



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE APEC ENVIRONMENT MINISTERIAL MEETING ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT TUESDAY, 10 JUNE 1997

Ministers and delegates to the APEC Environment Ministerial Meeting met in morning and afternoon Plenary sessions on Tuesday, 10 June 1997. They discussed and agreed to endorse the Cleaner Production Strategy and the Sustainable Cities Program of Action. Youth delegates also presented recommendations and engaged in dialogue with ministers.

CLEANER PRODUCTION

Genther Yoshida (US), on behalf of the Industrial Science and Technology (IS&T) Working Group, presented the results of their deliberations on cleaner production in the form of the APEC Cleaner Production Strategy. She noted that the Group had completed its work and achieved consensus on the Strategy. All members of the Group had recognized the importance of this issue and believed that this Strategy provided an excellent opportunity to add value to the ongoing work of APEC. The Strategy also demonstrates how advances in science and technology can contribute to economic growth and sustainable development and how real partnerships can be forged between the public and private sectors. She outlined the two goals of the Strategy: to strive to achieve dramatic progress in reducing environmental impacts in various industry sectors through promotion of appropriate cleaner production technologies, policies and practices; and to strive to achieve broader adoption of cross-cutting policies and methods for cleaner production through industrial, professional and private sector partnerships. She noted that there was a wide variety of ways in which member economies could achieve the goals and objectives of the Strategy, including sector-based and cross-cutting approaches. She emphasized that while this Group may continue to undertake activities on its own, there was also a need to cooperate with other groups within the APEC community, such as the Human Resources Development Working Group, in order to implement the Strategy.

A number of ministers and delegates expressed appreciation for the work of the IS&T Working Group and supported the initiatives contained in the Strategy. Many delegations highlighted the importance of the exchange of knowledge, know-how and technologies, and suggested cleaner production was of major importance to implementing sustainable development. One delegation also mentioned that the implementation of cleaner production was crucial because of its ramifications for other environmental problems, such as climate change and marine pollution. It was suggested by some that the stronger member

economies could assist weaker member economies in the implementation of cleaner production through the transfer of technology and provision of financial support, while many others also emphasized the importance of technology transfer. One delegation expressed concern that the agricultural sector had not been mentioned in the Strategy and suggested that the importance of developing local capacity and networks also be emphasized. Another delegation expressed interest in being a center for the promotion of cleaner production in the APEC region.

Several delegations discussed their experiences with cleaner technologies and cleaner production initiatives including: training courses for industry and member economies; initiation of a national industrial rating program; voluntary pilot programs with industries involving the ISO 14000 series; cooperation with other agencies; and problems faced in the design phase of industrial projects. Delegates also highlighted the importance of small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with respect to cleaner production and the special challenges they face. One delegation proposed further work on industrial environmental performance indicators as well as the use of ISO 14000 for SMEs. The importance of the private sector in achieving cleaner production was also underscored during the discussions. Other concerns discussed were the effects of cleaner production on new markets and industrial efficiency and the need to avoid duplication of work with other bodies on this issue.

The Chair noted strong support for the Cleaner Production Strategy and suggested that members give concrete examples of what this plan could mean. He also suggested that there be momentum beyond the adoption of the Strategy so that the plan would result in some sense of accountability in the future. Participants endorsed the Strategy and agreed to present it to the APEC Economic Leaders meeting later this year in Vancouver.

SUSTAINABLE CITIES

Avrim Lazar (Canada), representative from the APEC Senior Environment/Economic Officials *ad hoc* group, presented the Sustainable Cities Agenda for Cooperation.

He noted that unlike the two other themes that emerged from the 1996 Manila Ministerial meeting, Sustainable Cities does have an "institutional home." Since that meeting, he explained that Senior Environment Officers (SEOs) have met four times to develop the Agenda for Cooperation, which: recognizes existing efforts in other international fora, such as UNCED and Habitat; focuses on concrete, practical actions rather than broad statements of intent; emphasizes shared knowledge and technology; and seeks broad participation. The Agenda identifies five principal barriers to cooperation: ineffective utilization of knowledge; perceived disincentives to

investment; separation of agendas between private and public sectors, sectoral experts and various levels of government; lack of meaningful involvement by individuals; and inadequacy of initiatives to address the needs of the poorest and most disadvantaged sectors of the population. In order to break down these barriers, the SEOs developed a comprehensive Program of Action to implement the Agenda.

Several delegates announced various regional workshops and conferences over the course of the coming year that would serve as fora for the exchange of information and experiences on several issues as they relate to sustainable cities: environmental education; economic instruments for and innovative approaches to financing sustainable cities initiatives; interconnections between the social, economic and environmental policy; and water issues. One delegate invited members to participate in a recently established "APEC Environment Protection Center," which could serve as a forum for information exchange, scientific research and personnel training on environmental and economic policies for realizing sustainable cities.

Several delegates outlined efforts to redress problems experienced in their urban centers, such as poor air quality and circulation, overpopulation and transportation. One delegate called for the careful planning of cities according to a multisectoral and global strategy based on specific short-, medium- and long-term objectives. Another delegate stated that the sustainable development of cities was constrained by lack of funds and technology, and underscored the importance of economic and technical cooperation within APEC. Another requested that the concept of sustainability be applied to all aspects of urban planning, not just infrastructure. One delegate proposed three action-oriented programs: a feasibility study of publicly-owned technology; the use of unleaded gas by all APEC countries; and implementation of local Agenda 21s.

Several delegations underscored the importance of environmental education and participation of people in devising and implementing sustainable cities. One stated that in order to meet the two key challenges of the future, globalization and information technology, city planners would need to understand the wider interrelationships between business and government. Another delegate stated that sustainable cities will require the participation of all stakeholders, with special consideration for the needs and concerns of the poor and disadvantaged. One delegation stated that poverty eradication must be the basis for any sustainable cities initiative.

One delegate underscored the need to incorporate other dimensions of sustainable cities and called on APEC environment ministers to make greater efforts to connect with UN structures, such as Habitat, in which related social and economic discussions are taking place. Several delegates noted that because sustainable cities affect the overall APEC agenda, it should be adopted by the Leaders as a major cross-sectoral issue and that the SEOs coordinate efforts in this regard. A representative of the APEC Secretariat suggested that the SEOs might consider taking up these issues to ensure that the Program of Action, which links more than half of its action items with existing APEC committees, is fully addressed by appropriate APEC fora, including Leaders' meetings.

Citing environmental and health problems associated with poor air quality and contamination, most delegates underscored the need for environmentally-friendly fuels and methods of transportation. Most delegates emphasized the importance of exchanging information and experiences in order to operationalize the agenda. Many delegates also stressed the need to integrate environmental, social and economic approaches in implementing sustainable cities. The Chair noted a strong consensus and delegates agreed to endorse the Program of Action.

YOUTH CAUCUS PRESENTATION

Hang Kuang (Chinese Taipei) and Hien Le (Canada) introduced the youth caucus presentation. Arief Budiman (Indonesia) and Keegan Haselhan (Canada) presented the recommendations on youth and sustainability to: create a scientific youth alliance within each economy to tackle regional socio-economic and environmental

problems; and provide environmental education for youth to develop a holistic approach, incorporating concepts, ethics, experiential learning and tools for action. Cecilia Wong (Canada) and Eka Putra (Indonesia) presented the recommendations for engaging individual action from primary stakeholders: facilitate partnerships and linkages between individuals and community-based groups by exchanging ideas, cooperating on projects and sharing resources; and create and raise individual awareness of environmental issues by sharing experiences and knowledge through media, Internet, brochures and workshops.

Darren Thomas (Canada) and Rojane Saidontree (Thailand) presented recommendations on encouraging governments and business to invest in sustainability: give individuals, companies and businesses incentives/awards for environmental consciousness; and promote mutual benefits through interactive education and experiential learning. Daniel Huxtable (Australia) presented recommendations for sharing and applying knowledge on sustainability: support international networking and active promotion and presentation of new ideas about sustainability through structured organizations, workshops and conferences; develop a program and utilize community groups and resources to link ongoing action at the individual level within the existing education system; and initiate environmental awareness activities among the youth that mutually support the principles of sustainable development.

Trudy Seri Samuel (Canada) outlined the next steps needed to follow up on the Youth Caucus, including creating a network, setting dates for Internet conferences, and e-mailing information and updates to the Caucus. She stressed that youth are calling on APEC for help with: access to the Internet; appointing a feedback mechanism from APEC; establishing a structure to keep the network alive; providing feedback from this meeting; formulating plans for inclusion of youth; and officially recognizing youth as stakeholders.

Following these presentations, ministers, delegates and youth representatives engaged in dialogue. Many agreed to the importance and positive results of engaging youth in APEC. One delegate said APEC should think about how to create an institutional capacity to involve youth on a regular basis. She also suggested that youth move beyond the process issues articulated in their recommendations and focus on the substantive issues under consideration (i.e. cities and oceans). Another youth delegate responded that the recommendation for a youth alliance to tackle these problems is a means of furnishing youth with the knowledge and tools to enable them to make high quality, informed contributions in these areas.

A youth delegate asked ministers how continued commitment to the action plans agreed at this meeting would be ensured in the face of frequent changes in governments and officials. One delegate responded that the youth's recommendations would be sent to APEC Leaders in November and that the "community of APEC" rather than APEC ministers will embrace these ideas to ensure that they live on. Another minister suggested that youth participation be formally considered by ministers at the next meeting.

In closing, Wisnu Wurjantara (Indonesia) and Robynn Moody (Canada) expressed hope that the ministers would implement their recommendations and voiced their commitment to help them in this regard. They stressed that the time for action is now and the time for youth involvement is now.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

Ministers and delegates will convene in a Plenary session at 8:30 am in the Concert Hall to conduct a dialogue with business and local authorities, to discuss Food, Energy, Environment, Economic Growth and Population (FEEEP), the Leaders' direction to promote environmentally sustainable growth in APEC and next steps/other business, and to finalize the Joint Ministerial Statement.