



Activity Title and Number: EU-China Seminar on the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation, A376-C4

Location and Date: Beijing; 29-30 October 2014

Beneficiary: General Administration of China Customs (GACC), General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine (AQSIQ), Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM), State Council Legislative Affairs Office (SCLAO), Ministry of Transport (MOT)

Brief Activity Report

Relevance and Impact

Implementation of the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation will boost global trade in the order of billions of dollars each year by reducing red tape and compliance costs for business. This is even more important for SMEs, which are disproportionately affected by trade costs. Early implementation of the Agreement will increase a country's global trade competitiveness and create jobs. China's ongoing customs reforms, embodied in its Customs 2020 Strategy, have greatly improved performance but China will have to review and revise some of its existing laws and practices to comply with the WTO Agreement, as will the EU. Implementation of measures like expedited clearance procedures, advance rulings and Single Window will generate economic benefits for EU and Chinese businesses alike. Accordingly, EUCTP II organised this seminar to bring together government and private sector experts with business to discuss the challenges and opportunities for China on trade facilitation. The main objective of the activity was to facilitate dialogue between business and customs on the day to day trade costs hampering EU-China trade, and the reforms that could be implemented to speed up clearance times and improve customs efficiency.

Activity Description

More than 90 people attended the seminar, drawn from GACC, regional customs, AQSIQ, MOFCOM, SCLAO, MOT, the United Nations, the EU Delegation and EU Member State Embassies. A large contingent of representatives of EU and China businesses also attended, affording a rare opportunity to raise concrete business concerns with government officials during a lively panel discussion.

GACC gave a detailed presentation on its Customs 2020 Strategy as did Shanghai Customs on the trade facilitation reforms in the China (Shanghai) Pilot Free Trade Zone (SPFTZ), including GACC's plan to rollout a national Single Window for customs clearance by the end of 2017. Feedback from business and experts was resoundingly positive and the visibility of EUCTP in the business community was given a strong boost.



Experts discuss priorities for trade facilitation in China to boost EU-China trade

Results and Dissemination

- ✓ EU and Chinese businesses had the rare opportunity to talk directly with government officials about reforms to improve China's trade facilitation performance, informing China's Customs 2020 Strategy and the national rollout of trade facilitation reforms being trialed in the SPFTZ.
- ✓ GACC advised that it aims to rollout the SPFTZ pilot Single Window nationally by the end of 2017.
- ✓ The event lays the groundwork for strategic technical assistance activities on trade facilitation in 2015.