



“Keeping Climate Change Solutions on Track: The Role of Rail”

Today the International Union of Railways (UIC) launches the global rail position paper on climate change: Keeping Climate Change Solutions on Track: The Role of Rail has been published with the support of United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

(Climate Express Brussels – Copenhagen, 5 December 2009) Reducing transport emissions is a crucial step in combating climate change. The rail sector is ready to be a part of the solution. To support the global leaders and decision makers going to the United Nation Climate Change Conference (COP 15) in Copenhagen this December UIC is launching the first global rail position paper on climate change. The report demonstrates the emission reduction potential of railways for society.

Keeping Climate Change Solutions on Track: The Role of Rail is one element of the “Train to Copenhagen” communications campaign, also supported by the United Nations Environment Programme, as well as WWF. To identify the emissions reduction potential of rail for society, the UIC commissioned the *Transport Research Laboratory (TRL)*, UK.

Jean-Pierre Loubinoux, the Director General of the International Union of Railways explains, “Transport brings enormous benefit to society, but it also has many external costs, including its contribution to climate change”. He continues, “this document gives an overview of why the transport sector has a special responsibility in the fight against climate change as transport is responsible for nearly one quarter of the global carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from fuel consumption. Transport is also the only sector where emissions are still increasing. Our report explains how society can benefit from the emissions reductions potential of railways. Further more, it explains how the rail sector is working continuously to improve its performance both via technological improvements and through behaviour change. Modal shift and development of smart sustainable transport systems with rail as the backbone, electrification and running railways on renewable energy are among the most efficient emissions reduction measures for society.”

The key findings of the global position paper have been extracted into the “Message from the Rail Sector to the COP 15” which was signed by rail leaders in Kyoto on the 5th of November at the UIC Asia Environment Conference. Since then it made a symbolic low carbon journey from Kyoto to Copenhagen, via the Trans-Siberian railway and the Climate Express* to Copenhagen. This message will be delivered personally to Connie Hedegaard, newly designated Commissioner for Climate Action of Denmark and host of the COP 15, on the arrival of the Climate Express in Copenhagen on the 5th of December – after the final leg of the symbolic Kyoto – Copenhagen journey.

UNEP Executive Director *Achim Steiner* will be onboard the Climate Express. He opens the global position paper: *“The Train to Copenhagen project is a showcase of sustainable transport solutions that will be part and parcel of a resource-efficient, low-carbon Green Economy of the 21st Century. By Sealing the Deal on an ambitious climate agreement in*

Copenhagen, governments will get into gear to propel the world to a low-carbon future so that societies may also finally embark on a journey to more sustainable transport.”

The Climate Express is bringing around 400 participants going to COP 15 from Brussels to Copenhagen on the 5th of the December. For more information on the Climate Express, the Train to Copenhagen communications campaign and the global rail position paper on climate change, see www.traintocopenhagen.org.

Press contact:

Liesbeth de Jong, T : + 33 1 44 49 20 53, e-mail: dejong@uic.org

Contact Train to Copenhagen Campaign:

Delphine Margot, + 33 6 22 47 54 32, email: margot@uic.org

For more information on the global rail position paper on climate change:

Margrethe Sagevik, + 33 6 28 42 12 55, email: sagevik@uic.org