



PRESS RELEASE nr.31 /2012

UIC Sustainability Awards 2012: Winners Announced at the 12th Sustainability Conference in Venice.

Indian Railways, ÖBB, Eress and TRENITALIA receive awards.

(Venice/Paris, 26 October 2012). The 12th UIC Sustainability Conference, organised by FS and UIC, with the title *The railway to a greener life*, is being held in Venice from 25 – 27 October 2012. On the first day the conference featured high-level speakers from the United Nations, the EU Commission, Italian Government and the European Parliament, along with senior leaders from the railway sector from all over the world and an audience of over 200 delegates to discuss the role of railways in achieving a sustainable future for the transport sector. Among them Mr Mauro Moretti, CEO of Italian Railways and Vice-President of UIC, Mr Vladimir Yakunin, President of Russian Railways (RZD), Mr Marc Juhel from the World Bank, Mr Ralph Wahnschafft from the UN and Mr Keir Fitch from the European Commission.

Jean-Pierre Loubinoux, UIC Director-General, opened the conference highlighting that “Transport is the fastest growing sector in terms of CO₂ emissions, mainly due to the always increasing demand for mobility and the rail sector is the key actor of this challenging period, as it has the potentiality to provide a solution, being responsible only for less than 2% of the total CO₂ emission from transport”.

He reminded the audience of UIC’s mission statement: “To promote rail transport at world level and meet the challenges of mobility and sustainable development, using a systematic complementary approach: strategy, improvement and communication.” Then Mr Loubinoux announced that UIC has been invited to join a working group to prepare the UN Secretary General’s High Level Panel on Sustainable Transport.

Mr Loubinoux’s opening speech was followed by Mr Moretti who declared: “to achieve the environment goals, we need strong government commitment between countries; we should enhance economy and competition by eliminating political barriers.” He emphasised the “important role of rail in cities and not only as a long distance transport mode.” Finally, according to the Italian motto he said “we should tackle the most polluted modes first.”

Mr Yakunin praised UIC’s role in promoting rail as a sustainable way to develop economies and meet the challenges of society, stressed the importance of the Declaration for Sustainability signed by 50 prominent railways and underlined RZD’s ambitions to modernise and improve its services, forming a link between markets and continents.

The conference’s main topics are addressing: railway development in the framework of the three pillars of sustainability, economic, social and environmental; the role of legislative framework in the development of sustainable railway transportation; rail and sustainable cities.

On the second day, along with parallel sessions of the UIC Sustainability Networks, the RIVAS project is holding its mid-term conference. Funded within the 7th Framework Programme (FP7) of the European Commission, this project aims at reducing the environmental impact of ground-borne vibrations while safeguarding the commercial competitiveness of the railway sector. The conference is taking stock of the achieved research results and will attempt to define the way ahead.

The third edition of the UIC Sustainability Awards was held at the 12th UIC Sustainability Conference.

Awards were given in four categories: Sustainable Mobility, Energy and CO2, Sustainable Land Use and the Jury's Special Prize. The winners and highly-commended projects were as follows:

Sustainable Mobility Category Winner:

TRENITALIA: Integrated Sustainable Mobility

This initiative combines three innovative projects: Combined rail tickets and electric vehicle rentals; discounts for regular rail customers for high quality folding bicycles; and a train and car share initiative. These projects were developed to attract customers to rail while improving the sustainability of the door-to-door journey.

Sustainable Land Use Category Winner:

ÖBB Green Paper: Landscape sensitivity and potential of conflicts along the Austrian railway network

This ambitious project assessed the biodiversity characteristics of Austrian railway infrastructure and highlighted areas of particular sensitivity and conflict. The project created an interactive mapping tool to better plan future infrastructure works with a minimum of environmental impact and to help promote and enhance biodiversity.

Energy and CO2 Category Winner:

Eress Partnership: Erex sustainable railway energy system

Erex is a that helps infrastructure managers and train operators reduce energy consumption, and CO2 emissions and save money by providing exact energy consumption data. The Erex system was developed by a non-profit organization, Eress, jointly owned by its partners, Infrabel, Banedanmark, Jernbaneverket and Trafikverket.

Jury's Special Prize:

Indian Railways: Improving Energy Efficiency in Railways by Leveraging Clean Development Mechanism

This project improved the energy efficiency of lighting in railway residential quarters in India. In total 1.41 million new low-energy light bulbs were installed. As well as delivering energy and CO2 savings, the project successfully leveraged the Clean Development Mechanism to support the project (the CDM is a global environmental investment and credit scheme developed by the United Nations).

UIC Director General Jean-Pierre Loubinoux said:

"The UIC Sustainability Awards showcase some of the best initiatives to promote sustainable development in the railway sector. The winners represent the diversity of the topic, ranging from biodiversity protection, multi-modal connections, energy management and a project that leverages international climate financing. This was a highly competitive process with excellent candidates and we congratulate all the entrants for their dedication to improve sustainability."

Notes to Editors

Background to the Awards

The UIC Sustainability Awards were introduced at the 10th UIC Sustainability Conference, which was held in London in September 2008. The aim of the Awards is to put the spotlight on and reward excellence to ground breaking projects and the significant efforts made within the rail sector to continuously improve its sustainability performance.

Highly Commended

In addition to the Winners, several projects received a Highly Commended certificate for excellent contributions to sustainable development in the railway sector. These were:

- Highly Commended: SusStations Partnership for SusStations – Supporting Sustainable Stations
- Highly Commended: Norfolk Community Rail Partnership Mobile Phone App
- Highly Commended: SBSN (Dutch Railways Remediation Foundation) Green on-site soil remediation
- Highly Commended: Italferr S.p.a. (Italian rail infrastructure manager) - Carbon Footprint in the design and construction phases
- Highly Commended: JBV (Norwegian rail infrastructure manager) – LCA Methodology for Railway Infrastructure - the Follo Line

For more information on the Winners and the Highly Commended entries please see www.uic.org/environment

Cleaner Development Mechanism

The Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), defined in Article 12 of the Protocol, allows a country with an emission-reduction or emission-limitation commitment under the Kyoto Protocol (Annex B Party) to implement an emission-reduction project in developing countries. Such projects can earn saleable certified emission reduction (CER) credits, each equivalent to one tonne of CO₂, which can be counted towards meeting Kyoto targets.

The mechanism is seen by many as a trailblazer. It is the first global, environmental investment and credit scheme of its kind, providing a standardized emissions offset instrument, CERs. A CDM project activity might involve, for example, a rural electrification project using solar panels or the installation of more energy-efficient boilers. The mechanism stimulates sustainable development and emission reductions, while giving industrialized countries some flexibility in how they meet their emission reduction or limitation targets.

For more information see: http://unfccc.int/kyoto_protocol/mechanisms/clean_development_mechanism/items/2718.php

To learn more visit <http://www.uic-environment.org/> and <http://www.rivas-project.eu/>

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