Regional connectivity in advancing SDGs in Asia and the Pacific

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Transport Division

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Three pillars of ESCAP transport work

Platform for intergovernmental cooperation and policy dialogue
Committee on Transport Ministerial Conference
Working Groups on AH, TAR and DP

Comprehensive capacity building programme
Operational connectivity
Transport Facilitation Models
Private Public Dialogue

Analytical work and data collection
Specialized monographs, bulletins and periodic assessments of transport connectivity in the region
| Infrastructure Connectivity | • Missing links along the transport networks,  
|                           | • Sub-standard quality of the networks  
|                           | • Uneven capacity along the same corridors  
| Operational connectivity | • Weak regulatory frameworks  
|                           | • Lack of harmonization of standards  
|                           | • Lack of coordination (domestic and regional level)  
| Euro-Asian Connectivity | • Obstacles to inter-regional trade  
|                           | • Lack of coordination and synergies  
| Countries with Special Needs | • Least Developed Countries  
|                           | • Landlocked Developing Countries  
|                           | • Small Island Developing Countries  
| Sustainable Urban Transport | • Congestion, pollution and Emissions  
|                           | • Affordability and accessibility  
| Rural transport connectivity | • Limited connection of rural roads to wider networks  
|                           | • Quality of rural infrastructure  
| Road safety | • 60 % of global road safety fatalities happen in Asia and the Pacific  
|                           | • 2020 Road Safety targets yet to be achieved  

Regional Action Programme on Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific Phase I, 2017-2021
Asia-Pacific is at the core of the sustainable transport challenges

Growth scenarios position Asia-Pacific at the core of transforming global transport performance and dealing with its externalities.

Global agenda has profound impacts on regional and national policies.

Innovation and new technologies, as well as new business models and trade patterns change transport landscape.

COVID-19 amplified the connectivity shortages and flagged the overall lack of sustainability. Building Back Better means accelerating transformation towards sustainable transport.
Building Back Better: Reshaping transport connectivity in Asia-Pacific

Pre COVID-19
- Infrastructure shortages
- Lack of digitalization
- Disbalanced freight modal split (road, rail, maritime)
- Inefficient or fragile transit arrangements
- Manual practices/checks at the border crossings
- Divergent standards on vehicles, drivers and international transit
- Connectivity gaps across the region

During COVID-19
- Restrictions
- New controls
- Market inefficiencies
  But also
  - Transit/green corridors
  - Electronic platforms for transport operations
  - No/reduced charges or penalties for storing cargo and other associated services
  - Emergency Response Centers for shippers and transport operators

Aftermath
- Impact on infrastructure connectivity (investments)
- Impact on operational connectivity (facilitation)
- SDGs and sustainability targets
### Major preoccupations of the freight transport authorities in Asia and the Pacific

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>During the crisis</th>
<th>Anticipating recovery</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balancing between containing the virus...</td>
<td>Protect transport workers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Licensing and certifications</td>
<td>Adapt to the changes in behavior</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transport operators' safety</td>
<td>Strengthen cross-border connectivity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maintaining the supply chain and...</td>
<td>Support economic growth, including job creation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Changes in transport corridors</td>
<td>Increase the resilience of transport</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suspension of technical periodic...</td>
<td>Improve digitalization of transport services, e.g. licensing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suspension of maritime traffic</td>
<td>Integrate decarbonization and sustainable transport measures</td>
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<td>Inter-city travel ban</td>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
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<td>Social distancing</td>
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</tbody>
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Evolving regional agenda for transport cooperation

Regional Action Programme on Sustainable Transport Connectivity (2017-2021)

- Operational connectivity
- Euro-Asian Connectivity
- Infrastructure connectivity
- Countries with Special Needs
- Sustainable Urban Transport
- Rural transport connectivity
- Road Safety

From 2022: Leveraging synergies and integrating thematic activities to support Building Back Better and the implementation of SDGs

- Environmentally sustainable transport
- Connectivity for efficient and resilient supply chains
- Safe and inclusive transport and mobility
Strategic objectives under consideration for the next regional programme on sustainable transport

- Pandemic recovery and resilience building
- Climate Change
- Pressures from changing social structures
- SDGs
- Technology and innovation
- Evidence based/data driven decision making
- Private sector and multi-stakeholder participation

Towards efficient and resilient transport and logistics network and mobility for economic growth

Towards environmentally sustainable transport systems and services

Towards safe and inclusive transport and mobility
New draft Regional Action Programme: 2022-2026

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Thematic areas</th>
<th>Overarching objectives</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Towards efficient and resilient transport and logistics network and mobility for economic growth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regional land transport connectivity and logistics</td>
<td>DIRECT IMPACT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maritime and interregional transport connectivity</td>
<td>DIRECT IMPACT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Digitalization of transport</td>
<td>DIRECT IMPACT</td>
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<td>Low-carbon mobility and logistics</td>
<td>DIRECT IMPACT</td>
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<td>Urban transport</td>
<td>DIRECT IMPACT</td>
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<td>Road traffic safety</td>
<td>INDIRECT IMPACT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inclusive transport and mobility</td>
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Relevant Sustainable Development Goals

*Classification of contribution*
New draft Regional Action Programme: 2022-2026

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| **Regional land transport connectivity and logistics** | - Further development of the Asian Highways, Trans-Asian Railways and dry ports;  
- Analytical and CB work on enhancing the operational connectivity, including during disruptive events;  
- Support the development of land and intermodal transport corridors and multimodal transport operations | - Increased capacity of countries to implement national and regional measures to promote rail and waterborne transport, as well as environmentally sustainable logistics, in the regional freight operations | - Facilitating access of LLDCs to the regional supply chains  
- Greater consideration of local development impact of the regional transport networks and corridors |
| **Maritime and interregional transport connectivity** | - Systematic and regular exchange of best practices and experiences on the issues and priorities for sustainable maritime connectivity for Asia and the Pacific;  
- Regular inter-regional multi-stakeholder forum for sustainable transport connectivity between Europe and Asia | - Knowledge products and policy tools on sustainable and resilient port and maritime transport in the Asia-Pacific  
- Policy guidelines for integrated transport connectivity between the port and the hinterland; | - Facilitating access of SIDs to global and regional supply chains  
- Knowledge products and policy recommendations on enhancing safety of port and maritime operations |
Highlights

- SDGs are mainstreamed and articulated into the 7 thematic areas of the proposed regional action programme
- Social and environmental dimensions of regional connectivity are increasingly explored to identify synergies and deal with possible trade-offs
- Regional connectivity mechanisms/agreements are leveraged to advance decarbonization and social inclusion
- South South Cooperation
- Evidence based policies to bridge the connectivity gaps