



TURUN KAUPPAKORKEAKOULU
Turku School of Economics

**BEYOND STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE:
CORPORATE-NGO ALLIANCES**

Developing dialogue with WWF Finland

Master's Thesis
in International Business

Author
Emma Ajosenpää 9580

Supervisors
Dr.Sc. Kari Liuhto
M.Sc. Jenni Jaakkola

5.5.2008
Turku

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	4
	1.1 Corporate social responsibility and external stakeholders.....	4
	1.2 Earlier studies on stakeholder relationships and NGO alliances.....	7
	1.3 The purpose of the study.....	8
	1.4 Defining key concepts	9
2	NGOs AS STAKEHOLDERS	11
	2.1 Stakeholder theory.....	11
	2.2 Stakeholder dialogue.....	12
	2.2.1 Dialogue forms	12
	2.2.2 Dialogue phases.....	14
	2.2.3 Dialogue constraints.....	16
	2.3 Characteristics of NGOs	18
	2.4 Influence of NGOs on companies	19
	2.4.1 Direct influence	19
	2.4.2 Indirect influence	21
3	CORPORATE-NGO ALLIANCES	23
	3.1 Benefits and risks for corporations.....	23
	3.2 Benefits and risks for NGOs	26
	3.3 Types of alliances and collaborations between corporations and NGOs.....	27
	3.4 Possible problems related to collaboration	29
	3.5 Forming a successful alliance	31
4	EMPIRICAL RESEARCH DESIGN	34
	4.1 Research approach.....	34
	4.2 Research strategy.....	34
	4.3 Case selection	36
	4.4 Data collection.....	37
	4.5 Data analysis	40
	4.6 Quality of the research.....	41
5	EMPIRICAL RESEARCH FINDINGS	43
	5.1 WWF – World Wildlife Fund For Nature.....	43
	5.2 Case companies	44
	5.3 Starting the co-operation.....	46

5.4	WWF Finland and the case companies.....	52
5.5	Objectives, benefits and evaluation of success	55
5.6	Relationship between WWF Finland and companies.....	59
5.7	Main empirical findings.....	61
6	CONCLUSIONS	66
6.1	Theoretical discussion.....	66
6.2	Managerial implications.....	69
6.3	Suggestions for further research.....	70
	REFERENCES	72

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1	REVIEW OF EARLIER STUDIES.....	77
APPENDIX 2	OPERATIONALISATION TABLE.....	79
APPENDIX 3	INTERVIEW THEMES.....	80
APPENDIX 4	CODE LIST.....	81

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1	Stakeholder view of firm	11
Figure 2	Phases of stakeholder dialogue.....	14
Figure 3	Four factors affecting the operationalisation of stakeholder dialogue	16
Figure 4	Integration of NGOs in business–government negotiations.....	22
Figure 5	Corporate–NGO collaboration decision path	32
Figure 6	Division of income of WWF Finland 2006/2007	44
Figure 7	The intensity of the collaboration of the companies	66

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1	The four NGO resources beneficial to companies	23
Table 2	Details of the interviews.....	39
Table 3	Key figures of the case companies.....	45
Table 4	Types of collaboration of WWF Finland and the case companies	52
Table 5	Main empirical findings	62

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Corporate social responsibility and external stakeholders

Corporate social responsibility means the responsibility for business consequences on the environment and stakeholders of the company and in what follows; this will be abbreviated to CSR. Three aspects of responsibility can be distinguished: economic, ecological and social responsibility. Economic responsibility implies economic sustainability of operations and economic effects on stakeholders. Ecological responsibility engages companies to look after the environment which implies efficient and prudent use of natural resources, protection of water, air and soil and preserving nature's diverseness. Social responsibility involves conditions and know-how of employees and their constant development, the respect for human rights, product liability and good manners of operation in networks concerning the company. (Niskala & Tarna 2003, 19–20.)

The business environment of international companies has changed significantly during the past decade. The new world order was revealed in Seattle in the context of WTO's summit in 2000: the chaotic congregation of protesters characterised evidently the turbulent environment in which companies have to act and to survive today. (Wootliff & Deri 2001, 157.) In addition to traditional stakeholders who include owners, customers, suppliers and employees, companies also need to take into consideration the external groups which are connected to them both directly and indirectly. Freeman (1984, 11–12) already realised the amount of external pressure touching companies over 20 years ago. He was convinced that the external stakeholders need to be included in the administrative systems of enterprises.

The company itself must set objectives for each of the three spheres of responsibility described above, but at the same time, the expectations of stakeholders must be taken into account. Stakeholder dialogue is a continuous process which acts as background process of CSR formulation. (Kujala & Kuvaja 2002, 160.) Stakeholder dialogue can take various forms because the company itself determines the level of engagement, the resources and the other constraints for the dialogue. It is impossible for the company to please everyone; therefore the stakeholder dialogue never fully guarantees that the company can operate without the fear of consumer sanctions, negative press or NGO activism. (Pedersen 2006, 158.)

Corporations face today an increased amount of pressure to acknowledge their stakeholders. Pressure to act accordingly to their expectations comes from many sources: primary stakeholders, secondary stakeholders, general social trends and

institutional expectations. Social and institutional pressure has increased after well-known corporate scandals, such as the collapse of Enron. There is also a growing number of different ratings and awards for responsibly acting companies. (Waddock, Bodwell & Graves 2002, 134, 136–137)

National governments also provoke considerable difficulties to multinational enterprises (MNEs). Relationships with political actors must be upon a healthy basis because they have the legal authority and the power to manipulate private economic transactions to promote their own economic, political, social or national security objectives. The government's intervention to the operations of a company can be either direct or indirect and therefore MNEs need to develop strategies to protect their international transactions. Problems may also arise when the relations of two governments change and the political environment becomes more unstable. (Jacobson, Lenway & Ring 1993, 454.) Governments are more important in some countries than others. For example, in China and India, the governments are seen as the most important stakeholders by MNEs. The high degree of regulation and the influence on economic activities increase the importance of these governments. (Holtbrügge & Berg 2004, 305.)

Pressure groups, such as non-governmental organisations (hereinafter mentioned, this will be abbreviated to NGOs), can cause companies substantial problems if their presence is not included in the daily operation modes (Freeman 1984, 13). Companies can no longer regard NGOs as a small minority of persons frustrated by modern capitalism; on the contrary, their role as societal agents will develop and the number and types of organisations will multiply and diversify. (Doh 2003, 14.) Some examples of international NGOs are the charity organisation Red Cross, human rights organisation Amnesty and environmental organisation Greenpeace. The influence of environmentalists, consumer organisations and other NGOs is expected to increase as a result of new information technologies (Holtbrügge & Berg 2004, 311).

The increased pressure from secondary stakeholders is due to two factors. Firstly, the power of NGOs and globally acting activists has increased because they are able to mobilise their resources and communicate negative information about companies with developed electronic communication systems more rapidly than ever before. The amount of available information over the Internet is overwhelming. (Waddock et al. 2002, 136). Secondly, the awareness of governments and communities of the potential negative effects of companies has increased. For example, communities have become more aware that the investments of companies are not always long-term oriented and their commitment to the local facility is sometimes low. After the departure of the firm, the local community usually faces problems such as unemployment. Intergovernmental organisations, such as the United Nations (UN) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), have developed several sets of global standards to

guide international corporations towards wiser practices. Laws and regulations also strengthen the situation of stakeholders. Companies are forced by law to respond also to the demands of non-shareholder stakeholders. (Clement 2005, 256–257.)

NGOs affect companies in various ways. Their influence is based on changing the public's attitudes towards global traders, manufacturers and investors. They try to persuade the public with cause-related campaigns, angry manifestations, protests, boycotts and sometimes even with sabotage. There are many examples where the actions of NGOs have made companies to lose millions. The most famous case in history is without a doubt Shell Oil's Brent Spar offshore oil drilling platform case in the mid of 1990's. Shell Oil wanted to sink the used platform into the deep waters of Northern Atlantic because according to their estimates, it was the best way to get rid of the old platform from environmental standpoint. Sinking the platform was also GBP 40 million cheaper than dismantling it on land. Greenpeace organised a massive campaign and boycotts and under the pressure Shell Oil decided to haul the rig ashore. (Yaziji 2004, 110–112.) The campaign caused Shell Oil major losses and a reputation crisis. After the event, Shell Oil admitted its negligence towards the society and stakeholders and today Shell is a pioneer in responsibility. (Kujala & Kuvaja 2002, 154.)

Examples of harmful campaigns are numerous. Yaziji (2004, 110) suggests that many of these episodes with disastrous consequences for the companies might have been avoided by partnering with NGOs instead of fighting against them and their campaigns. Companies not only would have avoided costly conflicts but also they would have had the chance to use the assets of the NGOs to gain competitive advantage.

The partnership between a company and an NGO can take many forms. It can be a short-time project including negotiations and communication linked to a separate question or a long-term consultation relationship. By taking the right attitude to the partnership with the NGOs, companies can obtain clear and direct benefits. (Kuvaja 1998, 71–75.) Collaboration can also be in the form of a cause-related marketing alliance of which both the NGO and the company benefit. Three types of cause-related marketing alliances can be distinguished: transaction-based promotions, joint issue promotions and licensing. (Andreasen 1996, 49.) The partnership is also possible in the form of certificates. For example, Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and Rainforest Alliance have developed certification systems for sustainable foresting. The FSC certificate is developed for the forest industry. Paper or wood products can obtain the certificate which transmits sustainable environmental values to the customers who are interested in environmental issues. For example, Home Depot, a US-based hardware store is committed to give priority for FSC-certified timber. (Domask 2003, 170–171.)

1.2 Earlier studies on stakeholder relationships and NGO alliances

The stakeholder theory literature presents only a few empirical studies on stakeholder relationships. Some selected studies are presented in Appendix 1.

Some studies have concentrated on the competitive advantage (Heugens, Van Den Bosch & Van Riel 2002) and better financial performance (Berman, Wicks, Kohta & Jones 1999) which can be obtained by building close and co-operative relationships with the stakeholders. These studies have shown that there are some links between co-operative advantage and stakeholder relationships. Competitive advantage was obtained through organisational learning and societal legitimacy and the whole industry could benefit from approached relationships with the stakeholders (Heugens et al 2002, 56).

Stakeholder communication is a problematic issue because stakeholder groups are not homogenous as the literature assumes. The heterogeneity within the groups makes communication and taking their expectations into account challenging. (Wolfe & Putler 2002.) Communication and relationships with stakeholders also are challenging because the public in different countries prefers different levels of communication. Half of the Scandinavian population finds that companies should communicate broadly and openly, and the other half prefers subtle or no communication at all. (Morsing & Schultz 2006, 330.) Ideally, stakeholder communication evolves into stakeholder dialogue. Ongoing dialogue is essential in maintenance of community relationships which is important after the completion of the project. A good way to maintain the dialogue is to establish a collective institution which involves both company representatives and local community members. (Jahansoozi, 2006, 946.)

The research on corporate–NGO alliances is still in its infancy. Empirical studies in this field are still relatively rare. Berger, Cunningham and Drumwright (2004) have studied company–NGO collaborations which have a social objective. They identified six categories of predictable problems related to the collaboration and a many-sided framework to help to prevent the problems. Rondinelli and London (2003) investigated 50 multinational companies and their environmental alliances with NGOs. They identified three levels of collaboration which can be distinguished in terms of intensity of the relationship. They also identified six strategic criteria which help companies and NGOs to find the most suitable form of collaboration. The six strategic criteria were transformed into questions and the decision path leading to collaboration was developed. Stafford, Polonsky and Hartman (2000) examined an environmental alliance of a German company and Greenpeace. The importance of linking the strategies of the partners was proven in this research which supports the findings of Berger et al. (2004).

Earlier studies concerning stakeholder relations and companies collaborating with NGOs is fragmented. There are examples from all continents and all fields of economy. The reason for the multiplicity is the complexity and diverseness of the NGO field.

Many studies have proved the importance of stakeholder dialogue and interaction but many studies examined the issue from distance. In this research, the emphasis is on details and specific information is gathered about the practice of corporate–NGO alliances.

1.3 The purpose of the study

The objective of this study is to examine strategic alliances and collaborations between companies and NGOs. Little research in this field has been made and therefore this topic merits further research.

The main purpose of the study is to describe a strategic alliance between selected companies and an international environmental non-governmental organisation.

Sub-objectives of the study are:

- To understand the process of forming and realising the alliance.
- To describe how the initial objectives of the alliance have been realised.
- To map the realised advantages of the alliance for the company and for the organisation.
- To analyse the relationship between the parties throughout the project and in the future.

The purpose of these sub-objectives is to examine the partnership in more detail and to clarify the background and the history of the relationship in order to understand the nature of the partnership. Emphasis is given to communication and interaction between the parties concerned.

The process of forming the alliance comprehends selecting the partner, developing the objectives of the alliance and planning the actual partnership. Understanding this process is important because it determines the success of the whole alliance. Selecting the partner is the most decisive factor for the success of the alliance. The second sub-objective is also linked to the beginning of the alliance. The purpose is to describe how the objectives of the alliance were set and how they have been achieved by the time of the interview. Comparing the aspects of both parties would be interesting in order to understand the dynamics of the alliance.

Mapping the advantages of the alliance is essential for perceiving the success of the alliance. Possible negative experiences and influences of the collaborations should be unravelled equally. Stating these two sides clarifies the motives of future alliances and clarifies if these alliances truly function. After mapping the realised final outcome or the results achieved at the time of research, the future of the alliance is evaluated in the light of the factors revealed earlier. The relationship between the parties is evaluated and

their mutual communication and other activities are described. An interesting matter could be whether the both parties see their common future similarly or not.

1.4 Defining key concepts

Stakeholder issues are in most cases complex and therefore some selected key concepts require clarification.

Stake as a concept is the basis of the stakeholder theory. At the simplest level, stake can be defined as an interest towards a company. Freeman (1984, 60) divides different sorts of stakes in three subgroups: equity stakes, economic stakes and influencer stakes. Firstly, an equity stake is an interest towards company which is a result of ownership which makes shareholders the typical equity stakeholder. Secondly, an economic stake which can be also called market stake involves other economic interests which are not related to ownership. Groups who have economic interest are such as employees, customers, suppliers and competitors. Finally, an influencer stake covers all remaining ambitions such as interests of environmentalists, consumer advocates, trade organisations and government agencies. (Freeman 1984, 60–63.)

Motivations behind different stakes also differ. The motivations of equity and economic stakes are more likely to be related to self-interest as shareholders want profit and employees are worried about their job security. On the contrary, influencer stakes are linked to common interests of the society rather than to the interest of one individual or organisation. Underlying motivations of influencer stakes are social and political attitudes which base for instance on basic values, feelings of nationalism, political party identification, racial prejudices and other attitudes. (Wolfe & Putler 2002, 68.)

Stakes can also be called claims. These claims can be focused upon the policies and the politics of the company or its operations towards others. The claims can be based upon judicial, economic, social, moral, technological, ecologic, and politic or power-related interests. The interests can concern the present, the past or the future. An illustrating example of a claim related to the past, is claiming compensation for the actions of a company. An expectation directed to the future may relate to a venture in the planning phase, such as a nuclear power plant construction project. (Weiss 1998, 30–31.)

Stakeholder as a concept has numerous definitions in the literature. By Freeman's classical definition, a stakeholder is a group or an individual which can affect or which can be affected by the company and its operations. Every stakeholder has an essential role in the success of the business. (Freeman 1984, 25.) According to Clarkson (1995, 106), a stakeholder has or claims ownership, rights or interests in a company and its activities. A stakeholder has legitimate expectations towards the company and its

operations. The company would be nothing without its stakeholders, and it exists not only for itself but also for its stakeholders. (Kujala & Kuvaja 2002, 84.) The company is circled by numerous different influencers with different strengths upon which it is dependent. The company is in constant interaction with its stakeholders and thus, it is a part of wide and complex network of actors. (Talvio & Välimaa 2004, 52–53.)

Non-governmental organisation (NGO) has no clear, generally accepted definition. Many types of organisations can be classified as NGOs. However, there are some fundamental features which are common to all NGOs. The clearest feature is that an NGO is independent from the direct control of governments. Generally speaking, an NGO is not constituted as a political party, it is non-profit making and it is not a criminal group. Non-violence is closely linked to the fact that NGOs are not criminal groups. However, many types of organisations can be regarded as NGOs and they all do not meet these criteria. In practice, some of them resemble political parties, many of them have commercial activities to fund their actions and some political NGO protests can be seen as aggressive and violent. Simply described, they are voluntary associations which act for a common cause on a continuous basis. (Willetts 2002.)

In the literature, the term non-profit organisation (NPO) is also used commonly. Most NGOs are also NPOs and their ways of acting are very similar. The major differences between NGOs and NPOs are linked to their tax status and organisational differences. Contributions to NPOs are often tax deductible and they have tax exemptions. NGOs need to be officially registered. (Choudhury & Ahmed 2002, 565.) The difference between these organisations is very hard to understand and in most cases, the organisations can be both. In this thesis, the term NGO is used to describe these organisations which affect or are affected by companies. An even better term would be civil society organisation (CSO) which is a relatively young concept, but until now it is not as generally accepted as NGO/NPO.

2 NGOs AS STAKEHOLDERS

2.1 Stakeholder theory

The stakeholder approach was introduced over twenty years ago by Freeman (1984). The main idea of the stakeholder model has remained the same: the stakeholders and their demands should be integrated in the corporate strategic planning because they are essential for the firm's mission and purpose. He also suggested that taking stakeholders into account and creating good relationships with them produces positive financial implications. (Freeman 1984, 26.)

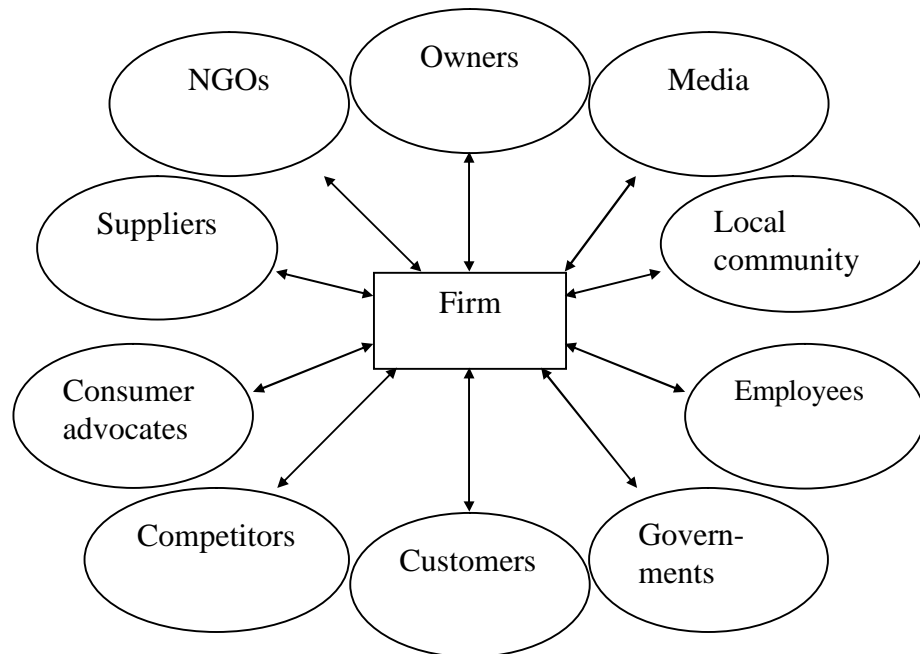


Figure 1 Stakeholder view of firm (modified from Freeman 1984, 25)

Figure 1 above presents the company in relation to its stakeholders in a complex network of actors. The figure gives a simplified image of the diversity and complexity of the operating environment of businesses today. The arrows in the figure represent stakeholder dialogue. All stakeholder groups presented in the figure can be split into subgroups, for example all suppliers cannot be treated as one; their differences must be taken into account. (Freeman 1984, 25.) When mapping stakeholders, a figure above, which every company forms of its own environment, can be used as a starting point. The form of the stakeholder map alternates between companies, industries and geographical territories. (Freeman 1984, 54–55.) The stakeholders of a firm are not constant; they change over time and depend on the situation. Approaching the

organisation from multiple aspects helps to perceive the situation more clearly. The organisation can be observed geographically, by division, industry, organisational level or function. In geographic observation stakeholders are identified at the local, national and international level. In large companies, the stakeholders can differ from each other between divisions and those of top management can be different from those of local administration. When the basis of observation is functions, stakeholders are identified for example for human resources or purchasing departments. (Talvio & Välimaa 2004, 110–111.)

The relationships between stakeholders have to be taken into consideration. They can form alliances and unite their forces against the common enemy, the company. (Weiss 1998, 34.) The coalitions are in general formed around a specific issue and they endure for a limited time. The coalitions are not necessarily against the company, they can also support it. The fact that one person can belong to several stakeholder groups at the same time, is also an issue to consider. Someone can for example be an employee, customer and a member of a political party, which makes him to belong to three stakeholder groups at the same time. (Freeman 1984, 58.)

2.2 Stakeholder dialogue

2.2.1 *Dialogue forms*

CSR obligates companies to take their stakeholders and their needs into account; stakeholder dialogue is a tool for interaction between a company and its stakeholders. Stakeholder dialogue is not only an obligation, but also an opportunity. Through dialogue, a company can conciliate with the stakeholders and gain understanding for their values. A successful dialogue enhances the ability of stakeholders to see the affairs from the company's perspective and thus the need to criticise it diminishes. Other motives for developing dialogue are securing justification of the company's existence and prerequisites of business activity and also obtaining expertise and know-how from stakeholders. Stakeholders can also give good advice for developing business and management, and in addition, anticipating and managing conflicts is simpler when the relationships with stakeholders are favourable. (Kujala & Kuvaja 2002, 84–85, 131.)

Stakeholder dialogue has many forms as it varies between one-sided informing and open interactive dialogue. Reactive communication, reacting to given information falls between these two extremities. Morsing and Schultz (2006, 325) present three CSR communication strategies: stakeholder information, response and involvement

strategies. The three strategies describe how companies strategically engage in CSR communication with regard to their stakeholders and they present the development of communication from a company monologue to more bilateral and dialogue-based stakeholder relationships.

In the stakeholder information strategy, communication is always one-way, from the company to its stakeholders. The purpose in this communication strategy is to inform the public about the organisation and its favourable corporate CSR decisions and actions using as objective information as possible. The information is usually given in the form of news, press releases, brochures, pamphlets, magazines, facts, numbers and figures. By using the stakeholder information strategy, the management excludes external stakeholders from the company processes because they see it as unnecessary. The communication department of the company has only one task: to design and formulate an appealing message to be presented to the public. (Morsing & Schultz 2006, 326–327.)

The stakeholder response strategy is a two-way asymmetric communication strategy, in which a response from stakeholders is requested in the form of opinion polls and surveys. The company is interested in the opinions of its stakeholders and is willing to improve its CSR efforts according to the public's opinions. This communication strategy is more demanding to the communication department of the company because they need to identify the relevant stakeholders in order to ask their opinion. With opinion polls, the organisation seeks external approval for its decisions. This communication strategy gives stakeholders a chance to speak but their role is still passive, they can give their opinion when asked. The problem in opinion polls are structured questions which often lead the answers towards the answers the company wants to hear, rather than the real concerns of the stakeholders. Although the company is interested in hearing the stakeholders' voice, there is a risk of distorted message reflected back. (Morsing & Schultz 2006, 327–328.)

The stakeholder involvement strategy includes stakeholders in the CSR decision-making processes of the company. This third strategy gives stakeholders an active role in the process whereas in the two strategies presented above, their role was rather passive. This strategy also assumes that informing and surveying of the previous strategies are necessary but insufficient. Companies which are committed to the involvement strategy aim to build mutually beneficial relationships with the stakeholders. In a constant dialogue with the stakeholders, the company not only influences the stakeholders, but also is influenced by them. Frequent and systematic dialogue with the stakeholders requires that both parties are willing to change. Involving the stakeholders makes them able to participate and suggest corporate actions and the CSR focus of the company is negotiated concurrently in interaction with them. (Morsing & Schultz 2006, 326, 328.) Suitable ways of establishing an interactive

relationship are seminars, small workshops, group work, consultative panels and individual interviews (Kujala & Kuvaja 2002, 138).

A seminar is practical when the number of stakeholders is limited and it is also a functional solution for a first encounter with them. In a seminar, the background and the objectives of the dialogue can be discussed and the schedule can be formulated. Smaller workshops can be used to proceed from the outcomes of the seminar. The groups can consist of only representatives from one stakeholder group for example environmental NGOs or they can be mingled. A consultative panel can be a single occasion or a regularly meeting specialist working group. A single panel can be organised around a single venture or a project about which the company wants to hear impressions and thoughts from the interested groups. A regularly meeting consultative panel can be used as a means of hearing regularly the worries and opinions of the stakeholders. (Kujala & Kuvaja 2002, 138–139.)

2.2.2 Dialogue phases

Even though stakeholder dialogue is a continuous process, phases can be identified. The phases are summarised in Figure 2.

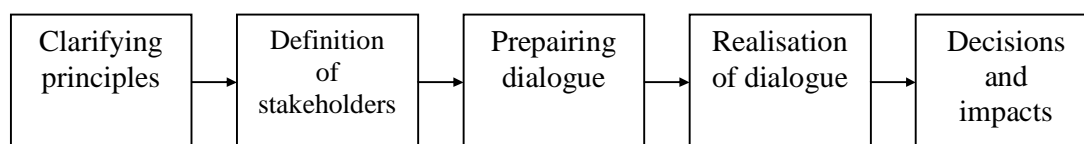


Figure 2 Phases of stakeholder dialogue (modified from Kujala & Kuvaja 2002, 133)

The first phase of the process is clarifying principles. The company has to clarify for itself at the outset the reasons and motives for initiating stakeholder dialogue (Niskala & Tarna 2003, 71). A natural situation for starting the process is when the management and key persons of the firm have stated their views about sustainability and CSR. The employees are involved in the process of evaluating the principles and values of the company and the next step is to take along the external stakeholders. This first phase of the process involves also engaging a person who is responsible for stakeholder dialogue. The most suitable person for the challenge is in most cases either the corporate communication manager or the community relations manager. (Kujala & Kuvaja 2002, 130–131.)

The second phase after clearing the principles is definition of stakeholders as is clear from Figure 2. This phase includes identification of stakeholders and selection of

relevant parties for the dialogue. The number of stakeholders of international companies is considerable and therefore keeping contact with all of them is both impossible and does not serve any purpose. (Kujala & Kuvaja 2002, 133.) The capacity and resources of the company also set limits to the number of stakeholders which are included in the dialogue. Selection of the relevant parties has to be made with careful consideration because the decisions made at this point have consequences for the outcomes of the dialogue. (Pedersen 2006, 144.) Stakeholders can be divided into two groups according to their role and importance: active and passive stakeholder relationships. Active relationships are maintained with the stakeholders who have information, visions and feedback which might interest the company. The relationship and the dialogue are planned to be as motivating as possible to create a win-win situation. Passive relations are kept with groups which are less important and these groups are only informed about the company and its activities. Estimating the importance of a single stakeholder can be hard and a good tool for analysing their significance is a matrix model, in which all possible groups are cross-tabulated using two criteria, their level of influencing power and their level of interest towards the company. When the stakeholders are selected, goals of dialogue for each group are set from the corporate aspect. (Kujala & Kuvaja 2002, 133–135.)

The third phase is preparing the dialogue. In this phase, persons in charge are selected who are entitled to supervise the progress of the dialogue. Their second and more important task is to ensure that the results of the dialogue are transferred to be part of the company's management systems and processes. Preparing work also includes creating the preliminary contacts with the stakeholders. The number of stakeholders is likely to decrease in this phase because some contact information may be outdated and no contact is reached or it is possible that some groups are reluctant to participate in the dialogue for ideological or resource-based reasons. After creating the first connection, goals of the dialogue are revised jointly. All stakeholder relationships are not necessarily personal. Also previously made different surveys and studies can represent the opinions of stakeholders, for example a study describing ethical investors and their attitudes. (Kujala & Kuvaja 2002, 136–137.)

The fourth phase of the dialogue is the actual realisation of the dialogue. Realisation of the dialogue includes also documentation, evaluation and reporting of the process which are essential to the success of the dialogue. Adequate documentation is important because the participants need to be informed about the advancement of the process. The most significant factor in the dialogue is integrating it to corporate strategy and processes. If the dialogue is executed as a separate project, the results have a risk of being less beneficial. (Kujala & Kuvaja 2002, 140, 149) Different forms of stakeholder dialogue were discussed in the chapter above. Company-related factors such as

resources shape the dialogue. Resources and other dialogue constraints are separated into their own chapter and will be discussed below.

The fifth and final phase of the stakeholder dialogue process is decisions and impacts, which means transformation of the multiple voices from the dialogue into a limited number of decisions. In consequence of the company's interpretation, selected voices are integrated in the future decisions. Some groups' opinions will be excluded and some opinions can be overstated. In every case, not all stakeholder groups' needs and claims can be satisfied because they are often contradictory and conflicting. Decision-making is balancing between different expectations. Once decisions are made, possible impacts originating from stakeholders are realised. (Pedersen 2006, 144.) Documentation and reporting are also important in this phase because taking into consideration the continuity of stakeholder dialogue, the stakeholders need to be informed why their opinion was or why it was not taken into consideration in the decision-making process (Kujala & Kuvaja 2002, 149).

2.2.3 *Dialogue constraints*

Stakeholder dialogues vary significantly as multiple individual, organisational and inter-organisational factors change. Figure 3 below presents the four factors which affect the stakeholder dialogue. For example, the financial situation of the company has an effect on the dimensions of the dialogue. (Pedersen 2006, 153.)

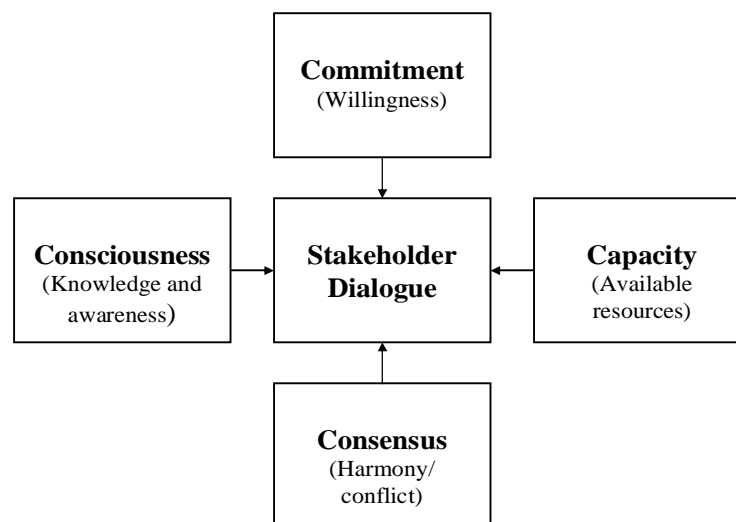


Figure 3 Four factors affecting the operationalisation of stakeholder dialogue (Pedersen 2006, 153.)

Consciousness refers to the knowledge and awareness of the company about CSR initiatives and practices. The most influencing element is the managers' knowledge and

awareness. The management must be committed to constructing a dialogue with the stakeholders because otherwise the dialogue risks becoming unstructured and accidental. The entire personnel's commitment is important because the employees are in constant interaction with the stakeholders. It is essential for the success of the dialogue that it becomes an integrated part of the company's day-to-day practices. Training and education of the personnel are ways to increase consciousness, but they are often expensive and time-consuming. (Pedersen 2006, 154–155.)

Capacity or the available resources shape the process. It is a consequence of resources that larger companies take CSR better into account. Available resources are also linked to consciousness as the training of the personnel requires investments. The availability of resources affects every stage of the process from selecting stakeholders to the dialogue to implementation. Having necessary resources does not make the dialogue existent. Having the resources does not mean that the company is willing to use them to this purpose. (Pedersen 2006, 155.)

Commitment is needed to allocate resources to certain issues. The commitment and willingness of the key persons to engage themselves to the process determines its success. Commitment can be reflected to the company's actions in the form of international initiatives such as the UN Global Compact and company's own sustainability development centre. A company's CSR activities are generally based on a genuine commitment to social and environmental issues or on self-interest. In most cases, the motivation for CSR is a combination of the two. (Pedersen 2006, 155–156.)

Last of the four features is consensus and it refers to the level of agreement between the participants of the dialogue. Different views about CSR and best practices and conflicts between the participants make conducting a successful dialogue more challenging. Fair, open and honest relationships are the basis of beneficial collaboration. Disagreement and controversy can exist between corporate members and stakeholders, inside the company or between stakeholder groups. However, dialogue is possible even though there is some disagreement but basic principles and rules must be accepted by everyone. (Pedersen 2006, 157.) Conflict in interests between stakeholders and the discussion followed can be a productive situation. For example, a company has gathered representatives from several NGOs around the same table. Their focus is different and they view the company and its actions differently. Discussing with another NGO, another organisation might soften its demands towards the company which is more unlikely to occur in discussions directly with the company. (Yaziji 2004, 113.)

2.3 Characteristics of NGOs

NGOs exist in countless forms and shapes. Categorising NGOs is remarkably problematic because their area of activity does not necessarily tell anything about the activities of the NGO and the branch of activity can be deliberately deceptive. For companies, it is essential to acknowledge the existence of different types of organisations. Understanding the motivations behind the actions is also important. (Juholin 2004, 127.)

The structures of NGOs also vary. A classical structure is a membership organisation which is co-ordinated in a geographically-defined hierarchy in provinces and nationally they have a headquarters in the capital city. When these national NGOs are further controlled by an international organism, they are global actors. An NGO can be structured around a local, provincial, national, regional or a global cause. A typical structure for altruistic NGOs, which promote social welfare, poverty alleviation and environment protection, is to have subscribers and supporters. They provide income for the NGO but do not have any democratic control over the expenditure or over policy priorities. Supporters receive newsletters and respond to calls for actions. Some NGOs have prerequisites for membership which can be for example a specific status, a participation in some activity or a specific occupation. (Willetts 2002.)

Even if defining different categories of NGOs is difficult, according to Willetts (2002) a distinction between operational and campaigning NGOs can be made. Operational NGOs are concentrated on making a change through tangible projects whereas campaigning NGOs are seeking larger-scale change through influencing the political system. The difference between the two categories, operational and campaigning NGOs, is clear, but many times NGOs move to the other side. Operational NGOs often run some regular campaigns or they support campaigning networks. Campaigning NGOs move to concrete actions because they feel responsible for their cause and they cannot ignore the immediate problems. (Willetts 2002.)

Operational NGOs strive for helping their cause by concrete actions in small-scale, local projects. They have to find financial donations or volunteer labour in order to run their projects and programs and therefore organising all the activities requires time and expertise in planning, preparing applications, budgeting, accounting and reporting. A good example of an operational NGO is the Red Cross which helps areas which have suffered from natural disasters and wars. Typically an individual project results in a small change in a limited area. The funding of activities is managed through donations and contracts made by governments, foundations and companies. (Willetts 2002.) Common to these organisations is strong practical experience, which gives them the ability to make decisions about actions in new countries. Their actions resemble the operations of international companies. (Parker 2003, 84–85.)

Campaigning NGOs have the same tasks with fund-raising and planning as the operational NGOs but the balance between them is different. Fund-raising is made on a smaller scale and besides collecting financial resources, it aims to strengthen the donors' identification with the cause. Campaigning NGOs organise major events which are targeted to gain favourable publicity and to increase the public's awareness of the supported cause. (Willett 2002.)

A third category in addition to operational and campaigning NGOs is introduced by Millar, Choi and Chen (2004, 402): NGO's which provide mutual assistance, inspiration and general networking, such as Rotary. This group of NGOs is quite insignificant for companies, but worth mentioning because acknowledging the diversity of NGOs is important.

The easiest and the most effective way to distinguish NGOs is to examine precise data of different variables. By analysing the number of full-time employees and the total sum of annual budget it is possible to estimate the size and possible impact of the NGO. Media appearances and opinion polls also give measures of their political strength and possible strength against companies. (Willett 2002.)

2.4 Influence of NGOs on companies

2.4.1 Direct influence

Direct ways of influencing companies are influencing the public opinion by publicity, campaigns and boycotts. An important way to influence the actions of companies is also various certificates of responsible business which are developed by NGOs in co-operation with various industries. (Doh 2003, 6–7.)

The most visible way to influence the actions of companies used by NGOs is aggressive campaigns which aim to force companies to change their actions into the desired direction (Doh 2003, 6). Internationally, the best known campaign organised by an environmental NGO is the Brent Spar example which was discussed in the introduction. The campaign was massive and led to desired outcome of the NGO, Greenpeace. (Kujala & Kuvaja 2002, 154.)

A boycott is the second most visible way of influencing companies used by the NGOs. The most famous example of boycotts dates back to the 1980s: numerous organisations set up a boycott against Nestlé which sold baby's milk mixture to developing countries using misleading marketing. More recent examples include Nike and other companies which produce or purchase products which are manufactured in

poor conditions in the developing countries. (Doh 2003, 6.) Although boycotts are an efficient way to influence the operations of a company, a boycott does not always lead to the desired final outcome. In the 1980s and 1990s, an organisation promoting rainforest protection supported a boycott of tropical timber. The boycott was successful and the sales of timber decreased. Piles of timber decomposed in the forest and the forests were cleaned to serve other purposes of use such as cultivation. Even though the boycott was successful in getting attention for the rainforests, it did not manage to protect them. At present, the NGOs have found other more efficient practices to promote their causes than uncertain boycotts. (Domask 2003, 161.)

Increasingly important and more efficient practice than boycotts, are certificates which are developed and maintained by the NGOs. One of the most significant contracts made between an NGO and industry is a certificate for forest industry developed by Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). (Doh 2003, 7.) FSC has created generic principles for foresting and taking these principles into account, national NGOs and companies together create principles concerning an individual country which are finally accepted by FSC. The certificate was introduced in 1996, and thereafter, for example Home Depot, the world's largest timber retailer, and Ikea, an international furnishing department store, have committed to give priority to FSC-certified timber. (Domask 2003, 170–171.) Forest certificates also affect large Finnish forest companies. Nearly all certified forests in Finland are PEFC-certified (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes). In 2005, Central European customers displaced their purchases from Finland because FSC-certified products were not available. Environmental NGOs, Greenpeace and WWF had approached the customers of forest companies and communicated them the problems concerning the national PEFC-system. At least a German publishing company Random House and a British hardware store Wickes had discontinued their purchases from Finland. The Finnish forest owners find FSC-system expensive and additionally, they are reluctant to give power to the environmental NGOs, to whom the power would be transferred along the FSC-certificate. The Finnish system of forest certification has been criticised to be uncompromising and ignorant concerning international issues. (Peltola 2005.) FSC-certified paper was also in the news when J. K. Rowling, the author of Harry Potter novels, forbid the printing of the Finnish translation of the seventh Potter on Finnish paper. She insists that all her books are printed on FSC-certified paper, and therefore, paper was imported from Germany to Finland. (Helsingin Sanomat 20.1.2008.)

Today, with the increased efficacy of communication technologies, the rapidity of actions is increased. For example, communicating a campaign or promoting a boycott is significantly faster and affordable than 15 years ago. NGOs can set up a coalition against a company within days because their networks are global and reactive. Their rapidity of mobilising forces is superior to companies which also operate globally

online. (Yaziji 2004, 111–112.) The number of networks and coalitions between NGOs has increased dramatically. A coalition can be formed of thousands of NGOs which are focused on a specific target. Formal structures are no longer needed to maintain a coalition, but it is essential to have sufficient resources at the centre where the co-ordination of the coalition is conducted. It is common that coalitions are formed under umbrella NGOs which gather NGOs with different identities but the same cause. (Willettts 2002.)

Larger companies are more likely to become the targets of NGO actions because the bigger and better known the company is, the bigger is the publicity value of the campaign. The larger the publicity value, the more probable is the change in the concerned issues wanted by the NGO. Also some industries are more likely to become targets of NGOs. For example, if the company offers life-threatening products, produces significant spillover effects, is based on new technologies or operates in different regions with differing ethical or social norms, the risk to get attacked is higher. (Yaziji 2004, 111–112.)

2.4.2 *Indirect influence*

Actions which affect companies indirectly include NGOs' pressure on governments which affects companies through legislation and regulation of business life (Doh 2003, 6). NGOs also have power in intergovernmental organisations such as the UN (Doh & Teegen 2002, 675).

NGOs affect governments directly and companies indirectly usually in situations where the issue concerning the NGO is a consequence of governmental actions, is based on given directions or it is too complex to hinder the negotiations. Such cases are for example environmental and commercial legislations. (Doh 2003, 6.) To influence governments, NGOs can address their campaigns directly to an individual politician or to an entire political party. Influencing an individual is reasonable in countries where the party discipline is loose. For example, in the United States the party programme does not bind an individual member of the parliament as strictly as for example in Germany. In the countries of strict party discipline NGOs seek to influence the target programmes of entire parties. (Keim 2003, 24.)

NGOs also influence on corporate responsibility through socially responsible investing (SRI). They influence corporate behaviour through investment vehicles such as managed funds and proxy initiatives. They can influence SRI system by four influencing strategies: advocacy toward institutional investors and pension funds, advice or consultation for SRI funds, shareholder activism and sponsorship of SRI funds. All four strategies can also be used simultaneously or sequentially. Advocacy

refers to influencing for example institutional investors to demand changes in management and corporate behaviour. NGO's have a consultation role in funds focused on SRI, in which they serve as advisors, information analysts and consultants. Shareholder activism can exist in two ways: influencing shareholders or actually owning some shares and raise questions at the annual meeting. In the fourth strategy, NGOs themselves initiate socially responsible investing funds. (Guay, Doh & Sinclair 2004, 133–135.)

NGOs have emerged as influential actors in institutional environment. They have become increasingly important participants in the negotiations between governments and multinational companies. Their entry to the negotiation table has complicated particularly the discussions of the terms of MNE investments to developing countries. Before all, estimating the importance of NGOs and their impact on the stability and sustainability of investment projects is challenging for companies and governments. By entering to negotiations, NGOs seek to increase transparency of investment procedure and rules and assure fairer distribution of economic returns, reasonable prices, employment opportunities for local labour and protection of natural resources. (Doh & Teegen 2002, 666, 668.)

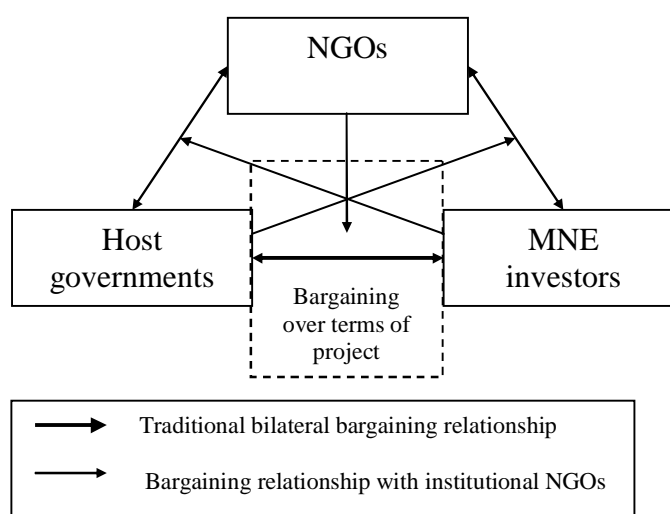


Figure 4 Integration of NGOs in business–government negotiations (Doh & Teegen 2002, 667)

The negotiation situation has changed from the traditional bilateral relationship between governments and companies into a complex trilateral network which can be seen in Figure 4 above. The new role of NGOs can give them power also in the negotiations touching an entire industry. For example, in the United States, in the negotiations of voluntary emission reductions between U.S. chemical industry and the environmental bureau, many environmental NGOs were present. (Doh 2003, 2, 8.)

3 CORPORATE-NGO ALLIANCES

3.1 Benefits and risks for corporations

Instead of opposing and defending themselves against NGOs, companies should strive for achieving a constructive and productive peace with these groups (Deri 2003, 33). Opposing NGOs can turn out to be a financial and a reputation crisis for the company. The NGOs possess several strengths which can be useful for companies. These strengths can serve companies in many ways and they can be obtained via co-operation. The four strengths proposed by Yaziji (2004, 114): legitimacy, awareness of social forces, distinct networks and specialised technical expertise, and the possible competitive advantages associated are summarised in the Table 1 below and discussed in more detail in the following.

Table 1 The four NGO resources beneficial to companies (Yaziji 2004, 114)

	NGO Resources			
Benefits for companies	Legitimacy	Awareness of social forces	Distinct networks	Specialised technical expertise
Head off trouble	X	X	X	
Accelerate innovation				X
Foresee shifts in demand	X	X	X	
Shape legislation	X		X	X
Set industry standards	X	X	X	X

Legitimacy of the NGOs is based on the large public which is supporting them. According to a survey, both Americans and Europeans find NGO spokespeople more credible than CEOs and PR representatives of companies. Companies are seen as greedy profit makers instead of humanitarians. (Yaziji 2004, 111–112.) The NGOs are trusted as global watchdogs which immediately send word of malpractices by companies worldwide. They are considered as reliable sources of information about multi-national business practices. Only academics and doctors are considered more reliable than the NGO's messages. (Deri 2003, 30–31.)

Awareness of social forces is a function of the NGOs' mission. NGOs are champions of decoding the public's concerns because their existence is based on attitudes and interests of the people. They can attune to and influence the shifts in common beliefs which then influence consumer preferences and demand. The NGOs can sense changes in attitudes long before the companies. Companies can head off trouble and foresee

shifts in demand if they partner with the NGOs which know better the concerns of the public as they are able to modify their practices before they face problems linked to the controversial practices. A crisis in the future can be prevented with the help of NGOs which are interested in the industry. (Yaziji 2004, 111–112.) Possible troubles with local cultures in host countries can be avoided by using the insight and knowledge of the local NGOs. At the same time the company gets a positive role as it is better appreciated by stakeholders. (Millar, Choi & Chen 2004, 401–402.)

Distinct networks and specialised technical expertise represent the competences that NGOs have developed by venturing where corporations usually do not go. Their networks consist of other NGOs, donors, regulators, legislators and public-interest lobbyists. The networks are often very extensive and dense because many NGOs are small and their resources are limited. For them, networking is vital and essential for gaining sufficient efficiency. Through partnerships, companies can participate in shaping legislation. NGOs as lobbyists are efficient because of their support by the public and their credibility. They can speak with the voice of five million supporters and they are truly interested in the society's well-being whereas company lobbying can easily be interpreted as simple profit seeking. (Yaziji 2004, 111–114.) The comprehensive network of the NGO partner, to which the company gains access, represents also a significant mass of potential customers. For this reason, NGOs with large memberships are attractive to many companies. (Andreasen 1996, 56.)

The personnel of the largest NGOs is highly educated as half of the personnel of the most influential environmental NGOs have master's or law degrees and 10% to 20% have even doctorates. NGOs employ lawyers, policy analysts and scientists whose skills and knowledge many companies lack. The scientists working for NGOs can possess information of new, more environmental technologies which can help the company to make their processes more eco-friendly, help the company to reduce waste, increase the competitiveness of the company and accelerate innovation. (Yaziji 2004, 111–113.) A good example of jointly developed technology is the development of more environmentally friendly refrigerator which developed to eliminate the use of CFCs which deplete the ozone layer. The idea to promote the technology came from the leader of Greenpeace's atmosphere campaign. They joined forces with a German company and soon all refrigerator manufacturers switched to the greener technology. (Stafford et al. 2000, 128.) The jointly developed technology can even develop into the new standard of the industry as took place in the refrigerator industry. Certificates developed together with NGOs set as well new standards to industries. Then the companies, who were involved in the process, get significant competitive advantage over others as first movers. (Yaziji 2004, 115.) Collaborating with an NGO can be the only option for companies to access to the knowledge held by NGOs. The knowledge of NGOs about creative ways to rethink business activities, identifying new products and marketing

opportunities and addressing stakeholder concerns is knowledge which would be too expensive, inefficient and time-consuming to develop internally for most of the companies. (Rondinelli & London 2003, 62.)

Partnering with an NGO can also create savings for the company. The alliance brings free publicity and many public-relations opportunities and savings can be realised on advertising and promotional costs. Having an NGO partner can also help the company to differentiate itself from its competitors and additionally, a survey has shown that 54% of consumers are willing to pay a premium for a product that supports a cause they are concerned about. (Andreasen 1996, 56.)

Company–NGO collaboration also includes risks. Partnering with an NGO requires company to share its critical information with the organisation. The form of collaboration determines if the company has to provide the NGO with knowledge of R&D projects, strategic plans and internal audits to help NGOs to understand better the company and thus help it. Transferring this sensitive information can make NGOs dangerous partners because the information about the company increases their power and possible threat. To protect themselves, companies need to develop strict guidelines for partnerships with NGOs. (Yaziji 2004, 115.)

Collaborating with an NGO and advertising it puts the company under the microscope of the media, the public and the regulators. A small error which was insignificant in the past can call into question the company's sincerity and the future of the collaboration might be endangered for losing mutual trust. Public may think that the partnership is only a shortcut to a better company image. The company can be also accused of greenwash which means that they invest more in slick and clever PR campaigns to promote their eco-friendliness than improving their environmental efforts in the reality. (Yaziji 2004, 115.)

Partnering with an NGO can harm the company reputation instead of improving it (Yaziji 2004, 115). This phenomenon can be called the self promoter's paradox. Corporate managers should avoid communicating CSR efforts too conspicuously because a survey realised in Scandinavia showed that half of respondents prefer minimal releases instead of expansive advertising campaigns and press releases. On the other hand, other half of the respondents found that companies should communicate broadly and openly. CSR communication is a challenge for managers because they have to balance between opposing expectations and communicate enough but not too much. (Morsing & Schultz 2006, 330–332.)

3.2 Benefits and risks for NGOs

The most important benefit of collaboration with corporations for NGOs is the acquirement of financial resources from the corporate partner. By partnering with corporations, NGOs are more easily able to get their voices heard and generate a change because the economic impact of companies is enormous. Companies have greater impact on environmental and social issues than national legislation or regulators because the sales of global companies are larger than the GDP of many countries. (Deri 2003, 28–29.)

Collaborating with a corporate partner is likely to raise the public awareness of the NGO and thus increase donations (Andreasen 1996, 50). By joining forces with a company, an NGO can acquire financial resources through long-term alliance sponsorships. Also associating them with a positive corporate brand brings benefits. (Dickinson & Barker 2007, 76.)

NGOs also recognise that negotiating directly with companies is often more efficient way to achieve the desired change than putting on a negative campaign. The effect of the campaign is uncertain because there are too many actors involved to its success: the public would have to put pressure on government officials or the company would correct their actions due to the public opinion. (Yaziji 2004, 112.)

Co-operation with a company can be highly beneficial for NGOs but there are also great risks for them. Risks can be involved with resources, image or organisational issues. Resource-related risks are wasted resources, reduced donations and loss of organisational flexibility. If the project fails, the NGO will have wasted resources without getting compensation for it. Their resources are limited and when a significant amount of resources has been used to the project, other activities, such as fund-raising may have suffered. Collaboration with a company may reduce donations to the NGOs as some persons might not accept partnering with companies which are traditionally considered as enemies. Some donors may also think that the organisations do not need their money anymore because they receive enough support from the alliance. Partnering with corporation may lead to loss of organisational flexibility. Corporate partners may impose restrictions to the liberty of action of NGOs for example, partnering with Visa makes contract with other credit card companies impossible. Restrictions can harm significantly other activities such as fund-raising and therefore NGOs must weight the benefits of the alliance against possible restrictions. (Andreasen 1996, 50.)

Image-related risks include tainted partners and antithetical marketing. Selecting the partner is crucial for the success and future prospects of the alliance. Partnering with a company with tainted image or bad reputation causes NGOs significant problems which could be prevented with careful partner selection. If the partner turns out to be disreputable, the future of the NGO is threatened because the partnership may prevent it

from carrying out its mission and damage its credibility. Fund-raising for future programs becomes extremely difficult if the NGO can be associated with scandals in the past. Image of the NGO is also threatened if the company's marketing tactics are in conflict with the NGO's image and strategy. (Andreasen 1996, 55.) By reason of fearing image deterioration in the eyes of some of their supporters, some NGOs keep quiet about their collaboration with corporations. This was the case of an environmental NGO which helped a global fast-food corporation in reducing waste. (Yaziji 2004, 113.)

Organisational issues are the ability of the NGO to handle overwhelming success and structural atrophy. The success of the partnership presents also dangers. Handling more funds and more requests for their use can turn out to be problematical for the NGO. When the annual budget is tripled as a result of the alliance, NGOs can be faced with the insufficiency of their administrative systems. Structural atrophy refers to problems which are linked to the decrease of the NGO's own marketing ability. If the NGO has become dependent on company funding, the end of the partnership may leave the NGO in a state of helplessness if the NGO has devoted most of its energy to supporting the alliance. In that case, exploring other potential corporate partners and increasing traditional donations have been left to lower attention. When the co-operation ends, the NGO might have problems to survive on its own, without corporate support. (Andreasen 1996, 55.)

3.3 Types of alliances and collaborations between corporations and NGOs

In corporate–NGO partnerships, three categories of partnerships can be distinguished using the intensity of the relationship as criterion: arm's length relationships which are of low intensity, interactive collaborations (moderate intensity) and intensive environmental management alliances (high intensity). The categorisation is based on the work of Rondinelli and London (2003, 64) in which they studied collaborations of 50 multinational companies and environmental NGOs. The categories are then complemented with collaboration examples from other scholars and sources.

Arm's length relationships include corporate support for employee participation in NGO activities, corporate contributions and gifts and corporate–NGO marketing alliances. By supporting employees to participate in NGO activities, companies aim to improve employee morale, develop image of CSR and enhance community relationships. NGOs in return, obtain funds and recruit new volunteers and participants. Activities which encourage employees to participate are for example compensation for employees and corporate awards for employee volunteers. (Rondinelli & London 2003, 66.) For example, all the employees of Nokia have the right to do charity work 1–2 days

per year. Charity work can be anything from helping in a veteran collection to sewing dolls to UNICEF. (Manninen 2007.) Corporate contributions include grants and monetary donations to NGOs and corporate gifts given are typically equipment of technology gifts which help NGOs in their projects. (Rondinelli & London 2003, 66.) A newly emerged format of corporate gifts is pro bono work, which can exist in different forms. For example, PHS, a Finnish advertising agency designed a campaign against violence concerning women for free for Amnesty International. The idea of pro bono is that the fortunate in the society share their expert knowledge free of charge to virtuous purposes. Particularly lawyers throughout the world have been active in pro bono work as they have represented disadvantaged persons. The idea of pro bono is simply to do something good; it is not PR because companies do not advertise it at all but they do not lie if they are asked about it. (Manninen 2007.)

Corporate–NGO marketing alliances can be also called cause-related marketing alliances (Andreasen 1996, 49). The objectives of marketing alliance for companies are obtaining endorsement from NGOs, adding social value to products and developing image of social responsibility. NGOs in turn acquire resources and increase their visibility. (Rondinelli & London 2003, 66.) Three principal types of cause-related marketing alliances can be distinguished: transaction-based promotions, joint issue promotions and licensing of the names and logos of NGOs. In transaction-based promotions, a corporation donates a specific sum of cash, food or equipment in direct proportion to sales revenue. (Andreasen 1996, 49.) For example by buying a bottle of mineral water, customer can donate 3 cents to the protection of the Baltic Sea. Also Tradeka, a retail operator with multiple chains, has joined its forces with the Finnish Association for Nature Conservation and offers its regular clients a possibility to donate a specific sum or a portion of collected bonuses to protection of the environment. Donating funds is made very easy and every cent is directed expertly and authentically to the protection of Finnish nature. (Ryhdy lahjoittajaksi.) Joint-issue promotion is a second form of cause-related marketing alliance. A corporation and one or more NGOs realise a joint promotional campaign on a selected social problem. One of the most successful joint campaigns has been a joint campaign by an American women's magazine and several organisations to increase awareness about breast cancer. The third form is licensing the names and logos of NGOs to corporations. In return, NGOs get a fee or a percentage of realised revenues. (Andreasen 1996, 49–50.)

Interactive collaborations are more intensive relationships and demand more time and resources from both parties to succeed. It can include NGO certification of corporate business practices, targeted project support and environmental awareness and education collaborations. Using NGO certificates enables companies to sell their products as green or sustainable, develop further their image and prevent boycotts and protests. NGOs can be sure that companies authentically change their procedures and

practices. Probably the best known NGO certification system is the FSC certificate which was already mentioned above when the direct influencing tactics of NGOs were discussed. Targeted project support refers to medium- or long-term relationships between companies and NGOs, which can include sponsorship of different environmental protection projects and development of eco-preserves on company property. Environmental awareness and education collaborations are accomplished by publishing reports, organising workshops and seminars and conducting research. The idea is to combine corporate resources and NGO knowledge and both parties benefit. Companies can access and disseminate environmental information, support research on new approaches and diffuse performance results. By working together, NGOs can influence business leaders, expand research and influence public policies. (Rondinelli & London 2003, 64–67.)

Intensive environmental management alliance is the highest level of corporate–NGO partnerships. Combining top expertise and top resources for environmental purposes is taken one step further. Concrete projects are realised to achieve environmental goals and objectives. Alliances can concentrate on waste reduction, joint technology development, product redesign, changes in manufacturing and distribution processes, improving plant performance, material substitution, air and water pollution prevention and energy and water conservation. Besides environmental objectives, companies can gain substantial savings in many areas of business activity. In general, an intensive management alliance is preceded with interactive collaboration, which then develops into a more intensive relationship. (Rondinelli & London 2003, 65, 67.)

3.4 Possible problems related to collaboration

Collaboration, no matter how successful, is likely to encounter problems in some phase. Berger et al. (2004, 62) identified six categories in their empirical study of company–NGO collaborations: misunderstandings, misallocation of costs and benefits, mismatches of power, mismatched partners, misfortunes of time and mistrust. Their study included solely social alliances, but the problems related to the relationships are similar to all alliances.

Misunderstandings can vary between macro-level misunderstandings of larger issues such as operating context to micro-level issues such as objectives of each partner. Misunderstandings are likely to occur in the early phases of the alliance. It is also common, that the partners do not understand one another's operation environments: for a business man, the world of NGOs is not evident. Interpretation differences can cause misunderstandings and underestimation of required time and effort to launch the alliance is also frequent. The objectives of the alliance are often misunderstood. The

objectives may be stated, but they are imprecise, difficultly measurable and invented with time. (Berger et al. 2004, 61–62.)

Misallocation of costs and benefits becomes a problem, when one or both partners perceive an unfair distribution of costs and benefits. If both partners agree that the benefits are too low compared to time and resources dedicated, the partnership is drawn in to its end. Problems emerge usually because NGOs are not acting as effectively as companies are accustomed to expect from their corporate partners. NGOs in turn can feel that the corporate demands are unreasonable. They can also consider that the company does not give the alliance the priority it deserves. (Berger et al. 2004, 63–65.)

Mismatches of power are typical in corporate–NGO alliances. Often, the company is assumed to be the more powerful, as power is associated with financial resources. In some cases, the NGO can also be the one with more power. For example, the NGO brand can be more valuable and the relationships with key stakeholders can be better than that of the company. Typically, the power of the NGO is underestimated by the company. Imbalance in power leads to dominating and dismissing the weaker and in the worst case, imposing a strategy or style on the alliance. In such cases, the future of the alliance is threatened. (Berger et al. 2004, 65–66.)

Mismatched partners refer to the skills and resources of the partners. The skills of both do not have to be identical, that would make the alliance senseless because it is important that the partners have complementary skills and resources. The difference of skills is a prerequisite for the alliance, but if the gap between skills is too wide, problems are likely to occur. Decision-making style and perceptions of time can be counted in partner skills. NGOs tend to be committed to long-term objectives whereas companies strive to reach short-term results. Decision-making in NGOs is in general time-consuming and consensus-driven as an opposite to the hierarchical command-and-control style of the firm. (Berger et al. 2004, 67.) Also Rondinelli and London (2003, 74) emphasised the importance of if not similar but at least approaching governance structures and missions.

Misfortunes of time occur usually after a couple of years of co-operation when the novelty of the relationship has ended. Refreshing and updating the alliance becomes a challenge and commitment and continual efforts are required. Misfortune of time is common in all business relationships because after a couple of years, the success or possible failure of the strategy comes into sight. Particularly after failure, extra efforts are needed if the alliance is wanted to continue. Corporate–NGO alliances are particularly vulnerable to lapse of time because brand managers, who are in charge of the alliance from the corporate side, usually move on to other tasks after couple of years. The problem related to losing key personnel is solved if the alliance is made an integrated part of the company's strategy and processes. (Berger et al. 2004, 68.)

Mistrust in the relationship is caused by a combination of problems described above. When mistrust is present in the relationship, it is likely to be transformed to covert behaviour, opportunism and further breakdowns in communication which result to other problems and in the worst case, dissolving the alliance. Without trust, the objectives set to the alliance cannot be reached. (Berger et al. 2004, 68–69.)

3.5 Forming a successful alliance

Pre-empting problems related to the alliance is possible, although no single prescription exists. Considering carefully the selection of the partner prevents many of the most common problems. The consideration connected to partner selection is the fit between partners. Fit between the company and the NGO has to be evaluated. Nine dimensions of fit can be identified: mission fit, resource fit, management fit, work force fit, target market fit, product/cause fit, cultural fit, cycle fit and evaluation fit. The most crucial elements are fits related to mission, resources, management and evaluation. Mission fit refers to a connection between the organisations' (company and NGO) mission and the mission of the alliance. Ideally, the alliance is seen to support the company mission rather than to bring only competitive advantage. Resource fit concerns the compatibility of resources and management fit the compatibility on the personal level. Evaluation fit refers to the measurement criteria used by both partners. Sometimes the preferred criteria can be significantly different, perhaps conflicting. (Berger et al. 2004, 68–76)

Partner selection is the most decisive factor for the success of the alliance. Identifying potential partners is the task of both, the company and the NGO. The selection of the partner should begin by assessing internal strengths and weaknesses to be able to find the most suitable partner. When potential partners are identified, they have to be evaluated using selected criteria. When the partner is selected and both partners are committed to the collaboration, the goals and expectations should be discussed in detail. To prevent problems in the future, the objectives of the project and their measuring criteria should be formulated into a written agreement. The terms of collaboration are also important; especially will the corporation be the NGOs only partner from a particular industry, the resources that both parties will commit and the areas of responsibility should be clearly defined. (Andreasen 1996, 58.)

Rondinelli and London (2003) have developed a decision path which helps companies and NGOs to determine the most viable option to their collaboration. The path leading to collaboration is designed especially for companies and NGOs which consider entering into a relationship of moderate or high intensity. The path consists of six strategic questions (Figure 5) which help the firm and the NGO to determine their commitment and find the best level of collaboration which corresponds to their

resources and concerns. The three first questions are useful to managers of companies which plan to enter into an interactive collaboration relationship with an NGO. The three first questions concentrate on external factors and the latter three questions involve also internal factors of the company which are more and more involved in the collaboration as its intensity increases. (Rondinelli & London 2003, 65.)

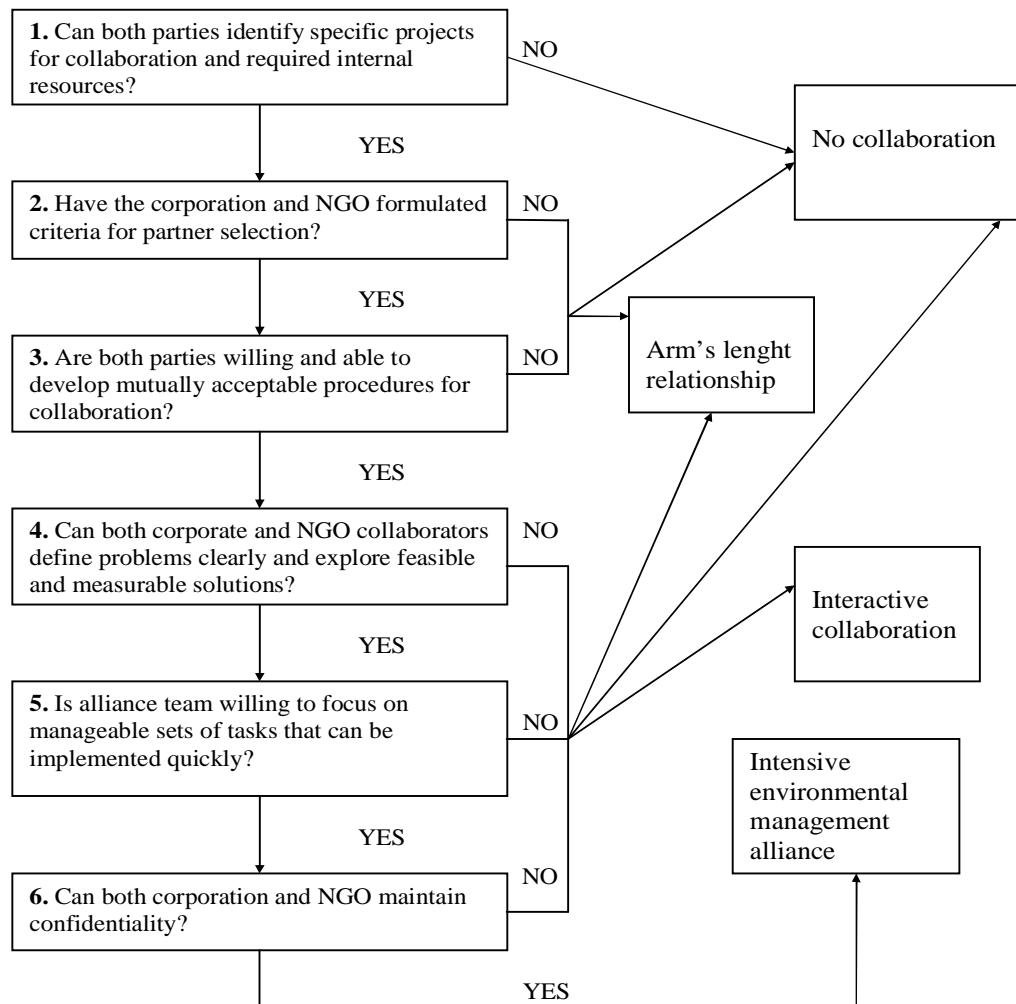


Figure 5 Corporate-NGO collaboration decision path (modified from Rondinelli & London 2003, 68)

Each strategic question or a step described in the figure above includes crucial tasks which all should be completed before progressing to the next question. The ability of the organisations involved to complete these tasks determines the intensity of the collaboration which is suitable for them. The end result can also be that no collaboration is established. Each question is explained in more detail below. (Rondinelli & London 2003, 67–72.)

The **first** question includes tasks such as identifying interests and objectives, comparing costs and benefits of the collaboration and selecting a cross-functional team in the organisation. In this stage, the internal support for the collaboration must be obtained meaning that the management of the organisation is fully supporting the idea of collaboration and that they trust the selected team.

The **second** question is about partner selection. Revising the selection criteria, identifying potential partners and identifying common interests and objectives are the tasks of this step. The selection criteria should be implemented in choosing the right partner amongst all the NGOs or determine whether collaboration can be started if some organisation suggests it.

When the potential partner is selected, common procedures are negotiated in the **third** step. The team which consists of the representatives of both parties should be able to find mutually acceptable procedures for collaboration. Keeping an open mind in the beginning is important and staking out positions in the beginning should be avoided. When acceptable procedures are found, they should be stated in a written memo.

The **fourth** step is about problem definition and finding solutions for solving it. The profitability and environmental outcome should be specified and results which can be monitored and measured should be identified. Mechanisms of information sharing should also be developed in this stage.

The **fifth** step includes assessing and selecting feasible potential solution, setting the time horizon and integrating the solutions into operational and administrative procedures. The most important factor for the success of the alliance in this stage is finding solutions which can be realised in a relatively short time. The more focused the project is, the more likely reaching success is. Too broadly or abstractly defined solutions can make the collaboration fail because reaching the objectives would take too long.

The **sixth** strategic question is very important if the company and the NGO are forming an intensive environmental management alliance. In such an alliance, the confidential information must be protected and the content of public reports should be agreed by both parties. The role of mutual trust is important, and therefore the relationship is often intensified gradually and intensive management alliances are established after trying less intensive collaboration forms.

4 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH DESIGN

4.1 Research approach

Research in social sciences can be divided in two general strategies. Some researches are statistical or quantitative in nature and they examine the world as a causal system in which all the processes can be measured, modelled and analysed by means of statistical analyses. (Koskinen, Alasuutari & Peltonen 2005, 16, 24.) Common in quantitative studies is highlighting the laws of cause and consequence. The approach is based on an assumption, that the reality can be perceived objectively and everything can be logically reasoned. (Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 1997, 130.) The other approach, qualitative research, aims to increase the understanding of the actions of corporations by analysing qualitative data. Qualitative data can also facilitate the understanding of a statistical causality found in earlier research. (Koskinen et al. 2005, 16, 24.) Qualitative research aims to describe real life with complexity of situations and interrelated factors which cannot be separated. Objectivity of research in these situations is virtually impossible to maintain because the researcher is involved in the process of generating the information. Whereas the aim in quantitative research is to confirm existing theorems and to make generalisations, in qualitative research, the purpose is often to find or reveal facts. (Hirsjärvi et al. 1997, 152.) The two approaches are not mutually exclusive. In practice, there is no clear-cut distinction between them and they are seen as complementary, not competing approaches. (Hirsjärvi et al. 1997, 127.)

This research is qualitative in nature because the purpose is to gain deeper understanding of the practice and procedures incorporated in the partnerships between an NGO and a company. Qualitative research is used when the researcher is interested in the human aspect of situations and how different actors live these situations. Analysing qualitative data allows describing in detail social situations and processes. (Berg 2004, 7.)

4.2 Research strategy

Case study is more an approach than a method. In a case study, the methods of data collection can vary but the approach and the way of drawing conclusions are the same. (Koskinen et al. 2005, 158.) A case study is useful when the phenomenon to be studied is less known and the purpose of the study is to provide insight into an issue, a management situation or theory. This strategy is also the most frequently used strategy

in international business thesis and dissertations. (Ghauri 2004, 109.) Case studies are often used when the purpose of the research implies posing “how” or “why” questions (Yin 2003, 1). Many studies in the field of business economics are at least indirectly case studies. The research object of a case study is in general a determined process, function, department, a series of events or history of the company in focus. A case study can examine the phenomenon on several levels: industrial, organisational, departmental, group or individual level. A case study is an excellent method for developing new hypotheses and ideas. Case studies are also used to test established beliefs, conceptions and theories but they also are used to making comparisons to question the earlier theories. (Koskinen et al. 2005, 155–157.)

There are five components in conducting a case study which are important (Yin 2003, 21):

- a study’s questions
- its propositions, if any
- its unit(s) of analysis
- the logic linking the data to the propositions and
- the criteria for interpreting the findings.

The first point refers to the form of research questions. In this research the purpose of the research is descriptive in nature and necessitates “how” and “why” questions which are typical in case studies. Study propositions direct attention to the research object and define the scope and the restrictions of the study. In this study, the propositions underlying are assumptions about how NGOs and companies collaborate and that they both benefit from it. The sub objectives described in the introduction explained them in more detail. The third component, unit of analysis is linked to the definition of a case. In this research, a case is not an individual or a company, but a process of partnership between a selected NGO and a company. It involves both sides and lasts for a determined time. The logic linking the data to the propositions can be for example a theory which is the situation in this research as well. The analysis and interpreting the findings are discussed below in the data analysis section. (Yin 2003, 21–27.)

The research object in a case study can be a single case or multiple cases. The single case strategy is appropriate when a critical case exists and it alone can explain or question an established theory. The single case can also be a unique or an extreme manifestation of the phenomena in question. A single case study can also be made as a pilot study before a more comprehensive study. The single case method is useful when the study is inductive and specific explanations are wanted. The multiple cases -strategy can also be called a comparative case study. The same questions are asked in a number of organisations and the answers are compared and conclusions are drawn. A multiple-case design allows obtaining general explanations but it is not recommended for making generalisations. (Ghauri 2004, 114–115.) A multiple-case design is preferred over the

single-case study because it allows having two or more cases, which increases the chances of making a reliable case study. A single-case design is vulnerable because every aspect of the study is dependent on the nature of the single case. With two or more cases, the possibilities of analytics and comparison increase. Examining multiple cases allows the researcher to point out similarities and differences between the selected cases. (Yin 2003, 53.)

4.3 Case selection

Case selection is the most important issue in this type of research. Case selection includes deciding which firms, individuals, groups or elements will form the data for the research. Selection criteria should correspond to the purpose of the research and the theoretical framework used. Every case studied has to serve a particular purpose in the study and therefore every case selected has to be justified. (Ghauri 2004, 112.)

WWF Finland was selected to represent the NGO side in this study. The most important selection criteria were their internationality and their environmental orientation because climate change and other environmental issues are daily topics in the news. Additionally, they are pioneers in the field of co-operation with corporate partners in Finland. Both parties of the alliance were interviewed. This is a prerequisite in order to describe the alliance as a whole.

Several companies which collaborate with the same NGO (WWF Finland) were selected to this case study. Several companies were selected because examining only one company and its co-operation with WWF Finland would give an inequitable and a narrow view of corporate–NGO alliances which often are without equal and complicated in nature. In order to gain a comprehensive picture and diversified data, companies from different fields of economy were selected. Their current relationship with WWF Finland was also an important criterion. WWF Finland has different forms of co-operation with corporate partners and companies were selected to represent these different groups. The three selected companies support different projects. The selected companies represent different fields of the economy and their co-operation with WWF Finland differs from each other. Two companies support the same environmental protection project but they also co-operate with WWF Finland in other ways.

Interviewing the key informants is crucial for the success of a case study (Yin 2003, 90). Good interviewees for the study were the employees who have worked close to the project and who are responsible for the maintenance of permanent relationships between the company and the organisation. These persons were located with the help of the Marketing Manager of WWF Finland and by examining the case companies' web pages. The help of the Marketing Manager of WWF Finland was important because she

knew exactly who was in charge of these issues in their partner companies. Some companies, for example Nokia, were ruled out in this phase because they had expressed their unwillingness of participating in research interviews. It came out that other studies related to same topic had been made recently. In total, five companies were contacted and three agreed for participating in this research. The initial contact was made by e-mail and further details were handled by e-mail or by phone. The three companies which agreed to participate were Metso Oyj, Nordkalk Oyj and Neste Oil Oyj, all Finnish listed companies.

4.4 Data collection

Data collection in case studies can be effectuated in various ways: verbal reports, personal interviews, observation and written reports. The most important consideration related to data collection in case studies is the profoundness of the data and its concentration on the research object. The essential is to obtain sufficient information of the research object in order to describe and explain the unique features of the case, as well as to compare multiple cases and point out their similarities and differences. (Ghauri 2004, 109–110.) The most important criteria for data collection are relevance and the fact that it serves the purpose of the case study (Koskinen et al. 2005, 157).

Interview is the most common method of data collection in qualitative research. An interview is more flexible than mail surveys and it allows the researcher more freedom to adapt to different situations. An interview is selected often for the following reasons: freedom of expression for the informant, unknown or unexplored research subject, nonverbal communication, complex and diversified expected answers, possibility for clarification, possibility of supplementary questions and the sensitivity or difficulty of the research subject. (Hirsjärvi et al. 1997, 195.) In this research, the main reasons to choose interviews as the data collection method were the complexity of expected answers and the possibility to pose supplementary questions for clarification and completion of the answers. These two factors are extremely important due to the exploratory nature of the purpose of this research.

Three basic types of interviews can be distinguished: a structured interview, a semi-structured interview and an unstructured interview. This classification is based on the role of the interviewer and level of instructing used in the situation. A structured interview refers typically to a survey interview in which the researcher has prepared a questionnaire with a strict order of questions and usually also the response alternatives are given. A semi-structured interview consists of open questions and gives more freedom to the interviewee. The interviewer can change the order of the questions if the situation necessitates. An unstructured interview aims at minimising the influence of the

interviewer on the responses. At the purest form, an unstructured interview is based on an idea or an object of interest of the researcher of which he wishes to discuss with the interviewee. The discussion proceeds freely and the researcher is focused to understand the visions of the interviewee. (Koskinen et al. 2005, 104.)

The method used for data collection in the research was semi-structured interviews which can also be called semi-standardised interviews, in which open questions are used. Supplementary questions can be posed if additional information is needed or responses need clarification. A semi-structured interview allows having more diversified information about the relationships between the company and its stakeholders than a structured interview. This is due to the fact that in a semi-structured interview, the interviewer is allowed to digress from the premeditated questions and ask supplementary questions or to encourage the interviewee to develop an emerged theme further. (Berg 2004, 80–81.) The semi-structured interview is indisputably the most commonly used method in qualitative studies in business and in social sciences (Koskinen et al. 2005, 105). It is also most commonly used in case studies because having open-ended questions allows the respondents to share their own insights, to suggest other person to be interviewed for the research and also to point out other sources of evidence (Yin 2003, 90).

Interviews can be conducted in person, over the telephone or by e-mail. All the interviews concerning this research were in-person interviews. A face-to-face interview has many advantages compared to telephone interviews: more accurate responses owing to contextual naturalness, greater likelihood of self-generated answers, symmetrical distribution of interactive power, greater effectiveness with complex issues and more thoughtful responses. Naturalness of the interview situation comes from small talk, joking, and nonverbal communication and from the similarity of the situation with everyday conversations. Naturalness leads to more open expression of both the interviewer and the interviewee. The interview situation is mutually interactive which means that both parties can raise topics and ask for clarification. Handling complex issues is more challenging in telephone than in person. (Shuy 2002, 541–544.)

The themes for the interviews (Appendix 3) were created on the basis of the sub objectives of the research. An operationalisation table (Appendix 2) was made to clarify the structure of the research and linkages between the theory and the empirical reality. In the table, each sub objective is linked with a section from the theory and interview theme. The same themes were used in all interviews. Questions were formulated slightly differently for corporate representatives and NGO representative but the content remained identical. All the interviews were made in Finnish and the quotations in the following section are translated as directly as possible by the researcher. Words and meanings have a great importance in qualitative research and therefore keeping the message as unchanged as possible is important.

The interviews were made in February 2008 and March 2008. Details of the interviews are presented below (Table 2). All the interviews were recorded with the permission of the interviewees. Their permission was asked beforehand by e-mail when other details of the interview were clarified. General notes about the interview place and other situational factors were taken immediately after the interviews.

Table 2 Details of the interviews

Interview	Date	Organisation	Interviewee	Place	Length
1	7.2.2008	WWF Finland	Anneli Alftan, Marketing Manager	WWF Finland office, Helsinki	45 min
2	26.2.2008	Metso Oyj	Jukka Seppälä, Vice President, Stakeholder Relations and Trade policy Manager	Metso Oyj head office, Helsinki	45 min
3	4.3.2008	Nordkalk Oyj	Kjell Weppling, Water group, Product Group Manager	Nordkalk Oyj head office, Parainen	55 min
4	1.4.2008	Neste Oil Oyj	Pentti Parkkinen, Brand Manager	Neste Oil Oyj head office, Espoo	45 min

Interviews 1, 2 and 4 were made in a meeting room and interview 3 in the interviewee's personal office. All interviews were accomplished without interruption or distraction in a calm environment. The transcribing of the audio material was done a couple of days after the interviews. Interviews were written practically word for word, only minor styling was made in the writing of some colloquial expressions. After transcribing, the text was read several times and some missing data was gathered from other sources. For example, the public relations department was asked about the other sponsorships of the company in the case of Nordkalk.

Because the interview with WWF Finland was made before the other interviews and before the case companies were chosen, details about the co-operation with these three companies were asked afterwards by e-mail. The person at WWF Finland was very busy at the moment and therefore the information received was quite brief. The information concerning each company from WWF Finland's point of view was significantly briefer than the information concerning WWF Finland from the companies. The interview made at WWF Finland was very good in general and the data was rich and it helped to form a comprehensive picture of the issue despite of the imbalance in that section of the data.

4.5 Data analysis

The best method of analysis is the one which serves the purpose of the research. All types of analysis methods are needed in social sciences. Two broad categories of methods can be identified: statistical analysis to explain and qualitative analysis to understand. (Hirsjärvi et al. 1997, 212.) The purpose of analysing qualitative data is to bring clarity to the data and summarise it without losing any information. By analysing, the data is made from complicated and fragmented to logical and serving the purpose. Analysing the data is the most problematic phase in qualitative research because data analysis techniques are not discussed in the theory as thoroughly as the data collection methods. Analysing qualitative data differs greatly from analysing quantitative data: qualitative data analysis techniques lack technical details about data processing. It is complicated because no mechanical pattern to get the results and to interpret them exists. For this reason, the scientific aspect of qualitative research and its ability of processing results have been criticised. Analysing qualitative data is a subjective process, which has to be taken into consideration when the quality of the research is analysed. (Eskola & Suoranta 1998, 138.)

When the data is collected using a semi-structured interview, a widely used way to begin analysing the data is to use the interview themes as a starting point. Examining the data through the lenses of the themes binds the theory and the data together as the themes were built around theoretical assumptions. For each theme, matching sections of the data are collected together. Thematisation is recommended if the purpose of the research is to solve a practical problem. (Eskola & Suoranta 1998, 152–153; 179.)

After finding the comprehensive themes, coding can be done to divide the data into more specific slices. Coding is a systematic way to go through and sort the data. The actual code can be a short word or an abbreviation which can be only understood by the researcher. Codes can be brought up inductively from the data or be constructed on the basis of the theory. Coding enables the researcher to group or regroup the data to examine desired points more closely. It is also easy to find the desired sections from the coded data. (Eskola & Suoranta 1998, 156–158.) Codes are a tool to organise and categorise the data. Codes can be used to form clusters of related segments around the research questions. (Miles & Huberman 1984, 56.) The code list used in this research can be found in the Appendix 4. It was mainly formulated with the help of the theory but it was modified during the coding process as some codes arose from the data and some codes needed modification.

4.6 Quality of the research

In qualitative research, the methods of research are numerous and varied, and therefore a unified, accepted way to measure the quality of the research does not exist either. The perception of the truth defines how the trustworthiness of research is evaluated. (Tynjälä 1991, 387–388.) To analyse the quality and the trustworthiness of this study, the criteria developed by Lincoln and Guba (1985): credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability are used.

Credibility refers to the extent in which the research matches to the reality. Recording the interviews increased the credibility of the research because the recorded material allows comparing and testing of interpretations later. (Lincoln & Guba 1985, 296.) Taping the interviews can sometimes have an adverse effect on the answers if the research topic is sensitive. In this research this was not a problem because the interviewees answered the questions very openly and this topic does not contain issues which the companies would want to hide, vice versa. The use of open questions increased the credibility of this research as the interviewees could express them freely and tell about the topic without tighter restrictions. Some facts were checked afterwards by e-mail to avoid errors in the data which increases the credibility of this research. The fact, that information collected by e-mail from WWF Finland concerning each company was so brief, affected negatively to the credibility of this research. Member check was also used to increase the credibility of this research. All the interviewees had the chance to read and comment the empirical research findings. Three of four interviewees commented and gave suggestions for corrections. Some facts concerning WWF Finland and the companies were corrected and also some other minor corrections were made. These corrections were quite small and they did not influence the empirical findings.

For the credibility of the research, it is also important that all the elements of the research are linked together. The operationalisation table presented in Appendix 2 points out how the reality and the empirical research were linked with the theory in this research.

The reliability of the data gathered in an interview can diminish because the interviewees have the tendency to give socially acceptable answers. This tendency differs between countries and cultures. (Hirsjärvi et al. 1997, 196.) In this case, the researcher trusted the reliability of the data but it is always possible that some answers were slightly affected by this because the research topic is related to the responsibility of business and the company representatives want to give a good impression about their company.

Transferability means how well the results of the research can be moved to another context and situation. The researcher alone is not able to evaluate the transferability of the research. The reader who wishes to apply the results is also responsible for

evaluating it. Therefore the researcher must describe the process and the data utilised in detail in order to provide enough information for transferability judgements. (Lincoln & Guba 1985, 297.) The process of this research was described in detail earlier in this chapter. Transferability is related to the external validity of the research. Having more than one case in a case study increases the external validity of the research. In multiple-case studies, the conclusions are based on various findings and they cannot be criticised of being biased because they are based on a unique case. A single-case approach is possible only when there are very strong arguments of choosing only one case. (Yin 2003, 54.) One problem in case studies is making generalisations from the research. In case studies, generalisations can be made to theoretical propositions and thus expand and generalise theories. A multiple case study can be compared to an experiment in which certain phenomenon is replicated several times. (Yin 2003, 10.)

Dependability describes how dependent the research results are of the external factors of the research situation. The factors include the effects of the situation, the researcher and the research objective itself to the results of the research. (Lincoln & Guba 1985, 299.) The interview situation in all interviews was calm and quiet. All the interviewees were well prepared to the interviews and they did not seem too busy or irritated by the interview. The influence of the researcher to the results remained minimal because open questions were used and the use of leading questions was avoided.

Confirmability measures the objectivity and neutrality of the data. Confirmable data is related to the truth value and applicability of the research findings. (Lincoln & Guba 1985, 300.) Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that the best way to improve the confirmability would be an external confirmability audit but such procedure was not possible in this research due to time and resource constraints. All the phases of the research process were described as thoroughly as possible. The analysis of the data was based on themes and codes which can be seen in Appendix 4. Using themes and codes makes the analysis of the data systematic which enables other researchers to understand the process better. Such a systematic method of analysis makes the analysis more objective.

Research ethics was taken into consideration in this research. The interviewees were informed about the research process before the interviews when they were asked to participate in the research. The interviews were taped with their permission and the permission was asked a couple of days before the interviews. All case companies were asked whether their name can be mentioned in the paper. Nothing which can harm the company is mentioned in the report.

5 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1 WWF – World Wildlife Fund For Nature

WWF is one of the largest environmental organisations in the world. It was founded in 1961 due to growing concern of the planet's future. It is a non-governmental organisation and the international secretariat is located in Gland, Switzerland. The mission of WWF is to “*stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature*”. WWF puts its mission into practice by conserving the biological diversity, by supporting sustainable use of renewable natural resources and by promoting the reduction of pollution. (WWF – Who we are...) WWF Finland was founded in 1972. Their first mission was to save the sea eagle from extinction. Today, one of their most important areas of operation is the protection of the Baltic Sea. (WWF Suomi – WWF Suomi.)

To achieve its goals, WWF runs a large scale of activities ranging from local nature conservation projects to initiatives which seek to improve the packaging of consumer products. Currently, there are over 2000 WWF conservation projects in progress around the world. Projects are realised together with local non-profit agencies, other global NGOs and companies which are willing to change and act for the planet in accordance with village elders, local councils and regional governments. (WWF – Who we are...)

WWF Finland co-operates with many companies to reach their nature and environment protection goals. The co-operation can be important in terms of substance when the project is related to supporting the company's environmental expert knowledge or in terms of financial support for WWF's work. Especially important for WWF is the co-operation with companies whose core activities affect the environment. (WWF Suomi – WWF ja yritykset.) WWF has also developed a service which helps offices of all sizes to reduce their environmental impact and save on energy and material costs. The system is called Green Office and after fulfilling the demanded criteria and paying the initiation fee, the office can use the Green Office label to communicate their green values to their stakeholders and personnel. (WWF Suomi – Green Office.)

During the last accounting period, 1.7.2006–30.6.2007, the gross income of WWF Finland was nearly EUR 3.4 million. The division of income is presented below (Figure 6). The share of companies was substantial being 31%. The number of Green Office contracts was 43 by the end of the period. (WWF Suomi – Vuosi 2007.) The importance of companies as a source of income for WWF Finland had increased from season 2005/2006, being then only 20%. The number of Green Offices was only 22 by the end of the period. (WWF Suomi – Vuosi 2006.)

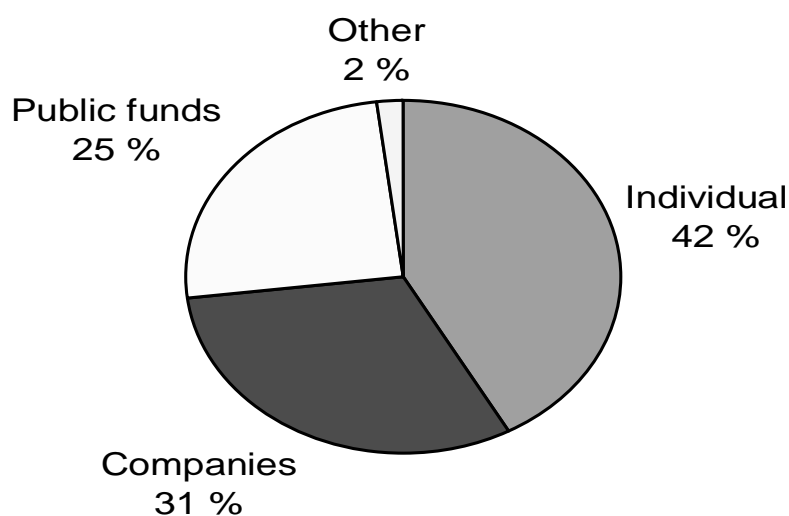


Figure 6 Division of income of WWF Finland 2006/2007 (WWF Suomi – Vuosi 2007)

The share of expenditures used for environmental protection was over 70% when the protection funds were included. In December 2007, the number of permanent and longer term periodic employees working in the office in Helsinki was 27. The work of volunteers is essential for WWF Finland. Volunteers work in professional panels, oil destruction and other field missions and trustees in the board of directors and in the supervisory board operate without meeting fees. The value of protection activities conducted by the volunteers has been counted to be equivalent of EUR 250 000. (Henkilökunta 2008.)

5.2 Case companies

Selected case companies all represent different fields of economy. Metso is a technology corporation, Neste Oil operates in the oil industry and Nordkalk produces limestone products. Neste Oil is the largest company if turnover is used as a measure but the personnel of Metso is the most numerous with over 26 000 employees worldwide. When the international expansion of the case companies is compared, Metso is the most international company and only truly global company amongst the three because they operate in all the continents. The other two companies are operating mainly in Europe. Nordkalk operates in the countries of Northern Europe and around the Baltic Sea. The main market area of Neste Oil is Finland but they also export to Northern Europe, to other European countries and to North America.

Table 3 Key figures of the case companies

	Metso Oyj		Nordkalk Oyj		Neste Oil Oyj	
	2007	2006	2007	2006	2007	2006
Turnover (M€)	6 250	4 955	334	303	12 103	12 734
Operating income (M€)	580	457	44	37	801	854
Total of the balance sheet (M€)	5 254	4 968	367	346	4 871	4 340
Return on equity (%)	25.4	30.9	38.2	24.3	25.6	34.3
Personnel	26 837	25 678	1339	1304	4807	4740

The key figures of the case companies are summarised above (Table 3). The figures are presented from the two previous years to illustrate the size and the financial performance of the companies. The growth rates of turnover and operating income are also mentioned. The number of personnel is the number of personnel in the end of the year. (Metso 2008; Nordkalk 2008; Neste Oil 2008.)

Metso Oyj is an international technology corporation which consists of three business areas: Metso Paper, Metso Minerals and Metso Automation. Metso's customers work in the pulp and paper industry, rock and mineral processing, power generation and other industries. Metso Paper is the largest business area with 46% of net sales in 2007. The share of Metso Minerals was 41% and Metso Automation 11%. Metso has activity on all continents but the main market areas are Europe and North America. Europe is the most significant of the markets with 40% of net sales in 2007. The importance of Asia and South America is increasing. (Metso Corporation – Metso in brief.) Metso Corporation was established in 1999 as a result of the merger of Rauma, operator in fibre technology, rock crushing and flow control solutions and Valmet, paper and cardboard machine manufacturer. The history of the companies forming Metso today goes back to the 18th century. (Metso Corporation – Metso's history.) The year 2007 was the best in Metso's history. The future of the company seems promising and Metso expects a 10% growth in 2008. (Metso 2008.)

Nordkalk Oyj produces high quality limestone products and is the leading company in this field in Northern Europe. The products are used in industry such as paper, steel and building construction, in agriculture and in environmental care. Nordkalk operates at more than 30 locations in 8 countries. (Nordkalk – Company.) Nordkalk has a long history. The activities started in 1898 when the production around limestone in Parainen concentrated to one company. New usages for lime emerged when the industry in Finland developed. Many acquisitions in the 1980s and 1990s made the company the most important limestone producer in Northern Europe. The current name, Nordkalk, was taken into use in 2004 after changes of ownership. (Nordkalk – History.) Prospects for year 2008 are good and growth is expected particularly in Poland and in the Baltic

states. The closing of paper machines in Finland can cause a decrease in the sales of raw materials of paper pigments. (Nordkalk 2008.)

Neste Oil Oyj produces advanced, clean traffic fuels and has a strategy of prioritising growing its refining and premium-quality biodiesel business. Neste Oil is composed of five divisions: Oil Refining, Biodiesel, Specialty Products, Oil Retail and Shipping. Neste Oil has two refineries in Finland (Naantali and Porvoo) which have a combined capacity of 14 million tonnes per year. The main market area is Finland where 8.1 million tonnes of petroleum products were supplied in 2007. At the same time, 6.3 million tonnes were exported. Neste Oil has some 900 service stations and diesel fuel outlets in Finland. Neste Oil's fleet consists of 30 tankers and they also have some tug boats and barges. (Neste Oil – In brief.) Neste Oil was established in 1948 and has during the years operated under the names of Neste and Fortum Oil. In 2005, Fortum's oil business was separated from the energy business and Neste Oil was born. (Neste Oil – History.) The market share of Neste Oil in Finland for oil retail was 27.6% for petrol and 39.8% for diesel fuels. Global demand estimations of oil are hesitant due to the economic situation in the USA. Oil retail grows in the Baltic region and growth is also expected for diesel fuel in Finland (Neste Oil 2008.)

5.3 Starting the co-operation

The reasons why WWF Finland and these companies collaborate have to be clarified before analysing the actual collaboration. WWF Finland has acknowledged the significance of companies for their activities from the beginning of their history in Finland. For them, it is important to collaborate with companies because they cannot reach their environment protection objectives without companies, because their environmental influences are substantial. Companies also affect considerably the decision-making of political actors and to protect the environment, all three parties must work together for the common objective. WWF Finland works together with companies which are sometimes far from green. They are willing to challenge the companies to think more about the environment. Collaborating with companies which are harmful to the environment is more challenging but also more rewarding because more can be achieved compared to companies which already are green and act responsibly.

Because we want the maximal benefit from the work we do, in these companies we can influence them and make them more environmentally conscious. (Alfthan 7.2.2008)

From the company perspective, collaboration with an environmental NGO is according to Metso's Seppälä, one way to promote the company's environmental responsibility to stakeholders. Alone, marketing the environmental responsibility would not be as convincing. Wepling from Nordkalk agrees and sees NGO-corporate collaboration as a marketing activity which communicates the ideology of the company and has influence on the company's image in the eyes of the target groups.

The branch of industry has a significant influence to these kinds of partnerships. Seppälä mentioned that it is natural for Metso to partner with an environmental NGO because according to OECD's definition below, 61% of the activities of Metso can be seen as environmental or clean technology.

Clean technology is the installation or a part of an installation that has been adapted in order to generate less or no pollution. In clean as opposed to end-of-pipe technology, the environmental equipment is integrated into the production process. (OECD Glossary of Statistical Terms – Clean technology definition.)

For Nordkalk, it is also natural to partner with an environmental NGO because for Nordkalk, everything that is made to ameliorate the condition of water system is important. They have a wide range of products and methods for treating or eliminating problems in water systems. Wepling also noted that for a collaboration to be important the values of the NGO and the company have to match and the two also need to have the same views about the importance of the activities and the objectives of the work of the NGO. The "We-spirit" has to be present in the collaboration.

For Neste Oil, environmental responsibility is one of the identity factors of their brand and in their activities it is highly prioritised. Collaborating with an environmental NGO reflects their environmentally responsible actions and therefore this type of partnership is straightforward for them. Another reason for collaboration is their shipping division. For them, the safety of their oil transports and the condition of the Baltic Sea are very important. WWF Finland is a natural partner for them because the sea is one of the most important activity areas of WWF Finland. Neste Oil also has a strategy of producing oil products as environmentally friendly as possible. It has to be noted that oil products are always harmful to the environment. The facts that they were the first company to launch sulphur- and lead-free products in Finland and that at the moment they are developing their own biodiesel, communicates their commitment to the issue to a considerable extent.

WWF Finland's principle is to choose according to their criteria the leading company from each branch of industry to collaborate. The reasons for this are that they do not want competition between their partners and they want to make sure that they can find

ways for significant collaboration with them to contribute to environmental causes. They do not have general criteria for their partner companies but the collaboration has to fulfil two of the three following criteria: communication, financial contribution and environmental protection.

WWF Finland collaborates with Metso because it is one of the most successful companies in Finland and they have a strong environmental policy. There is tremendous potential to develop the collaboration with Metso as their business develops. Neste Oil is an important partner for them because it has a large effect to promoting the safety issues in oil transports in the Baltic Sea. It also implements voluntarily many important safety issues before they are obligatory by the law. Discussing future solutions and possibilities with Neste Oil has been important. The significance of Nordkalk was more important in the past when a concrete project was realised to ameliorate the quality of water of the Baltic Sea, but today its role for WWF Finland is minor. (Alfthan 25.3.2008.)

New partners can also arise from actual issues. At the moment, climate issues are hot topics in the politics and in the media, and companies which can have a link to climate become interesting for WWF Finland. Collaboration can also be initiated by a technological innovation, which could help other companies for example to reduce their energy consumption. Partnering with such a company could promote the innovation and bring it into the consciousness of new companies and thus save the environment.

The companies have to be able to identify themselves in the values and in the methods used by the NGO. Aggressive organisations such as Greenpeace and organisations which concentrate solely on “pointing out the bad guys” are not seen as potential partners by the companies. The approach and ways of action of WWF differ from other more aggressive environmental NGOs such as Greenpeace. The representatives of Metso and Nordkalk thought, that as an environmental NGO, WWF is a preferred partner due to its constructive and solution-oriented approach. The problem of some smaller potential organisations may be their lack of resources. Their ideology might be great but the means of accomplishing something are insufficient. The lack of resources available is also a problem of some smaller companies and therefore WWF Finland is not interested in more extensive collaboration with them. As they have limited resources and cannot collaborate with everyone, they want to concentrate on collaborating with companies which are of significant size to maximise their efforts.

The relationships of the case companies with other environmental NGOs are quite good despite of the general attitudes of the companies towards them. Metso is familiar with activities of other environmental NGOs, but they have decided to concentrate on WWF Finland due to its resources. Neste Oil is very open to discuss with all environmental NGOs. Their biodiesel and especially its ingredient, palm oil, has been the topic of many discussions and it has also been handled in the media. They have

discussed the issue for example with Greenpeace. Nordkalk communicates constantly with several other organisations but the company prefers organisations which are honourable and legitimate.

From the corporate point of view, the NGO's professionalism was a very important criterion for the case companies. The personnel of WWF Finland are true experts in their field and they can be compared to the professionals of any specialised research institution. Their statements and opinions are taken seriously and they have weight for example in the questions related to the Baltic Sea. At WWF Finland, communication is also very professional. For a large international company such as Metso it is important, that they can trust that everything what is told about the company and about its role in the collaboration is right and the way it was mutually agreed. From the company perspective, it is meaningful to collaborate with WWF because their attitude to environmental protection is very practical, solution-oriented and business-like. They understand that reaching the goals necessitates both negotiations and money.

In our opinion, WWF is a good partner in the way that always when they bring some bigger problem up, at the same time they also have an idea of what could be done to it. They initially seek for a solution from technology or from the partner. (Seppälä 26.2.2008)

The internationality of the partner organisation is extremely important for Metso because 93% of their turnover comes from other countries than Finland. WWF Finland is the best partner for Metso because WWF as an organisation is global, it has an extensive network and it is very well known and their environmental work is appreciated around the world. The NGO must be recognised by the customers in all continents in order to maximise the benefits of the partnership. Even though for example The Finnish Association for Nature Conservation is a serious organisation, it is not a potential partner for Metso because it is not known internationally and their customers do not recognise it.

According to WWF Finland, around in 95% of the collaboration projects, the initiative has come from their side. They have taken the first contact after screening potential companies and choosing the most appropriate ones. In Metso's case, the initiative came from the company's side according to the company's representative. In Nordkalk's case, the partnership had started years ago, but Weppling was remembering that it was WWF Finland who first suggested joining their forces. Also in Neste Oil's case, the initiative was WWF's. It approached the company with the idea of Operation Mermaid and asked whether the company wants to participate in the campaign. After the first contact, the negotiations, or discussions, started. The search for the most reasonable form of collaboration starts usually by identifying the interests of both

parties. There are no ready solutions for collaboration as the collaboration relationships are all different. The partnerships are tailored for each company individually considering their field of activity and their needs, said Alftan (WWF Finland). According to the Brand Manager of Neste Oil, in some cases related to this type of collaboration, the negotiations may start even a year after the initial contact. Time is taken to disentangle the partnership and reasons for collaboration may be found after several contacts.

Personal history and attitudes seemed to have a great influence to these partnerships. The Marketing Manager of WWF had a long working experience in international companies which means that she understands well the needs of companies. Her experience helps her in suggesting possible projects to companies and she also understands the business environment. The personal attitudes towards the nature and sustainability of company representatives were also very favourable and their own interest toward these issues has probably facilitated the communication between the partners. The company values and sustainability strategies are of course important but personal attitudes may have had some effect. The career of Nordkalk's Product group Manager had probably strongly influenced the joint project of the company and WWF Finland as he had done his doctoral thesis concerning acid sulphate soils which was also the subject of their joint extensive research project, Life Lestijoki. The project is described in more detail below.

Neste Oil has a clear decision-making procedure for this type of collaborations. Contracts which exceed a specified sum are discussed in the executive team. Other smaller contracts are discussed in a sponsorship team, a part of the brand team, which consists of persons from different divisions and functions. They together discuss the proposal and decide whether the collaboration is suitable for them and how they are going to benefit from it.

A couple rounds of negotiations are done in order to formulate the contract. WWF Finland has some contracts which have been under negotiations for years, but it is rare. In cases where the negotiations have lasted for a long time, they have started on the basis of discussion without any purpose of even formulating a contract. These companies usually operate in the critical fields, such as forests and energy which have a great impact on the environment. Exchanging information and taking advantage of it is more important for WWF Finland in these cases than communication or financial support.

The negotiations concerning the case companies were relatively quick. According to Seppälä, in Metso's case the negotiations were quite short because their collaboration projects have been relatively simple. Metso chose the most suitable project for them amongst the already existing programs of WWF Finland. In the case of Nordkalk, a little more time was taken to find the common interests and themes which would form

the basis of their partnership. Soon a common ground was found and their collaboration was built around water systems, a very important theme for Nordkalk. A lot of time was not wasted in hesitating whether or not to collaborate; soon the discussion was directed to building a concrete project. In Neste Oil's case, the initial negotiations were years ago and other persons were involved at time and therefore details of the beginning were not available. In general, these types of collaborations are built in such a manner that common activities are identified by examining the values of both parties and creating a win-win situation is ideal. From the beginning, the common objective of WWF Finland and Neste Oil has been securing the oil transports in the Baltic Sea. This type of collaboration can be separated from charity projects in which no compensation is expected for the money given.

To prevent problems related to the partnership in the future, the backgrounds are investigated thoroughly before signing the contract and until now, surprises and conflicts have not occurred to WWF Finland. They have clear policies concerning collaboration with corporate partners and they also have a specific reason to collaborate with each company. The contracts always include a clause which states that WWF Finland has always the right to disagree with their partners. This is important for example in the partnership with Fortum, a Finnish energy company. WWF Finland does not approve any of their applications for building new nuclear power plants and this is made very clear from the beginning, but it does not prevent them from collaborating. On the contrary, they see a tremendous potential in the collaboration and are eager to discuss alternative ways of energy production with Fortum.

The content of the contracts is quite standardised; they include the paragraphs which are necessitated by the law and a plan of operation, which is framed for every company individually. General plans of operation which can be used with several companies exist in more extensive projects such as Operation Mermaid. The length of the contract period differs from two months to two years. The contracts of individual campaigns are very short but they always generate new campaigns and projects, said the Marketing Manager of WWF Finland. For example in the cases of Metso and Neste Oil, the contract is renegotiated and renewed every two years.

For us, it is typical to make contracts for one year and then we have an option if everything goes well, we continue. We have collaborated with WWF for a long time but we have this principle of one year at a time and we annually see whether we are going forward together. This collaboration has been very good and natural for us. The decision of continuing has been relatively easy to make. (Parkkinen 1.4. 2008)

5.4 WWF Finland and the case companies

The case companies collaborate with WWF Finland in various ways. Their past and present projects are summarised in the Table 4 below. Each project is described in more detail below.

Table 4 Types of collaboration of WWF Finland and the case companies

Company	Starting year	Present projects	Past projects
Metso Oyj	2003	Naturewatch	Operation Mermaid Naturewatch
Nordkalk Oyj	1995	Baltic Sea protection	Operation Mermaid Life Lestijoki
Neste Oil Oyj	2005 (2001)	Operation Mermaid Voluntary oil response brigades	Operation Mermaid

Naturewatch is an environmental education program, which aims to promote the sustainable lifestyle. The program is common for the countries around the Baltic Sea and this international aspect allows discussing these issues as an international problem. The idea is to start from the children and challenge them to observe the state of the environment and to be more environmentally responsible. Naturewatch activates schools to organise environmental activities. WWF organises events, school campaigns and competitions to students and training to teachers. WWF also supplies teaching material for schools. (WWF Suomi – Ympäristökasvatus.) Metso has supported Naturewatch program now for four years.

Operation Mermaid is a campaign established to support WWF's international Baltic Sea protection program. It is an extensive campaign which offers every Finn an opportunity to support the work of WWF around the Baltic Sea and also to take action personally. Everyone can participate in reducing eutrophication of the Baltic Sea by making right choices. Protection of the Baltic Sea requires international actions and WWF Finland with other WWF offices of the region can put pressure on decision-makers in different countries. The problems of the Baltic Sea are complex and diversified actions are needed to save it. The activities of WWF include declining eutrophication, improving oil spill response and saving endangered species. WWF has also established **voluntary oil response brigades** in which everyone can join and they also collaborate with universities and research institutes to investigate the current condition of the sea and to find the most important activities for saving it. (WWF Suomi – Itämeri.) Nordkalk and Metso used to be important sponsors of Operation Mermaid. Neste Oil is a current sponsor of the campaign and they also support the voluntary oil response brigades. They offer to the brigades a place to practise their oil recovery skills

in the premises of their Porvoo refinery. Nordkalk supports WWF's work for the Baltic Sea in general. In the table above, two starting years for Neste Oil are mentioned. This is due to the organisational changes in the company. WWF Finland collaborated already with Fortum and when the oil business was separated into its own company, the collaboration continued. The collaboration was strongly related to the Baltic Sea and because of the shipping activities, the contract was transferred to Neste Oil. At the moment also Fortum is collaborating with WWF Finland with other projects and objectives.

Life Lestijoki project was realised during 1997–1998 in association with WWF Finland, West Finland Regional Environment Centre, Regional Council of Central Ostrobothnia, Envitop Oy, the town of Kannus and Partek Nordkalk Oy Ab (today called Nordkalk Oyj). The project received Life Environment funding from the European Commission. Life is a financial instrument which supports projects aiding the development and implementation of European Union environmental policy. Partek Nordkalk Oy Ab was responsible for the methods used and for the expertise in using lime filter drainage systems. WWF Finland was responsible for spreading information about the project.

The purpose of the project was to try a new, more environmentally friendly drainage method and to measure its effects on the quality of the drainage waters discharging from the acid sulphate soils. The problem is that with current older drainage methods the drainage waters contain metals and increase the acidity of rivers and thus threaten the wildlife in the rivers. Acid sulphate soils are often in low-lying areas and they must be intensively drained to make effective cultivation possible. The issue is very controversial because the best method regarding cultivation is the worst for the watercourses. In the best case, the new method tested would benefit both agriculture and water pollution control. The results of the project were good: direct effects on the quality of water were realised and the importance of comprehensive, environmentally friendly management of acid sulphate soils was proven. However, positive conclusions could not be drawn in the situation because long-term monitoring of the water quality is necessary. (Weppling, Innanen & Jokela 1999.)

Different types of projects demand different amounts of resources. An important partnership such as WWF Finland's partnership with Nokia necessitates the work contribution of one fulltime employee at WWF. For companies, sponsoring an already ongoing program such as Naturewatch requires relatively low resources besides financial contribution and co-ordination work with Metso's units in locations where the Naturewatch program is active. More time is required in the beginning of a new contract period or when the contract is renegotiated. Also when the sponsorship target changes, more work is done at the communications department of the company when web pages and brochures need to be updated, specified Seppälä. More extensive collaboration

projects such as Life Lestijoki, an extensive project realised by WWF Finland, Nordkalk and other associates, require more time and personnel during a long period of time. The project team is formed of people from multiple organisations and it is as strong as its weakest link. Commitment to a joint project and believing in it makes the company to want to invest in such projects.

The amount of other resources invested in the partnership depends eventually on the company. The annual amount of money invested is fixed but then the amount of other resources used on communication, promotion and organising supplementary events is variable. The collaboration can be briefly mentioned on the web pages or it can be brought up in multiple situations and publications. The limitations and rules of using WWF's logo in communication are determined in the contract. The amount of human resources needed for communication changes over time as different topics are important at different times. For example, for Neste Oil, the discussion around palm oil with WWF Finland has required some human resources.

When talking about available resources, it has to be remembered that the WWF Finland has many partnerships and limited resources and that the partnership with WWF Finland is not the only partnership for the case companies. The support to this particular environmental NGO is only one sector of their sponsorships and charity projects. Outside the environment sector, Metso supports the work of Plan International and SOS children's villages. In addition, they have numerous project-related partners and they support the organisation of different types of seminars, exhibitions and student events. Besides WWF Finland, Nordkalk supports sport teams such as TPS and local junior teams in the cities where Nordkalk has working units. Some support is also given to student organisations and local cultural activities such as concerts. Most of the sponsorship money goes to WWF Finland and the protection of the Baltic Sea. (Stenfors 13.3.2008.) Neste Oil collaborates with a Finnish youth organisation, Youth Academy.

Corporate partnerships have affected and guided the protection activities of WWF Finland. Because they are partners of Neste Oil, a company which utilises palm oil, they have invested in the issue more than they otherwise would had invested. Althan mentioned the issues related to palm oil and the discussion around it as the most challenging aspect in corporate partnership recently. The company is striving for responsibility but the issue is very complex and they are still far from sustainably produced certified palm oil. The problem is that the producers of palm oil are unorganised and it is hard to convince them to produce sustainable palm oil because at the moment, there are buyers to any palm oil produced.

We have been able to discuss quite openly about our own perceptions of what palm oil is, what producing it demands and how it should be done

in order to take into consideration sustainable principles and so forth.
(Parkkinen 1.4.2008)

Together with Neste Oil, WWF Finland has discussed the issue and they have exchanged their ideas and perceptions about it. Neste Oil is interested in hearing the opinions of environmental NGOs and they are very pleased about their discussion connection with WWF Finland. Together, they have discussed the issue both in Finland and on a global scale. From Neste Oil's point of view, the issue is also still quite open and the issue of palm oil combined with traffic fuels is relatively new. Together they discuss, how palm oil could be produced taking the sustainable principles into account.

5.5 Objectives, benefits and evaluation of success

Objectives of the collaboration should be clearly determined in the beginning, but in practice, the objectives can be formulated in the course of action. From WWF Finland's point of view, having clearer objectives from the beginning would be preferable. However, the principle of the Marketing Manager is not to restrict the collaboration too much by a strict contract and therefore the objectives can remain vague. Many times it has been noted that the real purpose of the collaboration has been found later and it has been completely different from what was assumed after the first discussions. In some cases, reaching an agreement takes time.

The evaluation of the success of an individual campaign is easy but longer partnerships are more complicated to evaluate. Often in longer partnerships, concrete objectives are not defined. Measuring their success is almost impossible. The objective of the collaboration for Metso is communicational. They hope that their partnership is mentioned in association with WWF Finland's local work and in their publications. They have not measured the realisation of these objectives because the sum invested is quite modest compared to the size of the company, and in this situation, it is still considered justified rather to raise the level of financial support than spend resources on a measurement study. For them, their visibility has been satisfactory so far.

In more extensive projects such as Life Lestijoki, the objectives were defined quite loosely in the beginning but when they applied for financial support from EU for the project, clear objectives were determined with precise plans and budgets. Nordkalk had a key role in the project and according to them, the project was successful and even today the research accomplished years ago is still one of the best studies realised about acid sulphate soils. The objective of their current collaboration project is to emphasise the company's water system treatment products by participating to the protection of the

Baltic Sea. Measuring of the objective is therefore nearly impossible as the objective is image-related and holistic.

Definition of objectives and measuring them should be part of any contract written, said the Brand Manager of Neste Oil. Everything that is done together should be specified and the goals should be clearly defined. According to him, when working together with NGOs, it has to be remembered that the benefits obtained are in most cases far from concrete. It is the most significant difference in working with NGOs compared to corporate partners. When the partner is another company, the benefits can be measured in money and products or services are received against payment, which is not the case in NGO partnerships. Therefore measuring the success is also problematic and indirect ways of measuring them have to be used.

Measuring of success is simpler for example in sport sponsorships; customer questionnaire can be made and they can be asked whether the event was successful or not and how they saw the company in the event. These questionnaires measure how different stakeholder groups were reached and how the event helped in building positive company image. The partnership with WWF Finland is more complicated. They can evaluate the collaboration as a whole including how well the discussions around important issues have developed and so forth. The comprehensive measurement of the objectives is impossible and it is based on direct and indirect measures which together form the perception of the success of the collaboration.

Two types of benefits for companies of the examined NGO-corporate collaborations could be distinguished: image-related and communicational benefits. Communicational benefits include also network-related and stakeholder-related benefits as these three are almost impossible to separate. Stakeholder aspect is also incorporated in the image-related benefits. For WWF Finland, there are also the environment protection aspect and the financial aspect. They are little closer to their goals if companies work with them towards greener practices. For WWF Finland, the most important benefit is the financial support they get from companies, which forms around 30% of their annual budget. Internationally speaking, the share of company support of WWF Finland is one of the largest of all WWF offices.

Other benefits to companies in general mentioned by the representative of WWF Finland were bringing softer values to the business world and offering the customers a possibility to support WWF's work by purchasing a campaign product. Bringing softer values to the business environment could help the company in complicated situations and influence the general attitudes of the personnel:

If the company sometimes has to go through environmental procedures which do not evoke a positive feeling in the personnel, the presence of

WWF might help the personnel to understand it better if they know that this is done together. (Alfthan 7.2.2008)

The representatives of the case companies mentioned image and communication as the most important benefits. One important effect of collaboration is creating a positive picture of the company to its stakeholders. According to Seppälä, the personnel appreciate this type of activity. The feedback from the personnel and external groups has been positive. The topics related to WWF and different case descriptions have been used in the company's publications and thus facilitate the communication related to CSR. For example, for Metso, one idea behind supporting environmental education is to provide schoolchildren with interesting and concrete learning experience of challenges in environmental protection. This is considered to demonstrate the company's long-term commitment to sustainable development. The company's visible role in schools in locations of its operations is believed to create a positive image of the company to their employees:

One underlying thought is that the children of the employees of Metso would tell home that they had a nature day at school and there was Metso's logo on the materials and the employees of Metso would get a positive feeling of the company's activities in their own localities. (Seppälä 26.2.2008)

Image-related benefits are realised when the positive message about the company is strengthened by small messages coming from different sources which support each other. Metso's Seppälä was convinced that the decision-makers in the environmental field, who create the visions and the norms for the future, are interested in the expert knowledge of Metso about environmental issues and the solutions they offer. Links to WWF Finland make the company more credible when the clean technologies of Metso or the water system solutions of Nordkalk are discussed. The link to WWF also strengthens the marketing activities of the company.

Today, this is pretty much networking in different ways, so that the bigger the amount of directions where the information comes from, the more reliable the information is. This kind of indirect promotion of good things and green things has been important in that way. (Weppling 4.3.2008)

Benefits of the collaboration for Neste Oil were slightly different compared to the other two companies. For them, the collaboration is very important because it

communicates well their brand and strengthens their principles of clean products and safe oil transports, but they have also benefited from it in other ways. By having an open relationship with WWF Finland, the knowledge of environmental issues of the company has increased and for example the information related to the Baltic Sea is more accurate and up-to-date than the company would have without this partnership. They also receive the information more quickly than if they would have to search it from the media. Discussing the important issues such as palm oil has been important to them and they feel that they have reached a nice and open atmosphere in the discussions in order to continue the work in that area.

In general, the negative effects of NGO-corporate collaboration were seen as very small or nonexistent from the company perspective. They could not imagine a situation, in which a partnership with an environmental NGO could be harmful. As an oil company, Neste Oil has received some criticism for their collaboration. A partnership of an oil company and an environmental NGO has raised questions about greenwash and that the only reason for collaboration is cleaning the company's conscience. These suspicions arise because the area of activity of the company is critical and there are substantial risks to the environment involved. According to the Brand Manager of Neste Oil, oil companies are more easily criticised than the companies operating in different fields of economy. People still remember disastrous oil accidents from the past such as the accident of Exxon Valdez in Alaska in 1989 which is still mentioned in the media from time to time.

From WWF Finland's perspective the risks are eliminated by investigating the situation thoroughly before signing the contract. They always have a clear reason for collaborating with each company, and therefore confusions have not occurred. One possible problem which was mentioned is that people might confuse the panda logo of WWF with eco-labels. Their logo is not a guarantee for the product or the company being perfectly environmentally friendly. It only indicates that the company is working together with WWF or it supports the work of WWF.

Successful collaboration is not self-evident. For the WWF Finland, the most important factors which affect the success of the collaboration are openness and trust in the relationship. The partners must be able to discuss confidentially even the issues which might cause the company negative reputation. Revealing the skeletons in the closet is important because then they can be discussed and later maybe eliminated in the course of the collaboration. An ideal relationship is based on long-term partnership, because changing procedures and deep-rooted attitudes in order to protect the environment is a long process. Both parties must have the same goal and to accomplish it, they must be ready to make investments and really put a significant effort to the collaboration in order to make it real, instead of having it remaining only as something on a piece of paper. An ideal situation for WWF Finland would be, that companies

would really invest in achieving the objectives of the collaboration and that they would be incorporated in all activities and levels throughout the organisation.

For companies, the most important success factors mentioned were close to the partner selection criteria which were taken into consideration before starting the collaboration. Professionalism, internationality and resources were mentioned as well as functioning relationships, good personal relations and trust. Chemistry between persons assists working together. Mutual respect of the other's activities and objectives is important as well as believing in them, specified the brand manager of Neste Oil. He also mentioned the importance of giving and receiving feedback.

From company point of view, the success of the collaboration depends also on the company itself. Company itself can decide how they want to make the most of the collaboration. It is the company's task to communicate about the joint projects to their stakeholders and WWF only gives the possibilities to do so. By investing in internal communications or bringing forward the collaboration more, the benefits of participating to Operation Mermaid could have been significant, admitted the Product group Manager of Nordkalk.

It is a matter of resources and attitudes. The right attitude is important. The company has to always remember that the NGO cannot be a direct marketing channel for the company. They cannot promote the company's products but collaborating with an NGO is acting for a common cause which is seen significant and worthy of support also by the company. Promotion and communicating about the partnership is a field, which can be continued infinitely, said the manager from Metso. For Neste Oil also, finding the time for developing ideas of different ways of benefiting from the collaboration and implementing them was found to be the most challenging issue in this type of collaborations.

5.6 Relationship between WWF Finland and companies

All interviewed persons thought that the relationships between the organisation and the company are strong and they did not see any reason why the situation would change in the near future. Long-term relationships are essential for the achievement of objectives in environmental protection. Partners, who are in a long relationship, can trust each other and they can develop new ideas for collaboration as they know well each other's business and ways of action. In general, the relationships between WWF Finland and companies are long and until now, none of the collaboration relationships had ended. The longest relationships have lasted over 13 years.

The representatives of the case companies thought that their relationship with WWF Finland is open and their mutual communication is easy and uncomplicated. For the

future, the representatives of the two companies wished larger concrete projects. Metso was more interested in expanding their collaboration to a more international level as the majority of the turnover of the company is generated outside Finland. Nordkalk was ready to consider a concrete project because at the moment their relationship with WWF Finland is based solely on sponsorship and support and they are not working on joint projects. In their common history, periods of more intensive collaboration and sponsorship have alternated and in Wepling's opinion, he would be ready for a new, more concrete project again. He said that their relationship is open both on personal and organisational level and that the idea for a new project can come from both sides. Suggesting a new project to WWF and discussing their common objectives and schedules seemed like a probable issue to take place in the future and some ideas were mentioned during the interview. For Neste Oil, the relationship has been satisfactory and it has developed during many years of co-operation and the trust has increased during the years after many good experiences. They can trust each other's word that everything which is discussed and agreed, happens.

I'd say that this is on a good level and for the future, the environment issues are more and more important all the time. I'd see that the meaning of this type of partnership that we have, is increasing. (Parkkinen 1.4.2008)

Communication between WWF Finland and the case companies depends significantly on the situation. In the beginning of the collaboration, the communication is more intense as the common activities are identified and the objectives are formulated. Personal meetings are the most functional in the beginning, but their meaning decreases with time and afterwards practical issues are mostly handled by telephone. According to the Marketing Manager of WWF Finland, they try to communicate regularly with their partners. Meetings are organised around current issues such as an approaching construction exhibition and they can discuss for example the presentation of the company and possible joint visibility. Sometimes they also organise common events for their partners, for example a meeting for all companies which support Operation Mermaid.

Usually things are managed by phone because our partnership is based on a many years' collaboration. The personal influencing is not so important anymore when we are collaborating for the fifth year but then it is just dealing with practical issues. (Alfthan 7.2.2008)

Metso and WWF Finland meet approximately three times per year. When the need for a discussion arises, a meeting is scheduled. They go through the past events and discuss about future projects and how they would fit to the local activities. The contract is renegotiated every two years. Seppälä also mentioned a seminar which was organised earlier this year as a good channel for the company to present their expertise and products. He said that with the authority of WWF Finland, excellent speakers and influential persons can be persuaded to come to the event. In January 2008, Jorma Eloranta, the President and CEO of Metso delivered a speech in a seminar concerning climate change organised by WWF Finland in Helsinki. According to him, the future success of Metso is strongly based on the company's ability to offer solutions to prevent the climate change and to increase the efficient use of natural resources and energy. 190 decision-makers, experts and corporate representatives participated in the seminar. (Metso-konserni.)

Neste Oil and WWF Finland have at least one annual meeting in which they review the past year and plan the next year. They also meet according to need, which was also mentioned in Metso's case. They discuss their coming campaigns and see if the other could be a part of it or if WWF Finland has some suitable campaign in which the company could take part in. Operation Mermaid is the core of their partnership but at the moment, the communication between them is more related to palm oil issues. A couple of years back, the discussions were more related to the Baltic Sea and its marine environment and the safety of oil transportations.

At the moment, the communication between Nordkalk and WWF Finland is quite brief and it is limited to practical issues because their relationship is based on an annual donation for supporting the protection activities of the Baltic Sea. They receive newsletters regularly from WWF Finland and they communicate occasionally. Before, when they were collaborating more intensively, communication had of course a more important role.

5.7 Main empirical findings

The empirical research provided many interesting findings, which help to understand the collaborations between the case companies and the selected environmental NGO. The main empirical findings of this research are summarised in the Table 5 below and explained in more detail further. They are presented in the same order as the empirical findings were discussed earlier in this chapter. It is logical to start with the beginning of the collaboration and then move on to the benefits and other issues related to the partnership such as challenges and communication and the nature of the relationship.

Table 5 Main empirical findings

1	Attitudes and career development of key persons have an influence on the birth and the nature of the partnership. Working history in large international companies of NGO persons facilitates finding common ground with partner companies and the interests of company executives can reflect to the partnership.
2	The collaboration between an NGO and a company is based on common interests and objectives. Identifying shared values with the partner facilitates finding them.
3	The field of activity of the company has a significant effect to the nature of the partnership. In order to build a meaningful partnership, the products or the business area must fit to the programs of the NGO. The field of activity can be critical to the NGO or the company's products may help solving the issues which are important to the NGO.
4	The objectives of the collaboration are sometimes formed in the course of action and they can remain loosely defined in the beginning. Sometimes deeper discussions are needed in order to identify the real purpose of the collaboration.
5	The most important benefits for companies are image-related and communicational benefits which help in building a more positive company image. Other benefits included receiving accurate and trustworthy information about environmental issues.
6	Collaborating with an environmental NGO is a great way to communicate green values of the company to the stakeholders. The message is more convincing when it comes from multiple sources. However, it has to be remembered that the logo of an environmental NGO does not guarantee the greenness of the company or its products.
7	The company itself through its activities has a significant effect to the benefits obtained from the partnership. Their own activity and investments on internal and external communication are important.
8	The collaboration is not a risk and its disadvantages are nonexistent, if the restrictions and backgrounds are thoroughly examined beforehand. Some criticism had arisen in the case of the oil company because their business includes a significant risk to the environment.
9	Challenges in the collaboration are related to resources and their scarcity and finding the time to plan and implement ways to benefit from the collaboration.
10	Relationships between WWF Finland and companies are in general long and contracts are in most cases renewed. Until now, none of the partnerships has ended.
11	The preconditions of successful collaboration are an open relationship and discussion as well as mutual respect and appreciation of the objectives and activities of the other.
12	Communication between the NGO and the company is dependent on situations and the amount of communication varies over time. In the beginning and in the shift of contractual period, the communication is intense but in between less regular.

Attitudes and career development of key persons have an influence on the birth and the nature of the partnership. Three of four interviewees mentioned their own personal interest towards issues related to the nature and the environment. In one of the cases, an extensive collaboration project was very much linked to the history of the person as a researcher in biology. It is hard to say, whether the same project would have been realised without this fact. The background of the NGO representative has also influenced the collaboration because she has a long working experience in international companies, which has given her important information about business world and the daily challenges of companies.

The collaboration between an NGO and a company is based on common interests and objectives. Common objectives are needed in order to make the collaboration credible and functional. Values are important in this type of collaborations. There has to be a clear link with the products or the industry and the environment because without clear links and reasons external stakeholders would criticise the partnership. All case companies had strong links to the environment through clean technologies and green values.

The field of activity of the company has a significant effect to the nature of the partnership. In order to build a meaningful partnership, the products or the business area must fit to the programs of the NGO. For example, for Neste Oil it is natural to participate in the protection of the Baltic Sea by supporting Operation Mermaid because it is an important actor in the maritime transport of oil in the Baltic Sea. They also support the voluntary oil response brigades. In their business, the importance of environmental responsibility is also greater than for other businesses because the potential risks to the environment are more substantial. For Neste Oil, the environment is also a very important brand identity factor which distinguished it from the other two companies. Of course environmental issues were important for the other companies as well, but in the case of Neste Oil, they were clearly seen as an integrated part of their brand.

The objectives of the collaboration are sometimes formed in the course of action and they were not clearly defined in the beginning. The objectives were formulated during a phase of discussions and in some cases it turned out that the objectives were something else than it was stated in the beginning. Having a too strict contract would restrict the collaboration too much. Formulating clear objectives in the beginning would be ideal, but it is not often the case in practise.

The most important benefits for companies are image-related and communicational benefits. Collaborating with an environmental NGO is one way of communicating the green values to the stakeholders of the company and it strengthens the green identity of the company. Having an influential partner such as WWF Finland is an effective way to communicate these issues because WWF Finland is respected for their work and they

are not collaborating with any company possible. The companies which are accepted as partners have something to offer to the environment or they help WWF Finland to communicate their message.

Collaborating with an environmental NGO is a great way to communicate green values of the company to the stakeholders. The message is more convincing when it comes from multiple sources. Company alone cannot say convincingly that their practices are aiming for sustainability. External confirmation about the practises is needed or simply the message that the company is donating money for environmental protection can be the decisive factor in the consumer's mind if two otherwise similar companies are compared. The logo of WWF is not an eco-label or a guarantee of an environmentally friendly company, but it shows that WWF sees potential in the company and that they are working together for improving the state of the environment. In image-related issues, small things count.

The company itself through its activities has a significant effect on the benefits obtained from the partnership. Their own activity and investments on internal and external communication are important. Donating a specific amount of money alone does not benefit the company. Working together, finding ways to communicate the collaboration and organising campaigns and events enables having visibility, and thus benefiting from the collaboration. Communicating the partnership in the company's web pages and publications both internally and externally and thus making it known for as many persons as possible increases the benefits.

The collaboration is not a risk and the disadvantages are nonexistent if the restrictions and backgrounds are thoroughly examined beforehand. The contract always includes a clause which states that WWF Finland has always the right to disagree, which is especially important when they are collaborating with critical companies such as energy producers. Neste Oil has received some criticism about their collaboration with an environmental NGO. The critics have accused the company for collaborating only for their conscience's sake. To avoid such situations, the reasons of collaboration must be clearly defined for both partners.

The relationships between WWF Finland and companies are in general long and contracts are in most cases renewed. Until now, none of the partnerships has ended. A campaign realised together always generates something new. A long relationship is also beneficial for the both parties. From the NGO perspective, a long time is needed to achieve their goals and long-term relationships with partners are essential. With time, mutual trust in the relationship is built and the commitment to the partnership and to the common objectives is deeper.

Communication between the NGO and the company is dependent on situations and the amount of communication varies over time. In the beginning and in the shift of contractual period, the communication is intense but in the between it is less regular.

Practical issues are mostly handled by phone. Meetings are organised when there is a need for discussion and also when new topics arise. For example, changes in the company actions can generate new topics of discussion between the companies. A good example is the palm oil issue which has been widely discussed in the media when biodiesel was launched and which today forms the majority of the communication between WWF Finland and Neste Oil.

6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Theoretical discussion

The relationships of the case companies and WWF Finland were all different from each other. Using the categorisation of different types of collaborations developed by Rondinelli and London (2003), the case companies can be divided into groups. Both Metso and Neste Oil and their collaboration with WWF Finland can be situated in the middle, to interactive collaborations. Their collaboration with WWF Finland is more intense than just donating a fixed sum annually. In both cases, information is exchanged openly and both partners benefit from the collaboration. The open exchange of information between the company and the NGO is the key issue which separates their relationship from arm's length relationships. In Figure 7 below, the companies are situated on the continuum of intensity of the relationship. The abovementioned figure describes the present situation and does not take into consideration past events. The intensity of the relationship is a continuum and it can be challenging to distinguish different relationships.

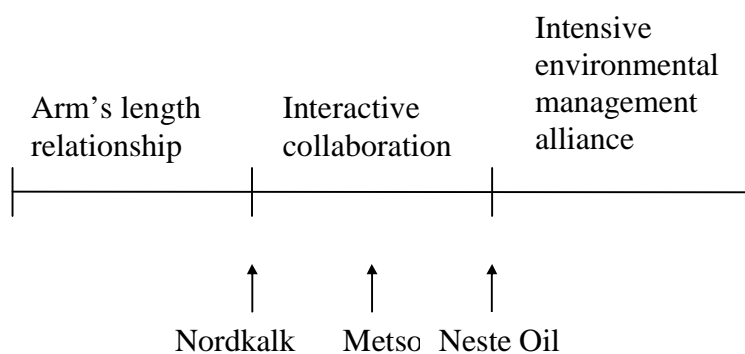


Figure 7 The intensity of the collaboration of the companies

Even though the collaboration between WWF and Neste Oil can be classified as being interactive collaboration, there are some signs of intensive environmental management alliance in their relationship, and therefore the company is situated between the two types. The reason for situating the company in between is the issue of palm oil. Also in protection of the Baltic Sea, Neste Oil has been very active and they are very responsible in that area, but the issue related to palm oil was strongly emphasised by both respondents, the Marketing Manager of WWF Finland and the

Brand Manager of Neste Oil. They are discussing a critical ingredient in one of the company's products, which increases the intensity of the collaboration. They are sharing critical information and are discussing confidential issues, which was the sixth strategic question in Rondinelli and London's (2003) decision path. The question number five is the reason why the company is not situated entirely on the side of intensive environmental management alliance. The issue they are dealing with is very complex and the partners have not been able to identify manageable sets of tasks which can be implemented quickly. When something concrete is done together to the issue, their relationship can be without a doubt classified to the most intensive level. It is possible that something concrete has been done related to this issue but as a confidential matter it was not mentioned in either of the two interviews.

For some of the case companies it was possible to deepen their collaboration with WWF Finland in the future, which supports the theory which indicates that in general, companies and NGOs develop their collaboration into an intensive environmental management alliance after some less intensive collaboration forms such as interactive collaboration. Intensive environmental management alliance requires considerable trust and openness in the relationship which can be obtained after years of collaboration. At present, the joint projects were realised mainly inside Finland. In the future, when the collaboration develops, expanding it across borders is possible as all the companies operate in international markets. The collaboration is likely to develop into more international because in Finland, NGOs collaborate with companies more than in other countries, and it is probable that the NGOs in other countries follow this trend. The role and importance of international collaboration is likely to increase in the future especially in environmental issues.

Using the criteria developed by Rondinelli and London (2003), the collaboration of Nordkalk and WWF Finland can be categorised as interactive collaboration because their support is targeted to a specific program and it has continued for years. In practise, the communication between them is not as intense as in the case of Metso and Neste Oil. The current relationship of Nordkalk and WWF Finland falls in between arm's length relationship and interactive collaboration. Their communication and exchange of information is not intense and it is not so important at the moment, but their support for the same target has been long-term and continuous. The intensity of their collaboration has changed over time. Their participation in Operation Mermaid in the past would be categorised clearly as interactive collaboration and Life Lestijoki is a great example of an intensive environmental management alliance. The project did not aim to reduce the costs of the company, but it was a joint research project in which their expertise had a key role.

The empirical findings in this research supported the theories related to the beginning and the success of collaboration. The importance of partner selection was significant. In

this case, the suitable partner is the key issue which was also highly emphasised in the literature. Finding a suitable partner influences the collaboration as a whole. The same factors, which were mentioned as partner selection criteria, were mentioned also as success factors.

As Berger et al. (2004) stated, a fit between the partners must be identified in order to make the partnership successful. The most important elements which were important to fit were mission, resources, management and evaluation. The empirical findings support the importance of mission fit between the partners. In corporate–NGO partnerships identifying the connection between the missions is very important before and in the beginning of the collaboration. Fitting the resources is always problematic because in this type of collaborations the company is usually the stronger partner and resources of the NGO are limited. Management fit, compatibility on the personal level, did not pose problems in the examined collaborations as the contact person of WWF Finland had a long working experience in international companies before her NGO career. Her understanding of the business world and companies had probably helped them to identify the fits between companies and WWF Finland. The most significant difference between theory and practise turned out to be the importance of evaluation fit. In the examined partnerships, the measuring of the results of the partnership was not done because in most cases, the collaboration was not a concrete project and measuring its outcomes was very complicated or impossible.

Another issue, which is linked to the objectives of the partnerships, was the fact that it is possible to determine the objectives later than at the moment of signing the contract. In the literature, it was suggested that accurate objectives must be determined, and preferably they are composed to a written document. The empirical findings of this research indicated that it is preferable to state the objectives in a written document in the beginning but it is also possible to find the purpose of the collaboration later. This later formulation of objectives is not rare in corporate–NGO partnerships in practice. Some relationships are even established without any purpose of collaboration and in those situations, discussion and exchange of information and ideas are the main purpose. An intensive stakeholder dialogue relationship can turn into collaboration by accident.

Misfortunes of time, which was seen as a threat in long-term relationship (Berger et al. 2004), was not a problem to any of these companies. It was suggested that after a couple of years of collaboration more time and effort are needed to maintain the relationship. On the contrary, the empirical findings suggest that the need of communication decreases when the relationship matures. It was also emphasised that in environmental issues, long time is needed to change the situation. It has to be remembered that Berger et al. (2004) had studied social alliances and all their findings do not apply to this environmental context. Misfortune of time is also related to the changes in personnel. Fortunately, in these examined collaborations, the same persons

had been working with these issues for a long time. The vulnerability related to personnel changes can be decreased if the collaboration is an integrated part of the company's strategy. The commitment to this collaboration was well communicated by all company representatives but some uncertainty is always incorporated in the future.

Collaborating with external stakeholders is an advisable way of communicating green values instead of communicating them directly. The message from third parties is considered more reliable. Some consumers prefer companies which do not communicate their responsibility openly. If it is communicated too openly, consumers may have the feeling that the company is hiding something. (Morsing & Schultz 2006.) Collaboration with an NGO strengthens the communication of CSR issues of the company. In the examined companies, it was seen as an important element of their communication. NGOs are trusted and they are considered as very reliable sources of information (Deri 2003). The companies presented in this research trust WWF Finland as a partner and believe that the message they send is trustworthy. Generally it can be stated that WWF Finland is a respected partner and it can be trusted in terms of expertise and communication. It was also noted that their reputation is excellent and companies are content with being associated to this environmental NGO in different situations and publications.

6.2 Managerial implications

A corporate–NGO alliance can be very fruitful to the company and the organisation in question, if a couple of facts are taken into consideration by company executives:

- The link between the NGO's goals and corporate goals is vital.
- Collaboration cannot function only as an image-cleansing activity.
- The resources of NGOs are often limited.
- Companies must work in order to benefit from the partnership.

Having common goals and a visible link with the NGO's goals and corporate goals is important for the credibility and the success of the alliance. Company executives must be truly interested in the environment and their ambitions behind this are not purely image-related. Having collaboration purely for building image should not be even possible because any self-respecting NGO would not agree to collaborate with such a company. Creating a win-win relationship is essential. At all times, it has to be remembered that the resources of the NGO are limited and that they might also collaborate with other companies. Benefiting from the collaboration requires time and effort from the company, especially communicating about it to their stakeholders is time-consuming.

Business executives must also remember that other important themes besides the collaboration project can emerge. The emergence of other themes related to the company can affect significantly the communication between the organisation and the company. For example in Neste Oil's case, the discussion around palm oil and its importance is an issue which has possibly surprised the partners at least to some extent. They have spent significant amounts of time on an issue which is not linked to their central collaboration theme, the Baltic Sea. The company is examined as a whole and also issues which are not directly linked to the actual collaboration, matter. The emergence of new issues which are seen important can change the focus of the collaboration and it is a part of the development of the relationship.

For some businesses communicating their CSR practises and emphasising their responsibility is more important than for others. Businesses such as oil companies must pay special attention to these issues because the potential risk embedded in their activities poses a serious threat to the environment. For the same reason, collaborating with an environmental NGO is more important for them and the realised benefits can be more substantial. However, the risks of being target of criticism are also greater in these fields.

6.3 Suggestions for further research

Even though this research was realised in a context related to environmental issues, this research provided a great deal of information concerning the practical side of corporate–NGO alliances. Most of the NGOs have limited resources, which affects the nature of the partnership. The world of NGOs is endless and offers many interesting opportunities for further research.

In order to analyse the importance of corporate–NGO partnerships, a quantitative research would be useful in order to investigate their frequency and dimensions in Finland as well as in other countries. At the moment, no statistical data was available of corporate–NGO partnerships in Finland or if it exists, it was not found during the making of this research. Only information available had to be searched from different web pages of individual companies and different NGOs. The research could include all listed companies in Finland and all types of NGOs. Simple information such as the number of partner organisations and sums invested could be useful to future researchers. The study could be realised as a quantitative research using a structured question form for data collection.

The collaborations examined in this research were realised in Finland. The NGO and the companies are international but their collaboration was in practise national and the involved persons were all Finnish. The collaboration related to the Baltic Sea is

international to some extent, but the NGO is probably responsible for the international activities as they collaborate with other WWF offices. This research did not cover those issues and it would be interesting to examine a collaboration which is truly international and in which persons represent different cultural backgrounds. The persons working for NGOs and companies come from different organisational cultures and unquestionably, differences in national cultures make the relationship more challenging to manage.

Comparing several partnerships would be a potential research topic as well. In this research, all companies which were used as an example represented different fields of economy. Comparing companies which operate in the same field of economy, for example international oil companies, would be interesting.

A similar study could be realised in a different context. This research used an environmental NGO as an example, but for example NGOs with social objectives interacting with pharmaceutical companies could be a research objective. An interesting research object would be for example the international Red Cross and its corporate partners in Finland or in target countries where reconstruction after a catastrophe is under way. There are many interesting international NGOs which all would merit being a topic of a research.

Communicating about the partnership was found to be important for the company in order to benefit from the collaboration. Communication would also be an interesting research topic. The use of different communication channels could be studied: how companies communicate their collaboration with an NGO and how many times it is mentioned in their publication? Another side of the communication could also be studied. A questionnaire to the company's customers and other stakeholders would reveal how successful the communication was.

REFERENCES

- Alfthan, Anneli, Marketing Manager, WWF Finland. Interview 7.2.2008.
- Alfthan, Anneli, Marketing Manager, WWF Finland. E-mail message 25.3.2008.
- Andreasen, Alan R. (1996) Profits for nonprofits: Find a corporate partner. *Harvard Business Review*, Vol. 74, No. 6, 47–59.
- Berg, Bruce L. (2004) *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences – fifth edition*. Pearson Education, Inc. USA.
- Berger, Ida E. – Cunningham, Peggy H. – Drumwright, Minette E. (2004) Social alliances: Company/nonprofit collaboration. *California Management Review*, Vol. 47, No. 1, 58–90.
- Berman, Shawn L. – Wicks, Andrew C. – Kohta, Suresh – Jones, Thomas M. (1999) Does stakeholder orientation matter? The relationship between stakeholder management models and firm financial performance. *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 42, No. 5, 488–506.
- Choudhury, Enamul – Ahmed, Shamima (2002) The shifting meaning of governance: Public accountability of third sector organizations in an emergent global regime. *International Journal of Public Administration*, Vol. 25, No. 4, 561–588.
- Clement, Ronald W. (2005) The lessons from stakeholder theory for U.S. business leaders. *Business Horizons*, Vol. 48, No. 3, 255–264.
- Deri, Chris (2003) Make alliances, not war, with crusading external stakeholders. *Strategy & Leadership*, Vol. 31, No. 5, 26–33.
- Dickinson, Sonia – Barker, Alison (2007) Evaluations of branding alliances between non-profit and commercial brand partners: the transfer of affect. *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*, Vol. 12, No. 1, 75–89.
- Doh, Jonathan P. – Teegan, Hildy (2002) Nongovernmental organisations as institutional actors in international business: theory and implications. *International Business Review*, Vol. 11, No. 6, 665–684.
- Doh, Jonathan P. (2003) Nongovernmental organizations, corporate strategy, and public policy: NGOs as agents of change. In: *Globalization and NGOs: Transforming business, government, and society*, Ed. by Doh, Jonathan P. – Teegan, Hildy, 1–18. Praeger Publishers: Westport, US.
- Domask, Joseph (2003) From boycotts to global partnership: NGOs, the private sector and the struggle to protect the world's forests. In: *Globalization and NGOs: Transforming business, government and society*, Ed. by Doh, Jonathan P. – Teegan, Hildy, 157–185. Praeger Publishers: Westport, US.

- Eskola, Jari – Suoranta, Juha (1998) *Johdatus laadulliseen tutkimukseen*. Vastapaino: Tampere.
- Freeman, R. Edward (1984) *Strategic management: A stakeholder approach*. Pitman Publishing Inc: Marshfield.
- Ghauri, Pervez (2004) Designing and conduction case studies in international business research. In: *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods for International Business*, ed. by. Marschan-Piekkari, Rebecca – Welch, Catherine, 109–124. Edward Elgar: Cheltenham, UK.
- Guay, Terrence – Doh, Jonathan P. – Sinclair, Graham (2004) Non-governmental organizations, shareholder activism, and socially responsible investments: Ethical, Strategic, and governance implications. *Journal of Business Ethics*, Vol. 52, No. 1, 125–139.
- Helsingin Sanomat 20.1.2008, J. K. Rowling kieltää Harry Potterien painamisen suomalaispaperille.
<<http://www.hs.fi/kulttuuri/artikkeli/J+K+Rowling+kielt%C3%A4%C3%A4+Harry+Potterien+painamisen+suomalaispaperille/1135233426329>>, retrieved 2.4.2008.
- Henkilökunta (2008) *Pandan Polku*, No. 1/2008, 22–23.
- Heugens, Pursey P.M.A.R. – Van Den Bosch, Frans A. J. – Van Riel, Cees B. M. (2002) Stakeholder integration: Building mutually enforcing relationships. *Business & Society*, Vol. 41, No. 1, 36–60.
- Hirsjärvi, Sirkka – Remes, Pirkko – Sajavaara, Paula (1997) *Tutki ja kirjoita*. Gummerus Kirjapaino Oy: Jyväskylä.
- Holtbrügge, Dirk – Berg, Nicola (2004) How multinational corporations deal with their socio-political stakeholders: An empirical study in Asia, Europe and the US. *Asian Business & Management*, No. 3, 299–313.
- Jacobson, Carol K. – Lenway, Stephanie A. – Ring, Peter S. (1993) The political embeddedness of private economic transactions. *Journal of Management Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 3, 453–478.
- Jahansoozi, Julia (2006) Organization-stakeholder relationships: exploring trust and transparency. *Journal of Management Development*, Vol. 25, No. 10, 942–955.
- Juholin, Elisa (2004) *Cosmopolis – yhteiskuntavastuusta yrityskansalaisuuteen*. Infर्वiestintä Oy: Keuruu.
- Keim, Gerald (2003) Nongovernmental Organizations and Business–Government Relations: The Importance of Institutions. In: *Globalization and NGOs: Transforming Business, Government, and Society*, ed. by. Doh, Jonathan P. – Teegan, Hildy, 81–105. Praeger Publishers: Westport, US.
- Koskinen, Ilpo – Alasuutari, Pertti – Peltonen, Tuomo (2005) *Laadulliset menetelmät kauppatieteissä*. Vastapaino: Tampere.

- Kujala, Johanna – Kuvaja, Sari (2002) *Välittävä johtaminen – Sidosryhmät eettisen liiketoiminnan kirittäjinä*. Talentum Media Oy: Jyväskylä.
- Kuvaja, Sari (1998) Strateginen yhteistyö kansalaisjärjestöjen kanssa. In: *Ympäristöviestintä ja – raportointi*, Ed. by Rinne, Pasi – Linnanen, Lassi, 71–79. Suomen ympäristötiedotuksen seura – Elinkaari: Helsinki.
- Lincoln, Yvonna S. – Guba, Egon G. (1985) *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Sage Publications: Beverly Hills, California.
- Manninen, Mari (2007) Työtä lahjaksi, *Helsingin sanomat*, 7.10.2007, D6.
- Metso (2008) Tilinpäätöstiedote 2007, <http://www.metso.com/corporation/home_fin.nsf/FR?ReadForm&ATL=/corporation/articles_fin.nsf/WebWID/WTB-080206-2256F-5D9DC>, retrieved 12.3.2008.
- Metso Coporation – Metso in brief. <http://www.metso.com/corporation/home_eng.nsf/fr?readform>, retrieved 13.3.2008.
- Metso Corporation – Metso's history. <http://www.metso.com/corporation/home_eng.nsf/fr?readform>, retrieved 13.3.2008.
- Metso-konserni, Toimitusjohtaja Eloranta puhui WWF:n seminaarissa. <http://www.metso.com/corporation/home_fin.nsf/FR?ReadForm&ATL=/corporation/articles_fin.nsf/WebWID/WTB-080212-2256F-8D654>, retrieved 29.3.2008.
- Miles, Matthew B. – Huberman, A. Michael (1984) *Qualitative Data Analysis*. Sage Publications: Beverly Hills, California.
- Millar, Carla C. J. M. – Choi, Chong Ju – Chen, Stephen (2004) Global strategic partnerships between MNEs and NGOs: drivers of change and ethical issues. *Business and Society Review*, Vol. 109, No. 4, 395–414.
- Morsing, Mette – Schultz, Majken (2006) Corporate social responsibility communication: stakeholder information, response and involvement strategies. *Business Ethics: A European Review*, Vol. 15, No. 4, 323–338.
- Neste Oil – History. <<http://www.nesteoil.com/default.asp?path=1,41,537,2396>>, retrieved 12.3.2008.
- Neste Oil – In brief. <<http://www.nesteoil.com/default.asp?path=1,41,537,3468>>, retrieved 12.3.2008.
- Neste Oil (2008) Tilinpäätöstiedote 2007, <<http://www.nesteoil.fi/default.asp?path=35;52;88;100;592;9661;9800>>, retrieved 12.3.2008.
- Niskala, Mikael – Tarna, Kaisa (2003) *Yhteiskuntavastuun raportointi*. KHT-Media Oy: Jyväskylä.
- Nordkalk – Company. <<http://www.nordkalk.com/default.asp?viewID=232>>, retrieved 13.3.2008.

- Nordkalk – History. <<http://www.nordkalk.com/default.asp?viewID=239>>, retrieved 13.3.2008.
- Nordkalk (2008) Tilinpäätöstiedote 2007, <<http://www.nordkalk.fi/default.asp?viewID=844&newsID=411>>, retrieved 12.3.2008.
- OECD Glossary of Statistical Terms – Clean technology definition. <<http://stats.oecd.org/glossary/detail.asp?ID=2988>>, retrieved 15.3.2008.
- Parker, A. Rani (2003) Prospects for NGO collaboration with multinational enterprises. In: *Globalization and NGOs: Transforming Business, Government, and Society*, toim. Doh, Jonathan P. – Teegan, Hildy, 81–105. Praeger Publishers: Westport, US.
- Parkkinen, Pentti, Brand Manager, Neste Oil Oyj. Interview 1.4.2008.
- Pedersen, Esben Rahbek (2006) Making corporate social responsibility (CSR) operable: How companies translate stakeholder dialogue into practice. *Business and Society Review*, Vol. 111, No. 2, 137–163.
- Peltola, Jari (2005) Sertifikaattiriita syö yhä metsäteollisuuden tuloja. *Kauppalehti* 31.10.2005, 6.
- Rondinelli, Dennis A. – London, Ted (2003) How corporations and environmental groups cooperate: Assessing cross-sector alliances and collaborations. *Academy of Management Executive*, Vol. 17, No. 1, 61–76.
- Ryhdy lahjoittajaksi, Ykkösbonus <<http://www.ykkosbonus.com/tradeka/ykkosbonus.nsf/sivut/peruspohja?OpenDocument&cid=ryhdylahjoittajaksi>>, retrieved 12.11.2007.
- Seppälä, Jukka, Vice President, Stakeholder relations and Trade policy Manager, Metso Oyj. Interview 26.2.2008.
- Shuy, Roger W. (2002) In-person versus telephone interviewing. In: *Handbook of Interview Research: context & method*, ed. by Gubrium, Jaber F – Holstein, James A., 537–555. Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, California.
- Stafford, Edvin R. – Polonsky, Michael Jay – Hartman, Cathy L.(2000) Environmental NGO–Business collaboration and strategic bridging: A case analysis of the Greenpeace–Foron alliance. *Business Strategy and Environment*, Vol. 9, No. 2, 122–135.
- Stenfors, Gunilla, Vice President, Corporate Communications, Nordkalk Oyj. E-mail message 13.3.2008
- Talvio, Cai – Välimaa, Mikko (2004) *Yhteiskuntavastuu ja johtaminen*. Edita Publishing Oy: Helsinki.
- Tynjälä, Päivi (1991) Kvalitatiivisten tutkimusmenetelmien luotettavuudesta. *Kasvatus*, No. 5-6, 387-398.

- Waddock, Sandra A. – Bodwell, Charles – Graves, Samuel B. (2002) Responsibility: The new business imperative. *Academy of Management Executive*, Vol. 16, No. 2, 132–148.
- Weiss, Joseph W. (1998) *Business ethics – A stakeholder and issues of management approach*. 2. ed. Hartcourt Brace & Company: Orlando, US.
- Weppling, Kjell, Water group, Product group manager, Nordkalk Oyj. Interview 4.3.2008.
- Weppling, Kjell – Innanen, Marja – Jokela, Sinikka (1999) *Life Lestijoki – happamien sulfaattimaiden hoito, Life Lestijoki – managing acid sulphate soils*. WWF Finland Report No. 11.
- Willetts, Peter (2002) What is a non-governmental organization? *UNESCO Encyclopaedia of Life Support Systems*. Article 1.44.3.7 Non-Governmental Organizations. <<http://www.staff.city.ac.uk/p.willetts/CS-NTWKS/NGO-ART.HTM>>, retrieved 14.10.2007.
- Wolfe, Richard A. – Putler, Daniel S. (2002) How tight are the ties that bind stakeholder groups? *Organization Science*, Vol. 13, No. 1, 64–80.
- Woolfitt, Jonathan – Deri, Christopher (2001) NGOs: The new super brands. *Corporate Reputation Review*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 157–164.
- WWF – Who we are, how we came about, and what we're about. <http://www.panda.org/about_wwf/who_we_are/index.cfm>, retrieved 30.1.2008.
- WWF Suomi – Green Office. <http://www.wwf.fi/yritykset/green_office/>, retrieved 12.3.2008.
- WWF Suomi – Itämeri. <http://www.wwf.fi/ymparisto/meret_jarvet/itameri/>, retrieved 15.3.2008.
- WWF Suomi – Vuosi 2006. <http://www.wwf.fi/tietoja/suomi/toimintakertomus/vuosi_2006.html>, retrieved 10.3.2007.
- WWF Suomi – Vuosi 2007. <http://www.wwf.fi/tietoja/suomi/toimintakertomus/vuosi_2007.html>, retrieved 10.3.2007.
- WWF Suomi – WWF ja yritykset. <<http://www.wwf.fi/yritykset/>>, retrieved 12.3.2008.
- WWF Suomi – WWF Suomi. <<http://www.wwf.fi/tietoja/suomi/>>, retrieved 12.3.2008.
- WWF Suomi – Ympäristökasvatus. <<http://www.wwf.fi/ymparisto/ymparistokasvatus/>>, retrieved 15.3.2008.
- Yaziji, Michael (2004) Turning gadflies into allies. *Harvard Business Review*, Vol 82, No. 2, 110–115.
- Yin, Robert K. (2003) *Case Study Research – Design and Methods, Third Edition*. Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, California.

APPENDIX 1 REVIEW OF EARLIER STUDIES

Author(s), year	Purpose	Methodology	Main findings
Berger, I. E. – Cunningham, P. H. – Drumwright, M. E. 2004	Understand the characteristics, factors and circumstances that enable or impede social alliances.	Field-based approach and elite interviews (n=69) of corporate and nonprofit representatives and additional interviews (n=21).	Six categories of predictable problems were identified. All problems cannot be predicted and pre-empted. Structure of the company, NGO and the alliance all affect the success of the project. Certain problems are related to alliance choices. Pros and cons of different structures were presented.
Heugens, P. – Van Den Bosch, F – Van Riel, C 2002	Examine the basic assumption of stakeholder theory: firms which build co-operative relations with stakeholders have competitive advantage.	In-depth case study of the dynamics in Dutch food industry. Interviews (n=23) of key players. Also data from food industry, 3 roundtable discussions and media.	The results support the basic assumption. The development of mutually enforcing relationships with external parties may result in organisational learning and societal legitimacy. All the firms in the Dutch food industry benefit from closer relationships.
Jahansoozi, J. 2006	To explore the organisation-stakeholder relationship between oil and gas operators and community members in Alberta, Canada.	In-depth interviews (n=16) with both petroleum industry and community members.	In Alberta, a collective institution was formed to gather petroleum industry and community members together in order to increase transparency which is crucial in rebuilding trust and healthy community stakeholder relationships after a crisis. Ongoing dialogue is essential in maintenance of community relationships.
Morsing, M. – Schultz, M. 2006	To illustrate the CSR communication challenge for managers.	Data from national Reputation Quotient Surveys in 2005 in Denmark (n=4178), Sweden (n=2783) and Norway (n=3397).	In the three countries, the general public agrees that companies are responsible for more than just their stakeholders. The difference between the countries concern how companies should publicise information. Half of the population finds that companies should communicate broadly and openly and the other half prefers subtle or no communication at all. Too conspicuous communication to increase the legitimacy may in fact decrease it.

Author(s), year	Purpose	Methodology	Main Findings
Rondinelli, D. A. – London, T. 2003	Investigate how corporations and NPOs share knowledge and expertise on environmental issues through strategic alliances.	Content analysis of a study of 50 MNEs, interviews (n=16)	Three levels of alliances were identified. Six strategic criteria which are worth consideration before any collaboration were presented based on the empirical research. Conclusion was that if a company and an NGO want to collaborate, all of the six strategic questions should be able to be answered positively.
Stafford, E. R. – Polonsky, M. J. – Hartman, C. L. 2000	Examine the linkage capabilities of NGOs by developing a strategic bridging framework and test it in a case analysis.	Case study of Greenpeace–Forn alliance which operated in 1992–93 in Germany.	To form an effective bridge between firms, NGO must administer the following: vision, internal support, vision articulation, a balance of self- and stakeholder interests, coping with threat and linkage endurance. The case alliance was a success in environmental terms but it caused the bankruptcy of the corporate partner when the alliance ended. Greenpeace was not able to help its partner to achieve its objectives.
Wolfe, R. A. – Putler, D. S. 2002	To illustrate heterogeneity within stakeholder groups.	Survey (n=168), in-depth interviews, Metric conjoint analysis	Stakeholder groups are more heterogeneous than the stakeholder literature suggests. Role-based classification of stakeholders may be deceptive when needs and priorities are analysed.

APPENDIX 2 OPERATIONALISATION TABLE

Purpose of the research	Sub-objective	Theoretical background	Interview themes
To describe the strategic alliances of an international environmental non-governmental organisation with companies	To understand the process of forming and realising the alliance.	Decision-path to collaboration, forming the alliance	Collaboration with an NGO, Starting the collaboration
	To describe how the initial objectives of the alliance have been realised.	Forming the alliance, advantages of the alliance	Objectives and evaluation of success
	To map the realised advantages of the alliance for the company and for the organisation.	Advantages of the alliance	Objectives and evaluation of success
	To analyse the relationship between the parties throughout the project and in the future.	Stakeholder dialogue	Relationship between WWF Finland and company

APPENDIX 3 INTERVIEW THEMES

Background

- job description
- career development
- role in WWF Finland collaboration

Collaboration with an NGO

- importance of collaboration in general
- Why WWF Finland?
- other NGO collaborations
- relationship to other environmental NGOs
- engaged resources
- type of collaboration
- duration
- current contract

Starting the collaboration

- initiative
- partner selection
- form of collaboration
- negotiations
- goals

Objectives and evaluation of success

- measuring criteria
- realization of objectives
- advantages and disadvantages of collaboration
- factors leading to success

Relationship between WWF Finland and company

- before collaboration
- communication
- ideal relationship
- challenges in practice
- present and future

APPENDIX 4

CODE LIST

PERS	Person-related issues
PERS.ATT	Personal attitudes related to co-operation
PERS.RO	Role in the co-operation
CO	Co-operation (Co.) with NGOs in general
CO.WWF	Co. with WWF
CO.OT	Co. with others
CO.MOT	Motives of Co.
CO.NOW	Co. now
CO.BEF	Co. before
CO.FUT	Future Co.
CO.CO	Contract
CO.RE	Demanded resources related to Co.
CRIT	Criteria for partner selection
CRIT.VAL	Values
CRIT.INT	Internationality
CRIT.NET	Networks
CRIT.PRO	Professionalism
CRIT.ACT	Ways of action
CRIT.RE	Available resources
BEG	Beginning of the Co.
BEG.INI	Initiative for the Co.
BEG.NEG	Negotiations
BEG.DISC	Discussions
REL	Relationship
REL.BEF	Before
REL.PRE	Present
REL.FUT	Future
REL.OT	Other NGOs
REL.COM	Communication
REL.ME	Meetings
REL.ID	Ideal relationship
OB	Objectives of the Co.
OB.FO	Forming
OB.BEG	Objectives in the beginning
OB.MSR	Measuring the objectives
OB.REA	Reaching the objectives
BEN	Benefits of the Co.
BEN.I	Image-related
BEN.COM	Communication-related
BEN.FIN	Financial
BEN.NET	Network-related
BEN.SH	Stakeholders
CHAL	Challenges related to the Co.
CHAL.PRO	Problems
CHAL.PRA	Practical challenges
CHAL.RE	Resource-related