

COLOMBO DECLARATION



OUTCOME DOCUMENT OF THE APO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POLICIES FOR PRODUCTIVITY GROWTH

SRI LANKA, 9–11 AUGUST 2017



The Asian Productivity Organization (APO) is the sole nonprofit international organization in the Asia–Pacific devoted to productivity. Established in 1961 as a regional intergovernmental organization, the APO contributes to the sustainable socioeconomic development of the Asia–Pacific through productivity enhancement. Three strategic directions guide the APO: strengthen NPOs and promote the development of SMEs and communities; catalyze innovation-led productivity growth; and promote Green Productivity.

APO members

Bangladesh, Cambodia, Republic of China, Fiji, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Republic of Korea, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam.

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INTRODUCTION

The delegates to the International Conference on Policies for Productivity Growth, representing the people as well as the public and private sectors in the Asia-Pacific region, gathered from 9 to 11 August 2017 in Colombo, Sri Lanka. The conference was organized by the Asian Productivity Organization (APO) and National Productivity Secretariat of Sri Lanka, involving more than 10 international experts/speakers and more than 50 participants, including 30 international delegates representing 15 countries.

The delegates recognized that government policies, strategies, programs, and actions are instrumental in steering national productivity growth and ensuring a balance among economic, social, and environmental aspects leading to achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As the issue of productivity cuts across sectors, policies need to take an integral but balanced approach considering national development planning and budgetary processes, important economic sectors, and key national actors who can be fundamental to advancing the productivity agenda for achieving sustainable development.

Conference delegates agreed that there was an urgent need to review national economic development policies and programs in order to achieve higher levels of productivity performance and national competitiveness in all sectors while aligning them with the global SDGs.

Based on their discussions and deliberations, the following recommendations were made by the conference. The respective governments are encouraged to review and adopt them and develop action plans to implement each recommendation in a timely manner.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND PRODUCTIVITY ENHANCEMENT

Recommendation 1

The involvement of multiple stakeholders at national level, global partnerships, and international cooperation are essential to achieve the SDGs. Therefore, governments should leverage existing national bodies to steer the process and prepare roadmaps for stakeholder consultations, evolve cooperative discourse platforms, and establish global partnerships in various thematic areas, especially energy, the environment, health, education, infrastructure, and disaster prevention. Such national bodies/national productivity organizations (NPOs) can also be mandated to develop national implementation frame works to meet the SDGs.

International cooperation is invaluable for building resilience and adaptive capacity and developing inclusive, sustainable, low-carbon methods to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. International organizations and NPOs can play a vital role in promoting, strengthening, and sustaining international cooperation between and among countries.

Recommendation 2

Governments should make overall efforts to foster high-quality human resources in science, technology, and innovation (STI) to make countries future-ready and achieve sustainable economic growth. Governments are urged to allocate a minimum 2% of GDP to the promotion of STI for future-oriented, innovation-based sustainable economic growth.

Recommendation 3

Governments should leverage existing strengths in STI R&D to develop upgraded or cutting-edge new product applications and services with global potential while building the capacity to adopt Industry 4.0 and the accompanying new product revolution.

Governments should promote cross-industry technology integration, with an emphasis on digitalization, Internet enablement, smart technology, and environment-friendly technology for productivity enhancement.

Recommendation 4

Considering that many APO member countries are agriculture-based economies, productivity concepts and indexes for agricultural productivity should be developed.



ALIGNING GREEN GROWTH AGENDAS WITH PRODUCTIVITY-BASED ECONOMIC POLICIES

Recommendation 5

Governments are encouraged to adopt comprehensive policies and programs such as promotional, including eco-labeling, standards, technology development, green public procurement, industrial clusters, and eco-awareness; regulatory, including economic instruments, viability gap funding, policy reforms across life-cycle stages; and institutional, including capacity development, institutional set-ups and strengthening, databases and indicators, and resource indexes as a part of economic surveys leading to the establishment of a circular economy for sustainable economic growth.

Recommendation 6

Governments are encouraged to set up national resource panels as a mechanism to provide independent scientific assessments of the sustainable use of natural resources and their environmental impacts as well as policy approaches to promote decoupling of economic growth from environmental degradation.

Recommendation 7

Governments are urged to develop national policies on sustainable consumption and production (SCP), formulate SCP indicators, and set up SCP institutional coordination mechanisms for sustainable productivity achieving green growth.

SCP curricula should be developed covering education through university.

International organizations such as the APO and UN Environment Programme can help by developing a common SCP module-resource pack consisting of curricula, training guides, toolkits, and case studies.



SPURRING NATIONAL PRODUCTIVITY PERFORMANCE THROUGH STI POLICIES

Recommendation 8

Governments should create an innovation-friendly culture along with strategic-foresight and institutional set-ups, energize corporate activities, and accelerate next-generation digital knowledge infrastructure development for AI, big data analytics, digitization, 3D printing, AR/VR, robotics, cloud computing, the Internet of Things, cyber security, etc. to stimulate science, technology, and smart green manufacturing.

Recommendation 9

Governments should build national capacity for comprehensive technology foresight to promote science-and technology-based innovation and improve policy making. Governments are encouraged to set up dedicated foresight units, which can identify and develop the best foresight methodology, such as STEEPED, to achieve the required objectives.

The APO can help develop a framework for future policy assessment to guide governments in setting future-based STI policies. Other external international organizations, such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, UN Industrial Development Organization, etc., may be contacted to provide additional inputs and support.

Recommendation 10

Governments are required to make a shift toward the digital economy paradigm, utilizing the ingenuity of communities, academia, and businesses to achieve advances in STI and ICT. The ultimate goal of such broad-based efforts is to create new jobs and add value for sustainable economic development.

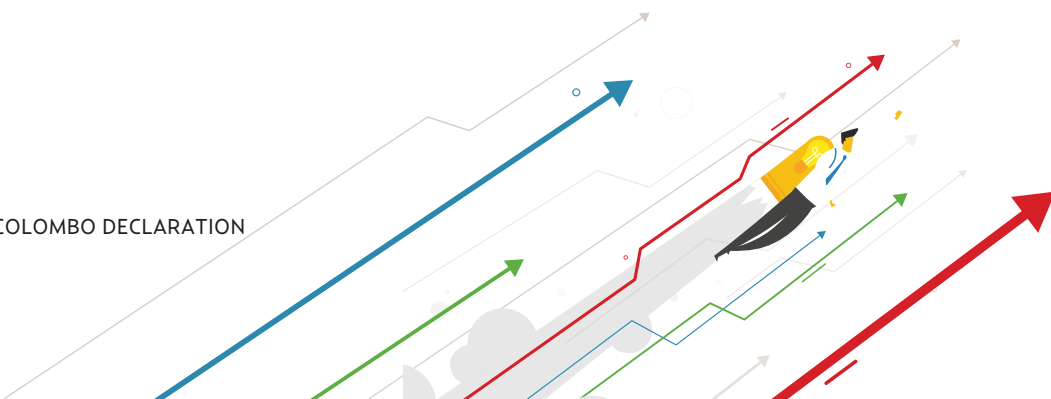
To back up such efforts, platforms are needed for nurturing creative talent, reinvigorating the digital economy, promoting virtuous ecosystems, and creating future industries focused on STI.

Recommendation 11

Governments should seek ways to harness the strength of evidence-based STI in decision-and policy making processes for higher national productivity and economic growth. International alliances should be established for capacity building and achieving synergies in STI.

Recommendation 12

Governments are urged to develop medium-term sectoral productivity roadmaps in consultation with trade associations, unions, and other stakeholders. Each roadmap should detail the productivity status, manpower use, and growth potential of each sector. The roadmaps would propose measures to introduce more innovation, reduce reliance on manpower, and increase the value-added potential of businesses in the sector based on ICT and Industry 4.0. There is a need to develop one-stop centers of innovation and Industry 4.0 offering technology consultancy and advice to SMEs.



ICT-BASED SMART GOVERNANCE POLICIES AND FUTURE-ORIENTED TECHNOLOGY FOR PRODUCTIVITY ENHANCEMENT

Recommendation 13

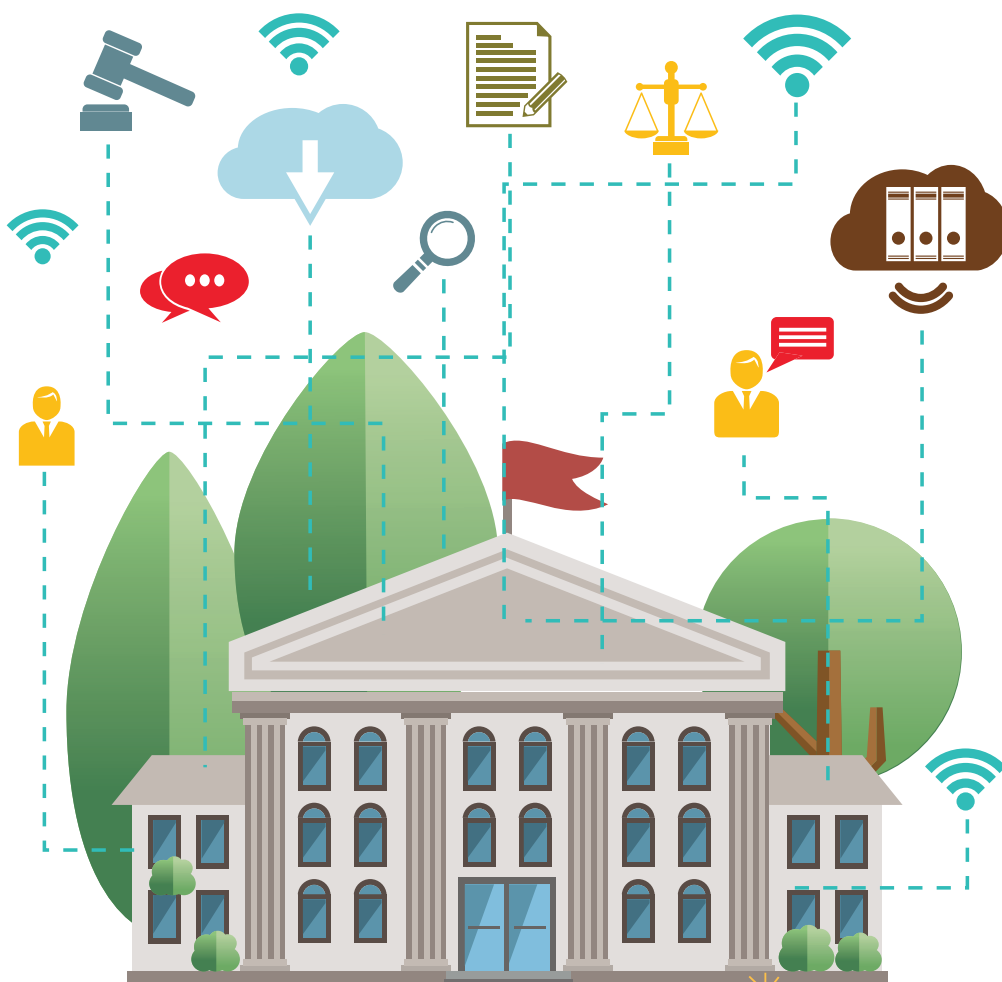
Governments are urged to develop innovative policies, programs, and regulations focusing on the large-scale establishment of smart cities. New, inclusive, open e-governance/m-governance concepts based on ICT are required to coordinate and integrate all stakeholders such as local governments, communities, businesses, academia, research organizations, financial institutions, and citizens to contribute to the process of setting up sustainable, smart cities of the future. Those stakeholders can identify local strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to formulate customized strategies for each smart city.

Recommendation 14

Municipal governments are requested to adopt strategic approaches including area-based development for city improvement (retrofitting), renewal (redevelopment), and extension (greenfield development) plus pan-city initiatives in which smart ICT-based solutions are applied to cover the widest possible areas.

Recommendation 15

ICT-based governance (Government 3.0) is transparent, competent, service oriented, and future ready. Governments should redesign their services to make them citizen friendly, put in place cognition- and prediction-based intelligent administrations, create eco-systems in which knowledge-based communities and smart enterprises can coexist and smart machinery is relied on to provide future-based infrastructure and services.



FUTURE-ORIENTED ANALYSIS FOR BETTER PRODUCTIVITY POLICIES

Recommendation 16

Governments should focus on developing life long learning to support communities, innovative future-ready enterprises, and vibrant hyperconnected cities, providing coordinated, inclusive, futuristic governance while educating the pioneers of next-generation society.

Recommendation 17

The future of economies will largely depend on holistic initiatives undertaken in the areas of growth and competitiveness, innovation, internationalization, productivity, and job and skill creation. Efforts should be made to develop blueprints for each sector to achieve their full potential and guide resource allocation to ensure that the optimum economic impact is delivered as a result of investment of resources and adoption of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

Recommendation 18

Governments should realize that the future of productivity depends on sustaining its growth by: improving public and private funding for R&D; increasing international connectedness (in both the public and private sectors); supporting the diffusion of innovation including openness, skills, global value chains, etc.; fostering well-functioning product, labor, and risk capital markets; fostering a competitive, open business environment; improving innovation policies; and the widespread use of advanced ICT.



SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTIVITY

THE NEW FRONTIER FOR PRODUCTIVITY

Bangladesh
Cambodia
Republic of China
Fiji
Hong Kong
India
Indonesia
Islamic Republic of Iran
Japan
Republic of Korea
Lao PDR
Malaysia
Mongolia
Nepal
Pakistan
Philippines
Singapore
Sri Lanka
Thailand
Vietnam

