

Associated British Ports (ABP) has shipped timber to the Scottish Port of Troon in a sustainable way since 2000.

Environmentally sound the 'timberLINK' Project by Sea and Water supporter ABP at its Port of Troon (Ayrshire), was designed to ship timber and other forest products by sea as opposed to road. timberLink is a leader in its field of sustainable transport of timber in Scotland and has saved around 6.2 million road miles so far, which equates to a saving of approximately 16,8000 tonnes of CO² emissions.

timberLINK was awarded a £4.4 million Freight-Facilities Grant (FFG) by the Scottish Executive in 2000 to help establish the trade which now ships in excess of 100,000 tonnes of timber a year around Scotland. Logs are shipped from the four ports of Ardrishaig, Campbeltown, Portavadie and Sandbank (Argyll) and hubbed at Troon, where the timber is then forwarded to local wood-processing plants including Egger at Auchinleck, Caledonian Paper and Mairs Sawmill (both in Irvine), and Wilson's Sawmill in Troon.

By shipping the logs some 25,000 lorry journeys have been prevented on the road network between Argyll and Ayrshire, including the busy tourist routes on the Argyll Peninsula and the A82 through Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park – from taking place.

The sustainable component of the timberLINK project was initially supported by the Scottish Executive, which actively encourages the transfer of freight from roads onto rail and water via their FFG scheme. More recently the responsibility for the timberLINK service has been taken over by Forestry Commission Scotland under the umbrella of a Public Service Contract. The rail and water FFG schemes are capital grant schemes to assist companies to invest in the facilities needed to enable sustainable transport (rail and water) to compete in financial terms with road.

Award	Amount of Award	Date Awarded	Average Lorry Miles to be removed in Scotland each year
Associated British Ports	£4,410,000	Feb 2000	1,000,000

Information from

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/52995/0048982.pdf>

Stuart Cresswell, ABP's Port Manager for Troon, said:

“timberLINK has been an incredible success since it started in 2000 and is now one of the Port of Troon's most important business ventures. As well as benefiting the environment by taking lorries off the road, we are also glad to

be in a position to facilitate and, therefore, support this fundamental Scottish industry."

Matt Jukes, ABP Port Director, Short-Sea Ports, said:

"ABP controls a network of strategically placed short-sea ports all around the coast of the UK. Wherever possible, we are keen to promote the waterborne transit of freight between such ports, rather than by road. The timberLINK initiative is a perfect example of how short-sea shipping, through tailored logistics solutions, can benefit a wide range of different parties."

Commenting on the timberLINK project Sea and Water's Research Director, Dr Heather Leggate said: "the launch of the timberLINK project by ABP is a successful trade story of British business developing a sound project which has attracted grant funding. Furthermore, it demonstrates the potential for water freight in reducing carbon emissions."

She added that it is a sound example of an effective coastal shipping service operating around the coast of Scotland.

Derek Nelson of Forestry Commission Scotland said:

"The timberLINK initiative helps reduce the number of lorries traveling on fragile rural roads and has been very successful since its introduction. It has provided a valuable solution for the transportation of timber."

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About ABP

ABP owns and operates 21 ports around Britain and is the UK's leading ports group. First privatized in 1983 it handles approximately a quarter of the country's seaborne trade. Its ports are: Ayr, Barrow, Barry, Cardiff, Fleetwood, Garston, Goole, Grimsby, Hull, Immingham, Ipswich, King's Lynn, Lowestoft, Newport, Plymouth, Port Talbot, Silloth, Southampton, Swansea, Teignmouth and Troon. ABP also has a property division which is responsible for managing the Group's extensive land and property assets. Issues relating to land that is used for port operations may involve anything from managing tenancy agreements to renegotiating leases, or providing expert advice on property-related matters when a disposal or acquisition is being considered. In addition, ABP's property division negotiates and manages the disposal of land and property that has been identified as non-core to the ongoing ports and transport business, adding value by securing alternative planning consents and infrastructure where appropriate.

ABP is a supporter of Sea and Water and is spearheading the campaign to make people aware that maritime transport makes a useful contribution towards the drive to use more environmentally-friendly modes of transport.

Road-traffic congestion is a major environmental problem which contributes significantly towards increasing CO₂ emissions and climate change. Some of ABP's environmentally sound schemes were supported by FFGs. Since 1997 ABP has received over £5 million of grants from the government to support 12 projects at their ports.

The Port of Troon

The Port of Troon offers one of the most sheltered harbours on the west coast of Scotland. An efficient trunk road system connects the port to the motorways of Scotland and England. Troon is now established as a major ferry and fishing port and is the closest fishing port to the rest of the UK. Troon is administered from Ayr.

Sea and Water is the thought-leader that encourages logistic managers to take freight off the highly-congested road network and onto environmentally friendly and sustainable modes of short sea, coastal and inland shipping. Modal shift to water will reduce carbon emissions that will contribute to HM Government's Kyoto Climate Change targets. Water-borne freight is environmentally sustainable and has economic benefits for the port and wharf communities around the UK.