

*Full Length Research Paper*

# Strategies of National Petrochemical Company of Iran

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In strategic planning goals, policies and strategies of the organization are determined considering aspirations, mission and the underlying values along with the determination of internal strong and weak points of the organization and threats and opportunities arising from environmental factors. The researches consider some advantages for strategic thinking and deep commitment toward strategic management process, strategic thinking and commitment. National petrochemical company has planned its perspective in accordance to Islamic Republic of Iran perspective. Fundamental goal of petrochemical industry national company in Iran is "development for a better life". We focus on step-by-step goals, strategies, operational and short-term plans and efforts on a development that provide a better life with different materialistic and spiritual aspects for our society, staff and stakeholders of the company.

**Key words:** Strategies, National Petrochemical Company, Iran.

## INTRODUCTION

In strategic planning goals, policies and strategies of the organization are determined considering aspirations, mission and the underlying values along with the determination of internal strong and weak points of the organization and threats and opportunities arising from environmental factors.

To evaluate the strategies, three major activities are done:

1. The examination of internal and external factors that are the bases of the current strategies.
2. Evaluation, comparison and assessment of the performances.
3. Taking corrective measures according to the condition.
4. The strategies should be evaluated regularly.

## Strategic management model

The comprehensive strategic management model used by national company of petrochemical industry is given below. According to this model the relationship between

the main components of strategic management includes eight consecutive stages as follows:

*Step 1:* The determination of mission, values and perspectives

*Step 2:* The analysis of external opportunities and threats

*Step 3:* The analysis of internal strong and weak points

*Step 4:* The analysis of SWOT matrix and planning strategy

*Step 5:* The translation of the strategies to a set of measurable functional indices according to balanced scorecard (BSC).

*Step 6:* Setting goals

*Step 7:* Using strategies

*Step 8:* Strategic evaluation and control

## The advantages of strategic management

The researches (Fred (2003)) consider some advantages for strategic thinking and deep commitment toward strategic management process, strategic thinking and

commitment are including:

1. Guides different levels of the organization management in setting target.
2. Facilitates the identification and responsiveness to the changes, new opportunities and emerging threats.
3. Reinforces the management net logic in the evaluation of requiring asset and labor force.
4. Coordinates all the managers' decisions about strategy in all the organization.
5. Enables the organization to change its reactive situation to proactive situation.

### **Perspective**

National petrochemical company has planned its perspective in accordance with Islamic Republic of Iran perspective. In perspective of Islamic Republic of Iran in 1404 (Hijri-Ghamari calendar), the followings are seen: By relying on everlasting power of God and in the light of national faith and planned and thoughtful effort in a group and in achieving the principles and targets of constitution in a 20 years perspective: "Iran is a developed country ranked first in economy, science and technology in the region with the Islamic and revolutionary identity in Islam world and with constructive interaction in international relations".

### **Fundamental goal**

Fundamental goal of petrochemical industry national company in Iran is "Development for a better life". We focus on step-by-step goals, strategies, operational and short-term plans and efforts on a development that provide a better life with different materialistic and spiritual aspects for our society, staffs and stakeholders of the company. We consider some valuable goals such as customer satisfaction, providing healthy, happy, innovative and productive working place, development of professional and humanity abilities and capacities of colleagues and their family, increasing productions and making change and diversity in the type of products and services, achieving productivity higher than facilities, presenting good output of assets and preventing them to waste, preventing resources waste, protection of environment and the other valuable goals because these lead into a better life for people, customers, colleagues and future generation in the society.

To achieve this fundamental value the following items are considered as work values as our priorities:

1. Discipline
2. Environment protection
3. Innovation
4. Responsibility
5. protecting human dignity

6. customer-orientation
7. learning and growth

### **Policy of National petrochemical company**

National petrochemical company with more than 40 years best experiences in the production of different kinds of petrochemical products in conformity with macro policies of Islamic Republic of Iran to change to a developed country ranked first in economy, science and technology in the region and to play an important role in non-petroleum exports with the priority of respecting fundamental values of human dignity is committed to keep national assets, protecting environment and continues improvement in all working fields and by relying on knowledge, effort and experience of the staffs, is determined to achieve fundamental goal "Development for a better life" and achieving fundamental values "effort, creation and honor" (Mohammadi (2005)).

### **The study of environmental factors**

In strategic planning process after planning mission and perspective of the organization it is required to identify the effective environmental factors (internal and external) and their effect on organization is evaluated in achieving mission and perspective. The study of external and internal factors of the organization is a permanent issue and the organizations should design a good system for this purpose.

The list of the external and internal factors is identified and then in regarding these factors, some researches are done by expert group (Hanger (2010); Robert and David (2005, 2007, 2008)).

The output of the cognitive studies and the above researches are the followings:

1. A thorough list of weak and strong points with the separation of the factors and prioritization
2. A thorough list of opportunities and threats with the separation of the factors and prioritization
3. The study and report of the effective method and impression of the identified SWOT in the organization.

The list of external factors (opportunities and threats) that is summarized by strategic group of sustained development Document Company as:

### **Opportunities**

1. The existence of food in the country
2. The presence of contractors, consultants, providers and various local manufactures
3. Availability of energy

4. The presence of educated and young human force
5. The presence and increase of research centers and competent universities in the country
6. The free price of petrochemical products
7. Privatization of national petrochemical company
8. Having access to international free water, land and rail ways
9. The establishment of new markets in Asia, east of Asia, China, India and etc.
10. Having access to big local markets
11. The possibility to integrate with the regional competing companies and participation in councils and regional contracts.

### **Threats**

1. Unstable policies in pricing food and the energy used in petrochemistry
2. Global economic record and decrease in demand and the price of the products.
3. The limitation in using external facilities due to economic sanction including finance, technology and etc.
4. The lack of providing adequate food ( including gas condensates for petrochemical plans
5. Extensive investment of competitors for the production of products and attaining great share of the market.
6. The lack of the presence of conditions, facilities and legal supports to attract investors.
7. Obliging the development of the required infra-structures of petrochemical plans to petrochemical industry national company.

### **Weaknesses**

1. Lack of establishment of scientific management and systematic thinking.
2. Lack of establishment of productivity cycle management and low working output.
3. Not having the comprehensive system of project management.
4. Lack of total establishment of succession planning and educating competent.
5. Not having a comprehensive system of knowledge management
6. Lack of up to date performance evaluation systems.
7. Lack of a comprehensive and integrated information system and not being equipped with new information technology.
8. Lack of development of an organizational structure along with Petrochemistry industry growth.
9. Lack of comprehensive system for budget control, cost and final price of the products.
10. Lack of establishment of economic thought and entrepreneurship.
11. Lack of establishment of safety culture, health and

- environment.
12. Lack of having adequate ability in managing contracts.
  13. Lack of establishment of protecting human dignity and ethical chart of the company.
  14. Lack of establishment of customer –oriented thought.
  15. Lack of establishment of team work culture.

### **SWOT matrix and the selection of strategy**

#### ***The formation of threats, opportunities, strengths, weaknesses matrix (SWOT)***

This matrix is one of the important tools by which the managers compare the information of internal and external factors and they can present it by four kinds of strategies:

1. SO strategies (base-strategies strengths and opportunities)
2. WO strategies (expansion strategies -weaknesses and opportunities)
3. ST strategies (defensive strategies-strengths and threats)
4. WT strategies (survival strategies-Weaknesses and threats)

Comparing the main internal and external factors are the most difficult part of making threats, opportunities, strengths and weaknesses matrix and it requires good judgments and there is nothing called the best set of compared factors. In this matrix in each stage two factors are compared together and the purpose is not to define the best strategies but to determine executable strategies. Thus, all the strategies that are presented in threats, opportunities, strength and weaknesses are not selected and executed.

In Table 1 the matrix of threats, opportunities, strengths and weaknesses are shown.

This matrix consists of 9 blocks. As it is shown in the figure, four blocks show the main factors and four blocks show strategies and one bloc is white or blank. Four blocks showing strategies are in fact SO, ST, WO, WT strategies that are created after completing the marginal four blocks related to the main factors (S.W.O.T) (Tables 2-4).

### **The classification of strategies based on SWOT matrix**

SO strategies (base-strategies strengths and opportunities):

1. Efficient use of food
2. Employing experience and competent experts.

**Table 1.** The diagram of threats, opportunities, strengths, weaknesses matrix (SWOT).

		<b>strengths S-</b>	<b>weaknesses W-</b>
<b>internal analysis</b>		<b>List your strengths</b>	<b>List your weaknesses</b>
<b>external analysis</b>			
opportunities O-	List your opportunities	Use strengths to take advantage of opportunities	Overcome weaknesses by taking advantage of strengths
Threats T-	List your threats	Use strengths to avoid threats	Minimize weaknesses and avoid threats

**Table 2.** SO strategies (base-strategies strengths and opportunities).

NO.	Matrix no. SWOT	Strategy
1	S-O	Efficient use of food by employing expert and competent experts.
2	S-O	Efficient use of contractors, consultants, local providers and manufacturers beside competent and experienced experts.
3	S-O	The attraction and using young and educated experts with the scientific management.
4	S-O	Using research centers and universities in the country to improve the capabilities of petrochemical industry experts.
5	S-O	Using competent and experienced experts and transferring their experience for privatization.
6	S-O	Export development in new markets by applying competent experts.
7	S-O	Sale development of the products in local markets by competent experts.
8	S-O	Collaboration development with the countries in the region by applying competent experts.
9	S-O	Increasing the variety of exporting products by efficient use of food.
10	S-O	Using contractors and consultants to increase and facilitate sale and export.
11	S-O	Using educated force to increase sale and export.
12	S-O	Using research centers to increase sale and export.
13	S-O	Efficient use and development of the existing infrastructures for the efficient use of international free water.
14	S-O	Efficient use and development of the existing infrastructures for the export development in new markets.
15	S-O	Efficient use and development of the existing infrastructures for the development of products sale in local markets.
16	S-O	Developing collaboration with the countries in the region or using the existing infrastructures.
17	S-O	Applying management with the economic thinking for the efficient use of food.
18	S-O	Efficient use of the ability of contractors, consultants and etc by applying scientific management.
19	S-O	The establishment of new and scientific management systems by using educated and experienced experts.
20	S-O	The establishment of new and scientific management systems by using research centers.
21	S-O	Applying scientific management in efficient use of privatization process.
22	S-O	Developing collaboration with the countries in the region by applying scientific management.

3. Efficient use of contractors, consultants, local providers and manufactures
4. The development of export in new markets
5. The development of products sale in local markets
6. The development of contribution with regional countries
7. The increase in the amount and variety of export products
8. The development of the existing infrastructures
9. Applying scientific management with the economic thought
10. The establishment of new and scientific management systems
11. Using 45 years of experience
12. Using NPC trade mark
13. The attraction and development of local and international investment
14. Changing the cheap energy from a relative advantage to a competitive advantage
15. The attraction of young educated experts and improving their capabilities
16. Efficient use of energy
17. Establishing economic production thought
18. Establishing the respect for client and ethical chart

**Table 3.** ST strategies (defensive strategies-strengths and threats).

NO.	Matrix No. SWOT	Strategy
1	S-T	Using experienced experts by group wisdom and group contribution to take good decisions to prevent unstable policies of food pricing.
2	S-T	Using experienced experts by group wisdom and group contribution to take good decisions in economic stagnation period.
3	S-T	Using experienced experts by group wisdom and group contribution to take good decisions to resist against global sanction.
4	S-T	Using experienced experts by group wisdom and group contribution to take good decisions to eliminate food shortage problem.
5	S-T	Using experienced experts by group wisdom and group contribution to take good decisions to achieve the major share of the market.
6	S-T	Using experienced experts by group wisdom and group contribution to take good decisions to provide an opportunity for collaboration and attracting investors.
7	S-T	Using experienced experts by group wisdom and group contribution to take good decisions to fight against unstable rules.
8	S-T	Using experienced experts by group wisdom and group contribution to take good decisions to increase the productivity of contractors and consultants.
9	S-T	Using experienced experts by group wisdom and group contribution to take good decisions to keep and reduce the escape of competent experts.
10	S-T	Using experienced experts by group wisdom and group contribution to take good decisions to establish an effective relation with privatization organization.
11	S-T	Using experienced experts by group wisdom and group contribution to take good decisions for good application of the conditions in global market.

- 19. Reinforcement and establishment of
- 20. Establishment of safety culture, health and environment
- 21. Reinforcement and establishment of Participative Management
- 22. Regular contact with research centers and good universities
- 23. Trying to achieve a great share in the market in the competition with the competitors
- 24. The development of economic and entrepreneurship thought
- 25. The establishment of safety culture, health and environment
- 26. Improving the capability of staffs
- 27. The establishment of protecting human dignity
- 28. The establishment of customer –orientation thought
- 29. The establishment of systematic working culture
- 30. Creating motivation for staffs
- 31. The increase of the units capacity for the maximum use of food
- 32. The development of human resources management
- 33. Increasing the productivity of the units
- 34. The development of IT

- 35. Creating a regular relationship with the customers
- 36. Using new equipment and technologies and advanced technologies
- 37. The establishment of the managers economic thought
- 38. Regular contact with research centers and good universities.

#### **WT strategies (survival strategies-Weaknesses and threats)**

- 1. Improving project management system
- 2. The development of an organizational structure in accordance to the activities of the company
- 3. The establishment of systematic and entrepreneurship thought.
- 4. Decreasing the effect of unstable policies in food and energy pricing
- 5. Improving safety, health and environment culture
- 6. Creating enterprise resource planning (ERP)
- 7. Improving human resources management system
- 8. Using new equipments and technologies in units processes

**Table 4.** WO strategies (expansion strategies -weaknesses and opportunities).

NO.	Matrix No. SWOT	Strategy
1	W-O	Planning the comprehensive system of project management by local experienced consultants.
2	W-O	Planning the comprehensive system of project management by experienced and educated human resources.
3	W-O	Planning and establishment of succession management system and education of competent managers by young, educated and experienced human resources.
4	W-O	Planning and establishment of succession management system and education of competent managers by research centers and universities.
5	W-O	Planning management system of succession knowledge and education of competent managers by young, educated and experienced human resources
6	W-O	Overview of organizational structure by educated human resources.
7	W-O	Planning management system of succession knowledge and education of competent managers by research centers and universities.
8	W-O	Overview of organizational structure by competent research centers and universities.
9	W-O	The development of economic thought and entrepreneurship with the aim of efficient use of food.
10	W-O	The development of economic thought and entrepreneurship with the aim of efficient use of energy.
11	W-O	The development of economic thought and entrepreneurship with the aim of efficient use of privatization process.
12	W-O	The development of economic thought and entrepreneurship with the aim of achieving more shares of new international markets.
13	W-O	The development of economic thought and entrepreneurship with the aim of efficient use of big local market.
14	W-O	The development of economic thought and entrepreneurship with the aim of efficient use of regional contributions opportunities.
15	W-O	Institutionalization of safety culture, health and environment with the aim of efficient use of regional contributions opportunities.

- 9. Using new systems in energy management
- 10. Increasing the productivity of units to reduce the expenses and increasing output
- 11. Creating regular relationship with the customers
- 12. The establishment of new management systems

### The classification of strategies

- 1. Reduction of expenses
- 2. Efficient management of stock
- 3. Efficient use of assets
- 4. The development of local and international participation with the countries in the region and in the world
- 5. Improving the value of the customer
- 6. Increasing sale
- 7. Attracting local and international investors
- 8. Competitive price
- 9. The stability of the products quality
- 10. The production and presentation of the required products of the customer
- 11. On-time delivery
- 12. Presenting after sale services
- 13. Deep bilateral relationship with customers

- 14. Improving the brand
- 15. The development of the relationship out of the organization with the qualified organizations
- 16. Improving safety, health and environment management
- 17. Reducing the environment pollutants
- 18. The development of the facilities and cultural, sport and facility infrastructures
- 19. Observing standards and legal requirements
- 20. Risk management
- 21. Innovation in the production optimization
- 22. Improving research and technology management
- 23. Using new equipment and technologies in processes
- 24. Improving research and development process
- 25. Improving design and development processes
- 26. The identification of research and development opportunities
- 27. The development of sale agencies and offices

### Strategic management model

By combining strategic planning model and balanced scorecard shown in Table 5, along with operational

**Table 5.** The classification of the strategies based on balanced scorecard (BSC) method.

strategy items based on balanced scorecard		The strategies of national petrochemical company
	Profit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expenses reduction</li> <li>• Optimized stock management</li> <li>• Efficient use of assets</li> <li>• The development of participation with Iran and regional countries</li> </ul>
Financial	Income growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving the customer value</li> <li>• Sale increase</li> <li>• The attraction of local and international investors</li> </ul>
	Customer orientation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Competitive price</li> <li>2. The stability of the products quality</li> <li>3. The production and presentation of the required products of the customer</li> <li>4. On-time delivery</li> <li>5. Presenting after sale services</li> <li>6. Deep bilateral relationship with customers</li> <li>7. Improving the brand</li> </ol>
	social and legal processes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. The development of the relationship out of the organization with the qualified organizations</li> <li>9. Improving safety, health and environment management</li> <li>10. Reducing the environment pollutants</li> <li>11. The development of the facilities and cultural, sport and facility infrastructures</li> <li>12. Observing standards and legal requirements</li> <li>13. Risk management</li> <li>14. Innovation in the production optimization</li> <li>15. Improving research and technology management</li> </ol>
Internal processes	innovation processes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16. Using new equipment and technologies in processes</li> <li>17. Improving research and development process</li> <li>18. Improving design and development processes</li> <li>19. The identification of research and development opportunities</li> </ol>

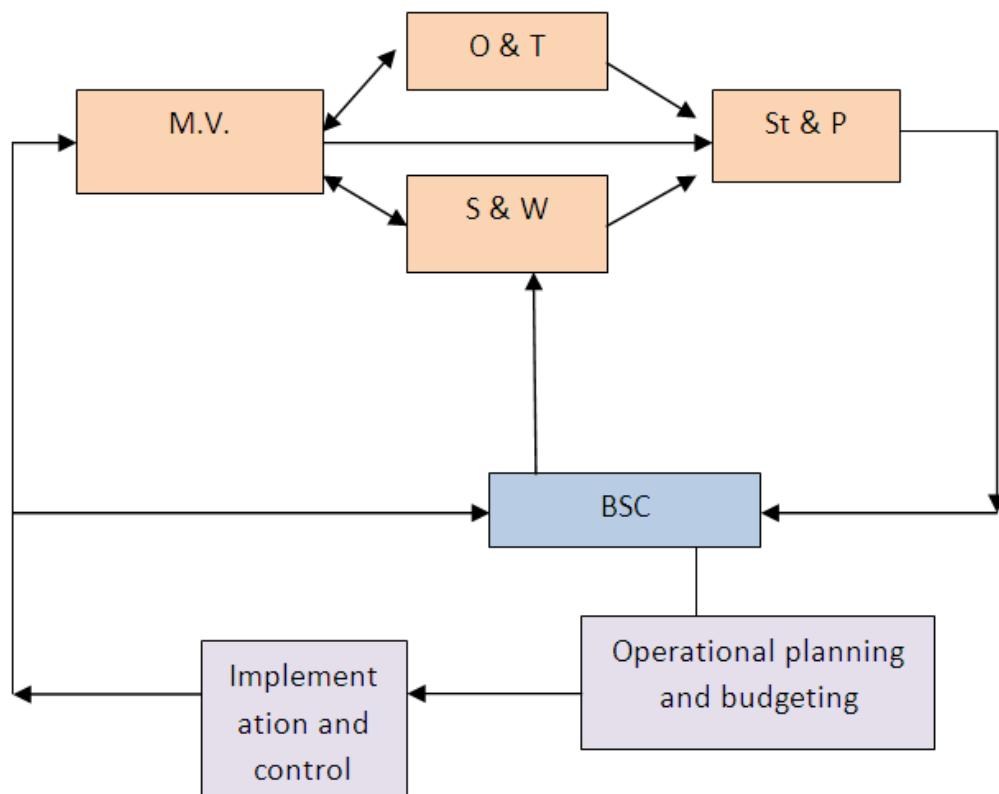
planning and budgeting and implementation and control give us the following image of the strategic management model (Figure 1).

### **Proposed goals**

The general goals are proposed as follows:

1. Growth and stability of income
2. Having a major share in non-petroleum export in the country
3. Increasing profitability of the company
4. Increasing the productivity
5. The growth of annual income
6. Reducing expenses
7. The growth and receiving new credits and financial resources
8. Increase and sale of the products
9. The attraction and development of local and

- international participation
10. Increasing the quality, quantity and production value
  11. Privatization
  12. Improving petrochemical industry share and the other branches in non-petroleum export and GDP of the country
  13. Holding and increasing the high-potential customers
  14. Achieving more share of the world market
  15. Being recognized in the new markets of the region and the world
  16. Increasing customer satisfaction
  17. Increasing the variety of the products with high added-value
  18. The improvement of after-sale systems
  19. Making the customer loyal
  20. Increasing the competitiveness power
  21. Increasing sale to especial customers
  22. Keeping the existing customers
  23. The establishment of knowledge management
  24. The establishment of safety, health and environment culture.



**Figure 1.** Strategic management model.

25. The establishment of the protection of human dignity
  26. Improving the qualification of staffs
  27. Improving innovation and creativity
  28. Increasing the applied patent
  29. Improving learning culture
  30. Improving systematic management thought
  31. Increasing the staffs satisfaction and their motivation
  32. The growth of Intangible assets
  33. Improving team works
  34. Improving performance assessment system
  35. Organizational agility
  36. The development of organizational culture
  37. Overview of organizational structure in conformity with the required growth in the organization

## *Macro goals*

After some discussion sessions in strategic group regarding the proposed goals, finally the macro goals of national petrochemical company were finalized and agreed by top management team as follows:

1. Increasing economic return
  2. Development of production capacity
  3. Achieving more shares in global market
  4. Achieving global standards regarding safety, health

and environment

- ## **5. Empowerment and the development of human resources**

## ***Short-term solutions***

## ***Long-term solutions***

Continuance of attachment 4- The modification of consumption habit plans (Table 6).

1. Moving toward organizational improvement based on macro policies of national petrochemical company and holding the festival of the best and introduction of successful companies.
  2. Comprehensive planning for the definition and organizational structure and human resources in terms of succession, entrepreneurship and macro goals of National petrochemical company.
  3. Increasing the productivity of complexes, central building and planning to improve systematic thought.
  4. Implementation of information management and knowledge.
  5. The establishment of succession planning and employing experienced managers.
  6. Moving toward organizational learning.
  7. Bench marking of the best local and international

**Table 6.** The modification of consumption habit plans.

No.	Item	Measurement index	Calculation method	Measurement unit
1	prioritization of plans based on added-value and economic attractions considering the existing limitations in financial resources (especial for group)	1-1NPV (Net Present value) 1-2 IRR (Internal Rate of return) 1-3*NPV ratio (Net Present Value)	According to Comfar method According to Comfar method NPV PVT	%
2	The implementation of energy audit in all complexes	2-1Energy productivity 2-2 Removing the un conformity	Added-value The value of consuming energy The number of removed un conformities obtained from total audit of the un conformities	
3	The establishment of corrosion management system, clarification, and reducing the damages arising from it.	3-1 Controlling corrosion 3-2 The plans to control corrosion	The expenses spent against corrosion The number of plans to control corrosion	Million Rials Number
4	Planning to avoid experienced experts exit petrochemical complex and creating motivation system	4-1 Service leave 4-2 Motivation 4-3 Satisfaction 4-4 Transferring from the industry	service leave staffs all the staffs Motivation score Satisfaction score The staffs who want to move from petrochemical industry all the staffs	
5	Increasing the effectiveness of courses and using other new educational methods (if necessary)	5-1Educational effectiveness 5-2 Educational ROI	Patrick method Education costs- Education incomes	Million Rls
6	Time management and optimization of working hour of the staffs	6-1 Working time	The number of activities/ The process with the working time The whole number of activities/process	
7	Planning for modification and increasing the capacity of the existing units and taking out worn-out and uneconomical units	7-1 Production to nominal capacity 7-2 The technology life Competitiveness of the capacity	The real production amount Nominal capacity The average life of the technology used in the industry The capacity of the existing unit The average capacity of under-construction units in the world	year
8	Identification, improvement of HSE indices in all the complexes and plans	HSE defined indices	According to the calculation method	
9	obliging complexes to achieve the different cases of standards and the indices inserted in technical documents (Final price of energy products, maintenance and repair and etc)	9-1 Final price of the product 9-2 Total factor productivity of production 9-3 Capital productivity 9-4 Material productivity 9-5 Maintenance and repair 9-6 MTBF 9-7 MTR	Final price of commodity and service, statistical general costs, financial costs and others $TFP = \frac{V}{L \cdot K^{\alpha}}$ Added-value Fixed assets value Added –value The value of the consumed raw materials The costs of Maintenance and repair Mean time between failures Mean time to restore	Million Rls Month/day day/hour

\*The above index is calculated by Comfar software.

**Table 7.** The relationship of macro goals with the strategic goals.

<b>Macro goals</b>	<b>Strategic goals</b>
Increasing economic return	The reduction of final price of the products Efficient use of assets The reduction of goods inventory The management of financial resources Optimized management of the stock Increasing production Increasing sale Attraction and development of local and international participations Reducing energy waste percent Reducing wastages Increasing productivity or modification of consumption habit Creating knowledge Creating advanced technology
Achieving more share of the global market	Increasing the share of the major petrochemical products in the world Increasing satisfaction Decreasing goods delivery time Decreasing the complains of the customers Decreasing the response time to complaints Improving supply chain management Attracting new customers Keeping customers The development of work volume with the customers
The development of production capacity	Increasing operation of the installed capacities Creating new capacities Improving equipments and technologies management On-time completion of petrochemical plans

as catalyst and the required processes (At least one technology in 2009)

9. Improving customer relationship manager (Using E-commerce and etc)

10. Planning to reach productive units to nominal capacity (At least three complexes in 2009)

11. Improving the system of equipment maintenance

12. Interacting with contractors in during construction stages of the unites and planning to reduce the final cost of the units and preventing technical and executional errors.

13. Determination of the modification of consumption habit in the design of units and installations and creating the capacities via optimization of the amount and the kind of energy consumption, study and installation of energy recycle systems, CHP installation considering the operational requirements in accordance with the new standards.

14. Gradual change of the existing power plant in petrochemical units to CHP system for simultaneous production of power and heat with the minimum 50% total output.

15. Optimization of the system of transferring petro-

chemical products via correct planning to transfer from production and consumption factors and the maximum transfer by pipeline to industrial units (Table 7).

## Conclusion

It can be concluded that:

1- National petrochemical company has more than 40 years best experiences in the production of different kinds of petrochemical products in conformity with macro policies of Islamic Republic of Iran.

2- The study of external and internal factors of the organization is a permanent issue and organizations should design a good system for this purpose.

3- After some discussion sessions in strategic group regarding the proposed goals, finally the macro goals of national petrochemical company were finalized and agreed upon by top management team.

It can be suggested to others to searchfor other petroleum companies to find the effect of their strategies on

the life of people of their countries.

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