

**ASIA-PACIFIC FORUM FOR ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT
THIRD SUBSTANTIVE MEETING**

25-26 January 2003
Guilin, China

Draft Chairperson's Summary of the Multi-stakeholder Meeting for APFED 3

1. The Multi-stakeholder Meeting for the Third Substantive Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Forum for Environment and Development (APFED 3) was held on 24 January 2003 at the Sheraton Guilin Hotel in Guilin, China. The meeting was attended by about 60 representatives of non-governmental organizations, the academic sector, the media, international organizations, national governments and local governments, as well as six members of APFED. Dr. Qu Geping, APFED Member from the People's Republic of China (PRC), Chairman, Commission for Environment Protection and Resource Conservation, National People's Congress, PRC chaired the meeting. Professor Zhang Kun, Director General, the Sino-Japan Friendship Center for Environmental Protection, PRC and Professor Akio Morishima, APFED Member, Chair of the Board of Directors of the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), respectively vice chaired the morning and afternoon sessions.

2. The meeting began with presentations on the topic of "Chinese Perspectives on Sustainable Development." Professor Niu Wenyuan, Senior Research Fellow, Institute of Technology, Policy and Management, Chinese Academy of Science, presented a 10-year review of the process for sustainable development in China. Mr. Pan Jianmin, Vice Mayor, City of Guilin, PRC, introduced the range of actions undertaken at the city level including prevention of industrial pollution. The chair then opened the floor for discussion. Questions were raised regarding by what means China will implement adequate resource conservation measures during its process of development and modernization, a dilemma many developed countries are facing.

3. Ms. Lisa Hiwasaki (IGES) introduced the objectives of the meeting, namely, to emerge with stakeholders' views on (i) the desired format and substance of the APFED Final Report to be finalized by the end of 2004 and (ii) Commitments made in the APFED Message to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), specifically, the Commitments of: collection and analysis of best policy practices (BPP); development of a network of researchers and research institutes (NetRes); and development of an inventory of capacity building programmes (CBP).

4. Two presentations were made on stakeholders' views on the expectations and suggestions for the APFED Final Report, first by Dr. Ren Yong, Deputy Director, Policy Research Center for Environment and Economy, State Environmental Protection Administration, PRC and then by Ms. Li Hao, Director, Beijing Earth View Education and Research Center, PRC. The chair then opened the floor to comments from the stakeholders regarding the APFED Final Report.

5. Stakeholder comments on the APFED Final Report included suggestions on the topics to be covered, the structure, the drafting process and the dissemination strategy. Participants pointed that the Final Report should emerge from APFED as a "value-added" product. Suggestions made on these respective points were as follows:

(a) re: topics to be included,

There was general agreement about the relevance of the seven topics already contained in the APFED Message – freshwater resources, renewable energy, trade, finance, urbanization, good governance and capacity building, as possible issues to be included in the Final Report. In

addition to these 7 topics, the issues of desertification and efficiency in the use and management of resources were among issues suggested by participants. It was suggested that trade and finance should be regarded as overarching issues rather than sectoral issues. These, added to the two overarching issues already established, namely governance and capacity building, would make four overarching issues to serve as the basis for analysis of the sectoral issues. Sustainable patterns of production and consumption was proposed as another possible overarching issue.

It was suggested that the Report should incorporate at the very beginning a presentation of the state of the environment in the Asia-Pacific, conveying a sense of crisis and urgency for action in the region. Moreover, it was suggested that the opening to the Report could contain some ethical underpinnings regarding sustainable development, touching upon issues of peace, social justice and human rights which are dimensions of sustainable development.

(b) re: structure,

The structure of the Report was discussed in relation to the various target readers of the Report. In this regard, it was suggested that the final output should have one concise and focused Report which would include specific recommendations, and an annex that provides detailed scientific analysis and the factual basis for the points made in the Report. It was proposed that cases of successful practices also be included in the annex. Therefore, the result of the collection of BPP would be partly used as input.

(c) re: drafting process,

For the drafting of the Report, there was a proposal to set up a drafting committee composed of experts on the issues covered in the Report as well as other stakeholders that have been involved in the APFED process. Lead authors would be designated for each specific issue along with a network of writers. In this process, resources from the NetRes could be used as a valuable pool of expertise. It was also suggested that, given the limited time available for the completion of the Report, a schedule be set up to streamline the drafting process.

(d) re: dissemination,

Taking into consideration the fact that one of the advantages of APFED lies in the quality of its members and their influence at various levels of decision-making, members themselves would be a valuable channel for disseminating the Report in the relevant fora dealing with sustainable development in the region. In addition, for the purpose of reaching the widest range of people, it was suggested that the Report be translated into many different languages of the region, including those of the APFED Members.

6. There was a general agreement that the primary audience of the Report should be policy makers. The Report should also target researchers and research institutes, non-governmental organizations and the public at large. In order for the Report to have the optimal impact on the different target groups, it was suggested that different versions be made, targeting government officials, experts in the field of sustainable development and the general public respectively.

7. In addition several participants indicated concerns about the follow-up on the Report. A mechanism to follow up on the recommendations and proposals that would be made in the Report was seen as advisable. As this point relates to the question of APFED after the completion of its mandate in 2004, it was indicated that APFED Members themselves would be most appropriate to take up this issue.

8. The agenda item for the afternoon session was devoted to the implementation plan of APFED Commitments. The session started with two presentations by Mr. Wu Baozhong, Vice President, East Environment Institute, PRC, and Ms. Ella Antonio, Area Manager for Asia-Pacific, Earth Council, Philippines.

9. Regarding the collection of best policy practices (BPP), many participants pointed out the need to clarify what would be regarded as “best” and the need to define criteria in that respect. In order for APFED to avoid falling into a judgmental trap, reference to “useful practices” or some other relative terms might be considered. In addition to BPP, it would be important to consider looking at cases of failure, insofar as these provide good insights on practices that need to be avoided. It was pointed out that knowing about BPP was not necessarily a guarantee of effective replication, as was the case in several examples presented by participants. The collection of BPP should be based on a global scanning with a focus on local conditions. Moreover, more than BPP, the state of progress towards sustainable development over the last decade indicates that the challenge is about implementation. Therefore, in addition to BPP, APFED might consider collecting best implementation practices.

10. With regard to the network of researchers and research institutes (NetRes), participants indicated that the NetRes should not be simply restricted to formal research institutes, but should also include NGOs and other organizations involved in sustainable development. In order not to start from zero, it was suggested that the NetRes makes use of existing networks under international organizations and networks of NGOs as well as the networks already created through groups which have participated in the APFED process so far.

11. Several participants expressed the view that the inventory of capacity building programmes (CBP) needs to be demand-driven so as to adequately respond to actual needs for capacity development. In addition, it was pointed out that capacity building can best be done by those who need it, through a learning process. Therefore, the CBP needs to create an interactive process involving the final beneficiaries. The CBP should be a mapping and not simply an inventory of initiatives. Mechanisms for monitoring and updating the CBP need to be considered.

12. A number of comments were addressed to all Commitments. Reflecting the diversity of the Asia-Pacific region is an important factor. The Commitments should give adequate attention to local communities as a pool of resources as well as essential actors in realizing sustainable development. To that effect the capacity of these actors to implement policies should be made a priority.

13. The need to link the Commitments with the WSSD Plan of Implementation, not only in terms of its key issues such as freshwater and renewable energy, but also the guiding principles such as ownership and partnership was stressed. It is important that the Commitments be value-added, unique, participatory and efficiently implemented. It was also said that as a basis for collecting the BPP, CBP, and establishing the NetRes, it is important to define who the end users are. Mechanisms for dissemination need to be well formulated. In that respect, a holistic approach that integrates the Commitments in their process of implementation can ensure mutual input so that NetRes would be used as a channel for disseminating the BPP as well as the CBP. Information and Communication Technologies can also serve as a channel for dissemination.

14. Stakeholders thanked APFED and called on APFED to incorporate the meeting’s output in its deliberations. The chair thanked the stakeholders for providing new viewpoints on the substance and structure of the Final Report and the Commitments. The participants expressed their gratitude to the Chair, Vice Chairs, the organizer, the Chinese Government and the local government.