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Economic Commission for Europe

Inland Transport Committee

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Item 4 (g) of the provisional agenda

Strategic questions of a horizontal policy or regulatory nature:

Analytical work on transport

Development of Sustainable Inland Transport Connectivity Indicators

Note by the secretariat

I. Background

1. A United Nations Development Account (UNDA) funded project entitled “Sustainable transport connectivity and implementation of transport related SDGs in selected landlocked and transit/bridging countries” is currently being implemented. The project is led by the UNECE Sustainable Transport Division and implemented with the support of relevant departments in two sister regional commissions ESCWA and ECLAC. It aims at developing a set of Sustainable Inland Transport Connectivity Indicators (SITCIN). In the first phase, the project involves the following pilot countries: Georgia, Kazakhstan, Serbia, Jordan and Paraguay.

II. Objective

2. The main objective of the project is to develop a tool enabling countries to measure their degree of connectivity: both domestically & bilaterally/sub-regionally as well as in terms of soft & hard infrastructure.

3. *Inter alia*, the SITCIN, once fully developed and tested in the five pilot countries, will provide an instrument (a measurable set of criteria) for Governments enabling them to evaluate/ assess:

- The extent to which they implement the relevant United Nations legal instruments, agreements and conventions effectively; and
- The degree to which their inland transport systems are inter-operable with the systems within their respective (sub-)regions.

4. In doing so, it should enable policy-makers to assess their country’s degree of external economic connectivity in terms of efficiency of inland transport, logistics, trade, customs and border crossing facilitation processes. Governments could also use the SITCIN to assess and report on their progress in implementing the transport related Sustainable Development

Goals (i.e. 2030 Agenda) and their commitments under the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries (for the decade 2014–2024).

III. Project phases

- I. Development of the initial set of Sustainable Inland Transport Indicators (SITCIN)
- II. Fact-finding missions to each of the five “pilot countries” to review national transport and logistics situation, resulting in five «national connectivity reports»
- III. National policy dialogue meetings to validate the reports
- IV. Tailor-made national capacity building programmes in each of the five “pilot countries”
- V. Concluding inter-regional forum to share “lessons learnt’ and experiences of the five pilot countries with other interested Governments around the globe to further promote the use of the SITCIN.

IV. SITCIN methodology

5. The current draft indicators are structured within three pillars of sustainability and applied across the four inland transport sectors including, road, rail, inland waterways and inter-modal transport:
 - **Economic Sustainability** (validating border crossing efficiency, time, and costs as well as quality of (inter-modal) infrastructure and the use of ICT and intelligent transport solutions).
 - **Social Sustainability** (assessing adequacy of road traffic rules enforcement, road traffic infrastructure, vehicle regulations and administrative frameworks surrounding cross border transport of perishable foodstuffs and of dangerous goods).
 - **Environmental Sustainability** (evaluating measures aimed at reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, air pollutants and noise emissions (looks into alternative fuel share and average age of the vehicle fleet etc.).

V. State of affairs and way ahead

6. The indicators are being tested, in parallel, in the context of the 5 pilot countries and based on feedback received by stakeholders will be further improved and strengthened. Upon completion of the project the full set of indicators will be published. The project is currently in its third phase with national policy dialogue meetings to validate the SITCIN findings taking place in all 5 pilot countries in the coming months, followed by targeted capacity building workshops.
7. The project should be completed by early 2021 and its concluding phase, an inter-regional workshop aimed at sharing “lessons learnt’ and experiences of the five pilot countries with other interested Governments around the globe to further promote the use of the SITCIN could be held back-to-back with the eighty-third session of the Inland Transport Committee in February 2021.
8. Regular updates on progress made in the framework of the project will be published on the SITCIN web-page: www.unece.org/trans/main/wp5/special_project_development_of_sustainable_inland_transport_connectivity_indicators.html.