Name and Affiliation (ALAC member/RALO)

Pari Esfandiari - ALAC/ EURALO

Proposed Session Title

What Role Internet Governance Institutions Play in Achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Brief Description

The clock is ticking down and industries and governments are stepping up their efforts to meet the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Internet and communication technology (ICT), as a fundamental element of development and a key component of our critical systems, has a decisive role. The negative impacts of the ICT industry including data mining's and data centers' carbon footprint and water usage are well understood and publicized. Missing from the conversation is the positive role of ICT technology in general and the DNS sector in particular as the enabler of development.

In recent years, Internet governance institutions have become more active in exploring their role in achieving the SDGs. ITU, in collaboration with more than 30 UN agencies, is continuously working towards strengthening the alignment of the WSIS Process implementation activities with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, thereby highlighting the direct linkages between WSIS Action Lines and SDGs. ISOC published a paper "The Internet and Sustainable Development" as early as 2015 and in a recent meeting, ISOCUK discussed the need to explore the concept further.

While ICANN's role is primarily technical, its maintenance of a stable and secure Internet is fundamental for the broader objectives of WSIS+20 and the SDGs. Recognizing the complex interplay of ICANN, WSIS+20, and SDGs, interim CEO, Sally Costerton has set the "Environmental Sustainability Strategy- Initiate the creation of ICANN's Environmental Sustainability Strategy" as its number eight objective for 2024, stating that in "FY24, ICANN will initiate the development of a comprehensive approach for implementing an environmental sustainability strategy for ICANN".

So far, ALAC is lagging. Understanding the positive and negative impact of the ICT industry in general and the DNS sector in particular, as well as exploring ICANN's potential role in achieving SDGs is long overdue.

Rationale/Desired Outcomes

To initiate an ICANN community wide awareness raising, mapping, and dialogue about the potential role of internet in achieving SDGs, with a focus on DNS sector.

To explore how and to what extent Agenda 2030 and SDGs are being integrated by internet governance institutions in their strategies and how these institutions could be positioned as the key drivers of sustainability.

Which, if any, other community groups do you plan to involve in your session? Please explain your plans for working cooperatively with the group(s), including your contacts, skill sets sought, etc.

I plan to involve other internet governance institutions who are already active in sustainability front including ISOC and WSIS, as well as ICANN org and ICANN community.

As a Euralo/ALAC member and the president of Global TechnoPolitics Forum, I have been working closely with many internet governance institutions and could reach out to my connections in these institutions. As for my skill set; I have spent the last 25 years at the forefront of internet communication technology, both as an entrepreneur and as an advisor to international organizations, this combined with my educational background of a Ph.D. in business environmental sustainability offers me the ability to lead this session.

Session Leaders/Facilitators and Panelists/Presenters

Here is the agenda for the session:
Introduction and Welcome – 10 minutes
Subject introduction: Pari Esfandiari (ALAC/EURALO) - 10 Minutes
Speaker (ISOC) - ICTs and SDGs - 10 minutes
Speaker (WSIS) - Linking WSIS Action Lines with SDGs - 10 minutes
Speaker (ICANN) – Governance - 10 minutes
Speaker (Registrar) – DNS and SDGs - 10 minutes
Open floor for Q/A - 30 Minutes
Closing remarks – 5 minutes
Closing session – 5 minutes
Duration: 90 mins

Under which At-Large FY25 Strategic Priority Activities work track area does this topic fall? See list of tracks: https://community.icann.org/display/atlarge/At-Large+FY25+Strategic+Priority+Activities

As mentioned in this proposal, the ICANN interim CEO, Sally Costerton's number eight objective for 2024 is "Environmental Sustainability Strategy - Initiate the creation of ICANN's Environmental Sustainability Strategy" in FY24.

As for ALAC, while the word sustainability is absent from the FY25 Stategic Priority, however, sustainability is an overarching concept with implications for all

ALAC strategic priority areas and initatives from policy, to governance and operations, to community organization.

Additional information or comments

Documents and references:

1. Greening our own house: addressing the environmental footprint of digital technologies - ITU Telecom World https://digital-world.itu.int/greening-our-own-house-addressing-the-environmental-footprint-of-digital-technologies
2. Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development | Department of Economic and Social Affairs (un.org) https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda
3. THE 17 GOALS https://sdgs.un.org/goals
4. WSIS -SDG Matrix - Linking WSIS Action Lines with Sustainable Development Goals https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/sdg/Content/Documents/wsis-sdg_matrix_document.pdf
5. World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Forum https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&type=30022&nr=3236&menu=3170
6. ICANN Goals for Fiscal Year 2024 https://www.icann.org/en/blogs/details/icann-interim-president-and-ceo-shares-goals-for-fiscal-year-2024-27-09-2023-en
7. The Internet and Sustainable Development - ISOC https://www.internetsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/ISOC-ICTs-SDGs-201506-Final.pdf
8. American Leadership on he SDGs https://unfoundation.org/what-we-do/issues/sustainable-development-goals/u-s-leadership-on-the-sdgs/?gclid=CjwKCAiAmsurBhBvEiwA6e-WPB2GJ9J70auVgCfGih6dOoQU_qRpMKy4VD4OGNMK5q6eKw1ppq5uphoCYeEQAvD_BwE
9. Measuring Eco-Friendliness of our Internet Infrastructure https://www.ajitora.asia/eco-internet-index-2023/ 10. The Environmental Footprint of Data Centers in the US https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/abfba1