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APEC SENIOR OFFICIALS' REPORT 2026

Economic and Technical Cooperation



2026 APEC SENIOR OFFICIALS' REPORT ON ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION

SOM Steering Committee on Economic and Technical Cooperation

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Letter from the SCE Chair

On behalf of the SOM Steering Committee on Economic and Technical Cooperation, I am pleased to submit the 2026 Senior Officials' Report on Economic and Technical Cooperation.

The Report highlights the progress made by APEC economies during 2026 in supporting the implementation of the APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040, including through the Aotearoa Plan of Action, and the ECOTECH Medium-Term Priorities.

Guided by the APEC China 2026 theme, "Building an Asia-Pacific Community to Prosper Together," and its priorities, the SCE and its sub-fora have contributed to advancing APEC's work across nine sectoral ministerial meetings and high-level forums and pursued initiatives spanning digital transformation, energy, forestry, food security, transportation, tourism, human resources, MSMEs, women's economic empowerment and other areas of regional cooperation.

Innovation emerged as an increasingly prominent feature of this work. The growing application of digital technologies, smart infrastructure and new approaches to skills and productivity was reflected across many sub-fora, while resilient economic growth for all remained central to ECOTECH activities.

The achievements recorded in this Report demonstrate the continuing importance of economic and technical cooperation in equipping APEC economies to respond to evolving challenges and opportunities. By maintaining openness, fostering innovation and deepening practical cooperation, APEC can continue to build a more connected, resilient, and prosperous Asia-Pacific. Further details on SCE's work are presented in the annexes to this Report.

I wish to express my appreciation to APEC economies; the SCE sub-fora and their Chairs and Lead Shepherds; the People's Republic of China as the 2026 host economy; the APEC Secretariat; and all participating stakeholders for their dedication and constructive engagement throughout the year.

I look forward to carrying this spirit of cooperation into the next phase of our collective work.

Mrs. TRAN Bao Ngoc,
Chair of the SOM Steering Committee on ECOTECH

Executive Summary

During the People's Republic of China's 2026 APEC host year, the SOM Steering Committee on Economic and Technical Cooperation (SCE) held three face-to-face sessions: SCE1 in Guangzhou, SCE2 in Shanghai, and SCE3 in Dalian. Viet Nam's APEC Senior Official, Mrs. TRAN Bao Ngoc, chaired the Committee, supported by the People's Republic of China's APEC Senior Official, Mr. CHENG Lie, as Vice Chair. The SCE's programme of work also included the twenty-first annual meeting of the SCE Committee of the Whole (SCE-COW), together with an informal gathering of SCE sub-fora Chairs and Lead Shepherds. Between these formal meetings, the Committee advanced its work through intersessional consultations and ongoing exchanges.

Through its endorsement of the 2026 SCE Annual Work Plan, the Committee guided and monitored the work of its fora throughout the year. This included the delivery of workshops, preparation of reports, and implementation of cross-cutting policies and projects that advanced APEC's economic and technical cooperation agenda. Further details on these activities and the progress achieved during the reporting period are presented in **Section 2.**

The SCE maintained oversight of its sub-fora and endorsed the annual Work Plans submitted by 14 of them.

The Committee also guided and aligned the activities of its 14 sub-fora. Among the principal outcomes delivered in 2026 in support of the host-year theme and the implementation of the APV2040, APA, and ECOTECH Medium-Term Priorities were the following:

Nine sectoral ministerial meetings and high-level forums were hosted by the People's Republic of China in 2026, with support from and contributions by SCE fora:

- The Policy Partnership on Women and the Economy (PPWE) contributed to the **2026 APEC Women and the Economy Forum**;
- The Tourism Working Group (TWG) supported the **13th APEC Tourism Ministerial Meeting (TMM13)**;
- The Telecommunications and Information Working Group (TELWG) assisted with the **2026 APEC Digital and AI Ministerial Meeting (DMM)**;
- The Experts Group on Illegal Logging and Associated Trade (EGILAT) contributed to the **6th APEC Ministerial Meeting on Forestry (MMRF6)**;
- The Agricultural Technical Cooperation Working Group (ATCWG) supported the **11th APEC Food Security Ministerial Meeting (FSMM11)**;
- The Small and Medium Enterprises Working Group (SMEWG) assisted in delivering the **32nd APEC Small and Medium Enterprises Ministerial Meeting (SMEMM32)**;
- The Energy Working Group (EWG) contributed to the **16th APEC Energy Ministerial Meeting (EMM16)**;
- The Human Resources Development Working Group (HRDWG) supported the **8th APEC Human Resources Development Ministerial Meeting (HRDMM8)**; and
- The Transportation Working Group (TPTWG) assisted with the **12th APEC Transportation Ministers' Meeting (TMM12)**.

The SCE also received voluntary briefings from six member economies - Australia; Republic of Korea; Peru; Thailand; United States; and Viet Nam - on their domestic initiatives to implement the APA's individual actions. The Committee further promoted engagement with stakeholders and cooperation across APEC fora, as reflected in the many activities convened throughout the year with participation from partners within and beyond APEC.

Section 3 provides a fuller account of these and other key achievements and priorities, together with information on the financial contributions made by APEC economies to the various sub-funds of the APEC Support Fund.

1. Introduction

The 2026 Report of the SOM Steering Committee on Economic and Technical Cooperation (SCE) offers an integrated account of the Committee's key priorities, initiatives, and results delivered throughout the year. It demonstrates how APEC economies have combined their expertise and resources to deepen economic and technical cooperation, respond to evolving regional circumstances, and make effective use of emerging opportunities.

Throughout 2026, the SCE and its sub-fora translated shared objectives into concrete outcomes through targeted projects, capacity-building activities, and joint undertakings that strengthened the economic and technical capabilities of member economies. The Report also illustrates the value of closer collaboration among APEC bodies and sustained engagement with external partners. These relationships have broadened the reach and enhanced the impact of the SCE's work. Looking ahead, the Report identifies promising avenues for further action, stronger policy coordination, and new forms of cooperation.

2. A year in review

During 2026, APEC economies advanced work across multiple areas of economic and technical cooperation. The SCE and its sub-fora supported this progress through capacity-building activities, professional training, skills enhancement, and the exchange of knowledge and good practices. Mrs. TRAN Bao Ngoc, APEC Senior Official for Viet Nam, led the Committee as Chair, supported by Mr. CHENG Lie, APEC Senior Official for the People's Republic of China, as Vice Chair. The Committee convened three times during the year and delivered the following outcomes:

- Endorsed the SCE Annual Work Plan for 2026;
- Endorsed 14 SCE sub-fora annual Work Plans; three SCE sub-fora Strategic Plans; three SCE sub-fora Terms of Reference; and seventeen SCE sub-fora subsidiary bodies Terms of Reference;
- Approved two projects (Project SCE 01 2026S and SCE 02 2026S), which were successfully delivered in 2026, contributing to advance youth professional development opportunities and resilient business model in the region;
- Coordinated the work of SCE sub-fora to facilitate alignment with relevant Leaders' mandates; and
- Provided direction to SCE sub-fora on Work Plans, Strategic Plans, and Terms of Reference.

3. Priorities and Accomplishments

3.1 Host Economy Priorities

During 2026, the SCE and its sub-fora aligned their work with the host-year theme, "Building an Asia-Pacific Community to Prosper Together," and China's three host year priorities—Openness, Innovation, Cooperation. The SCE and its sub-fora also supported the host economy in delivering high-level outcomes across nine APEC sectoral ministerial meetings and high-level forums, which contribute to APEC cooperation in relevant areas:

- The Policy Partnership on Women and the Economy (PPWE) supported the **2026 APEC Women and the Economy Forum**, held on 15 May 2026 in Shanghai, People's Republic of China, during which a **Chair's Statement** was issued.

- The Tourism Working Group (TWG) contributed to the **13th APEC Tourism Ministerial Meeting (TMM13)** on 27 June 2026 in Macao, China, which concluded with the issuance of a **Chair's Statement**.

- The Telecommunications and Information Working Group (TELWG) assisted in the hosting of the **2026 APEC Digital and AI Ministerial Meeting (DMM)**, held on 23 July 2026 in Chengdu, China, at which ministers adopted a **Joint Statement**.

- The Experts Group on Illegal Logging and Associated Trade (EGILAT) collaborated to support the **6th APEC Ministerial Meeting on Forestry (MMRF6)**, which took place on 27–28 July 2026 in Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China. The meeting concluded with the adoption of a **Joint Statement**.

- The Agricultural Technical Cooperation Working Group (ATCWG) contributed to the **11th APEC Food Security Ministerial Meeting (FSMM11)** on 25 August 2026 in Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, China. The meeting concluded with the adoption of a **Joint Statement**.

- The Small and Medium Enterprises Working Group (SMEWG) assisted in delivering the **32nd APEC Small and Medium Enterprises Ministerial Meeting (SMEMM32)**, which took place on 4 September 2026 in Guangzhou, China. It concluded with a **Chair's Statement**.

- The Energy Working Group (EWG) supported the **16th APEC Energy Ministerial Meeting (EMM16)**, which took place on 10–11 September 2026 in Beijing, China. The meeting concluded with a **Joint Statement**. Ministers also endorsed three deliverables: (1) *Vision and Proposed Actions on Universal Access to High-Quality Energy in APEC*; (2) *APEC Policy Recommendations on the Mutual Enhancement Between AI and Energy in the Asia-Pacific (2026–2030)*; and (3) *APEC Non-Binding Principles for Promoting Energy Security Synergy*.

- The Human Resources Development Working Group (HRDWG) contributed to the **8th APEC Human Resources Development Ministerial Meeting (HRDMM8)**, on 21 September 2026 in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province, China. The meeting concluded with the adoption of the **Joint Statement**. The Statement included an **Annex on Harnessing Artificial Intelligence's Potential for Employment in the Asia-Pacific Region**.

- The Transportation Working Group (TPTWG) assisted with the **12th APEC Transportation Ministers' Meeting (TMM12)**, held on 22 September 2026 in Beijing, China, which concluded with the issuance of a **Joint Statement**.

Beyond the Ministerial meetings outlined above, the SCE made a broad range of contributions to advancing the 2026 host year priorities, outlined in Annex 3.

3.2 Progress in the Implementation of the APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040

The APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040 (APV2040) and the Aotearoa Plan of Action (APA), establish voluntary and non-binding aspirations for the APEC region through 2040, centred on three economic drivers. APEC economies were encouraged to share, on a voluntary basis, their individual actions under the APA. In 2026, six economies provided updates to the SCE on their progress in advancing APA individual actions across a range of areas, outlined in Annex 1.

3.3 Fora Administration, Cross-Fora Collaboration, and 2024-2025 SCE Standardized Sub-fora Assessment Exercise.

a. Ensuring alignment of SCE Fora Governance Documents

In line with its Terms of Reference, the SCE coordinates integrated, action-oriented approaches to give effect to commitments made by APEC Leaders and Ministers. During 2026, it provided guidance to its sub-fora so that their Work Plans, strategic plans and terms of reference appropriately reflected these commitments. Accordingly, with support from the SCE, the sub-fora incorporated these priorities into their Work Plans and year-end reports, using the established templates and reporting arrangements.

b. Approving Strategic Plans

As of 5 October 2026, the SCE approved the following Strategic Plans of PPWE (2025-2030), ACTWG (2027-2029) and OFWG (2026-2028).

c. Approving Annual Work Plans

Under the SCE Terms of Reference, the Committee is tasked with reviewing and guiding the alignment of Working Group and SOM Policy Partnership Work Plans with APEC-wide medium-term ECOTECH priorities and annual objectives under the ECOTECH framework. To support this function, all Working Groups and Policy Partnerships are required to submit their strategic and annual Work Plans to the SCE. In 2026, 14 Work Plans were submitted to the Committee, all of which were approved, as shown in Table One.

Table One: SCE Fora Dashboard (As of 26 October 2026)

Forum	Terms of Reference	Annual Work Plan	Strategic Plan	Annual Fora Report	Last Fora Assessment
Agricultural Technical Cooperation Working Group (ATCWG)	2026-2029	2026	2026-2030	2026	2025
Anti-Corruption and Transparency Working Group (ACTWG)	2026-2029	2026	2027-2029	2026	2024
Emergency Preparedness Working Group (EPWG)	2026-2029	2026	2025-2027	2026	2025
Energy Working Group (EWG)	2026-2029	2026	2025-2030	2026	2024
Experts' Group on Illegal Logging and Associated Trade (EGILAT)	2026-2029	2026	2023–2027	2026	2024
Health Working Group (HWG)	2026-2029	2026	2021-2025	2026	2025
Human Resources Development Working Group (HRDWG)	2026-2029	2026	2026-2029	2026	2025

Oceans and Fisheries Working Group (OFWG)	2026-2029	2026	2026-2028	2026	2024
Policy Partnership on Science, Technology, and Innovation (PPSTI)	2026-2029	2026	2016-2025	2026	2024
Policy Partnership on Women and the Economy (PPWE)	2026-2029	2026	2025-2030	2026	2024
Small and Medium Enterprises Working Group (SMEWG)	2025-2028	2026	2025-2028	2026	2024
Telecommunications and Information Working Group (TELWG)	2026-2029	2026	2021-2025	2026	2025
Tourism Working Group (TWG)	2026-2029	2026	2025-2029	2026	2025
Transportation Working Group (TPTWG)	2026-2029	2026	2020-2024	2026	2025

The APEC Secretariat Executive Director also submitted the "2026 Report of the APEC Secretariat Executive Director on Fora Work: Alignment, Synergies, and Implementation of the Putrajaya Vision 2040 including through the Aotearoa Plan of Action" (Annex 1). The report found that all 14 sub-fora assessed had connected their Annual Work Plan activities to the 2026 APEC theme and priorities, and Leaders' priorities.

In 2026, the 14 SCE fora Work Plans reflected a broadly similar distribution of APA economic drivers to 2025. Driver Three: accounted for 52% of planned activities, down from 61% in 2025. Driver Two increased substantially to 41%, compared with 28% in 2025, while Driver One represented 7%, down from 11% in 2025.

In 2026, SCE fora Work Plans covered 68% of the ECOTECH Medium-Term Priorities, compared with 78% in 2025. The remaining priorities were not reflected in any activities, projects or initiatives reported by SCE fora in 2026.

The absence of explicit references does not necessarily indicate inaction, as projects may contribute to the same objectives through broader, overlapping ECOTECH priorities.

3.4 Cross-Fora Collaboration

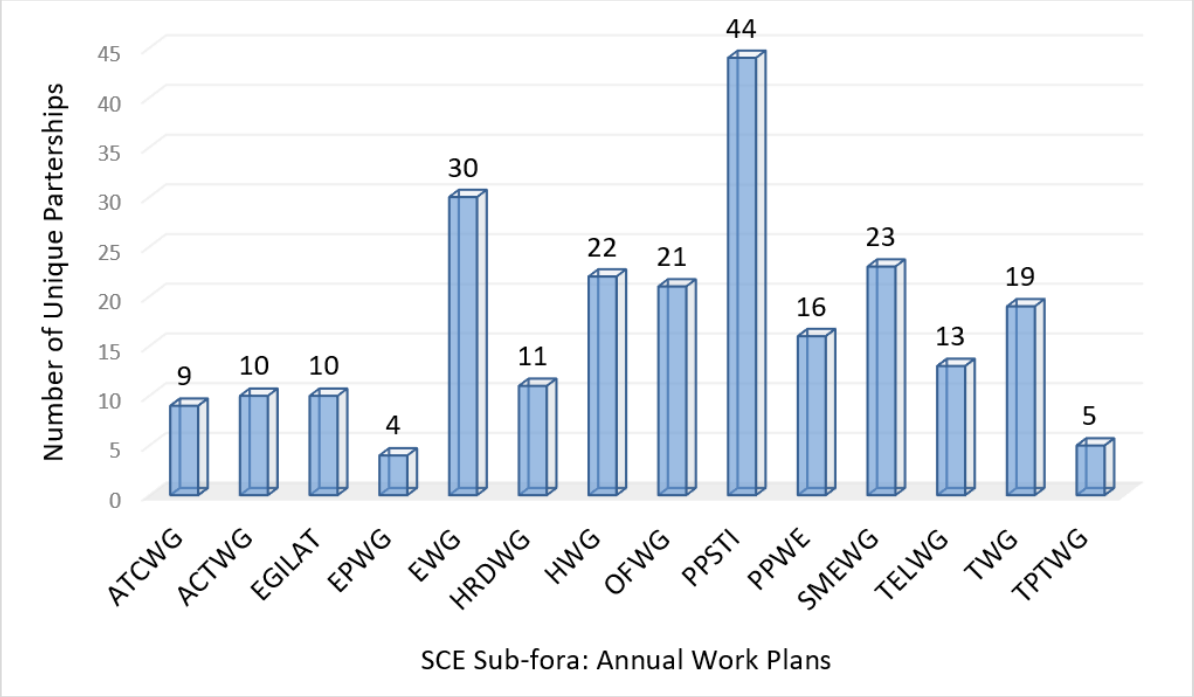
In 2026, SCE sub-fora Work Plans identified approximately 237 planned cooperation instances, encompassing cross-fora initiatives and external stakeholder partnerships. This exceeded the 223 instances recorded in 2025 and 200 in 2023, while remaining slightly below approximately 240 in 2024. Cross-fora collaboration accounted for 120 instances, or 51% of the total, compared with 41% in 2025, 50% in 2024 and 33% in 2023. These figures indicate a near-even balance between cooperation within APEC and engagement with external stakeholders.

The Work Plans identified 133 unique APEC and non-APEC partners, unchanged from 2025, close to 134 in 2024 and above 121 in 2023. Recurring partners—including SMEWG, PPSTI, PPWE, HRDWG, EWG and the OECD—suggest broader opportunities for cooperation across Work Plans. Other partners, such as the International Association of Classification Societies (IACS), appeared in only one Work Plan.

Among internal APEC cooperation instances, PPSTI, EWG, OFWG, SMEWG and HWG collectively accounted for 58%, underscoring their role in connecting activities across the SCE agenda. PPSTI, EWG and SMEWG also recorded the highest numbers of unique internal cooperation opportunities (see Graph Two). EPWG and TPTWG identified relatively fewer unique opportunities, while EGILAT and EPWG recorded the fewest internal collaboration instances. ACTWG identified no internal APEC cooperation instances in its own Work Plan,

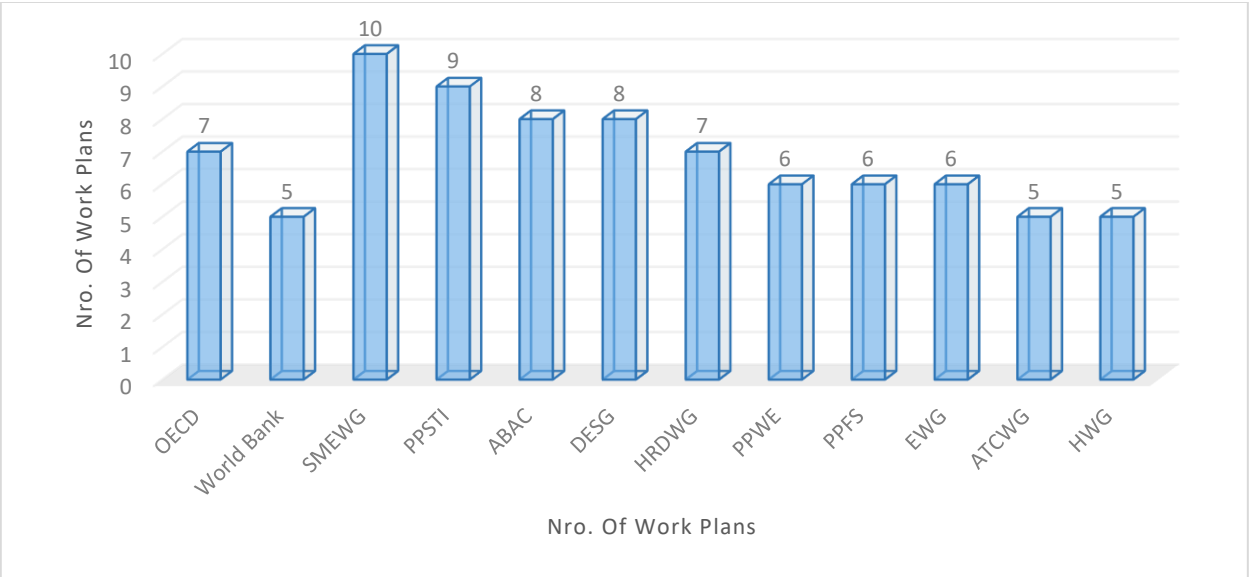
although another sub-forum listed it once as a partner. Overall, these findings show that planned cross-fora engagement remains concentrated among a small group of sub-fora.

Graph Two: Number of Unique SCE Fora 2026 Work Plan Cooperation Opportunities with Internal Partners



The 2026 assessment identified cooperation opportunities with APEC partners and external organisations, suggesting a tailored approach guided by each initiative's needs rather than a fixed set of partnerships.

Graph Three: Top Twelve APEC Partners and External Organizations Identified in 2026 SCE Work Plans



The 2026 SCE sub-fora Work Plans reflect a balance between collaboration within APEC and external partnerships that contribute additional expertise, perspectives and institutional value. The external partners most often referenced are the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), among others (see Annex 1).

3.5 2024-2025 SCE Standardized Sub-fora Assessment Exercise

Following the agreement reached by SCE members in November 2023 on the process, template and timelines for the 2024–2025 SCE Standardized Sub-fora Assessment Exercise, as well as the subsequent SCE recommendations and Senior Officials' decisions, as of 5 October, the Strategic Plans for the HWG, PPSTI, TELWG and TPTWG remain pending endorsement by the respective SCE sub-fora and the SCE.

In addition, the HRDWG and PPSTI need to decide whether the Terms of Reference of the following subsidiary bodies, which are due to expire on 31 December 2026, should be extended through 2029: the APEC Higher Education Research Centre (AHERC); Institute of APEC Collaborative Education (IACE); APEC Center for Technology Transfer (APCTT); and APEC Mentoring Center for the Gifted in Science (AMGS).

3.6 APEC Support Fund

In 2004, Ministers endorsed Australia's proposal to set up the APEC Support Fund (ASF) to serve as a flexible funding mechanism. The ASF aims to meet the capacity building needs for economies in APEC's agreed high-priority sectors for economic and technical cooperation. Since its inception, the fund has received contributions from many economies.

Voluntary contributions by APEC members to the ASF and its sub-funds in 2026 (as of 30 September 2026) were provided by 5 economies:

- Canada provided USD 323,247 to the ASF Sub-fund on Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and Sub-fund on Women and the Economy.
- Hong Kong, China provided USD 1,000,000 to the ASF Sub-fund on Strengthening Economic Legal Infrastructure.
- Japan provided USD 558,791 to the ASF Sub-Fund on Energy Efficiency, Low Carbon, and Energy Resiliency Measures.
- Korea provided USD 380,000 to the ASF Sub-Fund on Digital Innovation and USD 1,000,000 to the Sub-fund on Prosperity of Future Generations.
- Chinese Taipei provided USD 1,500,000 to the ASF Sub-Fund on the Future of Healthcare.

4. Conclusion

The 2026 APEC Senior Officials' Report on Economic and Technical Cooperation demonstrates the continued importance of ECOTECH in translating APEC's long-term objectives into practical, sector-specific cooperation. Under the People's Republic of China's host-year theme, "Building an Asia-Pacific Community to Prosper Together," and host year priorities of Openness, Innovation, Cooperation, the SCE and its sub-fora supported initiatives that promoted connectivity, technological transformation, resilience, and economic growth across the region. These activities remained anchored in relevant Leaders' and Ministers' mandates.

During the year, the SCE maintained its coordinating and oversight role, endorsing its Annual Work Plan and the Annual Work Plans of all 14 sub-fora, while providing direction on Strategic Plans and Terms of Reference. The breadth of the ECOTECH agenda was reflected in the support provided by SCE sub-fora to nine sectoral ministerial meetings and high-level forums, whose outcomes addressed issues ranging from digital and emerging technologies, energy security and food systems to human resources, transportation, tourism, forestry and MSME development.

The year also highlighted the increasing relevance of innovation and digital transformation across traditionally distinct policy areas. Digital and emerging technologies, digital infrastructure, digital skills, and technology-enabled services featured prominently in the work of several sub-fora. At the same time, the SCE continued to promote openness through resilient supply chains and support for MSMEs' participation in global markets, while cooperation remained embedded in capacity-building, policy dialogue, knowledge-sharing and stakeholder engagement.

Progress under the APA was further supported through voluntary updates from six economies on their individual actions, illustrating how domestic initiatives in digital transformation, skills, investment facilitation, healthcare, tourism and economic resilience can complement collective APEC efforts.

Looking ahead, the SCE should continue encouraging sub-fora to translate high-level mandates into clearly defined activities and deliverables, while giving greater attention at the planning stage to opportunities for cross-fora cooperation and engagement with relevant external stakeholders. Projects on cross-cutting topics such as digital and emerging technologies, connectivity, resilience, economic growth and workforce transformation would particularly benefit from coordinated approaches that draw on the complementary expertise of multiple APEC bodies. Continued voluntary reporting on APA individual actions could also help strengthen mutual learning and visibility of implementation across economies.

Sustained financial support will remain important for maintaining ECOTECH's capacity-building role, including through the APEC Support Fund and its sub-funds. The experience of 2026 provides a solid foundation for the next work cycle and confirms that continued engagement by economies, sub-fora, the Secretariat and relevant stakeholders will be essential to advancing a more innovative, resilient and prosperous Asia-Pacific.