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WORKING PAPER

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**Twelfth North American, Central American and Caribbean Directors of Civil Aviation Meeting  
(NACC/DCA/12)**

Placencia, Stann Creek District, Belize, 9-11 July 2024

**Agenda Item 7: Pathway to Sustainable Aviation**

**ACT-SAF in line with Challenges/contribution of Collaboration between ICAO and Central America**

(Presented by the Member States of COCESNA<sup>1</sup>)

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The purpose of this WP is to create an appeal to the different sectors of the aviation sector, academia, and specialized entities, in the promotion of sustainable programs and projects from the environmental, social, and economic points of view, with an approach based on assistance and capacity building programs, as a substantial element for the fulfillment of the aspirational objectives of carbon neutrality of the international aviation sector. This initiative, promoted from the region constituted by the member states of COCESNA, aspires to become a call for the coordination of the different actors concerned, to facilitate technology transfer, as well as the necessary resources to ease the transition to a sustainable aviation sector for developing States, in line with the environmental objectives to which ICAO aspires. as well as together with other States or organizations that join the efforts.

<b>Action:</b>	Actions are included in Section 4 of this Paper.
<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Strategic Objective 2 – Air Navigation Capacity and Efficiency</li><li>• Strategic Objective 4 – Economic Development of Air Transport</li><li>• Strategic Objective 5 - Environmental Protection</li></ul>
<i>References:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A41-22, “Consolidated statement of continuing ICAO policies and practices related to environmental protection - Climate change”</li></ul>

**1. Introduction**

1.1 The International Civil Aviation has made significant efforts to follow up on the various levels of commitment to meet its aspirational environmental objectives.

1.2 Taking into account, that from the Long-Term Aspirational Goal (LTAG) agreed upon the 41st sessions of the Assembly (A41), Net-Zero emissions by 2050 goal; a process has been given to build paths towards this goal, defining the need for a set of transformations, improvements, and implementation of the different measures within the sector as shown in the ICAO summary diagram on this Long-Term Goal. Of these measures, sustainable aviation fuels (SAF) and low-carbon emission

<sup>1</sup> Central American States integrated into the Central American Corporation for Air Navigation Services: Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua.

fuels (LCAF) are outlined as the main strategies to decarbonize air transport. These alternative fuels have been presented as the most promising measures to reduce emissions and help meet the LTAG target, due to their life cycle, which is of lower greenhouse gas emissions, and their capability to be directly substituted in existing aircraft infrastructure and fuel supply chain.

1.3 The Third ICAO Conference on Aviation and Alternative Fuels (CAAF/3) resulted in agreement on the ICAO Global Framework for SAF, LCAF and other aviation cleaner energies. This agreement has included four building blocks to support regulatory development, which are: policy and planning, regulatory frameworks, implementation support and financing.

1.4 Considering, that international aviation is characterized by technological innovation and its continuous improvements in efficiency to safely travel through airspace, which has made this means of transport more accessible to more people. International aviation has developed a significant growth curve due to several factors, including the world's population and economic growth, aviation technological advances, the globalized economy, and the development of aeronautical infrastructure, among other factors. However, the world is entering a new phase marked partly by generational change, the fight against climate change, and other global challenges. These factors, such as population and economic growth globally, are quite unpredictable, especially in the face of a scope of 25 years or more, as well as priorities and fashions. Therefore, fuel consumption and its consequent emission of greenhouse gases, as well as its reduction goal, can be a difficult value to determine under the concept of impossibility in the face of climate needs. In this sense, the baseline against which progress towards aviation's environmental objectives is compared should be updated more frequently based on the different levels of reporting and monitoring established.

1.5 SAF are necessary to make a dent in aviation air pollution and are a tool that takes a process to implement. The decarbonization of the aviation sector within the available time frame is unbearable with only one category of measures such as sustainable and alternative aviation fuels. The environmental ambition of full mitigation would also require addressing the other climate impacts by acting in various areas, including technology, air traffic operations and management, sustainable airports, increased energy efficiency and carbon sequestration with nature-based solutions. An issue that the sector will address in future meetings this year<sup>2</sup>.

1.6 Regardless of the hypotheses proposed or any others that may be generated in the future, it is indisputable that the aviation sector and its primary players will need to make substantial investments to change the course of their emissions. SAF are scientifically and technologically intensive but have great environmental potential under the appropriate sustainability criteria, which is why several actors have already set in motion, precursors and pioneers leading the way, establishing a new energy market in different parts of the world. It is an occasional moment for an early and strategic adaptation, acquiring our ticket to participate in the flight toward sustainability. A gradual entry into the market from our individual starting points through the pillars of alliance and collaboration, learning and adaptation, incremental innovation, and the optimization of resources through orderly strategies of capacity building. With a planning posture of *no hurry, no pause*, to coordinate the different actions in favor of the environment and sustainable development. Solid but safe changes towards reduction and its correct monitoring will be more than enough to achieve environmental objectives.

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<sup>2</sup> Upcoming ICAO events in Montreal: 2024 Symposium on Non-CO<sub>2</sub> Aviation Emissions to be held in September and the 2024 ICAO LTAG Stocktaking Event on Aviation CO<sub>2</sub> Emission Reductions in October.

1.7 Consequently, the member States of COCESNA within their activities in favor of the improvement of the environmental performance of the international civil aviation sector, promote the "Alliance for Sustainable Aviation (ALAS)" among other programs to strengthen the Assistance, Capacity-building, and Training for sustainable aviation fuel programs (ACT-SAF) in their different spheres of action. Promoting solutions that facilitate the international aviation sector to achieve its environmental goals while preserving its principles, without placing natural ecosystems at risk. Likewise, we mention and promote the collaborative advances made in the region from the EULAC APP-II program of EASA that will seek, as one of its axes, to support the implementation of SAF within the framework of ACT-SAF. The ASCENT 93 Project of the FAA-USA with support from the World Bank, is progressing in creating a network of doctoral students on the subject in several countries.

## 2. Analysis

2.1 This initiative reflects the common interest of the Central American States in promoting a sustainable air transport system by promoting economic progress and the circular economy, energy efficiency, the protection of biodiversity and ecosystems, the operational safety of aviation and the use of available natural resources in a responsible manner.

2.2 Connecting ideas, that the necessary investments can vary from State to State and region to region so that the supply chains of SAF and raw material production may be an efficient and competitive decarbonization kit. Moreover, developing this new aviation energy source requires research programs, production incentives, international support, and SAF policies to achieve the economic and environmental benefits of SAF in your State. The development of SAF in the world is a positive disruption of already established markets, which requires nuance in its approach to avoid negative effects on its evolution, due to the use of natural resources and the development of aviation.

2.3 Given the consideration of, the challenge of navigating the ambitions to venture towards decarbonizing aviation through SAF and LCAF. As well as the magnitude of the commitment to solidarity and pledge to cooperation towards a noble cause. So that States can prepare for and participate in the international platform with the impetus and vow, appropriate to their particular starting points. The corresponding reduction contributions are based on differentiated but shared responsibilities<sup>3</sup> and in a gradual but balanced increase between the capacity for implementation and the pursuit of results.

2.4 In the light of our deep consideration, current ambitions may fall beyond the State's capacity to participate responsibly pursuing a lauded challenge and opportunity. Meanwhile safeguarding efforts to straighten out their own urgent needs for deep development. Therefore, this initiative prompts us to consider a planning posture of *no hurry, no pause*, to coordinate the different actions in favor of the environment and sustainable development. With solid but certain changes towards the future of life in abundance and connectivity of opportunities

2.5 The ALAS initiative maintains its spirit of being a coordination mechanism between the different players of the international aviation sector to establish practical means for financial assistance, technology transfer, and capacity-building efforts towards the pinnacle achievement of establishing SAF.

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<sup>3</sup> Paraphrase of the *Principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities*

2.6 From the Central American States, all aviation actors are urged to seek collaboration and the highest possible level of progress in the implementation of the Program of Assistance, Capacity Building and Training for Sustainable Aviation Fuels (ACT-SAF) in promoting common solutions that facilitate the international aviation sector to achieve its environmental objectives.

2.7 Therefore, aims to respond to the importance of States and relevant stakeholders to keep working together for the development and deployment of Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF), Lower Carbon Aviation Fuels (LCAF), and other cleaner aviation technologies and energy sources through programs such as the Assistance Program, ICAO Capacity Building and Training for Sustainable Aviation Fuels (ACT-SAF) and its possible expansion to additional aspects, as a means of contributing concretely to the collective achievement of the agreed LTAG.

### **3. Conclusions**

3.1 The establishment of mutually beneficial cooperation alliances between different stakeholders in the international aviation sector is crucial to address the challenges of implementing assistance, capacity building, and instruction programs and projects for sustainable aviation fuels, for which this alliance is proactively promoted as a coordination mechanism between several sectors for sustained development towards decarbonization.

3.2 The ICAO Committee on Aviation Environmental Protection (CAEP), especially the Fuels Task Group (FTG), as well as any other relevant ICAO body, are urged to provide support in the management of diverse entities to allow the provision of technological and economic resources that make the energy transition possible as a method for achieving the aspirational goals set for environmental concerns, of the LTAG and the ICAO Global Framework for SAF, LCAF, and other aviation clean energies.

3.3 The Central American States integrated in the Central American Corporation of Air Navigation Services, COCESNA; ponder the existing raw materials in the region, as a differentiating element to focus from different mechanisms of international development, the commitment to promote the SAF-LCAF as a strategy of environmental, economic, and social sustainability.

### **4. Suggested Action**

4.1 The NACC Meeting is invited to:

- a) Note the information presented in this Working Paper;
- b) Invite other States and organizations to join this initiative;
- c) Consider the efforts being made around the world and in the region to scale up energy solutions to reduce aviation emissions;
- d) Invite States to participate and generate the necessary activities with stakeholders to *fly* towards a better aviation world.
- e) Ponder the need for cooperation, mutual support, and domestic enforcement among States to meet environmental aspiration objectives and change the course of emissions from the sector; and
- f) To request the timely intervention of ICAO/CAEP for coordination mechanisms for bilateral, multilateral, and south-south cooperation, in technical and financial resources for the execution of these initiatives.

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