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The UIC Sustainability Impact Awards 2026: Celebrating the best of mobility for people, the planet, and prosperity

(Paris, 25 September 2026) On the evening of 23 September 2026, the UIC Sustainability Impact Awards ceremony took place during the International Trade Fair for Transport Technology (InnoTrans), at Alstom's booth, in partnership with the Sustainable Development Foundation.

The awards were made possible thanks to the support of Platinum Sponsor Alstom and Silver Sponsor AECOM.

This important contest recognised and showcased outstanding achievements in the railway sector worldwide, highlighting best practices and innovative projects from railway companies, which have had a demonstrable impact and have contributed to making rail more environmentally friendly, efficient, and ethically responsible.

The Chilean State Railways (EFE) emerged as the overall winner, with a remarkable **four** projects shortlisted by the jury across the four categories of Climate Change, Adaptation and Resilience; Modal Shift; Healthy Cities and Communities; and Seamless Connectivity. These projects highlight EFE's wide-ranging approach to sustainability, from strengthening climate resilience to promoting low-carbon and better-connected mobility. Each category aligns with the UIC 2030 Vision "Design a Better Future" and links to a number of United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The event was opened by UIC Chair Yuji Fukasawa who extended a warm thanks to the finalists for sharing their best practices and experiences, underlining the importance of cooperation in the rail industry to spread a positive narrative about the sector.

UIC Director General François Davenne then addressed the participants by congratulating the 27 shortlisted projects and officially launched the fourth edition of the [Global Rail Sustainability Report](#), in which each initiative was mentioned. In his remarks, he underlined the strategic role of rail as the world enters the UN Decade of Sustainable Transport, stressing that sustainable mobility requires stronger policy support, greater investment and closer alignment between railways and public transport through coordinated advocacy.

He also highlighted UIC analysis which shows that emerging economies – where increasing rail's market share could avoid significant quantities of emissions – have untapped potential, while calling for new funding mechanisms to help close the investment gap. Looking ahead, Davenne announced that UIC and its partners will be launching the MOVE Credits Coalition next month in Rabat, in an event hosted by the Moroccan National Railways (ONCF), to help rail and public transport better access carbon markets and unlock additional revenue for

investment. “Rail is already delivering real impact in terms of sustainability,” he said, “now we must work together to align our message and unlock the finance needed to scale up sustainable mobility.”

Winners of the UIC Sustainability Impact Awards 2026

Railways of the Islamic Republic of Iran (RAI) for *Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience*

Advanced nano-costing solutions for railway fastening systems: enhancing infrastructure resilience and sustainability in arid and corrosive environments

“RAI received the UIC Sustainability Impact Award for turning technical innovation into proven real-world results, with the potential to make railway infrastructure more resilient and sustainable worldwide.” **Margrethe Sagevik**

The Italian Railway Network (RFI) for *Accessibility, Diversity and Inclusion*

A location intelligence-based methodology to shape the development of assistance services for Persons with Disabilities or with Reduced Mobility

“What makes this initiative stand out isn't just the mapping interface, but the integration layer underneath, which transforms data across different governance scales into a strategic engine for equitable network planning.” **Jorge Morera Ballester**

RSSB for *Healthy Cities and Communities*

Clean air for Great Britain's rail

“There were many strong applications, but I was particularly impressed by the RSSB project because it tackles air pollution as a critical health issue and turns robust monitoring into practical action to protect the health of passengers and rail staff across a network with more than 1.7 billion passenger journeys a year.” **Tu-My Tran**

Italo for *Seamless Connectivity*

Integrated Connectivity

“The project stood out for its strong collaboration among key stakeholders and its highly replicable approach, offering a model with clear potential to be scaled across the country and adapted to other regions.” **Carolina Chantrill**

ONCF for *Natural Resources Management*

Rewater train: making the most of every drop

“By transforming train-washing wastewater into a circular resource, ONCF has demonstrated that climate-smart innovation is not just an environmental necessity but a scalable economic opportunity; their model provides a measurable, replicable blueprint for resource efficiency and water conservation that other operators can adopt.” **Bertrand Goalou, Hildegard Meyer, Evan Freund**

Slovenian Railways (SŽ) for *Green Communication Campaign*
Sowing a Sunny Tomorrow – a regenerative green communication campaign led by Slovenian Railways

“The communication campaign has all the ingredients to be award-winning: environmental responsibility, engagement of local communities and even reviving local biodiversity by transforming major rail corridors across Slovenia into vibrant, blooming sunflower fields. The campaign shares the same vision as EIT Urban Mobility: the future of transport can only be sustainable. Congratulations to the winning team!” **Eloy Gomez**

Irish Rail (IE) for *Energy and Decarbonisation*
Conservation-led deep energy retrofit of a national monument (protected structure) - Connolly Station, Dublin, Ireland

“The Irish Rail project to restore a grand, historic train station was grand in its own way, making this station an icon of sustainability as well as of architecture.” **Lewis Fulton**

KORAIL for *Modal Shift*
KORAIL’s “Love Regional Rail Travel” modal shift project to reduce dependency on cars in depopulating regions

“KORAIL’s Regional Love Rail Travel initiative shows how smart incentives, strong local partnerships, and a clear modal shift can deliver real climate, social, and economic benefits for depopulating regions, advancing key SDGs, from sustainable communities to climate action.” **Holger Dalkmann**

UIC would once again like to congratulate all of the winners for their extraordinary contributions and encourage continued innovation in the pursuit of a more sustainable and connected future.

To learn more about the UIC Sustainability Impact Awards, please visit <https://uic.org/event/uic-sustainability-awards/>.

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