

ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE: A CONSOLIDATED STRATEGIC DIRECTION FOR THE WORLD ROAD ASSOCIATION

Since 1909, the World Road Association has been a leader in advancing technological changes and addressing social and economic challenges linked to the road sector. The Association has developed and promulgated policy and practices that contribute to safer and more efficient management and use of roads and road transport systems within an integrated, sustainable transport context.

Over the past forty years, the Association has been specifically concerned with the environment, as clearly stated in the conclusions of the 1979 World Road Congress in Vienna: *"Man wants a better environment, with the mobility to enjoy it.."*. Consequently, the Association has promoted road projects that respect the environment and reduce energy consumption. These concerns have broadened and gained more importance with each successive four year work cycle, with sustainability a key focus over the last two decades.

Since the 1990s, climate change has emerged as a critical global environmental concern, including questions about greenhouse gas emissions from human activity. Transportation is a major contributor to these emissions. Since 1970, greenhouse gas emissions from transportation have more than doubled globally, increasing at a faster rate than any other sector. On-road greenhouse gas emissions have more than tripled, accounting for almost 80% of this increase. In 40% of countries, transportation is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions.

Current projections indicate that freight transport emissions will quadruple by 2050 with freight replacing passenger transport as the main source of greenhouse emissions from surface transport. The foreseeable increase in freight represents an unprecedented challenge for the World Road Association in terms of capacity management as well as the implications for global mitigation measures to address climate change.

The Association supports the need to implement ambitious targets with the specific long term goal of reducing global emissions by at least 60% below 2010 levels by 2050. Apropos the need for targets and in recognition of the potential significant impact of emissions from the road transport sector, together with the vulnerability of road infrastructure to the effects of climate and weather patterns, climate change has been on the agenda of the Association for the last twelve years. In particular, it is noted that:

- many countries are already experiencing permafrost melting, coastal erosion, more frequent occurrence of extreme weather events from climate change, leading to questions of how to mitigate negative impacts and how best to adapt the road system to these changes; and
- the significant and growing contribution of on-road transportation to global greenhouse gas emissions has made climate change mitigation a growing concern to road administrations.

TO ADDRESS THESE CHALLENGES, WE, THE WORLD ROAD ASSOCIATION, THROUGH OUR 121 MEMBER COUNTRIES:

ADOPTED A NEW STRATEGIC PLAN for 2016-2019 that takes these challenges into consideration and are increasing our efforts to address them. We have established a specific strategic theme to consider climate change issues, in particular: adaption strategies and resiliency, environmental consideration in road design and operation and emergency management and disaster preparedness. The works of our more traditional strategic themes—including infrastructure design, operation, and financing--will also embed similar concerns.

PUBLISHED A FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT on adaptation to climate change and will monitor its implementation and relevance in various countries throughout the coming four years. We will also deliver a toolbox to manage the risk of natural hazards.

AIM TO PROVIDE GUIDANCE AND ENCOURAGE ACTION by our members by building on our program in the following areas:

- **Adaptation** of the road infrastructure and increasing the resiliency of the road transport system to climate change, in various economic and climate conditions;
- **Reduction** of the carbon footprint of the road transport system (infrastructure, operation, organisation) and establishment of reduction goals to measure and report progress;
- **Mitigation** of the negative impacts of road transport on climate change; and
- **Sustainability** of road construction, operation, rehabilitation, and maintenance.

COMMIT to address adaptation and mitigation in the road sector by means of this set of directions, measures and tools, building on past experience and existing expertise within the Association;

UNDERTAKE, through this comprehensive set of strategies and actions, a new **Low Carbon Road and Road Transport Initiative (LC2RTI)**; and hereby

CONTRIBUTE this initiative, along with similar initiatives from other transport sectors, to the works and achievements of the COP21 conference in Paris.