

Concept Note

International Webinar: Policies and Innovative Financing Mechanisms for Enabling Central Asia's Clean Energy Transition

Background

Amid the escalating global climate crisis, accelerating the low-carbon transition of energy systems has emerged as a global priority. All five Central Asian countries have submitted their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and set renewable energy development targets. However, fossil fuels still dominate the region's energy mix, with limited consumption of renewables such as wind and solar. Energy storage and transmission infrastructure remain underdeveloped, and continued policy support, innovative financing models, and improved stakeholder collaboration are needed to unlock more resources and catalyze international cooperation for advancing renewables in the region.

In recent years, China's collaboration with Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan in the renewable energy sector has steadily deepened, resulting in the implementation of several large-scale renewable energy projects and fostering high-quality investment partnerships. However, uncertainties and challenges continue to hinder the scaling of renewable energy investments in the region—ranging from policy and regulatory instability, technical constraints, limited financing options with high capital costs, to intensifying market competition. This year 2025 presents new opportunities for China-Central Asia cooperation, particularly with the upcoming Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit, which is expected to inject fresh momentum into climate and energy collaboration in the region.

Given this context, the upcoming webinar aims to deepen understanding of the challenges, needs and opportunities for advancing renewable energy integration in Central Asia and to explore practical and effective solutions, by convening the leading experts from financial institutions, multilateral development banks, enterprises, think tanks, and civil society organizations. The objective of this discussion is to generate joint insights and actionable recommendations that can feed into the policy discussions in the lead up to the upcoming SCO Summit and Energy Ministers' Meeting later this year. By highlighting critical gaps and proposing targeted solutions, we hope this webinar will contribute to the regional energy transition and support the achievement of shared climate and development goals.

Core Objectives:

1. **Enhance Understanding and Collaboration:** Stakeholders will gain in-depth insights into the current status and outlook of renewable energy cooperation between China and Central Asian countries, including lessons learned from implemented projects and future collaboration opportunities.

2. **Identify Key Challenges:** Systematically analyze major obstacles in investment and financing cooperation, such as policy barriers, technological bottlenecks, inadequate infrastructure, limited financing models, high financing costs, and intense market competition, to establish a foundation for problem-solving.
3. **Explore Innovative Opportunities:** Examine prospects for renewable energy integration, innovative financing mechanisms (e.g., green panda bonds, blended finance), and regional synergy development to upgrade cooperation models.
4. **Develop Policy Recommendations:** Based on discussions, formulate actionable policy recommendations in the lead up to the SCO Energy Ministers' Meeting, facilitating deeper and expanded China-Central Asia renewable energy investment and financing cooperation.

Draft Agenda
Webinar: Policies and Innovative Financing Mechanisms for Enabling Central Asia’s Clean Energy Transition

Date: April 28

Time: 10:00-12:30 am UTC+5; 1:00-3:30 pm UTC+8

Format: Zoom, Invitation-only.

<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/ACdwLINISTC5PSImFDJ18A#/registration>

Organizers: Greenovation Hub, CAREC Institute, Green Investment Principles (GIP)

Supporting Organisation: World Resources Institute

Working language: Chinese and English (simultaneous translation provided)

Beijing Time	Astana Time	Speakers
13:00 – 13:10	10:00-10:10	<p>Opening Remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charymuhammet SHALLYYEV, Director, CAREC Institute
Thematic Session I: Breaking Barriers: Policy Innovations and Regional Collaboration to Unlock Central Asia’s Renewable Energy Potential		
13:10 – 13:20	10:10-10:20	<p>Keynote: Progress and Outlook of China-Central Asia Renewable Energy Cooperation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hans HOLZHACKER, Former Chief Economist and Consultant, CAREC Institute
13:20 – 14:10	10:20-11:10	<p>The panel discussion will consist of two rounds of Q&A, each speaker will have 5 minutes to respond per question round.</p> <p>Moderator: GUO Hongyu, Deputy Director, Greenovation Hub</p> <p>Roundtable Speakers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LIU Jianguo (TBD), Deputy Director of the International Centre, Energy Research Institute National Development and Reform Commission • Timur SHALABAYEV, Executive Director, Qazaq Green RES Association • TBD, Energy Specialist, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank • Representative (TBD), expert from Uzbekistan

Session II: Mobilizing Green Finance: Innovative Financing Mechanisms for Central Asia's Clean Energy Transition

14:10-14:20	11:10-11:20	<p>Introductory Presentation: Innovative Financial Solutions to Support China-Central Asia Renewable Energy Cooperation</p> <p>JIANG Zijun, Program Officer, Greenovation Hub</p>
14:20-15:10	11:20-12:10	<p>The panel discussion will consist of two rounds of Q&A, each speaker will have 5 minutes to respond per question round.</p> <p>Moderator: CHEN Yingjie, Program Manager, Greenovation Hub</p> <p>Roundtable Speakers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CHENG Lin, Director of the Center for International Collaboration at the Institute of Finance and Sustainability (IFS), Head of Secretariat of the Beijing Office for the Green Investment Principles (GIP) for the Belt and Road • JIA Ziqun, Climate Finance Analyst, Perspectives Climate Research • Peline ATAMER, Senior Policy Analyst and Head of Sustainable Infrastructure and Green Growth Unit, OECD • JI Lin, Senior Climate Change Officer, Asian Development Bank
15:10-15:20	12:10-12:20	Q&A
15:20-15:30	12:20-12:30	<p>Closing Remarks</p> <p>GUO Hongyu, Deputy Director, Greenovation Hub</p>

About the Organizers

Greenovation Hub (GHub) is an independent environmental think tank with a global outlook, registered with the Beijing Municipal Civil Affairs Bureau. Founded in 2012, GHub is committed to policy research and multiparty dialogue from a global perspective, focusing on cutting-edge issues and innovative solutions in the field of sustainable development, helping China to achieve the goal of carbon neutrality with high quality and promoting green, open and win-win international cooperation to promote a net-zero and nature-positive future.

The Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) Institute is an intergovernmental organization dedicated to promoting economic cooperation through knowledge generation, capacity building and knowledge sharing in the CAREC region. As a leading regional knowledge hub, the CAREC Institute has a mission to support shared future and sustainable development in the CAREC region and beyond. The CAREC Institute is jointly shared, owned, and governed by eleven member countries: Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, People's Republic of China, Georgia, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Mongolia, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. The CAREC Institute, headquartered in Urumqi, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region of the People's Republic of China, provides hands-on support to the CAREC member countries through research, knowledge products and services.

Green Investment Principles (GIP) for the Belt and Road was officially launched in November 2018 as a collaborative initiative between the China Green Finance Committee and the City of London Corporation, along with international organizations such as the IFC, PRI, the World Economic Forum, and the Paulson Institute. The GIP aims to promote sustainable investment practices across the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) by embedding environmental, social, and governance (ESG) considerations into the investment process. The GIP focuses on seven core principles, including integrating sustainability into corporate governance, enhancing stakeholder communication, disclosing environmental information, utilizing green financial instruments, and adopting green supply chain management.