

ESCAP: Making transport in Asia and the Pacific more sustainable

Paving the Path: Decarbonising Transport in India and the Region

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Briefly about ESCAP

- **The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) was established in 1947**
- **It is the most inclusive intergovernmental platform in the Asia-Pacific region**
- **53 member States and 9 associate members**
- **One of the five regional commissions of the United Nations.**
- **Supports inclusive, resilient and sustainable development in the region by generating action-oriented knowledge, and by providing technical assistance and capacity-building**

ESCAP mandates in transport

The Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific (2022–2026)

Three overarching objectives

- (a) efficient and resilient transport and logistics networks and mobility;
- (b) environmentally sustainable transport systems and services; and
- (c) safe and inclusive transport and mobility.

Seven thematic areas

- (a) regional land transport connectivity and logistics;
- (b) maritime and interregional transport connectivity;
- (c) digitalization of transport;
- (d) low carbon mobility and logistics;
- (e) urban transport;
- (f) road safety; and
- (g) inclusive transport and mobility.

Guiding Principles for Sustainable Freight Transport in Asia and the Pacific

Endorsed by the **Committee on Transport at its Seventh Session** (23-25 November 2022) and finalized on 28 February 2023. The ten principles are:

- 1) To foster low GHG emissions from freight transport;
- 2) To optimize the modal split in freight transport operations;
- 3) To build the resilience and seamless operation of freight transport infrastructure to climate change and other disruptions;
- 4) To reduce freight transport logistics costs, including for cross-border and transit transport;
- 5) To address urban freight transport challenges;
- 6) To enhance the inclusiveness of the freight transport sector by promoting women's participation;
- 7) To increase access for people in rural areas to wider transport networks;
- 8) To strengthen the capacity of freight transport stakeholders;
- 9) To encourage innovative and diversified financing sources, including by private sector engagement;
- 10) To promote the use of data, digitalization and transformative technologies.

Energy Efficient Transport

The Regional Roadmap Towards Sustainable and Energy Efficient Freight Transport

Adopted at the Regional Meeting held on 9-10 August 2023 in Kathmandu, Nepal

Guiding vision: Efficient, connected, safe and clean regional freight transport system to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Objectives

1. Providing coherence to sustainable freight initiatives.
2. Creating synergies through partnerships.
3. Ensuring high-level political support.

Energy Efficient Transport (cont'd)

The Roadmap has **8 priority areas**:

1. Decarbonizing freight transport.
2. Building the resilience of freight transport to deal with climate challenges and pandemics effectively.
3. Strengthening cross-border and transit transport connectivity.
4. Enhancing rural freight transport linkages.
5. Improving urban freight logistics.
6. Reducing accidents related to freight transport.
7. Supporting sustainable freight transport in countries with special needs.
8. Increasing the share of rail freight and other sustainable transport modes.

Low Carbon Transport

ESCAP launched the **Regional Cooperation Mechanism on Low Carbon Transport** on 22 August 2022

Objectives:

- ✓ Enhancing consultation among member States;
- ✓ Deepening regional collaboration by sharing experiences, information, and best practice;
- ✓ Identifying common interests and policy priorities in meeting global decarbonization commitments;
- ✓ Strengthening linkages to the nationally determined contributions.

Low Carbon Transport: Timeline (2022 – 2026)

Phase 1 - Identification of subregional and regional priorities and the development of a cooperation framework (2022 – 2023)

Phase 2 – Implementation of the cooperation framework (2023 – 2026) Key activities and outputs include:

- ✓ Subregional consultations
- ✓ Regional meetings
- ✓ Summary reports on priority transport and climate change action in Asia and the Pacific
- ✓ Policy papers according to the priority topics identified by member States
- ✓ Cooperation framework that will enable joint work, knowledge transfer and data sharing on low and zero carbon transport for ESCAP member States
- ✓ Contributing to regional and global high-level dialogues and initiatives on transport and climate change

Strategy 2030 on Accelerating Rail Digital Transformation

ESCAP has developed the **Strategy 2030 on Accelerating Rail Digital Transformation in the Asia-Pacific** for a more competitive rail transport

At its eighth meeting in 2023, the **Working Group on the Trans-Asian Railway Network** endorsed the Strategy 2030

The Working Group noted that implementing the Strategy 2030 would:

- ✓ Give a big push to rail digitalization
- ✓ Boost the competitiveness of rail transport
- ✓ Enhance the sustainability of transport, thus contributing to the realization of the SDGs

Green and resilient transport infrastructure

Project on “Supporting the policies on green and resilient transport infrastructure along the Asian Highway Network”

- ✓ To strengthen sustainable transport connectivity by **collecting and disseminating best practices** in the development of green and resilient road infrastructure along the Asian Highway network
- ✓ Collection of highway construction and design standards from diverse Asian Highway countries
- ✓ Collection of best practices from both ESCAP and non-ESCAP countries, LLDCs, SIDs, etc.
- ✓ Inventory of best practices

Electric Mobility

The **Asia-Pacific Initiative on Electric Mobility** was launched in August 2022 to:

- ✓ Support the acceleration of the transition to electric mobility in the region;
- ✓ Enhance regional cooperation, provide opportunities for peer learning and experience sharing among private and public sector stakeholders;
- ✓ Strengthen the capacity to formulate national policies and strategies to accelerate transition towards electric mobility focusing on public transport;
- ✓ Enhance multi-sectoral collaboration among energy, transport, finance, and other sectors;
- ✓ Develop a knowledge base on the electric mobility ecosystem.

The Regional Meeting on Accelerating the Transition to Electric Mobility for Public Transport in Asia and the Pacific, 24 and 25 May 2023 in Manila, Philippines

Promoting sustainable maritime connectivity

- **Annual regional dialogue** on sustainable and resilient maritime connectivity, including the development of low- and zero-emissions green shipping
- Promoting the use of new technologies, such as **automated shipping** and **smart ports**
- Promoting **decarbonization and green shipping**:
 - Support to the implementation of global regulations and instruments
 - Help to establish a conducive policy environment for green shipping technologies and port infrastructure.
- Support to the UK-launched initiative on **Green Shipping Corridors**.

Ongoing capacity-building projects

Advancing Regional Cooperation Policies on Sustainable Maritime Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific (2024)

Sustainable Maritime Connectivity

Sustainable Port Network

Port Competitiveness Assessment

Bridging the Digitalization and Resilience Gaps in the Asia-Pacific Ports

Port Digitalization for Small Ports

Climate Change-related Disaster Response for Small Ports

Regional Roadmap for the Wider Deployment of Sustainable Smart Transport Systems

ESCAP developed the **first regional roadmap** which on smart transport systems in the region

Reviewed by the two expert group meetings on 1 December 2021 and 07 December 2022, and **finalized by the Regional Meeting** held from 11 to 13 July 2023 in Seoul, Republic of Korea and online.

The Regional Meeting:

- ✓ Adopted the **Regional Roadmap** to Support Regional Cooperation for the Wider Deployment of Sustainable Smart Transport Systems
- ✓ Adopted the **Seoul Declaration** on Regional Road Map to Support Regional Cooperation for the Wider Deployment of Sustainable Smart Transport Systems
- ✓ Recommended the **Committee on Transport to endorse** the Regional Roadmap at its 8th session to be held in the fourth quarter 2024.

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