The updating of the European transport policy has been achieved by the European Commission through the publication of the White Paper published only few days ago. In the White Paper, the relevance of rail freight for a more sustainable cargo mobility at lower operating costs and a smaller carbon footprint, has been fully confirmed. In order to make this an effective objective in the years to come the European Commission underlined the need to implement the recent legislation on the “European Rail Network for Competitive Freight”.

This concept has been further reinforced by the clear political choice of adopting a number of European rail corridors where freight could enjoy a higher degree of priority compared to the past history. These corridors having a much higher importance for carrying cargo on rail should constitute in the combination with each other the future European Rail Network for Competitive Freight.

It has been stated that in order to gain a higher market share and easier accessibility for the users, rail freight should become already competitive on distances of 300 km and more. This shorter distance indeed is a considerable improvement compared to the past perceptions when rail competitiveness was thought to become effective on distances of over 500 km. Recent evolution in the market place with fossil fuels becoming every day more expensive combined with driving hours limitations, professional drivers’ scarcity, road congestion and accidents have brought the message that the use of rail is desirable also for shorter distances.

All these concepts point in the direction of fulfilling rail freight industrialisation where traffic economies of scale are available or likely to become available in the near future. The maritime dimension is a new driver for generating a revolution in the traditional CTS handling management and transit through the major European ports. Many vessels of 12,000 TEUs and more are fully deployed on the busiest world trade lanes calling at a fewer number of ports where a much higher number of CTS movements are handled.

The race to gain competitive advantages through the deployment of bigger tonnage of up to 18,000 TEUs will bring even greater pressures on already congested overland infrastructures. TIGER DEMO Project, adopting shuttle trains to inland Dry Ports, is introducing a new industrial scale business model compatible with the new traffic volumes produced by these giant vessels.

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TIGER DEMO AT A GLANCE
The project officially started on 1 April 2011 (Project duration 30 months).

Background
TIGER DEMO is the acronym of “Trans-Rail Integrated Goods European-Express Routes DEMOnstrators”. TIGER DEMO Project is the continuation of TIGER project having the objective of taking the TIGER project pilots into a full demonstration phase for market uptake implementation. The market circumstances have evolved in the last two years moving from a full recession situation into a new cycle of economic development affecting all the main world zones trading with Europe. The pace of development in Europe is different from country to country but the positive effects of the economic recovery have materialised everywhere. In particular export flows have increased substantially giving a contribution to the balance of CTS traffic. Because of these market changes, some adjustments on the TIGER pilots proved to be necessary for completing an effective on the field demonstration. TIGER DEMO is a market driven project having the objective ofconducting the demonstrators to full market utilisation. The actual conditions prevailing in the market place have to be incorporated into the project. Hence the demonstrators should be made adaptable to the available rail infrastructures which might be different from the planned ones.

The TIGER DEMO Project structure is the following:
- Transition activity from the initial pilots to TIGER DEMO implementation planning
- The pilot augmentation process to facilitate this transition.
- The full scale demonstration of the four TIGER original projects identified as: Genoa Fast Corridor, MARIPLAT, Innovative Port and Hinterland Operation, Intermodal Network 2015.
- Evaluation of the demonstrators’ impacts
- Internationalisation of the demonstrated solutions

The activities on the field relating to the planning and the physical movements of trains and CTS are coordinated by the TIGER DEMO management structure, the Quality management and Technical Coordination as well as the Dissemination activities.

The 4 Demonstrators
The TIGER DEMO Project is constituted by 4 Demonstrators:
A. GENOA FAST CORRIDOR
B. MARIPLAT
C. PORT & HINTERLAND OPERATIONS
D. INTERMODAL NETWORK 2015
Main Project Objective
The TIGER DEMO Project addresses the promotion of sustainable logistics introducing innovative rail services connecting the Sea Ports of the EU with the hinterland. The step change in train management from Sea Ports to the Dry Ports including the adoption of advanced technologies constitute fundamental parts of this project in order to pre-empt the traffic congestion likely to develop in absence of the TIGER DEMO solutions. The new production concepts based on ship-to-train operations and the Dry Ports adaptation to these new production concepts will extend in practical terms the ports quays into the European mainland. By so doing the ships will be brought nearer to the final customers.

The TIGER DEMO Project Partners
Vital competencies include intermodality, inland dry ports and freight villages operations, port authorities, institutional regional governments, engineering, software and management system technologies as well as marketing and research. Sectorial association connected with rail industry are also present in the Consortium.
The launch of TIGER DEMO - Trans-Rail Integrated Goods European-Express Routes Demonstrators – co-funded by the European Commission, sets the TIGER project continuation from the pilot phase to a full scale demonstration. The consortium between seaports, rail freight/intermodal operators, infrastructure managers, dry ports, engineering/System providers as well as Institutions and Associations, will take the TIGER project approach to full market uptake implementation.

During the TIGER DEMO Kick Off meeting, which took place in Hamburg on April 12th 2011 in presence of Dr. Theodor Schlickmann from the European Commission, the Consortium partners agreed that: “the maritime traffic throughput in European ports is returning to the pre-recession levels and likely to accelerate further following the full deployment of giant container vessels of more than 12,000 TEUs. The race to gain a competitive advantage through the construction of even larger tonnage is set to continue, bringing bigger pressure on an already congested European overland transportation network. The TIGER DEMO approach offering co-modal solutions through transport industrialisation via inland Dry Ports constitutes a sustainable response to the freight mobility challenges posed by the growing impact of international trade on the existing overland infrastructures.”

The TIGER DEMO PROJECT will increase the productivity of rail infrastructure by extending the sea ports quays into hinterland dry ports located at the center of industrial and consumption traffic attraction zones. A specific research based on market/trade forecasts, supported by a mathematical modeling, estimated the volume projections into 2020 and the traffic concentration areas.

Although the TIGER DEMO Project is using the existing European rail infrastructures, the adoption of a new business model based on a faster transit from the seaports to the dry ports, is necessary. Investments in technology, management systems and upgrading of the infrastructures correcting bottlenecks and expanding terminal capacities are also the project integral parts. TIGER DEMO full scale demonstrations are adopting and reinforcing the regulation on the “European Rail Network for competitive Freight” which has become law in November 2010.