



# Digitalization of Conformity Certification and Mutual Recognition in the CAREC Region



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## [ Contents ]

### I Introduction of KTNET

### II Experiences in CAREC

### III Recommendation



# 1. Introduction of KTNET

KTNET, established in 1991 by KITA under the government(MOTIE)'s international trade automation master plan, is the official national digital trade infrastructure operator.

It specializes in operating digital trade services and other electronic transaction trust services. Based on its accumulated trade facilitation experiences, KTNET has shared its know-how with other countries in trade facilitation areas.

## 1. Trusted Company

### Designation as Electronic Transaction Infrastructure Service Provider for 10 Business Areas

- MOTIE, KCS, MOF, MSIT, MOEF, MOJ

### 100% subsidiary of the Korea International Trade Association (KITA)

- Based on the government's Comprehensive Trade Automation Master Plan of 1989 (established in 1991)

### Over 30 Years of stable and reliable operation of the National Digital Trade Platform (uTradeHub)

- 105,000 customers, 650 types of documents, Processing 500 million documents transactions annually (as of 2024)

## 2. Trust Company in Implementing Global Paperless Trade Platforms

### Mongolia

- e-Customs system implementation ('08~'10),  
e-Customs system optimization ('15~'16)

### Kazakhstan

- Consulting for customs administration modernization('05~'06)

### Uzbekistan

- **Standard administration system implementation project ('16~'19, '22~'23)**

### Trade Facilitation Innovation Award by ADB & ESCAP

- For Korea's FTA Origin Determination Service in 2022

### Kyrgyzstan

- Election capacity building support project('14~'16)

## 2-1. Framework Agreement on the Facilitation of Cross-Border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific (CPTA)

### A UN Treaty

- **Open to interested (53) ESCAP member states (voluntary) to become parties**
  - Enabling and action-oriented agreement
- **CAREC members to CPTA (7 out of 11)**
  - Azerbaijan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan

### Objective

- To facilitate cross-border paperless trade (data exchange) among willing ESCAP member states by providing a dedicated intergovernmental framework to develop legal and technical solutions
- Complementary to the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA)

## 2-2. Emerging Digital Trade Rules

### Increasing digital trade measures

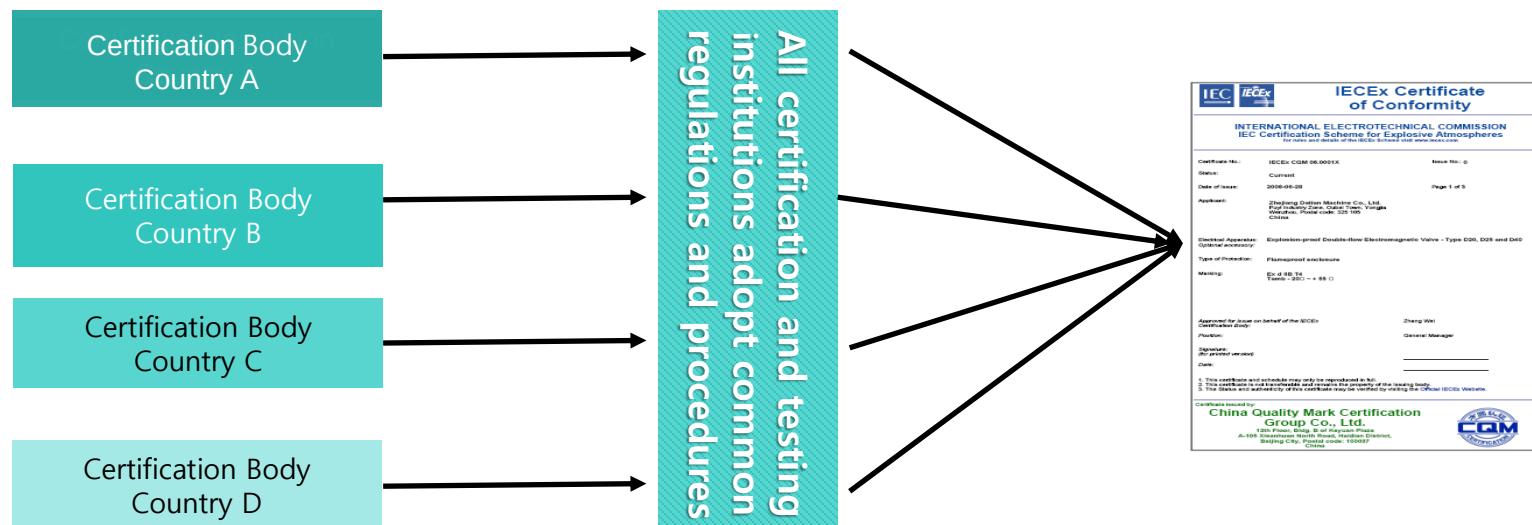
- **Preferential trade agreements incorporate more digital trade measures**
  - from data privacy and cyber security to e-Signature, e-Administration Documents and e-ID

### Digital Trade Agreements

- **Past FTAs are not advanced enough to eliminate or reduce the barriers faced by businesses operating in the digital economy**
- **Digital Trade Agreements are emerging as successors to digital trade provisions traditionally embedded within Free Trade Agreements**
  - Multilateral: Digital Economy Partnership Agreement
  - Bilateral: Singapore–Australia Digital Economy Agreement (SADEA), UK–Singapore Digital Economy Agreement (UKSDEA), Chile–Uruguay Digital Economy Agreement, Korea–Singapore Digital Partnership Agreement, Canada–Singapore Digital Partnership Agreement (CSDPA), Chile–Singapore Digital Economy Agreement
  - WTO Joint Statement Initiative on e-Commerce (WTO negotiations on trade-related aspects of e-commerce)
- **Korea has entered into separate negotiations with the EU and the UK to establish independent Digital Trade Agreements, outside the framework of their current Free Trade Agreements**

## 2-3. Mutual Recognition Overview and Status

**Mutual Recognition** is a system where certification bodies from different countries or regions **mutually recognize each other's certification and test results**, allowing the same product or service to be certified in multiple **countries without the need for additional testing at the importing country**.



### [Current Status]

| Country 1  | Country 2  | Product                | Year | Details                                                                   |
|------------|------------|------------------------|------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Kazakhstan | Uzbekistan | Electrical Equipment   | 2020 | Mutual recognition of electrical equipment test reports and certificates. |
| Kazakhstan | Uzbekistan | Agricultural Products  | 2018 | Mutual recognition of agricultural products safety and quality standards. |
| Kyrgyzstan | Tajikistan | Construction Materials | 2021 | Mutual recognition of construction materials quality standards.           |
| Kyrgyzstan | Tajikistan | Food Products          | 2019 | Mutual recognition of food products safety and quality standards.         |

## 2-4. Pilot Project Plan for Electronic Mutual Recognition of Conformity Certificates

| Category         | Contents                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Background       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Need for enhancing economic cooperation in Central Asia</li> <li>▪ Goals of promoting the use of digital solutions, strengthening supply chain connectivity, and expanding trade</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Goal             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Piloting an Electronic Exchange Model and Mutual Recognition of Conformity Certificates / Test Report in CAREC Countries</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Period           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 24 months in total</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Tasks & Schedule | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>(Phase 1 Pilot)</b> Develop and test a model for electronic exchange of Conformity Certificates / Test Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Selection of Participating Countries (3 months)</li> <li>- Assessment of Informatization Status and Business Processes (8 months)</li> <li>- Development and Testing of Electronic Exchange Model (4 months)</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>(Phase 2 Pilot)</b> Design and test mutual recognition arrangement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Design of mutual recognition framework (3 months)</li> <li>- Implementation Plan (3 months)</li> <li>- Testing and Submission of Final Report (3 months)</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Capacity Building : Workshop(in Korea, more than 4), Workshop(2times, online)<br/>Invitational Program(in Korea, more than 8)</li> </ul> |
| Requirements     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Allocation of personnel and participation in the project</b> belonging to the Participating National Standard Agency</li> <li>▪ If necessary, upgrade the internal systems of the standard agencies (KTNET will provide electronic exchange modules) and introduce experimental equipment to ensure international equivalence.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

### 3. Recommendations

#### Individual members

- CAREC member states are encouraged to actively promote the digital capacity building of their standardization bodies, particularly in the areas of certification, inspection, and testing.
- Where needed, members should seek support and collaboration from development partners to enhance these capabilities effectively
- Please join the ADB pilot project to assess your readiness and identify gaps

#### Development bodies

- It is recommended that development bodies coordinate the following activities:
  - Support the development of a platform to facilitate enhanced trust and collaboration among CAREC standardization authorities
  - Provide capacity-building programs for standardization and certification at the CAREC level and promote the activation of mutual recognition arrangements
  - Promote a digital mutual recognition system for standards and certification across CAREC member countries

⇒ **The enhanced capacity of standardization bodies, strengthened linkage with international standards, and the expansion of digital Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) for Conformity Certification among CAREC countries could significantly contribute to improved regional economic integration and expanded market access to other economies**

# Thank you

If you have questions,  
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