

# Implementation Plan for the United Nations Decade of Sustainable Transport

## CONCEPT NOTE

### 1. Introduction

While there is no single dedicated Sustainable Development Goal for transport, it is reflected in several SDG targets and recognized as an enabler for achieving many of the goals. Both the political appreciation of sustainable transport as well as our scientific understanding of transport's linkages, both synergies and trade-offs, with issues such as resilient infrastructure development, food security, economic growth, trade, global supply chains, promotion of health, energy efficiency and tackling of climate change have greatly improved in the last years.

In 2023, the General Assembly resolution A/78/148 titled "Strengthening the links between all modes of transport to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals" called, among others, for closer UN cooperation, a UN Decade of Sustainable Transport (2026-2035), and a Third UN Global Sustainable Transport Conference, and the celebration of the next World Sustainable Transport Day on 26 November 2024. The Member States also requested the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs to develop an Implementation Plan for the UN Decade of Sustainable Transport, in collaboration with the UN Regional Commissions and in consultation with the Member States, the United Nations system and all other relevant stakeholders.

The Implementation Plan for the United Nations Decade of Sustainable Transport will be a critical tool in steering global efforts towards sustainable, inclusive, and resilient transportation systems. By fostering collaboration, mobilizing resources, and ensuring effective monitoring, the plan can shine a light on the critical importance of sustainable transport, contribute significantly to its achievement and to the attainment of several of the SDGs.

### 2. Objectives

The Implementation Plan of the UN Decade of Sustainable Transport is expected to serve as a strategic framework to coordinate actions, mobilize resources, and monitor progress towards sustainable transport worldwide. The Implementation Plan is expected to be global and non-binding in nature, allowing for more detailed regional, national and local plans, strategies and ways of collaboration, as suitable.

At best, the Implementation Plan can provide a roadmap for accelerating the steps towards sustainable transport during the Decade, enhance coordination and collaboration among member States and other stakeholders, mobilize resources for sustainable transport projects at all levels, and increase awareness and capacity building on sustainable transport practices. The Implementation Plan can also provide global visibility for sustainable transport in SDG discussions and allow for improved

monitoring and evaluation of progress towards sustainable transport goals and on transport's contributions towards the SDGs.

While the Sustainable Development Goals have a target year of 2030, sustainable transport decisions made today will have much farther-reaching impacts. Identifying policies that will result in sustainable transportation systems is a major challenge for policy makers since the planning process involves a high level of complexity in designing policy packages combined with significant infrastructure investments, which span years or even decades from inception, to operation, to financial returns. As the timeline of the UN Decade of Sustainable Transport surpasses the current end date of the SDGs in 2030, the Decade provides a useful opportunity to provide continuity and visibility to global collaboration on sustainable transport. In general, recent crises demonstrate that the future will not necessarily mirror the past. With escalating climate extremes, rapid technological advances and uncertain societal dynamics the world faces a multitude of possible, probable and preferable futures that we need to anticipate, imagine and work towards and the Implementation Plan can support long-term planning for more sustainable transport pathways.

The development of the Implementation Plan can provide a process that brings together all the relevant UN entities working on sustainable transport and enhances collaboration and coordination with the numerous international organizations, non-governmental organizations, development banks, think tanks and other relevant entities.

### **3. Key Components of the Implementation Plan**

The Implementation Plan can encompass several critical components:

- **Vision and aims:** Define a clear global vision for ensuring that transport fulfills its potential as an enabler for sustainable development while reducing its negative externalities by 2035 through actions by all relevant stakeholders.
- **Strategic pillars and policy actions:** Identify and elaborate on the main pillars of sustainable transport and related policy options.
- **Stakeholder engagement / Partnership mapping:** Outline key roles and potential actions for engaging all relevant stakeholders, including governments, international organizations, private sector, civil society, and academia, in the implementation of the plan.
- **Support for implementation:** Identify potential funding sources and innovative financing mechanisms to support the implementation of the plan and propose measures and partners for capacity building, technical assistance, and knowledge sharing.
- **Monitoring and evaluation:** Map out potential elements for monitoring follow up, building on existing models, to track progress and showcase transport's contributions to sustainable development.

### **4. Process and methodology**

As guided by the General Assembly, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs shall develop the Implementation Plan for the UN Decade of Sustainable Transport, in collaboration with the UN Regional Commissions and in consultation with the Member States, the United Nations system and all other relevant stakeholders. The process of developing the Implementation Plan can be an effective tool for bringing together all the relevant stakeholders to highlight the significance of sustainable transport for the attainment of sustainable development at large, to strengthen existing partnerships and to foster new collaborations.

A drafting group, consisting of representatives of DESA and all Regional Commissions, will support the substantive preparations of the plan as well as facilitate the consultations and review of the plan. DESA and the Regional Commissions will nominate focal points to support this work.

The process of the development of the Implementation Plan will have dedicated channels of engagement to ensure the full participation of the wider United Nations system, the Member States, civil society and other stakeholders. DESA will utilize its existing collaborations and interagency channels to ensure that all relevant UN entities and outside actors working on transport will be engaged in the process.

As set out by the General Assembly, the process is expected to be conducted within existing resources, with no additional funds allocated for the development of the Implementation Plan. However, extra budgetary funds may be raised to support effective multistakeholder engagement and consultations with the Member States and transport experts. The process will aim at benefitting fully from existing workstreams, meetings and events to ensure most effective use of scarce resources and to further enhance collaboration with stakeholders.

The development of the Implementation Plan will involve a multi-phase approach:

- **Phase 1: Stakeholder consultations (second half of 2024)**
  - Consultations are held with a wide range of stakeholders to gather inputs and build consensus.
  - Workshops, events, webinars, and surveys are used to collect feedback and suggestions.
  
- **Phase 2: Drafting the plan (Early 2025)**
  - Inputs from consultations and research are synthesized to draft the Implementation Plan.
  - The plan's alignment with existing mandates, international agreements and frameworks, such as the outcomes of the SDG Summit and the Summit of the Future, the Global Plan for the UN Decade of Action on Road Safety 2021-2030, and the Paris Agreement, as well as numerous transport-related conventions and regional agreements, is ensured.
  
- **Phase 3: Review (Q2 of 2025)**

- The draft plan is shared with stakeholders for review and feedback.
- Feedback is incorporated to finalize the plan.
- **Phase 4: Launch and dissemination (late 2025)**
  - The Implementation Plan is launched ahead of the Third UN Conference on Sustainable Transport, potentially at a high-level event.
  - The plan is disseminated through various channels and implementation activities are initiated.