



**Asia-Pacific
Economic Cooperation**

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Agenda Item: VI vii

Sub-Committee on Standards and Conformance Convenor Report

Purpose: Information
Submitted by: SCSC Convenor



**Third Committee on Trade and Investment
Meeting
24-26 August 2021**

SUB-COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS AND CONFORMANCE

CONVENOR'S SUMMARY REPORT TO CTI 3 2021

1. During 2021, how has the forum's work contributed to CTI's objectives of:

The second Sub-Committee on Standards and Conformance (SCSC2) was held in Wellington, New Zealand on 20th – 21st August 2021. The meeting ran fully virtually with 19 Member Economies, SRB members and guests participating. The details of meeting are to be referred to the attached Minutes which captures all points discussed and endorsed at SCSC2 2021.

a. Support for the Multilateral Trading System

Japan reported on the WTO TBT Committee meetings and China reported on the WTO SPS Committee meetings.

Peru reported on the "Initiative on Promoting Transparency of Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) World Trade Organization (WTO) Notifications: Improving Completeness and Clearness of Information".

b. Regional Economic Integration, including taking forward the Putrajaya Vision 2040 and contributing to the development of the Implementation Plan in 2021

Thailand presented on "Capacity Building Workshop on Testing Methods for Internet of Things (IoT) Products. This project aims to develop capability of testing skills by undertaking the round robin test based on globally-relevant standards and recognize the testing methods for IoT products.

Japan reported on "Capacity Building on the Development of Climate Actions for Sustainable Growth by use of ISO 14080". The aim is to share challenge and potential needs of harmonisation for reporting climate action (ISO 14080) and sustainable finances (ISO 14030; ISO14100 and ISO 14097) to improve communication between financiers and ISO standards.

c. Trade Facilitation and Connectivity

Japan reported on the results of 3rd survey of the 9th Voluntary Action Plan (VAP) that reviews the alignment between national and international standards. The degree of alignment with the standards in 13 economies on 52 international standards relating to "COVID-19 and future pandemics" was reported. The 10th VAP is in October 2021.

In addition, several trade facilitation projects reported at SCSC include:

- Australia reported on the project "Trade Facilitation through the Development of an APEC Food Safety Risk Communication Framework".
- Australia reported on project "APEC Workshop to identify future work on non-tariff measures (NTMs) affecting grain trade.

d. Inclusion

China reported on a project to develop standards and conformity assessment for an ageing-inclusive digital economy. A project that aims to bridge the digital divide for the elderly through standards and conformity assessment.

e. Any other issues

N/A

2. How has the forum helped to fulfil the mandate of the [2021 Ministers Responsible for Trade Statement](#) & [2020 Declaration on Facilitating the Movement of Essential Goods by the MRT](#) (see Appendix B)

The 9th VAP focuses on standards of measures against COVID-19 and future pandemics. Standards on medical equipment such as ventilators, Biological evaluation and PPE were the most highly selected. This survey aims to determine the alignment priority that contributes to the mitigation of COVID-19 impacts in the regions.

In addition, United States presented on their projects on personal protective equipment, which aims to create appropriate standards, policy and regulations to support addressing issues shortages of PPE and nasopharyngeal swabs as well as strengthening technical skills.

3. Main outcomes from most recent plenary meeting

The SCSC plenary discussed the many projects that member economies are undertaking. The plenary also discussed the Terms of Reference for SCSC and for the two subsidiary bodies: Joint Regulatory Advisory Committee (JRAC) and the Food Safety Cooperation Forum. Both the SCSC and JRAC ToRs have been agreed to by the SCSC and JRAC respectively. The FSCF has not reached consensus on their ToR and SCSC Chair urged FSCF to return to discussions to achieve consensus.

4. Private sector engagement in 2021

Chinese Taipei presented on APEC Public-Private Dialogue on Product Safety in digital trade, which will identify product safety concerns and regulatory challenges in the e-commerce space to ensure product safety and avoid unnecessary technical barriers to trade. This project involves private sector stakeholders.

5. Cross-fora collaboration in 2021

- New Zealand's project "Low-carbon Hydrogen International Standard" (SCSC / EWG)
- The "14th Good Regulatory Practice Conference" (SCSC / EC)
- The "13th SCSC Conference: Standardisation in Circular Economy for a More Sustainable Trade" (SCSC / EC / CTI / PPSTI / CD)
- Voluntary Sustainability Standards to Trade in the APEC Region (SCSC / CTI / MAG)

6. Was quorum¹ reached at the most recent plenary meeting?

The quorum was reached with 19 economies participating.

¹ Quorum requires 14 economies or more. Quorum is measured by member economies (not including private sector) participating. Remote participation is counted.

7. Taking into consideration the forum's Assessment Report, what is your Forum doing to maintain/increase its relevance to APEC member economies and increase participation from its members?

SCSC is involved in trade facilitation initiatives, cybersecurity, Good Regulatory Practices, alignment with international standards, technical infrastructure development, food and product safety, and gender responsiveness in standardization. SCSC not only fosters discussions on project concept notes between the APEC regional members, but also with the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC). The continuing high quality of and the sheer number of projects make this committee a particular highlight in the APEC family.

8. Decision points needed from CTI

- SCSC awaits CTI decision on draft FSCF Terms of Reference. FSCF ToR is pending endorsement and is currently in negotiation regarding its governance structure.
- Malaysia invites CTI's participation for their project "APEC Stakeholders' Engagement on the Role and Impact of Voluntary Sustainability Standards (VSS) to Trade in the APEC region". The invitation will be shared in due course.