

**61ST CONFERENCE OF
DIRECTORS GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION
ASIA AND PACIFIC REGION**

*Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
7 – 11 September 2026*

AGENDA ITEM 7: AVIATION AND ENVIRONMENT

**REGIONAL COOPERATION FOR A HARMONIZED
APPROACH TO AVIATION DECARBONIZATION**

(Presented by Malaysia)

SUMMARY

This paper highlights the risk that States across the Asia/Pacific region are moving at different speeds and in different directions on aviation decarbonization, covering CORSIA, Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF), operational measures and new technology. It notes that, unlike air navigation and safety, the environment and decarbonization currently have no dedicated regional body of their own. Building on sub-regional decarbonization initiatives already under way, the paper invites the Conference to consider supporting a wider regional decarbonization roadmap and to request ICAO to study the establishment of a dedicated regional body for aviation environment and decarbonization, following the model of APANPIRG and RASG-APAC, to give this area of work the same sustained regional attention.

REGIONAL COOPERATION FOR A HARMONIZED APPROACH TO AVIATION DECARBONIZATION

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Aviation decarbonization relies on a combination of measures involving CORSIA, Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF), operational improvements and new aircraft technologies, working together to achieve ICAO's Long-Term Global Aspirational Goal (LTAG) of net-zero CO₂ emissions from international aviation by 2050.

1.2 States and Administrations across the Asia/Pacific region are advancing these measures at different speeds and through different national approaches. This diversity reflects each State's unique circumstances, but it also carries a risk of fragmentation, uneven progress and reduced overall effectiveness at the regional level.

1.3 The Asia/Pacific region includes some of the world's fastest-growing aviation markets. How the region works together on decarbonization matters not only for the environment but also for the competitiveness of its aviation sector and its ability to contribute to global standard setting.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 States are adopting different approaches to SAF certification, CORSIA implementation, emissions reporting, and State Action Plans (SAP). For airlines operating across multiple States in the region, this can mean navigating varying requirements, which increases costs, adds complexity, and may create uneven competitive conditions.

2.2 Some States, particularly those with limited technical, financial, or institutional resources, may find it harder to keep up with decarbonization measures being adopted elsewhere. This could lead to a widening gap in readiness across the region, which would affect the region's overall contribution to the LTAG.

2.3 There are significant opportunities for regional collaboration, for example, on SAF feedstocks, production facilities and book-and-claim systems; on joint research and development of new technologies; and on shared infrastructure for alternative energy. However, these opportunities remain largely untapped due to limited coordination and information sharing.

2.4 Air navigation and aviation safety in the Asia/Pacific region are each supported by a dedicated regional body such as Asia/Pacific Air Navigation Planning and Implementation Regional Group (APANPIRG) for air navigation planning and the Regional Aviation Safety Group- Asia and Pacific) for safety RASG-APAC for safety. These bodies give their subject areas sustained, structured regional attention through regular meetings, working groups, shared data, and a clear channel for reporting progress back to the ICAO as well as the DGCA Conference.

2.5 While environmental matters are discussed through various ICAO forums and regional meetings, these arrangements do not provide the continuous, structured regional coordination available for safety and air navigation. Decarbonization involves long-term planning, resource mobilisation, technical cooperation, monitoring of progress, and coordination among States, industry, and development partners. These activities require a permanent regional mechanism rather than periodic discussion alone.

2.6 Establishing a dedicated regional body for aviation environment and decarbonization would mirror the institutional model of APANPIRG and RASG-APAC. It could bring together States, industry and experts to coordinate decarbonization measures by maintaining a regional progress dashboard, targeting capacity-building support, developing common principles for SAF certification to prevent duplication and reporting to the ICAO on a regular basis.

2.7 With the introduction of diverse carbon and SAF policy approaches across the region,

airlines may face varying cost implications depending on their route networks. Without closer regional coordination, these variations could lead to competitive distortions and unintended operational responses that weaken the environmental impact of the measures. Safeguarding both environmental integrity and competitive fairness would therefore benefit from a more harmonised approach.

2.8 Some sub-regional work is already underway in this direction, with groups of States in parts of the region coming together to plan SAF deployment, CORSIA readiness and related measures collectively. A wider regional decarbonization roadmap, developed in consultation with States and existing regional bodies, could draw on the approach and lessons of such sub-regional efforts and extend similar coordination across the whole Asia/Pacific region. Such a roadmap could include:

- 2.8.1 shared milestones for SAF deployment and CORSIA compliance;
- 2.8.2 common principles for SAF certification systems;
- 2.8.3 coordinated capacity-building priorities for States that need support; and
- 2.8.4 regular reporting on regional progress to the ICAO and DGCA Conference.

3. ACTION BY THE CONFERENCE

- 3.1 The Conference is invited to:
 - a) note the contents of this paper regarding regional coordination of aviation decarbonization efforts;
 - b) support the development of a wider regional decarbonization roadmap through the ICAO Asia and Pacific Regional Office, building on existing sub-regional initiatives and in coordination with existing regional bodies, to guide collective action on SAF, CORSIA and other measures across the wider region;
 - c) propose that the ICAO Asia and Pacific Regional Office to study the establishment of a dedicated regional body for aviation environment and decarbonization;
 - d) propose the ICAO Asia and Pacific Regional Office strengthen coordination among relevant regional bodies on aviation decarbonization in the interim; and
 - e) encourage States/Administrations to share experience, challenges and good practices on SAF policy, CORSIA implementation, and other decarbonization measures through existing regional platforms.

— END —