



**COP15 High Level Segment
of the 2nd part of the UN Biodiversity Conference**

Statement of the ICAO Secretary General

(15 December 2022, Montréal)

1. It is my great honour to be with you for this High-Level Segment of the second part of the UN Biodiversity Conference.
2. Allow me to express my sincere gratitude to the Ministry of Ecology and Environment of China for inviting me to address you today as part of this important event on the future of our biosphere.
3. As many of you may know, I did not have to travel far to join you today. That's because the Headquarters of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the only UN agency headquarters based in Canada, is located not far from here in this wonderful city of Montréal.
4. This fortunate geographic proximity between COP15 and ICAO reflects an even stronger connection between us, and by that of course I'm referring to our respective sustainability objectives.
5. When it comes to protecting our planet, biodiversity and climate are two sides of the same coin, and we were very much encouraged that ICAO Member States were able to progress their climate ambitions respective of international aviation at ICAO's recently concluded 41st Assembly.
6. The Assembly's newly adopted resolution on a long-term global aspirational goal of net-zero CO₂ emissions from international aviation by 2050 marks the start of a new journey for aviation, and one which will serve to accelerate our sector's ultimate decarbonization.
7. To achieve this objective, countries will rely on measures delivering concrete in-sector emission savings.

8. More efficient operations, aircraft technology, the deployment of sustainable aviation fuels, and many other bold innovations now being conceptualized and realized, will all be essential to its success.
9. Important complementary contributions to these innovations will be made by ICAO's aircraft CO₂ standards, which will begin applying to aircraft type designs as soon as next month, when the new standards become applicable, and by the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA), the first global carbon offsetting and reduction solution for any industry sector.
10. Biodiversity is an important consideration in much of ICAO's work, including in areas such as aerial forest fire mitigation, species protection near airports, the prevention of wildlife trafficking, and perhaps most importantly at the moment, the deployment of sustainable aviation fuels.
11. ICAO Member States have recently adopted a comprehensive framework concerning the biomass and other sources to be explored for these new fuel types, and one founded upon strict criteria designed to protect biodiversity and promote conservation.
12. In addition to these contributions, the offsetting pursued under CORSIA will support many projects relating to deforestation and forest degradation, forest carbon stock conservation, and the sustainable management of forests in developing countries.
13. Our shared challenges to protect our climate, preserve biodiversity, reduce pollution, and build cleaner energy systems, are considerable, and addressing them is vital. The UN Biodiversity Conference can count on ICAO as a close and committed partner in support of any appropriate common objectives.
14. I wish you all great success in achieving positive results on the post 2020 biodiversity framework, and look forward to strengthening our ties and leveraging new partnerships as we work together toward our common goals.
15. Thank you.