



PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Steering the Way to Greener Road Infrastructure

A landmark Policy Statement released today affirms the commitment of the International Road Federation (IRF) to the development of environmentally sustainable roads as an investment in the long-term prosperity of both planet and society.

While international diplomatic negotiations on how to tackle climate change are faltering, the International Road Federation is taking action and leading the way to meet calls for a greener transport system. Simultaneously launched in Geneva, Washington DC, New Delhi, Africa, Australia and New Zealand, the **IRF Policy Statement on the Environment** places in perspective the crucial contribution that may be made by safe and sustainable road infrastructure in the context of international efforts to attain key global development objectives.

Achieving sound environmental and sustainability outcomes has long been an integral part of IRF members' policy and practice. The new Policy Statement reinforces their resolve to be at the vanguard of efforts to further improve the environmental performance of the road sector. As the statement emphasizes, this can be achieved without unduly compromising the mobility and access on which economic development and growth largely depend.

Speaking in Washington D.C., **Sibylle Rupprecht, the Director General of IRF Geneva**, highlighted that: *"Faced with the new challenges of our times, roads must be developed in such a way that they become the drivers not only of continued economic progress but also the environmental and social dimensions that are the underpinnings of truly sustainable development."*

Through a purposefully straightforward and action-oriented Policy Statement, IRF members give formal expression to their firm backing for road policies and practice that:

- Safeguard the environment to the maximum extent possible;
- Mitigate any adverse effects through pro-active consideration of environmental issues at every stage of planning and implementation;
- Manage and use resources efficiently;
- Encourage and provide incentives for ongoing innovation, so as continually to promote better environmental performance.

The Policy Statement 'walks the talk' by committing to a comprehensive list of political, regulatory and fiscal recommendations. *"The ambition is challenging and far reaching,"* states **Kiran Kapila, Chairman of IRF Geneva**. *"IRF believes, however, that, if widely adopted and wisely applied, these recommendations will prove that economic development and protection of the*

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environment need not be irreconcilable goals; and that viable green road infrastructure is today a reality.”

Rather than promoting an ideological approach to environmental mitigation regardless of real costs and outcome, the Policy Statement stresses the importance of viable, cost-efficient solutions with the potential to bring about tangible improvements in environmental performance.

In keeping with IRF’s overall approach – characterised by initiatives such as the **CHANGER** greenhouse gas calculator software (www.irfghg.org) - the Policy Statement is intended as a catalyst to raise awareness, promote immediate practical action, demonstrate the inherent ‘triple bottom line’ benefits and, most of all, inspire further innovation throughout the sector.

The Policy Statement is particularly timely in the light of growing recognition that economic development and transport are inextricably linked. *“In this respect,”* underscores **Kiran Kapila**, *“roads may be viewed as the missing link in global development efforts. Indeed, it is being increasingly acknowledged that, without roads, and the access they bring to vital trade and services, the UN Millennium Goals simply cannot be attained. Over the next decade, our sector has a crucial role to play at the forefront of efforts to ensure that industry responds responsibly and proactively to the new environmental and social challenges of our times.”*

*Founded in 1948, the International Road Federation (IRF) is the only world forum advocating better and safer roads through optimum road design and construction. IRF is a non-governmental, **not-for-profit organisation** with the mission to promote roads that are safe, economically viable and ecologically friendly. As a unique global platform bringing together public and private entities, IRF is committed to sound road infrastructure that brings prosperity, fights poverty, furthers education and gives better access to health services.*

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