With several targets included in the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a key role recognised in the Paris Climate Change Agreement, and mobility at the core of the Habitat III ‘New Urban Agenda’ debate, this is a vital time for transportation policy.

Addressing road safety, air quality, equitable transport and fuel economy can play an important cross-cutting role in reducing health burdens; promoting green mobility; ensuring sustainable energy use; and improving the quality of life and economic opportunities of millions of people. Through our ‘Safe, Clean, Fair & Green’ agenda, the FIA Foundation is working to make this vision a reality.
Every six seconds someone is killed or seriously injured on the world’s roads. Road traffic injuries are now the leading cause of death for young people aged 15-29. For men of working age they inflict a mortality burden equal to HIV/AIDS. More than 90% of casualties are in middle- and low-income countries.

Building on the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety, launched in 2011, the UN has included two road safety targets in the Sustainable Development goals (SDGs). Delivering these ambitious objectives will require increased global and national political commitment, and an immediate focus on key ‘winnable battles’ by 2020. These include:

- Action to improve the safety of road infrastructure. Through our support for the Global New Car Assessment Programme, the FIA Foundation wants to see all roads assessed for safety and given an International Road Assessment Programme (GRAP) star rating, with the highest risk roads then prioritised for safety upgrades to a minimum ‘3 stars’ or better;
- Action to improve vehicle safety. Through our support for the Global New Car Assessment Programme, the FIA Foundation funds independent consumer crash tests and campaigns for all cars to be built to meet at least 7 key UN safety standards;
- Action to protect road users. There is nothing to prevent almost all governments requiring and effectively enforcing 100% seatbelt and motorcycle helmet wearing. Reducing speed limits in residential streets and along school routes can prevent injuries and encourage healthy walking and cycling, and should be a priority everywhere. We work with many partners, including national NGOs, global institutions like the World Bank and WHO, and through our member network of auto clubs, for country action to improve legislation, increase awareness and support effective enforcement.

As an active partner in the #SaveKidsLives campaign, which achieved more than a million signatures for its ‘Child Declaration’ in 2015, the FIA Foundation is part of a global call to action urging governments to define and deliver their contribution to meeting the SDG road safety targets.

The road traffic injury epidemic is well understood; the solutions are known; the opportunity is now; there is no excuse for inaction.

Poor air quality is a contributory factor in the deaths of millions of people around the world. WHO estimates that 3.7 million deaths globally were attributable to outdoor air pollution in 2012, with the vast majority occurring in low- and middle-income countries. Poor air quality has major health effects, such as stroke, heart disease, lung cancer and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. The annual health cost of this invisible killer is estimated at $1.7 trillion.

Vehicle emissions contain particulate matter and harmful gases such as nitrogen dioxide (NOx). Diesel particulates are carcinogenic, and NOx is toxic and an irritant. Recent estimates suggest that around 200,000 deaths a year are likely to be attributable to vehicle emissions. Without action, increased numbers of vehicles could lead to the number of deaths rising by 50% by 2030.

Major urban centres, particularly in developing countries, are now so badly polluted that their population face grave health risks. The WHO urban air quality database shows that only 12% of people live in cities which meet WHO air quality guidelines. Around half of urban dwellers are exposed to levels 2.5 times higher than the guideline, putting them at particular risk of serious long-term health problems. In most cities, air quality levels are getting worse. Cities in India and China are particularly bad. Sixty-six out of the 74 biggest Chinese cities have failed air quality standards. Thirteen of the 20 most polluted cities in the world are now in India. This is a vital issue for Habitat III.

This places tremendous pressures on families, communities and health services. However, cost-effective policies to reduce vehicle emissions exist, such as introducing low sulphur fuel and improving and enforcing vehicle standards. The FIA Foundation supports the Partnership on Clean Fuels and Vehicles, working with developing countries in their efforts to improve fuel and vehicle technologies that reduce air pollution. The Partnership has effectively eliminated lead from petrol globally and now has a major focus on reducing sulphur content in fuel to less than 50ppm, vital for effective particulate control.

And, as a member of the Climate & Clean Air Coalition, the FIA Foundation is now prioritising future work aiming to mitigate the impact of personal mobility on urban air quality with a particular focus on the urban child health agenda.
The global transport sector contributes around a quarter of CO₂ emissions, and these emissions are increasing rapidly. The number of vehicles is set to triple by 2050; mainly in developing countries. We need to act together to reconcile legitimate aspirations for mobility and the associated social and economic benefits, with an ambitious reduction in fuel use and CO₂ from vehicles worldwide.

The Global Fuel Economy Initiative (GFEI), a partnership of six organisations hosted by the FIA Foundation, has set global targets for improvements in fuel economy and based on the adoption of existing, cost effective technologies. Achieving the GFEI target to reduce average vehicle fuel consumption (l/100km) by 50% by 2030 in all new cars globally, and all cars by 2050 would save 33 Gt of CO₂ and save 54 billion barrels of oil, and result in a net saving of $8 trillion.

GFEI’s latest analysis shows that while fuel economy is improving globally, more needs to be done to achieve GFEI’s targets by 2030. Average fuel economy improved by 1.7% in OECD countries between 2005 and 2013 from 8.6 l/100km to 6.9 l/100km, but progress in non-OECD countries has been slower, improving only by 0.2% to 7.2 l/100km.

GFEI is raising political awareness of the need to act on fuel efficiency. GFEI was showcased as one of the leading global initiatives to tackle climate change by the French government at the climate change negotiations in Paris in December (COP21), attracting significant new funding. As a result of GFEI’s ‘100 for 50 by 50’ campaign, almost 40 new countries have committed to introducing measures to improve vehicle fuel economy.

GFEI is also working closely with the G20 supporting its Transport Task Group in its goal of reducing the energy and environmental impacts of motor vehicles. G20 Energy Ministers welcomed the progress achieved in 2015 by countries participating in its Energy Efficiency Action Plan and committed to further work on vehicle efficiency and emissions. GFEI has also played a key role in Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All), which has recognised GFEI has a ‘high impact opportunity’.

The Sustainable Development Goals also recognise the importance of improving energy efficiency and reducing carbon emissions. Goal 7 focuses on energy, and target 7.3 aims to double energy efficiency by 2030, in line with GFEI’s own target.

FIA Foundation: supporting SDG and climate action

The new mobility-related SDG targets and the central role for transport in delivery of the COP21 Climate Change Agreement and the Lima-Paris Action Agenda together represent a great opportunity for transportation to be integrated into the wider development agenda, and to contribute to achieving many important social and environmental objectives. But this will only be realised through a concerted effort by governments, international bodies, the private sector and civil society to translate targets and promises from words on a page to measurable action on our streets and highways.

Our Global Fuel Economy Initiative makes a vital contribution to Energy target 7.3, and we are working with the G20 to improve vehicle fuel efficiency.

Ensuring safe, sustainable and healthy urban mobility is at the heart of Cities targets 11.2 & 11.6, and must be at the core of the 2016 Habitat III debate.

Through our work on vehicle fuel efficiency and low-carbon mobility, the FIA Foundation supports the Climate Goal, and the wider UN climate change process.
Promoting ‘Safe Systems’ for safer roads

We provide vital catalytic funding to enable innovative road safety programmes which, taken together, promote the ‘Safe Systems’ approach to casualty reduction. Through the International Road Assessment Programme (iRAP) and the Global New Car Assessment Programme (Global NCAP), independent star ratings for highways and vehicles are providing transparency and promoting policy change. We also support vital country-level campaigns focused on legislative change, awareness and enforcement, working through expert local partners.

Cleaning up vehicles and fuels

The FIA Foundation supports the Partnership on Clean Fuels and Vehicles (PCFV) to reduce the climate and health impacts of black carbon and particulate matter (PM) emissions. Diesel vehicles are responsible for up to 99% of all black carbon from road transport. PCFV is working to reduce sulphur levels in fuel below 50ppm, which enables particulate filter technologies to be added – potentially saving 700Gg of black carbon by 2030.

Advocating for fair mobility and healthy streets

Improving walkability and providing safe cycle networks can reduce car dependence, promote healthy travel and improve the liveability of cities. Working with partners including the UN Environment Programme and the World Resources Institute, the FIA Foundation advocates for equitable access to safe, clean and low-carbon mobility choices. Our particular focus is the rights and needs of children, and together with UNICEF, Save the Children and NGOs worldwide we design solutions and build alliances for safe and healthy streets for every child.

Facilitating fuel economy strategies

Hosted at the FIA Foundation, the Global Fuel Economy Initiative is scaling up work assisting countries in developing fuel economy policies. At the Climate Change Conference in Paris in December 2015, GFEI announced that almost 40 new countries have committed to fuel economy, taking the total number of countries we work with to 65 countries. Achieving the GFEI target of doubling average fuel economy by 2050 would save 33 Gt of CO₂, 54 billion barrels of oil, and result in net savings of $8 trillion.