



**Closing remarks  
by the Council President of the  
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO),  
Mr. Salvatore Sciacchitano,  
to the ICAO ENV Stocktaking Seminar 2020**

*(Virtual Meeting, 11 September 2020)*

*Good afternoon everyone,*

While carbon emissions are presently lower than normal due to the COVID-19 crisis, the need for bold action on climate change and air transport emissions remains strong.

As you have heard often over the last several days, the post-COVID green recovery provides us with a tremendous opportunity to build back better in aviation.

Together, we can accelerate this vital global air transportation network toward its de-carbonized future.

We heard from nearly 100 stakeholders during this event, and can count among them aeronautical pioneers, industry leaders, technical experts, researchers, innovators, civil society advocates, and countries currently engaged in greening their aviation sectors.

Dozens of solutions, including aircraft technologies, operational improvements, and sustainable aviation fuels were presented and explored here, most importantly for their CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reduction potential.

Myself and my diplomatic colleagues on the ICAO Governing Council have established an innovation theme for this organization for the next four years.

Part of our motivation for doing so was the recognition that new technologies can deliver new efficiencies and greener results, and that these are being introduced today at an unprecedented pace.

Very recently, for example, we've seen several airlines announce the retiring of older aircraft in their fleet in favour of new models offering up to 25% more fuel efficiency.

And beyond this, we are also seeing tremendous excitement around hybrid and electric aircraft. These will first enter into service on shorter routes, but in light of recent commitments by some major players they could also be providing longer range commercial and zero-emission services as early as the 2030s.

On the operational side, a substantial number of airports are realizing emissions and cost savings through greater reliance on solar solutions, and new types of "formation flight" are being proposed which could realize a further 10% fuel saving.

And with sustainable aviation fuels we can appreciate that they have already been used on over 250,000 commercial flights, flying out of nine distinct airports globally, and that eight aviation fuel conversion processes have now been certified.

At every opportunity we must accelerate the pace to scale-up these good practices, and to boost the innovation and implementation of greener solutions.

None of this will take place in a vacuum, however. Such innovations represent true paradigm shifts in many instances, and each relies on significant investments, incentives, and partnership, in addition to ingenuity.

Aviation has always promoted and benefitted from innovation, but it will be up to us to help energize this momentum further and motivate coalition partners, both private and public, to foster the required investment and incentive frameworks.

With public subsidies and bailouts playing a critical role in sustaining many airports and airline operators through this period, States could likely have a greater say over how the industry evolves post-pandemic.

This represents an opportunity to motivate and drive a greener recovery for the aviation sector, and ICAO is committed to support and assist States and stakeholders in all related initiatives.

We should also appreciate that countries at our last Assembly have directed the Council to work on the feasibility of a long-term global aspirational emissions reduction goal for international aviation.

Options and an implementation roadmap will be presented at the next session of the Assembly, and the information shared throughout this Seminar on CO<sub>2</sub> reduction potentials will directly feed into this work.

Before I conclude, please let me announce that Environment team will be conducting a dedicated ICAO Seminar on Aviation's Green Recovery which will take place virtually this 23 to 25 November.

While this Stocktaking event showcased the technical potential and opportunities for aviation in-sector CO<sub>2</sub> reductions, the next event will look into the wider spectrum of sustainability and aviation, now and in the long term.

It will also explore many other elements needed for air transport's green recovery, and provide you with a platform to frankly propose and discuss how its greener future can be shaped.

Together, you represent a strong and effective environmental coalition, and working through ICAO provides you with a unique opportunity to influence key public and private decision makers, and to strengthen the partnerships and results which will be so important to future generations.

Thank you.