The 26th Session of the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum (APRSAF-26)

Space Education Working Group (SEWG)
Concept Note

1. Background and Objectives of SEWG Activities

The goals of the Space Education Working Group (SEWG) are to promote space education activities and to provide opportunities for youth and educators in the Asia-Pacific region. Our actions are intended to shape the future of not just the children of the Asia-Pacific region, but of those all over the world.

In every place and culture on Earth, children love the natural world and look at life with wonder. They take pleasure in nature’s blessings, and stand in awe in the face of nature in all its power. Children may ask what lies beyond the stars they see, or how to overcome environmental crises. Over the 60 years that humanity has been exploring space, activities in space have increasingly become commonplace in our lives. Today, we have numerous players in aerospace, hailing from a range of countries and industries, seeking to broaden humanity’s horizons, dreaming of a more prosperous future.

The Space Education and Awareness WG was established at the 8<sup>th</sup> session of the APRSAF in 2001, changing its name to the Space Education WG in 2014. The WG’s objectives are: i) effectively using space education materials to enhance education for young people; ii) providing education and training opportunities for young people in space science and technology; iii) helping enhance mutual understanding among countries in the region through exchange opportunities for young people. The working group has been actively pursuing a variety of programs in close collaboration with educators across the Asia-Pacific region to encourage young minds to see the world through a larger, more cosmic perspective, and channel the spirit of curiosity, adventure and craftsmanship to thus make a contribution to the global community, and become part of the solution to the ills that plague today’s society.

The SEWG has three major programs held concurrently with the annual APRSAF session. The first program is the Poster Contest that is open to children aged between 8 and 11. Its
aim is to encourage the imagination through that year’s space-related theme; the theme for the next year’s Poster Contest is developed and selected at the WG’s annual meeting. Delegates to the annual APRSAF session are encouraged to vote for the best poster. The SEWG’s second program, the Water Rocket Event, is for students aged 12 to 16, and consists of a water rocket competition and cross-cultural activities. Because water rockets can be constructed from common materials such as plastic bottles, plastic sheets and plasticine, it is an ideal way to study the principles of rocketry and engineering. A great deal can be learned through the process of designing, building, and launching, then making modifications to improve performance. The program also provides students with an opportunity to interact with different cultures and further understand their own background. And the last program, the Educator Workshop, provides a valuable opportunity for educators to gather and trade experiences, insights and achievements from their own space education activities. The aim is to enhance the quality of teaching, which can nurture the kind of next-generation talent capable of true innovation. The WG also holds its Space Education Seminar for Educators annually to promote space education within the region, organized in close collaboration with the host agency to meet the specific needs of the host country. The WG considers it important to make the seminar both participatory and practical, so that attendees can incorporate what they learn into their everyday curriculum.

2. Results of SEWG Activities at APRSAF-25

See results of SEWG activities and Recommendations adopted at APRSAF-25: https://www.aprsaf.org/annual_meetings/aprsaf25/data/8_SummaryReports/8-4_SEWG_report_version_5.1_rev0109.pdf

3. Draft Agenda

This year’s SEWG session mainly focuses on the following two points. First, “Advancing Diverse Human Resource Development Toward a New Space Era.” The WG will share each country’s achievements and challenges, and discuss the future direction of regional collaboration, for example, how to fill the gap between the existing activity base for K-12 and higher education. Second, “Supporting Teacher and Educators to Nurture the Next Generation.” We will conduct an introductory session of the APRSAF Educator Seminar for attendees to experience hands-on educational materials and to get an idea on how to
introduce space to the classroom in order to foster a spirit of innovation. Throughout the whole session, the WG encourages attendees to take the viewpoint of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including Goal 4: Quality Education, Goal 5: Gender Equality, Goal 9: Industry Innovation and Infrastructure, and Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals. It will provide an opportunity to reflect our unwavering commitment to promoting space education for the development of youth with hopes and dreams.

Draft Agenda of APRSAF-26 SEWG meeting
(1) Opening of the session
(2) Adoption of the agenda
(3) General exchange of views on space education
(4) Joint educational activities for educators and young people
   a. Water Rocket Event
   b. Poster Contest
   c. Space Education Seminar for Educators
      ➢ Results of the previous seminar in India
      ➢ Introductory session of APRSAF Space Education Seminar – Hands-on Space Education
(5) Sharing of teaching tools and materials, with the greater aim of enriching space education
(6) Other business
(7) Wrap up
(8) Close of the session