

# **Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway Steering Group Overview**

AP-IS Second Working Group Meeting

ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division

ESCAP

# Overview of the AP-IS Steering Group

- According to the ESCAP resolution 71/10, the first meeting of the Asia-Pacific information superhighway (AP-IS) Working Group was held in September, 2015 in Incheon, Republic of Korea and agreed to organize AP-IS Steering Group
- The AP-IS Steering Group had developed 2 documents : the AP-IS Master Plan and Regional Cooperation Framework
  - The Asia-Pacific information superhighway (AP-IS) Master Plan was developed upon the studies and analyses carried out by ESCAP in the region, consultations with various stakeholders including the private sector representatives in April 2016 and expert meeting discussions at a technical meeting organized in March 2016.
  - Key strategic initiatives, targeted goals, related activities and timeline are outlined in the Master Plan, in line with the AP-IS four pillars, the RCF is designed to help achieve the overarching goals of the AP-IS Master Plan
- The Master Plan and Regional Cooperation Framework will be reviewed and refined at the second meeting of the AP-IS Working Group

# Terms of Reference

## ▪ Membership

- non-profit organizations, research institutes and experts from the member country governments (representing in their personal capacity) as multi-stakeholder representatives with policy and technical expertise.
- The Steering Committee should have geographical representation, at least one representative from 1) the Pacific, 2) East and North-East Asia, 3) South-East Asia, 4) South Asia and 5) Central Asia. Chairperson of the Steering Committee will be selected from the members: as the Steering Committee will report to the Working Group, the Chair will not be elected from the Working Group Bureau members.

## ▪ Steering Group Size

- In order for the group to be manageable, the Steering Committee members would not exceed 15, including the Bureau members.

## ▪ Duration

- If the Working Group agrees, the Steering Committee may continue its functions even after the presentation of the drafts to the Working Group as **a technical advisory body** to the Working Group.

## Members of Steering Group

- Mr. Yeong Ro, LEE was nominated as the chairperson of AP-IS SG and got support from members,

Darlington Akaiso, Enterprise Risk & Solutions – CRMER, IFC  
Abu Saeed Khan, Senior Policy Fellow, LIRNEasia  
FUSE Makoto, JTEC, Japan  
Jigme Tenzing, DIT Bhutan  
Chalermpol.c MICT, Thailand

- Invited Members : 12

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## Deliverables

- SG had drafted AP-IS Masterplan and Regional Cooperation Framework and then reviewed these with secretariat for months . Finally “AP-IS Masterplan-v10.docx” was as posted on the <https://unite.un.org/connections/forums/html/topic?id=b56348fe-60d4-41a5-8a5d-2559fa11b656&ps=25>
  - Comments from SG members were collected ;

Abu Saeed  
Khan, LIRNEasia

- Emphasized  
Fiber  
Transmission  
and Open  
Access –

“AP-IS is an ultra long-haul pan-Asian green field telecommunication transmission initiative. Its primary objective is to connect the Asian countries mostly using cross-border terrestrial optical fiber network. Submarine cable will be also part of AP-IS to connect the countries that are not physically integrated to the mainland of Asia. Open access remains central to the operational principle of AP-IS. The AP-IS Master Plan explores the opportunities of exploiting the existing terrestrial right-of-way. And Asian Highway has been identified as the primary right-of-way of AP-IS. Once implemented, AP-IS will generate various opportunities to accelerate digital opportunities. Convincing the political hierarchy of Asia to implement AP-IS should be the goal of this Master Plan.

State-owned telecoms carriers and the submarine cable industry have been exploiting Asia's impaired international connectivity. Therefore, the Master Plan should concentrate only on the transmission segment and avoid encompassing the peripherals. It will safeguard AP-IS from the risk of being over-trumped by the state-owned carriers and their benefactors “

As to the exclusion of "Open Access" in the Master Plan, unlike GMS-IS or SASEC, open access is the central pillar of AP-IS network. State-owned incumbents don't like open access and national policymakers often get misguided by them. Yet, kindly consider to incorporate the missing paragraph to safeguard the network neutrality of AP-IS.

Kisione, USP

- Pacific Islands should be included so that it brings more benefits to all the country -

For Pacific Islands, It is very crucial to coordinate projects. It is therefore very important for the donors and development partners to work together and share information.

There are few ICT projects in the Pacific, perhaps if we had better coordination it would benefit two or three countries instead of one country. Of course, each country has its own distinctiveness needs but if the International and Regional Organisation could coordinate these projects and convince Governments on what is the best for region and how it would bring more benefits to its people in the region instead of individual country. It is my hope that if we could work closely with these countries and advise them accordingly.

China,

- Step by step approach to encourage incumbent operator to invest basic infra -

1、 Admittedly, in the long term, the development of IXPs will be an effective way to improve interconnectivity, lower cost and promote the healthy development of the Internet industry. But within the duration of the master plan (2016-2018), the development of IXPs will face great challenges.

Firstly, it involves coordination of the Internet regulatory policies of each country, which cannot be achieved in a short term. Secondly, the development of IXPs at this stage will harm the interests of incumbent telecom operators at each country, which may arouse their strong opposition and reduce their willingness to invest.

Given the fact that telecom infrastructure in some underdeveloped region is weak and still rely on incumbent operators' continuous investment to develop in the short term, we propose to revise the main solution for traffic/network management to “promoting the reduction of access costs through multiple ways such as direct link of networks and development of IXPs, mainly based on the consultations among operators themselves and respectful of the regulatory policies of all the countries”.

2、 Previously, we proposed to add GMS in the governance structure. Now we would like to change it into LMC (Lancang-Mekong Cooperation), which is a new mechanism established in 2015 consisting of China plus the 5 GMS countries.

## ■ SG had drafted Regional Cooperation Framework

### < Objectives >

- Foster Partnership and collaboration
- Identify areas of synergies between stakeholders' ICT initiatives and plans,
- Finding ways to enhance capacity of LLDC, LDC and SIDS economies
- The in-depth studies and analysis

### < Areas of Cooperation >

- The implementation, coordination and monitoring of the AP-IS initiatives will be guided by an Advisory Group focusing on the four pillars

### < Financing Mechanism >

- Explore best financing mechanism for AP-IS as ICT infrastructures in the Asia

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[https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5\\_2526](https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5_2526)

