

**60<sup>th</sup> CONFERENCE OF  
DIRECTORS GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION  
ASIA AND PACIFIC REGIONS**

*Sendai, Japan  
28 July - 1 August 2025*

AGENDA ITEM 1:       THEME TOPIC

**THE SUSTAINABLE SKIES OF THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION:  
TOWARDS INCREASED ECONOMIC PROSPERITY AND  
SOCIAL WELL-BEING BY AIR TRANSPORT OF PEOPLE AND  
GOODS IN THE REGION**

(Presented by Japan)

**SUMMARY**

Under this theme, the conference will explore how air transportation can enhance economic prosperity and social well-being in the Asia-Pacific region. Discussions will focus on balancing aviation innovation with sustainability, encompassing environmental protection, workforce development, and economic resilience. Strategies to improve the efficiency of passenger and cargo transport while reducing environmental impacts will be examined. Additionally, discussions may align with ICAO's new strategic plan. Key themes include policy frameworks, technological advancements, and fostering diversity through NGAP, all aimed at building a sustainable and inclusive air transport network for the region's future.

## **THE SUSTAINABLE SKIES OF THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION: TOWARDS INCREASED ECONOMIC PROSPERITY AND SOCIAL WELL-BEING BY AIR TRANSPORT OF PEOPLE AND GOODS IN THE REGION**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The 60th Conference of the Directors General of Civil Aviation of the Asia and Pacific Regions (60th DGCA Conference) is held in Sendai City, Japan, July 28 - August 1 2025. This discussion paper introduces for discussion at the conference the Theme Topic “The sustainable skies of the Asia-Pacific region: towards increased economic prosperity and social well-being by air transportation of people and goods in the region.” The theme aligns with current global and regional trends, focusing on the role of sustainable aviation in promoting economic growth and social development.

1.2 The focus of the conference will be on exploring how the aviation sector can serve as a key enabler of both economic prosperity and social well-being across the Asia-Pacific region. In light of the growing importance of sustainable practices, the discussions will integrate environmental sustainability, workforce development, and the economic resilience of States into a comprehensive approach.

### **2. DISCUSSION**

2.1 Innovation and Efficiency in Sustainable Aviation: Innovation is key to driving both efficiency and sustainability in the aviation industry. New technologies such as sustainable aviation fuels (SAF), electric and hybrid aircraft, and advancements in air traffic management systems and CNS systems which will enable the introduction of trajectory based operation are critical for reducing environmental impact while promoting long-term economic growth. However, balancing these innovations with economic realities, particularly in developing States, remains a challenge that requires strategic planning and international cooperation. Additionally, improving operational efficiency is essential for reducing costs and lowering emissions. Participants will explore how innovations such as artificial intelligence, big data, and predictive maintenance can optimize air operations, enabling the aviation sector to achieve both economic and environmental sustainability.

2.2 Economic Resilience and Inclusivity: Aviation is a vital conduit for economic growth, facilitating trade, tourism, and market integration for remote and underserved regions. Ensuring economic resilience, particularly in smaller or developing economies, is essential for a more equitable air transport network. Policies that expand access to air services in rural areas and underserved markets, including exploration of the possibility to apply the development of advanced air mobility, will be considered, ensuring that aviation’s benefits are broadly distributed across different segments of society. A focus on inclusive growth will help strengthen the economic fabric of the Asia-Pacific region.

2.3 Sustainable Workforce Development: The sector faces an aging workforce and a shortage of skilled professionals, especially in technical and operational roles. States are encouraged to develop education and training initiatives, being mindful of the ICAO’s Next Generation of Aviation Professionals (NGAP) programme, to prepare the future workforce. Diversity and inclusion will be emphasized, focusing on increasing the participation of women and underrepresented groups in aviation. This approach ensures a resilient and sustainable talent pipeline that meets the industry’s evolving needs while promoting social equity.

2.4 Reducing Environmental Impacts: Aviation is widely regarded as a significant contributor to global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, and mitigating these impacts is a priority for the sector. The use of SAF, carbon offsetting, and energy-efficient infrastructure will be discussed as key strategies for decarbonizing the sector. The conference will address the ICAO’s Long-Term Aspirational Goal (LTAG) to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. Participants will explore policy incentives that encourage the adoption of low-carbon technologies, aligning the region with global sustainability goals while addressing region-specific challenges such as varying levels of development and

infrastructure readiness.

2.5 ICAO's new Strategic Plan: The discussions will be mindful of the ICAO Strategic Plan 2026-2050, which reflects the Organization's long-term aspiration to achieve bold strategic goals for the orderly growth of international aviation, underpinned by safety, security, and innovative services that enhance the passenger experience. By aligning regional strategies with global objectives, in line with Delhi Declaration adopted at the Second Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on 12 September 2024, the Asia-Pacific region can strengthen its competitiveness and resilience in the civil aviation sector. The focus will be on how regional cooperation can enhance the sector's ability to adapt to emerging global trends, ensuring that growth is both sustainable and inclusive.

### **3. STRUCTURE OF THE CONFERENCE**

3.1 At this conference, as in the past, each agenda item will be discussed according to its respective field, and it is expected that active discussions will take place with the above theme topic in mind.

3.2 In addition to each agenda item, a High-Level Panel Discussion (HLDP) will be held subsequent to the Opening Ceremony on Day 1. The invited panelists representing aviation authorities, aviation service providers, implementation support organizations, etc. will discuss why we should achieve sustainable skies and what we need to do as the Asia-Pacific region to achieve this goal. The panelists will also discuss the significance and challenges of achieving sustainable skies, as well as the initiatives needed to achieve this goal. It is expected that conference participants will deepen their understanding of advanced initiatives and best practices, promote initiatives related to human resource development and support for developing countries, and eventually share a vision for achieving sustainable skies.

3.3 A closed-door high-level discussion among Directors General (DGs) of APAC States is also scheduled for the end of Day 3. This closed session will provide an informal, non-committal space for DGs to discuss key topics to foster the unity and enhance cooperation to address needs and priorities in the region. Montreal Group members attending the DGCA Conference and the Regional Director of APAC Office will also be present as observers and resources to provide relevant background information when needed. In addition, the discussion is expected to contribute to enhanced communication between the DGCA Conference in the APAC region and the Montreal Group.

### **4. ACTION BY THE CONFERENCE**

4.1 The Conference is invited to:

- a) keep in mind the purpose and background of the conference theme topic and actively engage in discussions.
- b) encourage DGs to actively participate in the DG session on Day 3 and contribute to discussions on how ICAO's critical challenges should be addressed at the regional level from a long-term perspective.
- c) agree to make a DG-level commitment to deepen regional efforts toward economic prosperity and social well-being.

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