

ICANN Organization's Staff Report of Public Comment Proceeding

First Consultation on a 2-Year Planning Process																			
Publication Date:	02 April 2019																		
Prepared By:	Xavier Calvez																		
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Section I: General Overview and Next Steps																			
<p>During past planning processes, various conversations dealt with the challenge of dedicating sufficient time and resources to plan ICANN's activities.</p> <p>These discussions have included the idea of extending the planning process beyond its current 15-month duration to offer more time for community engagement into more extensive activity planning processes. This idea was also discussed during the IANA Stewardship transition.</p> <p>As mentioned by Cherine Chalaby, Board Chair, and Göran Marby, President and CEO, ICANN organization is initiating the process of evaluating a two-year process as a mechanism to address the need for additional time for community engagement.</p>																			
Section II: Contributors																			
<p><i>At the time this report was prepared, five communities and one individual posted comments to the forum. The following table lists these contributors in alphabetical order. Any quotations taken from contributor comments will reference the contributor's initials.</i></p>																			
<u>Organizations and Groups:</u>																			
Name	Submitted by	Initials																	
Business Constituency	Steve DeBianco	BC																	
Country Code Names Supporting Organization - Strategic and Operational Planning Committee	Giovanni Seppia	ccNSO-SOPC																	
Generic Names Supporting Organization Council	Berry Cobb	GNSO																	
gTLD Registries Stakeholder Group	Samantha Demetriou	RySG																	
ICANN At-Large Advisory Committee	ICANN At-Large Advisory Committee	ALAC																	

Individuals:

Name	Affiliation (if provided)	Initials
Cheryl Langdon-Orr	N/A	Individual

Section III: Summary of Comments

ICANN received submissions from five community groups and one individual. From those submissions, we identified 53 specific comments and nine different themes. The themes were based on the questions asked in the First Consultation on a Two-Year Planning Process Public Comment Proceeding. In the table below, we have summarized the themes and the number of comments received for each theme.

Public Comment Themes	Number of Comments
Q1 - Current Cycle not provide sufficient time	8
Q2 - Does more time, mean more transparency	6
Q3 - How and who should set ICANN's Priorities	6
Q4 - Policy Development and implementation activities	9
Q5 - What activities should be planned, by whom?	7
Q6 - Dedicated phase to plan for SO/AC activities?	5
2 public comment periods	4
Barriers to community involvement	4
Process	4
Grand Total	53

The following report is divided into three sections:

- **Key Takeaways** regarding the First Consultation on a Two-Year Planning Process Public Comment Proceeding
- **Summary Table** which visually shows questions from the Consultation paper that could be answered with a clear Agree or Disagree and our interpretation of the contributors' stances
- **Public Comments and ICANN organization's Responses** which shows each comment received, sorted by contributor, and our corresponding responses

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1 Key Takeaways

Thank you for your comments and input regarding the Two-Year Planning Process Document. We greatly value the feedback you have provided. Based on the feedback received, we will not proceed with extending ICANN's planning process to a two-year long process because there is a balanced support for and against this approach. In order to make a change of this magnitude to the planning process, we believe that a significant majority of the community should support it.

We received great input regarding the topic, and it is clear that increasing transparency continues to be a relevant objective. We will focus our efforts on improvements to the existing process that enhance participation into the process and transparency of the information provided, resulting in more accountability.

Thank you to the submitters for your time, effort, and feedback.

2 Summary Table

The table below provides a summary of the questions that were included in the First Consultation on a Two-Year Planning Process. This table represents questions that could be answered with a clear Agree or Disagree answer. Based on our interpretation of your comments, we have categorized them to the best of our ability. This table was created to visually summarize the questions and corresponding comments. We apologize for any misinterpretation and please contact us at planning@icann.org if there are any issues.

#	Question	Agree	Disagree	Unclear
1	Does the community agree that yearly planning cycle does not provide sufficient time for community extensive input and interaction on the operating plan and Budget?	ALAC GNSO Individual	BC RySG	ccNSO
2	Does the community believe that more time for planning provides more transparency?	ALAC BC	ccNSO GNSO RySG Individual	
4a	Should the policy development activities be planned?	ALAC BC ccNSO GNSO Individual RySG		
6	Should the planning process include a formalized dedicated phase to plan for SO/AC activities?	BC GNSO Individual RySG	ccNSO	ALAC
7	2 public comment periods and/or sessions of community feedback and involvement?	ALAC BC ccNSO		GNSO Individual RySG

8a	Lack of available time?	ALAC BC ccNSO		GNSO Individual RySG
8b	Complexity of the information produced?	ALAC RySG	BC	ccNSO GNSO Individual
8c	Complexity or length of the planning process?		BC	ALAC ccNSO GNSO Individual RySG
8d	Lack of relevance or interest?		BC	ALAC ccNSO GNSO Individual RySG

3 Public Comments and ICANN org’s Responses

Below is a listing of all comments received, sorted by contributor, and our corresponding responses.

Ref #	Contributor	Category	Question / Comment	ICANN org Response
1	ccNSO-SOPC	Process	Firstly, we fail to understand the purpose of a possible switch to the 2-year cycle. Is the new process meant to provide more time to the community to review the documents or to incorporate additional steps into the process (e.g. a phase of activity planning as mentioned in the process paper)?	Yes, the community conversations that raised the idea of a two-year planning process were driven by the need to add more time for community engagement in the planning process.
2	ccNSO-SOPC	Process	We understand the challenges that ICANN is facing both to evaluate internal input/decisions and to assess future trends properly while drafting the Plan(s). The ccNSO-SOPC has been participating actively in the process of ICANN Operating and Strategic Plans since over a decade. Therefore, we would like to reiterate the importance for ICANN to produce and/or refine planning guidelines that should be instrumental to the various teams to draft the narrative that should be included under the various headings of the Plans.	ICANN recognizes the value of narrative descriptions of its activities, projects and processes, and thanks the ccNSO SOPC to recognize and point to the need for guidance to the ICANN org team members.
3	ccNSO-SOPC	Process	We have been always supportive of a second phase of consultation for the Operating and Strategic Plans independently from having a 1 or 2-year process. That would enable ICANN staff – mainly the Finance department – to better incorporate the feedback from the various stakeholders and possible, last-minute changes, including updated budget projections.	Thank you for this feedback. The direct engagement between ICANN org and the submitters following the submission of public comments has proved to be both useful and resource-demanding, notably to ensure comments are adequately understood and addressed.

4	ccNSO-SOPC	Q1 - Current Cycle not provide sufficient time	Q1. We tend to agree that there is still room for improvement within the yearly planning cycle. At the same time, we believe that a very basic step forward could be to ensure language and text consistency throughout the planning cycle, an element that this Committee has been advocating since long time. That will help the community to follow the various plan iterations in a better way and easy the access of the non-English mother tongue to a very complex set of documents.	Thank you for this feedback and guidance. Text consistency in the documents produced, considering the breadth of topics in scope, is a challenge. Quality of the substantive information provided is also key and ICANN org consistently involves the most competent subject matter experts on any given topic to ensure adequacy of the information produced. This approach leads inevitably to involving a broad group of personnel to write parts of the documents produced. Following drafting, ICANN org conducts several levels of review across all planning documents, including a review by a professional writer/editor to help bring consistency in formats, language, substance. ICANN will continue improving the readability of the information produced.
5	ccNSO-SOPC	Q2 - Does more time, mean more transparency	Q2. We think that more time for planning would not increase the transparency of the process. A possible impact on its accessibility to a very much time-starved community will also be limited.	Thank you for this feedback. Minimizing the time invested and maximizing the transparency will continue to be the focus of ICANN org in this process.
6	ccNSO-SOPC	Q3 - How and Who should set ICANN's Priorities	Q3. The ccNSO-SOPC has always highlighted the need for ICANN both to prioritise its objectives and activities, and to be able to update them regularly. Should a Strategic Plan objective become obsolete and/or not important any longer during the five-year Strategic Plan cycle, we fail to understand the reasoning to continue with it. That will also empower ICANN staff to align new priorities coming from the community and/or from the developing DNS environment with the Plan at a much faster path than at present.	Please see response #31.

7	ccNSO-SOPC	Q4 - Policy Development and implementation activities	Q4. We believe that policy development and implementation activities should be part of a structured, well-prioritised and budget-sound planning cycle. We would appreciate more clarity around the question “What should be planned by the GNSO and ccNSO?” as it is quite difficult to provide a comprehensive answer considering all the elements that may affect any planning process.	This question intended to ask how the planning of policy development should be incorporated into the planning process. For example, should all Supporting Organizations, Constituencies, and Advisory Committees share their expected schedule of policy development activities for the upcoming year, as an input into the planning process? Or is it more appropriate for the planning of policy development and implementation activities to take place outside of the planning process?
8	ccNSO-SOPC	Q5 - What activities should be planned, by whom?	Q5. We remember that ICANN has already discussed what activities should be planned and what should be part of the regular, operational business of the organization. We think that the answer to such question requires ICANN to define the concept of “planning”.	When "Planning" was referred to in the Two-Year Planning Process document, it was in relation to the process of planning and ensuring the proper amount of resources are allocated to a specific task or activity in the budgeting process.
9	ccNSO-SOPC	Q6 - Dedicated phase to plan for SO/AC activities?	Q6. We do not deem a “formalized dedicated phase to plan for SO/AC activities” necessary. At the same time, we would appreciate more clarity for the question.	When “formalized dedicated phase to plan for SO/AC activities” was referenced in the Two-Year Planning process document, this was in relation to building a formalized dedicated process specific for SO/AC activities. The current planning process does not include this. Feedback regarding SO/AC activities is received in public comments and other sessions, but there currently is not a dedicated formal process.
10	ccNSO-SOPC	2 public comment periods	We believe that instead of having a preliminary document with some sort of planning, it would be more valuable for the community to have a high-level document with the top ICANN priorities that would be at the basis of the Operating Plan and Budget. Such document should also provide an overview of the main	We will consider this feedback as we make any changes to the planning process.

			projects/activities to reach the high-priority goals and objectives as well as an estimate of the resources required to implement them.	
11	ccNSO-SOPC	Barriers to community involvement	Regarding the possible barriers to community engagement in the planning process, the ccNSO-SOPC has already commented on this matter. The main challenges are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The ccTLD community is made of very operational people with limited time; - While we acknowledge that ICANN has made considerable progress on the style and content structure of the Plan(s), the fact that ICANN keeps changing these elements, and that the quantity and quality of information varies considerably within the objectives does not help the accessibility of the Plan(s). 	ICANN org recognizes the diversity of interest in the community members. We have created multiple budget documents so that there is something relevant to the varying backgrounds of the members in the community. We are cognizant of making too many changes and that was reflected in our FY20 Operating Plan and Budget documents, which were very similar to the prior year. Additionally, we continue to engage at ICANN meetings and via webinars to better educate the community on the information that we produce so that is transparent what information is being shared and how it can be accessed.
12	ICANN BC	Q1 - Current Cycle not provide sufficient time	Noting that the current time-frame for the planning process is 15 month, the BC believes this is adequate to address ICANN fiscal activities in tandem with the approved strategic plan.	Please see response #46.
13	ICANN BC	Q1 - Current Cycle not provide sufficient time	Question : Is there any precedence for this type of budgeting plan over a 2-year cycle? A budgeting plan for a 5-year Operations/Strategic plan with annual incremental/decremental budget provision do exist but a 2-yearly revolving activities planning may be duplicative and engender an excessive oversight into the staff responsibility domain and may not be the best use of precious community time.	Please see response #46.

14	ICANN BC	Q1 - Current Cycle not provide sufficient time	No. The yearly planning cycle provides sufficient time.	Please see response #46.
15	ICANN BC	Q2 - Does more time, mean more transparency	Yes but the current time is quite sufficient	Thank you for your comment. We note that you think more time provides more transparency and that the current planning process provides sufficient time.
16	ICANN BC	Q3 - How and Who should set ICANN's Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should parts of the strategic plan be prioritized of the 5 years it applies to? Yes From the strategic trends exercises conducted with several community organizations during 2018: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “there is no prioritization, everything is #1 and nothing is #1”. There is need for prioritization. “are the community priorities aligned with ICANN mission/vision?” Yes. “Focus on technical functions as a priority and avoid allowing budget constraints to negatively affect them” Yes. 	Please see response #31.
17	ICANN BC	Q4 - Policy Development and implementation activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should the policy development activities be planned? Yes. What should be planned collectively by the SO/AC? Based on exploration and need. What should be planned by the GNSO and ccNSO? Policy Development works, Reviews, Research. 	We note that the BC thinks policy development activities should be planned based on exploration and need through reviews and research.
18	ICANN BC	Q5 - What activities should be planned, by whom?	<p>Question 5 - What activities, other than policy development, should be planned and by whom?</p> <p>Examples: Reviews - SO/AC with support from ICANN org.</p>	We will consider this input for the planning of future reviews.
19	ICANN BC	Q6 - Dedicated phase to plan for SO/AC activities?	<p>Question 6 - Should the planning process include a formalized dedicated phase to plan for SO/AC activities? If so, how many years should be planned for?</p> <p>Yes, 5 years in sync with the 5-year Strategic Plan.</p>	We will consider this input for the planning of the Five-year Strategic Plan.

20	ICANN BC	2 public comment periods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would it be beneficial to insert, in the early part of the planning process, a phase of activity planning resulting in a document submitted for a first public comment period, and follow it by an operating plan and budget development phase which would be the subject of a second public comment period? Yes. 	Please see response #10.
21	ICANN BC	Barriers to community involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the barriers to community engagement in the planning process? Lack of available time? Yes, as most community members are volunteers. Complexity of the information produced? No. Complexity or length of the planning process? No. Lack of relevance or interest? No. 	Thank you for the feedback. We understand the availability of time challenges that community members face as several of them are volunteers and have other obligations. Recognizing this challenge, we will continue to focus on improving the quality and type of information we share as it pertains to the planning process.
22	ALAC	Q1 - Current Cycle not provide sufficient time	<p>The ALAC/At-Large community agree that more time should be given for additional community involvement. As we have previously noted, the current timelines are very compressed, to the detriment of full and effective participation by our volunteers. In addition, the priorities are often not known in advance. ICANN Org publishes a list of projects but does not give any particular clarity as to the priority given each project and how it compares to other projects on the list in terms of priority. If we extend the budget process to two years, it is essential the community has a better idea of the established priorities of all projects in the published list.</p> <p>The ALAC/At-Large community proposes a listing of priorities and statements on the impact of each project on ICANN org and on each of the unique ACs and SOs. This would be helpful, in the context of a vast number of ICANN org projects. If At-Large were aware of ICANN org priorities, it would help the community reshape our agenda to become more in line with the ICANN org workflow. It would give us an idea of which issues we need to</p>	Thank you for your feedback. We note that ALAC thinks additional time in the planning cycle would be useful and requests more transparency to give a better idea of the prioritization of ICANN projects and non-discretionary spending.

			<p>emphasize, should we feel an issue is extremely critical. Without an understanding of the priority of each of ICANN project, it is difficult for the community to respond and advocate effectively.</p> <p>For example, in At-Large, ICANN IT staff built an automated email translation service to enable regular communication and interaction within the ICANN community, particularly for policy work. We encourage ICANN org to provide the appropriate level of resources to ICANN IT for continued exploration, testing and support of such resources to ensure that the service that is eventually provided is not only robust and reliable, but also fit for purpose.</p> <p>It would also be helpful for the ALAC/At-Large if the community had a better idea of what specific items were included in non-discretionary funding, and the total budget they consume. This would give all constituencies a better idea of the priorities and how much of the budget is spent on these items. The community would also benefit from more information about the prioritization of items in the discretionary funds.</p>	
23	ALAC	Q2 - Does more time, mean more transparency	<p>The ALAC/At-Large community believe if the community is more aware of priority ranking of projects or has collaborated with ICANN org on priority ranking, then, yes, the additional time from 15 months to 2 years would provide more transparency. The extra time would allow more community involvement and increase the collaboration of the different ACs and SOs with the ICANN Planning and Finance departments.</p> <p>We think there needs to be more detailed explanation of where funds are going, how large the nondiscretionary funds are and how they are composed. This would give us and other constituencies much more</p>	Please see response #22.

			clarity on the smaller, non-discretionary budget.	
24	ALAC	Q3 - How and Who should set ICANN's Priorities	As the ALAC/At-Large community wrote in its response to the ICANN Strategic Plan, we believe that keeping the system up-and-running, safe and maintaining the multistakeholder system are the top priorities. Beyond these priorities, the community should be directly involved in setting other priorities. As priorities are usually linked to funding, the community should also have an opportunity to identify and point out the impact of changes to funding. Ample time needs to be given for community input.	Thank you for your feedback. We note that ALAC thinks maintaining the multistakeholder system is a top priority and the community should be involved in setting other priorities. During the planning process, we will try to be more transparent about changes to funding so that the community can provide feedback on changes and next steps.
25	ALAC	Q4 - Policy Development and implementation activities	The ALAC/At-Large community believes that while policy development and implementation activities are integral to the planning process, so are other activities, such as those that enable communications, collaboration, and outreach, between RALOS, At-Large members and other constituencies. Such activities are integral to the planning process. A jointly developed priority list would help the community advocate for the projects they feel are essential to each constituency. It would also help us plan better and target our own policy and outreach and engagement activities.	Thank you for the feedback. We note that ALAC thinks that, in addition to policy development and implementation, collaboration and outreach activities are integral to the planning process and a prioritized list of projects would help with planning.
26	ALAC	Q5 - What activities should be planned, by whom?	The ALAC/At-Large community is very supportive of the CCWG process, as it believes any activities which promote the collaboration of more than one constituency are beneficial to ICANN. The more people in various constituencies collaborate, the more trust can be built up, and problems resolved. As such, the creation of a "CCWG, CCEG" or any other cross community group to solve or collaborate on problems or policy issues is critically important to the functioning of ICANN. ICANN does not represent just one constituency, and therefore the more people in different constituencies work together to solve problems and create	Thank you for the comment. ICANN org also recognizes the value and impact generated from a "CCWG" or Cross Community Working Group. We will continue to recommend creation of and provide support for CCWGs when applicable and appropriate.

			<p>solutions, the better. However, we do realize that forming a cross community group, as defined by ICANN, may not work for every problem. In essence, cross community groups are a way for groups from different constituencies to work together, to help expand and better react to threats to the multistakeholder form of governance. An example is the current CCWG on Internet Governance for which a CCEG (Cross Community Engagement Group) would allow different constituencies to continue their collaboration, working to improve ICANN Internet Governance.</p>	
27	ALAC	2 public comment periods	<p>The ALAC/At-Large community believe it would be very helpful to have a phase of activity planning inserted into the planning process, for ACs and SOs to give the community time to provide their feedback. This feedback can then be incorporated into the operating plan and budget development phase.</p> <p>Once these budgets are created the community should have another opportunity for review. This will allow the community to have a better understanding of and contribution to the budget process.</p>	Please see response #10.
28	ALAC	Barriers to community involvement	<p>The ALAC/At-Large community believe the following items pose seven barriers to community engagement, but are just a small set of the problems people in the community face when engaging with ICANN:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understanding the concept, process and timelines ● Difficulty in understanding the terms and acronyms used ● Lack of available time? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Volunteers have limited time and the time they spend on this process should be welcomed. ● Translation into other languages besides English ● Captioning or real time translations ● Limited bandwidth 	<p>Please see response #21.</p> <p>We also recognize that multilingualism is essential for a global, multistakeholder organization. Consequently, ICANN strives to have information and meetings accessible in a variety of languages. ICANN's working language is English, and we provide language services in the six United Nations languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish) where and when appropriate as detailed in the Language Services Policies and</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Accessibility issues <p>The ALAC/At-Large strongly believes that for ICANN to be as inclusive as possible, documents should be translated into multiple languages. Further, important community meetings should be held in different time zones and in different languages, with real time translation (language channels) and captioning / real time transcription (RTT) provided on all calls. Captioning has the capacity to create better understanding of technical or unfamiliar terms.</p> <p>We encourage the regular use of real time transcription (RTT) services in English and in other languages to support the needs of those with hearing disabilities, as well as those whose first language is not English, or for participants with limited bandwidth. Thus, RTT allows them to participate and stay engaged.</p> <p>Many people who engage with ICANN live in bandwidth-challenged countries, so call quality varies considerably. Having the meeting written down in a text-only stream allows these individuals to better engage and follow the process. Embracing cultural diversity and inclusion through the implementation of this technology would help remove barriers to engagement and participation.</p>	<p>Procedures. Either directly or through partnership with local hosts, ICANN org also attempts to make language services available in the language of the country where it organizes its three annual ICANN Public meetings, if this language is not one of the six UN languages.</p>
29	Individual	Q1 - Current Cycle not provide sufficient time	<p>From my perspective, and I have been actively involved in several iterations of ICANN planning and budget cycle processes, the 1 year certainly does not provide sufficient time, especially for timely and effective community engagement and input. A more important matter in today's ICANN, than perhaps ever before, with the responsibilities of the Empowered Community. Care however, within an extended cycle of 2 years, will need to be taken on the specific timing of milestones such as opportunity for Community input well in advance of Draft Budget formulation</p>	<p>Thank you for your feedback. We note that you think the current one-year planning process does not provide sufficient time. ICANN org will continue to focus on getting feedback from the community so that it can be reflected in the Operating Plan and Budget.</p>

			etc., but that I suspect is the matter for future consultations.	
30	Individual	Q2 - Does more time, mean more transparency	In my view, the existence of more time for a planning process does not in and of itself provide for more transparency, but if the key activities and engagement points within the extended time period are well positioned in a timely manner, then that would, as a consequence of implementation specifics provide the opportunity for greater transparency. As would careful and publically available tracking and data capture relating to the processes that occur within any given cycle. (Track changes in docs, annotated records of input received (from who, when) etc.,	Thank you for your comment. We note that you think more time does not necessarily provide more transparency. ICANN org will try to provide key activities and note changes between cycles for greater transparency and easier collaboration with community members.
31	Individual	Q3 - How and Who should set ICANN's Priorities	From my perspective, prioritisation is essential, particularly as we are always likely to have competing interests across the different parts of the ICANN Community. Yet as ICANN operates in a sometimes volatile but almost always agile environment, built in flexibility also needs to be designed into the 'Prioritisation Process/Model' that in itself needs regular (annual perhaps) review within any adopted 5 year Strategic Plan. The ' How and Who' for me is a cross community effort inclusive of course of the Board and ICANN.org, or failing that at least one that has transparency and accountability considered inputs and opinions ICANN wide. And Again timeliness and the assurity that the community engaged in the process clearly understands the purpose and scope of the process is essential.	Thank you for your feedback. We note that you think different parts of the community will have competing interests for prioritization. During the annual planning process, we provide an update to the Five-Year Strategic Plan, which includes progress and status updates within each goal. Additionally, we are now holding annual strategic trends workshops internally, with the Board, and with the community so that we can align on priorities and implement budgetary changes. The inputs gathered during these sessions help shape and drive the priorities and strategies within our Operating Plan and Budget.

32	Individual	Q4 - Policy Development and implementation activities	Absolutely YES, this is essential in my view, it should also be noted that there has been a desire and call from at least parts of the ICANN Community for more planning and predictability on the PDP processes and activities including timings of calls for Public Comments since before ATRT1 was convened. There is probably a need for both planning that occurs with all the SO/ACs that would also include proposed or required Cross Community activities (CCWGs etc.,) as well as within, but transparent to the full ICANN Community Support Organisations specific planning on at least an annual basis with an 18 month to 2 year forecasting.	Thank you for your comment. We note that you think policy development is integral to the planning cycle and will consider your suggestions.
33	Individual	Q5 - What activities should be planned, by whom?	Matters such as outreach and engagement events and opportunities, key meetings within the Internet Ecosystem and ICANNs engagement in these should be primarily planned and shared in a single calendar resource, by the most closely related part of ICANN.org or ICANN Community. Here I am more interested in transparency of such activities and that they are well planned for, more than the who plans them.	Thank you for the comment. We appreciate the suggestion and recognize the value this initiative could have. ICANN org is responsible for planning, coordinating, and communicating several events within the Internet Ecosystem. ICANN will continue to plan and communicate about events for which ICANN org is directly responsible.
34	Individual	Q6 - Dedicated phase to plan for SO/AC activities?	YES, absolutely! Formalization of a dedicated phase is essential to the success of this sort of model, along with the recognition that the desire for predictability and management of expectations, there is always the possibility or likelihood that an 'unknown issue' will present itself as most urgent, and will need to be accommodated in planning reviews. So flexibility is also a key. How many years? As this is not a 'tabula rasa' exercise but rather a transition from ad hoc in some cases and formal in others, SO/AC strategic planning work, I would aim for any period of 18-24 months as desirable for forecasting, within existing overarching ICANN.org 5 year planning.	Thank you for the comment. We will consider this input into the planning process.

35	GNSO	Q1 - Current Cycle not provide sufficient time	<p>The GNSO Council notes that to date, the annual planning for the draft fiscal budget and operating plan are the most transparent and detailed ever produced by ICANN org. However, the compressed time frame with which to review an annual budget and operating plan is challenging given the time requirements to allow for the Empowered Community to dutifully consider the budget and if applicable, exercise its power to reject the budget. The Council believes that change allows for the opportunity to improve and thus, sees benefit in moving to a two-year planning cycle, which would seemingly allow for more time for the community to consider and provide input into the operations plan so long as input is provided prior to formulation of the draft budget being prepared for public comment around December.</p>	Please see response #29.
36	GNSO	Q2 - Does more time, mean more transparency	<p>Indirectly, perhaps. The Council does not believe that time is a direct function of transparency, rather, it has more to do with the levels of detail provided in planned projects along with planned costs. However, the Council notes that more detailed information by extension usually requires more time to consume and make sense of the information.</p> <p>However, to provide more transparency, tracking of changes (i.e. changes to the previous iterations of the plan along with the reasons for the adjustments) might be of a benefit to the community and would allow us to see the direction where the organization is moving, which allows to be able to suggest corrections of the course to ensure that the objectives are followed the way, which is acceptable.</p>	Please see response #30.

37	GNSO	Q3 - How and Who should set ICANN's Priorities	The Council fully supports prioritization but recognizes this is easier said than done given competing demands and divergent positions and interests. Prioritization at the objective and goal level may be somewhat helpful but prioritization is needed primarily at the portfolio and project level. For example, if GNSO operates at 110% of capacity, what priority should be assigned to an un-planned project and what inflight projects should be placed on hold until bandwidth is freed?	Please see response #31.
38	GNSO	Q4 - Policy Development and implementation activities	The Council fully supports policy development and implementation activities being a part of the planning cycle, as gTLD policy development is a core function within ICANN's remit. By better integrating policy development into the planning cycle, the resourcing needs can be better accounted for, which the Council believes will lead to efficiencies in the allocation of resources. By way of example, if the Council understands that a face to face meeting, an external facilitator, legal resources or other factors are needed to efficiently progress the work of a PDP, it can be properly accounted for in the budget and thus require less ad hoc scrambling to secure those resources.	Please see response #32.
39	GNSO	Q4 - Policy Development and implementation activities	The GNSO Council believes that a project reporting platform to establish an in-flight and planned project pipeline, that can properly represent current activities and percent bandwidth, is essential to its ability to plan its policy activities. The Council is undertaking steps to better understand the resourcing needs of the various activities in a PDP, which will help it better understand the community and staff capacity, which will allow the Council to make decisions based on priority and make resource planning more predictable. In that regard, the Council welcomes assistance from ICANN org in extending its project management proficiency, either by providing skilled resources or upskilling Councilors and/or staff.	Thank you for your feedback. We note the suggestion of a project reporting platform that shows statuses to help with policy development planning. ICANN org will try to provide more assistance with project management and notes the feedback given regarding the mentioned groups.

40	GNSO	Q4 - Policy Development and implementation activities	<p>The GNSO Council does not have a position about planning across the SO/ACs, as each group has distinct policy activities, requirements, and outcomes. However, given the rise of CCWGs, the issues being addressed across the community should be well understood, planned where possible, and prioritized accordingly.</p>	Please see response #39.
41	GNSO	Q4 - Policy Development and implementation activities	<p>For the GNSO, the simple answer is that absolutely yes, all projects should be planned to the extent possible. The Council maintains an on-going project list, mostly tracking current projects. It does lack prioritization however. How can the Council make tough decisions to suspend work, if necessary, that is considered important to certain stakeholders across the community? What information is necessary to make the decision? While the project list does contain planned work, such as future policy reviews, it is not managed in a way to better understand the policy development pipeline and resources necessary. Also, it is difficult to gauge available bandwidth of the community, predominately resources by volunteers.</p> <p>Collectively, the GNSO and ccNSO do coordinate on a regular basis and each has a liaison to the other organization. While the bodies have no mechanism to develop policy together, they can coordinate to the extent possible, to seek to ensure a consistent outcome. Identifying and understanding those topics of mutual interest is important.</p>	Please see response #39.
42	GNSO	Q5 - What activities should be planned, by whom?	<p>REVIEWS: Yes. The GNSO Council understands that it is already predictable when a review is to be launched. However, it is difficult to gauge the duration of the review itself and it is also difficult to determine the duration to implement changes, not knowing what recommendations could be formulated. It is also noted when a review does kick-off and while it is NOT policy development, it still</p>	Thank you for the comment. We will consider this input for the planning of future reviews and creation of CCWGs.

			<p>commands a portion of the available bandwidth. Essentially, there is always a review on-going, so what percentage of the bandwidth will always consume the current pipeline? In addition, oftentimes the Reviews will have some overlap in scope with existing or planned policy work. That potential duplication of work is best avoided.</p> <p>CCWG should be planned where possible</p>	
43	GNSO	Q5 - What activities should be planned, by whom?	<p>ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES: The GNSO Council greatly appreciates that the larger Internet ecosystem presents risks to ICANN's mission and activities. However, the impact of some these is either not understood or not documented. We would like to see a global calendar of events produced which includes those engagement activities which directly impact ICANN, as well as other Internet governance activities which may have an indirect impact on ICANN (along with an explanation as to why). We would support there being more of an emphasis on tangible outcomes being derived from ICANN's participation and/or sponsorship of engagement activities, and regular reporting of what events ICANN is participating/sponsoring, and their associated outcomes, would help us more fully understand the value proposition of this expenditure.</p>	<p>We appreciate the suggestion and recognize the value that a calendar regarding events in the Internet Ecosystem could have. ICANN org is responsible for planning, coordinating, and communicating several events within the Internet Ecosystem. ICANN will continue to plan and communicate about events for which ICANN org is directly responsible.</p>
44	GNSO	Q6 - Dedicated phase to plan for SO/AC activities?	<p>Yes. The GNSO Council supports a dedicated phase. But it also recognizes that plans have to be adjusted based on external forces. In many ways, this can be considered an on-going exercise. The GNSO Council is grateful to ICANN for this opportunity to share our perspectives on this important issue and we trust you will find our recommendations helpful. As the GNSO is a part of the Empowered Community we look forward to reviewing all inputs from the public comment process which addresses ICANN's broader strategy and how the operating plan complements</p>	<p>Thank you for the comment. We will consider this input into the planning process.</p>

			the operating budget. Finally, the GNSO Council will be happy to answer any clarifying questions that you may have regarding the contents of this document.	
45	RySG	Process	<p>While we understand that this discussion paper is focused on planning for the future, what we believe is missing from these discussions is an understanding of the many, many projects currently underway across the community - everything from their life expectancy to their budget and resource implications, including volunteer time and effort. None of these things are currently captured in these discussions.</p> <p>You may be aware that in 2018 the GNSO developed a spreadsheet of all open GNSO projects: https://gns0.icann.org/sites/default/files/file/field-file-attach/project-timing-planning-04oct18-en.pdf .</p> <p>At a glance, this suggests that there is a considerable amount of work being undertaken by the community on a number of issues. What it doesn't capture is how long these work efforts have been underway, or that the majority of GNSO projects run over the expected timeframe - in many cases by more than 12 months - and the reasons for these delays, that there is no requirement for existing work to be completed before new projects start, or that as interest wanes in one topic community volunteers move on to the next shiny thing or because there is urgency, as we saw with the EPDP on gTLD Data Registration.</p> <p>The community, ICANN org and the ICANN Board have been grappling with this issue for many years in the context of volunteer burnout, but in trying to understand the planning process it seems timely for ICANN org to dedicate resources to capturing all the distinct projects currently underway or recently</p>	Thank you for your feedback. We note that you would like more clarity on projects across the community and ICANN org will try to provide additional details whenever practicable.

			completed. On a sampling of the projects, it should carry out an analysis of the project lifecycle, resource implications including volunteer hours and ICANN org budget and resource implications, expected timeframe for completion and actual timeframe for completion and where there is a gap, understand the reasons for that. It really doesn't matter if the planning cycle is one or two years: the planning will be flawed if the input is inaccurate.	
46	RySG	Q1 - Current Cycle not provide sufficient time	The RySG does not necessarily agree that the yearly planning cycle is inadequate to gather sufficient community input and interaction. The issue here may be less of the total amount of time spent on the planning, and more a matter of how that time is utilized. One of the challenges with the planning cycle is that it competes with other efforts being undertaken within the community. The RySG supports ICANN's consideration of this question, and believes there may be value in exploring more efficient ways to present the information contained in the plan, solicit input and interact with the community that would create less pressure on the yearly cycle. While there may be value in extending the planning cycle, potential benefits should be balanced against the risk of further exacerbating volunteer burnout by demanding too much time from volunteers.	Thank you for your feedback. We note that you do not think that the planning process provides inadequate time. ICANN org acknowledges that the community is made up of volunteers who have limited time while reviewing the planning process and participating in other community efforts. ICANN org will continue to look for more efficient ways to present information within the Operating Plan and Budget and solicit feedback from the community.
47	RySG	Q2 - Does more time, mean more transparency	No. There is nothing to suggest that time correlates directly with transparency. More time may mean that the process will be less compressed or it may simply become more complicated. More transparency would come from better explanations about how ICANN org has managed the process for deciding budget allocations for different departments etc. and how community requests and comments were addressed.	Please see response #30.

48	RySG	Q3 - How and Who should set ICANN's Priorities	<p>The strategic plan is a list of goals against which projects should be measured. ICANN org should identify elements of the Strategic Plan that are currently being undertaken as part of ICANN's core business and budget and resources are already allocated. Part of the community process for determining which projects ICANN should take on should include a consideration of priorities. Subsequently, when the Board approves projects and budgets funds for them, it can further prioritize based on budget and other resource limitations.</p> <p>Where applicable, the Strategic Plan should note where certain parts correspond to specific years, and any prioritization should reflect that. Whether priorities are set by the community, ICANN org the ICANN Board, or a combination thereof, a detailed explanation of the prioritization should accompany the Strategic Plan.</p>	Please see response #31.
49	RySG	Q4 - Policy Development and implementation activities	<p>Yes. The GNSO and ccNSO should continue to oversee the policy development process and any integration with the planning cycle should not restrict these organizations from having the flexibility to initiate a PDP if warranted. But where PDPs (or IRTs) are in progress or where it is possible to plan them in advance, then integrating policy development activities into the planning process could be beneficial.</p>	Please see response #32.

50	RySG	Q5 - What activities should be planned, by whom?	<p>The RySG is struggling with the concept of 'planned' and how it's being used in this consultation paper. Is the assumption that reviews and cross community working groups are not currently planned?</p> <p>The timing of specific reviews is currently dictated in the ICANN bylaws and therefore should be planned for activities in any given year or period. Organizational reviews should similarly be planned. It is the RySG's hope that including reviews in the planning process will help alleviate issues with volunteer burnout (or a lack of volunteer resources) and also help facilitate a smoother implementation process for the ICANN Board and org.</p> <p>Cross community working groups have traditionally been organic in nature, but it may be helpful to establish criteria associated with instigating a CCWG effort that would include budget and resource implications and an assessment of whether there is an immediate need to commence such work, balanced with ongoing efforts.</p> <p>Engagement activities outside ICANN meetings seem to refer to face-to-face meetings for WGs or perhaps attendance at ICANN or DNS related events. Similarly, these activities should be evaluated against set criteria for expected benefits, budget and resource implications and whether there's an immediate need for engagement activities outside of ICANN.</p>	<p>Thank you for the comment. When "Planning" was referred to in the Two-Year Planning Process document it was in relation to the process of planning and ensuring the proper amount of resources are allocated to a specific task or activity in the budgeting process. ICANN org also recognizes the value and impact generated from "CCWG" or Cross Community Working Groups. We will continue to recommend the creation of and provide support for CCWGs when applicable and appropriate. ICANN org will continue to evaluate engagement activities to ensure that review meetings advance ICANN's mission.</p>
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51	RySG	Q6 - Dedicated phase to plan for SO/AC activities?	<p>With the exception of the GNSO, each SO/AC should be encouraged to develop a workplan for a 12 month or two year period, and identify areas or issues that are a priority. This work plan should, in some way, be connected to ICANN's Strategic Plan or mission and also capture other activities that the SO/AC is working on.</p> <p>The GNSO's Stakeholder Groups and Constituencies should be encouraged to do the same, while the GNSO Council should conduct a separate effort associated with the management of Council business and the policy process.</p> <p>The GNSO Council has, in the last two years, held strategic planning sessions and the outcome of these sessions could be informative for the rest of the community in determining resource requirements for policy development efforts. There is a challenge in understanding the budget implications and the distribution of funding</p>	Thank you for the comment. We think there is value in having a formalized process to plan for SO/AC activities and will continue to evaluate incorporating this into the planning process.
52	RySG	2 public comment periods	It is difficult to comment on the first question as it is not clear what the "activity planning" would entail, what the expectations for volunteers would be, or how the input would be considered. While such a step could be productive, we caution that an open call for input into "activity planning" could further exacerbate problems that exist around setting priorities effectively, as well as push ICANN into pursuing initiatives outside of its remit.	Thank you for your feedback. We note that the RySG thinks activity planning could exacerbate prioritization and scoping for ICANN.
53	RySG	Barriers to community involvement	As explained in our overarching comment we believe that the lack of a documented overview and understanding of the many projects underway is a barrier to community engagement in the planning process.	Please see response #45.