

2012 APEC Senior Officials' Report on Economic and Technical Cooperation



Economic and Technical Cooperation (ECOTECH) is aimed at fostering sustainable and inclusive growth and development in the Asia-Pacific and improving the overall economic and social well-being of all citizens living across the APEC region.

This agenda is based on the view – held firmly within APEC – that the gap between developing and industrialized economies needs to narrow if the region's future growth is to be secured.

The APEC Senior Officials' Meeting Steering Committee on Economic and Technical Cooperation (SCE) is the central coordinating body of APEC's ECOTECH agenda. In 2012, the SCE met on two occasions at the margins of APEC Senior

Officials' Meetings (SOM) in the Russian Federation – first in Moscow in February; and then in Kazan in May.

The SCE also held the seventh Committee of the Whole (COW) meeting with Chairs and Lead Shepherds from all its working groups gathering to discuss various policy issues, including a Dialogue on Food Security.

Other issues considered at the meetings included the strategic planning of SCE sub-groups, improving public communication and coordination on cross-cutting issues, and continuing past SCE priorities of streamlining and conducting independent assessments.

Recommendations to the 24th APEC Ministerial Meeting in Vladivostok, Russia in 2012

1. Endorse the 2012 SOM Report on Economic and Technical Cooperation;
2. Welcome the progress of work on strengthening APEC ECOTECH activities and enhancing fora accountability and communications, in particular the development of the Framework to Discuss Cross-Cutting issues and the Steering Council to guide APEC's implementation of the Travel Facilitation Initiative;
3. Welcome the achievements of the Working Groups and SOM Task Forces and welcome the ongoing improvements that have been achieved through the Program of Independent Assessment of all SCE fora; and
4. Welcome 2012 contributions to the APEC Support Fund from Australia, Japan, Russia and the United States.

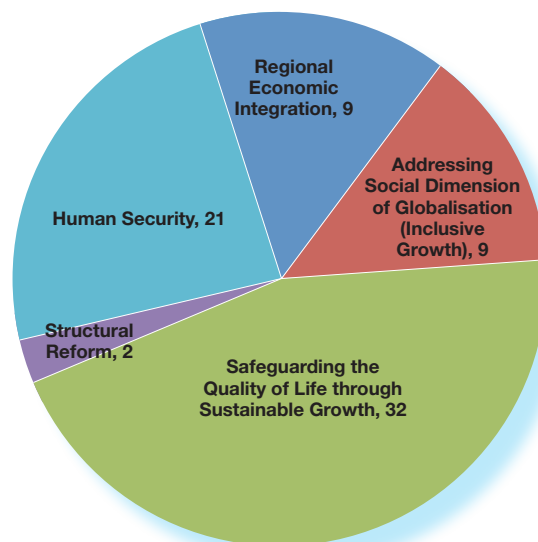
APEC Projects in Action

With the endorsement of the new five medium-term ECOTECH priorities in the Framework to Guide APEC ECOTECH activities, this report includes a summary of the work undertaken in 2012 reviewed against the five priorities for APEC's economic and technical cooperation:

- Regional Economic Integration;
- Addressing Social Dimension of Globalization (Inclusive Growth);
- Safeguarding the Quality of Life through Sustainable Growth;
- Structural Reform; and
- Human Security.

Number of ECOTECH Projects by Priorities

(from October 2011 to August 2012)



Advancing Free Trade for Asia-Pacific Prosperity

The SCE demonstrated strong performance in 2012, meeting all commitments outlined in its annual work-plan. Its **key achievements** include the development of a framework to discuss cross-cutting issues, creating a steering council to guide APEC's implementation of the Travel Facilitation Initiative, and updating the SCE terms of reference.

The SCE also instructed the Industrial Science and Technology Working Group to consider possible revision to its terms of reference to include the active participation of business and academia to build innovation policies on a market driven basis.

Annual work-plans of 15 working groups and task forces were approved. The SCE also considered the revised terms of reference for the Ocean and Fisheries Working Group and the Health Working Group, as well as the new terms of reference for the High Level Policy Dialogue on Agricultural Biotechnology. The SCE also considered the revised medium-term work plan of the Transportation Working Group.

Section 3 of this report reviews the progress of implementing the APEC Growth Strategy, following up on APEC Leaders' request for Senior Officials to conduct "annual progress reviews on APEC's relevant work programs while finding ways to take stock of progress, and making any needed adjustments in the work programs to maximize APEC's efforts to promote the Five Growth Attributes."

Section 4 of the 2012 SCE report underscores key projects completed by various SCE working groups and task forces to support economic and technical cooperation.

From October 2011 to August 2012, APEC working groups and taskforces registered 93 ECOTECH-related, capacity building projects. These include 73 projects approved by the BMC for APEC funding and 20 self-funded projects initiated and implemented by individual economies and/or groups of economies. In addition, the SCE itself had one APEC funded project during this period.

The APEC Senior Officials' Meeting Steering Committee on Economic and Technical Cooperation (SCE)

The SCE coordinates and manages APEC's Economic and Technical Cooperation (ECOTECH) agenda. It prioritizes activities in accordance with Leaders' and Ministers' directives; it oversees the work of SCE working groups; and it provides policy guidance on ways to contribute to APEC's ECOTECH goals.

Section 5 of this report includes the key achievements of all the SCE working groups and task forces and outlines the ongoing efforts they have made to strengthen the implementation of APEC's economic and technical cooperation agenda.

For example, the Agricultural Technical Cooperation Working Group has identified a set of voluntary principles to bolster food defense, while the Energy Working Group continues to intensify work on standards and testing methods for key energy-intensive appliances and building components. The Emergency Preparedness Working Group has also developed guidelines to promote SME business continuity plans to strengthen the reliability of supply chains. These are among some of the key outcomes of the SCE working groups in 2012.

Most APEC economies have implemented measures to improve access to justice, together with reforms to enhance the legal and institutional frameworks. The use of electronic systems in some courts, have helped to reduce costs and time from documentation.

APEC has done better than the rest of the world in this area. While the average number of procedures and costs to enforce a contract barely changed, it is getting slightly faster to enforce contracts in the APEC region. During the period 2009-2011, the average number of days to enforce a contract declined by 8 days, from 425 to 417 days, which is 218 days faster than the average time for the rest of the world.

The SCE consists of the following working groups and task forces:

- **14 working groups covering:** Anti-Corruption and Transparency (ACT), Agricultural Technical Cooperation (ATCWG), Experts' Group on Illegal Logging and Associated Trade (EGILAT), Emergency Preparedness (EPWG), Energy (EWG), Human Resource Development (HRDWG), Health (HWG), Industrial Science and Technology (ISTWG), Ocean and Fisheries (OFWG), Policy Partnership on Women and the Economy (PPWE), Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEWG), Telecommunications and Information (TEL), Transportation (TPTWG), and Tourism (TWG).
- **2 special task forces covering:** Counter-Terrorism (CTTF) and Mining (MTF).