



# **CAREC TOURISM SECTOR PROGRESS REPORT AND WORK PLAN**

JULY 2023 – JUNE 2024

Reference Document  
Senior Officials'  
Meeting  
Central Asia Regional Economic  
Cooperation 30-31 May 2024

## ABBREVIATIONS

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| ABEC  | Almaty – Bishkek Economic Corridor         |
| ADB   | Asian Development Bank                     |
| CAREC | Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation |
| CTCO  | CAREC Tourism Coordinating Office          |
| CTS   | CAREC Tourism Strategy                     |
| KNSC  | Kyrgyz National Statistics Committee       |
| MC    | Ministerial Conference                     |
| NTO   | National Tourism Organizations             |
| PRC   | People’s Republic of China                 |
| TA    | Technical Assistance                       |
| TFPG  | Tourism Focal Points Group                 |
| TTDI  | Travel and Tourism Development Index       |
| UNWTO | United Nations World Tourism Organization  |
| WEF   | World Economic Forum                       |

## I. KEY DEVELOPMENTS AND RESULTS

1. The CAREC Tourism Strategy 2030 and its accompanying regional tourism investment framework 2021–2025 were endorsed at the 19th CAREC Ministerial Conference (MC) on 7 December 2020. In 2021, a strong effort was made to approve the concept approval of the CAREC Tourism Virtual Portal, the provision of content by the countries, and the report on Tourism Infrastructure, services, and prioritization. Between 2022 and April 2023, the TA 9776-REG: Sustainable Tourism Development in the CAREC has achieved significant progress. After the Senior Officials' Meeting in June 2023, the CAREC Tourism Portal was launched, and a series of activities on capacity building for Central Asian countries are planned in May 2024 in Turkistan, Kazakhstan and the second Tourism Working Group Meeting in June 2024 in Istanbul, Türkiye. Currently, there is a need to focus on the project completion, as well as to address the issue of governance and sustainability of the CAREC Tourism endeavor.

2. **The global travel and tourism industry** was reshaped with medium to long-term implications due to some critical factors that took place since the second half of 2021, most of them simultaneously with different time horizons and climate change issues:

- Almost all countries have now emerged entirely from the pre-pandemic levels, in terms of foreign arrivals.
- The Russian war in Ukraine and the wider conflict in the Middle East with strong impacts on global agriculture, energy, trade, and tourism.<sup>18</sup>
- The emergence of latent geopolitical clashes, de-globalization, and disruption of supply chains.
- Climate change impacts and risks for tourism.

3. **Foreign arrivals surpassing the pre-pandemic levels.** As countries recover from the pandemic, economies are rebounding, with tourism contributing to such development. Tourist flows have been more geared towards vicinity rather than long-haul destinations. This has posed challenges to destinations that were highly dependent from long-haul high spending sources markets of Europe, North America, and North East Asia, as those travelers have prioritized traveling in their own countries and regions.

4. **Climate change impacts and risks for tourism.** Climate change poses significant threats to the tourism sector, such as extreme weather events, deadly storms, wildfires, sea-level rise, temperature changes, dry gorges, rivers and canals, and potential conflicts over natural resources, particularly fresh water. No country is immune to climate change. The attractiveness of many tourist destinations depends on their climate; however, tourism is among the first sectors affected by climate change, but tourist activity, at the same time, is a significant source of greenhouse gas emissions. Research can contribute to the transition of the tourism sector toward greater sustainability.<sup>19</sup> To mitigate the impacts of climate change, countries need to address this as a cross-cutting issue to develop adaptation and resilience of destinations, to develop new tourism practices and mindsets, and to develop institutional and territorial responses in tourist areas.

5. **Impacts and trends in the travel and tourism Industry.** Tourism is expected to respond to the critical factors described above with emerging trends, which countries need to

---

<sup>18</sup> UNWTO in <https://www.unwto.org/impact-russian-offensive-in-ukraine-on-tourism>

<sup>19</sup> Thoros "Revue en Recherche du Tourisme", April 3, 2023

be aware of to produce effective responses that benefit their industries:

- **Inward turn.** Following the pandemic and the conflicts in Europe and Middle East, most countries discovered the need to welcome domestic tourism and foreigners with longer periods of stay.<sup>20</sup> Regional tourism has become highly important due to lower travel costs than long haul. Furthermore, avoidance of conflict zones, may redirect the flows from Europeans westwards, and for Asians to stay in the region.
- **Higher costs of travel.** Airfares have increased significantly due to higher jet fuel prices, higher lease rates, and higher costs of operations. This impacts the volume of travelers. Furthermore, all other travel-related costs are expected to increase.
- **Reduced income and expenditure from traditional issuing countries.** The rise in cost of living and of interest rates have important impacts on the disposable incomes of the major and traditional issuing countries, as well as developing countries.
- **Competition between destinations** tends to become more centered around: safety and security issues; total cost of the trip; diversity and attractiveness of the available attractions meeting the expected experiences; welcomeness and openness of the local communities; quality of service.
- **Increased consciousness of environmental sustainability and resilience** puts pressure on destinations and countries to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions already in the short-term rather than reduce their pace of growth in the long-term. Tourism environmental activism is expected to grow, particularly by the younger and well-educated generations, in avoiding destinations that need to improve their environmental sustainability performances.

6. **Perceived social value.** Brand image and brand value of a destination are highly related to the perceptions in the digital space and the importance of the social networks of the individual.<sup>21</sup> Tourism marketing has become fundamentally digital, and traditional printed media and influencers have become mostly digital.

#### A. CAREC Tourism Virtual Portal

7. The CAREC tourism virtual portal—one of the initiatives under the marketing and branding strategic pillar of the tourism strategy 2030—has been officially launched during the CAREC Ministerial Meeting held in Tbilisi, Georgia, in November 2023.

8. ADB procured professional content production for each CAREC country, the regions within each country, and each country's top 10 tourist attractions, aiming to provide a consistent image and appealing content for the portal launch, including a style guide for the "Visit Silk Road" common brand.

9. Content creation that is consistent improves the image and reputation of the common Brand, and consequently of all the countries, needs to proceed to extend the reach and benefits of the portal. The countries need also to provide their consistent support and updated information on tourism activities according to agreed time schedule so the portal will be

---

<sup>20</sup> The denominated digital nomads, for whom some countries (e.g. Spain) have started to regulate, that are not considered as tourists according to the UNWTO definition. This type of nomadism can also be related to higher income non-asylum seekers, who develop their professional activities based in different countries, either because of wars or simply because of personal preferences.

<sup>21</sup> Social value derives from the social media and networking experiences and the perceived value added within such communities when visiting certain destinations, vis-à-vis other

updated on time.

10. The CAREC tourism portal targets two different audiences: institutional and travelers. The institutional part links regional partners and promote information sharing, including tourism projects and investment-related information, tourism data and statistics, events, and educational and training resources. The sections of the portal targeting potential and actual travelers focuses on providing information about the countries, regions, and tourism attractions, whilst promoting the services of private sector tourism providers in the region, thus constituting a true B2B portal capable of supporting the private sector in generating business and attracting tourists in a cost- effective manner. Furthermore, the portal will promote the common brand and generate traffic that can flow to each country's national institutional web portals. The portal is designed to be interconnected with the national tourism official websites as well as to the websites of private sector entities from CAREC countries.

11. The CAREC Tourism Portal has the potential to strengthen the "Visit Silk Road" common brand shared by CAREC countries as an umbrella of the national tourism brands, as well as to generate substantial revenue-generating initiatives, which can provide financial and managerial sustainability not only for the portal but also the entire CAREC tourism endeavors if the member countries choose accordingly. Country ownership and further functionality will be discussed during the second working group meeting in June 2024.

## **B. Conceptualizing four projects included in the regional tourism investment framework 2021–2025**

12. The final phase of the TA 9776-REG consists of conceptualizing four projects included in the regional tourism investment framework 2021–2025.

13. Four Projects have been prepared for conceptualization to include: the project's description, rationale, and scope; initial financial and economic pre-feasibility; initial social and environmental considerations; and identification of implementation agencies, timeline, and potential financing options. These projects are:

- a. Improvement of the infrastructure and services, including water supply and sanitation, sewage, and solid waste management, environmentally sustainable concepts, including building units based on renewable energy sources in pilot areas and a network of public eco-toilets in remote areas suitable to demanding visitors. A pilot project has been prepared for the Central Asian Region (Uzbekistan), and the Turkistan Workshop used for consultations with stakeholders.
- b. Upgrading and rehabilitating historical and culturally relevant tourist attractions in integration with urban planning and development, Institutional improvements, improved access to disabled, and capacity-building programs for stakeholders in major historical cities. The pilot area chosen was the axis Bucharā–Samarkand–Hissor.
- c. Development of a common registry of tourism assets and data collection, their content, and their management to allow effective and cost-efficient use by public entities, government officials, travelers, guides, and tour operators for intelligence gathering. The project concept was subject to consultations through online meetings with public entities and the private sector in all CAREC countries.

- d. Branding, strategy, planning, budgeting, and funding sources for implementing the common brand “Visit Silk Road”, integrating additional features for the CAREC tourism portal, and developing a “CAREC tourism service quality label innovative system”. The concept is applicable to all CAREC Tourism as a common endeavor. The quality label pilot data used refers to Pakistan, Kyrgyz Republic in different stages.

14. Depending on the results of the above-mentioned 4 projects, and the decisions from the countries to further develop them, comprehensive projects could be designed and implemented. For example, projects with extensive regional scope such as the branding, promotional activities, the quality label, and the asset database, could be rapidly extended to all CAREC countries as a regional project. The improvement of the infrastructure and services with environmentally sustainable concepts and upgrading and rehabilitating historical and culturally relevant tourist attractions in integration with urban planning could be considered in each CAREC country project pipeline having regional importance.

### **C. Governance of CAREC Tourism**

15. The CAREC Tourism Strategy 2030 provides a framework for the Institutional Structure of CAREC Tourism. At the top, the CAREC Ministerial Conference functions as the main high-level policy and decision-making body, responsible for providing strategic guidance on issues of regional relevance and accountable for the overall results of the CAREC Program. The Senior Officials’ Meeting monitors progress, recommends operational improvements, and ensures that the high-level decisions made at the CAREC Ministerial Conferences are effectively implemented. A Tourism Focal Points Group (TFPG) at the Tourism Sector level will lead the overall CAREC tourism work. This group comprises the tourism focal points appointed by each CAREC country since 2018. The CAREC Secretariat will provide technical, administrative, and organizational support during the implementation of the CAREC Tourism Strategy 2030. It also advocates adopting an incremental approach to effectively build countries’ ownership and devise the most appropriate institutional structure based on progress made.

16. Improving operationality and building countries’ ownership of CAREC Tourism requires the Senior Officials’ Meeting to decide on two critical areas: Governance and Funding to achieve sustainability.

17. Improving governance entails greater engagement and responsibility from the TFPG in managing, organizing, coordinating, and prioritizing defined and proposed common initiatives in delivering the CAREC Tourism Strategy outcomes. TFPG could convene twice a year with senior-level representatives of the CAREC National Tourism Organizations (NTO) in attendance. Three countries could lead the TFPG on a half-yearly rotative basis, starting in alphabetic order. The first with the presidency, the second with the “first chair” position, and the third with the “second chair” position. The objective of TFPG should be to provide guidance and professional support for implementing subregional tourism projects. The Meeting’s venue could be hosted by the country having the presidency. Creating a CAREC Tourism Coordinating Office (CTCO) should be considered to serve as the TFPG secretariat.

18. The CTCO activities could receive support from the Asian Development Bank (ADB), with its role evolving continuously depending on progress made, fostering, and facilitating

effective collaboration among the CAREC governments, development partners, public enterprises, NGOs, private sector, academic institutions, and the media on the implementation of the CAREC Tourism Strategy (CTS). Its initial role could be serving as the secretariat for the TFPG to lead the development and promotion of the CAREC Region as a single tourism destination in collaboration with the public and private sectors. It could also coordinate project development and implementation under the CTS and facilitate tourism knowledge production, centralization, and dissemination. The CTCO's office should be staffed and overseen by an Executive Director and supported by an Operations Manager, a Financial Manager, a Brand Manager, and operational staff, also allowing interns to gain valuable international tourism experience based on qualifications and need. The setting-up, including the CTCO charter, might require support from ADB.

#### **D. Sustainability of CAREC Tourism**

19. The sustainability of CAREC tourism is highly linked with its funding, on which the model to be followed needs a decision from CAREC Senior Officials' Meeting to be held in the end of May 2024 in Astana, Kazakhstan. There are fundamentally two distinct options to consider: (i) countries' budgets; and (ii) the development of own revenues supported by the countries' actions.

20. The **countries' budgets model** consists of contributions from the member countries to the budget of the CTCO activities and TFPG venues. The own revenues model defines revenues (ex., fees, advertising, etc.) originating from activities on which all member countries collaborate through enforcement (ex., common TVET certificate's annual fee; common quality of service label annual fee, etc.). The estimated TFPG meeting costs can reach \$150,000 a year. The operating costs of CTCO could reach US\$350,000 per year (staff of 7, web portal maintenance, content development, marketing, and other expenses). A total envisaged cost of US\$500,000 per year could be expected. The annual monetary contribution and the associated criteria should be decided during the Working Group Meeting in June 2024, including if the own revenues model shall be adopted, as it could be possible to have the difference between the revenues and costs be covered by the countries' budgets or returned in case of higher revenues than costs.

#### **E. Projects being implemented**

- **Development and Implementation of Common Health and Safety Protocols and Standards under the Almaty-Bishkek Economic Corridor (ABEC)**

21. The pilot project, included under the quality and standards strategic pillar in the regional tourism investment framework, supports the development of the Almaty–Issyk Kul tourism cluster. It aimed at reviewing existing health and safety protocols and measures prepared by Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz Republic in the tourism sector. It provides recommendations integrated into the countries' regulations based on international best practices. It will also support the capacity building of public and private tourism stakeholders to adopt and implement adequate health and safety measures in a coordinated manner. The pilot project was implemented by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and completed in Q2 2022.

22. The travel bubble concept will be fostered further, sharing lessons from the ABEC case between Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz Republic and promoting the use of standardized safety

and health protocols among CAREC members.

- **Development of Accommodation Classification System for ABEC**

23. This project also contributes to implementing the quality and standards strategic pillar of the tourism strategy 2030 and will support the development of the *Almaty–Issyk Kul tourism cluster*. It aims to develop a regionally harmonized Accommodation Classification System that will indicate the standards found at individual establishments to consumers and intermediaries. As the hospitality sector represents a fundamental tourism component, quality standards must be monitored and enforced effectively by applying a regionally harmonized system to help Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz Republic develop and market regional tourism. The UNWTO has implemented the project, which was completed in Q1 2023.

- **Sustainable Tourism Development Project in Mongolia**

24. The [project](#) has been designed in alignment with the CAREC Tourism Strategy 2030 and responds to the need for improved visitor sanitation facilities in the *Altai tourism cluster*. It comprises a loan of \$30.0 million and a grant of \$2.0 million, with implementation in 2022-2026. The project supports tourism development in three *aimags* (provinces) of western Mongolia, focusing on inclusive benefits for communities, nature-based solutions to protect wilderness and heritage values, fostering economic recovery and resilience in relation to climate change and other challenges. The project has four outputs: (i) inclusive planning and capacity for community-based tourism enhanced, (ii) enabling infrastructure constructed, (iii) sanitation and waste management improved, and (iv) management of cultural heritage sites and protected areas strengthened. It is aimed to build the capacity of residents and the private sector for community-based tourism, create jobs by establishing tourist streets and visitor complexes, and strengthen the management of five protected areas and heritage sites through improved visitor and sanitation facilities.

- **Tourism Satellite Account in Tajikistan**

25. This ADB-supported project, implemented by UNWTO, contributes to implementing the Strategic Pillar 5 - Market Intelligence of the tourism strategy 2030 and ~~will~~ supports the Heart of Central Asia cluster. It aims to develop a Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) as an international best practice in tourism statistical economic impacts measurement, following UNWTO's guidelines. This project consisted of the proposal of a TSA concept adapted to Tajikistan and implementation roadmap. A pilot TSA compilation is expected to be done by 2025 upon completion of the necessary surveys.

- **Tourism Satellite Account in Kyrgyz Republic at National and sub-national levels**

26. This project, implemented by the Kyrgyz National Statistics Committee (KNSC), also contributes to implementing the Strategic Pillar 5 - Market Intelligence of the tourism strategy 2030 and supports the Heart of Central Asia cluster with an alternative implementation process than used by Tajikistan. This project comprises the design and implementation of the TSA methodology following UNWTO's guidelines, design, and performance of demand (Inbound, domestic and outbound tourism) and supply side (tourism business registry, tourism activities) surveys, training and capacity building for the KNSC key staff, roadmap for the use of innovative digital tools to perform the household and inbound tourism surveys, as well as to collect administrative hard tourism data. The results are available in KNSC in its online portal.



- **Capacity building workshops and skills development activities.**

27. A workshop between 2-4 May 2024 was organized to provide capacity building and skills development for the national senior officials and private sector participants of 6 CAREC countries (KAZ, KGZ, UZB, TAJ, TKM, PRC). This event developed skills and capacities in: the fields of CAREC Tourism Potential; CAREC Tourism Marketing and Branding including “Thematic Marketing and Branding” harnessing the Ancient Silk Road; Product & Enterprise Marketing in the Tourism Sector; Each country’s marketing and branding initiatives; Event Marketing and Its Contribution to Brand Creation; Balance between trade and consumer marketing; Marketing Approaches and Measuring Effectiveness; Tourism Capacity Building in CAREC.

28. In coordination with GIZ, certification courses in tourism are being conceptualized, consisting of self-paced online learning, complemented by onsite training on regional cooperation in tourism.

- **Development of a Silk Road Visa**

29. A visa facilitation study for the CAREC region is ongoing aiming to assess the existing visa policy, procedures and regulations, and recommend areas for improvement based on global best practices and case studies with potential pilot programs (Silk Road Visa and Digital Nomads visa). The analysis will be shared during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Working Group Meeting in June 2024 in Istanbul, Türkiye.

#### **F. CAREC 2030 Results Framework: Tourism Sector**

30. Under operational cluster 2 (trade, tourism and economic corridors), the following progress has been achieved in the outcome and output tourism indicators from 2020 to 2024:

**Table 1. CAREC 2030 Results Framework: Tourism**

| <b>Outcome</b>  | <b>Indicator</b>   | <b>2017</b>  | <b>2019</b>   | <b>2021</b>  |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| Tourism competitiveness and positioning of the CAREC region as a globally attractive tourism destination enhanced | CAREC countries' TTDI rank increased. (base 100 index in 2019: 3.84) | 2 CAREC countries within the top 70 ranks (PRC 15, Georgia 70) | 4 CAREC countries within the top 70 ranks (AZE 59, PRC 15, GEO 47, KAZ 66). Index = 100                         | 4 CAREC countries within the top 70 ranks (AZE 63, PRC 12, GEO 44, KAZ 66). Index = 100.80 (last WEF TTDI available is for 2021) |
| <b>Output</b>   | <b>Indicator</b>   | <b>2017</b>  | <b>2021</b>   | <b>2024</b>  |
| Regional tourism projects approved  | Regional tourism projects conceptualized and approved                | N/A  | 1 CAREC regional tourism TA project approved in 2018; and 2 projects approved and initiated under the ABEC area | 1 CAREC regional tourism TA project approved in 2018; and 2 projects approved and initiated under the ABEC area                  |
| Institutional mechanism   | Expert groups  | N/A  | CAREC TFPG  | CAREC TFPG   |

|   |   |     |  |   |
|---|---|-----|--|---|
| for implementing joint regional tourism initiatives established                     | and regional tourism agency established and operationalized   |     | was established in 2018. Since then, three meetings of the tourism focal points group have been held (Oct 2018; Dec 2019; Jan 2021). | was established in 2018. Since then, five meetings of the tourism focal points group have been held (Oct 2018; Dec 2019; Jan 2021, Jun 2023, May 2024). |
| Enhanced service quality and minimum common standards adopted                       | Harmonized service standards, including safety and hygiene protocols, adopted in at least three CAREC countries (baseline: tbd) | N/A |  | 2 countries: KAZ and KGZ  |
| Improved multi-modal connectivity and efficiency in border crossing procedures      | Air connections between CAREC countries increased (baseline: 156 weekly frequencies in Oct 2020)                                |     |  | 179 in April 2024   |
| Improved multi-modal connectivity and efficiency in border crossing procedures      | Number of countries with e-visa systems increased (baseline: 8 in 2019)   |     | 8  | 10  |
| Strengthened and harmonized tourism data collection and analysis in CAREC countries | Increased number of CAREC countries with Tourism Satellite Accounts (baseline: tbd)   | 0   | 0  | 1 - KGZ (in first pilot published)  |

## II. CHALLENGES AND KEY ISSUES

35. At the time of its formulation, the CAREC Tourism Strategy 2030 took into full consideration not only the challenges that countries' tourism sectors were facing pre-COVID<sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup> These include limited access to and between CAREC countries, complex and nonuniform visa requirements and border arrangements, inconsistent quality of tourism infrastructure and services, skills shortages, lack of reliable tourism data and statistics, and low awareness and knowledge about the tourist attractions in CAREC countries.

but also the expected new patterns and trends derived from the pandemic. These include: (i) increased importance of domestic and regional tourism; (ii) emergence of safe travel corridors or travel bubbles; (iii) greater focus on sustainability and responsible travel; (iv) growing importance of developing unique and personalized local travel experience; and (v) increased use of digital technologies, online platforms, and social media. By gradually implementing regional projects and initiatives across its five strategic pillars, the CAREC Tourism Strategy 2030 will help countries' tourism sectors bounce back stronger and faster and restore travelers' confidence and trust by promoting the region as a safe and resilient tourism destination.

36. The geopolitical, economic, social, climate change and financial challenges will shape the tourism sector in the CAREC region for the coming decades. Despite increased capital costs for investment, the region shall be able to provide interesting investment opportunities for the private sector if the countries collaborate more effectively in jointly promoting their common tourism brand as an umbrella internationally.

37. Air travel is responsible for 30%<sup>23</sup> of the total GHG emissions in the travel and tourism industry, which responds to 8% of the global GHG emissions. Currently the low regional air connectivity between CAREC countries, impose a larger than reasonable GHG footprint as the amount of passenger seat kilometers is exacerbated by passengers needing to fly many more hours through main Middle East and Turkey hubs, compared to direct flights. Improved collaboration and coordination would result in improved connectivity, lower prices, and increased profitability for CAREC airlines, while simultaneously increase the number of regional tourists.

### **III. WORK PROGRAM FOR JUNE 2024–JULY 2025**

38. The implementation of the CAREC Tourism Strategy 2030 will continue over the next 12 months. Regional projects and initiatives, as well as analytical and knowledge products to be completed and/or initiated from June 2024–June 2025 include the following:

- Further development of the CAREC Tourism Virtual Portal implementing additional features, such as: a common sharable tourism assets database linked with private sector businesses and activities; inclusion of a common quality label and voluntary classification system; and further professional content production of each CAREC country, the regions within each country, and each country's main tourist attractions (paragraph 8);
- Further Implementation of Common Health and Safety Protocols and Standards to other CAREC countries (paragraph 22);
- Introduction of a pilot Silk Visa or Digital Nomads visa for tourists and visitors in some CAREC Countries (paragraph 30);
- Promotion of Accommodation Classification System for ABEC
- Implementation of TSA accounts in CAREC Countries
- Approval of the governance and sustainability model for CAREC Tourism during the CAREC Senior Officials' Meeting in May 2024 in Astana, Kazakhstan, and technical assessment for its set-up.

---

<sup>23</sup> Above

39. The next CAREC tourism focal point meeting will be face-to-face in Q2 2024. The objective of the meeting will be to (i) Present the statistics and comparability of the CAREC Tourism Portal with those of competing tourism regions; (ii) present the implementation of the projects described in the previous paragraph; (iii) review and update the CAREC regional tourism investment framework, including discussion on priority regional projects to be conceptualized over the next 12 months, the assessment of the climate change impacts, and its monitoring scheme.<sup>24</sup>

#### IV. DELIVERABLES FOR 2024 MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

40. The following list provides an overview of deliverables to be achieved by June of 2024.

| <b>Deliverables</b>  | <b>Timing (2024)</b> | <b>Description</b>  | <b>SOM/MC action</b> |
|--|----------------------|---|----------------------|
| CAREC Tourism Portal fully launched  | Q2                   | CAREC tourism portal ( <a href="http://www.visitsilkroad.org">www.visitsilkroad.org</a> and <a href="http://www.visitsilkroad.com">www.visitsilkroad.com</a> ) containing information on tourism regions and attractions in CAREC countries and promoting services of local tourism businesses. | For information      |
| Assessment on the Improvement of the infrastructure and services, including water supply and sanitation, sewage, and solid waste management, environmentally sustainable concepts, including building units based on renewable energy sources in pilot areas and a network of public eco-toilets in remote areas suitable to demanding visitors. | Q2                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report on the project's Concept</li> <li>• Presentation materials</li> </ul>   | For information      |
| Assessment on the Upgrading and rehabilitating historical and culturally relevant tourist attractions in integration with urban planning and development, Institutional improvements, improved access to disabled, and capacity-building programs for stakeholders in major historical cities  | Q2                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report on the project's concept</li> <li>• Presentation materials</li> </ul>   | For information      |

<sup>24</sup> A possibility could be the development of a “climate change mitigation index”, that could have correspondence with the WEF TTDI, for national and subnational levels of the CAREC Countries, in line with the Pakistan NTCL developed in 2022-3 and being implemented.

|   |    |   |                 |
|---|----|---|-----------------|
| Assessment on the development of a common registry of tourism assets and data collection, their content, and their management to allow effective and cost-efficient use by public entities, government officials, travelers, guides, and tour operators/agents for intelligence gathering | Q2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report on the project's Concept</li> <li>• Presentation materials</li> </ul> | For information |
| Assessment on the branding, strategy, planning, budgeting, and funding sources for implementing the common brand "Visit Silk Road", integrating additional features for the CAREC tourism portal, and developing a "CAREC tourism service quality label innovative system"                | Q2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report on the project's Concept</li> <li>• Presentation materials</li> </ul> | For information |
| Analysis on "Silk Road visa" and Digital Nomads completed with recommendation provided to the Tourism WG  | Q2 | Report and presentation.  | For information |

