



**Asia-Pacific
Economic Cooperation**

2014/SOM1/004
Agenda Item: 8

APEC Secretariat's Strategic Plan (2014 - 2016)

Purpose: Consideration
Submitted by: APEC Secretariat



**First Senior Officials' Meeting
Ningbo, China
27-28 February 2014**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper describes progress to date on the APEC Secretariat's new Strategic Plan for the three years (2014 - 2016).

The Planning Process

The previous Strategic Plan was approved by SOM1 2010 and terminated in 2012.

We organized a number of internal staff sessions discussing the role of the Secretariat, our performance in delivering the last strategic plan, and the challenges ahead. Our general view is that the role of the Secretariat is heavily circumscribed by directions from Senior Officials and Ministers. Therefore the Plan has not needed radical changes. Also some of the related framework such as our existing Values Statements still look robust for the new Strategic Plan. A Steering Group was formed to draft a new Mission Statement and Strategic Objectives.

This draft was submitted to officials at CSOM as work in progress. Few comments were received. Since then we have redrafted the Plan. We have also linked it to strategic and operational satellite plans for other parts of the Secretariat (including PSU, Communications and IT).

Strategic Objectives:

The Strategic Plan principally consists of five Strategic Objectives, which reflect the continuing focus of the Secretariat on:

- Aligning APEC activities with APEC goals and priorities;
- Working to improve APEC projects;
- Communicating APEC key messages;
- Improving working on research and policy capability;
- Being an effective Secretariat.

The new Strategic Plan follows a similar structure to the previous one: it is brief and focused. It reflects the fact that the role of the Secretariat is to serve APEC goals as reflected by Senior Officials.

Recommended Action:

It is recommended that SOM:

Approve the completed APEC Secretariat Strategic Plan, 2014-2016

APEC Secretariat's Strategic Plan for 2014-2016

APEC Mission Statement

APEC is the premier Asia-Pacific economic forum. Our primary goal is to support sustainable economic growth and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region.

We are united in our drive to build a dynamic and harmonious Asia-Pacific community by championing free and open trade and investment, promoting and accelerating regional economic integration, encouraging economic and technical cooperation, enhancing human security, and facilitating a favorable and sustainable business environment. Our initiatives turn policy goals into concrete results and agreements into tangible benefits.

*2009 APEC Branding Strategy: Mission Statement
Approved at AMM 2009*

APEC Secretariat's Vision Statement

To support and facilitate the achievement of APEC's goals.

APEC Secretariat's Mission Statement

The APEC Secretariat's mission is to provide professional services that add value to the APEC process. It provides analytical and policy support, institutional coordination, central project management, technical and advisory support as well as financial management and communications, public information and stakeholder engagement. The Secretariat's work is guided by its CORE values of Community, Openness, Respect and Excellence.

APEC Secretariat's Strategic Objectives for 2014-2016

The key strategic objectives of APEC Secretariat for the years 2014 to 2016 are as follows:

OBJECTIVE 1: FORA: To align APEC activities with APEC goals and priorities.

- 1.1 Provide support to APEC economies and fora in developing, facilitating, coordinating and implementing activities and projects by advising on APEC policies and priorities as approved by Leaders, Ministers and Senior Officials.

In addition to the wide-ranging administrative support that is provided to Chairs, Lead Shepherds and APEC fora, the Secretariat teams' will play a more substantive role in advising and assisting APEC fora progress their respective work programmes. Fora will benefit from the higher quality and consistent information provided by the Secretariat.

The Program Directors' will convey effective communication of APEC policies and priorities, and the coordination and facilitation of activities conducted at the fora level. Together with Secretariat support staff, the Program Directors' work to assist fora Chairs, Lead Shepherds and members in aligning objectives and carrying out fora activities.

1.2 Monitor the progress of APEC fora's strategic and work plans.

The Secretariat will advise and assist the Committee Chairs, Convenors and Lead Shepherds to direct APEC fora develop strategic plans and annual work plans that ensure their priorities and activities are aligned with APEC's goals.

1.3 Identify cross-cutting issues and promote cross-fora communication and collaboration.

The Secretariat will continue with efforts to identify cross-cutting issues across fora and share information on key cross-cutting initiatives with fellow colleagues through seminars and presentations.

The Secretariat will undertake an assessment of synergies within the ECOTECH agenda after SOM1 2014 and provide recommendations to SCE2 2014 about gaps on cross-cutting issues that may require SCE attention or direction.

1.4 Foster multilateral and regional relationships by engaging multilateral organizations and industry partners to advance APEC's goals.

Engaging relevant industry partners and multilateral organisations at fora level would bring expertise to discussions and decision making. Accordingly, over the period of the plan, the Secretariat will continue to foster strategic multilateral and regional relationships that add value to APEC initiatives.

1.5 To assist host economies in improving efficiency of APEC meetings through a review of meetings procedures and remote participation arrangements.

The Secretariat will undertake a review of existing guidelines and update them as necessary to keep pace with current practice and developments. The Guidelines for Hosting APEC Meetings last updated in 2004 and the proposed Remote Participation System guide are examples. Other APEC guidelines and proposals will similarly be reviewed and updated with a view to improving meeting efficiency.

The Secretariat will work closely with incoming host economies to maximize meeting and working group efficiency.

OBJECTIVE 2: PROJECTS: To continually improve the design, quality, effectiveness and impact of APEC projects through project management, monitoring and evaluation systems.

2.1 Provide guidance to APEC project stakeholders on project design and processes including financial management processes, to strengthen the alignment with APEC's strategic and policy priorities.

The Secretariat will in 2014, oversee the proposed independent review of the pilot phase of Multi-year Projects (MYPs). A pilot will be undertaken to implement two project approval sessions per annum from 2014 to further improve the overall quality assessment process of APEC projects and streamline project-related systems. The outcomes of the pilot will be assessed by the Secretariat in late 2014;

2.2 Undertake capacity-building programs for project overseers and members to improve the quality and impact of projects.

The Secretariat will continue to provide targeted training and outreach programs for Project Overseers on the margins of key APEC meetings to improve the quality of projects. Follow up training on project related contracting processes will be undertaken in the second half of 2014 to address specific capacity gaps in this area. Emphasis will also be placed on conducting targeted training programs on project monitoring and evaluation in 2014.

- 2.3 Strengthen project information management systems to collate, disseminate, manage and utilise project related information.

The Secretariat will continue to review ways of improving project related processes and resources, and oversee the ongoing management of the APEC Project Database (PDB) which was developed in October 2013.

- 2.4 Undertake systematic monitoring and evaluations of APEC projects to assess the impacts of APEC activities.

The Secretariat will implement the recommendations from the consultancy on long term evaluations in line with the directions approved by BMC. This will involve amendments to project documentation and templates as well as the development of a monitoring and evaluation plan/pipeline to guide future evaluations.

The Effectiveness Grant Fund, which is a contribution by the Government of Australia, will continue to finance the full-time Project Management Specialist located within the Secretariat's Project Management Unit. Funding for consultants to undertake the review of the MYP pilot will also be supported under the Effectiveness Grant.

OBJECTIVE 3: COMMUNICATIONS: To communicate APEC's key messages, engage stakeholders and support members to build awareness and understanding of policies, and outcomes.

- 3.1 Highlight APEC's priorities, concrete benefits, success stories, decisions and real practical outcomes for the region.

Produce timely, digestible editorial content on priority APEC issues and initiatives that spotlight the progress of member economies' agenda, their significance for businesses and people in the region and how they fit with broader regional and global developments. Efforts will be made to "humanize" the issues to articulate the technical aspects of APEC's work and its practical value. These will be communicated through traditional and social communications channels and outreach opportunities.

- 3.2 Develop, optimize, expand and maintain APEC's communication tools including innovative communication that improves the efficiency of message delivery.

Take advantage of innovations to systematically inform stakeholders about APEC events, initiatives and resources, further explain their significance to promote greater awareness and coverage of APEC, and support for its agenda. This includes enhancing the APEC website, managing meeting documentation and systems, expanding social media, identifying new channels and developing toolkits for member economies to adopt and use in their communication.

- 3.3 Build a communications network to enhance stakeholder engagement.

Establish formal communications networks comprising appointed officials from member economies, stakeholders and key influencers focused on domestic engagement that follow an APEC communications roadmap and amplifies key messages. Initially, this group should include incoming host economies. Support will include wholesale resources for localization, guidelines, event coverage and training. Subject to sufficient interest and resources, these networks should expand to include all members.

- 3.4 Continually monitor, protect, harness and evaluate APEC's brand and reputation.

Oversee the management of APEC intellectual property, trademark, copyright, sponsorship and branding by ensuring compliance with APEC guidelines and policy. Technical advice and support will be provided to hosts, member economies and fora.

OBJECTIVE 4: POLICY SUPPORT UNIT: To improve the quality of APEC's deliberations and policies by providing objective and high quality research, analytical capacity and policy support capability.

- 4.1 Provide robust research and analysis to support APEC fora and members so that policy development is evidence-based, internal capacities are enhanced, and implementation of policy measures can be evaluated.

The Policy Support Unit (PSU) will: undertake in-house analytical work or commission research for consideration by APEC SOM, committees or fora; prepare documents for discussion such as policy dialogue papers for APEC committees or fora; design and implement capacity building programs; evaluate progress in implementation of policy measures; and identify and propose high level policy principles and best practices.

- 4.2 Strengthen engagement and research collaboration with international and regional organizations.

The following actions will be undertaken: identify and engage international and regional organizations whose work complement or add value to that of APEC; establish a regular channel of communications and information exchange with these organizations; and establish formal collaboration and working arrangements with these organizations.

- 4.3 Communicate policy research and analytical outcomes to key APEC stakeholders.

The PSU will build an extensive mailing list of APEC stakeholders for communication of the PSU's work; publish policy research and analytical outcomes wherein permissible; work closely with APEC Communications and Public Affairs Unit to publicize and disseminate outcomes through communications and outreach activities targeted at key stakeholders; and participate in relevant events and meetings to increase the awareness and profile of APEC and the PSU's work.

OBJECTIVE 5: INTERNAL: To become an effective Secretariat through accountable, effective and efficient use of people, infrastructure and financial resources.

- 5.1 Manage internal resources effectively and cost-efficiently, as well as strengthen processes to ensure alignment with business needs.

A broad range of reforms will be implemented to increase the Secretariat's responsiveness to APEC Leaders' and business requirements, as well as to enhance the environment for staff through a more participatory, transparent and inclusive approach to management, staff development and corporate learning. The Secretariat will develop these capabilities internally and through assistance from the US APEC Technical Assistance to Advance Regional Integration (US-ATAARI) or other donors.

- 5.2 Ensure record management systems safeguard institutional memory.

The Secretariat's Record Management System will be enhanced to keep pace with technological improvements in order to safeguard institutional memory and maintain the integrity of both paper and electronic records residing in archives and the shared "M" drive respectively. Improvements to the Intranet and the APEC Information and Management Portal (AIMP) will also be made to enable efficient use and access to information by relevant stakeholders.

- 5.3 Refine procurement procedures and asset management system to meet best practices.

The Secretariat's Administration team will continue to strengthen as well as streamline its processes for procurement procedures and the asset management system through the development of electronic systems that adopt best practice budgetary and monitoring capabilities.

- 5.4 Strengthen human resource processes relating to recruitment, appointment, development and training.

The Administration's Human Resource function will strengthen the HR processes relating to recruitment and appointment; induction programs for new staff; performance appraisals; and HR development in terms of providing staff members with training opportunities to obtain competencies in skillsets, aptitudes, performance levels and personal qualities for them to realize their maximum potential and make valuable contributions to the Secretariat.

- 5.5 Provide secure information technology services that meet the needs of internal and external stakeholders.

Between 2014 and 2016, the Information Technology (IT) team will maintain and improve stability, security and performance of systems under its purview. The IT team will also continue to explore ways to improve IT cost-efficiency of all systems under its care through resource consolidation, automation of work processes, facilitating the Remote Participation facility to fora, and upgrading information systems to support Secretariat staff in their delivery of principal and supportive services.

- 5.6 Continually improve the financial management system to promote accountability, transparency, effectiveness and efficiency.

Between 2014 and 2016, the Finance team will continue to develop and maintain a sound financial management system to meet BMC directives and standards for fiduciary performance. In this regard, the Secretariat will take forward further work on the financial realignment exercise, which is a substantial work program to promote transparency in APEC financial management, strengthen the governance of the APEC Secretariat, support the stability of the APEC financial system, and promote predictability and sustainability of APEC project funding.