



WORKING PAPER

**HIGH-LEVEL MEETING
ON THE FEASIBILITY OF A LONG-TERM ASPIRATIONAL GOAL FOR
INTERNATIONAL AVIATION CO₂ EMISSIONS REDUCTIONS (HLM-LTAG)**

Montréal, 19 to 22 July 2022

Agenda Item 1: CO₂ emissions reduction scenarios and options for a long-term global aspirational goal for international aviation

Agenda Item 2: Means of implementation for a long-term global aspirational goal for international aviation

Agenda Item 3: Means of monitoring progress and next steps

Agenda Item 4: Conclusions and Recommendations of the Meeting

**AN AMBITIOUS LONG TERM ASPIRATIONAL GOAL (LTAG) IS NECESSARY FOR
INTERNATIONAL AVIATION**

(Presented by New Zealand and co-sponsored by Samoa, Cook Islands, Japan,
Kenya, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea and Canada)

SUMMARY

New Zealand seeks an ambitious long term aspirational goal (LTAG) for international aviation that acknowledges that developing countries, Pacific Island states and other low-lying states do not have time to wait for action. An equitable transition should underpin the LTAG, and any subsequent measures, to ensure support for those countries that will otherwise be left behind and be unable to keep up with the transition ahead.

Action by the HLM LTAG is in paragraph 5.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 New Zealand welcomes and supports the work that the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the Committee on Aviation Environmental Protection (CAEP) have completed to provide a technical report that sets out the feasibility, including different scenarios, for a long-term aspirational goal (LTAG) for the international civil aviation sector.

1.2 This paper seeks to highlight the importance of ICAO agreeing on an ambitious LTAG and why we require action to be taken now.

1.3 The LTAG should recognise and respond adequately to the urgency needed to address the climate change emergency, and an equitable transition should be a consideration to underpin the efforts required to move the sector towards net zero by 2050.

2. TIME FOR ACTION IS NOW

2.1 The international civil aviation sector has an opportunity to responsibly play its part to reduce global CO₂ emissions.

2.2 The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has demonstrated that anthropogenic climate change is real. The planet's average surface temperature has risen about 2 degrees Fahrenheit (1 degrees Celsius) since the late 19th century, a change driven largely by increased carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere and other human activities. Most of the warming occurred in the past 40 years, with the seven most recent years being the warmest. The years 2016 and 2020 are tied for the warmest year on record.¹

2.3 The scientific understanding of climate change as an existential threat is a given. We have seen it in ocean warming and acidification, biodiversity and species loss, and more frequent and more severe weather events. Our efforts must now focus on how this sector can make rapid and meaningful steps to reduce its carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions to reach net zero by 2050.

2.4 The 2015 Paris Agreement seeks a global response to the threat of climate change, including by holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, recognising that this would significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change.

2.5 The Glasgow Climate Pact, adopted at COP26 in 2021 reaffirms this and also recognises that the impacts of climate change will be much lower at the temperature increase of 1.5°C compared with 2°C, and resolves to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C.

2.6 This sector cannot delay taking climate action in a competitive world where there is a risk that consumers will make choices that are more aligned to environmental outcomes. Swiss Bank UBS surveyed more than 6,000 people in 2018, in the United States, Germany, France and the United Kingdom, and found that 21% had reduced the number of flights they took over the last year. Environmental campaigns such as 'flight shaming' have begun.² Such movements will increase in momentum if the aviation sector does not progress ambitious environmental action, and will have significant economic impact on the aviation sector.

2.7 New Zealand considers that more emphasis should be given to the urgency required to address climate change. The Boe Declaration³, signed by the Pacific Islands Forum in 2018, reaffirmed that climate change remains the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security and wellbeing of the peoples

¹ <https://climate.nasa.gov/evidence/>

² <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-49890057>

³ <https://www.forumsec.org/2018/09/05/boe-declaration-on-regional-security/>

of the Pacific. States must rapidly agree an ambitious LTAG so that discussions on subsequent measures that will support achievement of the LTAG can be progressed without delay.

3. PACIFIC ISLAND STATES DO NOT HAVE TIME TO WAIT

3.1 The IPCC Working Group 1 report makes clear that the impact on Pacific Island States from climate change will be significant and, in some instances, catastrophic, if credible efforts are not made to rapidly reduce greenhouse gas emissions.⁴ Increased temperatures, severe weather events, coastal erosion, the destruction of crops and clean water supplies, and sea level rise are already having significant negative impact on Pacific Island states. This is affecting the liveability and potential viability of these states, many of which are only a few metres above sea level.⁵

3.2 For example, unabated sea level rise is a real and significant risk. The IPCC has reported that some Pacific Islands will disappear, and some may no longer be habitable if the impact of climate change continues at its current pace.⁶ Since 2014, a total of 150 villages along Fiji's coastline have been identified by the government for relocation to higher ground.⁷ Should climate change mitigation continue at its current pace, citizens of those affected villages, and entire Pacific Islands, will be displaced. This does not simply mean a loss of housing; it means a loss of country, of culture, of home; their unique identity, connection to their land, and way of life will be destroyed.

4. DELIVERY OF THE LTAG SHOULD INCLUDE AN EQUITABLE TRANSITION

4.1 New Zealand considers that decisions taken to deliver on the LTAG should also include consideration of the need for an equitable transition to net zero emissions by 2050.

4.2 Actions taken by ICAO will have a direct impact on Pacific Island states. Lack of action will also have a direct, and even bigger impact on Pacific Island states.

4.3 Leading an equitable transition means addressing barriers to participation in the transition. Some of these barriers may be exacerbated, rather than caused by, the measures ICAO adopts to achieve an LTAG. Typically, the countries at risk of falling behind will be those most vulnerable to climate change, those struggling most with their adaptation burdens and with debt. ICAO will need to find methods to provide support; methods that do not depend on exceptions and exemptions that weaken the emissions reductions effectiveness of measures that are adopted.

4.4 ICAO's *No Country Left Behind* initiative will be critical to realise as we work towards an agreed LTAG.

4.5 Actions as outlined in HLM-LTAG-WP/7 will be important. This includes assistance, capacity-building and training. Knowledge sharing by states with more resource and subject matter

⁴ https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGI_SPM.pdf

⁵ <https://web.who.edu/coastal-group/research/projects/pacific-climate-change/>

⁶ <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>

⁷ <https://www.stuff.co.nz/pou-tiaki/300596791/climate-crisis-villagers-forced-to-abandon-their-homes-as-sea-levels-rise>

expertise will be vital. It is also important that financing options do not put smaller Pacific Island states in high levels of debt to reach an agreed LTAG.

4.6 The transition to zero carbon emission aviation will be characterised by new aircraft and fuel technologies, new infrastructure, and improved operational practices. These measures will require investment into research and development, which some states will be unable to make without support.

4.7 If ICAO makes decisions requiring deployment of different technologies and practices, it must also intervene to ensure states are not left behind. Attention to national circumstances of states will be critical. Such support will be critical for Pacific Island states, to ensure they have the capability and resources for the shift to net zero carbon emissions for the aviation sector. ICAO should seek to ensure an equitable transition for all states.

5. ACTION BY THE HLM-LTAG

5.1 The HLM-LTAG is invited to:

- a) note the contents of this working paper;
- b) note that decisions on climate action cannot be delayed as doing so will have a significant and catastrophic impact on small island States; and
- c) note that States should be striving for an LTAG that is ambitious and should consider how an equitable transition can support more vulnerable States, such as those in the Pacific.

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