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Committee on Trade Facilitation

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**NOTIFICATION OF ARRANGEMENTS AND PROGRESS IN THE PROVISION OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND CAPACITY BUILDING SUPPORT OF CATEGORY C DESIGNATIONS**

COMMUNICATION FROM SOLOMON ISLANDS

The following communication dated 19 August 2022 is being circulated at the request of the delegation of Solomon Islands for Members' information.

Solomon Islands hereby notifies information on the arrangements concluded and progress made in the provision of technical assistance and capacity building support of the following category C designations, as set out in Article 16 of the Trade Facilitation Agreement (WT/L/931).

Provision	Heading/Description	Category	Indicative date for implementation	Definitive date for implementation
Article 3	Advance Rulings	C	22 February 2022	31 December 2040
<b>Donors:</b> To be determined				
<b>Progress in the provision of technical assistance and capacity building support:</b>				
<i>Solomon Islands received no support on any technical assistance and capacity building from donors.</i>				
<i>Technical Assistance required:</i>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• for training support and Policy development and review of regulatory framework.</li> <li>• To establish Sectoral Unit to manage and enforce the Advance Ruling requirements.</li> </ul>				

Provision	Heading/Description	Category	Indicative date for implementation	Definitive date for implementation
Article 4	Procedures for Appeal or Review	C	22 February 2022	31 December 2040
<b>Donors:</b> To be determined				
<b>Progress in the provision of technical assistance and capacity building support:</b>				
<b>Customs currently have procedures for appeal and review.</b>				
<i>Solomon Islands received no support on any technical assistance and capacity building from donors.</i>				
<i>Technical Assistance required:</i>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To develop Policies and Institutional Procedures linking Border Agencies for processing appeals.</li> <li>• Need to establish an Administrative appeal authority.</li> </ul>				

Provision	Heading/Description	Category	Indicative date for implementation	Definitive date for implementation
Article 5.1	Notification for Enhanced Controls or Inspections	C	31 December 2025	31 December 2040
<b>Donors:</b> To be determined				
<b>Progress in the provision of technical assistance and capacity building support:</b>				
<i>Solomon Islands received no support on any technical assistance and capacity building from donors.</i>				
<i>Technical Assistance required:</i>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need support to reflect the provisions of the WTO agreement including other international and regional agreements in the draft legislation.</li> <li>• A need for support on training and development of relevant Government stakeholder's requirements on imports. This may include new changes and review of Border agencies legislations.</li> </ul>				

Provision	Heading/Description	Category	Indicative date for implementation	Definitive date for implementation
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need storage facilities in place to store detained goods for necessary inspection by relevant borders agencies.</li> </ul>
Provision	Heading/Description	Category	Indicative date for implementation	Definitive date for implementation
<b>Article 5.2</b>	<b>Detention</b>	<b>C</b>	22 February 2027	31 December 2040
<b>Donors:</b> To be determined				
<b>Progress in the provision of technical assistance and capacity building support:</b>				
<p>All importers are currently advised electronically on pending detention of goods for examination.</p> <p>Solomon Islands received no support on any technical assistance and capacity building from donors.</p> <p>Technical Assistance required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A need for Infrastructure support: Required to build detention facility as part of the wider testing facility required under Art. 5.3.</li> <li>Training and review of the relevant Legislations and requirements to improve the required provision on imports.</li> </ul>				

Provision	Heading/Description	Category	Indicative date for implementation	Definitive date for implementation
<b>Article 5.3</b>	<b>Test Procedures</b>	<b>C</b>	22 February 2027	31 December 2040
<b>Donors:</b> STDF-FAO and EIF				
<b>Progress in the provision of technical assistance and capacity building support:</b>				
<p>STDF project through FAO "Strengthening the capacity of the National Public Health Laboratory to provide services in support of Market Access for Solomon Islands Fish Exporters" June 2017-June 2022. The support was in targeting NPHL meeting international accreditation for accrediting the Microbiology Unit – this accreditation is still in progress. EIF in 2021 also supported in construction of NPHL Office facilities, trainings and equipment's. NPHL is still working on accrediting the Microbiology Unit of the NPHL to ISO 17025 under NATA &amp; IANZ and to have the Chemistry Unit of the NPHL accredited if and when resources are made available.</p> <p>Technical Assistance required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Infrastructure and Equipment: Support to build a Testing facility to carry out inspections at the border.</li> <li>Institutional Procedures: Once infrastructure provided, required to set up and manage testing facility.</li> <li>Human Resource and training: National Public Health Laboratory and other laboratories to carryout test on targeted imported and exported food products.</li> <li>Skill development for Environment Health Officers to inspect and detect high-risk food.</li> </ul>				

Provision	Heading/Description	Category	Indicative date for implementation	Definitive date for implementation
<b>Article 7.1</b>	<b>Pre-arrival Processing</b>	<b>C</b>	22 February 2022	31 December 2036
<b>Donors:</b> UNCTAD and DFAT Australia				
<b>Progress in the provision of technical assistance and capacity building support:</b>				
<p>Status 2016: The electronic cargo report was facilitated under the ASYCUDA system in 2016; Customs Rule, LN 35 of 22.04.15 under Customs &amp; Excise Act 2009. This was achieved through working together with Border agencies; Shipping/Customs Agents. The ASYCUDA National Project commenced in 2012 and completed around 2017. Support of the project was from UNCTAD and DFAT Australia in 2016.</p> <p>Status 2022: Covid-19 has delayed major upgrade of ASYCUDA world to the latest cargo version. Solomon Islands needs further support on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Harmonizing processes for all relevant border agencies and how to manage all necessary risks involved.</li> <li>ICT/ASYCUDA: For setting up electronic submission facilities for pre-arrival processing equipment and to improve clearance times in Customs and other agencies.</li> <li>Human resource and training: To handle submission and processing of documents in electronic format.</li> </ul>				

Provision	Heading/Description	Category	Indicative date for implementation	Definitive date for implementation
Article 7.3	Separation of Release from Final Determination of Customs Duties, Taxes, Fees and Charges	C	22 February 2020	31 December 2036
<b>Donors:</b> To be determined				
<b>Progress in the provision of technical assistance and capacity building support:</b>				
<i>Solomon Islands received no support on any technical assistance and capacity building from donors.</i>				
<i>Solomon Islands needs further support on:</i>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Policy &amp; Legal Framework: Investigate, review and IT sub projects</i></li> </ul>				

Provision	Heading/Description	Category	Indicative date for implementation	Definitive date for implementation
Article 7.4	Risk Management	C	22 February 2022	31 December 2036
<b>Donors:</b> DFAT Australia				
<b>Progress in the provision of technical assistance and capacity building support:</b>				
<i>Australia supports in developing a risk management system under a compliance management framework.</i>				
<i>Solomon Islands needs further support on:</i>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>ICT related Legislative and Regulatory Framework:</i></li> <li>• <i>To upgrade current system of control to effectively manage risk.</i></li> <li>• <i>Identify which management controls should be maintained for imports and their relevant procedures</i></li> </ul>				

Provision	Heading/Description	Category	Indicative date for implementation	Definitive date for implementation
Article 7.6	Establishment and Publication of Average Release Times	C	22 February 2022	31 December 2036
<b>Donors:</b> DFAT Australia				
<b>Progress in the provision of technical assistance and capacity building support:</b>				
<i>Solomon Islands conducted TRS in August 2016, one year after introduction of the ASYCUDA system in June 2015. This was the only time TRS was carried out in the country.</i>				
<i>Solomon Islands needs further support on:</i>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Regulatory Framework:</i> <i>To establish formal Policy/Procedures to implement the TRS and its results on regular basis</i></li> <li>• <i>Human Resource and Training:</i> <i>Need to train certain identified staff to take up responsibility for the task trained in design, implementation and analysis of a TRS.</i></li> </ul>				

Provision	Heading/Description	Category	Indicative date for implementation	Definitive date for implementation
Article 7.7	Trade Facilitation Measures for Authorized Operators	C	22 February 2024	31 December 2040
<b>Donors:</b> To be determined				
<b>Progress in the provision of technical assistance and capacity building support:</b>				
<i>Solomon Islands received no support on any technical assistance and capacity building from donors.</i>				
<i>Solomon Islands needs support on:</i>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Policy/Legal Framework:</i> <i>Authorised Operators (AO) procedures to be developed and reflected in relevant legislation</i> <i>Develop a national Policy mechanism on AO for coordinating and cooperating between Border agencies</i> <i>Provide a wide sensitization and awareness to exporters, importers and Clearing Agents on the Authorised Economic Operators (AEO) program</i></li> <li>• <i>Internal Procedures:</i> <i>Develop internal procedure requirements</i></li> <li>• <i>To review or amend relevant regulation to enable compliance and to set up functions for special treatment for authorised operators.</i></li> </ul>				

Provision	Heading/Description	Category	Indicative date for implementation	Definitive date for implementation
Article 8	Border Agency Cooperation	C	22 February 2022	31 December 2040
<b>Donors:</b> To be determined				
<b>Progress in the provision of technical assistance and capacity building support:</b>				
<p><i>Solomon Islands has established some Border Agencies Cooperation such as:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Agreement Between the Government of Solomon Islands and the Government of Papua New Guinea on Border Arrangements 1997 (to be jointly under review as of August 2023).</i></li> <li>• <i>Framework Treaty Guiding Relations Between the Independent State of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands 2020.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Solomon Islands received no support on any technical assistance and capacity building from donors.</i></p> <p><i>Solomon Islands needs support on:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Establishing arrangements to cooperate and coordinate formal legislation and admin framework; incorporate agreed procedures into current clearance processes.</i></li> <li>• <i>Capacity Building on new coordination approach and Publication of Procedures.</i></li> <li>• <i>To setup a separate unit to be responsible over inter-agency networking nationally and abroad</i></li> </ul>				

Provision	Heading/Description	Category	Indicative date for implementation	Definitive date for implementation
Article 10.1	Formalities and Documentation Requirements	C	22 February 2020	31 December 2040
<b>Donors:</b> To be determined				
<b>Progress in the provision of technical assistance and capacity building support:</b>				
<p><i>Solomon Islands received no support on any technical assistance and capacity building from donors.</i></p> <p><i>Solomon Islands needs support:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>TA to develop Business Process Reengineering (BPR).</i></li> <li>• <i>A need for Border agencies to improve on import and export procedures to increase flow of electronic submissions of documents for both imports and exports.</i></li> </ul>				

Provision	Heading/Description	Category	Indicative date for implementation	Definitive date for implementation
Article 10.3	Use of International Standards	C	22 February 2024	31 December 2040
<b>Donors:</b> STDF-FAO and EIF				
<b>Progress in the provision of technical assistance and capacity building support:</b>				
<p><i>STDF project through FAO "Strengthening the capacity of the National Public Health Laboratory to provide services in support of Market Access for Solomon Islands Fish Exporters" June 2017-June 2022. EIF in 2021 also supported in construction of NPHL Office facilities, trainings and equipment's.</i></p> <p><i>Solomon Islands has established the National Public Health Laboratory (NPHL) under the Ministry of Health &amp; Medical Services. The NPHL needs to be assessed if the Laboratory is internationally accredited and meets the international standard requirements.</i></p> <p><i>Solomon Islands needs further support:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>To train relevant officials on the use of international standards and determine their implications on traders.</i></li> <li>• <i>To identify and acquire appropriate infrastructure needed to ensure continued compliance with international standards is required.</i></li> <li>• <i>To meet and maintain international accreditation for microbiology and chemistry.</i></li> <li>• <i>To understand importing countries market access rules from an environmental health perspective.</i></li> </ul>				

Provision	Heading/Description	Category	Indicative date for implementation	Definitive date for implementation
<b>Article 10.4</b>	<b>Single Window</b>	<b>C</b>	22 February 2027	31 December 2050
<b>Donors:</b> World Bank Group (WBG)				
<b>Progress in the provision of technical assistance and capacity building support:</b>				
<p><i>Status 2019</i>  The National Single Window Workshop was hosted by World Bank Group (WBG) June 2019. This was the start of the process to inform stakeholders regarding Solomon Islands National Single Window (SINSW) its work and the preparations needed.</p> <p><i>Status 2022</i>  The Customs modernization project which commenced in 2019 with significant International Customs expertise has determined and confirmed that LDC such as Solomon Islands is not prepared nor capable of developing and implementing an advanced multi agency SW system. Work on such system involve significant planning consultation, legislative review, training and upgrade of inform system across multi agencies. This is both uneconomic and time intensive unless commenced as a major single project.</p> <p>Solomon Islands need further support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To formulate and incorporate the SW process into the Govt. policy and for possible reflection in the review Customs Legislation.</li> <li>• Need required training to implement and manage SW operations for respective implementing agencies.</li> <li>• Infrastructure development and Border agencies cooperation required.</li> </ul>				

Provision	Heading/Description	Category	Indicative date for implementation	Definitive date for implementation
<b>Article 12</b>	<b>Customs Cooperation</b>	<b>C</b>	22 February 2022	31 December 2040
<b>Donors:</b> To be determined				
<b>Progress in the provision of technical assistance and capacity building support:</b>				
<p><i>Customs is currently reaching out to regional administrations to improve cooperation and information sharing, as evidenced by 2023 Fiji pacific law enforcement agency conference on transnational crime.</i></p> <p><i>Customs is improving intelligence gathering and investigative capability through provision of additional staffing and technical and specialist training.</i></p> <p><i>Solomon Islands received no support on any technical assistance and capacity building from donors.</i></p> <p><i>Technical Assistance needed:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support to undertake awareness and capacity building for Officials on issues of cooperation</li> <li>• Sensitization – for compliance.</li> </ul>				