

THE CENTRAL AMERICAN ACTION PLAN FOR THE REDUCTION OF EMISSIONS FROM INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION AND ITS UPDATE

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The 37th Session of the ICAO Assembly in 2010 took an important step forward in addressing the topic of greenhouse gas emissions from international civil aviation. Resolution A37-19 sets an important precedent by providing a scenario of global targets to stabilize CO₂ emission levels in the international civil aviation sector.

The Central American region has fully recognized the efforts undertaken by ICAO to make progress in reducing greenhouse gas emissions from international air travel. The Voluntary Action Plans for CO₂ Emissions Reductions represent a significant strategy because it allows mitigation measures to be adopted in the short and medium term, that have many long-term benefits in terms of emissions reduction. This, in turn, allows States to establish proactive measures and actions in accordance with their own capacities and territorial conditions.

Within this context, the 96th Meeting of the Civil Aviation Directors General for Central America and Panama (DGAC/CAP/96), held in Mexico City from 22 to 25 May 2012, made a significant commitment for the region. It was proposed that the Central American States (Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua) should develop a joint action plan to tackle CO₂ emissions. The State of Guatemala was delegated as the Coordinating State to work collaboratively with the nominated focal points from each Central American State. to develop a plan, which will systematically define the main strategies in line with ICAO's aspirational goals.

The first Action Plan for the Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions from International Civil Aviation in the Central American region, entitled CAAPER, was thus submitted within the framework of the 38th Session of the ICAO Assembly.

The tri-annual update of the abovementioned Plan is currently in the process of being reviewed and approved. This is taking place in three main areas: Support Strategies, Reduction Measures, and Complementary Programmes. These include strategies such as institutional strengthening, the promotion of technology, infrastructure modernization, operational improvements, development of incentives, the promotion of research and development, the development of offsetting programmes, and other voluntary action.

The production of the initial document and its updated version have both illustrated once again the strengthening of Central American integration processes and the region's positive contribution to dealing with the phenomenon of global climate change in a responsible way.

It is important to clarify that the States in this region are developing countries that are extremely vulnerable and sensitive to the phenomenon of climate change. Therefore, voluntariness and recognition of States' specific capacities and special circumstances have been considered as key elements, alongside other principles, which urge States to step up their environmental protection and conservation efforts for future generations.

The sharing of air navigation services is enabling Central American countries to take measures to reduce emissions generated by operations in any of the given States. Joint strategies are also being implemented with a goal of contributing to the reduction of emissions from all operators, including those who use the upper airspace, even if they do not land in the region's airports.

CAAPER, in turn, has facilitated the development of the Central American region's potential to reduce emissions through different procedures such as Performance-Based Navigation (PBN); the Central American Air Navigation Agency (ACNA) has already projected a reduction of approximately 25,257 CO₂ tonnes in the region between 2015 and 2019 thanks to the implementation of these procedures. Moreover, implementing the various strategies established by CAAPER will allow for an estimated reduction of up to 42,375.15 CO₂ tonnes by 2019. This all brings added value to the document produced by Central American States which, in accordance with the baseline developed therein, have determined that the region only accounted for 0.583% of the total anthropogenic emissions from aviation in 2014¹.

All of the above clearly highlights the need to call on the aviation community to provide solid, sustainable, transparent, predictable and additional resources to accompany the development of this

CHAPTER 5

STATE ACTION PLANS

Action Plan and the implement of the mitigations measures to reduce CO₂ emissions from international aviation, as well as a call to those other countries and/or regions with similar or higher levels of vulnerability to climate change than the Central American region.

The implementation of the mitigation measures identified in the CAAPER Action Plan will allow for an estimated reduction of up to 42,375.15 CO₂ tonnes by 2019.

The Central American Action Plan for the Reduction of Emissions from International Civil Aviation and its update are a reflection of both the region's good faith and commitment to the global environment and the region's contribution to the vision of promoting an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable aviation.

References

1. It is estimated that aviation generated a total of 717.8 Mtonnes of CO₂ in 2014, according to data from the Global Carbon Atlas.