

## SUB-COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS AND CONFORMANCE (SCSC)

*including SCSC Joint Regulatory Advisory Committee on Electrical and Electronic Equipment Meeting (JRAC) and SCSC Food Safety Cooperation Forum (FSCF)*

*Report for the*

### CTI ANNUAL REPORT TO MINISTERS

#### For AMM's information

##### (a) Key outcomes and achievements in 2023

- SCSC adopted the ***Blueprint for Advancing Good Regulatory Practices (GRP) in the APEC Region***. The Blueprint is a concise, non-prescriptive mapping of key GRPs and related practices that can guide economy efforts at every stage in the regulatory life cycle. It can be incorporated into regulatory frameworks to increase transparency, improve regulatory quality, and produce better regulatory outcomes.
- SCSC adopted its revised Terms of Reference, which includes the ***Terms of Reference for the Food Safety Cooperation Forum (FSCF)***, establishing the FSCF as a formal subsidiary body of the SCSC.
- During 2023, the SCSC conducted several projects that focus on specific areas / issues. Many workshops were held in the margins of SOM1, SOM2 and SOM3 meeting clusters, namely:
  - SOM 1: Workshop on Strengthening Electronic Labeling (E-labeling) Practices for Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) Products
  - SOM 1: Workshop on Standardization in Emerging Technologies related to Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Measurement
  - SOM 1: Workshop on Strengthening Understanding of the WTO TBT Agreement
  - SOM 2: Workshop on Trade Facilitative Approach to Risk Communication: MRL Harmonization in the APEC Region
  - SOM 2: Workshop on Whole Genome Sequencing
  - SOM 2: FSCF Public Private Innovation Dialogue
  - SOM 3: Workshop on Standardization in Emerging Technologies related to Greenhouse Gas Emissions Measurement, Exploring Practical Applications
  - SOM 3: Workshop on the Role of Battery Energy Storage Systems Standards in Promoting Safety, Energy Resilience & Sustainability
  - SOM 3: 16<sup>th</sup> Good Regulatory Practices Conference
  - SOM 3: Workshop on Cybersecurity Approaches for Critical Infrastructure Sectors and Spotlight on Supply Chain Management
  - SOM 3: Workshop on the Implementing Circular Economy standards in the APEC region
  - SOM 3: Workshop on Supporting AI at Scale in the APEC region through International Standards

- SOM 3: Workshop on Understanding the Trade Issues related to Halal Certification
  - SOM 3: Workshop on Reducing Lead in Drinking Water through Standardization
  - SOM 3: Workshop on Assisting Policy Makers with Mitigation and Prevention of Plastics Pollution – Standards as a Resource for the Policy Framework
  - Workshop on Improving Transparency and Knowledge of Food Safety Requirements for trade food in APEC region (held virtually during the SOM 3 period)
  - Several other workshops were also held outside of SOM meeting clusters throughout the year, focusing on issues such as Next Generation Sequencing (NGS)-based microbial testing for probiotics products, water quality assurance, detection of SARS-CoV-2 by nucleic acid amplification methods, digital credentialing, etc.
- Japan conducted the 3<sup>rd</sup> survey of the 11<sup>th</sup> Voluntary Action Plan (VAP) and the 4<sup>th</sup> survey of the 8<sup>th</sup> VAP Alignment Work. The theme for the 11<sup>th</sup> VAP is “Climate Action”.
  - The *SCSC Joint Regulatory Advisory Committee (JRAC) on Electrical and Electronic Equipment Meeting* shared updates on Part I (Information Interchange) under the APEC EE MRA, and shared information and best practices on various issues of common interest, such as the controls of electronics and electrical products sold via online platforms and safety of battery-operated products, and EV supply equipment

(b) Work undertaken by fora in pursuit of the [Putrajaya Vision 2040](#), including through the [Aotearoa Plan of Action \(APA\)](#)

*Kindly refer to the “Collective Actions” (in the APA) for the relevant fora  
Please also outline any individual actions that your fora has showcased during the year.*

### **I. Trade and Investment**

- Under the first economic driver “**Trade and Investment**”, the Putrajaya Vision “reaffirm[s] our support for agreed upon rules of the WTO” and calls upon members to “work together to deliver, a free, open, fair, non-discriminatory, transparent and predictable trade and investment environment.” The SCSC contributes to APEC’s efforts on this front by implementing projects and initiatives that contribute to the following APA Collective Actions, among others:
  - *Progress liberalisation of trade in goods by reducing unnecessary barriers, strengthening trade facilitation, and fostering regulatory reform;*
  - *Increase trade predictability and openness by improving economies’ transparency through trade measures and policies.*
  - *Advance capacity building programmes to support the implementation of and adherence to WTO rules, including transparency and notification obligations.*
  - *Promote trade and investment facilitation for all, including by ... the adoption and improvement of effective standards and conformance systems, encompassing*

*standardisation, accreditation, metrology, conformity assessment and market surveillance;*

- These are done through discussions, workshops and initiatives on Good Regulatory Practices, including the issuance of the Blueprint on Good Regulatory Practices in the APEC Region, workshops on strengthening the understanding of WTO TBT Agreement, sharing updates of the WTO TBT/SPS Committees regularly at SCSC meetings, as well as other workshops on standards and conformance systems for certain specific areas, for example, Maximum Residue Limits (MRL) for pesticides. In some instances, work has addressed issues across the APEC region, such as lead in drinking water and food safety requirements. The SCSC has also taken a leading role to study standards and technical regulations in emerging areas, such as halal certification, artificial intelligence, and product circularity data exchange.

## **II. Innovation and Digitalisation**

- For the second economic driver “**Innovation and Digitalisation**”, SCSC works to create an enabling environment, accelerate digital transformation and strengthen digital infrastructures, contributing to, among others, the following APA Collective actions:
  - *Adopt new and emerging technologies to stimulate growth, connectivity and digital transformation;*
  - *Address challenges and barriers to achieving an enabling, inclusive, open, fair and non-discriminatory digital and innovation environment;*
  - *Cooperate to accelerate digital transformation;*
  - *Promote e-commerce / digital trade, including by supporting the development and implementation of international and regional norms and standards for the digital economy, compatibility of standards, regulations and systems, and supporting discussion and sharing best practice on rules and regulations in e-commerce*
  - */ digital trade;*
- These are done through discussions, workshops and initiatives on issues such as adoption of AI at scale through international standards, digital credentialing of certified products, electronic labelling, and control of electronic products sold via e-commerce.

## **III. Strong, Balanced, Secure, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth**

- SCSC contributes to the third economic driver “**Strong, Balanced, Secure, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth**”, through, among others, the following APA Collective actions:
  - *Ensure food safety and improved nutrition for all;*
  - *encourage and exchange best practice policies, and promote capacity building programmes, that address all environmental challenges - including climate change - and support sustainable growth, such as through: ... trade, ... promoting sustainable growth across sectors and the development of cost effective low and zero emissions technologies.*

<p>- <i>Advance APEC's circular economy work;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• These are done through the works of the FSCF, workshops on circular economy standards, standardization of greenhouse gas emissions measurement technologies, and mitigation and prevention of plastic pollutions through standards, etc.</li></ul>
<p>(c) Work Undertaken by the fora in response to Ministerial, SOM and CTI direction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• SCSC works as listed above support various decisions taken by APEC leaders, such as those in the 2022 Leaders' Declaration, the 2022 APEC Joint Ministerial Statement, the Bangkok Goals on Bio-Circular-Green Economy.</li></ul>
<p>(d) Key Issues Under Discussion by the Fora (if any); &amp;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In addition to ongoing discussions on the abovementioned issues relating to standards and conformance in the APEC region, the SCSC is embarking on discussions on new issues such as women and standardization, participation of SMEs in international standards development, and voluntary sustainability standards.</li></ul>
<p>(e) Items to submit to Senior Officials or Ministers (if applicable)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• N/A</li></ul>