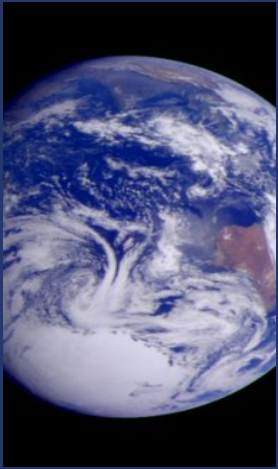# Geographic Regions Review Update
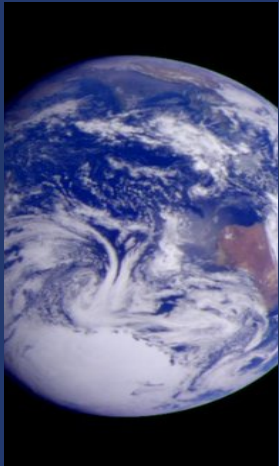
GNSO Council

10 March 2012

ICANN Geographic Regions

- Geographic diversity is a core component of ICANN

- Africa, North America, Latin America/Caribbean, Asia/Australia/Pacific and Europe.

Geographic Regions Review – Why?

- Review anticipated in Bylaws
- ccNSO Council requested review ('07)
- Board agreed and approved community-wide working group concept ('08) and charter ('09)
- WG has so far produced two reports
- Third (and final) report is drafted – with recommendations for potential changes.

GNSO Principles – Relevance of Regions

- Consider varying needs/concerns of different regions.

- Provide opportunity to express needs and concerns.

- Considered wider context of the geo region requirements imposed on all ICANN bodies.

- Measure requirements by citizenship.

- Balance three goals:
  - diversity of representation;
  - ease of participation; and
  - simplicity.

- Enfranchise existing and future users.

- Avoid making geo-political decisions

GNSO Principles – Change of Regions

- If any changes, improve on specifically identified imbalances.

- Simplicity (one regional set) should be balanced with the evolving needs of SOs and ACs

- Nothing sacred ICANN regions remaining at five.

- Establish mechanisms for resolving uncertainty in the relationship of countries or territories to regions

- Review regions with appropriate regularity; put in place means to understand the evolving needs and concerns of different regions.

Draft Final Report - Findings

- Principle of geographic diversity is valuable and should be preserved.

- Functional, cultural and language diversity and commonality also important.

- Changing the number of Regions would cause significant financial and organizational issues.

- No single independent, authoritative list of countries and regions that ICANN can "adopt".

Draft Final Report – Dual Approach

Top-Down:

ICANN should adopt and maintain its own formal, traditional, top-down Regional structure for use with ICANN Board appointments and by those SOs/ACs that wish to use it.

Bottom-Up:

Recognize and support less formal, dynamic, bottom-up "special interest groups" that build upon common interests (e.g. Small Island States, Arab States, Caribbean Islands)

Draft Final Report - Recs

- Use structure of the Regional Internet Registries (RIRs) as a starting point.
- Allow countries required to move, one-off opportunity to remain in old Region (with Government agreement)
- Consider more general right to self-select with Government agreement.
- SOs/ACs may use top-down structure if they wish, or may adopt alternative method for ensuring geographic/cultural diversity, subject to Board oversight.

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Draft Final Report – Community Comments

- Concerns about RIR model – not perfect
- ICANN should avoid political disputes
- SO-AC flexibility is good
- Special Interest Groups offer opportunity and challenges – will they have substance?
- Give countries/territories the option to opt-in to new system rather than forcing them to opt-out of a change

Next Steps

- Comments Summary Report and Tracking List published
- WG will review comments and publish Final Report
- Community (SO-AC) formal review opportunity
- Presentation To Board – mid 2012
- Board Review and Action – late 2012

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Additional Information

- Working Group Wiki Page – https://community.icann.org/display/georegionwg/Home+Page+of+Geographic+Regions+Review+Working+Group

- Geographic Regions Review Public Comment Forum - http://http://www.icann.org/en/public-comment/geo-regions-draft-final-report-30sep11-en.htm

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One World

One Internet

Q and A