

## **Geographic Regions Review Working Group**

### **Final Report - Issues Matrix**

March 2011 (Draft DAAv2-RHv2)

#### What is This Document?

The Three-Column Matrix/Table that begins on the next page compiles the various issues, questions, actions and options identified in the Geographic Regions Review Working Group's Interim Report (Section B and Section C), the Interim Report Public Comment Forum (PCF)(see - <http://www.icann.org/en/public-comment/#geo-regions-interim-report>) and the Working Group's Cartagena, Columbia Community Workshop.

#### Why Is It Being Made Available?

The matrix/table document is being made available to the community to provide insights into the current thinking of the Working Group members and to give the community an opportunity to react and provide input to the Working Group members who represent their particular community on the Working Group.

#### How was This Document Created?

This matrix/table format is borrowed from other successful ICANN working group efforts, and is being employed by the Working Group as a means to narrow discussions and achieve consensus on potential recommendations to the ICANN Board regarding the future uses and applications of the ICANN Geographic Regions Framework.

Where it seemed appropriate, the Staff and Working Group members copied and pasted selected text or quotes in the middle column of the table that further describe the topic set forth in the left-hand column. For more detailed discussion about a particular topic please refer to the underlying language in the Working Group's Interim Report (<http://www.icann.org/en/topics/geographic-regions/geo-regions-interim-report-12nov10-en.pdf>), the comments in the PCF or the Cartagena Workshop transcript (<http://cartagena39.icann.org/meetings/cartagena2010/transcript-geo-regions-09dec10-en.pdf>).

All Working Group members were given the opportunity to review the various issues/topics and indicate in the far right column their point of view regarding each issue. The current comments reflect whether Working Group members believe the topic should be addressed in the Final Report and, if so, what the WG should say or recommend to the Board on the topic.

#### How Will This Document Be Used?

**At this stage, the comments do not reflect a final consensus of the Working Group members but simply the latest thoughts on each issue/topic.** It is expected that Working Group members will make further changes to column three and may even add issues/topics to the document in the coming months.

A copy of this document has been placed on the Working Group's wiki web page (see – <https://community.icann.org/display/georegionwg/Final+Report+Draft+Issues+Matrix>). Interested community members are invited to provide comments about the various issues and topics on that page.

The matrix/table document will also be used as the basis for discussion during a Working Group workshop scheduled for Thursday March 17 at the ICANN Silicon Valley Public Meeting in San Francisco - <http://svsf40.icann.org/node/22217>. Interested community members are encouraged to attend that session and participate in the discussion. A transcript and recording of the meeting will be produced and posted on the Workshop web page.

For further information please contact Robert Hoggarth of the ICANN Staff at [robert.hoggarth@icann.org](mailto:robert.hoggarth@icann.org).

# # #

Issue/Question/Action/Option	Comments/Further Question	Suggested Approach/Recommendation to Board
General		
1. Make No Changes to the ICANN Geo Regions Framework	The Working Group has held out the option that it may make no recommendations to the Board.	Unlikely scenario but should be considered.
<b>From Interim Report Section B: Raising Fundamental Questions and Confirming General Principles</b>		
2. Has the Geographic Regions framework produced its desired effect?	When first allocating countries to Geographic Regions in 2000, the ICANN Board expressed the view that it would be far better to adopt an authoritative, independent allocation rather than to attempt to make its own determination as it was not qualified to do so. Staff identified the UN Statistics Division’s “Composition of macro geographical (continental) regions, geographical subregions and selected economic and other groupings” as a suitable list.	At the Board level, it has ensured a degree of geographic diversity, but it is not the “authoritative, independent allocation” (of countries to regions) that was intended. There are other shortcomings, particularly where the framework has been adopted for use by SOs and ACs.
3. Are the five regions still relevant, reasonable and defensible in the year 2010?		The present regions are not an “international norm” nor do they equate to any internationally recognized method of defining the regions of the world. They do not reflect the current make-up of the Internet community (and it is questionable that they have ever done so). The present allocation of territories is not defensible legally.
4. Are the five regions, in fact,	The Working Group has so far been unable to	We do not believe so.

consistent with the international norms of today?	identify any alternative, authoritative allocation of all countries of the world to regions.	
5. Does the primary use of Geographic Regions currently produce the desired broad international representation on the ICANN Board that reflects the makeup of the Internet constituency? If so, is it likely to continue to do so for the foreseeable future?	The Working group was unable to locate anything in the public record that explains how the Regions themselves were selected. Both the Green and White Papers suggested that representatives of APNIC, ARIN and RIPE should be on the ICANN Board. It is therefore possible that the primary operating areas of these three RIRs were selected as the first three Regions (i.e. Asia/Australia/Pacific, North America and Europe respectively) with Latin America/Caribbean and Africa being seen as the next likely RIRs to be established. It may be that the adoption of these Regions, based upon the RIRs, was meant to provide the “functional diversity” required by the Bylaws.	<p>With respect to the ICANN Board only:</p> <p>It DOES provide a form of geographic diversity but does NOT reflect the makeup of the Internet. This divergence is likely to increase with time.</p> <p>It does little for cultural diversity.</p>
6. Do the present ICANN Geographic Regions, and their use, enhance or detract from ICANN goal of reflecting the functional, geographic, and cultural diversity of the Internet at all levels of policy development and decision-making? What changes, if any, could be made to better reflect the cultural diversity of the Internet?		<p>The Geographic Regions are part of a top-down organizational structure. This works to a degree at the ICANN Board level, but is much less satisfactory when applied to SO-AC where a bottom-up approach would be much more appropriate. We believe that there is a strong case for the recognition of Special Interest Groups that would permit, for example, small island nations or Arab states to come together to promote policies and decisions of common interest without necessitating major changes to the “formal” regional structures.</p>
7. Would ICANN operations benefit from a re-allocation of Geographic Regions?		<p>The re-alignment of the regional structure to match the current RIR system should be seriously considered. Fundamentally, ICANN</p>

<p>If such a reallocation took place what frameworks should be considered – the current RIR system or some other modification to the existing system? How would such changes affect existing SO and/or AC operations?</p>		<p>is a technical organization and so aligning regions with the technical “infrastructure” seems logical and defensible. We have not yet worked through the possible consequences, but bear in mind that we also see a reduced role for “regions.”</p>
<p>8. Rather than a single organizational model, would different SO-AC communities benefit if they were permitted to employ their own geographic diversity methodologies tailored to the specific needs of their own communities – with some oversight or review by the Board to assure adherence to the bylaws principles?</p>		<p>We believe that there should be a single “regional structure” but that how each SO-AC meets the geographic and cultural diversity requirements should be up to them. They may, or may not, make use of the “regional structure.” Board oversight would of course be necessary.</p>
<p>9. How would any of these potential changes impact individual SO-AC operations? Would there be impacts to the ICANN budget or staffing resources?</p>		<p>To be determined</p>
<p>10. What impacts, if any could the recent Affirmation of Commitments have on ICANN’s Geographic Regions Framework?</p>		<p>To be determined</p>
<p>From Interim Report Section C: <b>Identifying Issues On Which To Develop Specific Recommendations</b></p>		

General Principles Regarding the Application of Geographic Diversity:		
Issue/Question/Action/Option	Comments/Further Question	Suggested Approach/Recommendation to Board
11. Matter #1- "ICANN should make reference to existing international norms for regional distribution of countries."	<p>The impact of affirming the community-by-community evolution that has occurred over the last decade would likely be minimal on all the communities who are currently subject to those individual standards. If this approach were affirmed, then those individual communities could assess the application of international norms on their own communities in the various unique ways that they are impacted by them.</p> <p>Alternatively, abandoning the community-by-community approach and returning to a consistent organizational process does not need to be groundbreaking. But adoption of such an approach would require re-evaluation of the USND classifications for their applicability to ICANN in 2010. If they were found wanting, then alternative categorization or classification models could be investigated and considered.</p>	<p>We don't currently follow "international norms".</p> <p>We should:</p> <p>Adopt a single regional structure (based on RIRs?). This would be used to ensure geographic diversity of the ICANN Board (i.e. the original purpose) and would be available for use by SO-AC if they wished to use it as part of their diversity procedures.</p> <p>Much more flexible, bottom-up Special Interest Groups should be recognized as a means of encouraging participation by a wide range of interests.</p>
12. Matters No. 2 & No. 3 - Representing Needs and Concerns of Regions	<p>The geographic regions framework should not be so inflexible as to force certain communities to prevail upon unwilling or under-qualified participants to satisfy the regional participation requirement. At the same time the Board could conclude that strict adherence to certain standards might be the best way to force participation and</p>	<p>See above</p>

	build-up regional competence or participation in certain areas.	
13. Matter No. 4 – Application and Evaluation of Geographic Diversity in a Wider Context	<p>Experience over the last decade has shown that individual communities are in the best position to craft unique operational solutions that honor the central goal of geographic diversity within ICANN operations. The best option may be to “formalize” an approach that puts decisions for how to achieve geographic diversity in the hands of those who understand their communities best. Such an approach would allow each SO and AC to determine the best way to achieve geographic diversity in their own organization given the unique forms and structures of their community and how it operates or interacts globally.</p>	Agreed. See 11 above.
14. Matters No. 5 and No. 18 – Striving For Diversity of Representation, Ease of Participation and Simplicity	<p>The fundamental task of this Working Group is a review of the <u>geographic</u> regions framework. In that context, the potential exists for a more fundamental consideration of cultural and language elements as related definitional elements of geographic diversity. The Working Group is prepared to consider these elements noting that such approach suggests a more fundamental consideration of ICANN’s geographic region framework than may have been originally contemplated. While separate frameworks for different communities or classification of region (e.g., geographic, culture or language) is a possibility, the Working Group cautions that separate frameworks might prove to be confusing and unmanageable from an organizational perspective.</p>	The WG should be taking a holistic approach to this issue and should present recommendations for an overall approach for adoption by the Board together with some recommendations for individual SO-AC to consider.

<p>15. Matters No. 6 &amp; 7 – The Evolving Needs of Regions and Future Users</p>	<p>The current framework cannot be expected to anticipate potential communities or participants who are not yet known or may not yet exist, but it must be flexible enough to accommodate them when they do form or arrive at ICANN’s doorstep. It is unrealistic to revise the current framework to reflect future developments in the Internet, but the framework should at the least be updated to reflect current realities. This means that the framework will always be behind the curve.</p> <p>From a practical standpoint, the current three-year review cycle seems to be too short and a five-year period would be more appropriate. Future adherence to a five-year review cycle should be apart of the Board’s ongoing/regular agenda that is tracked and monitored by the ICANN Staff.</p>	<p>A five year cycle would be ok, provided there is some interim procedure that could be followed by individual countries/territories to “self-select” an alternate region.</p>
<p>16. Matter No. 8 – Diversity Must Be A Goal “At All Levels”</p>	<p>Because the Bylaw separately depicts “functional”, “geographic” and “cultural” diversity, one could argue that each category could have its own operational principles, framework or system. The working group does not think honoring the spirit of Article 1 Section 2 requires such comprehensive action, but the Final Report could consider whether such an approach is worth further/future consideration.</p>	<p>We think the combination of regions and Special Interest Groups would deal adequately with this issue.</p>
<p>17. Matter No. 9 – Recommendations Must Reflect Sensitivity and Broad Consensus</p>	<p>At minimum, recommendations offered in the Working Group’s Final Report (if any) will be subject to an on-line community comment forum. The Working Group will investigate other participation tool (webinars and public community sessions at the Cartagena and San</p>	<p>The WG is already pursuing this course. This does not seem to be a matter for the Final report document draft itself.</p>



	<p>Francisco ICANN meetings) to ensure that there are several opportunities for further community review and comment before future Board action (if any) is taken on this matter.</p>	
<p>18. Matters No. 10 and 11 - Importance of Flexible Application/Implementation</p>	<p>The Board will need to consider whether the early divergence from the original framework concept (building on the UN model) should be corrected or whether modifications to the system as it exist today is a more appropriate approach. The organization would seem to have too many systems and mechanisms built on the existing framework to justify a complete re-orientation of the system. A more reasonable approach might be to make targeted adjustments to the framework as it now exists by potentially adding regions or making minor re-assignments to reflect more practical issues that individual community members have identified.</p>	<p><b>We have to recommend a comprehensive solution, not just minor re-assignments.</b></p>
<p>19. Matters No. 12, No. 13 and No. 14 – Maintaining Geographic Balance; Defining The Measures of An Evolving Internet</p>	<p>To the extent that “balance” is considered to be a relevant factor in evaluating the success of the geographic regions framework, it will be important to clearly identify the measures of that balance. Using a balance measure of current Internet users, for example, would suggest the need to modify the current framework to account for Internet population growth in certain geographic regions – particularly with respect to the Asia/Pacific Region.</p> <p>Conversely, a “user” measure of geographic region balance may not carry the same weight for contracted community members because the pools of eligible members in those</p>	<p>The Interim Report mentioned the need for any WG recommendations to “ utilize the most available and up-to-date information reflecting the distribution of Internet users around the World to ensure that any recommendations it makes are based on the most current data.”</p> <p><b>An alternative view is that the distribution of Internet users is no longer of great significance.</b></p>

	communities are geographically unbalanced.	
20. Matter No. 16 – Sovereignty (also mentioned in PCF)	ICANN should not become involved in the complex and differing relationships between territories and mother countries, but neither should it impose its own unilateral decision. Rather it should allocate territories to Regions in accordance with the wishes of internet community and Government of the territory, provided no objections are raised by the Government of the mother country.	Agreed.
21. Matter No. 17 – Application of Citizenship Criteria	The initial geographic diversity rules were developed on the basis of the citizenship of individual Board members. The domicile of individuals has now been added. In expanding the diversity criteria to other uses by SOs and ACs, the basis has moved from individuals to countries. Countries do not have citizenship or domicile and as a result, some of the rules no longer make legal sense. Any detailed review of the Bylaws concerning geographic regions and diversity should seek to remove these anomalies.	Agreed – but as we believe that individual SO-AC should develop their own diversity procedures, each SO-AC would deal with its own section of the Bylaws.
22. Matter No. 19 - Number of Regions	Two potential options for Board consideration are to maintain the current number of regions or to expand the number of regions. Reducing the number of regions does not seem to be a viable option for consideration. Increasing the number of regions, by any number would have substantial resource impact on the processes and practices of ICANN.	If the RIR model is adopted, there would be no change in the number of Regions. Hopefully the SIGs would resolve some of the other issues.
Allocation of Countries to Regions/Number of Regions:		

Issue/Question/Action/Option	Comments/Further Question	Suggested Approach/Recommendation to Board
23. Matter No. 15 – Considering the Africa Region	Maintaining the present composition of the African Region would likely impact few ICANN resources in any particular community. It is hoped and expected that African representation will continue to increase over time but that is an incremental resource increase rather than a strategic one.	If the RIR model is adopted, there would be no change in the number of Regions. Hopefully the SIGs would resolve some of the other issues.
24. Adding an Arab Region or sub-region	Note League of Arab States comments on Initial Report and comments at Cartagena Workshop favoring some level of recognition.	Covered by the introduction of SIGs
25. Treatment of CoE member countries allocated to A/P Region	Noted in community comments in Interim Report PCF	Covered by the introduction of SIGs
26. Suggested Creation of Small Island Developing States	Noted in Interim Report PCF	Covered by the introduction of SIGs
27. Matter No. 20 – Too Many Regions “Difficult” or “Unworkable”	The expansion of the number of geographic regions would also create resource impacts on ICANN communities and professional Staff. Additional regions would likely require additional staff administrative support commitments. New groups in At-Large or other ICANN structures will likely require additional staff or other administrative support (telephone conference bridges, web site support, potential travel funding) and could increase ICANN budget costs.	If the RIR model is adopted, there would be no change in the number of Regions. Hopefully the SIGs would resolve some of the other issues.
28. Matters No. 21 and No. 23 – Aligning the Regions To Other Frameworks	Aligning the ICANN system with the RIR system would result in re-alignment of various regions within ICANN. The burden of that change would be limited for ICANN internal Staff operations but would likely have a substantial impact on various	Agreed

	community members and the make-up of various structures within the ICANN system. If pursued, implementation of such a re-alignment could be managed over a transition period to minimize disruption to affected community members.	
29. Matter No. 22 The Challenge of Region Size	ICANN's structures and processes should lower barriers for participation and engagement by community members as much as practicable. The sizes of the current regions do create circumstances where individuals must travel long distances for face to face meetings. Smaller (more) regions could address this concern, but any potential benefits should be compared with the increased internal resource costs they could conceivably incur.	How individual SO-ACs organize themselves should be up to them. They could make use of sub-regions or SIGs to overcome these issues.
30. Matters No. 24 and No. 25 - Consideration of Cultural, Language and Economic Ties	Regional classifications based on culture, language, economic ties or particular geographic characteristics should be considered in any review of the geographic regions framework. Additions to the number of regions based on these non-geographic considerations would present many of the same potential impacts as an expansion of geographic regions noted above in the discussion of Matter No. 20 above. An alternative approach might be to acknowledge in some way the role of special interest groups (perhaps the concept of sub-regions as mentioned in the PCF) formed by countries who share a common interest, whether it be language, culture or unifying geographic factors. Perhaps these could exist quite separately from the formal Regional	Agreed – see above.

	Structure but SOs or ACs might have to establish criteria that such Group would have to meet before being given formal recognition. These non-geographic regions might require bottom-up self-selection procedures similar to the process the Board has recognized regarding petitions for new Constituencies in the GNSO	
Additional Issues:		
<b>Issue/Question/Action/Option</b>	<b>Comments/Further Question</b>	<b>Suggested Approach/Recommendation to Board</b>
31. If Special Interest Groups and/or sub-regions were to be introduced, what "status" should they be granted within ICANN? What relationship would they have, if any, with existing Regional Organizations?		