



North-East Asia Regional Power Interconnection and Cooperation Forum 2020 and Launch of Report on Regional Power Grid Connectivity for Sustainable Development in Northeast Asia: Policies and Strategies

**10 December 2020
Virtual**

Background

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought unprecedented socioeconomic challenges to the global economy. While protecting lives and livelihoods are at the center of government policies and stimulus packages rolled out throughout the year, these measures also provide a window of opportunity to imbed recovery strategies to build back better and facilitate the transition to carbon neutral economies.

There are encouraging recent developments in the subregion on this front. Countries in East and North-East Asia pledged that they would step up efforts to fight climate change. China, Japan and the Republic of Korea all announced this year their commitment to become carbon neutral by 2060 in the case of China and by 2050 for Japan and the Republic of Korea. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea already announced last year during the UN Climate Action Summit that it would reduce carbon emissions by 16.4 percent every year until 2030 and cut the amount of greenhouse gas emissions by 36 percent in line with the Paris Agreement. Similarly, Mongolia, since ratifying the Paris Agreement in 2016 has started implementing its National Determined Contribution (NDC). Also in 2020, the Russian Federation developed a long-term, low carbon development plan which promises to cut greenhouse gas emissions by a third by 2030 compared to 1990 levels.

In order to realize these targets, the subregion will need to substantially increase the use of renewable sources of energy and reduce reliance on fossil fuels. In this regard, subregional cooperation on power grid interconnection can help to harness the potential benefits of the rich renewable energy resources in East and North-East Asia.

Increasing cross-border power grid interconnection would not only contribute to lowering average energy prices and increasing overall energy security, it is also critical for enabling the subregion's decarbonization. Considering that the subregion as a whole accounts for more than

one third of the global total primary energy consumption and one third of the world's carbon dioxide equivalent emissions, cross-border electricity trade of electricity produced by renewable energy resources will also significantly contribute to global sustainability.

Recent shifts in the energy landscape – including the decline in cost of renewable energy sources such as wind and solar PV, improvements in high-voltage transmission technologies, and the establishment of a number of relevant initiatives focused on regional integration – have increased momentum for the integration of Northeast Asian power systems. The subregion is endowed with abundant energy resources, technological expertise, and financial resources, all of which can support increased and sustainable integration. These resources are not, however, evenly distributed, and so increased collaboration is necessary if integration is to move forward and to ensure that integration is both economically and environmentally beneficial.

Against this background, the NEARPIC Forum 2020 is being organized to share recent developments on North-East Asia power interconnection and discuss ways forward to enhance cooperation. Also, ESCAP will launch a report on 'Regional Power Grid Connectivity for Sustainable Development in Northeast Asia: Policies and Strategies', which was developed to examine the potential benefits of and challenges to increased integration in the subregion, and which proposes a set of policy recommendations, based on ESCAP's draft *Regional Roadmap for Power System Connectivity*, to guide and facilitate the integration process. The Report has been reviewed by regional experts and government representatives and will serve as a background document for discussing the next steps for subregional cooperation on cross-border power grid connectivity.

Objectives

The NEARPIC Forum 2020 aims:

- To discuss the findings from the report on Regional Power Grid Connectivity for Sustainable Development in Northeast Asia, particularly from the governments' perspectives
- To share (i) recent progress in feasibility studies including ADB-NAPSI project outcomes and (ii) international and regional experiences on power interconnection; and
- To discuss strategies for intergovernmental cooperation and concrete project proposals for moving forward

Participants

- Members of NEARPIC Steering Committee
- Government officials in the North-East Asian countries
- National institutes, energy companies and other public-sector stakeholders

- International organizations and financial institutions
- Academia and think tanks

Organization

- The NEARPIC Forum 2020 will be organized on 10 December and held virtually from 15:00 to 18:00 (GMT+9) using MS Teams
- All discussions of the Forum will be conducted in English
- Presentations will be delivered by representatives, resource persons and experts upon the session focus, followed by discussions

For any inquires or more information, please contact us at ha@un.org or hong6@un.org.