

AFRICAN CONTINENTAL FREE TRADE AREA

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) is the continent's most ambitious integration initiative. The main objectives of the AfCFTA are to, inter-alia:

1. Create a single continental market for goods and services, with free movement of business persons and investments;
2. Expand intra-Africa trade; and
3. Enhance Africa's competitiveness and support its economic transformation.

The AfCFTA came into force on 30 May 2019 and trade under the AfCFTA started on 01 January 2021.

Mauritius has ratified the Agreement establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area in October 2019.

The Agreement consists of three Protocols, namely:

1. Protocol on Trade in Goods;
2. Protocol on Trade in Services; and
3. Protocol on Rules and Procedures on the Settlement of Disputes.

The Agreement can be downloaded here:

- [Agreement establishing the AfCFTA](#)
- [Compiled Annexes to the AfCFTA Agreement](#)

The decision to start trading under the AfCFTA on 01 January 2021 was endorsed by the 13th Extra-Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly held on 05th December 2020, whereby it has been agreed to start trading on the basis of legally implementable and reciprocal Tariff Schedules and Concessions, with agreed Rules of Origin, and Customs Documentation.

Trade under the AfCFTA will start among countries having submitted their tariff schedules and ratified the Agreement. Countries and members of Customs Unions with which Mauritius can trade on preferential terms under the AfCFTA as from 1st January 2021 are as follows:

MEMBER STATES/COUNTRIES

1. Egypt
2. Sao Tome and Principe

CUSTOMS UNION

1. Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC)

Cameroon, Chad, Congo Republic, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon

2. East African Community (EAC)

Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda

3. Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

Nigeria, Niger, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Mauritania, Sierra Leone, The Gambia, Togo, Cabo Verde and Mali

4. Southern African Customs Union (SACU)

Eswatini, Namibia and South Africa

However, it is to be noted that trade with COMESA/SADC Member States will continue on the basis of the COMESA Treaty and the SADC Trade Protocol as is the case currently. Consequently, the AfCFTA opens up trade opportunities on non-COMESA/SADC markets.

Details of the tariff schedules of the above countries and agreed rules of origin are available here:

- [Tariff Schedules](#)
- [Agreed Rules of Origin](#)

CERTIFICATE OF ORIGIN

A Certificate of Origin shall be issued by the Customs Department of the Mauritius Revenue Authority on application by exporter or producer, provided that the goods meet the origin criteria.