

India pledges net zero emissions by 2070

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In a high-level roundtable discussion held at the ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization) Global Implementation Support Symposium 2023, Rajiv Bansal, Secretary of Civil Aviation in India, announced the country's commitment to becoming net zero in carbon emissions by the year 2070.

This target, although falling short of the global goal of 2050, was deemed realistic, considering the prevailing realities and infrastructure limitations faced by India.

During the symposium, Bansal emphasised the importance of sustainable aviation fuels (SAF) in achieving the net zero goal.

He acknowledged that the process of SAF legislation, regulation, production and deployment required the involvement of multiple agencies and extended beyond the realm of civil aviation. Bansal further highlighted the challenge of prioritisation posed by competition for biofuels from other sectors, particularly road transport.

Sustainability criteria

One crucial aspect mentioned in the official statement released by the Ministry of Civil Aviation, Government of India, was the application of sustainability criteria for CORSIA (Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation) eligible fuels.

The implementation of such criteria would necessitate external verification bodies to apply their rules, thereby ensuring the adherence to sustainability standards.

Bansal stressed the need for support from the ICAO in facilitating the cycle of SAF production through its implementation and support policy.

India's decision to set a target of achieving net zero by 2070 was influenced by the existing realities and infrastructure constraints, as mentioned in the official statement. Bansal further called upon ICAO to be guided by the principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities in their pursuit of the net zero goal.

The transition towards lower carbon emissions and the adoption of SAF have been identified as fundamental steps in the aviation industry's efforts to achieve net zero by 2050.

India's commitment to the net zero goal by 2070 demonstrates the country's recognition of the importance of sustainable practices in aviation and its determination to align with global environmental objectives.

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