



IV Ordinary Meeting of Ministers

South American Rail Integration

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Rail transport is less damaging to the environment, and is safer and more efficient for carrying large volumes of cargo. In spite of this, rail is far behind other modes of transport in South America.



The steady growth currently being experienced in the region's agricultural, industrial and mining production and the likelihood of this trend continuing represent a tremendous opportunity to promote concrete improvements in the infrastructure in place, the construction of new rail tracks and the revitalization of rail services.



The promotion of rail development with a long-term, regional perspective, furthering regulatory harmonization, must be a strategy for South America to achieve greater efficiency and competitiveness in freight transport.



Participants in the recently held Rail Working Group meeting stressed the importance of sharing a regional agenda and work plan to enhance national initiatives and place rail transport at the service of regional production.



Next Steps

- The countries will complete the information on rail projects in the Project Database.
- While the COSIPLAN GIS is not operational, the Working Group Presidency is drawing up a map of the existing rail network, highlighting the COSIPLAN Portfolio projects.
- An analysis of the regulatory aspects of rail transportation should be conducted to facilitate regional integration (approve the terms of reference and identify financing alternatives).
- The countries will submit their own national rail development plans at the next meeting of the Working Group, focusing on the interconnection points with other countries.