



NATIONAL RESEARCH UNIVERSITY  
HIGHER SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

*Elizaveta A. Safonkina*

**BUSINESS AS AN ACTOR IN  
REGIONAL GOVERNANCE:  
THE CASE OF THE APEC  
BUSINESS ADVISORY  
COUNCIL (ABAC) IN APEC**

BASIC RESEARCH PROGRAM

WORKING PAPERS

SERIES: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
WP BRP 15/IR/2015

*Elizaveta A. Safonkina*<sup>1</sup>

## **BUSINESS AS AN ACTOR IN REGIONAL GOVERNANCE: THE CASE OF THE APEC BUSINESS ADVISORY COUNCIL (ABAC) IN APEC<sup>2</sup>**

In the modern globalized world new actors, in particular business, exert increasing influence on the international decision-making processes. The business is generally important and influential actor in the regional governance promoting the group's common interests. The article aims to test this hypothesis drawing on the findings from study of the APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC). The author analyses the Asia-Pacific business priorities promoted by the ABAC, actions implemented to make other regional actors acting in line with these priorities and ABAC achievements in that process. The official ABAC and APEC documents constituted the evidence base for the analysis. The research methods used in the article include qualitative content analysis and comparative historical analysis. The author comes to conclusion that business is an influential actor in the Asia-Pacific regional governance due to its capability to promote business priorities implementation at the state level.

JEL Classification: F59.

Key words: APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC), Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), regional governance, actorness, non-state actor.

---

<sup>1</sup> National Research University Higher School of Economics. International Organizations Research Institute. Research Center for International Cooperation and Development. Junior Research Fellow; E-mail: esafonkina@hse.ru.

<sup>2</sup> This Working Paper is an output of a research project implemented by the International Organizations Research Institute of National Research University Higher School of Economics (HSE) – “Models of international institutions engagement in the process of multilateral governance in the areas of macroeconomic policy, financial regulation, international trade, investment and infrastructure” (Russian Humanitarian Research Foundation, 2015-2017). Any opinions or claims contained in this Working Paper do not necessarily reflect the views of HSE.

# **Introduction**

## **Business as an actor in the international relations and regional governance**

Non-governmental actors in the international processes draw attention of the specialists in international relations and political experts since 1970-s (e.g. J. Nye, J. Rosenau and many others). The emergence of non-governmental actors was pushed by Westphalian system failure which accelerated globalization. Conceptually the idea that individuals and private groups, not states, are the fundamental actors in world politics is embedded in the liberal theory of international relations which “rests on a “bottom-up” view of politics in which the demands of individuals and societal groups are treated as analytically prior to politics. Political action is embedded in domestic and transnational civil society, understood as an aggregation of boundedly rational individuals with differentiated tastes, social commitments, and resource endowments” [Moravcsik, 1997]. Moreover, according to the liberal intergovernmentalism theory “the state governments act as the main gate-keeper for domestic interests to enter the regional arena” [Börzel, 2013], so their common efforts in particular aimed at regional cooperation development are encouraged by the needs of domestic market actors and civil society and “the domestic interest groups have to rely on their governments if they want to influence regional policy outcomes and institutional reforms” [Börzel, 2011]. However, until recently the vision of non-governmental groups` actorness was confined to the domestic politics.

As the world becomes more interdependent and mutual vulnerabilities increase, non-governmental actors represented by a wide range of organizations, movements, groups, social communities act at the global political scene independently of states and states` associations and in communication with other global (and regional) politics actors [Tsygankov, 2013]. An actor is characterized by a freedom to act despite of system`s constraints, an independence in decision making, a capacity to cooperate with other actors and act actively, having a strategy aimed at setting a goal and succeeding as well as clear identity, recognizing by other actors and with resources [Tsygankov, 2013]. More simply “an actor prefers some outcomes to others and pursues a strategy to achieve its most preferred possible outcome” [Frieden, 1999].

Empowered by a sense and capacity to act the actors can influence “a game” in the international arena. The actors could be individual and collective. The collective actors can be defined as communities with ideals, capacity to go beyond one state, and to participate in cross boarder communications.

These features of actorness, intrinsic in such institutions as the APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC), ASEAN Business Advisory Council, Business and Industry Advisory Committee to the OECD (BIAC), Business Twenty (B20), make these transnational business networks legitimate stakeholders in the international relations. It should be noted that though these groupings are diverse in their membership and the patterns of engagement, they can be broadly defined as institutions, understood as “formal or informal procedures, routines, norms and conventions embedded in the organizational structure of the polity or political economy” [Hall and Taylor, 1996].

Before turning to the study of ABAC role in regional governance, we need to clarify the notion of regional governance. W. Barnes and K. Foster define regional governance “as deliberate efforts by multiple actors to achieve goals in multi-jurisdiction environments” [Barnes and Foster, 2012]. The regional governance aims to solve a regional problem or seize a regional opportunity bringing together formal and informal actors who organize, network and engage with others to achieve a goal.

The importance of the regional governance in the context of globalization was argued by a number of researchers in political and social sciences, e.g. B. Buzan and O. Wæver and P. Katzenstein who wrote about “a world of regions” [Acharya, 2007]. P. Katzenstein noted that in comparison with European regionalism Asia’s one is “informal and economic” and relies more heavily on “market transactions and ethnic or national capitalism” which enhances the capability of business to influence the policy agenda in the region.

Neo-functionalistic approach to regionalism assumes that “with policies increasingly made at the regional rather than the national level, economic and societal actors would increasingly shift their expectations and loyalties towards regional institutions giving rise to a new political community, in which states would settle their conflicts peacefully” [Börzel, 2011].

APEC as a regional governance mechanism was launched to address the common problems the countries of the region faced in the late 1980-s, in the first place barriers to trade and investment disrupting economic growth [APEC Ministers, 1989]. The trade and investment liberalization was intended to facilitate doing business in the region. As indicated in the APEC 1997 Leaders Declaration, the APEC approach to address regional challenges was “based on three mutually supportive pillars - trade and investment liberalization, business facilitation, and economic and technical cooperation” [APEC Leaders, 1997]. A concrete step aimed at business facilitation in the region was the APEC Ease of Doing Business Action Plan (2010-2015) adopted in 2009

[APEC, 2009]. The document included actions in 5 priority areas: starting a business, getting credit, enforcing contracts, trading across borders, dealing with permits. According to this plan, doing business should be 25% cheaper, faster and easier by 2015. Since its birth APEC recognition of the role of business as economic growth engine and the need for business friendly environment reflected business interests and remained at the core of the regional policy agenda.

The growing understanding of important role of business for boosting free and open trade and investment, job creation and human capital development in the Asia-Pacific region became the stimulus for ABAC establishment. The initiative came from the leaders themselves. As the first step the APEC Leaders created two advisory committees for the dialogue with the business: the Eminent Persons Group (EPG) and the Pacific Business Forum (PBF) in 1993 [Yamazawa, 2011]. The EPG included one private individual from each APEC economy; some of its members later joined ABAC. In 1993 the EPG submitted its first report to the APEC Leaders with proposals mainly focused on trade and investment liberalization. The PBF aim was to engage private firms in APEC activities. The PBF brought together two members from each economy and submitted reports with concrete recommendations reflecting the business interests. The EPG ceased to exist in 1995. However, the PBF laid the foundation for ABAC which was established by the APEC Leaders the same year. A decision on ABAC` establishment was announced in the APEC Leaders` Osaka Declaration: “Recognizing that business is the source of vitality for the Asia-Pacific and the driving force for regional economic development, we will appoint the members of the APEC Business Advisory Council to provide insights and counsel for our APEC activities” [APEC Leaders, 1995].

The research problem of this article is to estimate whether the business is a full-size actor in the regional governance? Could it influence other actors to make decisions in line with its interests? To respond to these questions the author analyzes the role of business in the regional governance drawing on the study of APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC). ABAC is the most known “business voice” institution in the Asia-Pacific region. In 2015 it celebrates the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its establishment. Over the period of 20 years ABAC recommendations were included into the APEC documents and in some cases translated into practice. The APEC Leaders` documents acknowledge the importance of ABAC in “strengthening public-private partnership and promoting APEC cooperation in various fields” [APEC Leaders, 2014a] and recognize it as a vital mechanism for effective private sector involvement in APEC work.

The hypothesis is that the business is generally important and influential actor in the regional governance promoting the group's common interests. The author argues that ABAC has a capability to promote its interests by influencing the APEC decision making in the ways most preferred to the ABAC members. However, it should be said that the dynamics of the Asia-Pacific region development gives a special so-termed "strategic setting". What does it mean? The globalization processes and economic development trends promoted bringing together the state and business interests thus facilitating the business voice to be heard and business recommendations to be implemented at the state level. Nevertheless, the author believes that the favorable "strategic setting" could not cast doubt on the ABAC actorness.

The relevancy of the study is determined, first, by a rising importance of state leaders – business engagement evidenced by emergence of such new actors as B20 and BRICS Business Council; second, by Russia's increasing wedge into the Asia-Pacific region which demonstrates the highest growth rates in the world, with business being an important growth driver. Third, lessons from the study of the ABAC, as a new actor in the regional relations, might prove useful for such institutions as Shanghai Cooperation Organization Business Council and the Eurasian Economic Union dialogue with the business.

## **Methodology**

The research methods used by the author include qualitative content analysis and comparative historical analysis. The first research method allows the author to explore business priorities reflected in the recommendations to the APEC leaders and recommendations' reflections in the official APEC documents. The second one is instrumental to track the ABAC's and regional economic and business environment evolution.

By applying qualitative content analysis the author assessed the number of references to ABAC in the APEC documents and the APEC reflection of ABAC's recommendations in the documents including the number of mandates delegated by the APEC leaders to their institutions at the ABAC request.

The APEC Leaders' reflection of the ABAC' recommendations is assessed on a scale from -1 to +1. A score of "+1" means that a recommendation was reflected in the APEC Leaders documents in a form of APEC commitments or mandates. A score of "0" means that ABAC recommendation was reflected in the APEC Leaders' documents but no commitments or mandates were adopted. A score of "-1" means that ABAC recommendations were not reflected

in the APEC Leaders documents. The overview of ABAC - APEC interaction as reflected in the APEC summits documents since 1996 is presented in Annex A.

To analyze how the business elaborates its strategy to communicate with APEC and promote its priorities the author explores ABAC as internal and external engagement model, including such elements as functions, mechanisms of communication and agenda. The functions include elaboration of consolidated position of the APEC business community, providing an opportunity for direct interaction between business and state leaders, influencing the APEC decisions through ABAC recommendations. Mechanisms of communication relate to ABAC internal interaction, communication with the APEC leaders and engagement with national authorities with regard to the regional agenda. Three types of communication mechanisms can be characterized by flexibility, capability to evolve, openness, established procedures and institutions, frequency and regularity. The agenda is characterized by the nature of priorities, level of coincidence with summitry institution agenda, continuity and flexibility.

## **ABAC is an actor acknowledged by the APEC leaders**

The ABAC full-sized actorness` evidence is proven by the number of references to ABAC in the APEC documents. This number has increased in recent years and comes at a total of 55 in the period from 1995 to 2014 with the number of mandates amounting to 12. However, examples of ABAC inspired commitments are limited to 3, adopted in the Vancouver (1997), Bangkok (2003) and Singapore (2009). 8 of the 19 summits have a score of “+1”, one – a score of “-1”, the other 10 are assessed with “0”.

In 1996 ABAC declared its intent “to advance the APEC vision in ways most valuable to the region's business and to the wider APEC community” generating specific, results-oriented recommendations” [ABAC, 1996]. However, so far very few of the ABAC recommendations were fully implemented by the APEC. Most notable cases include the APEC Business Travel Card (ABTC) and a proposal for the Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP).

The story of ABTC dates from 1996, when ABAC recommended to the APEC Leaders to endorse the introduction of an APEC Business Visa to facilitate business-related travel in the region [ABAC, 1996]. According to this recommendation the APEC Business Visa should have had “a minimum validity of five years and allow multiple entries of up to 60 days per entry”. The same year the APEC Ministers in their Joint Statement “welcomed the decision by Australia, Korea, and the Philippines to proceed with a trial of an APEC Business Travel Card in 1997 and

noted the value of the APEC Business Travel Card initiative as a contribution to enhancing the mobility of business people in the APEC region”. Starting from its establishment 19 economies of APEC fully participate in the scheme, including Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Chile, China, Hong Kong (China), Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, PNG, Peru, the Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Chinese Taipei, Thailand and Vietnam. Canada and the US are transitional members of the scheme. ABTC permits its holder to travel to, enter and undertake legitimate business in participating economies for a minimum of two months. The card is valid for three years. ABTC also fasters processing on arrival for its holder at major airports of participating economies. According to the APEC Policy Support Unit study on “The Impact of Business Mobility in Reducing Trade Transaction Costs in APEC”, “the ABTC scheme reduced transaction costs for ABTC holders by 38% between March-July 2010 and March-July 2011, representing a total savings of USD3.7 million”.<sup>3</sup>

Second most evident ABAC initiative which was “blessed” by the APEC Leaders is the proposal that Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP) should become a reality. ABAC has been advocating the concept of an FTAAP since 2004, when it was first included into the ABAC report to the APEC Leaders [ABAC, 2004]. Two years later, in 2006 APEC Leaders instructed APEC officials to examine various options for regional economic integration including the FTAAP. It should be noted that their mandate included a reference to the ABAC: “We shared the APEC Business Advisory Council’s (ABAC) views that while there are practical difficulties in negotiating a Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific at this time, it would nonetheless be timely for APEC to seriously consider more effective avenues towards trade and investment liberalization in the Asia-Pacific region. Therefore, while affirming our commitments to the Bogor Goals and the successful conclusion of the WTO/DDA negotiations, we instructed Officials to undertake further studies on ways and means to promote regional economic integration, including a Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific as a long-term prospect, and report to the 2007 APEC Economic Leaders’ Meeting in Australia” [APEC Leaders, 2006]. In 2010 APEC Leaders issued “Pathways to FTAAP” [APEC Leaders, 2010] in which they announced that “now is the time for APEC to translate FTAAP from an aspirational to a more concrete vision” and instructed “APEC to take concrete steps toward realization of an FTAAP, which is a major instrument to further APEC’s Regional Economic Integration (REI) agenda”. In 2014 The Beijing Roadmap for APEC’s Contribution to the Realization of the FTAAP was adopted representing “an important concrete step towards greater regional economic integration” [APEC Leaders, 2014b]. The Roadmap

---

<sup>3</sup> APEC Business Travel Card. <http://www.apec.org/About-Us/About-APEC/Business-Resources/APEC-Business-Travel-Card.aspx> (accessed 2 May 2015).

contains five actions to be potential building blocks of the FTAAP, one of them is to “strengthen engagement with the business sector via the APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC) and other direct routes” [APEC Leaders, 2014b]. The APEC Leaders committed to intensify efforts to strengthen APEC public-private sector dialogues on the promotion of regional economic growth, integration and an improved business environment and to use the ABAC input on issues expected to impact the region’s economic growth and development over the longer term to advance work towards the realization of the FTAAP. This statement is a clear evidence of the ABAC recommendations influence on the APEC Leaders decisions as its 2014 report ABAC called “for concrete steps towards the realization of an FTAAP such as developing a roadmap and conducting analytical work” [ABAC, 2014].

As can be seen, a period of ABAC recommendations proposal and their approval by the APEC Leaders or Senior Officials is very short, which is an evidence of the ABAC influence on the regional APEC policy.

Thus, starting from its inception the ABAC is able to influence the APEC leaders` decisions to guarantee that business priorities are taken into account by the APEC economies and the recommendations are implemented at the state level. It is also important that the APEC leaders referenced to the ABAC as independent and “wise” partner which also proves the hypothesis on ABAC full-size actorness in the region.

ABAC annual reports provide the starting point for discussions with the APEC Leaders, but “the Leaders' own questions and areas of interest steer these conversations into a wide range of areas of economic and trade policy, where the views from the Business Advisory Council members provide valuable context for the Leaders' own thinking on these issues, and vice versa”.<sup>4</sup>

To develop reconciled positions of the Asia-Pacific business community on the various issues on the APEC agenda ABAC works through multiple working groups. In 2014 and 2015 five working groups were established on the topics of regional economic integration, finance and economics, sustainable development, SMME and entrepreneurship and connectivity.<sup>5</sup> The working groups are led by chairs, lead co-chairs and co-chairs.<sup>6</sup> The working groups` chairs usually brief ABAC on the process of elaborating recommendations within working groups at

---

<sup>4</sup> About ABAC. <http://ncapec.org/abac/index.html> (accessed 2 May 2015).

<sup>5</sup> The 2015 Work Program <https://www.abaonline.org/v4/content.php?ContentID=22610251> (accessed 8 February 2015).

<sup>6</sup> ABAC WORKING GROUPS <http://www.hk-apec.com.hk/c.php?id=37> (accessed 8 February 2015).

the ABAC meetings which helps to consolidate positions.<sup>7</sup> For demonstrating their shared vision on the recommendations ABAC reports to APEC Leaders contain the signatures of all ABAC members. To simplify the communications between ABAC members the International Secretariat was established in Makati City, the Philippines. The Secretariat maintains a website with actual information on ABAC activities. Funding for it is provided through “a system of annual dues, which are structured to reflect the size of each economy, following the APEC formula”.<sup>8</sup> In 2015 ABAC Secretariat consists of four persons (Director, Deputy Director, Program Officer and Finance Officer).<sup>9</sup>

To present its recommendations to APEC Leaders ABAC prepares the reports and other documents. The first ABAC report to the APEC Leaders was submitted in October 1996 [Yamazawa, 2011]. In addition to the reports ABAC provides letters to APEC ministers coordinating the key agenda issues, e.g. trade, finance, energy, SME. Such letters present the ABAC’s priorities and existing challenges. To project their vision to the APEC the ABAC members participate in various APEC meetings and related events, including senior officials’ and working groups’ meetings.

ABAC recommendations influenced the APEC growth priorities to be more inclusive creating a friendly environment for SMEs, women and youth entrepreneurship development as well as boosting innovation. In its first report ABAC called on the APEC Leaders “to endorse the establishment by September 1997 of an APEC Network for SME's” for “pursuing action programs and promoting policy initiatives in areas that are crucial to the development of SME's at the domestic and regional levels” [ABAC, 1996]. In line with this recommendation in 2004 the APEC SME Innovation Center was established to “help APEC member economies exchange information on SME innovation and to establish cooperative networks among APEC members for SME innovation”.<sup>10</sup>

The ABAC 2011 report contained the recommendation on promoting economic inclusion for women. The authors of the report emphasized that many women entrepreneurs in the region “still lacking access to capital, markets, technology, skills and information to enable them to start or grow their business” [ABAC, 2011]. The same year the APEC Leaders committed “to take

---

<sup>7</sup>ABAC Meeting Overview.  
<http://www.ncapec.org/docs/ABAC%20Documents/ABAC%20I%20Manila%20Completed%20Briefing%20Binder%20Documents/ABAC%20Opening%20Plenary%20Documents.pdf> (accessed 15 February 2015).

<sup>8</sup> The APEC Business Advisory Council. Founding and Structure <https://www.abaconline.org/v4/content.php?ContentID=2521> (accessed 15 February 2015).

<sup>9</sup> The ABAC Secretariat <https://www.abaconline.org/v4/content.php?ContentID=22611417> (accessed 15 February 2015).

<sup>10</sup> Vision of SMEIC. <http://www.apec-smeic.org/about/?menu=vision> (accessed 2 May 2015).

concrete actions to expand economic opportunities for women in APEC economies” [APEC Leaders, 2011]. As part of its communications outreach efforts ABAC holds the ABAC Women’s Forum (AWF) “which aims to co-develop and promote policies that enhance opportunities for women in business in the region and APEC SME Summits” [ABAC, 2014]. It should be noted that at the beginning ABAC representatives didn’t participate in all the APEC levels, the expansion of participation was a later development.

The ABAC 2006 report recommended to “encourage innovative and emerging technologies”. The authors of the report noted that “economic growth and prosperity in APEC will be driven by technological innovation and access to information” [ABAC, 2006]. The same year APEC Leaders adopted the “APEC Technology Choice Principles” “as a new pathfinder initiative to spur the cycle of innovation and opportunity and to promote economic development across the region” [APEC Leaders, 2006].

As regards to the ABAC recommendations topics, they have not changed significantly since 1996. Recommendations on trade and investment liberalization and facilitation are predominant and constant annually. The recommendations on strengthening financial systems of the region and SMEs support are also frequent in ABAC documents. Such topics as food security, green economy, women economic inclusion and others emerge in response to the new priorities (Annex B).

## **ABAC internal and external communication model**

For better understanding ABAC as an actor its communication model should be explored.

### **Internal communication**

Mechanisms for communication within ABAC are relatively inclusive and open. Given that the number of national representatives is limited to three representatives per economy nominated by state leaders, ABAC is a closed club. However, through national consultations ABAC members can represent the interests of a wide range of business actors, including SME. ABAC’s internal communication is flexible, combining a set of working groups, and a pattern of four annual regular meetings and ad hoc meetings depending on agenda needs. ABAC members meet quarterly in various countries. For example, during the Philippines presidency ABAC meetings

held / to be held in Hong Kong, Mexico, Melbourne, Manila.<sup>11</sup> In 2014 during the Chinese presidency ABAC members met in Auckland, Santiago, Seattle and Beijing. They have an established format and procedures. Firstly, the conference report of the previous meeting is approved, then the ABAC working groups chairs report on the groups priorities and working plans and outputs, including elaboration of the letters to the APEC Ministers.<sup>12</sup> [e.g. ABAC Secretariat, 2014].

Thus, the ABAC internal communication mechanisms are institutionalized, frequent and regular, open and inclusive for the members and non-transparent and exclusive for non-members, they have an established pattern, which has not evolved significantly since the ABAC inception.

### **Communication with national authorities**

Each APEC economy has its ABAC national secretariat which facilitates communication with national authorities and coordinates the work of the three national ABAC members. The types of national secretariats include<sup>13</sup> APEC study centers and think tanks (e.g. in Australia, Canada, Chile, Taipei), banks (e.g. in Brunei Darussalam), business associations (e.g. China, Korea, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Singapore), companies (e.g. in Indonesia), chambers of commerce and industry (e.g. in Viet Nam). In some countries special organizations for supporting participating in ABAC are set up. For example, the Support Council for ABAC Japan (SCABAC-J) was established in 1999.<sup>14</sup> Earlier in 1994 in the US the National Center for APEC (NCAPEC) was launched.<sup>15</sup> NCAPEC is the only US business association focused on facilitating private sector engagement in the APEC. In the US representatives to ABAC annually present the Council's recommendations to the White House.<sup>16</sup>

ABAC meetings with national authorities are not regular. For example, US Secretary of State John Kerry addressed the Annual NCAPEC Luncheon in November 2014 in Beijing<sup>17</sup>. The secretariats in the countries support consultation on the national positions for the ABAC recommendations.

---

<sup>11</sup> APEC Business Advisory Council <http://www.apec.org/Groups/Other-Groups/APEC-Business-Advisory-Council.aspx> (accessed 8 February 2015).

<sup>12</sup> Past events. April 20 - April 23, 2015 Mexico City, Mexico. <http://www.ncapec.org/events/index.html> (accessed 2 May 2015).

<sup>13</sup> ABAC Wants Your Views. <https://www.abaconline.org/v4/content.php?ContentID=2609> (accessed 7 June 2015).

<sup>14</sup> APEC Business Advisory Council JAPAN. <http://www.keidanren.or.jp/abac/en/> (accessed 8 February 2015).

<sup>15</sup> ABOUT THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR APEC. <http://ncapec.org/about/index.html> (accessed 8 February 2015).

<sup>16</sup> APEC BUSINESS ADVISORY COUNCIL PRESS RELEASE <http://www.usembassy-israel.org.il/publish/press/apec/archive/october/ap11025.htm> (accessed 8 February 2015).

<sup>17</sup> Secretary of State Kerry Remarks at the Annual NCAPEC Luncheon – November 8, 2014 – Beijing, China <http://ncapec.org/media/blog.html> (accessed: 15 February 2015).

Mechanisms for ABAC members` communication with national authorities are flexible, intended to enhance inclusiveness and openness, the degree of their formalization and institutionalization is member specific.

## **Communication with APEC Leaders and other APEC formats**

ABAC communication mechanisms with APEC Leaders and other APEC formats include face-to-face dialogue, reports and other documents submission. ABAC meet with APEC Leaders annually. These mechanisms are established and institutionalized, they have not evolved significantly since 1995. These mechanisms` openness and inclusiveness is limited as was explained above.

Analysis of the ABAC internal and external communication model proves that the ABAC could act independently from other actors and actively promote its member interests elaborated on consensus basis.

## **What are the business interests promoted by the ABAC?**

The ABAC agenda priorities focus on creating business friendly environment in APEC member economies and providing APEC with the business perspective on specific areas of cooperation. ABAC calls on APEC to continue working on a more ambitious agenda on trade, investment and services liberalization and regulatory reforms to facilitate regional trade.

ABAC agenda closely correlates with APEC which proves a hypothesis that “strategic setting” in the region facilitates ABAC interests promotion. The announced priorities of ABAC for 2015 include advancing regional economic integration, strengthening SMME, maximizing human capital potential, promoting resilient communities.<sup>18</sup> The APEC priorities focus on regional integration, fostering SMEs' participation in the regional and global economy, investing in human capital development, and building sustainable and resilient communities.<sup>19</sup>

ABAC agenda is characterized by a high level of continuity (Annex B). The topics of trade and investment liberalization in the region are the backbone of all ABAC recommendations. The

---

<sup>18</sup> The 2015 Work Program <https://www.abaconline.org/v4/content.php?ContentID=22610251> (accessed 15 February 2015).

<sup>19</sup> Senior Officials Set APEC's 2015 Agenda Priorities [http://www.apec.org/Press/News-Releases/2014/1210\\_priorities.aspx](http://www.apec.org/Press/News-Releases/2014/1210_priorities.aspx) (accessed 15 February 2015).

continuity proves that the ABAC as a full-size actor has its own strategy to promote its interests and priorities.

In addition to the established topics the ABAC agenda is shaped by proposals made by one or group of countries representatives, for example on making use of relevant expertise of ABAC members and establishing the dialogue with concrete APEC task force. Such flexibility of the agenda also reflects ABAC independency as an actor.

## **Conclusion**

The findings of the research allow confirming the hypothesis that business is important and influential actor in the regional governance promoting the group`s common interests.

The ABAC has all key characteristics of actor such as independence in decision making, a capacity to cooperate with other actors, its own strategy etc. The analysis demonstrates the ABAC capacity to influence other actors` decision making to promote its priorities. Other actors, in particular the APEC leaders, acknowledge the ABAC as their full-fledged and “wise” partner and consciously translate its recommendations into their mandates and commitments.

The ABAC historical overview reveals that this actor is sustainable and flexible to be a permanent player at the regional scene. The ABAC success in accomplishing its priorities and objectives is determined inter alia by a balanced and predominantly institutionalized internal and external communication model which ensures elaborating a consensus between ABAC members and engaging in a direct dialogue with other regional actors.

However, the question to what extent the ABAC reflects all Asia-Pacific business community interests still remains due to its limited membership but this is quite a different story.

Annex A. References on the ABAC in the APEC Leaders documents 1995-2014.<sup>20</sup>

Year	Document	Reference	Type of the reference	Number of references	An example of ABAC recommendation	Score
1995	Osaka Declaration - APEC Economic Leaders' Declaration for Action	8. Recognizing that business is the source of vitality for the Asia-Pacific and the driving force for regional economic development, we will appoint the members of the <b>APEC Business Advisory Council</b> to provide insights and counsel for our APEC activities.	Mandate to ABAC [1] <sup>21</sup>	1		
1996	Subic Declaration - From Vision to Action	22. We affirm the central role of the business sector in the APEC process. This year, the <b>APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC)</b> was organized and convened at our request. We thank <b>ABAC</b> for its valuable work and <i>[ask our ministers to work closely with the business sector next year to examine ways of implementing <b>ABAC</b> recommendations]</i> . 23. <i>[We ask in particular that they consider <b>ABAC's</b> call to facilitate the movement of business people, enhance investment flows, strengthen investment protection in terms of transparency, predictability, arbitration and enforcement of contracts, align professional standards in the region, involve the private sector in infrastructure planning, develop policies supportive of small and medium enterprises, and encourage greater business sector participation in economic and technical cooperation]</i> .	Acknowledgement of importance of ABAC; mandate [2]	4	ABAC proposes that each APEC economy wishing to attract foreign investment in infrastructure organize a Joint Infrastructure Roundtable in 1997 to identify and recommend corrections to remove impediments to business/private sector involvement in developing new infrastructure, disseminate regional best practices, and establish productive linkages between to meet particular infrastructure needs.	+1
1997	Vancouver Declaration - Connecting the APEC Community	5....The views of the private sector are critical to ensuring that APEC's efforts remain focused and on target. In this regard, we welcome the review of the Manila Action Plan for APEC which was carried out by the <b>APEC Business Advisory Council</b> , and <i>[instruct our ministers to take <b>ABAC's</b> views into consideration in the preparation of future plans]</i> . As individual Action Plans remain the core mechanism for APEC's trade and investment liberalization activity, we reaffirm our commitment to their annual improvement.... 11....[We will reflect on	Mandate [1]; commitment [1]	4	We submit two proposals to address these issues: • The Partnership for Equitable Growth (PEG): The new framework encourages greater business/private sector participation in ECOTECH activities...Buildi	+1

<sup>20</sup> References on the ABAC are in bold, mandates are in round brackets, in bold and italics, commitments are in round brackets.

<sup>21</sup> We don't consider 1995 summit because the APEC Leaders declaration contains a mandate to ABAC itself.

Year	Document	Reference	Type of the reference	Number of references	An example of ABAC recommendations	Score
		recommendations set out in ABAC's 1997 Call to Action]. We also welcome ABAC's intention to establish a Partnership for Equitable Growth, and express appreciation for recommendations on perse and important issues such as standards, business mobility and capital market development. We stress the need for APEC to broaden its outreach to a wider segment of the business community....			ng on our recommendation last year for our the establishment of the APEC Network for Economic and Technical Cooperation, we propose the establishment of PEG as a catalyst for business/private sector participation in APEC ECOTECH initiatives.	
1998	Kuala Lumpur Declaration - Strengthening the Foundations for Growth	20...We believe the contribution of the business/private sector in ECOTECH activities will enhance and strengthen our efforts to advance the economic and technical cooperation agenda and welcome ABAC's commitment in this area through the Partnership for Equitable Growth (PEG).... 22. We recognise that the involvement of the business/private sector is an important feature of APEC work and endorse its broader participation in APEC activities. We direct Ministers to enhance business/private involvement, within existing guidelines, in relevant APEC activities. We welcome efforts to improve business mobility through the APEC Business Travel Card scheme and the collective commitment to expand the availability of multiple entry visas or permits to business travellers. We also welcome the recommendations by ABAC and <i>[instruct our Ministers to study ABAC's proposals, including the APEC Food System]</i> .	Mandate [1]	3	APEC should build an APEC Food System, a long-term project to achieve a more robust regional food system that efficiently links together food producers, processors and consumers and more securely meets the region's future food needs.	+1
1999	Auckland Declaration - The Auckland Challenge	We accept Ministers' proposals for an initial work programme to strengthen markets. This gives priority to strengthening market infrastructure and human capacity in our economies and enterprises, especially in developing economies. It also calls for specific implementation strategies in areas such as natural gas and e-commerce. We call upon the private	Mandate [2]	6	<b>Capacity Building</b> Moves to liberalize trade and investment in the region need to be complemented by a program to build the capacity and	+1

Year	Document	Reference	Type of the reference	Number of references	An example of ABAC recommendations	A score
		<p>sector, including the <b>APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC)</b> and the APEC Financiers' Group, to contribute to these efforts.</p> <p>We reaffirm that individual actions by economies are the principal means by which APEC's goal will be attained. We acknowledge that progress towards the Bogor Goals has been uneven, and undertake to continue concrete actions to fulfil our commitment. We also accept the views of <b>ABAC</b> and other business representatives who have called for action plans to be more specific, transparent and comprehensive, and welcome the initiative by Ministers to review and strengthen processes for individual and collective actions under the Osaka Action Agenda.</p> <p>We welcome Ministers' report on the APEC Food System proposed by the <b>APEC Business Advisory Council</b>, and endorse its recommendations on the development of rural infrastructure, dissemination of technological advances in food production and processing, and promotion of trade in food products. A robust regional food system that efficiently links food production, food processing and consumption, is a vital contribution to meeting the objectives of APEC. <i>[We instruct Ministers to implement the recommendations, taking into account ABAC's submission this year, and monitor annually progress towards achieving the APEC Food System].</i></p> <p>Once again, we welcome the recommendations from the <b>APEC Business Advisory Council, ABAC</b>, and thank members of the Council for their contribution in areas such as capacity building, finance, food, e-commerce and air services. <i>[We instruct Ministers to take the ABAC recommendations into account during their work in 2000].</i> We support implementation of the eight steps for more competitive air services, and the identification of further steps to liberalise air services in accordance with the Bogor Goals. Tourism and air services have a large</p>			<p>infrastructure of APEC member economies to cope with the transition to more open, competitive markets. We recommend a more coherent APEC ecotech program which also details the scope for business input.</p> <p><b>Finance</b> Recovery appears to be within reach, but keeping the region on the road to recovery depends upon continued momentum in the areas of financial reform and corporate restructuring. We have developed specific proposals to promote early economic recovery within the region, and to lay the foundation for long-term stability and sustainable growth.</p> <p><b>Food</b> We reconfirm our 1998 recommendation on establishing an APEC Food System, and suggest possible first steps towards implementation of an APEC Food System including the creation of an APEC export subsidy-free zone.</p> <p><b>E-commerce</b></p>	

Year	Document	Reference	Type of the reference	Number of references	An example of ABAC recommendations	Score
		contribution to make to development and community building in the region.			We will continue to work with the wider private sector and governments in the region to develop principles governing e-commerce and a template to assist economies in developing e-commerce in their own economy. We recommend that APEC Leaders seek agreement in the WTO not to impose any new customs duties on electronic transactions over the internet.	
2000	Bandar Seri Begawan Declaration - Delivering to the Community	9. ...We also thank <b>ABAC</b> for the extensive recommendations it has made on implementation of these issues and <i>[ask that our Finance Ministers examine them in the coming year]</i> . 18. Today, we also launch a wide-ranging Action Agenda for the new economy that outlines programs that will help our economies use advances in information technology to boost productivity and stimulate growth and extend services to the whole community...We welcome <b>ABAC's</b> contribution to these issues this year and encourage them to continue that cooperation. 35.... <i>[We instruct our Ministers to continue work on simplifying and harmonising our customs procedures and standards and conformance as two priority areas highlighted by <b>ABAC</b> and our business community]</i> .	Mandate [2]	3	With <b>ABAC's</b> support, <b>APEC</b> must strengthen its efforts to communicate to the region's business community what it is doing to facilitate trade through simplified customs procedures, more transparent standards regimes, and faster procedures for business travelers.	+1
2001	Shanghai Declaration - Meeting New Challenges in the New Century	17.... . In particular, we thank <b>APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC)</b> for its report and value the interaction with the Council and other business representatives....		1		0
2002	Los Cabos Declaration -	The involvement of the <b>APEC Secretariat</b> in this work is	Mandate [1]	4	Take urgent action to restore	+1

Year	Document	Reference	Type of the reference	Number of references	An example of ABAC recommendations	A score
	Expanding the Benefits of Cooperation for Economic Growth and Development - Implementing the Vision	fundamental, and we acknowledged the need to also involve other APEC stakeholders in this work such as <b>ABAC</b> , Women Leaders' Network and the APEC Study Centers. We welcomed <b>ABAC</b> 's report on "Sharing Development to Reinforce Global Security". We place great value on <b>ABAC</b> 's contribution to the APEC agenda and [ <i>have instructed Ministers to consider the report carefully</i> ]. We noted that APEC is already pursuing a number of initiatives identified by <b>ABAC</b> in areas such as counter-terrorism, corporate governance, promotion of micro-enterprises development and support for the WTO Doha Development Agenda.			investor confidence by measures to improve corporate governance standards and practices in member economies and promote the transparency of policies affecting trade and investment. In particular, APEC economies should move to adopt one set of internationally accepted accounting standards, implement measures to promote the highest standards of ethical corporate behaviour, audit independence and transparency and fairness in reporting.  Effective development and delivery of micro-finance in developing economies can strengthen the growth of micro-enterprises.	
2003	Bangkok Declaration - A World of Differences: Partnership for the Future	To advance the DDA and the Bogor Goals of free and open trade and investment, as well as their supporting conditions, we agreed to:... [Work with the <b>APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC)</b> and the business community to continue to implement the Shanghai Accord and Los Cabos directives to facilitate business activity in the APEC region,	Commitment [1]	1	In our report, we highlight actions required to strengthen security in financial systems and in trade while ensuring that APEC continues to make progress	+1

Year	Document	Reference	Type of the reference	Number of references	An example of ABAC recommendations	Assessment
		including the reduction of transaction costs 5% by the year 2006].			towards its goal of reducing transaction costs by 5% by 2006.	
2004	Santiago Declaration - One Community, Our Future	<p><b>ABAC</b> presented us two relevant proposals: a joint scoping study for a Trans-Pacific Business Agenda; and a study of the feasibility and potential scope and features of a Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific.</p> <p>We welcomed the inputs from our business community, including <b>ABAC's</b> resolve for expanding trade, and we share its view on the critical importance of trade facilitation. We look forward to the continued participation of <b>ABAC</b> as we implement the Santiago Initiative. In particular, we invited <b>ABAC</b> to provide its views on emerging trade facilitation issues as well as on the benefits and challenges that arise for business from the increasing number of RTAs/FTAs in the region and ways that these can be addressed.</p> <p>Corruption is a serious threat to good governance and deters investment. Therefore, fighting corruption is essential to the development of our economies for the benefit of our people. We welcomed the timely commitments and recommendations of <b>ABAC</b> in this regard.</p>		5	In our Report, we tabled a proposal for an ambitious Trans-Pacific Business Agenda that can significantly enhance the scope and effectiveness of APEC's trade facilitation initiatives and we call for a joint scoping study with a view to launch this initiative by 2005. We also explored a proposal for a Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP) that may have the potential of bringing significant economic benefit to the region as a whole. We believe that this idea requires and is worthy of further careful study. We therefore recommend the establishment of a high-level task force by APEC Leaders to examine the concept in more detail.	0
2005	Busan Declaration - Towards One Community: Meet the Challenge, Make the Change	We took note of the recommendations from the <b>APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC)</b> . We will continue to work with the business sector in our venture towards improving the business environment in the Asia-Pacific.		2	Create an Environment Conducive for Business . Promoting good business ethics and eliminating corruption in the	0

Year	Document	Reference	Type of the reference	Number of references	An example of ABAC recommendations	Score
		We welcomed the signing of the <b>ABAC</b> Anti-corruption pledge by the CEOs at the APEC 2005 CEO Summit and encouraged public-private partnership in this campaign.			region complement the number of initiatives taken towards improving the business environment.	
2006	Hanoi Declaration - Towards a Dynamic Community for Sustainable Development and Prosperity	<p>We shared the <b>APEC Business Advisory Council's (ABAC)</b> views that while there are practical difficulties in negotiating a Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific at this time, it would nonetheless be timely for APEC to seriously consider more effective avenues towards trade and investment liberalization in the Asia-Pacific region.</p> <p>We highlighted numerous steps taken this year to carry forward the Busan Business Agenda of the Busan Roadmap, including the following:....</p> <p>We welcomed the expanded work program on investment liberalization and facilitation in collaboration with <b>ABAC</b> and other relevant international organizations;  <i>[We instructed Ministers to ensure steady implementation of the Hanoi Action Plan in close collaboration with ABAC].</i> We also appreciated relevant recommendations from <b>ABAC</b> and encouraged APEC fora to take them into consideration when developing their work programs.  <i>[We instructed Senior Officials to work with ABAC and other business leaders to strengthen corporate governance to assure greater economic opportunities and prosperity].</i></p>	Mandate [2]	5		0
2007	Sydney Declaration - Strengthening Our Community, Building a Sustainable Future	11. We took note of the views of the <b>APEC Business Advisory Council</b> on the importance of enhancing the convergence of trade agreements in the region.		1	ABAC calls for increased effort by APEC to develop business-oriented model measures chapters for any new regional trade agreements and to encourage compliance by economies currently negotiating or	0

Year	Document	Reference	Type of the reference	Number of references	An example of ABAC recommendation	A score
					intending to negotiate RTA/FTAs.	
2008	Lima Declaration - A New Commitment to Asia-Pacific Development	<p>We welcomed the views and work carried out by the <b>APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC)</b> on improving the business environment, and called for an active participation of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the REI agenda.</p> <p>We also recognized the role of <b>ABAC</b> in raising the importance of food and agricultural issues on the APEC agenda.</p> <p>We recognized <b>ABAC's</b> efforts in promoting CSR awareness and uptake in the region through the dissemination of information regarding CSR principles, practices and benefits.</p>		3	We urge Leaders to continue to give importance to SME development by implementing special support programs on technological infrastructure, financing capacity building, and training.	0
2009	Singapore Declaration - Sustaining Growth, Connecting the Region	<p>[We will continue to promote greater collaboration among our IP rights experts, <b>APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC)</b>, and enforcement authorities across the APEC region and recognise the importance of capacity building].</p> <p>We welcome the efforts of member economies and <b>ABAC</b> in these areas and encourage public-private partnerships to further APEC efforts to enhance governance, institutional integrity and combat corruption.</p> <p>We welcome the efforts of <b>ABAC</b> and the business community to enhance governance and encourage economies to work through public-private partnership to further APEC efforts in this area.</p>	Commitment [1]	3	ABAC continues to highlight the important role that the effective protection of intellectual property rights plays in promoting regional economic integration, globalization of supply chains and the development of domestic IP-based industries.	+1
2010	Yokohama Declaration - The Yokohama Vision - Bogor and Beyond			0		-1
2011	The Honolulu Declaration - Toward a Seamless Regional Economy	We applaud the contributions of the <b>APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC)</b> to our work. Recognizing that private enterprise is the engine of trade, investment, and innovation, we have committed ourselves to enhancing the role of the private sector in APEC, through greater input into APEC's working groups and the establishment of new public-private Policy Partnerships.		1	ABAC sees the need for public and private sectors and institutions to collaborate more closely and coordinate their efforts and to identify and focus their efforts	0

Year	Document	Reference	Type of the reference	Number of references	An example of ABAC recommendations	Score
					on areas that address specific needs of APEC member economies, activities that effectively harness APEC's strengths, and issues that promote APEC's broader goal of regional economic integration.	
2012	Vladivostok Declaration - Integrate to Grow, Innovate to Prosper  ANNEX E - Fighting Corruption and Ensuring Transparency	We support the increasing engagement of the <b>APEC Business Advisory Council</b> which contributes significantly to greater collaboration between the public and private sectors. We remain fully committed to facilitate the role of APEC's business community and to provide more opportunities for its participation in APEC's work.  We welcome the recent contributions of the <b>APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC)</b> and the ACT in these important areas and in fighting corruption and illicit trade.		2	ABAC's work on government procurement as a next generation trade issue, and recommendations on increasing transparency and objective and sound criteria such as lifecycle costing in the procurement process, can play an effective role in facilitating anti-corruption efforts and creating a level playing field for businesses operating in the region.	0
2013	Bali Declaration - Resilient Asia-Pacific, Engine of Global Growth  Annex A - APEC Framework on Connectivity  Annex B - APEC Multi Year Plan on Infrastructure	21. We commend the <b>APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC)</b> for enriching APEC's work by means of partnership. We recognize the importance of private sector involvement in our work and we welcome further <b>ABAC</b> engagement.  8. We recognize the critical importance of improving synergy with other international fora, such as ASEAN, Pacific Alliance, East Asia Summit and the G20, and regional and multilateral development banks, as well as with <b>ABAC</b> and the private sector. <i>[We instruct our Ministers and officials to engage and cooperate</i>	Mandate [1]	5	APEC economies will not be able to fund the region's massive infrastructure deficits without private sector investment.	0

Year	Document	Reference	Type of the reference	Number of references	An example of ABAC recommendations	Score
	Development and Investment	<p><i>with these stakeholders, taking into account mutually acceptable international standards, before submitting the blueprint in the 22nd APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in China].</i></p> <p>9. We welcome the continued efforts of the <b>ABAC's</b> Asia Pacific Infrastructure Partnership (APIP) and the development of the <b>ABAC's</b> Enablers of Infrastructure Investment Checklist.</p> <p>14. APEC cooperation on infrastructure development and investment will take advantage of regional expertise, experience and funding sources, including from multilateral and regional development banks, and the private sector. The Asia-Pacific Infrastructure Partnership (APIP) and <b>ABAC's</b> PPP checklist are particularly relevant.</p>				
2014	<p>The 22nd APEC Economic Leaders' Declaration - Beijing Agenda for an Integrated, Innovative and Interconnected Asia-Pacific</p> <p>Annex A - The Beijing Roadmap for APEC's Contribution to the Realization of the FTAAP</p> <p>Annex D - APEC Connectivity Blueprint for 2015-2025</p>	<p>64. We commend the constructive role of the <b>APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC)</b> in strengthening public-private partnership and promoting APEC cooperation in various fields.</p> <p>Bearing in mind the above, we agree to undertake the following actions while pursuing the conclusion of initiatives considered as potential building blocks of the FTAAP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CTI Friends of the Chair Group on Strengthening REI and Advancing FTAAP, led by member economies, will organize and lead a task force to undertake the study and will seek contributions from interested APEC economies, the APEC Policy Support Unit, <b>ABAC</b>, PECC and APEC Study Centers.</li> <li>• Strengthen engagement with the business sector via the <b>APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC)</b> and other direct routes. We will intensify efforts to strengthen APEC public-private sector dialogues on the promotion of regional economic growth, integration and an improved business environment. <b>ABAC</b> input on issues expected to impact the</li> </ul>		6	ABAC recommends that Leaders encourage greater public-private collaboration to help member economies: develop proportionate financial regulatory frameworks; design financial inclusion strategies and capacity building initiatives that promote a broad range of financial services and innovation; promote coordination among stakeholders including the private sector; and accelerate the development of market	0

Year	Document	Reference	Type of the reference	Number of references	An example of ABAC recommendations	A score
		<p>region's economic growth and development over the longer term will be used to advance work towards the realization of the FTAAP.</p> <p>41. To gather this information, economies should work with the private sector. In this regard, the <b>APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC)</b> and APEC's policy partnerships and industry dialogues can contribute significantly by providing private sector feedback or insight on market needs, trends and expectations.</p> <p>42. We urge the private sector, with coordination from <b>ABAC</b>, to provide direct support for many of the more bankable connectivity initiatives being undertaken in the region. In addition to PPP for infrastructure projects, the private sector could help support capacity building programs as well as educational and cultural exchanges. The private sector could also help in proposing and producing connectivity-enhancing innovations in the region.</p>			infrastructure related to financial identity, credit information, collateral management and payments.	
<b>Total number of references:</b>				<b>55</b>		
<b>Total number of mandates:</b>				<b>12</b>		
<b>Total number of commitments:</b>				<b>3</b>		

Annex B. ABAC reports topics, 2004-2014

<i>Year</i>	<i>Topics</i>
2014	<p>Accelerate trade and investment liberalization</p> <p>Achieve FTAAP</p> <p>Building effective global value chains</p> <p>Enhance supply chain connectivity</p> <p>Pursue the new services agenda</p> <p>Accelerate infrastructure development and facilitate infrastructure investment</p> <p>Adopt an APEC Blueprint on Connectivity</p> <p>Engage the private sector in infrastructure financing</p> <p>Support the development of SMMEs and financial inclusion</p> <p>Advance women`s economic inclusion</p> <p>Accelerate green growth</p> <p>Address energy security</p> <p>Achieve food security</p> <p>Build robust partnerships in the mining sector</p> <p>Promote healthy workforces</p> <p>Promote the rule of law</p> <p>Accelerate financial market development to promote growth</p> <p>Respond to the challenges of urbanization</p>
2013	<p>Accelerate trade and investment liberalization</p> <p>Promoting regulatory coherence</p> <p>Initiate the new services agenda</p> <p>Enhance supply chain connectivity</p> <p>Strengthen food security</p> <p>Address energy security</p> <p>Encourage infrastructure investment and development</p> <p>Facilitate technology dissemination and innovation</p> <p>Foster the development of SMMEs</p> <p>Engage Women in the Economy</p> <p>Accelerating regional financial market integration</p> <p>Mobilizing regional savings for long-term investments</p> <p>Facilitating internationalization of emerging economies` currencies</p>
2012	<p>Accelerate trade and investment liberalization</p> <p>Promote regional financial market integration</p> <p>Enhance supply chain connectivity</p> <p>Promote investment in infrastructure</p> <p>Strengthen food security</p> <p>Promote trade in environmental goods and services</p> <p>Address energy security</p> <p>Promote living cities</p> <p>Facilitate technology dissemination, innovation and cutting-edge technology investment</p> <p>Support SMME development</p> <p>Promote the participation of women in the economy</p> <p>Financing innovation</p> <p>Initiate a new services agenda</p> <p>Resolve APEC Business Travel Card issues</p> <p>Optimize policy exchange between business and APEC.</p>
2011	<p>Strengthen the global supply chain and value chains</p> <p>Promote regulatory coherence</p> <p>Renew focus on multilateral trade</p> <p>Address next generation trade and investment issues.</p> <p>Ensure food security</p> <p>Address energy security</p> <p>Encourage SME cross-border trade</p> <p>Promote regional integration of financial markets</p> <p>Enhance SME access to finance</p> <p>Support green growth</p> <p>Promote economic inclusion for women</p>

2010	<p>Re-commit to achieving the Bogor Goals and develop a new vision          Make further progress towards achieving FTAAP          Identify new business requirements          Resist protectionism          Conclude the Doha Development Agenda          Facilitate investment flows          Facilitate the flow of goods and services          Accelerate SMME capacity building efforts          Ensure food security          Address energy security          Address skilled personnel shortages          Ensure trade security          Harmonize transportation safety regulations          Promote safety in the logistics supply chain          Enhance competition policy          Further improve business mobility          Strengthen intellectual property rights cooperation          Increase transparency and fight corruption          Support industry dialogues          Promote environmental-friendly goods and services          Tackle climate change          Promote human capacity building          Strengthen and deepen the region's capital markets.</p>
2009	<p>Promoting Post-Crisis Recovery          Accelerating Regional Economic Integration          Resisting Protectionism          Concluding the Doha Development Agenda          Enhancing Investment Flows          Facilitating Trade Flows          Enhancing Connectivity          Supporting the Development of SMEs, including Micro-Enterprises          Ensuring Access to Labor          Tackling Illicit Trade          Support for the APEC Industry Dialogues and Fora          Implementing APEC's Intellectual          Property Rights Commitments          Enhancing Food Security          Addressing Energy Security and Climate Change          Developing a Modern Industry of Emergency Response          Leveraging on ICT to Foster Economic Growth          Strengthening and Deepening the Region's Capital Markets          Promoting Capacity Building to Strengthen Financial Systems</p>
2008	<p>Responding to the Suspension of the Doha Development Agenda (DDA) Negotiations.          Accelerating Regional Economic Integration.          Addressing the Global Credit Contraction and Inflationary Pressures.          Enhancing SME Development, including Micro-Enterprises.          Responding to Food Supply and Price Issues.          Facilitating Investment Flows.          Facilitating Trade Flows.          Implementing Structural Reform.          Ensuring Access to Labor.          Boosting Innovation.          Promoting ICT-Enabled Growth.          Ensuring Energy Security.          Mitigating Climate Change.          Deepening and Strengthening Capital Markets.          Promoting Corporate Social Responsibility</p>
2007	<p>Climate change          Energy security          WTO, Doha trade negotiations</p>

	RTAs Investment Business mobility Mobility of labour Harmonisation of standards Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Small and Medium Enterprises Financial markets Counter corruption Disease pandemic Interaction between APEC and ABAC
2006	Lead the way in the successful conclusion of the WTO DDA negotiations. Promote high-quality RTAs/FTAs Implement the Busan Business Agenda (improve regulatory environment). Foster a secure and favorable environment for trade and investment. Respond urgently to critical energy situation Strengthen financial systems Support the growth of SMEs Develop avian influenza/pandemic preparedness Strengthen Standards Organizations and Regulatory Dialogue Implement APEC's Intellectual Property Rights Commitments Encourage innovative and emerging technologies Life sciences and environment Foster closer APEC-ABAC relations.
2005	Lead in the successful conclusion of the Doha Round Respond to the Santiago Initiative Keep APEC on Track to Achieve the Bogor Goals Adapt to the new security environment Create an Environment Conducive for Business Strengthen Financial Systems Develop Emergency Preparedness. Cope with Volatile Energy Situation Encourage Innovation Environmental and Life Sciences-related Technologies
2004	WTO, Doha Development Agenda Trade and investment liberalization and facilitation Security Financial systems Capacity building

## Literature

ABAC (2014) APEC Business Advisory Council Report to APEC Economic Leaders. <https://www.abaonline.org/v4/download.php?ContentID=2609958> (accessed 20 August 2015).

ABAC (2011) APEC Business Advisory Council Report to APEC Economic Leaders. <https://www.abaonline.org/v4/download.php?ContentID=22610109> (accessed 20 August 2015).

ABAC (2006) ABAC Report to APEC Economic Leaders. <https://www.abaonline.org/v4/download.php?ContentID=3088> (accessed 20 August 2015).

ABAC (2004) APEC Business Advisory Council Report to APEC Economic Leaders. Volume 1 Executive Summary. <https://www.abaonline.org/v4/download.php?ContentID=1680> (accessed 20 August 2015).

ABAC (1996) ABAC Meeting in Manila, Philippines 1996 - Executive Summary. <https://www.abaonline.org/v4/content.php?ContentID=986> (accessed 20 August 2015).

ABAC Secretariat (2014) CONFERENCE REPORT. FIRST ABAC MEETING FOR 2014. [https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=3&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CCsQFjAC&url=http%3A%2F%2Fasia.fki.or.kr%2FCommon%2FDownload.aspx%3Fid%3D63df2ff4-d274-4c06-9adb-e712f6bbdb9c&ei=jq1EVcOENeP4yQOn\\_IGQAg&usg=AFQjCNEC7CXs\\_GxHr5q\\_tV5N--hk2-w0w&bvm=bv.92291466,d.bGQ](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=3&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CCsQFjAC&url=http%3A%2F%2Fasia.fki.or.kr%2FCommon%2FDownload.aspx%3Fid%3D63df2ff4-d274-4c06-9adb-e712f6bbdb9c&ei=jq1EVcOENeP4yQOn_IGQAg&usg=AFQjCNEC7CXs_GxHr5q_tV5N--hk2-w0w&bvm=bv.92291466,d.bGQ) (accessed 20 August 2015).

Acharya, A. (2007) "The Emerging Regional Architecture of World Politics," *World Politics* 59, no. 4 (July 2007): 629-652. <http://www.amitavacharya.com/sites/default/files/World%20Politics%20Regions%20Review.pdf> (accessed 20 August 2015).

APEC (2009) APEC Ease of Doing Business Action Plan (2010-2015). [http://mddb.apec.org/Documents/2010/EC/WKSP1/10\\_ec\\_wksp1\\_003.pdf](http://mddb.apec.org/Documents/2010/EC/WKSP1/10_ec_wksp1_003.pdf) (accessed 20 August 2015).

APEC Leaders (2014a) The 22nd APEC Economic Leaders' Declaration - Beijing Agenda for an Integrated, Innovative and Interconnected Asia-Pacific. Available at: [http://www.apec.org/Meeting-Papers/Leaders-Declarations/2014/2014\\_aelm.aspx](http://www.apec.org/Meeting-Papers/Leaders-Declarations/2014/2014_aelm.aspx) (accessed 20 August 2015).

APEC Leaders (2014b) Annex A - The Beijing Roadmap for APEC's Contribution to the Realization of the FTAAP. [http://www.apec.org/Meeting-Papers/Leaders-Declarations/2014/2014\\_aelm/2014\\_aelm\\_annexa.aspx](http://www.apec.org/Meeting-Papers/Leaders-Declarations/2014/2014_aelm/2014_aelm_annexa.aspx) (accessed 20 August 2015).

APEC Leaders (2011) The Honolulu Declaration - Toward a Seamless Regional Economy. [http://www.apec.org/Meeting-Papers/Leaders-Declarations/2011/2011\\_aelm.aspx](http://www.apec.org/Meeting-Papers/Leaders-Declarations/2011/2011_aelm.aspx) (accessed 20 August 2015).

APEC Leaders (2010) Pathways to FTAAP. [http://www.apec.org/Meeting-Papers/Leaders-Declarations/2010/2010\\_aelm/pathways-to-ftaap.aspx](http://www.apec.org/Meeting-Papers/Leaders-Declarations/2010/2010_aelm/pathways-to-ftaap.aspx) (accessed 20 August 2015).

APEC Leaders (2006) Ha Noi Declaration - Towards a Dynamic Community for Sustainable Development and Prosperity. [http://www.apec.org/Meeting-Papers/Leaders-Declarations/2006/2006\\_aelm.aspx](http://www.apec.org/Meeting-Papers/Leaders-Declarations/2006/2006_aelm.aspx) (accessed 20 August 2015).

APEC Leaders (1997) Vancouver Declaration - Connecting the APEC Community. [http://www.apec.org/Meeting-Papers/Leaders-Declarations/1997/1997\\_aelm.aspx](http://www.apec.org/Meeting-Papers/Leaders-Declarations/1997/1997_aelm.aspx) (accessed 20 August 2015).

APEC Leaders (1995) Osaka Declaration - APEC Economic Leaders' Declaration for Action. [http://www.apec.org/Meeting-Papers/Leaders-Declarations/1995/1995\\_aelm.aspx](http://www.apec.org/Meeting-Papers/Leaders-Declarations/1995/1995_aelm.aspx) (accessed 20 August 2015).

APEC Ministers (1996) Joint Statement - From Vision to Action. [http://www.apec.org/Meeting-Papers/Ministerial-Statements/Annual/1996/1996\\_amm.aspx](http://www.apec.org/Meeting-Papers/Ministerial-Statements/Annual/1996/1996_amm.aspx) (accessed 20 August 2015).

APEC Ministers (1989) First Ministerial Meeting Joint Statement. [http://www.apec.org/~media/Files/MinisterialStatements/Annual/1989/89\\_amm\\_jms.pdf](http://www.apec.org/~media/Files/MinisterialStatements/Annual/1989/89_amm_jms.pdf) (accessed 20 August 2015).

Barnes, W.R. and K.A. Foster (2012) Toward a More Useful Way of Understanding Regional Governance <http://brr.berkeley.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Barnes-Foster-Toward-a-more-useful-way-of-understanding-regional-governance.pdf> (accessed 20 August 2015).

Börzel, T.A. (2013) Theorizing Regionalism: Cooperation, Integration, and Governance. <https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CBwQFjAA&url=https%3A%2F%2Feustudies.org%2Fconference%2Fpapers%2Fdownload%2F33&ei=BONFVceJGIOiyAPduYGgCQ&usq=AFQjCNHOQOkKcZn0qYzBbdtcYMfWt2scxw&bvm=bv.92291466,d.bGQ> (accessed 20 August 2015).

- Börzel, T.A. (2011) Comparative Regionalism. A New Research Agenda. [http://userpage.fu-berlin.de/kfgeu/kfgwp/wpseries/WorkingPaperKFG\\_28.pdf](http://userpage.fu-berlin.de/kfgeu/kfgwp/wpseries/WorkingPaperKFG_28.pdf) (accessed 20 August 2015).
- Dougherty, J.E. R.L. Pfaltzgraff (2001) *Contending Theories of International Relations: A Comprehensive Survey*, Longman.
- Freiden, J.A. (1999) Actors and Preferences in International Relations <http://scholar.harvard.edu/jfrieden/files/actprefir.pdf> (accessed 20 August 2015).
- Hall, P.A., R. C. R. Taylor (1996) Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms, *Political Science*, XLIV, pp. 936-957 <http://www.la.utexas.edu/users/chenry/core/Course%20Materials/Hall&TaylorPolStuds/9705162186.pdf> (accessed 20 August 2015),
- Larionova, M. et al. (2013) Effectiveness of G20-B20 Engagement, *International Organisations Research Journal*, pp. 92–114.
- Moravcsik, A. (1997) Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory of International Politics, *International Organization* 51, 4, Autumn, pp. 513–53 <https://www.princeton.edu/~amoravcs/library/preferences.pdf> (accessed 20 August 2015).
- Tsygankov, P. (2008) Aktory i faktory v mezhdunarodnyh otnoshenijah i mirovoj politike [Actors and Factors in International Relations and World Politics] in Lebedeva M. (Ed.) *Privatizacija mirovoj politiki: lokal'nye dejstvija – global'nye rezul'taty* [World Politics Privatization: Local Actions – Global Results] Moscow, pp. 30-53 [http://polit.msu.ru/pub/unm\\_mpmo/library/Actori\\_i\\_Factori.pdf](http://polit.msu.ru/pub/unm_mpmo/library/Actori_i_Factori.pdf) (accessed 20 August 2015).
- Tsygankov, P. (2013) Negosudarstvennye uchastniki mirovoj politiki [Non-state Participants of World Politics] [http://www.observer.materik.ru/observer/N9\\_2013/005\\_017.pdf](http://www.observer.materik.ru/observer/N9_2013/005_017.pdf) (accessed 20 August 2015).
- Wiener, A., T. Diez (2004) *European Integration Theory*, Oxford University Press.
- Yamazawa, I. (2011) *Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation: New Agenda in Its Third Decade*, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies. <https://books.google.ru/books?id=7gLao5i7KoEC&pg=PA32&lpg=PA32&dq=abac+apec+report+1996&source=bl&ots=3wAyB7LILD&sig=7PC9EeobPmb-pXQp7YvNIF5CcGI&hl=ru&sa=X&ei=byPOVJrSNAL5ywPG8YC4DA&ved=0CBwQ6AEwA#v=onepage&q=abac%20apec%20report%201996&f=false> (accessed 20 August 2015).

Elizaveta A. Safonkina

National Research University Higher School of Economics. International Organizations Research Institute. Research Center for International Cooperation and Development. Junior Research Fellow

E-mail: [esafonkina@hse.ru](mailto:esafonkina@hse.ru)

**Any opinions or claims contained in this Working Paper do not necessarily reflect the views of HSE.**

© Safonkina, 2015