



GREEN CUSTOMS GUIDE TO MULTILATERAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS



UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME



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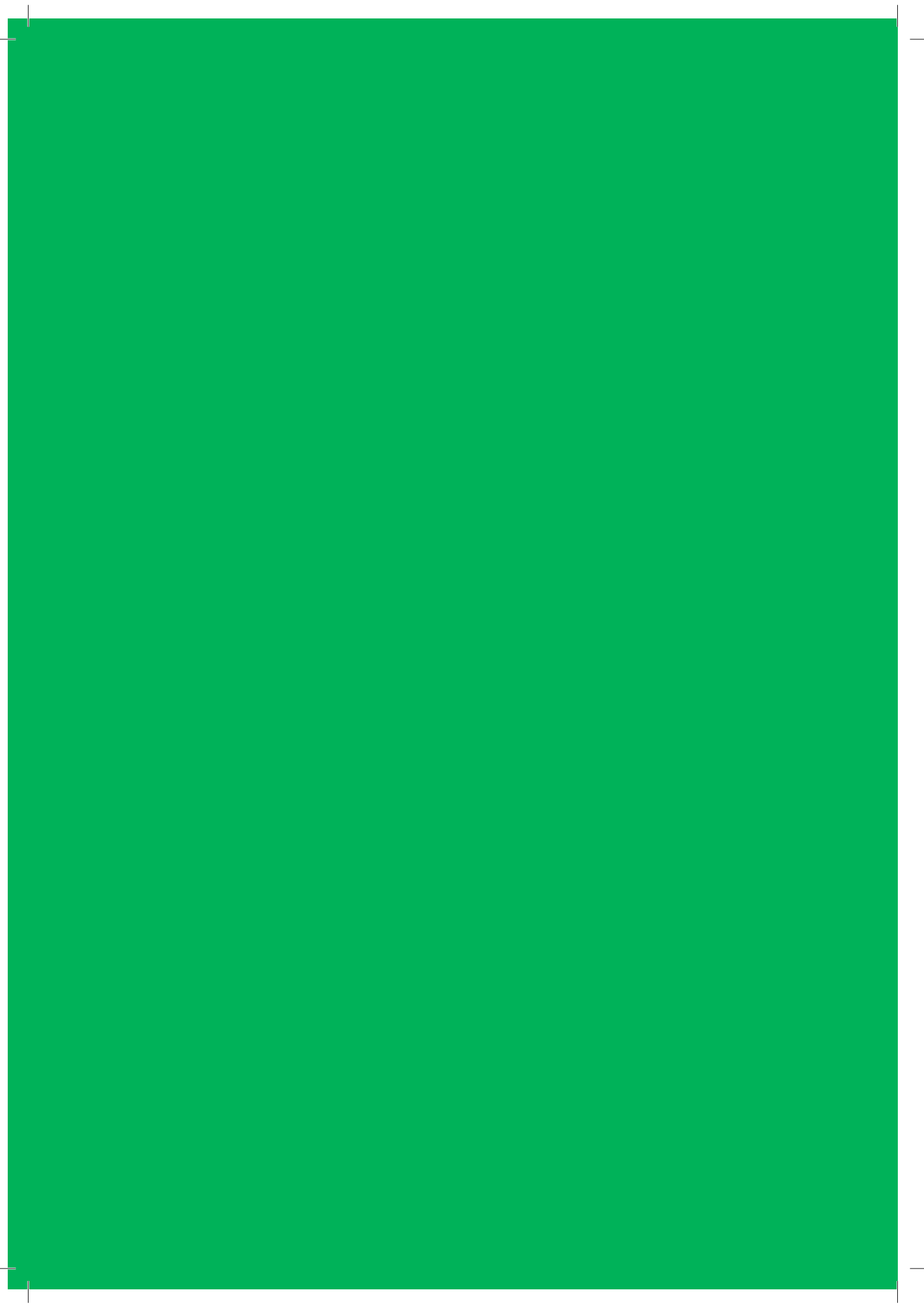
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**THE GREEN CUSTOMS GUIDE
to Multilateral Environmental Agreements**

The Green Customs Initiative



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Foreword

Customs officers like you are on the frontline of facilitating and monitoring international trade. We expect you to maximise the benefits society can derive from this trade, while at the same time we ask you to limit the risks and threats that such commerce can pose, such as uncontrolled and illegal trade or criminal activities.

Certain substances and commodities that cross borders are considered to be “environmentally sensitive” for human health or ecosystems because of their inherent hazardous qualities, their potential for misuse, or their impact on biodiversity or species. Such items include banned or restricted chemicals, hazardous and toxic waste, rare and endangered species and living modified organisms. Many of these items are controlled under multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) or other treaties, such as the Chemical Weapons Convention. Effective monitoring and control of the transboundary movement of such substances and commodities is a key component of environmental protection and, in many some cases, national security.

However, for you to do your daily work, you need information and guidance so that you know what to look for, why you are looking for it, what the implications of its uncontrolled or illegal trade are, and whom to contact for more specialised assistance. Such capacity building of Customs officers was initiated under CITES and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, and it soon became evident that both illegal and legal trade needed to be considered in a holistic way by making links, where appropriate, with other environmental conventions to provide integrated training.

This Green Customs Guide is a tool that assists with this. This publication, which has been designed to be used by Customs officers as part of a training curriculum or as a stand-alone introduction to the subject, provides you with an overview of the conventions, their requirements related to trade in the “environmentally sensitive”, and your role in facilitating their legal trade and preventing illegal trade.

This Guide has been produced by the Green Customs Initiative, an unprecedented and award-winning collaborative effort of 10 international organisations and convention Secretariats concerned with the implementation or enforcement of agreements with trade-related aspects. By finding links between the respective mandates and scopes of operation, the partners have joined together to engage, encourage and support Customs officers in the implementation of MEAs and related agreements, in a cost-effective and coordinated manner.

Today Customs officers are becoming aware that their traditional role as guardians of the trading system is evolving into a more nuanced one encompassing different dimensions of sustainable development related to the well-being and protection of society. Now we are asking you to be at the frontline not only of trade, but also of environmental protection, and to contribute to the greening of trade.

Through this Guide, the Green Customs partners invite you to join in the effort to protect our global common environment as well as that of your country by addressing these international agreements in your daily work. We sincerely hope that this Guide is helpful and stimulates you to become more involved as a protector of the environment.

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WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION



Preface

Customs officers and border protection officers ensure that any goods entering or leaving their country comply with national laws. If their country is a party to one or more multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), then these agreements are likely to be included in the national laws and regulations. Today, many environmental problems are transboundary in nature and have a global impact. They can be effectively addressed only through international co-operation and shared responsibility, made possible through MEAs. Several MEAs regulate the cross-border movement of items, substances and products, mainly in the form of imports, exports and re-exports. Thus the front-line Customs and border protection officers responsible for controlling trade play a very important role in protecting the national and global environment.

Of particular importance to the work of Customs and border control officers are the with treaties with trade-related provisions, such as the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.

MEAs regulate the transboundary movement of a wide variety of items that Customs

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