

E-APEC STUDY CENTERS CONSORTIUM CONFERENCE 2020 (e-ASCCC 2020)

*“Towards an Inclusive, Sustainable Growth
and Shared Prosperity Post-Pandemic”*

Date

23 SEPTEMBER 2020

Time

10.00 A.M ~ 2.00 P.M
(UTC/GMT+8)

INTRODUCTION

As the host for APEC 2020, Malaysia intends to realize a balanced, inclusive and sustainable growth as well as intensify regional economic integration among its 21 member economies. Malaysia is expected to chart the strategic direction of APEC and its outcome according to the theme, three priority areas and the APEC Post 2020 Vision by the end of its chairmanship. Malaysia has set the overarching theme of her hosting year in 2020 as “*Optimizing Human Potential Towards A Resilient Future of Shared Prosperity. Pivot. Prioritise. Progress.*” This is supported by the three priority areas i.e. (i) Improving the Narrative of Trade and Investment; (ii) Inclusive Economic Participation through Digital Economy and Technology; (iii) Driving Innovative Sustainability.

OBJECTIVES

- ✓ To share knowledge, exchange good practices and lessons learned on the progress and challenges facing the APEC economies in achieving an inclusive, sustainable growth and shared prosperity, especially in facing the new normal post pandemic;
- ✓ To pave the way for a multi-stakeholders collaboration, network formation and identify key impediments and innovative ideas in achieving an inclusive, sustainable growth and shared prosperity in the region;
- ✓ To contribute to the formulation of APEC Post-2020 Vision, taking into account that the APEC region will face greater challenges of economic cooperation, open trade and investments.

Panels

Improving The Narrative of Trade and Investment
Inclusive Economic Participation through Digital Economy and Technology
Driving Innovative Sustainability

Roundtable Discussion - The Direction for the APEC Post-2020 Vision – Post Covid-19

Moderator:

HH Tunku Zain Al-Abidin Ibni Tuanku Muhriz
Royal Fellow of Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

1st speaker: Ambassador Dato’ Muhammad Noor Yacob
Adjunct Professor, Institute of Malaysian and International Studies (IKMAS),
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

2nd speaker: Dr. Rosario Santa Gadea
Director of the Center for China and Asia-Pacific Studies
University of the Pacific (Universidad del Pacífico), Lima-Peru

FOR MORE ENQUIRIES

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Drafting e-commerce regulations for a sustainable economic recovery: Lesson from DEPA analysis

Prof. Felipe Muñoz
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Abstract

In recent years, the digital transformation led by technological advances in electronic devices as well as ICT networks, have had a strong effect on global economy through the expansion of e-commerce (APEC, 2019a). The current international pandemic situation caused by the COVID-19 outbreak has enhanced these business transactions. The rise of e-commerce has forced the economies of the world, particularly those belonging to APEC, to review and develop the physical, human and regulatory infrastructure to establish policies within this sector (APEC, 2017c, 2019b). Thus, the discussion has focused on elements such as electronic transaction frameworks, openness to this type of commerce, cybersecurity, or data privacy. It has also been widely addressed, especially by developing economies, the relevance of the reduction of digital gaps in order to benefit from e-commerce related opportunities (APEC, 2017c).

The governance of the digital economy has become a relevant policy issue for governments across the Asia Pacific region. In this context, the Digital Economy Partnership Agreement (DEPA), composed by Chile, New Zealand and Singapore, acknowledges the importance of the digital economy in promoting inclusive economic growth, and enhance the development of e-commerce in a post pandemic economic recovery scenario. This paper will analyze DEPA as a case study to identify key lessons for the development of regulations that will help boost cross border e-commerce in APEC economies for a post pandemic sustainable recovery. For this purpose, the following structure is proposed. After the introduction, a literature review on the development of e-commerce trade regulations in APEC region will be conducted. Second, an analysis of DEPA's provisions to identify key lessons will be presented. Finally, some policy recommendations will be drafted.

Keywords: DEPA, APEC, e-commerce, sustainable development, post pandemic recovery

The Resilience of Global Value Chains within The APEC Region

Divya Sangaraju

Researcher, Policy Support Unit , APEC Secretariat Singapore

Abstract:

“This policy brief aims to replicate a key study conducted by APEC in 2014 where a quantitative evaluation of the Strength of Value Chains was conducted. As an update to this study, the policy brief we are currently finalizing provides updated results on the extent of resilience against 5 key risk areas (Natural disaster risk; Logistics and Infrastructure Risk; Market Risk; Regulatory and Policy Risk; and Political Risk) that are relevant to Value Chain Strength in the APEC region. This study is important as it quantifies the region’s performance in terms of Global Value Chains resilience, an issue being exemplified in recent months. The paper makes use of the Principal Component Analysis method to calculate a Value Chain strength index that quantifies the resiliency of the Global Value Chain environment of the APEC region in comparison to other inter-governmental bodies such as ASEAN, G20, OECD and the European Union. Furthermore, considering the recent pandemic, a section of this report has highlighted instances where businesses or governments have shown resilience to this pandemic and the areas within which improvements can be made. More importantly, this study helps shed light on how governments can be more prepared to face unexpected crisis like COVID-19 in the future. “

Facilitating E-commerce in Malaysia: Understanding Barriers confronting SMEs in selected services.

Prof. Tham Siew Yean
ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute

Associate Prof. Dr. Andrew Kam Jia Yi
Institute of Malaysian and International Studies, UKM

Abstract:

In 2018, it was estimated that 98.5 percent of the business establishments in Malaysia are micro, small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Given the domestic orientation of the SMEs, the government has initiated numerous initiatives to facilitate SMEs to penetrate the export market. For example, the SME Masterplan (2012-2020) that was launched in 2012, targeted to increase the share of exports of SMEs to 23.0 percent by 2020. E-commerce is promoted by the government as a platform to facilitate exports since it can reduce the fixed costs incurred for exporting by removing the need to establish a physical presence in export destinations. The presentation will be based on a survey conducted by the authors on identifying the key barriers faced by SMEs in ecommerce adoption in retail and food services in the Klang Valley. The wholesale and retail trade, food and beverage (F&B) and accommodation sub-sector which accounted for 62.3 percent of SME value-added in the services sector, grew at the fastest pace of 7.5 percent in 2017. More importantly, growth was underpinned by retail trade and motor vehicle segments. Facilitating the SMEs in retail services to adopt e-commerce can expand their market opportunities as retail sales from e-commerce is estimated at about 2 percent, which is much lower to China's 10 percent, the US at 9.2 percent and South Korea at 16.3 percent. The findings of the survey provides recommendations for policy purposes in a sector which is increasingly important in Malaysia.

**Foreign investment and value-added generation in resource rich economies in the
Association of Southeast Asian Nations and Pacific Alliance**

Dr. Yuri Landa-Arroyo, Universidad de Lima, Perú

APEC Study Centers Consortium-Peru

Abstract:

This study evaluates the effect of foreign direct investment (FDI) on the generation of added value in natural-resource-rich economies in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Brunei, Indonesia and Malaysia) and the Pacific Alliance (Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru). We use international input-output tables published by the OECD which contain transactions between 64 economies composed of 36 economic sectors each, from 2005 and 2015. First, we identify which are the global value chains (GVC) that make intensive use of minerals; then, we locate the position of each evaluated country-sector in such chains; and finally, we estimate, through an econometric regression, what role has foreign direct investment played in the sectors that transform minerals.

After estimating the added value generated by country-sector in each link of the mineral-intensive value chain, we find that the ASEAN economies and Mexico are positioned in forward links in these chains, while Chile, Colombia and Peru still remain in initial links. We also find that FDI has played an active role in generating added value for ASEAN economies, but has not had similar effects in Latin American economies. The result is explained by the vertical industrial policies applied in the former, while for the latter the priority has been concentrated on horizontal policies.

Trade and investment facilitation: efficiency in programs and actions in APEC

Dra. América Zamora-Torres

Universidad Michoacan de San Nicolás de Hidalgo

Abstract:

Trade facilitation and increased investment among its partners are one of the three pillars of the Asia Pacific Economic Association Forum (APEC) agenda, which is why this chapter seeks to explore, to almost thirty years since its creation, if it has fulfilled these goals and in what proportion. For which a two-pronged analysis is made, the first a qualitative analysis regarding multilateral liberalization, the area of free trade and review of individual and collective action plans; and secondly, a quantitative analysis of efficiency measurement with respect to trade and investment. As a result of the work presented, it is necessary to channel APEC's efforts to comply with the Bogor goals, since despite the different efforts, these goals are still far from being achieved.

BELT AND SILK ROAD INITIATIVE: A NEW GAME CHANGER OF TRANSNATIONAL INVESTMENT IN ASIA

Atty. Irene D. Valones, MPM (UP), LLM
Supreme Court

Abstract:

The advent of globalisation in this modern age and highly diversified world paves way for a new era of economic alliance of states in Asia through the establishment of China's Belt and Silk Roads Initiative (BRI), comprising the Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB) and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road (MSR), which connects the East and the West in order to promote and sustain leverage in the transition of the world from western hegemony to a policy of peace, mutual respect, and coordination under China's helm. In this pursuit, China continues to use BRI not only as an economic but as a geo-political strategy to broaden its sphere of land and maritime control against the opposing hegemony among its neighbouring countries, the East and the West. This paper delves into the theories and praxis of investor state arbitration as well as issues on transparency of the Bilateral Investment Treaties (BIT) and international investment agreements (IIAs) as tools for governance of investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) in the light of the accelerating transnational investments under the BRI in Asia and the member-economies within the APEC belt. It is theorised in this paper that complexities in ISDS mechanisms can be remedied by establishing a multilateral investment court in order to foster legitimacy and transparency on arbitral tribunals and therefore, address the issues on the malleable and amorphous nature of public policy to promote not only the economic interest of the State parties and foreign investors but also the sustainable development of the people.

MSME Digitalization in a Post-COVID World: Implementing a Gender Inclusive Action Agenda

Justin Kwan

Program Manager, APEC-Canada Growing Business Partnership, Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada

Phebe M. Ferrer

Research Assistant, APEC-Canada Growing Business Partnership, Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada

Abstract:

The COVID-19 pandemic has made digitalization a priority for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) region. While efforts to engage MSMEs in the digital economy precede the pandemic, social distancing measures now require MSMEs to adapt from in-person to online operations. As economies prepare to assist MSMEs in digitalizing their operations, governments' policy approaches must account for the pre-existing inequalities facing underrepresented groups in entrepreneurship – especially women- and youth-led MSMEs – in order to ensure an inclusive transition to the digital economy. Drawing from the implementation experiences of the APEC-Canada Growing Business Partnership, a joint international development project between the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada and APEC Secretariat, this paper analyzes the Partnership's on-the-ground activities promoting inclusive growth among MSMEs in Indonesia, Peru, the Philippines, and Vietnam. Based on the project's preliminary findings, this paper provides two policy recommendations on how to (1) utilize a gender-based analytical framework in MSME digitalization; and (2) build the capacity of on-the-ground partners to provide gender-based training and research concerning digitalization. We highlight both international strategies (e.g.: APEC Policy Partnership on Women in the Economy) and Canadian tools (e.g.: Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy and gender-based analysis plus (GBA+) approach), which recognize the specific context of women-led businesses in the Partnership's implementation. We therefore recommend that government measures regarding MSME digitalization operate through an analytical gender-based lens. Ensuring an inclusive transition of MSMEs to digital operations is crucial toward facilitating the full economic participation of underrepresented groups moving forward.

Research on the Internet Financing of APEC and The Financing Problems of MSMEs

Jingjia Zhang

APEC Study Center of Nankai University

Abstract:

As the booster of economic growth in the Asia-Pacific region, micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in the APEC region employ more than half of the labor force in the market, and play a positive role in promoting economic growth. However, for most of MSMEs in the Asia-Pacific region, the difficulties encountered in financing from credit institutions cannot be ignored. "Difficult financing and expensive financing" has become one of the most concerned issues of global MSMEs and government departments. The emergence of Internet finance has effectively impacted the Pareto's principle, gradually meeting the financing needs of MSMEs, achieving a long tail effect and promoting effective resource allocation. From the perspective of Internet financial services for MSMEs, this article explains the financing obstacles for MSMEs in the APEC area and the feasible ways to use Internet finance to solve financing problems.

MSMEs : Digitization and e-commerce, Base for the development and diversification of markets.

Esteban Zottele de Vega & Aníbal Zottele Allende
Universidad Veracruzana, Mexico

Abstract:

The impact of Covid-19 in the economies of APEC has among its worst consequences the weakening and closure of a significant number of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) with the consequent loss of jobs and the worsening of imbalances in the regional economies.

This situation is not new, although it is more critical and as it has long been widely expressed in different forums, including APEC, the difficulties that affect MSMEs, including among others the problems of financing, access to technological progress and International markets.

In addition, in the face of each global or local crisis and each advance especially related to the development of interconnectivity, the digital gap increases with respect to large companies. This affects the competitiveness of MSMEs, especially in the face of global processes.

Therefore, the digitization of these companies and the use of e-commerce must be incorporated as basic tools for their growth. Digital transformation is essential, as it boosts efficiency, streamlines processes, reduces costs, stimulates productivity, reduces human errors, and opens companies to new markets.

This process involves various challenges, investment, connectivity, staff training and innovation. In this way, the specific support for digitization and e-commerce for MSMEs must have public policies, so that these companies can reach international standards.

Mitigating excessive labor migration of nurses: A theoretical framework

Tereso S. Tullao, Jr.

De La Salle University Manila, Philippines

John Paolo R. Rivera

Asian Institute of Management Makati City, Philippines

Abstract:

The Philippines is recognized for producing nurses and exporting them to developed economies. However, with the surge of confirmed cases of coronavirus and incidence of deaths among patients and medical workers, the economy's limited healthcare system continues to be overwhelmed. Moreover, migration of nurses, which has been persistent even before the pandemic, worsened the current situation. This phenomenon existed primarily because of higher compensation and better working conditions outside the country. We explicate the situation and present a framework on how to mitigate excessive migration of nurses. From our framework, we have shown that: (1) if wage gap for nurses between the sending and receiving economies narrows, migration will decrease; (2) if the likelihood of morbidity in receiving countries increases, it can narrow the expected wage gap, which will reduce migration; (3) if global supply of nurses decreases because of lower demand for nursing education due to high death of nurses, there will be pressure for wages to increase. Hence, there is a need for the Philippines to adjust by increasing wages and improving the work conditions to mitigate the egress of nurses. This alternative may be more efficient than total deployment ban, which may lead to irregular migration. These will have a long-term effect on the capacity of the economy's healthcare system to address the medical needs of Filipinos.

Keywords: coronavirus, labor migration, nurses, wage gap

JEL Classification: F22, I18, J08

The relation between knowledge economy and tourism competitiveness in the APEC zone

Carlos Mario Amaya Molinar

Juan Carlos Yáñez Velazco

Irma Magaña Carrillo

Universidad de Colima - University Center for studies and research on the Pacific basin-APEC
Study Center

Abstract:

(iii) Driving Innovative Sustainability

The paper analyzes the tourist activity in the economy of APEC against the approaches of the knowledge economy, tourism competitiveness and the academic training of tourism professionals in universities. To this end, tourism activity in the APEC economies is considered in the light of the knowledge economy, the indicators of tourism competitiveness of the World Economic Forum and information provided by the World Tourism Organization. In an introductory way, the tourism system is described, the level of progress in the epistemological conception of tourism, some limitations and challenges faced by actors and researchers of the tourism industry in terms of knowledge management and, finally, the educational practices of three university institutions dedicated to the training of tourism professionals are reviewed. Subject to confirmation by other methodologies, the preliminary facts found through the review of academic literature, institutional documents and databases show a relationship between investment in research and development, higher education and human capital formation with tourism competitiveness and the use of tourism resources. The post-pandemic era poses new challenges for knowledge management and tourism competitiveness in the APEC zone.

Developing a strategy for Philippine tourism recovery post-pandemic: A Systems Thinking approach

Fernando Martin Y. Roxas

Asian Institute of Management

John Paolo R. Rivera

Asian Institute of Management

Eylla Laire M. Gutierrez

Asian Institute of Management

Abstract:

Tourism has become one of the economic pillars of the Philippines. Primarily steered by domestic travel, tourism is recognized for its contributions to ensuring sustainable growth and inclusive development in the country. However, the outbreak of Covid-19 challenged its resiliency, making it one of the most heavily affected industries due to its susceptibility to the pandemic. The sudden hiatus of tourism activities in the country posed immediate debilitating effects to the whole economy. Aggravated by the pandemic's expected impact on existing travel behaviors and business models, recent events induced transformations that require a more complex and systemic approach to creating a strategic recovery plan for the industry. Given an opportune time to reassess established paradigms on tourism growth, this study contributes to the discourse on tourism recovery and Covid-19. By examining the literature on pandemic management and response, this study utilizes Systems Thinking to craft and present a strategy in restarting tourism activities. By using causal loop diagrams, we generate valuable insights for policy action. Findings suggest the need to prioritize domestic tourism by utilizing multi-stakeholder collaboration with an end goal of pursuing a more sustainable Philippine tourism industry that aids in rebooting the economy.

Keywords: Systems Thinking, Tourism Recovery, Covid-19

JEL Classifications: L83, O29, P41

To Mask or Not to Mask

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June 16, 2020

Abstract

Some governments implement mandatory mask policies partly based on the scientific studies that show mask-wearing helps “flatten the curve” (reduces the outbreak pace such that the health care system can handle). However, these studies unable to tell when and why people would comply and wear masks. I endogenize individuals’ mask-wearing decision in a model in which selfish individuals know that masks protect others more. The result shows their decisions exhibit inter-dependence that the choices depend not only scientifically on the filtration efficiencies of masks to and from the wearers but also economically on how many others are infected and whether they wear masks too, as well as how many people are inevitably “bumping” into others in non-trivial ways. Without relying on behavioral assumptions and ad hoc differences, the model offers a rational explanation of the polar opposite cases among equally crowded cities: some in which almost everyone wears masks, but few do so in others. Comparing social and private incentives, the model identifies the scenarios wherein mandatory mask policies benefit society and wherein people comply with such policies. It highlights how economics differs from science in calculating the effectiveness of mask-wearing in containing the virus.

Food Safety Management and Compliance among Selected Cacao Enterprises in Davao City

Lim, Y.A.C.¹, De Castro, M.M.E.², Depositario, D.P.T.³, Nuñez, C.L.R.⁴

Abstract:

In the Philippines, 80% of national output is produced in Davao Region and thus it is known as the cacao and chocolate capital of the Philippines. Due to its processed form being of high quality, cacao is poised to be one of our top export commodities. Food safety standards must however be met by cacao processors for our chocolate to qualify for export. The study assessed the food safety management practices and compliance of selected Cacao producers and manufacturers in Davao City. A multi-case qualitative research design was employed through interviews, survey and ocular inspection in the selected enterprises.

The findings revealed that compliance to food safety standards were highly driven by the market/buyer side of the chain. Most of the cacao enterprises perceived their operations as heavily compliant to food safety standards. However, the unavailability of equipment and lack of consistency of food safety policies were some of the identified issues among the processors. In addition, farmers' practices relied heavily on extensive experience than on properly documented procedures in the production chain. The acquisition of equipment crucial in ensuring food safety like mechanical dryers, remedial training for employees and managers on food safety, formulation of formal food safety written policies, and formalizing a traceability system for enterprises are recommended.

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What Goes Around Comes Around: Pivoting to a Circular Economy

Satvinderjit Kaur Singh

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Abstract:

The waste we throw away has a tendency of coming back in our air, water and food, directly affecting our livelihoods, economy and health. The presentation will discuss the waste problem in APEC and present a more sustainable production model — the circular economy — which minimises waste and optimises resource use by incorporating reuse, repurposing and recycling of materials into manufacturing and logistics. It will point to new business and trade opportunities provided by the circular economy in general and during the COVID-19 pandemic in particular. Finally, it will present some policy recommendations and discuss the role of regional cooperation in facilitating the transition to a circular economy.

The presentation will be based on the following PSU publications:

1. Policy Brief

Circular Economy: Don't Let Waste Go to

Waste <https://www.apec.org/Publications/2020/01/Circular-Economy---Dont-Let-Waste-Go-to-Waste>

2. ARTA Theme Chapter

APEC Regional Trends Analysis - What Goes Around Comes Around: Pivoting to a Circular Economy; Uncertainty Tests APEC's Resilience amid COVID-

19 <https://www.apec.org/Publications/2020/05/APEC-Regional-Trends-Analysis---What-Goes-Around-Comes-Around>

Viet nam's efforts in building sustainable economic development in the post-pandemic period

Dr. Chu Minh Thao

Diplomatic Academy of Viet Nam

Abstract:

The Covid-19 has created a hard year for the global economy and Vietnam's economy. It has negatively and largely impacted on Vietnam's economy, especially the tourism, services, value chain, input materials, etc. resulting in reduction of Vietnam's GDP growth. This study aims at reviewing Vietnam's challenges and opportunities and its policies and efforts to achieve sustainable economic growth in the context of facing a new normal post-pandemic.

The study finds out that: The post-pandemic context is characterized by the uncertainty of the world economic development accompanied by the major power competition that has expanded not only in political, economic and security sectors but also in the fight against the pandemic. These events happen on top of the lasting issue of climate change. Thus, this context has caused concerns of a long period of slow global economic recovery that would inhibits the efforts to build a sustainable economic growth and development.

Within that context, Vietnam has to overcome long-term and immediate challenges relating to rising unemployment, vulnerabilities of enterprises, especially small and medium enterprises. Vietnam, however, has certain advantages such as receiving more investments due to the shifting of investment locations away from China by Japanese, American and European enterprises.

Given these challenges and opportunities, Vietnam's policy has targeted at: i) controlling the breakout of Covid-19; ii) focusing at supporting MSMEs, unemployed, iii) digital transformation; iv) green economy; v) taking advantages of its networks of FTAs, for instance Economic Partnership Agreements with Japan, Free Trade Agreement with South Korea, and the recently signed Vietnam-EU FTA.

Asia-Pacific in Globalization: Trends and Opportunities for Peru

Dr. Rosario SANTA GADEA

Director of the Center for China and Asia-Pacific Studies of Universidad del Pacífico
(University of the Pacific), Lima-Peru.

Abstract:

In 2021, Peru will celebrate the bicentennial of its national independence which is an occasion for thinking towards the future. In this context, the paper focuses on a comparative vision of Peru with the economies “in the other side of the Pacific” in order to identify elements to renew our agenda of cooperation with them in the following decades. It is usual to compare Peru with the rest of economies of Latin America. In this research we have made this comparison with a group of economies that we have called Asia-16, as analytical category, including the 16 economies of Asia and Oceania in the Pacific basin members of APEC. The analysis reveals wide gaps with regards to this group that Peru will have to overcome in its path towards development. The paper is divided in three parts: (1) an overview of the importance and dynamism of Asia-Pacific in the global economy, (2) the outlook and pending challenges of trade between Peru and Asia-16, and (3) the comparative analysis of Peru with regards to these economies based on indicators about competitiveness, productivity, logistic costs, among others. This outlook shows that there are benchmarks in Asia-Pacific that Peru could further explore in order to identify learned lessons that contribute to its own development process and enrich the cooperation agenda with this region. We consider that this paper could be a valid contribution to the ASCC, Panel 1 “Shared Prosperity Post 2020: What It Means for the APEC Economies”, in particular Item 1 “Addressing Lower Economic Growth, Higher Poverty and Unemployment”. The paper is focused on structural conditions that are the background for shared prosperity.

RSG

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