APEC: Addressing the Impact of Expanding Population and Economic Growth on Food, Energy and the Environment (FEEEP) Dec. 1996

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The APEC Economic Leaders' Declaration for Action issued in Osaka, Japan in 1995, states that "the Asia-Pacific's fast expanding population and rapid economic growth are forecast to sharply increase the demand for food and energy and the pressures on the environment". Leaders agreed to put these inter-related, wide-ranging issues on their long-term agenda and to work together to ensure the region's economic prosperity is sustainable in the long run.

In 1995, the combined gross national product of APEC economies was over US $15 trillion, or about half of the world's total output. Conservative estimates suggest that these markets will account for at least half of global growth over the next decade — an economy roughly equivalent to the size of Canada's being added to global consumption.

With over two billion people in total, APEC economies also account for two-fifths of the world's

population, and about half of the world's emissions of pollutants, use of energy, and production and consumption of food. Given these figures, there is a clear need to take steps now to sustain growth over the longer term, protect the quality of life of future generations, and address questions about the impact on socio-economic systems from pressures on the relative prices of fresh water, food and energy. Of particular concern is the quality of life in urban areas. The combination of economic activity concentrated in urban centres coupled with the global trend towards population migration to cities has created major sustainability challenges related to food and energy supplies for the future, and environmental health in the long run.

Under the auspices of the Economic Committee (chaired by Canada), APEC is developing a common framework to analyze the interlinkages among this complex set of issues, dubbed the "FEEEP [food, energy, environment, economic development, population] initiative", in APEC. Ministerial meetings on environment (Toronto, June 9-11) and energy (Edmonton, August 26-27) will contribute to the Economic Committee's analysis of these issues. A symposium will take place in Saskatoon from September 2-4 to finalize the report to Leaders in Vancouver on November 24-25.

Another important input on FEEEP issues is the Consortium Conference of the APEC Study Centres, which will take place in Banff from May 22-24. Led by Canada's APEC Study Centre, co-located with the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, the Consortium Conference will bring together academic experts from the entire APEC region to examine, among many other issues, the elements of FEEEP, and to provide views to the Economic Committee for consideration.

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