Preventative measures for shipping companies and freight forwarders to combat illegal wildlife trade

Due diligence and documentation:

↗ **Know Your Customer** – new customers and ongoing monitoring of established customers *(see Box 1 for more guidance)*

↗ **Due diligence on new employees** – geo-locate address, check website, contact info, tax/business registration ID.

↗ **Collect** (if national legislation allows) shipper, agent and consignee information

↗ **Develop and maintain a caution list** of fraudulent shippers/clients etc.,

↗ **Go digital** – for documents, and automate transport processes

Internal/company policies and practices

↗ **Adopt a zero-tolerance corporate policy** for any act linked to illegal wildlife trade and related corrupt behaviour

↗ **Training of employees** on wildlife trafficking issues and latest trends (e.g. concealment methods and trafficking routes)

↗ **Implement supply chain security programmes** such as World Customs Organization's Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) programme and the Customs Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (CTPAT)

↗ **Become a member** of the National Association relevant to your line of business, the Chamber of Commerce and or other national, regional and international initiatives.

Interaction with customers and authorities

↗ **Encourage shippers to use WCO's HS codes** and include them in Bills of Lading (B/Ls) to strengthen Customs' ability in container risk profiling *(see Box 2 for details).*

↗ **Ensure timely provision of shipping documentation to Customs.**

↗ Support critical evidence for the Law Enforcement by **providing shipper, agent and consignee information**, such as phone numbers, email, and addresses **(if national legislation allows).**

BOX 1

Some of the questions you should ask yourself when assessing potential new clients (or monitoring existing ones):

1 **Is the shipper a registered business entity? Does it have a tax ID? Is it a member of the national Chamber of Commerce or the relevant business association?** Conduct searches on local corporate registry to verify that the company is active. (Remember: recently established companies maybe a risk factor!)

2 **Does the company exist on the web? Own or third party website? Does its website corroborate the stated line of business?** (For example a Nigerian timber company sending a one-off shipment of cashew nuts should sound suspicious)

3 **Can you geo-locate the company? Is it a private residence or commercial property? Are multiple other businesses registered at the same address?** (Remember: the inclusion of fake addresses on documentation is a possible indicator of a shell company)

4 **Are the IP address, phone, and email address consistent? Is it a business email address or-for example a gmail, yahoo account? Who answers the phone?** (Conduct searches for adverse media coverage on shipper in local language sources. Links between Africa-based shippers and Vietnamese or Chinese individuals/companies it might be a risk factor)

BOX 2

WCO's HS code

The World Customs Organization Harmonized System code (WCO HS code) is a multipurpose international nomenclature to classify traded products.

"It comprises about 5,000 commodity groups; each identified by a six-digit code, arranged in a legal and logical structure and supported by well-defined rules to achieve uniform classification." The Harmonized System is governed by the International Convention on the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System. Countries and regions can add additional digits after the sixth digit, to narrow commodity classifications even further according to specific tariff and statistical requirements they may decide to introduce unilaterally. In Hong Kong SAR, for example, the HS code was extended to eight digits.

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