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Europe promotes greener transport through eco-driving

Wednesday, 16 June 2010 07:12

By **Katrice R. Jalbuena**

The European Union provided a 13.7 million euro (\$16.79 million) grant for a three-year research program that aims to develop and evaluate green transport technologies and applications which will deliver up to 20 percent carbon dioxide emissions reductions.

The eCoMove project aims to integrate the concept of eco-driving with eco-traffic management to help a particular vehicle achieve the theoretical least possible fuel consumption in any given trip, without compromising the quality of mobility of people and goods.

"In reality today, vehicles, drivers and traffic management systems fall short of this ideal, and much fuel is wasted leading to unnecessary [carbon dioxide] emission," said Jean Charles Pandazis, coordinator of the project.

Road transport alone is responsible for about 70 percent of all transport greenhouse gas emissions, which in turn account for around 20 percent of global emissions. The eCoMove project intends to lessen the sector's emissions by focusing on two main sources of avoidable fuel consumption: private vehicles and freight vehicles.

The project will apply cooperative information and communication technologies to provide real-time information. It will use vehicle-to-vehicle and vehicle-to-infrastructure communication to integrate systems that will support eco-driving with eco-traffic management.

The project will act on the driver's behavior, route choice and road network management. It will help drivers to be more fuel efficient while driving and to find the best route that will give them the best chance of driving through green traffic lights.

Meanwhile, road operators will be guided on how to adapt to traffic signal parameters and apply other measures to balance traffic so vehicles on the network consume the least possible fuel.

Lastly, the project will provide incentives such as cash ecobonuses or priority in traffic to encourage green and efficient driving.

Due to its complexity and large scale, the eCoMove project requires several subprojects to address all three components. Another subproject will validate all developments, assess the potential impact and examine the costs and benefits of deployment.

However, a full evaluation of cooperative traffic management strategies still needs a high penetration of equipped vehicles, which cannot be achieved at the eCoMove test sites. Thus, a simulation environment will be set up to test and evaluate the project's applications.

The eCoMove project began in April of this year and will run until March 2013. It is funded through a European Commission program for information society technologies.



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