



International Civil Aviation Organization

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ICAO NEWS RELEASE

COM 11/12

**FLIGHTPATH TO A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE
THE ICAO RIO+20 GLOBAL INITIATIVE**

MONTREAL, 18 June 2012 – The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), with the support of the Air Transport Action Group (ATAG), launched today “Flightpath to a Sustainable Future”, an ICAO special Rio+20 global initiative consisting of the first-ever series of connecting flights powered by sustainable alternative fuels, on which ICAO Secretary General, Mr. Raymond Benjamin, will travel from Montréal to Rio de Janeiro for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, known as Rio+20.

Organized in close cooperation with numerous industry stakeholders, these flights will be some of the greenest to operate. On his way to Rio+20, Mr. Benjamin will travel via Toronto, Mexico City and São Paulo, on flights with Porter Airlines, Air Canada, Aeroméxico and GOL. The flights, which will operate using various blends of sustainable aviation biofuel, will also involve the world’s largest aircraft manufacturers, including Bombardier, Airbus and Boeing. The initiative will be complemented by the first Azul Airlines and Embraer biofuel test flight, using a sugar cane blend, as well as another biofuel flight, which will arrive from Europe.

“This is truly a world-first series of flights,” said ICAO Secretary General Benjamin, “and one which demonstrates that the whole air transport sector is working together to make significant advances across a range of sustainability issues, so that it can continue to fulfill its role as a catalyst for economic and social development, while reducing its impact on the environment.”

“Such a collaborative enterprise showcases, in a concrete manner, that sustainable biofuels are now a reality. From camelina to used cooking oil or jatropha, advanced alternative fuels help save significant amounts of CO₂ emissions while not competing for land or water with food crops,” also stated the President of the ICAO Council, Mr. Roberto Kobeh González.

The flights will also carry a message from the aviation industry itself as the ATAG Aviation & Environment Summit’s Declaration will be delivered to leaders at Rio+20. Signed by the heads of associations representing the world’s airports, airlines, air navigation service providers, and manufacturers, the declaration reiterates the air transport sector’s commitment to environmental responsibility while ensuring that it can continue to bring enormous benefits to communities and economies around the globe.

Paul Steele, Executive Director of ATAG, a group representing the global aviation sector, emphasized that “aviation is a key enabler of economic growth and social development, which currently supports 56.6 million jobs and over \$2.2 trillion of global GDP. Our sector has a strong track record of fuel efficiency and CO₂ emissions savings working collaboratively as today’s flights are demonstrating. But we also need governments to step up and help craft the sustainable future we all want. Support for research and development of new technologies, sustainable biofuels for aviation and much-needed improvements in infrastructure are vital for aviation to be able to continue its positive role, while minimizing its environmental impact.”

Airlines received approval to fly on biofuels in 2011. While there are very small quantities of sustainable aviation biofuel available to airlines today, it is hoped that with the right government assistance, producers will be able to deliver the quantities needed at a price comparable to traditional jet fuel, while continuing to meet sustainability criteria.

The series of flights will arrive in Rio de Janeiro tomorrow, Tuesday 19 June, for the Rio+20 Aviation Day, just ahead of the high-level session for heads of government delegations.

A specialized agency of the United Nations, ICAO was created in 1944 to promote the safe and orderly development of international civil aviation throughout the world. It sets standards and regulations necessary for aviation safety, security, efficiency and regularity, as well as for aviation environmental protection. The Organization serves as the forum for cooperation in all fields of civil aviation among its 191 Member States.

Notes for media:

The flights carrying the ICAO Secretary General include:

1. Porter Airlines flight 414, from Montreal to Toronto, on a Bombardier Q400 using fuel derived in part from camelina;
2. Air Canada flight 991, from Toronto to Mexico City, on an Airbus A319 using fuel derived from used cooking oil, supplied by SkyNRG;
3. Aeroméxico flight 014, from Mexico City to São Paulo, on a Boeing 777-200 using fuel derived from used cooking oil, jatropha and camelina, supplied by ASA; and
4. GOL flight from São Paulo to Rio Santos Dumont, on a Boeing 737-800 using fuel derived from inedible corn oil and used cooking oil, supplied by UOP, a Honeywell company.

The other two flights:

1. Azul Airlines test flight to Rio Santos Dumont, on a Embraer 195 using fuel derived from sustainable sugar cane, supplied by Amyris; and
2. A European carrier to Rio de Janeiro International, on a Boeing 777-200 using fuel derived from used cooking oil, details to be announced on 19 June.

The flights are being coordinated through collaboration involving, among other partners: Aeroméxico, Air Canada, GOL and Porter Airlines; Airbus, Boeing and Bombardier; Aeropuertos y Servicios Auxiliares (ASA), Curcas, SkyNRG and UOP; Aéroports de Montréal and Infraero; ANAC and the Air Transport Action Group. Additionally Amyris, Azul and Embraer will be involved in another sustainable biofuel flight on 19 June 2012.

The industry declaration and further information about the social and economic benefits of aviation can be downloaded from www.aviationbenefitsbeyondborders.org.

A press conference and photo opportunity will be held on the arrival of the flight carrying the ICAO Secretary General at 14:00 on Tuesday 19 June at Santos Dumont Airport in Rio de Janeiro. Media will need to register with Maria Carolina Santana, mariacarolina.eco@gmail.com or with Beatriz Cardoso, beatriz@letterabrasil.com.br.