Regional Cooperation Mechanism on Low Carbon Transport:
Creation of Green Transport Corridors in Asia and the Pacific

Regional Meeting

25 and 26 September 2024
Hanoi, Vietnam and Online

MAJOR CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Regional Meeting was organized by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and supported by the Ministry of Transport of Vietnam on 25 – 26 September 2024 in Hanoi, Vietnam and online. This Regional Meeting is the third and final meeting of the "Regional Cooperation Mechanism on Low Carbon Transport" series in 2024, which supports the development and implementation of transport and climate change mitigation plans of ESCAP member States.

2. The objectives of this Meeting were to provide an opportunity for ESCAP member States and other stakeholders to present road and maritime freight transport challenges, needs, as well as solutions. It also served as a platform for multistakeholder engagement and to identify green transport corridors and associated measures that are best suited for Asia and the Pacific through possible regional coordinated action.

3. The Meeting was attended by representatives of ESCAP member States, including Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bhutan, Cambodia, Fiji, Georgia, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR), Nauru, Nepal, Kingdom of the Netherlands, Philippines, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Thailand, Türkiye, and Vietnam.

4. The Meeting was also attended by representatives of international and non-government organizations, including the Asian Development Bank (ADB), International Labour Organization (ILO), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), CALSTART, Climate Champions Team, Climate Policy Initiative, German International Cooperation Society (GIZ), International Road Transport Union (IRU), International Transport Workers Federation, Life-Links, Northern Corridor Transit and Transport Coordination Authority (NCTTCA), and the Smart Freight Centre. The programme is shown in Annex I, while the list of participants is in Annex II.

5. The Meeting started with an opening session, where representatives of the ESCAP secretariat and the Ministry of Transport of Vietnam shared their respective support on the transition to low carbon transport and emphasized the importance of engaging and cooperating with multimodal transport stakeholders, including road and maritime transport, and to develop innovative solutions for green transport.

6. The first session was focused on an introduction of the decarbonization of freight transport, which included presentations from representatives from the Asian Transport Outlook (Asian Development Bank) and GIZ Vietnam who shared current trends on freight transport demand and carbon emissions, as well as net zero emission scenarios and the energy mix necessary for the transition to low carbon freight transport. ESCAP consultant also presented the concept of green freight corridor framework and examples such as the Northern Corridor Green Freight initiative in Africa.

7. Representatives from the ESCAP member States presented their national freight transport decarbonization priorities and barriers, including Bhutan, Cambodia, Fiji, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Lao PDR, and Nepal. Country representatives shared their countries' plans to be carbon neutral (Bhutan), to develop electric vehicles, vehicle efficiency standards and policies (Bhutan, Fiji, Nepal) and skills that would be required for low carbon freight transport (Bhutan), to further develop inland waterway shipping (Cambodia), to create a digital corridor and hub in green energy (Georgia), and to install charging systems (Kyrgyzstan). Challenges included congestion in cross-border transport, lack of modern logistics facilities, working with truck drivers to improve efficiency (Lao PDR), lack of infrastructure (e.g. electric vehicles, charging infrastructure), policy and institutional barriers, and lack of resources and technical capacity (Nepal).

8. The concept of green transport corridors was further discussed by a representative from CALSTART, ESCAP and NCTTCA. CALSTART highlighted that the number of electric trucks has been growing and there are multiple green transport corridors that have been established through the Global Green Road Corridors Initiative, while ESCAP shared the concept and examples of green transport corridors for Asia and the Pacific. NCTTCA presented how transport corridors and supply chains can be electrified with appropriate strategies, priority action and targets, including initiatives such as the Northern Corridor Green Freight Strategy 2030 that also includes eco-driving and training.

9. Existing regional and global initiatives that support the decarbonization of freight transport were presented by representatives from the IRU, Life-Links, UNEP, and ESCAP. The IRU representative shared their Green Compact initiative, which is a collective commitment on carbon neutral commercial road transport by 2050, as well as the implementation of a green corridor concept to optimize border crossing procedures that can be supported by public private partnerships. The Life-Links representative presented the benefits of green transport corridors for sustainability and resilience, and the concept of green freight going beyond carbon emissions as it is about trade, productivity, resilience of the supply chain, connectivity of economies to other parts of the world, and social impacts among others. Supply chains are lifelines and stakeholders who depend on them are most affected by the risks incurred. The representative also emphasized the need to invest in what is possible now and not wait for electric trucks to arrive. The UNEP representative highlighted the

need to green the existing fleet where it is most critical and transformative action for heavy duty vehicles is happening in Southeast Asia. The scaling up of innovative solutions, such as the replication of green transport corridors across regions, supported by the Global Green Road Corridors Initiative, and financing were also raised as key issues to address. The integration of maritime time transport, including green shipping corridors that reflect decarbonizing shipping and green ports strategies, was then presented by an ESCAP representative.

10. Subregional characteristics in Asia and the Pacific, including differences and similarities in creating green transport corridors in the region, were presented by the Asian Transport Outlook representative. National experiences were also shared by Azerbaijan, Fiji, Nauru, Tajikistan, Thailand, and Vietnam. Priorities mentioned included the development of low carbon transport, electrification, green shipping corridors, smart cities, digitalization systems, safe and efficient transport, energy efficiency and emission standards, optimized transport systems, railway network, inland waterway network, and green port technologies. Challenges raised included land transport infrastructure constraints, road safety, fossil fuel dependence, lack of capacity and technical expertise, dominance of road freight transport, and the transition to renewable energy for heavy duty vehicles.

11. In a discussion session on supporting measures for the creation of green transport corridors, participating ESCAP member States highlighted the need for green financing and better understanding of available financing mechanisms, building logistics hub, capacity building, including support to implement action plans, awareness raising, monitoring of progress, regular testing of vehicles, certifying drivers on eco-driving training, optimizing routes, increasing connectivity, maintaining of infrastructure, smart traffic management, facilitating cross-border transport, and the harmonization of policies between neighbouring countries.

12. In the session focusing on inclusive and just transition, representatives from the International Transport Workers Federation, Climate Policy Initiative and the International Labor Organization presented measures and best practices to support countries in preparing the transport workforce by retraining them, as countries transition to low carbon transport. They mentioned the critical points of labour shortages in the sector, the need to provide facilities, e.g. parking spaces, for road freight transport workers, supply chain accountability, applying decent work principles that include working and driving times, as well as rest periods, standards and guidelines on transport, the emergence of new jobs in the sector, and ways to retrain and reskill workers to help them navigate the transition. It was highlighted that just transition measures in the transport sector should also be included in Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). In addition, it was pointed out that as there is a need for electrification of trucks in order for India to meet its targets, such a transition will impact 8 million direct and 9.4 million indirect jobs in the trucking sector in India, which requires significant finance to retrain workers.

13. Greater collaboration and commitment to establish green transport corridors could be further heighted at the 29th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP29) to the United Nation Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Representatives from ESCAP, Azerbaijan, who serves as the Presidency of COP29, and the UNFCCC Climate Champions Team shared their respective plans for COP29, including the need to work together for greater process on the transformation of the transport sector, as well as available platforms for action such as opportunities presented by COP29 and other future COP meetings. Closer collaboration between transport and energy sectors will also be crucial in decarbonizing transport.

14. A discussion on the development of an action plan on low carbon transport was conducted with all participating member States, who were all invited to share their thoughts and comments on the possibility of the development of an action plan for the Asia-Pacific region. The scope and format of such a regional action plan were discussed. ESCAP member State representatives highlighted the need to include transport targets for climate mitigation and adaptation on a subregional and regional level; establish a timeline for action; improve all modes of transport; create tangible action, e.g. harmonization of standards; identify most feasible measures for implementation that are clear and consistent to support low carbon transport; create specific goals and deadlines; provide capacity building opportunities; improve access to relevant information; involve relevant research and development units; engage with stakeholders in its development and implementation processes; matching financing support with countries' needs; appoint representatives or one focal point from each country; reach out to other relevant line ministries; organize regular meetings to discuss the scope of the action plan and draft it before presenting to the Ministerial Conference on Transport in 2026, and to reach an agreement or declaration on such a regional cooperation mechanism. Lastly, the use of NDCs to identify transport action that could be included in the regional action plan was also discussed.

15. The ESCAP secretariat expressed gratitude to all country and organization representatives for their participation in the Meeting and for their contribution to the discussions.

16. The ESCAP Secretariat and its partners will develop a policy brief as an outcome of the discussions to support countries in developing green transport corridors.

17. The documents and presentations made during the Meeting are available on the ESCAP event webpage available here, https://www.unescap.org/events/2024/regional-cooperation-mechanism-low-carbon-transport-creation-green-transport-corridors.

18. Post-meeting evaluation has also shown that 100 per cent of the participants who responded to the evaluation form stated that the Meeting has achieved its stated objectives and 100 per cent of the participants found it useful for their current work and 100 per cent

had increased their knowledge and/or skills. Additional comments included how participants gained “more of a global understanding of the topic and discovered the issue from very different perspectives” and “got to explore more about different regional decarbonization measures in Asia and the Pacific”. A participant also noted that “the concept of green transport corridors is still yet to be established in my country, so hearing all the discussions and different experiences from the participants is eye opening for me”.

19. These major conclusions and recommendations of the Meeting were adopted on 26 September 2024 in Hanoi, Vietnam.

Annex I: Programme of Regional Meeting

Regional Cooperation Mechanism on Low Carbon Transport: Creation of Green Transport Corridors in Asia and the Pacific

Regional Meeting
25 and 26 September 2024
9:00 – 17:00 (GMT+7)

Long Bien Meeting Room
Thang Long Opera Hotel
Hanoi, Vietnam and Online

Introduction

Following the launch of the ESCAP Regional Cooperation Mechanism on Low Carbon Transport in August 2022, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) has conducted a series of subregional consultation and capacity building workshops to mobilize transport ministries and key stakeholders in the Asia-Pacific region to engage in the transport and climate change policy process and to help advance the goals of the Paris Agreement through transport strategies. In each of these workshops, representatives from ESCAP member States shared their national low carbon transport goals, policy priorities and implementation action, as well as their experience in the development of their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and long-term low greenhouse gas emission development strategies.

Discussions have led to the emergence of several common areas of priority and needs across the Asia Pacific region. This Regional Meeting will focus on one of these common priorities, which is the creation of green transport corridors. This topic was identified by ESCAP member States for in-depth analysis and technical assistance due to existing gaps in the technical, institutional and financial support that they are currently experiencing in the transition to low or zero carbon transport.

The development and implementation of green freight transport policies have been identified as an important strategy for decarbonizing the transport sector. However, this is a difficult challenge for the region due to the lack of regulations and fragmentation of stakeholders in many countries. Transport corridors that are green, integrated, and efficient will also need to take into account the multimodal nature of supply chains, including land and maritime transport.

Green corridors refer to specific shipping routes where the feasibility of zero-emission shipping is catalyzed by a combination of public and private actions. Such corridors also entail multimodal supply chains and alternatives for freight transport through economically relevant hubs and long-distance routes, as well as the integration of multiple transport modes, including

highways, railways, and waterways. In addition to the necessary technology, a prerequisite for green transport corridors is to put in place the relevant agreements and reciprocal recognition of standards between countries, so greater regional cooperation can play a critical role in their development and operation.

Meeting Objectives

This regional meeting on the creation of green transport corridors provides an opportunity for ESCAP member States and other stakeholders to present road and maritime freight transport challenges, needs, as well as solutions. It also serves as a platform for multistakeholder engagement and to identify green transport corridors and associated measures that are best suited for Asia and the Pacific through possible regional coordinated action. This meeting is part of the second phase of the ESCAP Regional Cooperation Mechanism for Low Carbon Transport in Asia and the Pacific, which supports the development and implementation of transport and climate change strategies of ESCAP member States.

Format and Registration

The Regional Meeting will be conducted in person and virtually. Please register via the link below and indicate your participation format.

https://forms.office.com/e/3PNkXuhUuc

Programme

Day One: Wednesday, 25 September 2024

Time (GMT+7)	Topic	Speaker
9:00-9:30	**Moderator: Ms. Wei-Shiuen Ng**, Economic Affairs Officer, ESCAP **Opening Session** This session will present the background, structure and key objectives of the Regional Meeting, as well as opening remarks on relevant initiatives in Asia and the Pacific on climate finance for low carbon transport.	**Ms. Katrin Luger**, Chief of Section, Transport Division, ESCAP **Ms. Tran Thi Thanh Thuy**, Deputy Director General, International Cooperation Development, Ministry of Transport, Vietnam

Time (GMT+7)	Topic	Speaker
9:30-10:30	**Session 1: Introduction to the Decarbonization of Freight Transport** This session presents a range of innovative measures that can effectively reduce freight transport emissions, as well as major regional trends for land and maritime transport.	**Mr. Alvin Mejia**, Asian Transport Outlook **Ms. Ly Dang Tuyet**, Transport and Climate Change Expert, GIZ Vietnam **Mr. Parthaa Bosu**, Consultant, ESCAP
10:30-11:00	**Coffee Break**	
11:00-12:30	**Session 2: National Freight Transport Decarbonization Priorities and Barriers** Freight transport, including both land and maritime transport, remains challenging for countries in Asia and the Pacific to regulate and decarbonize. ESCAP member States are invited to share their policy priorities and existing barriers, as well as any lessons learned.	**ESCAP Member States:** • Bhutan • Cambodia • Georgia • Kyrgyzstan • Lao PDR • Nepal
12:30-13:30	**Lunch Break**	
13:30-15:00	**Session 3: The Concept of Green Transport Corridors** This session will present the definitions and concepts of green transport corridors that have the potential to link land and maritime transport, as well as case studies and initiatives in the Asia Pacific region and beyond.	**Mr. Ricardo Garcia Coyne**, Program Manager, CALSTART **Mr. Fedor Kormilitsyn**, Economic Affairs Officer, ESCAP **Mr. Emmanuel Imaniranzi**, Northern Corridor Transport and Transit Coordination Authority (NCTTCA) **Mr. Rik Arends**, Director, Sustainable Freight Buyers Alliance, Smart Freight Centre
15:00-15:30	**Coffee Break**	

Time (GMT+7)	Topic	Speaker
15:30-17:00	**Session 4: Regional and Global Freight Transport Initiatives** This session will highlight existing regional and global initiatives that support the decarbonization of freight transport, including the creation of green transport corridors. Potential alignment of and synergies between existing initiatives will also be discussed.	**Mr. Jens Hügel**, Senior Adviser, Global Advocacy, International Road Transport Union **Ms. Sophie Punte**, Founder, Life-Links and Founder and Board Member, Smart Freight Centre **Mr. Sean Cooke**, Programme Management Officer, UNEP **Mr. Sooyeob Kim**, Economic Affairs Officer, ESCAP

Day Two: Thursday, 26 September 2024

Time (GMT+7)	Topic	Speaker
9:00-9:15	**Wrap up of Day One and Introduction to Day Two Meeting Objective**	**Ms. Wei-Shiuen Ng**, Economic Affairs Officer, ESCAP
9:15-10:30	**Session 5: Subregional Characteristics in Asia and the Pacific** Potential differences and similarities in creating green transport corridors across subregions in Asia and the Pacific will be presented. The possibility of creating a regional initiative to accelerate and align initiatives on green transport corridors for multiple modes in the Asia Pacific region will also be discussed.	**Mr. Adwait Limaye**, Asian Transport Outlook **ESCAP Member States:** • Azerbaijan • Fiji • Nauru • Tajikistan • Thailand • Vietnam
10:30-11:00	**Coffee Break**	
11:00-12:00	**Session 6: Discussion on Supporting Measures for the Creation of Green Transport Corridors** Supporting measures, including standards and regulations, as well as technologies that can encourage the creation of green transport corridors will be discussed in this session. Specific requests from ESCAP member States will also be highlighted.	**Mr. Fedor Kormilitsyn**, Economic Affairs Officer, ESCAP **ESCAP Member States**

Time (GMT+7)	Topic	Speaker
12:00-13:00	**Lunch Break**	
13:00-14:00	**Session 7: An Inclusive and Just Transition** This session is focused on supporting countries to develop an inclusive and just transition in the freight transport workforce. Existing measures and best practices and lessons learned will be presented.	**Mr. Jeremy Anderson**, Director of Just Transition and Sustainable Transport, International Transport Workers Federation **Mr. Arun Krishnan**, Manager, Climate Policy Initiative **Ms. Alejandra Cruz Ross**, Transport Specialist, International Labor Organization
14:00-14:30	**Coffee Break**	
14:30-15:30	**Session 8: Onward to COP29** This session will highlight some of the opportunities at COP29 that will enable greater collaboration and commitment made to establish green transport corridors. It will also include a discussion with participants to develop key messages for Asia and the Pacific to be brought forward to COP29.	**Ms. Wei-Shiuen Ng**, Economic Affairs Officer, ESCAP **Mr. Elmar Rasulov**, Advisor, International Cooperation Department, Ministry of Digital Development and Transport, Azerbaijan **Mr. Mohamed Hegazy**, Transport Lead, Climate Champions Team
15:30-16:30	**Session 9: Discussion on the Development of an Action Plan on Low Carbon Transport** ESCAP member States and development partners are invited to share their thoughts and feedback on the possibility of the development of an Action Plan on the Regional Cooperation Mechanism on Low Carbon Transport. This session will focus on a discussion on what should be included in an Action Plan and the process required for it to be supported by member States.	**ESCAP** **ESCAP Member States**
16:30-17:00	**Closing session** Key discussion outcomes will be summarized, and next steps will be discussed.	**ESCAP**

Annex II: List of Participants of Regional Meeting

UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Regional Cooperation Mechanism on Low Carbon Transport:
Creation of Green Transport Corridors in Asia and the Pacific

Hanoi, Viet Nam, 25 – 26 September 2024

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

ARMENIA

Mr. Andranik Grigoryan, First Secretary, Department of Multilateral Policy and Development Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

AZERBAIJAN

Mr. Elmar Rasulov, Advisor, International Cooperation Department, Ministry of Digital Development and Transport

BHUTAN

Mr. Sangay Duba, Executive Engineer, Department of Surface Transport, Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport

CAMBODIA

Mr. Chanvisal Seng, Deputy Chief of Coastal Management Office, Merchant Marine Department, Ministry of Public Works and Transport

FIJI

Mr. Josua Biulailai, Transport Planner Analyst, Ministry of Public Works, Meteorological Services and Transport

GEORGIA

Ms. Tsabuna Nakulashvili, Senior Specialist, Transport and Logistics Development Policy Department, Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development

INDONESIA

Ms. Danawiryya Silaksanti, Senior Specialist, Ministry of Transportation
Ms. Mutiara Adella, Officer, Center for Sustainable Transport Management

KYRGYZSTAN

Mr. Nurmat Musabekov, Chief Specialist, Transport Department, Ministry of Transport and Communications

LAO PDR

Ms. Adisone Silavong, Deputy Director of Freight and Logistics Division, Ministry of Public Works and Transport

NAURU

Mr. John Vianney Cain, Director for Seawall Developments and Acting Director for Public Works (Roads), Department of Infrastructure Developments

NEPAL

Ms. Anjali Shilpakar, Civil Engineer, Department of Roads, Ministry of Physical Infrastructure and Transport

KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS

Ms. Vu Thi Diep, Senior Policy Advisor, Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Hanoi

PHILIPPINES

Mr. Anthony Harbie Quebec, Senior Communication Development Officer, Department of Transportation

Ms. Michelle Caoili, Senior Communications Development Officer, Department of Transportation

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Ms. Arina Zhezherova, Head of the Department of Scientific Support for Low-carbon Development, Research Center for Complex Transport Projects of the Ministry of Transport

TAJIKISTAN

Mr. Zevarsho Ismoilov, Chief Specialist, Center for Digitalization of the Road Sector, Ministry of Transport

THAILAND

Mr. Popponpat Yamwan, Plan and Policy Analyst, Office of Transport and Traffic Policy and Planning, Ministry of Transport

TÜRKIYE

Mr. Yusuf Esidir, Transportation and Logistics Specialist, Strategy and Budget Office of Presidency

VIETNAM

Ms. Tran Thi Thanh Thuy, Deputy Director General, International Cooperation Development, Ministry of Transport, Vietnam

Ms. Tran Thi Van, Principal Official, Department for Roads, Ministry of Transport

Ms. Nguyen Quynh Trang, Official, Ministry of Transport

Mr. Pham Anh Tu, Official, Ministry of Transport

Ms. Nguyen Thi Phuong Hien, Vice President, Transport Development and Strategy Institute, Ministry of Transport

Ms. Cao Thi Thu Huong, Researcher, Transport Development and Strategy Institute

Mr. Tran Gia Huy, Researcher, Transport Development and Strategy Institute

Mr. Vu Linh, Researcher, Transport Development and Strategy Institute

Ms. Nguyen Thi Hoang Minh, Researcher, Transport Development and Strategy Institute

Ms. Le Thanh Nhan, Climate Change Expert, Transport Environment and Sustainable Development Institute

Mr. Nguyen Ha Hai, Deputy Director, Vietnam Maritime Administration

Ms. Nguyen Nhung, Expert, Vietnam Railways

ORGANIZATIONS

ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

Mr. Adwait Limaye, Data and Policy Analyst, Asian Transport Outlook
Mr. Alvin Mejia, Program Manager, Asian Transport Outlook

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION

Ms. Alejandra Cruz Ross, Transport Specialist

UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

Mr. Sean Cooke, Programme Management Officer

OTHER ENTITIES

CALSTART

Mr. Ricardo Garcia Coyne, Program Manager

CLIMATE CHAMPIONS TEAM

Mr. Mohamed Hegazy, Transport Lead

CLIMATE POLICY INITIATIVE

Mr. Vivek Sen, Director
Mr. Arun Krishnan, Program Manager

GIZ

Ms. Dang Tuyet Ly, Team Leader, NDC Transport Initiative for Asia
Ms. Pham Linh Chi, Project Officer

INTERNATIONAL ROAD TRANSPORT UNION

Mr. Jens Hügel, Senior Adviser – Global Advocacy

INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT WORKERS FEDERATION

Mr. Jeremy Anderson, Director of Just Transition and Sustainable Transport

LIFE-LINKS

Ms. Sophie Punte, Co-founder and Chief Executive Officer

NORTHERN CORRIDOR TRANSIT AND TRANSPORT COORDINATION AUTHORITY

Mr. Emmanuel Imaniranzi, Director Transport Policy and Planning

SMART FREIGHT CENTRE

Mr. Rik Arends, Director of Sustainable Freight Buyers Alliance

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RESOURCE PERSON

Mr. Parthaa Bosu, International Consultant, ESCAP

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Ms. Wei-Shiuen Ng	Economic Affairs Officer Transport Research and Policy Section Transport Division ESCAP
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Mr. Sooyeob Kim	Economic Affairs Officer Transport Connectivity and Logistics Section Transport Division ESCAP
Mr. Alejandro Garcia Macias	Associate Expert Transport Connectivity and Logistics Section Transport Division ESCAP
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