

Examining ICANN's Recent Geographic Regions Review Efforts



Rob Hoggarth | LACRALO Webinar | 18 February 2016

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History

Why Regions? – Diversity

- Originally a tool to achieve geographic diversity on the ICANN Board (2000)
- Subsequently applied in various ways when defining the organizational structures for the ALAC, GNSO, and ccNSO



ICANN Bylaws – Article VI, Section 5 International Representation

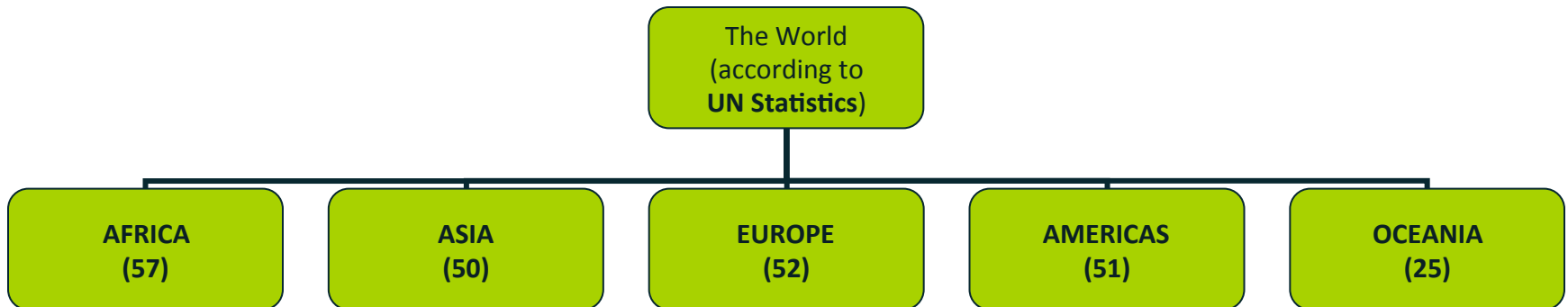
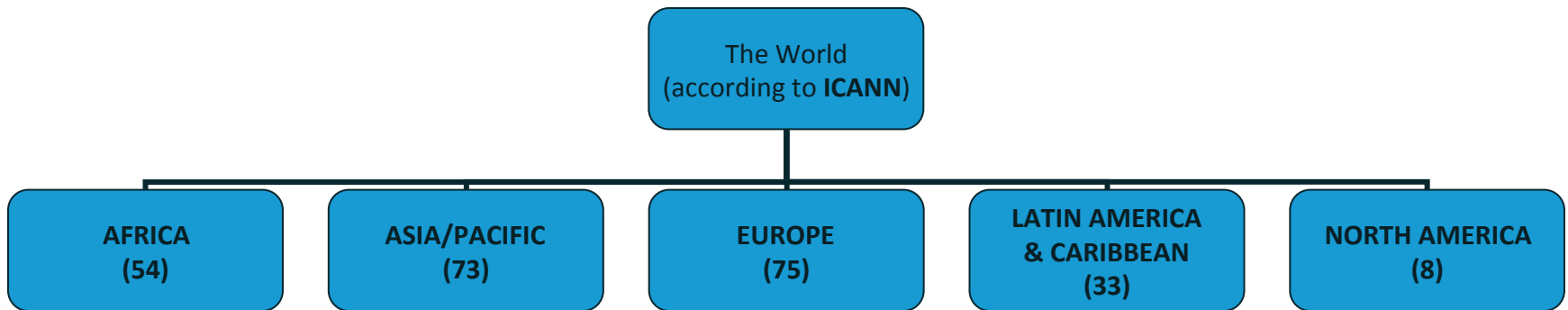
“... As used in these Bylaws, each of the following is considered to be a “Geographic Region”: **Europe; Asia/Australia/Pacific; Latin America/Caribbean Islands; Africa; and North America**. The specific countries included in each Geographic Region shall be determined by the Board, and this Section shall be reviewed by the Board from time to time (but at least every three years) to determine whether any change is appropriate, taking account of the evolution of the Internet.”

Regions – The Task in 2000

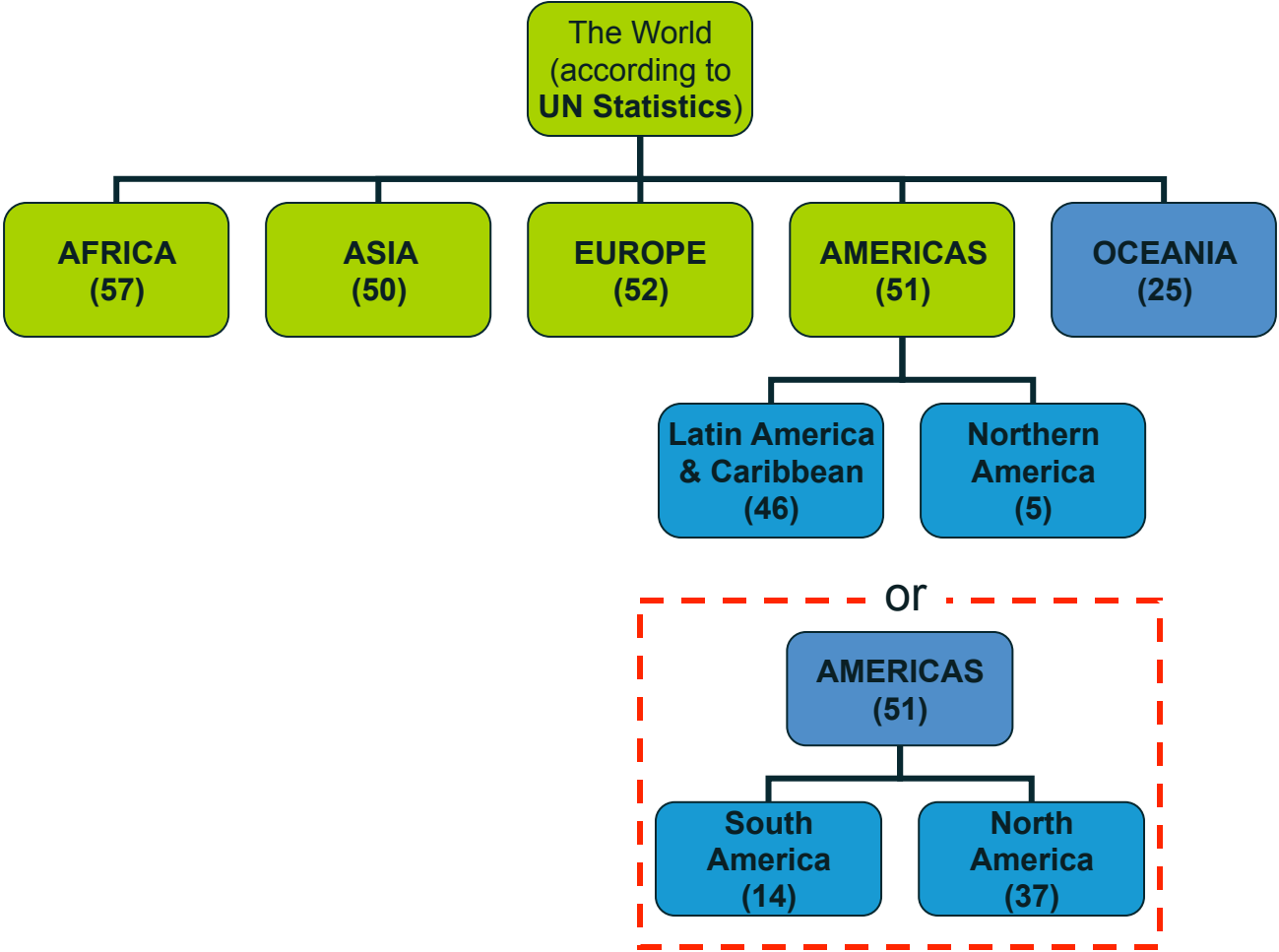
ICANN Board Meeting – Yokohama Japan (**ICANN | 06**)

Resolved [00.64] - that the staff is directed to assign countries to geographic regions on the basis of the United Nations Statistics Division's current classifications of "Countries or areas, codes and abbreviations," as revised 16 February 2000, and "Composition of macro geographic (continental) regions and component geographical regions," as revised 16 February 2000.

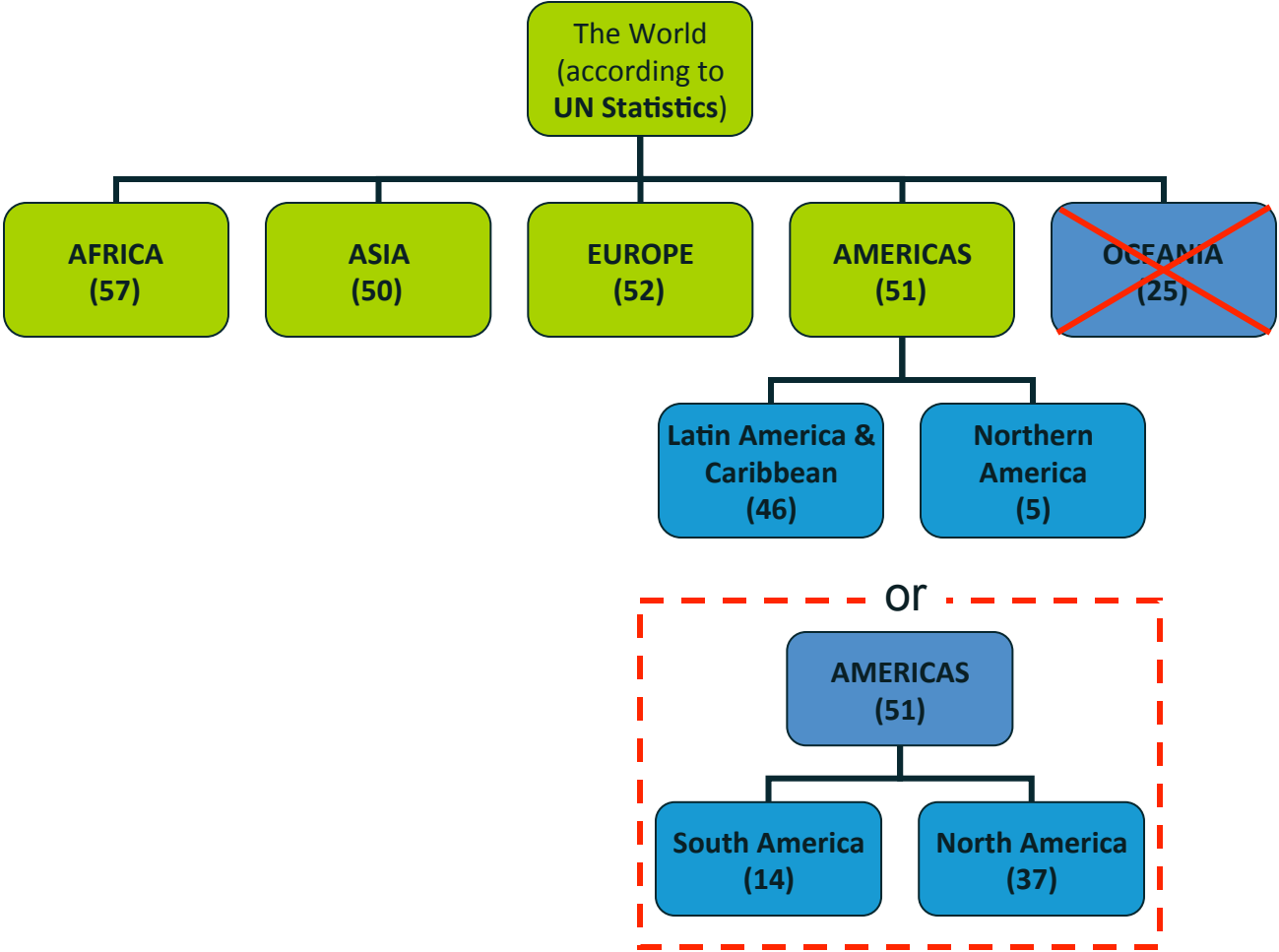
The Two Regional Structures



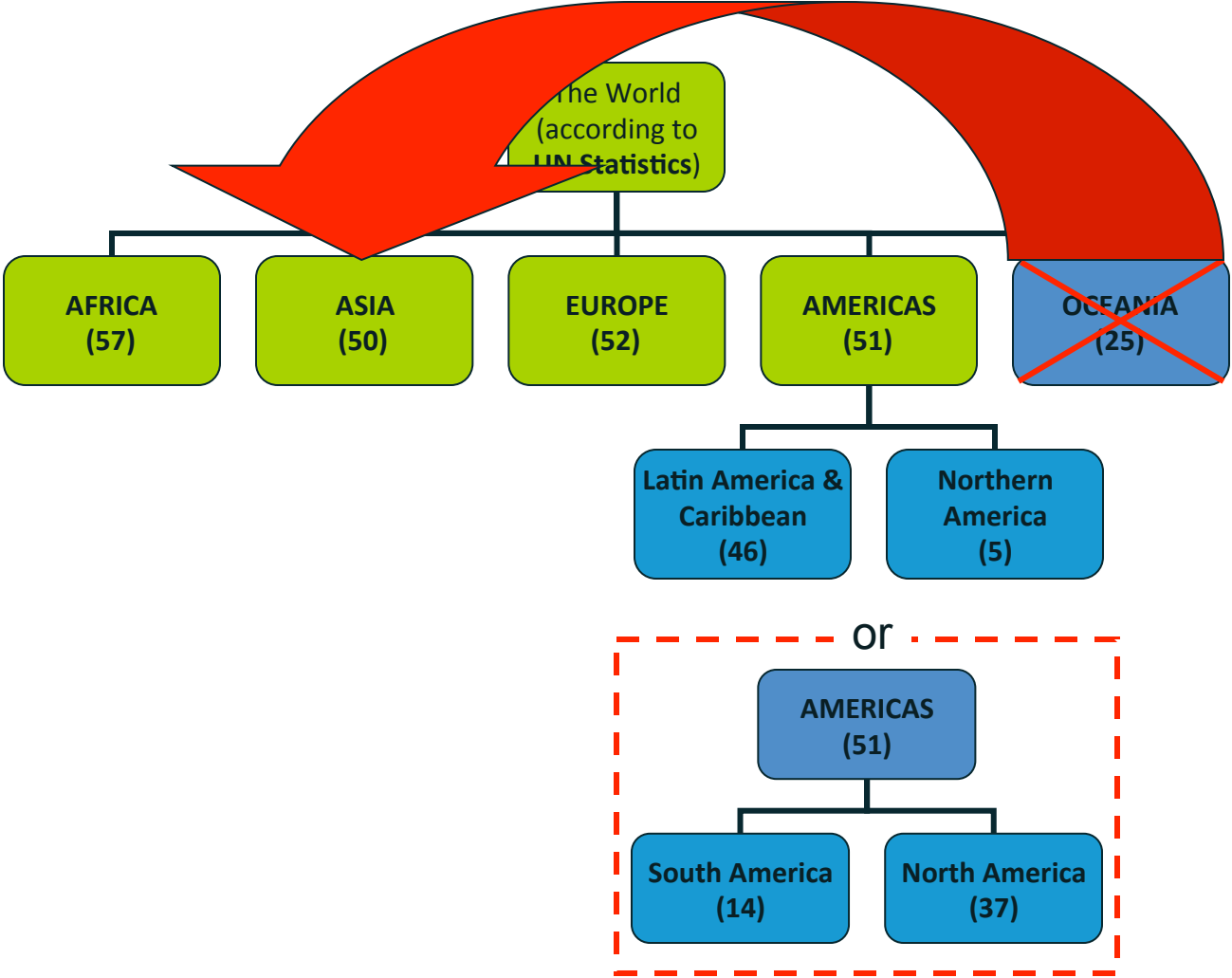
From UN Statistics to ICANN



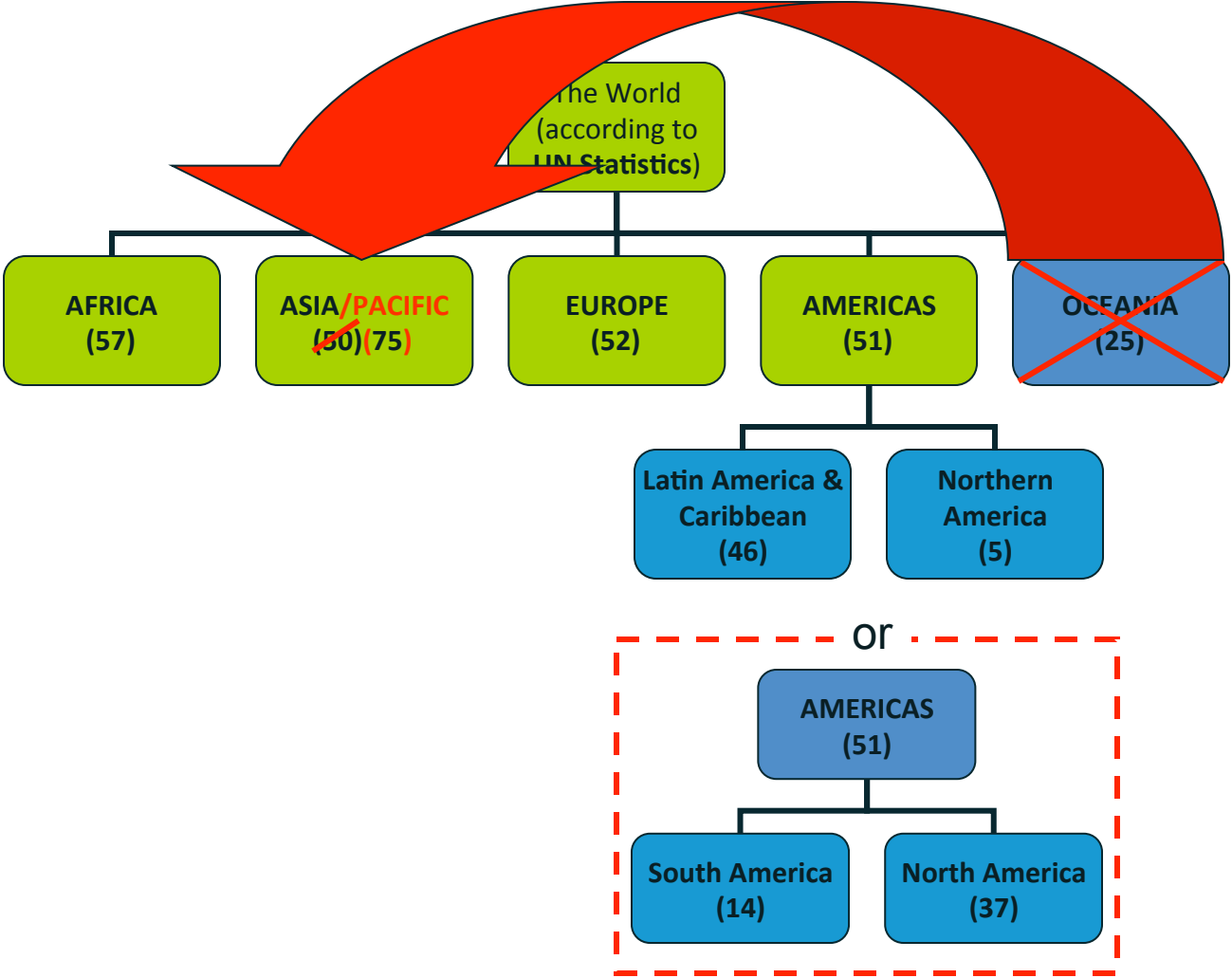
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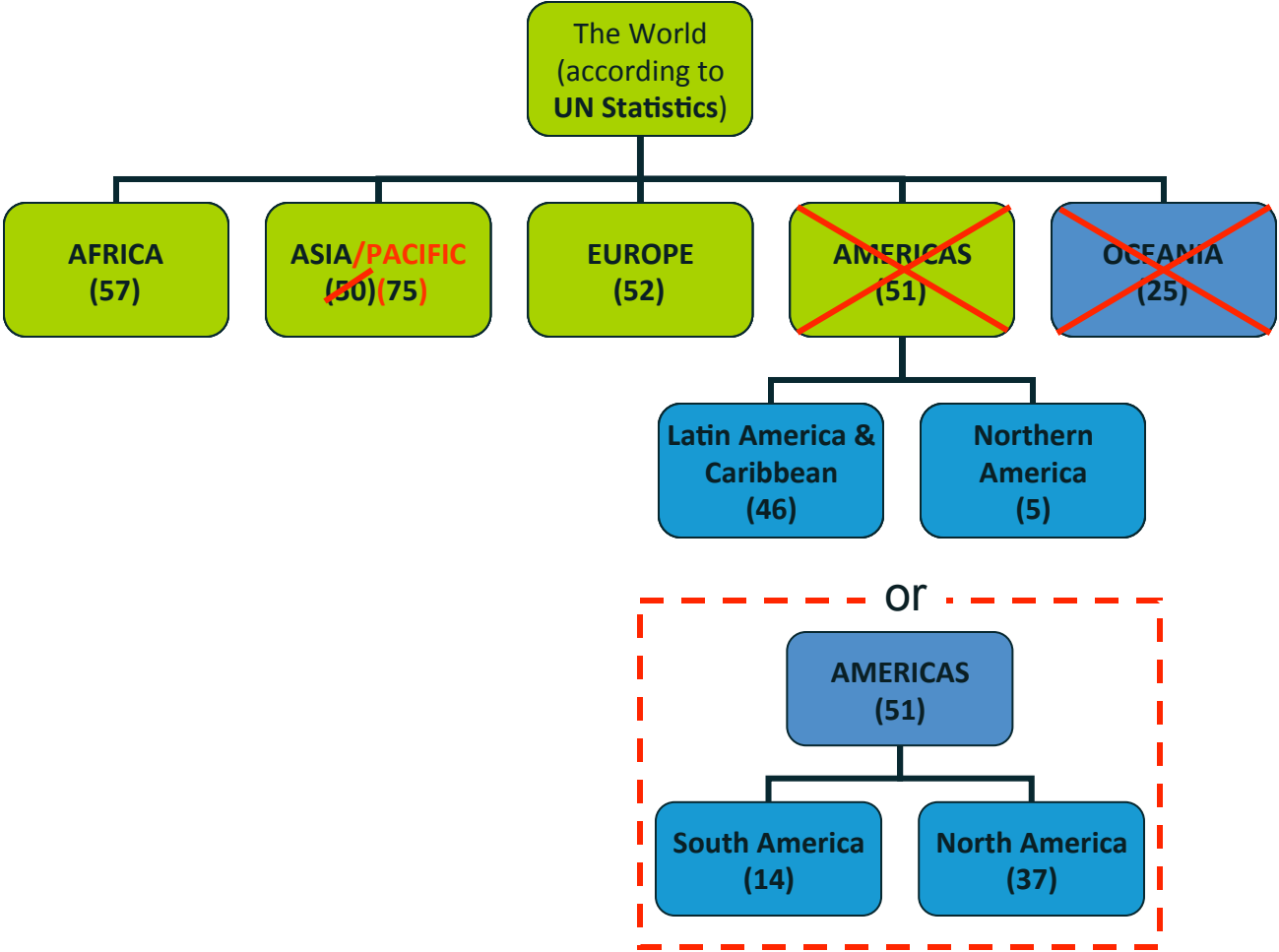
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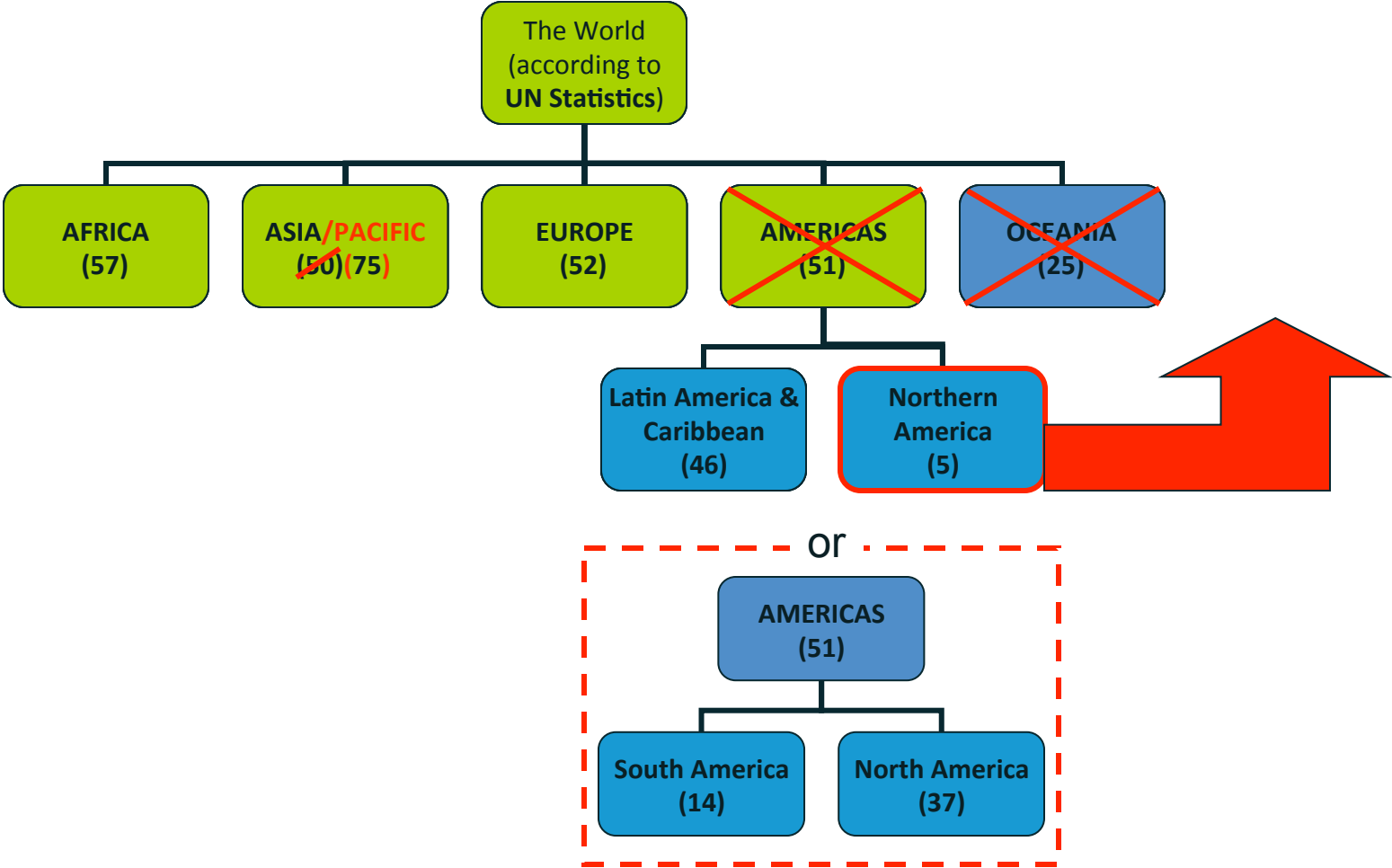
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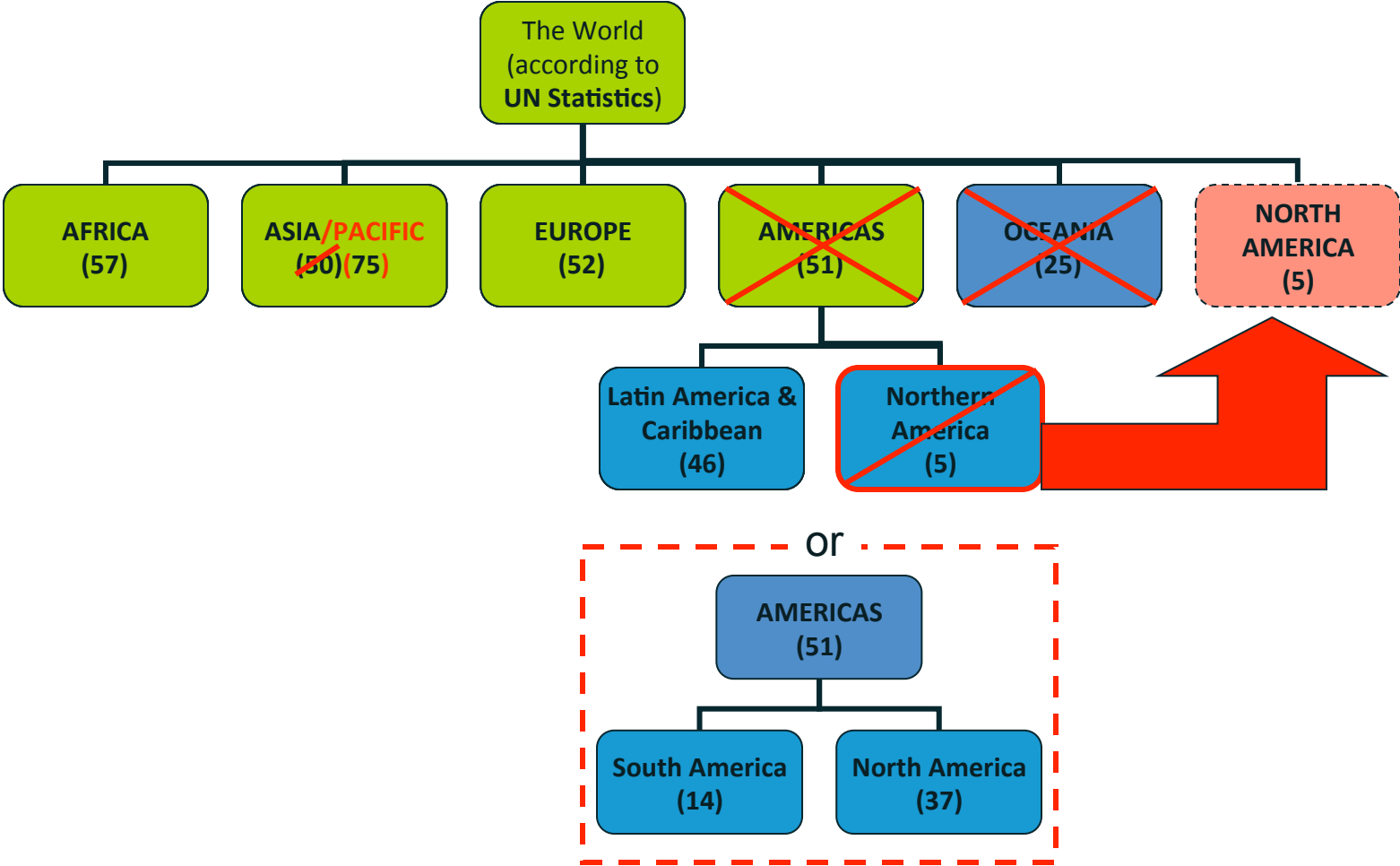
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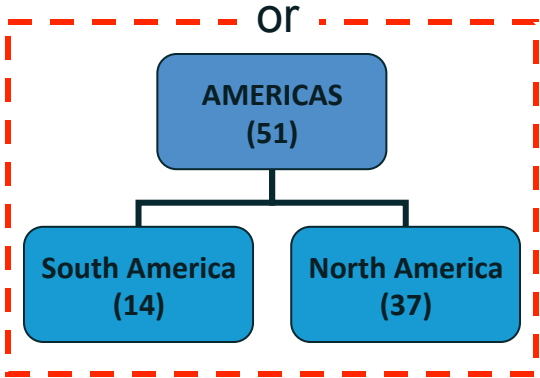
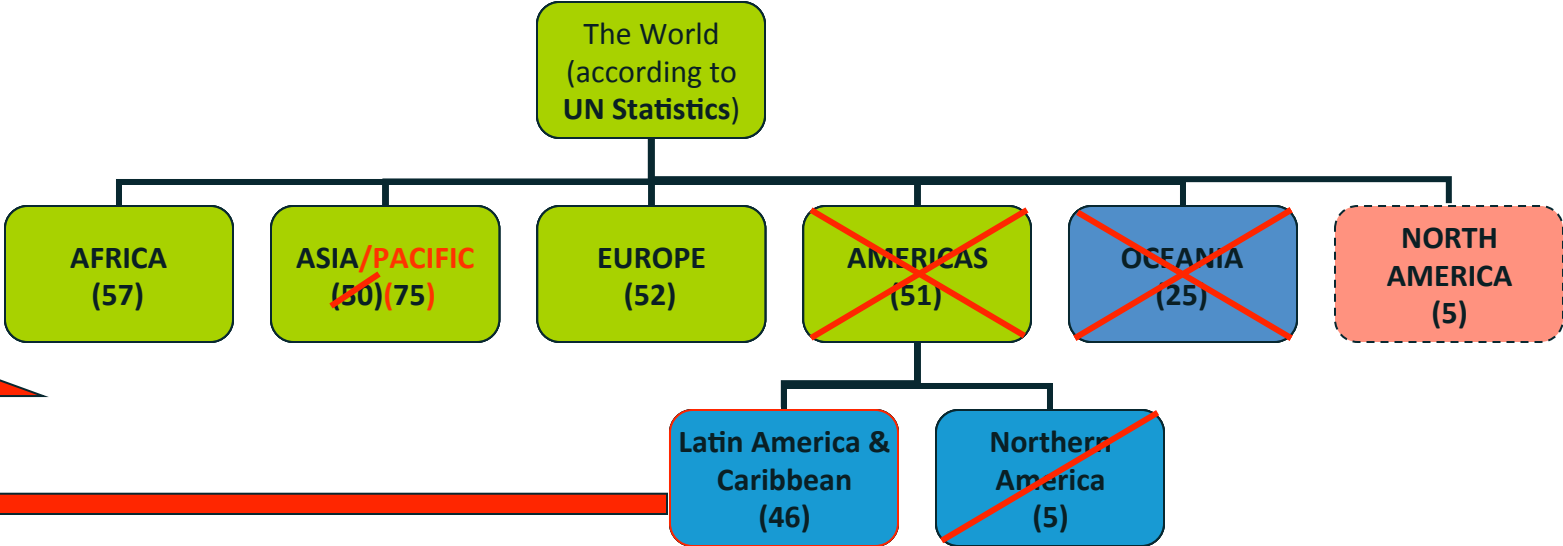
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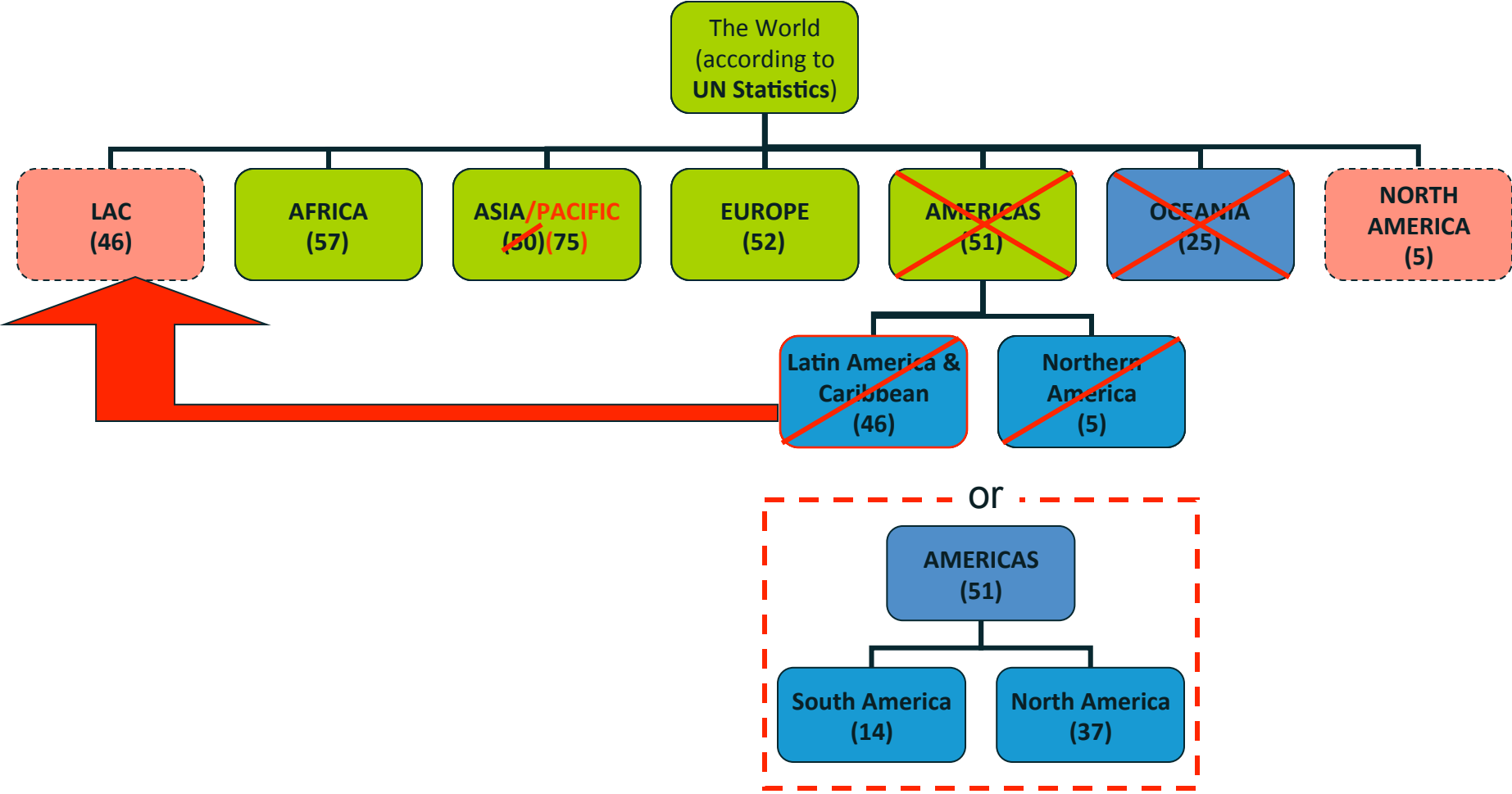
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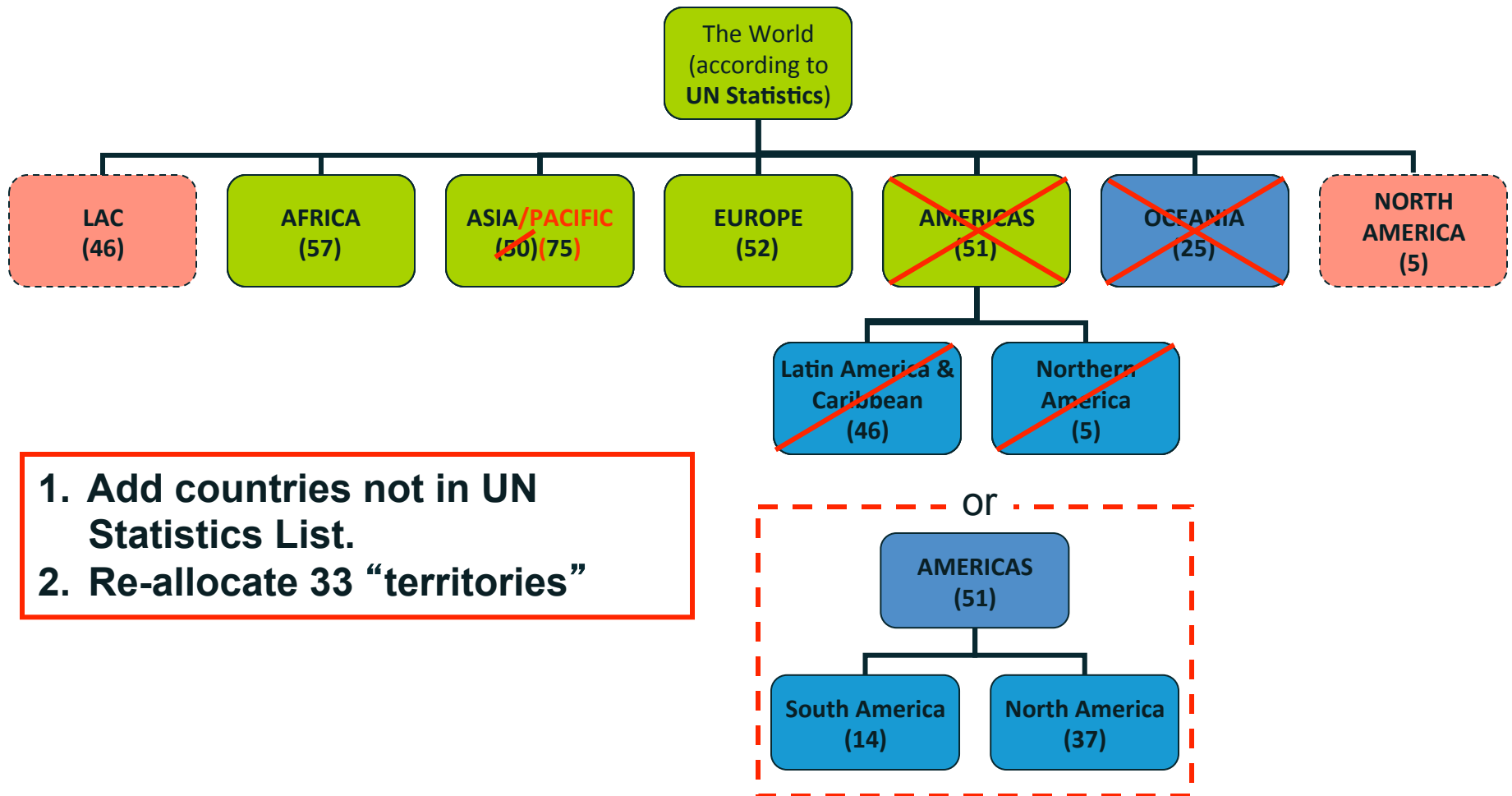
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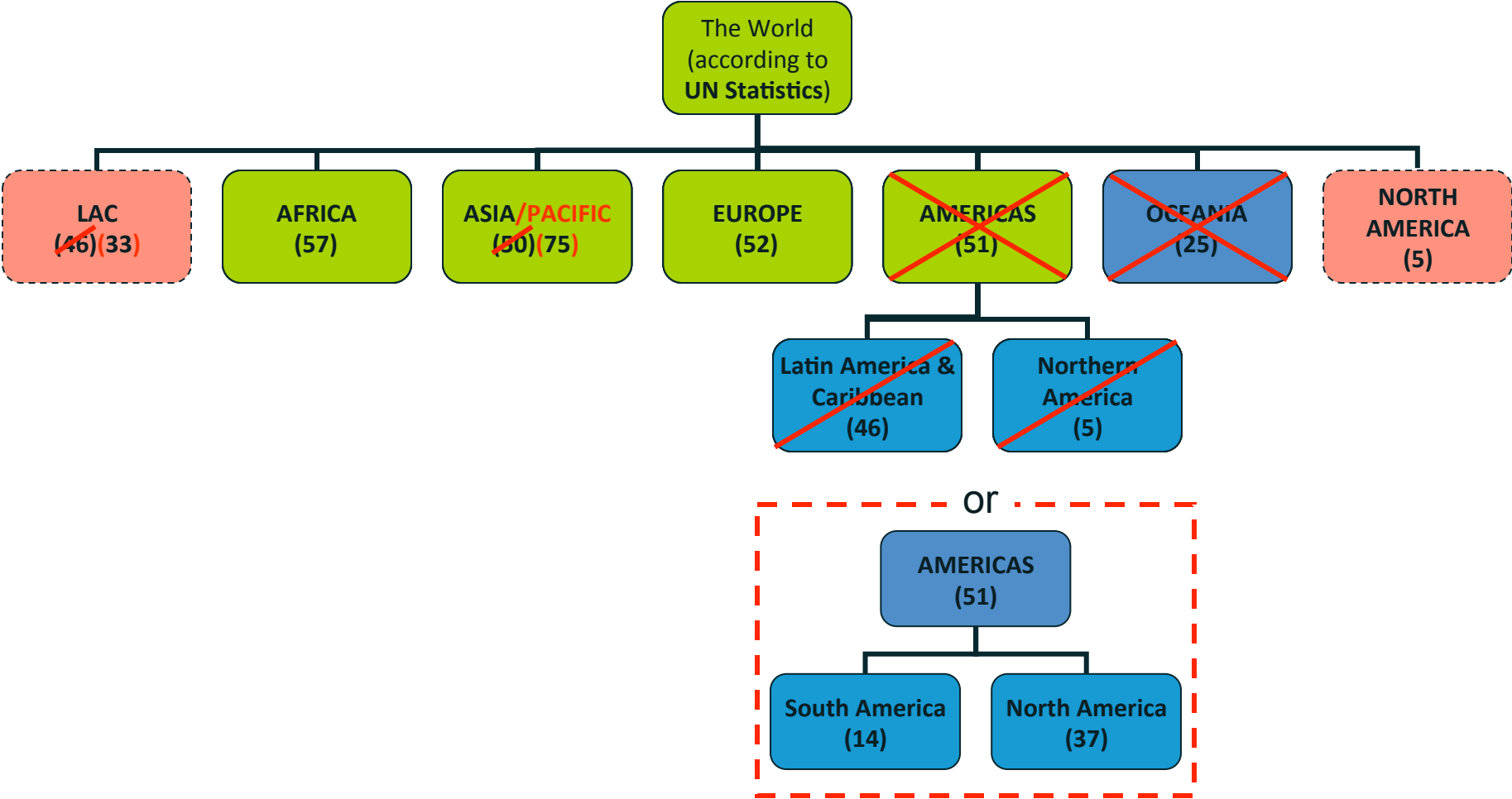
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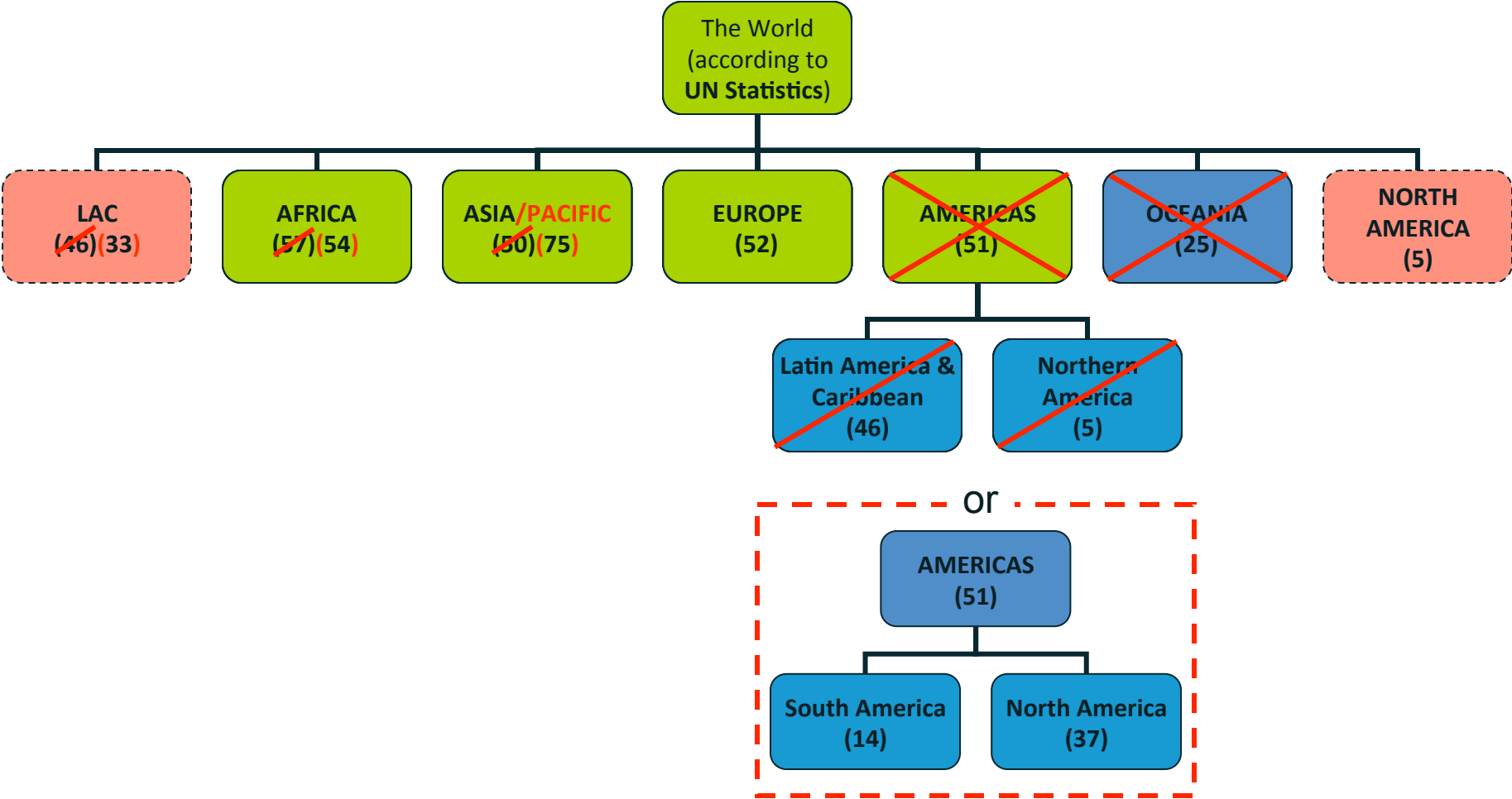
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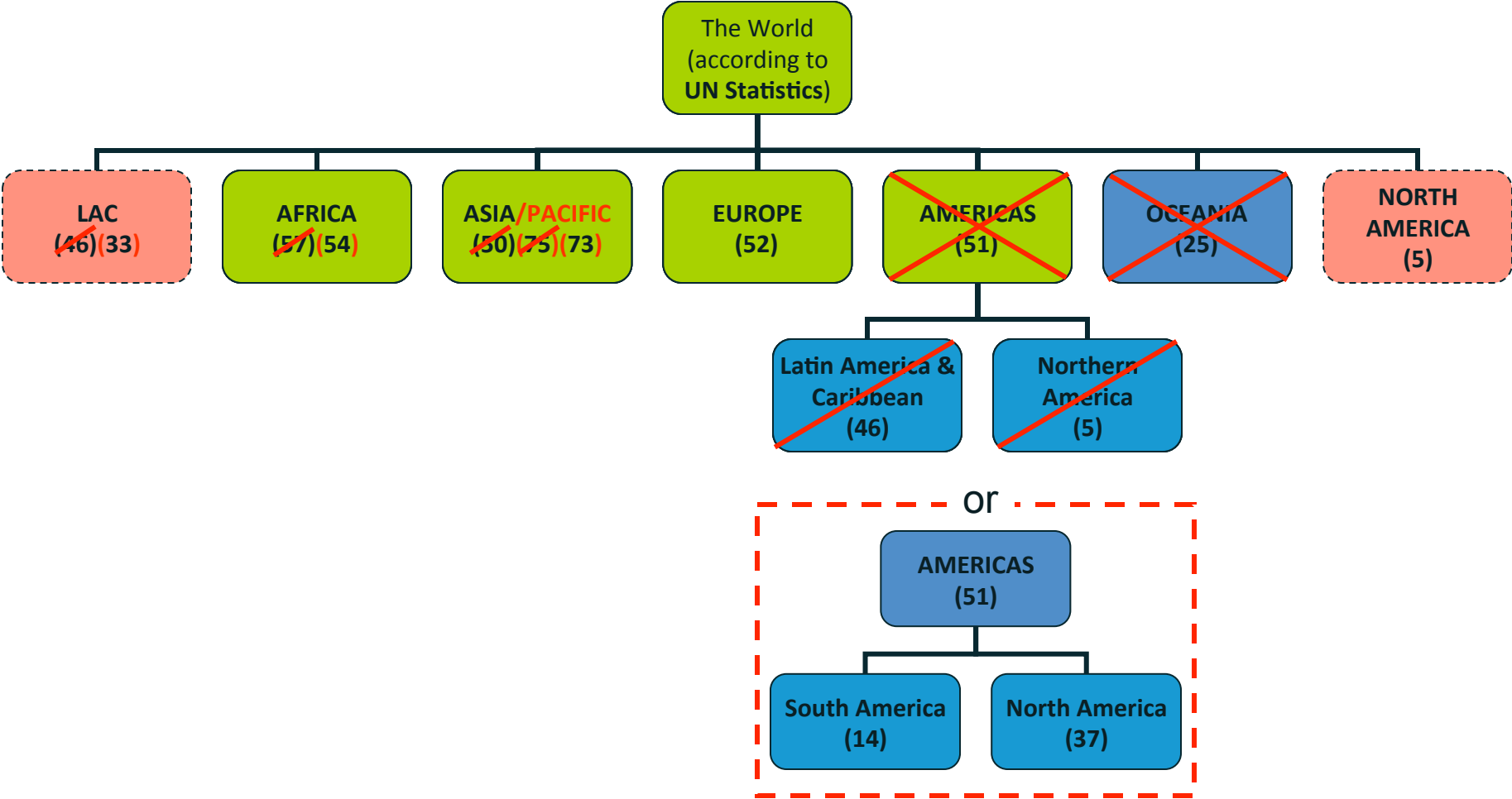
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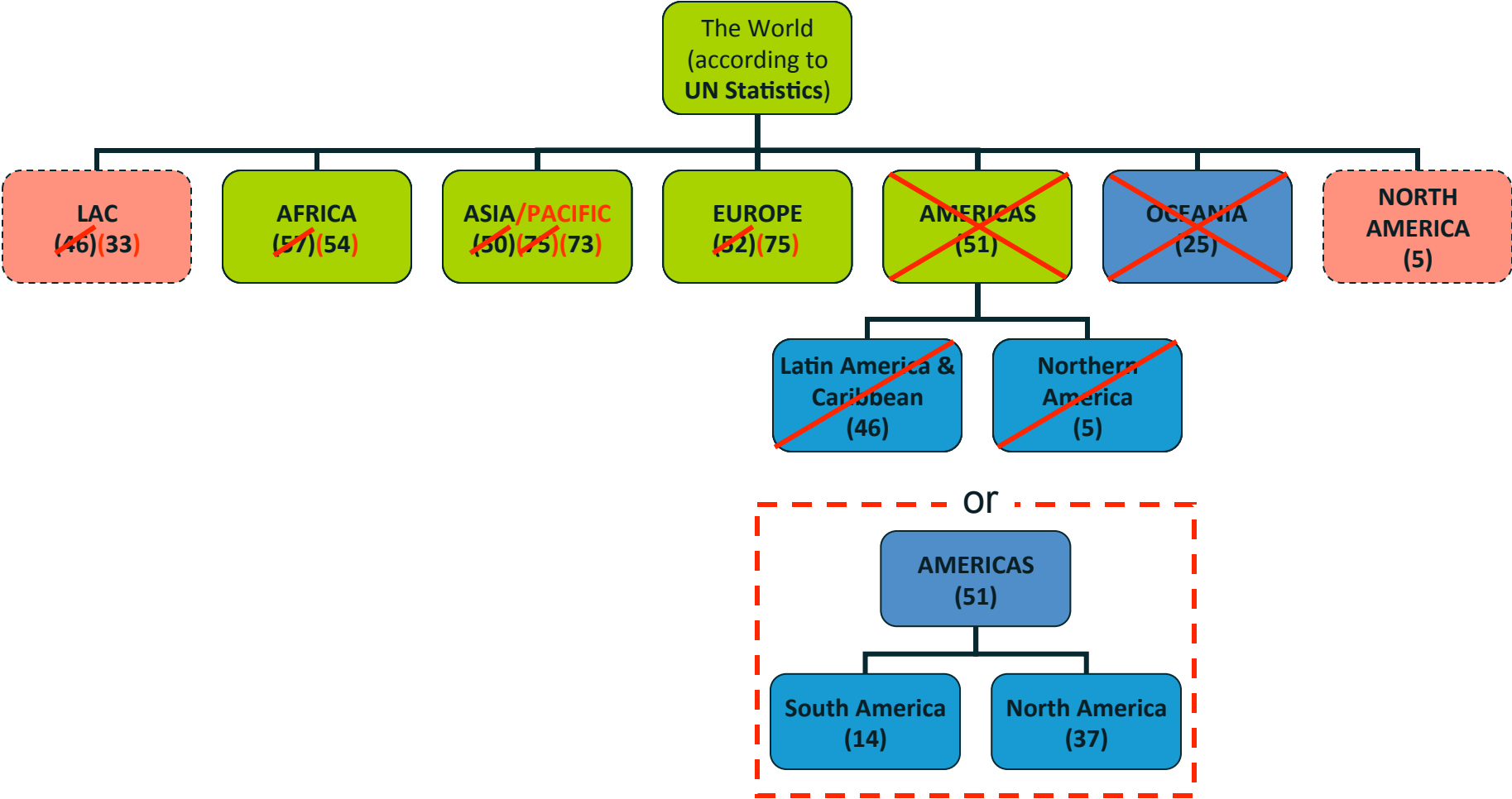
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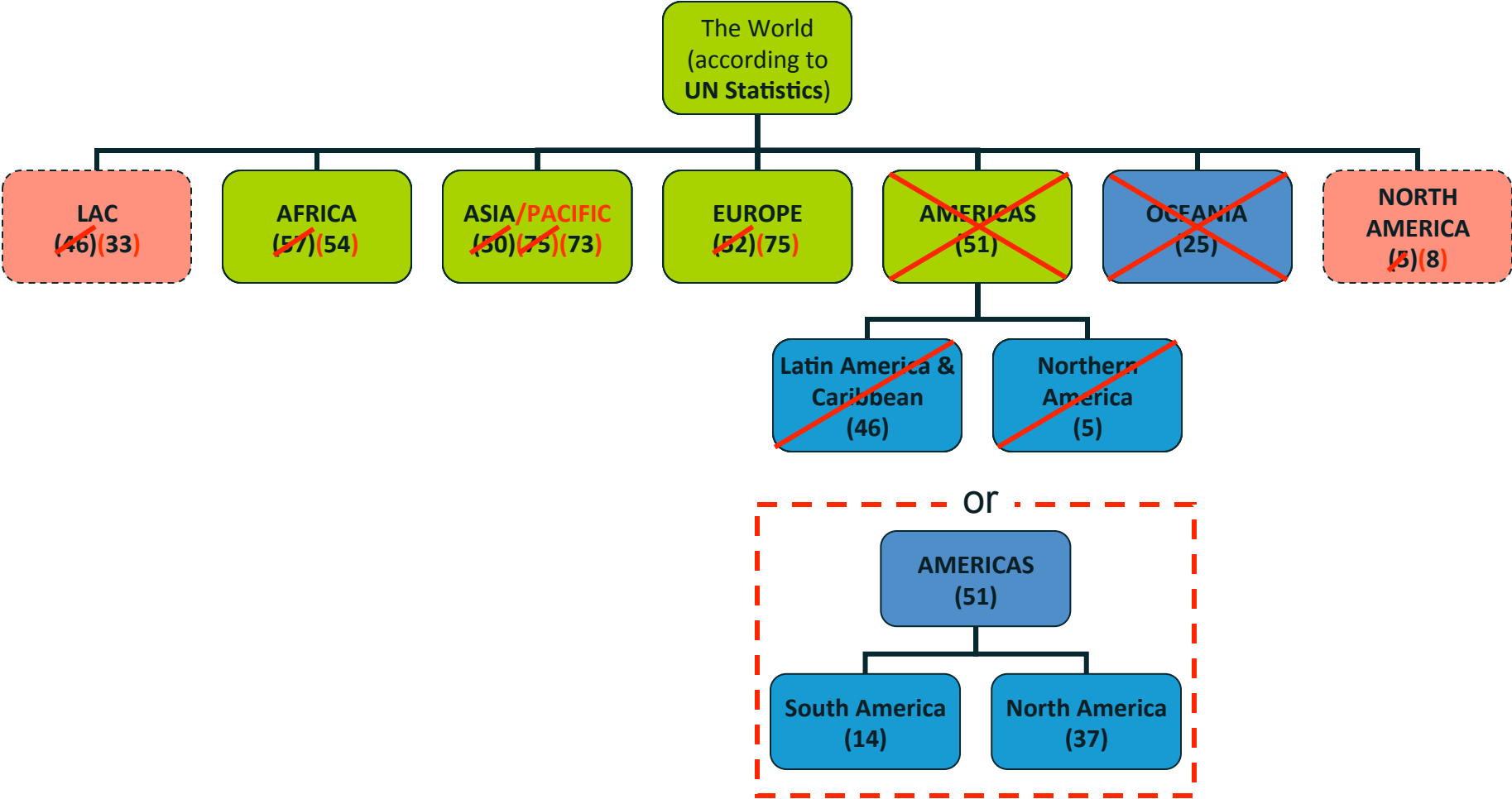
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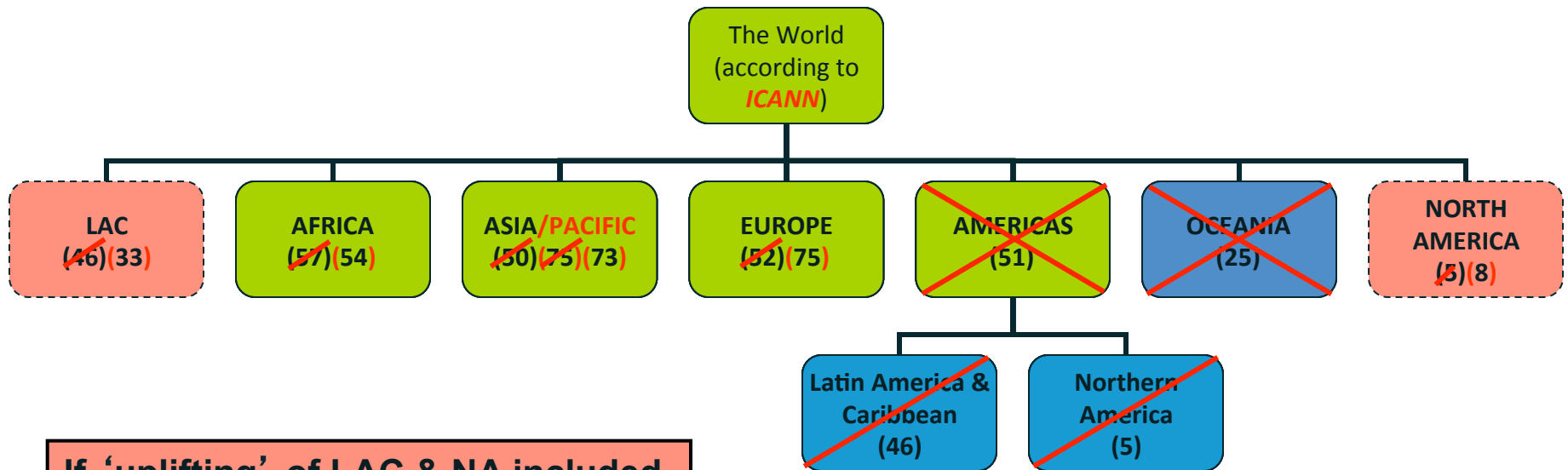
From UN Statistics to ICANN



From UN Statistics to ICANN

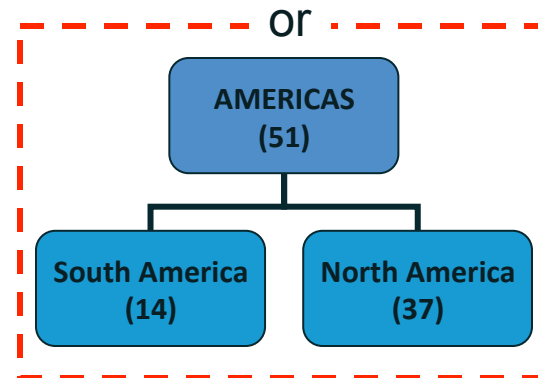


From UN Statistics to ICANN



If 'uplifting' of LAC & NA included, 40% of countries are in different region than the one allocated by UN Statistics.

If not, 17% of countries are in a different region.



Challenges

- Remoteness
- Language
- Culture
- Political Ties
- Economic Ties



Examining the ICANN Regions – 2007

- In 2007, the ccNSO highlighted a number of concerns to ICANN Board about the current definition and use of Geographic Regions
- ccNSO recommended the appointment of a community-wide working group to study these issues.
- At ICANN30 | Los Angeles, the ICANN Board requested the ICANN Community, including the GNSO, ccNSO, ASO, GAC, and ALAC, to provide ICANN Staff with input on the ccNSO's recommendation.
- The culmination of these efforts was a cross-community working group – formed by the Board in 2009

Working Group Efforts

Board Working Group – Purpose

- Representatives invited from all ACs and SOs (ALAC, ASO, ccNSO, GAC and GNSO participated at various stages)
- Identify the different purposes for which ICANN's Geographic Regions are used;
- Determine whether the uses of ICANN's Geographic Regions (as currently defined, or at all) continue to meet the requirements of the relevant stakeholders; and
- Submit proposals for community and Board consideration relating to the current and future uses and definition of the ICANN Geographic Regions.

Working Group Efforts

Over the course of its deliberations, the Working Group has:

- Reviewed the underlying history, objectives and general principles of ICANN's Geographic Regions Framework,
- Identified the various applications and functions to which the regions framework has been applied by existing structures and the ICANN staff; and
- Engaged the community in an extensive collaborative dialogue about issues and potential solutions to maintain and potentially expand the value of the geographic regions framework for the entire community.

Working Group Efforts (cont.)

The WG adopted a three-phase approach:

- Initial Report
- Interim Report
- Final Report

Expectation that extensive (and lengthy) opportunities for comment and dialogue would be employed.

Promise was kept. Lengthy comment periods for each report. Six (6) public meeting special workshops.

Findings & Recommendations

Major Working Group Findings

- The ICANN principle of geographic diversity remains important and relevant to ICANN's mission and a wholesale modifications to the original geographic regions framework is not merited now.
- In mapping the UN Statistics' categorization into ICANN's pre-defined Regions, ICANN apparently deviated significantly from the UN allocations.
- Despite these deviations from the Board's original objective, ICANN has largely applied geographic diversity principles consistent with the organization's diversity goals.
- The Working Group was unable to identify an alternative consistent or standard geographic categorization model with international recognition that would better meet ICANN's requirements.

Overall Working Group Recommendations

ICANN should adopt its own Geographic Regions Framework based upon the current assignment of countries to regions. This new framework system should govern the make-up of the ICANN Board.

To provide flexibility to individual communities and structures within ICANN, it is recommended that for the time being they be permitted to:

- a. follow the same framework as the Board, or
- b. develop their own mechanisms (with Board oversight) for ensuring geographic diversity within their own organizations.

Notable Recommendations – First Five

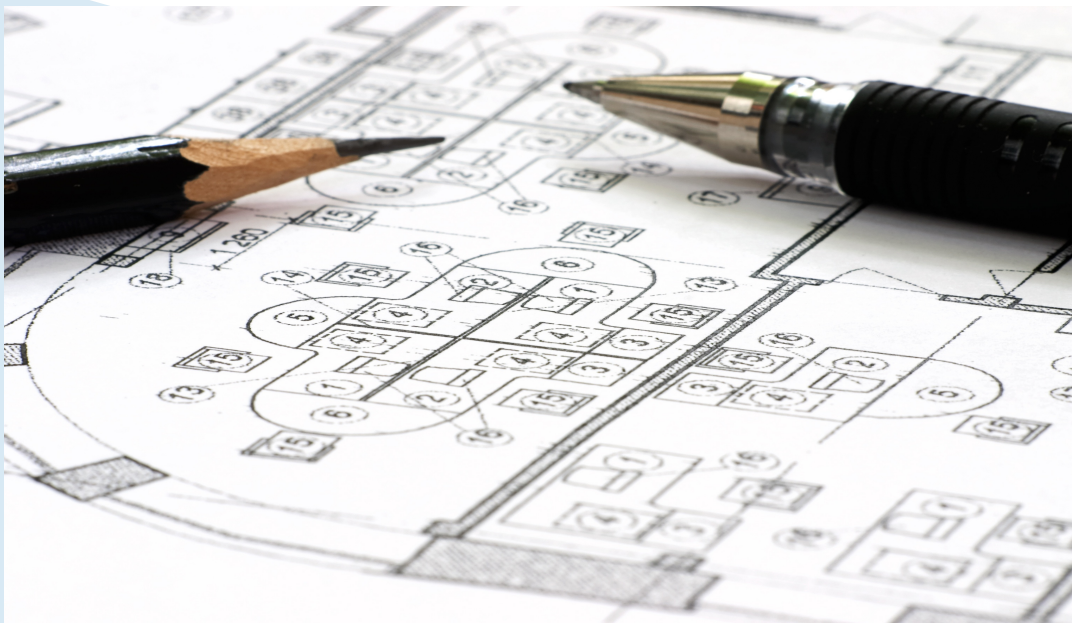
- 1) Application of the geographic diversity principles must be more rigorous, clear and consistent.
- 2) Adjusting the number of ICANN geographic regions is not currently practical.
- 3) No other International Regional Structures offer useful options for ICANN.
- 4) ICANN must formally adopt and maintain its own unique Geographic Regions Framework.
- 5) The Community wants to minimize any changes to the current structure.

Alternative Background Slide

- 6) ICANN must acknowledge the sovereignty and right of self-determination of states to let them choose their region of allocation.
- 7) ICANN communities have flexibly applied geographic diversity principles over the years. The Board should remain strictly subject to the current framework, but flexibility should be preserved for other structures.
- 8) “Special Interest Groups” or “Cross-Regional Sub-Groups” offer new diversity opportunities.
- 9) Implementation mechanisms and processes must be developed by Staff; and
- 10) The Board must preserve its oversight and future review opportunities.

Next Steps

- Community Comment Opportunity
- Board Review and Action
- Staff Implementation (List and Processes)



Next Steps: Public Comment Opportunity

Final Report Recommendations of the Geographic Regions Review Working Group

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Open Date

23 Dec 2015 23:59 UTC

Close Date

24 Apr 2016 23:59 UTC

Staff Report Due

9 May 2016 23:59 UTC



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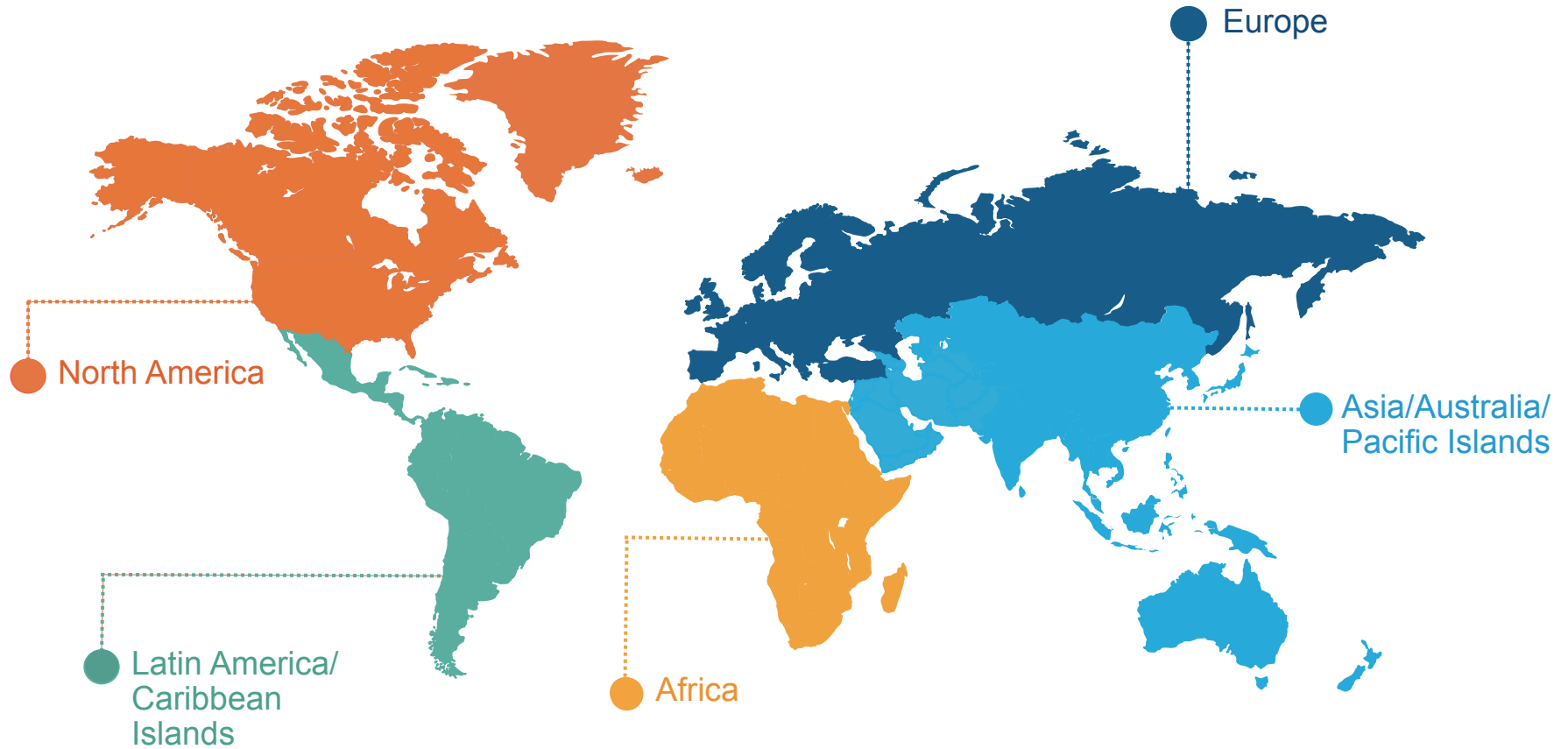
Brief Overview

Purpose: The cross-community Geographic Regions Review Working Group has produced its Final Report in which it proposes a series of recommendations regarding the ongoing application of the organization's geographic regions framework. The ICANN Board is interested in further community reaction to those recommendations and has instructed the Staff to open and manage a public comment period of at least 120 days to give the community an opportunity to thoroughly review the proposals and provide any additional comments on the working group recommendations.

Current Status: Community feedback is requested concerning the Working Group recommendations.

Discussion/Q&A

ICANN Regions Framework – Pop Quiz



Thank You