
APEC Energy Working Group

Guidelines on a Voluntary Peer Review for Reform of Inefficient Fossil Fuel Subsidies that Encourage Wasteful Consumption (VPR/IFFSR)

APEC VPR/IFFSR is a voluntary co-operative review process by APEC member economies coordinated by the APEC Energy Working Group

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Background

Starting in 2009, APEC Leaders have annually committed “to rationalize and phase out inefficient fossil-fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption, while recognizing the importance of providing those in need with essential energy services.” In 2011, APEC Leaders agreed to set up a “voluntary reporting mechanism” that they would review annually to assess APEC’s “progress” toward this goal. And in 2013, APEC Leaders agreed to build regional capacity to assist APEC economies with rationalizing and phasing out inefficient fossil-fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption, while recognizing the importance of providing those in need with essential energy services.

A key challenge is to turn these commitments into positive progress. Additionally, any efforts undertaken in APEC should be complementary to, and not duplicative of, ongoing efforts in the G20. Since not all APEC economies are members of the G20, there is ample opportunity to target capacity building and support to those economies that would find it beneficial.

Fossil fuel subsidies incentivize fossil-fuel production and consumption and can result in increased energy demand. When these subsidies are inefficient, they can lead to fiscal pressure, harmful emissions, and potentially undermine APEC’s sustainable green growth agenda. The APEC Energy Ministers noted in the 2012 Energy Ministers’ statement that “the reduction of subsidies will encourage more energy efficient consumption, leading to a positive impact on international energy prices and energy security, and will make renewable energy and technologies more competitive.” In terms of environmental benefits, phasing out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies regionally could deliver benefits for the climate, reduce local pollution and cut GHG emissions.

Despite the benefits of inefficient fossil-fuel subsidy reform for individual economies, implementation of reform continues to be a challenge. Governments often face opposition from numerous stakeholders with vested interests in maintaining the subsidies as well as from the general population. Many APEC economies use fossil-fuel subsidies to support low-income households, state-owned utility companies or important sectors such as agriculture. Practical and administrative challenges abound, particularly the challenge of ensuring that poor and vulnerable groups within society are adequately protected from rising energy prices resulting from subsidy reforms. An APEC voluntary peer review process on reform of inefficient fossil fuel subsidies (VPR/IFFSR) could improve the quality of APEC voluntary reporting to our Leaders as well as help disseminate best practices on reform of inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption.

The APEC VPR/IFFSR was closely coordinated with the ongoing efforts in the G20, similar

to the voluntary reporting mechanism (VRM) adopted by APEC in 2011, so that it will be complementary and not duplicative of G20 efforts.

Objectives

Working to support APEC Leaders' instructions to reform inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption and to build regional capacity for the reform of those subsidies, the objectives of the Voluntary Peer Review on IFFSR (VPR/IFFSR) are:

- To improve the quality of information available to APEC Leaders through the APEC voluntary reporting mechanism;
- To provide targeted assistance and capacity building for economies that wish to implement reform; and
- To facilitate learning and provide an avenue for sharing reform experiences and policy tools among APEC economies, including possible follow-on seminars to highlight successful outcomes and lessons learned.

Activities to be Undertaken as Part of the VPR/IFFSR

The main activity to be undertaken as part of the VPR/IFFSR is the Peer Reviews of volunteer member economies. **Part A** below presents the principles and guidelines for the peer reviews including EWG expectations, peer review governance, and roles and responsibilities of the EWG, the volunteering economies being reviewed, the IFFSR Secretariat, and the Peer Review Team. **Part B** presents the peer review project guidelines, including suggested Peer Review development timetables, preparations for the Review Team, roles and responsibilities of the Review Team, and the preparation of the Peer Review Report.

Part A. Principles and Guidelines for Peer Review

In 2013, the EWG⁴⁵ endorsed a Voluntary Peer Review of Inefficient Fossil Fuel Subsidy Reform (VPR/IFFSR) proposal that puts in place an ongoing series of reviews of inefficient fossil fuel subsidies across APEC economies that volunteer to be a part of this review process. The reviews are 'peer reviews', that is, the reviewers are fossil fuel, financial and economic experts sourced from peer APEC economies, as well as from relevant institutions.

1. EWG Agreed Expectations

The EWG is to report progress of the VPR/IFFSR to Leaders in 2015. With APEC Leaders' instructions in mind, we seek to develop a robust process and clear guidelines for this process. The Peer Review process and any subsequent reform of inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that volunteer economies decide to implement should take into account the following guiding principles:¹

- **Reforms should lead to reduced wasteful fossil fuel consumption** – To improve energy security and reduce associated greenhouse gas emissions.

¹ APEC Progress on Rationalizing and Phasing Out Inefficient Fossil Fuel Subsidies: Proposed Voluntary Reporting Mechanism, EGCFE, APEC 2012/EWG43/043 Agenda Item: 15b.
http://www.iisd.org/gsi/sites/default/files/g20lib_apec_2012_volreportmechanism.pdf

- **Reforms should allocate resources more efficiently** – To improve market efficiency and allow scarce resources to be channeled to uses that are more productive in the long term.
- **Reforms should include policies that target help to those in need of essential energy services** - To support rationalization of inefficient fossil fuel subsidies, targeted policies should be developed where appropriate to protect the poorest and most vulnerable populations.
- **Reforms should support sustainable economic growth** – Rationalizing inefficient fossil fuel subsidies should be done in a way that does not hamper long-term sustainable growth and development, and is attentive to macro-economic impacts.

To be most effective, economies' strategies for rationalizing and phasing out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies should ideally (and dependent on the choices and individual circumstances of the APEC economy being reviewed):

- Have clear objectives, criteria and timeframes;
- Be appropriately sequenced in order to support an effective transition;
- Include a coherent strategy for communicating why reform is necessary, the benefits of reform and the timing and implementation of the reform;
- Plan for building and deploying technical and administrative capacity where required; and
- Monitor and assess implementation in a timely and transparent manner.

2. Peer Review Guiding Principles

As agreed by APEC Leaders, the VPR/IFFSR is an economy-owned process. The following are principles agreed to by EWG to guide this process:

- Recognize the context for fossil fuel subsidies in the economy.
- Review the economy's inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption, or any "support measures" identified by the volunteer economy for review.
- The volunteer economy will ultimately decide which policies should be deemed as "inefficient". If so inclined, the economy may also seek guidance on the perceived efficiency or effectiveness of a given subsidy that they nominate.
- Review the analytical processes used to estimate the expected impacts of reform of inefficient fossil fuel subsidies.
- Review the analytical processes used to evaluate the priorities for reform, review options considered by the Peer Review volunteer economy, and develop recommendations for monitoring progress.
- Recommend areas for capacity development; and
- Learn from the challenges and successes of other economies' reforms and planned programs.

Similar to other peer review processes in APEC, a volunteer economy may elect to have follow up peer reviews on IFFSR in the years following an initial peer review.

3. Peer Review Governance

The Peer Review process is a voluntary review process. Therefore, each Peer Review assessment is an agreed cooperative process among the economy, IFFSR Secretariat, and

the review team, under the auspices of the EWG. As the EWG has overall accountability to APEC Leaders for the Peer Review, economies wishing to undertake a Peer Review should initially approach the EWG Secretariat in order to register their interest in undertaking a voluntary Peer Review, and seek formal recognition of that interest at the next EWG meeting. Economies wishing to undertake a Peer Review may consult with the IFFSR Secretariat (to be established) before the official registrations.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

This section provides an overview of the expected roles and responsibilities of the EWG Secretariat, the Peer Review volunteer economies, the IFFSR Secretariat, and the Review Team.

EWG Secretariat

- Maintain the list and order of volunteer economies;
- Distribute to members in advance the draft report for discussion and endorsement at the next available EWG meeting;
- Maintain an archive with the reports of previous Peer Reviews
- Report progress to APEC senior officials; and
- Ensure appropriate reporting by the EWG to APEC Leaders.

Peer Review Volunteer Economies

The following are best practices for the volunteer economy as agreed to by EWG. Volunteer economies should be guided by these best practices to the extent practical given their individual circumstances:

- Participate in APEC technical workshop(s) (or review workshop materials) on inefficient fossil fuel subsidies identification and evaluation;
- Participate in the preliminary planning of the review with the VPR/IFFSR Secretariat and the EWG Secretariat;
- Identify a lead government ministry or authority for evaluating inefficient fossil fuel subsidies;
- Consider the creation of an intra-governmental coordination body with relevant governmental ministries and authorities to ensure adequate coordination on inefficient fossil fuel subsidy identification and evaluation within the economy;
- Develop specific guidelines for identifying inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption;
- Work with technical consultants if desired, identified by the IFFSR Secretariat and engaged by the economy, to develop pre-briefing information regarding inefficient fossil fuel subsidies in various sectors, as well as relevant governmental policy goals and objectives to the review team prior to the visit, in coordination with IFFSR Secretariat;
- Confirm with the IFFSR Secretariat the proposed experts for the review team;
- Respond to questionnaires and submit relevant information requested by the review team prior to the visit;
- Identify a list of stakeholders, including government officials and other organizations that the review team should consult;
- Work with the review team to coordinate the visit program;
- Suggest accommodation and provide practical and logistic information and contacts that will be needed by the review team during the visit;

- Coordinate the logistic arrangement with the IFFSR Secretariat;
- Ensure that identified participants in the Peer Review are available for the Review process;
- Provide English-language documents and explanation in meetings, as needed;
- Submit comments to the review team on the preliminary report; and
- Work with the IFFSR Secretariat and the review team to ensure that the final draft report meets the volunteer economy's requirement.

IFFSR Secretariat

The role of the IFFSR Secretariat is to support the volunteer economy by coordinating and driving the administrative and logistical processes of the Peer Review.

- If requested by the volunteer economy, identify technical consultants consistent with APEC protocols, and ideally based in the APEC region, to support the economy in developing the required background material prior to the Peer Review;
- Assist the volunteer economy and the EWG Secretariat in identifying potential review team members;
- Provide drafting services to the peer review panel; and
- Provide any other logistical and administrative support to the peer review process, as required.

Review Team

- Work together in a collegial manner under the direction of the Peer Review team leader;
- Be accountable for the quality of the review process;
- Undertake preparation for the review, including reading pre-briefing information and preparing comments for discussion;
- Conduct discussions with relevant government ministries and authorities who are responsible for identifying inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption and their potential reforms and, at the request and/or approval of the volunteer economy, with other stakeholders who are affected by the subsidies and their potential removal;
- Present its findings, including its recommendations, which will serve as the basis for the preparation of a post-visit Draft Review Report;
- Finalize the Draft Review Report; and
- Consult with the economy on the Draft Final Report, in coordination with the IFFSR Secretariat. The Review Team will be guided by the views and requests of the volunteer economy being reviewed, including in preparing the text of the final draft report, which should then be approved by the economy.

5. Confidentiality & Transparency

- All participants in this process must maintain confidentiality of Peer Review information. Until the Draft Final Peer Review report is released by the economy to the EWG Secretariat, the review team, IFFSR Secretariat and the Volunteer Peer Review Economy must treat all content and discussions as confidential. Furthermore, the volunteer economy may decide that specific information of the Peer Review is confidential. Such information cannot be disclosed without explicit permission from the volunteer economy. The economy being reviewed will also have the right to decide whether the final report will be

published and disseminated.

6. Needs and Expectations of the Reviewed Economies

When APEC economies offer themselves for Peer Review, they expect a careful and transparent application of the Peer Review process. In particular the Peer Review Team must treat with professionalism and sensitivity:

- The unique policymaking climate and processes in each APEC economy. Each economy has its own distinct policymaking and regulatory framework. The review should refrain from critiquing the political context behind an economy's fossil fuel subsidy regime as well as governance structures and processes of volunteer economies.
- The status and context of official ministries and other governmental authorities in the Peer Review economy;
- The development and economic status of the Peer Review economy; and
- The guidelines selected by the Peer Review economy for identifying inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption.

7. Volunteering for a Peer Review

The Peer Review is a voluntary system. It is envisaged that one to two APEC Member Economies will voluntarily undergo peer review each year. Given that the G20 Member Economies are also likely to undergo a Voluntary Peer Review process, APEC members of the G20 may wish to undergo the Peer Review under the G20 guidelines. Any APEC member undergoing a Peer Review through the G20 is encouraged to share the results with EWG members, in order to transfer lessons learned from that process to all Members. APEC members undergoing Peer Review through the G20 may also volunteer for a VPR/IFFSR in APEC, but will be given lower priority should two or more non-G20 economies seek to undergo peer review in the same year.

Part B. Peer Review Project Guidelines

1. Suggested Peer Review Development Timetable

Development of a successful Peer Review for IFFSR requires clear organization. This section outlines the tasks that should be undertaken to ensure that the planning of a Peer Review and its various stages are undertaken within a reasonable timeframe, with sufficient time allocated for internal coordination, stakeholder meetings and consultations with the volunteer economy. A “Date to be Completed” column has been provided to support the establishment of clear deadlines for Peer Review deliverables.

Table 1 below provides a suggested work plan that can be used as a checklist.

Stage	Activity	Responsibility	Date to be Completed
1	Economy identifies funding for VPR/IFFSR. ²	Economy	
2	Economy participates in an APEC technical workshop on identifying, evaluating, and reforming inefficient fossil fuel subsidies if needed.	Economy	
3	Economy identifies the Lead Ministry/Department for IFFSR and may also create an Inter-Ministerial Coordination Body to ensure appropriate coordination among government ministries and authorities.	Economy	
4	Economy volunteers for the Peer Review.	Economy	
5	EWG endorses the economy volunteering for Peer Review.	EWG	
6	IFFSR Secretariat provides the volunteer economy with a register of APEC-based technical consultants to support the Economy in developing its IFFSR analyses for the pre-briefing information (if requested).	IFFSR Secretariat and Economy	
7	Economy prepares for and submits to IFFSR Secretariat pre-briefing information.	Economy	
8	IFFSR Secretariat and economy representatives plan the Peer Review using VPR/IFFSR guidelines.	Economy and IFFSR Secretariat	
9	Peer Review team proposed in consultation with the APEC economy volunteering to be reviewed.	Economy and IFFSR Secretariat with assistance from the EWG Secretariat	
10	Peer Review team confirmed.	Economy and IFFSR Secretariat	
11	Economy plans Peer Review visit in discussion with IFFSR Secretariat.	Economy and IFFSR Secretariat	
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IFFSR Secretariat provides briefing information and Peer Review visit agenda to Review Team. • IFFSR Secretariat and Review team may submit specific questions on the briefing information and its approach to IFFSR to the Economy. • IFFSR Secretariat with Review team may provide comments on the review visit agenda. 	IFFSR Secretariat and Review Team	

² APEC technical assistance funds will be available to developing APEC economies who volunteer for a peer review.

13	Economy provides answers to the specific questions and information to review team and IFFSR Secretariat.	Economy	
14	Review visit to economy.	Review Team, Economy and IFFSR Secretariat	
15	Draft Review Report completed (excluding any confidential material).	Review Team and Economy	
16	Finalize draft report in coordination with the Economy.	IFFSR Secretariat and Economy	
17	Final draft report approved and signed by economy.	Economy	
18	Economy provides Peer Review draft report to EWG.	Economy	
19	Economy and EWG Secretariat tables the final draft review report at EWG meeting for its discussion and approval. A representative from the peer review team presents key findings from the report.	Economy, Review Team EWG Secretariat	
20	Approved report to be published on the APEC website (if permitted by the Economy).	EWG Secretariat	

2. Preparation for the Review Team

Internal Coordination within the Economy

It is important for the Economy that is interested in undergoing the IFFSR Peer Review to develop internal coordination mechanisms to ensure a whole-of-government approach. As such, it is recommended that a lead ministry or authority within the government be designated for governmental coordination. In addition, if the economy chooses to do so, an inter-ministerial coordination body that includes relevant government ministries, departments and authorities can be created as well. Finally, in addition to internal coordination, the Economy may also choose to consult with external stakeholders to solicit their inputs on IFFSR.

A crucial part of the internal governmental process of IFFSR is the identification and evaluation of inefficient fossil fuel subsidies. As such an IFFSR template is provided below to support this process. This template is based on the voluntary reporting format that has been agreed by the APEC EWG. Completing this template for each inefficient fossil fuel subsidy can be a significant effort.

Table 2: IFFSR Evaluation Template

Subsidy Title:	
Description:	
Weblink to Legislation/Regulation (page #):	
Subsidy Type:	Producer / Consumer / General / Other
History:	
Recipients:	
Duration:	

Financial Value:	
Potential Impacts:	
Affected Government Ministries/Departments:	
Affected Stakeholders:	
Inefficient? If so, why?:	
Options for Reforms:	
Benefits of Reform:	
Expected Changes Regarding Value and Recipients:	
Planned Action (if any):	
Timeframe:	
Current Status:	

Based on the consultations with internal (and if appropriate, external) stakeholders and the completed IFFSR Evaluation template for each inefficient fossil fuel subsidy, the Lead Ministry of the Economy or Inter-ministerial Coordination Body will develop the pre-briefing information for the Review Team and will also determine the agenda for the Review process.

Technical Consultant for the Lead Ministry/Coordination Body

In order to support the Lead Ministry and/or Coordination Body in identifying inefficient fossil fuel subsidies and options to rationalize them, it might be helpful to have the support of a technical consultant. However, this is not mandatory. The consultant could be a resource that the Lead Ministry and/or Coordination Body could use as appropriate to support technical aspects of the review process. The consultant can also support the Ministry in putting together the pre-briefing material for the Review team. Ideally any technical consultant will be APEC-based.

Pre-Briefing Information for Review Team

When the review team is confirmed, the volunteer economy will provide briefing materials to the review team members, which would ideally include:

- Introductory material about the economy;
- Key energy trends and dynamics data;
- Completed IFFSR Evaluation templates;
- Long term objectives for IFFSR within the economy, and considerations for short term pathways;
- The economy's definition of what constitutes an inefficient fossil fuel subsidy and the approach it wants to undertake in its reform process;
- Goals and limitations expressed by the Inter-ministerial Coordination Body for the peer review;
- Agenda for the Review, including list of government stakeholders invited to present their views to the review team;

- List of external consultations and the participants (as requested and/or approved by the economy);
- Proposals for action by the government; and
- Proposals for a communication strategy and approach by the government.

To maximize the effectiveness of the review team's visit to the volunteering economy, the volunteer economy is urged to thoroughly prepare the aforementioned materials prior to the review team's arrival and make use of electronic and verbal communication to ensure mutual understanding of expectations, both for the visit and the overall peer review. Volunteer economies may also choose to submit third-party data as both a supplement to their own internal data and as a means of verifying data accuracy.

3. Peer Review Team

Review Team Role

The Review Team should be guided by the Peer Review principles and objectives in Part A. Team perspectives should incorporate policies, processes, and programs, keeping in mind APEC leaders' aspirational goal of rationalizing inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption, while also implementing policies that support the provision of energy services to those in need. It is suggested that the Peer Review team consider the economic, environmental and social impacts of the inefficient fossil fuel subsidies identified by the volunteer economy and any proposed reforms recommended by the review team. The review team should also consider any cross-sectoral impacts of these same subsidies that take into account the range of stakeholder groups that are currently affected by inefficient fossil fuel subsidies and those that may be affected by any future reforms to these subsidies.

Review Team Establishment

Once an APEC Member Economy has informed the EWG of its interest to undergo a Peer Review and the EWG has endorsed the economy's request, a review team will be formed of no more than ten personnel, with a minimum of six members. The review team will ideally consist of APEC-based experts from the fields of energy, finance, and development. To ensure a diversity of perspectives and expertise, the review team should include fossil fuel subsidy experts from at least three APEC Member Economies. Experts outside APEC could be included with agreement of the EWG, as is traditional practice, and might include representatives from non-APEC organizations like the International Energy Agency, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Asian Development Bank and the World Bank. The volunteer Economy, assisted by the IFFSR Secretariat, should identify the review team members well before the review visit and request nominations from APEC Member Economies. The Economy should inform the EWG membership of the proposed composition of the review team and seek endorsement of any non-APEC members.

Requirements for Review Team

Experts are expected to have a comprehensive understanding of fossil fuel subsidies, reform and policy strategies, as well as in-depth expertise in fiscal, financial, and development issues relevant to the APEC region. Review Team experts should demonstrate an ability to meet or exceed the following criteria:

- International experience, preferably from within the APEC region, and expertise in energy sector, development/social or fiscal/financial issues associated with fossil fuel subsidies;
- Experience across a range of technical, policy and program settings, preferably from within the APEC region – it is important that reviewers can look across program or sector boundaries to identify missing components and propose new synergies; and

- Ability to apply sound judgment, rational economic analysis, diplomacy and cultural awareness – it is expected that the team will comprise senior experts in management or leadership roles in their respective economies.

It is important that the review team contain a breadth of expertise – diversity is important to ensuring effective questioning and understanding of an economy’s characteristics. Ideally, experts from previously reviewed and next to be reviewed economies could be included to help ensure continuity of the Peer Review process.

Finalization of Review Team

The volunteer economy and EWG Secretariat will jointly select a Review Team, and the Review Team will nominate a Review Team Leader. The Review Team Leader’s role is to:

- Liaise between the APEC Economy representatives and the peer review team.
- Ensure effective co-ordination of the review team.
- Lead the compilation of the preliminary report.
- Work with the Economy in finalizing the review team’s report.

4. Peer Review report

The Peer Review report will be the key output of the Peer Review process. The Peer Review Team is responsible for preparing the report with clear consensus of recommendations and the rationale or reasons for these recommendations.

Review Process

Please refer to “the Review Team roles and responsibilities” in Part A. The duration of the visit should be up to one week. The first 2-3 days would be meetings with the government (with the Lead Ministry and the Coordination Body) and, if requested/approved by the economy, non-governmental stakeholders. One to 1.5 days will be scheduled for review committee deliberations, with another day reserved for meetings with the Lead Ministry and the Coordination Body to discuss the preliminary report of the review team.

The volunteer economy should aim to ensure a good spread of interviews across government, and if the volunteer economy agrees, non-governmental organizations as well. While the Review Team may request or suggest specific meetings with internal/external stakeholders from the volunteer economy, it will ultimately be up to the volunteer economy to determine who the review team should meet with.

Review Criteria

It is essential in a peer review that a team of experts cooperate to effectively assess the basis for and actions arising from a policy or program. It is critical that the Peer Review Team have the freedom to develop effective questions and observations, but also important that the peer review team act with objectivity and respect for the subject. Primarily, the peer review relies on the good judgment of the Peer Review Team and cooperation of the volunteer economy.

Developing good review criteria is critical for ensuring an effective Peer Review. Given the diversity of APEC member economies, at least at the initial stages of the Peer Review process, it would be more sensible to set qualitative criteria rather than quantitative criteria concerning whether the economy to be reviewed has fully evaluated the impacts of inefficient fossil fuel subsidies and the potential effectiveness of proposals for reform.

The following criteria are offered as guidance for the review team, subject to the approval of the volunteer economy.

- Review the Economy's long term goal for the role of fossil fuel subsidies.
- Has the economy developed quantifiable metrics for the impacts of inefficient fossil fuel subsidies?
- Evaluate the extent and quality of the inefficient fossil fuel subsidy data submitted by the economy using the IFFSR Evaluation template.
- If reforms have been undertaken in the past, evaluate the effectiveness of these reforms, as well as the government's monitoring and evaluation of past reforms.
- Consider whether the APEC Member Economy has overall and/or sector-specific inefficient fossil fuel subsidy reform action plans.
- Consider how the Economy plans to implement the action plans, and the extent to which it may face financial or human resource challenges in the process.
- Review and evaluate any proposed plans for IFFSR.
- Consider if and how the Economy aims to utilize public-private partnerships (or cooperation) in IFFSR implementation.
- Evaluate whether the Economy is on the right track towards achieving its own goals for inefficient fossil fuel subsidy reform, and suggest options for implementation that are relevant to the chosen reform strategy and that reflect the individual circumstances of the Member Economy being reviewed.

Preliminary Draft Review Report

A preliminary draft report with proposed recommendations and the associated rationale behind the findings (including relevant economic analysis) will be prepared by the Review Team following the end of the review visit. The preliminary draft report will reflect the consensus of the Review Team and be presented to the volunteer economy on the last day of the review visit, as noted above. When there is disagreement between the volunteer economy and the Review Team findings, the Review Team Leader and the volunteer economy will seek to resolve differences to the satisfaction of the volunteer economy. The Review Team Leader and IFFSR Secretariat will prepare a draft Review Report from the preliminary report for comments/ approval by the volunteer economy. A final draft Review Report that includes findings and recommendations approved by the volunteer economy and the Review Team will be forwarded to EWG Lead Shepherd and EWG Secretariat approximately two months before the next EWG meeting. Subject to the approval of the volunteer economy, the final draft Review Report will be circulated to EWG Members for discussion and endorsement at the next available EWG meeting.

Discussion at EWG Meetings

The final draft Review Report will be presented by either a representative of the review team or the volunteer Economy to the EWG for discussion. EWG members will be invited to ask questions and comment on the report. Subject to the approval of the volunteer economy the Review Report will officially become final once the EWG endorses the draft. The EWG Secretariat will ensure that a discussion session is on the EWG meeting agenda. Because the review is voluntary, it should be noted that any implementation of recommendations is at the sole discretion of the volunteer economy.

Publication

With the permission of the volunteer economy, the APEC EWG Secretariat will place the final report on the EWG website after the report is endorsed by EWG members.