This is just a brief comment on the global strategy. I would like to say much more but project deadlines and conference presentations require attention. I welcome this strategy and am delighted that the WHO has grasped the importance of physical activity as core health-promoting intervention. This is not new and there is a large comet trail of WHO statements on NCDs that reveal a deep scientific and public policy understanding of the over-riding need to improve physical activity. In spite of high quality scientific work by the WHO and dozens of scientific studies showing the importance of physical activity there are far too many signs of trends in the opposite direction. This is especially the case in my own field of sustainable mobility and the importance of walking and cycling is not reflected in the totality of national transport policy, priorities and spending. It would be instructive to look at public health outcomes in the best practice sustainable mobility city of Freiburg in southern Germany with is 34% of all trips every day by bike and 29% on foot and low levels of car use (Figure 1). Car use and its encouragement of intensely sedentary life styles is very low indeed and physical activity is very high.
Liverpool (UK) is typical of British cities and transport and urban design have the effect of promoting high rates of sedentary car use and low rates of active travel (Figure 2). Liverpool has an 11% modal share for walk and 2% for bike and there are reasons why Freiburg has a high level of physical activity and Liverpool has a low level and the WHO draft strategy is a major and fundamental
contribution to the task of moving Liverpool (and all the other poor performing cities and regions) in the policy direction of Freiburg.

Figure 2

Liverpool Modal Split

The global strategy very much improves knowledge transfer and high quality policy advice and should be supported. It makes many links between increasing physical activity, urban design and the ways that countries, regions and cities can boost walking and cycling. If we do not boost walking and cycling we will fail to deliver gains in physical activity and fail in our endeavours to reduce the very large human tragedies and costs associated with CVD, diabetes and obesity.

Source: [http://www.epommeu/tems/](http://www.epommeu/tems/)
The WHO draft strategy is excellent but it is not enough. The WHO has set a high standard but others must follow and demonstrate beyond doubt and criticism that we can all “do a Freiburg”, that “doing a Freiburg” produces a high quality of life and economic success and continuing our BAU approach to transport projects and spending in the same way we have done this since the 1960s is an historic mistake. This needs more work and it needs a new approach which has been dubbed “the living laboratory approach”.

There has to be more activity to follow up on the truly excellent global strategy