

APEC Framework for Capacity Building Initiatives on Emergency Preparedness

Recalling the commitment made in Vancouver, November 1997, for an APEC value-added role to strengthen cooperative efforts for ensuring an integrated approach to dealing with emergency preparedness in the region;

Acknowledging the challenge to sustainable growth and sustainable infrastructure development posed by natural disasters which continue to affect the region;

Recognizing that unexpected, large-scale, natural disasters which affect one of us can affect all of us in the community, and that we can benefit from shared expertise and collaboration on emergency preparedness activities;

Desiring to safeguard the basic needs, including health and quality of life, of all people in the APEC community through developing effective preparedness capabilities to reduce the human and property recovery costs of emergencies and facilitate post-disaster rehabilitation and reconstruction:

SCOPE

APEC members agree to cooperate in areas of mutual benefit and interest to promote improved emergency preparedness in the APEC region in relation to natural disasters: including floods, droughts, earthquakes, bush or forest fires, tidal waves, cyclones, tornados, and emerging infectious diseases.

OBJECTIVE

We agree on the need for cooperation to enhance preventive and responsive measures for natural disasters through improved information sharing and capacity building among APEC member economies.

ACTIVITY

Joint activities and programs to strengthen economic and technical cooperation on emergency preparedness may include the following:

- projects to improve capacity building in emergency preparedness through training courses and exchange of personnel;
- seminars and trade exhibitions;
- improved access to emergency preparedness information through development of an Internet website to facilitate information exchange;
- sharing of best practice information on advance monitoring systems and legislative frameworks;

- ongoing dialogue with relevant international, regional and sub-regional organizations to maximize use of existing activities and avoid duplication of effort;
- engaging with local communities, including volunteer emergency response organizations, scientific research institutions, and businesses involved in emergency preparedness services, technology and equipment.

COMMON UNDERSTANDING

Recalling the guiding principles for APEC economic and technical cooperation concerning mutual respect and equality, mutual benefit and assistance, constructive and genuine partnership, and consensus building, we acknowledge the diversity of the region as well as the desire for a basis of common understanding for cross-border cooperation on emergency preparedness activities. In this context, we recognize:

- There is a shared responsibility for both the public and private sectors in preparedness activities to anticipate emergencies, with the responsibility for action vested at the level most affected.
- APEC activities and projects should complement the structures and procedures of existing organizations which are active in the area of emergency preparedness.
- Flexibility and adaptability are key to emergency preparedness activities. When generic techniques of preparedness / capacity building initiatives are being shared, proposals should recognize local conditions.

IMPLEMENTATION

To ensure a multi-disciplinary approach, APEC Senior Officials should be tasked as the point of guidance and coordination for all APEC fora activity related to emergency preparedness.
