



**Asia-Pacific
Economic Cooperation**

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Session 1.5

Summary Report - 17th Emergency Preparedness Working Group Meeting 2021

Purpose: Information

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**18th Emergency Preparedness Working Group
Meeting
Chiang Mai, Thailand
18 August 2022**

Summary of the Meeting
The 17th Meeting of Emergency Preparedness Working Group (EPWG17)
Virtual Meeting
20 and 21 May 2021

1. The **17th Meeting of the Emergency Preparedness Working Group (EPWG17)** was hosted virtually by New Zealand, on 20 and 21 May 2021. The virtual meeting was chaired by EPWG Co-Chairs Mr. Koji Suzuki (Japan) and Mr. Xiaoning Zhang (China). The chair of PPWE, the convener of ABAC Taskforce on Disaster Recovery Planning and Risk Management, representatives of PPSTI and HWG also participated in the meeting. The APEC Secretariat's EPWG Program Director (PD), Mr. Febby Andryananto, assisted the meeting.
2. The meeting was attended by **18 out of 21 EPWG member economies** namely: Australia; Brunei Darussalam; Chile; China; Hong Kong, China; Indonesia; Japan; Korea, Malaysia; New Zealand; Peru; Philippines; Russia; Singapore; Chinese Taipei; Thailand; United States; and Viet Nam.

Session I: Opening Session

3. EPWG Co-Chair, Mr. Koji Suzuki, welcomed all participants of EPWG17 Virtual Meeting. EPWG Co-Chair expected that all EPWG delegates would actively participate in the meeting including in discussing the important issues such as Putrajaya Vision 2040 and EPWG fora assessment. The Co-Chair appreciated the efforts made by disaster management agencies that have contributed in the fight against COVID-19 pandemic.
4. Ms. Jenna Rogers from the National Emergency Management Agency of New Zealand, representing the APEC 2021 host economy in her opening remarks explained that the global pandemic reminds us why forum such as APEC is more important than ever before. The need for cooperation, coordination, and collaboration is essential to manage current and future risk. EPWG member economies need to enhance collective capacity to manage disasters and support recovery from disasters. Members have the opportunity to make advancement in areas of mutual interest that build resilience to the current pandemic and future disasters.
5. The EPWG Co-Chair invited all EPWG members to introduce themselves. The Co-Chair announced that 18 EPWG economies attended the EPWG17 Virtual Meeting, thus, achieving quorum.
6. The meeting adopted the EPWG17 Meeting Agenda and EPWG Strategic Plan 2021 - 2024.
7. Ms. Jenna Rogers briefed delegates on New Zealand's policy priorities for APEC 2021. She explained that New Zealand's policy priorities for 2021 aim to chart the course through the COVID-19 response and lay the foundations for an inclusive, sustainable and resilient recovery. New Zealand has three policy priorities that are Economic and Trade Policies

that Strengthen Recovery, Increasing Inclusion and Sustainability for Recovery, and Pursuing Innovation and a Digitally-Enabled Recovery.

8. The EPWG Program Director briefed members on EPWG's works in 2021. The PD explained that the APEC SCE is in a process to assess all foras under SCE including EPWG in 2021. SCE has completed the fora assessment for EPWG in January 2021. EPWG has also submitted EPWG's response to the fora assessment to SCE in February 2021. SCE will make a final determination regarding the mandate of all SCE foras in August 2021 (SOM 3). He suggested EPWG to begin working on revised Terms of Reference (TOR) for submission to SCE prior to SOM 3. The PD also shared updates about EPWG projects that were submitted in project session 1 2021.

Session II: EPWG's Initiative in Responding to COVID-19

9. The Co-Chair briefed members on the EPWG's initiative in responding to COVID-19. He informed members that, as of April 2021, 13 EPWG economies have contributed to the sharing of information document. Some of the new measures shared by EPWG member economies in 2021 are the rolled out of COVID-19 vaccine, new application of contact tracing, quarantine policy for travelers, support for business in facing the economic downturn, and deployment of mobile hospitals. The updated document has been posted on EPWG-page.
10. Eight EPWG member economies discussed recent major disaster events and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) policy implementations during COVID-19 pandemic.
 - a. The representative of Chile shared information on its National Policy for Disaster Risk Reduction, National Strategic Plan 2020 – 2030. Chile explained that the objective of this national policy is to establish guidelines to strengthen Disaster Risk Management in pursuit of sustainable development and resilience of territories and communities. the Policy has linkages with global agendas that are 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, The New Urban Agenda Habitat III, COP 21 Paris Agreement, and Sendai Framework.
 - b. The representative of China discussed the practices to combat COVID-19. The Ministry of Emergency Management of China coordinated the allocation of relieve supply from central government to the people. The Ministry also guided local authority to strengthen the regulation over relief materials so it can be efficiently allocated to the affected people. It has also launched a platform to provide a unified access to the government's services and resources that are important for business and individuals.
 - c. The representative of Japan shared major disaster events under COVID-19 pandemic that includes Typhoon Haisen in September 2020, earthquake in February 2021, and heavy snow in January 2021. Japan's DRR policy implementation during COVID-19 includes developing a series of disaster response guidelines to help local governments, updating the Business Continuity Plan (BCP) Guidelines based on COVID-19 experience, and sharing good practices on COVID-19 countermeasures during disasters.

- d. The representative of Korea explained about natural disaster management amidst COVID-19. Korea's disaster management system is prioritizing the protection for residents by responding to COVID-19 and Natural Disasters simultaneously. Disaster preparedness that has been taken by the government are developing new guideline for temporary shelters and evacuation sites to prevent the spread of COVID-19, amending the guideline for the warming centers considering the COVID-19 quarantine, and conducting on-site Inspection for temporary shelters.
- e. The representative of Malaysia shared information on Malaysia's response on flood disaster management during COVID-19 pandemic. Malaysia has endorsed disaster management guideline during COVID-19 with the objectives to outline the roles & functions of every agencies; to cultivate the new normal practices among the responders; to outline victim management procedures at evacuation centre & security control; and to control & prevent the spread of virus COVID-19 among the victims as well as the responders. Malaysia highlighted that no covid-19 cases have been detected at flood evacuation centers that shows the SOP was adhered to by evacuees and related agencies.
- f. The representative of Russia shared lessons learned from COVID-19 outbreak. Measures taken by Russia on civil protection during COVID-19 are self-protection of fire and rescue personnel in their home bases on duty shifts, minimization of daily workers in office buildings, health control and regular disinfection measures, and more use of videoconference platforms. EMERCOM of Russia has done disinfection works in public places such as hospitals, clinics, schools, and transport infrastructure sites.
- g. The representative of Australia shared information about COVID-19 Interstate Deployment Protocol. The Protocol is intended to support the safe and rapid response to emergency response situations following both formal and informal requests between states and territories. It was developed to assist jurisdictions risk-manage any potential spread of COVID-19 brought about by inter-state movement. Australia also explained about the coordination mechanism with the purpose to provide a centralised coordination function for the whole-of-government non-health response to COVID-19.
- h. The representative of Chinese Taipei shared major disaster of drought that occurred in Chinese Taipei in 2020. The drought has direct impacts to agricultural irrigation (rice and fruit), manufacturing industry, livelihood, and hygiene under COVID-19. Chinese Taipei pointed out that slow-onset or sudden-onset disaster might couple with COVID and could create compound impacts. Effective resilience under COVID could be achieved through comprehensive risk evaluation and countermeasures, and systematic and well-organized operations.

Session III: EPWG Strategic Plan 2021 – 2024 and EPWG TOR

- 11. EPWG Co-Chair invited members to share their views on how to implement the EPWG Strategic Plan 2021 -2024. The Co-Chair speaking on behalf of EPWG Japan explained that Japan has been facilitating space technology application to disaster risk reduction. Japan has been sharing the satellite imaginary data and information products to relevant disaster management organization in the region.

12. With regard to the new TOR, the PD pointed out that the Secretariat will work with EPWG Co-Chairs to prepare the draft TOR after the EPWG17 meeting. The Secretariat will circulate the draft to members in June to seek comments and possible endorsement. During the discussion, Chile expressed its support to participate in drafting the new TOR. Chile suggested strengthening the group's focus on resilient economy, sustainable development, and climate change. New Zealand echoed the statement from Chile on the development of EPWG TOR. Chinese Taipei and the Philippines also expressed their support to work with the Co-Chairs and all members in developing the new TOR.

Session IV: APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040 Implementation Plan

13. China highlighted that the people in the Asia Pacific region is still facing a complex situation of combined danger of disaster and COVID-19 pandemic, so EPWG should make more effort to build a safer and more prosperous Asia Pacific. To this end, China proposed three suggestions to implement the vision, first to uphold unity and cooperation, second to continue to sharing experiences about disaster management, third to explore new cooperation models. Japan shared its interested on the issue of DRR and climate change in implementing Putrajaya Vision. Chinese Taipei proposed an idea to raise young disaster managers to continue the momentum of cooperation among APEC economies until 2040.

Session V – Cross-Fora Collaboration

14. APEC Health Working Group (HWG) representative briefed members on the proposed collaboration with EPWG. The representative believed that EPWG and HWG can collaborate to discuss emergency preparedness, share experiences and best practices, and develop policy proposals that member economies may adopt to help address current and future threats. HWG will organize a policy discussion that will also invite EPWG members.
15. PPWE Chair briefed members on the Implementation Plan of “The La Serena Roadmap for Women and Inclusive Growth (2019-2030)”. The Chair explained that the Implementation Plan serves as a framework to provide comprehensive and cross-cutting direction for APEC fora and sub-fora in determining relevant existing and new work streams that may contribute to meeting the targets and fulfilling Action Areas of the La Serena Roadmap. The PPWE Chair encouraged EPWG to contribute to the implementation plan.
16. ABAC Taskforce on Disaster Recovery Planning and Risk Management Convenor shared information on ABAC programs in 2021 and possible collaboration with EPWG. The convenor proposed promoting smart investments, integrating disaster risk and mainstreaming recovery measures from planning to implementation. EPWG members may consider developing region-wide approach to disaster and pandemic response, with a strong public-private engagement. The Convenor reminded that it is important to address disaster-related issues by also assessing the impact on trade, finance, health, food and energy security

17. PPSTI representative proposed a cross fora collaboration with EPWG. The representative pointed out that the cross fora will be organized in a form of policy dialogues among EPWG, PPSTI, HWG and related APEC fora to enhance inclusion and sustainability for disaster recovery for connecting APEC resilience city and community through the innovation on science and technology for decision making on the impacts of natural disasters, climate extremes and pandemic spreading.
18. During the discussion, China stressed the importance of “The La Serena Roadmap for Women and Inclusive Growth (2019-2030)”, which is in line with China’s long-term policy.

Session VI – Capacity Building

19. The PO of APEC Project EPWG 02 2019 A “Workshop on Enhancing Participation in Flood Disaster Preparedness through Community-based Hazard Mapping” invited EPWG members to participate in the Virtual and Hybrid Workshop on 15 to 24 June 2021. The PO reminded members that the registration deadline is 4 June 2021 and each economies may nominate more than two participants.
20. The PO of APEC Project EPWG 03 2019 A “APEC Disaster Risk Management Strategies to Support MSMEs Business Sustainability” shared updates that the online survey have been completed in April 2021 with seven economies participated in the survey. The PO invited EPWG member economies to join the virtual workshop on 3 to 5 August 2021.
21. The PO of APEC Project EPWG 01 2020A “APEC Programme in Rejuvenating Cities and Resilience Capacities for Dual Challenges of COVID-19 Pandemic, Extreme Weather Events and Climate Induced Disaster (Rejuvenate-Cities-C19)” explained the project aims to build the regional and local capacity by reinforcing risk-informed decision for action and realigning domestic DRR for societal transformation in the cities. The project outputs consist of research and survey work, virtual events, and project report.
22. The PO of APEC Project EPWG 02 2020A “Enhancing Natural Disaster Preparedness through Understanding Tsunami Risks” shared that the project aims to advance knowledge of tsunami risk along the circum-Pacific margin, with a particular emphasis on the northern coast of Chile. The project outputs consists of compilation of geographical data from Chile, workshop, and reporting.
23. The PO of APEC Self-Funded Project “Regional Economic Integration through the Lens of Disaster Resilience” that have been endorsed by members in March 2021. The project aims to focus on DRR in business and local communities and to raise risk awareness through various activities in line with APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040. The PO invited members to contribute to the project’s main programs that are: 1) case collection and study of APEC practices, knowledge and technology related to risk identification, assessment, monitoring and transfer; 2) Community-based DRR knowledge sharing video.
24. The representative of China briefed members on the preparation of proposed APEC Self-Funded Project “Work Safety Management in Work Resumption under COVID-19”. The projects aims to promote the sharing and exchange of experiences of APEC economies in managing the workplace safety to resume the economy under Covid-19. The Project’s

activities include developing a “Guidance for Workplace Safety Management in Work Resumption under Covid-19”.

25. The representative of Chinese Taipei briefed members on the proposed APEC self-funded Project “APEC Resilience Week: Building SMART Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) over COVID-19”. The project aims to explore the principles of smart DRR alliance for information intelligence through cloud for APEC Resilience City over Covid-19. The virtual meeting will held on December 2021 with joint activity with PPSTI ACT’s annual meeting.

Session VII – APEC SCE Fora Assessment of EPWG

26. EPWG Co-Chair briefed members on EPWG fora assessment conducted by APEC SCE. The Co-Chair elaborated that SCE has completed the fora assessment for EPWG in January 2021. EPWG has finalized and submitted its responses to SCE in February 2021. There were no decisions on the fora assessment at SCE 1 meeting and SOM 1 in March 2021.
27. During the discussion, several EPWG member economies expressed their support for EPWG to continue its mandate in APEC. Chinese Taipei supported EPWG to enhance its contribution on resilience and disaster risk reduction in APEC. China underscored that EPWG has successfully performed its duties and mission in the past four years. New Zealand supported the continuation of EPWG and highlighted that there is opportunity for EPWG to better align with UNDRR, Sendai Framework, and SDGs goals. Japan reiterated its support for EPWG to contribute to the Putrajaya Vision 2040. Russia highlighted that EPWG has been very productive in responding to global challenge including COVID-19. Chile underscored the importance for EPWG to continue its work and also growth.
28. EPWG member economies reached consensus in the meeting on the continuation of EPWG’s mandate without any adverse comments.

Session VIII - Other Business

29. The representative of New Zealand briefed delegates on the preparation the 14th meeting of APEC Senior Disaster Management Officials Forum (SDMOF) to be held in 26 May. New Zealand invited all EPWG member economies to join SDMOF which will focus on “Disaster Management Adaptations during COVID-19 Pandemic”
30. The representative of Thailand shared information on preparation of APEC 2022. Thailand is planning to host physical meetings for APEC in 2022. Thailand is still in a process of developing the theme and priorities for APEC 2022 that will be in line with Putrajaya Vision 2040 and build on the work of preceding APEC Host (Chile, Malaysia, and New Zealand). Some of the priorities that are being considered are trade and investment, digitalization, well-being, agriculture and food security, and sustainable, inclusive, and responsive growth.

Session IX - Closing Session

31. The meeting endorsed the Document Classification List.

32. The representative of EPWG New Zealand as the host economy thanked all delegates for their attendance and important contribution in EPWG meeting. New Zealand also extended appreciation to EPWG Co-Chairs and EPWG PD for facilitating the meeting. New Zealand look forward to enhancing collaboration among EPWG member economies and across APEC foras on disaster risk reduction.
33. EPWG Co-chair, Mr. Xiaoning Zhang, pointed out that the EPWG17 virtual meeting has been very productive. He reminded that EPWG has endorsed the Strategic Plan 2021 - 2024 and invited members to actively implement the strategic plan. EPWG Co-Chair, Mr. Koji Suzuki, thanked New Zealand, EPWG member economies, and the Secretariat for their support and participation in the meeting.

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