



**Asia-Pacific
Economic Cooperation**

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**28th APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting 2021 –
Annex: Aotearoa Plan of Action**



**28th APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting
12 November 2021**



AOTEAROA

Plan of Action



Asia-Pacific
Economic Cooperation



NEW ZEALAND
APEC 2021

Aotearoa Plan of Action

A plan for implementing the Putrajaya Vision 2040

Our vision is an open, dynamic, resilient and peaceful Asia-Pacific community by 2040, for the prosperity of all our people and future generations.

In implementing the Putrajaya Vision 2040, economies will build on APEC's founding documents, including the 1994 Bogor Goals and the 1995 Osaka Action Agenda. APEC economies remain committed to APEC's mission and its voluntary, non-binding, consensus-building principles, and APEC economies will advance the APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040 with a spirit of equal partnership, shared responsibility, mutual respect, common interest, and common benefit.

This Aotearoa Plan of Action sets out individual and collective actions towards achieving our Vision, along with how we will evaluate our progress. Economies will review and adapt the Aotearoa Plan of Action over time to ensure it remains comprehensive, balanced and relevant across all elements of our Vision. It is intended to be a living document. This Aotearoa Plan of Action does not preclude other APEC work to implement the APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040.

Three Economic Drivers

Trade and Investment:

Objective: "To ensure that the Asia-Pacific remains the world's most dynamic and interconnected regional economy, we acknowledge the importance of, and will continue to work together to deliver, a free, open, fair, non-discriminatory, transparent and predictable trade and investment environment."

- Evaluation of progress: APEC's trade and investment environment is free, open, fair, non-discriminatory, transparent and predictable.
- Individual Actions: Economies will take actions to liberalise trade and investment in a manner that it is free, open, fair, non-discriminatory, transparent and predictable.
- Collective Actions: Economies will:
 - Progress liberalisation of trade in goods by reducing unnecessary barriers, strengthening trade facilitation, and fostering regulatory reform;
 - Progress services liberalisation, facilitation and cooperation, including by implementing the APEC Services Competitiveness Roadmap;
 - Promote the flow of quality investment through steps such as work on investment facilitation and liberalisation;
 - Promote adequate and effective protection and enforcement of intellectual property, including by providing capacity building, particularly to spur economic development and innovation; and
 - Increase trade predictability and openness by improving economies' transparency through trade measures and policies.

Objective: "We reaffirm our support for agreed upon rules of the WTO in delivering a well-functioning multilateral trading system and promoting the stability and predictability of international trade flows"

- Evaluation of progress: Growth of international trade flows in the region become more stable and predictable including with increased coverage of WTO rules, through APEC members' effective and transparent implementation of existing and future commitments.
- Individual Actions: Economies will implement their WTO commitments. Where appropriate, economies will also seek to accelerate their implementation, go beyond them, and work on ways to further promote the stability and predictability of trade flows.

- Collective Actions: Economies will:
 - Support APEC's role as an incubator of ideas by advancing new approaches that help deliver a well-functioning multilateral trading system, with the WTO at its core;
 - Support progress of negotiations at the WTO to deliver a trade and investment environment that is free, open, fair, non-discriminatory, transparent and predictable;
 - Support implementation of WTO disciplines arising from negotiations, including in prospective areas such as harmful fisheries subsidies, and agriculture negotiations;
 - Encourage, as appropriate, WTO members' discussions towards necessary reform of the WTO across all its functions; and
 - Advance capacity building programmes to support the implementation of and adherence to WTO rules, including transparency and notification obligations.

Objective: "We will further advance the Bogor Goals and economic integration in the region in a manner that is market-driven, including through the work on the Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP) agenda which contributes to high standard and comprehensive regional undertakings."

- Evaluation of progress: Economic integration occurs in the region by advancing the unfinished business of the Bogor Goals in a manner that is market-driven and through the development of high standard and comprehensive regional undertakings.
- Individual Actions: Economies will continue to support ongoing efforts to conclude, ratify, implement and upgrade high standard and comprehensive trade agreements as appropriate.
- Collective Actions: Economies will:
 - Complete the unfinished business of the Bogor Goals and further deepen economic integration in the region in a manner that is market-driven;
 - Effectively advance efforts on the Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP) agenda, consistent with the Lima Declaration;
 - Strengthen APEC's key role as an incubator of ideas on trade and investment issues in the region;
 - Advance capacity building programmes and cooperate on best practice for the development of and participation in high standard regional undertakings; and
 - Carry out discussions on, and studies into, areas of convergence and divergence across all chapters of trade agreements in the region that contribute to high standard and comprehensive undertakings.

Objective: "We will promote seamless connectivity, resilient supply chains and responsible business conduct."

- Evaluation of progress: To promote seamless connectivity, resilient supply chains and responsible business conduct, APEC economies will improve physical, institutional and people-to-people connectivity.
- Individual Actions: Economies will develop tools and adopt policies that foster seamless connectivity, resilient supply chains and responsible business conduct.
- Collective Actions: Economies will:
 - Implement APEC's Connectivity Blueprint, including by strengthening connectivity and resilient supply chains within APEC, and by cooperating to equip businesses to better understand their supply chains;
 - Promote trade and investment facilitation for all, including by:
 - i. fully implementing the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, and seeking to build on it where appropriate;
 - ii. working towards digitalising border processes facilitated by application of internationally recognised standards, strengthening customs cooperation and increasing port cooperation; and
 - iii. the adoption and improvement of effective standards and conformance systems, encompassing standardisation, accreditation, metrology, conformity assessment and market surveillance;
 - Address key infrastructure gaps and enhance connectivity by creating transparent regulatory environments, promoting dialogue, and sharing best practices that enable quality infrastructure development and investment, which remains accessible, sustainable and affordable with respect to life-cycle costs;
 - Improve digital connectivity in the region;
 - Promote and cooperate on measures that facilitate the safe cross-border movement of people, particularly in the context of changing pandemic related health and travel measures, so as to strengthen tourism, aviation and similarly affected sectors;
 - Strengthen multi-stakeholder cooperation to promote responsible business conduct, particularly with the private sector; and
 - Promote capacity building to improve physical, institutional and people-to-people connectivity.

Innovation and Digitalisation:

Objective: "We will pursue structural reforms and sound economic policies to promote innovation as well as improve productivity and dynamism."

Macro-economic policies:

- Evaluation of progress: Growth in the region is based on a stable, sustainable and resilient macro-economic environment for all.
- Individual Actions: Economies will seek continued improvement in the resilience and sustainability of their macro-economic policies, particularly fiscal and monetary policies.
- Collective Actions: Economies will:
 - Promote macro-economic policies, including sound fiscal and monetary policies that are calibrated to combat the negative macro-economic impact of global pandemics such as COVID-19, support recovery, and contribute to future growth through:
 - i. sharing information and best practice;
 - ii. promoting good regulatory practices and regulatory cooperation; and
 - iii. building capacity to support implementation of commitments, including through the Cebu Action Plan;
 - Improve fiscal sustainability and transparency to support long-term resilient development and future financing needs; and
 - Collaborate across relevant APEC fora on such issues related to macro-economic policies, including services and the digital economy.

Structural reform:

- Evaluation of progress: The region sustains positive productivity growth, fostered by continuous growth in innovation.
- Individual Actions: Economies will focus their reform efforts on those areas of the economy that have the greatest potential to drive increases in productivity and innovation.
- Collective Actions: Economies will:
 - Advance future APEC initiatives on structural reform under the four pillars of the Enhanced APEC Agenda for Structural Reform (EAASR), including through:
 - i. sharing information and best practice;
 - ii. promoting good regulatory practices and regulatory cooperation; and
 - iii. building capacity to support implementation of EAASR commitments; and
 - Collaborate across relevant APEC fora on issues related to structural reform, including services and the digital economy.

Objective: "To empower all our people and businesses to participate and grow in an interconnected global economy, we will foster an enabling environment that is, among others, market-driven and supported by digital economy and innovation."

- Evaluation of progress: APEC's digital and innovation environment is market-driven and increasingly connected globally, including through the promotion of interoperability, allowing all APEC people and businesses to achieve increased participation in, and benefit from, innovation and the digital economy.
- Individual Actions: Economies will strengthen efforts to foster an enabling environment, including by promoting regulatory and non-regulatory approaches that are coherent, interoperable, non-discriminatory, and that foster competition as well as promote innovation.
- Collective Actions: Economies will:
 - Identify ways to support resilience and recovery by utilising science, technology and innovation systems, including through capacity building;
 - Adopt new and emerging technologies to stimulate growth, connectivity and digital transformation;
 - Share best practice, and promote approaches for a digital economy that fosters competition and promotes innovation;
 - Address challenges and barriers to achieving an enabling, inclusive, open, fair and non-discriminatory digital and innovation environment;
 - Collaborate to develop an innovative digital business environment, including through frameworks and understandings on best practice that encourage the development, application, uptake and management of new technologies;
 - Deepen APEC's multi-stakeholder engagement and collaboration on digital issues, especially with business;
 - Promote measures, interoperable approaches, and the use of digital technologies to facilitate trade and investment;
 - Promote ecosystems that support MSMEs, including those in the creative industry, to take advantage of the digital economy; and
 - Support the identification and integration of new and emerging sustainable transportation and mobility technologies and services.

Objective: "We will strengthen digital infrastructure, accelerate digital transformation, narrow the digital divide, as well as cooperate on facilitating the flow of data and strengthening consumer and business trust in digital transactions."

- Evaluation of progress: The region improves digital connectivity among economies, businesses and people including by enhancing trust and security in the use of ICTs, accessibility and affordability of digital infrastructure in the region, broadening participation in the digital economy, and cooperating on facilitating the flow of data and strengthening consumer and business trust in digital transactions.
- Individual Actions: Economies will strengthen their digital infrastructure, accelerate digital transformation, narrow the digital divide, work on facilitating the flow of data, and strengthen consumer and business trust in digital transactions.
- Collective Actions: Economies will:
 - Accelerate APEC work and capacity building on the digital economy, including by prompt and effective implementation of APEC's Internet and Digital Economy Roadmap;
 - Cooperate on measures to address the digital divide, including facilitating access to digital infrastructure and supporting development of digital skills and digital literacy;
 - Cooperate to accelerate digital transformation, including by supporting the digitalisation of industries such as services, manufacturing and agriculture;
 - Promote e-commerce / digital trade, including by supporting the development and implementation of international and regional norms and standards for the digital economy, compatibility of standards, regulations and systems, and supporting discussion and sharing best practice on rules and regulations in e-commerce / digital trade;
 - Cooperate on facilitating the flow of data and strengthening consumer and business trust in digital transactions;
 - Cooperate on the provision of consumer protection in the digital environment;
 - Promote cost-effective mechanisms that support cross-border business-to-business engagement, including through electronic transactions and dispute resolution including under the APEC Collaborative Framework for Online Dispute Resolution of Cross Border Business-to-Business Disputes; and
 - Stimulate practical application of digital technologies for inclusive and sustainable growth in such areas as trade, finance, public services and healthcare.

Strong, Balanced, Secure, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth:

Objective: "To ensure that the Asia-Pacific region is resilient to shocks, crises, pandemics and other emergencies, we will foster quality growth that brings palpable benefits and greater health and wellbeing to all, including MSMEs, women and others with untapped economic potential."

- Evaluation of progress: APEC's growth is high quality and inclusive, bringing palpable benefits and greater health and wellbeing to MSMEs, women and others with untapped economic potential.
- Individual Actions: Economies will adopt and strengthen regulatory approaches, sound public sector governance, and take other measures that support economic inclusion, greater health, wellbeing and resilience for all.
- Collective Actions: Economies will:
 - Build on APEC's Agenda on Advancing Economic, Financial and Social Inclusion to enhance economic inclusion for all, including by:
 - i. Advancing inclusive policies, including under the economic drivers of trade and investment, and innovation and digitalisation, to promote sustainable economic growth opportunities and improve quality of life for all members of society;
 - ii. Advancing gender equality and the economic empowerment of women, particularly through accelerating the full implementation of the actions in the La Serena Roadmap for Women and Inclusive Growth and building on them;
 - iii. Promoting start-ups and advancing MSMEs' access to finance, global markets, and global value chains as well as assisting in building their capacity to effectively participate in the wider economy;
 - iv. Building on APEC's work on supporting MSMEs' and women's economic empowerment, and cooperate to further develop APEC's work on other groups with untapped economic potential, such as indigenous peoples as appropriate, people with disabilities, and those from remote and rural communities;
 - v. Promoting economic and technical cooperation to enhance capacity building and inclusive economic participation; and
 - vi. Sharing experiences and best practice to promote inclusiveness and quality of life, including through: promoting structural reform to remove barriers to economic participation; encouraging the transition of economic actors from the informal to the formal economy; and data analysis.

- Enable quality and equitable health access and outcomes for all with a view to achieving universal health coverage, including by strengthening health systems, by cooperating on:
 - i. preventing, detecting, responding to, and recovering from, pandemics;
 - ii. accelerating equitable access to safe, effective, quality-assured, and affordable vaccines for all;
 - iii. supporting the safe, secure and efficient operation of resilient health related supply chains; and
 - iv. the use of digital technologies that foster health system innovation, such as telemedicine and digital health;
- Ensure lasting food security, food safety and improved nutrition for all, as well as reducing food waste and loss in the region by promoting agricultural and food trade, agricultural sustainability and innovation, and implementing the Food Security Roadmap Towards 2030; and
- Enhance cooperation to foster secure growth, including by implementing the APEC Beijing Declaration on Fighting Corruption, Santiago Commitment to Fight Corruption and Ensure Transparency, and the APEC Consolidated Counter-Terrorism and Secure Trade Strategy.

***Objective:** "We will intensify inclusive human resource development as well as economic and technical cooperation to better equip our people with the skills and knowledge for the future."*

- Evaluation of progress: All our people are well equipped with the skills and knowledge they need to adapt and thrive now and in the future.
- Individual Actions: Economies will implement policies to ensure equity and inclusion in education and human resource development, including life-long skills development and social protection measures, to provide for widespread participation in the digital economy, inclusive labour markets, and to support swift recovery from economic shocks.
- Collective Actions: Economies will:
 - Innovate and exchange expertise on skills and human resource development, and cooperate on sharing lessons and best practice in these areas;
 - Cooperate to improve the collection and analysis of skills and labour market data sets, including to better assess and bridge skills gaps and mismatches between skills and employment;
 - Strengthen economic and technical cooperation to intensify capacity building in inclusive human resource development;
 - Cooperate on the development of skills and literacy for all to accelerate the digital transformation of the region's economy, including by implementing APEC's Education Strategy and the APEC Framework on Human Resources Development in the Digital Age; and
 - Build on existing APEC work on mutual recognition of qualifications to deepen and widen its coverage.

Objective: "We will promote economic policies, cooperation and growth, which will support global efforts to comprehensively address all environmental challenges, including climate change, extreme weather and natural disasters, for a sustainable planet."

- Evaluation of progress: APEC's growth and prosperity is achieved on an increasingly environmentally sustainable basis.
- Individual Actions: Economies, will implement policies consistent with their international obligations to advance environmentally sustainable and resilient growth, including by contributing to meeting APEC goals.
- Collective Actions: Economies will:
 - Cooperate in relevant APEC fora to develop, encourage and exchange best practice policies, and promote capacity building programmes, that address all environmental challenges - including climate change - and support sustainable growth, such as through:
 - i. structural reform;
 - ii. trade, including APEC's work on facilitation of trade in environmental goods and services;
 - iii. public finance, including tax policy and rationalising and phasing out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption, while recognising the importance of providing those in need with essential energy services;
 - iv. sustainable infrastructure and transport;
 - v. promoting sustainable growth across sectors and the development of cost effective low and zero emissions technologies, sustainable finance and, if appropriate, carbon pricing mechanisms; and
 - vi. ensuring energy security, access, reliability and resilience through energy transition.
 - Seek to deliver existing Leaders' commitments on energy issues: particularly to accelerate progress towards the 2030 target of doubling the share of renewable energy in the APEC energy mix, including in power generation, from 2010 levels by 2030; and to deliver a plan to reduce aggregate energy intensity by 45%, from 2005 levels, by 2035;
 - Work towards the sustainable resource management of agriculture, forestry and marine resources and fisheries, including by implementing the APEC Roadmaps on Marine Debris, and Combatting Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing, and commitments to combat illegal logging and associated trade;
 - Further implement the APEC Disaster Risk Reduction Framework;
 - Advance APEC's circular economy work; and
 - Advance work on sustainable tourism.

Continuous improvement of APEC as an institution

Objective: "To maintain APEC's unique position as the premier forum for regional economic cooperation as well as a modern, efficient and effective incubator of ideas, we will embrace continuous improvement of APEC as an institution through good governance and stakeholder engagements."

Consistent with our objectives to embrace continuous improvement of APEC as an institution, and to address key challenges related to good governance and stakeholder engagements, APEC will:

- Improve its governance and organisational structure, with a view to efficiently and effectively delivering upon all elements of the APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040;
- Ensure the sustainability of the staffing and resourcing of the APEC Secretariat and Policy Support Unit (PSU), while ensuring that the institution remains financially prudent;
- Explore ways to discuss the possibility of expanding APEC members and observers;
- Deepen engagement with ABAC and the private sector, as well as PECC, PIF, ASEAN, and other international and regional organisations;
- Promote engagement with a broader range of economic stakeholders, such as NGOs and civil society, to reflect the breadth of the APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040;
- Review and update APEC's relationship with the APEC Study Centre Consortium;
- Continuously improve the communication of APEC's work to the broader public; and
- Consider how to better make use of digital technologies for participation in APEC.

Review and Renewal

Objective: "We will achieve the vision by 2040, with an appropriate implementation plan and review of its progress."

Highlighting Individual Actions

By the end of 2023, each economy will have voluntarily showcased a number of their individual actions based on the options in this Aotearoa Plan of Action. Individual economies are encouraged to keep their progress on actions up-to-date and inform APEC, via the appropriate Committee, of progress every second year. APEC fora may hold discussions on these as necessary. At the time of their progress reports, economies may also add new actions and remove existing actions as appropriate.

Evaluating progress

With assistance from the PSU, APEC economies will evaluate progress towards achieving the APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040. Committees will work with the PSU to identify relevant indicators that will support this evaluation. Progress will be reported by Committees every two years through existing reporting processes. Senior Officials will also report progress on areas for continuous improvement to the APEC Ministers' Meeting every two years.

Five-year review of collective actions

To ensure the Aotearoa Plan of Action is a "living document" and remains relevant, APEC will review the collective actions and continuous improvement actions every five years, in 2026, 2031 and 2036. Collective actions will be measured in terms of APEC's progress as a whole. Existing collective actions may be renewed, revised or removed. New collective actions may be added. The collective actions for the following five-year period will be recommended to the APEC Ministerial Meeting for approval.

Mid-term review of progress and individual actions

In conjunction with the 2031 review of Collective Actions, APEC will also review the individual actions, and how we evaluate our progress towards achieving all elements of the Vision.

Fora and sub-fora terms of reference

APEC fora and sub-fora will make provision for implementing the APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040, including through this Aotearoa Plan of Action, in their terms of reference, work plans and strategic plans.