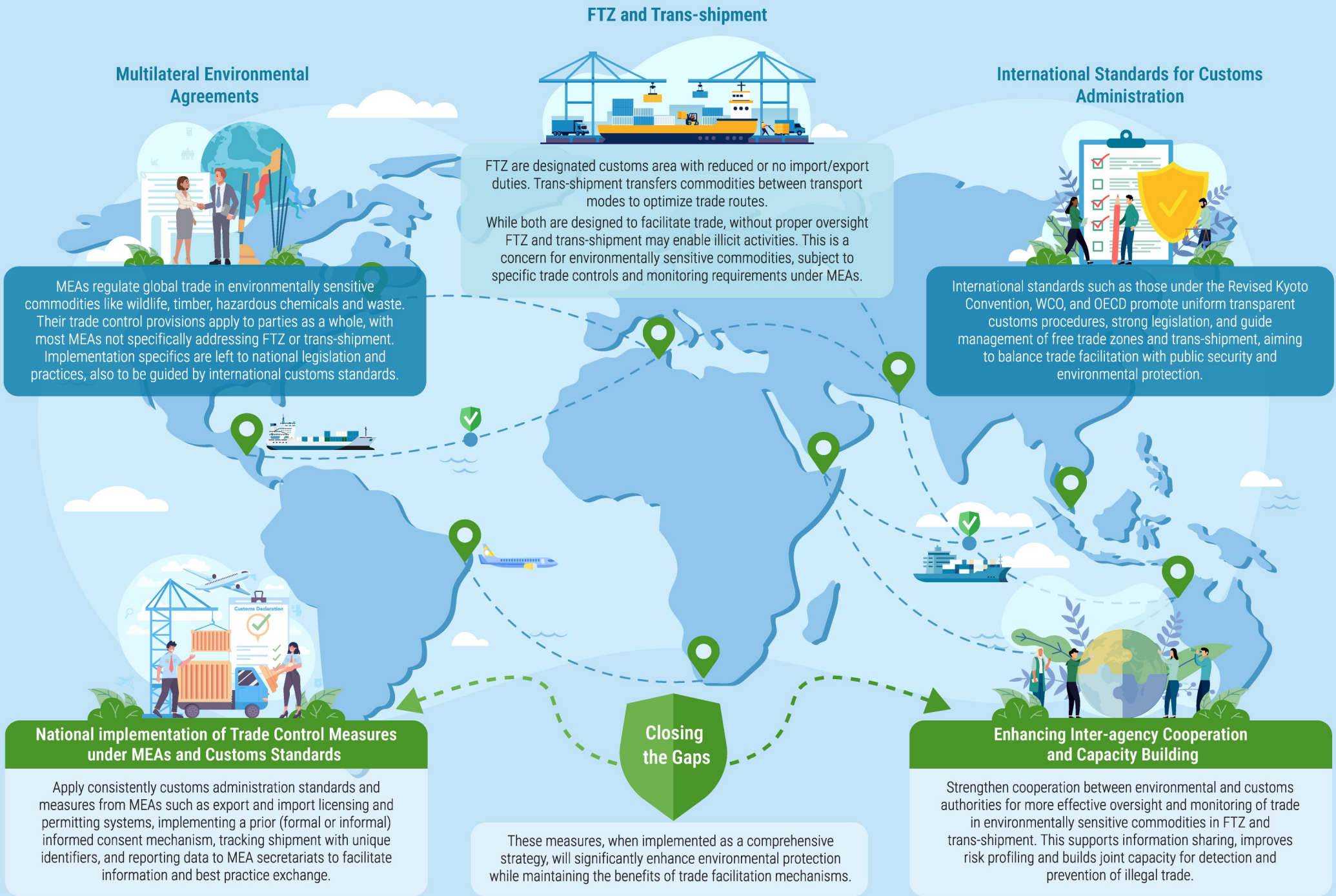


Free Trade Zones, Trans-shipment and Multilateral Environmental Agreements



Multilateral Environmental Agreements

MEAs regulate global trade in environmentally sensitive commodities like wildlife, timber, hazardous chemicals and waste. Their trade control provisions apply to parties as a whole, with most MEAs not specifically addressing FTZ or trans-shipment. Implementation specifics are left to national legislation and practices, also to be guided by international customs standards.

FTZ and Trans-shipment

FTZ are designated customs area with reduced or no import/export duties. Trans-shipment transfers commodities between transport modes to optimize trade routes. While both are designed to facilitate trade, without proper oversight FTZ and trans-shipment may enable illicit activities. This is a concern for environmentally sensitive commodities, subject to specific trade controls and monitoring requirements under MEAs.

International Standards for Customs Administration

International standards such as those under the Revised Kyoto Convention, WCO, and OECD promote uniform transparent customs procedures, strong legislation, and guide management of free trade zones and trans-shipment, aiming to balance trade facilitation with public security and environmental protection.

National implementation of Trade Control Measures under MEAs and Customs Standards

Apply consistently customs administration standards and measures from MEAs such as export and import licensing and permitting systems, implementing a prior (formal or informal) informed consent mechanism, tracking shipment with unique identifiers, and reporting data to MEA secretariats to facilitate information and best practice exchange.



These measures, when implemented as a comprehensive strategy, will significantly enhance environmental protection while maintaining the benefits of trade facilitation mechanisms.

Enhancing Inter-agency Cooperation and Capacity Building

Strengthen cooperation between environmental and customs authorities for more effective oversight and monitoring of trade in environmentally sensitive commodities in FTZ and trans-shipment. This supports information sharing, improves risk profiling and builds joint capacity for detection and prevention of illegal trade.