

Concept Paper		
Webinar on “Achieving Efficiency Improvements in Trucking Sector”		
Webinar	PRG-222/2021/PETREN	SEC

Background:

Freight trucks are the backbone of most economies, because they are responsible for a significant portion of goods movement. Although freight trucks make up a relatively small percentage of the on-road vehicle fleet, they are responsible for a disproportionately large share of fuel consumption and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Daily, millions of tons of goods are transported in the world (including SAARC member states), and as the economies of the SAARC region grows, the gross tonnage transported through the trucking sector is expected to increase. Due to various factors including lack of truck efficiency, the logistics cost is very high in South Asia and ranges between 13-14 percent of GDP, as compared to 8 percent in the USA ¹.

At present, the global trucking and commercial vehicle sector is incredibly diverse in terms of the vehicles being used, as well as the purposes for which they are used and the conditions under which they are used. There is an almost equally wide range of proven technologies currently on the market that can increase the efficiency/mileage of these vehicles. These include improving the truck aerodynamics, anti-idling devices, advanced cruise control, GPS assisted routing, fuel specification improvement etc. Apart from these technology options for the existing diesel-powered trucks, trucking sector will also benefit from emerging electric truck technologies, particularly batteries that do not require charging from grid-powered stations, but rather are charged onboard with fuel cells. Hydrogen fuel cell electric vehicles that convert hydrogen to electricity onboard through the drive train—are currently being developed by traditional and new companies.

Introduction:

SEC, under its thematic area of “Program area on integrated assessments of Energy, Transport, and Environment (PETREN)” will conduct a webinar titled “Achieving Efficiency Improvements in Trucking Sector”. The webinar will be 1 hour long activity, and will consist of presentations from potential resource persons having professional experience in the relevant field, belonging to the government, private and academia sectors will be invited from within and outside SAARC region to hold brief talks. These talks will cover the whole breadth of the topic, including current scenario of trucking in the SAARC member states, physical and ICT technological options for efficiency improvement, barriers, relevant case studies, and tools to promote fuel efficiency.

¹ <http://www.davidpublisher.org/index.php/Home/Article/index?id=31689.html>

Objectives:

Following are the objectives of the webinar:

1. To educate the professionals from SAARC region about advancements in the trucking sector with respect to improved efficiency.
2. To provide an opportunity for the audience to engage with the experts of the heavy vehicle transport sector and to seek replies to their queries.
3. To link up the experts with the professionals of the SAARC region who are working on the same issues.

Major Aspects /Topics to be covered during the Webinar

Major aspects covered by this webinar will be as follows:

1. Economics of the trucking sector
2. Current scenario of the trucking sector in SAARC
3. Drivers for efficiency improvements in the trucking sector
4. Technological options and contemporary solutions
 - a. Physical technologies such as improvements in aerodynamics, anti-idling devices, advanced cruise control, better transmission systems etc.
 - b. ICT solutions e.g., GPS assisted routing, dead-haul logistics management etc.
 - c. Electric Trucks
 - d. LNG operated trucks, including their operation for movement of LNG to retail pumps.
5. Relevant case studies
6. Barriers to the technologies
7. Best regulatory, fiscal and policy tools for driving/promoting efficiency improvements in trucking sector

Relevance, Coherence and Sustainability:

The webinar is relevant and coherent to SEC's thematic program area on integrated assessments of Energy, Transport, and Environment (PETREN). It is also in line with SEC's sustainability objectives. SEC expects to take first step in bringing a wave of macro level thinking and deeper brainstorming by the regional stakeholders on this important issue of transition to cleaner fuels.

Potential Professional Resource

Resource persons having experience in the relevant field, belonging to the government, private and academia sectors will be invited from and outside SAARC region to hold brief talks.

Venue

The activity will be conducted on the online webinar facility available at SAARC Energy Center office at Islamabad, Pakistan.