

Advancing Sustainable Aviation: The ICAO State Action Plan initiative

By ICAO Secretariat

The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is making significant efforts towards ensuring the sustainable growth of aviation through its State Action Plans initiative. Launched in 2010, the State Action Plan initiative aims to assist ICAO Member States with developing their strategies to reduce CO₂ emissions from international aviation. Throughout the years, the initiative has gained momentum, particularly with the growing focus on Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF) and other aviation cleaner energies, all of which are integral to addressing climate change and supporting the achievement of the long-term aspirational goal (LTAG) of net-zero carbon emissions by 2050.

Collaborative Global Efforts

ICAO has seen strong engagement and cooperation from its Member States since the introduction of the State Action Plan initiative. As of May 2025, **150 Member States** have voluntarily submitted their Action Plans, covering **99.11% of global international aviation traffic** measured in **Revenue Tonne Kilometres (RTK)**. This is a significant milestone, demonstrating the commitment of ICAO and its Member States to mitigate aviation's environmental impact and progress toward global climate goals.

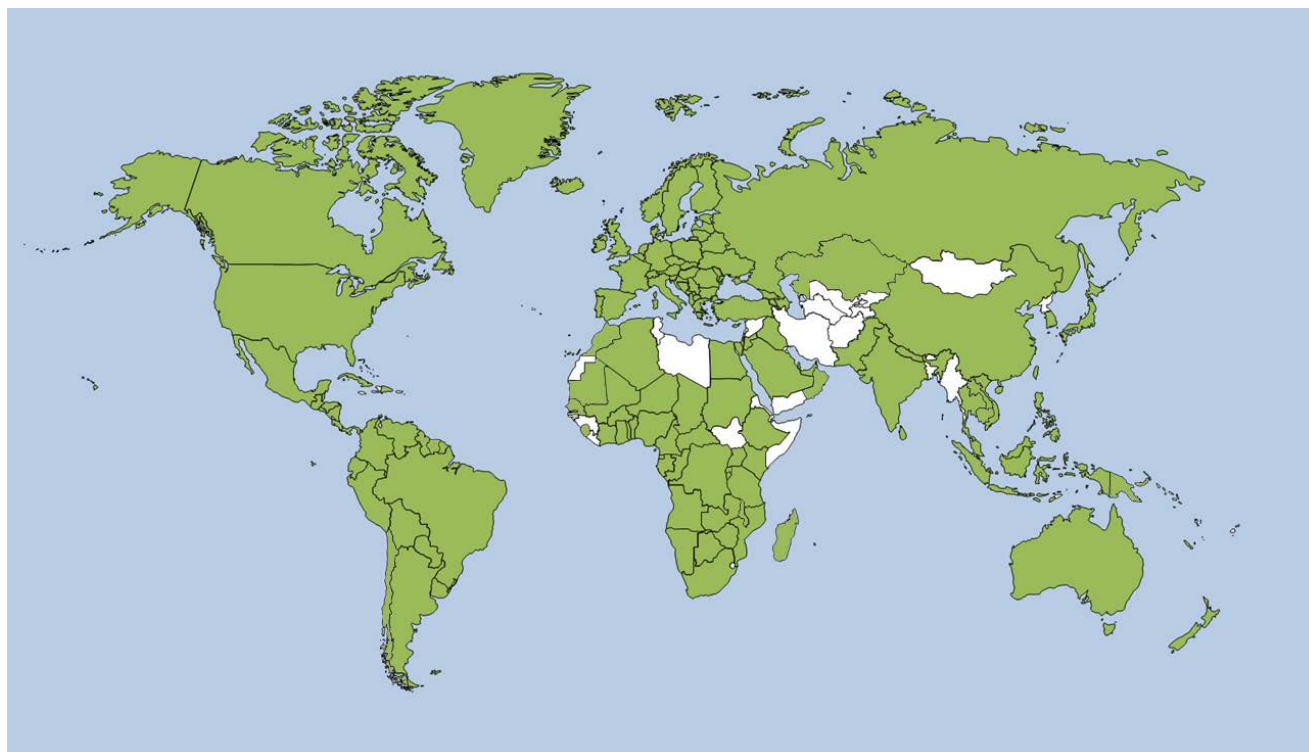


FIGURE 1: Map of the State Action Plans submitted to ICAO as of May 2025.

What are the core elements of a State Action Plan?

State Action Plans is a comprehensive living document that outlines each State's measures to reduce CO₂ emissions from international aviation. In this regard, the State Action Plans consist of five key components:

1. **Nomination of Focal Points:** Each State designates a focal point and alternate focal point (if applicable) responsible for the development, update and submission of the action plan.
2. **Baseline Scenario (scenario without action):** States assess their current emissions and future emissions in the case where no action is taken.
3. **Mitigation Measures:** States select from ICAO's Basket of Measures, determining which emission-reduction strategies are most appropriate for their national context.
4. **Expected Results (scenario after taking action):** States calculate and quantify the expected emissions reduction from the implementation of their selected mitigation measures,
5. **Assistance Needs:** States can include the assistance required to implement their selected mitigation measures.

Aligning with the Long-Term Aspirational Goal (LTAG)

The crucial role of the State Action Plan was highlighted in Resolution A41-21 which requested the Council to regularly monitor progress on the implementation of all elements of the basket of measures towards the achievement of the LTAG, through various tools or mechanisms including monitoring of information from the State Action Plans and means of implementation. In this regard, Member States have been encouraged to regularly submit updates to the action plans every three years, allowing ICAO to track and compile global progress in line with international resolutions and goals.

Supporting States with Updated ICAO Guidance

ICAO remains committed to providing Member States with the necessary tools and resources to develop, update, and implement their State Action Plans. In 2024, ICAO released the fourth edition of Doc 9988, *Guidance on the Development of State Action Plans on CO₂ Emissions Reduction Activities: Towards LTAG Implementation*, which introduces updates that aim to address the recent environmental developments and support the implementation of LTAG goals. The updated guidance includes:

- **Incorporation of SAF, LCAF and other Aviation Cleaner Energies:** The guidance highlights the pivotal role of Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF), Lower Carbon Aviation Fuels (LCAF), and other aviation cleaner energies in achieving emission reduction targets.
- **Harmonized Reporting:** provides templates which will allow all States to report quantified data in a harmonized manner to support the aggregation of information.
- **Capacity-Building and Financial Support:** The guidance also emphasizes ICAO's capacity-building efforts and provides information on the financial instruments available to help States implement their mitigation strategies.

The Role of Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF)

The development and deployment of SAF are considered among the most effective mitigation measures for reducing CO₂ emissions from international aviation. The ICAO Global Framework, adopted by CAAF/3 in 2023, sets a collective global target to reduce CO₂ emissions in international aviation by 5% by 2030. States have been strongly encouraged to integrate their policies, actions, and roadmaps for SAF and other cleaner fuels into their action plans, allowing ICAO to monitor global progress more effectively. A dedicated session on State Action Plans was delivered on 6 June 2024 as part of the ACT-SAF Series #12,¹ focusing on the incorporation of SAF into State Action Plans.

1 <https://www.icao.int/environmental-protection/Pages/ACT-SAF-Series.aspx>.

The assessment of 102 State Action Plans submitted and updated since 2020 indicates that 78 States have included SAF as one of mitigation measures, and 102 States have included their national long-term CO₂ reduction measures and targets in their State Action Plans submitted to ICAO.

Building Capacity for Future Success

ICAO supports Member States in meeting their emission reduction targets through robust capacity-building programmes, including regional seminars and training to develop and implement SAPs, and the ICAO SAP Buddy Programme,² a peer-learning initiative that pairs States to exchange best practices and provide mutual support in SAP development. Through these SAP Buddy Partnerships, ICAO fosters a collaborative environment where States

can learn from one another and share insights to improve their action plans.

ICAO also developed a draft agreement of cooperation intended to serve as a model framework that Member States can utilise to facilitate international partnerships. In this regard, as of 2025, ICAO recognizes the following SAP Buddy Partnerships (Figure 2).

Global Progress: A Regional Breakdown

As of 2025, **150 out of 193 Member States** have submitted their State Action Plans, representing **99.11% of global RTK**. Figures 3 and 4 shows a regional breakdown of the State Action Plan submissions.

Partners		Status of Action Plan		
State providing support	State receiving support	Under development	Submitted to ICAO	Posted on the ICAO website
Bulgaria	North Macedonia		X	X
Spain	Ukraine		X	X
Namibia	Zambia		X	
Kenya	Botswana		X*	X*
Dominican Republic	Panama		X	X
Namibia	Gambia		X	
Italy	Madagascar		X*	X*
Brazil	Mozambique		X	X
Spain	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)		X	X
Indonesia	Timor-Leste	X		

X*: The action plan submitted was supported by the ICAO - European Union (EU) Assistance Project on Capacity Building for CO₂ mitigation for international aviation.

FIGURE 2: List of State Action Plan Buddy Programme Partnerships.

Region	States Submitted	States Left to Submit	Percent Submitted
SAM	13	0	100%
EUR/NAT	50	6	89%
WACAF	21	3	88%
ESAF	17	7	71%
NACC	15	7	68%
MID	10	5	67%
APAC	24	15	62%
Global	150	43	77.7%

FIGURE 3: Regional breakdown of State Action Plan Submissions (in Percentages).

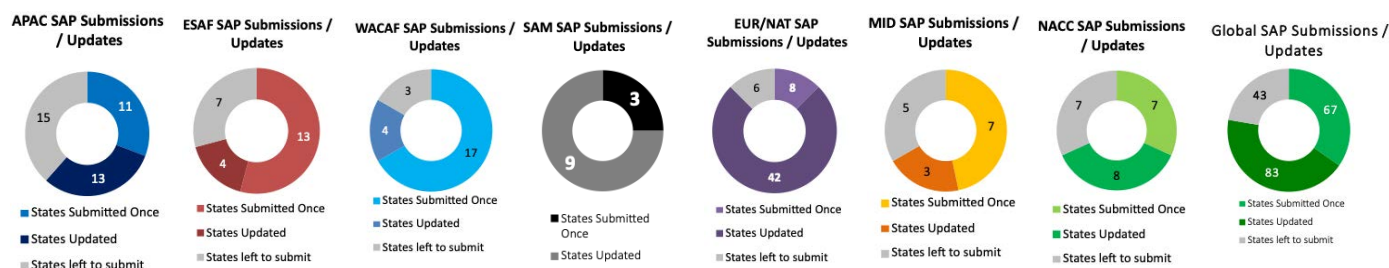


FIGURE 4: Regional breakdown of State Action Plan Submissions and Updates (in absolute numbers).

2 <https://www.icao.int/environmental-protection/pages/BuddyPartnerships.aspx>.

Celebrating the Success of the SAM Region

ICAO warmly acknowledges the significant milestone achieved by the ICAO South American (SAM) Regional Office, which has become the first ICAO Regional Office to have all its States submit their voluntary State Action Plans. This achievement highlights the dedicated efforts of the SAM States and the SAM Office. ICAO celebrates this collective progress as a vital step and encourages all other ICAO regions to follow towards the global response to climate change.

Looking Towards the Future

ICAO is looking forward to receiving new as well as updated State Action Plans and to reaching new milestones. As those submissions continue to increase, ICAO strongly encourages all Member States to maintain momentum and continue working towards the LTAG of net-zero emissions by 2050. The collaborative efforts of all States will be critical in achieving our collective, ambitious and vital goal for the future of aviation and the planet.

For more details on the ICAO State Action Plan initiative, including resources and support available to Member States, visit ICAO's Environmental Protection page³.

³ https://www.icao.int/environmental-protection/pages/climatechange_actionplan.aspx