
South Asian Energy Regulators Exchange: Towards Institutionalizing a Regional Electricity Regulators' Forum

December 16-17 2019 | New Delhi, India

HIGHLIGHTS



Integrated Research and Action for Development (IRADe), under the The USAID SARI/EI program organized a "South Asian Electricity Regulators' Exchange: Towards Institutionalizing a Regional Energy Regulators' Forum" on 16th and 17th December in Delhi, comprising Chairpersons, members and senior delegates from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

Mr. Monowar Islam, Chairman, BERC; Mr. Dilli Bahadur Singh, Chairman, ERC Nepal; Mr. Samdrup K Thinley, CEO, Bhutan Electricity Authority; Ms. Janaki Vithanagama, Secretary to the Commission, Sri Lanka, among others, participated in the Exchange, aimed at institutionalizing a Regional Electricity Regulators' Forum through high-level deliberations.

During the Exchange, the SARI/EI team recapitulated the findings of its Reports on a) "Regional Energy/ Electricity Regulatory Institutional Mechanism in South Asia: South Asia Forum of Electricity/ Energy Regulators" and b) Regional Regulatory Guideline. The Reports, that underline the need for a neutral forum of Electricity Regulators in South Asia to assemble, brainstorm, strategize and recommend specific steps to address the barriers to cross-border electricity trade in the region, was well-appreciated by all the dignitaries.

This was followed by an experience-sharing and brainstorming session among the participants to deliberate and decide on the next course of action for formation of a Regional Electricity Regulators' Forum. Some important breakthroughs were arrived at after a participative and thorough discussion.

- The group unanimously consented to limit the scope of the forum to cover 'Electricity Regulators', rather than 'Energy Regulators' for the near future.
- After much deliberation, it was agreed to form the Regional Electricity Regulators' Forum in the form of a 'Committee' i.e. "Committee of Electricity Regulators of South Asian Countries", comprising of Chairperson-level officials, within the SAFIR framework. The Committee will be formed under overall institutional framework of existing Regional Organisation i.e. SAFIR. The Committee would be supported by a Working Group for carrying out discussions and giving recommendations and assistance. The Committee would conduct at least two meetings in a year and an annual regulatory dialogue to facilitate its objectives, with regular interaction/ meetings with the Working Group.
- The SARI/EI will provide Technical Knowledge support, secretariat and other logistics support towards operationalizing " Committee of Electricity Regulators of South Asian Countries"

During the second half of the delegates' exchange, participants were taken to the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC) for a face-to-face meeting with the Chairperson and Chiefs of various disciplines at CERC, to facilitate understanding of the nuances of India's Central Regulator's working process, dispute resolution and framework of guidelines.

On 17th December, the delegation visited the CERC Courtroom and attended the live public hearing process in CERC. The delegates highly appreciated this initiative and remarked that it would be very helpful for them to come up with more robust public hearing process in their respective countries.

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