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## Investment Experts' Group

### **The Latest IEG Meeting**

The Investment Experts Group (IEG) held its second meeting (IEG2) for 2019 in Puerto Varas, Chile on 22–23 August 2019. IEG2 was attended by delegates from 17 member economies and 2 guests—the World Economic Forum (a three-year guest, from 2017 to 2019) and the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL).

The IEG continued to focus its work on examining investment issues in the APEC region towards achievement of the Bogor Goals. The Work Plan on the Next Generation Trade and Investment Issues (NGeTIs) and the Investment Facilitation Action Plan (IFAP) are among the tools that the IEG employs in this regard.

### **IEG Work Plan for the Next Generation Trade and Investment Issues**

The IEG developed a Work Plan for the Next Generation Trade and Investment Issues (IEG Work Plan on NGeTIs), a multi-year document which was endorsed by both the IEG and CTI prior to the second IEG meeting 2017. The work plan allows IEG members to track the progress of the group's work in examining the investment aspects of the existing and potential next generation issues. IEG members have been working on [their selected topics](#) based on existing modalities within APEC and kept consistent with their own priorities. Existing modalities include, but are not limited to: APEC-funded projects, self-funded projects, researching, publishing or sessions in IEG meetings—and reporting updates at every meeting in future. Under the work plan, members continue to pick up issues for review. Currently, 10 economies are engaged with nine next generation issues (some economies are engaged on more than one issue, and some issues are addressed by multiple economies).

### **Investment Facilitation Action Plan**

In 2008, APEC Ministers endorsed an [Investment Facilitation Action Plan](#) that is aimed at strengthening the competitiveness and sustainability of economic growth of APEC's member economies and making further progress towards achievement of the Bogor Goals. The IFAP includes a comprehensive prescription of actions that can be taken across a range of policy areas and have served as a valuable reference tool for the improvement of the APEC investment climate. The IEG has reviewed the action plan's implementation progress and published three reports in [2013](#), [2015](#) and [2017](#).

IEG members agreed to continue IFAP implementation through the launch of the 4th phase of IFAP (IFAP IV) with implementation focused on the second, third and fifth principles laid out in the action plan:

- Principle 2: Enhance stability of investment environments, security of property and protection of investors
- Principle 3: Enhance predictability and consistency in investment-related policies
- Principle 5: Build constructive stakeholder relationships.

Through discussions at IEG meetings and intersessional work, 12 out of 21 economies were identified and their updates were submitted. The PSU's report, "Facilitating Investment in APEC: Improving the Investment Climate through Good Governance" was endorsed by the IEG and will be published by the end of 2019. The report found that investment facilitation actions would help stabilize FDI flows and ensure sustainability in the long run, and that a stable investment environment, secure property laws and good investor protection serve as safety nets as well as risk-reducing mechanisms for foreign investors.

### **APEC Investment Commitment Handbook**

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The IEG made progress on the APEC Investment Commitment Handbook, an initiative led by Australia. The handbook provides an overview of the obligations contained in international investment treaties and the risks that economies face in the event its officials violate these obligations. The handbook is targeted at government officials at all levels and in all branches (executive, legislative and judicial) and will help them avoid violating international investment obligations, which could potentially trigger international investment disputes. The handbook was endorsed by IEG.

### **Support for the Multilateral Trading System**

The IEG continues to support the multilateral trading system through discussions with external stakeholders such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the World Economic Forum (WEF) as well as the World Bank about international investment agreements issues. This has paved the way for the investment policymakers of each APEC economy to take stock and utilize what they've learned from these discussions in their home economies.

### **Capacity Building Workshops**

The Workshop on Investment and Sustainable Development in a Digital World was jointly organized by the IEG along with the World Economic Forum and the Chilean Investment Promotion Agency on 22 August 2019 in Chile. The workshop fostered an exchange among international organizations such as the World Trade Institute (WTI), United Nations Commission on International Trade Law, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the WTO as well as among private companies, academia and investment promotion agencies. The workshop participants discussed cutting-edge developments in international investment policy and practice, and how this impacts the attainment of sustainable development goals. The workshop produced practical, action-oriented steps that may help with achieving sustainable and inclusive investment, drawing from senior levels of policymakers and business executives.

Under the Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP) work program on investment, China organized a self-funded Workshop called "Optimizing Investment Measures in the Asia-Pacific" on 11–12 April 2019 in Shanghai. The workshop's participants shared best practices and exchanged experiences of policies on investment liberalization, facilitation, promotion and protection. Australia self-funded a joint World Bank, OECD and APEC workshop on investment policy reform in June 2019. The workshop covered data collection and analytics; gender, social inclusion and sustainability; investment promotion; and options to increase domestic value-add from foreign direct investment. The discussion underscored economies' views on policy reform efforts and associated impacts. A policy report highlighting the key points of discussion was developed as an ongoing resource and circulated through the IEG.

Source: <https://www.apec.org/Groups/Committee-on-Trade-and-Investment/Investment-Experts-Group>.