

REPORT OF THE SUB-REGIONAL DISSEMINATION WORKSHOP OF THE NORTHERN CORRIDOR GREEN FREIGHT STRATEGY 2030

**FOUR POINTS BY SHERATON, KAMPALA
25TH - 26TH MARCH 2024**

A. BACKGROUND

1. The Northern Corridor is a critical linchpin in facilitating trade across East Africa. The Corridor serves as a vital economic lifeline, connecting the hinterland countries of Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, South Sudan, and parts of the Democratic Republic of Congo to the bustling Kenyan maritime seaport of Mombasa. Renowned as the busiest Port in East and Central Africa, the Port of Mombasa handled 33.75 million metric tons of total cargo throughput encompassing imports, exports, and transshipments in 2022.
2. The vision for the Northern Corridor Transit and Transport Coordination Authority as stated in its Strategic Plan 2022-2026 is to become a safe, sustainable, and competitive trade and transport corridor. The vision combines diverse freight transport perspectives and sets the foundation for preparing and implementing long-term plans. The green freight component is integrated with the phrase “sustainable.” It is important for all stakeholders in the Northern Corridor Member States to acquire knowledge that will enable them to take stock of corridor emissions control.
3. In July 2023, the Executive Committee of the Northern Corridor directed the Secretariat to review/evaluate the effectiveness of the Corridor Green Freight Program (2017-2021), assess/and gain valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities associated with implementing sustainable freight transport solutions in the region, in addition to formulating a comprehensive Green Freight Strategy for 2030. The Corridor Green Freight Program (2017-2021), developed in collaboration with the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), aimed at improving fuel efficiency of road transportations, cutting emissions of particulate matter (PM), black carbon emissions and oxides of nitrogen (NOx) grams per ton-km by at least 10%, and reducing by 10% CO2 emission intensity grams per ton-km by 2021.
4. In December 2023, the Secretariat in collaboration with UNEP, Smart Freight Centre (SFC), and Kuhne Foundation reviewed the Corridor Green Freight Programme (2017-2021) and developed the Northern Corridor Green Freight Strategy 2030 using UNCTAD framework for Sustainable Freight Transport and feedback from stakeholders’ consultations in the Northern Corridor region. The review of the 2017-2021 Green Freight Programme and stakeholder interviews highlighted critical factors that hindered implementation of the proposed green freight interventions and these include: insufficient focus on sustainable infrastructure, lack of expertise at the Secretariat and limited funds, low public awareness, and inadequate attention to cross-cutting priorities like social and environmental factors.

5. The Northern Corridor Green Freight Strategy 2030 whose focus is on enhancing fuel efficiency, reducing carbon footprint to actively combat climate change, and reduction of harmful pollutants such as particulate matter, black carbon, and NO_x, aiming to safeguard public health and preserve air quality has clear targets and recommended improvement measures for implementation until 2030.
6. To ensure a smooth and coordinated implementation of the Northern Corridor Green Freight Strategy 2030, the Northern Corridor Secretariat in collaboration with UNEP and Environmental Compliance Institute (ECI) organised a wide stakeholders' dissemination workshop of the Green Freight Strategy 2023 on 25th and 26th March 2024 at Four Points Sheraton, Kampala, Uganda. In the workshop, stakeholders were enlightened on the challenges and opportunities associated with implementing sustainable freight transport solutions, targets set under the Green Freight Strategy 2030, and proposed no-regret actions which are aligned with regional and national priorities.

B. OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKSHOP

7. As indicated earlier, the Northern Corridor Secretariat partnered with UNEP in the development of the Northern Corridor Green Freight Strategy 2030. The workshop mainly aimed at disseminating the draft final Green Freight Strategy 2030 to all public and private sector stakeholders and seek for its validation by member States representatives and partners before it is presented to the Northern Corridor Executive Committee for adoption and implementation. The workshop aimed at creating a framework for member States, private sector players, and development partners to update each other on the countries' initiatives towards greening freight sector, promotion of low emissions transport, Corridor emissions monitoring and global trend towards zero emissions freight, and regional initiatives to cleaner transport being implemented in their respective countries and areas of operations as well as innovative ways the private sector can use to implementing sustainable freight transport solutions such as fleet renewal, eco-driving trainings, and logistics operations at ICDs etc., for harmonisation and support.

C. MEETING AGENDA AND PARTICIPANTS

8. The agenda of the meeting as well as the list of participants are attached to this report as Annex 1 and 2.

D. OPENING REMARKS

9. In his opening remarks, Bageya Waiswa, the Permanent Secretary and Chairperson of the Northern Corridor Executive Committee, Ministry of Works and Transport, Republic of Uganda welcomed all delegates to the workshop and wished them a pleasant stay in Kampala. He recognised the commitment

to the holistic approach of addressing climate change challenges and urged Member States and other stakeholders to adjust and align their sustainable transport policies, planning strategies, investment decisions, and cross cutting priorities to the new simplified five targets under the Northern Corridor Green Freight Strategy 2030. Waiswa further recalled that the climate change poses a growing threat to the communities and urged participants to implement measures that safeguard infrastructure from future challenges. He informed the meeting that Uganda despite investing heavily in transport infrastructure for the last 30 years, struggles with maintenance of roads mainly due to the premature damages caused by extreme weather conditions such as persistent rainfall that results into flooding across the country. He also informed participants that the member State of Uganda through her updated Nationally Determined Contribution 2020 to 2030 has committed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 24.7% in 2030 below business-as-usual baseline, implement 1,412 km of fully electrified Standard Gauge Rail (SGR) by 2050 and rehabilitate 34 Km of Meter Gauge Railway (MGR) by 2026 to facilitate freight modal shift from road to rail, build climate-resilient roads, bridges, water, and rail transport infrastructure systems (i.e., 7,600Km of paved national roads by 2025; 1,848 Km of paved urban roads by 2025; and 7,600 Km of railway); and revise design codes, regulations and guidelines to climate proof strategic transport infrastructure, among others. Finally, he concluded by calling the Northern Corridor Secretariat and different stakeholders to work hand in hand to timely establish a regional Green Freight Transport Network to raise awareness on Sustainable Freight Transport, facilitate and coordinate capacity building and trainings of all transport sector stakeholders, and accompany member States towards implementing climate resilient transport infrastructure.

10. In his remarks, Omae Nyarandi, the Executive Secretary of the Northern Corridor Secretariat welcomed all participants to the discussions aimed at harmonising the implementation of regional green freight commitments with the Northern Corridor Green Freight Strategy 2030. He sincerely thanked UNEP for supporting the review of the Northern Corridor Green Freight Programme (2017-2021), development of the successor Green Strategy 2030, and for working with the Environmental Compliance Institute (ECI) and the Northern Corridor Secretariat in organising the dissemination workshop of Green Freight Strategy 2030 in Kampala. Nyarandi acknowledged the coordination and support received from the Ministry of Works and Transport during preparations of the workshop and reminded participants that the Northern Corridor remains the busiest trade and transport route in East and Central Africa. He added that the Corridor handles an average daily truck traffic ranging between 2000 and 3000 trucks and has a total fleet size of around 12,500 trucks. The Corridor facilitates a daily road freight movement of about 75,000 tonnes from Mombasa to the hinterlands of Kenya and EAC countries and emits high levels of emissions daily in the air due to the poor quality of fuels consumed and age of trucks. Nyarandi indicated that the Northern Green Freight Strategy 2030 focuses on enhancing fuel efficiency, reducing carbon footprint to actively

combat climate change, and reduction of harmful pollutants and targets to implement eco-driving training for 1000 drivers; improve fuel efficiency of freight transport by 10% by 2030 when compared to 2024 levels; reduce Particulate Matter (PM), Black Carbon, and Oxides of nitrogen (NOX) by 12% by 2030 when compared to 2024 levels; reduce CO2 emissions intensity by 10% by 2030 when compared to 2024 levels; and enhance climate resilience of at least 2000 km of roads. He concluded his remarks by commending Member States for their commitments to reduce GHG emissions from the transport sector under their Paris Agreement related Nationally Determined Contributions and implored partners active in sustainable freight transport and logistics such as UNEP, Smart Freight Centre (SFC), Kuehne Foundation (KF), TMA to support the implementation of climate resilient transport infrastructure targets.

11. In her remarks, Jane Akumu, the Programme Officer in Sustainable Mobility Unit under the Industry and Economy Division of the United Nations Environment Programme thanked Uganda for providing a platform to discuss the Northern Green Freight Strategy 2030 and the Northern Corridor Secretariat for organizing the workshop. She indicated that UNEP's current focus is to address the triple planetary crisis facing the world today of climate change, nature loss and pollution. Akumu referred to the current projected increased motorisation rate including freight and commended the Northern Corridor Secretariat for taking the lead as the first corridor in developing the Green Freight Strategies aimed at addressing the climate and pollution challenges. Akumu also highlighted higher emissions and other negative impacts resulting from poor fuels and weak vehicle regulations and indicated UNEP's ambition to eliminate these pollutants by adopting ultra-low sulphur diesel and minimum Euro 6/VI emission standards by all countries in 2030 and the shift to the zero tailpipe emission vehicles and 100% elimination of fossil-based fuels for heavy-duty transport by 2050. She acknowledged the Climate and Clean Air Coalition and the Climate Works Foundation that enabled UNEP to fund the review and update of the Northern Corridor Green Freight Strategy 2030 and assured continued partnership with the Northern Corridor Secretariat and its member States towards actualizing the strategy.

E. PRESENTATIONS, COMMITMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

PRESENTATIONS:

12. The invited speakers and consultants made the following presentations:

- a) Promoting low emissions transport in Africa
- b) Overview of the transport sector in Uganda
- c) Regional initiatives to cleaner transport – Standards
- d) Review of the Northern Corridor Green Freight Programme (2017-2021)
- e) Presentation of the Northern Corridor Green Freight Strategy 2030
- f) Country initiatives towards greening freight

- g) Global trend towards zero emissions freight – Indian experience
- h) Role of Private Sector in implementing Green Freight solutions
- i) Emissions Tracker
- j) Northern Corridor Emissions Monitoring tool

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS SESSION:

- Resilience adaptation requires adequate financing, what is the plan and how do we ensure adequate mobilisation of resources?
- Focus has mostly been on EVs, what about considering alternatives such as hydrogen gas and other alternatives to power vehicles? Would these be cheaper? Have more useful life?
- How do we incorporate private sector in these critical discussions? Considering the likely impact on final consumers, engagements must be pro-active and targeted.
- How do we ensure our discussions around EVs also involve Standards? Standards are critical and require to be designed, planned, and generally adopted across the board.
- What is our choice of technologies for green freight? These are critical considerations to ensure efficiency and effectiveness;
- What options and alternatives are we providing for transporters over the medium to long term?
- As we promote the move away from fossil fuels to green energy to power vehicles, can we move systematically and step by step? Currently, hybrid engines are already in use. How are they? Do they serve the purpose? Are they not good enough?
- Highways must have adequate charging facilities, otherwise vehicles would require to carry multiple batteries for longer journeys. What is the plan and how do we provide adequately for these challenges?

PARTNER PRESENTATIONS

- Emphasis on collaboration, coordination, and networking
- International experiences available for sharing.
- Anxiety among key stakeholders, especially from the private sector, needs to be addressed through information, communication, awareness creation, trainings, and adequate preparation;
- Challenges to e-mobility, as well as the likely impact of adopting Euro 6 standards, need to be identified and addressed;
- Data collection strategies must be enhanced, including through Telematics and use of other Digital platforms;
- Northern Corridor Secretariat presents a strong platform for engagement in the Regional Member States and guiding progression towards achievement of goals and targets; and
- A strong enforcement regime is required, including monitoring emissions (both CO₂ and non – CO₂)

KEY TAKE AWAYS AND COMMITMENTS:

13. After presentations and discussions, participants noted as follows:

- Need for harmonisation of policies, laws and regulations to adequately prepare for the move towards a Green Freight agenda across the world.
- Existing Standards under the EU (on Dimensions and Weights) and on Charging Protocols, should be harmonised and adopted.
- The triple bottom line – Economic; Social and Environmental, remains a key guide in the implementation of the Green Freight Strategy 2030.
- The need to plan is crucial – non motorised transport, climate resilient road infrastructure, funding, among others.
- Need to work towards a modal shift from road to rail, as well as other alternatives such as Inland Waterways, to reduce carbon emissions. This requires development of relevant infrastructure, policies, and guidelines.
- There is need to develop guidelines for the Standards already in place, for air quality (emission standards), and measure emissions from vehicles to ensure compliance.
- It is important to develop implementation guidelines for importation of used vehicles, focusing on revised sulfur level limits, as well as regular vehicle inspection.
- Considering the nature and scope of investments required, clear strategies for resource mobilization are critical. (Partnerships, budgets, and general resource mobilization).
- Partnerships are required towards feasibility studies on the introduction of electric trucks along the Northern Corridor.
- The private sector is always faster, more efficient, and ready to explore innovations. Care should be taken not to frustrate private sector efforts in this space.
- Need for continuous data collection, surveys, knowledge management and use of available information to inform future strategies; and
- Need for capacity building in both public and private sector agencies. Eco driving skills for drivers, compliance certification, among others.

14. Partners committed as follows:

- UNEP committed to support the implementation of the Corridor Green Freight Strategy 2030.
- Northern Corridor Secretariat to push for development of climate resilient transport infrastructure in the Member States.
- Ministry of Works and Transport (MoWT) appreciated the efforts put in by the Northern Corridor Secretariat and development partners towards development of the Corridor Green Freight Strategy 2030 and committed as the Chair of the Northern Corridor Council of Ministers and Executive Committee, full support to the Green Freight Strategy 2030 by mobilising all Member States to move towards implementing the proposed targets.

15. The dissemination workshop recommended as follows:

- Coordination, collaboration, and networking – NC Member States; Public Sector, Private Sector and Development Partners.
- Supporting Policy development and incentives – charging protocols and infrastructure visibility, weight and dimensions, resilient infrastructure, etc.
- Capacity building and special skilling, across both public and private sector entities, coupled with sensitization, awareness creation and simple communication messaging.
- Data/Feasibility Studies – use of telematics and development of digital platforms.
- Country and regional wide planning and urban mobility development strategies.
- Improve efficiency of freight trucks – reduce the number of empty trucks.
- Adoption of high technology and adaptation towards achieving the goals of the Green Freight Strategy.
- Clear implementation plan (under 5 strategies).
- Training of drivers on eco-driving skills (target 1,000 drivers by 2030);
- Improve fuel efficiency by 10% by 2030.
- Reduce particulate matter, NOx, Black Carbon by 12% by 2030.
- Reduce CO2 emission by 10% by 2030; and
- Enhance climate resilience of at least 2,000kms of climate resilient roads in the NC Region

F. VALIDATION OF THE NORTHERN CORRIDOR GREEN FREIGHT STRATEGY 2030

The meeting validated the draft final Northern Corridor Green Freight Strategy 2030 for implementation with the following comments.

1. The Northern Corridor Green Freight Strategy 2030 to be finalised and shared among key stakeholders. Page 18 of 8
2. The Northern Corridor Secretariat to develop an Action Plan/Implementation Matrix of the Green Freight Strategy 2030 with clear timelines, yearly targets, and expected medium to long term outputs.
3. The Northern Corridor Secretariat to map all key stakeholders and partners and establish a Corridor Green Freight network for a smooth implementation of the Strategy. The duties and roles of each partner should be developed and communicated.
4. The Northern Corridor Secretariat to liaise with all partners and Member States in defining capacity program needs and ensure it is initiated as soon as possible.