



UNION INTERNATIONALE DES CHEMINS DE FER  
INTERNATIONALER EISENBAHNVERBAND  
INTERNATIONAL UNION OF RAILWAYS

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## **The international Union of Railways (UIC) welcomes the official Kyoto Protocol entry into force.**

*This important international move towards tackling the climate change challenge has to be followed by steps to include international transport policies and sustainable mobility into the climate change framework.*

*The CO<sub>2</sub> advantage of the railways provides the means of achieving the aims of the Kyoto Protocol and making a key contribution to sustainable mobility. It is time to act!*

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(Paris, 15.02.2005) The Kyoto Protocol - an international and legally binding agreement to reduce greenhouse gases emissions world wide - enters into force on Wednesday 16th of February. All 141 countries that have signed the protocol have agreed to a total cut in greenhouse-gas emissions of at least 5% less than their 1990 levels in the commitment period 2008-2012. The Kyoto Protocol does not tell how to meet this target, it will be up to the National legislation of each country. Regarding the transport sector this will for many countries include land transport, while international transport like aviation and shipping are not concerned by the national aims set by the Kyoto Protocol.

However, transport causes 25-30% of the global CO<sub>2</sub>-emissions and needs to be fully adopted into the climate change framework. The CO<sub>2</sub>-emissions can be significantly lowered with a modal shift towards rail and public transport. According to a recent study by IWW/INFRAS (October 2004) on the continuously increasing external costs of transport, climate change represents the most important cost category in Europe – like many similar global studies. The costs are estimated to be 196 billion Euro (that means 30% of the total external costs). The railways causes only 1,9 %. The rail sector is continuously working to improve its environmental performance, and its CO<sub>2</sub> advantage in itself offers the way further towards sustainable mobility in all regions.

New mechanisms need to be negotiated that are appropriate to improving transports contribution to emission reduction. The existing transport funding are not allocated to encouraging sustainable transport networks. Funds need to be allocated towards sustainable consumption and products, giving priority to energy efficient low carbon intensive products and services. This means investing in new infrastructure for rail and public transport to make it more attractive.

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Developing countries are not included in the Kyoto Protocol. Facing a boom in mobility and transport demand in all regions of the world we are up to serious economical, environmental and social challenges! It is about time to think new, rail is offering its contribution! Railways offer sustainable mobility through efficient transport built on social equity, low environmental impact and positive economic growth.

**For more information please contact :**

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