

UNFCCC should guide work on aviation and maritime fuels

Marrakech, 11 Nov (Hilary Chiew) – The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) shall guide the work of the UN aviation and maritime agencies, stressed many developing country Parties.

While recognising the recent efforts undertaken by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) and the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), a large number of developing countries reaffirmed that the UNFCCC is the primary forum to address the issue of climate change with the Convention's principles and provisions, in particular the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities.

They said this at the opening session of the 45th session of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA 45) on the sub-agenda item 'Emissions from fuels used for international aviation and maritime transport' on 7 November.

At its recent 39th Assembly, ICAO member states reached an agreement called 'Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation' (CORSIA) as the first of its global market-based measure that addresses CO₂ emissions from any industry sector. The 'basket of measures' to achieve ICAO's aspirational goals of two per cent annual fuel efficiency improvement and carbon neutral growth from 2020 includes four elements: aircraft technology, operational improvements, sustainable alternative fuels, and a global market-based measure.

The IMO adopted amendments to chapter 4 of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) Annex VI that will require ships to record and report data on their fuel oil consumption and additional data on proxies for the 'transport work' undertaken by the

ship. The amendment is expected to enter into force on 1 March 2018. The IMO Marine Environmental Protection Committee also approved a roadmap (2017-2023) for developing a 'Comprehensive IMO strategy on reduction of GHG emissions from ships' which foresees an initial greenhouse gases (GHG) strategy to be adopted in 2018.

SBSTA Chair Carlos Fuller (Belize) said he would conduct informal consultations in preparing a draft conclusion to be approved by the SBI at its closing plenary on 14 November.

India delivered a statement which was supported by **the African Group, the Arab Group, the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Argentina, Brazil, Chile, China, Cuba, El Salvador, Iran, Malaysia, Maldives, Panama, Uruguay and Vietnam.**

These Parties, while recognising the efforts that recently took place in ICAO and IMO to address the issue of aviation and maritime emissions, reaffirmed that the following elements should be duly considered by ICAO and IMO when addressing climate change:

- The UNFCCC as the primary forum to address the issue of climate change. Climate change-related work under the ICAO and IMO shall be guided by and consistent with the work under the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the UNFCCC;
- Article 2.2 of the Kyoto Protocol, by which Annex I Parties shall pursue limitation or reduction of emissions of greenhouse gases from aviation and marine bunker fuels, working through ICAO and IMO respectively, with the developed countries taking the lead;
- Respect for the principles and provisions of the Convention, in particular the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and

respective capabilities; and measures should not constitute disguised restrictions on international trade;

- Comprehensive assessment of the possible social, economic, technical and environmental implications of the measures under discussion for developing countries, taking into account that international aviation and maritime transport play a vital role in the facilitation of world trade, and therefore on social and economic development in developing countries;

- Respect for the consensus rule, and for the promotion of an inclusive and transparent process, and a multilateral approach consistent with the principles and provisions of the UNFCCC, in opposition to unilateral measures; and

- Promotion of financial resources, environmentally-sound technologies and know-how by the developed countries to developing countries.

The developing countries “urge ICAO and IMO, bearing in mind the outcome of the 39th ICAO Assembly and the latest IMO Marine Environment Protection Committee Session (MEPC 70) to develop climate change measures in a manner that is consistent with the principles and provisions of the Convention, in particular the common but differentiated responsibilities between developed and the developing countries and to be fully aligned with and support the implementation of the Paris Agreement, with a view to avoid possible inconsistencies between intergovernmental organisations under the UN.”

They stressed that, “The developed countries shall take lead in mitigation actions as per the Convention, and the outcome of ICAO and IMO shall not impose inappropriate economic burden in developing countries and shall not hamper the sustainable development of developing countries.”

They also said that efforts to achieve a strategic plan to address the issue of GHG maritime emissions should not undermine growth and trade flows of developing countries and should consider the negative impacts on growth and trade, taking into account that their trade is based mainly on the shipping sector.

In relation to the outcomes of the last ICAO Assembly, India highlighted on behalf of the group of Parties that it has been agreed that the GMBM scheme (CORSIA) “shall take into account special circumstances and respective capabilities of States,

in particular of developing countries, and with developed States taking the lead in addressing emissions. It is also important to highlight that the ICAO Resolution A39.3, in its preamble, recognises that it does not set a precedent for or prejudice the outcome of negotiations under the UNFCCC, the Paris Agreement, or other international agreements, nor represent the position of the Parties to the UNFCCC, the Paris Agreement, or other international agreements.”

“In this regard, we further note that, in order to avoid duplication of work and promote tolerance between both UNFCCC and ICAO, units arising from the Kyoto Protocol mechanisms should be automatically recognised as eligible for ICAO’s CORSIA and given preference. Proposals regarding this issue under ICAO technical bodies should be respectful of the mechanisms under the UNFCCC and should not prejudice ongoing discussions under the UNFCCC,” the Parties further added.

They also said that, “We also wish to reaffirm the temporary nature of the GMBM scheme, including as complementary to broader package of measures, such as further progress on aircraft technologies, operational improvements and sustainable alternative fuels. Under this broader effort, there is a need to ensure the provision of means of implementation to support developing countries for them to be able to voluntarily undertake specific action plans and measures.”

Finally, they emphasised that the work in the ICAO should remain consensually in a Party-driven, transparent and inclusive as well as consensus-building manner, without resorting to unilateral actions that are inconsistent with UNFCCC principles.

In relation to the IMO work, these Parties pointed out that it should be taken into account that the issue of GHG emissions in the maritime transport has particular characteristics.

“Firstly, emissions from maritime transport account for a relatively low percentage of overall global emissions. On the other hand, shipping plays a vital role in facilitating trade flows and being a key driver of development in developing countries.

“Secondly, IMO’s future emission scenarios vary widely. This is related to the uncertainty in the range of the increasing demand for maritime transport.

“Thirdly, compared to emissions from other modes of transport, international shipping is efficient and cost-effective. Should measures on shipping emissions increase costs, trade could be switched, where possible, to other means of transport that have much higher emissions per tonne-mile,” they cautioned.

In this context, these Parties said there are many options to be explored when addressing emissions from shipping, including changes in ship design, operational practices and energy efficiency, which could lead to good results, while avoiding negative impacts on international trade, especially for relatively distant countries. Besides, the work that is being undertaken on further measures for energy-efficiency of ships and data collection should be consistent with UNFCCC principles and provisions.

Traditionally, they noted, actions under IMO have always been taken only after adequate and in-depth technical studies and analyses. On the discussions under the roadmap towards a “Comprehensive IMO Strategy on reduction of GHG emissions from ships”, they urged the important need to have analysis and studies in order to take adequate decisions for measures including in the strategy.

They said that in the IMO High Level Action Plan [resolution A, 1998 (29)] , it has been established that “Developing countries’ necessities should be taken into consideration”.

They requested that their “be included in the records of these sessions and we entrust that the ICAO and IMO will take these matters under consideration in their work and in their reports in future SBSTA sessions” emphasising that the two organizations “should harmonise their actions with COP decisions.”

The **United States** said it strongly supported and welcomed the ICAO’s GMBM. It also welcomed the IMO MEPC70 work that paved the way for the textual amendment to the MARPOL Convention, which enabled the data collections system to track fuel consumption of ships. It looked forward to comprehensive implementation of emissions reduction from shipping in the next couple of years.

The **European Union** in welcoming the progress in ICAO and IMO said in the Paris Agreement, Parties set ambitious temperature goals and agreed to achieve a balance between anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of greenhouse gases by the second half of this century.

It said all economic sectors, including international aviation and maritime transport, have to contribute fairly to attaining these goals. Any sectors, it added, that fails to reduce its emissions puts the global effort to combat climate change at risk. The EU therefore encouraged Parties to bring the spirit of Paris to ICAO and IMO.

Singapore in reaffirming the leadership of the two respective UN agencies in addressing emissions from international transport said the ICAO Assembly made a historic move in adopting the CORSIA and that 66 member states covering 86.5% of international aviation emissions have declared their intent to participate in the scheme from the outset. It urged ICAO and member states to follow up by vigorously working out the details necessary for implementing the CORSIA, even as they continue to work on operational and technological measures to address emissions from international aviation.

Singapore further welcomed the IMO’s MEPC70 work in the adoption of a clear roadmap for developing a strategy to reduce emissions from international maritime transport and the adoption of the global data collection system on ships’ fuel consumption which will provide a robust process in determining whether, and what additional measures would be needed in the strategy to reduce emissions from international shipping.

Japan echoing Singapore, said it strongly believed that GHG emissions from international aviation and shipping should continue to be addressed by ICAO and IMO which have expertise in the respective fields and that their member states are already taking concrete steps and actions to address emissions from international transport.