



**Asia-Pacific  
Economic Cooperation**

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2025/MtgCode/XXX

Agenda item:

**Discussion paper:  
APEC Workshop on Promoting Environmental  
Policies that Meet the Needs of the Private Sector**

**1. Background**

Sustainable Food Supply Chain in APEC Region

In the APEC region, the pursuit of sustainable food supply chains has become a strategic priority for APEC economies. This goal is central to achieving long-term food security, climate resilience, and inclusive economic growth. As food supply chains become increasingly more diversified and complex, it is becoming clear that individual efforts by single economies or companies alone are no longer sufficient to address the challenges. In this context, the diversity of economic structures, cultural contexts, environments, production circumstances, and policy frameworks across APEC economies might present complexities in harmonizing environmental policies that effectively support this transition.<sup>1</sup>

Shared Long-Term Goals

APEC economies have collectively committed to transforming food systems through the Food Security Roadmap Towards 2030, which emphasizes sustainability, inclusivity, and resilience. The roadmap calls for reducing food loss and waste, enhancing resource efficiency, and promoting climate-smart agricultural practices. These efforts are aligned with broader APEC visions such as the Putrajaya Vision 2040 and the Aotearoa Plan of Action, which advocate for a dynamic and sustainable Asia-Pacific community.<sup>2 3</sup>

Private Sector as the Key Actor

The private sector plays a central role in food supply chains, from production and processing to distribution and retail. APEC recognizes that over 90% of environmental impacts in food supply chains originate from upstream activities, often managed by private enterprises. Many companies are actively investing in sustainability—adopting green technologies, improving traceability, and reducing emissions—especially in response to consumer demand and regulatory shifts.

Need for Business-Aligned Environmental Policies

To further accelerate these efforts, it is essential to implement environmental policies that reflect the operational realities and needs of private enterprises. APEC's Policy Partnership on Food Security (PPFS) emphasizes the importance of public-private partnership to design and implement effective food system policies. This includes measures such as incentives and other strategies to encourage sustainable practices, support for innovation, and capacity-building for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.apec.org/press/blogs/2025/charting-apec-s-framework-for-sustainable-supply-chains>

<sup>2</sup> [https://mddb.apec.org/Documents/2024/PPFS/PPFS1/24\\_ppfs1\\_005.pdf](https://mddb.apec.org/Documents/2024/PPFS/PPFS1/24_ppfs1_005.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.apec.org/Groups/Other-Groups/Policy-Partnership-on-Food-Security>

### Cross-Economy Collaboration for Regional Impact

Given the transboundary nature of food supply chains, inter-economy cooperation is vital. APEC promotes regional integration through shared principles, best practices, and joint initiatives. The PPFS encourages economies to work together to reduce food loss and waste, improve nutrition, facilitate trade and enhance resilience across the agri-food system.

## **2. Objectives of the discussion**

This workshop provides an opportunity for dialogue among various stakeholders. It aims to foster a shared understanding of what constitutes effective, business-aligned environmental policy in the food sector. By encouraging mutual learning and partnership, the workshop contributes to the development of a regional movement that supports sustainable food supply chains and amplifies the positive efforts of private enterprises.

## **3. Expected outcomes**

Through the workshop, participants will be able to:

- gain insights into the practical needs and challenges faced by private food companies in implementing environmentally sustainable practices, and discover valuable perspectives that can inform and enhance policy development within their respective economies.
- come up with potential opportunities for public-private partnership that can enhance the impact of environmental policies in the food supply chain.

These outcomes are expected to promote discussions on greater policy harmonization across APEC economies and foster partnership not only between the public and private, but also among private companies within and across borders.

## **4. Discussion framework and guiding question**

To support the creation of outcomes from the workshop, a discussion framework is designed to guide discussions among panelists and participants. This framework introduces guiding questions for steps of the supply chain, aiming to facilitate focused dialogue. By doing so, it helps participants gain a deeper understanding of private sector needs across economies and provides an opportunity to explore effective public-private partnership.

### Guiding Questions

-For production

- (1) Could you share how incentives and other approaches are designed to encourage environmental practices at the farm level, and any communication strategies you've found effective in working with producers?
  - ✓ How do you communicate sustainability expectations or goals to contracted farms or suppliers?
  - ✓ Have you observed differences in response or engagement between large-scale producers and smaller farms?
  - ✓ How are sustainability goals set and monitored within your farm operations or in contracted farms? Are there internal benchmarks or third-party standards you follow?
  - ✓ How do you ensure that environmental practices are integrated into daily farm operations without compromising productivity?
  - ✓ Are there any lessons learned from managing your own farms that could inform broader industry practices or public policy?
- (2) Any thoughts on what kind of support or role you envision for the public sector in scaling these efforts (incentive/communication/partnership with producers).
  - ✓ Are there existing public-private partnerships that have helped advance sustainability in your supply chain?
  - ✓ How could government agencies better support communication and knowledge-sharing between producers and companies?
  - ✓ Are there any types of government interventions that you believe could unintentionally hinder sustainability efforts at the farm level?

- (3) How do you see the respective roles or perspectives of the public and private sectors in promoting industry-led initiatives?
- ✓ What should be the primary responsibility of the private sector in driving sustainability in food production?
  - ✓ What kind of policy frameworks or regulatory environments help enable private sector leadership?
  - ✓ How can governments ensure that their policies are flexible enough to support innovation while maintaining accountability?
- (4) What challenges might arise from each sector (public/private)
- ✓ From the private sector side, what are the main operational or financial constraints that limit sustainability efforts?
  - ✓ Have you faced any regulatory or bureaucratic challenges that slow down progress?
  - ✓ How do you handle conflicting priorities between business goals and environmental goals?
  - ✓ Are there examples where conflict or misalignment between public and private approaches led to inefficiencies?

-For sourcing & manufacturing

- (5) What kind of support would you hope to see from public sector in improving supply chain transparency?
- ✓ In your sourcing operations, are there areas where achieving full transparency remains a work in progress, and where additional efforts or collaboration could help bridge current gaps?
  - ✓ How could public sector support help in verifying sustainability claims from upstream suppliers, especially in international sourcing?
  - ✓ What role could government play in facilitating data sharing or interoperability between different supply chain actors?
- (6) What role should private sector play in that process?
- ✓ How do you engage with suppliers to align on sustainability and transparency goals?
  - ✓ Do you see a role for industry-wide collaboration or voluntary standards to complement government efforts?
- (7) Given the integrated approach from production to sales, could you share any insights—if possible—on the environmental advantages of this model?
- ✓ How does vertical integration help your company reduce environmental impact across stages (e.g., fewer transport emissions, better resource planning)?
  - ✓ How do you measure and communicate the environmental benefits of this integrated model to stakeholders?
- (8) How do you think the responsibility of private companies that handle materials or products with relatively high environmental impact?
- ✓ How does your company approach risk management or mitigation for these environmental hotspots?
  - ✓ Do you believe companies should take voluntary action beyond compliance when dealing with high-impact commodities?
  - ✓ How do you balance environmental responsibility with cost and competitiveness in these areas?
- (9) Any thoughts on how public sector can help address these challenges (for high impact commodity)
- ✓ What kind of regulatory or financial support would help companies transition to lower-impact alternatives?
  - ✓ Are there examples where government-led initiatives (e.g., certification schemes, import regulations) have helped improve sustainability in high-impact sourcing?

- ✓ How could governments support innovation or R&D in alternative materials or production methods?

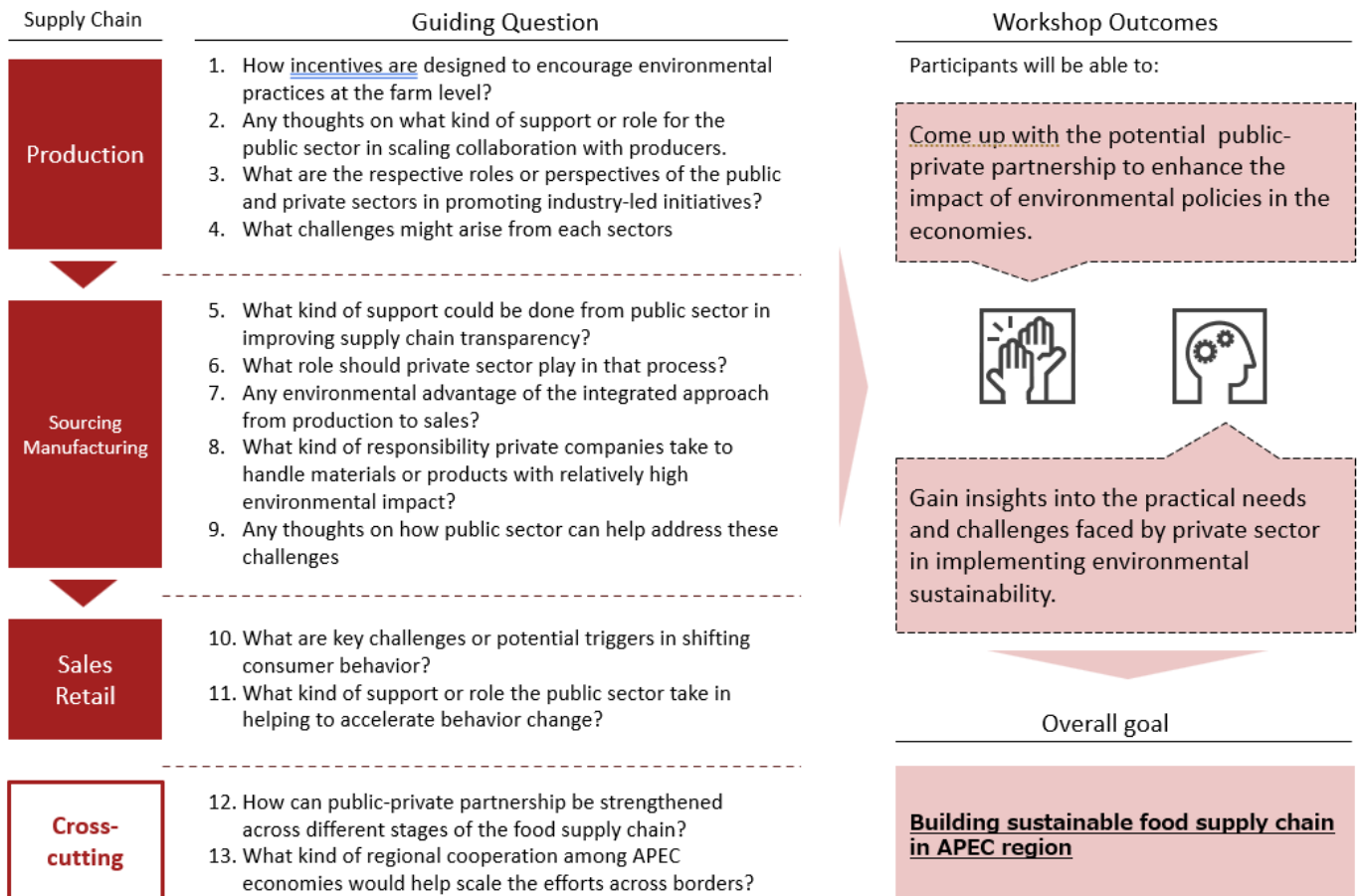
-For sales and retail

- (10) What do you see as key challenges or potential triggers in shifting consumer behavior?
- ✓ What types of consumer behaviors are most difficult to change in relation to sustainability (e.g., preference for low-cost products, lack of awareness of environmental impact)?
  - ✓ Have you observed any successful strategies—such as labeling, storytelling, or in-store campaigns—that helped shift consumer choices toward more sustainable options?
  - ✓ How do you balance sustainability messaging with other consumer priorities like convenience, taste, or price?
  - ✓ Are there differences in consumer response between product categories (e.g., ready-to-eat meals vs. fresh produce)?
  - ✓ What role does digital engagement (e.g., apps, loyalty programs, social media) play in influencing consumer behavior in your business?
- (11) What kind of support or role do you envision for the public sector in helping to accelerate this transition (behavior change)?
- ✓ What types of public awareness campaigns or educational initiatives would be most effective in complementing your company's efforts?
  - ✓ How might public sector incentives (e.g., subsidies for sustainable products, tax benefits for eco-friendly purchases) influence consumer behavior?
  - ✓ Do you see value in government partnerships for pilot programs or behavioral research related to sustainable consumption?
  - ✓ Are there regulatory changes (e.g., packaging standards, advertising guidelines) that could support more sustainable consumer habits?

-Cross-cutting

- (12) How can public-private partnership be strengthened across different stages of the food supply chain to promote sustainability?
- ✓ Are there examples where partnership between government and industry has worked well across multiple stages (e.g., from farm to retail)?
  - ✓ What kind of institutional mechanisms (e.g., working groups, joint platforms, shared data systems) could help facilitate ongoing dialogue?
  - ✓ How can trust and transparency be built between public and private actors, especially when interests or priorities differ?
  - ✓ What role can industry associations or multi-stakeholder initiatives play in bridging gaps?
- (13) What kind of regional cooperation among APEC economies would help scale sustainability efforts across borders?
- ✓ Are there specific areas (e.g., standards, certification, trade policy) where regional alignment would benefit your operations?
  - ✓ How can APEC economies work together to reduce duplication or fragmentation in sustainability initiatives?
  - ✓ What role do cross-border partnerships or pilot projects play in advancing shared goals?
  - ✓ Are there lessons from other regions or sectors that could inform APEC-level collaboration?

Graph1. Discussion framework



**5. Recommendation**

In light of the discussions and insights shared throughout this workshop, it is recommended that participants consider initiating or continuing public-private dialogues within their respective economies. These dialogues, informed by the perspectives and examples presented in this paper, can serve as a valuable foundation for exploring environmental policies that are responsive to private sector needs and driven by the innovative capacity of industry actors. By fostering inclusive and collaborative approaches, economies can work toward the development of sustainability policies that are both practical and impactful across the food supply chain.

**APEC Workshop on Promoting  
Environmental Policies that Meet the  
Needs of the Private Sector**

**Incheon, Republic of Korea  
Aug 8, 2024**