

Side Event: Aviation Indicators – Measuring the Health of the Global Aviation System

Inputs to the SDG Process

22 April 1:15 pm EST

UNHQ Conference Room 1, NY

Note: I was one of only four participants at the side event.

Brief Summary:

Sainarayan A, Chief of the Aviation Data and Analysis unit at the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) highlighted the importance of connectivity in relation to the SDGs. Connectivity is key to fostering tourism growth, which has spill-over effects on jobs creation and economic growth, as well as infrastructure development. This is directly linked to Goal 8 / Target 8.9, which is concerned with economic growth and employment. To optimize connectivity, work needs to be done on market access, intermodality, airline activities, facilitation and optimal use of airport systems. ICAO contributes to improving connectivity by providing guidance on taxes and charges, as well as designing systems for air carrier ownership and control, Aviation System Block Upgrades (ASBUs), facilitation/security and consumer protection. It has designed an indicator on air connectivity, which it proposes be integrated as global indicator in the SDG framework. This indicator measures how much connectivity is available and how much is being utilized.

ICAO

- exists since 70 years
- works with the Chicago Convention's 191 signatory states
- develop international standards for regulation of aviation
- doesn't include domestic/military aviation (only international civil aviation)

Why global regulation and management is needed

- continuous growth of air traffic
- 3.1 billion passengers carried
- 32 million aircraft departures
- 5.7 trillion revenue passenger kilometers

Global Aviation Priorities

- Safety
 - o runway safety
 - o controlled flight into terrain
 - o loss of control (inflight)
- Global Air Navigation Plan

- Performance based navigation
- Continuous descent and climb operations
- Collaborative decision-making
- On average, 62.84% of ICAO standards are implemented (no apparent clusters by development status or geographic area)

Aerodrones (i.e. airports) are related to goal 9 on infrastructure

- on average, only 58.51% of ICAO standards are applied
- standards needed for runways
- Target 9.1: Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including regional and transborder infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all
 - These standards are the basis for safety and development of the indicator

Air Connectivity

- Definition: movement of passengers, mail and cargo involving the minimum of transit points (i.e. short, optimal user satisfaction, minimal price)
- Connectivity and the SDGs
 - Connectivity -> Tourism Growth -> Jobs creation -> economic growth
 - Connectivity -> Infrastructure development -> jobs creation -> economic growth
 - Goal 8 / Target 8.9
- Why connectivity? [ICAO is the leader in promoting air connectivity]
 - Trade in goods
 - 35% of global trade is transported by air
 - improves competitiveness (access to wider markets and flow of investments across borders)
 - Trade in services
 - Tourists carried by air
 - Tourism is vital to the economy in many LLDCs and SIDS
 - Humanitarian
- To optimize connectivity
 - Market access (e.g. liberalization)
 - Intermodality
 - Airline activities
 - Facilitation
 - Optimal use of airport systems
- Lack of connectivity translates to loss of opportunities for economic growth, tourism, jobs creation and infrastructure development
- ICAO's contribution to connectivity: guidance on taxes, charges, air carrier ownership and control, Aviation system block upgrades (ASBUs), facilitation/security and consumer protection
- ICAO's air connectivity indicator (how much connectivity is available, and how much is being utilized)
 - Indicator supported by WTO

Q&A

- connectivity from West to East Africa has a lot of wasted fuel (unsustainable) because it has to go through Europe or the Middle East; best to connect the regions better
- lot of room for efficiency improvements
- WTO participant: target should include energy efficiency and more direct connections
- Hard to connect growth in connectivity + economic growth with environmental protection, but technological advancement (e.g. new (lighter) planes that consume less fuel) makes a huge difference in GHG emissions
- Solar flights are being tested and solar panels in airports are being supported