



CAREC PILOT PROJECT ON ELECTRONIC EXCHANGE AND MUTUAL RECOGNITION OF CONFORMITY CERTIFICATES: KICKOFF WORKSHOP

1–2 June 2026 | Incheon, Republic of Korea

BACKGROUND

The Asian Development Bank (ADB), in partnership with the Korea Trade Network (KTNET), the official national paperless trade infrastructure provider for the Republic of Korea (ROK), is implementing a pilot project to develop a model and framework for the electronic exchange and mutual recognition of conformity certificates. By establishing a mutually acceptable system, the pilot project seeks to reduce processing time, enhance mutual trust, and strengthen cooperation in the use of digital solutions in trade. The pilot project is being implemented in five Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) member countries: Azerbaijan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, and Uzbekistan signed a memorandum of understanding with ADB and KTNET to participate in the pilot project in November 2025, while Tajikistan formally expressed their interest to participate in February 2026.

ADB and KTNET, in collaboration with UNESCAP, will host the pilot project’s kickoff workshop on 1–2 June 2026 in Incheon, ROK. The kickoff workshop will introduce the pilot project’s digitalization model; identify key issues and priority interventions at the national and regional levels; and demonstrate international best practices in electronic exchange and mutual recognition.

The pilot project is being implemented under the ADB Technical Assistance on Implementing the CAREC Integrated Trade Agenda 2030 (Phase 2): Accelerating Digital Trade (Subproject 3). It is in line with the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific (CPTA) (especially CPTA Article 13 on pilot project). While Pakistan is in the process of acceding to CPTA, all other participating countries are parties to CPTA. The project may also be supported by the CPTA Working Group on mutual recognition while the Chair of the Working Group is from KTNET.

PARTICIPANTS

Representatives of CAREC participating countries, KTNET project team, UNESCAP specialists, ADB staff and consultants.

AGENDA

Day 1	1 June 2026, Monday
8:30–9:00	<i>Registration</i>
9:00–9:05	Welcome Remarks Speaker: Jean Koh, CEO and President, KTNET
9:05–9:10	<i>Group photo and introduction of participants</i>

Day 1	1 June 2026, Monday
9:10–9:20	<p>Introduction to ADB CAREC Work on Digital Trade</p> <p>Speaker: Dorothea Lazaro, Senior Regional Cooperation Specialist, ADB</p>
9:20–10:00	<p>Session 1: Best Global Practices in Electronic Exchange and Mutual Recognition</p> <p>This session will examine international benchmarks and successful case studies in digital trade, focusing on the legal, technical, and operational frameworks that have enabled leading economies to transition to fully paperless environments. By analyzing these global best practices, participants will identify scalable strategies and interoperable standards that can be adapted to enhance their own national and regional trade ecosystems. The guides on implementing paperless solutions for certificates of origin and phytosanitary certificates, prepared by the CPTA Standing Committee with support of the CPTA Working Group, will be shared as concrete examples and reference materials.</p> <p>Moderator: Dorothea Lazaro, Senior Regional Cooperation Specialist, ADB</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tengfei Wang, Economic Affairs Officer, UNESCAP • Sung Heun (Rama) Ha, International Digital Trade Specialist, KTNET
10:00–10:30	Open Discussion
10:30–11:00	<i>Break</i>
11:00–11:40	<p>Session 2: Overview of Digitalization Model</p> <p>This session will explain how the pilot project’s 5-stage digitalization model will support countries’ effective transition to digital exchange of conformity certificates.</p> <p>Moderator: Dong Whan (Don) Lee, International Trade Facilitation / Institutional Coordination Advisor, KTNET</p> <p>Speaker: Sung Young (Adolfo) Kang, International Project Manager, KTNET</p>
11:40–12:00	Open Discussion
12:00–13:30	<i>Lunch</i>

Day 1	1 June 2026, Monday
13:30–14:30	<p>Session 3: Preliminary Analysis of Pilot Countries' Readiness</p> <p>This session will present a preliminary comparison of the current baseline of institutional and technical readiness among the pilot countries. Participants will engage in a collaborative review to identify critical gaps and prioritize the specific interventions required for a successful pilot implementation.</p> <p>Moderator: Tengfei Wang, Economic Affairs Officer, UNESCAP</p> <p>Speaker: Sung Young (Adolfo) Kang, International Project Manager, KTNET</p>
14:30–15:00	Open Discussion
15:00–15:30	<i>Break</i>
15:30–16:30	<p>Session 4: Selection Criteria for Pilot Products</p> <p>This session will focus on defining the criteria for identifying pilot products for the electronic exchange of conformity certificates. Participants will evaluate key considerations and benchmarks to ensure the selected products can effectively demonstrate the pilot project's efficiency and scalability.</p> <p>Moderator: Sung Heun (Rama) Ha, International Digital Trade Specialist, KTNET</p> <p>Speaker: Yoo Young Lee, Senior Customs Attorney, Seonyul Customs Attorney Office</p>
16:30–17:00	Open Discussion
18:00–20:00	<p>Welcome Dinner hosted by KTNET</p> <p>Venue: Hanyang Songdo Hanok Village</p>

Day 2	2 June 2026, Tuesday
8:30–9:00	<i>Registration</i>
9:00–10:00	<p>Session 5: Key Technical, Legal and Regulatory Issues</p> <p>This session will discuss technical standards and legal and regulatory actions required to ensure seamless and secure information exchange across national systems. Participants will discuss priorities and strategies for developing interoperable protocols to eliminate technical barriers and streamline the cross-border flow of electronic certificates.</p> <p>Moderator: Sung Heun (Rama) Ha, International Digital Trade Specialist, KTNET</p> <p>Speaker: Sung Young (Adolfo) Kang, International Project Manager, KTNET</p>
10:00–10:30	Open Discussion
10:30–11:00	<i>Break</i>
11:00–11:50	<p>Session 6: Synthesis and Next Steps</p> <p>This concluding session will synthesize the key findings and stakeholder feedback from the workshop to establish the action plan and timeline for the pilot project's implementation.</p> <p>Moderator: Maria Isabela Corpuz, Regional Cooperation Coordinator, ADB</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sung Young (Adolfo) Kang, International Project Manager, KTNET • Dorothea Lazaro, Senior Regional Cooperation Specialist, ADB • Tengfei Wang, Economic Affairs Officer, UNESCAP
11:50–12:00	Participants' post-event evaluation
12:00–13:30	<i>Lunch</i>
14:00–17:00	<p>Session 7: Study Tour at Korea Conformity Laboratories</p> <p>This study tour/session will provide a practical demonstration of the operational processes of advanced digital trade solutions. Participants will observe live workflows and engage in technical discussions with site operators to understand the real-world challenges and efficiencies gained from automating trade documentation and clearance processes.</p>