



**Asia-Pacific
Economic Cooperation**

**Independent Assessment of the APEC Marine Resource
Conservation Working Group (MRCWG)**

APEC Steering Committee of ECOTECH (SCE)

August 2008

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2008 APEC#208-ES-0.1.2

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Executive Summary

Introduction and Assessment Objectives

The Pacific Ocean links the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Member Economies and hosts complex ecosystems that produce a wealth of resources for local, regional, and global use. Not only do people depend upon the health of the Pacific Ocean for their livelihood, but Earth's climate also depends upon the health of the Pacific Ocean. Climate change, in turn, will affect the abundance of marine resources. The sustainable development of marine resources for tourism, industries, construction, and other sectors is critical for the future success of private sector investment and trade. As outlined in the 2008 Terms of Reference, The Marine Resources Conservation Working Group's (MRCWG) goal is to facilitate a balanced policy and program agenda for the sustainability of the marine environment to ensure that marine resources are protected and sustainably used by current and future peoples of the APEC region, based on the APEC vision of free and open trade and investment. Such a group is critical, given the significant value to the region and APEC Member Economies' gross domestic product of sustained economic activities from marine and coastal resources.

This Independent Assessment of the MRCWG is part of an effort to make APEC's economic and technical cooperation (ECOTECH) agenda more focused by reducing the duplication of projects and efforts and increasing the effectiveness of expertise and skills. This report reviews and assesses the contribution of MRCWG to APEC work priorities and the fora's effectiveness at achieving stated goals and objectives by examining MRCWG operations and activities. The Report contains two main parts. Part I reviews outcomes, objectives, and impacts. Part II, more forward looking, examines how the MRCWG can be more effective in achieving goal, outcomes, and objectives; how it can collaborate more effectively internally and externally; and how it can define and take advantage of future opportunities. Specifically, the purposes of this review and independent assessment are to:

Part I: Review, Assess, and Evaluate the MRCWG

1. Review activities and assess the outcomes.
2. Evaluate how the MRCWG activities can support the objectives of the Working Group and APEC.
3. Assess the impact of the work program "on the ground" in APEC member economies.

Part II: Opportunities, Challenges, and Recommendations for the MRCWG

4. Identify ways to develop synergies among the work of various fora.
5. Identify opportunities for greater collaboration with other regional and international organizations and bodies including the private sector, academia, and civil society.
6. Identify ways to tap resources for programs as well as opportunities to profile and share programs or projects.
7. Evaluate whether the MRCWG is operating effectively, if it should be merged with the Fisheries Working Group (FWG), or if the Terms of Reference (TOR) should be changed.
8. Identify ways to strengthen the fora's strategic priorities and direction for future works.

The goal of this report is to: 1) show the contribution MRCWG has made in Member Economies and the region; and 2) discuss how to strengthen and improve the functioning and effectiveness of the MRCWG. To meet these goals, T.C. Hoffmann & Associates, LLC (TCH&A) conducted a review and analysis using a participatory approach and key word searches in project proposals (see Appendices A, B, C, and D: Methodology, Survey Templates, Assessment Framework, and Best Practices). In addition, TCH&A spoke with non-governmental organization (NGO) leaders in the region. This approach produced recommendations based on both the APEC Secretariat's and MRCWG members' identified successes, challenges and opportunities.

Highlights from the Report:

Part I: Review, Assess, and Evaluate the MRCWG

The review of MRCWG impacts focuses primarily on information related to projects. Key findings for “on the ground” impact in Member Economies and throughout the region include:

- Overall the MRCWG is perceived as being effective and having positive impact on the ground.
- The MRCWG is perceived as having significant positive impact in addressing 4 critical areas: 1) policy and legal frameworks for sustainable, integrated management of marine resources; 2) instruments to understand and control marine pollution and harm; 3) sustainable management of coastal and marine habitats and related ecosystems; and 4) shared science on ocean observing, assessment, forecasting, and rapid response systems.
- MRCWG projects are seen as contributing strongly to building regional capacity. Projects have a wide range of impacts that primarily build capacity through education and sharing of, access to, or developing information and data on topics and issues related to marine resource management and conservation.
- Interviewees' agree, there is an opportunity for the MRCWG to strengthen collaboration and coordination with the private sector, academia, civil society, and relevant international and regional organizations and bodies.
- In the past, the MRCWG has been effective in leveraging APEC funding with Member Economy funds. Current participants of the MRCWG are committed to ensuring the success of the working group by providing human and financial resources.

Part II: Opportunities, Challenges, and Recommendations for the MRCWG

The second part of this report identifies opportunities and challenges and makes recommendations for how the work programs of the MRCWG can become more effective. Key recommendations made in Section 7, *Evaluate Whether the MRCWG is Operating Effectively, if it Should be Merged with the FWG, or if the TOR Should be Changed*, and Section 8, *Identify Ways to Strengthen the Fora's Strategic Priorities and Directions for Future Works*, of this report include:

Ways to Increase MRCWG Operational Effectiveness:

- Encourage the APEC Secretariat, MRCWG, and Member Economies to retain staff and develop materials that capture and build institutional knowledge of the working group.

- Encourage appointing a chair and vice chair for the D the Lead Shepherd Office (LSO) position to create strong, continuous leadership and allow Member Economies to co-host if they cannot meet these requirements.
- Invest in and continue efforts to update the APEC website and web tools and train the MRCWG Member Economy points of contact on how to use these tools. These tools could improve efficiency of communication and coordination in activities such as Member Economy reporting, and the MRCWG project selection and evaluation process.
- Improve the effectiveness of meetings by allowing more time for strategic, forward thinking in meetings. This requires more advance planning of meeting agendas, increased participation of other APEC and non-APEC fora, and less time for Member Economy reporting.
- Require all supported projects to fill out evaluations, state quantitative impacts, and disseminate produced materials and results of the project throughout the region.

MRCWG Merger with FWG: At this time APEC should not implement a merger of the MRCWG and FWG. In remaining discrete groups, they should annually formalize a list of issues on which they will collaborate and develop a simple process that is clearly communicated for reviewing and supporting joint projects.

To Improve the MRCWG TOR: The MRCWG TOR could lay out a simple yet effective monitoring and evaluation framework with standardized qualitative and quantitative measures that are goal/objective/outcome based, not just deliverable based, for both the MRCWG operational functions, such as convening and learning as well project impacts on the ground.

Strategic Priorities and Directions for Future Works:

- Ensure MRCWG activities clearly contribute and are linked to APEC core goals of free and open trade and investment in the Asia-Pacific region. As a cross-cutting working group, the MRCWG needs to link sustainable marine development, management, and marine conservation to socioeconomic benefits and convey to Member Economies the short- and long-term importance of this link across all major relevant marine resource-based sectors.
- Consider future MRCWG work programs in the areas of climate change, corporate social responsibility, building marine resource natural and social science data and information and connecting it to policy and management, watershed to ocean ecosystem-based management, and governance of transboundary marine protected areas and the high seas.

MRCWG Leads the Region in Marine Resource Conservation and Management and Achieves APEC-wide Goals and Objectives:

By acknowledging past successes and implementing recommendations from this report, the MRCWG has a crucial role to play in APEC, APEC Member Economies, and in the region. It will lead the region in marine resource management, sustainable coastal and ocean development, and conservation. It will thus fulfill its goal of facilitating a balanced policy and program agenda for the sustainability of the

marine environment to ensure that marine resources are protected and sustainably used by current and future people of the APEC region, based on the APEC vision of free and open trade and investment.

Summary of Key Findings

Interviewees said that MRCWG and joint MRCWG and FWG meetings were effective (3)..... 3

In a review of 59 projects, the MRCWG has been most active in fulfilling APEC’s capacity building functions; engaging relevant sectoral and stakeholder interest; and promoting leadership and improved regional coordination and cooperation for the responsible care of the oceans. It has been least active in improving the cooperation and coordination between APEC fora with marine-related activities; contributing to APEC’s core goals of free and open trade and investment; and responding to APEC emerging priorities..... 4

Interviewees’ perception of the effectiveness of these projects overall is “very effective” (4). However, projects supporting the following outcomes could be more effective: contributing to APEC’s core goals of free and open trade; developing, promoting, implementing, and/or complying with domestic & international law, regulations, and enforcement mechanisms for sustainable management of marine resources and/or control of marine pollution; and improving and strengthening market-based instruments for sustainable management of marine resources and/or control of marine pollution..... 4

Interviewees’ perception of the effectiveness of MRCWG in the formation and implementation of APEC policies to achieve key outcomes based on the 9 assessment criteria is overall “effective” (3). 5

Interviewees’ perception of MRCWG collaboration with other APEC Fora effectiveness overall is “effective” (3), primarily due to increased synergy with the Fisheries Working Group..... 5

Interviewees’ perception of MRCWG collaboration with other Non- APEC Fora effectiveness overall is “somewhat effective” (2)..... 6

The MRCWG has been the most active in facilitating the production and dissemination of best practices related to the control of marine pollution; integrated management of marine resources; sustainable management of coastal habitats; and shared science on ocean observing, assessment, forecasting and rapid response systems. 8

The MRCWG has performed little to no work on facilitating the production and dissemination of best practices related to capacity building related to bio-prospecting and non-living marine resources; tourism activities; and the role and function of business and private sectors and communities in sustainable management of the marine environment..... 8

Interviewees’ perception of the significance of MRCWG impacts overall is “some positive impact”(3), with “significant positive impact” (4) in the following areas: policy and legal frameworks for sustainable, integrated management of marine resources; instruments to understand and control marine pollution and harm; sustainable management of coastal and marine habitats and related ecosystems; and shared science on ocean observing, assessment, forecasting, and rapid response systems..... 9

MRCWG projects have a wide range of impacts that primarily build capacity through education and sharing of, access to, or developing information and data on topics and issues related to marine resource management and conservation. 13

Almost half of the MRCWG projects specifically stated that they targeted women’s participation in activities. However, less than 15% stated that women would benefit from this project, and few women were involved in the planning of it. 13

MRCWG projects provide an important source of leveraged funds from Member Economies. For every \$1 of funding from APEC for projects, MRCWG members contribute \$1.42, therefore providing almost 60% of total project funding. Respondents judged MRCWG activities to be cost-effective. 13

Interviewees generally are “committed” (3 out of 5) to providing long-term funding and “very committed” (4 out of 5) to providing personnel to support MRCWG’s activities..... 15

Interviewees said that MRCWG project selection process is very effective (4) 28

Eight project evaluations were available for review out of 59 MRCWG projects. The content of past project evaluations have not successfully demonstrated project implementation, impacts, performance, or opportunities for improvement and have not been communicated to the MRCWG..... 29

A strong majority of participants stated that the MRCWG 2008 TOR is a document that “very effectively” (4) reflects the strategic priorities of the MRCWG and APEC. 31

The current and future work of the MRCWG is guided by BPA and TOR that was developed with significant participation from Member Economies and is well structured to advance APEC and MRCWG goals, objectives, and priorities. The BPA is the strategy document and the TOR is the business plan and the TOR and MRCWG workplans needs to be more ambitious and further refined to be effective planning tools for the group to implement the strategy..... 32

Summary of Recommendations

Recommendation 1: To improve synergy with other APEC fora, the MRCWG Lead Shepherd could communicate and coordinate with other Lead Shepherds and APEC fora regarding meetings of mutual interest.....	16
Recommendation 2: The MRCWG can increasingly develop joint projects on issues of cross-cutting interest with the APEC Agricultural Technical Cooperation Working Group, Energy Working Group, Fisheries Working Group, Transportation Working Group, Tourism Working Group, the Industrial Science and Technology Working Group, Small and Medium Enterprises Working Group and the Mining Task Force, Task Force for Emergency Preparedness, Special Initiative on Sustainable Development, and the APEC Study Center Consortium.	17
Recommendation 3: Member Economies can organize their own representatives of each of the APEC fora and coordinate meeting debriefings after working group meetings. Full domestic debriefings will allow Member Economies to be better connected to broader APEC objectives and current themes.	19
Recommendation 4: The MRCWG needs to proactively cultivate and encourage greater participation of other organizations and bodies, including the private sector, academia, and civil society s in MRCWG activities. Such participation can happen in various ways.....	20
Recommendation 5: It is critical for the MRCWG to specifically target the agro-industry, mining, tourism, shipping, and other non-fisheries sectors. In collaboration with the FWG, the MRCWG can push forward its agenda with the fisheries sector, but MRCWG could move beyond the fishing sector 1) to have a unique niche and relevance to APEC over the long term; and, 2) to fulfill the goals and objectives as outlined in the BPA and TOR.....	21
Recommendation 6: The MRCWG needs to prioritize synergy and collaboration with other APEC fora and other regional and international organizations and bodies including the private sector, academia, and civil society, which will lead to joint financing of projects in the region. When appropriate, MRCWG activities could have APEC fora and other regional and international organizations and bodies match requirement to increase participation and leverage project funds with for example, private sector, civil society, NGOs, and IGOs.	24
Recommendation 7: MRCWG could develop a communication strategy and plan to profile MRCWG’s work program and results to Member Economies, APEC fora, and other regional and international organizations and bodies including the private sector, academia, and civil society.	25
Recommendation 8: The APEC Secretariat, MRCWG, and Member Economies could retain staff and develop materials that capture and build institutional knowledge of the working group.....	27

Recommendation 9: The MRCWG needs to ensure strong, continuous leadership. This could be achieved by having co-chairs for a longer period of time or appointing a chair and vice-chair. When the chairs terms is completed the vice chair would become chair..... 27

Recommendation 10: The APEC Secretariat needs to invest in and can continue its efforts to update the APEC website and web tools and to train the MRCWG Member Economy points of contact on how to use these tools. These tools could improve efficiency of communication and coordination in activities such as Member Economy reporting, and the MRCWG project selection and evaluation process..... 27

Recommendation 11: The MRCWG could improve the effectiveness of meeting conduction by allowing more time for strategic, forward thinking in meetings. This requires more advance planning of meeting agendas, increased participation of other APEC and non-APEC fora, and less time for Member Economy reporting. 28

Recommendation 12: MRCWG should require all Project Overseers to follow the BMC project evaluation process and share with other members of group the results to improve accountability and adaptive management of programs. Project Overseers will need to fill out evaluations, state quantitative impacts, and disseminate produced materials and results of the project throughout the region. 29

Recommendation 13: At this time APEC should not implement a merger of the MRCWG and FWG. In remaining discrete groups, they should annually formalize a list of issues on which they will collaborate and develop a simple process that is clearly communicated for reviewing and supporting joint projects. 31

Recommendation 14: Add in the TOR, under activities 1) “improve private sector understanding, stewardship, and cooperation for responsible care of the marine resources they depend upon” and 2) “improve and increase communications on the importance and value of marine resources among APEC fora and the private sector.” 31

Recommendation 15: The MRCWG TOR could lay out a simple yet effective monitoring and evaluation framework with standardized qualitative and quantitative measures that are goal/objective/outcome based, not just deliverable based, for both the MRCWG operational functions, such as convening and learning as well project impacts on the ground. 32

Recommendation 16: MRCWG activities need to clearly contribute and be linked to APEC core goals of free and open trade and investment in the Asia-Pacific region. As a cross-cutting working group, the MRCWG needs to link sustainable marine development, management, and marine conservation to socioeconomic benefits and convey to Member Economies the short- and long-term importance of this link across all major relevant marine resource-based sectors. 32

Recommendation 17: MRCWG can clarify the role it plays in the policy arena. It can act as an advisor to Member Economies and other APEC fora for sharing ideas, information, best practices, and supporting

activities that promote the long-term health and sustainability of economic marine resources throughout the region. 33

Recommendation 18: Based upon the Assessment Framework and APEC strategic framework priorities, increase MRCWG project work and development of best practices and sharing in four specific areas: 1) target the sectors that most greatly threaten marine and coastal environment- e.g. agro-industry, aquaculture, fisheries, maritime transportation, and tourism; 2) expand the role and function the private sector and communities in sustainable management of the marine environment; 3) build capacity to research and address future areas such as, bio-prospecting and non-living marine resources; 4) build capacity food safety measures. 33

PART I: Review, Evaluate, and Assess the MRCWG

The first part of the report will review, evaluate, and assess the work programs of the MRCWG. The three sections in Part 1 of this report are:

1. Review of the MRCWG activities and assessment of outcomes;
2. Evaluation of how the MRCWG activities can support the objectives of the Working Group and APEC, including the integration of women; and,
3. Assessment of the impact of the work program “on the ground” in APEC member economies.

1. Review of MRCWG Activities and Assessment of Outcomes

The MRCWG has four key activities:

- A. The conduct of MRCWG meetings, including joint meetings with the Fisheries Working Group;
- B. The development and support of projects proposed by the Member Economies;
- C. In coordination with APEC leaders, the development and implementation of policies; and
- D. The fostering of key relationships and cooperation with stakeholders, international organizations, and the public.

This report reviews and evaluates the MRCWG since its inception within an Assessment Framework and Criteria developed by TCH&A. The Assessment Framework and Criteria were derived from APEC policies and guiding documents, including the Bogor Goals, Osaka Action Agenda, Seoul Oceans Declaration, Bali Plan of Action (BPA), Strategic Framework for the MRCWG, MRCWG TOR, and the 1996 Manila Action Plan for APEC Six Project Priorities (MAPA), and the MRCWG Terms of Reference (see Appendix C for Assessment Framework and Criteria and sources).

The Assessment Framework and Criteria allowed TCH&A to compose questions for Member Economies and efficiently review MRCWG’s key activities to determine the extent to which they are achieving MRCWG outcomes. Participants were asked to rank the “effectiveness” of the MRCWG in achieving outcomes and participating in certain activities. The “effectiveness” ranking is on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest. In addition, participants were open ended questions (see Appendix B for survey questions).

Table 1: MRCWG Activities Meeting Assessment Criteria

Assessment Criteria	Number of MRCWG Projects Fulfilling Criteria	Average of Perception of <u>Projects*</u>	Average of Perception of MRCWG <u>Participation in Formation and Implementation of APEC Policies*</u>	Average of Perception of MRCWG <u>Collaboration with other APEC Fora*</u>
Contribute to APEC core goals of free and open trade and investment in the Asia-Pacific Region.	11	Effective (3)	Somewhat Effective (2)	Effective (3)
Promote leadership and improved regional coordination and cooperation for the responsible care of the oceans.	29	Very effective (4)	Very effective (4)	Very effective (4)
Promote a sustainable, ecosystem-based approach to coastal and marine management, applied in an integrated and cross-sectoral manner.	27	Very effective (4)	Effective (3)	Effective (3)
Develop, promote, implement, and/or comply with domestic & international law, regulations, and enforcement mechanisms for sustainable management of marine resources and/or control of marine pollution.	22	Somewhat effective (2)	Somewhat effective (2)	Very Effective (4)
Improve and strengthen market-based instruments for sustainable management of marine resources and/or control of marine pollution.	16	Effective (3)	Somewhat effective (2)	Effective (3)
Engage relevant sectoral and stakeholder interests . [Stakeholders are primary beneficiaries, and/or their participation is a key part of the project.]	29	Very effective (4)	Effective (3)	Effective (3)
Improve the cooperation and coordination between APEC fora with marine-related activities.	12	Very effective (4)	Very effective(4)	Effective(3)
Build capacity of member economies.	43	Very effective (4)	Very effective (4)	Very effective (4)
Respond to emerging APEC priorities .	6	Very effective (4)	Very effective (4)	Very effective (4)

*Perception of effectiveness on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest.

A. Review of Meetings and Assessment of Outcomes

The key purposes of the Annual Meetings are to:

1. Provide Member Economies with the opportunity to share information about their domestic efforts to advance the implementation of MRCWG's Strategic goals and objectives, particularly those included in the BPA; and
2. Review and discuss proposals for new projects and the implementation of ongoing projects.

Key Finding: Interviewees said that MRCWG and joint MRCWG and FWG meetings were effective (3).

Meetings support outcomes through the planning of projects, but can also lead to the following outcomes through the convening function of the MRCWG. The convention function of annual meetings and intersessional activities lead to:

- Engaging with relevant sectoral and stakeholders interests;
- Improving cooperation and coordination with APEC fora on marine-related activities;
- Building capacity of member economies through the sharing information and best practices; and,
- Promoting leadership and improved regional coordination and cooperation.

B. Review of Projects and Assessment of Outcomes

Projects are the most significant way in which the MRCWG translates APEC policies and objectives into tangible outcomes. Projects facilitate the development of information, technology, best practices, and the dissemination of skills and information to APEC Member Economies. Projects provide the opportunity for Member Economies to share expertise and for APEC working groups to sponsor the development of new expertise to address emerging issues of concern. APEC Projects cover a wide range of activities, such as seminars, publications, and research, and are aimed at enhancing economic growth and prosperity for the region, including trade and investment liberalization and economic and technical cooperation.¹

Table 1 above shows 2 ways in which project outcomes are assessed:

- 1) The number of MRCWG projects fulfilling the criteria, which is based solely on what is stated in the project proposal or evaluation document.
- 2) Survey data from MRCWG members and their perception of the effectiveness of projects in achieving the desired outcomes.

¹ Guidebook on APEC Projects at 3 (6th Edition, 2007), available at http://www.apec.org/content/apec/about_apec/policies_and_procedures.html#Projects

The MRCWG has supported and implemented a total of 59 projects since its inception.² Many projects achieved multiple outcomes, as listed in the assessment criteria. The review of projects shows where the MRCWG has been the most and the least active.

Key Finding: In a review of 59 projects, the MRCWG has been most active in fulfilling APEC’s capacity building functions; engaging relevant sectoral and stakeholder interest; and promoting leadership and improved regional coordination and cooperation for the responsible care of the oceans. It has been least active in improving the cooperation and coordination between APEC fora with marine-related activities; contributing to APEC’s core goals of free and open trade and investment; and responding to APEC emerging priorities.

Survey research highlights the perception of project effectiveness in the 9 assessment criteria categories (see Table 1 above).

Key Finding: Interviewees’ perception of the effectiveness of these projects overall is “very effective” (4). However, projects supporting the following outcomes could be more effective: contributing to APEC’s core goals of free and open trade; developing, promoting, implementing, and/or complying with domestic & international law, regulations, and enforcement mechanisms for sustainable management of marine resources and/or control of marine pollution; and improving and strengthening market-based instruments for sustainable management of marine resources and/or control of marine pollution.

C. Review of Development and Implementation of Policies and Assessment of Outcomes

The MRCWG has participated in the development of, and is guided by, strategic policy frameworks that express APEC-wide priorities, goals, and objectives. These frameworks include the Bogor Goals, Osaka Action Agenda, and the Seoul Oceans Declaration.

The BPA and Seoul Declaration are excellent policy frameworks that have promoted leadership and improved regional coordination and cooperation. These frameworks have led to positive outcomes and impacts on the ground in Member Economies.

In ranking the “effectiveness” of MRCWG participation in the development and implementation of APEC policies to achieve the following outcomes in the Assessment Framework, MRCWG Members perceived that MRCWG participation is:

- Very effective in promoting leadership and improved regional coordination and cooperation for the responsible care of the oceans; improving the cooperation and coordination between APEC

² This is the number of projects in the AIMP database available to the consultants as of March 2008.

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fora with marine-related activities; building capacity of member economies; and responding to emerging APEC priorities.

- Somewhat effective in contributing to APEC core goals of free and open trade and investment; developing, promoting, implementing, and/or complying with domestic & international law, regulations, and enforcement mechanisms for sustainable management of marine resources and/or control of marine pollution; and improving and strengthening market-based instruments for sustainable management of marine resources and/or control of marine pollution.

Key Finding: Interviewees' perception of the effectiveness of MRCWG in the formation and implementation of APEC policies to achieve key outcomes based on the 9 assessment criteria is overall "effective" (3).

The MRCWG has also funded a few projects that support international policy, which are propagated by intergovernmental entities that can create such law and policy (for example, the APEC Member Profile Database of Ocean Governance Arrangements, MRC 05/2003). Finally, respondents stated that in the past, compared to other APEC issues and fora, marine resources conservation issues have received lower priority in APEC-wide policies.

D. Review of Collaboration and Assessment of Outcomes

Respondents were asked to discuss their perceptions of the fostering of key relationships and cooperation with various stakeholders, including APEC fora and non-APEC fora, from the private sector to the public to international organizations.

APEC Fora

Consistent, substantial cooperation between the MRCWG and APEC fora such as the Tourism and Energy Working groups has been somewhat limited. Instead, MRCWG has primarily focused on coordination with the Fisheries Working Group (FWG). Respondents cited only limited knowledge of past cooperation with other APEC fora that did not include the FWG

Key Finding: Interviewees' perception of MRCWG collaboration with other APEC Fora effectiveness overall is "effective" (3), primarily due to increased synergy with the Fisheries Working Group.

Non-APEC Fora

Project respondents were asked to rank the overall effectiveness of collaboration between the MRCWG and each of the following group at achieving the 9 MRCWG assessment criteria:

Private sector was ranked as "somewhat effective" (2 out of 5).

Project respondents cited very limited knowledge among the commercial industries of Member Economies, and the sector specific APEC working groups such as Tourism Working Group, etc. (except FWG). Many project proposals state intent to invite representatives from the private sector, but there is

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rarely mention of the specific representatives that are to be engaged. One of the observed distinctions between MRCWG and the FWG is that the latter has cultivated more significant ties to fishing industry representatives. However, coordination has been slow with the other APEC (not including the FWG) working groups, but recent discussions show an interest and desire for more synergy.

The private sector has been recognized as having a strong interest in various projects the MRCWG conducts, including:

- The dissemination of best practices related to control of invasive species;
- Oil spill mitigation technology;
- Management of harmful algal blooms; and
- The tourism sector as a key user of satellite imagery produced through other non-governmental and Inter-governmental Organizations.

Respondents cited the APEC Roundtable Meeting on the Involvement of Business/Private Sector as an example of good cooperation with the private sector. The MRCWG has voiced a desire for more active engagement in the future with the private sector.

Civil society/public sector was ranked “somewhat effective” (2 out of 5).

Respondents indicated that instances of significant involvement between MRCWG and civil society/public sector are limited. MRCWG’s interaction with this contingency has primarily focused on outreach and education to the public, rather than the development of more collaborative activities. There have reportedly been good discussions between MRCWG and the academic sector related to poverty alleviation, as well as useful dissemination of information and training to the public on preparation for tsunami events, but to date, few projects focus on piloting projects and working with local government on implementation of initiatives. However, most project proposals state that they will invite participation from the public sector.

Other international organizations were ranked as “somewhat effective” (2 out of 5).

There has been some, albeit limited, communication between the MRCWG and other regional and international fora. Representatives from other NGOs and IGOs have attended MRCWG meetings as observers or presenters, but they usually do so on a one-time basis and not as part of a strategic, collaborative process. For example, there has been some limited communication between the MRCWG and the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), International Union Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), but Member Economies recognize the need to align priorities and efforts with the international agenda.

Key Finding: Interviewees’ perception of MRCWG collaboration with other Non- APEC Fora effectiveness overall is “somewhat effective” (2).

2. Evaluation of How MRCWG Activities Can Support MRCWG and APEC Objectives

One of the most important ways in which the MRCWG and other APEC working groups advance their objectives is by spreading best practices among Member Economies. As stated in the TOR of MRCWG, 3 objectives exist:

1. Ensuring the sustainability of the marine environment and its resources through understanding oceans, seas, and coasts; and by managing the marine environment sustainably.
2. Providing for sustainable economic benefits from the oceans.
3. Enabling sustainable development of coastal communities.

Best practices are standards, procedures, and processes that are the most effective at achieving the stated objectives. In the case of MRCWG, the development, dissemination, and implementation of best practices occurs primarily through projects and meetings.

To assess how MRCWG activities (primarily projects) support MRCWG and APEC Objectives, TCH&A distilled a list of issues and topics, based on the MRCWG TOR and other key APEC strategic documents, and evaluated the best practices by issue.³

The following table demonstrates the number of projects that addressed each of the following key best practice issues and topics.

Table 2: Best Practice Issues and Topics

Best Practices Covering the Following Issues:	Number of Projects
Policy and legal frameworks for sustainable, integrated management of marine resources (e.g. marine protected areas (MPAs), environment impact assessments (EIAs), and integrated coastal zone management policy and frameworks).	21
Instruments to understand and control marine pollution and harm (e.g. from unsafe maritime practices, land- and sea-based sources, compensation and liability for environmental damage from ships, including from anti-fouling paints, ballast water, derelict fishing gear, marine debris, invasive species/pests).	28
Sustainable management of coastal and marine habitats and related ecosystems (e.g. conservation of vulnerable areas and coral reefs, mangroves, wetlands, etc.).	18
Responsible management of fisheries and sustainable aquaculture , including elimination of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing activities (includes scientific research, control of destructive fishing practices, promotion of responsible trade in fishery products, capture of live reef fish, bycatch issues, turtle	11

³ See Appendix C for a full list of strategic framework documents that were reviewed for the development of this list.

conservation, interaction between climate change and fisheries).	
Sustainable management of tourism activities that affect the marine and coastal environments.	4
Capacity building for food safety measures .	13
Shared science on ocean observing, assessment, forecasting and rapid response systems (e.g. conform to FAO Strategy for Fisheries Status and Trends, participation in Global Ocean Observing Systems (GOOS)).	15
Capacity building to research and address bio-prospecting and non-living marine resources.	0
The role and function of business and private sectors and communities in sustainable management of the marine environment.	7

Based on the review of project summaries and proposals there are two key findings:

Key Finding: The MRCWG has been the most active in facilitating the production and dissemination of best practices related to the control of marine pollution; integrated management of marine resources; sustainable management of coastal habitats; and shared science on ocean observing, assessment, forecasting and rapid response systems.

Key Finding: The MRCWG has performed little to no work on facilitating the production and dissemination of best practices related to capacity building related to bio-prospecting and non-living marine resources; tourism activities; and the role and function of business and private sectors and communities in sustainable management of the marine environment.

Based on this evaluation of Best Practice issues and topics, the MRCWG has focused its effort primarily in achieving objective 1, ensuring the sustainability of the marine environment and its resources. Few best practices and projects have focused on objective 2, providing for sustainable economic benefits from the oceans. A few projects have focused on the valuation of marine resources. There is an opportunity to further support the achievement of objective 3, enabling sustainable development of coastal communities. MRCWG has supported a number of projects related to sustainable development and engagement with the private sector. There is an opportunity to strengthen the MRCWG activities to fulfill objectives 2 and 3 more effectively, which will be discussed in Section 8.

3. Assessment of the Impact of the Work Program "On the Ground" in APEC Member Economies

The review of MRCWG impacts focuses primarily on information related to projects. Here, four topics are discussed: the perception of impacts among projects respondents, the impacts demonstrated by a

review of MRCWG project proposals and evaluations, an evaluation of cost-effectiveness of MRCWG activities, and an estimation of replicability and sustainability of MRCWG activities.

A. Perception of Impacts Among Project Respondents

Impacts of MRCWG Activities

Information in this sub-section reviews project interviewees’ and survey respondents’ perceptions of the level of impacts of MRCWG’s activities. Both groups were asked to rank the effectiveness of MRCWG activities, as a whole, at achieving impacts related to the best practice topics. Ranking is on a scale of 1 (negative impacts) to 5 (very significant positive impacts).

Key Finding: Interviewees’ perception of the significance of MRCWG impacts overall is “some positive impact” (3), with “significant positive impact” (4) in the following areas: policy and legal frameworks for sustainable, integrated management of marine resources; instruments to understand and control marine pollution and harm; sustainable management of coastal and marine habitats and related ecosystems; and shared science on ocean observing, assessment, forecasting, and rapid response systems.

The rankings featured in Table 3 below represent the average rankings of those responses provided by the interviewees and survey respondents.

Table 3: Interviewee Perception of MRCWG “On the Ground Impact” in Member Economies

Impact Topic or Issue	Impact Ranking & Numeric Score
1) Policy and legal frameworks for sustainable, integrated management of marine resources (e.g. MPAs, EIAs, and Integrated Coastal zone management policy and frameworks).	Significant Positive Impact (4)
2) Instruments to understand and control marine pollution and harm (e.g. from unsafe maritime practices, land- and sea-based sources, compensation and liability for environmental damage from ships, including from anti-fouling paints, ballast water, derelict fishing gear, marine debris, invasive species/pests).	Significant Positive Impact (4)
3) Sustainable management of coastal and marine habitats and related ecosystems (e.g. conservation of vulnerable areas and coral reefs, mangroves, wetlands, etc.).	Significant Positive Impact (4)
4) Responsible management of fisheries and sustainable aquaculture, including elimination of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing activities (includes scientific research, control of destructive fishing practices, promotion of responsible trade in fishery products, capture of live reef fish, bycatch issues, turtle conservation, interaction between climate change and fisheries).	Some Positive Impact (3)
5) Sustainable management of tourism activities that affect the marine and coastal environments.	Some Positive Impact (3)

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6) Capacity building for food safety measures.	Some Positive Impact (3)
7) Shared science on ocean observing, assessment, forecasting, and rapid response systems (e.g. conform to FAO Strategy for Fisheries Status and Trends, participation in GOOS).	Significant Positive Impact (4)
8.) Capacity building to research and address bio-prospecting and non-living marine resources.	No Identifiable Impact (2)
9.) The role and function of business and private sectors and communities in sustainable management of the marine environment.	Some Positive Impact (3)

This table demonstrates the strong correlation between the respondents’ positive perception of impacts and the issues or topic areas for which the group has performed the most projects. The four topics or issues that received the highest ranking, and the corresponding number of MRCWG projects on those topics, are:

- Policy and legal frameworks for sustainable, integrated management of marine resources = 21 projects.
- Instruments to understand and control marine pollution and harm = 28 projects.
- Sustainable management of coastal and marine habitats and related ecosystems = 18 projects.
- Shared science on ocean observing, assessment, forecasting and rapid response systems = 15 projects.

Many interviewees view the impact being at a higher level (i.e. influencing national decision makers) instead of creating an impact “on the ground.” MRCWG is a forum for building capacity and exchanging best practices, and has the ability to advance international and regional standards and best practices on marine resource issues. The group has focused significantly on shifting marine management from single species management to ecosystem-based management (EBM), which interviewees believe has gained momentum and traction in the region because of MRCWG’s investment in and support of EBM projects. Furthermore, the group was quickly able to respond and address priorities in the region, such as the tsunami.

MRCWG could improve impact in the following areas:

- Responsible management of fisheries and sustainable aquaculture;
- Sustainable management of tourism activities that affect the marine and coastal environments;
- Capacity building for food safety measures;
- Increasing the role and function of business and private sectors and communities in sustainable management of the marine environment; and,
- Capacity building to research and address bio-prospecting and non-living marine resources.

According to interviewees, some of these areas, such as food safety and bio-prospecting, have only recently emerged as a priority for the group. Many of the project efforts are just starting, so the impact

is low and/or undetermined, but there is a lot of movement to implement the work and continue to strengthen policies. Many stated that the MRCWG needs more time to develop the strategies in order to chart impact.

B. Impacts Demonstrated by Review of MRCWG Project Proposals and Evaluations

In an effort to determine impacts, MRCWG project proposals and evaluations were both reviewed. A thorough table of information from all available project proposals and evaluations is provided in Appendix E.

The project proposals indicate that the MRCWG has made significant impacts “on the ground” in Member Economies.⁴

The following table is based on a review of all 59⁵ MRCWG projects for which there was a proposal and/or a project evaluation available. Information from this review is compiled in table form in Appendix E and F.

⁴ TCH&A would like to note that this review did not include contacting projects to verify impact. Because this information is based on self-reporting of projects, there may be more or less of an impact on the ground.

⁵ 22 projects just had summaries, 35 had proposals, and 2 only evaluations for a total of 59 projects made available to the consultant since 1995.

Table 4: MRCWG Supported Projects Impacts

Category	Summary Statement⁶
Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than a quarter of the 59 projects document the types or number of participants engaged in an activity. • Less than a third of the 59 projects involve multiple economy projects.
Impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects have a wide range of stated impacts, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ increasing public education; ○ improving governance; ○ exchanging of expertise/knowledge; ○ increasing capacity, which promotes regional collaboration; ○ improving livelihoods; and, ○ improving environmental quality.
Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports, conferences, training programs, and manuals are most common type of deliverables. • Other deliverables include monitoring criteria and indicators, high resolution satellite imagery, data and mapping of ecosystems, etc.
Distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects distribute information in various ways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 23 projects produced a Website; ○ 22 projects produced a manual or report; ○ 8 projects made either a compact disk (CD) or video; ○ 3 projects produced either a brochure or newsletter; ○ only 1 project translated materials into multiple languages and 1 made a presentation to APEC leaders.
Gender Concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almost half of the proposals specifically stated that they targeted women’s participate in activities. • Less than 15% stated that women would benefit from this project. • Less than 15% stated that women assisted with the planning of the project.

As illustrated in Table 4 above, the information contained in the project proposals and evaluations indicates that MRCWG’s activities are intended to create significant impacts “on the ground” in member economies.⁷ The table also demonstrates a wide range of outcomes, types of information, and products produced by MRCWG projects. However, quantifying those impacts is challenging for a number of reasons. First, few projects submitted evaluations, and those that did most often just restated the project objectives. Second, since no standardized metrics exist, the evaluation of project outcomes differs.

⁶ All numbers refer to the number of times the point arose in each of the 59 project proposals and evaluations reviewed (see Appendix F). Most of the proposals and evaluations describe participation and impacts qualitatively, if at all.

Key Finding: MRCWG projects have a wide range of impacts that primarily build capacity through education and sharing of, access to, or developing information and data on topics and issues related to marine resource management and conservation.

Key Finding: Almost half of the MRCWG projects specifically stated that they targeted women's participation in activities. However, less than 15% stated that women would benefit from this project, and few women were involved in the planning of it.

Project respondents provided the following examples of activities that have had a particularly **very significant positive impact** on the ground in Member Economies.

- **Management of Red Tides and Harmful Algal Blooms:** Increase capacity to manage and prevent harmful algal blooms through the development of guidelines on monitoring, inspection and regulatory programs, with a supporting resource document. The project also led the establishment of a Group of Regulatory Authorities for Seafood monitoring, Certification and Trade, with a supporting network of scientific experts on marine biotoxins.
- **Satellite Application in Knowledge-based Economies (SAKE):** Provide developing economies with high-resolution satellite imagery. This tool improves developing economy capacity to monitor status, activities, and coastal development and to better understand ecosystem interactions with the goal of identifying opportunities to implement conservation measures for marine and coastal resources.
- **Tsunami Preparedness and Resilience through Research, Extension, Education, and Training:** Improve tsunami preparedness and resilience through research, education, and training help the local stakeholders of Western Sumatra.

C. Evaluation of Cost-Effectiveness of MRCWG Activities

Cost effectiveness was defined, for the purpose of this assessment, as the marine conservation return or impact as a result of human and financial resources provided and used by the MRCWG.

Because quantified values on the impacts of MRCWG's activities is not available, it is not possible to directly calculate cost effectiveness by comparing funds spent to quantitative impacts achieved. The consultants therefore used two sources of information as a proxy for a traditional cost-effectiveness analysis. First, for MRCWG projects, funds contributed by member economies were compared with the funds contributed by APEC to demonstrate the leveraged value of these activities. Second, project respondents were asked to provide their perception of MRCWG cost effectiveness.

Key Finding: MRCWG projects provide an important source of leveraged funds from Member Economies. For every \$1 of funding from APEC for projects, MRCWG members contribute \$1.42,

therefore providing almost 60% of total project funding.⁸ Respondents judged MRCWG activities to be cost-effective.

Based on a review of all MRCWG projects available in the APEC Project Database (AIMP):

- The total cost of all MRCWG projects is **\$8,375,329.05**.
- Of that amount, only **\$3,462,448.00** was sought from APEC.
- Thus, the difference between the total cost and amount sought from APEC, **\$4,912,881.05**, was provided by Member Economies.

Thus for every dollar of funding provided by APEC, \$1.42 dollars are contributed by the Member Economies. In other words, the Member Economies directly provide almost 60% of total project funding. However, two interviewees judged the group's activities as only somewhat cost effective. The respondents noted that because it is difficult to quantify the value of some of MRCWG's numerous activities, particularly capacity building and knowledge dissemination, it is difficult to demonstrate MRCWG's cost-effectiveness in numeric terms.

D. Estimation of Replicability & Sustainability of MRCWG Activities

Consultants were asked to estimate the replicability and sustainability of MRCWG activities. For this purpose, **replicability** is defined as the extent to which MRCWG's activities:

- Demonstrate best practices;
- Are adaptively managed, with lessons learned being incorporated into future project iterations or project locations;
- Allow for innovations to solve problems.

MRCWG's project proposals and evaluations described very few clear indicators of project replicability. Below is a list of 4 projects that are good examples of replicability because they were intended to result in the development and dissemination of best practice materials to many Member Economies.

- Development and Validation of Phycotoxin Analytical Methods, Standards and Reference Materials for Seafood Product Certification and Safety: 3 rounds of project funding, initially with

⁸ Total project cost does not include self-funded projects. The calculation is based on the budget information provided in the project summary for each project, available in the AIMP Project Database. It is important to note, however, that of the 35 MRCWG projects in the AIMP Project Database for which project proposals were available, for 16 of these projects, discrepancies were identified between the budget numbers on the summary page, versus the numbers in the proposals (these discrepancies are noted in the Project Database Appendix E and F). It is unclear which number is the more accurate, and if proposals for the remaining projects were reviewed. It is likely that additional errors would be identified. Additionally, six projects in the AIMP Project Database did not contain budgetary numbers. There are also two additional projects that were not listed on the AIMP, but for which project evaluations, with no budget numbers, were reviewed.

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5 Member Economies participating, then 12, and eventually more than 18 Member Economies participating.

- Management of Red Tide and Harmful Algal Blooms in the APEC Region: 5 rounds of project funding with 18 Member Economies participating.
- SAKE: 3 rounds of project funding with 9 and, later, 4 Member Economies participating.
- Ocean Model and Information System for the APEC Region (OMISAR): 4 rounds of project funding with more than 10 Member Economies participating each year as well as hundreds of experts in year 3.

The high number of participating Member Economies positively suggests that the successive years of the project offered new, useful information, because some Economies participated in multiple iterations of the projects. The extent of adaptive management employed is unknown, but the renewal of project funding suggests that the projects achieved satisfactory results.

A key example of a project that is highly replicable is Tsunami Preparedness and Resilience through Research, Extension, Education and Training. Project respondents expressed a great desire and opportunity to share national best practices regionally. Since different levels of capacity exist throughout the region, elements could be adopted region-wide.

Sustainability is defined here as the extent to which MRCWG's activities receive sufficient and ongoing monetary and in-kind support to ensure the longevity of activities and the existence, success, and importance internally within APEC and externally. MRCWG's activities illustrate sustainability with:

- The sufficiency of funding to support the group's operations and projects; and
- The level of visibility of the group's successes and impacts.

The multiple rounds of funding received by the projects listed above reveals that MRCWG's activities have achieved a measure of sustainability.

Key Finding: Interviewees generally are "committed" (3 out of 5) to providing long-term funding and "very committed" (4 out of 5) to providing personnel to support MRCWG's activities.

PART II: Opportunities, Challenges, and Recommendations for the MRCWG

The second part of this report identifies opportunities and challenges and makes recommendations for how the work programs of the MRCWG can be made more effective. There are five sections in Part II of the report:

4. Identify ways to develop synergies among the work of various fora;
5. Identify opportunities for greater collaboration with other regional and international organizations and bodies including the private sector, academia, and civil society;
6. Identify ways to tap resources for programs and opportunities to profile and share programs and projects;
7. Evaluate whether the MRCWG is operating effectively, if it should be merged with the FWG, or if the TOR should be changed; and,
8. Identify ways to strengthen the fora's strategic priorities and directions for future works.

4. Identify Ways to Develop Synergies Among the Work of Various APEC Fora

Although the importance of cooperation between APEC fora is widely recognized and encouraged, opportunities exist to increase and improve the synergy, awareness of activities, priorities, and coordination between MRCWG and other APEC fora (see Part 1, Section 1 on review and assessment of outcomes).

Past and current synergy with APEC fora has been primarily with the FWG. To increase the synergies and impacts of work and to avoid duplication of activities, the Steering Committee on Economic and Technical Cooperation (SCE) members, at the first meeting in 2008 in Lima, highlighted the need for more coordination and consultation between the various SCE related fora.⁹

Key APEC fora with which the MRCWG could improve collaboration and cooperation are other working groups whose mandates touch upon issues that affect marine resource management and conservation include, for example, the APEC Fisheries Working Group, Tourism Working Group, Transportation Working Group, Agricultural Technical Cooperation Working Group, Mining Task Force, and others listed on pages 17-19.

Recommendation 1: To improve synergy with other APEC fora, the MRCWG Lead Shepherd could communicate and coordinate with other Lead Shepherds and APEC fora regarding meetings of mutual interest.

- **Recommended Action: The Lead Shepherd office could pursue a number of activities including: 1) coordinating regular meetings with other Lead Shepherds to discuss issues of mutual interest; 2) extending standing invitations to other APEC fora to participate in MRCWG meetings and activities; 3) coordinating MRCWG representation and attendance at other APEC fora; and 4) co-hosting joint meetings or intersessional meetings.**

⁹ 2008 APEC Secretariat Report on APEC Developments, 2008/MRCWG/007, at 6.

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The MRCWG could extend standing invitations to other groups and Lead Shepherd Office representatives to attend MRCWG Annual Meetings and participate in intersession activities. The MRCWG could periodically produce, disseminate, and post on its website a list of upcoming events and meetings. The Secretariat could update MRCWG on issues relevant to MRCWG that are being conducted/discussed at other fora (not just APEC), and an MRCWG representative could attend at least one other fora meeting each year. The Lead Shepherd could also communicate directly with other Lead Shepherds in order to stay updated on issues of mutual interest.

Recommendation 2: The MRCWG can increasingly develop joint projects on issues of cross-cutting interest with the APEC Agricultural Technical Cooperation Working Group, Energy Working Group, Fisheries Working Group, Transportation Working Group, Tourism Working Group, the Industrial Science and Technology Working Group, Small and Medium Enterprises Working Group and the Mining Task Force, Task Force for Emergency Preparedness, Special Initiative on Sustainable Development, and the APEC Study Center Consortium.

- **Recommended Action: The MRCWG needs to utilize the systems and abide by the timelines that the APEC Secretariat has developed and implemented to fully leverage the institutionalized process for all APEC Fora new project proposals and review. This will enable groups to review and improve project proposals as well as avoid duplication of efforts. Furthermore, the Budget and Management Committee could invite the MRCWG to comment on relevant projects developed by other fora. In addition, the BMC could bring issues of mutual interest and concern to the attention of both the MRCWG and other APEC fora by requesting formal responses from working groups on overlapping issues and projects.**

MRCWG could address cross-cutting issues, such as 1) engaging with the private sector to develop and pilot test innovative market-based solutions and improve environmental practices; 2) assessing and piloting opportunities with wave energy and carbon offsets through the vast ocean linking APEC Member Economies; and, 3) identifying best practices for mitigation and adaptation of climate change impacts on coastal peoples and marine resources.

The MRCWG could conduct intersessional updates and collaborative strategic planning activities with other APEC fora. Whether through email/newsletter correspondence or conference calls, the MRCWG needs to improve communication with other working groups throughout the year.

APEC fora that the MRCWG could engage with on possible activities/areas opportunities for increased synergy include:

- Transportation Working Group: The MRCWG and Transportation Working Group (TPTWG) group could partner and coordinate discussions, convene panels, and develop best practices on, for

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example, management of ballast waters with the maritime industry or disposal of waste, reducing anchor damage, planning harbors, ports, etc.

- Energy Working Group: The MRCWG and the overall energy policy and security-related work of this group is relevant to the management of ocean resources and the use of ocean-based energy sources such as offshore energy industries and ocean energy¹⁰. The MRCWG could partner and coordinate discussions, convene panels, and develop best practices on offshore energy industries as well as discuss ocean energy opportunities, sitings, and impacts.
- Tourism Working Group: The Tourism Working Group (TWG) endorsed the *APEC/Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) Environmental Code of Conduct for Tourism*. This and other TWG actions relate to the marine environment through corporate social responsibility and sustainable management of tourism outcomes and impacts, the conservation of ecosystems and biodiversity, the conservation of energy and reduction of waste and pollutants, and the respect and support of local communities and cultures that are tied to the health of the marine environment. The MRCWG could partner with the TWG to coordinate discussions, convene panels, and develop and implement best practices.
- Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) Steering Committee on Economic and Technical Cooperation (SCE): The MRCWG can share impacts and communicate results and best practices for the SOM and SCE to share with other APEC fora and leaders.
- Agricultural Technical Cooperation Working Group (ATCWG): With a focus on sustainable agriculture and related environmental issues, a joint project could be developed that identifies and pilots best practices for agro-industry to reduce nutrient loading and negative impact on water quality.
- The Industrial Science and Technology Working Group's (ISTWG): One of the group's main objectives is to use industrial science and technology to improve quality of life while safeguarding the natural environment and achieving sustainable development. One possible area of synergy could be building networks and information management systems around marine resource ecological and economic data in the region. A network of experts and government decision makers could be linked together to identify data and information needs related to marine resource management and conservation.
- Small and Medium Enterprises Working Group (SMEWG): The group's main purpose is to encourage the growth of small and medium sized enterprises. The MRCWG could partner with this group to support discussion, training of key marine resource sectors, and projects to develop market-based solutions and best practices. This group could also be a key partner and liaison in identifying relevant national and regional business associations and leaders that could participate in or partner with MRCWG activities.

¹⁰ Ocean Energy has not been identified in any past guiding MRCWG strategic framework or prioritization documents. It is not in this reports assessment framework. The consultant mentions it solely as an example of a topic that the group could work on with another APEC working group. Ocean energy is a growth area for many countries thinking of renewable energy sources.

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Other special task forces and groups are also relevant to develop synergy: The Mining Task Force, Task Force for Emergency Preparedness, Special Initiative on Sustainable Development, and the APEC Study Center Consortium. APEC leadership has been increasingly recognizing the importance of cooperation between the APEC fora on common issues of interest, and encouraging the continued cultivation of a collaborative approach. Respondents stated that MRCWG’s next target is to strengthen collaboration with the Tourism and Transportation Working Groups. The BPA will also increase the emphasis given to cooperation and collaboration.

Table 5: Examples of Opportunities for MRCWG Synergy with APEC Fora

TOR /BPA Objectives	Activities	APEC Fora
1) Ensure the sustainability of the marine environment and its resources through: 1 a) understanding oceans, seas, and coasts; and,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ocean observation and data collection • Understand the value of the marine sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industrial Science and Technology Working Group • APEC Study Center Consortium • Energy Working Group • Fisheries Working Group • Tourism Working Group • Transportation Working Group • Small and Medium Enterprises
1) Ensure the sustainability of the marine environment and its resources through: 1 b) managing the marine environment sustainably	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecosystem-based management • Marine pollution • Marine invasive species • Coral reefs and other vulnerable areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural Technical Cooperation • Energy Working Group • Fisheries Working Group • Mining Task Force • Tourism Working Group • Transportation Working Group • Small and Medium Enterprises
2) Provide for sustainable economic benefits from the oceans; and,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximize value from use, production, and harvesting • Trade facilitation and market access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fisheries Working Group • Small and Medium Enterprises
3) Enable sustainable development of coastal communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable integrated management • Hazard mitigation • Post-natural disaster rehabilitation and planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fisheries Working Group • Industrial Science and Technology Working Group • Task Force for Emergency Preparedness • Telecommunication and Information Working Group • Tourism Working Group

Recommendation 3: Member Economies can organize their own representatives of each of the APEC fora and coordinate meeting debriefings after working group meetings. Full domestic debriefings will allow Member Economies to be better connected to broader APEC objectives and current themes.

5. Identify Opportunities for Greater Collaboration with Relevant Regional and International Organizations and Bodies, Including the Private Sector, Academia, and Civil Society

Cooperation with non-APEC fora is given high prominence in the MRCWG's Terms of Reference and is listed among the Priority Activities of the Group and Duties of the Lead Shepherd. The MRCWG is strongly encouraged to collaborate with:

- Business and private sector marine based industry representatives, not included as members of economy delegations;
- Organizations, civil society, academic bodies and other experts who are not included as members of economy delegations; and
- Other relevant regional and international non- governmental and inter-governmental organizations.

There is an opportunity for the MRCWG to become the leader of marine resource management in the region, but this will require improved communication and synergy with non-APEC fora, including the private sector, academia, non-governmental organizations, and other intergovernmental organizations (IGOs). As discussed in Section 1, perception of collaboration with other non-APEC fora was only "somewhat effective" across all sectors.

The MRCWG has an opportunity to link best practices, as well as science and technology to policy and management, by: 1) supporting the implementation of innovative and experimental best practices; 2) raising challenging questions and facilitating dialogue among the private sector, policymakers, managers, regulators, scientists, and stakeholders; 3) sharing and disseminating data and information on best practices and standards; and 4) integrating other organizations and bodies into project design, co-funding of projects, and implementation.

MRCWG could also link the socioeconomic benefits and value of conservation with sustainable development and management of marine resources. Demonstrating this link and showing the value of implementing best practices is essential in order for Member Economies to adopt and change policy and practice.

Recommendation 4: The MRCWG needs to proactively cultivate and encourage greater participation of other organizations and bodies, including the private sector, academia, and civil society in MRCWG activities. Such participation can happen in various ways.

- **Recommended Action: MRCWG could actively include other organizations and bodies, including the private sector, academia, and civil society in meetings and project proposals. This will require active pre-planning of meeting topics and objectives as well as project**

development to reach out to and target key leaders and organizations that represent these groups and encourage participation and collaboration.

A. Private Sector

At the 2008 Annual Meetings, the MRCWG was informed by the APEC Secretariat representative that APEC leadership re-emphasized the importance of interactions with the business sector through two mechanisms: the APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC), and corporate social responsibility, which could become a key priority issue for APEC.¹¹

The MRCWG could partner with the private sector to 1) encourage stewardship of marine resources; 2) develop and pilot innovative market-based approaches to encourage sustainability; and 3) implement best practices in the sector. The adoption of best practices will more likely occur by collaborating with the private sector to discuss and share information about the value of marine resources, sustainable management, and conservation for the long-term economic future of the sector.

Recommendation 5: It is critical for the MRCWG to specifically target the agro-industry, mining, tourism, shipping, and other non-fisheries sectors. In collaboration with the FWG, the MRCWG can push forward its agenda with the fisheries sector, but MRCWG could move beyond the fishing sector 1) to have a unique niche and relevance to APEC over the long term; and, 2) to fulfill the goals and objectives as outlined in the BPA and TOR.

The MRCWG can be experimental and innovative through the projects it funds to test or assess new approaches or best practices. Developing market-based solutions across all sectors to highlight the value of implementing best practices and marine stewardship is essential.

MRCWG has an important role in setting best practices by sector and developing international standards for these sectors. MRCWG can work synergistically with the other APEC working groups, as is highlighted in Section 4. Key issue areas to target based on the BPA, and TOR could be:

- Land-based pollution: the MRCWG could work with, for example, agro-industry and the tourism, mining, and energy (thermal pollution) sectors.
- Invasive species: the MRCWG could work with the shipping sector.

¹¹ A CSR Workshop was held prior to the SCE 1 meeting (Canada and Peru provided a briefing on the information that was discussed on this topic). ABAC is requested to play a critical role in the development of the APEC CSR policy. [2008 APEC Secretariat Report on APEC Developments](#), 2008 MRCWG/007, 21st Marine Resources Conservation Working Group Meeting, Piura, Peru, 14-17 April 2008 at 4. SEE 2008/SOM1/016 AT 5-8

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In addition, MRCWG could work with the private sector, such as Google Ocean or companies like ESRI, to improve ocean data and information access. Other industry associations could be tapped to further knowledge on the value of marine resources and to share best practices.

B. Civil Society/Public Sector

The MRCWG needs to actively collaborate with the public sector and civil society, specifically academic and research institutes and the local government, to further its goals and objectives as outlined in the TOR and BPA. Both of these target audiences need to actively engage and participate in MRCWG activities and projects to build knowledge and capacity.

- **Recommended Action: The MRCWG could focus on building strategic partnerships and building capacity and networks of researchers and academics in the region. At the same time, civil society and public sector engagement is critical for impact of MRCWG efforts long term. The MRCWG could act as a forum to convene discussion on challenging questions between these two groups. This could include assessment and sharing of best practices and pairing of scientists and key public and private sector decision makers.**

Examples of how the MRCWG could engage with civil society and the public:

- Scientists could evaluate and assess current status of regional and national invasive species regulations and monitoring approaches against international best practices.
- The MRCWG could collaborate and communicate with scientists, researchers, and the public sector to determine data needs and gaps in marine environmental and socioeconomic data.
- Panels could be organized on complex topics, such as how to manage land-sea interactions, and more specifically, how to study and assess cumulative water quality impacts from a science perspective and how to develop and implement good policy from a regulatory perspective.
- In collaboration with the FWG, the MRCWG could host a panel on how to implement EBM and discuss what an EBM regulatory body looks like (e.g. invite academics; share lessons for Member Economies Fishery Management Councils that are transitioning to EBM).
- MRCWG could actively support and share strategies to integrate science into coastal and ocean policy and management decision making (e.g. invite academics; share lessons from Member Economies on their approach to integration).

C. Other Non-governmental and Inter-governmental Organizations

NGOs and IGOs are a vital sector to collaborate with to 1) leverage funds and capacity; 2) align priorities and interests in the region; and 3) and engage in discussion, share case studies, and debate and push best management practices, standards, and the conservation agenda.

MRCWG could invite key representative to meetings, as well as participate in key NGO and IGO fora to share the MRCWG's work program. Depending on the topic and/or issue, a wide range of national and international NGOs could be targeted. Relevant larger international NGOs include Conservation

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International, International Union Conservation of Nature, Oceana, The Nature Conservancy, Wildlife Conservation Society, and World Wildlife Fund. Donors could also be targeted (see Section 6 below for a discussion on donors).

Relevant IGOs include the Asian Development Bank, United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) Regional Seas Programme, UNEP Division of Technology and Industry, International Maritime Organizations, International Oceanographic Commission, World Fish, and Global Environment Facility, among others.

- **Recommended Actions: MRCWG needs to be represented at key international and regional meetings to encourage collaboration and link its best practices to international best practices and ensure they really are the “best” practices.**

6. Identify Ways to Tap Resources for Programs and Opportunities to Profile and Share MRCWG Programs or Projects.

Member Economies may depend on marine resources, but they invest little in conservation and management. Over the course of the next decade, significant investment will need to be made if Member Economies want to maintain or improve the health and productivity of their marine resources. MRCWG needs to increase communications as well as synergy and collaboration with Member Economies, APEC fora, and other regional and international organizations and bodies including the private sector, academia, and civil society, which could create opportunities for additional human and financial resources.

The MRCWG has taken an important step to leverage regional investment funds through its work with the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Coral Triangle Project. There are other opportunities for leveraging funds and increasing international coordination. Six primary groups could provide additional funding for MRCWG activities:

1. **APEC funds:** APEC fora can support MRCWG and marine resource conservation cross-cutting projects. The BMC can increase funds allocated to the MRCWG. However, the MRCWG needs to be more proactive and make sure that their projects are aligned with APEC priorities. This means the MRCWG needs to identify, push, and lobby for the mentioning of MRCWG priorities in APEC declarations. Coastal and ocean resources were identified as a priority.¹² This high-level elevation of issues within MRCWG’s

¹² 2008 APEC Secretariat Report on APEC Developments, 2008 MRCWG/007, 21st Marine Resources Conservation Working Group Meeting, Piura, Peru, 14-17 April 2008 at 6. See, 2008/SOM1/016, Annex A.

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expertise and coverage presents an excellent opportunity for the group to highlight its past work and garner support for future initiatives.

2. Member Economies: Many Member Economies could contribute funds for MRCWG work program (see Appendix G: Participation of Member Economies in Key MRCWG Activities). Participants repeatedly stated that the level of attendance at MRCWG Annual Meetings would likely increase if the events were positioned as an essential component of the larger international framework of marine resource management. Respondents also noted that alternatives to physical attendance of meetings, such as video conferencing and other online tools, have not been fully utilized (see Appendix G: MRCWG Annual Working Group Meetings – 1990 to 2007 in Appendix G).

3. NGOs and IGOs: MRCWG could leverage project funds throughout the region to maximize impact and increase MRCWG's profile when appropriate. Large NGO and IGO initiatives include leveraging funds through the Micronesia Challenge, the IUCN Pacific 2020 Challenge, and other large international environmental NGOs mentioned in Section 5.

4. Bilateral and Multilateral Banks: MRCWG could leverage funds and encourage Member Economies to apply for funds from, for example, Global Environment Facility, Asian Development Bank, German Bank of Reconstruction, Inter-American Development Bank, United States Agency for International Development, Swedish International Development Bank (SIDA), Canadian International Development Agency, Japan International Cooperation Agency, and others.

5. Foundations: Active donors in the region include, for example, Conservation International's Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund, David and Lucille Packard Foundation, Marisla, Sandler Family Supporting Foundation, David D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, United Nations Foundation, and Walton Family Foundation, among others. Industry foundations could also be leveraged for matching funds and could support NGOs' participation in the MRCWG meetings and activities.

6. Private Sector: Businesses and business associations (these may be NGOs) could be tapped. Many companies, such as BP and Expedia, are interested in increasing corporate social responsibility. Business associations such as the Pacific Asia Travel Association could be partnered with at their venues as well as at MRCWG activities.

Recommendation 6: The MRCWG needs to prioritize synergy and collaboration with other APEC fora and other regional and international organizations and bodies including the private sector, academia, and civil society, which will lead to joint financing of projects in the region. When appropriate, MRCWG activities could have APEC fora and other regional and international organizations and bodies match requirement to increase participation and leverage project funds with for example, private sector, civil society, NGOs, and IGOs.

To increase resources MRCWG must increase synergy and collaboration (discussed in Sections 4 and 5) and profile, share, and communicate MRCWG activities and encourage participation as well as share

best practices and impacts of its works.¹³ To do this effectively, MRCWG could allocate human and financial resources to and implement the following recommendations:

1. Linking Socioeconomic Benefits of Marine Resource Management and Conservation: Member Economies and the private sector could still be convinced of the benefits of proactive sustainable development and conservation of marine resources.

- **Recommended Action: MRCWG could support studies and then develop outreach materials that link the socioeconomic benefits of sound marine resource management, sustainable development, and conservation to Member Economies and the private sector.**

2. Convening and Communications: Through its activities, the MRCWG has achieved many positive outcomes supporting APEC priorities. MRCWG Members view the group as being “effective,” if not “very effective” in achieving outcomes and impacts.

Recommendation 7: MRCWG could develop a communication strategy and plan to profile MRCWG’s work program and results to Member Economies, APEC fora, and other regional and international organizations and bodies including the private sector, academia, and civil society.

Investing in communications will increase recognition of the strategic value of the group—particularly by demonstrating MRCWG’s impact on Member Economies, both among the APEC leadership and high levels of Member Economies’ governments. This, in turn, will increase meaningful participation in the working group by making MRCWG an essential component of international marine conservation and resource management efforts. By strategically coordinating with other regional and international organizations and bodies including the private sector, academia, and civil society and keeping abreast of international priorities, MRCWG could make the group’s work as effective and efficient as possible, avoiding duplication and becoming the cutting edge of marine resource management and conservation efforts.

- **Recommended Action: The MRCWG must have a current website. The MRCWG could actively advertise and post to relevant e-mail groups, and develop newsletters with meeting dates, agendas, and activities. MRCWG could also develop communications collateral such as brochures, Powerpoint presentations, etc. that all Members of the working group can share at relevant meetings.**

¹³ Please also refer to April 2008 report titled, APEC-Multilateral engagement: Survey of current approaches, prepared for AusAid for example of different approaches to increasing synergy and collaboration.

3) Increasing Project Influence: Since MRCWG supports projects around the region, it could demonstrate how all of its activities support APEC and MRCWG outcomes and make positive impacts on Member Economies. This requires developing effective communication channels to share results and information, as well as monitoring outcomes.

- **Recommended Action: Require MRCWG funded projects and activities to 1) report results, and 2) have a dissemination strategy to share results and/or products that project “grantees” could be required to execute upon it.**

7. Evaluate Whether the MRCWG is Operating Effectively, if it Should be Merged with the FWG, or if the TOR Should Be Changed

A. Assessment of Whether the MRCWG is Operating Effectively

This assessment sought information about the effectiveness of the operational and management functions performed by the APEC Secretariat and the rotating Lead Shepherd’s Office (LSO).

Both the APEC Secretariat and the MRCWG have demonstrated a strong interest in improving their management functions through activities described in this subsection. It is important to acknowledge that the APEC secretariat is making significant efforts to improve management and communication, as evidenced by the many initiatives highlighted in the 2008 APEC Secretariat Report on APEC Developments submitted at the MRCWG Annual Meeting. However, the extent and effectiveness of these reforms is very closely related to the availability of funding and related staff capacity.

Staffing Capacity

Since the APEC Secretariat is designed to be involved at a very minimal level and the working groups are voluntary in nature, operational effectiveness is affected by the capacity limitations experienced by both the APEC Secretariat and its Program Directors as well as LSO.

The effectiveness of the APEC Secretariat’s management interface with the LSO and Member Economies is subject to the common institutional problem of lapses in institutional capacity caused by changes in key staff and transition of leadership. In 2007, the SCE approved guidelines for Lead Shepherds, but variation in management is an unavoidable consequence of significant differences between governments. In compliance with these guidelines, the MRCWG could create an Appendix or Addendum to this effort that provides the LSO with core information necessary to effectively lead the MRCWG. This manual would also serve as an important reference for MRCWG members who have not held the LSO position, but, by containing key historical and contact information, would benefit from understanding how the office works.

Recommendation 8: The APEC Secretariat, MRCWG, and Member Economies could retain staff and develop materials that capture and build institutional knowledge of the working group.

- **Recommendation Action: The APEC Secretariat, MRCWG, and Member Economies could try to keep staff in posts as long as possible to provide continuity. They could identify knowledge and skill sets needed to manage programs effectively. The MRCWG could also develop LSO operations manual, to be continually updated, to capture and transfer institutional knowledge between Lead Shepherds.**

The number of Member Economies that have the capacity to hold the LSO is significantly limited because the position is entirely self-funded. Even for developed economies, the LSO role is a burden on scarce government staff resources. For less developed economies that may only be able to afford to send a single representative to the meetings, there is very little incentive to allocate scarce resources to the LSO office. Other international bodies, such as the IUCN Commissions, outline criteria that the lead country must meet in order to take on the role. The International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) allows countries to co-host, selecting a less developed country and a more developed country to work together. This could be a way to increase capacity for the MRCWG and also as an effective way for more countries to actively engage and be invested in the MRCWG, to achieve cooperation and increase capacity in the region between Member Economies.

Recommendation 9: The MRCWG needs to ensure strong, continuous leadership. This could be achieved by having co-chairs for a longer period of time or appointing a chair and vice-chair. When the chairs terms is completed the vice chair would become chair.

Website and Web-based Tools

The APEC hosted web-based management tools have great potential to improve the effectiveness of MRCWG's functions. The impact of all MRCWG activities is significantly diminished if information is not readily available on the website for all interested parties (Member Economies, APEC Secretariat leadership, and interested stakeholders). Web-based tools are an efficient and cost-effective way to communicate and disseminate information internally and externally. Other APEC fora maintain satellite websites that are frequently updated and accessed.

Recommendation 10: The APEC Secretariat needs to invest in and can continue its efforts to update the APEC website and web tools and to train the MRCWG Member Economy points of contact on how to use these tools. These tools could improve efficiency of communication and coordination in activities such as Member Economy reporting, and the MRCWG project selection and evaluation process.

Meeting Coordination and Conduct

There are a number of opportunities for improvement. In particular, respondents repeatedly suggested that the historical emphasis on the review of procedural and administrative issues, and the limited discussion of key strategic issues, detract from economy participation and devalue the meetings.

Recommendation 11: The MRCWG could improve the effectiveness of meeting conduction by allowing more time for strategic, forward thinking in meetings. This requires more advance planning of meeting agendas, increased participation of other APEC and non-APEC fora, and less time for Member Economy reporting.

- **Recommended Action: The MRCWG LSO could plan Annual Meeting themes and topics in advance. Agendas could be developed at least 4 months in advance, since such meetings are an important way to coordinate Member Economy feedback as well as coordinate presentations and participation from other APEC and non-APEC fora.**
- **Recommended Action: MRCWG could spend a majority of time at meetings discussing strategic and forward-looking activities as well as ways in which to achieve outcomes in the Annual Meeting through convening of panels to share best practices, results of projects investments, and adaptive management of programs. Meeting agendas could be developed in such a way that there is a clear purpose and outcome for every item.**
- **Recommended Action: The strategic focus of MRCWG Annual Meetings could be increased by performing some routine administrative tasks intersessionally, through improved use of online tools. Member Economies could use the APEC AIMP database to post and display full member economy reports at least a few weeks prior to the meeting.**

Project Proposal Process

Key Finding: Interviewees said that MRCWG project selection process is very effective (4) .

The MRCWG project selection process is already deemed “very effective,” but could be made more effective via improved communication and coordination via on-line tools. MRCWG members suggested a few ways to improve the process:

- **Recommended Action: The MRCWG could communicate the process, ranking system, and steps with a timeline 6 months in advance and require proposals to be submitted at least 3 weeks prior to the MRCWG meeting for Member Reviews. This can be done intersessionally to meet the BMC deadlines.**

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- **Recommended Action: The Project Evaluation Team (PET) could help to coordinate project proposal information and help to guide and improve the quality of projects submitted and the flow of that process from the MRCWG side. The PET could maintain a “living” guidance document on the preparation of project proposals on the MRCWG webpage. The PET could also ensure that all project proposals are uploaded onto the AIMP Project Database.**

Although the Guidebook on APEC Projects is an important resource, it does not include the most up-to-date directives on priorities for funding. As they are reviewing project proposals, the PET will have the best access to the most recent project selection guidance. Thus, the PET could compile and annually update a brief guidance web page that provides an organizing overview of all information needed to enable project proponents to prepare effective project proposals. Finally, the PET is the logical point of contact with the APEC Secretariat to assist with the uploading of all project proposals (as well as project evaluations, described below) to the AIMP Project Database.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Follow-Through

Key Finding: Eight project evaluations were available for review out of 59 MRCWG projects. The content of past project evaluations have not successfully demonstrated project implementation, impacts, performance, or opportunities for improvement and have not been communicated to the MRCWG.

Project respondents repeatedly stated that project follow-through, including demonstration of project implementation and impacts, is the area where MRCWG has been the least successful. Through monitoring and evaluation of MRCWG’s program of work and communications to APEC fora and other regional and international organizations and bodies including the private sector, academia, and civil society, the MRCWG could more effectively highlight its impact and outcomes.

Recommendation 12: MRCWG should require all Project Overseers to follow the BMC project evaluation process and share with other members of group the results to improve accountability and adaptive management of programs. Project Overseers will need to fill out evaluations, state quantitative impacts, and disseminate produced materials and results of the project throughout the region.

- **Recommended Action: Ideally, the MRCWG could develop a standardized list of indicators to measure not only project impacts, but also MRCWG operational functions related to convening and sharing of best practices and lessons learned.**
- **Recommended Action: The MRCWG could also require project “grantees” to have a communications plan and dissemination strategy as part of the project.**

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The APEC Secretariat is aware of the need to increase the number and type of documents available on the AIMP.

Member Economies could fully support the increased use of the AIMP as an efficient tool to store project information, including the post-project evaluation reports.

- **Recommended Action: All project evaluations could be available on the AIMP Project Database. The PET could facilitate the receipt and processing of all evaluations for the MRCWG and designated accountable for ensuring that Project Overseers are capable of and actually performing satisfactory project evaluation and follow-through. Model evaluations could be available on the MRCWG web site to give Project Overseers an example of an appropriate evaluation.**

B. Evaluate Whether the MRCWG Should Be Merged with the FWG

The MRCWG should remain its own group for 3 primary reasons:

1) Coastal and ocean issues are a priority for APEC Member Economies, and the issues of sustainability and conservation are complex and need dedicated attention. A cross-cutting working group that collaborates with multiple sectors is essential for the Member Economies to ensure healthy and sustainable marine resources for the future.

2) While the two groups do share some issues of mutual interest, (such as understanding climate change impacts upon marine resources and developing adaptation and mitigation strategies, EBM, improving conservation of vulnerable areas, sustainable fisheries management, sustainable aquaculture- especially in relating how to manage wastewater and reduce invasive species, understanding the value of the marine sector, ocean observation and data collection) the purpose and approach of each group significantly differs. The FWG approaches issues from the perspective of maintaining sustainable, fruitful fisheries and encouraging trade liberalization and facilitation in fish and fisheries products to eliminate barriers that restrict access to markets, while the MRCWG's perspective centers on the sustainability and conservation of the marine resources as a whole.¹⁴ There may be instances in which the core goals of the two groups are in tension—for example, when maintaining sustainability of marine resources as a whole runs counter to maximizing fisheries productivity. As mentioned above, the MRCWG issues extend far beyond fisheries.

3) Currently, most officials and experts attending the FWG and MRCWG meetings are from different ministries or agencies in Member Economies.

¹⁴ As stated earlier, the goal of the MRCWG is to facilitate a balanced policy and program agenda for the sustainability of the marine environment to ensure that marine resources are protected and sustainably used by current and future peoples of the APEC region, based on the APEC vision of free and open trade and investment. Draft MRCWG TOR, 2007/FWG&MRCWG/003, 6th Joint Session of the Fisheries and Marine Resource Conservation Working Groups, Gold Coast, Australia, 27 April 2007.

Recommendation 13: At this time APEC should not implement a merger of the MRCWG and FWG. In remaining discrete groups, they should annually formalize a list of issues on which they will collaborate and develop a simple process that is clearly communicated for reviewing and supporting joint projects.

Intellectually, many people would agree that EBM is the best approach to marine resource management; and, therefore single species management is becoming obsolete. In theory this could mean that the FWG and MRCWG should be renamed and merged. However, in reality and practically speaking, the FWG and MRCWG are not ready for a merger at this time. Most Member Economies do not know how to implement EBM. The FWG is a large working group, strongly attended by Member Economies. In many of the Member Economies fishing and aquaculture are the largest contributors to gross domestic product. As mentioned above, the goals of the groups are different and could be in “conflict”. Furthermore, at this present time, if merged the goals of the MRCWG may become a small subset within the goals of merged group.

If the MRCWG follows the recommendations in this report, becoming a cross-cutting working group that has strong relevance and prominence in the international arena as well as within APEC, and EBM becomes more readily adopted and implemented by Member Economies, then the consultant recommends revisiting the issue of a merger in the next 5 years.

C. Evaluate Whether the TOR Should Be Changed

Respondents gave high-marks to the new MRCWG Terms of Reference (TOR).

Key Finding: A strong majority of participants stated that the MRCWG 2008 TOR is a document that “very effectively” (4) reflects the strategic priorities of the MRCWG and APEC.

The TOR was judged to be a “very effective” document for this purpose because it was developed with the active participation of a number of Member Economies, and it carefully incorporates the strategic priorities articulated by the APEC Secretariat.

As discussed throughout this document, there is a need for the MRCWG to prioritize collaboration and engagement with the private sector.

Recommendation 14: Add in the TOR, under activities 1) “improve private sector understanding, stewardship, and cooperation for responsible care of the marine resources they depend upon” and 2) “improve and increase communications on the importance and value of marine resources among APEC fora and the private sector.”

Key Finding: The current and future work of the MRCWG is guided by BPA and TOR that was developed with significant participation from Member Economies and is well structured to advance APEC and MRCWG goals, objectives, and priorities. The BPA is the strategy document and the TOR is the business plan and the TOR and MRCWG workplans needs to be more ambitious and further refined to be effective planning tools for the group to implement the strategy.

There is an opportunity to improve the MRCWG TOR by linking the strategy to goals, objectives, outcomes, and impacts. The MRCWG supports important work, yet it is difficult to show the impact of its efforts and communicate and share results and best practices with both internal APEC audiences and external parties.

Recommendation 15: The MRCWG TOR could lay out a simple yet effective monitoring and evaluation framework with standardized qualitative and quantitative measures that are goal/objective/outcome based, not just deliverable based, for both the MRCWG operational functions, such as convening and learning as well project impacts on the ground.

8. Identify Ways to Strengthen the MRCWG's Strategic Priorities and Direction for Future Works

This section identifies ways to strengthen the MRCWG's strategic priorities and direction for future work. It builds upon the key findings presented in Part 1 of the report and presents some associated recommendations.

A. Strengthening MRCWG's Strategic Priorities

Part 1 of this report shared results of the assessment of outcomes, impacts, and ways in which MRCWG activities could support the objectives of the working group. This analysis highlights areas where the MRCWG could strengthen its strategic priorities as guided by the BPA and TOR. These areas include:

Recommendation 16: MRCWG activities need to clearly contribute and be linked to APEC core goals of free and open trade and investment in the Asia-Pacific region. As a cross-cutting working group, the MRCWG needs to link sustainable marine development, management, and marine conservation to socioeconomic benefits and convey to Member Economies the short- and long-term importance of this link across all major relevant marine resource-based sectors.

The MRCWG takes a regional perspective on the ocean, coasts, and seas. A core function is to provide a forum for a regional perspective on coastal and ocean resource health, best management practices, and future trends to assist Member Economies with the ability to develop marine resources sustainably now and in the future.

Recommendation 17: MRCWG can clarify the role it plays in the policy arena. It can act as an advisor to Member Economies and other APEC fora for sharing ideas, information, best practices, and supporting activities that promote the long-term health and sustainability of economic marine resources throughout the region.

Many project respondents were confused about the role MRCWG plays in the policy arena. The MRCWG does not develop legally binding policy agreements, but it has a powerful role to play within APEC and the region, as it can inform the region on how to manage and implement policy. The MRCWG can encourage Member Economies to work together towards cooperative marine resource management and support and ensure the long-term health of the marine resources that tie the region together.

Recommendation 18: Based upon the Assessment Framework and APEC strategic framework priorities, increase MRCWG project work and development of best practices and sharing in four specific areas: 1) target the sectors that most greatly threaten marine and coastal environment- e.g. agro-industry, aquaculture, fisheries, maritime transportation, and tourism; 2) expand the role and function the private sector and communities in sustainable management of the marine environment; 3) build capacity to research and address future areas such as, bio-prospecting and non-living marine resources; 4) build capacity food safety measures.

MRCWG's program of work needs to more directly engage, support, and build capacity for sustainable practices for the private sector businesses and activities that use and depend on marine resource. Furthermore, capacity building in new private sector areas such as bio-prospecting, ocean energy, and non-living marine resources is essential to assist with status and information on these resources as well as to share international standards and best practices with and between Member Economies.

The MRCWG needs to prioritize synergy and collaboration with other APEC fora and other regional and international organizations and bodies including the private sector, academia, and civil society. This will enable the forum to be most relevant to Member Economies, other key APEC fora, and other regional and international organizations and bodies including the private sector, academia, and civil society. As discussed in Sections 4 and 5, there are a number of ways in which the MRCWG can develop synergy and increase collaboration.

Improving communications by having MRCWG members actively share information about the MRCWG at other APEC fora and relevant regional and international meetings is essential to increasing the effectiveness of achieving its goals, objectives, and outcomes and ultimately have impact in Member Economies. Furthermore, the MRCWG needs to have a Website that shares projects, materials, and reports that have been developed (See Section 7 for more details).

B. Direction for Future Works

Opportunity: In 2008, protection of marine and coastal resources is ranked first among the 2008-09 ECOTECH priorities.¹⁵ This high-level elevation of issues within MRCWG's expertise and coverage presents an excellent opportunity for the group to highlight its past work and garner support for future initiatives.

With APEC leadership's recent prioritization of ocean and coastal resource protection, and the global focus on addressing drivers and impacts on climate change, the MRCWG has an excellent opportunity to demonstrate its value in achieving APEC-wide policies and in generating increased level of support for its future work. The elevation of climate change as a critical global issue and inclusion of protection of marine and coastal resources as an issue of primary concern signal an opportunity for the group to increase support and prioritization from APEC and Member Economies. In addition to the priorities the MRCWG already addresses, future directions that were identified by MRCWG members, other relevant regional and international organizations the consultant interviewed, and regional reports the consultant examined such as Global International Waters Assessments, for the MRCWG to consider beyond the next year include:

- Climate Change: The MRCWG could focus on two main areas: 1) sharing best practices for mitigation and adaptation for managing marine resources in response to climate change; and, 2) building capacity and knowledge in the region to understand marine resource response to climate change and linking such responses to socioeconomic impacts to predict trends. Member Economies could then effectively and sustainably manage resources to ensure long-term economic opportunities.
- Corporate Social Responsibility and Partnership: The MRCWG can work with difference business sectors to share best practices in corporate social responsibility and target sectors (already targeting fishing and aquaculture) such as agro-industry, mining, tourism, transportation, ocean energy, and bio-prospecting for marine resources. MRCWG could encourage the private sector to partner and support sustainable management and conservation projects in the region. For example, MRCWG could facilitate the engagement and participation of the private sector in the Coral Triangle Initiative.
- Building Marine Resource Natural and Social Science Data and Information and Connecting to Policy and Management: The MRCWG can support and build capacity throughout the region in research, monitoring, data access, and information management of marine resources. This includes both natural and social sciences so that links on the impact and value of marine resources are clearly connected to human welfare and economic value. The MRCWG could assist through its convening function, case studies, sharing of best practices, and support of projects

¹⁵ 2008 APEC Secretariat Report on APEC Developments, 2008 MRCWG/007, 21st Marine Resources Conservation Working Group Meeting, Piura, Peru, 14-17 April 2008 at 6. See, 2008/SOM1/016, Annex A.

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to connect data, analysis, and information most effectively for integrated science in coastal and ocean management and decision making.

- Watershed to Ocean Ecosystem-based Management: The MRCWG can build capacity and knowledge around EBM at different scales. Specifically, it could address how to integrate watershed/river basin to coastal and ocean management planning and management by taking the ecosystem-based management approach.
- Governance of Transboundary Marine Protected Areas and the High Seas: The MRCWG could discuss and share best practices on how the region can act and demonstrate how Member Economies will manage these areas. Currently the United Nations is developing goals, standards internationally for governance of the high seas.

The MRCWG needs to actively engage with other APEC fora and other regional and international organizations and bodies including the private sector, academia, and civil society to ensure they are addressing APEC priorities and are aligned with international and regional initiatives, best practices, and standards.