

APEC Ocean Cooperation in the Asia Pacific Region

APEC members share one ocean, and they account for over 80% of global aquaculture production. The ocean is an important conduit for 90% of world trade, and connects people, markets and livelihoods, as well as providing ecosystem services and playing an important role towards fulfilling economic recovery and prosperity of the Asia Pacific region.

APEC recognizes the need to conserve and sustain the ocean so that it can continue to meet the needs of the present without damaging the interests of future generations. It is also mindful of increasing challenges both from natural and human factors, such as over-exploitation of resources in the context of increasing human demands, increasing pollution, loss of biodiversity, and the impacts of global climate change and natural disasters. APEC is an important platform for regional economic integration and growth, and a well-placed platform for discussion and cooperation related to the ocean.

We acknowledge and seek to build upon previous work in this area, which came out of guidance from APEC Leaders' Declarations, APEC Leaders' Growth Strategy, and the 2013 Joint Ministerial Statement and commitments made in the 2002 Seoul Ocean Declaration, the 2005 Bali Plan of Action, the 2010 Paracas Declaration and Paracas Action Agenda, and in particular the Xiamen Declaration, which is the outcome document of the 4th APEC Ocean-related Ministerial Meeting (AOMM4) held in Xiamen, China, on 28 August, 2014. We also commend the progress made by the Ocean and Fisheries Working Group in these years

We confirm that “for the purposes of APEC, the APEC Ocean and Fisheries Working Group views Blue Economy as an approach to advance sustainable management and conservation of ocean and coastal resources and ecosystems and sustainable development, in order to foster economic growth”. We also recognize the importance of the APEC Marine Sustainable Development Report, which provides an overview of marine sustainable development activities within APEC.

While progress has been made in APEC, particularly over the past few years, we also recognize that the world's oceans and seas still require better understanding and coordinated action and the urgent need for ocean cooperation due to the complex and trans-boundary nature of ocean and coastal issues and challenge. We support the call made by APEC Ocean-Related Ministers in the Xiamen Declaration for the establishment of more integrated, sustainable, inclusive and mutually beneficial partnership through ocean cooperation among APEC members, that implements previous commitments and focuses efforts on collaborative and concerted actions in the following four priority areas: (1) Coastal and marine ecosystem conservation and disaster resilience; (2) The role of the ocean on food security and food-related trade; (3) Marine science, technology and innovation; and (4) Blue Economy.

We welcome the Xiamen Declaration and support the actions within it in the hopes of supporting healthy and productive oceans and coasts in the APEC region.