

Message from Tim Johnson

Lead representative for the International Coalition on Sustainable Aviation (ICSA)

In 2021, the stark warning from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to policymakers was that “global warming of 1.5°C and 2°C will be exceeded during the 21st century unless deep reductions in CO₂ and other greenhouse gas emissions occur in the coming decades.” Its advice on the need to limit cumulative CO₂ emissions, reaching at least net zero CO₂ emissions along with strong reductions in other greenhouse gas emissions, was equally unambiguous. There is no room for complacency and we can’t afford to delay action.

More recently, IPCC’s report on mitigation highlighted that international cooperation is a ‘critical enabler’ for achieving ambitious climate change mitigation goals, noting that effective and equitable climate outcomes are influenced by engagement with civil society actors, political actors, businesses, youth, labour, media, Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

The International Coalition for Sustainable Aviation (ICSA), which represents environmental NGOs active in finding solutions to aviation’s environmental impacts, has been providing a civil society voice at ICAO since 1998. ICSA sees this year’s 41st ICAO Assembly as a key moment for ICAO to define a decarbonisation pathway for international aviation by agreeing a long-term climate goal that aligns with scientific advice and a 1.5°C temperature goal. The negotiation of such agreements begins with the availability of robust scientific and technical evidence, and we have been actively involved in the Committee for Aviation Environmental Protection’s (CAEP’s) work which provides states with a good understanding of the potential contribution that technology, operations and sustainable aviation fuels can make to reduce emissions.

While CAEP initially focused on technology standards, the wider scope of its work in recent years – including market-based measures and sustainable aviation fuels - has emphasised the continued and increasing need for collaboration, not only with civil society but with experts in other fields. The technical work underpinning ICAO’s offsetting scheme, CORSIA, benefitted from understanding the experiences and lessons learned from



existing carbon markets, while ongoing work to account for sustainable aviation fuels has necessitated a wide-ranging look at land use issues and industrial processes.

Looking ahead to potential technologies of the future, such as electric and hydrogen technology, we will need to collaborate with a wide range of interests including renewable energy producers, investors, consumers, communities and local governments in order to gain public acceptance that could, potentially propel aviation into a new era of fossil-free travel.

Good practices and policies require transparency and trust, and engagement is critical to both especially in the climate crisis where the public expects urgent and effective action. This is particularly true for ICAO’s work as aviation’s environmental performance remains firmly in the public spotlight. ICSA is committed to working through open processes at CAEP and ICAO to find effective answers to these issues.