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Newsletter

Researchers Discuss Prospects for Inclusive Green Growth and Sustainable Development in the CAREC Region

The CAREC Institute's Third Annual Research Conference "Prospects for an Inclusive Green Growth and Sustainability in the CAREC Region" was held online on September 20-21. The conference, funded by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), aimed to foster connections between research and policymaking by systematically documenting policy-oriented research and contemporary thinking on inclusive and green economic growth. The conference, which brought together more than 120 researchers and experts, included presentations of research manuscripts that will be compiled and published as the CAREC Institute's Third Annual Book.

Mr. Kabir Jurazoda, Director of the CAREC Institute, opened the conference with welcoming remarks, emphasizing the urgency of addressing climate change, achieving sustainable economic growth, and promoting inclusive development for the CAREC region. As Central Asian countries witness the impact of climate change on the environment and society, the need for regional cooperation to find solutions to green growth and sustainable development is of paramount importance. And, the Third Annual Research Conference serves as a platform to catalyze necessary transformative ideas and initiate meaningful discussion. "By uniting our efforts and knowledge, we strive to shape a future in where economic prosperity goes hand in hand with environmental stewardship and social justice – a future that is resilient, inclusive, and sustainable for generations to come," said Mr. Kabir Jurazoda.

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THE THIRD CAREC INSTITUTE RESEARCH CONFERENCE

PROSPECTS FOR AN INCLUSIVE GREEN GROWTH AND SUSTAINABILITY IN THE CAREC REGION



Participants of the CAREC Institute's Third Annual Research Conference.

"CAREC and the ADB are committed to helping member countries develop and implement their national climate strategies," added Dr. Lyaziza Sabyrova, Regional Head of the ADB Regional Cooperation and Integration, Central and West Asia Department, "the ADB supports member countries in assessing, refining and implementing their Nationally Determined Contributions, national adaptation plans and other climate-related priorities." CAREC countries' strategic goals for climate change adaptation and mitigation require adequate resources, while mobilization of climate finance is a challenge for governments, and in response to this challenge, the ADB and its partners are planning to establish a multi-donor trust fund for CAREC regional climate and sustainable development projects. She pointed to three areas that require new knowledge and rigorous research analysis - crossborder technology transfer to reduce the technology gap; private sector participation in green development; and inclusivity to ensure that every voice, regardless of income, gender or background, is heard and valued.

Dr. Albert Park, Chief Economist and Director General of the ADB, delivered the keynote address on "CAREC in the Global Transition to Net Zero." He noted that developing countries in Asia are the most vulnerable to climate change and there are three policy pillars they can apply to decarbonize their economies: i) price reform by pricing carbon emissions and eliminating subsidies that contribute to emissions; ii) promoting low-carbon responses by introducing rules and incentives for decarbonization and attracting finance for low-carbon activities; iii) and ensuring justice by working towards equitable international sharing of the burden of mitigation, compensating and protecting vulnerable groups, and helping those affected to adapt.

During the special session, Dr. Johannes Linn, Senior Fellow in the Global Economy and Development Program at the Brookings Institution, presented the findings of the report "CAREC 2030: Supporting Regional Actions to Address Climate Change." The report is the result of a scoping study on climate change in the CAREC region, commissioned by the CAREC Secretariat, that outlines a strategic approach to regional climate action and identifies principles to guide sectoral climate actions, priority areas for investment, and recommends concrete steps to achieve a more resilient and climate-resilient region. He emphasized

that the CAREC Program and the CAREC Institute can play a leading role in supporting coordinated climate action among CAREC member countries, providing research and capacity building with a focus on regional climate change.

During the session "Climate change and sustainability," CAREC researchers Dr. Yao Yinxin from the Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI), Dr. Falendra Kumar from University of Jammu, Dr. Liu Chang from Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and Dr. Asif Razzaq from the CAREC Institute presented and discussed research papers related to carbon emissions and climate change. The presenters spoke about the importance of CAREC national governments taking proactive actions to apply innovations in climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies, implementing multiple policies to reach carbon neutrality, increasing investment in adaptation efforts to deal with the water crisis, improving productive capacity to reconcile economic growth with environmental stewardship, and strengthen regional cooperation.

During the second session of the conference, researchers Dr. Dimitris Symeonidis from Decentralized Solutions Global Network, Dr. Burulcha Sulaimanova from OSCE Academy and Dr. Ilma Sharif from the University of Karachi, Dr. Dina Azhgaliyeva from the ADBI, and Dr. Ummara Razi from the Sunway University Business School presented their papers related to issues of green energy, energy transition and sustainability. Based on their research, the speakers suggested that CAREC countries stimulate development and access to renewable energy sources, eliminate subsidies on conventional energy sources, improve environmental and energy tariff regulations, attract investment from private investors to integrate digital advances into the renewable energy sector, promote market mechanisms and encourage international cooperation to share experiences. To balance long-term brown and green growth, countries need to adopt green growth strategies and diversify energy sources to reduce vulnerability of their economies to price volatility. Importantly, CAREC countries need more research on various aspects of inclusive and green economic growth, knowledge and policy dialogues, and green skills development.

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The second day of the conference began with a discussion of issues of regional integration and sustainable development. Dr. Hassan Daud Butt from Bahria University, Dr. Zainab Ahmed from Lahore Garrison University, Dr.Fu Xin and Dr. Changzhen Zhang value chains, technology transfer and trade. from Hohai University, Dr. Mohsin Shahzad from Liaoning Normal University, Dr. Deng Yujia and Dr. Zheng Xinyi from Xinjiang Agricultural University, Dr. Adeel Kadri from and Dr. Muhammad Musa from Manzil Pakistan and Dr. Nurlyaiym Zhaksybayeva from Nazarbayev University, addressed various topics of trade and regional economic cooperation to reduce the region's vulnerability to climate change. The researchers called for greater regional environmental integration for sustainable future for the CAREC region by implementing joint environmental projects, coordinating disaster preparedness and response, harmonizing environmental policies and establishing regional disaster response mechanisms, as well as by supporting capacity building and information sharing. They noted that developing policies which encourage the integration of environmental, social and governance and circular economy concepts in business, will help channel capital toward sustainable endeavors.

In turn, regional cooperation on green agriculture, such as the establishment of agricultural demonstration parks and warehouses, and the use of cross-border ecommerce, will promote the development of regional

The conference concluded with a panel discussion in which researchers Dr. Imran Aziz from the IMF, Dr. Zheng Yuan from the New Development Bank, Dr. Farhad Taghizadeh-Hesary from Tokai University, and Dr. Wang Meng from the Xinjiang Institute of Ecology and Geography, shared their views about effective strategies for climate action and sustainable development in the CAREC region. They brought examples of best international policy practices which help integrate environmental issues with programs for economic growth and social progress and encourage businesses to adopt sustainable practices. Dr. Hans Holzhacker, Chief Economist of the CAREC Institute, concluded the panel discussion session by noting the importance of regional cooperation during the postpandemic recovery and green transition to bridge gaps in knowledge, financing and technology.

ADB's Regional Representative Visits the CAREC Institute

On September 28, Dr. Lyaziza Sabyrova, Regional Head of the Regional Cooperation and Integration of ADB's Central and West Asia Department, visited the office of the CAREC Institute to discuss institutional strategy, new directions for research and capacity building activities, and other aspects of institute's strategic planning.

Mr. Kabir Jurazoda welcomed Dr. Lyaziza Sabyrova and shared information on the progress of the midterm review of the implementation of the institutional strategy, new strategy and institutional development directions to better serve the knowledge needs of CAREC member countries. Director presented achievements of the CAREC Institute over the past three years (2021-2023) and planned activities for the next two years according to the institute's draft Rolling Operational Plan for 2024-2025.

Dr. Lyaziza Sabyrova thanked the staff of the CAREC Institute for good achievements and noted the importance of updating the strategy to adapt the institute to the changing environment. She suggested continuing to improve relevance to the needs of CAREC countries and quality of knowledge products and services of the institute. The parties further discussed

different aspects of joint cooperation on research projects in areas of regional trade, transit corridors, climate change, green energy transition, tourism and inclusive development.



CAREC Institute's staff meets with Dr. Lyaziza Sabyrova.

CAREC Institute Contributes to Discussions on Sustainable Development of Ecology and Environment

On September 18-19, the International Forum on Sustainable Development of Ecology and Environment along the Silk Road Economic Belt was held in Urumqi (the PRC). The forum was organized by the Xinjiang Institute of Ecology and Geography of the Chinese Academy of Sciences in partnership with the CAREC Institute.

The forum aimed to facilitate the knowledge exchange and discussions to promote better technological cooperation between countries, and advance the construction of greener, innovative and sustainable cooperation along the Silk Road under the Belt and Road Initiative. The event brought together nearly 300 researchers and experts from 17 countries, including the CAREC region, to share their country-level research findings on biodiversity conservation, green agriculture, food security, the status and sustainable utilization of water resources, ecological restoration and governance.

Mr. Kabir Jurazoda, Director of the CAREC Institute, delivered the keynote address on "How to Jointly Build a Greener, Innovative, and Resilient Silk Road – an International Perspective." He emphasized that the CAREC Institute, as an intergovernmental international organization representing eleven CAREC member countries and serving as the knowledge support arm of the CAREC Program, is in a unique position to promote regional knowledge cooperation. The Institute has published many leading research papers and policy briefs on climate, water and agriculture in the region. Director Jurazoda highlighted the productive partnership between the CAREC Institute and the Xinjiang Institute of Ecology and Geography of the Chinese Academy of Sciences that has led to meaningful progress on addressing issues such as disaster risk reduction, ecological restoration with a special focus on the Aral Sea area, climate change, and resource sustainability. This collaboration demonstrated the shared commitment to solving problems that transcend borders. Mr. Jurazoda proposed to jointly build a green, innovative and sustainable Silk Road by i) promoting international research cooperation, ii) strengthening partnerships with international organizations, and iii) establishing a sustainable mechanism for international cooperation.

During the sub-sessions, CAREC Institute's experts shared their views on water issues in the CAREC region. Dr. Iskandar Abdullaev, former Deputy Director Two of the CAREC Institute, spoke about water scarcity and climate change in Central Asia, and how these factors affect the economy, social and political stability. Dr. Abdullaev emphasized the critical role of water in the sustainable development of Central Asia, while highlighting the region's serious water challenges, including scarcity, deteriorating quality, shrinking glaciers, groundwater depletion, unreliable water supply, and inefficient water use. Dr. Abdullaev noted the importance of deep regional cooperation between countries in policy development, medium- and long-term water resource planning and information exchange.

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Mr. Kabir Jurazoda speaks at the International Forum.

Another CAREC Institute's invited expert, Dr. Au Shion Yee, Principal Water Resources Specialist, Food, Nature, and Rural Development Sector Group of the ADB, spoke about the importance of effective planning in improving water management and adaptation in East Asia. Dr. Yee emphasized ADB's focus on upstream engagement in adaptation planning and the provision of the Technical Assistance to support the PRC's National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2035, with a particular focus on the Yellow River as a regional priority. Additionally, he noted that ADB TA also support Mongolia in enhancing climate change adaptation strategic planning and community resilience in the environment and natural resources sector. He also shared key lessons learned from water adaptation management projects in East Asia.

Researchers from CAREC member countries spoke about regional cooperation in water resource management and environmental protection in the CAREC region. Professor Chen Yaning from the Xinjiang Institute of Ecology and Geography of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Director of the State Key Laboratory of Desert and Oasis Ecology, spoke about the utilization and sustainable management of water resources. In his presentation, Professor Chen highlighted the significance of the Silk Road Economic Belt in connecting the Eurasian continent and the CAREC region. He stressed the challenges posed by water resource scarcity and ecosystem fragility to economic, social development, and ecological security along the Silk Road. Professor Chen recommended a series of

measures, including embracing a path of green development, fostering international science and technology collaboration, and enhancing water resource management and utilization efficiency to jointly fortify water resource preservation and achieve mutual development.

Dr. Roman Jashenko, Director of the Institute of Zoology under the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, delivered a keynote speech addressing "Animal Diversity and the Regional Animal Red List of Central Asia." In his presentation, Dr. Jashenko proposed the establishment of a national expert committee dedicated to animal and plant protection in Central Asia, the compilation of a red book of the animals and plants specific to the Central Asian region, and the creation of a list of rare animals and plants. Additionally, he suggested fostering international research initiatives focused on bird migration and vascular plants in Altay, Xinjiang, China.

The International Forum on Sustainable Development of Ecology and Environment along the Silk Road Economic Belt contributed to the establishment of and Open Leadership Dialogue Mechanism among the national research institutions and universities to translate research findings into practical actions for the construction of a greener, innovative, and resilient Silk Road. The forum participants have jointly released the declaration of "Forge Synergies for Development, Jointly Build a Beautiful Silk Road" as the consensus for multistakeholder collaboration.

CAREC Institute's New Policy Brief on Central Inspections for Low-Carbon Cities in China

The CAREC Institute has published a policy brief on China's best policy practices for using centralized inspections for low-carbon cities. China's central inspections involve rigorous assessments and evaluations conducted by the central government to ensure that cities effectively implement low-carbon policies and meet emission reduction targets. These comprehensive inspections identify potential gaps and challenges in low-carbon initiatives, allowing for targeted interventions and policy adjustments to enhance environmental performance. By engaging with local authorities and communities, central inspections foster a culture of accountability and encourage cities to adopt innovative measures and best practices for reducing carbon emissions. As a result, these inspections serve as a vital catalyst for fostering eco-friendly urban development and aligning cities with China's commitments to combat climate

change and achieve a greener and more sustainable future.

Inspections constitute a distinctive administrative system within China, involving higher-level governments overseeing the actions of lower-level governments. In the context of environmental protection, inspections involve establishing environmental protection inspection groups by higher authorities, which are then deployed to local areas to supervise, inspect, control, and hold local governments and environmental protection departments accountable. Among these inspection mechanisms, Central Inspections of Environmental Protection is one of China's most stringent and obligatory environmental regulations. Implementing central inspections leads to a substantial reduction in carbon emission intensity in cities.



CAREC Institute Participates in the Sixth Silk Road (Dunhuang) International Cultural Expo

The CAREC Institute delegation, led by Mr. Kabir Jurazoda, Director of the Institute, attended the Sixth Silk Road (Dunhuang) International Cultural Expo from September 6 to 7, in Dunhuang, Gansu province (the PRC). This year's Expo, on the theme "Connecting with the World: Cultural Exchanges and Mutual Learning," aimed at facilitating cultural exchanges and cooperation among countries along the Silk Road, fostering closer people-to-people ties, and promoting economic and social development.



Mr. Kabir Jurazoda speaks at the China-Central Asia and ASEAN Development Cooperation Forum.

Over 1200 participants, including government officials, scholars, private sector representatives, and media, from more than 50 countries and international organizations took part in the Expo, where Turkmenistan was invited as the Country of Honor.

On September 7, during the parallel forum on "China-Central Asia and ASEAN Development Cooperation", Mr. Kabir Jurazoda spoke about the role of think tanks in promoting regional cooperation and integration. During his presentation, he mentioned that the Central Asian region has a strong basis for a mix of different ethnicities and religions living together, cultural integration, and having a variety of viewpoints. Central Asian countries have comparable systems, are economically diverse, and spread over a wide geographical area. He pointed out that the CAREC Institute's research shows that CAREC countries need to continue to work closely to narrow the national income gap with advanced economies and integrate their economies more deeply into global and regional value chains while making them more self-sufficient and more resilient to external shocks. He also highlighted that the CAREC region requires countries' close collaboration against stubborn inflation, rising interest rates, heightened uncertainties, and the ever-worsening impact of climate change. During the event, the CAREC Institute delegation met with Mr. Ahmed Eiweida, the World Bank Global Coordinator for Cultural Heritage & Sustainable Tourism, to explore areas for cooperation on regional tourism development.

The Silk Road International Cultural Expo is an important event that includes cultural exhibits, performances, investment promotions, and cultural tours. This expo has taken place six times since 2016 in Dunhuang, a significant center on the Ancient Silk Road in the northwest of the People's Republic of

Media Interview of the CAREC Institute Director on Tourism Cooperation in the CAREC Region

Mr. Kabir Jurazoda, Director of the CAREC Institute, provided <u>an interview to the China Global</u> <u>Television Network</u> regarding regional tourism cooperation in Central Asia. He proposed that Central Asian countries and the PRC collaboratively promote regional tourism by connecting countries' tourist attractions, and outstanding natural and cultural resources found within each country to provide visitors with an exceptional tourism experience along the Silk Road. CAREC countries can promote a common brand, such as "Visit the Silk Road", by developing and launching a China-Central Asia tourism web portal and organizing joint tourism activities by tour operators and other tourism services providers. In December 2020, ministers and senior officials from the 11 CAREC member countries endorsed the CAREC Tourism Strategy 2030 to promote safe, sustainable, and inclusive tourism development in the region, and enhance its attractiveness as a competitive tourism destination globally. The strategy adopts a holistic approach, covering five strategic pillars: connectivity and infrastructure, quality and standards, skills development, marketing and branding, and market intelligence. The strategy also mainstreams six crosscutting themes: health, safety, and security; digitalization; gender equality; environmental sustainability; involvement of the private sector; and universal access to tourism services.

CAREC Institute Participates in the High-level Forum on "Belt and Road Development"

On September 9, Dr. Huang Jingjing, Deputy Director One of the CAREC Institute, participated in the Highlevel Forum on "Belt and Road Development" in Xiamen, the PRC. She presented CAREC perspectives on knowledge cooperation and poverty reduction during the roundtable session on infrastructure construction and international cooperation in poverty reduction under the Belt and Road Initiative.

Dr. Huang Jingjing noted that CAREC countries, like many other nations in the world, have made great progress in poverty reduction and welfare improvement in the past few decades, but poverty has remained a severe curse. She pointed out that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development promised 'to leave no one behind and to reach those furthest behind first,' however reducing poverty is a difficult task which requires a complex set of policies for sustainable, inclusive and equitable economic growth, supported by greater employment and decent work for all, social integration, declining inequality, rising productivity, and a favorable business environment. She suggested that countries worldwide could establish a platform for sharing knowledge, expertise, best practices and the latest technological innovations on poverty reduction to jointly build a better world.



Dr. Huang Jingjing participates in the High-level Forum on "Belt and Road Development".

As one of the activities of the 23rd China International Fair for Investment and Trade, this forum was coorganized by the China Association for International Economic Cooperation and the Xiamen National Accounting Institute. Over 60 participants including government officials, scholars, and private sector representatives participated in the event.

CAREC Institute Presented at the Economic Forum in Karpacz

CAREC Institute Chief Economist Dr. Hans Holzhacker participated in a panel discussion on "The Middle Corridor connecting Europe to Asia" during the 32nd Economic Forum in Karpacz, Poland. The Economic Forum was held under the theme "New Values for the Old Continent – Europe on the Threshold of Change," and brought together political, economic and social leaders from more than 60 countries to exchange views and knowledge.

The Middle Corridor, due to its unique geographical location, plays the role of a vital bridge connecting Europe and Asia. It connects the resource-rich countries of Central Asia with the industrial centers of Europe, making the Middle Corridor a key point for energy transit, trade and economic cooperation throughout the South Caucasus. The panel discussants highlighted the importance of the Middle corridor while pointing also to bottlenecks and the challenges of the corridor's development.



Dr. Hans Holzhacker participates in the panel discussion at the Economic Forum in Karpacz.

During the panel discussion, Dr. Hans Holzhacker noted that revenues from exports of transport services are significant for some CAREC economies that can range from 2% to 5% of GDP for more involved countries. However, the real importance of transport corridors is that they increase connectivity, especially for landlocked economies. Moreover, transport corridors should not only serve for transit, but also help build economic corridors. Therefore, providing proper modes of transportation, and paying attention to the first mile and last mile so that local business can participate is of high importance.

According to CAREC Corridor Performance Measurement and Monitoring data, the average speed of travel along CAREC corridors without delays has improved significantly, especially by rail, but the speed with delays has not improved as much. Dr. Hans Holzhacker suggests that CAREC countries work together not only to build the hard infrastructure of CAREC corridors, but also to improve soft infrastructure and trade facilitation measures such as single windows and paperless SPS systems.

CAREC Institute Contributed to Transport Corridor Research Studies

CAREC Institute Chief Economist Dr. Hans Holzhacker and Acting Chief of the Capacity Building Division Mr. Rovshan Mahmudov participated in presentations and discussions during the East-West Logistics Forum on September 26-27, 2023, in Almaty, Kazakhstan. The East-West Logistics Forum was jointly organized by the Kazakh-German University, the Asian Development Bank Institute, and the CAREC Institute and several other organizations. The topic of the forum was "Transport



Participants of the research workshop of the East-West Logistics Forum.

Corridors in the CAREC Region: Supply Chain Resilience and Trade Facilitation."

The event aimed to promote policy research and dialogue in the CAREC region. The forum participants discussed the development of transport corridors in the CAREC region, including their importance for supply chain resilience, for the region's trade and economic potential, and challenges and opportunities for upgrading the corridor infrastructure, especially for the Transcaspian (Middle) corridor.

Dr. Hans Holzhacker emphasized the need to develop transport corridors to economic corridors, to use the reduction in trade and transaction costs provided by the transport corridors to develop the economies of the regions located along the corridors. In addition to direct benefits, such as the development of intraregional supply chains and stronger connectivity that allow businesses to take advantage of economies of scale and scope, economic corridors also have indirect benefits which affect the lives of many people in adjacent areas. Economic corridors can help trigger the industrialization of lagging regions, create jobs and other social opportunities.

Dr. Hans Holzhacker and Mr. Rovshan Mahmudov also provided feedback to research papers during the workshop session examining the economic impact of transport corridors and infrastructure investments in Central Asia and the Caucasus.

All materials and video recording of the event will be available at the CAREC Institute's e-learning platform.

CAREC Institute Contributes to Discussions on Regional **Energy Cooperation**

On September 8, CAREC Institute Senior Research Specialist Dr. Asif Razzaq presented the issues and prospects for regional energy cooperation between the PRC and Central Asian countries at the Sixth China (Karamay) International Petroleum, Natural Gas and Petrochemical Technology and Equipment Exhibition & Trade and Investment Forum.

Dr. Asif Razzag noted that the PRC and Central Asia have been connected for centuries by the ancient Silk Road, which facilitated trade, cultural exchange, and the movement of ideas. And today's connection is reignited with renewed vigor and purpose, paving the way for sustainable development. To achieve sustainable economic growth, CAREC countries need more energy, but climate change means they must significantly reduce carbon emissions and accelerate the transition to green energy. The CAREC study <u>"Sustainable Pathways to Energy Transition in</u> the CAREC Region- A Governance Perspective" finds that the region's energy transition is slow due to the abundance of fossil fuels, dependence on low marginal Initiative for Investment and Long-Term Growth. In cost hydropower, and the need for large investments to upgrade infrastructure. Central Asia's economy is already struggling with energy shortages, aging infrastructure, and increasingly inefficient and unreliable energy production facilities.

The report provides recommendations to CAREC countries. Countries of the Central Asian region should develop long-term strategies along with complementary short-term policies, introduce an appropriate energy governance structure, as well as a specific regulatory framework. Regional coordination is needed to implement a market-based emissions control system and a more favorable investment climate in the region, to create necessary regional institutions, such as a regional load sharing center, to ensure that regional supply and demand are matched in real time. "Such regional organization could facilitate and implement renewable energy procurement and contracting processes, as well as implement emission reduction contracts. This organization could then distribute revenues from emissions reductions to help support the vulnerable groups of the population throughout the region," said Dr. Asif Razzaq.

He also participated in the launch of the Karamay addition to this, he discussed regional integration in a media interview conducted during the event.



Forum participants in Karamay, the PRC.

ANNOUNCEMENTS



The application deadline is October 15, 2023.

For more information about the project and application process, please visit the CAREC Institute's website.







Knowledge-Sharing Webinar

ENHANCING REGIONAL TRADE FACILITATION THROUGH NATIONAL SINGLE WINDOW: PAKISTAN'S EXPERIENCE

2 November 2023 15:00 – 17:30 (Beijing time, UTC+8)

To attend the webinar, please register by October 25, 2023, using the following link: <u>https://n9.cl/eofwq</u>



About CAREC Institute

The Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) Institute is an intergovernmental organization dedicated to promoting the economic cooperation in the Central Asia and along the Silk Road through knowledge generation and sharing. The CAREC Institute is jointly shared, owned, and governed by eleven member countries.

The Institute acts as a knowledge connector among the five CAREC themes-economic and financial stability; trade, tourism, and economic cornidors; infrastructure and economic connectivity; agriculture and water; human development-to ensure coherence in design and implementation of policies, programs, and projects to promote regional economic cooperation and integration.



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