

CAREC INSTITUTE NEWSLETTER

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About the CAREC Institute

The CAREC Institute is an intergovernmental organization jointly owned by eleven member countries, dedicated to promoting economic cooperation in Central Asia and along the Silk Road through knowledge generation and sharing. Acting as a knowledge connector across five core themes—including economic stability, trade, connectivity, agriculture, and human development—the Institute ensures policy coherence to drive regional integration.

Inside This Issue

- Visit to ADB Headquarters.....2
- UNITAR’s International Digital Economy Governance Programme3
- CAREC Institute Knowledge Products..4
- Call for Papers.....5
- Upcoming Event.....6

CAREC Institute’s Online Resources

- [News](#)
- [Events](#)
- [Publications](#)
- [E-Learning Platform](#)



Institute Spotlight

AIB Delegation Led by President Zou Jiayi Visits CAREC Institute to Deepen Bilateral Cooperation

On 11 February, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) delegation, led by President Madam Zou Jiayi, visited the CAREC Institute (CI) at its headquarters in Urumqi. The two sides held productive discussions to further enhance bilateral cooperation.

During the meeting, Dr. Li Kouqing, Deputy Director One of CI, and Dr. Kuat Akizhanov, Deputy Director Two of CI, briefed the delegation on CI’s strategic priorities, operations, and proposed areas for collaboration with AIIB.

President Zou reaffirmed AIIB’s readiness to pursue long-term and systematic cooperation with CI. She noted that AIIB and CI share extensive common interests in advancing connectivity and sustainable development in the CAREC region. She also emphasized the importance of mission-oriented, operation-driven and innovation-focused joint knowledge initiatives to support practical cooperation between the two organizations.

Mr. Konstantin Limitovskiy, AIIB Chief Investment Officer for Public Sector (Region 2) & Project and Corporate Finance (Global) Clients, also joined the discussions.



The two sides identified several priority areas for cooperation, including capacity building programs to enhance regional cooperation capabilities; joint research on financial sector development and related topics; strengthened knowledge sharing; collaboration in major events organized by both sides; as well as further development of the cooperation framework.

Officials from the Finance Department of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region also attended the meeting.

CAREC Institute Delegation Visits Asian Development Bank Headquarters to Deepen Strategic Partnership

From 23 to 27 February 2026, a delegation from the CAREC Institute (CI), led by Dr. Li Kouqing, Deputy Director One of the Institute, visited the Asian Development Bank (ADB) Headquarters to strengthen the strategic partnership between the two organizations as CI enters its second decade of physical operations.

During the visit, Dr. Li met with ADB Vice President Yang Yingming to exchange views on deepening bilateral cooperation, and subsequently held consultations with management from various departments, including the Central and West Asia Department, the East Asia Department, the Strategy, Policy and Partnerships Department, the Independent Evaluation Department, the Economic Research and Development Impact Department, Sectors Department 1, and the Climate Change and Sustainable Development Department. The consultations focused on aligning the two organizations' strategic priorities and exploring practical ways to strengthen collaboration in key areas.

He also met with the CAREC Secretariat, CI's focal point at ADB, and discussed collaboration with sector counterparts aligned with CI's priorities in transport, human and social development, agriculture, trade, and finance and investment, as well as colleagues from the Budget, People, and Management Systems Department and the Communications and Knowledge Management Department.

Dr. Li further met with the Executive Director's Office for the People's Republic of China (PRC) and representatives of the PRC Poverty Reduction and Regional Cooperation Fund to discuss options for further leveraging the PRC's network and resources to support the development of the CAREC Institute.

The extensive engagements enhanced CI's understanding of ADB operations, strengthened mutual trust, and helped identify priority areas for further cooperation.





CAREC Institute's Dr. Yixin Yao Participates in UNITAR's International Digital Economy Governance Programme

Dr. Yixin Yao, Senior Research Specialist at the CAREC Institute, was invited as an academic mentor and expert speaker for the International Digital Economy Governance and Leadership Capacity Building Programme, held in Beijing from 3 to 5 February. Co-launched by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and the Global Digital Economy Cities Alliance (DEC40), and administered by UNITAR's Global SDG and Leadership Development Centre, the Programme seeks to strengthen digital-economy governance capacities in developing regions through a combination of online guided tuition and on-site field learning. Over 30 participants attended, including senior government officials, city representatives, and business sector representatives from Africa, Europe, and Asia, with representation from CAREC member countries.

At the field workshop on 3 February, Dr. Yao delivered a presentation on "AI Regulation System and Case Study in China". She outlined China's AI regulatory framework and cases, compared EU and Japanese AI regulations, and highlighted the CAREC Institute's flagship initiatives: the CAREC Leadership Training Workshop on AI for Social and Economic Transformation in the CAREC Region and the achievements of the Tianshan Forum for Central Asia Economic Cooperation in 2025.

The next day, Dr. Yao acted as an academic mentor for the Programme's evaluation session. She provided expert feedback on final reports from CAREC member country participants and facilitated discussions on potential follow-up cooperation, further strengthening the Institute's connections with regional professionals.

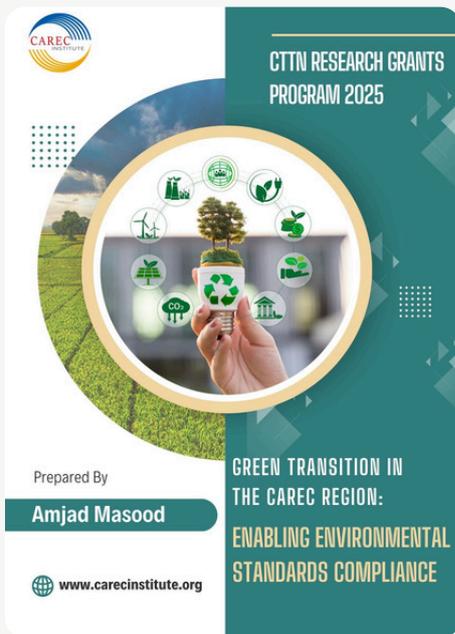
Over the years, the CAREC Institute has rolled out a series of research initiatives and capacity-building workshops focused on the digital economy and AI. Building on this foundation, the Institute will further strengthen collaboration with regional and international partners to deepen its work in the digital economy and AI governance and promote the sustainable development of the digital economy across the CAREC region.

"A sound AI regulatory system is essential for digital growth. By analyzing AI governance in China, the EU, and Japan, we provide the CAREC region with some alternative and practical models for development. Together with our global partners, we are building the capacity needed to drive the region's digital transformation."

– Dr. Yixin Yao



CAREC Institute Knowledge Product



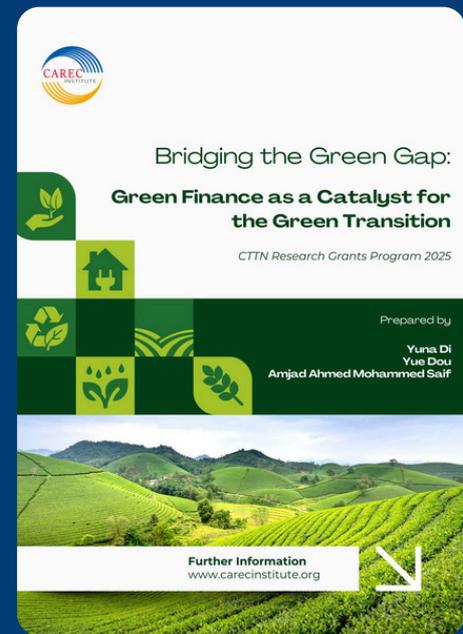
CAREC Institute Releases New Report on Green Transition and Environmental Standards Compliance in CAREC Region

The CAREC Institute has recently published a new report focusing on the green transition in the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) region, with a focus on helping countries meet environmental standards. The report, titled "Green Transition in the CAREC Region: Enabling Environmental Standards Compliance," was supported by the CAREC Think Tank Network (CTTN) Research Grants Program 2025.

CAREC member countries have made commitments under the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals, but the region still faces high emission intensity. To address this challenge, the report takes a regional perspective to examine CO₂ emission trends and identify differences in emission levels across sectors in CAREC economies.

The report focuses on environmental standards and eco-labels, which work as market tools to guide both producers and consumers towards low-carbon choices. Given that energy-intensive sectors in CAREC countries have high emissions levels, the study uses panel data to test the effectiveness of energy management standards in practice.

Based on the study, the report offers a three-part policy plan: prioritizes certification for high-emission sectors, simplifies and unifies environmental standards, and strengthens support for companies to meet these standards. These measures are key to ensuring companies strictly adopt and follow environmental standards, supporting the CAREC region's green transition.



CAREC Institute Release: New Study Under CTTN Research Grants Program 2025 Explores Green Finance as Catalyst for Regional Transition

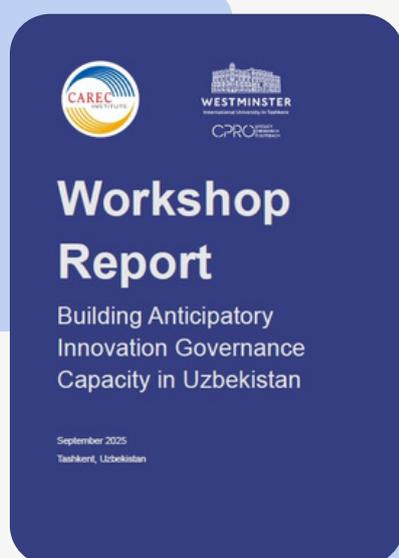
The CAREC Institute (CI) has released a new research report under the CAREC Think Tank Network (CTTN) Research Grants Program (RGP) 2025, focusing on the critical role of green finance in driving the green transition across the CAREC region. Employing an entropy-based index for quantitative assessment, the report examines the growing significance of green finance as a catalyst for shifting the CAREC region, which has traditionally been dependent on fossil fuels and carbon-intensive infrastructure, toward low-carbon, climate-resilient development. It addresses the pressing need for such a transition amid mounting climate risks, energy insecurity, and global decarbonization commitments.

Key findings highlight that while external funding from Multilateral Development Banks, through concessional loans, blended finance and capacity-building initiatives, has provided crucial support, the overall investment scale remains inadequate to meet the region's needs, which are estimated to exceed USD 400 billion by 2030. The report also underscores the value of Public-Private Partnerships in advancing green infrastructure.

To bridge the green finance gap and facilitate an inclusive, just and sustainable transition, the report puts forward policy recommendations, including formulating clear national green finance strategies, expanding green taxonomies, strengthening domestic capital markets, and enhancing regional cooperation platforms such as the CAREC Green Energy Alliance.

About the CTTN Research Grants Program

The CAREC Think Tank Network (CTTN) Research Grants Program (RGP) provides support for research projects among think tanks and academic institutions in the CAREC region. The program promotes collaboration across countries and supports evidence-based policy recommendations to address regional challenges.



Workshop Report Released: CAREC Institute Workshop Strengthens Anticipatory Innovation Governance Capacity in Uzbekistan

This report is the output of the CAREC Institute's in-country capacity building workshop on Building Anticipatory Innovation Governance Capacity in Uzbekistan, held 23–26 September 2025. Co-organized by the CAREC Institute and the Center for Policy Research and Outreach (CPRO) at Westminster International University in Tashkent (WIUT), the workshop was supported through co-funding from the CAREC Institute's Capacity Building Grant Program—an initiative dedicated to advancing skill development and knowledge exchange across CAREC member countries.

For more details, please access the full report and visit the CAREC Institute [E-learning Platform](#).

Related:

[CAREC Institute Grant Supports Innovation Governance Workshop in Uzbekistan](#)

Call for Papers

2026 CTTN Research Grants Program—Financial Sector Development for Sustainable and Inclusive Growth in the CAREC Region

The CAREC Institute is pleased to launch its 2026 Research Grants Program, inviting proposals on Financial Sector Development in CAREC countries. The program supports policy research under the CAREC Think Tank Network (CTTN) to strengthen regional cooperation and integration.

Call for Applications

CTTN member think tanks are invited to submit draft proposals of 3,000–5,000 words (excluding references). Successful grantees will receive up to US\$5,000 to develop full policy research papers over a period of approximately six months.

Indicative Research Areas include, but are not limited to:

- Strengthening banking sector resilience and prudential regulation
- Developing equity and bond markets
- Financial inclusion strategies for SMEs and underserved populations
- Digital finance and regulatory frameworks
- Role of development banks and blended finance in mobilizing investment
- Financial infrastructure, payment systems, and credit information systems
- Governance, transparency, and risk management in financial institutions
- Financial consumer protection, financial literacy, and trust-building mechanisms
- Cross-border financial integration and regulatory harmonization

Important Dates

- Call for Papers: 10 February
- Proposal Draft Submission: 20 March
- Decision & Contract Signing: 15 April
- First draft submission: 30 May
- Presentation at CTTDF: June (tentative)
- Second draft submission: 17 July
- Final draft submission: 25 September
- Blog input: 20 November

Submission Details

Please submit your proposal to Ms. Jesscy Hu, Coordination Specialist, at jesscyh@carecinstitute.org, with the subject line "CTTN Research Grants Program".

For additional information regarding the call for papers, kindly see the details in the attached [Document](#).



CAREC Institute Chai Talk

Alternative Dispute Resolution in Fostering Foreign Direct Investment and Cross-Border Trade



Scan to Join the Conversation

Webinar

9/April/2026
14:50-16:30 (Beijing Time)

Online via Zoom
Simultaneous interpretation in **English and Russian**

Upcoming Event

CAREC Institute Chai Talk: Alternative Dispute Resolution in Forstering Foreign Direct Investment and Cross-Border Trade

Event Overview

Join the CAREC Institute and the Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI) for an insightful online dialogue on how effective Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms can unlock greater investment and trade in the dynamic Central Asia region.

As foreign direct investment and cross-border commerce grow, so does the need for reliable, neutral, and enforceable ways to resolve disputes. This webinar will explore the critical role of arbitration, mediation, and other ADR methods in mitigating risks, building investor confidence, and creating a predictable legal environment essential for sustainable economic growth.

Featuring leading experts from international arbitration centers and regional institutions, the session will provide valuable perspectives on the latest trends, challenges, and opportunities in ADR. The discussion will offer practical insights to navigate the complexities of cross-border engagements.

Date & Time: 9 April 2026, 14:50–16:30 (Beijing Time)

Format: Online via Zoom with simultaneous interpretation in English and Russian

Register here:

https://carecinstitute-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_RFvDAz-DT_-1jllkxaYjog

About the CAREC Institute Chai Talk:

The CAREC Institute Chai Talk is an informal forum that brings together experts, policymakers, and stakeholders from the CAREC region and beyond for interactive discussions on topics such as economic trends, public policy, and sustainable development. Held in a relaxed setting over tea (“Chai”), these sessions encourage open dialogue, active participation, and the exchange of ideas. By fostering knowledge sharing and networking, the Chai Talk series supports collaboration and addresses key regional challenges to advance economic development and cooperation.

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