

FEEEP Symposium 1997, The Impact of Expanding Population and Economic Growth on Food, Energy, and the Environment in the APEC Region, Chair's Summary of Workshop Four: Socio-Economic Context

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5. FEEEP Symposium 1997, The Impact of Expanding Population and Economic Growth on Food, Energy, and the Environment in the APEC Region, Chair's Summary of Workshop Four: Socio-Economic Context

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Thank you Mr. chairman. Although I cannot claim to be an expert in any of F,E,E,E, or P, I am interested in formulating this FEEEP initiative in the context of APEC. Having chaired Workshop Four on 'Socio-Economic Context', I have got a better perspective of it.

Let me characterize the FEEEP initiative in the following ways. First FEEEP has a global implication. Each of the five variables addresses not only the APEC members but also non-members as well. APEC has become a huge regional cooperation group only comparable with the European Union, which means APEC now has a global responsibility. But so far we have been talking only among ourselves in TILF and Ecotech. With this FEEEP initiative we are now addressing the rest of the world as well.

Second FEEEP has an important functional role to play on the APEC 's agenda. We have already launched two main tracks, TILF and Ecotech, from this year onward. However, neither of them is in a very good shape. We are afraid APEC may lose momentum and it needs a few supplementary mechanisms to revitalize the APEC's momentum toward the Bogor target. One is the sectoral approach which was initiated by the successful ITA under President Clinton's initiative last December in Subic and Singapore. As Mr. Edward told us on the first day, senior officials are now examining 61 candidate sectors. This will help promote TILF. I expect FEEEP will make another supplementary mechanism to help Ecotech. In Ecotech more than 200 projects are going on independently of each other. By combining two or three groups, FEEEP will provide a breakthrough for tangible achievement of Ecotech.

Third, the five variables of the FEEEP are often rearranged to indicate the impacts of the two variables, population increase and economic growth, on the other three, food, energy and environment. This cause and effect relationship can be reversed so that food, energy, and environment will cause major bottlenecks to population increase and economic growth. Here we should note that the FEEEP initia-

tive has a 'spatial element'. That is, no country can resolve these bottlenecks within its own boundaries. In Japan, we had to stop our economic growth 100 years ago if we were to solve these bottlenecks in order to sustain our economic growth. Global cooperation is inevitable for some of the factors like global warming and population explosion, but it will be a very slow process. We have to explore whatever we can do within APEC as a quicker practical solution.

This is my understanding of the FEEEP initiative and let me now come to the summary of discussion in Workshop Four. Leaders last year emphasized the cross-cutting approach to the FEEEP. On Tuesday afternoon we discussed each of F, E, E, E, and P, but yesterday our organizer set four themes crosscutting the five variables. The first three, technology, market and governance, each has a clear focus of its own, while the theme of my workshop, socio-economic context, sounded like soup where you just throw everything in. It certainly gave us an advantage. We can speak about whatever we like. But we go astray easily. In the Workshop, I proposed my own definition. Namely, the other three workshops will assume our customs, habits, practice and institution as given and construct their arguments within these socio-economic conditions. However, in order to tackle the FEEEP issues effectively, we may have to change or at least modify some of our socio-economic conditions.

This definition seems to have worked well, and a variety of arguments have come out. I had two expectations: The organizer's instructions would guide our discussion in an orderly way, and the afternoon session, even with different participants, would repeat more or less the morning session and both chair and rapporteurs could relax. However, the outcome betrayed both expectations. Many arguments emerged outside the organizer's instructions, and quite a few new arguments were made in the afternoon. It cannot be helped. After all, the workshops are brain-storming sessions and you cannot tell the outcome in advance. Let me report some of our main arguments.

Sustainable Development

- There is agreement on the need to define sustainable development. Many participants suggested that the definition offered on day 1 of the plenary was more reflective of reality. Sustainable development means maintaining the capacity to respond to issues and problems in a dynamic and fluid system on a forward going basis.
- There was recognition that the conventional indicators such as GDP are not satisfactory mechanisms to measure the overall progress of development in nations. These have to be supplemented by other indicators.
- There is innovative work being done by the United Nations, the Commonwealth Secretariat, and the World Bank amongst others to develop indicators that are broader in scope including not only economic and ecological factors but also social indicators.

- APEC should contribute to the ongoing work on the refinement and dissemination of sustainable development indicators.

Environment

- Issues of socio-economic development and technology transfer are written into international environmental agreements: The Montreal Protocol of Ozone Depletion is an example of how an international agreement can be improved by the inclusion of civil society, the scientific community and North-South governments as equal partners in decision making.
- With the commercialization of many products, there is a tendency to apply patents and intellectual property rights. The outcome of this has had a devastating impact on forest/agricultural biodiversity. Local communities and farmers are deprived of the economic benefits from their traditional products and knowledge.
- In applying and following the rules and regulations set out by the WTO, governments tend to ignore other conventions such as the Plant Breeders Rights.

Poverty and Urbanization

- With expanding populations and economic growth, the world has seen a doubling of poverty with women and rural populations disproportionately affected.
- There is unequitable distribution of wealth, resources and income as the transition from rural to urban centers occurs.
- Economic growth depends on social sustainability. Breakdown in social cohesion leads to economic decline.
- Urbanization, without balanced development in the rural regions, is also a contributing factor to the poverty gap.
 - disappearance of agricultural communities as land, water and labor resources move to the cities.
 - dislocated farmers

Human Resources Development

- Human resource development and training are critical to the economic development of a country.

The development of human resources goes beyond capacity building. It includes the provision of opportunities for people to become self-sufficient and productive members of society.
- There are problems faced by small rural farmers in developing countries to access credit and appropriate technology.
- Free trade sometime results in dislocating various members of the labor force without providing them alternative meaningful employment. Consequently, there

is a need to support dislocated people with mechanisms that do not distort markets. The importance of investing in HRD to adapt the dislocated labor force to a changing job market is critical. APEC is invited to look at these experiences in both developed and developing countries to resolve some of these issues.

Infrastructure and Transfer of Technology

There is a need for transfer of technology and appropriate infrastructure development (both physical and services) in the rural areas. It was further elaborated that the technology and infrastructure that is developed for one particular socio-economic context may not be sustainable for another. These differences should be taken into consideration by both private sector and government when investing in infrastructure development and technology transfer.

Changing Lifestyles

- As income increases, diets become more diverse including the increased consumption of meat products with the consequent increased grain production to feed livestock.
- Serious attention has to be given to the preservation of traditional cultural dietary practices that are environmentally friendly, more healthy, and more economically viable.
- Each country should seek lifestyle practices which take into consideration the environment, including energy consumption.

So much for my report on the socio-economic context of the FEEEP initiative. I hope you now understand that the socio-economic context is never the 'rest of all' but contains a rich menu of clues to developing the FEEEP initiative. Each of them can be related to at least a few of the 200 Ecotech projects and provide them with enough fresh enthusiasm to enhance the momentum of moving them forward toward tangible achievement. The FEEEP initiative will make an effective supplementary mechanism to Ecotech.

Although I see bright prospects for the FEEEP initiative, I will not propose that we should make FEEEP the 14th Work Project of Ecotech and add another ten or twenty working groups to the current 200. FEEEP will play a catalyst role in combining and revitalizing the Ecotech.

Lastly, it is also important to disseminate the ideas evolved from this symposium widely and assure that they are shared by all participants in Ecotech projects. I expect an FEEEP report will come from the Economic committee and it will provide cross-cutting not only among F,E,E,E, and P but also Ecotech and TILF. I also wish to see this kind of symposium held every year or every other year and provide academics and NGO people with access to the APEC process. Thank you very much.