

**ASIA-PACIFIC FORUM FOR ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT (Second Phase)**  
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**Document “Report on APFED I and Overall Activities of APFED II”**  
**Outline**

**1. Introduction**

APFED was established upon ministerial deliberation during the Environment Congress for Asia and the Pacific (ECO ASIA) 2001 to: i) identify critical environment and development issues, ii) propose a new development framework that will lead to greater equitability and sustainable growth in the region, and iii) recommend necessary actions to be taken by the relevant stakeholders in the region. APFED’s 26 members envisage a world that allows a new paradigm to emerge, addressing the challenges of sustainability supported by values and institutions that are more equitable. The paradigm shift entails an essential change 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 conducted in harmony with the natural environment.

**2. Overview of APFED**

(i) APFED I activities

During the first phase of APFED, APFED members met six times to discuss various issues regarding sustainable development. To create effective dialogue 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 the problems confronted in order to promote sustainable development in the different parts of the region, and to take them all into account in the course of APFED deliberations.

During 2001 and 2002, APFED worked on five key issues namely freshwater resources, renewable energy, trade, finance, and urbanisation. In May 2002, APFED presented the “APFED Message to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD)” as its interim output. In this Message, APFED committed

itself to launching three new partnership initiatives: “Collection and Analysis of Best Policy Practices (BPPs),” “Development of a Network of Researchers and Research Institutions (NetRes),” and “Creation of an Inventory of Capacity Building Programmes (CBPs) in Asia and the Pacific Region.”

(ii) Highlight of APFED I Report

APFED I came up with many recommendations to promote a shift to sustainable societies. These recommendations are essentially of two types: the first type applies to the regional or sub-regional level. These underpin APFED’s attempt to propose ways towards sustainable development for the region as a whole. The second type addresses important sustainability issues common to many countries in the region. Those recommendations are, therefore, either at the national level or at the local level.

The recommendations were put together in three groups: those i) which are cross-sectoral in nature and considered essential for advancing an integrated approach to environmental conservation, ii) for strengthening the role of major stakeholders as well as for facilitating partnerships, iii) to promote an integrated approach in the five sectors that APFED considers critical for a sustainable future in the region, namely freshwater resources; marine and coastal resources; energy and air; land use management including urbanisation, rural development, and forest conservation; and chemical issues.

Recommendations for Integrated Approaches to Sustainable Development focuses upon measures to promote environmental policies that are more an integral part of economic and social policies. Reflecting the features of new environmental policies, recommendations centre on (i) provision of incentives, (ii) promotion of stakeholder participation, and (iii) an intensified focus on trans-boundary issues. The proposed measures are intended to promote consistent and efficient implementation of cross-sectoral environmental policies. They are meant to strengthen the environmental foundations of the region, upon which various sectoral policies can then be formulated and implemented. The recommendations are categorised into six sections, namely institution building, systems development, capacity building, finance, trade, and technologies.

Recommendations for Multi-Stakeholder Partnership look at how, in a globalised world, international policies have become intimately linked with domestic issues and policies. Interactions of people have become more frequent and complex. Information flows have become more dynamic than ever. As the world has changed, the importance of partnerships among stakeholders has been emphasised in recent international political forums, such as WSSD. Recognising the importance of participation, these recommendations try to promote actions of the primary actors, specifically civil society, the private sector, and the public sector.

Recommendations regarding integration of environmental policies into developmental sectors (Major Sectoral Recommendations) are based upon a series of consultative meetings conducted by APFED in different parts of the region. At each meeting, APFED listened to local experts to espouse a broad range of opinions regarding local efforts to achieve sustainable development. In addition to suggestions for the improvement of overall environmental management and the development of policy integration, APFED received a variety of ideas on how to strengthen the sectoral approaches in five specific sectors: Freshwater Resources; Marine and Coastal Resources; Energy and Air; Land Use Management; and Chemical Issues. The suggestions received during the APFED process have been developed into a series of recommendations, aiming to integrate the environmental principles underlying sustainability into sectoral policies.

### (iii) Challenges in implementing APFED I recommendations

APFED I recommendations contained in its final report has set out a comprehensive framework for promoting the development of effective and innovative policies and measures and their implementation. It is a challenging task and requires intransigent efforts of wide ranging stakeholders to take a concrete action toward materializing APFED recommendations and achieving common objectives.

The overall policy framework and its principles must be translated into more pragmatic guiding rules and enabling programmes. The creation of sustainable society and the promotion of an integrated approach, for instance, are a part of the pivotal pillars for the APFED I recommendations. How far once can devise specific guiding rules and enabling programmes applicable to specific sectors and cases given conditions at present thus remain to be an important and arduous task.

Were the good practices substantially influenced by the availability of fiscal or external financial support? One must draw more detailed lessons from the presented good practices and recommended policies about what kind of innovative mechanisms and modalities enabled stakeholders to overcome the deadlock of resource constraints and to succeed in mobilize required resources. The presented policy recommendations have given useful guidance, but were not meant to provide a panacea to all cases. It is thus important to develop mechanism and modalities most suitable and deemed as effective to tackle challenges in the given contexts.

It is equally important to convey the APFED recommendations to a wider range of stakeholders and partners in the light that the APFED recommendations need agents who undertake concrete actions to implement them. APFED members assume an important role to play in rendering the APFED recommendations to such stakeholders and partners with a view to materializing the implementation of recommended policies and measures.

How to catalyze and bring about partnership will remain to be an important challenge in implementing the APFED recommendations. The network of stakeholders and partners steered by the APFED framework needs to be bolstered in this respect.

In order to facilitate the implementation of the APFED recommendations, it is thus proposed to initiate the APFED II activities as described in the following section.

### **3. APFED II proposed activities**

APFED II will place first priority on facilitating implementation of the APFED recommendations.

#### **(i) Objectives and framework**

It aims to (I) intensify efforts to collect information on successes and failures of policies and projects for sustainable development of 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 for sustainable development with key stakeholders in the region.

APFED II consists of four main activities, namely, policy dialogues, which will be held in order to promote the messages of APFED, Knowledge Initiatives to increase the knowledge and share experiences of innovative ideas for sustainable development; and showcase projects which aims at verifying whether the various innovative policies, technologies, and practices recommended by APFED are applicable. A Network of Research Institutes for Sustainable Development (NetRes) will be established in order to give intellectual inputs and carry out showcase projects and the knowledge initiative.

#### **(ii) Policy dialogues**

An APFED recommendation called for a ‘multi-stake holder dialogue’ whose purpose is to share APFED messages with other stakeholders, and to deepen understanding of sustainability policies among both APFED and other stakeholders. This recommendation is being implemented as the ‘policy dialogue’ in APFED II. While the APFED action platform suggested five different types of forum such as , Asia-Pacific Open Forum on Sustainable Development, Environmental Policy Dialogues in the five sub-regions, and Asia-Pacific Environment Round, due to resource and other limitations, APFED II would focus on APFED ‘policy dialogue’ and Asia-Pacific network of strategic Research Institutes (NetRes).

APFED dialogues will be usually held as a side event of a big conference, because this approach is likely to draw more policy makers and experts. Dialogues are chaired by an APFED member, and usually attended

by selected participants.

The first policy dialogue of APFED II ('Access to information') will be held in November 2005 in Jakarta, Indonesia as part of the ASEF Conference on "1/3 of Our Planet". It aims to review the current situation with regards to information disclosure, identify issues and discuss possible measures for international cooperation on information disclosure.

(iii) Knowledge Initiatives

The Sustainable Development Knowledge Initiative is intended to be "the brain of APFED II." The initiative will collect lessons and experience from innovative sustainable actions implemented in the region, extract wisdom from the lessons learned, and share that wisdom with all stakeholders concerned. It will be an engine to generate internal human capacity in the region for sustainable development. Sustainable development of the region will be less resource-dependent and more knowledge-based, thus generation, storage, and use of knowledge will be the most important element for a sustainable Asia-Pacific.

A best practice database was established during APFED I comprising of 163 best practices which were compiled by collecting information mainly from the APFED members. These will be merged with the RISPO (Research on Innovation Strategic Policy Options) good practice inventory, developed under the Asia-Pacific Environment Innovation Project (APIES) as the APFED Good Practice Database (AGPD) under APFED II. However, there is a strong need to improve the quality of good practice so that they are more reliable and consistent information can be provided. In addition, the good practices have to be updated on a regular basis.

Establishment of an award system to update and collect new good practices is proposed under APFED II. This award will be presented to encourage further dissemination of good practices, promotion of information sharing by organising workshops or enlarging the scope of operations of such good practices amongst other things.

The Friends of APFED will be set up among those organisations/individuals concerned in the fiscal 2006. Any new developments and achievements will be provided to members of the Friends of APFED. Actual membership and modalities will be discussed in the APFED plenary meeting in 2006.

(iv) Showcase projects

The Innovation Showcases for Sustainable Development will be "the implementation arm of APFED II" and constitutes one of three main activities of APFED II. The innovation showcases will provide opportunities for recommendations included in the main report produced by APFED and other innovative

ideas to be put into practice on a pilot basis. Innovative policies, technologies, and practices will be tried on an experimental basis to verify if they do, in fact, fit into different political, economic, social, and natural conditions of a country or an area to which such ideas are applied. A total of about 15 showcase projects are proposed in a year. The innovation showcases are a conduit by which innovative policies, technologies, and practices, in particular those recommended in the APFED main report, are piloted and incubated. Based on the outcomes, appropriate innovations can then be scaled up for application to different parts of the region.

Thus there are two main goals of APFED Showcases:

- 1) to address implementation barriers to innovate policies and practices by providing opportunities to pilot “innovative ideas.” Such barriers include uncertainty of impacts of innovative actions and resistance of certain stakeholders.
- 2) to examine the feasibility of “innovations” in one country/region and their applicability to other countries/region which have different political, social, economic and other conditions.

The APFED Showcase Panel will be established under a grant facility which will be newly set up under UNEP. The mandate of the panel is (1) selection of showcase projects, (2) selection of a NetRes institute to be in charge of a selected showcase project, (3) provision of funds to NetRes institutions to facilitate their intellectual inputs to the selected projects and monitor them, (4) verification of evaluation of the selected projects, and (5) examination of accounts when selected projects completed.

(v) Network of Research Institutes for Sustainable Development (NetRes)

NetRes is an integral part of APFED and will act as an implementing agency for the showcase projects and knowledge initiatives under the guidance of the APFED Steering Committee which will comprise of a number of current APFED members. Institutes will be selected, taking into account advice from APFED members, and expertise held, among other factors.

Roles of NetRes in Knowledge initiative:

- a. NetRes members can facilitate submission of applications by disseminating information about the APFED Award, and by contacting potential organisations/ individuals.
- b. NetRes in collaboration with the APFED secretariat will help verify achievements claimed by applicants by conducting fact finding mission, where necessary.

Roles of NetRes in showcase projects:

- a NetRes institutions will play a catalytic role to promote showcase projects by providing intellectual inputs in to showcase project (1) sound project design, (2) smooth introduction of innovative ideas to project sites, (3) project evaluation, and (4) disseminating lessons learned.
- b NetRes institutes will monitor and supervise showcase projects, and manage funds allocated to the project.
- c NetRes institutions can make proposals of showcase projects. They can be also an implementer of showcase project, where appropriate.
- d Evaluation of the showcase projects will be done by NetRes in association with IGES, where appropriate.

#### **4. Key aspects for successful implementation of APFED II activities**

- i) The process of APFED II needs to be truly participatory, encouraging mutual learning, and promoting innovation, while ensuring diversity for future generations.
- ii) Securing necessary funds for implementing the activities of APFED II, especially those related with the showcase projects.
- iii) Forging partnerships among relevant organisations, in particular international organisations concerned, and NetRes institutions.
- iv) Good coordination between APFED secretariat and the NetRes institutes is required.
- v) Timely and wide distribution is required for receiving proposals for the showcase projects and good practices for the yearly award.