



Chasing Sustainability In Logistics

ECOLOGISTICO₂, A WEB TOOL DEVELOPED BY ECR ITALIA, CAN MONITOR AND ENHANCE THE SUSTAINABILITY OF LOGISTICS PROCESSES ACROSS THE SUPPLY CHAIN.

While both retailers and suppliers are endeavouring to adopt more sustainable practices into their day-to-day operations, keeping track of progress is something of a grey area.

Ecologistico₂, developed by ECR Italia in conjunction with GreenRouter, claims to have the answer: it is a free tool, created to help companies find solutions to reduce the impact of their supply chain, promoting collaboration and sharing of results.

Among the areas in which Ecologistico₂ has improved visibility are warehouse management, truck fill optimisation, the use of vehicles with a lower environmental footprint, and a variety of other initiatives that companies have implemented to make their supply chains more efficient and less polluting.

ESM spoke to a number of companies that are using the tool, about the sustainability goals that they are seeking to achieve and how Ecologistico₂ is influencing how they undertake sustainability projects.

Retail Challenges

Italian retail cooperative Coop Italia has sought to address environmental matters on several fronts: through the development of its private-label products according to strict environmental guidelines, through improving the energy efficiency of its stores, and through the realisation of all the phases of its supply chain in a more efficient way.

“All production plants, warehouses, carriers, and all those who operate along the entire production chain are involved in this policy, in order to achieve these purposes,” says Iacopo Niccoli, the group’s process integration manager.

In addition, the cooperative has taken steps to source more products from organic and environmentally certified suppliers, and implemented measures to reduce packaging. These steps, however, present a challenge, in that these sort of interventions do not always come with an economic benefit.

“The conversion to more green processes lead management costs to increase, especially in the short term,” he says. “The economic benefit, in terms of advertising, communica-

tion, visibility, and perhaps sales growth, can take a long time to be shown, and its achievement is not always certain.”

Coop Italia applied Ecologistico₂ to two different projects: the replacement, in a non-food warehouse, of the lighting system to LED, and the move to LNG trucks (from diesel trucks) for goods transportation to its stores.

“In the evaluation phase of the projects, Ecologistico₂ allows the comparison between alternative technical solutions, and, subsequently, it enables us to calculate and promote the results achieved in terms of CO₂ reduction,” Niccoli says.

Life Cycle Assessment

On the supplier side, baby care manufacturer Fater Group has adopted a sustainability approach based on a circular-economy model, incorporating product design, production, transport, and the recycling of used products. Ecologistico₂ has provided the business with a tool that underpins the group’s strategy to minimise environmental impact.

“Sustainability is a core business strategy for Fater,” says Rossella Grattagliano, its associate director of corporate communications. “We are committed to improving the environmental impact of all our activities, following the ‘Life Cycle Assessment’ approach. This drives us to incorporate sustainability choices in all phases of our products’ life: design, raw and pack materials selection, production, logistics, post-usage, recycling.”

With that in mind, the group developed a business unit, FaterSMART, focused on developing solutions for recycling used absorbent products. Indeed, the company developed the first technology in the world to deliver 100% recycling of used absorbent products, ensuring that every waste product comes ‘back to life’. In order to track progress in these objectives, the group turned to the Ecologistico₂ solution.

“We believe that achieving our sustainability objectives is the result of a journey that requires constant learning, improving and innovating,” says Grattagliano. “Having effective measurement and tracking tools helps a lot.”

“Ecologistico₂ provides important support in the area of logistics, while, on top of that,

we have implemented a digital platform that allows us to compare the environmental impact of different product versions, enabling us to easily measure the 'Life Cycle Assessment' total effect of our product design choices," she adds.

In the coming years, the business also hopes to use Ecologistico₂ as a means to promote the use of intermodal transports in partnership with logistics suppliers.

Supply Flow

Similarly, at sugar refiner Eridania, which commemorates its 120th anniversary this year, Ecologistico₂ facilitated a modal switch in the company's supply flows, which delivered defined economic returns.

"The main activity is linked to the optimisation of the railway flows, both from France and from distribution in Italy," says Gian Paolo Mangolini, supply chain manager at Eridania Italia.

Where the company has encountered challenges, however, is in how it can quantify the effects of an upgrading of its supply flows,



Coop Italia Ecologistico, has been able to provide 'objective measurement' for the group

with a lack of tools available to make this evaluation. This is where Ecologistico₂ comes in.

"It's very important that Ecologistico₂ will give the possibility to evaluate the effect of the actions taken, and, what's more, it will give us a certification of the results. In my opinion, this is the critical point that enables us to develop other projects. Without a system that could measure and certify the

results, there is a risk that the project will not be effective," adds Mangolini.

As firms seek to marry sustainability goals with better business performance, while, at the same time, driving greater efficiency in their operations, Ecologistico₂ could be a valuable tool in their arsenal. ■

For further information, visit tinyurl.com/ecologistico2

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