



APFAN introductory information

MISSION AND VISION

APFAN, the Asia Pacific Food Analysis Network, is a special project of the Federation of Asian Chemical Societies (FACS). APFAN's *mission* is to serve the needs of food analysts in their dual roles to achieve food quality, food safety and good nutrition and to promote food trade in the Asia Pacific region. APFAN helps its members to maintain and improve their abilities in food analysis and this is achieved by developing a network of food scientists and food technologists that encourages the sharing of ideas, concepts and methods through on-line communication and face to face meetings. APFAN's *vision* is to create a stable and peaceful Asia Pacific region where its people benefit through improved health and prosperity. APFAN seeks to achieve 'equivalence' of standards between economies in both food safety and food trade systems, thereby strengthening food security in the region.

HISTORY

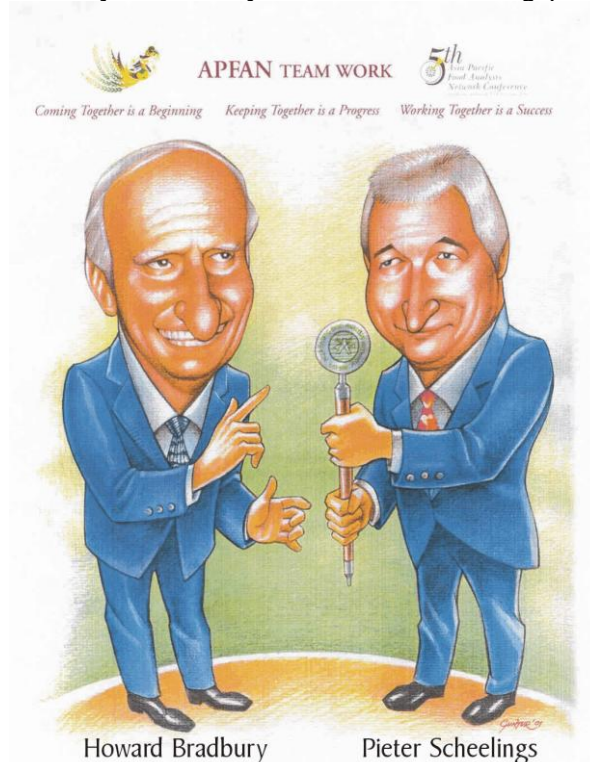
APFAN was formed at the 3rd Asian Chemical Congress, which was held in conjunction with the Royal Australian Chemical Institute's 10th Analytical Chemistry Conference in Brisbane in 1989. Dr Howard Bradbury from the Australian National University accepted the role of APFAN Founding Coordinator. For 26 years Dr Bradbury's humanitarian efforts focused on the development of simple kits for the determination of cyanogens in cassava to help reduce the incidence of the debilitating 'Konzo' disease, which causes irreversible paralysis of the legs, often in children and young women, in developing countries such as Mozambique. In 2007 he was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia for his service to science as a plant biochemist.



ANU Emeritus Professor Dr Howard Bradbury, Founding Coordinator APFAN.

As a network of food scientists and food technologists from more than 25 countries in the Asia, Pacific and African regions, APFAN rapidly grew to over 500 members in its first few years.

Thereafter, Dr Pieter Scheelings (Australia) took on the role of APFAN Coordinator in November 2001, assisted by Co-Directors Dr Julia Kantasubrata (Indonesia) and Dr Aida Aguinaldo (The Philippines). Professor Dr F. G. Winarno (Indonesia) took over as APFAN Coordinator in September 2014. As of July 2018, the new APFAN Coordinator is Mr Stewart Jones (Australia). Assoc Prof Kunchit Judprasong (Thailand) is the Deputy Coordinator and Ms Rosemarie Dumag (The Philippines) is the Secretary. As of May 2023, Ms Li Hui Ling (Malaysia) is the Treasurer.



Dr Bradbury handing over the 'Baton' to the new APFAN Coordinator, Dr Pieter Scheelings during the 5th Analytical Conference (5AC) in Yogyakarta, Indonesia in 2001.



The new APFAN Coordinator, Mr Stewart Jones receiving the 'Baton' from Prof. Dr F. G. Winarno during the APFAN PT1 Workshop in Jakarta, Indonesia in 2018.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Since its formation in 1989, APFAN has a long and successful history of working towards improving the quality of food analysis and the safety of food in the Asia Pacific region, mostly through training and the maintenance of an active network.

APFAN has successfully organised 9 regional Analytical Conferences (ACs). The first and second ACs were held in Penang (1AC) in 1990 and Kuala Lumpur (2AC) in 1992 in conjunction with meetings of the Institut Kimia Malaysia. The third AC (3AC) was held in Manila in 1995 in conjunction with the Sixth Asian Chemical Congress. The fourth AC (4AC) was held in Chiang Mai, Thailand, from 16-19 November 1998. 5AC was held in Indonesia in 2001. 6AC and 7AC were both held in Melbourne, Australia in 2016 and 2018 in conjunction with the 1st and 2nd International Conferences on Food Analysis (ICFA). 8AC was held virtually in November, 2021 in conjunction with the 3rd ICFA and 9AC was held as part of the 4th ICFA held in Melbourne in November 2023. 10AC was held in Melbourne in November 2025 as part of the 5th ICFA. Through these Conferences, as well as “hands-on” laboratory Analytical Workshops (AWs), short courses and special projects, and consultancies and work secondments, several thousand food analysts have been trained, have had the opportunity to travel throughout the Asia Pacific region, and have become ‘quality drivers’ within their own laboratories and economies.

Analytical proficiency has been enabled through the production of food-based reference materials (RMs) in a program led by Dr Prapasri Puwastien from Mahidol University, and through a series of workshops conducted in 2006 in Indonesia in association with IFAN, the Indonesian Food Analysis Network (Dr Julia Kantasubrata), in Thailand (Dr Prapasri Puwastien) and in the Philippines (Dr Aida Aguinaldo and Ms Teresita Portugal). APFAN through these activities has enabled a common regional understanding of measurement uncertainty principles and laboratory accreditation protocols.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

Food analysis is vital to food quality, food safety and food trade. International food trade and public health and safety increasingly depend on reliable inspection, measurement and testing systems. Accurate chemical and microbiological analyses and regional equivalence of laboratory standards are essential and critical for policy development, monitoring regulatory standards, health advancement, and hence for regional social and economic development. To meet international expectations, laboratories in the Asia Pacific region involved in the testing of food commodities need to be accredited to the ISO/IEC 17025 international standard. Yet many remain not accredited because they lack the skills necessary to implement the standard's technical requirements for method validation and measurement traceability, and management requirements for performance and proficiency.

In recognition of the need to improve the proficiency and capabilities of regional food testing laboratories, APFAN is conducting a multi-phase project that produces and distributes Proficiency Testing (PT) materials free of charge to food analysis laboratories in the Asia Pacific region. Follow-up PT Workshops have been held in Indonesia (PT1) in 2018, in Thailand (PT2) in 2019, in the Philippines (PT3) in 2023 and in Malaysia (PT4) in 2024. The PT5 Workshop was held in Fiji in September 2025, which brought together analysts from 9 countries cross the Asia Pacific (see [Pacific and international experts meet in Fiji to strengthen food analysis - The Institute of Applied Sciences](#)). The next PT6 Workshop will be held in 2026 in Perth, Western Australia, at which PT materials will again be distributed free of charge to participants. These Workshops discuss the PT results in detail, to enable the participant laboratories to improve their methodologies and adopt a more uniform approach to regional food analysis. By focusing on the practical aspects of ISO/IEC 17025 through PT and follow-up workshops, this project will assist participants to identify, assess and implement actions that address the technical shortfalls of their organisations.

APFAN is also involved with the Pacific Quality Infrastructure Initiative (PQII), the regional QI system in the Pacific, which has recently completed a five year project from 2020-2024. The PQII aims to strengthen a demand-oriented QI and access to services that enhance trade competitiveness in the Pacific region. The project is managed by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), which engages with regional and international development and technical partners and donor agencies. Plans for the PQII 2026-2027 activities are currently underway and APFAN welcomes the opportunity to work with the PQII Pacific Islands Testing Committee (PITC) as well as the newly formed Association of Official Analytical Collaboration - South West Pacific (AOAC - SWP) Section. Key issues in improving laboratory performance in the Asia Pacific region include facilitating access to inexpensive PT studies and RMs, and harmonisation of methods. The establishment of Pacific Island Reference Laboratories (PIRLs), the adoption of AOAC Official Methods of Analysis (OMA), and cooperation with the AOAC - SEA (South East Asia) Section will greatly enable the production of safe food and the facilitation of trade in the region.

FUTURE

Celebrating its 37th anniversary in 2026, APFAN finds itself in a different world compared to 1989. Globalisation of markets is creating an urgent need to harmonise divergent national systems for measurement, standards and conformity assessment. The level and nature of training requirements and trainee expectations in food analysis have evolved with advances in analytical technology and complexity of instrumentation. The Asia Pacific region is home to 60 percent of the world's population, scattered over a vast area. Indonesia alone consists of 17,500 islands where 800 different languages are spoken. The region conducts 42 percent of the world's trade and it is the world's largest trading bloc. We could not get a more diverse collection of cultures and talent. It is true that the Asia Pacific region needs the services of APFAN more than ever before.

As APFAN looks to the future, the need to achieve equivalence of standards between economies in the Asia Pacific trading region, particularly in the areas of food analytical systems and food safety systems is evident. It is important that APFAN works closely with international agencies such as AOAC, AusAID, IAEA, FAO, WHO, UNIDO, ASEAN and the APEC Food Safety Cooperation Forum to ensure a consistent approach across the region. We now have the tools of social media and the use of webinar training modules to reduce travel costs for some seminars. We look forward to using these tools to improve our networking and speed of communication, in particular, in the post-COVID era.

Global climate change has heightened the focus on the environment and its effects on food quality, safety and security. In the future there will also be a need to do more work in the area of microbiological proficiency testing and traceability (biometrology), as well as continuing developments in risk management and international accreditation of laboratory management systems. Together we can embrace these changes through a new generation of APFAN members and activities.

HOW TO JOIN APFAN

APFAN now has more than 4,700 contacts in over 73 countries within the region. As a non-profit organisation, the breadth and depth of APFAN's activities are dependent on the level of support received from its Sponsors. If you would like to help us in achieving our aims, please contact the Coordinator.

Membership of APFAN is free. To join, simply email the Coordinator, Mr Stewart Jones, at apfan.apfan@yahoo.com.