International Civil Aviation Organization

WORKING PAPER

THIRD CONFERENCE ON AVIATION AND ALTERNATIVE FUELS (CAAF/3)

Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 20 to 24 November 2023

Agenda Item 2: Supporting policies to promote the development and deployment of cleaner energy for aviation

AVIATION GREEN LANE

(Presented by Japan, Singapore and the United States)

SUMMARY

This paper presents the Aviation Green Lane (AGL) concept as an approach to implement the ICAO basket of measures for aviation decarbonisation through fostering value chain collaboration, ensuring credibility, and providing transparency to consumers amidst concerns over greenwashing. The AGL provides a pathway for interested States and airlines to develop and demonstrate accelerated international aviation emissions reductions through tangible efforts. We detail the objectives and principles of the AGL concept, and lay out a possible tiered approach to implement more sustainable flights through a set of progressive requirements.

Action by the Conference is in paragraph 4.

1.   **INTRODUCTION**

1.1   At the 41st ICAO Assembly, the sector adopted the collective long-term global aspirational goal for international aviation (LTAG) of net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. Following this historic achievement, the sector will need to embark on turning that goal into a reality. ICAO has identified a basket of aviation decarbonisation measures comprising technological and operational improvements, sustainable aviation fuels (SAF), and the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA). The implementation of the ICAO basket of measures would be key to the achievement of LTAG.

1.2   Here, we lay out an Aviation Green Lane (AGL) concept as a possible framework to implement the ICAO basket of measures. The AGL concept provides a pathway for interested States and airlines to develop and demonstrate accelerated emissions reductions on specific routes, and in a credible manner through tangible efforts to avoid greenwashing. In tandem, it also seeks to provide more

transparency for consumers to make informed choices. This concept also follows an end-to-end approach, encouraging cooperation amongst stakeholders across the value chain needed to support a flight.

1.3   While the AGL is a concept and will take some time to implement, we view that there are merits to share the idea early to provide a reference for States looking for novel opportunities to collaborate with one another. We hope that this paper will encourage more collaborations, spark new and innovative ideas, and ultimately catalyse further efforts either at the ICAO or State level to support aviation's decarbonisation.

1.4   The subsequent paragraphs detail the key elements and considerations of the AGL concept.

2.   **AGL CONCEPT**

2.1   The objectives of the AGL are:

> i.   Facilitate and promote the accelerated decarbonisation of air transport, to support the ICAO long-term aspirational goal, building on the efforts of the ICAO and its existing initiatives;
>
> ii.   Mutually recognise a common robust framework for green practices, including SAF use, between two or more countries; and
>
> iii.   Encourage the uplift of SAF where feasible, and recognise the use of virtual certificates representing SAF uplift generated under a credible system or mechanism.

2.2   The AGL will abide by the following principles:

> i.   ICAO framework: All participating States should support and implement ICAO's policies and practices related to environmental protection.
>
> ii.   Route non-exclusivity: AGL flights may operate in parallel to non-AGL flights between the same origin and destination and will not be used to exclude otherwise acceptable air traffic between the two airports under the relevant air-services agreement(s).
>
> iii.   Competition policy: The implementation of AGL must not lead to discriminatory practices or introduce competition concerns.
>
> iv.   Continuous Improvement: AGL requirements will progressively increase the quantity of emissions reductions based on ongoing improvements in technology and policy.

2.3   Framework of requirements

2.3.1   A set of minimum requirements is necessary to ensure that AGL flights meet certain implementation thresholds to be considered sustainable. Similar to the Airports Council International (ACI) Airport Carbon Accreditation scheme, the AGL follows a proposed tiered framework containing a basket of activities to be implemented across the various aspects of a flight, with higher tiers being more stringent.

2.3.2   The proposed framework is designed to involve the entire value chain needed to support a flight, bringing together stakeholders from the airline, airport, and air traffic management functions to collaborate and make possible an end-to-end sustainable flight.

2.3.3   In line with the principle of continuous improvement, the requirements within each tier will increase in emissions reduction impact over time. The presence of multiple tiers will continue to provide implementation flexibility for stakeholders.

2.3.4   The appended framework (see Table 1 below) provides a high-level scope of elements that could be considered under the AGL. Detailed requirements would have to be developed in close consultation with relevant stakeholders (e.g., airlines, airports, ANSPs, etc.), and in consideration for the circumstances of participating States.

Table 1: Possible framework

Functions	Initiative	Non-exhaustive factors to consider in establishing tiers**
Airline	Sustainable aviation fuel and lower carbon aviation fuel use	• Carbon intensity of jet fuel blend, e.g. magnitude of reduction from standard 89gCO2e/MJ baseline • Whether fuel is CORSIA-eligible
	Aircraft type	Fuel efficiency of aircraft
	Aircraft operational measures	Whether efficient aircraft operational measures are observed, e.g., single-engine taxiing, etc.
	Offsets	Whether offsets are CORSIA-eligible
	In-flight passenger experience*	Whether the substitution of reduced weight supplies onboard the aircraft, the reduction of unnecessary supplies onboard the aircraft, the elimination of single-use plastics, and adoption of renewable packaging and materials, etc., are observed
Air Traffic Management	Operational measures by air navigation service providers	The extent of air traffic management measures to enhance operational efficiency in a safe manner, across different flight phases
Airport	ACI Airport Carbon Accreditation	Level of accreditation achieved
	Ground service***	Use of cleaner energy for airport ground service operations
	In-terminal passenger experience*	Adoption of paperless check-in, etc.

While these factors have limited impact on decarbonisation, they are important to ensure that the passenger experience is congruent with the AGL concept and what it means to fly sustainably.
*** The AGL Concept could include other factors, such as minimum threshold standards for airline participation.*
**** It is worth noting that in certain circumstances, ground service operations may be provided by the airline itself or a ground service provider.*

2.4   Process and recognition

2.4.1   The AGL is currently designed to be a bilateral or multilateral initiative, overseen by authorities and implemented by industry stakeholders. Interested States could enter into bilateral or multilateral agreements or similar arrangements to formalise participation.

2.4.2   The AGL follows a voluntary, opt-in approach. Interested stakeholders (i.e. airlines and other partners in the value chain) should register their intention to participate to the authorities. Thereafter, flights flown by registered stakeholders that meet the requirements set under the AGL framework will qualify as AGL flights, with the ability to market their flights as such. Stakeholders can determine which and how many of their flights to adhere to AGL requirements.

2.4.3   To ensure reliability and validity of reporting, States could pre-agree on a set of necessary documentation to be furnished for recognition, via service agreements. To streamline processes and minimise administrative burden and costs, areas pertaining to SAF and carbon offset use can potentially go through an addendum reporting module to CORSIA. For other areas not covered under CORSIA, the relevant documentation would need to be produced for authorities' recognition.

3.   **CONCLUSION**

3.1   The AGL presents an approach to implement the ICAO basket of measures through fostering value chain collaboration, ensuring credibility, and providing transparency to consumers. By sharing this AGL concept, we hope that it can spark further collaborations and innovative solutions to help advance the decarbonisation of the sector, in support of LTAG.

4.   **ACTION BY THE CAAF/3**

4.1   The CAAF/3 is invited to:

   a)   note that the Aviation Green Lane (AGL) is a bilateral / multilateral scheme to advance aviation decarbonisation, in support of the ICAO long-term aspirational goal (LTAG);

   b)   provide inputs and feedback to the AGL concept; and

   c)   consider applying elements of the AGL concept in the development of bilateral and multilateral initiatives to support LTAG achievement.

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