



**Bothnian
Green
Logistic
Corridor**

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**How to better link the Bothnian
Corridor with its neighbours?**

ThinkTank

Think transport | Think energy

Transport corridors – connecting Europe

By Przemysław Myszka

The Bothnian Green Logistics Corridor (BGLC) has two big and important neighbours – Norway to the west, and Russia to the east. However, one should not forget about the Corridor’s southern partners – Denmark, Germany and Poland.

Overland transports Norway-Gulf of Bothnia-Russia are conducted overwhelmingly by truck. In this regard the Russian Federation is e.g. the largest market for Norwegian salmon, while the demand for fresh fish from Norway in Poland is also very robust and contributes significantly to the Swedish-Polish ro-ro traffic.

The idea is, however, to shift more of the freight from roads onto rails, along with improving routes from Sweden to Norway and from Finland to Russia. There are plans to set up an intermodal service all the way from the Port of Narvik in Norway to Russia. The main issue here is how to make this concept economically sound (by e.g. solving problems with securing backhaul cargo from Russia). On the contrary, there are rival plans such as linking the Port of Kirkenes (near the Norwegian-Russian border) through a wide-gauge railway directly to Russia’s network. Moreover, new mines in the north of Sweden and Finland will put pressure not only on the Iron Ore Line (Norway-Sweden) railroad’s capacity, but also on the Port of Narvik.

Nonetheless, truck logistics won’t give up easily its market share and do their best is order to stay competitive and still carry goods on the west-east axis in harsh weather conditions in the north of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia (which road system is substandard).

Talking about sea traffic, the Arctic Sea is becoming warmer and thus easier to navigate, and as an effect, the Russian stakeholders may reroute much of the cargo from the Bothnian region to ports in the Barents and White Seas. Last but not least, the 2015 Sulphur Emission Control Areas in the Baltic Sea will impact BGLC’s connections with south Baltic countries.

All stakeholders underline the necessity of strengthening cooperation between various parties within the Bothnian Green Logistics Corridor as well as between its east, west & south partners, both from the public and private

sectors, in order to streamline all initiatives, ideas and works. The task of establishing a green transport corridor is not an easy one. The concept must be well-thought-out, so it will withstand any challenges the future holds, and wisely governed, because even the greatest ideas tend to crumble without the right persons in charge. The people along the Bothnian Corridor know that and have placed their bet on partnership. ●

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By Edel Storelvmo
Managing Director of Futurum AS



Futurum AS is a business development company, located in the Norwegian city of Narvik. We are involved in the Bothnian Green Logistic Corridor project (BGLC), where one of our ambitions is to further develop the railway connection between Narvik and St. Petersburg/Moscow. This route is a section of a larger intermodal corridor, namely the so-called NEW-Corridor (N.E.W.) which consists of a land- and sea-transport section, linked together to an intermodal chain through the rail/sea terminal in Narvik. The N.E.W. is an intermodal transportation concept where several routes can be developed. The main parts are the ocean leg between Narvik and North America and the land transport section which consists of railroads between the Atlantic port in Narvik, through Sweden, Finland, Russia and Central Asia all the way to East Asia.

The separate elements of the corridor are partly in operation and the infrastructure exists. Nonetheless, the sections are not linked together, and they have to be integrated into a seamless intermodal chain. A viable railway section Narvik-St. Petersburg/Moscow is therefore an important condition for materializing the entire chain, and our intention is to continue the work after the completion of the BGLC project.

There are of course challenges connected to this development, for instance interoperability issues like different gauges and effective terminal operations. In our further work we would therefore initiate strong cooperation among partners with interest and competence related to the mentioned challenges. Such logistical cooperation includes, among others, stakeholders connected to the terminal in Haparanda (gauge break), terminals in Kouvola where we find professional systems and competence related to further transit to and from Russia as well as Russian carriers, terminals, forwarders and distributors.

Further project work intends to start in early 2014, where the above-mentioned tasks along with others issues will be on the project's agenda. ●



By Dag Bakka Jr.
Head of Press & Information
for the Norwegian Association
of Cargo Freighters



Regional transport corridors are the cornerstone of the EU's transport policy and whose objective it is to integrate rail and sea carriers more. Even though the Bothnian Corridor is mostly to run overland (rail and road), ideally I would like to witness a stronger intermodal sea-rail-road system for unit load, spanning across the Baltic Sea to relieve congested roads. Norway is a very good example in this regard, as intermodal has approx. a 58% share in rail transport performance.

The question is to what extent other regions, such as Russia and Norway, could be connected to the Bothnian Corridor. In this regard, there are several issues concerning Norway. There is another transport corridor linking the Continent to the country's coast, branching eastwards to the Oslo fjord and northwards along the coast. Secondly, import unit loads via Oslo destined for northern Norway are carried by rail (through Sweden) to Narvik in 27 hours and distributed by road. Cargo such as frozen fish from mid/northern Norway to Russia is largely carried by road across Umeå-Vaasa and then to Russia.

There are also a few initiatives for intermodal systems such as the Arctic Rail Link via the Port of Narvik to Russia and a similar service for mid-Sweden by the Port of Trondheim – but so far without success.

One possible market for the Bothnian Corridor may be northern Norway from Narvik and by rail ferry from Sweden to Germany/Poland. As for rail connections to Russia for overseas cargo, I believe that container feeders to St. Petersburg would be a cheaper option – both environmentally as well as economically. ●

By Bjarne Ivar Wist
Director Strategy and Information
at CargoNet AS



By Kari Ruohonen
The Finnish Transport Agency's
Director General, Projects



The concept of transport corridors as well as solutions relating to eastern markets in Scandinavia and Europe are interesting and important to CargoNet. Our company has for years been an important player in the Scandinavian railway sector, especially on the north-south transport axis.

Since 1993 CargoNet's Arctic Rail Express (ARE) has provided effective transports between the Norwegian cities of Oslo and Narvik through Sweden. CargoNet's concept is to use shuttle trains for carriages of fruits, vegetables and consumer goods to the northern part of Norway, and fish back to the southern part. We run 20 trains a week between Oslo and Narvik.

In 2014 CargoNet aims to start up operations between terminals in Kiruna (Sweden) as well as Narvik. The stop in Kiruna is for customers who want to reach Tromsø and destinations in Finnmark County in the shortest possible time. CargoNet is open to discussions to extend or connect the Arctic Rail Express to the Baltic countries. ●

First, in order to better link the Bothnian Corridor with its neighbours, internal connections must be improved. That is the reason why we are upgrading e.g. the railway from Seinäjoki to Oulu in Finland. Moreover, the Finnish Transport Agency has carried out a study on the state of railroads in Lapland; the paper also covers the question of possible connections to other countries from the Barents region. The report can be found on the Agency's website: www.liikennevirasto.fi.

It goes without saying that the Bothnian Corridor is important, however, when speaking of east-west connections, the difference in rail gauge between Sweden and Finland is a major problem. It is not easy to find an efficient and yet not too expensive solution in this regard. Nonetheless, in the near future Finland will be linked via Sweden to Narvik and to Murmansk in the opposite direction by existing railway connections. ●



By Gesa Köhler
Ministry of Energy, Infrastructure and State Development Mecklenburg-Vorpommern

The Bothnian Corridor is not only connected to Russia and Norway, but on the southern end there are several connections to Central Europe. This connection has played a great role in the Bothnian Green Logistic Corridor project (BGLC) and should not be forgotten. To better link the Bothnian Corridor to Central Europe it is important to understand that there are several options. Apart from the traditional route from Sweden via Denmark and Hamburg to the south, emerging markets in (south-)east Europe open new transport possibilities. For many transport relations it is faster, greener and more cost efficient to transport goods on a sea route and then e.g. via the ports of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (Germany) or Poland. The BGLC project has partners in both of these regions.

Many transport operators do not know about the opportunities, good infrastructure and free capacities of these alternative routes. It is therefore crucial to initiate a networking process, e.g. by business stakeholder study visits. This is also done as a part of the Bothnian project. When discussing sea transport an important issue are of course the Sulphur Emission Control Areas as well as the increasing plans for offshore wind farms that need to be coordinated with the shipping industry. This issue has been discussed at several BGLC conferences too.

How to better connect the North with the South and create an efficient, cost effective and green corridor is a crucial question that the BGLC project has been working on. ●



By Erling Sæther
Director Industrial Politics at the Norwegian Logistics and Freight Association

The main freight volumes go north-south to and from Norway. That applies to all transport modes – road, rail, air and sea. The infrastructure is not sufficient whether capacity-wise or maintenance-wise. Thus the first priority for Norway has to be to improve north-south connections.

We have good experience with cross country railway freight transportation between Norway and Sweden. There are three daily train services between Oslo via Hallsberg and Kiruna to Narvik with consumer goods northbound and 3,000 tn fresh salmon southbound. That service has been created, not because of, but in spite of governmental efforts.

The first thing to happen is that transport buyers as well as forwarders need to document the volume required to establish an improved railway network and show the ability to switch from road onto rail. If not – then one cannot assume that authorities will give economical priority to east-west connections. ●



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