



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE APEC ENVIRONMENT MINISTERIAL MEETING ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT MONDAY, 9 JUNE 1997

The APEC Environment Ministerial Meeting on Sustainable Development commenced on Monday, 9 June 1997 at the Royal York Hotel in Toronto, Canada. Delegates heard opening remarks and ministerial statements in a morning Plenary. Ministerial statements continued in an afternoon Plenary, after which delegates discussed and agreed to endorse the APEC Strategy for Sustainability of the Marine Environment.

OPENING PLENARY

Sergio Marchi, Canadian Minister of Environment, formally opened the meeting, highlighting Canada's "Year of Asia Pacific." He stated that balancing economic and population growth with environmental protection will involve two key challenges: developing an Action Plan containing practical solutions to help create more sustainable urban areas, marine environments and cleaner production methods; and sending a clear message to the upcoming meeting of APEC Economic Leaders that economies must redouble their efforts to make sustainable development the overarching objective by integrating economic, development, social and trade agendas. Richard Krentz, on behalf of the aboriginal peoples of Canada, presented the "Tex Em Ay" (Tree of Life) Totem Pole, which he hoped would remind the meeting of the human connection to nature.

Chris Henderson, CEO of the Delphi Group, outlined the key issues of the Business Leaders and Municipal Leaders Forum on Sustainable Cities: air pollution; water, wastewater and waste management; cleaner production; privatization; public-private partnerships; policy and regulatory reform; and financing sustainable cities. He stated that only through marshaling the capital, expertise and ingenuity of the business sector, in partnership with governments and the voluntary sector, can the pressing environmental challenges of APEC cities be met. Youth Caucus representatives Yeow Wei Pang (Singapore) and Bryce Hartnell (Canada) welcomed the opportunity to present their perspective on the issues under consideration, and underscored their efforts to make theirs a "paperless" meeting through use of chalkboards and laptops. They called on governments to facilitate youth's participation in decision-making by providing infrastructure, guidance, funding and training.

Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Executive Director of UNEP, stated that five years after Rio, the world still engages in the same kind of

economics and industry, employs the same technologies, views security from the same narrow perspectives, and engages in the same consumption and production patterns that have brought about the current state of environmental decline. Noting that APEC can provide stimulus to change this trajectory, she stated that the vitality and dynamism of the region could be harnessed to achieve the mutually supportive objectives of trade liberalization and environmental protection. Beth Johnson, Mayor of Delta, British Columbia, presented key messages from the 60th annual conference of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. Conference participants highlighted the importance of empowering municipal governments, integrating public and private sector agendas and examining environmental concerns at the community level. They underlined the need to balance population growth, economic growth and human and environmental health, and identified disincentives to investment hindering support for infrastructure expenditures and community-based projects as the most critical barrier to progress toward sustainable urbanization. The conference also called for more effective use of resources by all orders of government and a framework to facilitate investment in sustainable cities.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Sarwono Kusumaatmadja, State Minister of Environment (INDONESIA), noted that APEC's consideration of sustainable cities, sustainability of the marine environment and cleaner production are important contributions to identifying key issues of sustainability. He cautioned against pretending that all the answers have been found and underscored the importance of seeking new approaches to sustainability. Robert Hill, Minister of Sports, Territories and Environment (AUSTRALIA), stated that significant progress had been made by the Working Groups in the areas of marine sustainability, cleaner production and sustainable cities. He called on the groups dealing with transport, energy and tourism to pick up the challenge. He noted the opportunity afforded by APEC to take ideas and turn them into concrete programs on the ground, but cautioned against straying from an already ambitious agenda.

Tsuneo Suzuki, State Secretary for Environment (JAPAN), called on the meeting to issue a strong message for the success of UNGASS and FCCC COP-3. He said now is the time to operationalize the themes of sustainable cities, sustainability of the marine environment and cleaner production, and called for constructive results in this regard. Nobuteru Ishihara, State Secretary of the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (JAPAN), emphasized the need for public and private sectors to work together and be balanced in the development of industries. Victor O. Ramos, Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (PHILIPPINES), recalled the importance of

sustainable development and the inter-relationship between issues such as poverty, population growth, resource depletion and environmental degradation. He noted that there should now be a transition to action and that the Philippines would contribute to the implementation of the action plans and strategies. Chang-Hee Noh, Ambassador at Large of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (REPUBLIC OF KOREA), stated that one of the challenges for APEC was to promote economic growth that respects the environment. Recalling the 1996 Manila declaration, he suggested that APEC had already laid a solid foundation for cooperative solutions and that member economies should try to integrate these in a coherent and concrete manner.

Eileen Claussen, Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of Oceans and International Environment and Scientific Affairs (US), suggested that APEC must now: move from plans and strategies to action on the ground; consider a mechanism for coordinating environmental concerns; and allow public-private partnerships to flourish. She asserted that APEC was a regional entity of global significance and stated that APEC economies must demonstrate their commitment to working together for the benefit of the environment.

Dato' Abu Bakar Daud, Deputy Minister of Science, Technology and Environment (MALAYSIA), stated that UNCED had made it clear that sustainable development meant a balanced and integrated approach to the goals of economic growth, social equity and protection of the environment. The key was to find the right balance, which might differ from one country to another. Hsung-Hsiung Tsai, Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (CHINESE TAIPEI), expressed support for efforts to integrate environmental concerns into APEC discussions and noted that the policy areas selected for this meeting were particularly meaningful. He described actions taken under each agenda area, including regional conferences and workshops held in Taipei to exchange experiences, promotion of sustainable fishing technologies and development of an action plan related to sustainable cities. Sidek Bin Saniff, Minister of the Environment (SINGAPORE), noted that economies that are in an advanced stage of development could guide others in building environmental policies, particularly regarding information-sharing, capacity-building and transfer of expertise. He called for integration of environmental concerns into other policy areas and noted the lack of an institutional structure within APEC to address environmental issues.

H.J. Ismail Damit, Minister of Development (BRUNEI DARUSSALAM), urged participants to remember that APEC economies have diverse settings and needs and supported the concept of shared but differentiated responsibility. He said that research and development for technology must take into account the capacity of the end user, especially small- and medium-sized enterprises. Bowen Leung, Secretary of Planning, Environment and Lands Branch (HONG KONG), stated that the upcoming transition of Hong Kong's sovereignty to China would present new opportunities for coordinated efforts toward sustainable development. He noted that Hong Kong shall commission a major study on sustainable development to map out a strategy and examine ways to integrate environmental concerns into other policies.

Simon Upton, Minister of the Environment (NEW ZEALAND), stated that ministers should focus on ways APEC can add value to ongoing international discussions. He noted that many emerging problems in the region would be of an unprecedented scale and the solutions must be workable. He noted that APEC was neither a negotiating forum nor a regional branch of the UN and called for a free and frank discussion of differences. Adrianna Delpiano, Minister of Public Lands (CHILE), noted that poverty and marginalization still present very big problems despite stable economic growth, and sustainable development policies must answer these social realities. She noted that increased pressure on natural resources without strong regulatory measures had led to environmental problems.

Yingphan Manasikarn, Minister of Science, Technology and Environment (THAILAND), underscored its environmental efforts, including the establishment of a system of electric trains in Bangkok

expected in 1999 and plans for comprehensive treatment of waste water in all major cities. He expressed support for the treatment of solid waste based largely on the Polluter Pays Principle and for ISO 14,000, and called for clean production information networks among APEC economies. He also called for incorporating environment into national socioeconomic development and economic growth while protecting the environment. Pius Pundi, Department of Environment and Conservation (PAPUA NEW GUINEA), noted that its economy was at an early stage of development and underscored the importance of natural resource issues, especially forests, fishing and mining. Xie Zhenhua, Administrator for the National Environment Protection Agency (CHINA), stated that APEC's ultimate goals of trade liberalization and collaboration would not be achievable without economic and technical cooperation. He outlined efforts to promote socioeconomic development and economic growth while protecting the environment.

SUSTAINABILITY OF THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT

John Fraser, Canadian Ambassador for the Environment, chaired the forum's discussions on the Action Plan to Address Sustainability of the Marine Environment, which was developed by the Marine Resource Conservation Working Group (MRCWG). The Action Plan elaborates on the goals and activities necessary for APEC to meet its strategic objectives of integrated approaches to coastal management, prevention, reduction and control of marine pollution and sustainable management of marine resources. It calls for mechanisms for coordination, periodic review and updating and mechanisms for linkages with other multilateral organizations and domestic agencies concerned with sustainability of the marine environment. The Plan outlines an approach to measuring its success in meeting its objectives by establishing performance standards.

A number of ministers and delegates expressed support for the Action Plan and specifically emphasized its mechanism for periodic review and its approach for measuring success. One delegate asked whether the Action Plan contains specific formulations to combat destructive fishing practices or to address mariculture as a solution to food production problems. In response, some delegations highlighted that provisions and performance measures in the Plan on ensuring the sustainability of marine resources through effective management address destructive fishing practices. Mariculture, while not explicitly referenced, is addressed under provisions on coastal management and prevention of marine pollution.

Ministers and delegates raised a number of issues that should be addressed in connection with the Action Plan, such as the necessity for coordinating and prioritizing the necessary actions, and cooperation in compiling information to prevent oil spills. Delegates also noted their commitments under existing agreements and stressed the need to develop effective cross-linkages and avoid duplication of work. One delegation underscored the need for a mechanism to coordinate environmental activities throughout APEC fora as recommended by the MRCWG. Another called for performance measures to address resource conflicts in shared waters. Participants endorsed the Action Plan and agreed to present it to the APEC Economic Leaders meeting later this year in Vancouver.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

Ministers and delegates will convene in a Plenary session at 10:00 am in the Concert Hall of the Royal York Hotel to discuss Cleaner Production and Sustainable Cities and to conduct a dialogue with youth.