
REVIEW OF
**DEVELOPMENTS
IN TRANSPORT**
IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

2013

TRANSPORT AS A KEY
TO SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT AND
REGIONAL INTEGRATION



ESCAP is the regional development arm of the United Nations and serves as the main economic and social development centre for the United Nations in Asia and the Pacific. Its mandate is to foster cooperation between its 53 members and 9 associate members. ESCAP provides the strategic link between global and country-level programmes and issues. It supports Governments of countries in the region in consolidating regional positions and advocates regional approaches to meeting the region's unique socioeconomic challenges in a globalizing world. The ESCAP office is located in Bangkok, Thailand. Please visit the ESCAP website at www.unescap.org for further information.



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Cover photograph: Xinhua/Qin Qing - Builders lay rails on a bridge along the Yuxi-Mengzi Railway in southwest China's Yunnan Province, March 10, 2012. The 142-kilometer Yuxi-Mengzi Railway section is part of international railway linkages.

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FOREWORD



This Review is published at an important time for future policy and planning of transport investments. Transport accounts for around 60 per cent of all fossil fuels used on the planet, around 30 per cent of all energy use and an estimated 23 per cent of global CO₂ emissions. To reduce these negative externalities, we need regional solutions today that will support sustainable development, solutions

which are fuel efficient and which reduce pollution, congestion, accidents, and deaths on the roads, while meeting the needs of business, people and our planet.

Transport is an 'enabler', providing access to economic, health, education, and social services. That is why the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, or Rio+20, recognized the importance of the efficient movement of people and goods, and access to environmentally sound, safe and affordable transportation as a means to improve social equity, health, resilience of cities, urban-rural linkages and productivity of rural areas. It also noted the need to take into account road safety as part of efforts to achieve sustainable development.

This Review examines emerging transport trends across the region, focusing on inter-modal regional connectivity and cross border facilitation. It provides an update on the status of the Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway networks, as well as progress in the development of intermodal linkages such as dry ports. For the first time, it also includes a chapter on inter-island shipping, which looks at the specific transport challenges facing ESCAP's member States and associate member States in the Pacific. It also explores options for upgrading urban mobility, while meeting the needs of diverse sections of the population.

The Review will contribute to the transformational shift which is needed to make our transport systems more efficient, cleaner, safer and more affordable, as well as more equitable, to the benefit of all.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Noeleen Heyzer'.

Noeleen Heyzer

Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary,
United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

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The term “South-East Asia” in this publication refers collectively to Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam.

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INTRODUCTION

Transport is an essential element in the development of Asia and the Pacific, and has played a critical role in the region's rapid economic growth. Transport networks facilitate the movement of people and goods, ensuring that labour, raw materials, products and ideas can move around easily and contribute to the social, economic and environmental betterment of the region. The challenge of the coming decades will be, however, to ensure that transport policies and investments contribute to more sustainable and inclusive development paths. Mitigating the negative externalities of transport is a necessary step in ensuring the sustainability and inclusiveness of transport networks.

Against this background, the Review of Developments in Transport in Asia and the Pacific will explore some of the major transport challenges in the region.

INTEGRATING TRANSPORT MODES TO OPTIMISE EFFICIENCY

With the growing importance of intra-regional trade, countries in the region can benefit from more direct land transport routes. To contribute to sustainable development, those land transport routes need though to be optimally integrated as simply building new infrastructure is unlikely to cope with expected increased in transport demand. In addition, it is essential that the physical infrastructures are developed in such a way that they create the conditions for a shift towards the most efficient transport modes. To understand the future of regional transport networks, Chapter 1 will review major infrastructure projects that could shape these transport systems in the years to come. Key policy initiatives that promote intermodal integration such as the Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports supported by ESCAP will also be presented.

FACILITATING TRANSPORT MOVEMENTS ACROSS BORDERS

While having transport networks physically connected is important, they are only valuable to the extent they can be used by transport operators. For instance, having the right institutional agreements to facilitate transport across borders can be as important as the physical infrastructure required to transport freight. In that respect, there remain numerous bottlenecks throughout the region that add considerable cost to trading. Chapter 2 will therefore present a set of options

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