SLOCAT
Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport

Input to COP30 Presidency Roadmap: Transport as a System Lever for Transitioning Away from Fossil Fuels

31 March 2026

SLOCAT welcomes the opportunity to express its views and present a few inputs for the COP30 Presidency to consider towards the Inputs to COP30 Presidency Roadmap on Transitioning Away from Fossil Fuels in a Just and Orderly Manner.

SLOCAT, the Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport Partnership, is **a global multistakeholder transport partnership representing over 100+ partners,** including NGOs, IGOs, Think Tanks, Academia, Private Sector, Multi-Lateral Development Banks, UN agencies and other stakeholders. SLOCAT accelerates the transformation of transport systems and services towards inclusive, healthy, green and resilient solutions for people and the planet. We do this through narrating data and evidence-based knowledge as well as convening, strategic communications and advocacy. This helps build **collective thought leadership and influence at the crossroads of transport, sustainability, climate and social justice.** This submission has been developed in consultation with our partnership.

At COP30, the presidency announced to develop a roadmap on '*Transitioning Away from Fossil Fuels in a Just, Orderly and Equitable Manner*' para 28 (d) GST1. In the same para 28 (g) of GST1, at COP28 parties agreed to '*Accelerating the reduction of emissions from **road transport** on a range of pathways, including through development of infrastructure and rapid deployment of zero- and low-emission vehicles*'. **Transport sits at the structural core of the fossil-fuel economy** and remains the second largest and fastest growing emission sector, responsible for 15.9% of global greenhouse gas emissions and for 21.9% of global CO2 emissions in 2023. This input positions Transport as a System Lever to transition away from fossil fuels.

Q1: What are the most critical barriers — whether physical, economic, financial, institutional, technological or social— preventing a transition away from fossil fuels?

The persistence of fossil fuel dependence in transport reflects a reinforcing system of structural failures.

Economic Lock-in: Economic systems remain aligned with fossil fuel use. Fossil fuel subsidies, estimated at approximately USD 7 trillion annually, continue to distort pricing and delay the uptake of clean alternatives, which, without the equivalent

subsidies, can not compete on pricing. Governments rely heavily on fuel tax revenues, which creates fiscal resistance to moving away from fossil fuels. Capital allocation further reinforces lock-in, with continued investment in road expansion and fossil-dependent infrastructure. Existing fossil-induced assets introduce stranded asset risks that incentivise incremental rather than systemic change, like Mass clean electrification, modal shift, etc

Demand Lock-in: Transport demand is structurally embedded in car-centric urban systems and logistics networks. Rising freight demand and the continued growth of energy-intensive vehicle segments (e.g., SUVs) reinforce fossil fuel consumption. In many regions, particularly in low- and middle-income countries, the absence of viable alternatives like public transport, rail, and safe active mobility means demand cannot shift without first expanding access.

Infrastructure and Technology Lock-in: Transport systems are constrained by long-lived infrastructure. Road-dominated investment patterns limit modal shift, while electrification remains insufficient at the system scale. Misalignment between transport and energy systems, particularly grid capacity and charging infrastructure, further slows progress. As a result, even where policy ambition exists, delivery capacity remains constrained**.** Furthermore, it is important to consider regional realities like the dominance of informal transport in developing economies.

Governance and Coordination Failure: Fragmentation across ministries and levels of government prevents system-level planning. Transport remains insufficiently integrated into climate strategies, with only around 58% of NDCs including transport targets. The absence of a widely adopted quantified global goal for transport weakens alignment and accountability, while limited data systems constrain monitoring and enforcement.

Implication for the roadmap:
These barriers are mutually reinforcing. Addressing them requires coordinated interventions across demand, finance, infrastructure, and governance. Isolated or technology-only approaches without people centred outcomes will not deliver transition at the required scale or speed.

By "People-centred" we mean designing and measuring the impact of transport and energy interventions around the needs, rights and everyday realities of the people who use and depend on the system; not only technical or economic outputs. For example this would include accessibility to jobs, health and education, equity and affordability, safety and health, e.g., reduced injuries, lower air pollution exposure, livelihoods and inclusion. It also embeds meaningful participation of local communities and

decision-makers in project design. In short, people-centred outcomes reframe success from technical outputs to tangible improvements in wellbeing, opportunity and dignity.

Q2: What potential levers, whether economic, financial, institutional, social or technological,exist for accelerating the implementation of the transitioning away commitment?

2. Transport as a Strategic System Lever

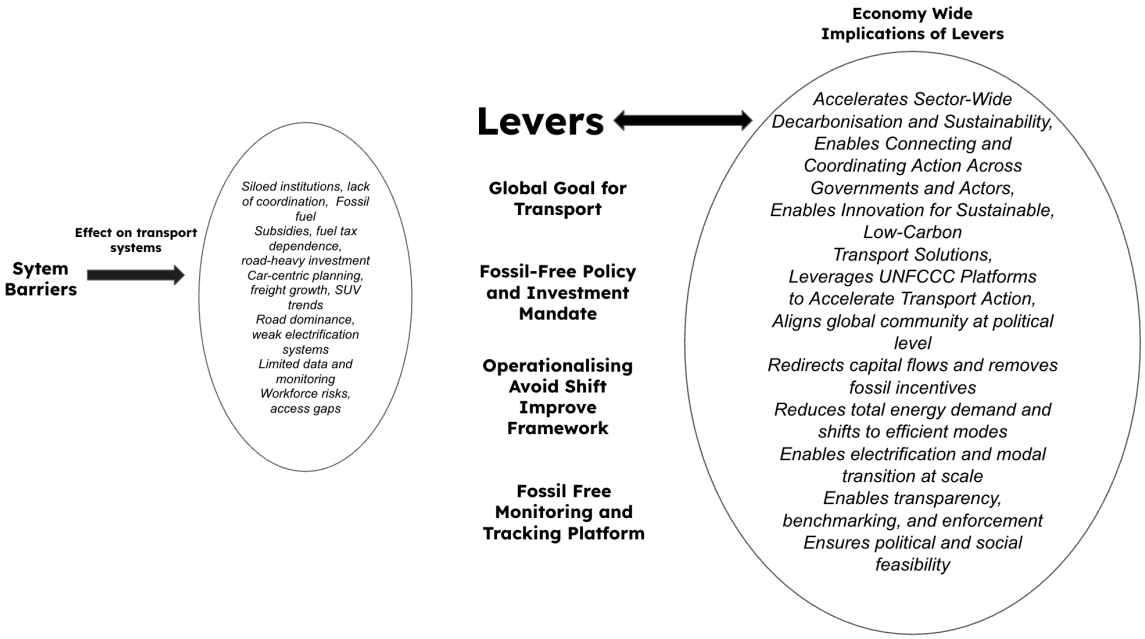
Transport sits at the structural core of the fossil-fuel economy. It accounts for the largest share of global oil demand almost 90%, and fossil fuels accounted for 95.4% of the transport sector's energy consumption in 2023; a share that has remained virtually unchanged for five decades, and is one of the fastest-growing sources of emissions. , Transport also remained the fastest-growing sector in 2023, consuming 27% of the global energy for end-uses.

Because transport both drives and reinforces fossil-fuel demand through its links to energy, land-use, trade and industry, it should be treated as a **primary demand-side lever in fossil-fuel phase-out strategies, not merely a downstream sectoral outcome**

High-Impact Levers for Transitioning Away from Fossil Fuels

The roadmap should prioritise a limited set of system-level levers capable of breaking multiple lock-ins simultaneously.

Mapping Barriers to Levers



Lever 1: Global Goal for Transport

A quantified and widely adopted global goal for transport **acts as a catalyst for transitioning away from fossil fuels** by setting in motion a coordinated shift across the system: *expanding inclusive access to low-carbon transport, reducing the sector's overall energy use, and phasing out fossil fuels through scaling up renewable and zero-emission energy sources*. By providing a shared framework to connect and coordinate action across governments and stakeholders, it aligns policy, finance, and implementation while strengthening international cooperation. At the same time, it **sends a clear signal to guide investment and climate finance,** de-risking low-carbon solutions and enabling countries, particularly low- and middle-income economies, to accelerate the shift. Embedded within UNFCCC processes, it translates climate ambition into actionable, measurable pathways for decarbonising transport at scale

⇒ Read more about What a Global Goal for Transport will Set in Motion

***Roadmap signal**: A global transport goal is essential to close governance gaps and guide fossil fuel free investments to at scale.*

Lever 2: Fossil-Free Policy and Investment Mandate

This Lever establishes a binding mandate for governments and financial institutions to redirect public budgets, Multilateral Development Bank (MDB) portfolios, and national transport plans away from vehicle-focused infrastructure, such as highway expansions, **towards people-centred access outcomes.** By prioritising the 'Avoid' and 'Shift' components of the ASI framework, the mandate ensures that investments facilitate shorter trips through integrated land-use planning and promote the most efficient, *fossil-free modes: public transport, rail, walking, and cycling*. **It aims to bridge the massive USD 2.7 trillion annual funding gap for clean transport by repurposing the USD 7 trillion currently spent on fossil fuel subsidies.** Critically, 'Avoid' and 'Shift' strategies can deliver 40–60% of the transport emission reductions needed, yet account for only 8% and 27% of NDC transport actions, respectively, making this reorientation the most cost-effective near-term lever available. Fossil-Free Policy and Investment Mandate enables large-scale investment in low-carbon transport infrastructure, including rail, urban public transport, freight corridors, and pedestrian and cycling networks. It also serves as a key lever for shifting support from fossil fuels to a renewable-based economy.

***Roadmap Implication:** Public finance should only support fossil-free transport systems*

Lever 3: Fossil-Free Transition Real-Time Monitoring and Reporting Platform

This solution leverages the Transport Data Commons as a technical backbone to host and harmonise global data on fossil-fuel subsidies, transport emissions, and finance flows in real time.

We would start by agreeing on a clear definition of "fossil-free" so projects can be tracked against it. Examples of fossil-free investments include electric bus fleets (charged with renewables), electrified rail freight terminals, renewable-powered logistics hubs and cycling/walking infrastructure.

Data is synthesised and reported through the SLOCAT Transport, Climate and Sustainability Global Status Report (GSR) and integrated into UNFCCC reporting cycles, including the Global Stocktake. By transforming monitoring into an advocacy instrument, it ensures that 'policies-as-data' tracking the quality and existence of laws are used alongside quantitative metrics to maintain political ambition and secure accountability for fossil fuel phase-outs. Consistent, transparent data is the foundation without which no global transition can be tracked, verified, or accelerated.

***Roadmap Implication**: What is not measured cannot be managed data system should become a core implementation tool.*

3. Existing Momentum: Foundations for Scaling

The roadmap can build on existing frameworks and implementation experience.

⇒ Implementation of para 28 (g) of First Global Stocktake 1/CMA.5, *Accelerating the reduction of emissions from road transport on a range of pathways, including through development of infrastructure and rapid deployment of zero- and low-emission vehicles* through this Roadmap

⇒ A call to double the share of energy efficient and fossil-free forms of land transport by 2030

⇒ Chilean Declaration endorsed by 10+countries on reducing the transport sector's energy demand by 25% by 2035, with one-third of that energy coming from renewable sources and sustainable biofuels.

⇒The Avoid–Shift–Improve framework,

⇒ Roadmap for Transformative Action on Freight Transport and Logistics

Implication for the roadmap: *The priority should be to scale and align existing approaches, not develop new frameworks.*

4. Sequencing the Transition

A clear sequence of actions is required to guide implementation**.**

Phase 1: Prevent Lock-in and Set Direction (Critical Window)

Priority actions	
Stop new fossil lock-in	No new public financing or approval of fossil-dependent transport infrastructure
Shift financial flows	Initiate large-scale reallocation of fossil fuel subsidies toward clean transport systems
Embed demand reduction	Integrate Avoid–Shift into NDCs and national transport strategies
Quantify global objective(s	Adopt a quantified global goal for transport to align policy and investment
Establish accountability systems	Operationalise a real-time monitoring platform tracking emissions, subsidies, and finance
Strategic use of the UN Decade of Sustainable Transport (2026–2035):	The Decade could function as an implementation platform, not a coordination exercise: • Scale proven solutions (public transport, active mobility, electrification) • Standardise tracking of transport emissions, finance, and fossil fuel phase-out • Align national and subnational action with global objectives

Global Stocktake 2 (2028): Enforce Course Correction

GST2 should act as a decision-enabling moment and not just an assessment.

It should encourage

- Alignment of NDCs with transport decarbonisation pathways
- Demonstrated progress on subsidy reform and demand reduction
- Clear timelines for phasing out fossil-dependent transport systems

Roadmap Implementation:
GST2 should ensure transport transforms from "underrepresented sector" to "core implementation priority."

Phase 2: Scale System Transformation

Once lock-in is avoided, the focus shifts to scaling.

- Rapid expansion of public transport, rail, and active mobility systems
- Full alignment of public and private finance with fossil-free transport
- Integration of electrification with clean energy systems
- Better spacial planning to reduce transport distances and favour Fossil free modes (e.g. co- location of housing and services, spacial distribution of production and consumption

5. Ensuring a Just, Orderly, and Equitable Transition

A credible transition must reflect differentiated national circumstances and ensure inclusion.

High-income countries must prioritise demand reduction and address overconsumption, while low- and middle-income countries require support to expand access without locking into fossil-dependent systems. **This requires scaling concessional and grant-based finance and improving access to clean technologies, ensuring the outcomes are people centred.**

Fair user fees, fair and transparent user fees using the "polluter pays" principle will help reduce demand for high carbon modes and fund the expansion of FF modes, while reducing the burden on taxpayers.

The transition must also address labour impacts. Approximately 193 million transport workers face disruption risks and require reskilling and social protection. Informal transport systems must be integrated into transition strategies to avoid exclusion.

Finally, transport systems must shift from a focus on mobility to ensuring equitable access to jobs, services, and opportunities, including for women and marginalised groups.

Implication for the roadmap: *Equity should not be considered as an add-on but rather a precondition for implementation.*

SLOCAT
Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport

Conclusion

The roadmap can prioritise transport not as a standalone sector, but as a system lever that catalyses transitioning away from fossil fuels. This requires immediate action to realign finance, reduce demand, and establish global coordination mechanisms. Partial or delayed interventions will reinforce existing lock-ins.

By acting on transport systems, the transition away from fossil fuels can be accelerated across multiple sectors, simultaneously delivering climate, economic, and social outcomes in parallel.

We thank the COP30 Presidency for the opportunity to provide inputs to the Roadmap, and SLOCAT remains available to support efforts of the Presidency. Feel free to reach out to us:

Carly Gilbert-Patrick, Secretary-General (carly.gilbertpatrick@slocatpartnership.org)
Akshay Jamdade, Policy Analyst (akshay.jamdade@slocatpartnership.org).

Few links for reference

- GIZ and SLOCAT: "Is Transport on Track for 1.5°C? Transport in Nationally Determined Contributions 3.0"
- Roadmap for Transformative Action on Freight Transport and Logistics
- UN Decade of Sustainable Transport (2026-2035)
- SLOCAT NDCs Library