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Strategic questions of a horizontal policy nature:

Environment, climate change and transport –

ITC follow-up to Rio+20 and the 2030 Development Agenda

Sustainable Transport in the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals

Note by the secretariat

Summary

This document provides information about the main developments on the position of sustainable transport in the recently adopted 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Due to the role of ITC in addressing global transport issues, among others through the United Nations legal instruments and regulations under its purview of global and regional geographical coverage, and in light of the relevant analytical and capacity-building activities, as well as its policy dialogue, the Committee may wish to **reflect on ways to strengthen** its role and contribution in implementing of the transport-related targets of the 2030 Agenda.

I. Policy context: the 2030 agenda

1. On 27 September 2015 world leaders united at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit and expressed their determination to take the bold and transformative steps which are urgently needed to shift the world onto a sustainable and resilient path.
2. To achieve this objective, they adopted a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets for 2030 that aspire to help humanity revert to a virtuous path of sustainability.

II. Operationalizing the 2030 agenda

3. The scale and ambition of this new universal agenda is such that its success will largely be determined by its operationalization, which involves inevitably the finalization of the indicators for measuring the SDGs.

4. This effort is led by the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC), which aims at endorsing an indicator framework at its next session in March 2016. There is a broad view that the follow-up to the post-2015 development agenda will need to be based on a strong data framework. This is one of the lessons from the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

5. The next phase in operationalizing the 2030 agenda consists of developing the list of indicators to measure the SDGs and targets, a task undertaken by the Interagency and Expert Group on SDG indicators (IAEG-SDG). The current list now includes more than 220 indicators: 165 have been agreed upon at this time, the rest are being negotiated.

6. The complex requirements of the new development agenda also pose significant challenges to statistical systems and capacities. Considerable efforts are thus needed to develop and build statistical capacities in order to follow up on the post-2015 framework.

7. From a statistics angle, UNECE through its statistics subprogramme continues to be actively involved in the process of developing the statistical monitoring framework for SDGs as a member of the Inter-Agency Expert Group on SDG indicators (IAEG-SDG) and the UNSC Friends of the Chair group on broader measures of progress.

8. Additionally, the ITC Working Party on Transport Statistics (WP.6) is an intergovernmental body dealing with the development of appropriate methodologies and terminology for the harmonization of transport statistics as well as the collection of transport, including road safety, data from member States and the dissemination of these data. For example, in 2015 the UNECE Transport Statistics and the UNECE Road Safety Statistics papers were published electronically in the three UNECE languages. This work could well become part of and contribute to the monitoring of the transport-related SDGs and targets.

9. Furthermore, UNECE through its transport subprogramme participates in the UN Technical Working Group that supports the United Nations Secretary General's High Level Advisory Group on Sustainable Transport that is also involved in the discussions.

10. What will happen next? All 220 or so indicators will be included in the list that will be submitted to UNSC for adoption. Negotiations on the open items continue from December 2015 to February 2016. The final decisions on the indicators that have yet to be agreed upon will be reflected in a background paper to UNSC. The UNSC is expected to adopt the full list of indicators in March 2016. These will then go to ECOSOC for adoption in April and to the General Assembly in September 2016.

III. Implementation of SDGs and the role of ITC and its subsidiary bodies

11. What gets measured, gets done. Thus, the monitoring mechanism for the implementation of the SDGs is important. Discussions have started on the follow-up and review architecture for the post-2015 development agenda. A key question in this regard is: what could the national, regional and global levels contribute to the monitoring and review mechanism, and how can these different levels be linked? The monitoring component of the mechanism is understood as the process of tracking progress against goals and targets based

on data and indicators. The review component of the mechanism is understood as the process of analysing trends and their underlying causes, identifying policy shortcomings, and deriving recommendations to improve SDG achievement, which is based on a sound monitoring and data framework.

12. Monitoring is only one component of bringing about change. However, it does not replace implementation measures. In the future, the need to help countries implement SDGs will intensify. It will, therefore, be important to translate the global SDGs into concrete measures that have a positive impact on people's lives. This operationalization can be done by developing policy recommendations, regulations, guidelines and legal instruments that lead to concrete actions and that advance the transition towards sustainable development, including sustainable transport and mobility.

13. What role can ITC play in supporting the development of sustainable transport and mobility?

(a) Is there a role for ITC in monitoring achievements on the road towards the SDGs? The review of implementation may be conducted by different platforms, e.g. ITC as a UNECE Sectoral Committee, or treaty bodies of legally binding instruments. ITC as the only United Nations body dealing with the full scope of inland transport activities and as a centre of United Nations transport conventions for inland transport, vehicle regulations and dangerous goods transport would be a natural hub for reviewing transport-related targets that are included in several of the proposed SDGs. Should this be the decision, it will mean substantial additional workload for the secretariat, which would need to be matched with additional posts in the Division. At the same time, it may well be decided not to involve ITC and the Sustainable Transport Division in the monitoring exercise.

(b) Should the emphasis be more on supporting implementation through analytical and capacity-building activities as well as policy dialogue? Through its analytical work of global relevance, wide-ranging capacity building activities, strategic analytical tools and the policy segment of its annual session, the ITC provides outputs, tools and platforms that can catalyse a more detailed and substantive policy dialogue among senior policy leaders from governments, businesses and the academia.

14. In addition, the so far agreed upon indicators may not be the best or the most complete at least as far as transport is concerned. So it is worth noting that most goals have some relevance for transport, though the indicators are not necessarily a reflection of such. For example, an aspect of the transport of dangerous goods regulations is the prevention of pollution of the aquatic environment. Criteria define: (i) hazardous substances to the aquatic environment and specific requirements for their packing and labelling; (ii) the construction and operation of vehicles, and inland navigation oil or chemical tankers, to prevent the release of such substances into freshwaters and rivers during transport. For targets 3.9¹ and 6.3², our work is extremely relevant but only indirectly with the agreed indicators.

15. The following table summarizes the SDGs and targets for which indicators are directly connected to the work of ITC and its subsidiary bodies.

16. In sum, due to the unique role of ITC in addressing global transport issues through the United Nations legal instruments and regulations under its purview, the Committee may

¹ By 2030, substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination.

² By 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse globally.

wish to reflect on possible opportunities and ways in which the Committee's role in the implementation of the transport-related SDGs and targets of the 2030 agenda may be enhanced, including for those targets for which indicators do not correspond with, and reflect the importance of, the Committee's work.

Table

Transport-related Sustainable Development Goals, targets and indicators

Transport-related goals

Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

3.6 *By 2020, halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents.*

Indicator: Number of road traffic fatal injury deaths per 100 000 population (age-standardized)

UNECE Inland Transport Committee is the only United Nations forum offering a 360° approach to Road Safety based on its regulatory work, capacity-building and technical assistance, analytical work and policy dialogue covering the following areas:

- Traffic rules;
- Signs and signals;
- Road infrastructure;
- Construction and periodic inspection of vehicles;
- Driving times and rest periods for professional drivers;
- Dangerous goods;
- Mobilizing political will and resources, including support for the work of the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Road Safety.

Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

9.1 *Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including regional and transborder infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all*

Indicator 1: Share of the rural population who live within 2km of an all season road

Indicator 2: Passenger and freight volumes

ITC through the work of the Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics (WP.5) on climate change adaptations, prepared policy-oriented recommendations that aim to improve the long-term sustainability of international transport systems and set best examples of national policies, addressing the issues of transport networks vulnerability among member Governments, including developing and landlocked countries, as well as small island States.

Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

11.2 By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons.

Original indicator: Proportion of the population that has a public transit stop within 0.5 km

Proposed modification/alternative indicator or additional indicator: Proportion of the population that has convenient access to public transport [**NB: Agreed**]

The ITC provides best practices and policies for the development of sustainable urban transport systems, i.e. systems that are efficient, interconnected, affordable, safe and environmentally friendly allowing greater wider mobility and access for all within dense urban environments.

Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

13.2 Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning.

Original indicator: Number of countries that have formally communicated the establishment of integrated low-carbon, climate-resilient, disaster risk reduction development strategies (e.g. a national adaptation plan process, national policies and measures to promote transition to environmentally friendly substances and technologies) [**NB: No agreement**]

The ITC and its subsidiary bodies provide a platform to share best practices and policy recommendations for adapting inland transport to withstand and reduce the effects of climate change, as well as sound policy inputs in mitigating climate change through the development of tools. For example, ForFITS is a tool for governments to make informed choices of the most effective policies when designing low CO₂ transport systems.
