

**Joint Ministerial Statement
The 2nd APEC Ocean-Related Ministerial Meeting (AOMM2)**

Bali, 16-17 September 2005

BALI PLAN OF ACTION

**Towards Healthy Oceans and Coasts for the Sustainable Growth and
Prosperity of the Asia-Pacific Community**

Recognizing that healthy oceans and coasts are particularly crucial for food security, poverty alleviation and sustainable and equitable economic growth as well as environmental and resource sustainability in the Asia-Pacific region;

Mindful of the need for conservation and sustainable management of marine resources, responsible fishing and aquaculture practices, including improved management, enforcement and monitoring, the use of best available science and technology, as well as the need for capacity-building and technology transfer;

Noting the findings of the 2005 Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture Report, that since the 1950s there has been a consistent increase in the proportion of marine fish stocks classified as overexploited or depleted, underscoring the urgent need for action;

Mindful of the need to enhance public awareness of the importance of oceans and seas, and to better integrate our oceans management activities to promote the sustainability of the marine environment and resources, and of the need to accelerate ocean outreach programs engaging relevant stakeholders in APEC fora;

Acknowledging the instructions of the APEC Economic Leaders, the guiding principles of the Seoul Oceans Declaration (SOD), and responsibilities under oceans and fisheries instruments, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement (UNFSA), the FAO Compliance Agreement, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES) and commitments in the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, internationally-agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, and commitments through the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); and,

Taking into account APEC's basic principles *inter-alia*, of cooperation, voluntary participation, mutual respect, flexibility and open regionalism;

We, the APEC Ocean-related Ministers, reaffirm our commitment to progress the 2002 Seoul Oceans Declaration by taking, subject to available resources and capabilities, substantial and concrete steps to balance sustainable management of marine resources and the marine environment with economic growth.

We, therefore, are determined to work domestically, regionally, and internationally, in the near to mid-term (2006-2009), towards:

- I. ensuring the sustainable management of the marine environment and its resources;
- II. providing for sustainable economic benefits from the oceans; and,
- III. enabling sustainable development of coastal communities.

We commit to reporting regularly on progress on the implementation of these actions, domestically and within APEC, and to strengthen the exchange of views and information with other related APEC fora and related regional and international organizations, in view of identifying overlaps and joint programs.

I. Ensuring the sustainable management of the marine environment and its resources

To achieve this goal, it is necessary to: a) understand oceans, seas and coasts; b) manage the marine environment sustainably; and, c) manage living resources sustainably.

I.a. Understanding oceans, seas and coasts

A clear and comprehensive understanding of the oceans, seas and coasts will enable APEC member economies to accurately assess their potential and to manage them appropriately. To these ends, we are determined to carry out the following concrete actions:

Oceans Observations and Data Collection

A better understanding of the nature and functions of the oceans, seas and coasts and resources requires capacity and cooperation to collect and share the necessary information for informed decision-making.

- i. Build the capacity of APEC economies to conform to the FAO Strategy for Fisheries Status and Trends Report, and increase the number of APEC economies providing comprehensive data on fisheries to relevant regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs), including reporting on the impacts of fishing;
- ii. Strengthen regional research and data-sharing partnerships for Pacific and Indian Ocean *in-situ* observations to enhance global observations in the oceans and coasts;
- iii. Encourage the relevant APEC economies to participate in the Group on Earth Observations (GEO) and carry out the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS) implementation plan;
- iv. Increase technical cooperation, assistance and capacity building to enable relevant APEC members to implement the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS);
- v. Promote more active implementation of open, free and unrestricted, and at or near real-time sharing of relevant observational data for predictions, forecasts, watches and warnings, consistent with international obligations and domestic legislation;
- vi. Further develop the Ocean Models and Information Systems for APEC Region (OMISAR) as part of a regional contribution to GEOSS;
- vii. Promote the collection and sharing of information on the effects of climatic changes, including changes in sea levels and potential impact in the region;
- viii. Exchange research and information on ecosystems to ensure conservation and sustainable management;

- ix. Exchange research and information on those marine invasive species posing a risk to biosecurity in the Asia Pacific region;

Understanding the value of the marine sector

A better understanding of the short-term and long-term market and non-market value of the marine sector would better enable stakeholders and decision makers to achieve sustainable, integrated marine management.

- x. Study the market and non-market value of the marine environment and marine industries in the Asia-Pacific region, including by undertaking research, communication and information exchange on marine activities.

I.b. Managing the marine environment sustainably

Sustainable management of activities in the marine environment within the Asia-Pacific region should be aimed at improving the condition and productivity of marine and coastal ecosystems. We commit, where appropriate, to undertake the following actions:

Ecosystem-based Management

Sustainability of the environment is achieved through a holistic approach, whereby ecosystems are identified and managed as units with a range of interdependent components. There is a need to better understand these systems and manage the impact of human activities on them.

- i. Develop an agreed set of factors to be applied in defining marine ecosystems in the Asia-Pacific region, and establish a key set of variables to monitor and to assess changes in these ecosystems;
- ii. Initiate the identification of ecologically and biologically significant areas and apply, as appropriate, area-based measures, such as marine protected areas, consistent with international law and based on best available scientific information, to manage and conserve these areas;
- iii. Increase sharing of best practices on the roles and function of the business and private sectors and communities in the sustainability of marine environment, and promote their involvement;
- iv. Improve understanding and management of the impacts of human activities, including fishing practices and aquaculture, on environmental health and productivity;

Marine Pollution

Pollution in a variety of forms (i.e. physical, chemical and biological), presents a direct threat to the health and productivity of the oceans, seas and coasts and requires specific action to avoid and minimize the negative effects.

- v. Encourage relevant APEC economies to reduce land-based sources of marine pollution, both domestically and regionally, by implementing the UNEP Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities

- (GPA), and supporting its advancement through participation in the 2nd Intergovernmental Review of the GPA in China in 2006;
- vi. Study, in cooperation with UNEP GPA, the economic drivers that contribute to land-based sources of marine pollution;
 - vii. Support international and regional cooperation, consistent with international obligations, on the prevention and control of sea-based pollution of the marine environment from various sources including oil spills and discharges from vessels;
 - viii. Support efforts to address derelict fishing gear and derelict vessels, including the implementation of recommendations from research already undertaken in the APEC context;
 - ix. Identify ways to: analyse ocean circulation, wind and drift patterns in the Asia-Pacific region, areas of accumulation and likely impacts; improve understanding of the harmful effects and costs of marine debris; improve understanding of impediments to proper disposal and recovery; and determine focal points to compile and disseminate member economy expertise and information and create practical guidelines, in cooperation with FAO and other relevant bodies;

Marine Invasive Species

Marine invasive species pose a threat to the region's marine species, ecosystems, and economy. There is a need to take appropriate action to limit introductions of marine invasive species and to further develop frameworks to manage incursions.

- x. Continue to develop and implement the Regional Management Framework for APEC Economies for Use in the Control and Prevention of Introduced Marine Pests, specifically in the support of the establishment of a network and capacity building;
- xi. Promote early ratification or adherence, as it is appropriate for the economy, to the IMO Ballast Water Convention and prepare for the requirements of the IMO Ballast Water Convention, including through investigation of a coordinated regional approach to marine invasive species in the Pacific Basin, with the involvement of IMO, FAO, APEC, South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), Permanent Commission of the South Pacific (CPPS) and other relevant organizations;
- xii. Reduce introductions of marine invasive species through all vectors, by increased training of officials to prevent and manage marine invasive species and to implement domestic, regional and international requirements; and cooperation to establish scientific networks and information exchange;
- xiii. Increase the communication among APEC fora relevant to addressing marine invasive species;

Coral Reefs and Other Vulnerable Areas

Because marine and coastal features, including shallow and deep water coral reefs, mangroves, seagrass beds, wetlands and seamounts, serve particularly valuable roles in the maintenance of marine productivity and biodiversity, sustaining coastal integrity, and are important in the socioeconomic and cultural development of coastal communities, special effort is required to maintain these systems.

- xiv. Improve the conservation of vulnerable areas by: managing activities having a destructive impact on these areas and associated species, based on the best available scientific information; increasing monitoring and research; and enhancing local management, as appropriate, to maintain environmental and economic benefits;
- xv. In particular, support the efforts of International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI), and International Coral Reef Action Network (ICRAN) and other domestic and regional initiatives to ensure coral reef conservation, including by decreasing marine debris and addressing destructive practices such as reef bombing and cyanide fishing;
- xvi. Improve, through education and outreach efforts, public understanding of: the importance of corals, sea grass beds and mangrove areas to the overall marine ecosystem and to sustaining economic benefits; and, how to avoid degradation;
- xvii. Encourage member economies to develop their own sustainable coastal policies and integrated coastal management plans, to accommodate the conservation and protection of those vulnerable areas;
- xviii. Support international and regional efforts on the protection of wetlands and the promotion of wetland awareness.

I.c. Managing living resources sustainably

Managing resources sustainably is an integral component of the process towards achieving a healthy and productive marine environment. Accordingly, we commit, where appropriate, to undertake the following actions:

International Fisheries Governance

The shared nature of the oceans and their resources has resulted in a variety of multilateral instruments (i.e. regimes, institutions and norms) that represent the fundamental standards and means for cooperatively and sustainably managing fisheries resources. It is important that such instruments are supported.

- i. Increase the number of APEC economies that ratify, or adhere to, UNCLOS, UNFSA, FAO Compliance Agreement, and effectively implement provisions domestically and in RFMOs in which they are a member;
- ii. Increase the number of APEC economies that are a party to, or a cooperating non-member of, all relevant RFMOs, and cooperate in establishing new RFMOs, where gaps exist;
- iii. Increase the number of APEC economies that implement the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, Strategy for Status and Trends, and International Plans of Action on Seabirds, Sharks, Fishing Capacity, and Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing;

Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture Management

Fisheries resources contribute not only to food security and local livelihoods but they support widespread commercial activity and are a key economic driver of the region. Dedicated efforts to ensure the long-term sustainability of these resources is of fundamental importance.

- iv. Engage in fisheries management reform, where appropriate, including through RFMO reform, by advocating the application of an ecosystem approach to fisheries management, improving

- decision-making processes to reflect a precautionary approach, ensuring capacity does not exceed long-term resource sustainability, enhancing monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) programs, and establishing adequate sanctions to achieve deterrence;
- v. Strengthen efforts to combat IUU fishing including by pursuing the use of at-sea, port-state and trade-related measures, in accordance with international law, as key compliance tools, through APEC capacity building and sharing of best practices, and strengthen efforts to collaborate through MCS regimes and the MCS Network;
 - vi. Identify mechanisms to better manage fishing capacity, such as through projects that facilitate the sharing of APEC economy experiences in fishing capacity reduction and adjustment, to help ensure a balance between such capacity and long-term resource sustainability;
 - vii. Investigate the role and contribution of data collected by GEOSS to achieving sustainable fisheries;
 - viii. Support capacity building and market-based conservation tools for live reef fish, including codes of conduct for sustainable trade in reef food and ornamental fish and measures, as appropriate, for eco-labelling of reef fish;
 - ix. Assist APEC economies with implementing measures to reduce bycatch resulting in unintentional mortality. These include potential projects on capacity building and technical assistance to reduce bycatch and mortality of species incidentally caught, including marine turtles, in fisheries operations, by demonstrating the benefits of mitigating technology;
 - x. Develop programs to help developing economies contribute to marine turtle conservation based on FAO Guidelines to Reduce Sea Turtle Mortality in Fishing Operations as well as to help implement, as appropriate, the Indian Ocean and South-east Asia (IOSEA) Turtle Memorandum of Understanding, and the Inter-American Convention on the Protection and Conservation of Marine Turtles;
 - xi. Develop the capacity of APEC economies to implement domestic plans of action for shark conservation and management;
 - xii. Develop a better understanding of the interaction between climate and fisheries in the Asia-Pacific region;
 - xiii. Improve the protection of critical sites for the replenishment of fisheries, such as spawning and aggregation sites;
 - xiv. Develop an APEC strategy on sustainable aquaculture;
 - xv. Support efforts by APEC economies to cooperate with FAO to improve knowledge of deep sea fisheries species.

II Providing for Sustained Economic Benefits from Oceans

It is crucial that APEC member economies develop effective and practical steps to realize the full economic potential of the ocean resources of the region by striving to achieve the APEC goals of trade and investment liberalization and facilitation, taking account of conservation and sustainable management of living marine resources. Institutional capacity building and technical assistance is needed at all stages of the production and distribution chain. Hence, we commit to the following actions:

Maximize Value from Use, Production and Harvesting

Economic sustainability depends not only on management for resource sustainability, but that economic value added for economies from the use of such resources is fully enabled.

- i. Undertake further work to improve understanding and management of impacts of aquaculture on environmental sustainability, to secure consumer confidence in aquaculture products, an emerging issue both domestically and regionally, and to facilitate aquaculture's sustainable contribution to coastal communities, wild stocks and food security;
- ii. Launch the Aquaculture Network of the Americas (ANA) and implement its proposed Action Plan, in cooperation with the FAO;
- iii. Improve production and post-harvest practices by harmonizing standards to ensure healthy and safe seafood products;
- iv. Improve traceability of fish and fish products;
- v. Reduce and eliminate corruption that undermines sustainable fisheries management and fair trade in fisheries products;
- vi. Promote the use of voluntary initiatives such as certification schemes, consistent with international standards, including FAO eco-labelling standards, as a complement to mandatory measures;
- vii. Minimise fisheries discards and wastage in order to maximise economic benefits from fisheries and aquaculture;
- viii. Reduce and eliminate maritime crimes to ensure the maritime safety of fishing and navigation.

Trade Facilitation and Market Access

Efforts to improve trade and access to markets of fish products are necessary to maximize sustained economic benefits from trade.

- ix. Support the WTO/Doha negotiations, including those related to market access for fish and fishery products, and fisheries subsidies;
- x. Build the capacity of the fisheries sector of APEC economies as a matter of highest priority, to adapt to the results of WTO negotiations;
- xi. Undertake stocktaking of existing commitments regarding fisheries and fish products in free trade agreements and regional trade agreements in the Asia-Pacific region and related cooperation agreements to complement broader APEC Review efforts overall;
- xii. Enable greater market access for the products of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), small-scale fisheries, and aquaculture;
- xiii. In accordance with international law, avoid the use of discriminatory practices and obstacles to trade for fish and fish products;
- xiv. Ensure that health and safety standards and practices for fish and fish products are transparent, non-discriminatory and based on best scientific information.

III Enabling Sustainable Development of Coastal Communities

Healthy and productive oceans and coasts underpin the wellbeing of coastal communities, and are more resilient to human and natural impacts than degraded ecosystems. Cognizant of the human, economic and environmental impacts of climate variability and natural disasters (in particular the 26 December, 2004 Indian Ocean Earthquakes and Tsunami), we recognize the need for swift rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts to rebuild sustainable coastal economies in affected regions. In order to mitigate the effects of future hazards and climate extremes on society, we underscore the need for all future coastal development to be in accordance with the principles of sustainable development, disaster risk management and integrated coastal zone management. We, in a practical way, are determined to carry out the following specific measures:

Enabling Integrated Management

Working towards integrated coastal zone and watershed management to meet community needs while sustaining ocean health.

- i. Develop outreach tools that would increase the awareness and engagement of coastal communities' in various functions such as monitoring and conservation of the coastal environment;
- ii. Identify the various roles and functions of fishing communities, including the role of women, in conserving and restoring the marine environment;
- iii. Encourage coastal communities to contribute to environmental conservation through beach-cleaning, tree-planting and maintenance of tidal and aquatic plant-beds;
- iv. Promote best practices in integrated oceans and coastal management approaches;
- v. Advance regional capacity to address pressing marine resource use and coastal hazards issues by promoting a domestic and regional comprehensive approach that includes research, outreach and education through government, community and academic partnerships;
- vi. Reduce the adverse impacts of tourism on marine resources and the environment, including by promoting sustainable marine ecotourism;

Hazard Mitigation

Increasing knowledge and the coordination of information is essential to improve the prediction of and preparation for hazards and climate extremes

- vii. Increase coordination to fulfil responsibilities to implement the IOC's end-to-end tsunami warning system, including contingency planning;
- viii. Sustain and expand as required multi-hazard capabilities for disaster reduction at domestic, regional and international levels, including the use by APEC economies of the forthcoming All-Hazards Forecast and Warning Compendium that is a product of the June 2005 APEC/US Workshop in Hawaii;

Post-Natural Disaster Rehabilitation and Planning

It is important to ensure the swift rehabilitation and reconstruction of affected coastal communities and their economies, and build capacity to mitigate the impact of possible future events.

- ix. Enhance the readiness of coastal communities for possible future tsunamis by increasing coordination with APEC Task Force on Emergency Preparedness and other relevant APEC fora, and increasing the use of expertise of the International Tsunami Information Center through the International Coordination Group for the Tsunami Warning System in the Pacific; and the Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning System;
- x. Re-establish income-generating activities of affected coastal communities, including re-establishing aquaculture and fishing effort, ensuring sustainability, and support coastal zone environmental rehabilitation;
- xi. Investigate the use of an on-line database to allow APEC economies to update and view details of all tsunami-related projects, programs and activities;
- xii. Develop integrated coastal zone management plans that anticipate and plan to mitigate the impact of hazards and climate extremes, allowing coastal communities to adapt and mitigate the affects.