

March 1, 2011

Green Logistics – Chances for Business and Society

Vincent Kobesen has been a member of the Board of PTV Planung Transport Verkehr AG since 2008: in April 2011 he became head of PTV's business field Logistics Software.

Vincent Kobesen took a degree in Business Administration. After completing his degree he joined Fokker Aerospace as business consultant. In his role as logistics consultant he founded and headed the two companies Districon and Ordix, today called PTV Benelux. Moreover, 49-year-old Kobesen is a member of the advisory boards of several associated companies of PTV.

Why should it be important for transport companies to now deal with "Green Logistics"?

Vincent Kobesen: "Let me begin by saying that nobody should ignore environmental protection, neither in business nor private matters. The climate change discussion has already motivated many companies around the world to rethink. As a result, they are now striving to manage their business operations in a more sustainable manner. Therefore, it seems only natural to use resource-saving transports. According to 'Branchenkompass 2010 Transport', a study conducted by Steria Mummert Consulting, currently every third organisation in the consumer products industry and in trade would be willing to pay a green surcharge. Transport companies, and here I'm talking in particular about small and medium-sized companies, can set themselves apart from the competition, if they position themselves as green logistics providers on that market in good time."

Does this mean that Green Logistics is not just a matter for key players in this sector?

Vincent Kobesen: "No, quite the contrary. These days, Green Logistics has become an important part of the strategy of almost any major transport companies. However, they cannot implement their strategy in a consistent manner unless all suppliers and subcontractors can and want to adhere to the same guidelines. Small haulage companies that cannot provide information about their transport emissions, will lose a further market share sooner or later. Apart from that, it won't help to bury one's head in the sand regarding the current development since political institutions in Europe have been discussing regulations that restrict the emission of harmful substances and greenhouse gases for quite a time now. This means that generally applicable rules will be established sooner or later."

When did PTV start to address the issue of emissions calculations?

Vincent Kobesen: "Our company has always been passionate about sustainability. With our route and transport planners we have therefore focused on long-term saving of resources from the outset. Our emissions calculation has its origins in the business field Traffic Software. A couple of years ago, our team of transportation experts integrated a tool for traffic-related emissions calculation into our transportation planning software PTV Vision. Since 2008, our business field Logistics Software has also been working on this topic intensely. Last year, we integrated an emissions calculator into our route planning software map&guide professional. The Handbook Emission Factors for Road Transport (HBEFA 3.1), which is based on emission surveys from numerous federal environment agencies, is used as data source. In April 2010, our solution was certified by TÜV Süd, a recognized German inspection authority. The emissions calculation module which we have now integrated into Hermes' component solutions includes uphill and downhill inclines for the first time. As of the middle of 2011 it will be available to all our customers.

What is the current track record on the cooperation with Hermes?

Vincent Kobesen: "Since 2007, Hermes has been using PTV's geographical and logistical software solutions to optimise their transport operations. Together with Hermes and Steria Mummert we have developed the PTV xServers in such a way as to use them for CO2 balancing. As a result, Hermes is the first logistics service provider who can now calculate the CO2 footprint of each shipment. We have established a good basis for road transport and we want to continue to work together on this basis. Our aim is to develop intermodal planning tools in order to optimise transport across different means of transportation. There are exciting times ahead! But one thing is certain: they will be green."