

Announcement of “Railways & Environment” Conference to be held in Delft, Netherlands (16-17 December 2010)

Delft University of Technology and Europoint Rail Technology Conferences and Exhibitions are organising the Railways & Environment conference on 16 – 17 December 2010.

Jean-Pierre Loubinoux, UIC Director General, and Henning Schwartz, Head of UIC Sustainable Development Unit, have taken part in the conference’s scientific committee.

The conference will focus on the environmental impact of the rail system as a transport mode in general, and more specifically as a mechanical system. This impact is felt at several levels and is often interrelated.

Particularly in densely populated areas such as the Netherlands, a country situated on an important corridor, rail transport ought to offer an environmentally-friendly solution, but should at the same time affect the (living) environment as little as possible. However, environmental issues are also relevant in less densely populated countries. Themes such as the renewability of railway systems, waste management, rail emissions and air quality are applicable to railway operations anywhere. This conference is unique in that it looks at railways and the environment from various perspectives. It therefore offers a platform for learning, international knowledge sharing, innovation and formulating strategic policy as well as good opportunities for networking.

Despite the fact that rail transport is less burdensome for the environment than road transport, the rail system also has its unfavourable environmental effects. Think for example of air pollution caused by diesel trains and of soil contamination on railway tracks and in yards. Other environmental impacts are mechanical: vibration and noise emissions, which have a major impact on the environment. In addition, a rail system as a landscape element leads to landscape and ecological segregation and may lead to the disintegration of urban areas. All these factors are increasingly important considering the expansion of high-speed networks in Europe and beyond.

Questions that will be addressed and answered during this two-day conference are: how can soil contamination and energy consumption be reduced as much as possible? How can the negative effect on air quality caused by rail be minimised to the utmost degree? Issues such as noise and vibration emissions reductions will also be discussed. Furthermore, the conference will address sustainability and renewability in the life cycle approach and will deal with technical ideas and innovations in total life cycle management. In short, over two days participants will catch up on the environmental effects of railways and will be advised on how to deal with them. Participants will also be informed about innovations and opportunities for creative industrial solutions.

The conference targets rail professionals such as transport operators, rail infrastructure managers, environmental policy planners and those involved in fundamental and applied research in this area as well as the supply industry.



More information on the Conference programme and online conference registration: www.railways-environment.com

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