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Economic Commission for Europe**Inland Transport Committee****Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics****Thirty-third session**

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Item 3(a) of the provisional agenda

Development of transport networks and/or links:**Euro-Asian Transport Links****The potential role of the Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics in the implementation of the Inland Transport Committee Strategy until 2030****Note by the secretariat****I. Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics current mandate and role**

1. As per its approved programme of work for 2020–2021 and long-term programme of work (ECE/TRANS/WP.5/2019/6), the Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics (WP.5) is an intergovernmental body that reviews the general trends with regard to transport developments and transport policy, and analyzes specific transport economic issues; fosters world-wide participation in its activities by encouraging cooperation and collaboration; and collaborates closely with the other subsidiary bodies of the Inland Transport Committee (ITC). Its mandate allows it to assume the unique role of a transport “think tank” in the framework of ITC. The objective of the working party is to enhance the understanding of the main inland transport trends and developments and strengthen international cooperation to develop sustainable Euro-Asian transport links. A full version of the endorsed WP.5 biennial programme of work is available in the annex.

II. Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics record of achievements

2. Over the last 20 years, WP.5 has undertaken considerable work regarding the development of sustainable regional and interregional connectivity, transport infrastructure networks and corridors including transport infrastructure financing. It has issued publications and research papers, established formal group of experts and task forces developed analytical tools and held capacity building workshops:

- Over the last 10 years:



- More than 20 capacity building workshops have been organized, almost all with a focus on interregional transport connectivity;
- Nineteen publications and research papers have been prepared and published;
- Sixty-two formal group of experts' sessions have been organized;

Other flagship activities include:

- The Euro-Asian Transport Links project (Phases I (with ESCAP¹), II, III and operationalization as Phase IV);
 - The TEM and TER Master Plans and their revisions (dates);
 - The Guidelines for Socio-Economic Cost Benefit Analysis of Transport Infrastructure Project Appraisal (date);
 - The Common Criteria regarding the Identification of Bottlenecks, Missing Links and Quality of Service in Infrastructure Networks (dates);
 - The Hinterland Connections of Seaports;
 - The Group of Experts on climate change impacts and adaptation for transport networks and nodes; and
 - The International Transport Infrastructure Observatory (with ESCWA²).
3. These are just a few of the noteworthy, long-lasting and sustainable achievements of the working party.

III. Adoption of the ITC Strategy until 2030

4. At its eighty-first plenary session (19–22 February 2019, Geneva), the ITC adopted its Strategy until 2030. With the adoption of this Strategy the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) member States and ninety-six other United Nations Member States as Contracting Parties to the legal instruments administered by ECE set a vision to make ITC as the United Nations platform for inland transport to help efficiently address global and regional needs.

5. Moreover, through the adoption of the Strategy the Committee decided to enhance its role as:

(a) The United Nations Platform for regional and global inland transport conventions.

(b) The United Nations Platform for supporting new technologies and innovations in inland transport.

(c) The United Nations Platform for regional, interregional and global inland transport policy dialogues.

(d) The United Nations Platform for promoting sustainable regional and interregional inland transport connectivity and mobility. By providing a comprehensive, harmonized regulatory framework, as appropriate, and institutional reference point supporting international connectivity, developing new or building on existing initiatives, agreements, or corridors, as needed.

IV. ITC call to align the work of its subsidiary bodies with the ITC Strategy

6. At its eighty-first session, the Committee also invited its subsidiary bodies to take follow-up actions to align their work with the ITC Strategy (ECE/TRANS/288, paras. 15 (a)

¹ Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

² Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

and (c)). In response to this invitation, WP.5 reviewed its activities, and agreed on six main clusters of work included in its long-term 2020–2030 programme of work adopted at the thirty-second session, as follows:

(a) Development of transport networks and/or links: Under this cluster the work on Euro-Asian Transport Links and other links and corridors, including monitoring of network developments should be continued and expanded. In particular, WP.5 should serve as a platform to foster and monitor operationalization activities and through these activities to further promote and enhance interregional connectivity. Under the term “operationalization” the following topics are covered: harmonization and simplification of border-crossing formalities, infrastructure connections and interoperability standards, efficient corridor management and bringing the standards and rules/regulations in line with international standards, in particular those provided in the United Nations transport legal instruments, as well as application of new technologies and digitalization.

(b) Transport and climate change: Under this cluster the analytical work and research on impacts of climate change on transport assets and operations and identification of most suitable adaptation measures in order to make transport infrastructure resilient should continue.

(c) Sustainable urban mobility: Under this cluster WP.5 should build on its past work and continue developing urban mobility policies supporting sustainable urban development. Further Mobility as a Service (MaaS) developments and sustainable public transport systems should also fall under this cluster.

(d) Transport infrastructure data: Under this cluster, WP.5 should establish, maintain and further expand the international transport infrastructure observatory as an innovative platform to finance transport infrastructure projects, available on the on-line ECE Geographical Information System (GIS) platform. The work of the Group of Experts on benchmarking transport infrastructure construction costs should also fall under this cluster.

(e) Review and monitoring of emerging issues and sustainable development goals (SDGs): Under this cluster WP.5 should discuss and analyse emerging transport issues and prepare analytical outputs. WP.5 should also monitor the trends in achieving transport-related sustainable development goals and contribute to the development of support tools for achieving these goals.

(f) Inland transport security: Under this cluster WP.5 should provide a platform for mainstreaming and further enhancing solutions for addressing inland transport security issues.

7. The WP.5 mandates and programme of work is fully aligned with the priority actions of the Strategy included under the ITC’s fourth role as a “United Nations Platform for promoting sustainable regional and interregional inland transport connectivity and mobility”.

8. More specifically the clusters cover:

- Interregional connectivity including through Euro-Asian Transport Links (EATL) and corridors, through its work under cluster A on the development of transport networks and/or links, cluster D on infrastructure data as well as cluster F on inland transport security
- Promoting sustainable transport and urban mobility through its work under cluster B on transport and climate change, cluster C on sustainable urban mobility and cluster E emerging issues and sustainable development goals.

9. While the work of the WP.5 is fully in line with the Strategy, at the same time, further steps should be taken enabling the Working Party to fully embody the fourth role of the ITC on promoting and enhancing sustainable regional and interregional connectivity and mobility. One key step in this regard could be the annual (or biennial) hosting of an “interregional sustainable connectivity forum” as an integral part of the working party

session, in cooperation with ESCAP, and other interested partner organizations such as OSCE³, the European Commission, TRACECA⁴ and others.

10. Certainly, by hosting the interregional connectivity forum, WP.5 can enhance its mandated role in the operationalization of the Euro-Asian and other transport corridors. The forum can provide an opportunity for WP.5, in accordance with its Terms of Reference (ToR), to review and analyse the general trends regarding transport developments and policies. It can foster world-wide participation in WP.5 activities and encourage cooperation and collaboration with the other Regional Commissions. It can provide a platform to discuss improvement of intermodal coordination and integration and encourage data and information exchanges between and among countries and organizations.

11. WP.5 would serve as the inter-face platform where all corridor operationalization efforts are consolidated and put into a broader context. In this regard it would build upon the work of all Working Parties in support of sustainable connectivity and mobility. It would collect and disseminate information on latest trends in various areas, identify and respond to the emerging needs and challenges, promote accession to the legal instruments, assist in implementing the legal instruments in close collaboration with other subsidiary bodies of the ITC.

12. In this role, WP.5 would build further on the achievements of the Forum on Sustainable Transport Connectivity between Europe and Asia which was held jointly by ECE and ESCAP in the framework of the sixty-second session of the Working Party on Intermodal Transport and Logistics (WP.24) at Geneva on 28 October –1 November 2019.

V. Resource requirements

13. The above could be performed by the WP.5 secretariat within existing financial and staffing resources, where and if applicable with the support and substantive inputs of other relevant working parties.

VI. Guidance by the Working Party

14. WP.5 is invited to consider the above-mentioned proposal and provide guidance.

³ Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

⁴ Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia

Annex

Biennial 2020–2021 programme of work and evaluation

The 2020–2021 biennial programme sets forth activities for implementation within the coming biennium. The activities are defined within the clusters of the long-term programme of work. The activities are listed together with expected accomplishments which are defined to help WP.5 evaluate its achievements.

A. Development of transport networks and/or links

<i>Activities:</i>	<i>Expected accomplishments</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WP.5 manages the operationalisation of transport links/corridors to build up on EATL, Phase I, II and III projects and their findings and recommendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WP.5 sets up a programme of Corridor Operationalisation Performance Review (COPR), • WP.5 organizes and peer-reviews conclusions and recommendations of performance reviews, and/or • WP.5 establishes and oversees corridor management groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A programme of COPR is established by WP.5 • Two COPRs are organized and their conclusions and recommendations are peer-reviewed by WP.5 • Two corridor management groups are established by WP.5 and their workplan are agreed

B. Transport and climate change

<i>Activities:</i>	<i>Expected accomplishments</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WP.5 initiates the process to establish its group of experts on assessment of climate change impacts and adaptation for inland transport • The group of experts improves databases with climate data and transport assets and operations • The group of experts expands the analysis of climate indices for creating more knowledge on future impacts of climate change and extreme events on transport assets and operations • The group of experts collects and analyses information and data from national climate change adaptation projects seeking to identify key areas of vulnerability of specific assets and facilitates one such project in countries willing to improve in this area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group of experts is established in 2020 • The database is improved • New climate indices are analysed • Information and data from national projects are collected and analysis has commenced • Project is started in at least one country willing to improve in infrastructure climate change adaptation analysis

C. Sustainable urban mobility

<i>Activities:</i>	<i>Expected accomplishments</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WP.5 develops a model to assess urban mobility challenges • WP.5 develops a handbook to launching or strengthening MaaS at city level • WP.5 contributes to master plan for cycling through infrastructure module 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft model is developed • Draft handbook is developed • Infrastructure module is prepared

D. Transport infrastructure data

<i>Activities:</i>	<i>Expected accomplishments</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WP.5 develops the international transport infrastructure observatory • The group of experts on benchmarking transport infrastructure construction costs identifies models, methodologies, tools and good practices for evaluating, calculating and analysing inland transport infrastructure construction costs • The group of experts establishes terminologies used for costing inland transport infrastructure • The group of experts collects data for benchmarking transport infrastructure construction costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International transport infrastructure observatory is available on ECE GIS platform • Compilation of models, methodologies and tools is prepared • Glossary with terminologies is prepared • Data is collected and put on ECE GIS platform

E. Review and monitoring of emerging issues and sustainable development goals

<i>Activities:</i>	<i>Expected accomplishments</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WP.5 monitors trends in achieving transport-related sustainable development goals • WP.5 promotes Sustainable Inland Transport Connectivity Indicators (SITCIN) • WP.5 identifies emerging inland transport issues and analyses them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trends are monitored • Application of SITCIN has increased • At least one additional issue is identified, and its analysis has started

F. Inland transport security

<i>Activities:</i>	<i>Expected accomplishments</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WP.5 develops a roadmap for mainstreaming and further enhancing solutions for addressing inland transport security issues • WP.5 serves as a platform for the exchange of information on threats and risk along specific freight routes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roadmap is developed • One assistance workshop is organized

<i>Activities:</i>	<i>Expected accomplishments</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• WP.5 organizes assistance activities on mainstreaming inland transport security solutions	
