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Technology foresight has been increasingly undertaken by developing countries to identify technologies whose adoption might serve as a platform for future economic growth. However, foresight activities have not, by and large, resulted in well-developed policy initiatives. Three factors are relevant for improvement. First, foresight activities would benefit from being more informed by the convergence literature and global convergence experience over the past several decades, and should therefore incorporate organically the concepts of absorptive capacity and technology gap into foresight exercises. Second, certain preconditions – in particular the existence of a functional national innovation system – enhance the likelihood that foresight exercises will be successful. Third, in order to achieve wide buy-in and promote the sustainability of initiatives generated by the foresight activity, developing countries are advised to consult widely in the foresight process. Policies emanating from foresight activities should additionally address two core challenges: a) a clear definition of those technologies that should be developed internally vs. those that should be sourced from abroad and b) identification of the internal capabilities to be developed in conjunction with those technologies targeted for acquisition from abroad.

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