Corporate environmentalism and its practical implications for managers

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A case study about managers` environmental work at Skanska

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Abstract

Thesis title:	Corporate environmentalism and its practical implications for managers-A case study about managers` environmental work at Skanska
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Author:	Rudolf Jonas, Ewan Prezens, Philip Swedenborg
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Key words:	Corporate environmentalism, ecologic-economic decision-making, CSR worldviews
Purpose:	To explore environmental decision-aming processes at managers at Skanska, also with regard to enviornmental decison-making conceptualizations in theory.
Method:	The research of the thesis is based on a qualitative approach through the use of semi-structured and open interviews. Furthermore an interpretative approach is followed.
Theoretical framework:	The theoretical framework is about general approaches of corporate social responsibility (CSR), strategic forms of corporate engagement in CSR and decision-making conceptualizations in corporate environmentalism
Conclusion:	Managerial decision-making processes and work in corporate environmentalism has to acknolwledge the complextiy in environemntalism, as well as worldviews and different individual understandings with regard to corporate and CSR in general.

Contents

1.Introduction

1.1 Illustrating the Issue (background)

This research project is largely realized by professional networking of one of our colleagues, which provided us to the privileged access to interview managers at Skanska. After doing due diligence and research about Skanska and its field of business, we found the company`s focus and rhetoric on greening or corporate environmentalism a promising and challenging area of research, because we, and mainly our generation see great importance in addressing environmentalism.

Corporate environmentalism, as an area of research was and is of particular interest to us for several reasons. Firstly, we are one of the first generations to not only witness but are also living through the 'rise' in the awareness of this 'new' type of corporate environmentalism and responsibility. Secondly, as business administration students, our focus has often been on topics such as change management, leadership and the management of understanding, we felt many aspects of corporate environmentalism touched on these topics as well as more social and ambiguous areas, as corporate social responsibility (CSR) or knowledge management. Furthermore, we felt that corporate environmental aspects were both relevant for and indeed geared towards new ways of understanding and thinking about our role in the natural environment and the implications it will have on organizational theory.

Our curiosity was neither driven by an extroverted leaning to embark on an environmental crusade or to specifically develop new theories in the field. Rather we had as our aim the desire to establish findings in the field of corporate environmentalism and its implications on management practitioners. Also, the fact that environmentalism is often perceived as something that is inherently good, we wanted to shed light on the organizational implications this had specifically within the context of corporate environmentalism. After further research on this topical area, we found that, within the literature a broad set of definitions and concepts regarding corporate responsibility and corporate environmentalism existed. Especially, when to consider strategic organizational implementations in relation to answering the fundamental question of, what the responsibility of an organization is.

We also noticed that within the area of corporate environmentalism, that there was much literature describing and addressing opportunities and the resultant benefits for organizations engaging in corporate environmentalism, as well as information on how to implement and align organizational strategies towards environmental issues. But as much of the literature addresses opportunities that exist for organizations in corporate environmentalism, we found that there was a distinct lack in the literature, of when to consider and evaluate problems and obstacles of the corporate engagement in environmentalism, specifically at the individual and managerial side. We observed that more focus and attention was set on higher order strategic organizational aspects, but less on contemporary, practical, day-to-day implications and obstacles that managers in the field of corporate environmentalism encounter.

As our research area is clearly contemporary and as we will demonstrate not without criticism, we often found ourselves 'side tracked` by the wide variety of literature and grappled with issues relating to new and varied vocabulary and concepts in relation to understanding the fundamental concepts related corporate environmentalism.

1.2 Problem formulation and research question

Klintman (2000) argues, that out of the more and more problematic becoming environmental conditions, the focus in environmentalism has moved from local emissions with local consequences, to a broader concept beyond local effects and interests. Generally speaking, environmental issues are now seen from a global perspective. Much effort and research, both quantitative and qualitative has been done regarding the technological and natural scientific aspects related to environmental conditions. Nevertheless, Klintman (2000) claims, that the more essential elements of how modern society works or the human lifestyle with regard to the environment, has not been the major focus of research. Addressing the highlighted problem of increased environmental damage, we attempt to narrow down our field of research towards society, or human behaviour and the environment. In general we look to areas of research regarding corporate social responsibility (CSR), and here we place special focus on corporate environmentalism.

Within the literature and theoretical developments, where environmentalism is linked to business practices, many concepts in this area can be seen to have their roots in CSR. Also, because of the variety of definitions and concepts of CSR, addressing why and how organizations are seen responsible for society and why they should engage in issues concerning it, CSR can be seen as an overarching field of corporate environmentalism.

We first focus on the broad field of CSR, to establish a general understanding of this area, as well as to recognize that CSR, and CSR related topics potentially fit into many business areas, which can result in corporate benefits. Within the context of CSR, three main approaches can be identified, which are the *shareholder*, *stakeholder* and *societal* approaches. These approaches can be structured from a chronological and historical background, as well as from the range and extend of organizational engagement in CSR.

Even before the current understanding of CSR was developed, Friedman (1962) argued that the only responsibility for organizations was to generate profits for the shareholders of the organization. Increasing criticism regarding this approach, contributed to the development of the *stakeholder approach,* which enlarges the notion of the *shareholder approach* towards organizations as also being accountable for their stakeholders. Here, stakeholders can be seen as persons, groups or systems, which are affected by organizational actions (Freeman, 1984).

The stakeholder approach furthermore stresses, that not only do organizations affect their environment, but also that the environment affects organizations. This acknowledgement and the growing impact of society on corporate behaviour, especially growing societal concerns about corporate activity and its negative implications on the environment has led to the development of the *societal approach*. The main issue of the societal approach can be seen as the broad view of CSR, where organizations are seen as responsible to society as a whole, where they are an integral part and where they should operate towards public consent, constructively serving the needs of society (Van Marrewijk, 2003).

Doing research on these findings in the literature regarding the development and different concepts of CSR, another important stream of literature caught our attention, where the focus is put on the strategic implications for organizations, to actively engage in CSR processes and activities. Strategic approaches of organizations towards CSR are closely related to the development and the conceptualization of CSR, as corporate activity has a growing impact on society and the environment. This further implies a growing need for organizations to take up CSR. As CSR is closely related to corporate activity, specifically in relation to society and the environment, strategic corporate approaches towards CSR have as their focus, the adequate combination of economical and societal issues, which as a result can lead to an increase in profitability and competitive advantage for organizations.

Within the strategic focus of organizations on CSR, the literature also stresses and discusses a variety of concepts and forms in the context of CSR. Out of the different understandings and definitions of the role of CSR, three concepts of strategic corporate engagement in CSR and CSR related fields are addressed, in order to establish a framework for our research topic. These concepts are *strategic CSR, corporate sustainability and corporate environmentalism*. It is important to state that many of the concepts, the various definitions and points of view, all overlap and that they often address similar issues depending on how broadly or narrowly they address CSR. In particular, whether the natural environment is seen to be as a part of society.

The literature regarding corporate environmentalism, where Skanska`s environmental strategy can be seen as being closest related, points to problems and difficulties in environmental decision-making processes and also in the related evaluation of the ecologic-economic trade-offs, that is suggested to exist between organizations and the environment.

Brewer and Stern (2005) argue, that environmental decision-making processes are basic factors that organizations need to consider in order to determine, implement and engage in a strategy of corporate environmentalism. In terms of environmental decision-making, Hoffman (2000), further stresses that organizations struggle between win-lose and win-win solutions in relation to environmental decision-making. Win-lose solutions have as an outcome environmental protection, but largely at the expense of business profitability, whereas with win-win solutions, business as well as the environment benefit from it (Porter and van der Linde, 1995a; Palmer, Oates and Portney, 1995; Walley and Whitehead, 1994). The range between perfectly win-lose and perfectly win-win solutions can potentially be seen as the field in which organizations engage in corporate environmentalism. Often a mixture between these is found to be the case and the degree of the trade-offs for organizations can be either high (when to consider perfectly win-lose solutions), or zero, when to consider win-win solutions.

The organizational processes and activities, derived from addressing corporate environmentalism have implications for managers, who are the actors that decide and evaluate, which ecologic-economic trade-off their organizations engage with.

The focus of our study is to explore how organizational actors approach, experience and handle environmental decision-making processes and how they evaluate potential ecologic-environmental trade-offs. It is our intention to investigate and shed light on, how managers view and evaluate the various potential trade-offs between economic growth and

environmental protection and how they approach the decision-making process related to how corporate activity is engaged with.

This further includes research, regarding the experienced obstacles and challenges of organizational actors to various degrees and dimensions, in terms of going towards win-lose or win-win solutions.

Taking into account Hoffman`s conceptualization in environmental decision-making, the win-lose, win-win and especially his suggested mixed model approach of win-lose and win-win solutions, we want to investigate manager`s views, approaches, and experiences about/towards environmental decision-making and ecological-environmental trade-offs. Findings in relation to Hoffman`s conceptualization of environmental decision-making will act as a base-line for our discussion about the experiences, obstacles and challenges faced by managers in regard to environmentalism and also towards individual understandings of CSR.

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1.3 Research Question

How do managers experience and approach environmental decision-making and the implied potential trade-offs between economic growth and environmental protection, as they are identified in the CSR literature?

1.4. Method

With regard to the methodological considerations of the study, we account for the techniques we have used to come to terms with social reality. Thus dealing with interpretative possibilities we felt that a qualitative approach best lends itself to problematization of established ways of thinking. Our case study consists of 8 interviews conducted at various departments and business units within the Skanska's business concern.

1.5 Relevance

The purpose of this study is to gain insights about the various obstacles and challenges, which managers at Skanska face in combination with environmental decision-making. These are derived from ecological-environmental trade-offs in the context of Skanska`s environmental strategy. With regard to Hoffman`s environmental decision-making conceptualization, it is the aim to shed light on the different degrees and forms of solutions, that managers in the field of corporate environmentalism face.

Through analyzing the ecological-environmental trade-offs that managers have to handle and how they experience environmental decision-making, we also aim to conduce a better understanding in the various conceptualizations of corporate environmentalism and the general field of CSR.

Banerjee (2001a) argues, that corporate environmentalism has the potential to redefine and change not only existing ways of thinking within organizations, but also to empower all organizational actors to become agents of change. Leaned on this argument, we want to demonstrate how organizational members, here managers, integrate and deal with environmentalism, geared towards gaining competitive advantage. We therefore argue, that this study is relevant for researchers and practitioners, which are interested in contemporary issues concerning corporate environmentalism at the practical-managerial level. Individual, worldviews

We argue that our study is relevant for researchers and practitioners, which are interested in issues about the impacts of individual understandings and worldviews of CSR , with regard to corporate environmentalism, as well as practical-managerial implications of corporate environmentalism.

1.6 Outline of thesis

Concluding this first chapter, we briefly demonstrate the content of the other chapters in the thesis:

In *chapter 2* we give a description of the research methodology. We include a summary of the methodological approaches and the different research orientations that have contributed to it.

In *chapter 3* we address the theory of the field. We first, discuss Strategic Corporate Social Responsibility and environmental sustainability we then proceed, to negotiation theory and organizational behaviour. We conclude this chapter by identifying the corporate and theoretical implications these may have.

In *chapter 4* we present a case study of Skanska and their environmental strategy. We also address our empirical findings from interviews with managers at Skanska, about their experiences and understandings of corporate environmentalism and CSR, their challenges and struggles with environmental decision-making and environmental-ecologic trade-offs.

In *chapter 5* we discuss our empirical findings with the existing literature in this field. Our discussion ranges from individual and general worldviews and understandings of CSR and corporate environmentalism, to economic-ecologic trade-offs and environmental decision-making, when managers engage in corporate environmentalism. Our discussion will end with suggestions for future research within the field of corporate environmentalism.

In *chapter 6* an overview and general aspects of our thesis will be demonstrated, where we shortly address the major issues of the chapters of our study.

2.Method and Methodology

In this section our ontological and epistemological approach will be presented to the reader. We shall also present the research design and information regarding the data collection process. We then proceed to address and reflect upon the authenticity, plausibility and criticality of the study as well as attempts at being more reflexive in our approach. The underpinning message of this section is to inform the reader of our methodological approach which is derived from, understanding the construction and development of reality related to the managerial perceptions.

2.1. Ontological and Epistemological Approach

Corporate Environmentalism deals with two major contexts, an ecological context as well as social dimensions. This sees our research addressing both issues related to social and natural reality and the inter-relationship that exists between the two.

Being familiar with current and established research in the field of corporate environmentalism and CSR, therefore allows us to establish our position, which is based on an interpretative approach. The underlying reasons for choosing an interpratavist approach as opposed to the positivist approach deals with the epistemological considerations about how and what we are able to know. The positivist approach implies that one is able to differentiate an objective reality and reveal objective truth. Our approach, the interpretavist, implies that reality is something that is socially constructed or negotiated and therefore understanding and being able to offer information or explanation in regard to this is seen as more important than discovering an ultimate truth (Crotty, 1998).
Derived from this baseline of our conceptualization of corporate environmentalism and CSR, we are better placed to further investigate and analyze issues at a deeper level (of individual understanding) and creating a richness through detail, by understanding the basis of actions taken.

With regard to conceptualizations of environmentalism and CSR, much of the literature suggests that there is a polarity of understanding between organizational growth and environmental protection. Taking an interpretative approach into account therefore can help to address various opinions of corporate environmentalism and CSR. These opinions can

range from that organizational growth and environmental protection as being mutually exclusive, as well as being them being synergistic. Especially when considering growing societal claims that seem to demand organizations to take more proactive steps by addressing environmentalism, a synergistic approach seems to become more applicable. This can be seen being related to our method in that it deals with socially constructed and developing societal norms.

We believe it is important to our study to understand if and how varying worldviews (held by managers at Skanska) ultimately shape and influence business management practice within the organization. Taking this notion into consideration, a hermeneutic approach, which addresses the interrelationship of basic and continually developing individual understandings, can be seen as our methodological approach. For the purpose of our research we harmonize with Arbnor and Bjerke (1997) who also interpret hermneutics with a rather broad definition as creating knowledge through interpretation and understanding. These organizational actors (managers) are potentially the shaping and influencing sources of power, resistance and politics within the organization and therefore there interpretations and understandings are the primary focus of the research.

Concluding our methodological approach, we also take social constructionism into account, as it deals with subjective reflections and understandings, as opposed to positivism, which considers objective methods in relation to viewing the social world. Social constructionism according to Easterby-Smith et al. (2008) then concerns itself with how people make sense of the world and that language plays an important role in sharing this information. It therefore serves as an interpretative method by aiding to inform how individuals acquire subjective knowledge about reality. The key to this approach is that 'reality' is being determined by, people as opposed to objective facts. The different constructions and there meanings are therefore of importance to this approach.

2.2. Theoretical Perspective and Methodology

Crotty (1998) argues that researchers are free to devise their own research process in order to serve our end purpose. We have aimed for an epistemologically consistent approach (maintaining an interpretive position) and this has also had implications on the character of the methods we have used. Furthermore we found that, as Crotty (1998) argues, that this

consistency can be more problematic than the debate between quantitative and qualitative research. We found in our own work and much of the referenced qualitative works, that elements of quantification (measurement in relation to environmentalism, for example green house emissions) were both useful and important in conceptualizing of the research areas. Although this cross-referencing between quantitative and qualitative was relatively accessible to us what was less clear was how to balance altering worldviews.

Our qualitative research has been conducted within an interpretative paradigm, as we are interested in ideas of how subjects understand and know the world.

We follow a qualitative research approach, as Alvesson & Sveningsson (2003) suggest, that working in a qualitative fashion allows for better reflection between theory and empirical material. Further addressing the previous assumption (being able to work effectively between theory and empirical material) Sandberg and Targama (2007) argue, that while it is important to figure out what effects resulted in a changed condition, having a greater impact on peoples` behavioural routines, can only be effectively done through influencing people's understanding of the external conditions. Therefore, by using an interpretive approach and by becoming more familiar with the research field and the questions facing the actors involved (what is sustainability or CSR etc) we are better placed to understand the respondents external conditions. This we felt was particularly relevant to the research, understanding the respondents behavioural experiences.

Our methodology is derived from ideas related to how the world is understood and known. Alvesson and Skoldberg (2009) argue for an understanding of reality that is being socially constructed and does not allow for objective facts. The resultant outcome of this was the employment of a qualitative research methodology. This was based on semi-structured and open interviews in order to facilitate a means for us to come closer to insights related to our respondents worldviews which are based on emotions, values, beliefs and the sense-making process. Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009) argue that in qualitative research aspects of "…ambiguity as regards interpretive possibilities…" (2009:08) allows for the researchers` construction of reality to be more visible, which in our study we have seen in the various individual understandings of managers.

With regard to the broad and complex field of corporate environmentalism and CSR, we

believe a qualitative approach also lends itself to the problematization of established ways of thinking and thus allows grounds for us to further develop insights in the research area.

2.2.1. Research Design

Our case study consists of a core of 8 interviews, four that are semi-structured and four that are open, at Skanska, Sweden a global actor in the construction industry. Our hypothesis was based around gaining insights into how mangers experience and deal with environmental decision-making and the espoused trade-off's between economic growth and environmental protection. And therefore the methodology is grounded upon how the respondents know and understand the world. We follow an interpretive approach and work through the iterative process between the theoretical and the practical. This qualitative based approach lends itself to deal with ambiguity and social norms that a quantitative approach does not readily offer.

After conducting our first rounds of interviews (4) in a semi-structured approach we found that the research maybe better served by using an open approach. Denzin (1989b) suggest that, instead of pitting one-type of interview style against the other, using a broader approach (semi-structured and open approach), can achieve better results. We felt this approach (open) was more applicable and gave greater freedom to the respondents to discuss in-depth, their personal and related experiences in regard to dealings with corporate environmentalism. This also allowed us to frame and deeper explore topics as they arose by the respondents. Denzin and Lincoln (1998) argue that interview is not a neutral tool as the interviewer actively creates the reality of the interview situation, based upon which situational understandings are created and grounded in those specific interactional episodes.

Although Skanska is a global organization and this has business implications on how it operates, we satisfy ourselves with investigating its operations within the local Swedish context. We have two core data sources. Our primary data is sourced from the semi-structured and open interviews from a cross-section of employees (managers only) at Skanska's Head Quarters in Stockholm as well as offices in Malmoe and Lund. The secondary data has been collated from management literature, corporate documents in relation to corporate environmentalism, websites and prospectus. This secondary data, serves the function to describe the corporate position and subsequently is not our primary point of interest, as it does not reveal information at the individual level.

2.2.2. Research Process

Gaining Access

Access would prove key to our research and the purpose of the study. After initial communication and following a process to inform Skanska's Human Resources department of our intention to do research, we were granted a freedom to contact suitable and available persons for the study. Skanska made no demands regards the non-disclosure of information or regarding matters of anonymity and confidentiality. We felt a freedom to address the areas of research we felt interesting and pertinent and never felt any reservations or conditional constraints were placed on our research.

Selection of Interview Subjects

The priority of the research was to gain information about managerial perceptions related to corporate environmentalism. The interview subjects were therefore identified and subsequently restricted to those in managerial functions and particularly those who had dealings with environmentalism. The respondents ranged in hierarchy and experience from a relatively 'new' manager to a Senior Vice President.

Almost all the candidates contacted volunteered to participate, after we initially approached and informed them about the study. In total we managed to get access to eight managers who were actively working with issues related to corporate environmentalism in their daily work. We managed to get a diverse cross-section of organizational members, where the respondents ranged in age, sex, as well as functional and hierarchical levels. We also managed to get access at a variety of different regional offices in Sweden, two local offices in Malmoe and Lund and the Head Quarters in Stockholm for which we independently organized travel and accommodation.

Carrying out the Study

As mentioned we used both semi-structured and open interviewing techniques. We started all the interviews in the same fashion by addressing a background or a talk sheet and explaining in general terms the purpose of our research and requesting information about the respondents in relation to their academic background, work experiences etc. We did not conform to any specific interview techniques other than being respectful of the local conditions by

conforming to the dress and etiquette norms in place in Sweden and Skanska. Throughout the interview process we tried to encourage conversations that we, and the respondents found topically interesting, but that was also related to the research area. We encouraged answers by presenting open questions such as "what have you learned" and "what difficulties have you experienced".   Often the respondent's answers were related to their very technical understandings of environmentalism. To bridge our understanding we used our field notes, to understand aspects of corporate environmentalism, and to guide discussions that were at times very technically specific and colloquial. As a general rule many of the respondents were very engaged in the interview process and did not falter for lack of opinion or to relate to topical areas of interest.

We chose only to conduct interviews where we could get face-face time with the participants, as we felt this might be more conducive to in-depth knowledge sharing and help establish a more informal tone and a situation of trust. As Denzin & Lincoln (1998:73) referencing Stein suggest "… The question must be asked in person-to-person if we want it to be answered fully…". All interviews were recorded and transcribed within 48hrs, two of which had to be translated from Swedish to English, which one of the researchers (a native speaker) diligently did. In addition we took extensive field notes during the entire research process which proved both educational and functional. Observations did not play a major role in the study however it did provide certain more passive insights regarding the organization and its artefacts.

The observations, were not only at the offices that we conducted our interviews at but commercial rhetoric regarding greening could be see seen at most 'job' sites that Skanska had operations (which were quite many) . Our Secondary sources also served a similar purpose but in some instances this was the only explicit information we were able to get access too.

As much of the academic research area, regarding environmental strategy was new to us, reviewing and comparing notes provided useful tools in our understanding of the subject area and served to highlight our own pre-understandings.

Credibility

When to deal with an interpretative approach, addressing the credibility of the research, can be improved by subjecting findings to criteria of evaluation. This can also be seen in line with source criticism, which, according to Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009) is especially appropriate

to case studies as the interviewee's descriptions are often taken as factual information and accepted with little criticality. Within an interpretative paradigm, it can be seen that subjectivity is inherent, as individuals discuss reality from their own understandings and perceptions of the world. As we deal with an interpretive paradigm, where subjectivity can be seen as inherent, objective findings are not sufficiently measurable. However subsequent and elementary controlling of these rationalizations would serve the purpose of limiting subjective interpretations related to credibility. Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009) argue that these distortions can be mitigated through concerning ourselves with issues of *authenticity, bias, distance and dependence*.

We have chosen to establish for the purposes of our research, that the information we gathered from the respondents has credibility. As discussed earlier establishing an objective truth is potentially well beyond the grasp of research that takes an interpretive approach. However what can be stated is, that all the empirical material that has been collected and our own accounts of what we reviewed are authentic. The candidates were approached individually, came from a range of business units and functions, we are therefore of the opinion that a co-ordinated or intentional attempt to deceive or embellish information from us would seem unlikely. Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009) argue that bias both deliberate and unintentional can distort interpretations of both the researcher and the candidate. Our attempts to minimize this bias has stemmed from an awareness of it and through being more critical of our thoughts and perceptions. Our active responses this could be seen in line with Weick (1979) who argues not to blindly accept and follow practitioners` definitions and problem characterizations but to instead embrace these in terms of labels and symbols that we can understand. Our field notes and constantly unfolding understanding of matters, both theoretical and practical, in relation to corporate environmentalism served as this anchoring point.

In our research the respondents were the topics of discussion and subsequently bias could stem from the fact that it maybe favourable to present oneself in a more positive light. This is a theme that will later be developed in a later section in relation to environmentalism, namely the social desirability bias being see as environmentally conscious. The open style of the interview, in itself was also a means of bridging this bias, as it gave respondents freedom to talk about experiences and decisions, as if to someone who had no prior knowledge of corporate environmentalism. This of course involves gaining a level of trust and confidence

from the respondents, which might be derived from our ethical commitment to them.

Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009) put forward that researchers would do well to complement source criticism with empathy. They identify the meaning and importance of this as being "…the intuitive understanding 'from within' of the object of investigation…" (2009:114). We as researchers, may also contribute bias, which stems from our pre-understandings or subjective interpretations based on the subject area. As we will develop in the theoretical section and discussion much research in relation to corporate environmentalism sees a dominant paradigm of business being viewed predominantly through an economic lens with environmentalism and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) playing a secondary role. Thus, understanding the theoretical perspectives and being familiar with them, allows us to better interpret the empirical findings. Our awareness of the need to assume responsibility in relation to our own criticality may serve as a contributing and mitigating factor and limit bias.

Reflections

Alvesson and Sköldberg (2000) argue that being reflexive and self-reflexive should be the base-line for an objective standpoint towards research. Our research was conducted as a group of 3, which could be seen as a dynamic that contributed to many discussions regarding our own understandings and interpretations of the subject matter. Furthermore we felt this dynamic contributed to minimizing naive problematic elements in our research also lead to varied and informative findings.

This we believe gives our research a greater richness and quality not only in relation to challenging our own understandings but also in formulating and actively interpreting the empirical material.

3.Theory

Our theoretical presentation starts with a discussion about the broad field of CSR, its general implication for business and problems in finding a definition or conceptualization for CSR. We will then continue to establish an understanding of three basic CSR approaches and their relationships towards each other. This will be followed by strategic concepts and implications of corporate responsibility, which take the potential benefits associated with social commitments within the business strategy into account. By addressing the concepts of *strategic CSR, strategic corporate sustainability and strategic corporate environmentalism*, corporate responsibility in the context of organizational strategy will be discussed from these three concepts. After having conceptualized the forms of CSR and their strategic implications for gaining competitive advantage, we draw on areas of corporate environmentalism, in which decision-making processes, regarding the varying levels of economic-ecologic trade-offs and the resultant implications these have for managers, are put into focus. We then demonstrate corporate-environmental decision-making perspectives through the *win-lose and the win-win approach*, and also address the shortcomings within these frameworks, leading to a *mixed* balance approach between the two models. Furthermore, the problematic and ambiguous nature of corporate environmentalism as an overarching obstacle for all forms of decision-making processes will be put into consideration. To conclude our theoretical section and deriving from this more general point of view in corporate environmentalism, we demonstrate established conceptualizations of environmental decision-making approaches and ecological-economic trade-offs, as well as, obstacles, challenges and opportunities, which managers, engaging in corporate environmentalism, face.

3.1. Forms and concepts in the field of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

There is, and has been, a broad debate among academics, consultants and corporate executives in creating a concise range of definitions that covers a more humane, ethical and transparent way of doing business. The areas involving these issues range from the overarching term CSR to concepts such as *sustainable development, corporate environmentalism, corporate citizenship or the triple-bottom line*. CSR specifically has been a thoroughly discussed topic, resulting in a variety of concepts, definitions and critique/s (Van Marrewijk, 2003).

CSR is often seen as a concept or a vehicle that will solve major issues such as the global poverty gap, social exclusion and environmental degradation. Many management disciplines have recognized that CSR can fit their corporate purpose and have seen the possibilities of aligning this to areas of quality management, marketing, communication, finance or HRM. What this demonstrates is that views of CSR can be aligned with these management areas and, therefore, the current concepts and definitions often lend themselves toward bias and specific interests (Van Marrewijk, 2003).

Göbbels (2002) argues that because of the lack of an all-embracing definition of CSR, the academic debate and ongoing research regarding conceptual models are being hampered. But on the other hand, such an all-embracing conception of CSR would have to be broadly defined, which, in turn, could then render it too vague in terms of corporate implementation. The alternative as suggested by research, could be a set of differentiated approaches, which match the various ideal forms and contexts where firms operate. Therefore, each company should choose the concept which matches best with that company`s aims and intentions. The chosen CSR approach should be well aligned with the company`s strategy as a response to the changing circumstances within its environment (Van Marrewijk, 2003).

In this section we address general approaches of corporate behavior with regard to CSR and put into consideration to whom organizations have responsibility to. Within the history of CSR a sequence of three approaches can be identified. The first approach, the classical view of CSR is the *shareholder approach*, where the social responsibility of business it to increase its profits (Friedman, 1962). Developed from the principle that social responsibility of corporations is to generate profit, here shareholders, and especially their profit-maximization is seen as the primary goal of the company. Socially responsible activities are not seen as part of the domain of an organization, but seen as a major task of governments. The shareholder approach can also be interpreted as only being of organizational interest when CSR is able to contribute to the aims and goals of the business and, ultimately, furthering long-term value creation for the owners (shareholders) (Foley, 2000).

Growing skepticism about this shareholder approach grew, as generating profits were not seen as the main objective of corporations and that their success should also based on their stakeholder relationships. The second approach, the *stakeholder approach,* claims that organizations are not only accountable to their shareholders, but also to the interests of their stakeholders. Stakeholders can then be defined as groups who are affected by the achievement

of organizational goals, but also as groups who affect organizations, whereas the dominant and almost universal stakeholders can be seen as societal and environmental issues. As organizations, through their business interests, affect stakeholders, they therefore have to be aware of these multiple stakeholder interests and balance them in an adequate way. It can be concluded that this theoretical approach can be seen towards a view that, where a company has many opportunities to increase its performance, many actors can influence it (Russo and Perrini, 2009; Freeman, 1984).

The third approach in the general context of CSR is the *societal approach*, which can be seen as the broader view of CSR. Within this approach, companies are seen as being responsible to society as a whole, of which they also form an integral part. Or, as Van Marrewijk (2003) suggests, that organizations operate public consent to constructively serve the needs of society. This approach is very much related to the previously mentioned stakeholder approach, even though the focus is more on the social performance of corporations, where environmental issues are often also framed as social issues (Gray, 1992; Drumwright, 1994). Taking these approaches into consideration, it can be argued that they are similar or almost the same, when taking the definition of stakeholders into consideration. Since society and the environment could also be seen as stakeholders of organizations, the stakeholder approach then also addresses the societal approach. In reverse, it can also be argued that aspects of the societal approach, such as society and the environment, include typical stakeholder groups of the stakeholder approach. Examples of this could be seen as community, employees, government etc., which sees the societal approach, then also addressing the stakeholder approach.

When considering that the boundaries and similarities between the stakeholder and the societal approaches are often blurred, in order to emphasize a stable differentiation, researchers argue to distinguish between stakeholder interests and societal issues, when speaking of stakeholder and societal approaches (Banerjee, 2002).

Having addressed these CSR approaches, it becomes clearer that the CSR paradigm is not only the final result of a process, but also a process itself. This process, it has been suggested, must be considered in all decision-making, and evaluated and measured (Jones, 1980; Russo and Perrini, 2009). Specific issues within the CSR paradigm have been emerging and can now be seen as crucial. In the main, socially responsible companies have to act "voluntarily" to comply to CSR paradigms, which can be seen as going beyond legal and government prescriptions (Davies, 1973). The central issue of the CSR debate thus becomes the symbiotic

relationship between business and society, against the central issue of the shareholder approach (the relationship between shareholders and the maximization of profits). Furthermore, the CSR paradigm has developed into a necessary integration of business into society (Ackerman, 1975). Within this framework, society interacts with business at large, lending its legitimacy and prestige, and business becomes responsible for its activities within society in its long-term economic operations and creation of value (Garriga and Mele, 2004). CSR can and is therefore also to be considered as a strategic orientation of organizations, which are capable of implementing socially responsible behaviors, while pursuing business activity. Through these activities, they also become accountable for their chosen strategy towards relevant stakeholders (Russo and Perrini, 2009).

The purpose of this section was to firstly, demonstrate definitions and conceptualization aspects and the problems that these may imply, within the CSR field. Further, we have tried to elaborate a more general understanding of the broad context of CSR, its different approaches and the interrelationships and different conceptualizations of the stakeholder, as well as the societal approaches. We have also addressed the "evolution" of the CSR paradigm from profit maximization, towards a concept of a symbiotic relationship between business and society. The section was briefly concluded with the aim to put strategic organizational orientations towards CSR into consideration, which is the focus of the next section.

3.2. Approaches for organizations within strategic dimensions of CSR

In the following section, the focus is set on the strategic implications for organizations in combination with CSR. This will be done, by addressing the concepts of *strategic CSR, strategic corporate sustainability and strategic corporate environmentalism*. The first concept can be seen as the general view towards CSR and strategic corporate behavior, e.g. addressing justice or stakeholders, whereas *corporate sustainability* focuses on societal, economic and environmental aspects. Finally, *corporate environmentalism* focuses on issues about nature and the "green planet". All these concepts overlap each other to various degrees, depending on how broadly or narrowly their contexts are defined in relation to organizational responsibility. They all, to some extent, address the stakeholder as the societal approach, even though we assume that the strategic CSR approach can be seen more closely related to the stakeholder approach, the other two concepts are more closely related to the societal approach.

3.2.1. Strategic corporate social responsibility

This approach concerns itself with the achievement of competitive advantage for organizations, where CSR is seen as the source for such competitive advantage, and organizations should employ the quest for greater competitiveness and better results (Ashley, 2002).

Concerning competitive advantage, in combination with CSR issues, De Wit and Meyer (2005) put forward, that every single strategic content is unique and that a unique fit between strategy process, strategic content and the unique circumstances related to the strategic context, need to be aligned in order for this to be successful. Focusing on such specific context allows organizations then to raise their potential in creating and developing social responsibility actions and thereby contributing toward society in a structured framework. This implies that organizational actions towards CSR should be directly connected to the organizations` core business in order to maximize the potential of these actions (Porter and Kramer, 2002; Zadek, 2005).

Corporate social strategies are efficient, when business strategies, social responsibility actions and core businesses are aligned. When this is well managed, CSR programs and projects can create significant benefits for organizations in terms of reputation, as well as in the motivation and loyalty of their employees (Filho et al, 2010).

Especially, since today the business activities of organizations have a direct and growing impact on the environment and society, Porter and Kramer (2006) stress that there is an inter-dependence between corporations and society. Because of their impacts on environment and society, CSR has become intimately and, almost indispensably, connected with modern organizations, which therefore have to incorporate aspects related to their impacts, in their strategy formulation and in their strategy decision making (Mintzberg, 1983).

In line with this, Filho et al. (2010) suggests that organizations should choose to take societal expectations and decisions into account, as these can result in attractive alternatives for the firm. When formulating the strategy process, organizations should especially take into consideration the arising positive and negative aspects, not only for the business itself, but also for stakeholders, society and the environment. The strategic focus on CSR can be seen as an overall business body, which is integrated by the top management as an integral component in executive work, motivated by personal values and altruism, where strategic advantages are developed (Pearce and Doh, 2005; Filho et al, 2010).

A variety of CSR strategies were critically examined by Husted and Salazar (2006) with the

objective of maximizing both profits and social performance. These authors identified three types of social investment: *altruistic, selfish and strategic* and concluded that strategic investment creates better results for companies that try to simultaneously achieve the maximization of both profit and social performance. Such a strategic investment consists of the creation of well-being and positive advantages to society and the local community and also consists of additional beliefs to the company, such as an enhanced reputation for better and more qualified labour. The conclusion of Husted`s and Salazar`s (2006) study points out that companies can add value and obtain competitive advantage through socially responsible activities when it acts strategically and, therefore, a strong argument could be made that CSR should be connected with the corporate strategies.

3.2.2. Corporate sustainability

Moving from strategic CSR towards corporate sustainability, it can be argued that CSR performs a binding function between a company and its stakeholders, while the corporate sustainability paradigm promotes actions for a fairer world and a more humane future. Corporate sustainability enriches the previously mentioned strategic CSR concept by providing a broader normative anchor and a guiding agenda (Marrewijk, 2006), which includes references to stakeholder issues, but also argues for broader business sustainability perspective, rather than just a narrow business perspective. Corporate sustainability can be defined as meeting the needs of the direct and indirect stakeholders, without compromising the ability to meet the needs of future stakeholders as well (Kleine and von Hauff, 2009).

For a better delineation from the mentioned strategic CSR concept, from a pragmatic point of view, it can be said that corporate sustainability should start with the three dimensions of sustainability (economic, ecologic, and social), rather than with the traditional ethical categories such as justice or discourse with stakeholders (Kleine and von Hauff, 2009). Within these three dimensions of sustainability, also called the `triple bottom line`, sustainability issues are aligned with social, environmental and financial dimensions (Elkington, 1994). This implies that the organizational level of analysis towards sustainability refers to the combined social, environmental and firm-profitability needs towards the general corporate strategy. This is then represented in the implementation and outcomes of the corporate sustainability actions and projects, deviated by the corporate strategy, where the mentioned sustainability dimensions are taken into account and are aligned (Porter, 2008).

When considering corporate sustainability in terms of systems approaches, the fundamental principle is that organizations and the environment have to be seen as complex and unitary whole for the development and implementation of effective strategies and interventions (Senge, 1990; Starik and Rands, 1995; Hammond, 2003; Stead and Stead, 2004; Waddock, 2006). But both, organizational corporate sustainability conceptions and systems frameworks, are far from monolithic within the current economies, there are differences in both in terms of e.g. industries, countries, politics etc. Identifying such macro-level differences, findings within these are conducive for organizations to frame interpretations of sustainability issues, which then affect the corporate sustainability strategy and also then organizational interventions (Porter, 2008).

3.3. Corporate strategy towards corporate environmentalism

The previous concepts focused, on the one hand, on the traditional stakeholders as the strategic CSR approach and, on the other hand, on the corporate sustainability approach with its ecological, economic and societal focus. The following approach of corporate environmentalism has environmental and nature related issues as part of its task.

In the literature, there is a growing area of research that explicitly recognizes the importance of the biophysical environment and examines its role in strategic management and marketing (Gladwin, 1995, Shrivastava, 1995a,b). Researchers have argued that it is important to examine ecological constraints on strategy formulation and that these considerations should be applied at the broadest corporate strategic level (Banerjee, 2002).

From an environmental perspective, the focus of this approach is on developing an "environmental ethic" in business firms. The approach of corporate environmentalism is about the recognition of the importance of environmental issues, as well as addressing and aligning these issues to the general business strategy of the organization. Within a strategic perspective, the corporate environmental approach can be seen as the translation of environmental concerns into organizational actions, strategically designed to improve a firm`s environmental performance (Banerjee, 2002).

In other words, corporate environmentalism has as its focus, the strategic implications and idea that environmental issues can influence the behavior of decision-makers within firms. It

also examines how managerial behavior can be modified to address environmental issues and exemplifies the conceptualization of corporate environmentalism as the integration of environmental considerations into the strategic planning process of the firm (Judge and Douglas, 1998; Banerjee, 1999; Banerjee, 2002). Furthermore, it has been argued that constraints imposed by the biophysical environment will provide new capabilities for firms and that recognizing, managing, and leveraging these (natural) resource constraints will ultimately lead to sustained competitive advantage (Banerjee, 2002).

The last few decades have, in particular, been characterized by an increased awareness of environmental issues from governments, organizations and society. Because of global warming issues such as ozone depletion, soil erosion, air and water pollution there is a greater demand for immediate solutions.

Through a complex web of constituents, whether customers, shareholders, investors or employees; environmentalism becomes transformed from something external to market environments to core objects of the organizations (Babiak, 2009). The perspective of corporate environmentalism as a strategic issue is based on managerial perceptions of the strategic importance of environmental issues, as well as the level of integration into strategy (Banerjee, 2002).

Shrivastava (1995) identified a shift to `ecocentric` management, which is highlighted by an increase in ecologically sustainable organization-environment relations, where "ecocentric" operating organizations create harmonious relationships between their natural and social environments and seek to systemically renew natural resources or minimize waste and pollution.

Furthermore, Gimenenz Leall et al (2003) claim that organizations can raise their level of competitiveness, when they engage and adopt environmental practices. The natural environment is increasingly viewed as a pillar of CSR, also because it has great impact on economic and social concerns (Montiel, 2008).

3.4. Environmental decision making perspectives and trade-offs between business and environmentalism

The previous sections addressed the possibility for organizations to gain competitive advantage, through engaging in strategic forms of CSR. In this section, environmental decision-making perspectives, regarding various forms and dimensions between economic-

ecologically related trade-offs within the construction of a strategic CSR focus of organizations will be discussed. We aim to demonstrate corporate-environmental decision-making perspectives, where we address the win-lose, the win-win and a decision-making approach, that incorporates or balances the previously mentioned perspectives. In particular, we demonstrate the shortcomings of these perspectives in the managerial corporate environmental decision-making process. Also, that the mixed, integrative policies, as a result of a proper balance between win-win and win-lose models are of best interest for organizations. Despite the difficulty in evaluating the possible trade-offs for organizations, when engaging in environmental processes, and also the practical-managerial implementation of these actions, we also demonstrate that literature stresses a mixed, balanced approach, which can increase the set of perspectives for the opportunities for organizations to reduce trade-offs when to engage in environmentalism, while also contributing to protecting the environment.

Environmental decision-making processes are basic factors for organizations in order to determine, implement and engage in a strategy of corporate environmentalism. It is being argued that in today's market, corporate decision-making plays a major influence in shaping environmental conditions (Brewer & Stern, 2005).

In the last decade environmental consideration has been a core aspect of business strategy and decision-making and has also started a debate on perspectives of the relationship between economic competitiveness and environmental protection, specifically, whether this relationship can produce inherently win-lose or win-win outcomes. In general, win-lose proponents argue that economic growth and environmental protection are largely incompatible; environmental protection must, by its very nature, reduce economic competitiveness (Palmer, Oates and Portney, 1995; Walley and Whitehead, 1994). Win-Win proponents, on the other hand, argue that a fixed pie framing of the issues is a false dichotomy and suggest that economic competitiveness can be improved through environmental protection (Gore, 1992, Porter and van der Linde, 1995a.).

In the following sections we address on the mentioned win-lose, win-win or mixed perspectives and possible shortcomings of these models, regarding managerial environmental decision-making.

3.4.1. The Win-lose perspective

Hoffman (2000) sees the win-lose perspective as a framework that is based on environmental regulations. In general, the win-lose model compares environmental benefits, controlled by government regulations and the economical impact for industries. The nature of the win-lose perspective is that the interest of environmental protection and economic growth is set up to be opposed to one another (Hoffman, 2000).

This model is based on the argument that out of the beneficial outcomes for environmental protection and the related financial implication, economics and the environment are put into a state of opposition. In this model, from a theoretical perspective, environmental protection can only be achieved at the expense of negative economical growth, which furthermore implies that there is no balance between environmental benefits and economic cost. This imbalance occurs because the win-lose perspective ignores the possibility of a positive outcome for both parties (Hoffman et al, 1999). Out of this opposition emerges the standard trade-off in the economics versus the environment debate, where the existence of a win-win or cost-free solution to environmental problems, neither makes sense, nor is recognized. This perspective reinforces rather more confrontational approaches, as opposed to cooperative approaches between the environment and economics, where each side is pursuing its goals by demonizing the other side (Hoffman et al, 1999). There is a conflict of interest, where the economic and environmental interest are in a battle of concessionary agreement, with each party pursuing its own goals. Environmentalists are willing to sacrifice economic development and seek out environmental protection at all cost, while corporate decision makers prioritise economic growth by increasing profit at the cost of environmental protection. This makes cooperative decision making impossible, as there is a difference of interests (Hoffman, 2000). Joint solutions through cooperative decision making are suggested as impossible. The win-lose framework overlooks opportunities to "expand the pie", creating collective value for all parties in the negotiation by focusing on the satisfaction of underlying interests that may not be in conflict, rather than of formal positions that are likely (Hoffman et al, 1999). When to address on managerial corporate decision-making implications of this model, not only the mentioned theoretical shortcomings of importance, but also that this perspective puts corporations and their managers into a more passive role, where they have to react on the demands for environmental protection. Furthermore, Hoffman (2001) also claims that drivers of environmental protection have become more complex and that environmental concerns are

now originating from occupational communities such as academic institutions, trade associations, competitors and the press, where each of them is altering the definitions of legitimate corporate environmental practice. This complexity given and the fact that organizations have to react on these environmental drivers, put managers engaging in corporate environmentalism in a state of ambiguity, where it is hard to evaluate proper long-lasting environmental actions.

3.4.2. Win-win perspective

The win-win perspective is the second framework addressed within corporate environmental decision-making processes and proposes that environmental protection and economic growth can simultaneously be satisfied. This perspective argues that the relationship between economics and the environment is a false dilemma, from a cost-benefit point of view and that there are no trade-offs between them.

Hoffman (2000) stresses that in win-win models environmental regulation can be minimized, or even eliminated by innovation from firms and, that in such a cooperative approach, economical protection and economic growth is seen as mutual, rather than competing against each other, as in the win-lose model.

More specific in terms of corporate environmentalism, Porter and van der Linde (1995) point out that there can be economical gain through innovation by organizations which create responses to environmental regulation that are consistent with the competitive objectives of the organizations. Furthermore, that firms, who have addressed their environmental issues, have found themselves improving productivity and profitability, while emphasizing on environmental responsibility (Hoffman, 2000). The key to realizing such benefits lies in a new frame of reference for thinking about environmental improvement (Porter and van der Linde, 1995a), one that steps out of the traditional cost-benefit model. (Hoffman et al, 1999). But, Karagozoglu and Lindell (2000) argue that due to the complexity of environmental issues, opportunities are hard to come by and Hoffman (2000) argues that this framework seems too simple and too good to be true. In reality, the win-win situation is only feasible in certain circumstances, because to satisfy both party's interests is not always a possibility. Also, having addressed the complexity of environmental issues in the win-lose models, within this framework the result of complex, ambiguous decision-making for managers, stems not only out of the many drivers and stakeholders for environmental protection, but more as a matter of finding technical solutions or innovations for a simultaneous benefit, the corporations and the

environment.

As the win-lose perspective, the lens of the negotiations literature show the win-win formulation also to be flawed. It is based on the notion that all interests among parties can be mutually satisfied, with no trade-offs or compromises necessary between them. It is virtually impossible to achieve all of one`s interest and to have the other party do so as well. (Hoffman et al, 1999).

An often cited example of a win-win solution is the product differentiation policies of the Body Shop Company. Body shop started to differentiate their products towards being 100% made from exotic, environmental friendly natural ingredients. These new products served to be conducive for social benefits, as Body Shop purchased ingredients such as blue com from the Pueblo Indians in New Mexico, or Brazil nut oil from the Kayapo Indians of the Amazon River Basin. Through this product differentiation, Body Shop was not only able to increase its market share as a result of the emphasis on social benefits of the products, but also to contribute to environmental protection or safety (Fiorino, 2006).

3.4.3. Mixture framework approach

Hoffman (2000) has recognized that the interest of the environment and the economical aspect can neither be a competition nor a cooperative solution, when speaking in absolute terms. When combining the win-lose and win-win perspectives, real opportunities arise for improving both environmental protection and economic growth. Further, explaining the need of a combination of the win-lose and win-win perspectives, Hoffman (2000) mentions that out of stricter controls, opportunities to find possibilities for a mutual gain (win-lose framework) are harder to find, whereas win-win perspectives, in reality, seem to be appropriate solutions only in certain circumstances.

Within the mentioned theoretical frameworks of the two models, it can be said that in truth or reality, neither sides within the models take an absolutist position. In line with this, Porter and van der Linde (1995b) admit that innovation cannot always completely offset the cost of compliance; and Walley and Whitehead (1994) concede that win-win situations may exist, but they are, in fact, very rare. Therefore, the focus should not be solely either on win-lose or win-win situations, but more on the proper balance of win-lose versus win-win situations and on an adequate frame of reference for analyzing them (Hoffman et al, 1999).

The case of Balzers Corporation as mentioned by Hoffman et al. (1999) can be seen as an example for such a mixture model of win-lose and win-win solutions. In 1991, Balzers Corporation, a manufacturing company which was producing optical components and compact discs, faced an environmental compliance problem. Because after a leakage in the company`s system for using Freon for cleaning parts before shipment, it got fined from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Besides a fine, another term of the settlement for the company was to seek a new cleaning process system, which resulted in a water-based solution, where the use of Freon was reduced to zero. Furthermore, the new system cost half of what the previous system had cost to run and did not threaten the safety of the employees as the Freon system did. In the end, there were gains for the environment as well as for the organization.

This example shows the struggle between environment versus economics, but as seen, opportunities exist to expand the area of win-lose and win-win solutions, which then simultaneously improve the potential outcome for the environment, as well as for economic interests (Hoffman et al, 1999).

Hoffman et al. (1999) claims that in current organizations, in addressing corporate environmentalism, managers often fail or struggle to identify gains, because too often they are preoccupied with disturbing gains and losses. The field of corporate environmentalism is broad, always developing and where many different stakeholders such as governments, trade unions and society are involved. All these aspects make decision-making and the evaluation of the related trade-offs hard and its outcomes uncertain.

The mixed-motive model suggests that wiser trade-offs exist and that by focusing on distribution, integration and flexibility, environmental-economic related trade-offs previously perceived as either win-lose or win-win, should be seen in a mixed framework, addressing both the win-lose and win-win models.

Hoffman (2000) has recognized that, in general, the interest of the environment and the economical aspect can neither be a competition nor a cooperative solution. Despite the imperfections of the mentioned models, the win-win model does not acknowledge the impossibility to satisfy both party`s interests, neither does the win-lose model seek or find all opportunities for solutions, but the mixed framework approach seems to overcome these shortcomings to a certain degree. It is therefore important to mention that within this mixed

framework approach, implications, resulting from the complex and ambiguous nature of corporate environmentalism, also exist.

3.5.Summary

This theoretical chapter aimed to establish an understanding and evaluate different conceptualizations and forms of CSR in general and strategic related aspects of corporate responsibility. At the beginning different approaches of CSR from a historic-societal and organizational-level-involvement perspective were illustrated. The field of CSR was further elaborated by addressing concepts of the strategic social responsibility that organizations have.

Deflected from these concepts, especially corporate environmentalism, economic trade-offs ascribed to organizations, when engaging in environmental decision-making, were discussed. The focus was set on win-lose and win-win models in corporate environmentalism decision-making and their shortcomings in theory. Out of the shortcomings of these models, a framework including both characteristics of the win-lose and win-win models was then shown, where the claim for a balanced mixture of business satisfaction and environmental protection, to result in greater benefits for both, was demonstrated. Within the discussions about these three perspectives of corporate environmental decision-making and the implied trade-offs for organizations, we stressed the difficulties, challenges and opportunities for managers. Besides the problematic shortcomings of the win-lose and win-win models, managers also struggle with the general complexity and ambiguity in corporate environmentalism decision-making. Due to the nature of environmentalism and the growing number of environmental drivers, evaluating and detecting ecological-environmental trade-offs, the consequences and opportunities for corporate activity, are a major problem in the environmental decision-making processes of managers. Related to the overall complexity and ambiguity of corporate environmentalism and the mentioned decision-making models, it is important to say that these decision-making models and processes, and the implied trade-offs can be related or substituted with issues and actions of strategic CSR or corporate sustainability, which is then again a matter of definition and conceptualization.

In the following chapter, we will present findings relating to problems, challenges and opportunities that arise out of the general complexity and ambiguous issues associated with corporate environmentalism. Also, the shortcomings in the win-lose and win-win models will

be demonstrated by empirical findings from interviews with managers working for Skanska. Besides, further introducing Skanska as an organizational concern and its green strategy, it is the aim to address on empirical findings with regard to how managers experience, handle and approach environmental-decision making. We will also demonstrate the various understandings of corporate environmentalism (and CSR in general) addressing different worldviews and their impact on corporate activity in combination with society and the environment.

4.Empirical findings

In this empirical chapter, the aim is to evaluate Skanska`s 'green' strategy and show the findings from the interviews held with managers at Skanska, this will be presented in two sections. The first section gives information and establishes an understanding about the construction industry in Sweden, the Swedish construction company Skanska and its focus on corporate environmentalism. The second section demonstrates examples from the interviews, regarding individual understandings of corporate environmentalism and CSR. As well as the experienced environmental decision-making processes and perceived economic-ecologic trade-offs by managers at Skanska. These examples are demonstrated within four areas, which are; *the managers` understandings and worldviews* of CSR and corporate environmentalism; *strategic and business* aspects facing Skanska and their managers; *practical, day-to-day challenges and problems* at Skanska working with environmental projects; and *standardization/certification issues* at Skanska and in corporate environmentalism.

4.1.Case Study Skanska

This section serves to demonstrates a short and general background about the construction-industry in Sweden, this will be followed by a description of Skanska`s corporate history. The case study, about Skanska will be concluded with characteristics and information relating to Skanska`s green initiative of corporate environmentalism.

It could be important to establish the understanding that sustainability and corporate environmentalism in the Swedish construction industry, seems to have become a trend that many firms have incorporated in their business activities. Strategic approaches towards these environmental issues could mainly been seen as being adopted in the mid to late 1990s.

Sustainability in the Swedish construction industry seems therefore to have become a trend, with many firms implementing this in their business activities. This strategic approach was adopted in 1995, but was only really emphasized in the late 90's, due to external pressures from the markets, legislation, and public opinion. Government regulation also played its part as a major factor in leading companies' to initiate green initiatives. The responses that evolved from the actors involved in the Swedish construction sector was to voluntarily take the lead in the reduction of construction waste, in order to avoid rigorous regulations and subsequent penalties.

Environmental issues in general, however could be seen as being first introduced in the Swedish business context in the 70's, however this largely emphasized risk rather than the opportunities. Gradually (business) opportunities became more prevalent and according to some authors (Wenblad, 2001) the construction sector soon started to embracing these prospects. Skanska, Sweden's largest construction firm is actively promoting their business as green and seems to have adopted ever more strategic approaches to deal with environmental issues in search of competitive advantage.

Company Profile

Skanska, a multinational construction company based in Sweden, is active and operating in the fields of construction, commercial properties, homes, and public private partnership. It includes as its Home Markets Northern and Central regions of Europe, Latin America, and the USA.

Skanska one of the world's largest construction company, and employs an estimate of 55,000 employees within their home markets. In 2010 total assets amounted SEK 77.72 billion, with a turnover of SEK 122.224 billion.

Skanska AB (2010)	
Headquarters:	Solna, Sweden
Industry:	Construction
Founded:	1887
Revenue:	122 billion SEK
Employees:	55,000

Skanska claims to be operating under a decentralized structure, based on local business units, who are well established within their own markets and regions, these are supported by Skanska's brand and shared values (Skanska, 2011).

History

Skanska was founded by Rudolf Fredrik Berg in 1887 and was initially a manufacturer of concrete products. Eventually Skanska became a construction company and came to play a vital role in reinforcing Sweden's infrastructure. In the 1950's Skanska entered the global market and several years later they became an internationally recognized brand (Skanska, 2011).

Skanska in their business prospectus, claim that their business approach has change significantly over the past decade, due to the growing awareness of environmental issues.

They also claim to be more proactive towards environmental responsibility, by embracing the challenges related to the economical aspects, while also maintaining their focus on environmental performance (Skanska, 2009). The table below shows a time and linear progression of Skanska's development towards a more sustainable environmental approach.

History of Skanska's Sustainable Development		
1995	Member of World Business Council for Sustainable Development	
1997	Skanska's first environmental report was published	
2000	Skanska Sweden introduce an environmental policy for cars	Skanska joins the U.S. Green Building Council
2001	Member of the UN Global Compact	
2002	Skanska's first Sustainability Report was published	
2004	Skanska introduces the 4 Zeros: Zero Accidents, Zero Environmental Incidents, Zero Ethical Beaches, Zero Loss-makers	
2005	Skanska Residential Development is Swan Ecolabel certified	Representative of the Global 100 Most Sustainable Corporation
2007	Skanska UK was awarded Sustainable Contractor of the year	
2010	Ranked 2nd overall as Best Green	Top 10 in the Nordics for Carbon

	Companies Award	Disclosure Projects

(Skanska AB, 2011)

Skanska's Green Thinking

Skanska`s vision, in relation to corporate environmentalism, is to be recognized as one of the leaders in green project development and construction. It is their explicit aim to contribute to a positive building environment, by developing sustainable societies (Skanska, 2010).

Skanska argues that sustainability is just another good business practice. As a leading company in this sector, they have adopted the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) for their own sustainability agenda. It (GRI) focuses on key aspects to innovate the social, environmental and economical agenda of sustainability. Another measurement system regarding corporate environmentalism that Skanska has incorporated, is the international certification system called "Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design " (LEED). This framework, which was developed by the U.S. Green Building council, provides and supports organizations that face operational and ownership issues in corporate environmentalism, a defined means to identify and implement practical and measurable solutions (U.S. Green Building Council)

Skanska stress, that environmental responsibility has high priority within their strategy and state, that they have over 10 years of commitment in relation to environmental management. By implementing sustainable methods, they suggest they promote a positive contribution to energy and climate, materials, ecosystems and local impacts (Skanska, 2009).

Skanska sees sustainability as a major business opportunity and they claim to have significantly moved forward during the year of 2010, with regard to corporate sustainability. They furthermore see themselves as embarking on a journey, which they hope to lead them to "Deep Green". In Skanska´s terminology, "Deep Green" indicates a construction process, where projects have as close to a zero negative environmental impact as possible. Skanska measures environmental impacts and the "Deep Green" goal by the following indicators (Skanska, 2010):

- Net zero primary energy
- Near zero carbon construction
- Zero waste
- Zero hazardous materials

- Zero unsustainable materials
- Net zero water for buildings and zero potable water for construction in civil infrastructure

4.2. Empirical findings from the interviews

In this section it is our aim to present findings from the interviews with managers at Skanska. The focus of these findings, are primarily based around the perceived environmental decision-making processes and the related trade-offs between economic growth and environmental protection, which managers at Skanska have experienced. Also of interest are what business implications these have related to Skanska`s corporate environmental focus. We furthermore demonstrate our findings in relation to the managers` general understandings of corporate environmentalism or CSR with regard to their daily work.

The first major section of our theoretical chapter was in relation to general approaches and societal worldviews of CSR and corporate environmentalism. While Friedman (1962) stressed that the single task of an organization was to generate profits for its shareholders, Freeman (1984) argues, that organizations also have to be responsible for their stakeholders. Freeman (1984) further suggests this to be extendable to the whole society and environment. Through our empirical findings we demonstrate these possible contradicting CSR-views on the general corporate responsibility understandings of managers at Skanska. In particular the relationships and contradictions, between individual CSR understandings of managers and the corporate environment they were working in.

The second major section we presented in our theoretical chapter, was about the engagement of organizations in corporate environmentalism. There, we addressed the problematic of the economic and environmental related decision-making processes as a result of different trade-offs between organizations and the environment. Based on environmental decision-making perspectives, (its) shortcomings and general difficulties associated with corporate environmentalism, we have looked to investigate the experiences and developments managers at Skanska have made and handled, within the field of environmental decision-making and the related ecological-environmental trade-offs.

Analyzing interviews from managers at Skanska at different divisions and also at different organizational levels, helped us to structure our findings and the demonstration of the

empirical data.

The demonstration of the findings, based on the empirical data is divided into four areas. We begin our empirical findings *firstly*, by demonstrating Skanska`s managers` individual understandings in relation to their organizations` corporate environmentalism and CSR views, as well as general worldviews of corporate environmentalism and CSR. The area addressing worldviews and understandings of CSR and corporate environmentalism will be further divided into sections, regarding *national context, age and the organizational context*. The *second* area of investigation deals with environmental strategy and its related environmental decision-making processes and the evaluation of ecologic-economic trade-offs. Here we will also address Skanska`s organization, its divisions and the various business-environmental issues, which its managers face. The *third* area places focus on the practical, day-to-day challenges and problems with regard to corporate environmentalism that Skanska faces. We will conclude with a *fourth* section, where the investigated issues deal with obstacles and problems regarding standardization and certification in relation to environmentalism, that managers at Skanska have experienced.

In relation to our empirical findings it is important to state, that we found the addressed areas often overlapped and establishing defined boundaries (in relation to the themes) was not really possible in absolute terms.

4.2.1. Worldviews and individual understandings of CSR and corporate environmentalism

The following empirical findings address themes that found the most commonality in relation to individual understandings and worldviews of corporate environmentalism and CSR of the managers interviewed at Skanska. Also taking into account that these (understandings and worldviews), are based on issues of value, emotion and reflection addressing corporate environmentalism and CSR. We see this as a valuable resource to understand and frame, how the individual managers` ideas and thoughts materialize, when talking about environmentalism. Based on our empirical findings in relation to individual understandings and worldviews of corporate environmentalism and CSR, we structured these into the areas of National context (Sweden) , age (generation) and organizational (Skanska) context.

National Context

Sweden and the 'Swedish' positive stance towards proactive environmental issues we found

to have strong commonality amongst almost all the interviewees. When discussing with one of the managers, about the local preconditions, the respondent described a situation in relation to the certification system and its correlation to cultural or national understandings of environmentalism.

> "A good comparison is if you look at the difference between Sweden and America and LEED the system (certification) it is build on best building practise but also is about cultural practises we get a lot of what I call automatic points in Sweden. I tell people often that they will get a lot of points for having parking for bicycle racks but people look at me like I am crazy because people don't use their bike to commute to the office in the US" (Anna)

This example was one of several empirical findings that reference national context, here specifically contrasting Sweden with the United States of America. The respondents often directly and indirectly imply, that Sweden was seen as one of the leading countries in relation to environmentalism, both in terms of Skanska`s organization, but also in more general terms. In another example in relation to worldviews and national context, one of the managers suggested that even though Sweden was seen a good example there are other countries also pushing hard to achieve deep green strategic goals.

> "No, I would say, Sweden is of course far ahead, but also Skanska UK is perhaps even further along, and Czech Republic is quite worse, and there you could see the heritage or the culture from different countries, but that's were Skanska's company culture must supersede the national culture, and that's what I think will happen during the next couple of years. That all the different levels in the countries go up, and hopefully that Skanska is pulling of the bad regions with then, perhaps whole countries will develop more green, because Skanska is pushing the boundaries and limits of these countries" (Sven)

Another manger when asked about the implied love of nature by Swedish people and its relation to work at Skanska, was more circumspect in his approach, *"lets say it helps"*

The empirical findings across the section of mangers interviewed seemed to corroborate an opinion of Sweden and the Swedish market potentially being more ready for environmental

innovations and initiatives than peer nations, within the Skanska concern.

> "What is difficult for us as a global company, to have like one message, because we are at different parts, our units are in different parts, and that is quite difficult to understand. Different cultures, different business models and what is green. So if you are in a market where no one is asking for anything green, and then we come from the head office and say that green is important. People cannot relate to it...So this is something I would say is difficult" (Sven)

What the empirical finding suggests, in relation to national context, is that being 'green' or being seen as 'green', potentially means and could embody different things within different national cultures and contexts. And that Skanska as an organization should leverage organizational culture to bridge these varied understandings.

Age

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, we saw age, specifically the younger generations` opinions and understandings towards corporate environmentalism to be a recurring factor within our empirical findings. We sensed an underlying feeling by the managers interviewed, that tends to suggest, a feeling that the younger generation of employees incorporate environmentalism more in their daily work than 'older' colleagues. Or stated in different terms, that they (the younger generation) do not differentiate or see environmentalism as something that is 'foreign' or obtrusive to their routine and work processes. There were, however no empirical findings to suggest that the older generation did not care for environmentalism rather incorporating environmental aspects into their work processes was potentially a more laboured affair.

When discussing age and the role it plays with one manager he had the following to say...*Of course the older guys care, but they don't care(...)in the same way...*

On trying to get him to further develop this line of reasoning, about the younger generation and how they relate this to their work, a reaffirmation of this potentially alternative understanding by the younger generation could be seen by the following example.

> "I think they feel its natural, if they can choose between two things they choose the

more environmental product. Even if it costs a small amount more" (Michael)

Another manager exemplified not only age, but also discussed functional differences between construction workers on the job site and office workers in relation to environmentalism

"that is very hard to say to a contractor, it is also hard business wise, day to day practise people that have been working in the industry for years and years and have had great results and now we are pushing them to do something completely different" (Anna)

These illustrations demonstrate potential positives and difficulties in relation to age that would seem to corroborate the notion that a younger generation is quicker to embrace 'green' in daily work practices than more mature colleagues. These findings in relation to age do not imply that the 'older' generation do not care about the environment or environmental initiatives rather the findings would suggest that there is more of a time (delayed) element in relation to embracing these issues. This could be related to how these older employees have been socialized over time by the predominant paradigm of profit maximization.

Organizational context (Skanska)

A dominant position in much of the literature suggests that organizations have focus and priority only on the economic bottom line. This approach (Elkington, 1999) suggests moving to embrace the 'tripple' bottom line', which is broad enough to incorporate both social and environmental impacts of business. Taking this point of view into account, we detected some findings that can be seen as incorporating the social impacts of business, or where managers have addressed organizational (Skanska) understanding of corporate environmentalism.
The following empirical finding relates to a manager being asked about the understanding or definition of corporate environmentalism active at Skanska.

"I'm not sure if it's a definition really, but the thing for me is…. that is working in Skanska… instead of just saying we will do this for the customer there is a lot of development work going into it there is a lot of investment from the company" (Anna)

Elaborating on the development theme and corporate investment in relation to time and

resources devoted to 'green' one of the respondents made this statement:

> "Ja, we have quite a wide contact interface with the rest of Skanska, we work together with purchasing or environmental department, work with many different projects, with the R&D manager of Skanska, and R&D manager of Skanska Sweden and we also have quite good contact with the Norwegian projects. So all these contacts give us influences in different ways, so its not that there is a big boss, standing over, saying you must go green. Etc., it comes more natural from these different contacts. And then also the group meetings they strengthen the whole thinking etc" (Gunnar)

There seems to be an implied and organic understanding of the 'green' goals of the company firstly to establish legitimacy but also that individual efforts are not enough and that working together in a more co-ordinated manner as an organization will achieve more specific results. This understanding in relation to the organizational context would seem also to be time related, in as much as the push towards 'green' and the more strategic initiatives are relatively new for Skanska. There also seemed a tacit awareness that more could still be done in-relation to environmental initiatives but establishing a base from which to work was an important starting point if efforts 'green' were to be seen as legitimate.

4.2.2. Implications of corporate environmentalism that arise from strategic and business related aspects

Corporate environmentalism and green management, it has been suggest will create a new dynamic within organizations that will allow for greater feedback, leading to actionable change from all organizational members. What we have managed to deduce in relation to Skanska, is that the problem formulation, in relation to environmentalism, varies from business unit to business unit and manager to manager. At Skanska, the organization starts at a very technocratic level (regulation compliance) and aim to go beyond this base-line established by government and from the empirical findings we could suggest that they have actively tried to incorporate it in a more meaningful manner on the strategic and operational side. On discussing this, with one of the organizational Vice-President's and asking him to elaborate about Skanska's environmental program *"Compliance is where we start, to comply with laws and things like that"*, he exemplified this by suggesting that after compliance, they aim to drastically reduce the amount of resources (energy, consumption etc) that are used in

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their processes. Establishing what he termed…"*internal efficiency*"… was also an important aspect in developing a business case for moving forward. This internal efficiency could be seen as using technology such as video conferencing and 'green' cars to promote green thinking and fundamental understanding within the company.

"Then we can go to the customer… (and say)…we can offer you a green solution. If we would have started without having that in place we think that our credibility would not be as good, so it is kind of important to do that journey" (Sven)

From what we discovered from our empirical data, is that this journey (from 'green' to 'deep green') is still at a formative stage, and is being constantly developed in relation to what constitutes good corporate environmental practice. Another theme that was addressed by one of the group manager's, was the establishment of a measurable base-line and the creation of legitimacy. Working with international certification within the construction industry, they suggest gives them a better platform to be able to quantify, compare and improve processes and systems in relation to environmentalism. The implication was also, that international certification was only one way by which Skanska was able to put 'pressure' on itself.
By creating internal certification and looking at a cross-section of different certifications, they are able to offer a stronger 'green' position.

"what is really interesting is that we are branching out from LEED we are looking at BREM and a Swedish system (referring to other certification systems) which is really growing its not just we Skanska and we are LEED we are Skanska and we are "green" and we acknowledge that in order to promote green and get to our goal of deep green we need to embrace all of the different systems that the customers wants, so where all of our internal products are LEED a lot of external clients need that we offer them other possibilities for certification" (Anna)

These initiatives, using differentiated approaches to certification and environmentalism would seem to be well grounded and based on prudent business principles. This also demonstrates Skanska's ability to re-think and re-assess what 'green' means to themselves as well as what it entails to their clients.
When asking another respondent if they are heading in the right direction there seemed to be a more cautious circumspection and an awareness of the work that still lies ahead by the Vice

President.

> "Jaja, that's for sure, but you could say that, this is a little bit like going up an escalator in the wrong direction, lets say. The moment you stop walking you will walk down. So it's not that good, you need to be on top all the time and you can never relax. Not only at Skanska but also when it comes to green, because it is getting greener and greener, and our competitors they are not sitting, they try to improve all the time and therefore we need to too" (Sven)

We would suggest that the empirical findings suggest that although establishing sound and well thought out policy in relation to environmentalism was important competition in the market and an ever-increasing societal demand for greener product offerings also created a sense of urgency. This sense of urgency, in relation to the new developments regarding greening was also picked-up on by one Group Manager

> "From, a personal perspective in terms of the employee, you feel like you need to know, there is a lot more pressure and you feel you must be involved in the conferences and meetings because you don't want to be the environmental person sitting at a meeting and hear…you know… I was at this design meeting and I heard about this…(related to environmentalism) and you just look at them with a blank stare.... and makes for interesting dynamic for people and management" (Anna)

The functional implications and the subsequent development or evolution of the chosen strategy into something that becomes more meaningful and 'concrete' was also mentioned to be dependent on the feedback loop from the bottom-up exemplified by the following group manager.

> "But one of the things lost in corporate land is that feedback from the bottom up…the environmental initiatives provide that…because the upper level management just don't know it…. like saying we want a happy employee or we want better profit margins those are things that have been in business policy a long-long time, green and environmentalism is not they have to lean on us a lot more and that is creating a new dynamic in a way" (Anna)

The empirical material in this instance, relates to a disconnect regarding the opinion and

understanding of top-management as being to far from the 'action' and therefore potentially not being well enough informed about the practical matters. This situation is therefore creating opportunities for bottom-up feed back in relation to the more practical matters that are arise in relation to environmentalism. The dynamics around strategy formulation, whether it is better top-down or bottom-up in this further demonstrated by the following empirical quote.

> "The problem is, its above my head, in terms of that the development and the funding for it comes from top management it comes to my group because we are the specialists and advisors I think it is tough because at the moment we do not have a real business strategy and we are going with the flow and doing our educations doing the best we can for the projects that we have" (Arne)

With regard to the organizational context, we have found that corporate environmentalism is seen as being a rather new strategic avenue that Skanska has engaged in. Subsequently managers are facing the breadth in definition and a variety of understandings related to the field, which all affect the decision making process. These are subsequently materialized in practical and day-to-day challenges.

4.2.3. Practical, day-to-day challenges and problems

Moving from a more strategic approach that has been discussed in our empirical findings, the following section address on practical day-to-day challenges and problems, managers at Skanska were dealing with.

When interviewing one manager, he mentioned that the use and reuse of soil, can be seen as a major environmental and economical opportunity at Skanska, specifically the Väg & Anläggning Syd (Infrastructure development unit). However, he suggested that, along with this challenges (how to deal with removed soil in an environmentally conscious manner) comes difficulties with regards to engines, machinery, and freight, which all have major environmental and economical impacts. When interviewing one of Skanska's project managers, he repeatedly addressed the issue of salvaging topsoil (the most fertile soil) and how they are frequently trying to come up with better solutions to preserve this valuable resource. He suggested that since Skåne is in a unique situation, as there is a surplus of soil

compared to rest of Sweden, it is a significant opportunity to take advantage of. However, he further explains the lack of knowledge amongst clients and how they are more often looking for the easier route, has affected how soil has been used in the past and also how it has been dealt with.

> "Soil is really a resource that you throw away most of the time, and you cannot think like that, you have to think in a longer term. So you should not really throw it away…do something with it instead" (Ulf)

He further discusses how the advancement in technology has led Skanska to be more innovative with regards to the use of soil. Skanska has been trying to market the issue of reusing soil as being a form of best practice within this field. This was done with one of their own projects that became a success, this project also helped create a positive attitude on finding demand for soil.

> "We had a job in Sunnanå which was a field of 120 000 square meters. The soil we had there was 10 plus (grading scale) which is the highest class you can have. We moved this soil to another field, which had class 5. This was cheaper than running it to the tip. So there is an economic benefit to think of the environment. It becomes cheaper for the customer and ourselves" (Ulf)

This empirical quote highlights the technical understanding that is often required in relation to environmentalism. In this instance when referencing soil and a grading scale (0-10) that measures how rich in minerals or valuable the soil was. We suggest, this demonstrates how a change in understanding is required and occurring regarding something that in previous work process was seen as waste, that need either to be removed or dumped. On the other hand, also related to this example he also noted that, it seems much easier than it actually is and that a variety of mitigating factors played a significant role and that this process did not only involve transporting the soil from point A to B. He further exemplified this, by suggesting that things like, getting regional approval takes time, which most of their clients don't have, but since this was one of their own projects, time was not an issue and all of the required checks could be carefully made.

In line with this specific empirical finding, he discussed a recent project at the newly built

Malmoe Arena, where a large amount of soil was dug up. Rather than driving it to the tip, which was only a kilometre away, Skanska approached a company who had use for this type of soil. They were given the soil for free and in return the receiving company was to pay the transportation cost. The project manager emphasized the importance of these opportunities, as it will not only lead to mutually beneficial situations, but also raises the awareness to find more recipients for the soil. Moving this to the next step however, becomes a major challenge for Skanska. He explains how these types of projects are only feasible within a limited (kilometre) radius, as the transportation cost and impact will outweigh the economical benefits. He further discusses how they are very dependent on innovation and technology and that without further technological advancement they will not be able to expand according to 'green' goals.

> "Minimizing transportation and machinery use, the need to plan and take advantage of existing material. Being able to plan the work so as to minimize as much as possible and then to continually increase the demands on the engines and filters so that you always fall in emissions" (Ulf)

Besides the issue of soil, Skanska is trying to come up with other practical solutions that will both have a positive environmental and economical impact. Within the construction industry, companies recognize energy efficient solution and reduction of carbon emission to be an importance of contributing to a sustainable world. One of Skanska's technical consultant within the one of the technical project departments, put emphasis on how the technological advancement have led them a step closer to the journey of "Deep Green". Even with Skanska's technical expertise, it is still very reliant on suppliers.

> "We do not develop products ourselves, such as doors, mouldings, insulation and so on, and it is the big problem, but we try to push the suppliers, so they can produce what we want" (Björn)

Skanska is very much limited to their suppliers and often despite Skanska's organizational size they are not the suppliers` biggest client, and therefore they are limited in how much they are able to influence the suppliers` environmental position.

One of Skanska's future ambitions is to build zero-energy housing and they claim that

although there is much that can be done here and now, there is also much that can't be done due to various external factors, including legislation and a lack of interest from energy companies.

> "one would think that by 2020 we will be able to build zero-energy house, but it also says that we do not believe it is economically viable to optimize every single house to the zero-energy house" (Björn)

The critical issue (in relation to operating in an open system) this manager, a technical consultant, suggested can be practically demonstrated in the following quote, where he discusses the building of a "Deep Green" house in Åkarp (a town in Southern Sweden)

> "someone has built a plus house, which is the first in Sweden. They have a house that delivers more heat and electricity than they consume (therefore it is called a plus house), but it is cheaper for them to give away the electricity to Eon (an electricity company), instead of selling it" (Björn)

The consultant claimed that it would become harder to sell the surplus energy, and that due to technical reasons and issues related to installation, additional costs would also have to incurred. The result was that it was not feasible to take the necessary steps to install the equipment, as the investment cost, spent by the owner would not be re-couperated.

4.2.4. Standardization and certification issues in corporate environmentalism

Standardization systems and certification issues, were a recurring topic within our empirical findings. Certification, Skanska have argued offers a means to measure and map out their sustainable goals when discussing this with one manager and the feelings towards Skanska`s environmental strategy, he replied:

> "It was good it think it's a good initiative and it will be better over time. At the moment its all the things you want to measure or evaluate the buildings of the projects, all these things are not developed or not that easy to measure. So I think it will be a better tool in the future, but you have to start somewhere, and we are working on it" (Gunnar)

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The above empirical quote also serves to highlight some of the critique that has been directed at certification in general, which mainly revolves around measurability and the complexity of defining what is measurable and how to measure it but also accounting for what is left out.

Standardization, in general is quite important within the construction industry, in terms of building codes, government regulation, and the assurance of quality control. At Skanska, they have their own intranet system, which includes information on databases for chemical substances, products and equipment, legislation, machinery and fuel. This, they suggested to be important in maintaining a high standard of control for the whole organization, as well as a shared standardized procedure amongst employees. One the group manager, who was in charge of the environmental certification, emphasized the importance of internationally recognized certification as offering them a platform to work from.

> "Focus on the facts rather than fluffy green terms, certification allows you to do this". It, (LEED) is a design roadmap for green, and assess performance in the design process on how can I make my building better so it gives you that ground work and allows you to create the building from the beginning and then we tailor it to the client whether they have an interest in being visually green" (Anna)

The nature of the market and more specifically the individual clients, environmental goals potentially place different demands on Skanska and their standardized system. In terms of standardization and certification, after two years of operation, the interviewed manager suggested, that Skanska has realized that clients potentially are not happy with the off the shelf approach to environmentalism. As the clients also are working towards specific environmental goals, which may extend beyond what Skanska is currently able to offer. As a consequence of this, the manager in the interview suggested, they are attempting to provide solutions that best meet clients` demands, as well as their own environmental objectives and are working to achieve more differentiated approaches to address this.

Again addressing standardization and in this instance also the standardized business practices in relation to initial client meetings, tendering the design phase, approval, and implementation. One of the senior managers of the infrastructure and development department mentioned, how these standardized processes do not always allow him to have

influence or impact on changes, at the point when they (department) get involved at the development phase. Even though the interviewee suggested that there maybe room for improvement, he seemed to imply that this process was limiting environmental action, which is exemplified by the following empirical quote.

> "It feels…it is already stuck in the phase of design and often difficult to change it my phase…because people feel that this is they way it should be if I try to change height or levels it is to late (in reference to the process). You can effect much more on the design phase than we are doing today" (Michael)

The standardize work process in place at Skanska have used may need to be revised or updated in order to better incorporate communication and knowledge sharing regarding potential environmental improvement methods from different organizational members. Even-though there is always room for process improvement (in relation to mentioned above) an example how Skanska tries to incorporate this environmental business policy of not sacrificing their long-term environmental goals to shorter term profits. Is exemplified in the following empirical example by a senior manager for the Öresund region:

> "We will build environmentally friendly houses, whether the customer wants it or not, even if the client is not prepared to pay the extra cost they will still get it. It may well mean that we lose the customer because we are a bit expensive, but this is now for the commercial business and not for the construction business. We have that chance because we own property" (Arne)

The interviewee further elaborated, that because of this business approach, and specifically in instances where they are the owners of these properties, this facilitates a unique situation where they are able to have more control over the green objectives pursued.

4.3. Summary

In this empirical chapter we aimed to demonstrate our empirical findings, which were split into two main sections. Firstly, a short description about Skanska`s history, background and green strategy, and secondly the empirical findings from the interviews with managers at Skanska. Regarding Skanska`s background and green strategy it is important to state, that

Skanska claims to put much emphasis on, establishing themselves as a sustainable and green company, and that they believe they are well on their way to achieve this goal.

As mentioned our introduction to this section, empirical findings about the managers' experiences and understandings of corporate environmentalism and CSR in general were divided into four sections. The first part addressed the individuals' understanding of corporate environmentalism and CSR, which our empirical findings suggest, can stem from the national context, where different national and subsequently individuals' understandings were stressed. Another important issue we demonstrated from our findings was, that age was seen as something that could play an important role in corporate environmentalism. We felt that the interviewees implied, that younger people were more socialized towards topics of CSR and had different and potentially more proactive views towards environmentalism, than older colleagues. The first part of the interview findings was concluded by demonstrating empirical quotes about organizational understanding of corporate environmentalism at Skanska. Deriving from individuals` understandings and worldviews of corporate environmentalism as well as CSR, the next area of empirical findings aimed to show implications for organizations addressing corporate environmentalism. From this strategic approach, macro-level dimension related too corporate environmentalism, we continued to address our empirical findings in relation to practical day-to-day challenges and problems facing managers, when they engaging in corporate environmentalism. Within this area, we shed light on the various problems and obstacles in practical as well as project related environmental work at Skanska. We also addressed their (problems and obstacles) implications, ranging from aspects like project-involvement issues of managers to more general distributive or supply-chain management issues. The final section in our empirical section concluded by demonstrating interview findings, with the focus on standardization and certification, which for Skanska plays a major role in establishing premise for corporate environmentalism.

5.Discussion

This final chapter of our thesis relates to our findings from the empirical data with research and the literature. It is our purpose to shed light on our findings with regard to the literature in CSR, corporate environmentalism, environmental decision-making and the evaluation of ecological-economic trade-offs. Specifically, our aim is to address our critical position, derived from our empirical findings, towards Hoffman`s (1999) conceptualization of environmental decision-making.

Our discussion will be divided into three sections. In the first section, we emphasize our critique, claims, as well as conformity with regard to Hoffman`s conceptualization. We start by presenting managerial perceptions of this conceptualization, which is then also further developed by emphasizing the usefulness, as well as dangers, when thinking in terms of the win-lose, win-win and mixed models. Based on our empirical findings, the second section of our discussion presents limitations of Hoffman`s framework. These limitations are discussed within the areas of practical and technical complexity issues of environmentalism, as on areas of worldviews and individual understandings of CSR. The third and final section serves to addresses and summarize our discussed findings and outlooks with regard to Hoffman`s framework, as well as suggestions for further research.

5.1. Managerial perceptions of Hoffman`s framework

This section, with regard to our empirical data, is to illustrate if and how mangers think in terms of Hoffman`s framework.

Porter and Linde (1995) address the relationship between environmental protection and economic growth as being an `arm-wrestling match` involving trade-offs between society`s desire for environmental improvement and the economic burden on industries. Following this argument, Hoffmann`s (1999) conceptualization of environmental decision-making, the win-lose, win-win and the mixed approaches, emphasizes economic-ecological trade-offs in relation to corporate environmentalism. Taking into consideration Hoffman`s approach in combination with our empirical findings, we argue that, the managers interviewed at Skanska could be seen to partly approach Hoffman`s framework of environmental decision-making, with regard to the evaluation of the related economic-ecological trade-offs. We see this

framework (Hoffman) as being more valuable, in an abstract form. This framework, we see as helpful for example, when generating or establishing frameworks for more general conceptualizations of corporate environmentalism. But with regard to practical, day-to-day and strategic organizational dimensions, we argue, that Hoffman`s conceptualization of environmental decision-making is too general and broad.

When exploring the empirical findings in relation to the perception of Hoffman`s framework with manager`s at Skanska, we partly align with this framework, which is, that managers are indirectly approaching and emphasizing, the spectrum of win-lose, win-win or the mixed model approaches. We see differences in the managers` perceptions of the environmental spectrum and in the way that they are approaching, thinking of and viewing such a framework.

Furthermore we claim that managers, dealing with corporate environmental decision-making, actively do not think in dimensions of the win-lose, win-win, or even the mixture approach of these models, but these thought processes are internalized in more indirect way.

It can be said that these managers were approaching win-win or mixed models solutions, as well as facing forms of win-lose models.

Our position therefore to the potential usefulness of Hoffman`s conceptualization is, that it can be conducive to map out broad and more general strategies towards corporate environmentalism.

When thinking in terms of this conceptualization, we see problems related to the variety of parties or actors involved.

The struggle between environmentalism and organization cannot only be seen as being one sided, as within these areas there are many actors involved and in even in a win-win or mixed model solutions, certain actors maybe faced with win-lose situations. In line with these complications, from our empirical findings, we observed several win-win, win-lose or mixed model approaches at Skanska, where win-actors, as well as lose-actors were not easy to determine.

We found one example which showed that Skanska had overcome technical-environmental implications for introducing a so called win-win project, but at the same time the lack of proactive government activity, lead to the project not being realized. Here the roles were reversed, as Skanska wanted to push environmental issues, but the government, with regard to this project, was not actively facilitating a means for them to achieve that.

5.2. Limitations of Hoffman`s framework

In this section we present our claimed limitations of Hoffman`s framework of environmental decision-making. We found two areas of interest in relation to the limitations Hoffman`s conceptualization of environmental decision-making, which is complexity in environmentalism, and worldviews and individual understandings of CSR and corporate environmentalism.

5.2.1. Complexity in environmentalism

The first area of limitations we see in Hoffman`s framework, addresses the complex nature of environmentalism with regard to the practical, technical dimensions in corporate environmentalism. We see Hoffman`s conceptualization to act as a more or less abstract formation, to generally map out corporate environmentalism, but when considering practical and technical implications of organizational activity, we argue that Hoffman`s approach is not able to sufficiently or properly address these issues.

Therefore, from the findings of our empirical investigation with managers at Skanska, with regard to shedding light on implications in environmental decision-making and on the challenges and opportunities managers have to face, we see the importance of taking the complex nature of environmentalism into account.

In reflection to Hoffman`s conceptualization with regard to environmental decision-making, we see the importance and main challenges in this regard as those, surrounding the broad spectrum and complexity associated with environmentalism.

Furthermore we see the importance of evaluating and understanding such complexity issues, which we claim that Hoffman`s framework does not explicitly address.

Environmentalism, due to the complex nature of the environment can be seen as something unique, always developing, changing and having a broad range of interrelations and impacts between/on corporate activity, as well as society. Also, related to the fact, that environmentalism is an emerging field, analyzing our empirical data, we found managers struggling with environmental decision-making. This could also be because of the variety, as

well as a lack of universally accepted definitions and explorations in environmentalism in literature and in organizations (Skanska).

As one interviewed manager said about Skanska`s green initiatives, slaiming that it was a good thing, which will become better over time. But he also mentioned that many of the things he wants to measure and evaluate (when involved in a building project) are not developed or are not easy to measure. In putting emphasis on developing measurement issues in corporate environmentalism, he thinks this to be an important tool that will be better in the future.

Given this example, and even though managers involved with environmental decision-making want to emphasize corporate environmental solutions, or address (and think in terms of) Hoffman`s win-win model, they find themselves hindered by problems with regard to partly developed standards and measurements systems in environmentalism. Corporate environmentalism and environmentalism in general is a broad field, and the development and establishment of measurement systems or standardization tools, with regard to corporate activity is crucial. Such standardization and measurement systems help managers and respectively their organizations to address, develop or even establish a solid foundation for corporate environmentalism and environmentalism in general

Another example in terms of measurement and standardization that we detected, can be seen in the organizational struggle, of having a standardized corporate environmental system or approach, internally, as well as towards customer or external stakeholders.
One manager interviewed about standardization and certification at Skanska, mentioned that potentially clients were not happy with the off-the-shelf approach to environmentalism at Skanska, as they (clients) too were working towards their own specific environmental goals, and that these may go beyond what Skanska is currently offering. This example shows that organizations (Skanska), as well as customers may have different understandings of environmental goals.

We have already discussed the complex nature of environmentalism, which of course is derived from the far more complex nature of the environment. The practical issues deal with problems for the search of the best and most meaningful solutions in corporate activity, across external stakeholders, regarding the struggle between business and environment. We also

found that, addressing on these complexity issues, problems, in relation to internal organizational processes and politics occur, that are heavily influenced by the slippery conception and ambiguous dimensions of corporate environmentalism.

This can be seen in one empirical finding, where a manager claimed shortcomings in the design phase of a project, out of complexity issues in corporate environmentalism. He claimed that because of the lack of adequate involvement in the initial designing phase of one project, he, when involved in later phases of the project saw difficulties in changing the mistakes (with relation to how they could improve environmental issues), which had occurred at the design phase.

The point we are trying to establish here is, that out of complexity issues in environmentalism, wrong decisions could already be made at the initial stages of projects, which then are often hard to resolve at later stages.

Out of this and other empirical findings, we conclude that, because of the partly undeveloped and missing standardization-, measuring-, or general instruction-guidelines for and in corporate environmentalism, as result of its complexity, problems occur, ranging from the practical (micro) to strategic (macro) levels within organizations. We have criticized that Hoffman`s model does not address such problems and implications in corporate environmentalism and suggest, when to evaluate environmental decision-making in terms of win-lose, win-win or mixed model approaches, to put focus on problems occurring from the complex nature of environmentalism.

Banjeree (2002) argues that, within a strategic perspective, the corporate environmental approach can be seen in the translation of environmental concerns into organizational actions, which are strategically designed to improve a firm`s environmental performance. In line with this, we see the strategic design for the translation of environmental concerns into organizational actions, based from an approach, which incorporates the complexity and ambiguity of environmentalism and its impacts on external, as well as internal organizational processes and policies.

Taking this notion into consideration, one manager interviewed mentioned, that in terms of environmental issues, there is a lack of feedback from the bottom up, because the upper management does not have the adequate understanding or knowledge of such complex and practical environmental issues.

Another manager argued also in the same topic. He criticised that, after having invented a new "green" product, he found himself struggling with other divisions in the company introducing this product or technology. This was because these divisions did not have the proper knowledge or understanding about the impacts and possible benefits of this product or development. This example can be further developed, when we detected such "technical-environmentalism" problems at Skanska at their different division in different markets (countries).

All these demonstrated examples can be seen as a motivating reason of incorporating the complexity aspects of environmentalism and its related implications on corporate activity. It further becomes clear that, not incorporating complexity in relation to Hoffman`s framework, limits the scope of the win-lose, win-win, or mixed models to be more relevant only in general conceptualizations.

5.2.2. Worldviews and individual understandings

Within this area, our claimed limitations with regard to Hoffman`s conceptualization in environmental decision-making, the emphasis is put on worldviews and individual understandings of corporate environmentalism and CSR in general.

Worldviews (beliefs, values and emotions), which potentially play towards an individual understanding of environmentalism, we suggest to be seen as a resource for further framing, how manager`s individual ideas and actions manifest themselves in relation to corporate environmentalism.

Our discussion in this section addresses our supposition that worldviews play a mitigating role in the different approaches and understandings of manager`s environmental decision-making. By addressing the acknowledgement that individual`s worldviews influence environmental decision-making, we follow up and enlarge our view and standpoint towards Hoffman`s conceptualization of environmental decision-making.

From our empirical findings we conclude that, derived out of individuals` different worldviews and understandings of corporate environmentalism or environmentalism in general, individuals perceive the potentially same situation in environmental decision-making and the evaluation of ecological-economic trade-offs from different views and angels, as well as approaching them in different ways.

Reflecting on Hoffman`s win-lose, win-win or mixed model framework, we suggest worldviews have the potential to broaden and deepen our analysis towards thinking about corporate environmentalism, but in a more interpretative way because as with many models, interpretation is a subjective process, which is based on a perceived reality. Perception, as argued by Harding and Long (1998) is a process of interpretation that is influenced by knowledge, experience, motives and values. Our empirical data and material does not however conclusively demonstrate our supposition that worldviews and understandings of corporate environmentalism or environmentalism in general influence environmental decision-making processes and evaluate ecologic-economic trade-offs, but given our empirical data, we think to have enough credibility to argue in favour of this claim.

In terms of corporate environmentalism from interviews with managers` at Skanska, we found that there was both a broad and a narrow understanding or conceptualization of the term and its meaning. This was largely influenced and dependent on the managers` functional role and business unit. We have demonstrated practical and concrete examples of this on a range of issues, from what product to use and its environmental impact, the market forces around being green, colleagues` interpretations of fundamental issues etc. This confusion (of the understanding of environmentalism) we felt was true not only at Skanska, but for much of the literature reviewed, derived from a theoretical perspective of CSR, which corporate environmentalism can be seen as part of. Göbbels (2002), argues that there is a lack of an all-embracing definition of CSR. This position, we have tried to address in our research and specifically in the theoretical section by asking the question "what is the responsibility of an organization?"

Part of the realization when analyzing the theoretical aspects of Hoffman`s, win-lose, win-win or mixed models or perspectives, is, that they address issues in corporate environmentalism too simplistically and narrowly, resulting in all the dynamics associated (worldviews, understanding etc) with regard to corporate environmentalism and organizational responsibility not being incorporated. Therefore, managers individually conceptualise, potentially fundamental understandings of corporate environmentalism. Almost all the managers interviewed, mentioned the importance of corporate environmentalism or being 'green' as something that is a core value for themselves, as well as for Skanska Sweden. The importance or awareness of environmental issues we do not dispute we would even suggest

that it could be seen as something that was internally consistent with all the managers interviewed. However, potentially less consistent were the exact values and ethics, which governed or influenced actual decisions. In the empirical section we developed our themes of National context, Age (generational) and Hoffman`s mixed model approach or the approach of the triple bottom line, to establish an understanding about the relationships between worldviews and corporate environmentalism, furthermore between individual understandings of corporate environmentalism and environmental decision-making.

An example in relation to this, from the interviews would be from a Manager originally from the United States of America and actively involved in Skanska, Sweden's 'green' certification process. As discussed in the empirical section, Skanska stresses, that certification plays a major part in developing their 'green' practices and provides a means to measure, compare and map out 'green' initiatives, locally and nationally within the organization. As part of the certification process each office is able to measure and gain points for pro-environmental initiatives, as comparable example of the two countries we can look at the points that could be received for having bicycle racks for employees to park their bikes. She stressed that in America it is not common, that people (employees) cycle to work. Subsequently this initiative may potentially only be seen as 'window-dressing' in the USA. Where as in Sweden, they would receive certification rating points, for this initiative as people often are both able to cycle to work as well as it being a potentially functional value amongst many Swedes. This seemingly simple example we argue partly highlights the complexities involved in relation to certification, but also how worldviews are informed by a national context.

In terms of Skanska's 'green' goals, certification and government compliance are key issues that they believe can drive the business case for environmentalism forward. The potential reality is, that due to a cross-national approach to environmentalism, the role of national and local pre-conditions or worldviews, come to play a larger part in relation to the fundamental understanding of corporate environmentalism.

We further found that another contributing theme towards approaching corporate environmentalism, which also often recurred, was related to age, although empirically, we were not able to specify or identify a specific generation. Many of the respondents were of the opinion that the younger generation 'cared' or assumed a more environmentally oriented approach more readily than older colleagues. We tend to suggest that there was an underlying

feeling and attitude by the managers interviewed, suggesting, that for these 'younger' organizational members, environmentalism was more readily included in their daily work, than by 'older' colleagues.

Our empirical findings about individual`s worldviews and understandings of corporate environmentalism as well as of CSR in general, point out that the shareholder approach of CSR, or the suggested paradigm of business, as being predominantly viewed only through economic values and dimensions could be considered less valid. In addition, our findings about the manager`s worldviews and understandings of CSR suggest, that corporate environmentalism and in a broader sense CSR, is shaped by the societal CSR approach and furthermore by the stakeholder approach, which considers society as a stakeholder. Also, deriving from the conceptualization that different individual understandings or worldviews, shape and influence corporate environmentalism, we claim that younger people do not see, think, approach and talk about environmental decision-making and ecologic-economic trade-offs in the same way as the literature, in particular Hoffman (1999) suggest. Younger organizational members have a greater desire to contribute towards environmental issues, as well as their societal attitudes potentially being more comfortable in embracing environmentalism, than previous generations. This can be seen in the fact that older employees often still think in a mindset that was potentially socialized under the economic, profit-maximization paradigm, whereas the younger generation potentially mirror the societal approach, which actively incorporates economic growth and environmental protection. However, we also found that they are limited by the designs and conceptualizations of corporate environmentalism, for example in one department at Skanska, a top-down approach was still too prominent, causing problems to evaluate the proper general corporate environmental strategy, as environmental-complexity issues, understood by the lower levels, did not make their way up to the top of the department.

Out of our findings we argue that such a proactive stance towards corporate environmentalism can open more and new opportunities for evaluating economic-ecological trade-offs and environmental decision-making.

However, a more critical position is taken in relation to corporate environmentalism by Banerjee (2001). He argues, that there exists a social desirability bias, which stems from the correctness of being seen as environmentally responsible, which led, amongst other things, to firms, espousing environmental claims which are increasingly being brought under scrutiny.

In relation to our analogy about generational thinking, it could be suggested, that even though the younger generation are perceived as more environmental conscious, this could also stem from a societal bias, as suggested by Banerjee (2001). This bias could manifest in a pressure to be seen or to act in more environmentally conscious ways. However, in regard to Skanska, we do not necessarily feel environmental consciousness stemming from societal bias, to be the case, contrarily we have seen a genuine interest in environmentalism.

Our empirical findings in relation to Hoffman`s win-lose, win-win, as well as the mixed approach, in light of the CSR literature suggest, that concerns for the environment can be best seen at two levels internal (personal) and external (economic trade-off's regulation etc.) concern for the environment. Other researchers who have more fully developed and embraced an internal and external approach to environmentalism (Banerjee and MCKeage, 1994; referenced in Banerjee, 2001a) suggest, that those with internal environmental concern had higher 'scores' than those whose focus was on external environmental concerns. An exemplification of this can be seen in our empirical findings, where Skanska (internal) is prepared to build an environmental friendly house, but the clients (external) may not be prepared to pay for this type of house. Although Skanska shows an environmental concern in building environmental houses, they are also aware, that some clients are not willing to pay a premium price to achieve environmental goals.

This can bring into question not only what Skanska defines as environmentalism, but also what society or organizational members define as reasonable and responsible measures towards corporate environmentalism.

To conclude this section about our claimed limitations of Hoffman`s framework, it can be also said that the complexity of environmentalism has impact on individual understandings and worldviews of corporate environmentalism. Furthermore, we claim that the complexity of environmentalism can cause to influence and shape the individual understandings and worldviews towards corporate environmentalism. This can be seen in one empirical finding, where out of technical-complexity issues in environmentalism, one department and their managers did not only have different views of certain work related, technical environmental issues. This kind of lack of knowledge caused, that their individual understandings towards environmentalism were not that proactive and that they were not that positive towards environmentalism as before.

On the other hand we claim that individual understandings and worldviews of CSR can have impact on the perception on complexity issues in environmentalism. If individuals, or their

individual understanding of corporate environmentalism does not feel positive or good about that, then also, their curiosity in exploring or to unknot complexity issues in corporate environmentalism is no that high, which then also has negative outcomes on the productivity in corporate environmental work.

These two broad areas of our claimed limitations towards Hoffman`s conceptualizations are not that easy to frame, as complexity and individual understanding are ambiguous fields and as illustrated above, that they can overlap, which we often recognized within our field of study.

5.3. Summary of findings and suggestions for further research

We have claimed that worldviews and individual understandings, shape and influence corporate environmentalism or CSR in general, as well as the complex nature of environmentalism having an impact on corporate environmental work. This point of view we see as being conducive and supportive towards our general position and opinion regarding Hoffman`s conceptualization of corporate environmentalism and environmental decision-making.

In general, we see that Hoffman`s conceptualization, does not adequately address the big picture (related to what the question of what is CSR actually about) neither does is adequately address issues at a more detailed practical level in relation to corporate environmentalism.

Regarding the stated claim above, we further see Hoffman`s approach as not addressing our suggestion, which is, that individual`s understandings of CSR shape and influence work in corporate environmentalism and also the general conception of CSR, which is based on societal concerns towards corporate activity.

It can be said that Hoffman`s approach intentionally does not address worldviews and societal issues, because of its focus on strategic corporate activity in combination with environmentalism. But when considering our previous suggestions, it could be said that such issues should be included in corporate environmentalism and especially in environmental decision-making. Or to put it different, Hoffman`s framework does not include individual-societal issues, when to evaluate ecological-environmental trade-offs and engage in corporate

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environmentalism. Clearly, within the win-lose, win-win or mixed model approaches, Hoffman does mention complexity issues, with regard to government legislation, technical shortcomings etc., but he did not explicitly address the possible impacts of individual understandings or societal worldviews on corporate environmentalism, especially on environmental decision-making.

From our empirical research we see, that in general, Hoffman`s framework seem to exclude issues of the big picture or goal of CSR, which is based on individual and respectively societal concerns about corporate activity. We think that taking this into consideration is conducive for improvements in managerial work within corporate environmentalism and environmental decision-making. We also claim that Hoffman`s conceptualization does oversee details in the field of corporate environmentalism in relation to the complex nature of environmentalism. We felt that the problems, managers at Skanska faced, are partly caused by different understandings or knowledge of/in corporate environmentalism.

To minimize or overcome the claimed limitations of Hoffman`s conceptualization we suggest to place emphasis on an (organizational) approach, which aspires to incorporate complexity related issues of environmentalism as well as worldviews and individual understandings of corporate environmentalism. Such an approach should strive to establish and develop a common understanding in corporate environmentalism, in terms of technical-complexity, but also individual-understanding issues.
This then would align the internal and external differentiated organizational approaches of corporate environmentalism and environmental decision-making, as well the different judgments and social constructions of individual understandings and worldviews in CSR and corporate environmentalism.

Concluding our discussion, we suggest further research addressing issues with regard to environmental complexity, worldviews and individual understandings of CSR. We see importance in putting more focus on environmental strategy and the relation to practical problems, addressing the complexity of environmentalism. Furthermore research in this field should focus on in depth studies about the impacts of worldviews and individual understandings on CSR, respectively corporate environmentalism.

6.Conclusion

To conclude our thesis, this chapter aims to summarize general issues of the various chapters, our empirical findings and its implications towards the theory and literature.

As addressed in the introduction, we placed emphasis on corporate environmentalism and environmental decision-making because we were able to get access and interview with managers at Skanska, for our empirical study. The fact that Skanska has moved towards embracing corporate environmental strategy, focused our attention towards this field of literature, and here we further found that environmental decision-making processes to be basic factors for a beneficial engagement in corporate environmentalism. In this regard, Hoffman`s (1999) environmental decision-making conceptualization, which includes the win-lose, win-win and mixed approaches, was taken brought into focus for our empirical study.

For the development of a better understanding of our field of study, in the theoretical chapter, we addressed areas ranging from CSR in general towards environmental decision-making. At the beginning of the theory section it was our aim to demonstrate the broad field of CSR and the different approaches stemming from CSR *(shareholder, stakeholder and societal).* Having established a general view of CSR we further stressed the strategic implications of corporate responsible activity, where we emphasized the concepts of strategic CSR, strategic corporate sustainability and corporate environmentalism. Within this illustration of literature, we discussed the lack of a general definition or conceptualization of CSR, as well as different CSR approaches, which often overlap and where we see this notion of general importance for our study. From these ambiguous conceptualizations and the strategic approaches of CSR we introduced Hoffman`s conceptualization of environmental decision-making and the related ecological-economic trade-offs. The fundamental message of this framework was the suggestion, that mixed approaches of win-lose and win-win approaches in environmental decision-making are most beneficial for organizations, as well as for the environment.

Furthering our illustrated theoretical section, we presented our empirical findings from our interviews with managers at Skanska. By first introducing Skanska`s "green" strategy and background, we then addressed on findings from the interviews, which we divided into four sections. First we put emphasis on the managers` individual understandings in relation to Skanska`s corporate environmentalism, as well as on their general worldviews with regard to corporate environmentalism and CSR, this section, was further divided into areas of national

contexts, age and organizational context. We then showed findings related to the various challenges and problems the interviewed managers` at Skanska had to face with regard to environmental strategy and environmental decision-making processes. From empirical findings related to strategic aspects of corporate environmental behavior, we emphasized the areas of practical, day-to-day challenges for the managers at Skanska. Our empirical chapter, was concluded by addressing the, investigated obstacles and problems regarding standardization and certification issues, managers at Skanska had experienced.

In the next chapter we discussed and elaborated our empirical findings with regard to the illustrated literature in the theoretical chapter, where the focus was on Hoffman`s conceptualization of environmental decision-making. At the beginning of our discussion chapter we framed our standpoint and critique towards this conceptualization, in terms of Hoffman`s conceptualization not actively being perceived by managers and that thinking in terms of this framework may cause negative implications for corporate environmentalism. Deriving from our critique, we then presented our suggested limitations of Hoffman´s framework, divided into the areas of complexity issues of environmentalism and worldviews and understandings of CSR and corporate environmentalism. The essence of these limitations we found to stem, out of the complexity of environmentalism and individual understandings of corporate environmentalism, managerial work and environmental decision-making was often hard to conceptualize. In terms of limitations and the complexity of environmentalism, we saw that managers were struggling with standardization and measurement issues in environmentalism, as well as with internal and external definitions or conceptualizations of corporate environmentalism. Addressing limitations with regard to worldviews and individual understandings of corporate environmentalism and CSR, we discussed that these influence and shape the managers perception towards corporate environmentalism.

The general conclusion of our study is, that Hoffman`s conceptualization does not address the origins of CSR, as well as the complex nature of environmentalism. To reduce or overcome the discussed limitations of Hoffman`s conceptualization we suggest, to take the fundamental, as well as individual understandings of CSR into consideration within corporate environmentalism. Furthermore we argue that emphasis should be put on further developing overall understandings in terms of environmental complexity issues.

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8. Appendix

List of Interviews (8)

Background Information on Interviewees with alias names

Date: 21 March 2011
Name: Jasper
Job Title: Project Engineer
Department: Väg & Anläggning Syd (Infrastructure Development Unit)

Date: 23 March 2011
Name: Ulf
Job Title: Project Manager
Department: Väg & Anläggning Syd (Infrastructure Development Unit)

Date: 24 March 2011
Name: Michael
Job Title: Project Manager
Department: Väg & Anläggning Syd (Infrastructure Development Unit)

Date: 1 April 2011
Name: Sven
Job Title: Executive Vice President
Department: Senior Executive Team

Date: 19 April 2011
Name: Gunnar
Job Title: Project Manager
Department: Teknik & Projekteringsledning (Engineering & Project Management)

Date: 26 April 2011
Name: Björn
Job Title: Technical Consultant
Department: Teknik & Projekteringsledning (Engineering & Project Management)

Date: 27 April 2011

Name: Anna

Job Title: Environmental Manager (LEED)

Department: Teknik & Projekteringsledning (Engineering & Project Management)

Date: 4 May 2011

Name: Arne

Job Title: Managing Director

Department: Skanska Öresund AB (Commercial Development)