

UPDATE OF ACTIVITIES WITHIN APEC

ASIA-PACIFIC ECONOMIC COOPERATION

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Introduction

The office of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Secretariat in Singapore provides the central link for all APEC activities among the various APEC fora. The Secretariat and its Program Directors serve as the institutional memory and point of coordination for APEC.

This is the third year that the APEC Secretariat has produced the *Update*. Its purpose is to provide the reader with a broad overview of APEC fora activities in 1998 and to facilitate more direct involvement in APEC's work by the business and private sector. The *Update* is organized to reflect the structure of APEC. There are sections in the *Update* on each of the three committees, the ten working groups, the one policy level group, and the one experts group. In addition, the *Update* contains sections on the APEC Study Centres Consortium and several cross-cutting issues that are of interest to more than one APEC fora.

Nineteen ninety-eight is Malaysia's year for hosting APEC. Building upon Canada's achievements as the host of APEC in 1997, Malaysia will consolidate activities in Trade and Investment Liberalization and Facilitation and further raise the profile of Economic and Technical Cooperation. Malaysia will emphasize capacity-building. She will work closely with other APEC economies in developing initiatives in the areas of human resources development, harnessing technologies for the future, and broadening outreach efforts about APEC to a wider segment of the business community. Malaysia will also work on Management issues, with emphasis on rationalizing APEC fora.

Four important decisions from the 1997 Leaders and Ministers' meetings that particularly affect Malaysia's work plan are as follows:

First, Leaders met in Vancouver (24-25 November 1997) amidst a financial crisis. Leaders directly addressed the crisis and expressed their continued commitment to open market principles. They instructed APEC in cooperation with other actors to "intensify its economic and technical cooperation, giving priority to upgrading financial systems, enhancing cooperation among market regulators and supervisors, and other measures to help improve the integrity and functioning of financial markets."

Second, Ministers agreed to early voluntary sectoral liberalization in 15 areas with a view to having liberalization measures in nine of those areas ready for implementation in 1999. The nine areas are: environmental goods and services, fish and fish products, forest products, medical equipment and instruments, telecommunications mutual recognition agreement, energy, toys, gems and jewelry, and chemicals. Leaders instructed Trade Ministers to "finalize detailed targets and timelines" for liberalization of the nine sectors by their next meeting in Kuching, Malaysia on 22-23 June 1998.

Third, Ministers endorsed the establishment of a Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) Subcommittee on Economic and Technical Cooperation (ECOTECH).

Fourth, Leaders agreed to "welcome Peru, Russia and Vietnam as new members of the APEC community, effective in 1998."

Leaders and Ministers also emphasized the importance of assisting Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs); they encouraged greater participation by businesses in APEC's work, and introduced several new initiatives in the areas of: electronic commerce, emergency preparedness, and infectious diseases.

Malaysia will pursue all of these initiatives in 1998. This work will build a greater sense of community in the Asia-Pacific and will bring APEC economies closer to realizing the objective of free and open trade in the region by 2010 for industrialized economies and by 2020 for developing economies. All the APEC activities for 1998 will peak at the Leaders' Meeting in Kuala Lumpur on 17-18 November.

I hope that the *Update* will be useful to you as an introduction and reference, and that it will provide you with helpful information about the work that APEC fora perform. For more detailed information, please feel free to contact the individuals listed in the *Update*. You can also visit the APEC Secretariat's Internet website at **<http://www.apecsec.org.sg>**. The website is the most comprehensive, current source for information on APEC.

Ambassador Dato' Noor Adlan
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Committee on Trade and Investment

The Committee on Trade and Investment (CTI) was established by the *Declaration on an APEC Trade and Investment Framework* in November 1993.

CTI coordinates APEC's work on liberalizing and facilitating trade and investment (refer to the *Bogor Declaration* 1994). It works to reduce impediments to business activity in 15 specific areas outlined in the *Osaka Action Agenda*: tariffs and non-tariff measures; services; investment; standards and conformance; customs procedures; intellectual property rights; competition policy; government procurement; deregulation; rules of origin; dispute mediation; mobility of business people; implementation of the Uruguay Round outcomes; and information-gathering and analysis.

CTI also provides a forum for discussion of trade policy issues. Its chair for 1998 is Ambassador Edsel T. Custodio of the Philippines. Activities in CTI's 15 work areas are outlined under the relevant sections in the *Update*.

Business and Private Sector Participation

CTI engages in regular outreach efforts to business via the APEC Business Advisory Council and directly through seminars, speeches, the Internet, publications, and media relations. The Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC) regularly attends CTI meetings, providing analytical and business input. The business sector plays a key role on technical work areas (for example, standards and conformance) by providing specialized input.

Achievements

During 1997 the CTI focused its work in three major areas. The CTI:

- Implemented and improved Collective Action Plans (CAPs) which will significantly lower costs and reduce barriers to the movement of goods and services. (Major individual achievements are outlined under the relevant sections.)
- Improved Individual Action Plan (IAP) format guidelines to which member economies should adhere in preparing their IAPs in 1998.
- Assisted Ministers in identifying potential sectors for early voluntary liberalization.

At the Vancouver Ministerial Meeting, Ministers agreed to early voluntary sector liberalization (i.e. liberalization before the agreed goal of 2010 for industrialized economies and 2020 for developing economies) in 15 areas with a view to having liberalization measures in the first nine of those areas ready for implementation in 1999. The 15 areas are: environmental goods and services; fish and fish products; forest products; medical equipment and instruments; telecommunications mutual recognition arrangement (MRA); energy sector; toys; gems and jewelry; chemicals; oilseeds and oilseed products; food sector; natural and synthetic rubber; fertilizers; automotive; and civil aircraft. Leaders instructed Ministers responsible for trade to "finalize detailed targets and timelines" for liberalization of the first nine sectors by their next meeting in Kuching, Malaysia on 22-23 June 1998.

Next Steps

CTI will continue to implement, improve, and expand Collective Action Plans across all areas of the *Osaka Action Agenda*.

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Tariffs and Non-tariff Measures

Tariff and Tariffs and Non-Tariff Measures (NTMs) are two of the 15 specific areas under CTI outlined in the *Osaka Action Agenda* through which APEC member economies are working to eliminate tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade. Member economies are committed to creating a region of free and open trade and investment no later than 2010 for industrialized economies and 2020 for developing economies.

The Collective Action Plans for Tariffs and NTMs require APEC members to: develop a computerized tariff database (APEC Tariff Database); pursue incorporation of information on NTMs into a future version of the APEC tariff database; compile a list of measures recognized as non-tariff impediments to trade; compile a list of products affected by those impediments; and identify industries in which the progressive reduction of Tariffs and NTMs may have a positive impact on trade and economic growth in the Asia-Pacific region, or for which there is regional industry support for early liberalization.

A new Market Access Group (MAG) has been established in 1998 to handle the CTI's work on Tariffs and NTMs. The convenor is Ms Ng Kim Neo, Senior Director, Trade Development Board of Singapore.

Business and Private Sector Participation

APEC member economies consult their private sectors regularly. Business views have been incorporated in the development of the APEC Tariff Database, which is also sponsored by the private sector (Federal Express).

Businesses and academia provide important input to the CTI's work on Tariff and NTMs, particularly through analytical work performed by the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC). Businesses that would like to become more involved in the CTI's work on Tariff and NTMs should contact the APEC office in their member economies (see page 47 for Member Economy contact information).

Achievements

The computerized APEC Tariff Database, sponsored by Federal Express, incorporating the applied tariffs of APEC member economies, was launched in May 1997. The data was provided by individual member economies and is based on the Harmonized System (HS) Code. The database is publicly accessible through the Internet at <http://www.apectariff.org>. APEC is interested in receiving your comments about the database, please e-mail them to Mr Terry Lee at tl@mail.apecsec.org.sg.

Next Steps

During 1998, the CTI will perform the following work on Tariff and NTMs through the MAG:

- Undertake an information resource study on voluntary sectoral liberalization in APEC.
- Update the APEC Tariff Database twice a year to keep the information current.
- Identify ways to expand the APEC Tariff database to include information on NTMs.
- Exchange information among member economies on NTMs and export subsidies through the World Trade Organization (WTO).

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Services

The objective of the work on Services in APEC is to progressively both reduce restrictions on market access for trade in services and provide Most Favored Nation (MFN) treatment and national treatment for trade in services. Each economy will contribute positively to the WTO negotiations on trade in services, expand commitments under the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) on market access and

national treatment, and eliminate MFN exemptions where appropriate. Each member economy will also consider the undertaking of additional actions to facilitate the supply of services. Collectively, the APEC economies will take actions with regard to services in telecommunications, transportation, energy, and tourism. They will also continue to seek Collective Actions in other service sectors.

At its January 1997 meeting, the CTI decided to establish an informal Group on Services (GOS) in order to pursue work on services outlined in the *Osaka Action Agenda* (OAA). The first task of the newly formed GOS was to formulate a work program for 1997, including ways to meet the OAA's requirement that member economies continue to seek Collective Actions in other service sectors. The Group's mandate is to address the Trade and Investment Liberalization and Facilitation (TILF) tasks contained in the OAA and in directions from Leaders, Ministers, the Senior Officials Meeting (SOM), and the CTI, building upon the existing body of work on Services and related aspects within APEC. Chile is the convenor for the GOS.

Business and Private Sector Participation

In 1998 the People's Republic of China will host a number of seminars on trade in services which will enhance business and private sector participation. Seminars on the measurement of trade in services and their corresponding statistics will also be held.

Achievements

As mandated by the OAA, one of the major aims of the GOS is to elaborate a matrix of Collective Actions in Services. The *Manila Action Plan* contained a matrix of Collective Actions by the four working groups relevant to Services: Energy, Telecommunications, Transportation, and Tourism. In response to the Leaders' call for Collective Actions in service sectors beyond the four already specified, the GOS finalized a Collective Action Plan (CAP) in the area of services in 1997.

Other achievements in 1997 included: 1) a review of trade in services arrangements within APEC, including the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the Australia and New Zealand Closer Economic Relations Trade Agreement (ANZCERTA), and the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA); and 2) the compilation of a list prepared by the APEC Secretariat of existing databases containing statistical information on trade in services.

Next Steps

The GOS plans to compile a list of measures that effect, either positively or negatively, trade and investment in all service sectors. It will also identify requirements for provision of professional services in member economies and make such information available to business in an accessible and user-friendly format.

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Investment

The Investment Experts' Group (IEG) is a sub-group of the APEC Committee on Trade and Investment (CTI). It was established in 1994 to bring together officials in the region involved in the regulation of foreign investment. Its main role is to assist the CTI in achieving the investment-related components of APEC's liberalization and facilitation agenda. Mr Neil Hyden (Australia, Commonwealth Treasury) is the current chair of the IEG.

Business and Private Sector Participation

The IEG seeks views from the business sector about priorities for APEC's investment liberalization and facilitation agenda through its annual Investment Symposium.

Achievements

The IEG conducts an annual Investment Symposium at which business representatives and investment officials meet to discuss issues. Three symposia have been held since 1995. The 1997 Investment Symposium, *Enhancing the Environment for Investment in APEC*, took place in Hong Kong in October. The symposia have provided valuable input into APEC's investment reform priorities and suggested ways to improve the investment environment in the APEC region.

Next Steps

The IEG plans to implement further liberalization of investment regimes of member economies. It also aims to improve the technical skills of officials who deal with investment projects in member economies through a range of training programs.

The IEG will:

- Regularly update the APEC Investment Guide on the Internet so that it remains relevant to the needs of business.
- Conduct regular policy discussions in IEG meetings that focus on key issues relating to investment practices.

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Standards and Conformance

The CTI Sub-committee on Standards and Conformance (SCSC) was established by the *Declaration on an APEC Standards and Conformance Framework* (November 1994).

The principal objectives of the SCSC are to: encourage alignment of members' standards with international standards; achieve mutual recognition among APEC economies of conformity assessment in regulated and voluntary sectors; promote cooperation for technical infrastructure development in order to facilitate broad participation in mutual recognition arrangements in both regulated and voluntary sectors; and ensure the transparency of the standards and conformity assessments of APEC economies.

The Chairman for the SCSC in 1998 is Mr A. Aziz Mat, Director General, Department of Standards, Malaysia.

Business and Private Sector Participation

Representatives from specialist regional bodies are invited to SCSC meetings, and business people occasionally attend SCSC meetings as part of member economies' delegations. Representatives from the private sector have attended seminars and conferences organized under the auspices of the SCSC.

Achievements

SCSC achievements during 1997 included:

- Completion of *Guidelines for the Preparation, Adoption and Review of Technical Regulations*.
- Completion and Internet dissemination of *APEC Food MRA Supplementary Material*.
- Internet publication of *APEC Contact points for Standards and Conformance Information*.
- Submission of Progress Reports on alignment with international standards.
- Execution of a Technical Infrastructure Development survey (1997 TILF Project).
- Compilation of recommendations to improve transparency following an evaluation of responses to the 1996 Transparency Survey.
- Seminar on *Environmental Management Standards and their Implications on Global Trade* held in April 1997.

- Training Programmes on Standards and Conformity Assessment Schemes held in March and November 1997 (APEC Partners for Progress Project).

Next Steps

The SCSC will continue to implement and improve collective action plans in the area of standards and conformance.

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Customs Procedures

The Customs Procedures Group of Customs Experts was converted into a formal CTI Sub-committee on Customs Procedures (SCCP) in 1995. Its objective is to facilitate trade in the Asia-Pacific region by simplifying and harmonizing customs procedures.

The Chairman of the SCCP in 1998 is Mr Madehi bin Kolek, Deputy Director-General, Royal Customs and Excise Department, Malaysia. The SCCP was chaired by Canada in 1997.

Business and Private Sector Participation

Private sector representatives such as customs brokers, importers, exporters, freight forwarders and business people have attended the annual APEC Customs–Industry Symposia held since 1993.

The SCCP also worked with the International Air Transport Association to organize and conduct a ‘United Nations Rules for Electronic Data Interchange for Administration, Commerce and Transport’ (UN/EDIFACT) seminar in April 1997 for members as part of the SCCP comprehensive technical assistance program.

Achievements

The SCCP’s achievements during 1997 included:

- Development of the first phase of the technical assistance training programs for its members in four of the eleven areas under its common action plans: WTO valuation

agreement, UN/EDIFACT, the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property (TRIPS), and Advance Ruling Systems.

- Development of comprehensive multi-year technical assistance programs in the following four areas: HS Convention, Clear Appeal Provisions, Temporary Importations, and Common Data Elements.
- Conducting seminars and workshops on: rules of origin, risk management and computer applications, and UN/EDIFACT; and conducting its fifth annual public and private sector Customs–Industry symposia.
- Publication of *A Blueprint for Customs Modernization: working with Business for a faster, better border*. The *Blueprint* describes, in practical terms, customs simplification and harmonization in the Asia-Pacific region. Its purpose is both to facilitate business planning by providing SCCP/APEC’s views on where customs modernization is headed and to serve as a benchmark against which APEC Customs Administrations can measure their progress on modernization.

Next Steps

The SCCP will continue to implement and improve Collective Action Plans in the areas of customs procedures. It will also periodically update the *Blueprint for Customs Modernization* to reflect the evolving trade environment.

The SCCP will identify and pursue projects on the regional enhancement of harmonized and simplified customs procedures and on enforcement matters related to trade facilitation. The SCCP will undertake joint projects with business and private sector organizations related to trade facilitation, and will promote other projects that contribute to the common development of human resources.

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Intellectual Property Rights

The Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) experts have carried out the work program since 1996 to achieve the planned Collective Actions as well as to enhance APEC-wide cooperation in the following areas: deepening the dialogue on intellectual property policy; surveying and exchanging information on the current status of IPR protection and administrative systems; studying measures for the effective enforcement of IPR; fully

implementing the TRIPS Agreement no later than 2000 and facilitating technical cooperation to that end.

Business and Private Sector Participation

The APEC Symposium on Enforcement of Intellectual Property Rights (18–19 July 1997, Taipei) attracted wide participation from the private sector. A contact list of public, business and private sector experts on IPR is available on the APEC homepage <http://www.apec.org.sg>

Achievements

Key achievements of the IPR experts group for 1997 included:

- Launch of the IPR Information Mall on the APEC homepage.
- Conducting training programs on Management of Industrial Property Rights in Thailand (February and November 1997).
- Discussion of the US draft Memorandum of Understanding of Trademark Application with a view to the facilitation of the application for trademark registration in multiple APEC economies.

Next Steps

The IPR experts will continue to promote technical cooperation, targeting the year 2000 to fully implement the TRIPS Agreement. Other tasks are the development of guiding principles on IPR enforcement; improvement of the protection of well-known marks; and continuing discussions to conclude an agreement on trademark application mailboxes.

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Competition Policy

The globalization of business has highlighted the importance of competition issues. APEC's objective in this work area is to enhance the competitive environment of the region. In November 1994, APEC Ministers agreed that the Committee on Trade and Investment (CTI) would develop an understanding of competition issues, in particular competition laws and policies of economies in the region. The CTI should learn how competition laws and policies affect flows of trade and investment in the APEC region and identify potential areas of technical cooperation among member economies. In 1996, the *Osaka Action Agenda* work programs for competition policy and law, and deregulation were combined, in view of the linkages between the two issues (see the Deregulation update).

Business and Private Sector Participation

Businesses and academia provide important input to APEC's work on competition policy, particularly through analytical work performed by PECC and seminars. Promoting dialogue with the business community on competition policy and law remains a priority.

Achievements

Three annual workshops have been held, covering issues such as competition policy and law; technical assistance; linkages between competition policy and trade policy; objectives and mechanisms of competition policy; interrelationship between competition policy and deregulation; regulation of natural monopolies; and occupational regulation.

During 1997, progress in this work area included:

- Training seminars for officials working in the competition policy and law areas;
- Construction by Chinese Taipei of a publicly accessible database on APEC competition policy and law; and
- Conducting a Workshop on Competition Policy and Deregulation (Quebec City).

Next Steps

Future focus will be on the identification of priority issues for APEC in competition policy and laws, and continuing exchanges of information and expertise on that topic.

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Government Procurement

The Government Procurement Experts Group (GPEG) was established in 1995. Hong Kong, China is the current Chair of the GPEG. The *Osaka Action Agenda* of November 1995 commits APEC economies to ‘develop a common understanding on government procurement policies and systems’ and to ‘achieve liberalization of government procurement markets throughout the Asia-Pacific region in accordance with the principles and objectives of the *Bogor Declaration*.’

Business and Private Sector Participation

Business people have attended GPEG educational programs.

Achievements

In 1997, GPEG:

- Held a seminar on Bid Challenge Systems in Chinese Taipei, and a Government Procurement (GP) Training Program in the People’s Republic of China as part of its ongoing education program to develop a common understanding about GP.
- Improved and expanded the APEC GP homepage to include more detailed information about more members’ policies and procedures, including their returns to a questionnaire survey, and addition of new links to members’ individual websites, listing specific trade opportunities
<http://www.apecsec.org.sg/govtproc/gphome.html>.
- Contributed to the WTO’s study on Transparency in GP by providing information on APEC members’ GP regimes (the survey returns), their IAP commitments in the area of GP, and APEC views on the elements of the principle of transparency.

Next Steps

GPEG will continue work on developing non-binding principles on GP and consider ways to support GP work in other multilateral fora. Members plan to develop, by 2000, a set of non-binding principles on GP based on the free-trade principles already embraced by APEC.

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Deregulation

Unilateral deregulation by APEC economies makes an important contribution to trade and investment liberalization and facilitation. Transparency in regulatory regimes and the elimination of trade-impeding or unnecessarily restrictive regulations are the key objectives of APEC work in the deregulation area. This work is undertaken by the Committee on Trade and Investment (CTI). In 1996, the *Osaka Action Agenda* work programs for competition policy and law, and deregulation, were combined, in view of the linkages between the two issues (see Competition Policy update).

Business and Private Sector Participation

Businesses and academia provide important input to APEC's work on deregulation, particularly through analytical work performed by PECC and seminars. Promoting dialogue with the business community on deregulation is a key focus for the future.

Achievements

Highlights of work on deregulation in 1997 included:

- Publication on the Internet of the *1997 Report on Deregulation Initiatives in APEC Member Economies*. Its objective is to promote transparency in regulations, provide a basis for further APEC initiatives on deregulation, and provide a user-friendly source of information for the private sector.
- Conducting the 1997 Workshop on Competition Policy and Deregulation (see Competition Policy update for details).

Next Steps

The focus will be on information sharing, dialogue, and study in regard to best practices in deregulation. In 1998 a further Workshop on Competition Policy and Deregulation will be held and a *1998 Report on Deregulation Initiatives* will be published. A Symposium on Regulatory Reform is under consideration.

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Rules of Origin

The Rules of Origin issue is covered by the CTI in its plenary and informal meetings. APEC member economies, through CTI, will:

- Gather information on APEC economies' respective rules of origin and develop a compendium of rules of origin for the use of the business and private sector;
- Facilitate, complement and accelerate, in the short term, World Trade Organization/World Customs Organization (WTO/WCO) work on harmonization of non-preferential rules of origin; and
- Study the implication of rules of origin on the free flow of trade and investment.

Business and Private Sector Participation

A representative from a specialist international body, the WCO, was invited as a guest speaker at the Rules of Origin seminar (Philippines, August 1996).

Achievements

The *Compendium of Rules of Origin of APEC Member Economies, 1997* was published both on the Internet and in print. The book is targeted at helping the private and business sector to better understand rules of origin in APEC economies.

Next Steps

CTI will continue its information exchange among member economies on rules of origin requirements, and assess APEC member economies' compliance with procedural obligations in the WTO *Agreement on Rules of Origin*.

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Dispute Mediation

Trade and other economic disputes have negative implications for the cooperation that APEC is designed to promote (see Bogor *APEC Leaders' Declaration*, 1994). The Dispute Mediation Experts' Group (DMEG) was set up in 1995 to explore ways of cooperative dispute-solving. It focuses on government and private disputes, and on promoting transparency in laws and regulations as a means of dispute avoidance (see *Osaka Action Agenda* 1995). The DMEG is chaired by Canada.

APEC regards WTO dispute settlement as the primary channel for solving disputes. APEC can have a role in helping to resolve and avoid disputes through non-adversarial and voluntary approaches. (APEC is not a rules-based organization, so it is not possible for it to establish a formal, binding dispute settlement mechanism.)

Business and Private Sector Participation

Academics, lawyers, arbitration experts, mediators, and business leaders provide valued input into APEC's work on disputes.

Achievements

Highlights of the DMEG's work in 1997 included:

- Publication of *International Commercial Disputes: a Guide to Arbitration and Dispute Resolution in APEC Member Economies*.
- Conducting a training seminar on the WTO Dispute Settlement Understanding, and conducting policy discussions and information sharing on dispute issues.

Next Steps

The DMEG will focus on improving the dispute mediation sections of APEC members' IAPs. The DMEG will also conduct further policy discussions on dispute settlement and resolution mechanisms and a seminar on transnational commercial disputes.

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Mobility of Business People

The *Osaka Action Agenda* of November 1995 commits APEC members to enhance business mobility by exchanging information on regulatory regimes, streamlining the processing of short-term business visitor visas and procedures for temporary residence of business people, and maintaining a dialogue on these issues with the business community.

Business and Private Sector Participation

The APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC) has made facilitation of business travel a priority. The CTI's agenda on business mobility has been guided by ABAC's recommendations. Business has also been closely consulted in the development of the Business Travel Card scheme and the introduction of other APEC initiatives.

Achievements

In 1997:

- APEC members published a revised second edition of the *APEC Business Travel Handbook* which provides information on their short term business visa requirements and contact information for offices in the APEC region that issue visas. *The Handbook* can be purchased from the Secretariat. It is available on the APEC homepage at <http://www.apecsec.org.sg>.
- Individual members have taken steps to facilitate business travel, such as by expanding visa-waiver programs or introducing multiple-entry visas.
- Some members initiated a trial of the APEC Business Travel Card, which offers accredited business travelers visa-free travel and expedited airport processing when visiting participating economies (Australia, Korea and the Philippines). Chile and Hong Kong, China have announced their intention to join the scheme in 1998. More economies are expected to consider participation following assessment of the trial.

Next Steps

Participating economies will evaluate the Business Travel Card trial and report to other members, with a view, if successful, to increasing participation. Members will also assess other measures to facilitate short-term business travel, such as expanding visa-waiver arrangements and applying new technologies to border management.

Members will exchange and publish information on regulations affecting temporary residence of business people and consider options for liberalizing those regulations.

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Implementation of Uruguay **Round Outcomes**

Since its creation in 1989, APEC has taken the position that it should build on the open multilateral trading system. Thus APEC Ministers and Leaders committed themselves to an early and successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round (UR), and agreed after its conclusion to carry out UR commitments fully without delay.

The task of this area is to promote opportunities for training and exchange of views and experiences on challenges and solutions related to implementation of the UR outcomes. The goal is full and effective implementation of UR outcomes within the agreed time frame, in a manner fully consistent with the letter and spirit of the WTO Agreement.

Business and Private Sector Participation

The business and private sector has not usually participated in the UR Implementation seminars and workshops. Member economies will consider whether to hold periodic seminars with the business and private sector on UR Implementation in the future.

Achievements

In 1997, four workshops and seminars were held to promote APEC work in the following areas: WTO Dispute Settlement Understanding, TRIMs Agreement, Valuation Agreement and TRIPs Agreement.

Next Steps

Member economies will consider participation in additional implementation seminars, and discuss a subsequent UR Implementation seminar to enhance participation in the WTO built-in agenda and to maintain the momentum for liberalization in APEC and the WTO. Member economies will also contribute to an annual review to monitor progress on UR Implementation, and identify provisions of the UR Agreement that are especially relevant to APEC work.

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Economic Committee

The Economic Committee was established at the Sixth APEC Ministerial Meeting in Jakarta in November 1994, when the Ministers agreed to transform the Ad Hoc Group on Economic Trends and Issues into a formal policy committee. The Committee serves as a forum for member economies to exchange information and provide views and analyses on economic issues in the region. It aims to promote common understanding within APEC on, and disseminate information concerning, economic linkages and longer-term economic trends and issues in the region. The Committee undertakes analytical work on both trade and investment liberalization and facilitation matters and on cross-cutting economic and technical cooperation issues.

Business and Private Sector Participation

As a policy-level forum, the Economic Committee does not have direct participation by the business and private sector at its plenary sessions but the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC) attends as an observer.

Representatives of the business and private sector, including experts in the key issues of food, energy, environment, and population, attended the Symposium on the Impact of Expanding Population and Economic Growth on Food, Energy and the Environment (FEEEP) held in September 1997.

Business people are an important element of each economy's delegation to the annual Public-Business/Private Sector Dialogue on Infrastructure. Both small and large firms are represented. Business input is critical to the conclusions of the Dialogue.

Achievements

In 1997 the Committee:

- Prepared and published the annual *APEC Economic Outlook*, which reviews member economies' recent economic performance and future prospects. The theme of the 1997 *Outlook* was "open regionalism." The Committee also published three related books: *The Impact of Trade Liberalization in APEC*, *The Impact of Investment Liberalization in APEC*, and *The Impact of Sub-regionalism on APEC*. All of these titles can be purchased from the APEC Secretariat; an order form is available on the APEC homepage.
- Organized the third Public-Business/Private Sector Dialogue on Infrastructure Development, held in Los Cabos, Mexico which focused on long-term planning for

infrastructure development. The proceedings of the Dialogue were published by the Committee.

- Organized a major symposium on FEEEP, held in Saskatoon, Canada to consider the interlinkages between FEEEP issues, to which non-government organizations and the academic and business communities, in addition to APEC member economy government officials, contributed. An interim FEEEP report drawing together APEC's work on food, fisheries, energy and sustainable development was prepared for Economic Leaders and Ministers.
- Contributed to APEC's work on infrastructure through the activities of the Infrastructure Workshop, in particular made a substantial contribution to developing the framework endorsed by Leaders and Ministers for strengthening economic and technical cooperation on infrastructure.
- Published a study on *Foreign Direct Investment and Market Framework Policies: Reducing Friction in APEC policies on Competition and Intellectual Property*.

Next Steps

The Committee will prepare and publish the 1998 APEC *Economic Outlook*, which will be coordinated by the People's Republic of China. The Outlook will focus on the role of Science and Technology issues in economic growth. Research work on Intra-regional Migration will be completed in 1998. A substantive report on APEC's response to the interlinked FEEEP issues will be prepared for the 1998 APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting. The Committee will also organize the 1998 Public-Business/Private Sector Dialogue on Infrastructure, which will be held in Chinese Taipei in May 1998. A major project on trade and the environment was launched in 1997, with outputs expected in 1998, including a seminar to discuss the conclusions of the study and the establishment of a database on environmental measures which impact on trade liberalization and facilitation.

More broadly, the Committee will pursue its program of analytical work on cross-cutting issues, in support of both the Trade and Investment Liberalization and Facilitation (TILF) and Economic and Technical Cooperation (ECOTECH) Agendas.

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Budget and Administrative Committee

The Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) in September 1993 agreed to establish the Budget and Administrative Committee (BAC) to advise APEC Senior Officials on budgetary, administrative and managerial issues. The Committee assesses and makes recommendations on the overall budget structure, considers budget requests, drafts the annual APEC budget, and examines all questions relating to the APEC budget and budgetary processes. The BAC also monitors and evaluates the operations and overall performance of working groups, and makes recommendations to the SOM for improved efficiency and effectiveness.

Business and Private Sector Participation

As an internal administrative forum, the BAC does not have direct participation by the business and private sector at its sessions.

Achievements

The BAC has performed the functions set out above. The BAC usually holds two regular meetings each year. These are supplemented, if necessary, by *ad hoc* meetings.

Next Steps

The BAC will continue its advisory, monitoring and assessment functions and its role in relation to APEC budgetary and administrative matters. The Committee's other tasks in 1998 are expected to include:

- Monitoring the expenditures under the APEC Central Fund and recommending adjustments to the budget as appropriate;
- Monitoring the progress of Central Fund-financed projects carried out by APEC committees and working groups and considering ways to strengthen this function;
- Approving funding requests under the 1999 budget and drawing up the draft 1999 APEC budget;
- Reviewing the proliferation of APEC databases;
- Reviewing the common unit cost items for budgeting;
- Reviewing the members' contribution formula;
- Applying revised document classification guidelines to BAC documents;
- Examining publications related matters; and
- Considering a new system for selecting the Chair of the Committee.

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Energy

The Energy Working Group (EWG), which is shepherded by Australia, was launched in 1990. The objective of the EWG is to maximize the energy sector's contribution to the region's economic and social well being, while mitigating the environmental effects of energy supply and use. The EWG contributes to decision-making through frank and open discussion of members' energy policies and planning priorities, sharing basic resource demand and supply outlook data, and considering the regional energy policy implications and responses to wide-reaching energy-related issues.

Business and Private Sector Participation

The business/private sector is involved in the work of the EWG through the EWG's five Expert Groups and is represented at EWG meetings by the PECC Energy Forum. In 1996, the EWG formed the Ad Hoc Business Forum to develop and advise on policy issues that would be addressed by the EWG relating to power infrastructure. Business participates in, and supports, EWG events such as seminars, training programs and technology demonstrations. A business sector–Ministerial dialogue was held in conjunction with the Energy Ministers' meeting in Edmonton in 1997. Energy Ministers have asked the EWG to look at ways to sustain and expand its interaction with business.

Achievements

The EWG has:

- Published APEC *Energy Statistics* on a regular basis, consisting of annual and quarterly data covering energy balances, final energy consumption, supply and demand by energy sources and electricity, and stock changes for APEC member economies.
- Developed, and obtained the agreement by Energy Ministers to implement 14 Rational Energy Policy Principles which give impetus to the reform of energy policies in member economies. Ministers in Edmonton (1997) agreed that significant progress had been made in implementing the non-binding principles and that they would continue to review progress regularly.

- Held the second Energy Ministers' meetings (Edmonton, August 1997).
- Gained endorsement by Energy Ministers (1997) of the non-binding principles contained in the *Manual of Best Practice Principles for Independent Power Producers (IPPs)*, aimed at mobilizing capital for private sector investment in power infrastructure.
- Secured endorsement by Ministers of a set of non-binding principles for good environmental practice aimed at ensuring new power infrastructure additions in APEC economies are environmentally sound.
- Conducted a program of seminars, training courses and information exchange activities aimed at promoting new and renewable energy technologies, more efficient energy production and use, and the mitigation of the environmental impact of energy production and use, including through the application of clean fossil energy technologies.
- Upgraded and expanded its Internet website resources aimed at facilitating power infrastructure investment.

Next Steps

During 1998 the EWG will continue its work program based on the *Osaka Action Program for Energy* and the priorities established by Ministers and Economic Leaders including:

- Developing and publishing a comprehensive Regional Energy Supply and Demand Outlook to the year 2010.
- Making significant progress towards the establishment of a comprehensive linked database of minerals investment opportunities in the APEC region.
- Commencement of implementation of the directions given at the Edmonton Ministerial meeting including:
 - work on facilitating natural gas infrastructure and trading system development;
 - additional progress on cooperation in energy standards;
 - further consideration of the environmental aspects of power infrastructure;
 - an expanded program on energy efficiency.

The EWG will present outcomes and recommendations on its current priority activities to the third Energy Ministers' meeting in Japan in October 1998.

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Fisheries

The Fisheries Working Group (FWG) aims to: promote the conservation and sustainable use of fisheries resources, promote sustainable development of aquaculture and habitat preservation; seek solutions to common fisheries resource management problems and aquaculture disease control; enhance food safety and quality of fish and fisheries products, and promote sector-specific work relating to trade and investment liberalization and facilitation.

Australia is the lead shepherd for two years. Its term started in July 1997.

Business and Private Sector Participation

The business and private sector does not participate in Fisheries Working Group meetings, but in some cases it has been involved at the project level. The FWG will develop procedures to improve the involvement of business in its activities.

Achievements

The FWG's achievements in 1997 included:

- Publication of an *Inventory of Fisheries Administrations and Organizations in APEC Members* (1997);
- Two technical workshops on seafood inspection systems (Bangkok, October 1997 and Bangkok, November 1997);
- Preparation of a 'how-to' manual on trade in airshipped seafood for publication in early 1998;
- Phase I (tariffs) of the project on Trade and Investment Liberalization in Fisheries; and
- Six workshops on auditing Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) and quality programs.

Next Steps

The FWG will continue to be engaged in the long-term fisheries trade study project that analyzes sectoral trade issues over a period of four years, covering tariffs, non-tariff measures, investment measures, and subsidies. The FWG will undertake an economic analysis of the impact of tariffs on free trade and investment in the fisheries sector in the Asia-Pacific region. The FWG will also discuss issues relating to aquaculture and study the impact of longline fishing.

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Human Resources Development

Established in 1990, the Human Resources Development Working Group (HRDWG) covers a broad range of human resources development issues from basic education to industrial training to leadership and management for SMEs. Human Resources Development (HRD) is a priority issue in APEC — one of the APEC Economic Leaders' six priorities — and the HRDWG has a special role in furthering that priority.

There are five main areas of work undertaken by the HRDWG, each of which is managed by an HRD subgroup. The Business Management Network focuses on executive education and development. The Economic Development Management Network promotes the utilization of human resources in economic development. The Industrial Technology Network focuses on mutual recognition of professional standards, the provision of practical skills and the sharing of best practices on technical issues. The Education Forum focuses on how education systems in the APEC region prepare people for the needs of rapidly changing labor markets. Finally Labor Market Information serves as a forum for the exchange of information on labor market trends in the APEC region.

A Youth Network was formed in May 1997 to establish a network of young people in APEC economies to work together to create an electronic sourcebook/website on work, study and exchange opportunities in the APEC region.

Themes in which the HRDWG has had a special interest recently, but which also relate to matters dealt with by other APEC fora, include: HRD for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), HRD for Sustainable Development, and Lifelong Learning.

Business and Private Sector Participation

A small number of individual firms and trade associations attend HRDWG meetings, including those of subsidiary networks, as part of member economies' delegations. Direct participation of the business sector centers on discussion of projects at network level. The business community has been involved in HRD events such as seminars and training programs, and has provided funding for some of these.

Achievements

The HRDWG, being one of the largest APEC Working Groups, has been involved in more than 80 projects to date, including centrally and self-funded projects. In addition, in 1997 it:

- Prepared the *Statement of Medium Term Priorities for the APEC HRDWG*; and
- Completed an Organizational Review of its mandate, priorities, and structure.

Next Steps

During 1998 the HRDWG will concentrate on more focused discussion, better coordination between HRD and other APEC fora, greater participation by youth, women and the business and private sector, better dissemination of project outcomes and results, and discussion of policy implications of projects implemented. The HRD Working Group will do follow-up work from the decisions of the Second HRD Ministerial Meeting in Seoul in September 1997.

The HRDWG will implement 38 projects in 1998, including ones with the following titles:

- APEC Chief Human Resources Officers' Network
- Examining How Workplace Safety and Health Contribute to Productivity (Phase1)
- Gender and Life long Learning: New Women Development in the Asia-Pacific for the 21st century
- Global Advantages through People: Human Resources Management Policies and Practices in APEC Economies
- Human Resources Management for cleaner Production Needs in APEC
- Internet and electronic Commerce: Training in Java Base Technology for APEC Economies
- Linkages between Paid and Unpaid Work in Formulating HRD Policies
- SME Companies International Technology Conference – MITEC '98
- Symposium on Overcoming Bottlenecks: Free and Open Labour Markets
- Trade and Investment Insurance Training Program '98
- APEC Youth Skills Camp
- Vocational Training Project in Cooperation with Enterprises

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Industrial Science and Technology

The Industrial Science and Technology Working Group (ISTWG) was formed at the APEC Ministerial Meeting in Singapore in 1990 as the Working Group on Expansion of Investment and Technology Transfer. It has changed its name several times since then. The working group operates within the formal framework of APEC and the policy directions set by Leaders, and is guided by statements of APEC Ministers responsible for science and technology.

The ISTWG's work program is based on the working group's vision for the twenty-first century of a dynamic and prosperous Asia-Pacific region built on the development and application of industrial science and technology that improves the quality of life while safeguarding the natural environment related to sustainable development.

The Working Group has the following key priorities: improved flows of technological information and technology; improved researcher exchange and human resources development in the field of industrial science and technology (IST); facilitation of joint research projects among APEC member economies; improved transparency of regulatory frameworks; contribution to sustainable development through environmentally friendly technologies; and enhanced policy dialogue and review by the ISTWG.

Business and Private Sector Participation

Business representatives do not usually participate in the ISTWG meetings. However, there has been active business and private sector involvement in activities such as 'Technomart' held in Chinese Taipei (1998), and the inaugural meeting of the APEC Science and Technology Industrial Parks Network in Beijing (1997). The business and private sector is encouraged to participate in the ISTWG activities.

Achievements

The ISTWG issued the *ISTWG Handbook for Members* to ensure that its members are well briefed and that the group is effectively organized. The Handbook describes the current aims, policies, procedures, and practices of the group.

In addition to conducting a series of seminars, symposia and workshops, the ISTWG has completed several projects, including:

- 'Technomart';
- A study on available industrial science and technology indicators;
- A survey of relevant laws and regulations of APEC members governing trade and investment-related technology;
- Publication of various guide books on ISTWG-related matters including *APEC Emerging Infections* and *APEC Network of Science and Technology Industrial Parks*.

The ISTWG has created and will maintain the 'APEC Science and Technology Web' (AST Web) among member economies. The AST Web is on the Internet at <http://www.apecst.org>

Next Steps

Several ISTWG projects are ongoing and will deliver outcomes in 1998. The continuing projects include Cleaner Production/Clear Technology Strategy; Gender and Science and Technology; and Asia-Pacific Youth Festival on Science and Technology.

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Marine Resource Conservation

The Marine Resource Conservation Working Group (MRC) was launched in 1990. The objective of the working group is to promote initiatives in the APEC region which will protect the marine environment and its resources and ensure continuing socioeconomic benefits through maintenance of marine environmental quality.

Business and Private Sector Participation

The *APEC Action Plan for Sustainability of the Marine Environment*, which was endorsed by the Environment Ministers (June 1997), will rely on significant participation from the business and private sector in meeting its objectives. Several new project proposals for 1998 have significant business and private sector involvement as sponsors or co-sponsors, which is a new development for this forum. An informal task force will examine possible guidelines for business and private sector participation to identify areas where this sector can contribute, as well as the mechanisms for its involvement.

Achievements

During 1997 the Working Group, among other things:

- Prepared an *APEC Action Plan for Sustainability of the Marine Environment* that identifies concrete actions to put the Strategy into practice. The Action Plan is built around three objectives identified in the Strategy: integrated approaches to coastal management; prevention, reduction and control of marine pollution; and sustainable management of marine resources.
- Assessed integrated coastal management approaches in APEC on regional, domestic and local scales. Among the resulting initiatives from this assessment were the

Ocean Model and Information System (OMISAR) project, which coordinates model development; collects, analyses and disseminates ocean information; and transfers skills and modelling technologies, and the launch of a new Ocean Research Network for the Pacific (ORNEP).

- Held an APEC Workshop on the Impact of Destructive Fishing Practices on the Marine Environment to address the issues of: destructive fishing practices, protection of the coral reef environment, promotion of environmentally-friendly fishing practices, and legislation, enforcement and management strategies.

Next Steps

During 1998 the MRC will:

- seek input from other APEC fora with respect to their concerns and commitments in the implementation of the *Action Plan for Sustainability of the Marine Environment*. Implementation of the *Action Plan* will support APEC Leaders' priorities with respect to the marine environment, including promoting environmentally sustainable growth, harnessing technologies for the future, and developing human capital.
- promote coordinated development of APEC's marine-related networks (OMISAR, ORNEP, the Sustainable Development Training and Information Network, and the EduNet Integrated Coastal Management network). Such coordination will facilitate the exchange of information to support decision-makers, and the implementation of joint research and monitoring programs to sustain and conserve marine resources.
- hold workshops on ocean information and data exchange; decommissioning of offshore oil and gas platforms; regional implementation of the *Global Plan of Action for Land-based Sources of Pollution*, and prevention of maritime accidents and pollution.

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Telecommunications

The APEC Telecommunications Working Group (TEL) had its origins at the Senior Officials' Meeting in 1990. Under its first 'shepherd', the United States, the Group was charged to address human resources development; technology transfer and regional cooperation; opportunities for on-site visits, observerships and fellowships; and telecommunications standardization.

TEL activities are consistent with specific goals set out by APEC economic leaders in the 1994 *Bogor Declaration*. The work of the TEL is accomplished by four steering groups, which propose, implement and monitor projects and activities to advance the overall goals of APEC. Each steering group addresses a specific priority area. They are the Liberalization Steering Group; the Business Facilitation Steering Group; the Development Cooperation Steering Group; and the Human Resource Development Steering Group.

APEC Ministers responsible for the Telecommunications and Information Industry have met twice to review the work of the TEL, and to provide direction for the development of the Asia-Pacific Information Infrastructure (APII) project. At their first meeting in Seoul, Korea, in 1995, Ministers agreed on the objectives and ten core principles for the APII which are contained in the *Seoul Declaration*. At the second Ministerial meeting, held in Queensland, Australia, in 1996, Ministers made the *Gold Coast Declaration* which contained a Program for Action for the Telecommunications and Information sector in APEC economies. The Program for Action focuses on continuing liberalization efforts. The *Gold Coast* and the *Seoul Declarations* are available on the Internet at <http://www.dca.gov.au/apec/mtgdocs.html>

Business and Private Sector Participation

The business and private sector from many APEC member economies is actively involved in TEL activities, including all four TEL Steering Groups. The drive to complete a Model Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) in telecommunications equipment has attracted significant business participation and support. Research and publications by the Steering Groups have been welcomed by businesses.

Since TEL 13 (March 1996), each meeting of the Working Group has included a Business-Government Dialogue, organized jointly with the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC), which provides an opportunity for the two sectors to engage in informal discussion on topics of mutual interest. At TEL 15, the Liberalization Steering Group accepted a PECC offer to review and report on the benefits of liberalization of Guidelines for Trade in International Value-added Network Services (IVANS) within APEC, which marks a new level of business and private sector involvement with the Working Group.

Leaders and Ministers stated at the Vancouver APEC meeting that electronic commerce is one of the most important technological breakthroughs of this decade. The TEL welcomed the proposition of PECC to have a seminar on this issue in conjunction with the 17th TEL meeting in Brunei in March 1998. The issue of business/private sector

participation in TEL activities will be further considered at the next TEL meeting in Brunei in March 1998.

Business and private sector participation in TEL meetings and activities is welcome. Individuals wishing to take part should approach the APEC TEL Point of Contact in their particular economy to discuss arrangements (see page 47 for a list of APEC offices in Member Economies).

Achievements

TEL completed more than 28 projects in 1997, including:

- Publication of the *Guide to Regulatory Environments in APEC Member Economies*.
- Creation of a pilot project for the establishment of a TEL website.

Next Steps

During 1998 the TEL will review and implement its work program for 1998. Following its 16th meeting held in Wellington, NZ in September 1997, the TEL had approximately 30 active projects and activities, 26 of which will be completed in 1998. Highlights include:

- A study by the Business Facilitation Steering Group of the legal and regulatory barriers to electronic commerce, and a major survey of the use of electronic commerce by small and medium-sized enterprises.
- Several projects to advance electronic commerce to benefit the business and private sector, and especially SMEs (awareness seminars, studies of legal and regulatory environments, interoperability tests, etc).
- Pilot projects to accelerate the development of multimedia and online services.
- Development of a Model Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Conformity Assessment for Telecommunications Equipment.
- Establishment of an APII Cooperation Centre in Korea, concentrating on advanced broadband applications testing and development.
- Establishment of the APII Technology Centre in Japan, concentrating on experimentation with advanced broadband communications networks.
- Distance learning projects and workshops and personnel exchange programs — all to develop human resources for the telecommunications and information sector.

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Tourism

The Tourism Working Group (TWG) was formed in 1991 based on the recognition that the tourism industry is of growing importance in promoting economic growth and social development in the Asia-Pacific region. The TWG brings together tourism administrators to share information, exchange views and develop areas of cooperation on trade and policies. During 1998 Malaysia will chair the TWG.

Business and Private Sector Participation

Participation by the business and private sector has been channelled through the involvement of representative travel organizations such as the Pacific Asia Travel Association, the World Travel and Tourism Council and the World Tourism Organization. The TWG plans to expand participation of the business and private sector by enlarging the number of representatives invited to attend TWG meetings.

Achievements

Since its creation in 1991, the TWG has completed more than 10 projects. Highlight of the Group's 1997 accomplishments include:

- publication of *Tourism and the Environment, Best Practices, a Tourism Training Manual for Tourism*.

The TWG made significant strides in further defining its agenda and identifying priority issues. It has compiled a comprehensive inventory of barriers to travel in the APEC region and agreed to a series of collective actions to address impediments to tourism growth. Its work program includes activities in the areas of Trade and Investment Liberalization and Facilitation and Economic and Technical Cooperation.

Next Steps

The TWG's work program will focus on four specific themes:

- Facilitation of tourism movements and removal of travel barriers, including identification of all impediments to travel movements, identification and selection of manageable impediments for possible elimination or facilitation, and promotion of the economic importance of tourism in APEC economies.
- Promotion of tourism as a means to achieve sustainable economic development focusing on best business practices.
- Human resources development in the tourism industry through standardization of skills, identification of training needs over a projected period, and promotion of best business practices.
- Exchange of tourism information which focuses on: enhancing cooperation between the public sector and the business/private sector, establishment of effective means to exchange relevant information, support to cooperative programs, and access to communication networks.

The TWG is also interested in tourism issues that involve other APEC fora, such as those related to SMEs, transportation, the environment, technology, and youth.

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Trade and Investment Data Review

The objective of the Trade and Investment Data Review Working Group (TIDWG) is to improve the comparability among APEC member economies of published data on merchandise trade, trade in services, and international investment flows. TIDWG is working to minimize the discrepancies among APEC member economies in those statistics. More comparable data will allow a clearer understanding of the process of economic progress now occurring within the region.

Business and Private Sector Participation

The business and private sector is not directly involved in the activities of the TIDWG, since TIDWG's work deals exclusively with statistical data from government sources.

Achievements

The Working Group has developed and maintained the Trade and Investment Data Database (TIDDB), which includes data on international merchandise trade, trade in services, and international investment.

Next Steps

The Working Group will progressively expand the scope of the TIDDB to incorporate trade in services and foreign direct investment data. It will explore ways to establish linkages between the TIDDB and the APEC Tariff Database that was developed by the APEC Sub-committee on Customs Procedures (SCCP). The TIDWG is preparing to publish the TIDDB data so that it can be easily accessible and available to the public.

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Trade Promotion

The Trade Promotion Working Group (TPWG) first met in Seoul in June 1990. Its objective is to contribute to sustained economic development and cooperation among member economies through trade promotion in the region. The Group's work centers on trade promotion activities, trade financing, trade skills and training, trade information, and business and private sector participation.

Business and Private Sector Participation

Business representatives attend meetings as part of member economies' delegations and have influenced, via those delegations, trade promotion plans and programs. Since 1994, participants in delegations to the TPWG from the business community have also met separately as the Business Sub-Group and reported on their deliberations to TPWG. Business also participates in trade promotion activities such as APEC Trade Fairs. TPWG encouragement of business groups to establish a network among themselves helped launch the Asia-Pacific Business-Net (APB-Net), which has held annual meetings since 1994 and organized various events. The APB-Net meetings offer an important opportunity for business to meet and create joint ventures.

Achievements

In 1997, the TPWG organized an international trade fair in Yantai, Shandong, People's Republic of China. The TPWG has also compiled trade information about member economies and is in the process of developing an Internet version of that Directory.

Next Steps

The TPWG is working to be more action-oriented and more focused, to achieve greater coordination with other working groups, and to consolidate its existing projects.

In 1998, the TPWG will encourage more business and private sector involvement in its activities generally and in TPWG's role as an information center conducive to business. The Group will do a joint project with the HRD Working Group on a 1998 version of the Trade and Investment Insurance Training Program (TILF-TIITP). The

TPWG will also finalize the APEC-Net and compilation of the *Trade Skills on Training (TSAT) Course Catalogue* (Republic of Korea).

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Transportation

The Transportation Working Group (TPTWG) fosters economic development in the Asia-Pacific region through recommendations to increase the efficiency of the regional transportation system. The vast distances which characterize the Asia-Pacific region and the dynamic growth of its economies highlight the importance of an efficient transportation system to guarantee further development.

During 1997 the lead shepherd for the TPTWG was from the United States. The lead shepherd for 1998 is Mr Suryanto of Indonesia, who will serve a two-year term.

Business and Private Sector Participation

The business and private sector is an active participant in the TPTWG. Some economies regularly include business representatives as part of their delegations. TPTWG meetings are preceded by one-day seminars on transportation topics, to which business representatives are usually invited. Business has had limited influence on TPTWG plans and programs, though individual economies consult regularly with their private sector interests.

Achievements

Highlights of the TPTWG's achievements in 1997 included:

- Reconvening the Air Services Group (Singapore, October 1997) to prepare a report that analyzes and prioritizes the options previously identified by the Group, and recommends to Transportation Ministers which options should be developed and how they should be implemented.
- Development of a maritime initiative aimed at promoting an efficient, safe, and competitive operating environment for maritime transport, with the elaboration of a mission statement as the first step.

- Establishment of maritime and road safety groups; and
- As a follow-up to the *Congestion Points Study*, establishment of an Intermodal Task Force to provide guidelines, standards, and provisional options associated with an integrated transport system in the region.

Next Steps

Priority areas of the TPTWG include safe and environment-friendly transportation systems, trade facilitation, promotion of a more competitive transportation operating environment, infrastructure development, human resources development, and new transportation technologies. Specific projects the TPTWG will complete in 1998 include:

- Publication of a best practices manual based on findings arising from the Urban Transport Forum meetings (Seoul, Korea, 1996; Chinese Taipei, September 1997).
- Publication of an inventory of Oil Spills Preparedness and Response Arrangements in the APEC region.

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Policy Level Group on Small and Medium Enterprises

As a recommendation of the first APEC Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) Ministers' Meeting held in Osaka in October 1994, the Ad Hoc Policy Level Group on SMEs (PLGSMEs) was established in February 1995. Its first meeting, held in Jakarta in April 1995, was dedicated to drafting an action program on SMEs to contribute to the APEC Action Agenda. Providing support to SMEs is a priority of the *Bogor Declaration* as an essential element for economic development. In 1996 the APEC Senior Officials approved the proposal to renew the mandate of the PLGSMEs for two more years (from April 1997 to March 1999).

The SME Ministers met in Ottawa, September 1997 and committed their economies to create business environments that will address to the special needs of SME's. Many activities related to SMEs are undertaken by the various APEC fora. The PLGSME has developed a *Framework for APEC SME Activities* for consideration by all APEC fora in

designing and implementing SME-related activities. The PLGSMEs is chaired by Malaysia in 1998.

Business and Private Sector Participation

There are diverse types of private sector participation in APEC SME activities. For example, in conjunction with each year's Ministerial meeting, an SME Business Forum and Exposition takes place. About 1,000 businesses participated in the 1997 APEC SME Business Forum and Exposition in Ottawa. There was a joint session between SME Ministers and the private sector, represented by 54 (roughly three per economy) of the participants from the Business Forum, business associations, the Women Leaders' Network and the Young Entrepreneurs' Seminar. In addition, the Women Leaders Network consisting of women entrepreneurs within the APEC region met just prior to the SME Ministerial (Ottawa 1997) to provide input on gender issues in SME activities. Various individual SME projects involve SME participation, via surveys such as in the trade-financing project; through participation in training programs; and by attending seminars and workshops.

The 1998 SME Business Forum and Exposition will be held in conjunction with the next SME Ministerial Meeting on 10-11 September 1998 in Kuala Lumpur.

Achievements

Accomplishments during 1997 included:

- Development and endorsement by SME Ministers of the *Framework for APEC SME Activities*. This will help APEC fora maximize the benefit of their activities to SMEs.
- Publication of the compendium *Helping your Business Grow: Guide for SMEs in the APEC Region*, which identifies APEC initiatives of specific utility to SMEs; it is available on the APEC homepage at <http://www.apec.org.sg>
- Work on 20 SMEPLG projects.

Next Steps

The next steps for 1998 are encapsulated in the *SME Action Plan* which was endorsed by SME Ministers in September 1997 and includes 13 PLGSME projects that will take place in 1998. These initiatives include measures proposed by APEC export credit agencies to improve access to trade financing; the creation of a distance learning training program; the establishment of certification standards for small business counsellors; and the promotion of gender-sensitive policies to improve equality for women entrepreneurs.

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Agricultural Technical Cooperation **Experts Group**

In recognition of the importance of work on agricultural technical cooperation, the Agricultural Technical Cooperation Experts Group (ATC) was established in November 1996 as a formal APEC body with a continuing role. Prior to that decision, two meetings of experts had been held. The meetings (in Chinese Taipei 1995, and Australia 1996) agreed upon a work program of joint activities to enhance agriculture's contribution to the region's economic growth and social wellbeing and developed a framework for undertaking those cooperative activities.

The ATC's work program focuses on seven priority areas: conservation and utilization of plant and animal genetic resources; research, development and extension of agricultural biotechnology; marketing, processing and distribution of agricultural products; plant and animal quarantine and pest management; cooperative development of an agricultural finance system; agricultural technology transfer and training; and sustainable agriculture.

Business and Private Sector Participation

Representatives of the business and private sector are able to participate as members of their economy's delegation and are invited to collaborate in the cooperative activities undertaken by the ATC. The ATC will continue to coordinate closely with the PECC Food and Agricultural Forum to support PECC's activities, obtain advice, and ensure that work is not duplicated.

Achievements

Highlights of the ATC's accomplishments during 1997 include:

- A workshop on Agricultural Biotechnology (Canberra, Australia, March 1997).
- A workshop on Conservation and Utilization of Plant and Animal Genetic Resources (Chinese Taipei, March 1997).
- A seminar on Agricultural Finance Systems (Chinese Taipei, March 1997).
- Development of an ATC homepage (see <http://www.dpie.gov.au/dpie/apec/atc>).
- Support for PECC's Trade Facilitation Manual (see <http://www.pecc.org> under Food and Agricultural Forum).

Next Steps

The ATC's areas of focus for the future include the establishment of new networks and databases and the organization of workshops in the priority areas set by its work program. For example, the ATC will establish an agricultural credit information network; a database to enable researchers and breeders to access information on plant and animal genetic resources; and a database for information concerning institutions in the region involved in agricultural technology transfer, training facilities, and courses. The proposed workshops will discuss biotechnology risk assessment, agricultural finance, sustainable agriculture, pest risk analysis, and plant and animal genetic resources.

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Sustainable Development

The APEC Leaders' *Economic Vision Statement* at Blake Island, Seattle in November 1993 stated, 'Our environment is improved as we protect the quality of our air, water and green spaces and manage our energy resources and renewable resources to ensure sustainable growth and provide a more secure future for our people.' This statement provides the mandate for APEC's work on sustainable development.

Ministers of the Environment met in Canada in March 1994 and adopted an *Environmental Vision Statement* and a *Framework of Principles* for integrating economic and environment issues. The APEC Economic Leaders' Declaration for Action issued during the Leaders' Meeting in Osaka in November 1995 reaffirmed the integration of environment and sustainable development into APEC activities.

The Chair in 1998 is Malaysia.

Business and Private Sector Participation

At the Environment Ministers Meeting for Sustainable Development in Toronto, Canada (June 1997), an APEC Business and Municipal Leaders' Forum on Sustainable Cities was held. The meeting attracted participants from all APEC economies and provided an opportunity for APEC business and municipal leaders to give input into the deliberations of the Environment Ministers' meeting. The three-day forum on Sustainable Cities incorporated eight workshops: air pollution, water and wastewater management, waste

management, cleaner production, public-private partnerships, privatization of environmental services, policy and regulatory reform, and financing strategies.

Achievements

The Ministerial Meeting in Toronto (9–11 June 1997) included the following outcomes:

- Ministers commended the Industrial Science and Technology (IST) Working Group on its *Cleaner Production Strategy* and the Marine Resource Conservation (MRC) Working Group for its *Action Plan on Marine Sustainability* and directed environment officials to continue to work with colleagues from other APEC fora on the commitments and activities outlined in these documents.
- Ministers endorsed a *Program of Action for Sustainable Cities*.
- APEC Senior Officials will annually review sustainable development work in APEC to coordinate activities and provide guidance to APEC fora.

Next Steps

Senior Environment Officials will meet periodically in coordination with joint fora meetings to assist in integrating the promotion of sustainable development across all APEC activities.

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TILF Special Account

At the Economic Leaders' Meeting in Osaka in 1995, the members adopted an Action Agenda for the implementation of the Bogor commitment to achieve free and open trade and investment in the Asia-Pacific region no later than the year 2020. As the member economies proceed to meet their trade and investment liberalization and facilitation commitments, their efforts are enhanced through cooperative projects supported by APEC.

While respecting the individual efforts of member economies, Japan proposed at the Osaka Leaders' Meeting in 1995 to contribute, where necessary, up to 10 billion yen to

the APEC Central Fund over the coming several years for use in appropriate cooperative projects formulated in support of trade and investment liberalization and facilitation.

Business and Private Sector Participation

The business and private sector is not directly involved in the operation of the Trade and Investment Liberalization and Facilitation (TILF) Special Account, since this is an area of budgetary administration of APEC funds.

Achievements

The SOM II in Cebu in May 1996 approved the setting up of the TILF Special Account within the APEC Central Fund from 1997. Since then, the Secretariat has coordinated with various APEC fora on project proposals under this account and worked closely with the BAC to clarify procedures for the account.

The BAC approved 26 projects for 1997 TILF funding, amounting to approximately US\$3.7 million. On 15 May 1997, Japan transferred the contribution to the TILF Special Account amounting to approximately US\$4.2 million.

Thirty proposals, totaling approximately US\$4.4 million, were submitted for 1998 TILF funding. The BAC approved 27 of the proposals, totaling about US\$3.6 million.

Next Steps

The TILF projects are required to be of good quality, demonstrate clear TILF linkage and have participation by APEC economies. The TILF linkage will be in line with the 15 areas listed in Part 1, Section C and, where appropriate, Part 2 of the *Osaka Action Agenda*. See the CTI introduction (page 1 of this Update) for a list of the 15 areas.

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Public Affairs

The Public Affairs unit at the APEC Secretariat is responsible for media and public relations, production and sale of publications, and maintenance of the APEC library. Disseminating information about APEC is essential to achieve APEC's goal of free and

open trade and investment in the region by 2010 for industrialized economies and 2020 for developing economies. Governments will only be able to implement the policies that make free trade and investment a reality if their populations support APEC and understand how its work benefits them.

Business and Private Sector Participation

Many APEC fora create publications that are specifically targeted to meet needs of the business and private sector. The Secretariat actively markets APEC publications through the various APEC business networks and the Study Centres. In addition, APEC publications are frequently sponsored by businesses. A complete list of APEC's publications and an order form are available from the Secretariat and on the APEC homepage at <http://www.apec.org.sg>

The Secretariat provides numerous briefings on APEC's work to visiting businesses and academic groups. It hosts visits to the Library, by appointment. In late 1997 APEC Senior Officials decided to make most APEC documents public. Implementation of this decision should facilitate greater business and private sector participation in all areas of APEC's work.

The Secretariat is interested in receiving your comments about APEC publications and the APEC website; please e-mail them to Ms Ann Low at aml@mail.apecsec.org.sg. In addition, recommendations from member economies about appropriate sales outlets for APEC publications could greatly enhance our outreach efforts and publication sales.

Achievements

During 1997, the APEC Secretariat published 23 books. This represented a 28 percent increase in the number of books published versus 1996, and it brought the total number of titles APEC has for sale to 124. Revenues from publication sales increased 58 percent versus 1996 due to successful marketing efforts and production of particularly relevant publications by APEC fora. One particularly popular publication is *The Congestion Points Study Phase III: Best Practices Manual and Technical Report*, which identifies common transportation problems faced by APEC economies and serves as a basis for measurement to reduce bottlenecks in the region.

Other achievements in the Public Affairs area during 1997 included: development of an outreach strategy for media and public relations; compilation of an inventory of APEC publications and implementation of procedures to manage that inventory; a survey of APEC members and observers to improve the content of this publication (*Update of Activities within APEC*); a survey of journalists in member economies to make APEC's outreach efforts more targeted and cost effective; and commencement of work on redesigning the APEC website.

Next Steps

During 1998, the Secretariat will begin management of APEC publications through the use of a database. This will facilitate collection and analysis of information about publication sales, which will enhance marketing efforts. The Secretariat will implement the redesign plan for the APEC website. The new design will facilitate APEC outreach efforts by making information about APEC more accessible to Internet users.

Other important projects include: 1) development of a detailed marketing plan for APEC publications based on sales data that will be collected and advice from APEC fora about target audiences for their publications; 2) pursuit of agreements to distribute APEC publications via electronic data service providers and through book seller agreements;

and 3) establishment of an archive of public affairs information from APEC host economies to facilitate outreach efforts by member economies.

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Communications and Database System

One of the Secretariat's mandates given by the APEC Ministers is to establish direct and regular communications between the APEC Secretariat and APEC members, Lead Shepherds of Working Groups, and Committees. There is also a need to create an information repository at the APEC Secretariat to facilitate the movement and storage of APEC-related information. This information needs to be accessible to users in each member economy either in hard copy form or in electronic format.

In 1993, APEC Senior Officials approved the proposal to set up the APEC Communications and Database System (ACDS) to fulfill the communication mandate and data requirements. The whole system was fully operational in late 1994. An Internet website was set up subsequently in 1996. Now, users can access a wide range of information including the APEC calendar of events and documents from meetings (for example, the Leaders' Meetings and Ministerial Meetings) on the APEC website at <http://www.apecsec.org.sg>

Business and Private Sector Participation

The business and private sector is not involved in the communications and database system since it is developed and maintained by the APEC Secretariat.

Achievements

- All APEC members, working groups, committees and the private sector can easily communicate with the Secretariat either by fax or e-mail. Users can access selected APEC documents through the APEC Secretariat's homepage.
- The new database (*APEC Projects Database*) is now under the data entry stage and will be operational soon. This database will contain summary information of all approved APEC projects and will be a good management tool for working groups and committees.

Next Steps

The Secretariat will continue to maintain the communication system and to update the related databases to keep the data current. This will be an on-going process. The Secretariat will also implement the redesign plan for the APEC website.

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Research and Analysis

In November 1996, Ministers approved the recommendations of the Task Force on Management Issues (TFMI) concerning the Secretariat's role in Research and Analysis (R&A). The TFMI recommended that the Secretariat not develop a comprehensive R&A capability. The approach should be collaboration in R&A with APEC Study Centers and PECC. The Secretariat should coordinate, oversee and undertake, where necessary, a limited amount of R&A work, as requested and in direct support of APEC fora. The Secretariat should respond to requests for additional tasking on a case-by-case basis, after determining whether there is in-house capability or whether it should be contracted out. Ministers agreed that the TFMI's recommendations should also govern the R&A implications of the EC and CTI work.

The main objective of R&A in the Secretariat is to support APEC fora in information gathering and policy analysis, and to assist in maximizing resource collaboration and minimizing research redundancy. The scope of R&A work in the Secretariat is limited. It may encompass background information papers, literature review (including literature on APEC), current awareness of relevant regional and global developments, integration of cross-sectoral issues; synthesis of comparative studies, and analysis of policy options. These guidelines which govern the scope of R&A work performed by the Secretariat are contained in the information paper *Towards Guidelines and Priorities on Research and Analysis in APEC Secretariat* which was circulated and discussed at the Joint Fora meeting in February 1997.

Business and Private Sector Participation

In accordance with the decentralized nature of R&A, the extent of business and private sector participation in R&A is determined at the level of committees and working

groups. The APEC Secretariat does collaborative R&A work with PECC and APEC Study Centers.

Achievements

APEC has defined the mandate, objectives and scope of R&A in the Secretariat. R&A projects during 1997 included:

- Establishment of a projects database, which serves as an important management tool for R&A coordination;
- Updating APEC SMEs' profiles in general and their customs procedures and administrations in particular;
- Implementing the TILF Information Directory project;
- Liaising with PECC and APEC Study Centres; and
- Exploring the feasibility of institutional R&A linkages with several like-minded international organizations.

Next Steps

The APEC Secretariat will assist APEC fora, based on the TILF Information Directory, in facilitating R&A collaboration; and assist the BAC, based on the Projects Database, in identifying potential R&A duplication and in evaluating possible R&A collaboration to achieve optimal resource allocation. The APEC Secretariat will continue providing R&A support to APEC fora on a case-by-case basis.

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Study Centres Consortium

The APEC Study Centres were established as part of the Leaders' Initiative at the Blake Island meeting of APEC Leaders in 1993. Their purpose is to promote interdisciplinary and policy-relevant research from an independent and long-term perspective; facilitate exchanges of students and faculty among APEC economies; provide opportunities for mutually beneficial training, and foster understanding of the Asia-Pacific region through informed participation of other sectors of society.

There are now APEC Study Centres in 16 economies; the remaining two economies (Brunei and Papua New Guinea) plan to establish study centres in the near future.

The study centre concept is implemented flexibly. Each APEC member participates voluntarily in line with its needs and is responsible for managing its individual contribution, including program funding.

Business and Private Sector Participation

The Study Centres themselves represent important academic communities in their respective economies and as such the consortium is almost entirely composed of scholars. The business sector is not directly involved in the activities of the APEC Study Centres consortium.

Achievements

The Study Centres promote dialogue between government policy-makers and the academic community. The Study Centres:

- promote the study of regional economic issues and the setting up a network of research institutions and scholars working on APEC themes throughout the region.
- held their fifth annual conference in Banff, Alberta, Canada from May 22 to May 24. The conference consisted of an academic conference to feed ideas from the Study Centres into the APEC process, a business meeting, and a graduate student forum designed to encourage the next generation of scholars and leaders. There were more than 130 participants from 17 economies.
- are exploring the possibility of an APEC Reader — a collection of articles on APEC — for use by scholars and the public; the Study Centres will review existing exchange programs to identify opportunities for joint exchanges; and they will present a report to the Senior Officials' Meeting on their activities.
- presented a report to Leaders and Ministers at Vancouver in 1997 on achievements and activities.
- are continuing their unique and independent role in the APEC structure and will be open to considering adopting research work as suggested by various fora in APEC.

Next Steps

The APEC Study Centres Consortium will continue to develop its role within the APEC structure, and particularly to establish collaborative research projects as a means of strengthening networks in the region. It will work closely with the APEC Education Foundation in supporting research and education activities.

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Abbreviations

ABAC	APEC Business Advisory Council
ACDS	APEC Communications and Database System
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AFTA	ASEAN Free Trade Area
ANZCERTA	Australia New Zealand Closer Economic Relations Trade Agreement
APB-Net	Asia-Pacific Business Network
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
APII	Asia Pacific Information Infrastructure
ASEAN	Association of South-East Asian Nations
AST	APEC Science and Technology
ATC	Agricultural Technical Cooperation Experts' Group
BAC	Budget and Administrative Committee
CAP	Collective Action Plans
COW	Committee of the Whole
CTI	Committee on Trade and Investment
DMEG	Dispute Mediation Experts' Group
EC	Economic Committee
ECOTECH	Economic and Technical Cooperation
EU	European Union
EWG	Energy Working Group
FEEEP	Impact of Expanding Population and Economic Growth on Food, Energy and the Environment
FWG	Fisheries Working Group
GATS	General Agreement on Trade in Services
GOS	Group on Services
GP	Government Procurement
GPEG	Government Procurement Experts' Group
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points
HRD	Human Resources Development
HRDWG	Human Resources Development Working Group
HS Convention	Harmonised Commodity Description and Coding System
IAP	Individual Action Plan
ICC	International Chamber of Commerce
IEG	Investment Experts' Group
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
IST	Industrial Science and Technology
ISTWG	Industrial Science and Technology Working Group
IVANS	Guidelines for Trade in International Value-added Network Services
LAIA	Latin American Integration Association
LMI	Labour Market Information

MAG	Market Access Group
MFN	Most Favoured Nation
MRA	Mutual Recognition Arrangement
MRC	Marine Resource Conservation
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NTM	Non-tariff Measures
OAA	Osaka Action Agenda
OAS	Organization of American States
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OMISAR	Ocean Model and Information System
ORNEP	Ocean Research Network for the Pacific
PECC	Pacific Economic Cooperation Council
PLGSMEs	Policy Level Group on SMEs
R & A	Research and Analysis
SCCP	Sub-committee on Customs Procedures
SCSC	Sub-committee on Standards and Conformance
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
SOM	Senior Officials' Meeting
SPF	South Pacific Forum
SPS	Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures
TBT	Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade
TEL	Telecommunications Working Group
TFMI	Task Force on Management Issues
TIDWG	Trade and Investment Data Review Working Group
TIDDB	Trade and Investment Data Database
TIITP	Trade and Investment Insurance Training Program
TILF	Trade and Investment Liberalization and Facilitation
TPWG	Trade Promotion Working Group
TPTWG	Transportation Working Group
TRIMS	Agreement on Trade-related Investment Measures
TRIPS	Agreement on Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property
TSAT	Trade Skills on Training
TWG	Tourism Working Group
UN/EDIFACT	United Nations Rules for Electronic Data Interchange for Administration, Commerce and Transport
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UR	Uruguay Round
WCO	World Customs Organization
WG	Working Group
WGTP	Working Group on Trade Promotion
WTO	World Trade Organization

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