UECC 35TH ANNIVERSARY
1990-2025

An industry leader on a voyage of sustainability

UECC

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INTRODUCTION FROM CEO

Building on the past, embracing the future

UECC has been forged into an industry leader through a proud history founded on a dedication to corporate responsibility and sustainability

Life is full of challenges. And how we respond to these challenges, whether it be in the arena of business, sport, politics, academia or our everyday lives, will form us and ultimately determine our destiny.

The climate crisis is undoubtedly one of the greatest global challenges of today and this has had a transformational impact on the shipping industry over the past two decades, reshaping priorities and commercial goals in pursuit of net-zero emissions to safeguard the environment.

Since the early days of UECC with its inception 35 years ago, corporate social responsibility and sustainability have been the continual guiding principles of our decision-making. This has enabled us to respond in a positive way to the climate challenge, seeing it as an opportunity to demonstrate industry leadership towards a more sustainable future.

As the saying goes: 'Fortune favours the bold.'

UECC's ground-breaking approach meant we were the first mover in adoption of biofuels five years ago as we continue to pioneer new alternative fuels to facilitate the green transition. And technological innovation has been at the heart of our fleet expansion as the world's first LNG-fuelled newbuild PCTCs have been added to our fleet, exceeding regulatory requirements on emissions while cutting the carbon footprint of logistics for our customers.

It has been a remarkable and exciting journey, and I am proud and honoured to work alongside our dedicated owners, building on their strong leadership and forward-thinking approach to achieve our sustainability ambitions.

UECC's success is driven by the collective energy, enthusiasm, efficiency, and dedication of our entire workforce, past and present. Every member of our team plays a vital role in our achievements, supported by strong collaborations with industry partners and stakeholders.

It's all about teamwork.

UECC's corporate culture is underpinned by our core values of Unity, Energy, Challenging and Commitment. The safety and well-being of our staff remains the overriding priority, while the principles of worker empowerment, human rights, diversity, equality and inclusion are a key element of our ESG strategy to strengthen the company's greatest asset - our people.

UECC's success is driven by the collective energy, enthusiasm, efficiency, and dedication of our entire workforce

As we celebrate our 35th anniversary, UECC stands robust after embracing the new green reality, and is moving ahead with decarbonisation as our driving force, fuelled by the expertise of our people and collaboration with the industry.

On this firm foundation, we are confident in our ability to confront the challenges of tomorrow - and shape a sustainable and prosperous future in shipping.

EVOLUTION AND EXPANSION

Navigating shifting seas into a green future

UECC has confronted market headwinds to chart a successful course through turbulent shipping waters

Like traversing the seas, steering the right course in ship operations requires visibility to negotiate difficult conditions and tackle various risks to reach one's destination. And adopting a far-sighted strategy has enabled UECC to effectively navigate myriad obstacles - from a global financial crisis and covid, to new green regulations - and stay ahead of the market.

This prescient approach has been embedded in the company's strategy through successive changes of management, starting with its first Managing Director Tom Bringsværd who took over the reins from interim MD Pål Smith-Kielland amid the corporate transition from Ugland to create United European Car Carriers after 50:50 owners NYK and Wallenius Lines came onboard in 1990-91.

Springboard for growth

The landmark ownership shift provided the springboard for a new phase of evolution and expansion that saw UECC extend its European business with the opening of new offices and terminals in countries including the UK, Spain and Greece, grow its workforce and expand its fleet with additional high-capacity newbuilds and chartered-in vessels to capitalise on booming trade.

This activity was carried out to facilitate new freight contracts secured initially with major vehicle manufacturers Toyota and VW, followed by the addition of clients including BMW, Honda and Ford farther down the road, as increasing demand resulted in transported volumes rising by 75% after a decade of operations to over 1.4m units by 2001, when UECC operated 20 owned vessels.

Rapid expansion of the company's business was in line with massive growth in global seaborne trade as the total volume of cargo transported by commercial shipping more than doubled from 4bn tonnes in 1990 to nearly 11bn tonnes in 2021, according to Statista. This reflects increasing globalisation and demand for goods from a growing population.

Market challenges

Consequently, the UECC fleet had expanded to 32 vessels in 2008, after exceeding transport volumes of 2m units for the first time two years earlier. By that time, it had established a new headquarters in Oslo and a new structure with three trading hubs in Piraeus, Brussels and Oslo.

At the helm: the skilled officers and crew of UECC's fleet have enabled the company to deliver on sustainability ambitions. Pictured (L-R) are the PCTC Auto Aspire's Third Officer Diogo Pinto, Master Patrycjusz Wilkowski and Chief Officer Pavel Kepa

All photos: UECC unless otherwise stated

However, shipping is an inherently cyclical business due to the shifting tides of global trade, influenced by volatile economic and geopolitical factors, and UECC has not been immune to market turbulence.

The company had to contend with the fallout of the 2008 global financial crisis that affected operations, resulting in a leaner enterprise due to downsizing of both its fleet and personnel.

Although UECC's focus on the shortsea RoRo trade in northern Europe has largely shielded it from disruptive events that have hit shipping in other parts of the world, there were inevitable consequences as the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 hampered voyages, affected crewing logistics and led to supply chain challenges for vehicle manufacturers due to lockdowns.

Sustainability drive

Nonetheless, the company has demonstrated strong resilience in the face of such market challenges, while

Origins: UECC is given berth

United European Car Carriers (UECC) has its roots in the distinguished Ugland shipping family of Norway that has been foundational to the success of the nation's maritime industry through companies spanning various segments established by successive generations of shipowners.

UECC traces its earliest beginnings to the former Ugland Management Co (UMC), founded in 1966 by late Norwegian shipowner Andreas KL Ugland out of the family's home base of Grimstad *(photo right)*. Together with his brother Johan Jørgen Ugland, Andreas also ran the family business, AS Uglands Rederi, after inheriting it from their father, pioneering shipowner Johan Milmar Ugland.

UMC launched the era of shortsea car carriers with the order of three small car carriers - named Autoroute, Autostrada and Autobahn - at the Båtservice Verft yard in Mandal, Norway in 1969. A fourth newbuild, Autoweg, was subsequently also ordered and delivered. The UMC fleet grew exponentially during the next two decades through further newbuild orders, vessel purchases, time charters, joint ventures and corporate acquisitions, notably that of major French competitor Carline.

This resulted in a fleet of as many as 21 car carriers by 1989, when the now renamed company Andreas Ugland & Sons transported more than 920,000 units amid a buoyant market, setting the stage for the next exciting phase of development when UECC was to see the light of day.

EVOLUTION AND EXPANSION

Driving force: UECC is dependent on the expertise of its competent personnel to keep the fleet moving efficiently, including (L-R) Able Seamen Florival Oliveira and Paulo Carvalho, and Security Guard Agostinho Nogueira on the Auto Aspire

positioning itself as a first-mover in the industry push for decarbonisation amid the emergence over the past decade of new environmental regulations from the IMO and EU.

Consequently, UECC had already hatched plans to enhance the sustainability of its fleet as early as 2014, resulting in delivery of the world's first two dual-fuel LNG PCTCs from NACKS Shipyard in Nantong, China in 2016.

This was followed by subsequent newbuild orders for three multi-fuel LNG battery hybrid PCTCs - also the first of their kind - at China's Jiangnan Shipyard in 2019. The first PCTC, Auto Advance, was delivered in 2021 and the remaining

> *The company has demonstrated strong resilience in the face of market challenges, positioning itself as a first-mover in the push for decarbonisation*

vessels, Auto Achieve and Auto Aspire, in 2022. These are now part of a progressively more sustainable fleet, bolstered by UECC's pioneering adoption of biofuels to enhance the environmental performance of its other vessels.

In the latest evolution of the fleet, UECC is investing in additional multi-fuel battery hybrid PCTCs, with two such vessels currently on order at China Merchants Jinling Shipyard Nanjing that are scheduled for delivery in 2028. Once delivered, these newbuilds will increase the total number of owned eco-friendly PCTCs in the UECC fleet to seven vessels, plus two operated dual-fuel LNG newbuilds Blue Aspire and Blue Heritage.

UECC has set a new standard for eco-friendly maritime transport by expanding its fleet with advanced vessels designed for energy efficiency and sustainability, while exceeding current regulatory requirements, to strengthen its leading market position under the new green regime.

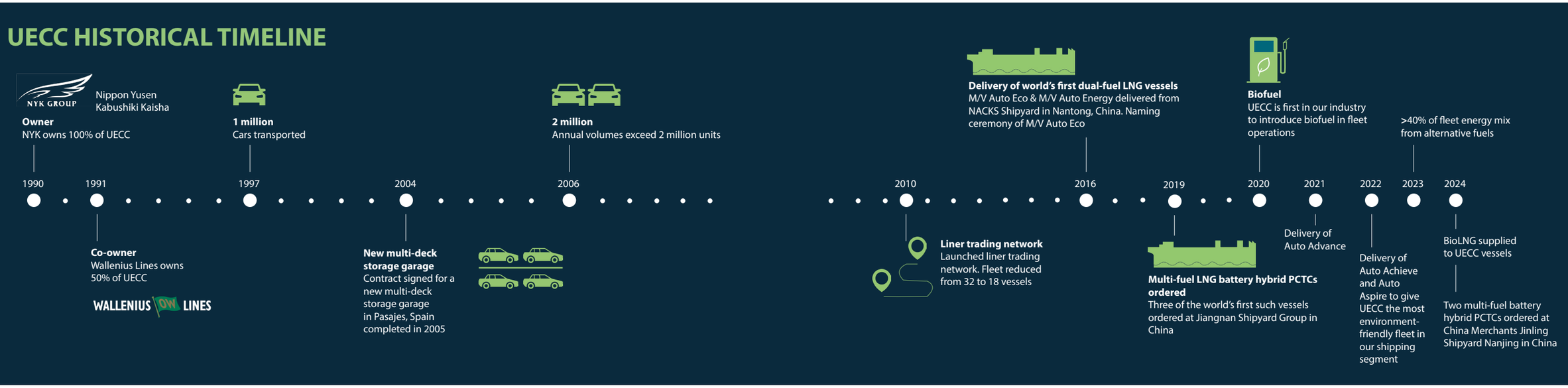
"Guided by the business foresight of visionary management over several decades, the company has plotted a stable course as it advances into the future with the winds of trade firmly in its favour," says UECC's Director Sales & Marketing Bjørn Svenningsen.

SHIPS' LOG #1

Autoroute's last commercial call at the port of Piraeus

- Autoroute sold in early 1970s to Lloyd Brasileiro of Brazil and renamed Autolloyd. Autostrada traded for Ugland/UECC until it was scrapped in Turkey in 1996. Autobahn served as feeder carrier in Mediterranean for deepsea lines including NYK in mid-1970s and later scrapped in Turkey. Fourth newbuild Autoweg delivered in 1973.
- Canabal and Cobres were delivered in 1976 from the Factoria de Rios yard in Vigo, Spain. Later sold in 1993 by NYK to Panamanian Car Carriers and ended their lives as Carib Sea and Carib Sun, owned by Höegh. Jarama also built at the same Vigo yard and delivered in 1980.
- Autoline and Autotransporter were in operation from 1983 to 2009 when they were sold for conversion to livestock carriers. Operating today as Al Mahmoud Express and Al Mahmoud Orient.
- Estoril and Goodwood, delivered in 1974 from French yard Chantiers Nouvelle des Ateliers et Chantiers du Havre in Le Havre, were sold for demolition in 2001-2003.
- Donington and Hockenheim delivered from same Le Havre yard in 1976 and operated also under the names of Tetre Rouge and Hunaudieres before being recycled in 2002/03.
- Montlhery and Le Castellet delivered in 1982 from French yard Soc Nouvelle des Ateliers et Chantiers de La Rochelle-Pallice and recycled in 2008. Autotrader, initially launched as Warendorp in 1974, was broken up as Sicily Express in 2001.
- Autofreighter, delivered as Fredenhagen in 1976, sold for demolition in 2005 by UECC but continued trading as Kebbi and now named Elduga, trading between Japan, Korea, China and Vladivostok.
- Autocarrier, built as Castorp in 1982, continued trading for UECC until being laid up in 2009 when it was sold for demolition. Autoroute recycled in Turkey at the age of 30 years old almost to the day.

UECC HISTORICAL TIMELINE



RECOLLECTIONS

Colourful career of a UECC veteran...

Retired former operations manager was in at the beginning and is a fount of encyclopedic knowledge on company history

"It has been a thrilling, and at times, challenging journey with never a dull moment!" recalls UECC's former Operations Manager John Bergmann, with a hint of a New York City accent derived from his childhood in the Big Apple and a subsequent work stint in the US metropolis.

Relaxing in an armchair with a cup of coffee as he recollects his time at the company, John is now enjoying a laid-back retirement together with his wife at their home in Grimstad where he spends time with family, playing with grandchildren and following sports like soccer, baseball and skiing, as commercial ships and ferries pass by on the Skagerrak strait off the sleepy coastal town in southern Norway.

It is a far cry from his hectic 26-year career at UECC, working long hours and weekends, having seen the development of the company from its earliest beginnings and had responsibility for complex fleet operations amid the ups and downs of the volatile shipping business.

Full circle

In a way, his life has come full circle. After graduating from business school in his home town of Arendal, John came onboard in 1971 when he was recruited as an accounting assistant with Ugland Management working out of a converted farmhouse in Grimstad where affiliate Uglands Rederi was also based, with the two companies run respectively by legendary brothers Andreas KL and Johan Jørgen Ugland.

That was the beginning of an adventure of diverse experiences with Ugland and UECC that have taken him to different parts of the world - and also out of his comfort zone.

Under the management of the "highly innovative" Andreas, Ugland grew from initially having three bulkers and three car carriers, subsequently taking delivery of an additional three newbuild car carriers that were to form the basis of the European shortsea trade later taken over by UECC.

The Big Apple: New York City was home for John Bergmann both during his childhood and in his subsequent shipping career

Photo: Pexels.com

MILESTONES: 1990 - 1996

June 1990
Nippon Yusen Kabushiki Kaisha (NYK) finalises takeover of ships, contracts and organisation. Ugland European Car Carriers established in Grimstad. Pål Smith-Kielland appointed interim managing director. Naviera Transal takes over MV Indianapolis and is subsequently acquired by ECC Holding.

1991
Tom Bringsværd appointed MD in January. Wallenius Lines takes over 50% of shares and company name changed to United European Car Carriers (UECC). Naviera Transal changes name to UECC Iberica SA.

1992
UECC Grimsby in UK is established, with Cheryl Burnley joining from the start. Head office moves to converted former lifeboat factory in Hasseldalen, near Grimstad. Annual shipped volumes in 1991 and 1992: 800,000 units.
(Photo below shows UECC staff and spouses at Hasseldalen).

1993
John Williams Son and Sharps is acquired by UECC. In-house technical management and crewing set up in Grimsby and Lisbon. Pål Smith-Kielland returns as MD. Two 1150-capacity car carriers ordered at Brattvaag Skipsverft, Norway. Euro Terminal Ltd opens for Toyota in Grimsby with first cargo for car maker carried on Autotransporter.

1994
Newbuild Autoracer delivered. UECC terminal established at Pasajes, Spain.

1995
Newbuild Autorunner christened and delivered in Grimstad. UECC Terminals Ltd opens for VW in Grimsby. UECC (London) Ltd established with office in City of London. Contract for four PCTCs is signed with Frisian Shipyard Welgelegen, The Netherlands.

1996
Management and commercial office opens in Lysaker, Norway.

Enjoying retirement: John Bergmann at home in Grimstad
Photos: John Bergmann

John also saw his role expand to encompass management of vessel operations under the joint venture Høegh Ugland Auto Liners (HUAL) forged with compatriot Høegh in the early Seventies, in which he had responsibility for contracts including transport of Fiat cars from Europe to the USA and return cargoes to the Mediterranean.

The combination resulted in a joint office being established in Oslo, which involved a 300km weekly commute for John between the Norwegian capital and Grimstad - often catching the last available flight home. "The weekends were mainly spent shovelling snow in the winter," he laughs.

NYC-bound a second time
An opportunity then emerged for John to work in NYC where he travelled with his wife and their two children - a three-year-old son and daughter aged 9 - in 1978 to take up a position as operational assistant with HUAL subsidiary Autoliners Inc, acting as a port agent, handling damage claims and serving as port captain for cargo operations with ships calling at ports throughout the US.

John's near two-year stint in NYC, where he commuted to midtown offices initially from a company apartment in Manhattan and later a home on Long Island, was to evoke fond memories of his childhood spent in the city where he lived with his parents and two younger sisters after the family emigrated from their native Norway to the US in 1958 when he was nine years old.

"NYC was a great place to grow up. I have always enjoyed the city and returned to visit on many occasions," says John, who started in third grade at elementary school and attended a junior high school on Long Island before the family returned to Norway in 1965, then with an additional daughter.

Back working in Grimstad with HUAL and acting as chartering manager for an Ugland bulker, John was soon to be thrown into the deep end when Ugland bought up its main competitor in the shortsea trade, Carline SA of France, in 1987. This resulted in the fleet expanding almost overnight from 10 to 19 ships incorporated in the newly formed Ugland Aall Car Carriers (UACC).

"I was given operational responsibility for the 19-vessel fleet, together with a team of only three people handling the hectic shortsea operation, while procuring bunkers and chartering additional tonnage as needed," he says.

New voyage with UECC
At that time, little did he know that this was just the precursor for a much bigger transition as UACC was subsequently acquired by Japanese giant NYK in the summer of 1990 when it was renamed Ugland European Car Carriers. UECC was born and John was among Ugland staff who joined the newly minted company, which became United European Car Carriers a year later when Wallenius Lines of Sweden gained a 50% stake after Tom Bringsværd was appointed managing director.

> *NYC was a great place to grow up. I have always enjoyed the city and returned to visit on many occasions*

The shift in ownership proved the springboard for rapid fleet expansion during the Nineties when six newbuild PCTCs, including Autoracer and Autorunner, were delivered - and another four contracted - as freight deals were signed with vehicle manufacturers like Toyota and VW that also resulted in new terminals being established.

"Fortunately, the operational team was expanded to 8-10 people as things could get pretty busy. Having to coordinate available ships for loading of multiple cargoes at the right ports, as well as ensure adequate supply of bunkers, was a difficult juggling act. It was challenging but exciting, and every day was different," John says.

Managing operations: John Bergmann, pictured (below right) at work during his career at UECC, retired following the delivery of Auto Eco (above) in 2016

Tackling market downturns
During his time with UECC, John has also had to contend with cyclical market downturns - such as a slump in the new car carrier market in the 1990s and the 2008 financial crisis - that required adapting fleet utilisation for available cargo business to maintain operations.

For example, this entailed having to pick up second-hand vehicles transported from North European ports to Lebanon and Libya in the Nineties, earning him the nickname 'Second-hand John' by colleagues at a Christmas party where he was presented with a painted car door - "and a hammer to use when my frustration boiled over".

John sees the highlight of his career at UECC as a 3.5-year stint from 2006 serving as operations manager at the company's former Piraeus office in Greece, where he headed up a multi-cultural team running a total of 10 ships plying North European, Mediterranean and Black Sea trade routes.

"While there was a heavy workload, the cultural interaction with other nationalities from countries like Spain and Ukraine was extremely valuable and we delivered successful results. It was also great to have a lot of autonomy and take a hands-on approach," he says.

John has been at the heart of the operational action as the UECC fleet has grown further in recent years, from the addition of earlier newbuilds Autosky, Autostar and Autosun in the early 2000s - resulting in a trip to Japan for he and his wife for the Autostar christening in 2001 - to delivery of the world's first dual-fuel LNG PCTCs Auto Eco and Auto Energy in 2016 when he retired from the company on the day of his 67th birthday.

Clued up on history
The emergence of the twin trends of decarbonisation and digitalisation during his tenure at UECC have resulted in changed reporting practices in line with green standards, while ship-to-shore communications have been greatly enhanced by digital technology to boost the efficiency of operational management, according to John.

He admits that he misses the friendly corporate culture at UECC, having "really enjoyed" his time at the company where he worked at the Oslo headquarters in his latter years. "There is a great camaraderie among staff and a positive rapport with management, which makes you want to go to work in the morning," he says.

But John, a keen history buff with an almost encyclopedic knowledge of UECC milestones, still stays in the loop. He remains a keen follower of the company's fleet by monitoring ship positions on the VesselFinder website, while also keeping track of company updates on social media.

And, perhaps longingly, he occasionally catches sight of a UECC car carrier passing by on the horizon...

Safe hands: UECC crew aboard the Auto Aspire

MILESTONES: 1997 - 2006

1997
Nils-Henrik Jaeger takes over as MD. Newbuilds Autopremier and Autopride delivered from Frisian yard. Major milestone of over 1m cars transported.

1998
Delivery of newbuild Autoprogress from Frisian. Additional three newbuild PCTCs contracted with Tsuneishi Shipbuilding in Japan.

1999
Newbuild Autoprestige delivered from Frisian. New crewing office opens in Setubal, Portugal.

2000
Newbuilds Autosky, Autostar and Autosun are delivered from Tsuneishi in period May-December.

2001
UECC now has 20 owned vessels with 667 employees (300 onshore, 367 onboard). Volume of units transported exceeds 1.4m. Major co-operation with EMC for Renault and Nissan volumes, new VW volumes also transported. Contract with Nato/ Norwegian Ministry of Defence. First ISO 14001 certificate.

2002
New major terminal for Gefco in Vigo and new UECC office opens in Paris to handle logistics and Gefco contract. New contracts with Toyota and Ford, and renewal of contract with Opel Ireland.

2003
New North/South service initiated, start of new Gefco service. Volumes increase to over 1.8m units. Fleet expands to 22 vessels and workforce to 806 employees. Annual volumes for Toyota up from 23k to 120k over 10 years. Volvo onboard as new customer.

2004
Fleet increases to 25 vessels and number of employees to 937 (616 on shore, 321 onboard). Jan-Eyvin Wang appointed MD. UECC Unipessoal Lds established. Partnership agreement between WWL and UECC. Increased Honda volumes, new Toyota contract, BMW car transport, Gefco contract extended.

2005
New 90,000 sq.m. multi-deck vehicle storage facility completed in Pasajes. Agreement with Transfennica for paper transport from Finland to Lübeck from 2006. New feeder service for NYK and new service to Malaga. New Zeebrugge office. Fleet now at 27 vessels on higher RoRo activity.

2006
Transport volumes exceed 2m units for first time. New commercial office opens in Piraeus. Long-term partnership with Eukor. Satellite communications installed on 14 vessels. Auto Bank and Auto Bay taken on long-term charter. New contract with Kia Europe/Glovis for Nordic destinations.

Future-oriented design: the multi-fuel LNG battery hybrid PCTC Auto Advance incorporates proven technology in a unique configuration to enhance performance

SHIPS' LOG #2

- Autoracer delivered in 1994 and Autorunner in January 1995.
- Autopremier and Autopride, both built at Frisian Shipyard Welgelegen at Harlingen in The Netherlands, were delivered in May and October 1997, respectively. Autoprogress and Autoprestige were delivered from the same yard in March 1998 and April 1999, respectively.
- The newbuild PCTC Autosky was christened in Grimstad in July 2000 after delivery from the Tsuneishi yard in Japan. Autostar was christened at Tsuneishi after being delivered in September 2000 while the Autosun, built at the same yard, was in operation by December 2000.

Autorunner was delivered in 1995

- The world's first dual-fuel LNG PCTCs Auto Eco and Auto Energy were delivered from NACKS Shipyard in Nantong, China in 2016. In 2019, Auto Energy received the first of two Greenports Awards from Bremenports for most eco-friendly vessel.
- The world's first multi-fuel LNG battery hybrid PCTCs Auto Advance was delivered from China's Jiangnan Shipyard in 2021 with the second and third, Auto Achieve and Auto Aspire, delivered in 2022. Emerald Leader is first of UECC's time-chartered vessels to be bunkered with biofuel.
- Auto Way, acquired from Höegh Autoliners by Wallenius Lines, taken on time charter by UECC. Dual-fuel LNG newbuild Blue Aspire taken on for operation to further expand fleet.

Technological innovation fuels industry progress

Bold moves in developing new low-carbon solutions have delivered significant operational gains

Necessity is the mother of invention and the push for sustainability in shipping has been the catalyst for innovative technological development by UECC together with industry players that have advanced eco-friendly ship evolution.

The company has been at the forefront in developing energy-efficient engine technologies to enhance operational efficiency and reduce its environmental footprint, breaking new ground with the order in 2014 of two dual-fuel LNG PCTCs, Auto Eco and Auto Energy, that were the first such vessels to be fitted with an LNG fuel propulsion system.

Enabling emissions reductions

"We never saw this as a risk but rather a great opportunity to make a difference and reduce GHG emissions by adopting and adapting available fuel technologies," says CEO Glenn Edvardsen.

The pioneering LNG installation was at the time the largest employed on a PCTC, allowing these vessels to complete a 14-day round voyage in the Baltic Sea solely using LNG as fuel, including main engine and auxiliary power generation.

The dual-fuel capability has enabled reductions of around 25% in CO2 emissions through the use of LNG, as well as SOx and particulate matter of 90% and NOx of 85%.

While paving the way for wider industry adoption of this important transition fuel, UECC took a further technological leap with its subsequent 2019 order of three multi-fuel LNG battery hybrid newbuilds - Auto Advance, Auto Achieve and Auto Aspire - at China's Jiangnan Shipyard.

Unique configuration

These vessels were designed, together with DNV and Jiangnan's in-house ship designer Shanghai Merchant Ship Design & Research Institute, to incorporate proven technology in a unique configuration geared to enhancing operational and environmental performance.

> *We never saw this as a risk but rather a great opportunity to make a difference and reduce GHG emissions by adopting and adapting available fuel technologies*

Dual-fuel engines have been combined with an energy storage system (ESS) incorporating a battery package charged by a permanent magnet, directly driven shaft generator or dual-fuelled generators.

The ESS and shaft generator provide a spinning reserve for batteries to be charged while at sea, allowing the vessels to operate in port solely on battery power, while enabling peak shaving to reduce fuel consumption and emissions.

WHO DARES WINS

Energy efficiency is further optimised by an intelligent energy management system.

LNG battery hybrid technology, together with an optimised hull design for better fuel efficiency, meant these vessels could exceed the IMO requirement to cut carbon intensity by at least 40% by 2030 versus 2008 levels.

Such technology has been further advanced with UECC's latest order of two similar newbuilds due for delivery in 2028 from China Merchants Jinling Shipyard Nanjing.

These will be fitted with multi-fuel LNG-driven engines incorporating state-of-the-art propulsion technologies to optimise energy efficiency and an aerodynamic hull design to minimise fuel consumption, as well as shore power capability and solar panels installed on the top deck.

Energy efficiency measures
UECC has also implemented other energy efficiency measures across its wider fleet such as waste heat recovery systems, air lubrication systems, high-efficiency anti-fouling coatings and advanced hull designs, while enabling its vessels for cold ironing at ports. Ship operations are also being optimised through advanced voyage planning, speed management and route optimisation.

Future-proof technologies such as advanced propulsion systems and energy-efficient capabilities will be incorporated into newbuilds so they are adaptable to future technical advancements and regulatory changes.

The company has taken a proactive approach to adoption of alternative fuels such as LNG and biofuels on both new and existing vessels, resulting in massive decarbonisation

New fuel: UECC's multi-fuel LNG battery hybrid PCTC Auto Advance bunkering bioLNG in Zeebrugge with our dual-fuel LNG PCTC Auto Eco to the right

gains for its fleet to boost compliance and reduce costs in relation to green regulation including CII, EU ETS and FuelEU Maritime.

Prescient investments
UECC's prescient investments in LNG fuel technology have given it a first-mover opportunity to switch to new low-carbon fuels such as liquefied biomethane, or bioLNG, and e-LNG as these become viable to further improve environmental performance.

Furthermore, this strategy has promoted development of the bunkering network for alternative fuels, while UECC has also served as a fuel incubator for the industry by performing early-stage analysis and testing of new biofuels - like cashew nut shell liquid - to evaluate their potential in terms of technical suitability, sustainability and commercial viability.

"By investing in technological progress, UECC has been able to achieve major gains in operational efficiency and environmental performance to give it one of the industry's most sustainable fleets," Edvardsen says. "Having set a new standard for sustainability, UECC will continue to invest in green technologies that maximise fuel efficiency while minimising environmental impact, as well as eco-friendly vessel designs for sustainable expansion of our fleet in line with the global imperative of decarbonisation."

New breed: newbuild Auto Aspire, one of three of the world's first multi-fuel LNG battery hybrid PCTCs earlier ordered by UECC, is shown before being launched at China' Jiangnan Shipyard in early 2022

Photo: Jiangnan Shipyard

MILESTONES: 2007 - 2020

2007
Craig Jasienski is appointed MD. Three new services launched: Black Sea, Wallhamn/Fredericia and Wallhamn/Hanko-Kotka. Gefco contract renewed. New H&H contracts with Caterpillar, Daimler, Mitsubishi and Renault Trucks. Five vessels reflagged to Portugal. Winner of inaugural Vehicle Logistics Partner Special Quality Award from TME.

2008
Fleet expands to 32 vessels. New headquarters in Oslo and new corporate visual identity. New structure with three trading hubs: Piraeus, Brussels and Oslo. Global financial crisis hits operations.

2010
Liner trading network launched, reducing fleet to 18 vessels.

2012
Glenn Edvardsen appointed CEO in September 2012.

2014
UECC orders world's first dual-fuel LNG PCTCs at NACKS Shipyard in Nantong, China.

2016
Delivery of dual-fuel LNG newbuilds Auto Eco and Auto Energy.

2017
UECC announces new Atlantic service linking Scandinavia with northern Spain. Auto Eco and Auto Energy are deployed for trading in Baltic Sea, with Malmö now included on the route. World's first purpose-built LNG bunkering vessel ENGIE Zeebrugge starts ship-to-ship LNG bunkering service in port of Zeebrugge.

2019
UECC orders three multi-fuel LNG battery hybrid PCTCs, the first of their kind in the world, under a contract with China's Jiangnan Shipyard Group and China Ship Building Trading. Green financing for newbuilds secured with Svenska SkeppsHypotek. Auto Energy receives Greenports Award for most eco-friendly vessel from Bremenports.

2020
Daniel Gent appointed as UECC's first Energy & Sustainability Manager. UECC collaborates with GoodFuels for pioneering trial of biofuel use on Autosky, with participation by BMW.

Covid-19 impacts operations. Contract to deliver 87 trams for City of Oslo. UECC commits to UN's Global Compact Initiative. Gasum performs first ship-to-ship bunkering of LNG blended with liquefied biogas on Auto Energy.

POWER OF PARTNERSHIP

And the winner is...: UECC's CEO Glenn Edvardsen is presented with Ford's World Excellence Award for Sustainability by Ford's Indirect Purchasing Director Samantha Fletcher at the UECC head office in Oslo in 2023

Cooperation the key to transformative change

Collaboration with valued partners across the industry has been vital to advancing the cause of sustainability

The success of UECC is built on teamwork and collaboration, both among our dedicated employees and with industry partners. Strategic alliances with key players in areas such as green fuel logistics and low-carbon technology have played a crucial role in advancing UECC's innovative leadership in eco-friendly shipping and expanding its operational reach across Europe.

The company is founded on a strong industrial partnership at the ownership level as investments from our co-owners NYK of Japan and Sweden's Wallenius Lines have provided a secure platform for growth with financial stability and a resourceful organisation.

The concerted backing of our owners for UECC's environmental goals has been an important factor in enabling us to pursue a proactive decarbonisation strategy to develop the fleet, giving us the motivation and momentum to lead the way in green shipping in the car carrier segment.

A core element of our sustainability efforts is engagement with stakeholders, which gives us holistic insights to better understand business dynamics. This means we can tailor our services in alignment with stakeholder concerns and ambitions, identifying opportunities and mitigating potential risks.

Client support for alternative fuels

Collaborations with automakers that are also among our major clients have been central to expanding UECC's logistics services, such as through development of new cargo terminals in Europe, as well as piloting of biofuels on our existing vessels to realise early gains for the industry in reducing emissions.

"The drive for decarbonisation in shipping demands a collaborative effort among all stakeholders - from shipping companies and cargo owners to ports and bunker suppliers

First delivery: of liquefied biomethane by truck to UECC's multi-fuel LNG battery hybrid PCTC Auto Advance at the Port of Vigo, Spain in early 2025 Photo: Naturgy

POWER OF PARTNERSHIP

Support from our customers has also been a key factor to facilitate new green initiatives such as Sail for Change, which has enabled us to bunker liquefied biomethane (LBM) for the first time on our five newest LNG-fuelled vessels as we expand our pioneering programme for adoption of new alternative fuels.

This demonstrates the power of industry collaboration in advancing the cause of decarbonisation by boosting uptake of alternative fuels in line with FuelEU Maritime, while also generating mutual commercial benefits through reduced financial exposure both to this regulation and the EU ETS.

Daniel Gent

UECC has taken a leading role in evaluating the potential of alternative fuels in terms of their technical suitability, sustainability and commercial viability, both to deliver the best solution for customers and give the sector a blueprint for assessment and adoption of such fuels.

Bunkering partnerships

Such progress would not have been possible without partnerships with green fuel suppliers such as GoodFuels, which allowed the initial pilot of biofuel on Autosky, and Titan Clean Fuels that has provided bunkering of liquefied biomethane - or bioLNG - under Sail for Change. In addition, we are collaborating with biofuel supplier ACT Group to assess the potential of Cashew Nut Shell Liquid under a joint project together with Lloyd's Register FOBAS and engine manufacturer Wärtsilä.

UECC has also harnessed industry expertise to make major technological strides through delivery of innovative newbuilds with the first-ever dual-fuel LNG solution for PCTCs and, subsequently, a novel multi-fuel LNG battery hybrid design developed in conjunction with DNV and Shanghai Merchant Ship Design and Research Institute.

These have enabled UECC to drastically reduce the environmental footprint of its fleet while promoting the use of LNG as a key transition fuel for shipping towards the goal of net zero. Furthermore, it has stimulated expansion of the bunkering network for this fuel together with energy companies such as Spain's Repsol in tandem with a surge of industry orders for LNG-driven newbuilds in recent years.

Forming industry standards

As well as serving as a conduit of expertise on alternative fuels, UECC has been a key participant in developing new standards to provide clarity as the industry grapples with the complexities of environmental regulation.

This includes the company's work in promoting a standardised methodology for calculation of emissions costs for cargo owners together with the Association of European Vehicle Logistics (ECG) and Smart Freight Centre.

"The drive for decarbonisation in shipping demands a collaborative effort among all stakeholders - from shipping companies and cargo owners to ports and bunker suppliers. And UECC has been putting this principle into action through various cross-industry initiatives that are achieving positive change," says UECC's Energy & Sustainability Manager Daniel Gent.

Innovation drive: BMW Group participated in a pioneering biofuels trial with UECC on the M/V Autosky in 2020 in collaboration with the GoodShipping Program Photo: BMW Group

MILESTONES: 2021 - 2025

2021

Delivery of first multi-fuel LNG battery hybrid newbuild Auto Advance. One-year review of continuous biofuel operation on Autosky with bunkering of 6000 tonnes of fuel shows 58% reduction in carbon intensity, CO_2 emissions cut of over 20m kg as well as 9000kg reduction in emissions of sulphur oxide and near elimination of particulate matter.

Noatum UECC Terminal Pasajes named 'Best Automotive Logistics Port of Spain 2020'.

2022

Deliveries of second and third multi-fuel LNG battery hybrid newbuilds Auto Achieve and Auto Aspire. Shippax Technology & Environment Award for Auto Advance. UECC launches new weekly North Sea service connecting ports of Zeebrugge, Esbjerg, Gothenburg and Drammen.

Partnership with Svitzer for use of biofuels on tugboats. Greenports 2022 double award for most eco-friendly vessel, Auto Energy, and most eco-friendly fleet.

2023

UECC establishes direct link between Port of Pasajes, Spain and Germany's Port of Cuxhaven serviced by Autostar. Auto Energy receives first LNG bunkering from Repsol as UECC expands in Mediterranean.

Emerald Leader is first UECC time-chartered vessel to be bunkered with biofuel under collaboration with GoodFuels and vessel owner NYK.

UECC wins Ford's World Excellence Award for Sustainability.

2024-25

UECC forms collaboration in 2024 with Lloyd's Register FOBAS, Wärtsilä and ACT Group to advance use of Cashew Nut Shell Liquid as biofuel through sea trials. UECC's Head of Business Planning & Sustainability Jørgen Lindgaard appointed to board of ECG.

UECC launches 'Sail for Change' initiative in 2024 with bunkering of all five of its LNG dual-fuel car carriers with bio-LNG at Port of Zeebrugge by Titan Clean Fuels. Two multi-fuel battery hybrid PCTCs ordered in 2024 at China Merchants Jinling Shipyard Nanjing in China. UECC expands fleet in 2024 with time charter of car carrier Auto Way, acquired and renamed by Wallenius Lines from Höegh Autoliners, together with operation of dual-fuel LNG newbuilds Blue Aspire and, in 2025, Blue Heritage.

POWER OF PARTNERSHIP

Ford steers right course for EV expansion with green logistics

UECC is supporting automotive giant's sustainability drive under their long-term partnership

Automotive giant Ford is boosting EV sales while bolstering its commitment to a responsible supply chain through the Road to Better initiative to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050 across its global operations.

Consequently, Ford sees sustainable transport logistics as a key priority to curb its Scope 3 emissions, with clearly defined criteria in place when selecting suppliers to ensure its supply chain safeguards both the environment and human rights.

Ford's Supply Chain Senior Manager Amanda Turner says the company's long-standing partnership with UECC, stretching back more than 20 years, has enabled it to turn ambition into action that yields tangible results in terms of reduced emissions and costs related to green regulation.

Wheels of progress: Ford's Road to Better initiative aims to achieve carbon neutrality across its global operations by 2050
Photo: Ford of Europe

POWER OF PARTNERSHIP

Partnership approach
"The need for a partnership approach is crucial in delivering creative solutions and innovative approaches, especially in logistics that is a particularly challenging area of business," she says.

"Therefore, we value leading suppliers of commodities and services who distinguish themselves from their peers through high standards of excellence in quality, technology, delivery and sustainability. And UECC is an important piece in our logistics puzzle."

Given growing global EV demand, Ford is increasingly reliant on eco-friendly and efficient shipping services for high-volume shipments to reach its main markets while minimizing its environmental footprint.

Ford transports a high volume of vehicles on UECC vessels, mainly transiting the North-South route between its production plant in Yenikoy, Turkey and destination ports in Northern Europe.

And Turner expects this volume to further increase in line with expansion of the UECC fleet as Ford invests heavily in the roll-out of new EV models over the coming years across its range of passenger and commercial vehicles.

> *We value leading suppliers who distinguish themselves from their peers through high standards of excellence in quality, technology, delivery and sustainability*

'Ahead of the game'
Ford has earlier awarded to UECC its prestigious World Excellence Award in recognition of the latter's leading role in decarbonization of shipping and support for its sustainability goals.

UECC is "ahead of the game" in terms of green ship operations and has taken the lead with valuable initiatives to facilitate emission gains, such as the Sail for Change programme to promote the use of liquefied biomethane, according to Turner.

She says that UECC has proven co-operative and flexible while taking an altruistic approach to educate about new regulations, for example.

"UECC has leading expertise and deep knowledge of the complex regulatory landscape that strengthens the wider shipping industry, such as through developing calculation methodologies. And we can benefit by leaning into their experience and competence in this area," Turner concludes.

Collaboration with Toyota Motor Europe gives impetus for sustainable investments

Leading vehicle manufacturer accelerating decarbonisation of its supply chain through participation in UECC environmental initiative

UECC has consistently delivered for Toyota Motor Europe (TME) throughout their enduring collaboration spanning more than three decades - both in terms of vehicle volumes and in meeting the leading automotive manufacturer's demands for top-notch, efficient and sustainable sea transport.

"When selecting logistics and other suppliers, our key priorities are high-quality performance, an innovative approach and reliability of service, as well as cost competitiveness, with a focus on long-term partnership," explains TME's Vice President Supply Chain, Jean Christophe Deville.

These criteria are underpinned by a strong commitment to sustainability that has gained more and more importance for both companies since the first cargo of Toyota vehicles was carried by UECC on its former vessel Autotransporter through the port of Grimsby, UK back in 1993.

Ambitious sustainability goals
"The ability of logistics providers to offer low-carbon solutions has become increasingly important, and this is at the core of our sustainable purchasing guidelines," Deville says. TME is aiming to reduce CO2 emissions from its supply chain by 33% by 2030 from a 2019 baseline as part of its efforts to achieve carbon neutrality across purchased goods and services - and all of its logistics operations by 2040.

TME is among 11 leading automotive companies involved in the Drive Sustainability initiative to boost sustainability across the supply chain by developing common standards and compliance tools to tackle four key challenges together with suppliers - carbon neutrality, sustainable raw materials, workforce wellbeing and a circular value chain.

'Significant emissions impact'
The vehicle manufacturer is pursuing diverse solutions to decarbonise its supply chain, including the use of rail transport as well as hydrogen-powered fuel cell electric trucks. This mirrors Toyota's multi-pathway approach to offer different vehicle powertrain technologies towards its customers and within its logistics operations.

"Therefore, partnering with UECC on sustainable ship transport has had a significant impact on our Scope 3 emissions, drastically reducing the carbon footprint of our maritime logistics operations," Deville explains.

Multi-pathway approach: TME is working to reduce the carbon footprint of its logistics chain through the use of railway transport, hydrogen-powered fuel cell trucks as well as sustainable shortsea shipping. Photo: TME

This has been achieved, among other ways, through participation in UECC's Sail for Change initiative that has enabled TME to transport its vehicles carbon-neutrally on PCTCs fuelled by liquefied biomethane on the main North-South trade network between Toyota manufacturing plants in Turkey and the Czech Republic, and ports in Northern Europe.

Consequently, UECC was awarded TME's prestigious 2025 Sustainability Achievement Award for its efforts in significantly reducing the logistics carbon footprint of the leading automotive manufacturer.

Long-term partnership
Deville also notes that UECC's contribution to the development of emissions accounting guidance with the Association of European Vehicle Logistics (ECG) aligns with TME's commitment to sustainability as a responsible corporate citizen shaping global standards.

"UECC is a pathfinder that is pushing the boundaries for sustainable operations in European shortsea RoRo transport and demonstrating industry leadership in sustainable shipping. TME is leveraging our partnership with UECC to challenge other logistics providers to invest in green solutions," Deville says.

"We hope that our long-term partnership gives UECC the confidence to make the necessary investments in technology, infrastructure and people to help us deliver on our sustainability goals. This stability is crucial for driving long-term change," he concludes.

Setting the pace on road to decarbonisation

UECC taking industry-wide view with green strategy to drive progress for a more sustainable world

UECC has made rapid strides in decarbonisation of its fleet as sustainability becomes an important competitive differentiator in the green shipping market. And the company aims to accelerate this progress over the coming years with an ambitious roadmap that sets out a series of bold initiatives to realise our goal of net zero emissions by 2040.

"Our fleet already exceeds IMO and EU regulatory requirements, but we are not standing still. UECC will build on its leading position in sustainable maritime transportation by investing in alternative fuels, newbuilds, vessel upgrades and other measures to maintain an environmentally superior fleet," says CEO Glenn Edvardsen.

"By minimising environmental impact, we can support our clients through eco-friendly operations that contribute to their ESG targets and mitigate financial exposure to new regulation, as well as benefit from reduced emissions and enhanced operational efficiency. This strategic alignment shows that responsible environmental practices and commercial success go hand in hand."

Advancing in green operations: UECC is building on progress made in enhancing the sustainability of its fleet with further orders for multi-fuel LNG battery hybrid newbuilds similar to the Auto Aspire and its two sistership, Auto Achieve and Auto Advance

Ahead of regulations

UECC is firmly on course to reach or exceed its target of a 45% reduction in carbon intensity by 2030 - above the IMO requirement of 40% - after cutting well-to-wake CO2 emissions by 107,000 tonnes in 2024 that was a significant 70% increase on the reduction from the previous year.

This has been achieved through the expanded use of alternative fuels - including liquefied biomethane, biofuels, and low-carbon LNG - that accounted for around 42% of fuel consumption on UECC's 16-vessel fleet of owned and chartered/operated PCTCs in 2024, up from 34% in 2023.

Consequently, all of UECC's vessels have achieved a C-rating or above under the IMO's Carbon Intensity Indicator (CII) to ensure compliance. Furthermore, its fleet is already in surplus in relation to the FuelEU Maritime requirement for a 14.5% reduction in average GHG intensity by 2035.

> *Responsible environmental practices and commercial success go hand in hand*

But UECC is ramping up its sustainability efforts through a three-pronged climate strategy of decarbonisation efforts, operational efficiencies and innovation in fuel technologies as the company asserts its industry leadership in reducing GHG emissions by optimising resource use and adopting sustainable practices across its operations.

Expansion of alternative fuels

There will be increased uptake of biofuels and LNG to further decarbonise the fleet, with a seven-year biofuel supply agreement in place to 2030 as UECC targets biofuels with a minimum 90% reduction in well-to-wake GHG intensity versus conventional marine fuels. The company will also boost the use of liquefied biomethane, or bioLNG, to make our five LNG-fuelled newbuilds even more environment-friendly.

As a result, the company is aiming for usage of 36% of biofuels, 23% of LNG and 23% of liquefied biomethane across its fleet by 2030 when it has an overall target of 80% alternative fuel usage - and it intends to phase out fossil fuels entirely by 2040.

In terms of operational efficiencies, UECC will invest in technical upgrades and low-carbon retrofits of existing vessels to enhance efficiency, reduce fuel costs and ensure regulatory compliance. Energy efficiency measures to be implemented include waste heat recovery systems, air lubrication systems, high-efficiency anti-fouling coatings and advanced hull designs.

Green fleet renewal

This will also entail data-driven operational measures to optimise ship performance, such as advanced voyage planning, speed management and route optimisation. UECC is also promoting, together with partners, electrification infrastructure for cold-ironing at ports so its vessels can be connected to shore power while docked to cut emissions.

The company aims to introduce onshore power supplies to facilitate cold-ironing for all its vessels by 2035, when it also intends to adopt eLNG as a fuel and have its first zero-emission ship as part of a newbuild programme geared towards alternative fuel technologies.

UECC is making further newbuild investments with orders in late 2024 for two multi-fuel battery hybrid PCTCs placed at China Merchants Jinling Shipyard Nanjing that are scheduled for delivery in 2028.

Retrofits will focus on vessels that can use cleaner biofuels and LNG, while UECC is also looking at zero-carbon fuels such as hydrogen and ammonia for potential newbuild investments beyond 2030.

The company intends to scale up its A and E-class vessels to achieve economies of scale with greater fuel efficiency and lower emissions per ton-mile, further enhancing the fleet for regulatory compliance.

"With these future milestones, we are raising the bar going forward for sustainable development and expansion of the business. But, with the collective competence and motivation of our workforce together with the cooperation of clients, partners and stakeholders, we are confident of realising these lofty ambitions towards a greener and more prosperous future," Edvardsen concludes.

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