



***Ms. Mette Werdelin Azzam
Rules of Origin expert, former
Senior Technical Officer - WCO
Secretariat***

Ms Mette Werdelin Azzam is an independent Customs and Trade Agreement Specialist with rules of origin as her main expertise and passion.

She has previously worked 10 years as Senior Technical Officer in the World Customs Organization (WCO) in Brussels, Belgium, as Head of Origin Sub-Directorate in the Tariff and Trade Affairs Directorate.

Ms Azzam holds a Higher Technical Certificate in international business (BTS de commerce international) from a business school in Paris, France. She graduated from the Danish Customs and Tax College in 2000 and has been working in the Danish Customs Administration until February 2008 where she was posted in Brussels as Danish Customs Attaché. From December 2005 to January 2008 Ms Azzam was responsible for

origin matters at the Customs Headquarter in Copenhagen, Denmark.

Ms Azzam has an extensive theoretic and practical knowledge of rules of origin legislation, both in the preferential and the non-preferential areas.

Ms Azzam has more than 10 years of training experience within the fields of customs legislation and customs procedures. As Head of the WCO Origin Sub-Directorate she was responsible for Capacity Building and Technical Assistance activities mainly for developing countries in the area of origin legislation. She has conducted more than 50 capacity building missions, including diagnostic assessments, advisory assistance, consulting and training workshops on rules of origin worldwide.



Mr. Hervé Godin
European Commission

Mr. Hervé Godin is the Head of a Sector dealing with non-preferential rules of origin and administrative cooperation in preferential trade arrangements in Directorate-General Taxation and Customs Union (Unit E/5) of the European Commission. He is also in charge of the monitoring of origin rules and procedures in preferential trade arrangements. He has joined this Sector since January 2016.

In his current functions, he is also representing the European Union in the ongoing review of the Specific Annex K on rules of origin of the Revised Kyoto Convention.

After 7 years spent in the French Customs Directorate-General, dealing with the French Customs Code, he joined the European Commission in 1995 and held various positions, all relating to customs legislation (in particular in the field of customs debts, recovery of debts and rules of origin).



Mr. Zakaria Asmama
Morocco Customs

Mr. Zakaria ASMAMA is currently Head of the Rules of Origin Service in the Kingdom of Morocco's Administration of Customs and Indirect Taxes and is a WCO Accredited Expert in Rules of Origin.

In addition to holding several senior positions in the fields of Origin and Nomenclature within his Administration, he is a permanent trainer responsible for Rules of Origin at the Customs Training Institute.

Mr. ASMAMA has participated in a number of meetings and workshops on Rules of Origin convened by the WCO, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Islamic Development Bank, etc.



Mr. Cuong Ba Tran
ASEAN Secretariat

Mr. Cuong Ba Tran is currently the Assistant Director, Trade Facilitation Division, Market Integration Directorate, the ASEAN Secretariat. He has joined the ASEAN Secretariat since September 2018.

His main duties are to provide policy and technical advices / recommendations pertaining to the implementation of the ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement (ATIGA) and

trade-in-goods related activities; participate the FTA negotiations to provide advice and support for ASEAN Member States in the areas of rules of origin, trade in goods, trade facilitation and customs; develop, monitor, and implement programs and projects in support of the establishment of a single market and production base, particularly in liberalization and facilitation of trade in goods; support and service relevant sectoral bodies under ASEAN Economic Community pillar. He also covers other broad areas including Trade Facilitation, ASEAN Single Window, and Customs Integration. Mr. Tran serviced the RCEP negotiation from 2018 to 2020 (until the end of negotiation).

Before joining the ASEAN Secretariat, he serviced Ministry of Trade and Industry of Viet Nam in almost 14 years as a trade negotiator. He participated in various FTA negotiations, including the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) (now renamed as CP-TPP), Viet Nam – Israel, Viet Nam – EFTA, ASEAN-Japan, ASEAN-Korea, ASEAN-Australia – New Zealand, ASEAN – Korea, and ASEAN – China FTA. Under such negotiations, he covered a number of areas, such as trade in goods, trade in services, investment, rules of origin, customs procedures, and trade facilitation. He is also a WTO expert in Goods, Services, Trade Remedies, and Agriculture.



***Ms. Adrienne Braumiller
Partner & Founder
Braumiller Law Group***

Adrienne is an innovative force in the international trade law arena. With

more than 25 years of experience, she is widely recognized as a leading authority in Customs, import, export, foreign-trade zones, free trade agreements and compliance. She has been involved in every aspect of import and export compliance, from developing compliance programs to conducting audits and assessments, representing clients who are under investigation, examining country of origin and substantial transformation issues, preparing and submitting voluntary disclosures, preparing and filing classification requests and licenses, analyzing whether specific transactions should be pursued, providing tailored training on specific import/export topics, addressing penalty assessments, and serving as an expert witness in a number of trade cases. The recipient of several awards, she is a frequent presenter of various topics.

Full bio is available on their [website](#).



***Mr. Roman Bruehwiler
Federal Customs
Administration of Switzerland***

Roman BRÜHWILER is a Senior Adviser at the Swiss Federal Customs Administration Section Free Trade and Customs Agreements. In his current function he represents Switzerland in the negotiations and committees of customs agreements and supports the national implementation thereof. This includes the ongoing comprehensive review of the Revised Kyoto Convention and in particular the coordination of the joint proposal to review Specific Annex K on Rules of Origin. In 20 years of service he held a variety of posts

ranging from the operational level to policy matters and international assignments with the WCO and the UN, all of which provided him with a broad experience in customs matters.



Mr. Rafael Cornejo
Director
Origen.Digital

PRESENT POSITION

Founding partner and Director of Origen.Digital, a consulting firm specialized in market access advice with an emphasis on rules of origin. Offers software services to convert rules of origin to the current versions of the Harmonized System, and software to determine the compliance of a product's productive structure with its origin requirements. (02/2021)

FIELD OF EXPERTISE

Forty years of international trade experience in Latin American trade integration processes, business information systems, free trade, and market access disciplines (origin rules, market access, and trade facilitation). Eighteen years of providing technical support to the main regional trade and convergence negotiations within the continent (Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), Pacific Arc, Pathway of America, Pacific Alliance).

Consultant for international organizations: Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) ALADI, MERCOSUR, UNCTAD, Institute for the Integration of Latin America and Caribbean (INTAL), World Bank (WB), SELA and national development agencies of the United States, Canada and Germany (USAID, CIDA,

GIZ) . Provided technical assistance on Rules of Origin, Certification of origin, and Trade Single Windows to different Latin American countries for the Inter-American Development Bank as consultant in Trade and Integration.

Relevant experience in the design and supervision of information systems related to international trade. Evaluator of international technical cooperation on trade, customs, trade facilitation, implementation of international trade agreements, and business information systems development.

Capacity Building in Integration and Trade Program at the IADB. Facilitator of the Practices Community on Rules of Origin. Director and instructor of the online course “Fundamentals of preferential rules of origin”, and in the “Advanced Course on Rules of Origin” for all the Latin American countries. Lecturer/Visiting Professor and developer of all course material for courses and seminars organized by ALADI, the World Bank, WTO, INTAL, UNCTAD, OAS, WCO, Georgetown University, George Washington University, and Latin American business organizations (such as the São Paulo State Federation – FIESP – Brazil; Industrial Development Association – SOFOFA – Chile; American Chamber of Commerce of Peru – AMCHAM). Capacity building and transfer of know-how by organizing and coordinating in more than 100 seminars and workshops on national and regional trade, and integration topics.

More than 20 publications and articles on topics related to Rules of Origin.



Ms. Nan Ding
General Administration of
Customs of People's Republic
of China

DING Nan, Deputy Director of Office of Rules of Origin, Department of Duty Collection, GACC.

She has been working in China Customs for 14 years as a lead negotiator on RoO of China's FTA talks such as RCEP. She is the chairperson of TCRO for the year 2020 and 2021, and was accredited by WCO as training expert on ROO in 2012.



Mr. Darlan F. Marti
WTO

Darlan F. MARTÍ is a trade policy specialist at the WTO Market Access Division. He has been the Secretary of the WTO Committee on Rules of Origin since 2012 and has, in that capacity, assisted WTO Members during the negotiation of the Bali (2013) and Nairobi (2015) Ministerial Decisions on preferential rules of origin for Least developed countries. In that context, he also assists Members in implementing both Decisions, including by leading the WTO team that examines the utilization of trade preferences by LDCs.

Before joining the WTO, Mr. Martí worked in the United Nations Conference for Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and in the South Centre. Mr. Martí is a Brazilian national and was educated at the University of Harvard, US (Executive Education), University of Cambridge, UK (Master of Laws, LL.M) and

University of Grenoble, France (B.A. in International Law).



Ms. Gael Grooby
Deputy Director, Tariff and Trade Affairs Directorate
World Customs Organization (WCO)

Gael Grooby is currently Deputy Director of Tariff and Trade Affairs at the World Customs Organization with responsibility for Origin, Valuation and the Nomenclature (Harmonized System). Prior to this she held various leadership roles in relation to the Tariff in her home administration of Australia.

While her primary area of expertise is the Harmonized System, she is strongly committed to continually enhance the understanding of the three major trade tools (Origin, Valuation and the Harmonized System) to ensure they effectively underpin legitimate trade.



Mr. Kit Hickey
Fonterra

Kit is part of the Fonterra Group's Customs & Tax Team providing specialist advice to the business in relation to Fonterra's cross border trading activities. This includes input to projects (trading models, product development and market access) developing and delivering in-house training on customs compliance/rules of origin/classification and valuation, conducting audits on Fonterra business units/external service providers and engaging directly with customs agencies, often on matters related to the implementation of trade agreements.

Prior to this, Kit was employed by the New Zealand Customs Service as an auditor, a valuation & origin specialist and a trade negotiator directly involved in Rules of Origin/Operational Procedures negotiations. Kit was also the Customs delegate to APEC for three years.

Fonterra is a member of the World Customs Organisation's Private Sector Consultative Group.



***Prof. Bernard Hoekman
Research Area Director, EUI***

Bernard Hoekman is Professor and Director, Global Economics, at the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute, where he also serves as the Dean for External Relations. A CEPR Research Fellow, his research focuses on international trade, international economic cooperation and trade agreements.



***Mr. Stefano Inama
Chief
Technical Cooperation and EIF
Section, UNCTAD***

Mr Stefano Inama is a Chief, Technical Assistance, Trade and Customs in the Division on African and Least Developed Countries (LDCs), UNCTAD Geneva, Switzerland

Mr. Inama possess over 30 years of experience on trade and customs issues matured advising Governments and private sector. He has designed and managed research and trade-related capacity building programs in Asia, Africa and Latin America, with a focus on trade laws and policy, regulatory and institutional

trade issues with a specialization on rules of origin and market access. He has written extensively on these subjects as well as on related industrial policy questions.

He is the author of one of the most comprehensive analytical books on rules of origin (Rules of origin in International Trade, Cambridge University Press, 2009, forthcoming edition 2021) and has co-authored ASEAN rules of origin :a way forward and The foundations of the ASEAN Economic Community ,Cambridge University Press 2015.

Mr. Inama has been representing UNCTAD during the negotiations in the Technical Committee on Rules of Origin (TCRO) established at the World Customs Organizations and most recently at the Working group on the revision of annex K of the Kyoto convention.

His work of advise and technical assistance to the WTO LDC group during WTO negotiations on Duty Free and Quota Free (DFQF) and rules of origin has been instrumental to the adoption of the Bali and Nairobi WTO Ministerial Decisions on preferential rules of origin for LDCs.

Mr. Inama provides advise to Governments on negotiations on rules of origin in FTAs negotiation such as the EU-South Africa FTAs ,EU-Philippines the ASEAN –China FTA and the lately the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCTA) and to regional organizations such as ASEAN ,COMESA,SADC, ACP and AU.

Most recently Mr. Inama has launched with Prof Bernard Hoekman an annual round table meeting of experts and a

platform on rules of origin at the European University institute in Florence, Italy. Such initiative is designed to provide a forum to discuss groundbreaking initiatives and emerging issue on rules of origin and their administration.

Mr Inama is also providing practical advice to private companies to comply with rules of origin regulations and administrative procedures and in such capacity has been participating to annual events organized by Deloitte and other consulting firms

Mr Inama holds Masters and LL.M degrees from the University of Bologna and College of Europe, Bruges, Belgium. He is member of the faculty of the ASEAN integration through at Center of International Law of Singapore and has been Visiting Lecturer at the Columbia University, the World Trade Institute, Master in International Law and Economics, M.I.L.E. and at IELPO International Economic law and Policy.



***Mr. Konstantinos Kaiopoulos
Director, Tariff and Trade
Affairs Directorate
World Customs Organization
(WCO)***

Mr. Konstantinos Kaiopoulos is Tariff and Trade Affairs Director at the World Customs Organization (WCO) since 1st March 2021. He provides leadership and management for the development of global Customs instruments, standards, and tools related to the International Convention on the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System (HS Code), the Customs Valuation and the Rules of Origin.

Prior to joining the WCO, he represented the Hellenic Customs Administration to the European Union, the WCO, the OECD (Organisation for Economic Development and Cooperation) and the WHO (World Health Organisation)/FCTC bodies. During his 35 years long professional career, Mr. Kaiopoulos worked for Greece's Independent Authority for Public Revenue, the Hellenic Ministry of Economy and Finance, the European Commission and the Newcastle Business School, occupying a variety of senior posts which have given him broad experience and knowledge in Customs, international trade and economics and international business.

Mr. Kaiopoulos is graduated from the London School of Economics, the College of Europe (Belgium), the Sciences Po, the University of Paris IV Sorbonne and the University of Aix-Marseille (France), and is specialised in International Law and International Economic Relations.



***Mr. Jonas Kasteng
National Board of Trade,
Swedish government agency***

Jonas Kasteng is a Senior Adviser at the National Board of Trade Sweden. His main areas of research are rules of origin and the utilization of tariff preferences. Current research focuses on firm and transaction-level data on preferential imports in the EU's free trade agreements and the reasons for their under-utilization.

Recent publications:

"The Use of the EU's Free Trade Agreements: Exporter and Importer Utilization of Preferential Tariffs"

"Who Uses the EU's Free Trade Agreements: A Transaction-Level Analysis of the EU-South Korea Free Trade Agreement"

"Using Utilization Rates to Identify Rules of Origin Reforms: The Case of EU Free Trade Area Agreements"

Mr. Kasteng has previously worked as a Political Adviser at the Swedish Parliament, as a Trade Policy Adviser at the Swedish Board of Agriculture, and as an Adviser to the Assisting Director General at the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean. He has also worked, on a temporary basis, at the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs and at the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD).

Mr. Kasteng holds a Master of Science Degree in International Business (Göteborg University, Sweden).

Follow on Twitter:
@JonasKasteng



Ms. Aissata KOFFI YAMEOGO
ECOWAS Commission

I am a national of Burkina Faso and a Program Officer in charge of Rules of Origin and Management of Community Preferential Regime.

With more than fourteen (14) years of professional experience including twelve (12) years at the Customs Union and Taxation Directorate of the ECOWAS Commission, I have actively contributed to the consolidation of the ECOWAS Free Trade Area, and improvement of intra-Community trade indices in the West African region. As part of my responsibility since 2008, I have monitored and managed the ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme (ETLS) procedure, which is the regulatory mechanism governing the free movement of products of ECOWAS origin between member states in the Community. From the technical point of view, I am responsible for the implementation of ECOWAS rules of origin and ensuring conformity with Community protocols in intra-community trade within the ECOWAS market space. As part of my responsibility, I organize training and sensitization activities in Rules of origin and Community instruments in the domain for Customs officials and the private sector actors.

In the recent years, I have been coordinating the Rules of Origin negotiation of ECOWAS member states within the framework of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA).



Dr. Francis Mangeni
AfCFTA Secretariat

Dr. Francis MANGENI is currently Head of Trade Promotion and Programs with the African Continental Free Trade Area. His past positions include Senior Economist and Diplomat at the African Union Embassy to the UN, the WTO and the Common Fund for Commodities; and Africa Regional Trade Policy Advisor. He was Director of Trade, Customs and Monetary Affairs of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) from 2009 to 2020. Francis has various charities which support public health and education, and holds a Doctorate in International Economic Law from the London School of Economics and Political Science (UK).



Ms. Gabriela Martinez Silva
Director for Foreign Trade
Audit
Mexico Customs
Administration

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Mr. Kolja Mendel
Managing Partner of Mendel
Verlag

Kolja Mendel is Managing Partner of Mendel Verlag, the leading European foreign trade information service and data content provider on applied global tariff and non-tariff measures. Mendel Verlag specialises in research, provision and updating of this information for numerous destination countries all over the world. Kolja joined the family company in the 90ies and actively participated in

the transformation process from a classical publishing house to a specialised international service provider. He has led key projects like the continuous supply of data content for the European Commission's Market Access Database (MADB) for over two decades and corresponding engagements for foreign trade promotion organisations in different countries. For industry projects he constantly engages in the procurement of tailored data content for global trade management solutions, also going beyond the known standards. Kolja regularly contributes to publications and events on different subject matters of foreign trade such as customs nomenclatures, tariffs and additional duties, rules of origin, export control and sanctions measures. He is member of the editorial board of FOREIGN TRADE, a magazine published in collaboration with the Foreign Trade Circle, the German association of customs and foreign trade practitioners. For this organisation he also acts as subject matter coordinator for rules of origin and international aspects.



Dr. Kunio Mikuriya
Secretary General
World Customs Organization

Mr. Kunio Mikuriya has been Secretary General of the World Customs Organization (WCO) since 1 January 2009. He provides leadership and executive management for the global Customs community's

priorities, including developing global Customs instruments, standards, and tools; securing and facilitating global trade; realizing revenues; building Customs-business partnerships; and delivering capacity building in support of Customs reform and modernization.

Prior to joining the WCO, he worked for Japan's Ministry of Finance for 25 years. During his career with the Ministry, Mr. Mikuriya occupied a variety of senior posts, which have given him broad experience and knowledge in Customs, trade, development, budget, and financial policies. He served as Director of Enforcement where he led efforts to fight illicit trade, then as Director of Research and International Affairs paving the way for the conclusion of the first regional trade agreement for Japan, and then as a Counsellor in the Tariff and Customs Bureau. He also served as Director of Salaries and Allowances to coordinate remuneration levels for the entire government workforce, and as the Budget Controller for Foreign Affairs, Official Aid, International Trade and Industry, in the Budget Bureau. In addition, he spent time as a Counsellor at the Japanese Mission to the WTO in Geneva and participated in the GATT Uruguay Round trade negotiations.

Mr. Mikuriya has a degree in law from the University of Tokyo and a PhD in international relations from the University of Kent.



***Mr. Mondher Mimouni
Chief of Trade and Market
Intelligence, International
Trade Center***

Mondher Mimouni is the Chief of the Trade and Market Intelligence in ITC, he is leading ITC's programmes on Transparency in trade, Competitive Intelligence and Non tariff Barriers. He has built several Web applications to improve the trade transparency and assess the export performance and competitiveness of countries. Mr Mimouni has also contributed to a variety of joint market analysis projects of the ITC, UNCTAD, WTO and the World Economic Forum. Mr Mimouni holds an M.Phil. equivalent in Development Economics from the Economic University of Montpellier, and an MS in Agricultural Policy and Development Administration from the CIHEAM-Montpellier.



Mr. Pablo MUÑIZ
Head of the customs practice
at VAN BAEL & BELLIS

Pablo is a partner at the law firm [Van Bael & Bellis](#) (Brussels - London - Geneva) where he heads the customs practice. He specialises in EU trade law, with a particular emphasis on EU customs law, including customs classification, origin issues, free trade agreements and other preferential arrangements, repayment requests, customs valuation, duty suspensions, as well as export controls and sanctions. Pablo often handles multi-jurisdictional customs matters involving disputes in several EU Member states.

He regularly advises clients on customs matters involving the EU Courts, the European Commission, OLAF, the World Customs Organization (WCO) and national

customs administrations throughout the EU.

Further information is available on [LinkedIn](#).



***Ms. Bernadita Palacios
Scheggia
Chile Customs***

Economist with over 13 years of experience in the fields of international affairs, finance and trade policy. After working for the first years of her career in the financial industry, she served as an International Affairs Advisor in the Ministry of Finance of Chile, where she participated as a negotiator of the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPP) in the areas of trade facilitation and customs procedures, competition policy and state enterprises, and financial services. She also participated as a representative of Chile in various meetings of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum (APEC) and prepared Chile's participation in the G20 Financial Track, when invited as an observer by Mexico in 2012.

She subsequently obtained a Master's degree in Public Administration from Harvard University. Upon her return to Chile she served as a Capital Market Advisor in the Ministry of Finance, working in the bill that modernized the banking legislation of Chile, to incorporate elements such as Basel III and tools to deal with failing banks. She also represented Chile in the Financial Markets Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), as well as in the discussion regarding the Code of Liberalisation of Capital Movements.

She is currently Head of the Technical Department of the National Customs Service, where she is in charge of the implementation of trade agreements and participating in trade negotiations in the area of rules of origin, including the deepening of the Chile-China Free Trade Agreement, the modernisation of the agreement with the European Union, the recent agreement with the United Kingdom and the negotiation of the Pacific Alliance with Associate State Candidates, among others. She has also presented before the Technical Committee on Rules of Origin of the World Customs Organization (WCO) and participated as Chilean delegate in the APEC Subcommittee on Customs Procedures, where she led the update of the APEC Customs Transit Guidelines 2019, to facilitate access to preferential tariff treatment for originating goods that have not been altered during transit.



Mr. Robert S. Smith
Americas Global Trade Leader,
EY

Partner based in the USA. He spent over 15 years of his global trade career based in Asia-Pacific, in Shanghai and Hong Kong, where he started EY's China Global Trade Practice and was the Asia-Pacific Indirect Tax Leader for many years. Robert returned to the US in 2015 during a period of significant trade disruption and accelerating regulatory change, to lead the Americas Global Trade Practice and work with multinational companies headquartered in the North American and Latin America regions.

Robert has deep experience in customs, trade, import/export and

indirect tax matters working with Authorities and companies around the world for the last 20 years. His knowledge in how companies operate their trade functions and the customs technical issues they encounter helps him to provide technical and practical advice to his clients.

Robert is a recognized authority on customs and trade issues and frequently speaks in conferences, webcasts and other forums around the world. He was a speaker at the 2019 World Customs Organization conference on the future direction of the Harmonized System and has participated on panels with WTO representatives on trade matters. He is the organizer and leader of EY's Americas Indirect Tax Symposium held each year in Miami attended by more than 300 participants that includes panelists/speakers from the WCO, Customs Authorities, other Government Agencies as well as industry representatives.

Robert has a Masters and a Bachelors degree in Professional Accounting, both from Brigham Young University. He passed the USCPA exam and previously worked as an auditor that allows him to apply his audit knowledge and accounting skills to the area of customs and trade. He also proficiently reads, writes and speaks Korean and speaks basic Mandarin.



Mr. Demba Seck
Technical Officer – Origin Sub-Directorate
World Customs Organization
(WCO)

Demba SECK is currently a Technical Officer –Origin Sub-

Directorate – World Customs Organization.

He held various positions at both operational and central administration levels as well responsible for origin matters in his home Administration in Senegal.

He has many years of training experience within the fields of customs legislation and customs procedures. Additionally to this, he has participated in several regional and continental negotiation rounds, all of which provided him with a broad experience.

Before joining the WCO, he was a WCO Accredited Expert Trainer on Rules of Origin and Technical and Operational Advisor on Revenue Package.



***Mr. Brian Staples
Trade Facilitation Services
(TFS), consulting group***

Brian Staples is President of Trade Facilitation Services (TFS: www.tradefacilitation.ca) an Ottawa- based international trade and customs consulting group that has been providing a wide range of multinational clients with effective market access strategies and solutions for over 30 years. TFS services include technical trade fundamentals with a particular focus on rules of origin and all dimensions of trade facilitation. Brian is also the Founding Director of the Origin Institute (<https://theorigininstitute.org>) and in addition to resolving trade problems for private sector clients, he

has also worked on a wide range of trade, customs and origin related technical assistance and capacity building development projects around the world. Mr. Staples is a longstanding member of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and the International Chamber of Commerce Commission on Customs and Trade Facilitation.



Mr. Goro Suzuki
Technical Attaché- Origin Sub-Directorate
World Customs Organization (WCO)

Goro SUZUKI is a Technical Attaché responsible for Rules of Origin in the Tariff and trade affairs, the World Customs Organization (WCO), from 2020.

Prior joining the WCO, he worked for Japan Customs for 15 years in the field of tariff, trade and facilitation areas. In the career, he developed his expertise as origin expert at the Rules of Origin Center, Tokyo Customs. As an Assistant Director of the office of Rules of Origin, Japan's Ministry of Finance, he participated in various international negotiations/consultations, e.g. EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement and Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), also he worked on uniform application of preferential and non-preferential rules of origin within its Customs administration.



Mr. Jeremy T. Harris
The Inter-American Development Bank

Mr. Harris worked as Consultant, Economist, and Integration and Trade

Specialist at the Inter-American Development Bank for more than eighteen years. In this context, Mr. Harris has participated in supporting several trade negotiation processes, including the FTAA and the DR-CAFTA, as well as others within Latin America, with an emphasis on rules of origin and market access. At the IDB he has participated in the design and development of several databases and information systems regarding market access. He has written on preferential trade agreements and their systemic effects on regional and global trade. Outside the IDB he has worked as a consultant for the UN-ECLAC, the CARICOM Secretariat, DFID, and GTZ. Mr. Harris holds a PhD in Economics from the University of Maryland.

Relevant publications include:

[“Convergence in the Rules of Origin Spaghetti Bowl: A Methodological Proposal” with Rafael Cornejo, INT-INTAL Working Paper N°34](#)

[“Rules of Origin for Development: from GSP to Global Free Trade” INT Working Paper 03](#)

[“Multilateralising Preferential Rules of Origin around the World” with Antoni Estevadeordal and Kati Suominen, INT Working Paper 08](#)



**Mr. Donald Tindamanyire
Principal Customs Officer
Tariffs, Valuation and Rules of
Origin at the East African
Community Secretariat,
Tanzania**

Donald Tindamanyire, is currently the Principal Customs Officer, responsible for Tariffs, Valuation and Rules of

Origin at the East African Community Secretariat, based in Arusha, Tanzania. Donald's experience in Customs Management spans over 19 years, specifically in the areas of valuation, tariff, Rules of Origin and trade facilitation. Donald holds a Master's Degree in Customs Administration, from the University of Muenster, Federal Republic of Germany, and a Bachelor of Laws (LLB), from the University of Dar es Salaam, in Tanzania.

As a regional expert, Donald's key responsibilities centre on ensuring the overall administration and monitoring on the application of the EAC Common External Tariff, Agreement on Customs Valuation and Rules of Origin, by EAC Partner States, and in accordance with the EAC Customs Union Protocol.

Donald is currently coordinating the EU-WCO Programme for Harmonized System (HS) in Africa within EAC region. He is overseeing the transposition and implementation of the HS 2022 version, which will include a Digitalized / Electronic Tariff and advanced ruling system. Donald also oversaw the awareness creation, for border agencies, on measures taken to facilitate smooth movement of goods within the region including the WCO HS reference guide on classification for COVID 19 medical supplies, in order facilitate expedited clearance.

Donald has also led the facilitation of various reviews of EAC Tariff regimes based on the EAC policy requirements, as well as participated in the negotiations on Rules of Origin for Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA)

and the recently concluded Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA).

Donald previously worked with the Tanzania Revenue Authority, where he held various senior portfolios, such as, Assistant Regional Manager Customs & Excise Department and Head of Rules of Origin, where he led various teams in the development and implementation of various policies and procedures on revenue collection, trade facilitation and protection of society.

From his legal background, Donald is an Advocate of the High Court of Tanzania, and a Member of both requisite professional bodies of the Tanganyika Law Society (TLS) and East Africa Law Society (EALS).



Ms. Rika Tokai
Japan Customs

Rika TOKAI is a deputy director at the Tariff Policy and Legal Division, Customs and Tariff Bureau, Ministry of Finance, Japan. With 25 years of experience in Customs trade, enforcement and international cooperation, she currently belongs to Office of Rules of Origin responsible for trade negotiations on rules of origin as well as policy-making and supervision of origin-related work in Japan Customs.

As for overseas assignment, she previously worked for the WCO as technical attaché in the Origin Sub-Directorate, Tariff and Trade Affairs Directorate from 2017 to 2020 and also worked as customs attaché in Japan-Taiwan Exchange Association at Taipei from 2007 to 2009, including as a researcher in the field of Free Trade Agreement at El Colegio de México (COLMEX) in 2003.



***Mr. Ricardo Treviño Chapa
Deputy Secretary General
World Customs Organization (WCO)***

Ricardo Treviño Chapa holds a Bachelor's degree in Financial Administration/Business from the Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey (Monterrey Institute of Technology and Higher Education) in Mexico and a Master's degree in Global Banking and International Finance from the University of Birmingham in the United Kingdom.

With a public sector career spanning 20 years, he first worked for Mexico's Government at the Institute for Protection of Bank Savings, focusing on areas such as process improvement, financial support analysis and asset management.

In 2007 he was appointed as General Director for Revenue Collection in the State of Mexico Government. Revenue collection tripled during his term of office, thanks to the implementation of automated processes. He also served as General Director of the Social Security Institute of the State of Mexico, where he led spearheaded a legal reform to strengthen the pension system.

In 2013 he joined Mexico's Tax Administration Service as Administrator General of Evaluation and Internal Affairs, where he was responsible for developing actions to strengthen integrity and transparency in Customs and tax.

In 2015 he was appointed as General Administrator of Customs by the President of Mexico, with ratification by the Senate. During his tenure in

office, Mr. Treviño Chapa promoted digitization of Customs procedures as well as cooperation with other border agencies and with Customs administrations of the country's main trading partners. Through the implementation of technology and data analysis, the risk alert effectiveness increased exponentially, impacting positively on revenue collection stemming from external trade. During this period of his career, he was also the WCO Regional Vice-Chair for the Americas and Caribbean region and, in this capacity, coordinated the first ever regional Strategic Plan in line with WCO objectives and priorities.

Since January 2018 Ricardo Treviño Chapa has held the post of WCO Deputy Secretary General, after being elected by the WCO Council. His current duties include leading the efforts to define and implement the WCO Strategic Plan for the period 2019-2022, which is based in an inclusive and transparent approach by taking, for the first time, contributions by the Organization's 183 Members into consideration. He has also succeeded in upgrading the strategic indicators, goals, priorities and deliverables for the Strategic Plan.

In his role as Deputy Secretary General, he follows up on the correct implementation of the WCO Strategic Plan, overseeing and coordinating efforts made by the Organization's three Directorates: Compliance and Facilitation, Tariff and Trade Affairs, and Capacity Building.

Some of the main activities addressed in the WCO Strategic Plan are the promotion and updating of the Organization's conventions, tools and instruments, including the Revised

Kyoto Convention, Harmonized System, SAFE Framework of Standards to Secure and Facilitate Global Trade, and Framework of Standards on

Cross-Border E-Commerce. To ensure implementation of the Organization's strategic goals, Mr. Treviño Chapa also follows up on the delivery of capacity building initiatives aimed at actively assisting Customs administrations to roll out training sessions and modernization initiatives. In addition, the development of a new mechanism to oversee proper implementation of WCO tools and measure the performance of Customs processes is one of the projects he is currently carrying out.

With a focus on results, transparency, Members' integration and innovative processes, Ricardo Treviño Chapa has been working together with other WCO Secretariat staff to ensure business continuity during the current global health crisis resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.



Mr. Saba Vallipuram
New Zealand Customs Service

Saba Vallipuram (Saba) has been working for New Zealand Customs Service (NZCS) as a Senior Advisor for over 19 years. He is an experienced International trade, economic and customs policy advisor, free trade agreement (FTA) negotiator of Rules of Origin and Customs Chapters and possess significant experience in implementation of FTAs. Saba has been Pacific trade facilitation / capacity building advisor for over three years and worked on

ASEAN regional economic and trade development issues.

Saba:

- is NZCS lead policy advisor for the review of the Revised Kyoto Convention,
- was NZCS lead for the recently concluded PACER Plus (Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Cooperation) negotiations,
- Is currently a Co-chair of the Sub-committee on Rules of Origin of the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand FTA (AANZFTA),
- Is currently a Co-chair of the Sub-Committee on Customs Procedures and Trade Facilitation of AANZFTA, and
- is World Customs Organization (WCO) Accredited Expert Trainer on Rules of Origin.



Mr. Åke Weyler
Swedish Association for
Textile Importers

Åke has his whole working life worked for branch/industry associations taking care of their interest towards the government of Sweden. He helped to form Textilimportörerna 1982 (Home textile-, Garment-, and Shoe Importers Association in Sweden) The purpose from the beginning was to fight, the then Swedish textile and garment quota system. He was successful in that and after Sweden joined EU (and got the quotas back) he helped to fight the EU quota system. During those years he supported strongly ITCB (the International Textiles- and Clothing

Bureau) the lobby group of textile and garment exporting countries demanding the removal of the MFA (the Multifibre Arrangement within GATT). Åke has been a member of the board of amfori, former Foreign Trade Association, in Brussels for many years until 2020. Åke Weyler has a small consultancy; Weyler Consulting & Information. The company slogan is "Traders hate quotas, duties and red tape. So do we. Professionally".