

The views expressed in this presentation are the views of the author/s and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Asian Development Bank, or its Board of Governors, or the governments they represent. ADB does not guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this presentation and accepts no responsibility for any consequence of their use. The countries listed in this presentation do not imply any view on ADB's part as to sovereignty or independent status or necessarily conform to ADB's terminology.

WAVES OF CHANGE

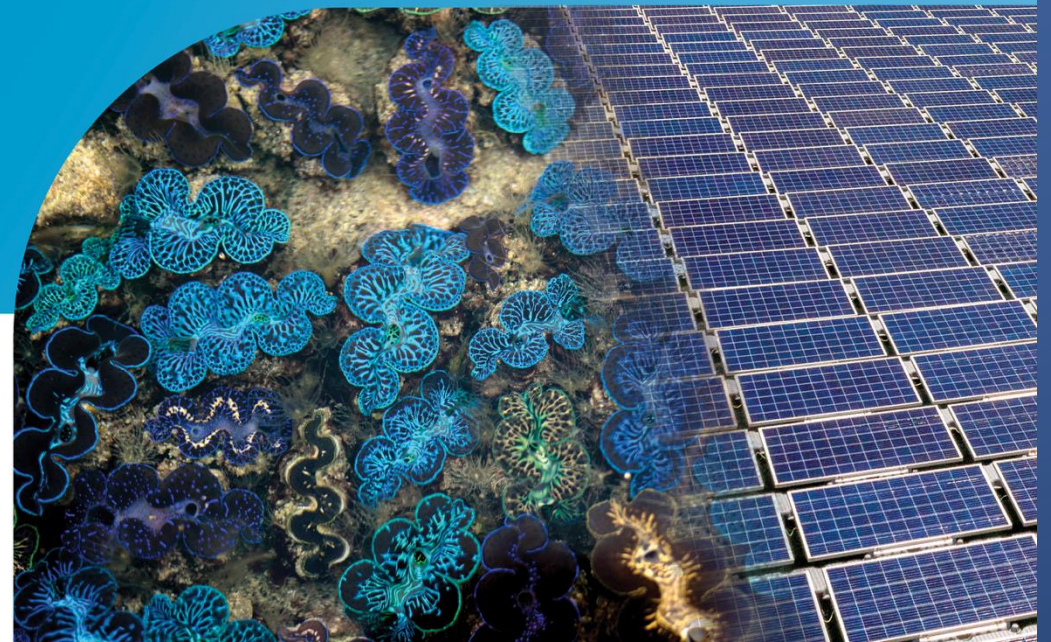
Harnessing Technology to Power the Sustainable Blue Economy

Workshop Two

25–28 May 2026 • Busan, Republic of Korea



Ministry of Oceans
and Fisheries



Session 1:

ADB's Strategic Approach to Regional Cooperation & Support to Blue Economy

Yuebin Zhang

Principal Regional Cooperation Specialist, CCRC

Regional Cooperation and Integration: ADB's Charter Mandate



RCI is a Charter Mandate

ADB Charter
"To foster economic growth and co-operation in the region...and contribute to economic development collectively and individually."

Regional Cooperation Policy
ADB has three roles in promoting RCI: honest broker, knowledge provider, mobilizer of project financing

RCI Strategy 2006
Four interrelated Pillars:

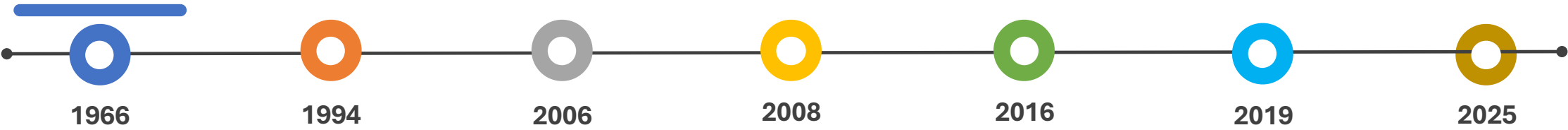
- regional and subregional programs on cross-border infrastructure and related software
- trade and investment
- money and finance
- regional public goods such as prevention of communicable diseases & environmental degradation.

RCI in Strategy 2020
One of the 3 complementary strategic agendas and one of 5 operational priorities.

RCI in Strategy 2030
One of the 7 Operational Priorities

MTR S-2030
RCI/RPG Identified as one of 5 strategic focus areas for accelerated work

RCI Operational Approach
Recalibrated RCI priorities; and to guide RCI operations over 2026-2030



RCI Support through Subregional Platforms

ADB



292 loan/grant projects
\$52.3 billion (ADB financing of \$18.4 billion)
342 technical assistance projects amounting to \$545.6 million



124 loan/grant projects
\$30 billion (ADB financing of \$14.2 billion)
237 technical assistance projects amounting to \$436 million



91 loan/grant projects
\$22.5 billion (ADB financing of \$14.3 billion)
160 technical assistance projects amounting to \$235 million



- RCI identified as 1 of the 5 **Strategic Focus Areas** for accelerated work.
- RCI contributing to ADB's new **organizational vision** of
 - Solving challenges together
 - Connecting the region
 - Empowering people for dynamic economies and a healthy planet
- Special focus on **regional public goods (including blue economy/healthy oceans)**.
- The **30% target** for RCI operations by 2030 (22% in 2025)

RCI Operational Approach 2026-2030: Responding to Challenges

The logo of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), consisting of the letters 'ADB' in a white serif font on a dark blue square background.

ADB is a leader in RCI, but the **landscape** is changing.

- Global and regional geopolitical fragmentation has resulted in deterioration of external environment for growth and development.
- Openness, trade, and investment have been a key driver of growth in the region, and it is now under threat of rising protectionism.
- Rapid digital development deepens integration and increases interdependence, bringing both benefits and new vulnerabilities.
- Environmental degradation and climate change are posing new risks.
- Stagnating and differing productivity constrains competitiveness, limits innovation, and hinders long-term growth

RCI can help turn challenges into opportunities: uncertain time is the best time to advance key domestic reforms and deepen/expand regional cooperation.

RCI Operational Approach 2026-2030: Resilience and Productivity at the Center

The logo of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), consisting of the letters 'ADB' in a white serif font on a dark blue square background.

Resilience strengthening needed

- Geopolitical conflicts
- Trade tensions and disruptions to RVCs and GVCs
- Transboundary environmental, climate and disaster risks
- Threat to regional health security

Productivity enhancement critical for removing the most binding growth constraint in the region (risk of middle-income trap due to lagging productivity)

- Maintaining an open trade system, deepening trade agreements, expanding intra-regional trade, and promoting export diversification
- Supporting reforms for the digitization
- Supporting private sector development (e.g., SME integration into RVCs/GVCs)
- Deepening regional financial/bond markets, including carbon market, correspondent banking, and trade finance
- Greening the regional value chain by reducing energy intensity
- Mutual recognition of skills and qualification for greater labor mobility

RCI Operational Approach 2026-2030: Priority Areas



Bolder RCI in response to rapidly changing global dynamics

New Directions for RCI Over 2026-2030

Priority Area 1 CONNECTIVITY

Increased focus on maritime connectivity and decarbonization
Digital infrastructure and inter-operability (e.g., **Asia-Pacific Digital Highway**)
Regional clean energy and power interconnection (e.g., **Pan-Asia Power Grid** such as APG & Trans-Caspian Green Energy Corridor)

Priority Area 2 TRADE, INVESTMENT & FINANCE

Economic partnerships and supply chain integration
Behind-the-border reforms for trade and investment
Regional financial cooperation
Regional economic/trade corridors & digital trade

Priority Area 3 REGIONAL PUBLIC GOODS

RPGs as top priority

- Collective response to climate change and disaster risks
- Biodiversity and ecosystem management
- Healthy oceans & blue economy
- Cross-border pollution control
- Protection of cultural heritage for sustainable tourism
- Regional health security
- Regional education services (e.g., TVET & mutual recognition)

RCI Operational Approach 2026-2030: Promoting Innovations

The logo of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), consisting of the letters 'ADB' in a white serif font on a dark blue square background.

- **Diversification into nascent sectors / areas** (e.g., maritime sector and blue economy)
- **Special support to new geographical countries and areas** (e.g., SIDS, remote/border areas within country)
- **Expansion of RCI beyond subregional boundaries** (e.g., South Asia-Southeast Asia, oceans)
- **Promoting private sector participation in RCI** (Non-sovereign/PPP)

ADB Support to Blue Economy: Healthy Oceans Action Plan

The logo of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), consisting of the letters 'ADB' in a white serif font on a dark blue square background.

- **Blue economy as an emerging priority for RCI/RPGs**
- **Focus Areas**
 - ✓ Creating livelihood and business opportunities
 - ✓ Protecting and restoring coastal and marine ecosystems and key rivers
 - ✓ Reducing pollution to oceans (plastics, wastewater, agricultural runoffs)
 - ✓ Improving sustainability of port and coastal infrastructure
- **Approach**
 - ✓ Strengthening policy and regulatory frameworks
 - ✓ Supporting regional cooperation (RPG nature)
 - ✓ Catalyzing use of high-level and digital technologies
 - ✓ Sharing knowledge
 - ✓ Engaging women, youth and communities

ADB Support to Blue Economy: Oceans Financing Initiative

The logo for the Asian Development Bank (ADB), consisting of the letters 'ADB' in a white serif font on a dark blue square background.

- **Purpose:**

- Support Healthy Oceans Action Plan by leveraging public/private sector funds

- **Achievements**

- Over \$5 billion ADB financing provided to date
- Innovative financing instruments/facilities developed
 - ✓ Ocean Resilience and Coastal Adaptation Trust Fund (Asia Window + Pacific Window)
 - ✓ Blue SEA Finance Hub under ASEAN Catalytic Green Finance Facility
 - ✓ Blue bonds
- Bankable pipeline projects identified and being processed

ADB Blue Economy Project Example: SOL: Land and Maritime Connectivity Project

The logo for the Asian Development Bank (ADB), consisting of the letters 'ADB' in a white serif font on a dark blue square background.

- **Amount:** \$170.7 million MFF (ADF grant)
- **Status:** Active
- **Overview:** The project supports the upgrading of roads in and around the capital, Honiara; the construction of two provincial wharves; and the reconstruction of the old wharf in Honiara International Port. The project will improve connectivity, efficiency, and disaster resilience of the transportation network in Solomon Islands.
- **Outcome:** Connectivity, efficiency, and disaster resilience of transportation network in Solomon Islands improved.
- **Outputs:** (i) Road transport infrastructure rehabilitated and climate proofed; (ii) Maritime transport infrastructure constructed and made resilience to disaster risks enhanced; and (iii) Institutional capacity strengthened.

ADB Blue Economy Project Example: MAL: Greater Male Waste-to-Energy Project

The ADB logo consists of the letters 'ADB' in a white, serif font, centered within a dark blue square.

- **Amount:** \$151 million MFF (ADF grant and loan)
- **Status:** Active
- **Overview:** The project will establish a sustainable solid waste management system for the Greater Malé region and its neighboring outer islands by developing infrastructure for treatment, disposal and recycling, using the proven waste-to-energy technology.
- **Outcome:** Solid waste treatment and disposal services improved in the Greater Malé region and its outer islands.
- **Outputs:** (i) Disaster- and climate-resilient regional waste management facility developed; (ii) Institutional capacity in sustainable waste-to-energy service delivery and environmental monitoring, and public awareness on waste-to-energy and reduce-reuse recycle improved.

ADB Blue Economy Project Example: CAM: Sustainable Coastal and Marine Fisheries Project



- **Amount:** \$104 million (ADF grant and loan)
- **Status:** Active
- **Overview:** The project invests in increasing the climate resilience and sustainability of coastal and marine fisheries in Cambodia, targeting the four coastal provinces of Cambodia to reverse the sharp decline in fisheries, promote sustainable mariculture, and enhance fish landing sites to improve seafood safety.
- **Outcome:** Coastal and marine fish stocks recovered, and diversified climate-resilient income generated
- **Outputs:**
 - Output 1: Adaptive coastal and marine fisheries enhanced.
 - Output 2: Climate-resilient coastal infrastructure developed.
 - Output 3: Sustainable and inclusive marine businesses incubated and commercialized

ADB Blue Economy Project Example: REG: Circular Pacific via Regional Recycling Network

The logo for the Asian Development Bank (ADB), consisting of the letters 'ADB' in a white serif font on a dark blue square background.

- **Amount:** \$10.6 million (ADF grant)
- **Status:** Processing
- **Overview:**
 - The proposed project will strengthen the collection and processing of the targeted waste streams from the 14 Pacific DMCs and export the recycled products to international markets, creating a regional recycling network with hub facilities supplied by participating countries to capture economies of scale.
 - Implementation will occur in two phases: Phase 1 will focus on establishing regional and subregional agreements on transport, logistics, and the legal framework, while implementing business cases for selected waste streams. Phase 2 will involve constructing recycling infrastructure, procuring and operationalizing equipment, signing country-specific framework contracts, and finalizing regional agreements and legislation governing the import of products and export of recovered materials.

ADB Blue Economy Project Example: SOL: Resilient Urban Services for Sustainable Tourism and Wetland Preservation

The ADB logo consists of the letters 'ADB' in a white, serif font, centered within a dark blue square.

- **Amount:** \$30 million (including \$10 million ADF grant)
- **Status:** Processing
- **Overview:**
 - The proposed project is centered on improving urban infrastructure and services in the three towns (Noro, Munda and Gizo) in the western provinces of the Solomon Islands through key investments in solid waste management, sanitation improvements, wetland preservation, and urban sector reforms.
 - The project has a strong focus on RPG provision by (i) preserving critical wetlands along the West Pacific Flyway, a key route for migratory waterbirds; and (ii) reducing ocean pollution caused by waste dispersion.

An aerial photograph of a solar farm. The solar panels are arranged in neat, parallel rows on the right side of the image. The ground between the panels is covered with various types of vegetation, including several large, blue-green plants with intricate, lace-like patterns, and some darker, more solid-colored plants. The overall scene suggests a combination of solar energy production and agriculture.

Thank you!