

FTAAP – Future directions and next steps

Dialogue on the PECC Signature Project FTAAP - Pathways to Prosperity

Summary of outcomes

The Dialogue was an AusPECC initiative under the PECC Signature Project “FTAAP Pathways to Prosperity”. It was held in February 2025 in Brisbane, Australia, on the sidelines of the first ABAC meeting. The Dialogue brought together more than 45 stakeholders in the APEC community to share perspectives on the future direction of an FTAAP and discuss how the PECC FTAAP Signature Project might add value to the FTAAP concept in APEC going forward.

During the Dialogue, ABAC, PECC and APEC delegates shared perspectives on the FTAAP concept.

- The APEC Executive Director highlighted the importance of continued stakeholder engagement and collaboration in uncertain economic times.
- The Chair of the ABAC REIWG outlined the need to take action in the most urgent areas impacting on business, including digital transformation and climate.
- CNCPEC reiterated the value of FTAAP and the role of APEC, noting the importance of PECC in taking a proactive role in FTAAP’s future direction.
- The APEC PSU shared the conclusions of the PSU FTA Convergences and Divergences Study, noting there are many areas in which APEC members have converging approaches, though divergences in 'new' areas remain.
- The meeting welcomed the participation of CNCPEC to the expert Project Taskforce and noted the Taskforce remains open and welcome to all PECC members.

AusPECC then facilitated a discussion on the possible future directions and next steps for the PECC project.

- Key areas of focus should be both ambitious - to provide innovative ideas on complex issues, such as digitalisation and AI - and achievable – they can consider 'low hanging fruit' where shorter term practical outcomes for business can be achieved, such as on paperless trade.
- Existing project work on Services and good regulatory practice, on Professional services and recognition, and on Trade and climate change can also be taken further, building on the recommendations of the three existing policy briefs.
- Regional outreach and engagement and continued discussions among ABAC, APEC and APEC are a priority.

AusPECC will now take forward the next steps:

- AusPECC will consult with the Project Taskforce and put forward some key initiatives to pursue over the year.
- APEC, ABAC and PECC will continue to work closely together in delivery of these initiatives where possible.
- AusPECC welcomes further input from the PECC community on project activities and focus.