

**Project  
Overview**



**WCO Guidelines  
on disaster  
management**



**Contact**





# Project Overview

## Duration

36 months



## Donor

The Government  
of Japan

## Implementation

WCO COVID-19  
Project Team



## Beneficiaries

Customs administrations  
from developed and  
least developed countries



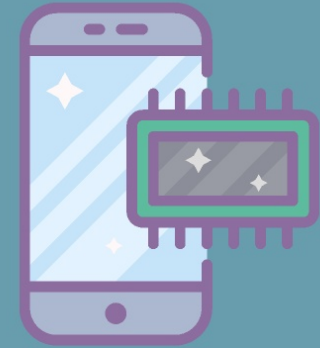
# Implementation Plan



**Developing WCO Guidelines  
on disaster management and  
supply chain continuity**



**Delivering Capacity building  
activities**



**Providing IT equipment/  
solutions**



# 100

Over 100 WCO Members have benefited from the Project events.

# 5/6

## WCO regions

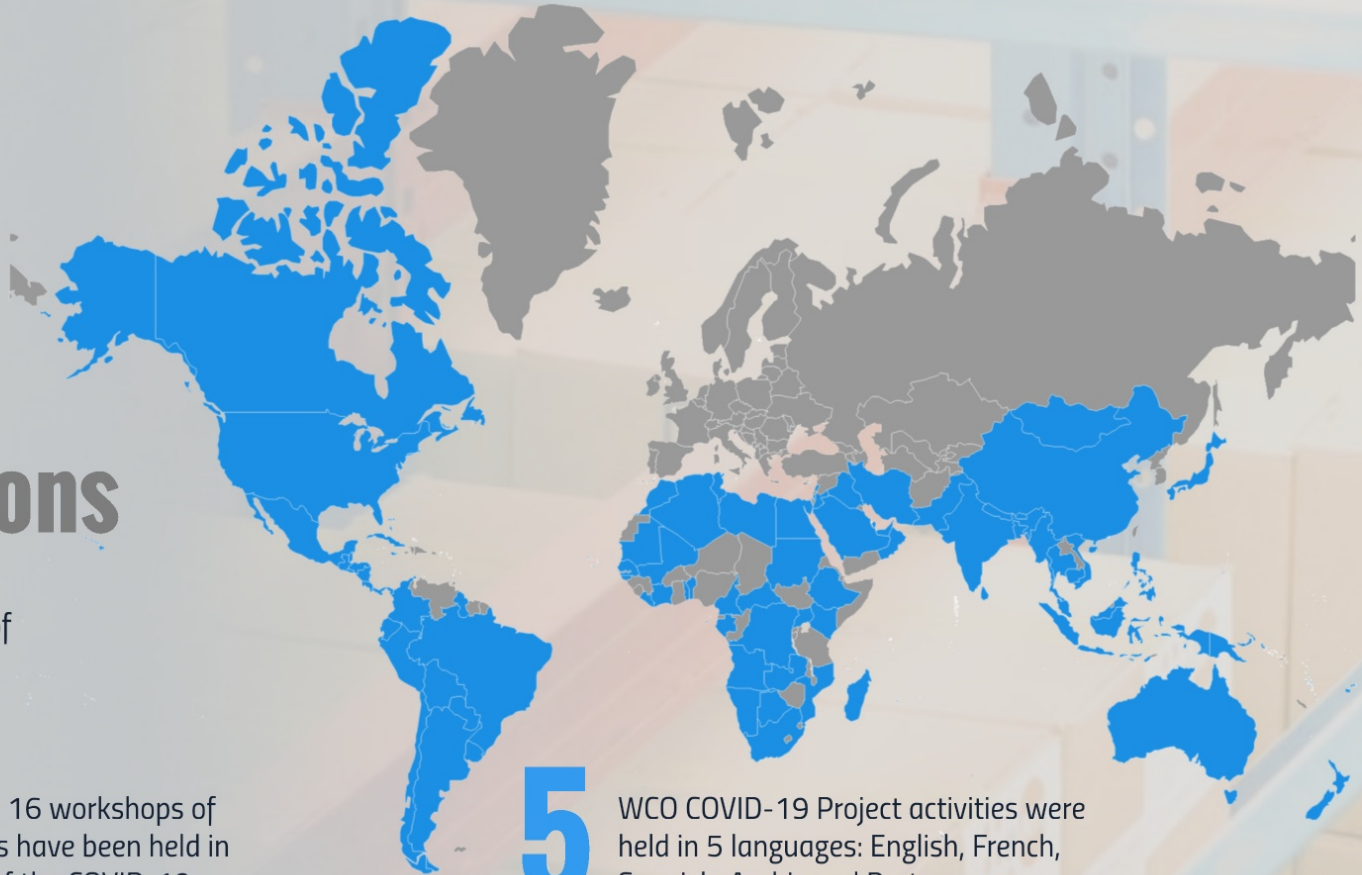
WCO COVID-19 Project activities have covered 5 of the 6 WCO regions.

# 16

As of June 2022 16 workshops of different formats have been held in the framework of the COVID-19 Project.

# 5

WCO COVID-19 Project activities were held in 5 languages: English, French, Spanish, Arabic and Portuguese.





# Capacity building activities



2.

10 national capacity building activities and 1 SIMEX

4.

Over 30 international partners involved

6.

Over 100 meetings with Members and partners

4 regional workshops and 2 sub-regional workshops

1.

More than 100 countries represented

3.

More than 700 participants

5.



# Mobile passenger e-declaration application and hardware





# WCO Guidelines on disaster management



Available in  
English, French,  
Spanish and  
Russian



Self-assessment  
tool available in EN  
and FR

May

Endorsed by the WCO Permanent Technical Committee at its 231st/ 232nd Sessions in May 2021

June

Approved by the WCO Council at its 138th Session in June 2021

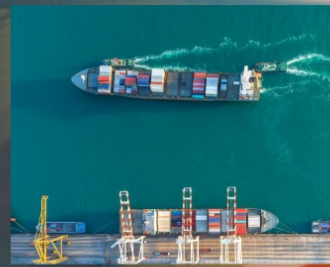
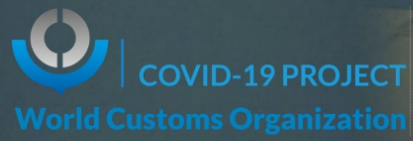
October

Updated version endorsed by the WCO Permanent Technical Committee at its 233rd/234th Sessions in October 2021

April

A self-assessment tool endorsed by the Permanent Technical Committee at its 235-236th Sessions in April 2022





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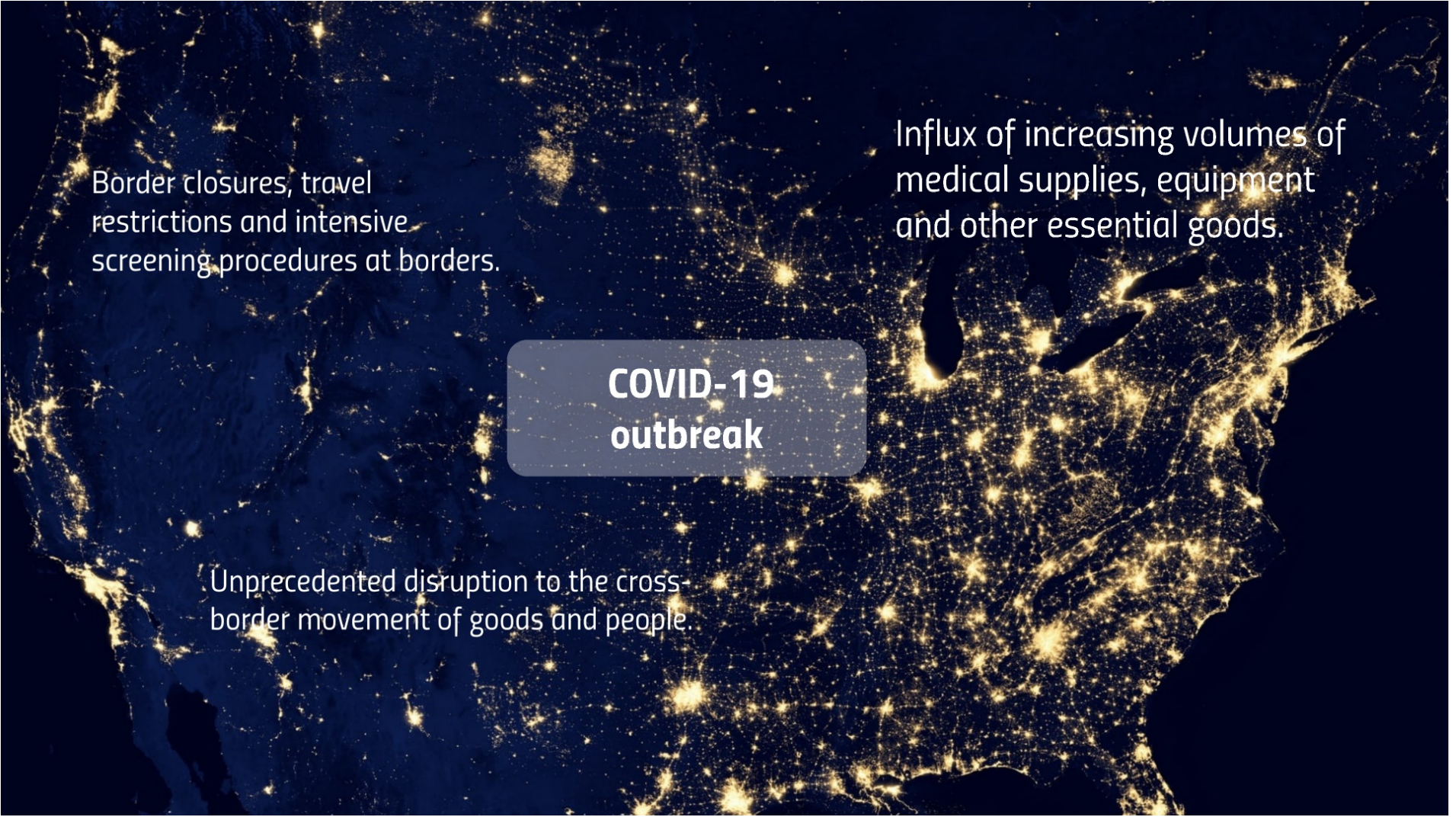
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A satellite night view of North America, showing the United States and parts of Canada and Mexico. The landmasses are dark, while the cities and urban areas are illuminated with a dense network of yellow and white lights. The lights are most concentrated along the eastern coast of the United States and in the Great Lakes region. The background is a deep blue-black space.

Border closures, travel restrictions and intensive screening procedures at borders.

Influx of increasing volumes of medical supplies, equipment and other essential goods.

## COVID-19 outbreak

Unprecedented disruption to the cross-border movement of goods and people.





**The Guidelines serve three main objectives:**

**1. Raising awareness of the crucial role of Customs administrations**

**2. Enhancing the level of preparedness**

**3. Providing clear guiding principles supported by best practices**



# Scope and structure



The Guidelines address **both infectious diseases and natural disasters** and are built on **the three** main phases of the disaster management cycle:

considered as a whole







# **Guidelines for the enhancement of Customs administrations' preparedness**





Source: Developing and maintaining Emergency Operations Plans, US Federal Emergency Management Agency



- **Promoting the role of Customs in disaster management through greater coordination with the national authority in charge of disaster management and involvement in the establishment of emergency plans;**



1) Guatemala

The Customs service is part of the National Coordinator for Disaster Reduction (CONRED), which allows Customs to have immediate information on the management of the crisis and to be clear about the procedures that must be applied to receive donations and humanitarian aid.

2) The United Arab Emirates

The Federal Customs Authority of the United Arab Emirates is a member of the National Crisis and Emergency Management Authority (NCEMA) team, which allows Customs to be part of the decisions made by the crisis team, hence ensuring the continuity of Customs tasks and procedures, while taking precautionary measures.

**Members  
practices**



- **Reviewing national Customs legal framework to incorporate facilitative the measures based on the international legal framework for the processing of relief consignments and responding to disruptive events;**

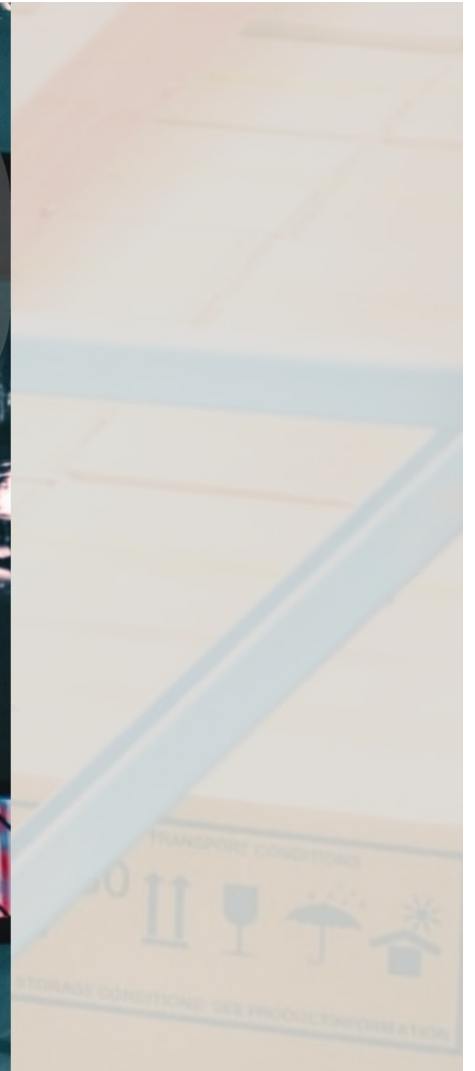
Provisions of the Customs procedures applicable in the aftermath of disasters, pandemics and other disruptive events should allow:

- Physical inspections to be kept to the minimum necessary;
- The acceptance of Customs declarations and supporting documents that satisfy minimum requirements of security and compliance based on risk management; and
- Enhanced cooperation and partnerships between Customs and stakeholders.

- **Aligning Customs procedures with international standards such as Chapter 5 of Specific Annex J to the RKC and the Istanbul Convention so as to expedite the processing of relief consignments;**



- **Fostering the use of technology to modernize Customs processes and procedures to ensure supply chain continuity.**





- **Developing Business Continuity Plans that can be activated and implemented to ensure the continuity of operations in the event of disruption;**

Business Continuity planning is defined in the Guidelines to Chapter 7 General Annex to the Revised Kyoto Convention, on Application of Information and Communication Technology.

Jordan

The Jordan Customs executive plan for tackling epidemic diseases issued in 2016 includes the measures that Jordan Customs takes to tackle any epidemic disease at all levels (strategic, tactical, operational) under the supervision of the Emergency and Crisis Management Committee. This executive plan is consistent with the national plan for tackling epidemic diseases.

**Member's  
practice**

- **Advocating the licensing/registration of eligible humanitarian actors so as to allow faster processing of relief consignments imported by them in the event of pandemics or natural disasters;**





- Establishing an Emergency Operations Centre to enable better coordination amongst the different departments in Customs administrations during the response phase;




- 
- **Procurement of rapidly deployed emergency infrastructure to allow the continuity of operations under safe conditions in the event of a pandemic or the destruction of Customs clearance infrastructure by a natural disaster;**


Training modules should cover leadership and management and be up-to-date

- **Improvement of Customs staff readiness through the incorporation of disaster management in the Customs training plans, conducting training for Customs staff and other stakeholders, preparing SOPs, conducting simulation exercises and fostering flexibility to switch to online work and training if needed;**



- 
- **Protecting Customs staff in the event of pandemics by providing PPEs and immediately adopting the appropriate health and safety protocols.**





# **Guidelines for an effective and efficient response to disruptive events**



- **Creating a task force mandated to monitor the situation and the implementation of response measures;**



Nepal

A Quick Response Team (QRT) coordinated by the Deputy Director General has been established at the Customs headquarters to coordinate all Customs offices, with the objective of facilitating the movement of relief and essential supplies.

**Member's  
practice**

- **Communicating effectively, both internally, with Customs personnel, on the safety measures, work organization and measures implemented to continue Customs operations, and externally, with stakeholders, to inform them about the measures taken to expedite the movement of goods, in particular essential and relief goods;**



Qatar

A number of televised information sessions and social media meetings were held to reassure the public about the progress of import and export operations, and the role of Customs in providing all the goods needed by the local market.

**Member's  
practice**



- **Contributing to the establishment and update of the list of relief and essential goods, e.g. by providing HS codes to the authority in charge of drawing up this list;**
- **Operating a permanent clearance system;**
- **Establishing a support help desk;**



India

A dedicated Single Window COVID-19 helpdesk for EXIM trade has been created on the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) website to facilitate the quick resolution of issue(s) faced by importers/exporters.

**Member's  
practice**



- 
- A photograph showing the hands and forearms of several people in white business shirts. One person is holding a dark blue smartphone, while others are pointing at the screen or gesturing with their hands. The background is blurred, suggesting an office or meeting environment.
- **Accepting simplified and provisional forms of declarations subject to regularization when possible, and accepting the electronic form of declarations and supporting documents;**





- **Fostering the use of risk management, pre-arrival processing and immediate release of low-risk shipments to ensure the availability of relief and essential goods**





### 1) Australia

Australia Border Force (ABF) deploys a wide range of Non-Intrusive detection technologies in its current border enforcement capabilities (cabinet x-ray units, pallet x-ray units, body scanners, container x-ray facilities, mobile x-ray units, CT scanners).

- **Optimizing the use of non-intrusive inspection techniques and prioritizing the inspection of relief and essential goods, if needed;**





TOGETHER

- **Strengthening cooperation with other government agencies to avoid duplication of inspections, requests for duplicate information, etc.;**
- **Reinforcing cooperation with other Customs administrations to expedite the movement of essential and relief goods;**



# Cooperation with the private sector

## The Authorized Economic Operator: a key element for supply chain continuity

**Members'  
practices**



### 1) Japan

Japan Customs has introduced a basic policy to refrain from physical contact with traders as far as possible during the COVID-19 pandemic. This measure includes relevant AEO validation processes (the examination of the data, e.g. the facilities' photos, and the company's internal documents, which are communicated via e-mail). Additionally, the necessary documents, including the application for AEO status, can be officially submitted by e-mail, as a general measure of flexibility.

### AEO programme helps to:

- Ensure supply chain continuity
- Ensure the safety and security of Customs staff
- Ensure the safety of the supply chain





- Enhancing Coordinated Border Management;
- Implementing the Single Window;
- Strengthening coordination with other border agencies;



- **Allocating more resources to the clearance of cross-border E-commerce shipments**



**Member's  
practice**

Bahrain

With the increase in demand for E-commerce transactions, Bahrain Customs increased staffing to support E-commerce stakeholders (DHL, Aramex, FedEx etc.)



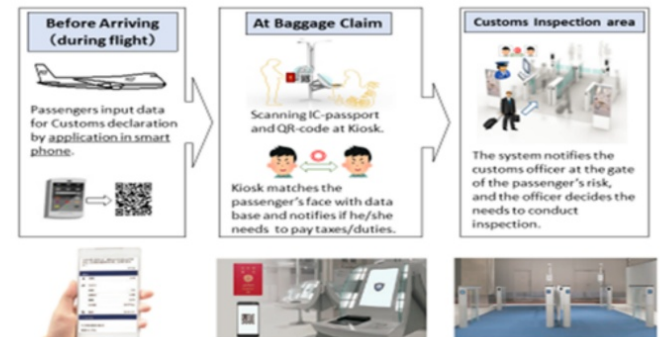
## Facilitating passenger control by using new technologies to minimize the physical contact with Customs personnel.

### 2) Japan


The e-Gate was introduced at Narita International Airport in August 2020 and improved the efficiency of Customs clearance for air passengers, especially for those with nothing to declare. Japan is currently planning to increase the number of airports equipped with this system in the near future.

Members' practices

### Electronic Declaration Gates







# Guidelines for improved management of the recovery phase



# Recovery phase

It is not an easy task to separate the measures implemented during each phase of the disaster management cycle from one another. This is particularly true for the response and recovery phases, as the majority of the measures extend to, and are applied during, the latter.

**Preparedness**


Holistic approach

**Response**

Cooperation is key

**Recovery**



- 
- Designating the recovery planning team with responsibilities to coordinate the recovery measures with other stakeholders and government agencies;
  - Assessing the impact of the disruptive event on the main functions, and on Customs staff and the impact of the measures that were taken during the response phase;
  - Sustaining the IT solutions that were implemented during the response phase by reviewing their impact, training Customs staff and enhancing the supportive legal framework;



- 
- Resuming enforcement activities as soon as possible to avoid facilitative measures being abused;
  - Maintaining a high level of cooperation with the private sector to get them involved in the setting up of recovery measures;
  - Reviewing Business Continuity Plans and SOPs to reflect the lessons learned and keep them updated.





# Supply chain continuity

## Enhancement of Customs administrations' preparedness

- Developing Business Continuity Plans and SOPs
- Establishing an Emergency Operations Centre
- Incorporating disaster management in the Customs training plans
- Adopting the appropriate safety protocols

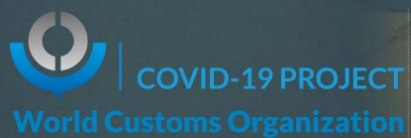
## Effective and efficient response to disruptive events

- Fostering the use of technology, risk management
- Establishment of the list of relief and essential goods
- Enhancing the cooperation and partnerships with different stakeholders- Implementing Single Window
- Facilitating E-commerce

## Improved management of the recovery phase

- Elaborating a recovery plan and designating recovery planning team
- Maintaining the IT-solutions
- Reinforcing cooperation with the private sector and other stakeholders
- Reviewing Business Continuity Plans and the SOPs





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# Thank you!

WCO COVID-19 Project Team

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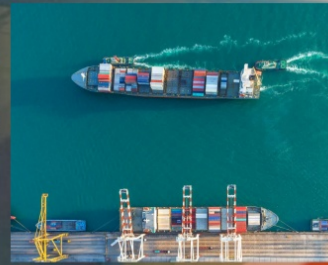
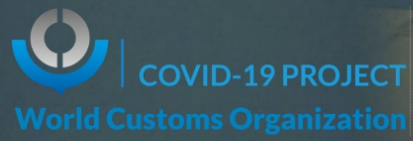
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