



ASSEMBLY — 42ND SESSION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 16 : Environmental Protection – International Aviation and Climate Change

SCALING UP SAF PRODUCTION TO DECARBONIZE INTERNATIONAL AVIATION

(Presented by Brazil and Ethiopia)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The increase of Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF) production is the main and most urgent challenge we face today in decarbonizing aviation, and SAF is acknowledged as the best solution to reduce aviation emissions in the short and medium term. However, current SAF production remains extremely low. The increase of SAF production is also key to reduce its price, given that SAF is currently at least twice as expensive as conventional jet fuel. At International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) our focus is on implementation when it comes to SAF. In 2023, ICAO adopted a Global Framework to promote SAF, Lower Carbon Aviation Fuels (LCAF) and other cleaner energy solutions. As part of the journey toward Net Zero by 2050, this framework aims at reducing international aviation CO₂ emissions by 5% by 2030 through the use of SAF, LCAF and other aviation cleaner energies.

The aviation sector must deliver “in-sector” emissions reductions, and SAF is the most efficient solution to achieve that. The Assembly needs to send a clear signal to economic operators by affirming that the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA) is the globally accepted sustainability standard for SAF, so that we can foster a harmonized development of the SAF market, avoid regulatory fragmentation, and support a unified approach to SAF certification. Brazil believes a package of stronger implementation commitments need to be agreed at the 42nd Assembly in order to support the urgent scaling up of SAF supply and demand towards the achievement of the *global aspirational Vision* to reduce CO₂ emissions from international aviation by 5 per cent by 2030 and of the Long-term aspirational goal (LTAG) by 2050.

Action: The Assembly is invited to:

- urge member States to facilitate the scaling up of SAF production rapidly, inclusively and sustainably, in all regions of the world, develop appropriate policies, support their industry and allow for a just and inclusive energy transition in the aviation sector;
- recognize CORSIA as the accepted sustainability standard for SAF, in order to ensure a globally-harmonized development of the SAF market, avoiding regulatory fragmentation and supporting a unified approach to SAF certification;
- reiterate a non-discriminatory and technically neutral approach towards feedstocks and pathways to produce SAF, provided they meet the CORSIA criteria and framework; and
- request the Council to establish a specific mandate for the Committee on Aviation Environmental Protection (CAEP) to develop working processes to effectively accelerate the approval of the sustainability of feedstocks and pathways, in order to urgently maximize scalability and increase opportunities for developing countries in a more inclusive decarbonization of international aviation.

Strategic Goals:	This working paper relates to the Strategic Goal – <i>Aviation is Environmentally Sustainable</i> .
Financial implications:	
References:	

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The increase of Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF) production is the main and most urgent challenge we face today in decarbonizing aviation. SAF is widely acknowledged as the best solution to reducing aviation emissions in the short and medium term based on in-sector measures. According to the Long-term aspirational goal (LTAG) Report, under the most ambitious CO₂ emissions reductions scenario, fuels may account for up to 55% of the emissions reductions by 2050. However, current SAF production remains extremely low. According to International Air Transport Association (IATA), in 2024, SAF production reached 1 million tonnes (1.3 billion liters). The increase of SAF production is also key to reduce its price, given that SAF is currently at least twice as expensive as conventional jet fuel. At International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) the focus should be on setting the grounds for States and creating the proper mechanisms to fully implement the Global Framework to promote SAF, Lower Carbon Aviation Fuels (LCAF) and other aviation cleaner energy solutions, adopted by Members States in 2023. As part of the journey toward Net Zero Carbon Emissions Growth by 2050, this framework aims at reducing international aviation CO₂ emissions by 5% by 2030 through the use of SAF, LCAF and other cleaner aviation energies.

1.2 Recent data from ICAO's Environmental Report 2025 shows that CORSIA Eligible Fuels (CEFs) could reduce between 6% and 10% of operators' emissions in the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA) Phase I (2024–2026). Moreover, the estimated cumulative cost of CORSIA compliance during this period ranges from USD 1.3 billion—if relying solely on offsets—to USD 8.4 billion when including SAF. These figures display the urgency of scaling up global SAF production under harmonized standards, to ensure cost-effectiveness, regulatory predictability, and the timely achievement of ICAO's climate goals.

1.3 The aviation sector must deliver “in-sector” emissions reductions and SAF is the most efficient solution to achieve that. We have to work to ensure that both pillars of *Eligible Fuels* and *Eligible Units* are able to deliver. Having SAF contributing to only between “0.8% and 2.5%” of emission reductions in 2030¹ is well below our original expectations.

1.4 The ICAO 42nd Assembly will be critical for ICAO to provide the necessary political guidance and mandates to change those trends for the better. The Assembly needs to send a clear signal to economic operators involved in SAF production and demand by affirming that CORSIA is the accepted sustainability standard for SAF, so that ICAO can foster a globally harmonized development of the SAF market, avoid regulatory fragmentation and support a unified approach to SAF certification.

1.5 Brazil believes a package of stronger implementation commitments need to be reinforced at the 42nd Assembly in order to support the scaling up of SAF supply and demand towards the achievement of the global aspirational Vision to reduce CO₂ emissions in international aviation by 5 per cent by 2030 and of the LTAG by 2050.

2. PARAMETERS FOR A FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GLOBAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 The Global Framework established key guiding parameters to maximize SAF production and consumption, and to do so in a just and inclusive manner—ensuring all global regions are able to participate in this market and benefit from it. The first parameter is the recognition of CORSIA as the sustainability standard for SAF. This will ensure a globally harmonized development of the SAF market, avoiding regulatory fragmentation and supporting a unified approach to SAF certification. This harmonized approach not only incentivizes SAF production by providing regulatory stability and predictability, but it also facilitates the use and claim of SAF environmental benefits by airlines by avoiding further regulatory burden of complying with different standards in each jurisdiction.

¹ Low to Moderate scenarios of *CAEP Projections of the Production of SAF in page 28 of CAEP's “Technical Assessments in Support of the 2025 CORSIA Periodic Review”*, referenced in A42-WP/28, Appendix B.

2.2 The second parameter is a non-discriminatory and technically neutral approach to feedstocks and pathways to produce SAF, provided they meet the CORSIA criteria. ICAO should not discriminate against different types of SAF. The carbon accounting methodologies and the sustainability criteria approved under the CORSIA framework should be technically neutral based on data and scientific evidence that account for the different realities and practices adopted in all regions of the world, including the peculiarities of tropical and subtropical countries. A restrictive approach based on specific contexts would hinder progress, disadvantage developing countries, and risk derailing global climate efforts, particularly in a geopolitical context that may divert focus from climate action. In this sense, ICAO should take into consideration, when evaluating the sustainability of those fuels, the conclusions drawn by well-recognized international organizations, such as the International Energy Agency (IEA), the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

2.3 In the same vein, the Global Framework also mandates the acceleration of the approval of the sustainability of feedstocks and pathways. The third parameter would be to establish a specific mandate for the ICAO Committee on Aviation Environmental Protection (CAEP) to develop working processes to effectively accelerate the current pace of approval of the sustainability of feedstocks and pathways, in order to urgently maximize scalability and increase opportunities for developing countries in a more inclusive decarbonization of international aviation. Otherwise, ICAO may constitute itself as a technical barrier for the development of the global SAF market. Similarly, ICAO should act quickly to approve agricultural practices and techniques that enhance productivity and can significantly scale up SAF production while upholding all sustainability criteria. The delay in ICAO's recognition of these practices creates significant uncertainties and leads to postponed investments that the sector simply cannot afford at this critical juncture.

2.4 The fourth parameter regards implementation support and financing. The Global Framework recognizes that without proper support to developing countries in terms of means of implementation and financing the world will not be able to adequately address climate challenge in aviation.

2.5 In summary, the message conveyed by the Global Framework is clear: scale up SAF production rapidly, inclusively, sustainably and in a harmonized way. Only by embracing all viable solutions can we meet the dual challenge of cutting aviation emissions and making SAF available and affordable. It should be in the enlightened self-interest of all member States to favour a democratic, open and inclusive approach to SAF, allowing for just and inclusive energy transitions in the aviation sector.

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