Ten Guiding Principles for Sustainable Freight Transport in Asia and the Pacific

To enhance the sustainability of freight transport in Asia and the Pacific, the design and implementation of freight policies shall be guided by following principles:

1. **Decarbonize freight transport**

   (a) ACCELERATE the decarbonization of freight transport through dedicated strategies in line with Paris Agreement and harness the positive spillovers of decarbonization to support the realization of multiple Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

   (b) CONSIDER a suitable modality, such as subregional/regional cooperation mechanism/framework/agreement to accelerate the process of decarbonizing freight transport in the decade of action for sustainable development

   (c) ENCOURAGE private sector partnerships and initiatives to decarbonize freight transport

2. **Optimize the modal split in freight operations**

   (a) SHIFT freight, where possible, to relatively more efficient or more environmentally friendly modes such as rail and waterborne transport

   (b) FRAME proactive country-specific modal shift policies that foster investments in relevant intermodal infrastructure and create institutional frameworks to shift freight to more sustainable modes

   (c) LEVERAGE regional and/or subregional cooperation, as appropriate, to promote shift to more sustainable modes such as by operationalizing multimodal transport corridors

3. **Build** the resilience of freight transport infrastructure to climate change and other disruptions

   (a) DEVELOP national strategies and policies as well as implementation plans to build the resilience of freight transport infrastructure and operations to mitigate and/or adapt to climate change and other disruptions
(b) RATCHET up support for small island developing states, landlocked developing countries, and least developed countries for resilient freight transport as they suffer disproportionately from climate change impacts and other disruptions
(c) SHARE experiences among countries and enhance the capacity of the stakeholders to mainstream resilience in freight transport infrastructure and operations

4. **Reduce** freight transport logistics costs, including for cross-border and transit transport

(a) LEVERAGE intergovernmental platforms provided by the working groups on the Asian Highway network, the Trans-Asian Railway network, and the Dry Ports to continue deepening regional infrastructure and operational connectivity
(b) ENHANCE the efficiency of border crossings by addressing physical, as well as non-physical barriers, in international transport, including encouraging cooperation among border agencies, both behind and across the border
(c) ENCOURAGE digital technologies to reduce freight logistics costs and facilitate transit transport

5. **Address** urban freight challenges

(a) DEVELOP and implement sustainable urban freight plans/strategies or modify existing sustainable urban mobility plans/strategies to reduce urban freight externalities, including freight related accidents
(b) PROMOTE multistakeholder decision-making mechanisms that comprehensively address urban freight issues through a bottom-up approach linking the specific development challenges to SDGs and their targets
(c) DEEPEN regional cooperation by sharing experiences and learning on sustainable urban freight practices that encourage synergies, while being replicable and scalable

6. **Enhance inclusiveness of the** freight transport sector by promoting women’s participation

(a) FRAME and implement proactive strategies and policies to widen women's role in the freight transport sector across the region
(b) INVOLVE academia and the private sector to play an active role in imparting required knowledge and skills to women
(c) ENCOURAGE hybrid occupational models such as working from home and other innovative solutions to motivate women to increase their participation in the freight transport sector
7. **Increase** the access of rural areas to wider transport networks

(a) **DEVELOP** dedicated rural freight transport policies and projects based on a deeper social cost-benefit analysis

(b) **IDENTIFY** and build a chain of cold storages/warehouses to reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses, in rural areas under public-private partnership schemes

(c) **DEEPEN** regional and/or subregional cooperation, as appropriate, for enhancing the access of rural markets to wider transport networks

8. **Strengthen** governance structures and capacity of freight transport stakeholders

(a) **ESTABLISH** appropriate governance mechanism(s) on sustainable freight transport to formulate coherent policies that address the complexity of the involvement of multiple stakeholders in freight transport, horizontally across the ministries and vertically at different levels of government as well as the private sector

(b) **ACTIVATE** the governance mechanism through concrete workplan(s), terms of reference and/or legislation, as appropriate.

(c) **ENHANCE** the capacity of government officials and private players to mainstream sustainability in freight transport by instituting dedicated capacity building programs across the region

9. **Encourage** innovative and diversified financing sources, including private sector engagement

(a) **PROMOTE** private sector financing for sustainable freight transport through public-private partnerships by developing the appropriate regulatory structures to manage risks

(b) **PREPARE** bankable projects on sustainable freight transport and tap financing from thematic funds such as the green climate fund, the climate change action plan, and from similar initiatives from the multilateral development banks

(c) **ESTABLISH** a national, subregional and/or regional sustainable freight transport fund to finance projects that have a high potential to deepen sustainability and create synergies
10. **Promote** use of data, digitalization, and transformative technologies

(a) **INCREASE** the coverage, timeliness, and quality of data and establish a harmonized data collection, management, and sharing system related to sustainable freight transport to allow for better monitoring and reporting on freight transport-related goals

(b) **EXPAND** regional cooperation and establish subregional/regional sustainable freight observatory to build a comprehensive repository of indicators, policies, good practices, and innovative solutions including on a circular economy

(c) **DEVELOP** necessary legal and regulatory frameworks to support digitalization and transformative technologies in freight transport