

## **SCE Report on Synergies within the ECOTECH Agenda 2020**

### **Background**

1. The SCE has tasked “the Secretariat to undertake a strategic assessment of synergies within the ECOTECH agenda after SOM1 and provide recommendations to SCE2 about gaps that may require SCE attention or direction” (point 7 of *SCE Report on Improving ECOTECH in APEC* (2013/SOM3/030)).
2. The first report by the APEC Secretariat (2014/SOM2/SCE/004) was submitted to the SCE2 in 2014. The second report was presented to the SCE2 in 2015.
3. The 2020 report has been rationalised somewhat from previous versions. The fora work plans are not attached. One is invited to review the 2020 Work Plans of the SCE sub-fora on the SCE ACS page. In addition, the template has been refined in recent years to request sub-fora to specify which other sub-fora or organisations it plans to collaborate with, and how. Similar reporting is sought in the template for annual Fora Reports submitted later in the APEC year.

### **Review of the annual work plans of the SCE fora**

4. The APEC Secretariat analysed fifteen (15) sub-fora work plans: ACTWG, ATCWG, CTWG, EGILAT, EPWG, EWG, HRDWG, HWG, OFWG, PPSTI, PPWE, SMEWG, TELWG, TPTWG, and TWG submitted as of 6 March 2020. The Secretariat analysis came to the following broad conclusions:
  - SCE sub-fora identified almost 200 areas of potential cross-fora collaboration.
  - Potential collaboration is being identified with other SCE sub-fora as well as with the sub-fora of the Economic Committee, the Committee on Trade and Investment, and the Finance Ministers Process/Senior Finance Officials’ Meeting.
  - Collaboration is not confined to the same or the more obvious partners but rather is diverse, and often differs from project to project.
  - There are new collaboration partners, which had not previously been seen in APEC. One example is ACTWG and PPWE collaborating to host a symposium on Gender Mainstreaming and Women’s Empowerment to Fight Corruption. Another is EPWG and SFOM on disaster risk financing.
  - The most active sub-fora in terms of collaboration are PPWE and SMEWG. The sub-fora with the fewest self-reported collaborations are PPSTI and TELWG however both of these sub-fora are identified by other SCE sub-fora as potential cross-fora collaboration partners.
  - A number of SCE sub-fora identify potential collaboration with external partners, including international and regional organisations such as the United Nations, World Bank, Asian Development Bank, INTERPOL, International Energy Agency, ILO, WHO and OECD, or non-governmental organisations such as the International Air Transport Association and Transparency International, to name but a few.

- Work plans continue to include fairly modest details on the nature and extent of such collaboration.
- Although certain work plans have identified potential collaboration with ABAC and ASEAN, there likely is scope for more frequent collaboration with both entities, together with Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, given their respective roles within the broader APEC process.

### **Review of the revised work plans and work plan addendums of SCE fora**

5. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the ability of fora to meet and conduct the work previously outlined on endorsed work plans.
6. The SCE Chair requested each fora submit a work plan addendum outlining the work that had been postponed, changed, or cancelled due to COVID-19. disrupted.
7. The APEC Secretariat analysed fourteen (14) sub-fora work plans: ACTWG, ATCWG, CTWG, EGILAT, EPWG, EWG, HWG, OFWG, PPSTI, PPWE, SMEWG, TELWG, TPTWG, and TWG submitted as of 24 August 2020. The Secretariat analysis came to the following broad conclusions:
  - While all fora have changed or postponed meetings and project events originally scheduled for 2020, the core work of APEC continues.
  - The majority of fora have conducted virtual plenary meetings or have virtual plenary meetings scheduled before the end of 2020. In addition, the majority of fora have shifted project events to virtual platforms.
  - Several SCE fora have commenced new work relating to COVID-19 including response and economic recovery. Examples of this work include:
    - EWG, PPWE, and SMEWG have requested members voluntarily share sector specific economy responses and policies.
    - TELWG is considering a new project to address the global challenges and cooperation on COVID-19 utilizing ICT.
    - TWG will conduct activities on emergency preparedness measures by APEC economies for the tourism industry.

### **Discussion on how to promote cross-fora collaboration**

8. At SCE3 in 2016, SCE members adopted eight recommendations to promote cross-fora collaboration (see 2016/SOM3/SCE/002).
9. The SCE Chair and the Secretariat together with the SCE fora have been implementing these recommendations since SCE3 of 2016. In 2020, a thematic discussion focussed on key fora deliverables and cross-fora opportunities was at the heart of the SCE-COW agenda. The CTI, EC, BMC, ABAC, and SFOM Chairs were invited to attend the 2020 SCE-COW. The Secretariat maintains all key documents of the SCE fora (ie Terms of References, Strategic Plans, annual Work Plans and annual Fora Reports) on the APEC Collaboration System (ACS). Remote participation is facilitated when requested, including in the context of 2020 SOM1 cluster meetings. The Secretariat also hosts virtual meetings as necessary to facilitate the ongoing work of SCE and SCE fora.

10. In 2017, APEC Ministers welcomed the adoption of the *APEC Guidelines on Promoting Cross-Fora Collaboration*, which streamline existing best practices and highlight emerging issues in the view of encouraging more effective collaboration APEC-wide.