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press release

INNOVATION: GEODIS EXPLORES OPPORTUNITIES IN ELECTRIC HIGHWAYS

GEODIS joined a consortium of French companies to commission a study on electric highways from the low-carbon consultancy firm Carbone 4. The study, published on February 27, confirms the interesting possibilities of developing this technology to reduce the CO₂ emissions of resulting from freight transport.

The study focuses on the possibility of implementing a fleet of hybrid heavy goods vehicles powered by a continuous supply of electricity made available over the entire length of the highway. The electricity distribution system would be installed along the inner lane of the highway, which would remain open to other vehicles, notably conventional heavy goods vehicles. The hybrid truck design would allow for use of an electric motor on the highway and a traditional internal combustion engine for maneuvering (overtaking, entering and exiting highways) and non-highway travel.

"Innovation is in our DNA," says Philippe de Carné, Innovation Director at GEODIS. "The search for alternatives to diesel and the reduction of the environmental impacts of dangerous emissions is one of our main research aims at GEODIS. This is why we sought to initiate this study. Our role as a leader in our sector and an enabler of our customers' growth is to prepare for the technological advances that lie ahead in our constantly changing environment."

The study shows that this type of project is an effective way of reducing the environmental impact of goods transport by road while optimizing the use of existing transport infrastructure. Implementation would require only a slight operational adjustment on the part of road transport professionals, with no transshipments and minimal training to adapt the driving style of their drivers.

The study confirms that on some highly trafficked routes and for transport companies using a single route the electric highway is a profitable option given current market conditions. Public financial support of €3 billion would serve to achieve profitability faster by generating positive environmental externalities (with a significant 30 MtCO₂ reduction in transport-generated CO₂ emissions) and a beneficial macroeconomic effect.

Today, road transport (of people and goods) is highly dependent on oil products and accounts for 30% of energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions in France. Roughly half of these are as a result of freight transport, the majority (85%) by road. The greenhouse gas emissions of heavy goods vehicles account for approximately 5% of national emissions and 3% to 4% of national energy consumption.

Download the results of the Carbone 4 study

GEODIS – www.geodis.com

GEODIS is a Supply Chain Operator ranking among the top companies in its field in Europe and the World. GEODIS, which is part of SNCF Logistics, which in turn is a business line of the SNCF Group, is the number four logistics operator in Europe and number seven worldwide. In 2016, GEODIS was ranked by Gartner as a “Leader” in its Magic Quadrant report on the world’s 3PL players. The international reach of GEODIS includes a direct presence in 67 countries and a global network spanning over 120 countries. With its five Lines of Business (Supply Chain Optimization, Freight Forwarding, Contract Logistics, Distribution & Express and Road Transport), GEODIS manages its customers Supply Chain by providing end-to-end solutions enabled by over 39,500 employees, its infrastructure, its processes and information systems. In 2015, GEODIS recorded €8 billion in revenue.

PRESS CONTACT

Bruno DELFILS
GEODIS – Corporate Communication and Marketing Director
00 33 (0)1 56 76 22 45
bruno.delfils@geodis.com