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Public consultation

## Green Paper “TEN-T: A policy review – towards a better integrated trans-European transport network at the service of the common transport policy”

### Statement of the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention

#### **A The legal Framework (Alpine Convention and Transport Protocol)**

*The Alpine Convention covers the Alpine region and in this frame the objective is to reduce the volume and dangers of interalpine and transalpine traffic to a level which is not harmful to humans, animals and plants and their habitats.*

*Therefore a transport Protocol has been formulated, with the following objectives:*

*The Contracting Parties undertake to pursue a sustainable transport policy which will:*

- (a) reduce the negative effects of and risks posed by intra- Alpine and transalpine transport to a level which is not harmful to people, flora and fauna and their environments and habitats, inter alia, by transferring an increasing amount of transport, especially freight transport, to the railways, in particular by creating appropriate infrastructures and incentives in line with market principles;*
- (b) contribute to the sustainable development of the habitats and economic areas in which people living in the Alpine region dwell and work by implementing a transport policy which encompasses all modes of transport and is harmonised between the various Contracting Parties;*
- (c) help to reduce and, as far as possible, avoid any impact which might endanger the role and natural resources of the Alpine region, the importance of which goes beyond the boundaries of the Alpine areas, and threaten its natural and cultural heritage;*
- (d) ensure the movement of intra-Alpine and transalpine transport at economically bearable costs by increasing the efficiency of transport systems and promoting modes of transport which are more environmentally-friendly and more economic in terms of natural resources;*
- (e) ensure fair competition between modes of transport.*

*The Contracting Parties undertake to develop the transport sector while observing the precautionary principle, the preventive principle and the polluter-pays principle.*

*The General transport-policy strategy aims at ensuring sustainability; the Contracting Parties undertake to promote rational, safe transport management in a harmonised, cross-border network that:*

- (a) ensures coordination between different carriers, modes and types of transport and encourages intermodality;*
- (b) optimises the use of existing transport systems and infrastructures in the Alps, including through the use of electronic data transmission, and charges external and infrastructure costs to polluters in line with the damage caused;*
- (c) encourages, by means of structural and regional planning measures, the transfer of the carriage of passengers and goods to more environmentally-friendly means of transport and to intermodal transport systems;*



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*(d) recognises and utilises the opportunities for reducing traffic volume.*

*Rail transport and shipping have therefore to be furthered for long-distance transport, and for economic activity and tourism in the Alps. The Contracting Parties shall promote:*

- (a) the improvement of railway infrastructure by constructing and developing the major transalpine railway routes, including connecting routes and suitable terminals;*
- (b) the further optimisation and modernisation of railway undertakings, in particular for cross-border transport;*
- (c) the adoption of measures designed in particular to transfer the long-distance carriage of goods to rail and to further harmonise transport-infrastructure user charges;*
- (d) intermodal transport systems and the further development of rail transport;*
- (e) the increased use of rail and the creation of user-friendly synergies between long-distance passenger transport, regional transport and local transport.*

*In order to reduce the volume of transit goods carried by land, the Contracting Parties shall encourage additional efforts to increase the use of shipping. On the other hand the Contracting Parties shall refrain from constructing any new, large-capacity roads for transalpine transport. Large-capacity road projects for intra-Alpine transport may be carried out only if:*

- (a) the objectives set out in Article 2(2)(j) of the Alpine Convention can be attained by means of appropriate precautionary and compensatory measures as determined by the environmental impact assessment;*
- (b) the transport requirements cannot be met by making better use of existing road and railway capacity, by extending or constructing new railway transport and shipping infrastructures, by improving combined transport, or by any other transport organisation measures;*
- (c) the results of the advisability study have shown that the project is economically viable, the risks are contained and the result of the environmental impact assessment is positive;*
- (d) regional planning and/or programmes and sustainable development are taken into consideration.*

*Concerning Air transport the Contracting Parties undertake to reduce as far as possible the environmental damage caused by air transport, including aircraft noise, without transferring it to other regions. Taking account of the objectives of this Protocol, they shall make efforts to limit or, where appropriate, prohibit airdrops in places other than airfields. In order to protect the wild fauna, the Contracting Parties shall take appropriate measures to impose time and place limits on non-motorised air transport for leisure purposes.*

*The Contracting Parties undertake to improve public transport systems from airports on the fringes of the Alps to the various Alpine regions so as to be able to satisfy transport demand without further damage to the environment. In this context, the Contracting Parties shall restrict as far as possible the construction of new airports and any major extension of existing airports in the Alps.*

The transport Protocol has been signed by all Contracting Parties of the Convention including the European Community and ratified by Austria, France, Germany, Liechtenstein and Slovenia. The European Commission, on 23 December 2008, adopted a proposal for a decision of the Council on the ratification of this Protocol. The European Parliament has already given its positive opinion: “The Commission considers that the Alpine Convention and in particular the Transport Protocol are instruments which help the European Community to achieve its objective of a sustainable transport policy in a large, highly sensitive cross-border zone. Therefore, the European community is called upon to conclude the Transport Protocol.” A final decision of the Council is now awaited.



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## B Observations for the TEN-T development

Under the point of view of the Alpine Convention, particularly in light of the requirements of the transport Protocol, the approach proposed in the green paper TEN-T represents a considerable improvement. The Green Paper promotes the development of transalpine transport in order to reduce negative effects and risks, to contribute to the sustainable development of the habitats and economic areas and to ensure the movement of transalpine transport at economically bearable costs by increasing the efficiency of transport systems and promoting modes of transport which are more environmentally friendly. All these aspects are mentioned in the Green Paper towards a better integrated transeuropean transport network.

To create a single, multimodal network it is important to work at different levels mainly concerning **infrastructure**, **logistics** and **information**. Therefore, for the optimal interconnection of modes and truly multi-modal system, the integration of the nodes as transfer points between different modes of transport as well as between long-distance and urban traffic in the planning of the transport network is essential.

Under Climate Change the conditions for transport and its impact on environment and health are also changing (not only in case of shipping) the conditions for transport and mobility, therefore a future TEN-T development also has to take into account the predictable changes on temperature or precipitations.

In general, it is proposed to align the further TEN-T development with the requirements of the Transport Protocol of the Alpine Convention as much as possible. Under such prerequisite the new TEN – T approach can be seen as a contribution to the implementation of the Climate Action Plan of the Alpine Convention and concrete solutions.

The objective of the Climate Action plan is to shift traffic towards more eco and climate-friendly means of transportation and significantly reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions linked to transports.

The measures of the Climate Action plan concerning transport are as follows:

- 1- shift as much of the transalpine traffic of goods and persons as possible towards means of transportation emitting less CO<sub>2</sub> :
  - a. spur and support the cooperation between national managers of railway networks, companies and local authorities to improve the service offer in terms of quality and frequency on existing railway networks, whether it be for the transport of goods or for the transport of persons (more particularly the Brenner plan and the BRAVO project, the IQ-C plan on the Gotthard/Simplon corridor , the French-Italian programme on the historical line between Turin and Lyon, the Alpfrail project on the Tauern axis)



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- b. continue with the implementation of new transalpine railway infrastructures on all major Alpine passes in order to create a trans-european network adapted for traffic shift : Swiss programme NLFA (*nouvelles liaisons ferroviaires alpines* or new Alpine railway networks), priority projects of the EU (axis Lyon - Turin - Trieste- Divaca - Ljubljana – Ukrainian border, and Berlin - Munich - Verona - Bologna - Naples via the Brenner)
  - c. continue with the surveys initiated by the transport Ministers of the Alpine countries within the Zurich Declaration in order to determine the most efficient means to regulate road traffic for goods through the Alps (better management of the traffic on an hourly and daily basis, optimisation of flows, feasibility of an Alpine transit exchange, etc.)
  - d. survey available options that rely on marine navigation (motorways of the sea) to replace transalpine road traffic when conceivable
- 2- encourage regional and local authorities to reduce within the Alpine space the traffic impact on environment and climate, especially for means that produce CO<sub>2</sub>:
- a. promote policies that reduce the use of individual cars (cheaper public transports, carpooling, use of bicycles within city centres) or make it less polluting (programmes on how to drive in a more ecological way)
  - b. develop on all scales a network of public transports which will guarantee practical continuity between the various means, mainly for reaching mountain resorts and tourist areas, and promote the means of transportation that emit less CO<sub>2</sub> and pollute less
  - c. develop planning tools (urban and interurban logistics plans, circulation plans, traffic plans, keeping or creating local services ...)
  - d. ensure application in full of the provisions of article 12, paragraph 2, of the Transport Protocol on air traffic which plans to restrict the construction of new airports and «to improve public transport systems from airports on the fringes of the Alps to the various Alpine regions » .

It also seems very valuable to take into account the results of Interreg projects especially from the Alpine Space Program as for example AlpFRail, Monitraf and others.

**AlpFRail** for example concludes that “One can recognize that comparing the northern side of the Alps with the southern side, fewer possibilities exist to load the freight from road to rail.” Modelization shows one very positive result: appreciable results in terms of reduction of the polluting emissions (emissions reduction until -20%) are possible also with interventions that do not imply an increasing of investments on the transalpine railway, beginning from the optimization of the functions of the intermodal centres are possible. And “...it



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is necessary to have train concepts ready for the container growth at the Mediterranean ports before the containers are travelling on the road via the Alps.” The main growth in the following years is expected in container transport. Hence an integration of the originators of container traffic, of the ports, is essential to shift the traffic in the alpine space. A holistic approach will be persecuted by considering the European inland and container transports to and from the seaports.

**MONITRAF** partners have developed four directions of common measures which can be seen as a comprehensive strategy for reducing transalpine freight traffic and its impacts. These four main directions supplement each other and will only become effective if implemented altogether:

Main direction 1 with the common monitoring system builds the basis for all other measures as it delivers the necessary data basis. It will also be crucial for evaluating the effectiveness of MONITRAF measures and for improving the instrument mix.

Main direction 2 with the regional measures can be seen as "on-top" measures as they are mainly aimed at reducing peaks in regional/local air pollution. A set of night driving bans and bans for high-emissions vehicles as well as flexible implementations of speed limits seems most effective.

Main direction 3 is the basis for the common modal shift policy. It builds on the total charging of external costs on the side of road traffic. A harmonised toll based on the higher external costs in sensitive regions can prevent cost differences between different alpine passages and sets a financial incentive for a shift to rail. The ongoing process to implement these external costs into the EU Eurovignette should lead to increased tolls at least to a comparable level of existing international agreements (e.g the Overland Transport Agreement between Switzerland and the EU). On the side of the rail, an improvement of service quality and a further development of infrastructure is necessary. Increased usage must then be supported through subsidies to rail.

Main direction 4 with the Alpine Crossing Exchange can be seen complementary to main direction 3 as it will replace the common "corridor toll" in the long-term (if designed as cap-and-trade system). In the event that the Alpine Crossing Exchange is only used as reservation system for improving traffic management over the Alps, it goes side by side with the other measures.



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## C Reference Documents

- Alpine Framework Convention [http://www.alpconv.org/theconvention/index\\_en.htm](http://www.alpconv.org/theconvention/index_en.htm)
- Transport Protocol of the Alpine Convention  
[http://www.alpconv.org/theconvention/conv02\\_en.htm](http://www.alpconv.org/theconvention/conv02_en.htm)
- Report on the state of the Alps “Transport and Mobility”  
[http://www.alpconv.org/soia/soia03\\_a\\_en.htm](http://www.alpconv.org/soia/soia03_a_en.htm)
- Studies of the Working Group Transport of the Alpine Convention:
  - Cooperation on railway corridors of the Alps
  - The real costs of transports on transalpine corridors
  - Sustainable mobility of tourism in the Alps
  - Public transport accessibility of Alpine tourist resorts from major European origin regions and cities. Synthesis Report
  - Sustainable transport systems in the Alps. Good practices and analysis of the transport systems (annex in English)  
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- AlpFRail Executive Summary  
[http://www.alpinespace.org/uploads/media/AlpFRail\\_Solutions\\_for\\_the\\_shift\\_from\\_road\\_to\\_rail\\_-\\_transnational\\_network.pdf](http://www.alpinespace.org/uploads/media/AlpFRail_Solutions_for_the_shift_from_road_to_rail_-_transnational_network.pdf)
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