

Transports in a sustainable society

Greenbook about the road haulage industry
contribution to sustainability

Title	:	Transports in a sustainable society
Workshop 1a	:	Traffic, environment and growth
Name	:	Göran Rosenberg
Organisation	:	Swedish Road Haulage Association
Country	:	Sweden
e-mail address	:	goran.rosenberg@akeri.se

Content

Background and scope	3
Methodology	3
Transports contribute to welfare and prosperity.	4
What is a sustainable society and it´s transports?	5
Who can do what to shift into a sustainability mode?	7
Sustainable Development Strategy	8
Strategic Dialogue Invitation	9
Discussion on results	9

Background and scope.

Sustainable development including welfare and prosperity to more people and solutions to important ecological problems is vital.

Transports and road transports in specific are frequently focused upon in debates to be a significant contributor to environmental problems. Politicians, authorities and NGO:s raises demands on more stringent legislation and economical control instruments to hold back further increase in road transports and to shift from road transports to railroad and shipping. EU launches the strategy about decoupling economic growth from increased transports.

The overall question to be penetrated within the road haulage industry would be - How do we contribute to sustainability?

Methodology.

To face this challenge and to try to find out what to do from the road haulage industry perspective some 100 executives met in 12 seminars during year 2002.

The main purpose for these seminars was to achieve increased knowledge and consensus about the sustainability concept and ideas for a long term sustainable business development within the road haulage industry.

Other purposes was to create ideas on how to establish :

- * Sustainability strategies and communication (2003).
- * Integrated sustainability forum throughout the haulage industry (2004).
- * Sustainability concept integration into training programs (2004).
- * A sustainability council representing important stakeholders (2004).
- * Strategic Dialogue Network (2004).
- * A Government Treaty on Sustainable Development (2005).

Results from seminar discussions will be presented in terms of conclusions, questions and fact descriptions and in the following structure :

- * Transports contribute to welfare and prosperity.
- * What is a sustainable society and it's transports ?
- * Who can do what to shift into a sustainability mode?
- * Sustainable Development Strategy.

Transports contribute to welfare and prosperity.

The first conclusion that came out of the seminar discussions were - Transports are important to secure welfare in Sweden and to support welfare and prosperity development throughout the entire world.

Welfare and prosperity in Sweden is to a very high degree dependent on well functioning transports partly because we have long distances within the country and to important markets and partly because we are very dependent on import and export.

Cooperation within EU is based on the idea of the inner market with free mobility of employees, money and goods and free competition. The inner market is supposed to create welfare and prosperity to people in Europe. Increased and more flexible transport capacity would be of crucial importance to support further economic growth and prosperity in EU.

In a global perspective poverty together with poverty related illness and social tensions are very important problems to be solved. Environmental problems e.g. climate change, ozone layer depletion, fresh water shortages, etc constitute major threats to sustainability. Increased economic activity and trade would be the basis for a continued and broadened welfare development. Increased transport capacity and more flexible and efficient transport solutions would be most important to make a positive development possible.

(Picture of production and transport chains that are important for economic growth, employment and welfare.)

The transport means truck, train, boat and aeroplane partly have their natural separated business areas and partly compete on the transport market.

Private cars constitutes a very important complement to transport services especially outside city centres.

Collective transport means in city centres are very important to reduce congestion and environmental and other problem related hereto and to enable goods transport services efficiency.

Optimised mixture of light and heavy trucks is important to increase efficiency in vehicle fleets and to minimise environmental impact.

What is a sustainable society and it's transports?

Seminar attendants found out that it is very difficult to explain the meaning of a sustainable society and what role transports could have in such a society.

They also found it difficult to fully understand how the process of transformation into a sustainable society could be carried out.

The following conclusions came out of the discussions.

It is very important to apply a holistic view on the sustainability concept and on the overall function of transports in society. Sub-optimised and fragmented approaches in many decision processes seems to be inefficient and delaying the transformation into sustainability.

(Picture on Sustainable Development including ecological, social, cultural and ethical aspects together with economical aspects on individual, company and society levels).

A sound market economy with relevant government and legal control would provide the best basis for an efficient transformation into a sustainability mode of development.

Obviously there is a need for partly new values and views and unconventional cooperation and for mutually agreed strategies to support short term and day-to-day decisions.

Transports are important to support a global welfare development but transports also have some significant negative side-effects such as :

- * Utilization of energy in electrical power and fuels.
- * Utilization of resources e.g. transport technologies, infra structures, government financing, other costs, etc.
- * Emission of air pollution and noise.
- * Accidents causing human injuries and damages to environment and other objects.
- * Barrier effects and other disturbances in land areas and marine environments.
- * Pollution of land and sea and of surface and ground water.
- * Changes in ground water levels.
- * Impact on cultural objects and on landscape views.

These and other negative side effects will grow more serious as transports are increased. Several of the negative effects also worsen by congestions in road traffic and over crowded airports.

One very important objective for EU is to achieve a de-coupling between further economic growth and increased transports.

The overall conclusion would be that the transformation into a sustainable society means both to reduce negative side effects from transports that are carried out and to hold back the supposed large increase of transport needs. Some interesting areas of various improvements would be :

- * Production/consumption of services not creating transport needs.
- * Strategies for production, storage and distribution of goods.
- * Consumption and life style patterns.
- * Society planning and placement of trade centres, residence areas and production plants, etc.
- * Increased efficiency within each transport mean e.i. truck, boat, train and aeroplane.
- * Increased efficiency in the transport sector as a whole.

Most executives participating in the seminars expressed their uneasiness regarding the general environmental debate in mass medias. The beneficial effects from transports are very seldom mentioned and taking into account when transport issues comes up. Why?

To enable relevant choices of measurements and government control e.g. legislation, taxis, etc on different system levels it would be interesting to develop and implement indicators and models on efficiency.

(Picture E = + / -).

Would it e.g. be possible to identify benefits (+) versus negative side effects (-) in ecological, economical and social terms on system levels such as transport assignment, transport chain, transport loop, transport mean respectively, etc. Would it be possible to develop and implement efficiency (benefits/negative effects) concepts on the overall society level to enable prioritisation of measurements in line with a sustainable development.

Who can do what to shift into a sustainability mode?

The Swedish road haulage industry invests hugely in increased customer satisfaction and reduced environmental impact. This however will not be enough to create a sustainable society.

(Picture showing a modern truck including IT, GPS, Telecom and Transports logistics and implementation of Euro 1-5 environmental requirements. The road haulage industry is becoming a high tech industry.)

In a 25 years period from 1990-2015 the road haulage industry will invest approximately 25 % or 2 billion SEK extra per year in increased efficiency and reduced environmental impact (IT, GPS, Telecom, Transport Management, Logistics, Euro 1-5 and recycling of CO₂ in refrigerated transports).

The road haulage industry will also invest in heavy eco driving which reduces fuel consumption and CO₂ emissions by 5 % or more. Most drivers will participate in training programs before year 2015.

Integrated management systems (Quality, Environment Protection, Work Environment, Road Traffic Safety, etc) will be implemented in most haulage firms before 2015. Today more than 2 300 firms have implemented management systems compatible to ISO 9001:2000 and 14 001.

A comprehensive program for business development with important aspects such as leadership business approach to increase the profitability, which is partly very low compared to many other business sectors. Increased profitability is very important to secure the capability of making investments for increased efficiency and reduced environmental impact.

Increased efficiency and reduced environmental impact on the road haulage industry system level is very important but it probably has a limited effect on sustainability compared to what could be achieved on other areas mentioned above. To avoid irrelevant focus on the road haulage industry it is important to participate also on the other areas of improvement. The Swedish road haulage industry would like to intensify and enlarge the sustainability dialogue with actors/functions like:

- * Society planning, land use, energy/fuel production and distribution, building and running of infra structures, traffic planning, etc

- * Development of business ideas, products, services and of manufacturing processes, sales and distribution, trade, etc.
- * Customers in all parts of the production chains and end consumers.
- * Purchasers and procurement procedures.
- * Suppliers of vehicles, fuels, electricity, IT, GPS, Telecom, Logistics and of other components and services to the transport sector.
- * Parliament, government, authorities and other decision making bodies on international, national, regional and local levels.
- * Branch and trade organisations.
- * Transport agents.
- * Transporters : road haulage firms, own account transporters, train and rail road operators, boats and harbour administrators, air freighters and air port operators.
- * Banks and other financiers and insurer companies.
- * Research and Training.

Sustainable Development Strategy

Based on a holistic view on ecological, economical and social aspects and on the function of transports in society the Swedish Road Haulage Industry will participate in the transformation to a sustainable society :

- * Striving for increased knowledge and consensus within the road haulage industry and in society as a whole about problems and development possibilities.
- * Develop and implement efficient ways of working and routines to identify and manage important aspects.
- * Develop and implement relevant indicators and key figures for measuring, control and reporting of sustainability performance.

- * Develop and commercialise products and services with growing customer satisfaction and decreasing environmental impact.
- * Develop, procure and use best available technologies and methods when ever possible from an economic point of view.

This strategy will be processed and decided on at the 2003 Road Haulage Industry Congress.

Strategic Dialogue Invitation

The Swedish Road Haulage Association would like to invite any actor interested to discuss the transformation into a sustainable society and the transport function in such a society.

Discussion on results

Participating executives are very experienced in various aspects of the business and the transport sector as a whole. They have a genuine and strong belief in increasing the transport efficiency and reducing environmental and other negative side effects from road transports and from transports in general. They fully appreciate the forthcoming needs of transformation into a sustainable development on a global scale and they want to participate in the transformation process in the best way possible.

This green book is the first attempt to collect ideas on how the road haulage industry could participate in the transformation into sustainability. Hopefully it will be used to initiate a fruitful strategic dialogue.