Navigating the Operational Impacts of Environmental Measures

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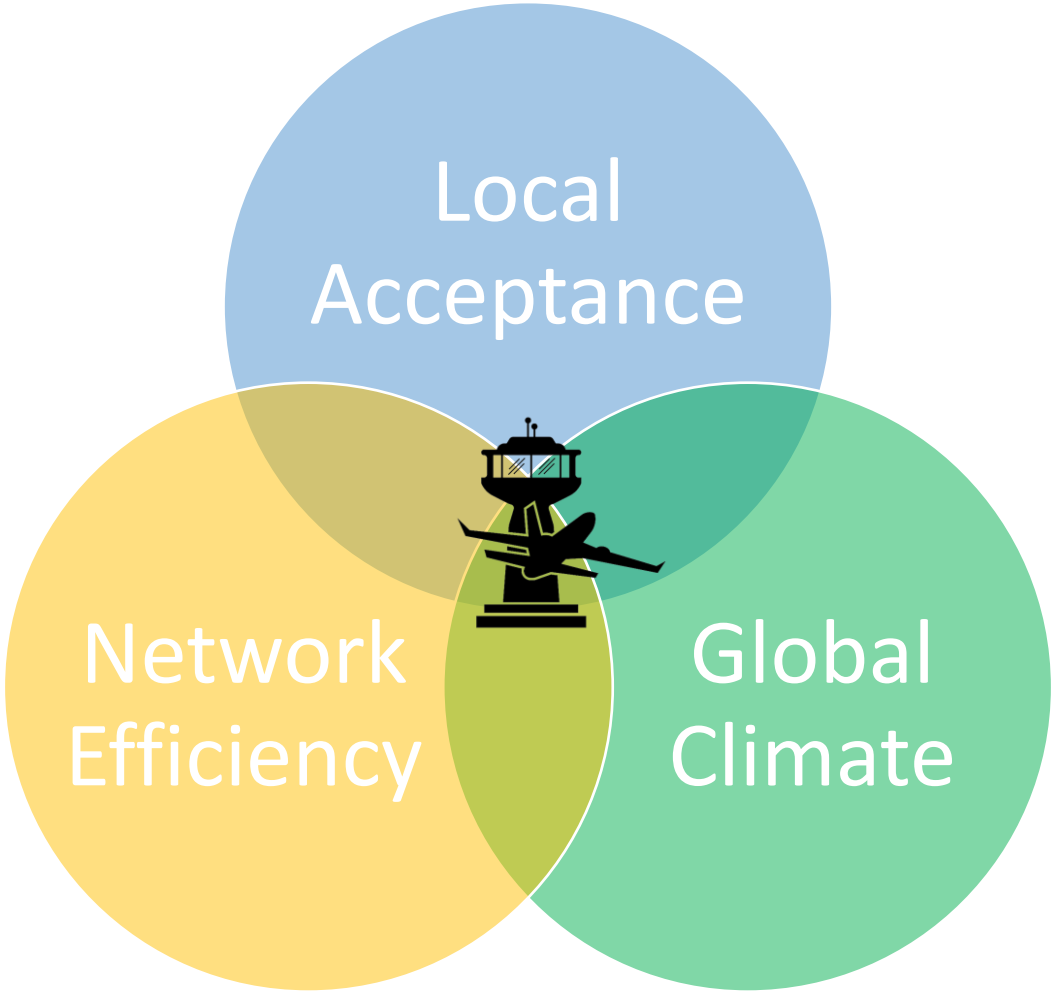
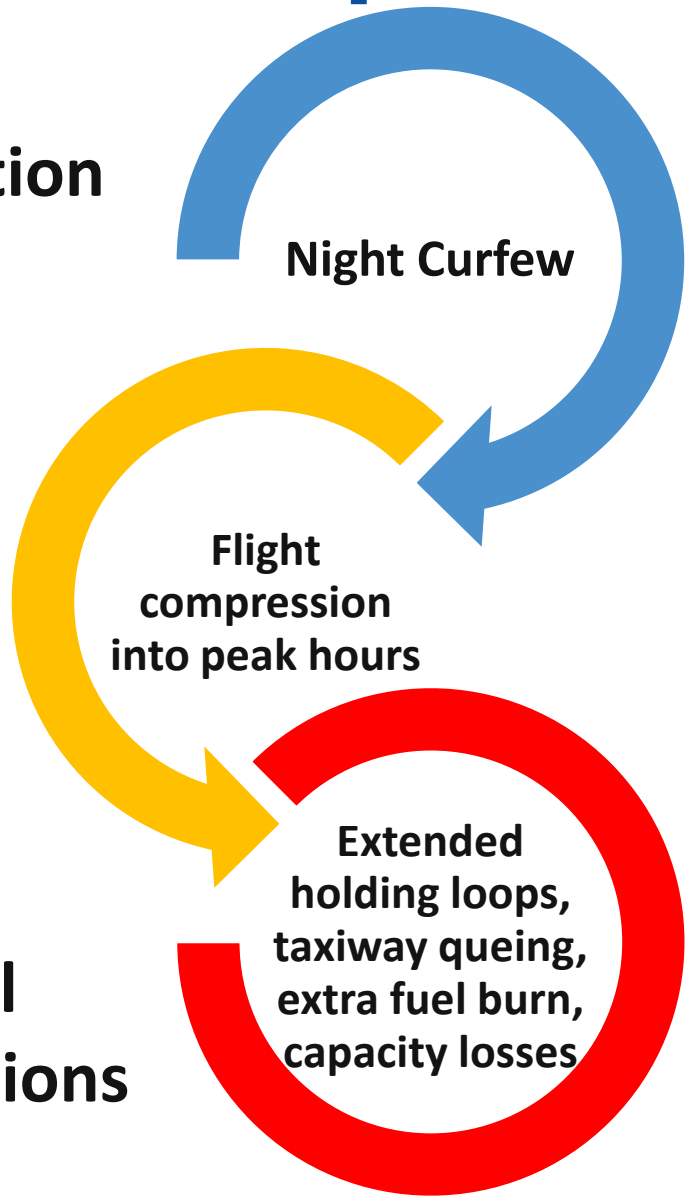
The Airport Dilemma
Local Legitimacy vs. Global Network Efficiency

Airports at the Intersection of Local Impact and Global Decarbonisation



Operational Realities & Systemic Repercussions



Trade-off: Lower local noise at night time, BUT increased frequency of flights & CO2 emissions.

Operational Realities & Systemic Repercussions

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Solutions to **Noise**, **Air pollution** and ground **CO2 through operational improvements:**

Airports

- Electrical Ground Power and Pre-Conditionned Air (PCA)
- Electric Ground support Equipment

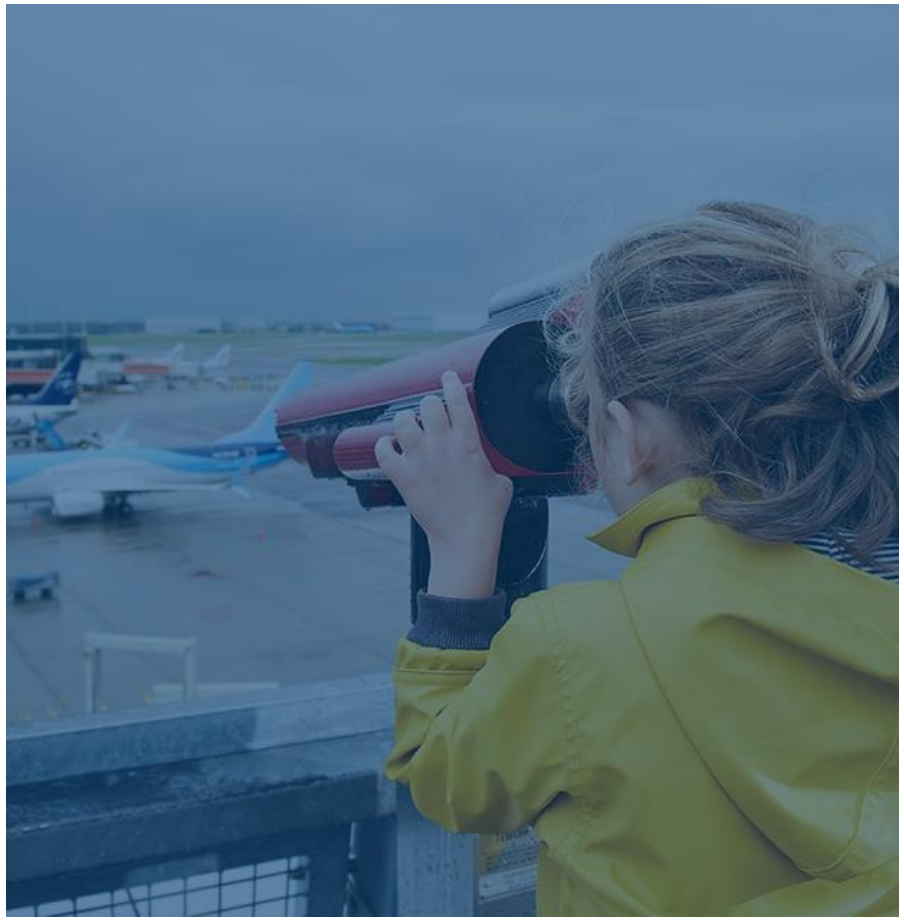
Airlines

- Obligation to switch off APUs
- Use taxibots

ANSPs

- Optimising flight paths
- Continuous Descent Operations (CDO)
- Optimised taxiing

Noise is now one of the main constraints on airport capacity, public acceptance and connectivity



Health and Quality of Life
Aircraft noise affects residents and the social acceptability of airport operations

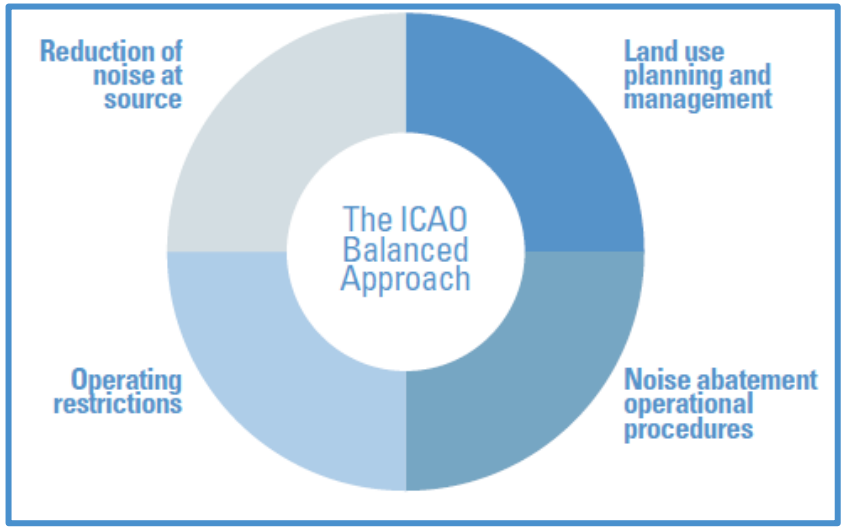
Night flights under pressure
Night operations face increasing political and regulatory scrutiny, with direct impacts on connectivity

Capacity and competitiveness
Movement caps and curfews can reduce connectivity and create network-wide consequences.

Trust in decision-making
Poor processes create legal uncertainty and undermine trust between communities, authorities and aviation stakeholders.

Noise policy must be credible for communities and operationally feasible for airports.

The Balanced Approach is a process, not just four pillars



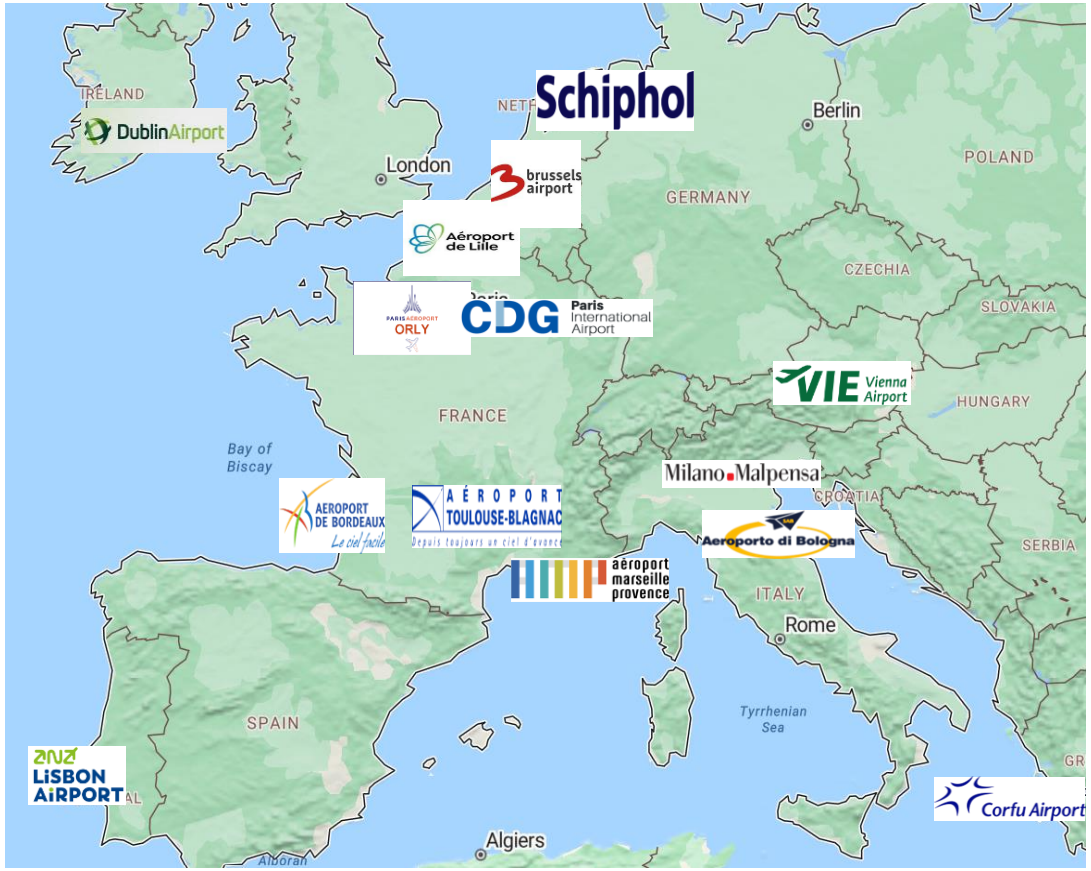
- The International Civil Aviation Association (ICAO) established the **Balanced Approach**.
- The European Union adopted this methodology in **Regulation (EU) 598/2014**, which provides the legal and procedural framework for noise-related actions at EU airports

1. Assess the noise situation
2. Determine whether a noise problem exists
3. Set a clear noise abatement objective
4. Assess available measures and cost-effectiveness
5. Adopt a noise management plan
6. Deliver, monitor and review

Assess measures under these 4 pillars in sequence. Operating restrictions come last, only where necessary, and are proportionate and cost-effective

Balanced approach processes in the EU

❑ In recent years, numerous BA processes were launched & new ones are expected:



Predetermined outcomes
Caps or curfews appear before the full assessment has been completed.

Weak objectives
Noise abatement objectives may not be clear, measurable or grounded in local evidence.

Incomplete assessment
Fleet renewal, procedures, insulation and land-use planning are not always fully assessed.

Late consultation
Stakeholders are sometimes consulted after key political choices have already been made.

Uneven application creates uncertainty for authorities, airports, airlines and communities.

Thank you

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