



Towards region-wide seamless connectivity in Asia and the Pacific

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Introduction

- ▶ Region-wide seamless connectivity was identified as one pillar in the agenda for economic cooperation and integration (*Bangkok Declaration on RECI in AP, 2013*).
- ▶ Promoting seamless connectivity of transport, energy and ICT is key for achieving the agenda.
 - ▶ It helps countries expand their markets, optimize exchanges and strengthen collaboration in support of sustainable development and shared prosperity.
 - ▶ It involves software (e.g., frameworks and capacities) and hardware (e.g., physical networks).
- ▶ This presentation summarizes the current state, challenges, and recommendations in transport, energy and ICT connectivity contained in Document E/ESCAP/MCREI(2)/3.

Transport Connectivity

Current Stage

- ▶ National level: Investment in infrastructure increased in recent decades.
- ▶ Regional level: AH, TAR, dry ports networks enhance regional connectivity.
- ▶ Maritime transport: 9 of top 10 container ports are in Asia-Pacific; main mode of transport of goods and services in the Pacific.
- ▶ Many regional and sub-regional initiatives and platforms support seamless transport connectivity.

Challenges

- ▶ Missing railway links.
- ▶ Substandard intercountry roads.
- ▶ High logistics cost.
- ▶ Lack of cross-border road transport facilitation.
- ▶ Wide range of agreements leads to fragmentation.
- ▶ Soaring demand for infrastructure but limited financing.
- ▶ Lack of public-private and private-private interaction.

Transport Connectivity

Recommendations

- ▶ Enhancing the delivery capability of infrastructure networks and services through intergovernmental agreements.
- ▶ Harmonizing technical standards and operational rules.
- ▶ Using modern technologies.
- ▶ Reinforcing cooperation and partnership for solution-oriented policies and actions.

Energy Interconnection in Asia-Pacific

Current Stage and Challenges:

- ▶ Regional energy use is projected to nearly double from 2010 to 2035 due to strong growth of population and GDP
- ▶ Insufficient supply or interruptions hamper many developing countries' economies
- ▶ More than 400 million inhabitants in the region are still not connected to electricity
- ▶ The share of modern renewable energy in the overall energy mix is stagnating.
- ▶ Most of the region's conventional energy resources are highly concentrated: total energy resources in five countries account for more than 85% of the total energy resources in the region

Energy Interconnection in Asia-Pacific

Recommendations:

- ▶ Change the political mindset from energy security based on independence to energy security based on interdependence
- ▶ Establish an effective institutional coordination mechanism through which the region moves from an ad hoc approach to a multilateral platform such as ESCAP

→ A Regional Roadmap for Energy Connectivity and institutional mechanism could help to develop energy connectivity and to build trust

Information and Communication Technology

Current Stage and Challenges:

- ▶ **Widening digital divide** in Asia-Pacific region has negative impact on the development of digital economy and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
- ▶ ICT infrastructure **gap** (transboundary connectivity), limited enabling **policy and regulatory environment**, lack of **resilience** ICT infrastructure to natural disasters, and limited **financing mechanisms** hinder national and regional connectivity; and
- ▶ Need to take advantage of the **interlinkages** and synergies across different types of infrastructure (for example, between ICT and railway, highway, energy infrastructures), to **reduce cost**.

Information and Communication Technology

Recommendations

- ▶ Regional cooperation by ESCAP member countries on promoting ICT connectivity through the **Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway**;
- ▶ **Alignment** of national, subregional and regional policies and regulations on ICT with the goals of the 2030 Agenda;
- ▶ **Codeployment** of infrastructure (ICT, Transport and Energy) can reduce bottlenecks and accelerate deployment. As a result, leveraging existing regional connectivity agreements (Asian Highway Agreement & Trans-Asian Railway Network) can be efficient and cost-effective; and
- ▶ **E-resilience** enhances certainty and lower risk of proposed ICT projects for funding.

The background features abstract geometric shapes in shades of orange and yellow. On the left, a solid orange shape extends from the top edge. On the right, a complex arrangement of overlapping semi-transparent triangles in various shades of orange and yellow is visible. The central text 'THANK YOU' is rendered in a bold, orange, sans-serif font.

THANK YOU