



In cooperation with
EIM, UIC, UITP and UNIFE



Fighting Climate Change: Railway Community Aspiration

1.

The evidence of climate change is ever clearer, as is the risk of substantial environmental damage for future generations. The need for urgent action has been recognised in the Commission's Communication where global climate change is to be limited to 2 degrees Celsius, seeking a 20% reduction of CO₂ emissions by 2020.

The railway community welcomes the European Union's 'call for action' and outlines below how the railways could assist global society and the transport sector as whole to reduce its CO₂ emissions - a sector which is responsible for a quarter of Europe's total CO₂ emissions.

2.

The railway system is currently the transport mode with the lowest specific CO₂ emissions on average. Consequently, **the most significant contribution to the EU climate change policy for the transport sector would be a modal shift from the roads and air to the railways**. To take a simple example: every journey made by train instead of by car in Germany reduces CO₂ emissions by two thirds; for a train journey instead of a flight, CO₂ emissions are as much as 70 % lower (per passenger).

The railways offer significant environmental advantages in general but are looking towards capturing more traffic from the roads and air in three segments in particular:

- ❖ Passenger traffic in agglomerations and city centres.
- ❖ High speed passenger services - up to 1000 km.
- ❖ Freight traffic on medium and long distances, as part of intermodal traffic/logistic chains.

3.

Despite its obvious CO₂ advantage, the railway sector is not complacent and seeks on the contrary to improve its position as the lowest CO₂ emitter. This involves implementing continuous improvement programmes, ranging from operational to technological solutions. Over the last few years a number of European railways have launched energy-saving programmes showing specific CO₂ emission reductions of up to 25%.

Moreover, the European railway community is committed to setting joint targets by the end of 2007 for improving the environmental and energy performance of railway services in Europe for the period to 2020.

4.

The railways have made considerable progress in terms of transport performance and reliability in recent years.

The passenger sector is stable, the high-speed rail system is growing rapidly and innovative metro and light rail systems have significantly improved the image, use and modal share of rail in many cities. The rail freight business has started to grow again and in some countries the rail freight market share is increasing after years of decline.

5.

The railways have improved despite the unfavourable and unbalanced competitive framework conditions prevalent in Europe. In a normal market economy, supply and demand are balanced by market driven prices.

However, this basic mechanism does not work in the European transport sector, as prices are distorted by the political framework relating to taxation, subsidies etc. **The “polluter pays” principle with the inclusion of externalities is widely supported - but still does not apply in practice in the transport sector.**

At present, European legislation does not allow for price adjustments in the transport sector reflecting real market conditions; environmental cost factors can only be taken into account in specific situations, not as a principle. Perhaps this distortion is the main reason why the transport sector is the fastest growing ‘polluter’.

6.

In summary, the European Railway Community is fully committed to improving its own environmental credentials, but **the only way to achieve significant reductions in CO₂ emissions in the European transport sector is to actively support modal shift.**

The European Railway Community therefore calls upon the European Member States, European Parliament and European Commission to take the following decisions:

Fighting Climate Change - the Railway Community Aspiration:

- ❖ Policy measures should make environmental advantages & improvements price effective
- ❖ Define a fair infrastructure charging mechanism in the framework of the “Eurovignette Directive” by:
 - putting an end to the current unbalanced legal provisions prohibiting the inclusion of climate change and pollution costs in road infrastructure charging policies in the EU.
 - including appropriate taxation and tolls for car traffic in agglomerations and city centres & earmarking these funds for improving regional and local public transportation
 - internalising external costs in pricing policies for road sector freight traffic & earmarking these funds for rail-related infrastructure/TEN projects
 - speeding up the Eurovignette timetable i.e. presenting the Commission impact studies announced previously and the necessary legislative proposals by the end of 2007 (instead of June 2008)
- ❖ Discontinuing unsustainable political treatment, such as aviation fuel tax exemptions.
- ❖ Creating legal instruments to move a significant proportion of hazardous goods from road to rail.
- ❖ Correcting the European Emission Trading Scheme which at present penalises the (electrified and) environmentally friendly railways; instead make it an effective system of “cap and trade” for pollution-intensive transport modes.
- ❖ Using campaigns to raise awareness regarding the impact of transport on the environment.
- ❖ Creating economic incentives for shippers who shift to environmentally friendly modes.

7.

Echoing the title of the Commission's White Paper on European Transport Policy for 2010: It is "time to decide" - to decide and to act now. The European Railway Community stands united in signing this aspiration and is represented by the following railway associations:



Community of European Railway and
Infrastructure Companies



Johannes Ludewig, Executive Director



International Association of Public Transport

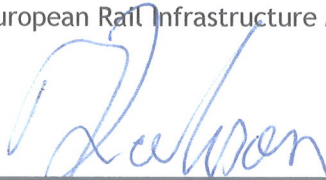
Euroteam



Brigitte Ollier, Director



European Rail Infrastructure Managers



Michael Robson, Secretary General



The Association of European Railway Industries



Michael Clausecker, General Director



International Union of Railways



Luc Aliadière, Chief Executive