

## CITA Rolling Strategic Action Plan 2024-2026

Project/Activity	Description/Objectives	Type of Input	Participating Countries	Implementation Period	Status	CAREC Institution/s or Agencies	
<b>Pillar 1: Trade Expansion from Increased Market Access</b>							
1	Regional Improvement of Border Services (RIBS)	Upgrade of facilities at key BCPs, customs automation system or national single window, and strengthening customs and project management capacity	Investment project	KGZ, TAJ, MON, PAK	KGZ-TAJ: 2013-2023 MON: 2016-2023 PAK: 2015-2023	Completed: KGZ, TAJ; Ongoing: PAK until 2023; Ongoing for MON and proposed new investment for Mongolia; Border Efficiency for Sustainable Trade Project for approval in 2023/2024; Completed scoping study for modernization of BCPs for TAJ-UZB (2023-2024)	CCC/TSCC
	Developing a regional RIBS model study	Knowledge sharing products and services	REG	2021-2024	Completed: Knowledge-sharing modules on RIBS projects (Jan 2021); Roundtable discussion to promote supply chain connectivity and resilient border operations in Mongolia (Sep 2022). Proposed: A case study on lessons learned and manual on best practices in RIBS and integrated border management (2023); replicate in other BCPs (PAK).	CCC/TSCC/CAREC Institute (CI)	
2	Developing a new border crossing point (BCP) (AZE-GEO)	Scoping for border project with joint SPS border control component at the Abreshumis Gza BCP	Investment project	AZE, GEO	2022-2024	Proposed: Ongoing due diligence (Ipek-Yolu-Abreshumis Gza) for project approval	TSCC
3	Upgrade of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures for Trade Project	Digitalization of phytosanitary certificates through the use of ePhyto solutions of the International Plant Protection Convention	Knowledge sharing products and services	AZE, GEO, PAK	2022-2024	Completed (PAK): integrating ePhyto solutions in the Pakistan Single Window. Ongoing (AZE, GEO): Business process analysis for streamlining trade of plants and plant products through the use of ephyto solutions.	Mongolia Ministry of Finance and Office of Deputy Prime Minister
4	Common Agenda for Modernization of Sanitary and Phytosanitary	Review and Updating of plant health legislation (pesticides and quarantine)	Knowledge sharing products and services	PAK	2022-2024	Ongoing (PAK): support for plant pesticide legislation	
5	Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) mapping	Enhance transparency and data exchange of technical regulations and accreditation or conformity assessment, and organize working or expert group meetings	Knowledge-sharing products and cooperation	REG	2021-2024	Completed: Mapping study on TBTs in CAREC (2022). Planned: ADB-United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)-CI: Experts' Workshop on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Databases: Facilitating Trade through Transparency of CAREC Technical Regulations and Standards (Q3 2023). Proposed: include technical regulation (TR) and conformity assessment (CA), mutual recognition of CA results, and develop a unified digital platform for non-tariff measures and e-certification to be replicated in CAREC (UZB).	RTG
6	CAREC Advanced Transit System (CATS) Pilot Project	Pilot of a CAREC regional transit scheme based on comprehensive and risk-based guarantees, and a customs information common exchange.	Investment project (scoping)	AZE, GEO, TKM, UZB, [KAZ]	2017-2024	Completed: CAREC Customs Transit Survey Findings and Workshop on Transit Facilitation at the sidelines of Asia Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum 2022 (Sep 2022); Completed: Memorandum of Understanding for signing of AZE, GEO, and UZB (October 2023) to implement pilot testing; TKM pending as signatory to MOU. Proposed: extend CATS CAREC-wide	CCC
	Transit agreement	Knowledge sharing products and services	AZE, KAZ, UZB	2023	Completed subregional assessment study on trade and cross-border transport facilitation for AZE, KAZ, and UZB (Q3 2023).	CCC	
7	Information Common Exchange (ICE)	Pilot customs data exchange among participating CAREC countries, which could be linked to CAREC Advanced Transit System	Investment project (scoping)	AZE, GEO, TKM, UZB, [KAZ]	2019-2024	Completed: Action plan for test phase and technical manuals for CATS prototype. Proposed: Develop user requirements for prototype system changes and improvements	CCC
8	Authorized economic operators (AEO)	Adoption of modern risk management systems and approaches, develop national AEO programs, and preliminary mutual recognition arrangement processes	Knowledge-sharing products and services/ Policy dialogue and cooperation	REG	2022-2024	Completed: Expert on AEO regional mapping engaged in Feb 2023 and AEO survey of countries in August 2023. Completed: 2 virtual AEO regional workshops (Sep 2023, Feb 2024), 1 in-person (October 2023). Planned: National workshops on risk management focused on AEO Program planned in MON and KAZ.	CCC; in partnership with Korea Customs Service
9	Joint customs control (JCC)	Document harmonization through the unified cargo manifest aimed at electronic exchange, mutual recognition of inspection results	Knowledge-sharing products and services	REG	2023-2024	Completed: Knowledge Sharing Program on Promoting Regional Cooperation and Integration for Economic Corridor Development in the CAREC Region (Georgia, May 2023). Proposed: Mutual recognition of customs control results, uniform requirements for customs checkpoints and customs control procedures, create IT expert group to study which countries can move to e-platform (UZB);	CCC
10	Paperless trade	Enhancing e-customs systems to facilitate paperless trade; World Customs Organization Framework of Standards in Cross-border E-commerce Accession to United Nations Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia-Pacific Adopting International Plant Protection Convention's ePhyto solutions: business process feasibility and technical support for migrating into e-SPS/ePhyto	Policy dialogue and cooperation; Knowledge-sharing products and services Knowledge-sharing products and services; Policy dialogue and Knowledge sharing products and services	REG REG GEO, PAK, MON, other interested countries	2021-2023 2020-2024 2021-2024	Published under <i>E-Commerce in CAREC Countries: Infrastructure Development</i> and presented at the CAREC Trade Week: Enhancing Cooperation in Digital Trade (Sep 2021) Mongolia, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan joined Azerbaijan and the PRC in 2022 Completed: CAREC Regional Conference on Adoption of ePhyto Solutions (Sep 2023). Ongoing: support for adopting ePhyto (GEO, PAK); improving capacity for e-certification such as ePhyto (MON)	CCC CCC; UNESCAP CAREC National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs), International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), USAID Trade Central Asia Activity (TCA), GIZ
11	National Single Window	Conduct regional mapping and gap analysis on information exchange platforms and single window systems Enhancing of electronic single window systems Application of global standards for trade and transport data and document exchange	Knowledge-sharing products and services/ Policy dialogue and cooperation Policy dialogue and cooperation; Knowledge-sharing products and services Knowledge-sharing products and services/ Policy dialogue and cooperation	REG REG REG	2023-2024 2021-2023 2022	Proposed: explore integration of digital platforms of countries (UZB); Engagement of expert in Q3 2024; outcomes of analysis to feed into regional seminar in partnership with Korea Customs Service (2024) Completed: Regional workshop on single window focusing on business process analysis and data harmonization (June 2023). Ongoing: Assessment to enhance AZE Customs' SW and its integration with other agencies' systems being finalized (August 2023). Completed: Workshop on Digitalization of Trade Documents in STKEC Region (May 2022). Proposed: Digitalize trade procedures, develop unified templates of documents, mutual recognition (UZB).	CCC CCC RTG, CCC, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)

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12 World Trade Organization (WTO) accession	Advisory support and capacity building for WTO accession	Knowledge-sharing products and services	AZE, TKM, UZB	2018–2024	Completed (AZE): Impact assessment study and stakeholders' seminar on WTO. Ongoing (TKM): Support for the drafting of the Memorandum on the Foreign Trade Regime (MFTR). Proposed: Subregional knowledge sharing for acceding members (Q2 2024).	RTG, WTO Secretariat
13 Best practices on free trade agreements (FTAs)	Development of the Guidelines on CAREC FTA design, negotiation and implementation for CAREC countries; CAREC FTA related country specific action plans; CAREC FTA research and model-based study on the economic effects of a CAREC FTA.	Policy dialogue, knowledge-sharing products and services	REG	2020–2025	Proposed: Reformat FTA into a broad-format Agreement on Economic Partnership among CAREC countries, and include all aspects of economic cooperation (e.g., non-tariff measures, investments, intellectual property rights, digital trade) (UZB); conceptual framework for general agreement (TAJ); interested in broader economic partnership agreement (EPA), comprehensive research on FTA and EPA (MON); include services such as transport and logistics, financial payments (PAK); investment as a priority chapter (PRC); FTA rather than EPA (GEO); comparative study of FTA and EPA (KAZ); workshop on the effects of FTA (TKM); CAREC FTA roadmap development, including institutional implications; CAREC RTA topical studies (by countries' demand. Completed: FTA Guidelines (Dec 2022); Regional workshop on sharing PRC's experience in FTAs (Nov 2022); CAREC FTA Report and Regional Dissemination Workshop (Jul-Aug 2022); CAREC Regional workshop on FTA Lessons (April 2022); 3 Case studies on selected FTAs: PRC-Georgia, RCEP, EAEU (Nov 2021-Jan 2022); Capacity Needs Assessment (Oct-Dec 2021); CAREC Countries Consultation workshop (Sept 2021); Inception workshop (May 2021).	RTG/CCC; CI; RKSJ
	Capacity building activities: regional training of trainers on how to design, negotiate, and implement FTAs; subregional and national workshops; targeted capacity development and training activities on FTAs	Knowledge-sharing products and services	REG	2020–2025	Proposed: National workshop on potential CAREC-wide FTA (MON); FTA country specific action plans for AZE, UZB, MON; knowledge products, policy briefs and blogs on FTA/RTA related issues. Completed: FTA targeted national capacity building on trade in services, e-commerce & investment-related provisions (KAZ, KGZ, TAJ, May 2023); National training on preparing to negotiate a potential CAREC-wide FTA (PAK, March 2023; UZB, May 2023); National workshops on potential CAREC-wide FTA (GEO, Jan 2023; PAK, March 2023; UZB, May 2023; TKM, May 2023; AZE, May 2023); Training of trainers on how to design, negotiate and implement FTAs (REG, Jan 2023)	RTG/CCC; CI; RKSJ; trade/commerce ministries of the participating countries
<b>Pillar 2: Greater Diversification</b>						
14 Free trade zone, special economic zones (SEZs), or cross-border economic zones	Feasibility study on free trade or special economic zones to strengthen competitiveness and promote economic diversification, including as part of economic corridor development	Investment project (scoping); knowledge-sharing products and services	REG	2020–2023	Completed: Forum on Developing Sustainable Economic Zones in CAREC Countries (Sep 2022); SEZ knowledge-sharing sessions conducted in MON (Apr/May 2021). Proposed: Share PRC's best practices, and facilitate collaboration between border provinces and towns (PRC).	RTG
	Developing economic cooperation zone	Investment project	MON-PRC (IMAR)	2020–2024	Ongoing: Mongolia project and counterpart PRC Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region program approved in 2020	RTG
15 Developing trade in services	Study to promote expansion and integration of trade in services in priority sectors (finance, health, pharmaceutical, education, transport, ICT and tourism)	Knowledge-sharing products and services	REG	2019–2024	Completed: Publication of the report, "Developing the Services Sector for Economic Diversification in CAREC Countries" (December 2021). Proposed: develop trade in services.	RTG, TSCC
16 Awareness and access to trade finance, supply chain finance, and guarantees	Bridge financing gaps and improve access to trade finance and credit guarantees for small traders	Knowledge-sharing products and services	REG	2018–2024	Ongoing: Survey on 2023 Trade Finance Gaps, Growth, and Jobs Survey (June 2023) under ADB's Trade and Supply Chain Finance Program	RTG; ADB's Private Sector Operations Department (PSOD) and Economic Research and Regional Cooperation Department (ERCD)
17 Accelerating Digital Trade through expansion of e-commerce, promotion of innovation and digital economy	Improving regulatory framework for e-commerce development in CAREC; identifying legal and policy reforms including drafting and implementing action plans	Knowledge-sharing products and services	REG	2019–2024	Completed: Support to align e-commerce legislation with international conventions and best practices (AZE); publications — "E-Commerce in CAREC Countries: Laws and Policies" (August 2021). Proposed: Develop standard package of legal documents required for regulating e-commerce (UZB)	RTG; ADB and development partners; Commercial Law Development Program (CLDP), USAID-Future Growth Initiative (FGI), USAID Trade Central Asia (TCA); ADB's Office of General Counsel (OGC)
	Analysis of infrastructure for e-commerce development in CAREC	Knowledge-sharing products and services; Policy dialogue and cooperation	REG	2021–2024	Completed: publication — "E-Commerce in CAREC Countries: Infrastructure Development" (March 2022); Ongoing: ADB call for proposals to accelerate digital trade	RTG/CCC; ADB and CI
	Digital Trade Forum to serve as a platform for bringing together stakeholders from government, private sector, and international organizations in help CAREC countries develop digital trade	Knowledge-sharing products and services; Policy dialogue and cooperation	REG	2022–2024	Completed: Inaugural CAREC Digital Trade Forum (2022). The 2nd CAREC Digital Trade Forum will be held in Astana on 17 April 2024.	RTG
	Enhancing digital economy in CAREC countries	Knowledge-sharing products and services; Policy dialogue and cooperation	REG	2022–2023	Completed: Mongolia (ICT Forum and Ministers Meeting to build inclusive Digital Trade (June 2023); Proposed: Coordinate with implementation of CAREC Digital Strategy 2030 (PAK).	RTG, ADB, CWRC and SDCC-DT
	Adoption of UNCITRAL's Model Law on Electronic Transferable Records (MLETR)	Knowledge-sharing products and services; Policy dialogue and cooperation	PRC, GEO	2021–2024	Completed: Capacity building and advisory on adoption of MLETR (GEO, PRC, 2023); webinar on "Digitalizing Trade in Asia Needs Legislative Reform" (October 2021); ICC report on MLETR for dissemination	International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Digital Standards Initiative (DSI), ADB: Regional Cooperation and Integration - Thematic Group (RCI-TG), PSOD, OGC, UNCITRAL
	Pilot project on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for innovative solutions to digitize procedures related to declaration of goods, proofs of origin and assessment of tax liabilities	Pilot project	GEO	2022–2024	Ongoing: Software for automated declaration of goods has been developed for testing and refinement	RTG, Georgia Revenue Service
	Pilot project to develop minimum viable project for electronic certificate of origin (COO) using blockchain technology and distributed ledger technology	Investment project (scoping); knowledge-sharing products and services	MON	2022–2024	Prototype has been developed with the the Mongolian National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MNCCI) and Mongolia Customs	RTG, MNCCI; Mongolia Customs General Administration; Ministry of Economy and Development (MED) and Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and ADB's IT Department (Sandbox Program)

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	Scoping studies on innovative solutions for customs processes	Investment project (scoping); knowledge-sharing products and services	REG	2023-2024	Proposed: scoping study to assess the needs of at least two CAREC countries on adopting new technologies, such as AI, cloud computing, big data, internet of things, and blockchain technology (Q4 2023); regional workshop in partnership with Korea Customs Service (2024)	CCC	
	CAREC Digital Trade Cooperation Framework Agreement	Policy dialogue and cooperation	REG	2024	Proposed by PRC MOFCOM at the 6th RTG Meeting	RTG, Digital Strategy Steering Committee	
<b>Pillar 3: Stronger Institutions for Trade</b>							
18	Online trade portal	Development of a one-stop shop repository for trade policies and/or regulations, best practices and data of CAREC countries (subsite in CAREC website), which could be linked with existing business-to-business platforms or mechanisms	Knowledge-sharing products and services	REG	2019–2024	Ongoing: Trade Information Portal statistics updated using latest available data. Link: <a href="https://trade.carecprogram.org/">https://trade.carecprogram.org/</a>	RTG
19	CAREC Corridors Performance Measurement and Monitoring (CPMM)	Continue to measure the competitiveness of CAREC corridors to enhance performance and address the bottlenecks at key BCPs, with additional data features	Knowledge-sharing products and services	REG	2019–2024	Ongoing: Annual reports on CPMM produced - including country-level information and 10-year stocktake of CPMM data published in 2022	CCC/CFCA/TSSC
		ADB-CI partnership to elevate the CPMM annual report and its dissemination. Develop CPMM briefs to advocate country-specific trade facilitation recommendations to CAREC governments for evidence-based policymaking.	Knowledge-sharing product and services	REG	2020–2024	Ongoing: ADB and CI entered into joint CPMM partnership roadmap through 2024. In 2020, the CAREC Institute has started disseminating country-specific policy briefs to relevant government entities. Completed a call for proposal and conference in 2022 resulting in publication of 4.5 working papers. In 2023, CI provided updates to the policy briefs to relevant government entities.	ADB/CI
		Develop an online portal to facilitate wider awareness and use of CPMM data, reports and activities.	Knowledge-sharing products and services	REG	2021–2024	Completed: CPMM web portal developed and accessible in Q2 2023. Link: <a href="https://cpmm.carecprogram.org/">https://cpmm.carecprogram.org/</a>	ADB/CI
		Review to expand and strengthen the CPMM methodology, improve its data collection and validation, and streamline its report and findings to effectively promote use of CPMM data and analysis in policy-related decision-making and independent research.	Knowledge-sharing products and services	REG	2023-2024	Ongoing: ADB conducted a preliminary review and will seek stakeholder consultation at a workshop in April 2024.	ADB/CI
	Pilot implementation of the improved CPMM methodology	Knowledge-sharing products and services	REG	2024-2025	Proposed to be conducted in June 2024	ADB/CI	
20	Enhanced interagency (SPS-customs-trade) cooperation	Capacity-building and fora to support policy coordination, including on risk management	Policy dialogue and cooperation, knowledge sharing products and services	REG	2021–2024	Completed: Joint CCC-SPS RWG Meeting on risk management and digitalization (Apr 2021). Proposed at the 3rd SPS Meeting (Jan 2023); preparation of risk management plans (AZE); harmonization of risk management systems (PAK); implementation of risk management (TKM).	RTG/CCC/SPS RWG
		One Health Approach between CAREC SPS working group and CAREC health sector group	Policy dialogue and cooperation	REG	2024-2026	Proposed	ADB, WTO, WOH
21	Improved research capacity and coordination among CAREC countries	Strengthen the role of CAREC Institute and linkages with national research institutes to provide opportunities for cross-learning	Knowledge-sharing products and services	REG	2019–2022	Ongoing: continuing participation at annual think tank forum	RTG, CI
		Strengthen trade in services statistics through cooperation	Policy dialogue and cooperation	REG	2021–2023	Completed: training on strengthening capacity for services trade and e-commerce statistics (MON, March 2023)	RTG; Mongolia's MED and MFA
22	Regular consultation mechanism	Consultation meetings for specific trade issues and measures and subnational crossborder issues	Policy dialogue and cooperation	REG	2021–2023	Proposed at the 3rd RTG Meeting (UZB); CAREC governors or mayors forum for regular exchanges (PRC)	RTG

Countries/members: AZE = Azerbaijan, AFG = Afghanistan, PRC = People's Republic of China, IMAR = Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, XUAR = Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, GEO = Georgia, KAZ = Kazakhstan, KGZ = Kyrgyz Republic, MON = Mongolia, PAK = Pakistan, TAJ = Tajikistan, TKM = Turkmenistan, UZB = Uzbekistan, REG = regional.

CAREC institutions: CCC = Customs Cooperation Committee, CFCA = CAREC Federation of Carrier and Forwarder Associations, NWG = national working group, RTG = Regional Trade Group, RWG = regional working group, SPS = Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, TSSC = Transport Sector Coordinating Committee.

Development Partners: ADB = Asian Development Bank, CI = CAREC Institute, ICC-DSI = International Chamber of Commerce Digital Standards Initiative, International Plant Protection Convention = IPPC; UNESCAP = UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific; UNCITRAL = United National Commission on International Trade Law, UNECE = United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, USAID = U.S. Agency for International Development, WOH = World Organization for Animal Health, WCO = World Customs Organization; WTO = World Trade Organization

Notes: Implementation period is indicative. Following the government change in Afghanistan in mid-August 2021, the Asian Development Bank placed on hold its assistance in Afghanistan effective 15 August 2021. Implementation of activities in and for Afghanistan is indefinitely postponed until further advised. Source: Asian Development Bank staff.

Status: Planned/Ongoing = projects have been approved and/or under implementation, including those that may require additional financing; Proposed = as requested by countries in concept development stage and/or funding options to be identified.