



Tracking and Tracing Systems, including the global information-sharing focal point (Article 8)

This document relates to item 5.1 of the provisional MOP agenda and corresponds to documents [FCTC/MOP/3/5](#)

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Key Recommendations

- GATC congratulates the members of the Working Group, the Convention Secretariat and the UNICC which provided technical assistance to the Working Group. We also welcome the report of the Working Group on tracking and tracing and the proposed interim solution for the Global Information Sharing Focal Point (GSP) which is designed to provide a communication platform allowing Parties to exchange information upon request in the context of their enforcement work against illicit tobacco trade.
- Five years after the entry into force of the Protocol, only half of the Parties have a tracking and tracing system for tobacco products. There is an urgent need for more technical and financial assistance to set up a tracking and tracing system in low and middle-income countries. The GATC therefore urges Parties to consider how to address the substantial and sustainable financial and technical resources that are required to ensure successful implementation of the Protocol.
- Qualitative and quantitative criteria are needed to evaluate the functioning of the interim solution of the global information-sharing focal point (GSP), but it would be a mistake to link the upgrade of the interim solution to quantitative criteria. The interim solution of the GSP has not been used yet and might need an upgrade in order to function well, independently of the proposed quantitative criteria.

Key Messages

- We appreciate that the Convention Secretariat has taken a multimodal approach to the collection of information on national and regional tracking and tracing systems. We are however concerned that the information in the submitted reports is insufficient to assess whether such systems contain all the essential components of a tracking and tracing system required under the Protocol.
- Given tobacco industry efforts to influence tracking and tracing implementation, it is essential that Parties have the support needed to develop independent systems, otherwise there will always be a risk of Parties inadvertently adopting systems that are non-compliant with the Protocol.

What is being proposed

Document FCTC/MOP/3/5 presents the report of the working group (WG) on tracking and tracing systems (Article 8). The draft decision invites the MOP to note the report and to consider adopting the annexed draft decision.

In the draft decision Parties are invited to:

- Adopt the recommendations as provided under paragraph 41 of the report;
- Share experiences and their T&T systems, provide requested information to the Convention Secretariat

Request the Convention Secretariat to:

- Continue operating the global information-sharing focal point to ensure efficient exchange of information between the Parties
- Establish the library of unique identification marking(s) patterns, to be made available in the global information-sharing focal point, and to maintain it updated;
- Continue collecting information on national and regional tracking and tracing systems and to report on their findings to the MOP;
- Monitor the use of the global as well as any relevant feedback from Parties using the systems;

Why is this important?

Article 8 of the Protocol focuses on tracking and tracing systems for tobacco products. As such, it requires an international tracking and tracing regime to be established within five years of entry into force of the Protocol with GSP within the Secretariat.

Five years after the entry into force of the Protocol, we estimate that 30 Parties don't have a T&T system. This is slow progress, given the Protocol's target for all Parties to have a cigarette tracking and tracing system in place within a 5 year period of the Protocol's entry into force for that Party – for the 41 Parties part of the Protocol when it initially entered into force, this time period ends in September 2023.

Background

MOP1 established a WG for the development and implementation of tracking and tracing systems in accordance with Article 8; the WG was requested to prepare a road map setting out the various phases for implementing the GSP, taking into account the number of parties that have established national and/or regional tracking and tracing systems at each stage, including information exchange needs of Parties, as well as compatibility and connectivity of their systems with the information technology (IT) infrastructure of the GSP. In alignment with decision **FCTC/MOP2(6)**, the Convention Secretariat made the necessary arrangements for the WG to establish under its extended mandate.

Document **FCTC/MOP/3/5** presents a report on the work conducted by the WG on tracking and tracing, as well as draft decision inviting Parties to continue their cooperative efforts to ensure the implementation of article 8, including relying on the recommended quantitative and qualitative criteria to take further decisions on future developments GSP. Furthermore, the draft decision requests the Convention Secretariat to carry on, and develop as necessary, its work in consolidating the establishment of the GSP.