FROM DUSK TO DAWN

Since the all time high of 2008, we have all been hit to a lesser or greater extent by the recession. However, for a while now we have seen the dawning of a better market with increased goods flows. The basic industries continue to suffer from high raw material costs, but volumes are rising. What is more, the economic slowdown of the past two years has given some parts of the logistics sector time to recover from congestion problems, remove bottlenecks and prepare for growth.

Over the past few years, we have also seen goods flows shifting to new markets and many of these changes look likely to persist, as other markets continue to develop due to currency effects and changes in consumer behaviour. This sets us the ongoing challenge as a logistics partner of developing along with our customers. Within Transforest, the past two years have seen us develop both our own terminal operations and maritime systems in order to meet future challenges. Now, as freight volumes recover, we have every opportunity to use all our resources in everything from new IT systems to ships and terminals and, not least, the knowledge of our staff to deal with our customers’ new requirements and flows. And of course our customers are looking to benefit from the potential in our organisation and the opportunities for logistics solutions that meet their specific needs.

We have recently seen a return to growth, with the Port of Rotterdam standing as an example of a container port that is back to previous peak levels. As far as the SCA Transforest terminals and maritime systems are concerned, the volumes of our old customers are on the up, but new customers and new products are also enjoying the opportunities provided by our network. Examples of this include the growth in forest industry products in Rotterdam and transshipments from Rotterdam to the UK and Scandinavia. Another example of growth is the volume of trailer and container traffic to Helsingborg and the state of our feeder that we have launched between Rotterdam and Stockholm. This means that all the services purchased by the forest industry, directly or via forwarding agents, for transport in Sweden, are to be covered by the criteria wherever the raw materials/ goods being transported can be traced to the forest industry. The rules are to be implemented as and when transport agreements are updated.

“The forest industry is one of the few sectors to have a concrete target of a 20 percent reduction in carbon emissions from our transport activities by 2020. The foresighted work and proactivity of the forest industry suggests that we will be able to achieve our target, but not without the necessary investment in railways, for example,” stresses Karolina Boholm.

Eco-driving

This long-term environmental work has been a priority area within SCA Transforest for many years.

FOREST INDUSTRY UNITED OVER TOUGHER TRANSPORT REQUIREMENTS

The sector’s new joint sustainability criteria for procuring road transport services cover several areas, including climate, working environment and road safety.

“Having a single voice makes us strong enough to set clear safety and environmental requirements as a way of driving the transport industry in a sustainable direction,” says Karolina Boholm, Head of Transport Policy at the Swedish Forest Industries Federation. This means that all the services purchased by the forest industry, directly or via forwarding agents, for transport in Sweden, are to be covered by the criteria wherever the raw materials/ goods being transported can be traced to the forest industry. The rules are to be implemented as and when transport agreements are updated.

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STEEP RISE IN FLUFF VOLUMES FROM THE USA TO ROTTERDAM

The 2008 investment in unique, specially adapted fluff warehouses has yielded fantastic results for Interforest Terminal Rotterdam. “We’re seeing sustained growth with fluff set to account for 20 percent of our total volume sales in 2010,” states Bob de Lange.

As volumes of and demand for fluff pulp have increased recently in Europe, so has the competition. In Rotterdam, SCA Transforest currently works with five different suppliers of fluff pulp.

“Existing players have increased their production capacity, and at the same time new suppliers are constantly entering the market. There are also plans for increased supplementary capacity,” explains Bob de Lange.

Not just SCA mills
Existing customers are also increasingly choosing to use the terminal for new destinations. And the fluff pulp is by no means headed exclusively for SCA mills. Of the fluff pulp that passes through Rotterdam, 70 percent makes its way to SCA mills, with the remaining 30 percent going to competing hygiene product manufacturers.

Background to ITR’s success
Another key reason for the volume increase in Rotterdam is SCA Transforest’s successful work in establishing efficient data integration between all the parties involved – Interforest Terminal Rotterdam, the suppliers’ shipping terminals, logistics departments in the USA and sales offices in Europe, as well as the end recipients.

“This improves the quality of information, while also increasing access to the information and reducing administrative handling costs,” comments Bob de Lange.

Huge competitive advantage
In addition, SCA Transforest and the terminal in Rotterdam enjoy the huge competitive advantage of having built up a well-developed intermodular transport system deep into Europe, which is able to offer sustainable and eco-friendly logistics solutions.

“We are less dependent on lorries and road transport,” says Bob de Lange. “Alongside all this, we have also benefited greatly from Gregor Star Shipping’s successful commercial and operational work on helping North American fluff producers to reach an ever-expanding section of the European hygiene market.”

Success for the new warehouses
Another advantage is the superb quality of storage that the Rotterdam terminal is able to offer its customers in the new, purpose-built warehouses.

“This has been a real triumph. We have a very high degree of capacity utilisation in our warehouses, with the terminal’s growth coming primarily from fluff,” says Bob de Lange.

Interforest Terminal Rotterdam has sailed up the rankings to become Europe’s leading terminal for fluff pulp handling. Fluff pulp is a highly sensitive product to transport and store. Rolls of this material, which contains no additives, go directly from the machines for use in items such as nappies, incontinence products, hygiene products and non woven airlaid paper. This makes the logistics particularly demanding.

In contrast to liner board, graphic paper and other products, this is a product that has to be consumed quickly. It is also more exposed to shifts in the market.

Unique warehouse
With the major investment of 2008 in a new warehouse, a new Panamax gantry crane specially adapted for forest industry products, and a new IT system for product handling, the terminal in Rotterdam is able to accept a large number of containers and store 150,000 tonnes of pulp.

With unique hygienic features, the warehouse has a total area of 20,000 square metres, 275 square metres of which is covered space for the lorries and four loading bays. The warehouse is designed to handle the most sensitive grades of pulp and paper and meets the criteria of HACCP, the international standard for ensuring food safety.

Leading the field in fluff pulp
The warehouse has been given a polished concrete floor for high quality handling and effective cleaning, and has been equipped with effective means to keep out birds. The containers are loaded and unloaded at weatherproof loading bays outside the warehouse, and inside the warehouse only electric forklift trucks are used.

All these arrangements allow Interforest Terminal Rotterdam to offer a service that is unique in Dutch ports for sensitive paper and pulp grades.

The terminal’s new IT system for stock management has also enabled optimum use of the warehouse space, which further increases the terminal’s capacity and the speed of goods handling.

FACTS:

- Interforest Terminal Rotterdam specialises in storing and handling paper and pulp, along with other dry loads and containers.
- The terminal handles around 3 million tonnes of goods per year. Around 1.2 million tonnes of this is forest industry products and other goods, half of which come from the parent company SCA Transforest. The remaining volume is made up of 85,000 containers, equivalent to 150,000 TEU.
- With the help of wireless radio technology, WaveLAN, truck-mounted computers and barcode readers, barcodes can be scanned, manually or from trucks, in all six warehouses.
The rapid expansion and extension of the Port of Rotterdam have increased the need for close transport links between the different terminals and areas. The area where Interforest Terminal Rotterdam is located is on the way to becoming a specialist in short sea containers and niche products, such as pulp, paper and fresh fruit.

“We feel there is a greater need for links with the other terminals around us, which is why we’ve signed an agreement on transport collaboration with ECT. This will give us access to the three terminals Rotterdam Shortsea Terminal, the Rail Service Center and the ECT City Terminal, as well as the facility to use the internal port roads that runs throughout ECT’s area,” explains Bob de Lange, Managing Director Interforest Terminal Rotterdam.

“The new cassettes will primarily be used in the terminal in Rotterdam to make our handling of the increased fluff pulp volumes more efficient,” explains Lars Nolander, Head of Marine Transportation. “This is becoming increasingly critical, since imports of fluff pulp to our terminal in Rotterdam have increased sharply in recent times. The cassettes will make us much more efficient in offloading directly from Grieg Star Shipping’s ships onto the quayside and then if necessary they can be stored in our new warehouses for onward shipment at a later date.”

Numerous benefits
This agreement brings numerous benefits. Interforest Terminal Rotterdam is able to avoid the busy public roads and can also use the multitrailer system that exists in the area, with small road trains that can transport 4 x 40 ft or 45 ft containers in one single haul.

“To achieve this, we first had to get customs approval, and solve all sorts of safety issues related to such transport across different terminals.”

Efficient transport
The Rotterdam terminal receives large break bulk shipments on Greig Star Shipping vessels.

“We will mainly use the extra cassettes to increase the speed of discharging the Greig Star vessels. By discharging directly from vessels onto cassettes and straight into the warehouse we minimize handling, and improve and increase quality. At the same time we also cut the time vessels spend in port, which is essential for a ship owner,” says Haraldsson.

Closer to the railway
All this is now in place and the road train has started shuttling intensively (regularly) between the terminals. “The new solution has given us better access to rail transport than before, which is important given the growing number of inland destinations that can best be served by railway transport. (But we also now have better links with the shipping lines that we can’t reach directly from our terminal). This represents an improvement in flexibility and broadens our scope to expand into other container intermodal intra-European and short-sea services,” concludes Bob de Lange.

The Rotterdam terminal receives large break bulk shipments on Greig Star Shipping vessels.

“Long useful life
The new cassettes are expected to have a long useful life. “Since we started in 1996, I don’t think we’ve had to scrap a single cassette. They are generally extremely reliable and hard-wearing. However, we have repaired a number of cassettes over the years, and that maintenance need is rising. The new cassettes will therefore be extremely welcome,” concludes Nils-Johan Haraldsson.

In order to handle the increased volumes of fluff pulp coming into Interforest Terminal Rotterdam, SCA Transforest has decided to order 40 new cassettes at a cost of SEK 3.5 million. This will give SCA Transforest a fleet of 1,490 cassettes.
The rising transport volumes on Grieg Star Shipping’s vessels from North America to Rotterdam have also led to an increase in transhipments from Rotterdam to Tilbury.

“At the moment, it’s a matter of regular small-scale shipments of fluff pulp, kraftliner, plywood, OSB, steel and project-specific cargoes. The volumes are not large enough to make it viable for Grieg Star Shipping to also route its large ships to London. It is better for them to be able to concentrate on a limited number of ports in Europe – including Rotterdam,” explains Nils-Johan Haraldsson, Vice President Marketing and Business Development, SCA Transforest.

Instead, to facilitate the transshipment to Tilbury via Rotterdam, SCA makes use of its own system of three ships that regularly serve the route Umeå-Sundsvall-Tilbury Rotterdam.

“Once a month we reverse the route on demand, so that the southbound ships go to Rotterdam first instead. The loads are driven onboard our vessels on cassettes and then taken on to Tilbury,” says Haraldsson.

Increased volumes

“The total comes to between 1,000 and 3,000 extra tonnes each trip from some of the the major North American forest industry producers.

“There have been more transhipments in recent times. If volumes were to considerable and sustainable increase, then Grieg Star Shipping might start going again straight to Tilbury rather than offloading in Rotterdam,” adds Haraldsson.

Major benefits

The close partnership with SCA’s ships provides numerous benefits. Grieg Star Shipping gains a larger network, enabling it to better serve its customers in Rotterdam and London.

“Much of the fluff pulp that comes into Rotterdam is heading for SCA’s hygiene product factories for the manufacture of nappies, sanitary towels and incontinence products,” says Haraldsson.

Of course, this also improves the attractiveness of Interforest Terminal Rotterdam.

“This collaboration strengthens our terminal by securing greater volumes. The sustained growth in our volumes in Rotterdam is proof that we have succeeded in establishing ourselves as the biggest and best-equipped terminal for fluff pulp,” concludes Nils-Johan Haraldsson.

New ship orders

Following the division of Grieg Star Shipping among the family that owned it, the shipping line has now been taken over by one of its former owners. In its new guise, Grieg Star Shipping is continuing as before as a rather slimmed down organisation with 100 employees in 15 offices around the world plus 67 employees at the head office in Bergen and a streamlined fleet of 24 wholly-owned specialist ships.

“The decision was recently taken to expand this fleet.

“We have just had confirmation of eight new open hatch ships with an option on another two at 50,000 tonnes each for delivery in 2012. They will form part of our worldwide trading and have been specially designed for forest products and unit loads. They mainly carry products and unit loads, but can also take bulk cargoes,” says Tom Rasmussen.

Increased shipments across the Atlantic

In the Atlantic, there are four large ships that, every two weeks, regularly run between the east of the USA and the Gulf of Mexico and the ports of Rotterdam and Bremen in Northern Europe.

Alongside OSB, we also ship 10–12,000 tonnes of kraftliner board per year from Alabama to Interforest Terminal Rotterdam, which then also goes on to Tilbury. However, the main focus is on shipments of fluff pulp from the USA to Interforest Terminal Rotterdam,” comments Tom Rasmussen.

“We have been collaborating with SCA Transforest for a long time.

“We have had a very special relationship with SCA since the 1990s – initially on shipments from Sweden to Genoa in Italy. Since then, this has developed into a close relationship and an extremely solid partnership. Our Atlantic ships have been regularly using Interforest’s terminals in Rotterdam and Tilbury for many years,” concludes Tom Rasmussen.

FLYING START FOR OSB FROM USA

With Grieg Star Shipping’s regular traffic from North America to Rotterdam, the UK market has also been opened up for deliveries of OSB from North American manufacturers. Several large transhipments of OSB have recently been made from Rotterdam to Tilbury, having earlier that week arrived on Grieg Star Shipping’s vessel from North America.
In the middle of this year, SCA Transforest introduced a new logistics solution for freight to Italy.

“We’ve now concluded a new deal that involves us switching to DB Schenker as our rail partner down to Italy, and as part of this we also gain access to a new terminal in the form of MDB, located in the Milan suburb of Desio. This is a simple and cost-effective solution that provides clear service and delivery improvements compared with the system we had in place before,” says Mikael Högström, Head of Purchasing Interforest Terminal Sundsvall.

One of the privately-owned MDB terminal’s specialist areas is forest industry products. The terminal handles a total of 900,000 tonnes of freight per year, of which 600,000 tonnes is crude steel and 300,000 tonnes is paper. The logistics solution is primarily intended for just over 25,000 tonnes of newsprint and LWC paper from SCA Ortviken. The reels of paper are transported by DB Schenker on four-axle wagons that take 54–60 tonnes each, via Germany down to Milan.

“The new terminal will bring SCA Ortviken much closer to its Italian customer base, since the vast majority of printers are located within a 150–160 km radius of Milan.

“In the future, we also plan to implement a system solution at MDB terminal’s specialist areas is forest industry products. The terminal handles a total of 900,000 tonnes of freight per year, of which 600,000 tonnes is crude steel and 300,000 tonnes is paper. The logistics solution is primarily intended for just over 25,000 tonnes of newsprint and LWC paper from SCA Ortviken. The reels of paper are transported by DB Schenker on four-axle wagons that take 54–60 tonnes each, via Germany down to Milan.

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The Port of Helsingborg, located at the narrowest point of the Öresund strait, is one of Northern Europe’s leading ports. With 9.5 million passengers taking the ferries between Sweden and Denmark every year, this is also one of the world’s largest ferry ports. However, Helsingborg has also rapidly grown into Sweden’s second largest container port.

“Our fantastic location has played a major role in our success, with an ice free port all year round, a navigable water depth of up to 13.5 metres and highly developed infrastructure by road, rail, air and sea. This has also paved the way for frequent vehicle ferry services to and from Denmark and many direct links for unitised freight to and from the rest of Europe. And all this right on the threshold of the Baltic,” explains the Port of Helsingborg’s new Managing Director, Jo Kristian Okstad.

Strong increase this year

Owned by the municipality of Helsingborg, the port has 240 employees and annually handles over 7 million tonnes of freight a year. “The municipal company is responsible for administration, stevedoring, construction and maintenance of harbour facilities. Annually we handle around 200,000 TEU by sea and about 100,000 TEU by land,” says Jo Kristian Okstad.

Following the financial crisis, the future is looking bright for the Port of Helsingborg. Freight volumes are exceeding all expectations and the port’s already rapid development has accelerated even further. “The year so far has brought great optimism within the transport sector. Industry has picked up and we have gained several new operations and customers. But the most important explanation is perhaps that we are developing as a freight transport hub,” says Jo Kristian Okstad.

Solid growth in container traffic

The early strategy of the port and the city to focus on container handling has proved highly successful. “This has led us to be established as a container specialist, a position that we intend to maintain and consolidate,” says Jo Kristian Okstad.

The growth in container handling over the past decade has been significant. Following major investment in container cranes, the Port of Helsingborg is now able to offer customers highly efficient container handling. Last year, the port also received the “Innovative Logistics Award 2009” for its modern IT support. The organisation behind the award is Next Generation Innovative Logistics at the University of Lund.

There have also been major investments in refrigeration. “We have increased the number of connection points for refrigerated containers from 120 to 350 and we have become certified banana weighers, which gives us an even stronger position as the country’s largest port for fruit and vegetables,” relates Jo Kristian Okstad.

Many new container shipping lines

The Port of Helsingborg has had a close partnership with SCA Transforest for many years. “They have shown fantastic farsightedness in their work,” comments Jo Kristian Okstad.

SeaLink, which operates routes between Reykjavik, a number of north-European ports and the Port of Helsingborg, has contributed new volumes and has rapidly become one of the port’s largest container customers. The world’s third-largest shipping line CMA CGM has increased its container shipments via Helsingborg and launched a new weekly service, with citrus fruit and vegetables from Morocco as its base cargo. Maersk Line has also increased its traffic to and from the Port of Helsingborg, taking in an extra stop in the port of Bremerhaven, Germany. Team Lines, Green Frewer Ltd and SOL Continent Line are new lines this year.

Combiterminal vital

The investment in a combiterminal inside the port area five years ago has also been a key factor in the port’s success. Here, freight is transferred between rail, sea and road transport.

“Our strategic location, our combiterminal and our move towards multimodal container transport are what make us so attractive,” adds Jo Kristian Okstad.

The volumes of rail traffic have gradually increased, hitting new heights in 2009 despite the financial crisis and economic downturn. So far this year, they have continued to increase. “The environment has become an increasingly important consideration for our industrial customers, and we are pleased to be able to meet that demand,” says the MD.

One example is transport and logistics company Intercontainer, which last year launched the first rail shuttle service between the Ruhr district and Sweden. The Port of Helsingborg is the hub for offloading and regional distribution of around 350 units per week. The rail shuttle replaces 70 heavy goods vehicles running between Germany and Helsingborg.

Growing pains

All this strong growth has not been entirely without its problems. The port is located in the middle of the city and thus occupies an inflexible and restricted site. Optimising use of space is therefore a key objective. “This is a delicate task, and the work of reshaping and freeing up new space for container traffic is constantly ongoing, in close collaboration with the city.”

The renewal and modernisation of the city now takes account of the port’s operations just as much as other social considerations. The fact that the port is also officially recognised as being of national strategic importance has kept the port and the shipping lanes protected from further exploitation. There are plans for a new port road and a dry port inland to take the pressure off the combiterminal when container volumes rise, plus a brand new logistics centre connected to the road and rail network to bolster Helsingborg’s position as a transport hub. “We are looking forward to the next few years with great confidence,” concludes Jo Kristian Okstad.

SCA UPS TEMPO IN HELSINGBORG

SCA Transforest has also noticed a considerable rise in shipments by sea to Helsingborg. So far this year, container volumes to the Port of Helsingborg have more than doubled compared with autumn 2009. “We are confident that this trend will continue in Helsingborg, not least due to our new container customer, Samskip-owned van Dieren, specialists in intermodal traffic,” explains Henrik Fälldin, sales manager at SCA Transforest.

Since October last year, SCA Transforest has also been shipping fluff pulp from Interforest Terminal Rotterdam to the Port of Helsingborg for transshipment by road to SCA’s hygiene product factory in Falkenberg. “This has proved a highly successful move, with 3,000 tonnes of fluff pulp passing through the port over the past five months of the year,” says Henrik Fälldin.

A major deal is in the pipeline in Helsingborg, which SCA Transforest looks forward to reporting on in future issues of New Ways.
EXTENSIVE IT INTEGRATION INCREASES FLUFF ROLL TRACKING

SCA Transforest’s recently installed new stock, planning and integration system has increased the scope for all the parties involved to keep track of fluff pulp deliveries. Close IT integration has now been built up between the suppliers, their sales offices and shipping ports, SCA Transforest, Interforest’s terminals and the end customers.

“We receive one or more messages from each vessel with information on which individual items, in the form of rolls, palettes or bales, they are carrying. When the ships reach the terminals, we can scan the rolls, compare that data with the information in the message and issue a receipt for the rolls and individual items that we accept, and then the supplier immediately receives a return message to that effect,” explains Roger Salgh, IT Manager at SCA Transforest.

Barcodes key
Via the barcode on the label, the message contains information on the identity of the rolls, as well as product information such as width, weight and quality. Often several weights are given, such as gross weight, net weight and air dry weight. “The same procedure takes place when it comes to delivery from the terminal; we scan the rolls that are taken out of the warehouse for final delivery, and at the same time a confirmation is sent to the supplier and sometimes also to the recipient. We then issue customer-specific transport documents with the information and logo that the customer wants,” says Salgh.

Better stock control
The new system gives suppliers, customers and SCA Transforest good control over the logistics, with exact details about where the rolls are at any given time.

“It also gives us greater insight into what stock we have, down to the level of individual items, and what has been delivered. With integration at this level, we lift the quality of the entire logistics process from manufacture to invoicing. For SCA’s part, the other advantage is that we establish closer ties with our customers,” comments Salgh.

The first installation of the new IT platform took place at Interforest Terminal Umeå in early 2007. The system was then installed in Rotterdam in November 2008.

Today around a hundred suppliers, customers, hauliers and authorities across Europe and North America are connected to the system.

Improving on the integration
The experts at SCA Transforest’s IT department are busy continuing to improve the systems for the benefit of customers.

“We’re focusing on also getting all container handling and the northbound goods from Rotterdam and Tilbury into the system,” says Salgh.

Since the Baltic Shipping Days 2008, the world has suffered the deepest recession in modern times, with the transport and logistics industry being particularly hard hit.

“During the Baltic Shipping Days, we’ll see examples of how various logistics players are operating to meet the future in different ways and with new solutions. The conference this year will cover the entire chain, from the Trans-Siberian Railway through terminals to marine transports in Europe and to the increasingly important global market, on which we’re all dependent,” explains Nils-Johan Haraldsson, Marketing Manager at SCA Transforest.

Hot topics up for discussion
At the Baltic Shipping Days 2010, the eighth Baltic Shipping Days will take place on 17–18 November. This year, the event will once again be held at Södra Berget in Sundsvall. The theme is: “Future Challenges” including the impact of environmental rules and laws on the logistics chain for the industry and shipping communities.

The future for leading terminals
On the second day of the conference, several leading players will present their ideas and experiences on how to improve and develop the industry towards a more modern and sustainable future. The seminars, which are integrated with a number of shipping communities, will be analysed by the industry, ship owners and the petroleum institute.

Speakers in this section include Karolina Boholm, Director of Transport and Head of Transport Politics at the Swedish Forest Industries Federation, Johan Roos, Director of Sustainability at Stena Rederi AB, and Ebba Tamm, MSc and Head of Product and Environmental Information at the Swedish Petroleum Institute.

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“I’m particularly excited about the integration of logistics networks for efficient and sustainable transport. We’ll also focus on the study of the Baltic being carried out by Hutchinson, which will inform the company’s decision on which terminals Hutchinson will be focusing on around the Baltic Sea.

Hot topics for discussion
A large portion of the first day of the conference will be dedicated to the environment and particularly the requirement to reduce the sulphur content in vessel fuel in the Baltic Sea and the North Sea – by 2011 for stage one and by 2015 for stage two.

“If this decision is implemented, the shipping industry risks transport costs rising by SEK 27 billion per year,” states Nils-Johan Haraldsson. How will this affect fair competition and will shipments be shifted from sea to road and rail instead? All these questions will be discussed.

Fantastic meeting place
The Baltic Shipping Days event has developed into a superb opportunity for experienced buyers and suppliers to network. The entire chain is represented at Baltic Shipping Days – industries, ports, terminals, shipping companies, agents, forwarding agents, freighters and insurers.

“Don’t miss this unique opportunity to meet partners and simultaneously listen to current issues in the industry,” says Nils-Johan Haraldsson.

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The eighth Baltic Shipping Days will take place on 17–18 November. This year, the event will once again be held at Södra Berget in Sundsvall. The theme is: “Future Challenges” including the impact of environmental rules and laws on the logistics chain for the industry and shipping communities.

The future for leading terminals
On the second day of the conference, several leading players will present their ideas and experiences on how to improve and develop the industry towards a more modern and sustainable future. The seminars, which are integrated with a number of shipping communities, will be analysed by the industry, ship owners and the petroleum institute.

Speakers in this section include Karolina Boholm, Director of Transport and Head of Transport Politics at the Swedish Forest Industries Federation, Johan Roos, Director of Sustainability at Stena Rederi AB, and Ebba Tamm, MSc and Head of Product and Environmental Information at the Swedish Petroleum Institute.
SCA AND PERSSON INVEST
CREATE NEW SOLID-WOOD PRODUCTS COMPANY

SCA and the Persson Group, based in the County of Jämtland, plan to form a joint solid-wood products company, Gällö Timber AB. The company will consist of Persson Invest’s two sawmills, Gällö and Tjärnvik, and SCA’s Jämtlamell Sawmill in Stugun.

The three sawmills will have a total of 161 employees and annual production of 380,000 cubic metres of solid-wood products. SCA and Persson Invest already cooperate extensively, both with respect to sales of solid-wood products in certain markets and in the procurement of raw materials. About 45 km separate Gällö and Stugun and, with coordination of production and the product range, efficiency is set to increase at the three sawmills.

“Coordinating the production and product range at Tjärnvik, Gällö and Stugun will enable us to enhance production efficiency. We aim to make the most of the strengths at each mill. Stugun handles small diameter logs in spruce and pine, while Gallo and Tjärnvik currently specialise in spruce. Stugun will continue to saw small diameter logs, while Gallo will take the larger logs,” explains Jonas Mårtensson, President of SCA Timber.

More attractive partner

“With the addition of Gällö Timber’s products, SCA Timber will be able to offer larger volumes of solid-wood products – more than two million cubic metres in total – making us a more attractive partner for the most dynamic wood-products customers in Europe and in other markets,” says Jonas Mårtensson.

Primaskog, which is jointly owned with Rodins Trå, has largely been responsible for the procurement of raw material for Persson Invest’s sawmills and the company will also continue to procure raw material for both Gällö and Rodins Trå. Persson Invest and SCA owns equal stakes in Gällö AB. The new MD is Tommy Högberg, former production manager at Tunadal Sawmill.

Targeting increased sales and exports

The investment in the new company will also have a positive impact on exports and container traffic from the port of Sundsvall.

“Gällö Timber will utilise SCA Timber’s well-developed sales organisation, which will significantly boost our strength in the market for solid-wood products,” says Bob Persson, President of Persson Invest.

Oy Backman-Trummer Ab is a major port operator and freight forwarder on the west coast of Finland with extensive logistic solutions through ports such as Turku, Kokkola and Vaasa. SCA Transforest is now glad to be part of their logistic solutions for the import of goods to Finland via Holmsund and Vaasa.

The cassette system and the ferry service from Holmsund to Vaasa gives a very competitive logistics solution with high quality and low carbon footprint. The cassettes are loaded with the import goods to Finland at our terminal in Rotterdam and are shipped to Holmsund on our RoRo-vessels. In Holmsund the cassette is transferred to the RG-line ferry to Vaasa, no extra handling of the goods is needed. When the goods arrive in Vaasa they are loaded directly onto trucks or discharged in to the warehouse.

– We have started with shipments of plastic granulates and other general cargo. We hope to find other volumes for the future and expand the cooperation, says Henrik Fälldin, sales SCA Transforest.
A year ago, Aditro Logistics’ operation in Umeå, which focused on industrial logistics, broke away under a management buy-out. The new company, which goes by the name of Innovative Logistics (Ilogistics), is now steadily growing, while also maintaining its established partnership with SCA Transforest and the manufacturing industries of northern Sweden.

As a consequence of the financial crisis in autumn 2008, Aditro Logistics, with its 120 staff, encountered serious financial problems. The company then underwent reconstruction in 2009, by the end of which the managers of Aditro’s logistics business in Umeå had agreed a local management buy-out. The Umeå company then changed its name to Innovative Logistics (Ilogistics).

“While retaining its customer base and third-party logistics business concept, its business operations have been concentrated, with all staff and all warehousing now located in Holmsund, Sweden,” says Andreas Bodén, one of the new owners.

Third-party logistics
As the economy started recovering, Ilogistics continued with its previous commitments in third-party logistics, not least for Volvo’s suppliers.

“The focus is the same. We refine the product. The difference is that we now focus exclusively on the market in northern Sweden. We are a third-party logistics company, shipping suppliers’ parts from Europe to Umeå using SCA’s system vessels. Then we store them, carry out the assembly in our production department and deliver the completed vehicles to the end customer just-in-time,” says Bodén.

Seeking to broaden customer base
With just over 30 employees and a turnover of almost SEK 120 million for 2010, Ilogistics does more than just deliver Volvo’s trucks.

“After the change in ownership, our business also changed. The greatest challenge for the future is to continue broadening our customer base. Before, we stood and fell with Volvo Trucks. We are therefore trying to attract more customers from outside the industrial sphere. If a new dip or financial crisis comes in a few years time and his manufacturing hard, we need more customers who can balance out the downturn,” explains Bodén.

New business
As it stands, Volvo Trucks still accounts for the greatest volume. However, in recent years Ilogistics has also signed deals with Komatsu Forest, who manufacture forest machinery, Alo AB in Umeå, who manufactures front loaders, and Hågglunds Drives in Örnsköldsvik.

“We recently also secured a new agreement with BAE Systems in Örnsköldsvik for Ilogistics to manage BAE’s spare-parts warehouse of 6,000 items.”

Very different pace now
“Business is going well for us. 2009 was a challenging year, but volumes are now beginning to rise steadily. From a low level, the market is starting to recover and the pace is very different now. We are feeling extremely positive about the future. All our customers are demanding higher volumes. The Volvo factory has increased its rate of production, with an estimated 15 percent increase in volumes since autumn 2009,”

Ilogistics aims to widen the scope of its services, expand its business and evolve into a natural and leading logistics centre based in Umeå.

The Gorm shelving unit in solid wood has for many years been a popular staple of IKEA’s range. SCA Timber and local business partner TraTeam have developed a production system that cuts costs in the chain from raw material to product in the store, making it extremely competitive.

“This is a complex production facility and we have had to develop new automated solutions for both nailing and packaging,” says Lars-Erik Frage, Plant Manager at TraTeam in Kramfors.

Complicated production
The right quality timber will be cut to the right dimensions in SCA’s sawmills, mainly in Röllstädebruck but also in Munksund. The kilned products are transported in stacks from Röllstädebruck to TraTeam in Kramfors, where they are planed, scanned and trimmed to finished shelving components.

In the next stage of production, robots nail the components into shelf segments. Finally, the shelving components are fed into an advanced packaging machine where they are flat-packed in cardboard boxes together with a bag of screws and instructions. Then the shelves are distributed to IKEA stores across the Nordic region, Benelux and Germany.

Unique initiative
Around 45,000 cubic metres of pine is required for the production.

“This represents a tenth of the production at Bollsta sawmill,” says Katarina Levin, Sawmill Manager at Bollsta sawmill.

“We have invested and developed the operation to a stage where we can take on complex production set-ups like this. Not many other sawmill companies can offer the same equipment, expertise or volume.”

Bollsta sawmill has an annual production capacity of about 450,000 cubic metres of pine solid-wood products. Some 140 employees and contractors work at the sawmill. TraTeam produces around 85,000 cubic metres of planed pine products per year for Bollsta sawmill and employs 50 people.

Fall 2008 saw SCA Timber open a brand new plant for the manufacture of the Gorm solid-wood shelving unit in Kramfors. In the plant, partner TraTeam will transform timber from SCA’s sawmill into at least a million shelving units per year. The factory represents an investment of SEK 35 million.

SCA OPENES SHELVING PLANT FOR IKEA

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