17th APT Policy and Regulation Forum for Pacific (PRFP-17)

Nukualofa, Tonga (Hybrid), 3 - 5 September 2024

CONCEPT NOTE

1. Background/Context

The Pacific region is made up of isolated and dispersed islands, requiring powerful ICT solutions to bridge distances and connect communities. International organisations, governments and private sector partners are increasingly investing in ICT infrastructure and capacity building initiatives to enable Pacific countries to participate fully in the global digital economy. These initiatives aim to build more inclusive and resilient digital ecosystems, empower Pacific communities, promote sustainable development and reduce the impact of climate change and natural disasters. Given these circumstances, it would be beneficial for the Pacific countries to have a shared platform to exchange information on telecommunications and ICT development policies and regulations, and to collaboratively discuss future strategies for individual nations and the Pacific community.

The APT Policy and Regulation Forum for Pacific (PRFP) functions as a subregional platform for this purpose and has become a leading event for addressing the shared challenges in telecommunications and ICT development encountered by Pacific members. Following APT's strategic plan, PRFP meetings strive to provide practical support and insights into policy and regulatory issues by focusing on the specific concerns of Pacific members.

As part of respecting and providing practical support for the "Lagatoi Declaration" adopted at the 4th Pacific ICT Ministerial Meeting (August 28-29, 2023), this year's PRFP meeting will also structure its sessions based on the priority areas agreed upon in the declaration. The meeting aims to support Pacific members in understanding policy and regulatory trends, thereby enhancing their capacity to address emerging opportunities and challenges. Ultimately, the meeting will provide an opportunity to discuss ways to achieve economic development and prosperity within the Pacific region.

In the special roundtable session of PRFP-17, following the discussion and expected content of the Ministerial Declaration, Ministers/Head of Regulators from APT Members will update policy and regulation issues in their countries and share insights, experiences, lessons learned, policies being implemented about telecommunication and ICTs.

Also, the meeting features various thematic sessions on 'Empowering Pacific: Navigation Digital Transformation and New Digital Order', 'Unleashing Digital Innovation: The Entrepreneurial Frontier', 'Digital Infrastructure: Exploring Infrastructure Evolution', 'Enhancing the Trustworthy Digital Environment', 'Digital Literacy for All: Promoting Inclusive Access to Digital Era' and 'Resilience in Crisis: Advancements in ICT for Disaster Management'.

PRFP-17 also offers closed sessions for policymakers and regulators, where they can freely exchange and discuss their views and information on critical ICT issues in the Pacific.

2. <u>Objectives</u>

The specific objectives for PRFP-17 are to:

- Discuss current policy and regulation trends in Pacific countries in the digital era.

- Examine and share information on digital transformation initiatives undertaken or that can be undertaken by the Pacific countries.

- Discuss policy and regulatory measures to foster the development of innovative services through the digital innovation and entrepreneurship.

- Provide updates on the latest digital Infrastructure developments and challenges in the Pacific region, including policy and regulatory aspects.

- Discuss strategies for building cybersecurity capacity and potential cooperation on cybersecurity issues.

- Explore measures to achieve digital inclusion through digital capacity building and skills development for all citizens, including vulnerable group.

- Provide updates on disaster management technologies and projects, sharing best practices in disaster preparedness, mitigation, and recovery.

- Hold a closed session for policymakers and regulators in Pacific countries to discuss other common ICT issues of concern.

3. <u>Expected outcomes</u>

The meeting will be conducted as a hybrid meeting. The provisional agenda and tentative programme of the PRFP-17 are enclosed herewith and annexed to the concept note (See Annex A and B for more information).

Specific outcomes include but not limited to:

- Identified major policy and regulatory concerns for Pacific countries.

- Increased awareness of policymakers and regulators regarding the latest issues in telecommunication and ICT.

- Improved understanding and Identified challenges faced by policymakers and regulators on various thematic topics, including digital transformation, digital innovation and entrepreneurship, digital infrastructure and digital islands, security and trust, digital capacity building and skills development, and disaster management.

- Explored potential solutions and cooperation on various thematic topics, including digital transformation, digital innovation and entrepreneurship, digital infrastructure and digital islands, security and trust, digital capacity building and skills development, and disaster management.

4. **Timing**

The hybrid meeting of the PRFP-17 will be a 3-day event from 3 to 5 September 2024. The meeting will be organised in person in Nukualofa, Tonga and via Zoom meeting platform from 9:00 AM – 17:00 PM (UTC+13).

5. **Participation**

All APT Members, Associate Members, Affiliate Members, International/Regional Organizations, and eligible non-members can participate in the PRFP-17.

Online participants will be provided with Zoom meeting link, meeting ID and password. Online participants shall log on to the meeting URL at the designated time and date. In order to have proper audio experience during the meeting, participants should be equipped with headset containing speakers and microphone. Please follow the guidelines in attending online meeting provided in an Introduction to APT Zoom meeting document.

6. **Contact persons:**

APT Secretariat	Local Secretariat
Ms. Sun Kyung Choi Programme Officer Ms. Warrawan Thapanasakul Programme Secretary Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT) 12/49 Soi 5, Chaeng Watthana Road Bangkok 10210, Thailand Tel: + 66 2 573 0044 (ext.115/116) Fax: +66 2 573 7479 E-mail : aptpolicy@apt.int	

17th APT Policy and Regulation Forum for Pacific (PRFP-17)

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Opening

2. Adoption of the Agenda

3. Election of the Vice-Chair of PRFP

4. Outcomes of the 16th Session of the General Assembly and the 47th Session of the Management Committee of the APT relevant to PRFP

5. Updates on the Action Plan of "Lagatoi Declaration"

6. Progress Report of Working Group on Regional Engagement

7. Roundtable on Updates of Policy and Regulation in the Pacific

8. Business Dialogues

9. Thematic Sessions:
    a. Empowering Pacific: Navigating Digital Transformation and New Digital Order
    b. Unleashing Digital Innovation: The Entrepreneurial Frontier
    c. Digital Infrastructure: Exploring Infrastructure Evolution
    d. Enhancing the Trustworthy Digital Environment
    e. Digital Literacy for All: Promoting Inclusive Access to Digital Era
    f. Resilience in Crisis: Advancements in ICT for Disaster Management

10. Closed Session for Policymakers and Regulators

11. Date and Venue for PRFP-18

12. Any other matters

13. Closing

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Nukualofa, Tonga (Hybrid), 3 September - 5 September 2024

Tentative Programme

TIME	PROGRAMME
Day 1 (UTC +13)	**Tuesday, 3 September 2024**
08:30 - 09:30	**Registration**
09:30 – 10:00	**Opening** • Opening Prayer • Welcome Remarks – Mr. Masanori Kondo, Secretary General, APT • Opening Remarks – Mr. John Jack, Chair of PRFP • Inaugural Address – (TBD) Tonga • Presentation of token of appreciation (Group Photograph)
10:00 – 10:30	Coffee/Tea Break
10:30 – 11:00	**Session 1 – *Plenary*** • Adoption of Agenda • Election of the Vice-Chair of PRFP • Outcomes of the 16th Session of the General Assembly and the 47th Session of the Management Committee of the APT relevant to PRFP • Updates on the Action Plan of "Lagatoi Declaration" • Progress Report of Working Group on Regional Engagement
11:00 - 12:15	**Session 2 :** *(Ministers and Regulators Session) Roundtable on Updates of Policy & Regulation in the Pacific* The widespread adoption of digital transformation in various sectors is addressing a range of socio-economic challenges and fueling national development. However, it also faces obstacles such as the digital divide and the misuse of technology leading to disparities and human rights violations. In response, countries are working to create safe, resilient, and sustainable digital environments through strong policy and regulatory frameworks. To facilitate this, there is an urgent demand for co-operative initiatives to establish cross-border digital standards that are tailored to the nature of cross-border digital services. The roundtable will invite ministers and regulators from the Pacific region to share insights, experiences, lessons learnt and initiatives on telecommunications and ICT policy and regulation in their respective countries and explore potential areas of co-operation to strengthen regional engagement among Pacific countries.

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	The meeting will also be a place to discuss the Action Plan for the practical implementation of the priorities set out in the Ministerial Declaration. *Moderator: Mr. Masanori Kondo, Secretary General, APT* *Topics:* • Achievement and Emerging Challenges in Policy and Regulation • Deliberations on effective implementation and co-operation on the Action Plan following the 4th Pacific ICT Ministerial Dialogue • Insights, experiences, lessons learned, initiatives taken with regard to telecommunication and ICTs policy and regulation *Panelists:* • Honorable Ministers • Heads of ICT Regulators
12:15 – 14:00	Lunch Break
14:00 – 15:15	**Session 3: (Business Dialogue):** *- Building the Future: Smart Infrastructure Development* The Pacific region, encompassing a diverse range of island nations, faces unique challenges and opportunities in its development journey. These countries often contend with geographical isolation, limited resources, and vulnerability to natural disasters. However, the advent of smart infrastructure presents a transformative opportunity to address these challenges and drive sustainable development. Smart infrastructure involves the integration of advanced technologies, such as the Internet of Things (IoT), artificial intelligence (AI), and data analytics, into the physical infrastructure to enhance efficiency, connectivity, and resilience. This session invites top executives from the ICT industry to share their insights and experiences and discuss with ICT policymakers and regulators the new challenges and opportunities that the transformation of ICT regulatory frameworks to build smart infrastructure will bring. *Moderator: (tbd)* *Topics:* • How to enable ICT business to unleash new potential and capabilities for building smart infrastructure • Challenges and Opportunities of ICT policy and regulatory framework • Suggest policy imperatives for successful smart Infrastructure development • Q&A *Speakers:* • Chief executives' level of ICT industry
15:15 – 15:45	Coffee/Tea Break

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15:45 – 17:00	**Session 4: Empowering Pacific: Navigating Digital Transformation and New Digital Era** Over the past few years, the acceleration of digital transformation across all sectors in many countries has solidified telecommunications and ICT technologies as essential means for maintaining social connections, providing crucial safety and relief services, and delivering education and healthcare. This digital innovation is transforming everyday life, industry, and society as a whole, preparing humanity for a leap forward based on a digital foundation. In this process, the necessity for establishing a new order in response to digital intensification has emerged. To achieve a successful human-centered digital transformation, governments need to establish a new order and collaborate with the private sector to prepare for digital intensification and create a new order. In this session, we will examine the trends and support directions of digital transformation in the Pacific region and explore the response strategies of Pacific region governments for establishing a new digital era in the era of digital intensification. *Moderator: (tbd)* *Topics :* • Opportunities and Challenges of Digital Transformation • Policy and Regulatory Frameworks to accelerate Digital Transformation • Key trends of countries and international organisation to establish a new digital era *Speakers:* • Member Administrations • International Organizations
Day 2	**Wednesday, 4 September 2024**
9:00 - 10:15	**Session 5: Unleashing Digital Innovation: The Entrepreneurial Frontier** The market continues to push for the optimization of new digital technologies and capabilities to meet the evolving ICT market landscape and requirements. Governments are facilitating digital transformation nationwide by fostering business innovation and promoting entrepreneurship. In this session, we emphasize the critical role of entrepreneurs in harnessing digital technologies to drive innovation, economic growth, and societal advancement and we will examine methods to disseminate digital innovation throughout society by collaborating with stakeholders who have pioneered new business processes and cultures through digital advancements. *Moderator: (tbd)* *Topics :*

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	• Share the impact the of human-centered digital innovation • Discuss the social and economic impact of innovative services - *Emerging services with Generative AI, Super apps, etc.* • What are the policy or regulatory measures to intoduce enabling environments for starsups in the Pacific? *Speakers:* • Member Administrations • International Organizations • Industry Representatives
10:15 – 10:45	Coffee/Tea Break
10:45 - 12:00	**Session 6:** *Digital Infrastructure: Exploring Infrastructure Evolution* Digital infrastructure is fundamental for stimulating economic growth, also enables new business opportunities, attracts investments, and facilitates trade and commerce, thereby boosting the overall economy. By investigating the diverse range of digital infrastructure facilities in the Pacific region and sharing government-led success stories, it is anticipated to highlight the robust, upgraded and resilient digital infrastructure. This session will discuss the challenges of building and developing digital infrastructure and provide an update on initiatives to improve connectivity. In particular, it will provide an opportunity to share experiences on the preservation and restoration of digital infrastructure for national emergencies, such as disasters or crises. *Moderator: (tbd)* *Topics:* • Updates on Connectivity in the Pacific - National Broadband, submarine cable projects, etc. • Developments of satellite technologies; Medium Earth Orbit (MEO), Low Earth Orbit (LEO) Satellites Communications, Geosynchronous Earth Orbit (GEO), etc. • How to connect the unconnected in the Pacific *Speakers:* • Member Administrations • International Organizations • Industry Representatives
12:00 – 14:00	Lunch Break
14:00 – 15:15	**Session 7:** *Enhancing the Trustworthiness in Digital Environment* To ensure the stable functioning and sustainable growth of a highly interconnected society amidst digital expansion, it is imperative to ensure the safety and security of networks and devices. Urgent actions are needed to safeguard digital services from network attacks and effectively counter cyber threats to maintain their stability. Additionally, countries are actively formulating

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	policies to enhance the safety and reliability of AI, integrated into various ICT technologies, and to protect personal data from breaches. This session will focus on discussing effective strategies for preventing and managing digital disruptions, along with addressing ethical concerns related to advanced technology adoption. These efforts aim to ensure the consistent and reliable usage of digital services while laying the groundwork for further advancements in technology and services. *Moderator: (tbd)* *Topics :* - Updates of policy and regulations on Cybersecurity in the Pacific - Utilizing AI and sharing data in ways that minimize privacy intrusions - Share legislative and regulatory trends on addressing AI bias, secure data sharing, and digital crime - Protecting children and adolescents from digital harmful content *Speakers:* - Member Administrations - Industry Representatives
15:15 – 15:45	Coffee/Tea Break
15:45 – 17:00	**Session 8: Closed Session for Policy Makers and Regulators** This session is an exclusive session for exchanging candid views and information amongst Policy Makers and Regulators on issues around ICT in the Pacific countries. The discussion topics will be decided by the participating countries. *Moderator: Chair of PRFP*
Day 3	**Thursday, 5 September 2024**
9:00 - 10:15	**Session 9: Digital Literacy for All: Promoting Inclusive Access to Digital Era** Addressing digital divides, whether based on age or gender, not only impedes the pace of digital transformation but also perpetuates societal inequalities and impedes social inclusivity. Enhancing digital literacy and encompassing the ability to comprehend, utilize, and critically evaluate ICT technologies stands as a pivotal endeavor in preparing for a successful digital transformation and proactively mitigating associated challenges. This session will acknowledge the hurdles and disparities hindering digital literacy promotion in the Pacific region, such as inadequate ICT infrastructure, limited accessibility, gender discrepancies in digital access, and cultural diversity. Additionally, it will delve into policy intricacies surrounding the

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	enhancement of digital literacy, including strategies to empower individuals in leveraging digital tools effectively and discerning misinformation. *Moderator: (TBD)* *Topics:* • Share the current status of digital gap in the Pacific • Industry and academia collaborate for effective digital literacy education • Discuss how to develop a user-centred ICT culture. • Explore Strategies to Enhance the Integration of Digital Technology in Education *Speakers:* • Member Administrations • Industry Representatives • International Organisation
10:15 – 10:45	Coffee/Tea Break
10:45 - 12:00	**Session 10: *Resilience in Crisis: Advancements in ICT for Disaster Management*** Recent advances in ICT tools and systems specifically designed for disaster management, such as real-time data analytics, geospatial technologies, communication platforms, and early warning systems, should be explored to build the disaster response capacity of Pacific countries. This session emphasise the importance of a collaborative approach between governments, NGOs, private sector organisations and communities in leveraging ICTs for effective disaster management and resilience building at local, regional and global levels. *Moderator:* (TBD) *Topics:* • Trends in disaster management with new ICT technologies • Analysis on the economic/social impact of effective disaster response • Introducing successful cases of public-private partnerships in crisis management, etc. *Speakers:* • Member Administrations • Industry Representatives • International Organisations
12:00 – 14:00	Lunch Break
14:00 – 15:00	**Session 11: *Plenary and Closing*** *Chair :* **Mr. John Jack, Chair of PRFP**

TIME	PROGRAMME
	Topics: • Way Forward (Future Outlook and potential cooperative issues) • Date and Venue of PRFP-18 • Any other matters Closing • Remarks by Secretary General, APT • Remarks by (TBD) Tonga • Remarks and closing by Chair of PRFP
15:00 – 18:00	**<mark>Networking Session</mark>**