

ASIA-PACIFIC FORUM FOR ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT (APFED)

Paradigm Shift towards Sustainability for Asia and the Pacific



APFED members envision a world that allows a new paradigm to emerge.

The new paradigm entails a shift in the way we view economy, society and the environment, where the quality of life and people's aspirations, not just economic growth and material wealth, will be the prime concerns for all.

In such a world, basic human rights are respected, and human activities are carried out equitably within the carrying capacity of the natural environment.

*A time will soon come
when a paradigm shift towards full sustainability becomes essential.
No time and no resources should be wasted
before realising a modest but sustainable future.*

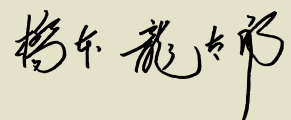
Message from the Chair of the Asia-Pacific Forum for Environment and Development (APFED)

Over the past decades, substantial efforts have been made at national, regional, and global levels, to secure a sound environment and shape a better society for us all. However, environmental degradation and poverty continue to threaten sustainable development for the Asia-Pacific region. Socio-economic changes, such as population growth, demographic shifts, economic expansion, and rapid industrialisation and urbanisation contribute to the worsening of environmental and social conditions. On top of that, rapid globalisation and emerging technologies generate additional challenges with tremendous future implications. At the same time, it is these rapidly changing conditions that provide us with new opportunities to promote sustainable development. It is our firm recognition that we should start questioning our current lifestyles, re-examining existing political and economic frameworks, reconsidering future regional vision, and identifying feasible paths towards truly sustainable societies. This made us believe that serious but open and constructive discussions are necessary in Asia and the Pacific.

With this line of thinking in mind, the Asia-Pacific Forum for Environment and Development (APFED) was established in 2001, by the Environment Congress for Asia and the Pacific (ECO ASIA). APFED consists of 26 members nominated by countries in the region and international organisations. The members participate in the forum in their individual capacity, and therefore the recommendations of APFED are not bound by official positions of particular governments and international organisations. Its objectives were to address critical issues facing the Asia-Pacific region and to propose a model of equitable and sustainable development for the region. APFED has met six times since its establishment and discussed various issues regarding sustainable development of the region. To create effective dialogues between all stakeholders, APFED also organised several multi-stakeholder meetings and expert meetings. Different venues were chosen for these meetings so that the members could witness the diverse nature and scale of problems confronted in order to promote sustainable development in different parts of the region, and to take them all into account in the course of APFED deliberations.

APFED members envision a world that allows a new paradigm to emerge. The new paradigm entails a shift in the way we view the economy, society, and the environment, where quality of life, human contentment and environmental sustainability, not economic growth and material wealth, will be the prime concerns for all. In such a world, basic human rights are respected, and human activities are carried out equitably within the carrying capacity of the natural environment. We are convinced that this is the vision for the Asia-Pacific region, and should be the vision for all human beings on the globe.

This final report is the result of extensive discussions among the APFED members and between the members and many participating experts and advocates of the region. Challenges are certainly enormous, and significant changes are obviously inevitable, but APFED members believe that the future prospective is bright. Indeed, APFED members saw many positive signs of efforts being made towards sustainability during their deliberations, and many of the recommendations in this report were in fact inspired by such encouraging examples. The region is certainly endowed with huge human resources, growing economies, rich cultures, and diverse social values. In fact, the scale of the Asia-Pacific is such that unless this region succeeds in achieving sustainability there will not be sustainable future for Planet Earth. Recommendations contained in this report should be considered in this context so that with these important things in mind, we can work closely together towards that goal.



Ryutaro Hashimoto
APFED Chairperson
Former Prime Minister, Japan



Photographs: Ryutaro Hashimoto,
APFED Chairperson

Asia-Pacific Forum for Environment and Development (APFED)

APFED was established in 2001 by the Environment Congress for Asia and the Pacific (ECO ASIA), as a forum to address critical issues facing the Asia-Pacific region and to propose a model of equitable and sustainable development for the region. The 26 members of APFED were nominated by countries in the region and international organisations, but participated in the forum in their individual capacity. Therefore, the recommendations of APFED are not bound by official positions of particular governments and international organisations.

The APFED Final Report was formulated through a series of meetings involving some of the region's leading figures in the field of environment and development. The Report consists of an overview of the Asia-Pacific region, APFED's future vision for the Asia-Pacific, APFED recommendations, and the APFED action platform.

The Perspectives of APFED for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific

The Asia-Pacific region is characterised by economic growth, is the most densely populated region in the world, and is the most diverse in natural eco-systems, traditions, and socio-cultural conditions. Challenges facing the region remain as daunting as ever, but these challenges could be turned into opportunities by building on the region's strengths. Respect for the rich human resources, traditional values, and enormous diversity treasured in the region should be the basis for the evolution of future sustainable societies. Clear vision, strong political will, and flexible social partnerships will enable the region to move along a truly sustainable path as the world leader in the 21st century.

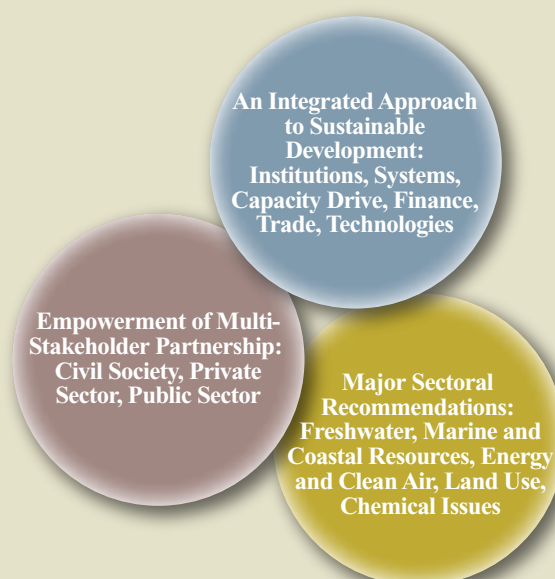
The sustainable societies that APFED envisages for the future will be diverse, and will take various forms, reflecting the socio-cultural and natural differences found throughout this region. Sustainable societies will be economically dynamic, and yet modest in their use of natural resources. They will be democratic, equitable, and peaceful. To realise sustainable futures of this kind, the societies should be truly participatory, encouraging mutual learning, and promoting innovation, while ensuring local diversities for future generations of the region. The ultimate aim should be achieving a less materials-intensive society, and a more service and knowledge-based society and economy. The entire society and the market need to shift their focus of production and consumption patterns to one which is more knowledge-based and which has more local value, from one currently based on mass exploitation of non-renewable as well as renewable resources.

APFED RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR A PARADIGM SHIFT TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

THREE GROUPS of APFED RECOMMENDATIONS

- (I) **Recommendations for an Integrated Approach to Sustainable Development** primarily address cross-sectoral issues essential for integration of the environment into decision-making, implementation, and monitoring of environmental and natural resources management policies.
- (II) **Recommendations for Empowerment of Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships** address measures to promote synergistic participation of three major stakeholders, civil society, private business, and the public sector, in environmentally sustainable activities.
- (III) **Sectoral Recommendations** facilitate application of the sustainability principles to the five major sectors selected namely freshwater, marine and coastal environment, energy and clean air, land use management, and chemical issues.



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE APFED RECOMMENDATIONS

I. Recommendations for an Integrated Approach to Sustainable Development

A Institutions for Environmental Democracy

To reinforce the emerging trend of decentralised and participatory governance and to encourage more environmental organisations and programmes at the sub-regional and regional level, three layers of regional institutions are recommended to strengthen environmental democracy in the region.

- ✓ *Asia-Pacific Open Forum for Sustainable Development*, to set the priority agenda through open discussions among key stakeholders
- ✓ *Asia-Pacific Environment Round*, to strengthen regional environmental governance by complementing existing intergovernmental forums to enhance common environmental policies, and
- ✓ *Asia-Pacific Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development*, to provide knowledge and information essential for promoting sustainable development

B Systems Development for Partnership

In accordance with the three layers of regional institutions, several new activities are suggested to promote partnership among different stakeholders, such as:

- ✓ *Asia-Pacific Voluntary Commitment Initiative*, to encourage actions of multi-stakeholders, by registering, monitoring and providing modest incentives for commendable actions
- ✓ *Participatory Environmental Agreements* to ensure that leadership in any new regional conventions always includes two common features—participation and result-orientation, and
- ✓ *Good Practice Databases* could provide useful lessons learned from various initiatives introduced in the region coordinated by the Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development

C Capacity Drive for Sustainable Development

Regarding four main aspects of capacity enhancement for sustainable development, namely i) education, ii) training, iii) awareness-raising, and iv) cross-sectoral approaches, the recommendations proposed include:

- ✓ Education: cross-border *Inter-University Accreditation System*, to provide students with opportunities to learn about regional diversity and strengthen multi-disciplinarity
- ✓ Training: *Training of Leaders for Sustainable Development* should be enhanced, drawing upon past and ongoing initiatives
- ✓ Awareness Raising: *Asia-Pacific Environmental TV Channel*, a region-wide web-based TV station that could provide a variety of services for media to create quality films through effective collaboration with existing programmes, and
- ✓ Cross-Sectoral Approach: *Local Partnership for Education for Sustainable Development*, that calls for strengthening of communication and co-ordination at all levels of formal and non-formal education

D Innovative Finance for Sustainability

Despite the increase in overall capital inflow into the region over the last decade, the environment has not been the main beneficiary of such inflow. To address this gap, a series of financial initiatives at the regional and local scale are recommended, including:

- ✓ *Regional Environment Fund for Asia and the Pacific (REFAP)*, proposed as a new financial mechanism funded primarily by governments, to support actions to address trans-boundary environmental problems at regional and subregional levels, and
- ✓ *Eco-Currencies*, proposed as a local finance initiative to effectively stimulate voluntary environmental activities without any external funding, usually at the community level, but a similar system could be applied in the context of multilateral enterprises with offices and factories in several countries in the region

E International Trade for Sustainable Development

Economic growth propelled by international trade will increase the pressure on the environment in the region. Thus, trade negotiations must address not only maximisation of the benefits from trade liberalisations, but also minimisation of the environmental costs. Based on such recognition, several recommendations were presented, including:

- ✓ *Better Environmental Guidance to FTAs and Other Trade Agreements*, recommending that the region should take a lead in setting a sound precedent for integrating environmental considerations into trade agreements, and
- ✓ *Fair Trade Initiative* could provide people at the grassroots level, low income people and small businesses in developing countries with fair fruits from the global trading system, by, for example, trading organic agricultural products

F Innovative Technologies for Sustainable Development

To address the new paradigm of technology development based on the concept of durability, environmental friendliness, reusability, easy maintenance, decentralised control and diversity, the following recommendations are proposed:

- ✓ *Asia-Pacific Alternative Technologies Development Partnership*, to catalyse home-grown technology development capabilities through enhanced interactions among technical institutes in the region.
- ✓ *Technology Transfer Consortium* that would address the financial barriers associated with technology transfer by channeling necessary funds in the form of soft loans, leasing and other affordable financial devices, and
- ✓ *Community Internet Kiosks* that fill a big gap in accessibility to ICTs amongst the developed and least developed countries

II. Recommendations for Multi-Stakeholder Partnership

G Empowerment of Civil Society Organisations

For civil society organisations (CSOs) in the region, various initiatives are recommended to nurture them as the key actor in promoting environmentally sound activities as well as indigenous values inherent to the region. Recommendations include:

- ✓ *Asia-Pacific CSO Centre* to function as a regional body to catalyse further interaction and collaboration among CSOs working on sustainable development in the region, and
- ✓ *Asia-Pacific Grassroots Initiative for Sustainable Societies*, to demonstrate the potential of grassroots social movements in Asia and the Pacific, based mostly upon traditional values such as modesty, simplicity, self-help and value of family, and respect of all other life forms

H Eco-Drive for the Private Sector

The private sector is a critical player in sustainable development. To reinforce its role, the following recommendations are presented:

- ✓ *Voluntary Environment Agreement Initiative*, to reinforce efforts of the private sector toward environment improvement e.g. through introduction of environmental management systems along supply chains, eco-efficiency and environmental reporting.
- ✓ *Renovation of Informal Sector*, aiming to capitalise on synergistic opportunities that exist between the informal sector and local environmental action, and
- ✓ *Asia-Pacific Green Labelling*, a system to convey accurate and reliable product information to consumers to overcome ineffectiveness caused by a proliferation of environmental labelling schemes

I Public Sector to Catalyse Multi-Stakeholder Partnership

The public sector—local and national governments as well as international organisations—continues to play a primary role in policy planning and coordination. Good governance should be encouraged and demonstrated urgently and consistently. Recommendations include:

- ✓ For local governments: *Supporting Community-based Activities for Sustainable Development*, in which local governments would provide support, in combination with various policy tools, to empower civil society for their voluntary actions
- ✓ For central governments: promotion of *Transparency of the Political System and Stakeholder Participation*, including information disclosure, periodic release of national environment performance reviews, application of sustainable development indicators, and promotion of the full involvement of stakeholders in the environmental policy cycle
- ✓ For international organizations: further *Promotion of International Cooperation* to facilitate effective multilateral initiatives

III. Major Sectoral Recommendations

J Freshwater Resources

Promotion of more rational and effective management of water resources is the key to a sustainable future in the Asia-Pacific region. Enhancement of the participation of key stakeholders in water resource management, and promotion of the best and most appropriate technologies are all vital to achieving such goal. The 11 recommendations include:

- ✓ *Strengthening Community Participation in Public-Private Partnership for Water Supply and Sanitation*, and
- ✓ Promotion of development and application of *Technologies for New Sources of Water*, such as rainwater harvesting and seawater desalination combined with renewable energy sources

K Marine and Coastal Resources

This section primarily addresses establishing Integrated Coastal Area Management (ICAM), enhancing stakeholder coordination and participation of all stakeholders, and strengthening regional cooperation. Research activities also need to be strengthened to sufficiently support informed decision-making via stakeholder participation. The 11 recommendations to further promote effective participation and coordination include:

- ✓ *Water Body-Based Strategic Action Programmes*, which have already been established in some water bodies, needing to be developed for other water bodies of the region, and
- ✓ *Asia-Pacific 'Save Our Sea' (SOS) Campaign*, to strengthen participation and awareness raising of the general public

L Energy and Clean Air

Energy generation and use must be made more environmentally benign in order to achieve a sustainable future. Heavy dependence on fossil fuels and the high-energy consumption patterns have resulted in serious environmental problems, including air pollution, global warming and potential climate change, and hindered sound socio-economic development. There are 10 recommendations in this section including:

- ✓ *Quantitative Targets for Renewables*, when they are set taking into account different country conditions, could be a useful tool in operationalising various programmes to reduce greenhouse gases and emissions of air pollutants, and
- ✓ *Integrated Transportation Planning* that could promote environmental sustainable transportation by among other measures, integrating land use planning, and telecommuting

III. Major Sectoral Recommendations (Cont.)

M Land Use Management – Urbanisation, Rural Development and Forest Conservation

Integration of conservation efforts and environmental services should be promoted in both rural and urban areas, reflecting that land is becoming increasingly precious due to continued population increase and economic growth in the region. To this end, partnership and voluntary initiatives should be enhanced in addressing specific land-based problems. The 10 recommendations include:

- ✓ *Asia-Pacific Nature Corridors*, are proposed as practical models and bridges between protected areas and sustainable production landscapes, i.e. forestry and agricultural areas, and
- ✓ *Rural-Based Industry with Support from Urban Community* that could help establish a material cycle that effectively combines urban and neighbouring rural areas; and creates new partnerships between urban and rural resident

N Chemical Issues

In order to promote safe management of chemicals in regional scale, it is essential that regional and national mechanisms be strengthened. A change to “green chemistry” also holds the key in improving chemical management. The 12 recommendations include:

- ✓ *“Cradle-to-Cradle” Management System of Chemicals* in which regional mechanisms for efficient and safe chemical management would be enhanced based on the “cradle-to-cradle” principle, and
- ✓ *Green Chemistry Research and Development* that would promote the development of more environmentally benign technologies for the manufacture, use and disposal of chemicals

APFED ACTION PLATFORM

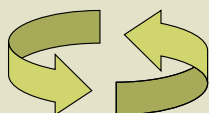
TO INITIATE THE FIRST STEP TO TURN THE APFED RECOMMENDATIONS INTO REALITY

The APFED Action Platform constitutes an integral part of the APFED Final Report, and indicates the next step for APFED.

In its second stage of APFED (APFED II), the Forum intends to be, as agreed upon at the ECO ASIA Meeting in June 2004, a “knowledge management” and “innovation facilitation” centre of the region. APFED II will (i) intensify efforts to collect information on successes and failures of policies and projects for sustainable development within the region, (ii) take a lead in promoting joint research on strategic policies to promote sustainable development for the region, and (iii) play a catalytic role in sharing knowledge and experiences to encourage sustainable development with key stakeholders in the region.

The Action Platform consists of the three broad mechanisms, each of which complements the others:

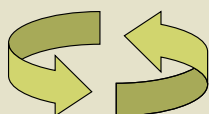
DIALOGUE



MULTI-STAKEHOLDER INTERACTIVE CHANNELS

The Multi-Stakeholder Interactive Channels consist of a variety of consultation processes involving concerned stakeholders, that are held to discuss and, whenever possible, to develop concrete ways and means to address priority issues in realising a sustainable future for the region.

KNOWLEDGE



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT KNOWLEDGE INITIATIVE

Lessons and experiences will be accumulated from innovative actions already implemented to promote sustainable societies in the region; wisdom will be extracted from these lessons and experiences; and this wisdom will be shared throughout the region. The Sustainable Development Knowledge Initiative will develop a network of databases that contain extensive examples of good practices for sustainable development, will create mechanisms that enable lessons to be learnt from past and current actions, and will organise workshops and other knowledge sharing activities.

ACTION

INNOVATION SHOWCASES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Opportunities will be provided for various actors in the region to showcase innovative policies, technologies and practices. Innovative ideas will be put into practice on an experimental basis to verify whether the proposed ideas are congruent with the prevailing political, economic, social and natural conditions. The Innovation Showcases for Sustainable Development are intended to aid the formulation of various innovations considered appropriate for the region, and to facilitate their widespread application.



For further inquiries, please contact:



Asia-Pacific Forum
for
Environment and Development

APFED Secretariat

Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) Tokyo Office
Nippon Press Center Bldg. 8th Floor, 2-2-1, Uchisaiwai-cho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-0011, Japan
Tel: 81-(0)3-3595-1081 Fax: 81-(0)3-3595-1084
Email: apfed@iges.or.jp URL: <http://www.iges.or.jp/en/ltp/pdf/apfed/>



Institute for
Global Environmental
Strategies

Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)

2108-11 Kamiyamaguchi, Hayama, Kanagawa 240-0115, Japan
Tel: +81-(0)46-855-3700 Fax: +81-(0)46-855-3709
Email: iges@iges.or.jp URL: <http://www.iges.or.jp>



Ministry of the Environment

Ministry of the Environment, Japan

No.5 Godochosha, 1-2-2 Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-8975, Japan
Tel: 81-(0)3-3581-3351
URL: <http://www.env.go.jp/>

List of APFED Members (as of December 2004)

Vinya S. Ariyaratne	Executive Director, Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement, Sri Lanka (successor to A.T. Ariyaratne, from APFED 3, January 2003)
James Cecil Cocker	Minister of the Environment, Tonga
Enkhbayar Nambaryn	Prime Minister, Mongolia
Cielito F. Habito	Professor and Director, Ateneo Center for Economic Research & Development, Philippines
Barbara R. Hardy	Former Commissioner of the Australian Heritage Commission, Australia
Ryutaro Hashimoto	Former Prime Minister, Japan
Parvez Hassan	Former Chairman of the World Conservation Union (IUCN) Law Commission, Pakistan
Yolanda Kakabadse	President, World Conservation Union (IUCN)
Martin Khor	Director, Third World Network, Malaysia
Kim Myung-Ja	Former Minister of Environment, Republic of Korea (successor to Kim Jin-Hyun, from APFED 4, August 2003)
Reza Maknoon	Advisor to the Vice-President and the Head of the Department of the Environment, Deputy Chairman, National Committee on Sustainable Development, Islamic Republic of Iran
Akio Morishima	Chair of the Board of Directors, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, Japan
Nakamura Kuniwo	Former President, Palau
Wadan Narsey	Director, Employment and Labour Market Studies, Pacific Institute of Advanced Studies in Development and Governance, The University of the South Pacific, Fiji
Neth Barom	Vice-Rector, Royal University of Phnom Penh, Cambodia
Olga Ponizova	Executive Director, Eco-Accord Centre on Environment & Development, Russian Federation
Qu Geping	Former Chairman of Commission for Environment Protection and Resource Conservation, National People's Congress, China
Emil Salim	Chairman of Association for Community Empowerment, Indonesia
Maurice F. Strong	Chairman of Earth Council, Rector of United Nations University of Peace
Simon SC Tay	Chairman of the Singapore Institute of International Affairs, Singapore (successor to Tommy Koh, from APFED 3, January 2003)
Tongroj Onchan	President, Mekong Environment and Resource Institute, Thailand (successor to Phaichitr Uathavikul, from December 2001)
Tadao Chino	President, Asian Development Bank
Hans van Ginkel	Rector, United Nations University
Bulat Yessekin	Executive Director, Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia
Klaus Töpfer	Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme
Kim Hak-Su	Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
- Observers -	
Yoriko Kawaguchi	Special Assistant to the Prime Minister of Japan
Aitkul Samakova	Minister of the Environmental Protection, Kazakhstan