

# **Intensive course of Sustainable Logistics, Helsinki**

## **07th – 11th of September, 2009**

### **How do you see sustainable logistics in the Baltic countries and in the Scandinavian countries?**

Intensive sustainable logistics course did not only offer the raw information about sustainability within logistics companies for us students to analyze, but in the first place it gave us a unique opportunity to discuss with the fellow students from the Baltic countries, Denmark and Lithuania, and find identical topics to uncover from different cultural points of view.

We have been more closely focusing our attention towards the similarities when it comes to sustainable logistics within the Scandinavian countries. Personally I would say that sustainable logistics in the above mentioned location tends to be gradually more and more efficient in pursuing the environmental goals. Further more I could clearly feel the importance of sustainability as from the point of competitiveness since “being green” is actually becoming a great marketing strategy in order to win the customers who are aware of the environmental issues nowadays. At the same time there is a quite significant trend when it comes to technological orientation of the companies with a great market share.

More so, I consider sustainable logistics in the Scandinavian countries to be future-focused and highly supported by the government which successfully monitors CO2 emissions and makes sure that the companies are utilizing their business opportunities in an environmentally friendly ways.

Finally, I find the emphasis on the transportation (transport optimizing, searching for the shortest routes, using efficient ERP programs, etc.) and supply chain (taking into consideration how green are the companies suppliers, taking over responsibilities for certain parts of Supply chain management to ensure sustainability and control over the operations within the company, etc.) to be a positive side of sustainable logistics in Scandinavian countries.

On the contrary, I feel that companies could more persistently market their ideology and let people know in which ways they are green since customers hardly get to know about the companies being environmentally considerate in practice.

### **Are there any similarities or differences in sustainable logistics in those countries?**

To start with the similarities, I would say that all the involved countries share the same ideology and have same concerns and aims which are reflected for example in the cooperation on the international level. Added to the already mentioned, governments in the countries also follow up information about the CO2 values produced by each of the companies. Same approach then helps to improve results of the sustainability in the whole region.

On the other side, there are also differences in the way sustainable logistics is pursued by companies in different countries. Obvious is different level of Marketing as well as the employee awareness concerning the environmental activities in which companies are involved in.

### **What did you learn of various group presentations on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> of September?**

My overall impression about the presentations is that the analyses made by the students during the intensive course week nicely outlined similar views of the involved countries on the question of the sustainability in logistics nowadays. It was quite surprising how similar were presentations in their “touch” considering that each of the discussed companies has a different business orientation and faces their own specific challenges during their processes.

I appreciated small differences thru which companies solved the challenges connected to the line of their business. Logical, though new, approaches did not make only me to think more deeply about the impact of the sustainability on logistics during the last decade during which transported volumes rapidly increased as well as became much more frequent.

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Future is already asking for more technological innovations and we heard it couple of times also during the presentations. In another word: energy has to be even much more efficiently utilized, waste management further improved and in all aspects resolved, environmental dangerous emissions minimized if not totally avoided, time of each conducted transportation shortened, etc.

In conclusion, further development is necessary and with no doubts will be closely bound to the technology solutions and innovations. Responsibility in that sense will be from businessmen laid on the engineers and scientists.

### **What was new and meaningful to you? What would you like to know more related to the sustainable logistics?**

As for new thing, it was interesting to observe six companies with different business focuses but with a common aim of protecting environment and obtaining sometimes very similar strategies. But at the same time I got to realize, that even a “green” company does produce a waste itself or does not care about all its impacts on the nature. That I assume to be a loophole to be taken care of in the nearest time to come.

On the question what I would like to know more about the sustainable logistics topic I can say simply: I would like to see more of the practical operations of logistics companies in a narrow connection with their sustainability. In a sense to see things for ourselves can be more useful than interviewing an employee of the company in a conference room with bulletins and PowerPoint presentation only.



**Sustainable Logistics course visit  
Vuosaari Harbor,  
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