




I. INTRODUCTION

1. Every two to three years, the Regional Cooperation and Integration (RCI) community of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) hosts a conference to connect with stakeholders in Asia and the Pacific, collect feedback on ADB actions and strategies, share knowledge, and explore innovative RCI initiatives. The 2019 RCI Conference discussed the [RCI Operational Plan \(OP7\)](#), which was prepared as part of ADB's Strategy 2030.



2. OP7 was carefully designed and balanced to build higher quality connectivity (pillar 1); expand global and regional trade and investment opportunities for firms in the region and make RCI benefits more inclusive given their unequal distribution (pillar 2); and generate more regional public goods (RPGs), which includes promoting collective action to support climate change mitigation and adaptation and mitigate cross-border transmission of infectious and communicable diseases (pillar 3).

3. The 2022 RCI Conference will provide a venue to discuss with key stakeholders of ADB's RCI operations (i) the performance, to date, of implementing OP7, and (ii) key strategic directions for the rest of the OP7 period and beyond. The participants of the Conference will include: (i) senior officials of developing member economies of the ADB responsible for coordinating regional cooperation initiatives, and (ii) representatives of development partner agencies, regional cooperation organizations, and relevant private sector organizations.

4. The Conference will be conducted in hybrid format, i.e., combination of physical and virtual event. In the afternoon of 22 August 2022, the day before the start of the Conference, a physical gathering of officials involved in the ADB-supported subregional cooperation programs together with ADB representatives will be held for a brief experience sharing session. Virtual participation is noted with an icon. 

II. CONFERENCE PROGRAM

DAY 1: TUESDAY, 23 AUGUST 2022

TIME	AGENDA	
Bangkok time (UTC+7)		
9:00 am–9:30 am	Welcome and Opening Address	Mr. Arkhom Termpittayapaisith  Minister of Finance Royal Thai Government
	Keynote Address	Mr. Woonchong Um  Managing Director General of the Asian Development Bank (ADB)
9:30 am–12:30 pm	Session 1: Mid-term Review of ADB Strategy 2030 Operational Priority 7 (OP7) on Fostering Regional Cooperation and Integration Brief comments by delegation heads, and representatives of regional and multilateral organizations (At most 5-minute intervention per delegation leader) ¹ <i>Open Forum</i> <i>There will be a 15-minute coffee/tea break starting at 10:45 am.</i>	<i>Moderator:</i> Ms. Xiaohong Yang Chief Thematic Officer, Sustainable Development and Climate Change Department (SDCC), ADB <i>Presenter:</i> Mr. Ronald Antonio Butiong Chief, Regional Cooperation and Integration Thematic Group, SDCC, ADB
12:30 pm–1:30 pm	Lunch Break	Chadra Ballroom
1:30 pm–4:30 pm	Session 2: Trends and Thematic Priorities Affecting the Future Directions of OP7	<i>Moderator:</i> Mr. Alfredo Perdiguero Director, Regional Cooperation and Operations Coordination Division, Southeast Asia Department (SERD), ADB

¹ A draft of the midterm review of OP7 will be sent to the Conference participants no later than 15 August 2022.

2A: Key priorities of RCI work in the next decade

Connectivity: This includes the hard (infrastructure) and soft (regulations) components of connectivity including 3 sectors: (i) transport road, railways, maritime, and air, (ii) energy (energy transmission, renewable energy, energy efficiency); and (iii) Information and Communication technologies (digital infrastructure and digital regulations)

Competitiveness: This includes 4 sectors (i) trade and investment, (ii) interconnected and interdependent network of livable, and smart cities, (iii) tourism cooperation, and (iv) joint development of high-value sustainable agriculture

Regional Public Goods: This includes (i) health cooperation, and (ii) managing climate change and/or natural disasters.

Panelists:

Mr. Samson Uridia
CAREC Trade Facilitation Focal,
Head, International Relations
Department, Revenue Service,
Ministry of Finance of Georgia

**Mr. Ranmuthu Hewage
Kumarasiri**
Director General,
Department of National Planning
Sri Lanka

Mdm. Sisomboun Ounavong
Director General,
Ministry of Planning and
Investment, Lao PDR

Dr. Zunika Binti Mohamed
Deputy Director General (Policy)
Economic Planning Unit, Prime
Minister's Department, Malaysia

H.E. Mr. Antonio Freitas
Vice Minister
Ministry of Finance, Timor Leste

2B: Cross-cutting issues for RCI work in the next decade

Questions:

(i) ADB as Secretariat of RCI groups. What should ADB focus in terms of its secretarial roles in each subregion including: as (a) financier, (b) mobilizer of cofinancing from development partners and private sector, (c) knowledge provider, or (d) honest broker?

(ii) How could ADB promote more open RCI beyond well-established subregional initiatives?

(iii) How can ADB promote participation of other stakeholders in RCI (private sector, local governments, knowledge institutions)?

(iv) How could ADB work with countries, subregions and beyond to develop a robust RCI pipeline or projects?

Panelists:

Dr. Zhan Shu
Director, IFI Division 2
Ministry of Finance, People's
Republic of China

Mr. Mahmudul Islam Khan
Deputy Secretary,
Economic Relations Division,
Ministry of Finance, Bangladesh

H.E. Dr. Suon Sophal
Director, Council for the
Development of Cambodia

Mr. Vudthidech Chamnikij
Senior Policy and Plan Analyst,
NESDC, Thailand

Dr. Edi Prio Pambudi
Deputy Minister,
Coordinating Ministry of Economic
Affairs, Indonesia

Open Forum

There will be a 15-minute coffee/tea break starting at 3:00 pm.

4:30 pm – 5:00 pm	Brief Wrap Up of Day 1	Mr. Ronald Antonio Butiong Chief, RCI Thematic Group, SDCC, ADB
6:30 pm – 8:30 pm	Welcome Dinner	Niche Restaurant

DAY 2: WEDNESDAY, 24 AUGUST 2022

9:00 am–10:30 am	Session 3: OP7 Future Strategic Directions for Pillar 1: High-quality Connectivity Infrastructure	<i>Moderator:</i> Mr. Thiam Hee Ng Director, Regional Cooperation and Operations Coordination Division, South Asia Department (SARD), ADB
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Presentations/Interventions

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| (i) Implementing resilient, high-quality regional connectivity infrastructure to support the net-zero transition | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showcase: Best practices and innovative cross-border transport projects from the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank • Showcase: The World Bank's experience in implementing inclusive, resilient, high-quality regional connectivity infrastructure in South Asia | <p>Ms. Supee Teravaninthorn
Director General, Infrastructure Investment Department (Region 2), Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank)</p> <p>Ms. Mandakini Kaul
Regional Coordinator, South Asia Regional Integration and Engagement, World Bank</p> |
| (ii) Ensuring energy security and growing energy trade | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showcase: The Monsoon Wind Power Project | Mr. Peck Khamkanist
Chief Executive Officer, Impact Electrons Siam Company Limited |
| (iii) Enhancing regional connectivity through ICT | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showcase: The Asia-Pacific Remote Broadband Internet Satellite Project | Mr. Olivier Richard
Chief Financial Officer, Kacific Broadband Satellites Group |
| (iv) Elevating the status and functionality of cross-border logistics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showcase: The electronic cargo tracking system (ECTS) initiative under the South Asia | Mr. Nilaya Mitash
Principal Operations Coordination Specialist (Regional Cooperation), SARD, ADB |



Subregional Economic Cooperation Program (SASEC) and the Strengthening Multimodal and Integrated Logistics Ecosystem (SMILE) program in India

Open Forum

There will be a 15-minute coffee/tea break starting at 10:30 am.

10:45 am–12:15 pm

Session 4: OP7 Future Directions for Pillar 2: Regional Trade and Investment

Moderator:

Ms. Emma Fan

Director, East Asia Department (EARD), ADB

The session will cover three topics on key trends and prospects in regional trade and investments, including agriculture value chains and food security, digital trade and free trade areas.

Speaker:

Mr. Abdelkarim Sma

Lead Regional Economist, Asia and Pacific Division, Department Programme Management Department, International Fund for Agricultural Development

(i) Promoting Sustainable Agro-Based Value Chains and Food Security

Panelist:

Mr. Takeshi Ueda

Principal Natural Resources and Agriculture Economist, Environment, Natural Resources, and Agriculture Division, SERD, ADB



(ii) Digital Trade: Trends and Prospects

Speaker:

Ms. Hannah Nguyen

Director, Digital Ecosystems, ICC Digital Standards Initiative

Panelist:

Mr. Luca Castellani

Legal Officer, United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), Vienna



(iii) Regional Trade: FTA Trends and Prospects

Speaker:




Mr. Yann Duval

Chief of Trade Policy and Facilitation Trade, Investment and Innovation Division, United Nations ESCAP

Panelist:

Ms. Deborah Elms

Director, Asian Trade Center, based in Singapore. She is an expert in RCEP, CPTPP

<i>Open Forum</i>		
12:15 pm–1:15 pm	Lunch Break	Chadra Ballroom
1:15 pm–2:45 pm	Session 5: OP7 Future Directions for Pillar 3: Regional Public Goods and Collective Action Session overview and introduction of speakers	<i>Moderator:</i> Ms. Lyaziza Sabyrova Director, Regional Cooperation and Operations Coordination Division, Central and West Asia Department, ADB
	Panel discussion on RPG related issues work in four key priority areas:	<i>Panelists</i>
	(i) A green deal for Asia and the Pacific? Connecting the global commons with regional and national public goods: RCI in support of ADB's role as the region's Climate Bank	Mr. Southanou Nanthanonty  Deputy Director General Department of Planning and Cooperation, Ministry of Health Lao PDR
	(ii) Regional public health and equitable national vaccination: RCI in support of achieving "vaccine security" in the region	Ms. Gao Kun  Director, Department of International Cooperation and Rescue, Ministry of Emergency Management, People's Republic of China
	(iii) Regional cooperation and collective action for better disaster resilience	Mr. Yerzhan Abish Director, Department of International Economic Cooperation, Ministry of National Economy Kazakhstan
	(iv) Operationalizing regional public goods through regional investment projects	Ms. Cecile Fruman Director, Regional Integration and Engagement in the South Asia Region (SAR), the World Bank
		Mr. Johannes Linn  Non-resident Senior Fellow, the Brookings Institution
	<i>Open Forum</i>	
	<i>There will be a 15-minute coffee/tea break starting at 2:45 pm.</i>	

3:00 pm–4:45 pm

Session 6: Future RCI Research and Innovation

Presentations followed by moderated panel discussion on the focus of RCI research for the next decade, which could be on three priority areas:

- (i) Digital transformation for productivity and inclusive growth
- (ii) Digitalization of trade and supply chain for improved accessibility and trade facilitation
- (iii) Digitalization and regional cooperation for sustainable and inclusive growth.

Need for new way of governance and policy making will also be discussed across all three priority areas.

*Moderator:***Ms. Cyn-Young Park**

Director, Regional Cooperation and Integration, Economic Research and Regional Cooperation Department (ERCD), ADB

Presentation on digital transformation and RCI:

*Presenter:***Ms. Lorraine Carlos Salazar**

Senior Knowledge Expert, McKinsey & Company



Panel Discussion:

*Panelists:***Ms. Rupa Chanda**

Director, Trade, Investment and Innovation Division, UNESCAP (services trade and RCI agenda)

Mr. Fukunari Kimura

Chief Economist, Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (trade and investment policy and facilitation and RCI)

**Mr. Thomas Abell**

Advisor, SDCC and Chief of Digital Technology for Development, SDCC, ADB

Open Forum

4:45 pm–5:00 pm

Brief Wrap Up of Day 2**Mr. Yuebin Zhang**

Principal Regional Cooperation Specialist, SDCC, ADB

DAY 3: THURSDAY, 25 AUGUST 2022

9:00 am–10:30 am	Session 7: Green Finance for RCI and Economic Growth	<i>Moderator:</i> Ms. Naeeda Crishna Morgado Infrastructure Specialist (Innovation and Green Finance), SERD, ADB
	Presentation on Green finance through multilateral and regional cooperation	<i>Remarks:</i> Mr. Anouj Mehta Country Director for Thailand and Unit Head, ASEAN Catalytic Green Finance Facility (ACGF), ADB
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ASEAN Taxonomy for Sustainable Finance• Supporting green bonds and green finance across ASEAN• Green Finance Initiative in South Asia: A case study of Kerala – Sanjeev Kaushik• Green Finance Initiatives and Instruments• Green Finance for Net Zero Transformation and High- Quality Growth: Examples from ADB’s Engagement in the PRC and Its Regional Implications	<i>Panelists:</i> Mr. Izlan Zainal Abidin Deputy Chief Executive, Securities Commission Malaysia Mr. Kosintr Puongsophol Financial Sector Specialist, ERCD, ADB Mr. Sanjeev Kaushik  Principal Financial Sector Specialist, South Asia Department, ADB Mr. PVS Suryakumar  Deputy Managing Director, NABARD, Mumbai Ms. Emma Fan Director, EARD, ADB
	<i>There will be a 15-minute coffee/tea break starting at 10:30 am.</i>	
10:45 am–11:45 pm	Session 8: Summary and Conclusion of the Conference	
	Presentation of Summary of RCI Conference	Ms. Rosalind McKenzie Principal Operations Coordination Specialist (Fragile Situation), Pacific Department, ADB
	Feedback from Subregional Representatives and Other Participants	
11:45 pm–12:00 pm	Closing Remarks	Ms. Xiaohong Yang Chief Thematic Officer, SDCC, ADB

12:15 pm–1:30 pm

Lunch

Chadra Ballroom
