

Group on Services
Report for the
CTI ANNUAL REPORT TO MINISTERS

For AMM’s information

(a) Key outcomes and achievements in 2025

- **APEC Services Competitiveness Roadmap (ASCR)**

- (1) **ASCR Final Review Report:** GOS conducted the ASCR Final Review with support from the Policy Support Unit (PSU) and finalized **the ASCR Final Review Report**.
- (2) **Development of the New Services Roadmap for 2026-2035:** Building on the ASCR Final Review, GOS is continuing its discussions on developing the new services roadmap for 2026–2035.

- **Domestic Regulation of Services**

GOS continued to address domestic regulation of services with the United States as the champion economy. In 2025, GOS held a workshop on the Services Domestic Regulation Initiative on Technical Standards Development, highlighting the process and impact of developing technical standards for services. Recognizing the growing importance of technical standards in the services sector, the United States has proposed “**APEC Non-binding Principles for Developing Technical Standards for Services**” to the GOS members, and discussions are currently ongoing.

- **APEC Index to Measure the Regulatory Environment in Services Trade of APEC**

The APEC Services Index, developed and maintained with the support of the OECD, has been used to measure and monitor the regulatory environment for services trade across APEC economies. In April 2025, GOS endorsed the “**Toolkit: Applying the APEC Index to Measure the Regulatory Environment for Services Trade in Regionally Relevant Use Cases**”, proposed by the United States as the champion economy for the Index, to help economies apply the Index to identify and reform restrictive policies and enhance services competitiveness.

- **Environmental Services**

GOS conducted the second review of the Reference List of Environmental and Environmentally Related Services, which was endorsed by APEC Ministers in 2021. As the result of the second review, GOS endorsed the addition of 14 subsectors to the Reference List. Further, in order to keep the list relevant, GOS has agreed to conduct a third review of the list in two years.

- **Services and Structural Reform**

GOS and EC held three joint workshops on Services and Structural Reform in 2025. Australia, leading this initiative, proposed a new project to develop economy-specific reform options and the “**APEC Voluntary Principles on Services and Structural Reform**” to guide voluntary reforms, support policy coherence and capacity building.

- GOS organized the following workshops/events in 2025;
 - EC-GOS Joint Workshop: “Digital Services and Structural Reform” (2 March)
 - ASCR Annual Dialogue, including “Joint GOS-EC Dialogue on Services and Structural Reform, including sessions on digital finance, digital payments, standards and AI”, “GOS Private-Public Dialogue on Challenges and Opportunities for Women’s Participation in High-Skill, Digitally Delivered Services in APEC” and “Workshop on Professional Services – Underpinning Economic Activity and Job Growth, including discussions on how professional services are traded internationally, the challenges faced by providers and consumers, and the key elements of sound regulatory frameworks.” (5-7 May)
 - GOS: Workshop on “Services Domestic Regulation Initiative on Technical Standards Development: The Process and Impact” (5 August)
 - GOS Workshop on Recent Approaches to the Domestic Regulation of Services in the APEC region (6 August)
 - EC-GOS Joint Workshop on Services and Structural Reform (7 August)
 - GOS: Workshop on “Application of the APEC Index to Measure the Regulatory Environment for Services Trade in Regionally Relevant Use-Cases” (8 August)

(b) Work undertaken by fora in pursuit of the [Putrajaya Vision 2040](#), including through the [Aotearoa Plan of Action \(APA\)](#)

GOS continues to advance the Putrajaya Vision 2040 and the Aotearoa Plan of Action (APA) through collective actions that promote services competitiveness, regulatory coherence, and inclusive growth across the Asia-Pacific region.

- GOS plays a central role in implementing the APEC Services Competitiveness Roadmap (ASCR), which reaches its target year in 2025. As part of its monitoring responsibilities, GOS conducted the ASCR Final Review this year, with support from PSU.
- GOS continues to address its five core issues—Domestic Regulation of Services, APEC Index to Measure the Regulatory Environment in Services Trade of APEC, Environmental Services, Mutual Recognition Agreement, and Manufacturing-related services—through champion-led initiatives. These efforts contribute directly to APA’s collective actions under trade and investment, innovation and digitalization, and inclusive and sustainable growth.
- GOS also supports structural reform in services through joint work with the Economic Committee, helping economies design and implement policy changes that foster productivity, sustainability, and inclusion.

(c) Work Undertaken by the fora in response to Ministerial, SOM and CTI direction

SOM mandate to monitor the implementation of the APEC Services Competitiveness Roadmap

- The GOS held the annual ASCR Dialogue during SOM2, bringing together cross-fora collaborations and industry participants over three days. The dialogue aimed to enhance the ASCR implementation process and gather input from relevant stakeholders to inform the development of the next ASCR roadmap.
- As the ASCR reaches its target year this year, GOS, with support from PSU, conducted and endorsed the ASCR Final Review. The ASCR Final Review found that APEC achieved progress through regulatory reforms, the development and use of the APEC Index to monitor services trade restrictiveness, and cross-sector cooperation, but overall liberalization was modest and uneven. It recommends deepening structural reforms, improving data and measurement, enhancing cross-fora collaboration, and strengthening private sector engagement to boost services competitiveness beyond 2025.

CTI tasking to take forward discussions on how to increase trade in environmental and environmentally related services, including by supporting liberalization, facilitation, and cooperation, as agreed in the 2021 APEC Ministerial Statement

- New Zealand, as the champion economy for the Environmental Services, led the GOS in conducting the second review of the Reference List of Environmental and Environmentally Related Services, which was first developed in 2021. As part of this review, GOS endorsed adding two sectors to Group 1 (environmental services) and twelve sectors to Group 2 (environmentally related services).

(d) Key Issues Under Discussion by the Fora (if any);

- “APEC Roadmap for Innovative, Competitive and Resilient Services”
- “APEC Non-binding Principles for Developing Technical Standards for Services”

(e) Private sector / Stakeholder engagement and cross-fora collaboration in 2025 (if any)

- The GOS is accountable for the implementation and monitoring of APEC-wide actions under the ASCR in 17 APEC sub-fora. A cross-fora collaborative event is to be organized in the margin of every SOM2 until 2025 to support efforts in monitoring its implementation.
- GOS is working on the following joint projects:
 - Joint EC-GOS Project: Services and Structural Reform
 - Joint GOS-PPWE Project: “Enhancing Women’s Economic Empowerment in APEC through Greater Participation in High-Skill Digitized Service Sectors”

(f) Items to submit to Senior Officials or Ministers (if applicable)

We submit for Senior Officials to note:

- ASCR Final Review Report (Appendix 1)

- The second review of the Environmental Services List (Appendix 2)