

AP* Retreat - 51st Meeting
23 February 2025
9:00 AM - 06:00 PM (GMT+8)
Jade Room, M World Hotel, Petaling Jaya, Malaysia
Co-Chairs: Alban Kwan and Yien Chyn Tan
Coordinated and Supported
by DotAsia Organisation (Edmon Chung, Phyo Thiri Lwin and
Timothy LI)
Special Thanks to the APRICOT team for the kind support.

In-person Attendees:

1. Jean F. Queralt
2. Neeti Biyani
3. Ching-Heng Ku
4. Jo-Fan Yu
5. Hiro Hotta
6. Satish Babu
7. Ole J. Jacobsen
8. Joyce Chen
9. Thomas Barrett
10. MAEMURA Akinori
11. Alban Kwan
12. Brook Schofield
13. Pavel Farhan
14. Dihan Morawaka
15. Hideaki Goto
16. Edmon Chung
17. Phyo Thiri Lwin
18. Boyoung Kim
19. Timothy LI
20. Rupesh B Shrestha
21. Jia Rong Low

22. Samiran Gupta
23. Noelle de Guzman
24. Yien Chyn Tan
25. Kurt Erik Lindqvist
26. Md Rafiqul Islam Sujon
27. Adli Wahid
28. Wen Yu Chen
29. Tim Wang
30. Athena Foo
31. Justine Chew
32. Maureen Hilyard
33. Oanh Nguyen
34. Kenny Huang
35. Hisham Ibrahim

Online Attendees:

1. Bikram Shrestha
2. Amrita Choudhury
3. Kelvin Truong
4. Jordan Carter
5. Toshiaki Tateishi
6. Ian Sheldon
7. Md Selim Reza
8. Shyama Sagarika
9. Phavanhna Douangbupha
10. Jenna Fung
11. Jasmine KO
12. KT Gan (PwC)
13. Bharadwaj Jaishankar (Chair, INTA Digital Asia)
14. Jean Jacques Sahel (Google)



AP* Retreat Meeting at APRICOT 2025 in Petaling Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia

I. Introduction

The meeting was opened by Alban Kwan and Yien Chyn Tan (Co-chairs of AP* Retreat). This AP* Retreat adopted a different format in which the agenda included interactive sessions to encourage participation and input sharing from all participants.

There were four main segments for the Retreat–

1. Capacity building programs in the Asia Pacific (APAC) region

- This segment started with a panel discussion on the topics of “The Need for Capacity Building from the Wider Internet Community”, followed by breakout group discussions to identify synergies across capacity building programs conducted by I*/AP* organizations.
- The aim for the breakout discussion was to identify common goals and ways to tap on each others’ resources/information effectively.

2. WSIS+20 Review process

- This segment started with an overview on what WSIS+20 is– background, what now, and what next, followed by breakout group

discussions to identify common interests among I*/AP* organizations in relation to WSIS+20.

- The aim for the breakout discussion was to identify how I*/AP* organizations can work better together in preparation of the WSIS+20 Review, specifically on the multistakeholder model of Internet governance (IG).

3. I*/AP* Members' Presentations

4. Future of AP* Retreat

- This was an initial discussion for aligning on the purpose and future organizing of AP* Retreat (e.g. future format, co-chair rotations, etc.).

II. Capacity Building Session

Panel Discussion

The panel discussion on “The Need for Capacity Building from the Wider Internet Community” featured three panelists; Jean Jacques from Google, KT Gan from PwC, Bharadwaj from International Trademark Association (INTA) Digital Asia.

At the panel, several key issues on IG were discussed, including the lack of connection and understanding between different communities within the wider Internet community, which limits broader engagement. It is important for the broader community to educate themselves on the Internet policy making process and to participate in it. Concerns were raised about the misuse of Internet infrastructure, particularly domain names being exploited for malicious purposes, highlighting the need for stronger governance. Additionally, the gap in public knowledge about Internet security especially in rural areas where mobile phones are the primary means of access was emphasized, calling for grassroots-level capacity building.

Breakout Discussion

The session continued with breakout sessions and group discussion where each group discussed aspects in relation to capacity building programs, including challenges of scaling and retaining participants, and the role of the wider Internet community in driving capacity building initiatives. Participants emphasized the importance of extending capacity building to wider sectors like banking, especially in developing countries, while recognizing that approaches must be tailored to better

apply relevant IG knowledge. Scaling efforts should be purposeful and coordinated to avoid duplication,

Through the breakout discussion, the participants also generally agreed that the current capacity building approach trains youths/newcomers to be volunteers in the ecosystem, which is at odds with main aspirations of most youths i.e. to find meaningful employment.

Next Step

The key next step from this segment was for I*/AP* members to identify synergies across all APAC capacity building programs. Stronger collaboration and information sharing among I*/AP* organizations were encouraged to maximize impact and build a shared pool of expertise. An easy first step could be to map out all existing programs based on categories such as youth, technical, training for governments, and others.

III. WSIS+20 Review Session

Overview

Joyce Chen from APNIC opened the meeting with an overview and introduction of the WSIS+20 Review process. Joyce shared the current status of the process, and provided clarification on common misunderstandings of the process, particularly on the reality that the WSIS process is not a bona fide multistakeholder process.

Breakout Discussion

During the breakout discussion, most agreed for the need of better support for cross-community conversations. Specifically on whether the term “technical community” needs to be included within the WSIS+20 language, the group broadly agreed that the focus should be on the issues first, followed by who should be involved. On this note, some participants affirmed that the technical community should be referenced or recognised in some ways. However, some raised the importance of defining what constitutes as part of the ‘technical community’ as it is not simply a homogenous term.

On top of that, the discussion by the different groups also touched on the need to work closely with coalitions such as regional governments and other stakeholders. One way to do so is to leverage on common policy interests across the region and have these articulated on paper for governments to consider when going into the

WSIS+20 negotiations. To effectively achieve this, the APAC community would need to be agile enough in coming up with a common position and clear narratives for our governments once the WSIS+20 draft is published.

Next Step

The key next step from this segment was to convene inter-sessional dialogues among the I*/AP* members before the next AP* Retreat in Sep 2025. The dialogues aim to provide regular updates on the process and explore potential collective input from the technical community, as well as effective avenues in which the community could engage with governments.

IV. I*/AP* Members' Presentation

Members presented on their initiatives and updates, and invited other organizations for further collaboration across the APAC region. Each speaker was given 5-8 minutes to present on their topics. The list of topics and corresponding speakers were as follows:

1. Eduroam Confederation to Empower the Pacific - Brook Schofield, IAMfederated
2. Building a National Secure Wi-Fi Infrastructure with International Roaming - Hideaki Goto, Tohoku University
3. SANOG Updates - Rupesh Shrestha, SANOG
4. Taiwan Internet Report - Wen-Yu Chen, TWNIC
5. Women IGF: Empowering Women in the Digital Sphere, A Catalyst for Inclusive Internet Governance - Sagarika Wickramasekera, APSIG
6. Advocating Internet Individual End User Interests - Justine Chew, APRALO
7. APNG Updates - Phyo Thiri Lwin, APNG
8. APNIC Updates - Joyce Chen, APNIC
9. APNIC Foundation Updates - Neeti Biyani, APNIC Foundation
10. Update of APTLD (remote) - Phavanhna Douangboupha, APTLD
11. Update of ISOC - Noelle Fancesca de Guzman, ISOC
12. IGFSAs - Joyce Chen, IGFSAs
13. APIX Update - Katsuyasu Toyama, APIX

V. Future of AP* Retreat

Updates from Secretariat

Edmon Chung from DotAsia Organisation, as the current head of the secretariat team, shared updates that the administrative, technical, and logistical transition has been successfully completed. Special thanks to Prof. Kanchana and her team intERLab, AIT for providing past Secretariat support. Secretariat support includes agenda development with co-chairs, coordination with all presenters, website and mailing list setup, and collaboration with APRICOT and APNIC on event logistics. Looking ahead, the Secretariat anticipates updating of the website and design (including new logo design of AP*), integrating systems, seeking continued sponsorship support, and enhancing meeting tools.

Group Discussion

Next, the discussion centered around seeking the participants' input on the need to reassess the purpose and format of upcoming AP* Retreats. A brief survey with two questions was introduced to gather input on whether a dedicated task force should be formed to explore this further. The goal is to take a more holistic, inclusive, and deliberative approach to future decision-making, rather than rushing into conclusions with limited participation. Concerns were raised about how the nature of the meetings has shifted away from technical coordination and the original purpose under APRICOT towards technical discussion. This shift prompted questions about how well the current format aligns with APRICOT's technical mission, and whether this evolution justifies the continued use of APRICOT facilities and support. However, others noted that technical organizations such as ISOC, ICANN and IETF, are increasingly engaging with broader issues such as privacy, and geopolitical concerns, which blurs the lines between purely technical and policy matters.

There was support for creating a meaningful and flexible platform that still roots itself in technical collaboration while acknowledging evolving discussions. The discussions also reinforced the idea of forming a special task force to review and potentially revise the AP* structure, particularly in response to concerns that the initiative may have drifted from its original spirit and objectives. It emphasized the need for consultative and inclusive processes, especially involving core groups and long-term members. There was general consensus on the need to revise the AP membership list*, as some original members may no longer be active.

Specific to the future Retreat format, participants generally agreed that the interactive segments were useful, and that for future AP* Retreat to retain this element, blending with existing presentations within the agenda.

Next Steps

The key next step would be to convene a task force to propose recommendations on each aspect of the future of AP* Retreat, including but not limited to updating the AP* Charter, reviewing Secretariat duties, co-chair appointment and term, updating membership, reviewing funding structure, etc.

VI. Conclusion

Final remarks focused on selecting co-chairs for the next AP retreat* (to be held alongside APNIC60 in Da Nang, Viet Nam).

The meeting concluded with the agreement to focus on forming the special task force first to explore foundational questions on the future of AP* Retreat, before finalizing the co-chair appointments. Current co-chairs Alban Kwan and Yien Chyn Tan committed to be part of the task force, and will work with the Secretariat to organize the forming of the task force.