



REGIONAL COOPERATION AND INTEGRATION
THEMATIC GROUP



Regional Cooperation and Integration Conference 2022

Strengthening Regional Cooperation and Integration for a New Era of Collective Action

23-25 August 2022, Bangkok, Thailand

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, relevant private sector organizations, and civil society.
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.

Day 1: 23 August 2022

9:00 am–9:30 am	<p>Welcome Address High-level Official of the Royal Thai Government</p> <p>Keynote Address on "Strengthening Regional Cooperation and Integration for a New Era of Collective Action" Mr. Woochong Um Managing Director General of the Asian Development Bank</p>
9:30 am–12:30 pm	<p>Session 1: Mid-term Review of ADB Strategy 2030 Operational Priority 7 (OP7) on Fostering Regional Cooperation and Integration</p> <p>Presentation by the ADB Regional Cooperation and Integration Thematic Group Secretariat</p> <p>Reactions from senior officials of developing member economies of ADB, representatives of regional cooperation organizations, and development partners (At most 5-minute intervention per delegation leader)</p> <p>Open Forum</p> <p><i>There will be a 15-minute coffee/tea break starting at 10:45 am.</i></p>
12:30 pm–1:30 pm	<p>Lunch Break</p>
1:30 pm–4:30 pm	<p>Session 2: Trends and Thematic Priorities Affecting the Future Directions of OP7</p> <p>Panel Session 2a: Key priorities of RCI work in the next decade Moderated panel discussion</p> <p><i>There will be a 15-minute coffee/tea break starting at 3:30 pm.</i></p> <p>Panel Session 2b: Cross-cutting issues for RCI work in the next decade Moderated panel discussion</p>
4:30 pm – 5:00 pm	<p>Brief Wrap Up of Day 1</p>

Day 2: 24 August 2022

9:00 am–10:30 am	Session 3: OP7 Future Strategic Directions for Pillar 1: High-quality Connectivity Infrastructure Presentations followed by moderated panel discussion on implementing high-quality connectivity infrastructure for transport, power, information and communication technology, and cross-border logistics to facilitate increasing trade, respond to disruptions from the COVID-19 pandemic, and transition toward green infrastructure. Open Forum
10:30 am–10:45 am	Coffee/Tea Break
10:45 am–12:15 pm	Session 4: OP7 Future Directions for Pillar 2: Regional Trade and Investment Presentations followed by moderated panel discussion on agricultural value chains and food security, trends and prospects of digital trade, and trends and prospects of regional free trade agreements Open Forum
12:15 pm–1:15 pm	Lunch Break
1:15 pm–2:45 pm	Session 5: OP7 Future Directions for Pillar 3: Regional Public Goods and Collective Action Presentations followed by moderated panel discussion on connecting the global commons with regional and national public goods; regional public health and equitable national vaccination; regional cooperation and collective action for better disaster resilience; and operationalizing regional public goods through regional investment projects. Open Forum
2:45 pm–3:00 pm	Coffee/Tea break
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 four priority areas: (i) people-centric cooperation; (ii) digital transformation for inclusive solution; (iii) sustainability for managing global public goods; and (iv) a new form of collaborative governance and policymaking approach. Open Forum
4:45 pm–5:00 pm	Brief Wrap Up of Day 2

Day 3: 25 August 2022

9:00 am–10:30 am **Session 7: Green Finance for RCI and Economic Growth**

Presentations followed by moderated panel discussion on green finance as a cutting edge theme, which addresses some key development concerns, and is a powerful issue for regional cooperation. They will showcase emerging examples in various subregions, which could provide models for other subregions to follow and build on.

10:30 am–10:45 am **Coffee/Tea break**

10:45 am–12:15 pm **Session 8: Summary and Conclusion of the Conference**

Presentation of Summary of RCI Conference

Final remarks/responses from senior officials of developing member economies of ADB, regional cooperation organizations, and development partners

Closing remarks by ADB

12:15 pm–1:30 pm **Lunch**