



ERERA TENTH FORUM ON REGIONAL ELECTRICITY REGULATION

« Regional energy cooperation in West Africa: current dynamics and integration prospects »

SUMMARY OF WORK

23 - 24 October 2025

Cotonou, Republic of Benin



INTRODUCTION

The ECOWAS Regional Electricity Regulatory Authority (ERERA) held its **10th Forum on Regional Electricity Regulation** from 23 to 24 October 2025 in Cotonou, under the theme “*Regional energy cooperation in West Africa: current dynamics and integration prospects*”.

This edition marked a pivotal step in the consolidation of the Regional Electricity Market (MRE), in a context marked by geopolitical changes, the challenges of the energy transition and the operationalisation of the Day-Ahead Market.

The Forum brought together nearly 200 participants representing **national regulatory authorities , electricity system operators , ministries responsible for energy , regional organizations** (OMVS, OMVG, CEB, CLSG, etc.) as well as **technical and financial partners** .

OPENING CEREMONY

The Forum was opened by the Representative of the Minister of Energy of Benin , after speeches by the President of ARREC , and the Representative of the ECOWAS Commission .

In his opening speech, he welcomed the continued efforts of ERERA and member states to build an integrated and united energy space, reaffirming Benin's commitment to working towards enhanced energy cooperation , based on security of supply, pooling of resources and environmental sustainability.

FORUM PROCEEDINGS

The work was structured around **five plenary sessions** and a **closing session** devoted to summarizing the debates and recommending a regional roadmap transmitted to ERERA and the community authorities.

Session 1: State of regional energy cooperation

This session provided an opportunity to assess the progress of major interconnection projects (CEB, CLSG, OMVS, OMVG), to examine the level of physical and commercial integration achieved, and to discuss the roadmap for the operationalisation of the Day-Ahead Market (DAM).

Panellists acknowledged the notable institutional advances, while stressing the need for a harmonised **framework for access, pricing and dispute settlement** to facilitate cross-border trade.



Session 2: Geopolitical and institutional challenges

The experts analysed the effects of regional political restructuring, including the withdrawal of the countries of the Alliance of Sahel States (ESA) from ECOWAS, on the continuity of electricity trade and market resilience.

They stressed the need to **preserve the technical neutrality of the Regional Electricity Market, to strengthen governance**, and to maintain **energy solidarity mechanisms** despite political turbulence.

Session 3: Role of regulators in risk management

The discussions highlighted the technical and contractual risks associated with regional interconnection: systemic failures, payment defaults, trade imbalances, etc. The regulators presented the existing mechanisms for **monitoring, preventing and resolving disputes**, and recommended the creation of a **regional early warning and mediation system** under the aegis of ERERA.

Session 4: Challenges of digitalization and cybersecurity

The speakers addressed the growing challenges of cybersecurity in a context of accelerated digitalization of electricity networks.

The discussions focused on the **results of the annual ASEA survey, emerging threats** affecting operators, and **resilience measures** to be implemented to ensure market continuity and protect sensitive data.

Session 5: Harmonisation of legal and regulatory frameworks

This session examined the progress and obstacles to legal harmonisation of the regional market.

Participants recommended a **gradual roadmap** for regulatory convergence, based on the sharing of best practices, training and technical assistance. ERERA was invited to play a leading role in **coordinating national reforms**, in order to ensure the coherence and legal certainty of the Regional Electricity Market.

CRITICAL POINTS RAISED

- Insufficient interconnected infrastructure and regional financial compensation mechanisms;
- Slowness in the national transposition of regional texts;
- Weak coordination between national institutions and operators;
- Growing cybersecurity vulnerabilities;
- Insufficient regional dispute settlement mechanisms;
- Need for a clear legal framework for fair network access and transparency of transactions.



MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

The following roadmap, which is a summary of the priorities and recommendations resulting from this 10th ERERA Forum, is drawn up in order to strengthen cooperation, regulation and regional energy integration in West Africa, in line with the objectives of ECOWAS and its specialized institutions.

Axis 1 – Physical and commercial integration of systems

- Finalize and operationalize ongoing priority interconnection projects (Northern Backbone, synchronization, etc.).
- Strengthen cross-border trade within the framework of the Regional Electricity Market (MRE).
- Accelerate the transition to Phase 2 of the Regional Market, while expanding participation to other States.

Axis 2 – Geopolitical and Institutional Challenges

- Reaffirm the founding vision of ECOWAS, by prioritizing the initial objectives of the 1975 treaty to promote cooperation for collective economic development
- Promote inclusive dialogue by encouraging in-depth consultation and understanding of different national situations
- Preserve the technical neutrality of the Regional Electricity Market and strengthen its governance to maintain energy solidarity mechanisms
- Encourage constructive engagement across the region by maintaining open channels of cooperation with all West African countries, in order to preserve the gains of integration in the areas of energy, trade and mobility.
- Safeguard regional integration for the progress of the entire continent by remaining a compact and cooperative sub-region to ensure that the achievements in terms of peace and security.

Axis 3 – Regulatory governance and harmonization

- Develop a regional dashboard for the transposition of community texts.
- Support Member States in bringing their legal and regulatory frameworks into compliance.
- Organize an annual regional dialogue on regulatory harmonization (ECOWAS–States).



Axis 4 – Cybersecurity and digitalisation

- Establish a regional coordination framework for the cybersecurity of electrical infrastructure.
- Implement a regional program to strengthen the digital capacities of institutions in the sector.
- Promote the interoperability and standardisation of digital tools used in the MRE.

By promoting the implementation of these recommendations, stakeholders aim to strengthen the security of electricity trade, accelerate economic growth, and improve access to reliable, affordable electricity throughout West Africa.

THE FORUM
