

ICAO: Environmental Mandate & Activities

International Civil Aviation Organization

Environmental Mandate

In matters of environmental protection, ICAO establishes Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs), policies and guidance for international civil aviation.

The Organization's activities are focussed primarily on issues and initiatives that benefit most from a common, coordinated approach, on a worldwide basis, namely aircraft noise and aircraft engine emissions.

Much of the work is undertaken through ICAO's Committee on Aviation Environmental Protection (CAEP), which has developed environmental standards for the certification of aircraft as well as guidance material on airport planning and management, operational procedures and market-based measures to reduce aviation's impact on the environment. The ICAO Secretariat coordinates the work of CAEP and supports its activities by providing statistical databases and forecasts, helping to analyse policy options, maintaining relevant documents, and facilitating the interface with other relevant ICAO activities. An Environmental Unit was formed within the Secretariat in January 2004 to consolidate environmental activities and enhance support to CAEP.

The Secretariat also coordinates environmental activities with other UN bodies such as UNEP, UNFCCC and WMO. For example, regarding engine emissions, ICAO reports periodically to the UNFCCC process on its activities to limit or reduce emissions from aviation and cooperates with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change on improving methodologies for calculating aviation emissions.

Environmental protection is a key strategic objective of ICAO: To minimize the adverse effect of global civil aviation on the environment.

Environmental Activities

- SARPs for aircraft noise certification
- SARPs for aircraft engine emissions certification
- Noise abatement operational procedures
- Land-use planning and management
- Operation restrictions to minimize aircraft noise
- Fuel efficiency
- Aircraft noise scenarios
- Aircraft emissions scenarios
- Aircraft noise modeling
- Aircraft emissions modeling
- Aircraft noise charges policies
- Local air quality
- Market-based options to reduce emissions including local air quality emissions charges, emissions trading and voluntary agreements to reduce emissions
- Aviation's impact on the upper atmosphere
- Climate change
- Ozone depletion
- Health issues related to aircraft operations