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UIC, the worldwide railway organisation, is involved in Sustainable Tourism on Rail

Launch of two important UIC documents in support of the United Nations Year of International Sustainable Tourism, 2017

(Paris, 27 September 2017) In the context of steadily growing international tourism, railway tourism allows the creation of added value at economic and social level through optimisation of existing resources. There is a growing market with new proposals every year that have much to contribute to sustainable development, decentralisation, diversification and management of tourist flows.

Supporting sustainable tourism using railways is not only a strategic framework for ensuring a positive image of Railways but also a way to answer to social concerns, create a competitive advantage and manage risk. It could be also an important contribution to encourage territorial development policies. Well-designed and well-managed railway tourism products are related to the three pillars (social, environmental, economic) of sustainable development and should contribute to sustainable tourism challenges.

In this context, UIC, the International Union of Railways, home of the international railway community, is in a strategic position to promote the creation of a stable network oriented to foster the opportunities arising from this special market and to act as a catalyst between the railway industry and tourism sector. To that aim, **UIC TopRail project** has been launched as a way to raise the profile of tourism by rail all over the world by creating a working group and a website, which has the ambitious goal of presenting a global overview of the existing leisure experiences by rail with latest information provided directly by the railway companies.

The International Union of Railways, UIC, and its TopRail group have today launched two important documents in support of the United Nations Year of International Sustainable Tourism, 2017.

- The TopRail Charter on Sustainable Rail Tourism;
- A set of Guidelines for Reporting on Sustainable Rail Tourism

The Charter has been originally signed by the high-level representatives of JR East, ÖBB, Trainose, MÁV-START, Ferrocarrils de la Generalitat de Catalunya, Wattrain, Transdev, Fedecrail, Camboios de Portugal (CP), Korail and Tren de Ecuador and it will be open to other UIC members to signifying their commitment to sustainable management and maximizing social and economic benefits to their local communities.

Signatories seek to develop alliances in support of the TopRail platform and promote sustainable development considerations in their own corporate decision making.

The TopRail Guidelines on Sustainable Rail Tourism provides a framework for members to leverage their existing sustainable development activities to:

- improve patronage
- share best practices
- leverage partnerships and
- prepare a set of indicators for international reporting and certification

The TopRail Charter and Guidelines were developed over the last year in a collaborative effort facilitated by the company expert in sustainability ESG Matters IVS and incorporates a rich source of member insights and creativity.

The UIC and TopRail are making these documents publicly available to accelerate implementation of the Guidelines and share the group's innovation.

CONTACTS

UIC Communications Department: com@uic.org

UIC TOPRAIL project: <http://toprail.org/>

World Tourism Day: <http://wtd.unwto.org>