

**16th APT Policy and Regulation Forum for Pacific (PRFP-16)**

Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea (Hybrid), 30 August - 1 September 2023

**CONCEPT NOTE**

1. **Background/Context**

Most Pacific countries have the unique geographic characteristic, which presents both challenges and opportunities. Some of the common challenges faced by Pacific countries which include achieving international / regional connectivity, deploying innovative ICTs throughout societies in response to accelerating digital transformation; addressing the sub-regional, generational, and gender digital divide and effectively managing disasters caused by climate change. Considering these circumstances, it is desirable to have common platforms that enable sharing of experiences in regard to the status of policies and regulations for telecommunications and ICT development, and to discuss way forward that is beneficial to each Pacific Island country and the Pacific community at large.

The APT Policy and Regulation Forum for Pacific (PRFP) is a sub-regional platform to serve the purpose and it has become a premium event to address common challenges in telecommunication and ICT development issues faced by the Pacific countries. In line with APT's strategic plan, the PRFP meetings have sought to provide practical assistance and understanding of policy and regulatory issues to Pacific countries by discussing issues of particular concern and interest to them.

This year's PRFP meeting will be preceded by the 4th Pacific ICT Ministerial Meeting (28-29 August), which would adopt a Ministerial Declaration on the theme "Connected Pacific - Enabling Aspirations through ICT". Accordingly, synergizing these events, PRFP-16 will organise its sessions based on the priority areas agreed in the Ministerial Declaration to support the development of telecommunications and ICT policies in the Pacific and provide an opportunity to share policy and regulatory trends, and enhance capacity to address emerging opportunities and challenges.

In the special roundtable session of PRFP-16, following the discussion and expected content of the Ministerial Declaration, Ministers/Head of Regulators from APT Members will update policy and regulatory issues from their countries and share insights, experiences, lessons learned, on telecommunication and ICTs policies and regulations being implemented.

Also, the meeting features various thematic sessions on ‘Accelerating Digital Transformation’, ‘Facilitating Digital Innovation and Entrepreneurship’, ‘Developing Digital Infrastructure and Enabling Digital Islands”, ‘Digital Security and Trust’, and ‘Digital Capacity Building and Skills development’. In particular, a session on ‘Strengthening Disaster Management capacity’, which has a significant impact on the development of Pacific countries, was organised to engage experts of NGO to discuss policy options for disaster management systems using ICT technologies.

PRFP-16 also offers closed sessions for policymakers and regulators, where they can freely exchange and discuss their views and information on critical ICT/telecom issues in the Pacific.

1. **Objectives**

The specific objectives for PRFP-16 are to:

* Update and discuss policy and regulation trends of the Pacific countries in the post pandemic era
* Discuss digital Transformation initiatives taken or can be taken by the Pacific countries and share the information
* Discuss policy and regulatory measures to promote the emergence of innovative services through Digital Innovation and entrepreneurship
* Share information on the latest digital Infrastructure developments and issues in the Pacific region, including policy and regulatory aspects.
* Discuss how to build cybersecurity capacity and possible cooperation on cybersecurity
* Discuss measures to achieve digital inclusion through digital capacity building and skills development for all group of citizens including vulnerable group
* Update on disaster management technology and project, share the best practice of disaster preparedness, mitigation, and recovery process
* Have a closed session among policy makers and regulators in Pacific countries to share and discuss other ICT issues of common concern to the Pacific.

1. **Expected outcomes**

The meeting will be conducted as a hybrid meeting. The provisional agenda and tentative programme of the PRFP-16 are enclosed herewith and annexed to the concept note (See Annex A and B for more information).

Specific outcomes include but not limited to:

1. Identified key policy and regulatory concerns of the Pacific countries.
2. Enhanced awareness of policymakers and regulators on the latest issues in telecommunication and ICTs.
3. Enhanced knowledge and Identified challenges of the policy makers and regulators on various topics of thematic sessions on Digital transformation, Digital Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Digital Infrastructure and Digital Islands, Security and Trust, Digital Capacity Building and Skills development, and Regional Engagement Global Cooperation.
4. Explore possible solutions and cooperation on various topics of thematic sessions on 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-16 will be a 3-day event from 30 August to 1 September 2023. The meeting will be organised in person at Port Moresby in Papua New Guinea and via Zoom meeting platform from 9:00 AM – 17:00 PM (UTC+10).

1. **Participation**

All APT Members, Associate Members, Affiliate Members, International/Regional Organizations, and eligible non-members can participate in the PRFP-16.

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.

1. **Contact Information**

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**16th APT Policy and Regulation Forum for Pacific (PRFP-16)**

**PROVISIONAL AGENDA**

1. Opening
2. Adoption of the Agenda
3. Outcomes of the 46th Session of the Management Committee of the APT relevant to PRFP
4. Introduction of the Ministerial Declaration at the 4th Pacific ICT Ministerial Meeting
5. Progress Report of Working Group on Regional Engagement
6. Roundtable onUpdates of Policy and Regulation in the Pacific
7. Business Dialogues
8. Thematic Sessions:
   1. Acceleration Digital Transformation in the post-pandemic era
   2. Facilitating Digital Innovation and Entrepreneurship
   3. Developing Digital Infrastructure and Enabling Digital Islands
   4. Digital Security and Trust
   5. Digital Capacity Building and Skills development
   6. Strengthening Disaster Management capacity
9. Closed Session for Policymakers and Regulators
10. Date and Venue for PRFP-17
11. Any other matters
12. Closing

**Annex B**

**16th APT Policy and Regulation Forum for Pacific (PRFP-16)**

Moresby, Papua New Guinea (hybrid), 30 August - 1 September 2023

**Tentative Programme**

| TIME | PROGRAMME |
| --- | --- |
| **Day 1**  (UTC +10) | **Wednesday, 30 August 2023** |
| 08:30 - 09:30 | **Registration** |
| 09:30 – 10:00 | **Opening**   * Welcome Remarks – Mr. Masanori Kondo, Secretary General, APT * Opening Remarks – Mr. John Jack, Chairman of PRFP * Inaugural Address – (TBD) * Presentation of token of appreciation   (Group Photograph) |
| 10:00 – 10:30 | Coffee/Tea Break |
| 10:30 – 11:00 | **Session 1** ***– Plenary***   * Adoption of Agenda * Outcomes of the 46th Session of the Management Committee of the APT relevant to PRFP * Introduction of Ministerial Declaration at the 4th Pacific ICT Ministerial Meeting * Progress Report of Working Group on Regional Engagement |
| 11:00 - 12:15 | **Session 2:** ***(Ministers and Regulators Session) Roundtable on Updates of Policy & Regulation and Implementation of the Ministerial Declaration***  *Digital transformation across all sectors of the economy and society is driving national development by addressing a range of socio-economic issues, but it also faces challenges in terms of widening disparities due to the digital divide and human rights violations caused by misuse of technologies. Therefore, while countries continue to strive to build secure, resilient and sustainable digital ecosystems by establishing effective cross-sectoral policy and regulatory frameworks, there is an urgent need for collaborative efforts to establish cross-border digital normative frameworks based on the characteristics of digital services provided across borders.*  *This roundtable invites ministers and regulators from the Pacific region to share their insights, experiences, lessons learnt and initiatives on telecommunications and ICT policy and regulation in their respective countries, and to explore potential areas of collaboration to strengthen regional engagement among Pacific countries. The meeting will also be a platform to discuss the practical implementation of the priorities set out in the Ministerial Declaration.*    ***Moderator: (tbd)***  ***Topics:***   * Development and Achievement of Policy and Regulation * Emerging Challenges in Policy and Regulation in post-pandemic era * Insights, experiences, lessons learned, initiatives taken with regard to telecommunication and ICTs policy and regulation * **Reaffirming the Ministerial Declaration** at the 4th Pacific ICT Ministerial Meeting and Discussion of the **framework for implementing the priorities**   ***Panelists:***   * Honorable Ministers * Heads of ICT Regulators |
| 12:15 – 14:00 | Lunch Break |
| 14:00 – 15:15 | **Session 3*: (Business Dialogue) ICT Regulatory Policy to Empower Digital Transformation***  *The constant emergence of new ICTs is transforming socioeconomic structures by promoting the digital transformation of entire societies. This change is fueling market competition, evolving governance, and accelerating industrial development. However, in order to sustain innovation and ICT industrial development through this digital transformation, security, crisis management, resilience, consumer protection, and reliable service provision are required. In addition, it is essential to transition from the traditional ICT regulatory framework to a conducive regulatory environment that leads to sustainable ICT industry development.*  *This session will invite 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 the ICT regulatory framework will bring.*  ***Moderator: (tbd)***  ***Topics:***   * How to vitalize the ICT business to drive new potential and capabilities * Challenges of existing ICT policy and regulatory framework * Suggest policy imperatives for successful digital transformation * Discussions on the ICT regulatory framework for empowering the Digital transformation * Q&A   ***Speakers:***   * Chief executives' level of ICT industry |
| 15:15 – 15:45 | Coffee/Tea Break |
| 15:45 – 17:00 | **Session 4: *Accelerating Digital Transformation in the Pacific***  *During the COVID-19 pandemic, many countries have seen an acceleration of digital transformation in all sectors, with most people using telecommunications and ICTs to stay socially connected, deliver needed services, provide virtual education, and more. To promote digital transformation, it is essential for the government to introduce innovative technologies to create digital services in the public sector, provide a public data platform that can lead to digital service innovation in the private sector, and provide design for digital with the participation of various stakeholders.*  *This session will discuss the current status of digital government, policy, and regulation in the Pacific and explore how digital transformation can be materialized through data openness and sharing, but not limited to. It will also present examples of building digital data platforms as a key element of digital government.*  ***Moderator: (tbd)***  ***Topics :***   * Updates of Digital transformation across all sectors and policy challenges * The current status of **Digital government** in the Pacific * Case of **public data sharing and utilization** for digital government * How to build a **Digital data platform** for Digital transformation   ***Speakers:***   * Member Administrations * International Organizations * Industry Representatives |
| **Day – 2** | **Thursday, 31 August 2023** |
| 9:00 - 10:15 | **Session 5*: Facilitate Digital Innovation and Entrepreneurship***    *There is an ongoing market drive to maximise new digital technologies and capabilities to fulfill the changing ICT market landscape and requirements. Governments are driving digital transformation across the country by encouraging businesses to innovate and promoting entrepreneurship.*  *In this session, we will explore ways to spread digital innovation across society with stakeholders who have driven new business processes and cultures through digital innovation, as well as reflect on current policies and regulations and identify implications.*  ***Moderator: (tbd)***  ***Topics :***   * Share the impact of the **business case for digital innovation** * *Contactless service, innovative services with AI technologies, etc****.*** * Discuss the impact of **innovative services such as digital payments, including e-wallets in the Pacific** * How policies and regulations can be improved to drive new digital innovations in the Pacific?   ***Speakers:***   * Member Administrations * International Organizations * Industry Representatives |
| 10:15 – 10:45 | Coffee/Tea Break |
| 10:45 - 12:00 | **Session 6:  *Developing Digital Infrastructure and Enabling Digital Islands***  *Developing digital infrastructure is key to economic growth in the Pacific, including fibre optics, international submarine and terrestrial cables, satellite, mobile and fixed networks. However, the digital divide exists, as many parts of Pacific countries remain unserved or underserved in terms of connectivity. To build an inclusive digital infrastructure, broadband networks are promoted, while in remote areas of the Pacific, mobile services provide a means to bridge the connectivity gap.*  *This session will discuss the challenges of building and developing digital infrastructure in Pacific countries and provide an update on initiatives to improve connectivity. It will also discuss the technical and policy/regulatory aspects of addressing challenges related to QoS (Quality of Service) in the context of the telecommunications environment in Pacific countries and provide a way forward.*  ***Moderator: (tbd)***  ***Topics:***   * Updates on **National Broadband connectivity** in the Pacific * Recent updates on **Submarine cable projects** in the Pacific * Information sharing about various **satellite technologies**; Medium Earth Orbit (MEO), Low Earth Orbit (LEO) Satellites Communications, Geosynchronous Earth Orbit (GEO), etc. * Mobile service provider strives and challenges to **ensure QoS** * 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:  *Digital Security and Trust***  *We have entered a hyper-connected society with sophisticated networks and connected devices. The more devices are connected, the more cyber-insecurity increases, and the more demand is placed on the stability of the network and the safety of personal information storage, which requires further reflection and consideration of the policy framework by regulatory authorities. In addition, not only networks, but also the stable provision of online platform services that have seen a surge in usage due to the Covid-19 pandemic are becoming important issues. Legislative discussions are also underway in the EU to minimise adverse effects by limiting the unethical use of AI system and services.*  *In this session, we will share the current status of losses such as disruption of critical ICT infrastructure and leakage of personal information due to cyber attacks, which have emerged as a global risk, and explore ways to ensure the stable provision of online platform services and establish a secure and reliable digital environment by overcoming the bias and securing the reliability of new automation technologies such as AI.*  ***Moderator: (tbd)***  ***Topics :***   * Updates of policy and regulations on Cybersecurity in the Pacific * Share the emerging trends in cyber threats and best practices in response * Policy efforts to secure **the stability of online platform services** * Share **legislative and regulatory trends on AI system or application** and draw implications for reliable network environment * How to use **emerging automated technologies ethically**   ***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:* ***Chairman of PRFP*** |
| **Day - 3** | **Friday, 1 September 2023** |
| 9:00 - 10:15 | **Session 9: *Strengthening Partnership for Disaster Management (1)***  **(Joint session with partner organizations)**  *The Pacific region has faced many disasters, including volcanic eruptions, cyclones, and earthquakes. Managing effectively to disasters in the Pacific is critical to the stable development of societies and the security of citizens.*  *This session will provide an update on policies and strategies to ensure reliable and resilient telecommunications/ICT infrastructure and services by leveraging ICT technologies in all phases of disaster management, from disaster prevention and preparedness, detection and warning systems, disaster response, and disaster recovery.*  ***Moderator: (tbd)***  ***Topics:***   * Updates of policies and strategies for sustainable, reliable and resilient telecommunication/ICT infrastructure and services * Challenges related to disaster preparedness, risk reduction and mitigation * The importance of corporate sector * Measures of strengthening local telecommunication capacities in vulnerable regions   ***Speakers:***   * Member Administrations |
| 10:15 – 10:45 | Coffee/Tea Break |
| 10:45 - 12:00 | **Session 10: *Strengthening Partnership for Disaster Management (2)***  **(Joint session with partner organizations)**  *This session provides a comprehensive understanding how Low Earth Orbit (LEO) constellation would facilitate disaster management including disaster communication and explores the development of collaborative partnerships between government and stakeholders including NGO.*  ***Moderator: (tbd)***  ***Topics:***   * New ICT technologies and their roles in disaster management   -LEO constellation in disaster response   * Q&A   ***Speakers:***   * Member Administrations |
| 12:00 – 14:00 | Lunch Break |
| 14:00 – 15:15 | **Session 11: *Digital Capacity Building and Skills development***  *In the age of digital transformation, digital divide, whether driven by age or gender, is not only an economic risk for the Pacific, but also a factor that is slowing down the digital transformation itself by increasing inequality. To thrive in the digital age, a key challenge is to increase digital literacy - the ability to not only understand and utilise ICT technologies, but also to critically accept and analyse them.*  *Recognising the challenges and gaps in promoting digital literacy in the Pacific region, including limited ICT infrastructure, accessibility and affordability, gender digital divide, and cultural diversity, this session will discuss policy challenges to improve digital literacy, including how to enhance the capacity to use digital technologies and recognise misinformation.*  ***Moderator: (tbd)***  ***Topics:***   * Share the current status of digital divide in the Pacific countries * Share the appropriate **Digital literacy education** at different levels of ICT development in each country * Policy and regulatory measures to support the ability to recognise **misinformation** * Initiatives to be taken to utilize **the power of youth** in the ICT sector   ***Speakers:***   * Member Administrations * Industry Representatives |
| 15:15 – 15:45 | Coffee/Tea Break |
| 15:45 – 17:00 | **Session 12: *Plenary and Closing***  *Chairman*: ***Mr. John Jack, Chairman of PRFP***  ***Topics:***   * Way Forward (Future Outlook and potential cooperative issues) * Date and Venue of PRFP-17 * Any other matters   Closing   * Remarks by Secretary General, APT * Remarks by Host * Remarks and closing by *Chairman of PRFP* |