

Indigenous Business Leaders' Statement of Priorities

Promoting Indigenous Business Inclusion Across APEC Member Economies

Preamble

1. We, Indigenous Business Leaders from APEC economies, met virtually on 7 July NZT to discuss our vision for expanding our involvement in trade and business and building our communities. We are grateful to ABAC for this opportunity and for making this Statement of Priorities available to APEC Economic Leaders.
2. In meeting together for the first time in this way, we have been mindful of the 245 million Indigenous people living in the APEC region and that we carry their hopes and aspirations for the future, building on the legacy handed down to them by their ancestors. We are mindful also that, while economic development across Indigenous economies is significantly varied, many of the challenges and barriers Indigenous businesses face are shared and arise from both historical and contemporary structural inequities. Notwithstanding these challenges, Indigenous peoples have maintained their knowledge systems and enhanced their know-how in ways that could significantly benefit the APEC region's commitment to build back better and fairer after the COVID-19 pandemic. An inherent commitment to inclusion, sustainability and prosperity for all peoples positions Indigenous businesses well to enrich and help shape a new regional economic recovery.

Recommendations

3. As APEC adopts an Implementation Plan for the Putrajaya Vision to 2040, we Indigenous Business Leaders urge APEC Economic Leaders to:
 - a. Accord priority to developing Indigenous Economic Inclusion in APEC to ensure Indigenous peoples participate fully in the APEC work program and have access to the resources necessary for the well-being and economic security of their communities – urban, rural and remote – as well as participate in the shaping of region's future economic story.
 - b. Work in partnership with the Indigenous Business sector to stimulate and incentivize Indigenous business growth and scalability for greater involvement in trade and economic cooperation and to improve cross-border collaboration.
 - c. Identify and address the infrastructure needs of rural and remote Indigenous communities including expanding the internet and digital infrastructure to improve access to the digital economy and cross-border e-commerce.
 - d. Expand the range of data collected relevant to the needs of the Indigenous Business sector within the APEC economies as well as supporting and recognizing the role of free, prior and informed consent in the collection, use and storing of Indigenous people's business and economic data.
 - e. Explore how Indigenous economies could benefit from existing multilateral trade rules and how the provisions of pathway agreements to the Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP) can be structured to reflect the needs of Indigenous business.
4. We look forward to future opportunities to gather and exchange views as Indigenous people from across the region and we undertake to continue to work cooperatively with ABAC and APEC to this end.

