



WORKING PAPER

ASSEMBLY — 41ST SESSION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 17: Environmental Protection – International Aviation and Climate Change

Agenda Item 18: Environmental Protection – Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA)

THE NEED FOR AGREEMENT ON AN AMBITIOUS CORSIA

(Presented by the United States)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA) is, and must continue to be, a critical element of ICAO’s “basket of measures” to address international aviation’s climate impacts. The United States believes that this Assembly provides the opportunity to affirm CORSIA’s climate ambition as the industry recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic. While CORSIA should continue to fill the gap between in-sector reductions and actual emissions, CORSIA’s mechanism for reporting Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) use will increase in importance as these fuels are increasingly deployed globally.

Action: The Assembly is invited to:

- a) adopt an outcome on CORSIA that reinforces ICAO’s climate ambition; and
- b) recognize the role CORSIA will play in enabling the deployment of Sustainable Aviation Fuels around the world.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to Strategic Objective – <i>Environmental Protection</i> .
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<i>Financial implications:</i>	None
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<i>References:</i>	None
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 ICAO made history in 2016 when the 39th Assembly adopted a resolution to establish the first global market-based measure to address carbon emissions for any sector in the form of the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA). CORSIA represents a fundamental piece of international aviation's efforts to address its climate impact, and is designed to prevent the sector from backsliding in the future.

1.2 The COVID-19 global pandemic caused an unprecedented downturn in international aviation and associated emissions, which impacted the implementation of CORSIA in various ways. In this context, this Assembly provides an opportunity for ICAO to reaffirm the importance of CORSIA and ensure that ICAO does not backtrack on its climate ambition by confirming CORSIA's fundamental aspects while incorporating necessary adjustments identified through the CORSIA Periodic Review to maintain CORSIA's fairness to all operators and take into account the pandemic's economic impacts on the sector.

1.3 The United States believes that CORSIA is, and will continue to be, a critical piece of ICAO's "basket of measures" to address international aviation's climate impacts and provides some suggestions for CORSIA in the following sections.

2. CORSIA'S OVERALL AMBITION

2.1 The Glasgow Climate Pact, as adopted by the recent UNFCCC COP26 in 2021 in Glasgow, UK, "reaffirms the long-term global goal to hold the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, recognizing that this would significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change," and also "recognizes that the impacts of climate change will be much lower at the temperature increase of 1.5°C compared with 2°C, and resolves to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C."

2.2 In light of this global ambition, ICAO must not weaken its actions to address the climate crisis. Despite the challenges facing the industry as it recovers from the COVID-19 global pandemic, it is important to affirm the commitment and credibility of ICAO climate initiatives, in particular CORSIA, at this Assembly.

2.3 For CORSIA, this means establishing a clear and certain baseline for all remaining phases that does not backtrack from CORSIA's original goal of carbon neutral growth from 2020 onward.

2.4 The United States looks forward to working with fellow Member States on maximizing the effectiveness of CORSIA, which includes considering a variety of factors such as ambition, participation, and implementation, among others.

3. CORSIA'S ROLE IN THE BASKET OF MEASURES

3.1 While much of the focus on CORSIA has been related to its offsetting requirements, CORSIA also serves as the international standard for reporting CORSIA eligible fuel (CEF) use and accurately capturing CEF lifecycle GHG emissions benefits, which will become increasingly important as Member States begin developing SAF industries.

3.2 All recent studies indicate that SAF will produce the most significant reductions in international aviation's CO₂ emissions.¹ CORSIA's role as the mechanism for reporting and tracking SAF use will become increasingly important as SAF deployment increases globally. The United States has developed and is implementing a "SAF Grand Challenge."² We expect similar initiatives to arise in other States and believe that the CORSIA infrastructure will be important to making those initiatives successful.

3.3 CORSIA, through its Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) System, also provides the backbone of global accounting of international aviation greenhouse gas emissions. Without CORSIA, the international system would lack a single, consistent dataset for making decisions about emissions and emissions reduction efforts.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 The CORSIA Standards and Recommended Practices are the outcome of an ambitious agreement that cemented ICAO's role in addressing international aviation's climate impacts. While the industry has endured difficult market conditions through the COVID-19 pandemic, ICAO must not lose sight of the ambition and collective spirit of 2016 when CORSIA was agreed. CORSIA must remain an ambitious and fair program for all operators. Aviation has always responded to a challenge with dedication and intensity. As we all recover from the pandemic, that response must also have the same dedication and intensity to the environmental ambition that is needed to combat the climate challenge.

4.2 The United States remains committed to CORSIA, and we believe that working together ICAO can once again embrace the spirit that pushed us toward its initial agreement in 2016.

4.3 The Assembly is invited to:

- a) adopt an outcome on CORSIA that reinforces ICAO's climate ambition; and
- b) recognize the role CORSIA will play in enabling the deployment of Sustainable Aviation Fuels around the world.

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¹ See, e.g., United States 2020 Aviation Climate Action Plan, <https://www.faa.gov/sustainability/aviation-climate-action-plan>; ICAO CAEP, "Report on the feasibility of a long-term aspirational goal (LTAG) for international civil aviation CO₂ emission reductions," <https://www.icao.int/environmental-protection/LTAG/Pages/LTAGreport.aspx>; Air Transportation Action Group (ATAG), "Waypoint 2050," <https://aviationbenefits.org/environmental-efficiency/climate-action/waypoint-2050/>.

² <https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2021-09/S1-Signed-SAF-MOU-9-08-21.pdf>.