



**ASSEMBLY — 41ST SESSION**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

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

**ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY**

(Presented by Saudi Arabia)

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Saudi Arabia's civil aviation sector is anticipating significant growth in the coming decade as Saudi Arabia seeks to substantially expand its tourism sector, tripling the number of air passengers during that period.

To manage and minimize the environmental impact and associated emissions and align with the commitments under the Paris Climate Agreement and the International Civil Aviation Organization's (ICAO) goals of reducing and mitigating aviation sector emissions.

The General Authority of Civil Aviation (GACA) will undertake an environmental sustainability project to outline environmental policy and regulation for the aviation sector of Saudi Arabia and define a roadmap of implementation to manage and minimise potential environmental impacts in the coming years whilst aiming to balance the environmental, social, and economic benefits and challenges.

This paper provides an overview of the environmental sustainability project approach.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This information paper relates to Strategic Objective – <i>Environmental Protection</i> .
<i>Financial implications:</i>	Without any financial obligations.
<i>References:</i>	Annex 16 — <i>Environmental Protection</i> , Volume I — <i>Aircraft Noise</i> , Volume II — <i>Aircraft Engine Emissions</i> , Volume III — <i>Aeroplane CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions</i> and Volume IV — <i>Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSA)</i>

**1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 This information paper highlights Saudi Arabia's approach to Environmental Sustainability, in the coming years, and stresses on the need for ongoing support, collaboration and partnership, particularly in the areas of technology, environmental resilience and innovation.

1.2 Saudi Arabia is undergoing a significant transformation through the implementation of the Saudi Vision 2030 which is built around three primary themes: a vibrant society, a thriving economy, and an ambitious nation. The landscape of the sector in Saudi Arabia consists of 29 airports (public and private) (domestic, regional and international).

1.3 Through an Environmental Sustainability Programme, Saudi Arabia will outline environmental policy and regulation for its aviation sector and define a roadmap to manage and minimise potential environmental impacts.

1.4 The objective(s) of the environmental sustainability project is to establish a bespoke KSA aviation environmental framework, based on International Best Practices applicable to the State, capture and analyse data to assist and prioritise decision-making and investment(s) draft a new regulatory and legal framework that will enable environmental and sustainability practices across the aviation value chain, with the ultimate aim to balance environmental, social, and financial benefits for the State through capacity building and development.

## 2. **BACKGROUND**

2.1 Saudi Arabia's civil aviation sector is anticipating significant growth in the coming decade as Saudi Arabia seeks to substantially expand its tourism sector, tripling the number of air passengers during that period.

2.2 Aligned with the KSA Vision 2030 the air transport market in Saudi Arabia is forecast under current scenarios to grow significantly by 2030, forecasts include:

- >330 million passengers,
- >2.5 million tonnes of cargo
- >250 destinations.

2.3 The evolving landscape of the aviation sector in Saudi Arabia provides a unique opportunity to consider and support (where feasible) sustainable measures in design, and construction whilst focusing on innovative solutions for operations. Balancing Saudi Arabia's Global Reputation and approach to the economic and operational requirements will be key to the Environmental Sustainability journey whilst ensuring the avoidance of accidental risk transfer and future-proofing technology options.

## 3. **PROJECT DETAILS**

3.1 Phase 1 of the Environmental Sustainability Programme will outline a framework and will assess the current baseline of aviation environmental aspects & impacts in the country, quantifying current greenhouse gas emissions and defining a plan to progressively reduce them in the coming years, supporting the sectors' contribution to international sustainability principles. The project will also prepare draft regulations and guidance materials to implement this approach.

3.2 The goal of the first phase is to define, in consultation with all stakeholders, the boundaries of environmental and sustainability management that Saudi Arabia intends to define and promote within the sector. This phase will include but is not limited to the following deliverables:

- a) advisors/stakeholders will meet to identify and analyse global references to environmental treaties ratified by Saudi Arabia and outline commitments made at the international level;
- b) existing environmental frameworks will be reviewed at the national level (environmental protection laws and regulations) to define their applicability to the aviation practices;
- c) most relevant environmental characteristics of the country will be covered including, but not limited to geography, climate, climate change, natural hazards, ecosystems, and biodiversity;
- d) environmental impacts of aviation activities will be identified and categorized;
- e) high-level guidelines for environmental and sustainability management in aviation, across all pillars of environmental impacts, will be defined based on international best practices and lessons learned; and
- f) Phase 1 will define the Saudi Arabia's Aviation Environmental Sustainable Framework.

3.3 Phase 2 of the environmental sustainability programme will involve a detailed assessment of the environmental sustainability footprint of the Saudi aviation sector, identifying:

- a) assets, sources and stakeholders;
- b) data collection and science-based recommendations; and
- c) preparation of a quantitative civil aviation national plan and associated roadmap for environmental management and minimization.

3.4 Phase 3 of the project will draft regulations, standards, and guidance materials required to support the implementation of the environmental sustainability programme and promote the adoption of environmental sustainability practices amongst all aviation sector stakeholders. Phase 3 will include but is not limited to:

- a) ongoing stakeholder collaboration, partnerships and alignments;
- b) environmental sustainability regulations, manuals, standards, guidelines, plans (as applicable);
- c) assessment and inspections approach; and
- d) definition and recommendations for training, development, and capacity building.

#### 4. **CONCLUSION**

4.1 The benefits of the Environmental Sustainability project will include, but not limited to:

- a) building Saudi Arabia capacity and support for environmental adaptation and transformation(s);
- b) utilising science-based information to support business decision-making and future prioritisation; and
- c) strengthening local and international partnerships and collaboration approaches.

4.2 The Assembly is invited to take note of the information provided in this paper and encourage States to exchange information on the development and implementation of environmental sustainability programmes, including challenges and benefits.

— END —