TOWARDS THE ASIA-PACIFIC INFORMATION SUPERHIGHWAY

First Session of the Committee on Information and Communications Technology & Science, Technology and Innovation | 5-7 October, Bangkok, Thailand
E/ESCAP/CICTSTI(1)/1
Agenda item 2(a)

ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division
ESCAP
1. State of ICT in AP E/ESCAP/CICTSTI (1)/1
State of ICT in Asia and the Pacific

- Despite significant progress digital divide remains;
- ESCAP region in 2015 accounted for over 52% of global fixed broadband subscriptions (compared to 38.1% in 2005)
- However, fixed broadband subscriptions lower than Latin America and the Caribbean, far lower than Europe and North America (weighted by population)
- East and N-E Asia (75%) account for majority of fixed broadband subscriptions, 2015
- High-income countries are more digitally inclusive
- Access to international connectivity or transit is largely dominated by submarine cable landings with many countries having:
  - poorly meshed backhaul domestic infrastructure that is poorly meshed
  - limited land-based, cross-border fibre interconnections
The Digital Divide in Asia and the Pacific (1)
The Digital Divide in Asia and the Pacific (2)

Fixed broadband subscriptions per 100 inhabitants by income group

Source: Produced by ESCAP, based on data sourced from ITU World Telecommunications / ICT Indicators Database (accessed July 2016)
The Digital Divide in Asia and the Pacific (3)

Average mobile broadband subscriptions in the ESCAP region overall and by country group (per 100 inhabitants)

Source: Produced by ESCAP, based on data sourced from ITU World Telecommunications / ICT Indicators Database (accessed July 2016)
2. AP-IS E/ESCAP/CICTSTI (1)/1
Responding to the digital divide: the Asia-Pacific information superhighway (AP-IS)

• A regional broadband Initiative supported by ESCAP, covering countries from Turkey to Kiribati

• Aims to facilitate movement of people, goods, money, information and knowledge for sustainable socioeconomic development

• …addresses the causes of digital divides, develops Internet ecosystem to support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), goals of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and stimulates digital economy
AP-IS as a Member State initiative

- **Resolution 69/10**: Commission recognized the need to in-depth analysis of the policy and regulatory barriers that could impede efforts to synchronize the deployment of ICT infrastructure across the region seamlessly

- **Resolution 71/10**: Commission established an open-ended Working Group on AP-IS to agree on principles and norms, and develop a Master Plan and Regional Cooperation Framework

- **First Meeting of Working Group**: Incheon, Korea, September 2015

- **Private Sector Consultative Meeting**: April 2016

- **Second Meeting of Working Group**: Guangzhou, China, August 2016

- **Establishment of Steering Committee**: for operationalization of Master Plan and Regional Cooperation Framework Document
3. Masterplan for AP-IS E/ESCAP/CICTSTI (1)/2
Masterplan for AP-IS: Vision

As a pillar of regional connectivity, the Asia-Pacific information superhighway initiative shall be a catalyst to develop seamless regional broadband networks which improve affordability, reliance, resilience and coverage and thereby address the causes of digital divides, develop the Internet ecosystem to support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and stimulate the digital economy in Asia and the Pacific.
Masterplan for AP-IS: Four Pillars

- Physical network design, development, management at regional level
- Intergovernmental negotiation
- Improving regulations based on open access

- Ensuring efficient and effective Internet traffic and network management at regional, sub-regional and national levels

- Resilient ICT networks
- Support to disaster management systems
- Ensuring last-mile disaster communication

- Bridging digital divides
- Promoting affordable access to underserved areas
- Policy and technical support to Governments
Masterplan for AP-IS: Medium-Term Objectives (2016-2018)

- **Addressing regional broadband connectivity**
  - Identifying missing links
  - Tapping cross-sectoral synergies for fibre-optic deployment
  - Improving regulatory frameworks and promoting open access to critical infrastructure

- **Addressing high transit costs**
  - Establishing sufficient IXPs and common principles on Internet traffic exchange
  - Improving Internet service quality at regional, cross-border, inter- and intra-regional levels

- **Addressing inclusive broadband access**
  - Improving regulatory frameworks and market practices
  - Accelerating reforms to foster competition on broadband market
Masterplan for AP-IS: Proposed Governance Structure

Asia-Pacific information superhighway steering committee

- North and Central Asia steering group
  - Implementation group
- South-East Asia steering group
  - Implementation group
- South and South-West Asia steering group
  - Implementation group
- Pacific Islands steering group
  - Implementation group
- East and North-East Asia steering group
  - Implementation group
Masterplan for AP-IS: Strategic Initiatives 2016-2018

1. Identification, coordination, deployment, expansion and integration of the regional backbone networks
2. Establishment of a sufficient number of Internet exchange points, and setting out common principles on Internet traffic exchange to decrease Internet traffic tromboning, transit costs and improve service quality
3. Undertake regional social and economic studies
4. Enhance ICT infrastructure resilience
5. Analysis of policy and regulations for leveraging existing infrastructure, technology and inclusive broadband initiatives
6. Capacity-building implementation
7. Research on AP-IS project funding mechanism based on PPPs.
4. Regional Cooperation Framework for AP-IS
E/ESCAP/CICTSTI (1)/3
Regional Cooperation Framework Document (RCF)

- Resolution 71/10: ESCAP countries called for creation of open-ended Working Group on AP-IS to **move forward with implementation**
- The RCF is designed to **help achieve the overarching goals of the AP-IS Master Plan**
- The RCF **highlights the need for regional cooperation** in 4 pillars: connectivity, traffic and network management, e-resilience and broadband for all
- **Second meeting of the Working Group** on the AP-IS, endorsed RCF and Masterplan and agreed to transmit both to the Committee on ICTSTI
Objectives of the RCF

a) Fostering partnership and collaboration between the member countries and various organizations to improve seamless regional connectivity
b) Identifying areas of synergy between stakeholders’ ICT initiatives and plans, as well as harmonization of policies and regulations;
c) Raising awareness on the importance of regional cooperation for regional connectivity and enhancing capacity
d) Encouraging participation of the private sector in developing the cross-border broadband infrastructure
e) Ensuring contribution of seamless ICT connectivity to the achievement of regional and international development goals
f) Capitalizing on intergovernmental platforms for setting norms and principles and building regional consensus
Norms and Principles guiding the RCF

a) Promote **open and non-discriminatory access to network infrastructure** at fair prices and reasonable service terms and conditions, and promote competition to enhance affordability and encourage innovation;

b) **Create synergies between national, subregional and regional ICT initiatives**;

c) Promote **cross-sectoral collaboration**, and adds value to existing mechanisms and partnerships in the area of ICT for development in general and ICT connectivity in particular.
Steering Committee

AP-IS Working Group agreed to transform itself into a steering committee to oversee the implementation of the Master Plan.

- The work of the steering committee will be guided by its terms of reference.

- The steering committee will oversee implementation, provide coordination and monitoring of activities, as well as provide overall guidance and decide on priorities and directions, while advising on partnerships, potential funding opportunities and emerging technologies.

- The steering committee will report on the progress and challenges related to ICT connectivity in respective network corridors to the CICTSTI through the secretariat.

- The CICTSTI’s reports, including recommendations, will be submitted to the Commission at its subsequent sessions, for consideration and adoption.
5. Issues for consideration by the Committee (under agenda item 2a)
Issues for Consideration by the Committee (1)

1. Endorse the outcomes of the 1st and 2nd meetings of the open-ended Working Group, as summarized in the present note.

2. Endorse the Master Plan and RCF Document for APIS.

3. Transform the open-ended Working Group into a Steering Committee that oversees implementation and provides advice and guidance.

4. Present the recommendations to the Commission at its seventy-third session for consideration and endorsement.

5. Request the secretariat to
   1. Accord high priority to implementation of AP-IS.
   2. Expand partnerships and collaboration with international and regional organizations to ensure synergies, while deepening research and analysis.
   3. Promote connectivity gains through AP-IS and in mutual support of SDGs and WSIS goals.
Thank you very much.