

We must not overlook significant past and current efforts by the public and private sectors to improve Canada's business performance in Japan. But these new Action Plans seek to integrate efforts better -- to avoid duplication. They have been developed in close co-operation with the private sector.

Above all, these Action Plans add a new dimension, however, by:

- placing more emphasis on building awareness of business opportunities in Japan;
- bringing more participants into the market and encouraging them to develop a strategy that will serve them some 5 or 10 years down the road;
- establishing sectoral and regional mutual-support networks;
- engaging industry leadership in partnership with governments; and,
- most importantly, appealing directly to the Japanese customer by designing and adapting our products to meet their needs.

Much of this work needs to be done right here in Canada. And groups such as your own can provide the leadership needed.

Preliminary development of these sectoral Action Plans is already under way.

In February, some 200 Canadian firms participated in workshops across the country to learn about the Japanese market for value-added building products. These and other companies can also look forward to a detailed study of the market to be released by our Tokyo trade office in June -- the culmination of a year's work by government and private-sector experts.

Next week, the first of what we hope will be a cross-country series of workshops on the market for processed foods will take place in Vancouver.

We have agreed with the Automotive Parts Manufacturers' Association (APMA) to cost share an expert to work in their offices to help implement a more active strategy for Japan. The APMA has set up a special Japan Committee to guide this process.

Tourism Canada's Asia-Pacific Partnership Committee cost shares generic "travel to Canada" advertising in Japan, and Tourism Canada has just run a series of seminars across Canada informing operators of tourism facilities about the needs and expectations of Japanese travellers.