

Sub-Committee on Standards and Conformance

including SCSC Joint Regulatory Advisory Committee on Electrical and Electronic Equipment Meeting (JRAC), SCSC Food Safety Cooperation Forum (FSCF), and SCSC Regulatory Harmonization Steering Committee (RHSC) on Medical Products

Report for the

CTI ANNUAL REPORT TO MINISTERS

For AMM’s information

(a) Key outcomes and achievements in 2024

- SCSC adopted its revised Terms of Reference, which includes the ***Terms of Reference for the Regulatory Harmonization Steering Committee (RHSC) on Medical Products***, establishing the RHSC as a formal subsidiary body of the SCSC. The RHSC also held its first meeting as an SCSC subsidiary body in July 2024.
- The 15th SCSC Conference on Standards and Conformance: Leveraging Voluntary Sustainability Standards (VSS) to strengthen APEC member economies’ trade partnerships and economic cooperation was held in August 2024 to address how VSS could be implemented and could contribute to sustainable trade, as well as the interaction, if any, of VSS with international trade obligations, including free trade agreements and WTO Agreements. A final report from this project will be produced later this year.
- During 2024, the SCSC conducted several projects that focus on specific areas / issues. Many workshops were held, including in the margins of SOM meeting clusters, namely:
 - Workshop on Assisting Policy Makers with Mitigation and Prevention of Plastics Pollution – Standards as a Resource for the Policy Framework
 - Virtual Workshop on Standards and Conformity Assessment for Electric Road Passenger Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE) – Sharing Experience and Best Practices
 - Virtual Seminar on Testing Methods for Internet of Things (IoT) Products
 - Workshop on sharing best practices on strengthening internal coordination to facilitate the effective implementation of the TBT agreement among APEC economies
 - Workshop on Development of Guidance on Strengthening Good Governance on the Implementation of Standardization and Conformity Assessment for APEC Economies
 - Workshop on Improving Food Safety Outcomes through Increased Cooperation between Food Safety Regulators and APAC Member Bodies Accrediting Certification, Inspection and Testing Services
 - FSCF Workshop on Electronic Certification for Animal Products
 - Workshop on APEC Experiences on Good Regulatory Practices: Improving Public Consultation
 - Workshop on Emerging Technologies for Digitization / Digitalization and International Regulatory Cooperation

- The 3rd Survey of the 12th Voluntary Action Plan (VAP) and the 4th survey of the 9th VAP Alignment Work were conducted.

(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, such as the “*Workshop on Development of Guidance on Strengthening Good Governance on the Implementation of Standardization and Conformity Assessment for APEC Economies*”, “*Workshop on APEC Experiences on Good Regulatory Practices: Improving Public Consultation*”. The SCSC also shared updates on WTO TBT/SPS Committees regularly at SCSC meetings, as well as other workshops on standards and conformance systems for certain specific areas, for example, EVSE, VSS and IoT products.

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;*
 - *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;*
- On this front, a panel discussion was conducted during SCSC 2, 2024, where members shared their experiences on digital transformation, focusing on how economies have

used digital tools to enhance access to quality infrastructure and public services. The discussion covered a range of topics, including the use of websites and digital platforms to promote quality infrastructure services and the role of AI in standards and conformance. The SCSC has also conducted workshops to explore the role of digital transformation in standards and technical regulations, such as on Electronic Certification of Animal Products and on Emerging Technologies for Digitization / Digitalization and International Regulatory Cooperation.

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 ... 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.*
 - *Advance APEC’s circular economy work;*
- These are done through the work of the FSCF, 15th SCSC Conference on VSS, Workshop on Assisting Policy Makers with Mitigation and Prevention of Plastics Pollution – Standards as a Resource for the Policy Framework, etc.

(c) Work Undertaken by the fora in response to Ministerial, SOM and CTI direction

- SCSC works as listed above support various decisions taken by APEC leaders, such as those in the Leaders’ Declarations, the Bangkok Goals on Bio-Circular-Green Economy, the San Francisco Principles on Integrating Inclusivity and Sustainability into Trade and Investment Policy.
- As stated by 2024 APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade, trade can play a positive role in achieving global food security and food safety. In this sense, SCSC is committed to promoting food safety through the Food Safety Cooperation Forum (FSCF).

(d) Key Issues Under Discussion by the Fora (if any)

- SCSC continues to discuss emerging issues in standards and conformance, such as women in standards, sustainability standards, role of AI in standards and conformance, etc.
- The topic of artificial intelligence and standards was superficially discussed during this year, but these topics could be part of future discussions within the forum, to the extent that standards can mitigate the risks associated with AI and take advantage of its uses by consumers

(e) Private sector / Stakeholder engagement and cross-fora collaboration in 20204 (if any)

- SCSC Meetings include representatives from international standards organizations (ISO, IEC, ASTM), as well as groups of bodies involved in standards development and conformity assessment.

- FSCF Meeting invited representatives from international organizations, private sector and academia to share updates at the meeting, including Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF), Joint Institute for Food Safety and Nutrition (JIFSAN), Asia-Pacific Food Regulatory Authority Summit (AFPRAS), University of Lima, Peru's National Society of Industries, etc.
- RHSC Meeting was well attended by regulators, industry representatives and academia.
- In addition, various members of the private sector were invited as expert speakers at SCSC Workshops throughout the year.
- SCSC projects are relevant to various other APEC Fora, and relevant fora were invited to participate in relevant workshops. Some of these groups include TPTWG, AD, EWG, GOS, OFWG, CD, PPFS, HWG, EGILAT, etc. Speakers from other fora were also invited to share their experiences as expert speakers.
- It must be highlighted the participation of SCSC Peruvian delegate during the 25th Experts Group on Illegal Logging and Associated Trade Meeting on 26 February 2024, under Cross-fora Information Exchange (Session IX).

(f) Items to submit to Senior Officials or Ministers (if applicable)

- N/A