



**Asia-Pacific  
Economic Cooperation**

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**2024/SOM1/015**  
Session 3.1

## **SCE-COW Chair's Report**

Purpose: Consideration  
Submitted by: SCE-COW Chair



**First Senior Officials' Meeting**  
**Lima, Peru**  
**7-8 March 2024**

## **SCE-COW Chair's Report to SOM**

The annual meeting of the SOM Steering Committee on ECOTECH Committee of the Whole (SCE-COW) was held in Lima, Peru on 5 March 2024. Key outcomes of this meeting were as follows:

1. The SCE COW approved the work plans of 10 SCE fora (2024/SOM1/SCE-COW/022-031).
2. The SCE-COW took note of the interventions of convenors and representatives of 12 SCE fora and two pre-recorded presentations with each highlighting key fora deliverables as they aligned with APEC 2024 priorities, together with remarks from SCE members on prioritization, and cross-fora collaboration. Members also requested convenors actively participate in and contribute to the implementation of the Putrajaya Vision 2040, the Aotearoa Plan of Action, as well as other APEC priorities and initiatives.
3. The SCE-COW took note of the update by Peru on its host year priorities, deliverables, and preparations for the SCE Policy Dialogue on Understanding the Nexus Between Connectivity and Formalization in the Asia-Pacific.
4. The SCE-COW took note of the briefing by the ABAC Secretariat Executive Director on ABAC's 2023 recommendations to APEC Economic Leaders and its implications for SCE fora.
5. The SCE-COW took note of the update on the Implementation of the ECOTECH Medium-Term Priorities through the annual work plans and strategic plans of SCE fora.
6. The SCE-COW noted the update by the APEC Secretariat on APEC-funded capacity building projects.

## **Recommendations**

It is recommended that SOM:

1. Note the outcomes of the meeting.

Attachment: Summary Report of the SCE COW.

**Summary Report – SOM Steering Committee on ECOTECH – Committee of the Whole  
Meeting  
(SCE-COW)  
Lima, Peru**

5 March 2024

1. A meeting of the SOM Steering Committee on ECOTECH – Committee of the Whole (SCE-COW) was held in Lima, Peru on 5 March 2024. It was attended by representatives of 21 APEC economies, Lead Shepherds, Chairs or representatives of the Agricultural Technology Cooperation Working Group (ATCWG), Anti-Corruption and Transparency Working Group (ACTWG), Emergency Preparedness Working Group (EPWG), Energy Working Group (EWG), Experts Group on Illegal Logging and Associated Trade (EGILAT), Health Working Group (HWG), Human Resource Development Working Group (HRDWG), Oceans and Fisheries Working Group (OFWG), Policy Partnership on Science, Technology and Innovation (PPSTI), Policy Partnership for Women and the Economy (PPWE), Small and Medium Enterprises Working Group (SMEWG), Telecommunications and Information Working Group (TELWG), Tourism Working Group (TWG), ABAC and the Executive Director of the APEC Secretariat.
2. The meeting was chaired by Ms. KIM, Sunyoung, Alternate Senior Official of Korea for APEC. The Vice Chair of the meeting was Ms. Carolina Carranza of Peru.

**Welcome by the SCE Chair and Adoption of the Agenda**

3. The SCE Chair welcomed delegates to the meeting. The agenda (2024/SOM1/SCE-COW/001) was adopted with members' agreement to remove *agenda item 3.3: Communicating the APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040*, due to the absence of the presenter.

**2024 Priorities and Deliverables**

**Agenda Item 2.1: 2024 Host Year Priorities**

**Agenda Item 2.2: Policy Dialogue**

4. Peru introduced the APEC 2024 Theme of: “Empower. Include. Grow” and its priorities: Trade and investment for inclusive and interconnected growth; Innovation and digitalization to promote transition to the formal and global economy; and Sustainable growth for resilient development to SCE member and convenors.
5. Peru also identified key deliverables alongside several proposed actions for its host year. The key deliverables included taking a new look at the “Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific” (FTAAP); organizing the first APEC joint Meeting of Ministers Responsible for Trade and Ministers of Women; concluding an APEC Roadmap to promote transition to the formal and global economy; finalising APEC policy guidance to develop and implement low-carbon

hydrogen policy frameworks in the Asia-Pacific; and developing APEC Principles for preventing and reducing food loss and waste in the Asia-Pacific region, among others.

6. Peru also detailed preparations for the SCE Policy Dialogue: Understanding the Nexus between Connectivity and Formalization in the Asia Pacific on 6 March 2024. Peru underscored that the Policy Dialogue will explore approaches to accelerate APEC actions on addressing the informal economy within its economies and inform key areas and actions that could be integrated into a final “Roadmap on the transition to the formal and global economy”.
7. Peru noted that it will facilitate a series of public-private dialogues and workshops aimed to identify recommendations and best practices that could support policymakers to adopt measures to encourage the transition of informal economic actors to the formal economy, with a special focus on innovation and digitalization as tools to achieve that purpose.
8. Members thanked Peru for updating the SCE on its 2024 deliverables and priorities as well as its preparations for the SCE Policy Dialogue. Members expressed strong support for Peru’s host year and leadership and its work to advance various themes including the transition of informal economic actors to the formal economy. SCE members also signaled a strong interest in the various initiatives and events Peru has planned to advance its priorities in 2024.
9. The SCE-COW noted Peru’s presentations on its priorities, deliverables and preparations for the SCE Policy Dialogue.

### **Implementation of the Putrajaya Vision 2040 and Aotearoa Plan of Action**

#### **Agenda Item 3.1: The 2023 ABAC Report to APEC Economic Leaders**

10. ABAC briefed members on ABAC’s 2023 recommendations to APEC Economic Leaders, with special consideration for its implications for SCE fora.
11. The presentation underscored that addressing current challenges requires public and private sector coordination with ABAC’s 96 recommendations tackling issues of sustainability, equity and opportunity. ABAC noted that this includes supporting a coherent trade architecture and FTAAP pathways; a collaborative and clear response to digital technologies and AI; tailored support to bolster the participation of under-represented groups in trade and urgent action on Climate Leadership Principles, with trade as a tool for advancing climate goals.
12. Members expressed support ABAC’s recommendations and for the private sector’s focus on important thematic issues centred on equity, sustainability, and opportunity.
13. The SCE-COW noted the ABAC Secretariat Executive Director’s briefing on ABAC’s 2023 recommendations to APEC Economic Leaders and its implications for SCE fora.

#### **Agenda Item 3.3: Implementing the ECOTECH Medium-Term Priorities:**

14. The APEC Secretariat briefed members on the integration of the ECOTECH Medium-Term Priorities into SCE annual work plans as a means of supporting their achievement.

15. The SCE-COW noted that of the ten SCE sub-fora endorsed work plans submitted for approval all had identified the ECOTECH Medium-Term Priorities against which the sub-fora will seek to contribute in 2024.
16. The SCE Chair requested that the sub-fora with outstanding work plans seek to conclude the work planning exercise by the end of the first quarter of 2024.
17. Further, the APEC Secretariat updated members on SCE fora with strategic plans that are expired or expiring in 2024.
18. The SCE-COW noted the update and the presentation by the APEC Secretariat.

#### **Agenda Item 3.4: Capacity Building Projects**

19. The APEC Secretariat briefed the SCE-COW on APEC-funded capacity building projects across APEC in 2023.
20. The presentation highlighted that SCE sub-fora accounted for the majority (90) of the approved 130 Concept Notes and PPSTI followed by EWG had the highest number of approved APEC-funded projects in 2023.
21. The presentation noted a 47% increase in the number of project applications from 2022 and a commensurate increase in project funding (6.06 Million USD in 2023 from just over 5 Million USD in 2022). Similarly, the APEC Secretariat highlighted an increase in capacity building projects from 87 in 2022 to 106 in 2023.
22. The presentation included data evaluating the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of projects. The Secretariat also provided information on which priorities were most often targeted in capacity building projects with the top three identical to 2022 priorities: inclusive growth, digital economy, and sustainable growth.
23. SCE members expressed appreciation for the work SCE fora are undertaking to build capacity and to provide economic and technical assistance through the modality of APEC-funded projects and encouraged remote participation when possible. One member announced its new voluntary contribution to APEC project funding.
24. The SCE-COW noted the briefing on the status of APEC-funded capacity building projects in 2023.

#### **Fora Convenors to Highlight Cross-Fora Collaboration and Key Fora Deliverables for 2024**

25. The SCE-COW listened to the presentations from convenors and representatives of 12 SCE sub-fora as they highlighted key sub-fora deliverables aligned with the Peru's host year priorities, cross-fora initiatives, and initiatives for possible Senior Official and Minister-level consideration. Additionally, two SCE Convenors provided prerecorded addresses that were played during the meeting.

26. Members thanked convenors for joining the meeting and for their contributions to the furtherance of APEC's mission.
27. Members stressed the importance of sub-fora taking a close look at the Putrajaya Vision 2040 and Aotearoa Plan of Action's ECOTECH-related collective actions as have been identified in the SCE's ECOTECH Medium-Term Priorities.
28. Members commended SCE fora for existing areas of partnership and coordination between working groups and policy partnerships and also encouraged the sub-fora to deepen this engagement, including with ABAC and other stakeholders.
29. Members took note of working groups' commitment to incorporate host year objectives and encouraged an even greater consideration of issues of sustainability, inclusivity and digitalization.
30. The United States noted the end of the term for the convenor of the TPTWG and sought volunteers from economies for a new Lead Shepherd and to host a TPTWG meeting. The SCE Chair encouraged economies to follow-up with line ministries on support to TPTWG.
31. The SCE-COW noted the 12 presentations and two pre-recorded addresses of the 14 SCE sub-fora convenors.

#### **Agenda Item 4.2: 2024 Fora Work Plans**

32. The SCE Chair asked the SCE to approve ten (10) sub-fora work plans of the following: ATCWG; EPWG; EWG; EGILAT; HWG; HRDWG; PPSTI; SMEWG; TELWG; TWG. The work plans of ACTWG; OFWG; PPWE; and TPTWG will be circulated to members intersessionally for endorsement. The SCE-COW endorsed the ten work plans submitted for consideration.

2024/SOM1/SCE-COW/022 ATCWG Work Plan  
2024/SOM1/SCE-COW/023 EPWG Work Plan  
2024/SOM1/SCE-COW/024 EWG Work Plan  
2024/SOM1/SCE-COW/025 EGILAT Work Plan  
2024/SOM1/SCE-COW/026 HWG Work Plan  
2024/SOM1/SCE-COW/027 HRDWG Work Plan  
2024/SOM1/SCE-COW/028 PPSTI Work Plan  
2024/SOM1/SCE-COW/029 SMEWG Work Plan  
2024/SOM1/SCE-COW/030 TELWG Work Plan  
2024/SOM1/SCE-COW/031 TWG Work Plan

#### **Agenda Item 7: Other Business**

33. There was no other business.

#### **Agenda Item 8: Document Access**

34. The following items were moved from restricted to public after being endorsed by the SCE.

2024/SOM1/SCE-COW/022 ATCWG Work Plan  
2024/SOM1/SCE-COW/023 EPWG Work Plan  
2024/SOM1/SCE-COW/024 EWG Work Plan  
2024/SOM1/SCE-COW/025 EGILAT Work Plan  
2024/SOM1/SCE-COW/026 HWG Work Plan  
2024/SOM1/SCE-COW/027 HRDWG Work Plan  
2024/SOM1/SCE-COW/028 PPSTI Work Plan  
2024/SOM1/SCE-COW/029 SMEWG Work Plan  
2024/SOM1/SCE-COW/030 TELWG Work Plan  
2024/SOM1/SCE-COW/031 TWG Work Plan

35. The SCE-COW approved the document classification list as amended.

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