply chains, particularly as New Zealand is experiencing high volumes of tobacco smuggling through the postal and courier mail pathways. New Zealand added that they look forward to the outcome of the project by the United States and wished to collaborate with them on risk management in e-commerce, should the opportunity arise.

The United States appreciated the interest from Australia and New Zealand in the pilots and would like to collaborate with one another in this area. They also updated on the expiration of the previous Supply Chain Framework Action Plan (SCFAP) and expressed interest and support for Singapore in developing a new, targeted, measurable, and current SCFAP that will help APEC supply chain work focus on current, immediate and future issues.

WCO offered some reference material that can be used in implementing Thailand's project: Workshop on Tax/Duty Collection for Imports of Low Value Goods under De Minimis Thresholds. The reference material included the WCO document on Revenue Collection Approaches that is based on the OECD guidelines, as well as the WCO Compendium of Case Studies on E-Commerce, which includes WCO members' experiences and best practices on revenue collection. Both documents are part of the WCO E-Commerce Package.

Thailand thanked WCO for the suggestion and stated that they also have the plan to invite WCO representatives to attend the workshop. The invitation letter will be sent out in due course.

The SCCP Chair wrapped up Day 2 Meeting by highlighting the 2SCCP priorities that were the main focus of the second day, which are SCCP Priority 2: Accelerating Implementation of the WTO TFA and SCCP Priority 3: Enhancing Supply Chain Predictability and Connectivity in APEC Region. The SCCP Chair appreciated all the economies and guest speakers that contributed to both agendas by sharing their point of view, best practices, experiences as well as the updates of their ongoing project.

In the end, the SCCP Chair encouraged the economies to support the new project and initiative that were presented today, which are WTO TFA Implementation Acceleration: Priorities and Channels for Adoption of Customs Related Chapters by New Zealand and the Workshop on Tax/Duty Collection for Imports and Risk Management of Low Value Goods under De Minimis Thresholds by Thailand.

AGENDA ITEM 7 – SCCP PRIORITY 4: EXPLORING THE USE OF NEW TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS TO SECURE SUPPLY CHAINS

7.1 Update: The Future of Trade and Border Management – to 2030 (Dashboard)

Australia shared an update on their self-funded project, The Future of Trade and Border Management – to 2030. The project aims to develop APEC Border Management Dashboard – a live platform contained a number of useful and up-to-date information which could be served as an excellent tool to support capacity building and inform APEC policy makers internationally. The dashboard mainly focuses on international trade and border management which sets out the building blocks for member economies to consider in four pillars: (1) Policy

and Regulation; (2) Technology and Information Communication Technology (ICT); (3) Industry and Supply Chains; and (4) COVID-19 Response.

The dashboard will be linked to APEC website to enable members to easily access and explore information. The dashboard will be updated regularly to ensure the accuracy of the information that can build dynamic and contemporary capacity for APEC member economies. This regard, Australia also thanked SCCP members for contributing their content on the dashboard.

7.2 Self-Funded Project Proposal: Measures used to secure Cargo containers from tampering

Australia introduced its self-funded project proposal on Measures used to secure Cargo containers from tampering. The aim of the project is to seek information from member economies on the measures that Customs Agencies are using or have been used to control contraband from being imported in cargo containers, in particular Smart Security Devices (SSD) was sparked by the World Customs Organization's (WCO) work, specific checks or control processes to limit access to containers prior to Customs clearance, or data obtained from commercial holdings or from reciprocal arrangements with other Customs Agencies that are used to detect and identify at risk containers. In doing this, the Australian Border Force (ABF) will circulate the survey to gather information from SCCP members in early March 2022. Such information may help to shed light on successes that Customs Agencies have experienced in reducing and detecting contraband trafficking and contribute towards policy development that will improve supply chain security and connectivity within the APEC region.

7.3 Presentation: KCS Big Data Strategy

The Republic of Korea shared with the SCCP on the progress of its Big Data Strategy. KCS has been harnessing big data since 2017 to manage databases and set up the big data platform by developing various analysis models. There are 3 key factors to reach this goal, namely: data analysts, self-analysis system, and service models. Recently, KCS have 160 data analysts and more than 30 self-developed data analysis models shared per year, as well as 23 service models provided on the big data platform. They also displayed how the platform operates and what the learning points are for this platform.

7.4 Presentation: Thailand's Cross-Border Data Exchange of the Electronic Phytosanitary Certificate

Thailand presented on its Cross-Border Data Exchange of the Electronic Phytosanitary (e-Phyto) Certificate. They used the Doing Business: Trading across Borders study's good practices that comprising of allowing traders to exchange information with Customs and other control agencies, using risk-based assessment to limit physical inspections, and engaging in trade agreements for efficient and effective practices, as well as Enabling the Business of Agriculture report from the World Bank as a guidance for their implementation. The process of data exchange of e-Phyto is that an importer and exporter can exchange an e-Phyto certificate with the ASEAN members through the ASEAN Single Window (ASW) and

the members outside of ASEAN through the International Plant Protection Convention Hub (IPPC Hub) and Peer to Peer.

Thailand also explained the method of accessing the information by traders in G2G format and the proportion of issuance of Phyto certificates to member economies that issued more than 400,000 pieces per year, dividing into China 37.48%, non-APEC economies 15.59%, Malaysia 15.32%, other APEC economies 15.07%, the United States 12.42%, and Japan 4.12%. Additionally, they expressed their intention to expand this system to the European Union, Argentina, Australia, Chile, Fiji, the New Zealand, Republic of Korea, and the United States in 2022.

7.5 Presentation: Initiative on Smart Customs, Smart Border and Smart Connectivity

People's Republic of China delivered the presentation on the "3S Initiative – Smart Customs, Smart Borders and Smart Connectivity" focusing on the application of the latest information technology to transform Customs Administration and build a global value chain that connects Customs and all other stakeholders.

The presentation firstly explained the core concept of "3S". "Smart Customs" aims at building digital and modern Customs. "Smart Borders" is designed to connect various authorities along the borders between 2 members. "Smart Connectivity" intends to create a network among all parties in the global supply chain.

Several People's Republic of China's good practices of 3S Initiative which are in line with APEC theme were further elaborated to the meeting. First is the Digital Border Information Connectivity Project which represented the APEC theme "Connect". The objective of the project is to facilitate trade between China and Singapore by creating a connectivity platform for data exchange and information sharing. Second, the China-ASEAN SPS Cooperation Information Website represented the APEC theme "Balance". The website contains more than 7,500 pieces of information, including SPS laws and regulations of China and ASEAN countries which effectively connects SPS supervision authorities, experts, practitioners and consumers of agri-food products. Third example is the Customs Quarantine e-Code Pass Project which represented the APEC theme "Open". It utilizes technology to electrically manage the whole process of border-entry quarantine at seaports and airports as well as automatically track the health declaration code and the dynamic trajectory of vehicles during the health and quarantine process.

China concluded the presentation by showing vision and goals of "3S Initiative" and showed willingness to collaborate with other Customs authorities and stakeholders to build a Customs-connecting world.

7.6 Presentation: Modernizing the Supply Chain into the 21st Century

The United States delivered a presentation on Modernizing the Supply Chain into the 21st Century by the Business Transformation and Innovation Division of the United States Customs and Border Protection. The United States briefed the members on the entry current state that is to recognize the problems of limited supply chain and fragmented data submissions and to

fully comprehend the role and benefits of blockchains and the distributed Ledger technology (DLT).

They further reported the results of the blockchain proof of concept on the North American and Central America Free Trade Agreement and Intellectual Property, which led them to realize that the business value is not blockchain but End-to-End supply chain visibility and traceability. As a result, the United States noted the importance of an Interoperable System between Blockchains, Distributed Ledger Technologies (DLTs) or any other technology. They also highlighted the elements of Global Interoperability W3C Standards and the concept of Digital Twin Technology as well as the outcomes of Standards based supply chains.

7.7 Presentation: Use of Disruptive Technologies by Customs

WCO provided an overview of the Study Report on Disruptive Technologies which emphasizes the importance of using disruptive technologies in Customs works and also provided some practical examples and use cases from WCO members. The group of technologies that WCO mainly focuses on are namely blockchain; internet of things (IoT); artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML); biometrics; drones; virtual, augmented and mixed reality; and 3D printing. The Strategies behind technology, policy recommendations, and use cases were also elaborated in the Report.

Moreover, in collaboration with the World Trade Organization (WTO), the WCO developed a joint WCO-WTO paper on “Customs use of Advanced Technologies to Facilitate and Secure Cross-Border Trade”. The paper reflects the results of the WCO’s 2021 Annual Consolidated Survey that revealed the use of disruptive technologies by Customs Administrations of WCO members in three groups of technologies: (1) Blockchain, (2) Internet of Things (IoT), (3) Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML). The results of the survey showed that 1/3 of WCO members are in an experimental phase of implementing blockchain technology in the area of Customs through various activities such as proofs of concept and pilot projects; 24 percent of WCO members have plans to introduce this technology in the next three years, while 41 percent still have no plan to do so.

The WCO further reported the information on benefits and challenges, implementation areas, examples of members’ case studies, and the feasibility on the application of blockchain, data analytics, artificial intelligence and internet of things in the area of Customs in the future.

Hong Kong, China shared their experiences on the bilateral cooperation with China in the pursuit of common goals of Smart Customs initiatives, such as Single E-lock, AEO Programme and risk management.

Singapore appreciated the successful cooperation with China on the various connectivity projects. They expressed their interest to expand such cooperation with other SCCP member economies on projects of mutual interest, especially the cooperation regarding new technology. Singapore also complimented efforts made by the United States in experimenting with new technology to modernize the supply chain and hoped to learn more about their application to Customs-related use cases.

The United States thanked Singapore for compliment and welcomed a further discussion with Singapore in more detail. The United States also highlighted the use of mixed technologies to respond to challenges within n supply chain.

Thailand thanked Australia, Republic of Korea, Thailand, China, the United States and WCO for valuable and informative presentations. Thailand also shared their view on Australia's self-funded project proposal that they believed this project will be useful for the member economies and they welcomed to cooperate and support, particularly responding to the survey that will be circulated in March 2022.

AGENDA ITEM 8 – SCCP PRIORITY 5: PROMOTING INCLUSION AND FOSTERING CAPACITY BUILDING IN THE INTERNATIONAL TRADING ENVIRONMENT

8.1 Presentation: Gender Equality and Diversity in Customs

WCO highlighted the importance of promoting Gender Equality and Diversity (GED) in Customs, as it is related to human rights and international objectives including the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. Furthermore, studies show that GED can contribute to sustainable economic development and growth and help increase efficiency in work. WCO provided some background of its work and initiatives in area of GED through the past years, as well as the results on gender balance in Customs from the 2021 WCO Annual Survey, which shows that Customs is still a male dominated sector and that this gender gap is even wider in higher level positions.

WCO presented the initiatives and tools launched to support GED in Customs, including the WCO Gender Equality Organizational Assessment Tool (GEOAT), the Virtual Working Group to provide a platform to exchange experiences, a Blended Training Package covering two e-learning modules and a Compendium on GED in Customs showcasing practical examples from various countries including Indonesia, Australia, the Philippines, and New Zealand. The GEOAT helps Customs administrations to assess their policies and practices in different areas of competences to identify how to enhance gender equality and diversity.

WCO concluded with its Declaration for GED in Customs together with its most recent initiative to establish a Network for GED. In Customs to promote inspirational examples of champions driving change on this topic. WCO stated that a virtual global conference will be held in March 2022 to officially launch this Network and that member economies will be invited to exchange experiences in this event.

8.2 Presentation: WCO Gender Equality and Diversity in AP Region

ROCB A/P briefed on the overview of their work in capacity building area. They thus emphasized how they work to support Gender Equality and Diversity (GED) as it is the foundation and access for better life quality of human being which is their main concept.

They presented the focused objective in enhancing effective resources deployment from their strategic plan, and shared the implementation of each specific action under the objective that the rate of female participants in international training and female head working in Customs

was beyond the targeted milestones. However, they still wish for more opportunities for women in these focused areas.

ROCB A/P stated to continue supporting and raising awareness on this matter despite during the pandemic situation through publishing online publications on their website. They committed to create more workshops and publications related to GED with APEC members Customs in the future.

8.3 Presentation: Enabling an Environment that Supports Women-led Businesses Participating in Global Trade

Thailand presented to the meeting that though there are more female population compared to male, there are fewer opportunities for female in many dimensions, including business area.

They highlighted the effort of Thai government in promoting women's development and gender equality in order to enhance equality for women-led businesses through their mainly focused in legislative frameworks, strategies and policies, for instance, the 2015 Gender Equality Act and the Master Plan under Thailand 20-year Strategies to provide policy-level support to protect gender discrimination and embrace equality especially in economic term.

Thailand also updated on their activities to ensure equal access for women to finance and business through Thai Women Empowerment Funds and vocational training and workshops, for example, Dream Weaving Project which provides necessary knowledge and skills for running business and entering digital economy. Moreover, there is the women's network called ASEAN Women Entrepreneurs Network (AWEN) in Thailand since 2018, established for developing and managing business knowledge and skills at the international level, which shows continuous support to women entrepreneurs in Thailand as well as in ASEAN.

8.4 Presentation: Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Task Force for Women

The United States introduced the United States Customs and Border Protection Task Force for Women (TFW) with its mission to promote a culture of gender diversity, equality and inclusion for all employees through unified initiatives that foster an environment that is safe, prosperous and mission ready. The group was officially launched in 2020. The United States further highlighted TFW accomplishments in 2021 including drafting a strategic plan along with short and medium/long term recommendations based on survey findings and other employee engagement efforts. In addition, they showed the result of survey related to gender issues. Areas where participants emphasized as most critical included hiring/promotion, training, recognition, resiliency, and recruitment/retention. For next steps in 2022 the TFW plans to complete a five-year strategic plan, determine root causes of statistically significant underrepresentation, build awareness, continue gathering employee feedback through outreach initiatives along, and other issues.

8.5 Presentation: Embracing gender equality and diversity in Indonesia Customs

Indonesia expressed Gender mainstreaming in the Ministry of Finance. Specifically, Indonesia further highlighted on Gender mainstreaming provisions aim: 1 to ensure that all the policies,

programs and activities are fair and equal for both women and men; 2 to ensure the continuity, sustainability and development of the Gender Mainstreaming Provisions quality; and 3 to ensure that all Ministers and Agencies understand the concepts, principles, and strategies of Gender Mainstreaming provisions according to their own authorities. In addition, Indonesia expressed the viewpoint that leaders' commitment plays a significant role in succeeding the gender mainstreaming implementation. Lastly, they shared that the Ministry of Finance, and the Directorate General of Customs & Excise commit to implementing the Gender Mainstreaming provisions with their guidelines for internal and external stakeholders.

8.6 Summary of SCCP2 2021 'Gender and Customs' Panel: Key Observations and Possible Future Directions

New Zealand presented a summary of the 'Gender and Customs' panel held at SCCP2 2021. Several stakeholders participated in this session. New Zealand outlined women in the workforce in the Asia Pacific region and the importance of eliminating systemic barriers. Insights from the APEC Women and the Economy Dashboard in 2021 illustrated that economies are doing well in the following areas:

- Mandating no discrimination in hiring.
- Maternity leave.
- Prohibiting the dismissal of pregnant women.

On the other hand, there are gaps in:

- Equal remuneration.
- Parental leave.
- Prohibiting sexual harassment at work.

New Zealand also highlighted areas in the La Serena Roadmap for Women and Inclusive Growth where Customs administrations are performing well, as well as areas for improvement.

The SCCP could progress this work in a number of ways in 2022. New Zealand is scoping a Gender and Customs initiative where they aim to develop a set of metrics to enable economies to monitor progress for women involvement in their respective Customs administrations.

AGENDA ITEM 9: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The APEC Secretariat reiterated that the SCCP Chair and the APEC Secretariat will oversee the implementation and follow up of the projects and initiatives listed under "B: SCCP Intersessional Actions" at the beginning of this document in our way to SCCP2 (August 2022).

CLOSING REMARKS

The SCCP Chair thanked the guest speakers and the member economies for their valuable idea sharing and active participation. The SCCP Chair also thanked the FOTC, APEC Secretariat, technical team from APEC task force for their support and contribution to SCCP1. The SCCP Chair congratulated the SCCP for the fruitful outcome of the Meeting concerning progress and update on economies' responses to COVID-19, post-pandemic recovery strategies as well as way forward to promote connectivity, utilize technologies and foster the capacity building in the global trade environment and then closed the meeting.*

