



South Asian Regional Standards Organisation (SARSO)

**Presentation by
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**South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation
(SASEC) Trade Facilitation Week:
Sanitary/Phytosanitary and Technical Barriers to
Trade**

**1-3 December 2014
Bangkok, Thailand**



South Asian Regional Standards Organization (SARSO)

- At the Fifteenth SAARC Summit held in Colombo on 2-3 August 2008, the Government of the member states had signed the Agreement on the establishment of SARSO.
- After ratification the Agreement entered into force with effect from 25 August 2011
- The Headquarter of SARSO is located in Dhaka.



Objectives of SARSO

- Harmonization of national standards of SAARC Member States to develop SAARC standards on the common products of regional interest
- Removal of Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT)
- Enhance flow of goods and services
- Explore the possibility of having a common mark of conformity.
- Use of International standards in developing SAARC standards by way of adoption, where applicable.



TBT & SPS Issues:

- TBT & SPS Barriers are related to standards, technical regulations and conformity assessment procedures.
- In developing SAARC standards, SARSO follows the 'Cod of Good practice of Standardization ANNEX 3 of the WTO TBTT Agreement.
- SARSO has the plan to develop a coordination mechanism among the SAARC member states to have better access to the eradication of TBT and SPS matters.



SARSO Technical Management Board

- Technical Management Board (TMB) is responsible for the planning, coordination and monitoring of all technical work of SARSO.
- TMB was formed by nominations of technical experts from all member states.
- First meeting of TMB was held on 31st March-1st April 2014.
- Member from India was elected 1st Chairperson for two years.



SARSO Technical Management Board

- Draft Technical Rules of TMB were finalized.
- The reports of 9 meetings of different Sectoral Technical Committees were discussed and approved.
- Recommended that TMB Chairperson will attend the GB meeting.



Identified Common Products for Harmonization of Standards (1)

SARSO Sectoral Technical Committees (STCs)	Identified Products on which standards are being harmonised	Meetings held/to be held
STC on Food and Agricultural Products	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Refined Sugar 2. Biscuits 3. Standards of on Microbiological requirements for cream portion of filled biscuits 4. Instant Noodles 5. Black tea 6. Vanaspati/Banaspati (veg. ghee) 7. Skimmed Milk Powder 8. National/CODEX Standard for Hygienic condition 	<p>First Meeting at SAARC Secretariat on 24 August 2011</p> <p>Second Meeting at Dhaka, Bangladesh on 12-13 December 2011.</p> <p>Third Meeting at Karachi, Pakistan on 2-3 April 2012.</p> <p>Fourth Meeting was held in India on 21-22 Sept 2014.</p> <p>Fifth Meeting is to be held in Sri Lanka.</p>



Identified Common Products for Harmonization of Standards (2)

SARSO Sectoral Technical Committees (STCs)	Identified Products on which standards are being harmonised	Meetings held/to be held
STC on Jute, Textile and Leather	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Identified Hessian products2. Jute Tarpaulin Fabric2. Jute Bags for packing of various commodities3. Jute twine4. Jute Carpet backing Fabric5. Jute yarn6. Cotton Drill Fabric7. Cotton Twill Fabric8. Towels and Toweling Fabric	<p>First Meeting at the SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu on 23-24 November 2011</p> <p>Second Meeting in Dhaka on 17-18 April 2013.</p> <p>Third Meeting was held in Colombo on 18-19 Dec 2013.</p> <p>Fourth Meeting is to be held in India.</p>



Identified Common Products for Harmonization of Standards (3)

SARSO Sectoral Technical Committees (STCs)	Identified Products on which standards are being harmonised	Meetings held/to be held
STC on Building Materials	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Steel Tube for Structural purposes2. Ordinary Portland Cement3. Steel Bars for Concrete Reinforcement4. Structural Steel5. High strength deformed steel bars and wires for concrete reinforcement6. Steel wires used in pre-stressed concrete7. Method of testing of steel and steel tubes (such as tensile testing, flattening, bend test etc8. Ceramic Tiles	<p>Three Meetings have been held at the SAARC Secretariat on 21-22 November 2011; 10-11 July 2012; 4-5 June 2013.</p> <p>Fourth Meeting is to be hosted by Nepal.</p>



Identified Common Products for Harmonization of Standards (4)

SARSO Sectoral Technical Committees (STCs)	Identified Products on which standards are being harmonised	Meetings held/to be held
STC on Electrical, Electronics, Telecom and IT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Electric cable (PVC insulated/sheathed) 2. Double capped fluorescent Lamp (Safety Requirements and Performance Requirements) 3. New Products Identified: Switches, Sockets, MCBs, Solar photovoltaic systems, transformers 	<p>First Meeting was held in India on 25-26 Sept 2014</p> <p>Second Meeting is to be hosted by Afghanistan.</p>
STC on Conformity Assessment	Established by the First Meeting of the SARSO Technical Management Board (Dhaka, 31 March – 1 April 2014)	First Meeting is to be held in India.



SAARC Agreements Relating To Standards and Conformity Assessment

- SAARC Agreement on Multilateral Arrangement on Recognition of Conformity Assessment and SAARC Agreement on Implementation of Regional Standards were signed during Seventeenth SAARC Summit
- Ratification of these two Agreements has been done by Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.
- It is requested that the Afghanistan, Maldives and Nepal may also ratify these two Agreements at the earliest.
- Ratification of these two Agreements is important for effective functioning of SARSO



SAARC Expert Group on Accreditation

- To strengthen accreditation capacity of the member states SAARC Expert Group on Accreditation (SEGA) has been established in 2012
- SEGA has conducted 3 meetings where financial and technical support were given by German National Metrology Institute (PTB)
- For skill development of relevant technical officials in the field of accreditation trainings and workshops are being conducted regularly.



Establishing International Relationship

- SARSO has communicated with ISO, IEC, ITU, CAC, APLAC, ILAC etc and has requested for membership or affiliation.
- ISO, IEC & ITU have responded.
- Attempts are being taken to establish relationship with all the above International Organizations.



Work Plan

December 2014- June 2015

- SARSO Training on Standardization, Quality Assurance and Laboratory Quality Management, December 2014 , India.
- Workshop to develop Roadmap for implementation of SAARC Agreement on Multilateral Arrangement for Recognition of Conformity Assessment (MARCA) - March 2015 Dhaka.



Thank you for your kind attention !