

## APEC Ministerial Meeting Joint Ministerial Statement 2021

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1. We, the APEC Ministers, met on 8-9 November 2021. Our meeting was chaired by the Hon Nanaia Mahuta, Minister of Foreign Affairs of New Zealand, and the Hon Damien O'Connor, Minister for Trade and Export Growth of New Zealand. We welcomed the participation of the APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC), and the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF).
2. There has never been a more important time for APEC economies to join, work and grow together. The COVID-19 pandemic continues to have far-reaching impacts on the health, well-being and economic prosperity of our region and the world. In response, APEC has mobilised in an unprecedented way. We have shared experiences, taken forward cooperation initiatives, and made timely commitments, which together will ensure a resilient and sustainable long-term recovery. We are committed to realising the Putrajaya Vision of an open, dynamic, resilient and peaceful Asia-Pacific community by 2040, for the prosperity of all our people and future generations. To this end, we are looking forward to our Leaders announcing the implementation plan for the Putrajaya Vision 2040.
3. At our meeting, we discussed the work we are taking directly in response to the COVID-19 crisis and our work under priority areas for 2021.

### **COVID-19**

4. As we respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are committed to putting people's lives and livelihoods first. We emphasise the need to strengthen international cooperation on COVID-19, including on research and development. We will continue our work to accelerate equitable and timely access to safe, effective, quality-assured and affordable vaccines, diagnostics, therapeutics, and related goods and services. Recognising the role of extensive COVID-19 immunisation as a global public good, we will accelerate our efforts to expand vaccine manufacturing and supply, to support global vaccine sharing efforts, and to encourage the voluntary transfer of vaccine production technologies on mutually agreed terms.
5. Recalling the commitments made in the 2021 APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade (MRT) Joint Statement, including the Statement on COVID-19 Vaccine Supply Chains, we are pleased to note that since June:
  - APEC members have ramped up trade facilitation efforts to move COVID-19 vaccines and essential goods across borders, including to prevent the movement of counterfeit vaccines and related goods in cooperation with relevant international organisations.
  - We have refrained from imposing unnecessary export restrictions.
  - Some economies have continued to liberalise tariffs, or maintain zero to low tariffs, for vaccines and other medical supplies.
6. Using the World Customs Organization (WCO) COVID-19 list as a reference, we are facilitating trade in a broader list of medical supplies and will continue to:
  - Improve the transparency of border measures taken in response to the pandemic.
  - Exercise restraint in the use of unnecessary export restrictions and non-tariff barriers, and ensure any such measures are WTO consistent.
  - Voluntarily reduce the cost of COVID-19 vaccine and related essential COVID-19 medical goods.
  - Strengthen border agency cooperation and coordination.

- Intensify work that minimises disruption to, and enhances the resilience of supply chains, and improves connectivity.
7. We reiterate the vital role that services play in supporting the movement of essential goods, as well as the distribution of vaccines, which will remain critical to our region's recovery. We welcome economies' ongoing work to implement the 2021 MRT Statement on Services to Support the Movement of Essential Goods.
  8. We note that the substantial losses from unrealised economic activity in the APEC region, as a consequence of border and travel restrictions, have significantly impacted our people and our economies. We need to continue to pave the way for the resumption of cross-border travel, without undermining efforts to control the spread of COVID-19. We welcome work completed on the types of measures that would better enable air crew to move safely and seamlessly, and we direct officials to advance further work on processes to support the movement of both air and maritime crew. We will explore additional specific initiatives, solutions, and best practices to facilitate safe travel in the region, paving the way for a return to people moving across borders for business, tourism and education. We task our officials to ensure APEC-wide coordination on safe passage and work towards tangible outcomes in 2022.
  9. We will continue to invest in sustainable, resilient, innovative, and equitable health systems as strategic assets in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, and preparing for future health crises, consistent with our goal to achieve universal health coverage. We welcome the varied and continuous efforts, as well as the contribution of additional resources across APEC to combat the pandemic.

## **Economic and Trade Policies that Strengthen Recovery**

### Macro-economic policies and structural reform

10. The pandemic has triggered unprecedented macroeconomic policy responses, which have underpinned a rebound of economic activity in the region this year. However, the recovery is far from complete, and is characterised by great divergences across and within economies, which remain exposed to downside risks. We need to sustain our economic recovery through continued policy support measures, while preserving financial stability and long-term fiscal sustainability. In this context, we support action that responds to the ongoing economic and social impacts of the pandemic, including through the New Strategy for Implementation of the Cebu Action Plan.
11. The pandemic has highlighted the ongoing importance of structural reform in the APEC region. It is clear that our structural policy response needs to ensure a more inclusive and sustainable recovery, supporting innovation and making us more resilient to future economic shocks. To this end, we welcome the Enhanced APEC Agenda for Structural Reform (EAASR). Ensuring our macroeconomic and microeconomic policy responses are complementary will be key to the success of our long-term recovery. To achieve this we encourage greater collaboration between the APEC Economic Committee and APEC Finance Ministers' Process.
12. Services play an important role in determining the economic growth, productivity, and future prosperity of our region. We welcome the Summary Report of the APEC Services Competitiveness Roadmap Mid-Term Review (Annex 1), and note its assessment of the region's performance in services competitiveness. The mid-term review showed that while many of the initiatives that have been progressed since 2016 provide a solid foundation, we need to better target and continue to address those barriers that inhibit our service suppliers from competing or trading in services markets, and ensure that regulations promote fair competition and the adoption of new technologies. We endorse the

recommendations of the summary report, which chart a path for our region to achieve the Roadmap's targets by 2025.

### Trade and Investment

13. We underline the vital role trade has played in mitigating the impacts of the pandemic. Trade should be a pillar for the development and future prosperity of all our people. We want to enable our people to share in the benefits of trade, including through advancing economic inclusion. We reaffirm the contribution that trade can make in addressing important global and regional issues.
14. To ensure that the Asia-Pacific remains the world's most dynamic and interconnected regional economy, we will continue to work together to ensure our trade and investment environment is free, open, fair, non-discriminatory, transparent and predictable. We reaffirm our commitment to keep markets open, and to address supply chain disruptions, thereby fostering mutually beneficial trade relations and reducing trade tensions. We will continue to work to ensure a level playing field to foster a favourable trade and investment environment.
15. We will advance economic integration in the region in a manner that is market driven. We support ongoing efforts to conclude, ratify, implement and upgrade trade agreements in the region that benefit our people and our businesses. In this context, we will advance the APEC Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP) agenda in line with implementing the Lima Declaration, to contribute to high quality and comprehensive regional undertakings. We also note that ABAC considers the realisation of FTAAP its preeminent economic priority.
16. We will continue to support our businesses to build and maintain open, secure, and resilient supply chains to facilitate seamless connectivity in the region. We recognise the importance of promoting regional, sub-regional and remote area connectivity through quality infrastructure development and investment, based upon relevant APEC work. We welcome the Final Review of the APEC Supply-Chain Connectivity Framework Action Plan 2017-2020. We are committed to implementing the APEC Connectivity Blueprint, including through enhancing connectivity cooperation in the digital era.

### World Trade Organization

17. APEC takes pride in its long history of active support for the rules-based multilateral trading system (MTS), with the WTO at its core. The MTS has been a catalyst for our region's extraordinary growth and we will work together to improve it. We seek a responsive, relevant, and revitalised WTO. We must support the WTO and its membership to modernise trade rules for the twenty-first century. Together, we will engage constructively and cooperate to ensure the 12th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC12) is a success and delivers concrete results.
18. As a priority for MC12, we see an opportunity for the WTO to demonstrate that the MTS can continue to help address the human catastrophe of the COVID-19 pandemic and facilitate recovery. We call for pragmatic and effective ministerial outcomes that makes it easier to respond swiftly and effectively to the COVID-19 pandemic and accelerate the recovery. Our priorities include supporting the facilitation of manufacturing, distribution, and supply chains of essential medical goods, including vaccines. We will work proactively and urgently in Geneva to support text-based discussions, including on a temporary waiver of certain intellectual property protections on COVID-19 vaccines.
19. We reiterate our determination to negotiate effective disciplines on harmful fisheries subsidies in line with SDG 14.6, and call for agreement to a comprehensive and meaningful outcome by MC12 in a few weeks' time.

20. Despite its importance for ensuring global food security and sustainable economic development, agriculture is one of the most protected sectors in global trade. We recognise the need for a meaningful outcome on agriculture at MC12, reflecting our collective interests and sensitivities, with a view towards achieving substantial progressive reductions in support and protection, as envisaged in the continuation of the reform process provided in Article 20 of the WTO Agreement on Agriculture and existing mandates.
21. We recognise the positive role that existing plurilateral negotiations and discussions are playing in progressing outcomes. APEC member participants in the relevant Joint Statement Initiatives (JSIs) call for conclusion of negotiations on services domestic regulation by MC12; and substantial progress by MC12 in the JSIs on e-commerce; micro, small and medium-sized enterprises; and investment facilitation for development. We take note of the efforts by the APEC economies who endorsed the Joint Declaration on Trade and Women's Economic Empowerment to deliver an ambitious outcome at MC12 that supports the advancement of trade and gender equality.
22. We continued our frank and constructive discussions regarding improvement to the WTO's monitoring, negotiating and dispute settlement functions. We continue to support the ongoing and necessary reform work to improve the WTO's functioning, including the importance of making progress on enhancing transparency to support its monitoring and negotiating functions. We will work together at the WTO and with the wider WTO membership to advance the proper functioning of the WTO's negotiation and dispute settlement functions, which require addressing longstanding issues. We urge WTO members to seek a shared understanding of the types of reform needed.

## **Increasing Inclusion and Sustainability for Recovery**

### Inclusive Growth

23. Now more than ever, and as part of recovery from COVID-19, it is our responsibility to ensure our economic, financial and social policies, and our trade and investment environment, promote equality of opportunity, advance decent work and economic inclusion for all.
24. We will strive to ensure labour and social protection systems are responsive to both the effects of the pandemic and in the broader context of the changing nature of work and employment and evolution of labour markets globally. We will continue to strengthen information sharing to enhance re-skilling, up-skilling and flexible lifelong learning opportunities; create training opportunities for those entering the job market; encourage efforts that support the mobility of professional and academic qualifications; and increase other capacity building activities in this area.
25. As our economies adapt to the Fourth Industrial Revolution, we are cognisant of the challenges associated with the future of work. The pandemic has accelerated already rapid innovation and technological changes. We recognise the importance of structural reforms in enabling our economies to take forward policies to achieve economic inclusion and to adapt to the future of work. We welcome the 2021 APEC Economic Policy Report on "Structural Reform and the Future of Work" and encourage economies to implement its recommendations.
26. MSMEs play a significant role throughout our region, providing an essential foundation of employment and economic growth, and we remain committed to fostering greater participation of MSMEs in regional and global markets. To this end, we welcome the findings of the Final Review of the Boracay Action Agenda (BAA) to Globalize MSMEs Study

Report. There is still work to be done, especially regarding MSME digitalisation and access to finance.

27. We highlight the serious threat posed by corruption, which undermines government accountability and public trust and impedes economic growth. In times of crisis, corruption can be more pervasive and undermine relief and recovery efforts. To combat corruption and strengthen APEC economies in the future, we encourage effective and timely communication and cooperation between authorities. We will work to facilitate the implementation of the UN Convention against Corruption and coordinate the implementation of APEC's Beijing Declaration on Fighting Corruption and Santiago Commitment to Fight Corruption and Ensure Transparency. We reaffirm our commitment to deny safe haven to corruption offenders and their assets, in accordance with domestic laws, and to combat transnational corruption. We will promote transparency, accountability, integrity and a culture of rejection of corruption across our region, as a basis for preventing corruption and ending impunity. We are committed to learning from each other, taking practical action and a united approach, including through collaboration with other international organisations, the private sector and civil society, as appropriate. We will continue to address corruption that prevents women's empowerment and reduces their opportunities for economic development.
28. The pandemic has disproportionately affected women and girls of diverse backgrounds in our region, and created new challenges and barriers to women's economic empowerment. Recovery from the pandemic creates opportunities to support women's leadership and empowerment. We reaffirm the commitments made at the APEC 2021 Women and the Economy Forum, including to the full and accelerated implementation of the La Serena Roadmap for Women and Inclusive Growth 2019 – 2030. We reaffirm the Roadmap's Action Areas, and acknowledge the La Serena Implementation Plan Report, which notes there are a significant number of activities under way across APEC fora. We are strongly encouraged by APEC activities that seek to promote women's full and equal access to capital and markets, skills and capacity building, leadership opportunities, voice and agency, innovative technology, and the labour force, as well as activities to advance women's economic empowerment through sex-disaggregated data collection and analysis.
29. APEC has also paid particular attention to the economic empowerment of other groups with untapped economic potential. This year this has included Indigenous Peoples and those in rural and remote areas, among others. This work also included promoting economic empowerment through dialogue among Indigenous Peoples themselves. APEC's work has demonstrated the susceptibility of these groups to worsened economic and social conditions during the pandemic. We underline the importance of collecting and analysing disaggregated data in informing policy responses; promoting opportunities for these groups through e-commerce; strengthening food security; and the role of traditional knowledge in sustaining economic resilience.

#### Sustainable recovery and climate change

30. We acknowledge the need for urgent and concrete action to address climate change. We recognise the economic advantages of transitioning to a climate resilient future global economy and appreciate net zero or carbon neutrality commitments in this regard. Addressing climate change will require a multidisciplinary and cross-cutting approach involving relevant APEC committees and sub-fora.
31. APEC's contribution includes work on economic policies that contribute to reducing emissions, tackling climate change, and addressing environmental challenges. We welcome the topic of the 2022 APEC Economic Policy Report on "Structural Reform and a Green Recovery from Economic Shocks," which will provide a platform for economies to

share information and compare responsive and green policy approaches and their contribution to inclusive and sustainable growth.

32. Trade policy is also an effective tool for pursuing sustainable economic development, and enhancing access to goods and services that support low-emission and climate-resilient economies. We welcome the update for reference purposes of the 2012 APEC List of Environmental Goods. We welcome the APEC review of implementation of the 2012 list, the growth in trade of these products, and the contribution it has made to green growth and sustainable economic development objectives. Noting that environmental goods and technologies have evolved and cover a wide range of sectors, we instruct officials to develop recommendations for potentially producing a voluntary, non-binding reference list with a view to providing guidance for further work, and to update the APEC List of Environmental Goods to HS2022 for reference purposes. We encourage further discussions on the impact of non-tariff measures on trade in environmental goods and services, and on other regulatory measures that underpin the development of more sustainable supply chains.
33. We reaffirm APEC Economic Leaders' commitments to work on environmental services and note that these services are now more important than ever to prevent, protect against and remedy environmental degradation. We welcome and endorse the Reference List of Environmental and Environmentally Related Services (Annex 2) as a contribution by our region to global discussions on environmental services. We reaffirm MRT's instruction for officials to take forward discussions on how to increase trade in environmental and environmentally related services, including by supporting liberalisation, facilitation, and cooperation.
34. We recall that in 2010 APEC Leaders committed to rationalise and phase out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption, while recognising the importance of providing those in need with essential energy services. To reach this goal, we will continue our efforts in an accelerated manner. In this regard, we decided at MRT 2021 to task officials to explore options, for those members in a position to do so, to pursue a voluntary standstill on inefficient fossil fuel subsidies for progress to be reported to Ministers in November. We welcome the options, as reported by officials, that member economies could take to pursue a voluntary standstill on inefficient fossil fuels subsidies. We call for member economies to take forward discussions in 2022 to facilitate future implementation. We encourage officials to identify additional capacity building activities in support of this work. We appreciate the efforts of APEC members that have already completed voluntary peer reviews and urge others to participate in this process.
35. We recognise the essential role that stable and diverse energy supplies play in achieving sustainable economic development. As we invest in renewable energy and other environmentally sound technologies as part of sustainable energy transitions that reduce our dependence on fossil fuels, we will continue to work together to support energy resilience, access and security in the region. We acknowledge the importance of stable energy markets and supporting the clean energy transition.

#### Sustainable Resource Management

36. The APEC region is increasingly impacted by environmental degradation, natural disasters, rising sea levels, and biodiversity loss. We are committed to promoting trade in legally harvested forest products and combating illegal logging and associated trade. We welcome the achievement of the APEC-wide aspirational goal of increasing the forest cover in the region by at least 20 million hectares. We appreciate the economic growth potential of circular, sustainable, and green economy approaches, and support investment, research, and strengthening economic and technical cooperation in this area.

37. The Pacific Ocean connects our peoples, enables our economic development, supports the biodiversity and health of our planet, and plays a crucial role in supporting global food security. We support the sustainable management and conservation of ocean and coastal resources. We are committed to the implementation of the APEC Roadmaps on Marine Debris and on Combatting Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing. Reaffirming their important role in combatting Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, we will carry out robust and effective measures based on the principles of implementing the PSMA to Prevent, Deter, and Eliminate IUU Fishing.
38. The ongoing impact of COVID-19 is being felt throughout our region's food supply chains. We recognise there is no 'one-size-fits-all' approach to achieving well-functioning, sustainable food systems, which are critical to our people's health and well-being and the success of our economies. We support efforts to reduce food loss and waste, promote innovations in agricultural biotechnology, and identify other measures that support sustainability in food security. We welcome the Food Security Roadmap Towards 2030, which focuses on digitalisation and innovation, productivity, inclusivity and sustainability, and identifies actions and targets which APEC economies will pursue together to achieve our goal of sufficient, safe, nutritious, accessible and affordable food for all.

### **Pursuing Innovation and a Digitally-Enabled Recovery**

39. We recognise that science, technology and innovation are important for supporting the region's recovery from COVID-19, preparing economies for future changes and shocks, and creating quality employment. We need to seize the historic opportunities created by the technological revolution and industrial transformation, redouble efforts to boost productivity, and foster an open, fair, and inclusive environment for the development and application of science and technology.
40. It is important to bridge the digital divide to ensure that the benefits of digital transformation flow to all our people and businesses and that no one is left behind. We will invest in capacity building that fosters innovation and ensures that our people and businesses, especially start-ups and MSMEs, can access the digital tools and infrastructure they need to fully participate in an interconnected global economy. We also take note of work on smart cities. APEC should continue to share best practice for digital skills development and lifelong learning with a view to developing agile workforces that can adjust to disruptions, changing circumstances and the future of work.
41. We welcome progress made by APEC members to embed the paperless trading facilitation measures they adopted during COVID-19, including accepting electronic payments and electronic documentation as the legal equivalent of paper documents. To improve the resilience of supply chains to shocks and reduce costs for businesses and governments, we commit to continue this work towards the digitalisation of our border processes and single window interoperability, increase port cooperation, and accelerate the full implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement. We welcome the Guidelines for Paperless Trade, which will help update and improve customs procedures and legislative frameworks, so that all traders can engage with APEC customs authorities electronically.
42. We recognize the importance of data in addressing the unprecedented health and economic challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. We also recognise the need for an accessible, open, interoperable, reliable and secure environment for the use of information and communication technologies, as an essential foundation for economic growth and prosperity. We will cooperate on facilitating the flow of data and strengthening consumer and business trust in digital transactions, with a view to mitigating the health and economic impacts of COVID-19.

43. We affirm our commitment to supporting each other to harness the opportunities of the digital economy and technologies for enhancing economic growth and public benefit, while ensuring appropriate privacy protections. We support efforts to share information, cooperate and identify synergies, as we develop policies, plans, and programmes that support new technologies and their ecosystems.
44. We reiterate our call to accelerate implementation of the APEC Internet and Digital Economy Roadmap, prioritising action in the areas of greatest impact on inclusive economic growth, including digitalised trade facilitation and promoting interoperability.

### **Strengthening APEC as an Institution**

45. We will embrace continuous improvement of APEC as an institution to ensure that its structure and governance are future-oriented and fit for the purpose of implementing the Putrajaya Vision 2040. We take note of progress made in 2021 towards streamlining APEC, and urge ongoing efforts to ensure that its committees and sub-fora are efficient, effective, relevant, responsive and accountable.
46. We reaffirm the importance of cooperation, capacity building, cross-fora collaboration, and engagement between APEC and regional and international organizations. We will strive to ensure that APEC's work continues to take into account a broad range of stakeholder views and perspectives.
47. We endorse the Senior Officials' Meeting Chair's Report of APEC's work for 2021. We endorse the Committee on Trade and Investment Annual Report to Ministers and note the Senior Officials' report on Economic and Technical Cooperation. We also note the ABAC Chair's report. We welcome the APEC Secretariat Executive Director continuing in her role for another three years from 2022 to 2024. We approve the 2022 APEC budget and thank members for their contributions including to general and specialised sub funds.
48. We thank New Zealand for hosting APEC in 2021 and look forward to APEC 2022, which will be hosted by Thailand.

*Haumi ē, Hui ē, Tāiki ē.*

*Join, Work, Grow. Together.*

### **Annexes**

1. Summary Report of the APEC Services Competitiveness Roadmap Mid-Term Review
2. Reference List of Environmental and Environmentally Related Services

## Annex 1

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### **Summary Report and Recommendations APEC Services Competitiveness Roadmap Mid-term Review**

*Renewing ambition of the APEC Services Competitiveness Roadmap (2016-2025) for a services-led recovery from COVID-19*

#### **CONTEXT & ANALYSIS**

In 2016, Leaders committed to a mid-term review of the APEC Services Competitiveness Roadmap (ASCR) in 2021 with a view to assessing what individual and APEC-wide actions will be required to complete the objectives by 2025. This paper summarises, for Leaders / Ministers, the reviews by the APEC Policy Support Unit (PSU) and APEC Business Advisory Council, as well as the outcomes of the Group on Services Trade Policy Dialogue on 19 May 2021. As a reminder, the three ASCR targets are to:

1. Ensure an open and predictable environment for access to services markets by progressively reducing restrictions to services trade and investment;
2. Increase the share (%) of services exports from APEC economies in the total world services exports so that it exceeds the current share in world services exports by 2025 (*the APEC's share of world services exports was 38.8 percent in 2014*); and
3. Increase trade in services in the APEC region so that by 2025, the compound average annual growth rate exceeds the historic average of 6.8 percent and the share (%) of value-added of the services sector in the total gross domestic product of the APEC region exceeds the global average level by 2025.

#### **I. Taking stock**

It is clear that there has been, and continues to be, a significant volume of work carried out across APEC economies in advancing the objectives of the ASCR. While this work and the many positive outcomes to date provide a solid foundation, APEC economies will need to do more targeted work to get back on track to meet the first 2025 target to progressively reduce restrictions to services trade and investment. While some sectors have become more open (logistics, architecture, engineering and banking), others have become more restrictive (road freight transport, accounting and telecommunications).

APEC economies collectively experienced year-to-year increases in services exports from 2016 to 2019 but those increases did not keep pace with total world services exports. Hence, unlike as envisaged in the ASCR's second target of increasing APEC's share of world services exports by 2025, APEC's share dropped from 38.8% in 2016 to 38.1% in 2019.

There was mixed progress on the third 2025 target. Prior to COVID-19, APEC economies were not on track to meet the target compound average annual growth rate in trade in services of 6.8%. The rate was 5.3% over 2016-2019, with a rate of just 1.1% in 2019. However, APEC economies were still on track to meet the target that the GDP share of services value-added across APEC outperformed the world on average. In 2019, APEC recorded a share 0.7% higher than the global average, but the gap had narrowed since 2016.

Of the 19 APEC-wide actions, data indicated some positive progress had been made toward the stated objectives of 10 actions, but there was mixed progress in relation to four actions and comparative data was not available in relation to five of the actions.

Summary of APEC PSU's ASCR Mid-term Review Recommendations	
<b>Recommendation 1</b>	<b>Accelerate implementation of specific APEC-wide actions:</b> Strategies can include identifying certain APEC-wide actions as priority areas, identifying champion economies and linking APEC-wide actions with work plan of accountable fora.
<b>Recommendation 2</b>	<b>Update set targets and outputs in each APEC-wide action and clearly associate activities with them:</b> Where original targets and outputs have been achieved, accountable fora should deliberate on the next steps. Where progress is lagging behind specific targets, targets should be reconsidered and recalibrated.
<b>Recommendation 3</b>	<b>Respond to COVID-19 decisively and concretely:</b> Steps and updates which economies and fora should consider include rationalization of policies affecting digital trade, further de jure and de facto market opening, dealing with regulatory heterogeneity, and attenuating social costs.
<b>Recommendation 4</b>	<b>Leverage cross-fora collaboration and capture all relevant activities:</b> Assigning each APEC-wide action to accountable fora helps in strengthening ownership, but more should be done to leverage cross-fora collaboration and to ensure that all relevant activities, particularly those outside the purview of the accountable fora, are captured accordingly.
<b>Recommendation 5</b>	<b>Ensure better synergy between ASCR and other APEC initiatives:</b> It is critical that ASCR be realigned to help realize the APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040. Other initiatives where there is room to enhance synergy include APEC Internet and Digital Economy Roadmap (AIDER), the La Serena Roadmap for Women and Inclusive Growth, and Enhanced APEC Agenda for Structural Reform (EAASR).
<b>Recommendation 6</b>	<b>Enhance engagement with the private sector:</b> The private sector is the main beneficiaries, the providers, and the users of services. Further and deeper engagement with the private sector to partake in deliberating, calibrating, and executing the ASCR should be continued.
<b>Recommendation 7</b>	<b>Continue to improve services data and statistics:</b> Improving the state of services data and statistics in the region would assist in monitoring the roadmap implementation, and in better equipping policymakers to plan and make evidence-based decisions.
<b>Recommendation 8</b>	<b>Undertake complementary, measurable, concrete activities:</b> Activities such as information-sharing workshops need to be supplemented with follow-up activities to support economies in undertaking tangible and measurable reforms.

## II. COVID-19 challenges and opportunities

COVID-19 has had a major impact on services trade in APEC; although there are some reasons for optimism, it is too early to assess the long-term impacts. The fall in services trade was much larger and recovery slower than the case for goods trade. WTO data shows goods trade was down by 3% in the third quarter of 2020 and up 6% in the fourth quarter, year on year. In comparison, trade in services was down by 24% in the third quarter of 2020 and by 19% in the fourth quarter.

Both consumer preferences to avoid in-person interactions and social distancing restrictions by economies severely limited face-to-face services trade, especially across

borders. However, there have been substantial shifts of some types of in-person interactions to online.

Impact on services sectors varied greatly. The large declines in 2020 were driven by a dramatic collapse in trade in travel, transportation and construction services. Although results for domestic travel and tourism, telecommunications and business services were mixed, financial and insurance services generally increased; this was not sufficient to offset the direct COVID-related impacts on travel and related services, however.

Data suggests announced greenfield investment in services sectors in 2020 compared to 2019 declined within APEC by 37%. Investment from APEC economies to non-APEC economies fell by 24%. This has negatively impacted services trade via commercial presence.

Estimates suggest 255 million full time jobs were lost worldwide. In many economies, the services sector employs large numbers of women, as well as individuals from other groups with untapped economic potential in some sectors. Job losses in services have a larger impact on these populations.

Governments took active steps to support affected businesses; however, of the 378 support measures tracked within APEC economies, 94% were assessed as harmful to trade liberalisation more generally as they discriminated against foreign firms.

Despite these challenges, it is important to recognise that the services sector will play a crucial role in facilitating the economic recovery of all APEC economies coming out of the pandemic.

The pandemic accelerated the shift towards services and the use of digital technologies in production, such as digital marketplaces, automation, and related software. This increased services-intensity in production will improve productivity and drive growth. While this creates opportunities for firms and workers, the overall impact will depend on the feasibility of using of digital technologies, the ability of workers to learn new skills, and the availability of education opportunities to reskill the workforce in a changing context. There will be a major role for governments in dealing with adjustment pressures and costs.

The pandemic saw governments experiment with the easing of regulations in some areas, such as remote health consultation and diagnosis. There is opportunity to reflect on regulatory experimentations and share best practices in preparation for post pandemic recovery.

As APEC member economies seek to promote economic recovery from the pandemic, there are significant opportunities to promote structural reform of key services sectors. The 2016 APEC Economic Policy Report on Structural Reform and Services highlighted how structural reform of the most restricted services sectors had the potential to promote both significant productivity gains and increases in trade in services. It will be important for the Committee on Trade and Investment and the Economic Committee to collaborate in supporting efforts by member economies to institute such reforms.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENDORSEMENT BY APEC ECONOMIES**

### **III. Proposed additional targets/initiatives for 2025**

- Measures adopted by APEC economies in response to the pandemic that create barriers to trade in services to be wound back in 2022, with the aim of removing them, as conditions in each economy permit, and no later than 2023. APEC economies should continue to ensure consistency of any such barriers with their World Trade Organization (WTO) and preferential trade agreement obligations and commitments.

- Strive towards full participation by APEC economies in key multilateral processes related to services trade and investment, including:
  - WTO Joint Statement Initiative on Services Domestic Regulation;
  - WTO Joint Statement Initiative on E-commerce;
  - WTO Joint Statement Initiative on Investment Facilitation for Development.
- Strive towards full participation by APEC member economies in:
  - APEC Business Travel Card (including accepting Virtual APEC Business Travel Cards).
- Expanded participation by APEC member economies in:
  - the Asia Region Funds Passport;
  - the Index to Measure the Regulatory Environment in Services Trade of APEC.
- Encourage discussion towards wider implementation and adoption of the APEC Cross Border Privacy Rules System by interested APEC economies and companies.

#### **IV. Proposed priority activities to 2025**

- Make services regulation and policy reform in favour of openness a central focus of APEC's structural reform agenda, including in relation to:
  - consistency with the APEC Non-binding Principles for Domestic Regulation of the Services Sector;
  - regulatory challenges dealing with digitalization and automation;
  - regulatory inefficiency and obstacles to establishing a commercial presence.
- Coordination on identifying and reducing regulatory heterogeneity that restrict services provision in order to improve interoperability among APEC economies, including:
  - MSME participation in global value chains to provide research, technical and design services as well as advertising, marketing and repair services, among other areas;
  - digital services standards, particularly in relation to digital transactions and data;
  - mobility of professional services, including mutual recognition arrangements;
  - cross-border trade in financial services, including by exploring interoperability between participating economies in the Asia Region Funds Passport and other schemes;
  - trade in environmental services
- Collective action on protocols, procedures, and the application of technology to facilitate the movement of people, including the APEC Business Travel Card, as applicable, as travel re-opens post COVID-19.
- Enhanced private services sector engagement across the breadth of APEC's agenda, including a private-public dialogue series on the implication of regional servicification, which relates to the growing role of services in manufacturing activities and value chains.
- Improved monitoring, reporting and transparency of the impact of APEC-wide actions, including:
  - where relevant, updating targets of APEC wide actions and identifying measurable indicators<sup>1</sup>;
  - collecting information using a common framework to improve comparison of the impact of policy changes affecting services trade in APEC member economies;

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to PSU recommendation number 2 from the ASCR Mid-term Review.

- promoting the collection of more meaningful services statistics across APEC economies, including:
  - on foreign affiliate trade in services (FATS);
  - intra-APEC trade in services; and
  - to enable identification of services subsectors at a more granular level.
- strengthening cross-fora collaboration, including through a formal cross-fora collaborative event on services at the margins of the annual Second Senior Officials' Meeting cluster, to reduce duplication of effort and increase the impact through the promotion of ongoing monitoring and evaluation of progress by 2025.

## Annex 2

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### **Reference List of Environmental and Environmentally Related Services**

Reiterating the key role that APEC plays in supporting green growth in our region;

Committed to finding common understanding in approaches to trade and environment issues and taking coordinated action to address environmental challenges, including climate change, while recognising each economy has its own policies;

Recognising the important role that trade in services plays in driving economic growth, productivity and prosperity, and ensuring that the Asia-Pacific remains the world's most dynamic and interconnected regional economy;

Responding to our Leaders' endorsement of the APEC-wide action of supporting liberalisation of, facilitation of and cooperation on environmental services, under the Environmental Services Action Plan, in the APEC Services Competitiveness Roadmap;

Committed to enhancing trade in services that are needed to protect our environment and noting that supporting liberalisation of, facilitation of and cooperation on environmental services will increase access to such services, directly benefiting the environment;

Noting recent work relating to environmental services that has been carried out by APEC's Group on Services, including the report '[Environmental Services in the APEC Region: Definition, Challenges and Opportunities](#)';

We endorse the below APEC Reference List of Environmental and Environmentally Related Services.

This list has been developed utilising the following principles:

*Environmentally related services are services considered by APEC economies:*

- (i) to directly relate to environmental conditions (including CPC Prov. Division 94, commonly considered to be core "environmental services"); or*
- (ii) to directly contribute to the design, construction and operation of facilities or equipment determined to improve environmental conditions.*

*Professional services included in the list are considered environmentally related when they require specific training or knowledge regarding the environmental impact of such facilities.*

This non-binding and non-exhaustive Reference List has been developed on a voluntary basis by the APEC Economies, and is open for future review as determined by Economies, with the first review to take place within two years. When reviewing the Reference List, Economies are encouraged to take scientific factors into consideration to ensure the environmental benefits of those services listed and identify other potential services for inclusion. The environmental and environmentally related services listed below represent Economies' best knowledge and efforts to contribute to classification efforts and take into account different perspectives that may apply in central or local environmental regulations.<sup>2</sup>

As the first voluntary and evolving Reference List of its kind, we hope that this will be a valuable resource for ongoing discussions in APEC.

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<sup>2</sup> For further guidance, this Reference List can be read alongside the [UN Statistics Division – Classifications on economic statistics](#).

## APEC REFERENCE LIST OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND ENVIRONMENTALLY RELATED SERVICES

*Group 1: Services that are environmentally related of themselves, being directly related to environmental conditions.*

<b>CPC 2.1</b>	<b>CPC 2.1 Description</b>	<b>CPC Prov.</b>	<b>CPC Prov. Description</b>	<b>Indicative beneficial relation to environmental conditions</b>
81139 ex	Experimental development services in other natural sciences [environmental sciences not elsewhere classified]	85109 ex	Research and experimental development services on other natural sciences [environmental sciences not elsewhere classified]	Environmental monitoring, analysis or assessment
83221 ex	Urban planning services [studies of environmental impact and economic assessments of urban development plans]	86741 ex	Urban planning services [studies of environmental impact and economic assessments of urban development plans]	Environmental monitoring, analysis or assessment
83231 ex	Landscape architectural advisory services [related to natural landscapes]	86742 ex	Landscape architectural services [advisory services related to natural landscapes]	Protection of biodiversity or landscape (incl. natural resources protection)
83232 ex	Landscape architectural services [related to natural landscapes]	86742 ex	Landscape architectural services [related to natural landscapes]	Protection of biodiversity or landscape (incl. natural resources protection)
83411 ex	Geological and geophysical consulting services [related to groundwater]	86751 ex	Geological, geophysical and other scientific prospecting services [consulting services related to groundwater]	Water supply or treatment
83411 ex	Geological and geophysical consulting services [related to the evaluation of geological, geophysical and geochemical anomalies]	86751 ex	Geological, geophysical and other scientific prospecting services [consulting services related to the evaluation of	Natural risk management; Solid or hazardous waste management

			geological, geophysical and geochemical anomalies]	
83412 ex	Geophysical services [related to carbon, capture and storage]	86751 ex	Geological, geophysical and other scientific prospecting services [related to carbon, capture and storage]	Environmental monitoring, analysis or assessment; Air pollution control or avoidance
		86752 ex	Subsurface surveying services [related to carbon, capture and storage]	
83412 ex	Geophysical services [related to natural risk management]	86751 ex	Geological, geophysical and other scientific prospecting services [related to natural risk management]	Environmental monitoring, analysis or assessment; Natural risk management
		86752 ex	Subsurface surveying services [related to natural risk management]	
83931	Environmental consulting services	86729	Other engineering services [related to environmental consulting]	Environmental monitoring, analysis or assessment
85340 ex	Specialized cleaning services [Cleaning services for reservoirs and tanks, these being parts of either industrial sites; furnace and chimney cleaning services; cleaning of furnaces, incinerators, boilers, ventilation ducts and exhaust units]	87409 ex	Other building cleaning services [Cleaning services for reservoirs and tanks, these being parts of either industrial sites; furnace and chimney cleaning services; cleaning of furnaces, incinerators, boilers, ventilation ducts and exhaust units]	Air pollution control or avoidance; Environmental remediation or clean-up
85970 ex	Landscape care and maintenance services [Planting, care and maintenance services of stationary and flowing water (basins, alternating wet areas, ponds, ditches, watercourses, sewage-treatment systems) and of plants for protection against noise, wind, erosion, visibility and dazzling]	96499 ex	Other recreational services n.e.c. [Planting, care and maintenance services of stationary and flowing water (basins, alternating wet areas, ponds, ditches, watercourses, sewage-treatment systems) and of plants for protection against noise, wind, erosion, visibility and dazzling]	Noise or vibration abatement; Protection of biodiversity or landscape (incl. natural resources protection); Wastewater management

89410	Metal waste and scrap recovery (recycling) services, on a fee or contract basis	88493	Recycling on a fee or contract basis	Solid or hazardous waste management
89420	Non-metal waste and scrap recovery (recycling) services, on a fee or contract basis			Solid or hazardous waste management
94110	Sewerage and sewage treatment services	94010	Sewage services	Wastewater management
94120	Septic tank emptying and cleaning services			Wastewater management
94211	Collection services of hazardous medical and other biohazardous waste	94020	Refuse disposal services	Solid or hazardous waste management
94212	Collection services of industrial hazardous waste (except medical and other biohazardous waste)			Solid or hazardous waste management
94219	Collection services of other hazardous waste			Solid or hazardous waste management
94221	Collection services of non-hazardous recyclable materials, residential			Solid or hazardous waste management
94229	Collection services of non-hazardous recyclable materials, other			Solid or hazardous waste management
94231	General waste collection services, residential			Solid or hazardous waste management
94239	General waste collection services, other			Solid or hazardous waste management
94311	Hazardous waste preparation, consolidation and storage services			Solid or hazardous waste management
94312	Ship-breaking and other dismantling of wrecks services			Solid or hazardous waste management
94313	Non-hazardous recyclable materials preparation, consolidation and storage services			Solid or hazardous waste management

94319	Other non-hazardous waste preparation, consolidation and storage services			Solid or hazardous waste management
94321	Hazardous waste treatment services			Solid or hazardous waste management
94322	Hazardous waste disposal services			Solid or hazardous waste management
94331	Sanitary landfill services, non-hazardous waste			Solid or hazardous waste management
94332	Other landfill services, non-hazardous waste			Solid or hazardous waste management
94333	Incineration of non-hazardous waste			Solid or hazardous waste management
94339	Other non-hazardous waste treatment and disposal services			Solid or hazardous waste management; Production of cleaner or renewable energy
94411	Site remediation and clean-up services, air	94090	Other environmental protection services n.e.c.	Environmental remediation or clean-up
94412	Site remediation and clean-up services, surface water			Environmental remediation or clean-up
94413	Site remediation and clean-up services, soil and groundwater			Environmental remediation or clean-up
94420	Containment, control and monitoring services and other site remediation services n.e.c.			Environmental remediation or clean-up
94430	Building remediation services			Environmental remediation or clean-up
94490	Other remediation services n.e.c.			Environmental remediation or clean-up

94510	Sweeping and snow removal services	94030	Sanitation and similar services	Environmental remediation or clean-up
94590	Other sanitation services			Environmental remediation or clean-up
94900	Other environmental protection services n.e.c.	94040	Cleaning services of exhaust gases	Air pollution control or avoidance; Noise or vibration abatement
		94050	Noise abatement services	
		94060	Nature and landscape protection services	
		94090	Other environmental protection services n.e.c.	
96422	Nature reserve services including wildlife preservation services	96332	Nature reserve services including wildlife preservation services	Protection of biodiversity or landscape (incl. natural resources protection)

*Group 2: Services that may be environmentally related when used for the design, construction and operation of certain facilities or equipment intended to improve environmental conditions, or for purposes that are determined to be environmentally beneficial by competent regulators (for example, with respect to projects related to renewable energy, pollution abatement, wastewater management, etc.).*

<b>CPC 2.1</b>	<b>CPC 2.1 Description</b>	<b>CPC Prov.</b>	<b>CPC Prov. Description</b>	<b>Indicative beneficial relation to environmental conditions</b>
54233	General construction services of dams	51330 ex	Construction work for civil engineering for waterways, harbours, dams and other waterworks [for dams]	Production of cleaner or renewable energy
54234	General construction services of irrigation and flood control waterworks	51330 ex	Construction work for civil engineering for waterways, harbours, dams and other	Natural risk management

			waterworks [for irrigation and flood control waterworks]	
54241	General construction services of long-distance pipelines	51340	Construction work for civil engineering for long distance pipelines, communication and power lines (cables)	Production of cleaner or renewable energy
54242	General construction services of long-distance communication and power lines			Production of cleaner or renewable energy
54251	General construction services of local pipelines	51350	Construction work for civil engineering for local pipelines and cables; ancillary works	Production of cleaner or renewable energy; Wastewater management; Water supply or treatment
54252	General construction services of local cables and related works			Production of cleaner or renewable energy
54253	General construction services of sewage and water treatment plants	51390	Construction work for civil engineering for engineering works n.e.c.	Wastewater management; Water supply or treatment
54262	General construction services of power plants	51360	Construction work for civil engineering for constructions for mining and manufacturing	Production of cleaner or renewable energy
54290	General construction services of other civil engineering works	51390	Construction work for civil engineering for engineering works n.e.c.	Solid or hazardous waste management; Wastewater management; Water supply or treatment
54320	Site formation and clearance services	51130	Site formation and clearance work	Environmental monitoring, analysis or assessment
54330	Excavating and earthmoving services	51140	Excavating and earthmoving work	Environmental remediation or clean-up

54342	Septic system installation services	51620 ex	Water plumbing and drain laying work [Septic system installation services]	Wastewater management
54650	Insulation services	51650	Insulation work (electrical wiring, water, heat, sound)	Improvement of energy efficiency
8321	Architectural services and advisory services	8671	Architectural services	Improvement of energy efficiency
83324	Engineering services for power projects	86729	Other engineering services	Production of cleaner or renewable energy
83326	Engineering services for waste-management projects (hazardous and non-hazardous)			Solid or hazardous waste management; Wastewater management
83327	Engineering services for water, sewerage and drainage projects			Solid or hazardous waste management; Wastewater management; Water supply or treatment
83441	Composition and purity testing and analysis services	86761	Composition and purity testing and analysis services	Environmental monitoring, analysis or assessment; Air pollution control or avoidance; Environmental remediation or clean-up; Solid or hazardous waste management; Wastewater management
83442	Testing and analysis services of physical properties	86762	Testing and analysis services of physical properties	Improvement of energy efficiency;

				Environmental monitoring, analysis or assessment
87152 ex	Maintenance and repair services of electrical machinery and apparatus n.e.c	88640	Repair services of electrical machinery and apparatus n.e.c., on a fee or contract basis	Production of cleaner or renewable energy