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SOCIAL PARAMETERS IN PORT CONCESSION AGREEMENTS. A PROPOSED FRAMEWORK TOWARDS PORT SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

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Abstract Summary :

Integration of social sustainability clauses into port terminal concession agreements is paramount for fostering a more equitable and resilient operational framework. Such integration addresses the needs of both external and internal stakeholders, which on the one hand include local communities and society at large, while on the other the very own port employees, who seek to satisfy their interests also through the inclusion of social sustainability clauses revolving around equality, diversity and safety amongst other. By integrating these social sustainability measures, ports can create a more inclusive environment that supports long-term social engagement as well as economic stability. Ports are critical nodes for local and regional economies, and their operations exert significant (positive and negative) social impacts on local communities. As observed and recorded within the context of this paper, several of these (positive and negative) externalities could be mitigated or minimized through measures and monitoring mechanisms implemented within the framework of concessions. In parallel by investing in stakeholder engagement and community development to provide input and feedback, ports can focus on mitigating adverse impacts and enhance social well-being. Through an arsenal of tools and indicators which could be adapted for the case of ports, port managing bodies and organizations can extend the social welfare offered to their employees through numerous ways. On both regards though, the adoption, implementation and disclosure of social initiatives and metrics not only does fulfill ethical obligations, but also serves as a strategic imperative for long-term viability and sustainability of the sector. In essence, the strategic incorporation of social sustainability considerations into concession agreements is not merely an ethical imperative but a crucial step toward achieving comprehensive sustainability

in the port sector.