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North American, Central American and Caribbean Office

INFORMATION PAPER

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(NACC/DCA/11)**

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Agenda Item 7: Promotion and Implementation of Regional Actions for Environmental Protection

GUIDANCE ON SUSTAINABLE AVIATION FUELS (SAF) PROMOTION POLICIES

(Presented by EASA)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper aims to inform the Civil Aviation Authorities of the North American, Central American and Caribbean Region on the publication of the first ECAC Guidance on Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF).

The ECAC Directors General agreed in 2020 to develop ECAC guidance material to promote best practices and harmonised policies for sustainable aviation fuels (SAF) in ECAC States, to address not only Europe's own priorities but also to support the implementation of ICAO Assembly resolutions. With these objectives, an ad-hoc Sustainable Aviation Fuels Task Group (SAF-TG) was launched in November 2021. As a result, the first ECAC Guidance on Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF) was endorsed by all 44 ECAC DG's on 24/02/2023.

Such guidance is fully consistent with the ICAO Guidance material issued in June 2022, and gathers as well other valuable work such as the SAF Policy Toolkit promoted by the Clean Skies for Tomorrow and the policy recommendations that the International Transport Forum presented in ICAO 41st Assembly. The document is available at ECAC Website to those in all regions who could benefit from its content and can offer Civil Aviation Authorities of the North America, Central America and the Caribbean Region a comprehensive basis for considering the different policies and approaches available for SAF promotion worldwide, including ICAO recommendations.

Strategic Objectives:

- Strategic Objective 5 – Environmental Protection

References:

- <https://www.ecac-ceac.org/activities/environment/european-aviation-and-environment-working-group-eaeg/saf-task-group>

1. Introduction

1.1 With the current aircraft technology still to be applied for the next 30 years, sustainable aviation fuels are considered to play a key role in the reduction of CO₂-emissions, while creating co-lateral positive outcomes in the fields of technological development, employment and energy independence. Sustainable aviation fuels (SAF) have the potential to significantly reduce aircraft net emissions and many States are embracing their large-scale introduction in line with Resolution A40-18 and with the [2050 ICAO Vision](#).

1.2 After the adoption by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Assembly of a long-term global aspirational goal for international aviation of net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 (LTAG), as for the [Resolution A41-21](#), based on a Feasibility Study provided by the CAEP, the relevance of the use of SAF has become even more tangible.

1.3 Assembly Resolution A41-21 identifies SAF as an element of the basket of measures to promote sustainable growth of international aviation and to achieve its global aspirational goals and recognises that the largest potential impact on aviation in-sector CO₂ emissions reduction will come from fuel-related measures.

1.4 The 41st ICAO Assembly requested States to set a coordinated approach in national administrations for policy actions and investment to accelerate the appropriate research, development, deployment and use of renewable energy sources for aviation, including the use of SAF, in accordance with their national circumstances.

1.5 At the Third ECAC Environmental Forum (October 2019) the need was highlighted for sharing best practices and experience to facilitate technical understanding and to further stimulate SAF policies in ECAC Member States. With these objectives, an ad-hoc Sustainable Aviation Fuels Task Group (SAF-TG) was launched in November 2021. It is formed by (consists of) of experts from different European States and organizations and tasked to develop guidance to support SAF promotion in Europe.

1.6 The aim of this paper is to inform the Civil Aviation Authorities of the North America, Central America and Caribbean region on the guidance material developed by such Task Group and its availability for exchanging good practices for the deployment of policy actions to promote the supply and use of SAF.

2. The Guidance on Sustainable Aviation Fuels

2.1 As above indicated, the launch in November 2021 of the SAF-TG formed by experts from different European States and organizations, was aimed to develop guidance material promoting technical understanding, best practices and harmonised policies to boost SAF supply and use in ECAC States.

2.2 The guidance should help States, including non-ECAC States, to develop SAF strategies or policies, or to implement best practices to promote supply and industrial scale-up once a policy has been defined.

2.3 The guidance contents, among other elements, concise definitions about what are SAF, sustainability criteria frameworks, the benefits of use of SAF, potential barriers and challenges and key policy recommendations to create regional or national strategies.

2.4 The guidance is fully consistent with ICAO's Guidance on Policies¹ issued in June 2022 and gathers as well other valuable work such as the SAF Policy Toolkit promoted by the Clean Skies for Tomorrow and the policy recommendations that the International Transport Forum presented in the ICAO 41st Assembly.

2.5 It also includes European specific content regarding the potential capacity and the current and foreseen policies in place and foreseen, together with a comprehensive map, promoting awareness of the regional experience and making it a complementary document to ICAO's one.

2.6 The recommendations of best practices aim to share positive experiences and learn from them, presenting practices that have worked well in different States as potential recommendations to others. The guidance is also intended as an initial step towards harmonisation in Europe.

2.7 The guidance has been made public [here](#) for use by any State and it can serve as a basis for bilateral or multilateral exchanges in the topic.

3. Conclusion

3.1 Showcasing the policy actions of pioneering States, as well as the initiatives of the industry, is instrumental to successfully promoting SAF.

3.2 At the same time, SAF or policy requirements should be harmonised as far as possible to avoid unnecessary barriers to the transition to SAF and complexity for economic operators. The regulatory initiatives taken in the last few years by many ECAC States have paved the road for major developments to promote SAF in Europe.

3.3 Building on those experiences, this Guidance document is aimed at facilitating technical understanding, information and best practices sharing. It contains recommendations for designing SAF promotion policies that could be applied in any interested State, to facilitate the deployment of SAF as one of the most effective ways to progress towards the Long Term Aspirational Goal in line with Resolution A41-22.

¹ ICAO (2022) [Guidance on Potential Policies and Coordinated Approaches for the Deployment of Sustainable Aviation Fuels](#).

