

Annex – 3: Review of National Policy Documents

This annex provides key points of the relevant policy documents only and is not an exhaustive review of all the policy documents.

1. Ninth FY Plan (1997-2002)

Concepts, Strategies and Targets of Long-Term Development of Ninth Plan:

Transport Sector:

Target for 20 years include “Ropeways and cable cars will be installed in remote areas and tourists spots. The construction of electric railway line along Mechi-Mahakali will be given priority. Electric railway will be constructed along the outskirts of Kathmandu Valley. The use of circular electric railway will be started and use of trolley buses and electric battery operated vehicles will be expanded in order to lessen the pollution in the Kathmandu Valley.”

The review of the eight plan shows that ten new more trolley buses were added during that period.

One of the priority areas of the ninth plan include: controlling vehicle induced pollution.

The ninth plan under the heading of other means of transport specifically focuses on Trolley Bus Service: “Thirteen km long Kathmandu-Bhaktapur trolley bus service, the only trolley bus service of Nepal, will be extended to Kathmandu ring-road during the ninth plan period. Initiation of its privatization will be done. Detailed study will be done in order to extend the trolley bus service to Tripureswor-Kirtipur, Thapathali-Patandhoka-Pulchok and Tripureswor-Maharajganj-Ringroad junction in Kathmandu Valley and necessary infrastructure will be constructed gradually to operate its services. Feasibility study will be done to operate trolley bus service in Biratnagar-Itahari-Dharan sector in the eastern region and Bhairahawa-Butwal sector in Western region and necessary infrastructure will be constructed.”

The Traffic and Transport Management section under the transport specifically focuses on vehicular pollution control. The planned activities for the ninth plan are regular vehicle emission test and on the spot vehicular pollution monitoring. Production, development and operation of zero emission vehicles will be encouraged.

Development of Infrastructure- Electricity Development:

The background on the heading highlights “ non polluting natural fuel (hydropower) can replace other polluting fuel (petroleum, gas and coal) and helps to save foreign currency and reduce the level of air pollution”.

The objectives of the plan in electricity development include: “to develop hydropower in a least effective way so as to meet the energy demand from agriculture, industry, transportation, domestic, commercial and other sector”

2. Review of Tenth Plan (2003-2008)

10th Plan has main objective of the Traffic and Transport System Sector is to make the traffic and transport system systematic and sound by making transport service reliable, safe, pollution free, and service-oriented, and to increase the quality of the transport service.

The long-term concept of the transport sector development in the 10th Plan is to develop the sustainable, reliable, low-cost, safe, comfortable, pollution free and self-reliant transport system that contributes to the overall economic, social, cultural, tourism and so on development in the kingdom of Nepal.

One of the strategy of the 10th Plan is to effectively enforce the Nepal Traffic Pollution Standard of 1999 (2056) in order to reduce the pollution due to traffic.

Policies and action policies have focussed to make transport services safe, reliable, pollution free and qualitative thus increasing the quality of services. In the Kathmandu valley efforts to reduce the pollution adopting various means of controlling the pollution caused by traffic has a specific mention. Besides, one of the action program has targeted for the expansion of Trolley Bus System.

3. Review of National Conservation Strategy (1988)

In 1988, the National Conservation Strategy (NCS) was formulated. NCS, as indicated during the Eighth Plan, recognises that in order to meet the basic needs of the Nepalese people substantial development activity must be undertaken. Such development will cover a wide range of projects.

The NCS provides that:

- An Assessment and Review Office (ARO) will be established, and it will be responsible for socio-economic and environmental assessment,
- The proponent of a development project or industrial activity that may have significant detrimental social and or environmental impacts must prepare and file with ARO a statement concerning the potential socio-economic and environmental effects of the proposed development. The impact statement must be prepared in accordance with the guidelines provided by ARO, and
- A review process that is open to both government and non-government participants and consistent with government's policy concerning public participation will consider the proponent's socio-economic and environmental impact statement.

4. Review of National Plan of Action (1996)

In 1996, National Plan of Action was prepared for the United Nations Conference on Human Settlement (HABITAT I, Turkey 3-14 June, 1996). The National Plan of Action identified prior issues, formulated a plan of action for a period of years 1996-2000 and identified key areas for international co-operation and assistance. The plan identified several priorities relating to urban environmental planning and management, including development of water and air pollution control and monitoring, land use planning and enforcement, urban basic service, and related institutional capacity building.

5. Review of NEPAP (1993)

NEPAP has identified the eight aims and policies:

- To efficiently manage natural and physical resources
- To balance and coordinate developmental efforts and environmental conservation in order to meet the basic needs of the Nepalese people in a sustainable manner
- To manage, develop, and conserve natural, cultural, physical, and heritage resources, keeping in view the social, economic, and cultural needs and potentialities of the present and future generations
- To identify and mitigate to the greatest extent possible the adverse environmental impacts caused, or likely to be caused, by human action and development projects
- To utilize, manage, develop, conserve, and recycle natural and physical resources in a manner that is not detrimental to their ability to yield long-term benefits
- To formulate and implement special protection and conservation policies and plans to safeguard important national heritage resources such as rare wildlife species, plants, biodiversity, genetic pools, environmentally sensitive areas, and manmade heritage sites of aesthetic and cultural significance
- To formulate acts and laws pertaining to various environmental issues as the needs arises and to carry out timely reform of existing legislations
- To develop institutions for the effective implementation of environmental laws and policies

Looking into the above policy statements, the utilization of the natural resources in a sustainable manner and the protection of the environmental qualities, mitigating the adverse impacts caused by human actions, formulations of policies and acts as the needs arises can be directly related to the promotion of the clean vehicles in Nepal. These policy statements also directly supports the development of specific policy and provide guidance to encourage clean technologies with legal supports.

It recognizes that the deteriorating quality of air in many urban areas is imposing significant social and economic costs on population. It relates with the high incidence of respiratory diseases raises health costs and results in lower level of productivity.

The document said that “in urban areas, haphazard growth of settlements and industrial establishments and a dramatic increase in the number of vehicles have worsened air pollution,”

Under this heading “vehicular pollution” has been highlighted. The focus is given on import of quality vehicles, quality fuels, better roads, introducing standards for vehicles, review of pricing structure of petroleum products to avoid fuel adulteration, and more emphasis is given on proper repair and maintenance of vehicles. The need for standards and monitoring mechanism is highlighted. The sad part is that there is no mention of the then running trolley bus as a no smoke vehicles and need to promote such ones. In the mitigating of adverse impact, this NEPAP does not give emphasis on promoting electrical vehicles. However there are many issues mentioned that discourages the polluting ones and hence open room for clean ones. In the identified action program also promotion of electrical vehicles is missing.

6. Review of National Transport Policy 2058

This policy document has mention of cleaner or non-polluting vehicles in the following sections

Background

In the urban areas road infrastructure and vehicle management should be done with due consideration to the environment.

Preamble

This policy has been formulated in order to promote the transportation services in the remotest areas of Nepal with minimum resources as soon as possible, to make the existing transport infrastructure more reliable and to establish an environmental friendly transportation system in the rural and urban areas with the international standard transport system of foreign countries.

Objectives

The primary objective of the National Transport Policy 2058 is to aid in the social, economic, cultural and tourism development of the nation through the extension of far reaching, reliable, low cost, safe, comfortable and self reliant transport system.

Policy

- The construction and repair and maintenance of the road infrastructures will be carried out keeping in view of the traffic safety and environmental worthiness
- Expansion of the service of solar and electric vehicles throughout the country
- To make the public transport safe, reliable, facilitating, pollution free and easily accessible to general public as per the economic condition of people
- No foreign loan investment on the transport service, which is not economically feasible

Transport Infrastructures

- To limit the traffic density and movement of vehicles within the acceptable level as per the land use and carrying capacity of cities
- Arrangement of a separate bicycle lane in cities
- Not to run the transport infrastructure and transport service likely to require subsidy from government

Public Transport Vehicles

- To allow the running of public transport vehicles only on the basis of free competition
- To reduce the load on roads, only the vehicles with appropriate Axle Load System will be allowed to run
- New vehicles will be required to get the roadworthiness certificate in five years and then in every two years
- Complete ban on import of older vehicles more than five years
- The discarded batteries, Mobil, grease or other oily wastes to be disposed only on assigned places or following the prescribed procedures
- To make the public transport reliable, facilitating, pollution free, safe and less expensive; standards will be developed for repair and maintenance and providing road permits
- The vehicle, which was made for particular purposes, will be allowed only for that purposes

For City Area

- Ban of motorized vehicles in the core city areas
- Priority to solar, electric or gas operated bus, tram, or motor
- Not to allow to increase the traffic density from a fixed density. For this city parking system and control on ownership of vehicles will be introduced
- Vehicles to be parked only on the assigned parking places
- Restriction on the running of noise and air polluting vehicles. A separate standard will be introduced for core city areas

Custom, Tax, Royalty

- To promote the private sector investment in the transport infrastructure development and promotion of pollution free vehicles, tax and custom rebate will be provided for certain duration

7. Review of SDAN (a recent document of government prepared in 2002 and still in the draft stage)

Three chapters of SDAN are found directly related: Transport; Water and Energy; and Protection of Atmosphere. The review is focused on these three chapters only.

Transport:

Although focus is on road infrastructure development, the attention is drawn to managing pollution. The pollution is linked to the increased number of vehicles, the condition of vehicles, and the poor road condition and the resulted congestion. Among the four major identified program areas, the environmental sustainability is one. In this program area the focus is given to environmental impacts assessment of road infrastructure development and developing environmental code as well as economic measures (polluter pays principle) to control vehicular pollution.

Water and Energy:

On the basis for future action, one of the basis for identified future action is “policies favorable to renewable energy over fossil fuels”. The emphasis is given to encourage the use of renewable energy to curtail the growth of fossil fuel imports and it is stressed that government policy needs to support these opportunities.

Among the objectives defined for the sustainable development of energy sector, include “to increase the use of the country’s own renewable energy sources to at least match fossil fuel imports within a 20 year time frame.

One of the identified essential programs is “Policies favorable to renewable energy over fossil fuels”:

“There are a number of ways that HMG/N could demonstrate its support for the use of country’s own renewable energy over imported fossil fuels. The fastest growth in fossil fuel use is in the transportation sector. Electric trolley buses, trains, and battery-powered vehicles could all play a much larger role in the country’s transportation sector than they do today. The government could remove the subsidy being provided on diesel fuel and provide custom and VAT privileges on the importation of electric vehicles. The department of transportation should provide priority to electric vehicles for public transportation on assigning routes on which they can run.” The promotion of time-of-day meters is also given emphasis to maximize the off-peak use of electricity.

Protection of Atmosphere:

Climate Change, Protection of Ozone Layer, and Air Pollution Control falls under the heading of Protection of Atmosphere.

Among the objectives on Climate Change include: control of GHG emissions, and maximize utilization of nations huge clean hydropower energy source. In order to achieve the, the identified essential programs/activities include GHG Emission Limitation. Under this the identified activities are:

- Establishment of trolley bus facilities in the ring road of Kathmandu Valley to limit the fossil fuel consumption and utilize hydro electricity
- Feasibility study to introduce electric trains on long distances particularly in the Terai region
- Promotion of battery operated vehicles in the valley and other major cities

On the Air Pollution Control, the primary objective set is improve the air quality of major urban centers by bringing down the level of suspended particulate under control and maintaining the present level of other gaseous pollutants. To achieve this primary objective, the secondary objective includes: promotion of zero emission vehicles and environmentally sound vehicles to control the level of gaseous pollutants. Other secondary objectives- setting of national ambient air quality standard and emission standards; the air quality monitoring networks; and the system of assessment of impact on health, physical, and economic damage of air pollution also support the promotion of zero emission vehicles.

Among the identified essential programs/activities for correcting the air pollution, the prominent ones are:

- Electric vehicles will be promoted with reduced night tariff of electricity
- Necessary infrastructure will be developed in ring-road of Kathmandu to run trolley buses
- Economic incentives and disincentives will be introduced to replace old vehicles with more environment friendly vehicles
- Introduction of polluter pays principle including penalties for violators