



Press release nr 12

The International Union of Railways (UIC) supports the UN World Environment Day “Your Planet Needs you – UNite to Combat Climate Change”

UIC will run a special train, the “Climate Express”, in 6 months’ time from Brussels to Copenhagen to bring NGO representatives, decision-makers and journalists to the UN COP 15 conference on Climate Change by train.

(Paris, 5 June 2009). The UN World Environment Day is taking place today under the slogan “Your Planet Needs You – UNite to Combat Climate Change”. Through this day the United Nations intends to raise worldwide awareness of the environment and to enhance political attention and action. UIC also welcomes the launch of the UN-led campaign “Seal the Deal” for the promotion of a definitive agreement on climate change when governments meet at COP 15 in Copenhagen in December this year.

UIC, the worldwide association representing the railways fully embraces the *World Environment Day* and the “Seal the Deal” campaign. *Jean-Pierre Loubinoux*, UIC Director General underscores: “*Rail is the most climate friendly mode for transportation and plays a key role in significantly reducing global greenhouse emissions from the transport sector, which is one of the few sectors in which emissions are consistently rising. I am happy to see so many countries in the world developing new rail projects which will have a considerable impact in terms of environmental, not to mention economic and social benefits as well*”.

The EU Inventory Report of the European Environmental Agency, issued on 29 May, show that greenhouse gas emissions in the European Union fell by 1.2 % between 2006 and 2007 and it is expected that the Kyoto target – to achieve an average 8 % reduction in relation to 1990 levels for the period 2008 – 2012 - will be reached. This is despite the fact that transport emissions have risen, for the most part in the road sector where emissions are up 5.3 %. To date greenhouse gas emissions from international aviation and maritime transport have been excluded from national totals, yet the emissions from these modes have grown steadily since 1990, reaching about 6 % of total EU emissions in 2007.

UIC urges representatives of governments to include transport in the definitive agreement on climate change when they meet at COP15 in Copenhagen and highlights the fact that curbing the growth of and reducing transport emissions is one of the most vital steps in fighting global warming. UIC also stresses the need for new transport policies promoting behaviour change for all transport users. Furthermore UIC urges decision-makers to ensure that the “next generation Kyoto protocol” places greater emphasis on the rail sector’s contribution to reducing emissions in the transport sector.

Six months’ from today, on 5 December 2009, UIC will run the *Climate Express* from Brussels to Copenhagen to bring NGO representatives, decision-makers and journalists to the UN COP15 Conference on Climate Change by train and inform the UNFCCC participants of the role that rail

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can play in solving the challenges of mitigation and adaptation. The *Climate Express* is part of the *Train to Copenhagen communication campaign* and includes a package of promotional activities highlighting the environmental performance of the rail sector, including a website, a global rail position paper and a symbolic journey from Kyoto to Copenhagen, during which the joint declaration formulated by the Asian members during the Kyoto Seminar (November 2009) will be conveyed. The Train to Copenhagen campaign will provide an overall framework and catalyst for national rail promotion campaigns. The Climate Express has attracted support from global organizations including NGOs (e.g. WWF), the COP15 organization itself and the United Nations (UNEP, UNFCCC, UNGC).

Note to the editors

UIC is the International Union of Railways – the world-wide organisation for international cooperation among railways and for the promotion of rail transport at world level in order to meet the challenges of mobility and sustainable development. UIC has 200 members on all five continents and is headquartered in Paris (www.uic.org).

UIC is working continuously to further improve the environmental and sustainability advantages of the rail sector – including its energy efficiency. UIC is also leading the rail sector's work in adapting rail infrastructure to the consequences of climate change.

One year ago at the EEA Headquarters in Copenhagen UIC launched the internet tools EcoPassenger (www.ecopassenger.org) and EcoTransIT (www.ecotransit.org) to calculate and compare the energy consumption and emissions of different transport modes, first for use in Europe and now being extended to other world regions. The tools are designed to assist transport users by increasing awareness of the consequences of the choices they make in their everyday lives for business and personal trips and for the freight supply chain. The tools are also aimed at decision-makers for the inclusion of sustainable choices in their transport policies.

UIC will be attending the continuation of the UNFCCC preparatory meetings for the COP 15, SB 30 (Subsidiary Bodies) in Bonn next week with an exhibition stand and an official side event to promote the Train to Copenhagen communication campaign (www.traintocopenhagen.com).

For more information please contact

Liesbeth de Jong, UIC Press relations, T. : + 33 1 44 49 20 53, email: dejong@uic.org

Delphine Margot, UIC Communications adviser in charge of the Train to Copenhagen campaign,
T : + 33 1 44 49 20 55, email: margot@uic.org

Margrethe Sagevik, UIC Senior Sustainable Development Advisor, e-mail : sagevik@uic.org,