

**ICAO Conference on Aviation and Alternative Fuels,
16-18 November 2009, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil**

*Report of the participants
from the European Commission in cooperation with
Sweden, current holder of the EU Presidency,
for information of the EU Member States
and the other States Members of the European Civil Aviation Conference*

Summary and outcome

- The ICAO Conference on Aviation and Alternative Fuels on 16-18 November 2009 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, had about 100 participants from 23 states, with additional observers including the European Commission, the manufacturing industry (ICCAIA), the airlines (IATA).
- The Conference concluded with the adoption of a *consensus* Conference Declaration, which will be forwarded as part of the ICAO input to the UNFCCC Conference in Copenhagen, together with the initial version of a “high level framework » for aviation alternative fuels.
- The Declaration presents a commitment of the aviation sector and a positive perspective to use sustainable alternative fuels for aviation. It builds on confidence regarding the technical feasibility of alternative fuels in aviation and promotes that requirements concerning sustainability, sufficient supply and financing are or should be fulfilled.
- The initial "High Level Framework" indicates identified accomplishments from ongoing measures and initiatives, and projected activities for the coming years. The information includes the US CAAFI activities, accomplished test flights, the EC SWAFEA study and the implementation of the EU sustainability criteria for biofuels.
- ICAO announced the intention to organise more activities on alternative fuels. They will be addressed in the next ICAO Council and Assembly meetings, including in the Colloquium planned in May 2010. Also activities in the context of CAEP can be expected. Issues to be covered include life cycle analysis and sustainability criteria as well as facilitation of access to financing.

The conference

- The agenda of the Conference foresaw short presentations of the Working Papers submitted, focussing on the proposed conclusions and recommendations. The only Information Paper presented was IP4 on the EU sustainability criteria for biofuels. The European Working Paper WP9 on Measures was presented by the Swedish Presidency. The other Working Papers came from the US, Brazil, ICCAIA, IATA.
- Also the discussion on each Working Paper focussed on the conclusions and recommendations and the precise wording which was agreed for each point.
- The Declaration includes a selection of the agreed conclusions and recommendations, including from the European paper.
- A number of states, including from Europe and the European Commission were invited to the drafting group which elaborated the Declaration on the basis of a proposal from the ICAO Secretariat. The discussion there focussed on including all necessary aspects and elements, in

particular to get a balance between the call for support to the use of alternative fuels, including financing aspects, on the basis of the achieved progress in their technical feasibility including the first industry standards, and the need to ensure sustainability of alternative fuel use. There was however general agreement that "sustainable alternative fuels" should be understood as those demonstrably helping to reduce climate change impact of aviation.

- The discussion addressed also the "need to (financially) assist developing countries" where the compromise formulation refers also to the outcome of the High Level Meeting of 7-9 October 2009 on this matter. Also the Emission Trading Scheme and its incentive setting for the use of biofuels was mentioned, though not further discussed.

Comments and conclusions from a European perspective

- From the European perspective it proved important to be present with the Working Paper and the proposed conclusions and recommendations which were all accepted by the Conference. Taking the input papers as well as the discussion, it was mainly the US and Europe and the industry stakeholders which contributed.
- The Swedish EU Presidency organised coordination meetings between the European states which ensured that several delegations took the floor and contributed coherent and complementary messages, supporting the European approach of the Working Paper.
- The main message from Europe was the need to identify and to ensure the sustainability of alternative aviation fuels including in particular to agree on sustainability criteria at international level, connecting into ongoing initiatives on the subject.
- Sustainability is highlighted in the final Conference documents without suggesting a definition, but it mentions the need to develop common sustainability criteria at international level. It is in line with the EU energy policy and its framework covering also aviation (bio)fuels and does not affect the implementation of the EU sustainability criteria.
- The Declaration refers to *specific needs in aviation*. From the European perspective it needs to be ensured in the follow-up that this does not lead to aviation specific definitions, but that links with other, in particular energy/biofuels related bodies, are established.
- Some reflections were also dedicated to questions of fuel standardisation and approval in Europe including the role of EASA. Currently, industry standards for kerosene are accepted for airworthiness certification including for Europe the UK Defence Standard, and the Conference concluded that this was the way forward also for new "drop-in" fuels (i.e. with the same characteristics as current jet fuel, not requiring modifications of aircraft/equipment). Thus no specific fuel certification or formal approval process exists. The EC SWAFEA study will look into this.
- Considering the way the Conference was conducted and the future activities envisaged by ICAO to promote and to facilitate the use of sustainable alternative fuels in aviation, it will be useful to consider in time how to prepare the European participation. In this respect the European Commission is invited to inform the states about the results of the SWAFEA study. The existing groups preparing ICAO environmental work in ECAC could be used to address and coordinate also the question of fuels in the ICAO context.