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report

Building trust with  
stakeholders

## Workshop Series

# Engaging with NGOs: challenging but rewarding?

Key elements of the discussion

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As Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs)' influence have grown, recent years have seen a burgeoning of both prominent campaigns targeting business and, conversely, alliances between businesses and NGOs on issues linked to companies' core activities. Those range from improving companies' environmental indicators or designing innovative environmentally friendly products, through to collaboration in monitoring supply chain activities, setting new industry standards, or in jointly shaping legislation.

With the purpose of sharing views and experiences on these new alliances, CSR Europe, in association with its national partner organisation Orse, organised two meetings in July and September, the first in Paris and the second one in Brussels, focusing respectively on the involvement of NGOs in social and environmental auditing and on the new alliances developing between NGOs and companies. The debates were initiated by presentations given jointly by companies and NGOs explaining how they work together. At both events, NGOs were invited to attend the morning session to present their experiences and to explain the reasons for the debates in which they were now engaging with companies.

A number of questions were addressed, such as:

Why do companies decide to partner with NGOs? What are the risks and benefits?

What kind of partnerships can be developed?

Taking into account that there are 900 NGOs present in Europe, how do you select the right partner?

How do you partner with an NGO? What are the ingredients of successful partnerships?

The experiences and discussions are summarised below.

## **Partnering with NGOs: risks and benefits**

### **Benefits for the company**

There are several ways in which NGO partnership can be profitable to companies:

#### **Contributing specific skills**

NGOs possess expertise that companies often lack. They may have a thorough knowledge of certain geographic areas, or specific social and environmental issues with which the company is not used to having to cope. Companies are often aware of the need to adopt a responsible behaviour from a social, environmental or ethical point of view, yet struggle with the 'How to'. NGOs can play the role of catalysts to help develop more responsible approaches, and to act as bridges between the company and other stakeholders, such as governments, and local communities.

The skills found in companies and NGOs are often complementary. Chris Marsden, Chair, Amnesty International Business Group in the UK, also points out that NGOs are often staffed by idealists who need: "help in learning about the art of possible", while business people often: "tend to be good at finding easily implemented solutions".<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> David Grayson and Adrian Hodges, « Corporate Social Opportunity - 7 Steps to make CSR work for your business, Greenleaf Publishing, 2004

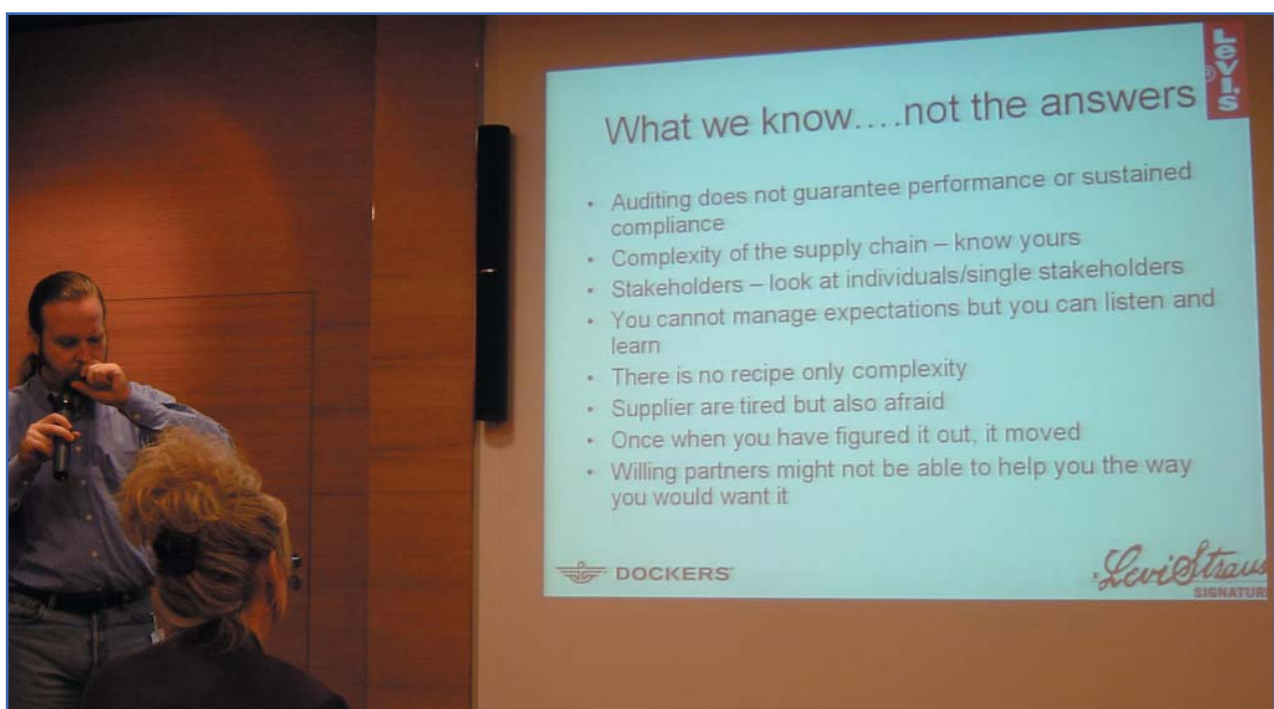
Total decided to partner with Pro-Natura in the Niger Delta after discovering projects run by the NGO. The cooperation with Pro-Natura teams enabled Total to benefit from the NGO's experience in developing participative approaches to help local communities both produce and implement their own development plans through local governance structures. Through this cooperation, Total was able to help 100,000 people living near to its production site.

Microsoft has been partnering with the UK charity NSPCC (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children) for the past ten years. Every year, an employee from the charity has been seconded to the community affairs department. These secondees used their knowledge gained in the non-profit sector to help Microsoft develop its own strategy for partnerships with NGOs in the UK.

Through the secondment scheme, the NSPCC benefited from valuable insights into the functioning of multinational companies.

The involvement of NGOs may lead to the development of innovative products and processes within the company. For instance, the partnership with the green NGO Environmental Alliance led Fedex to develop novel and more environmentally friendly transport solutions. NGOs may also be involved in impact assessment projects.

Tools can also be jointly developed: examples include a tool for SME environmental self assessment developed by Group Caisse d'Epargne together with WWF and a web site and magazine on genetic engineering developed by Novozymes together with the Danish Society for Nature Conservation.



### **Raising Awareness**

By bringing new insights and points of views, NGOs can help to raise awareness of certain issues inside the company and find innovative answers to particular issues.

In certain cases, dialogue or alliance with an NGO can become a real eye-opener. The partnership between the Danish Society for Nature Conservation and Novozymes led the company to open a debate about genetic engineering that had not previously taken place. Similarly, a dialogue between Coca-Cola and Greenpeace started after the green NGO launched a campaign during the Sydney Olympics. As a result of these exchanges, Coca-Cola now has a better understanding of NGOs, is better equipped to anticipate potential NGO campaigns, and will become much better at responding to them in the future. In the discussion, it was acknowledged that engaging with NGOs often leads to companies managing emerging risks better.

NGOs may also be useful allies in improving a company's training efforts.

Based on a written agreement, Hydro funds Amnesty International for approximately 120.000 € a year. In return Amnesty International Norway assists Hydro with its human rights training. For instance, the NGO provides three-hour training sessions for young managers in an internal training programme. These are open discussions in which dilemmas are highlighted for which participants need to find specific solutions that will work for their company.

Together with the joint development of environmental and social criteria in lending and supplier choice, and the work conducted to help clients with their own sustainable development policies, training is an important dimension of the partnership between Group Caisse d'Epargne and WWF. The initial ambitious project, to assess sustainable impact with clients, revealed that Group Caisse d'Epargne sales people were unprepared to integrate new procedures that were very different from former ones. Therefore, clients felt uncomfortable when being asked unusual questions. Training is needed to resolve this issue, which is being jointly organised with WWF. WWF is intervening in the group's university and in its local branches and has also contributed to the production of a booklet aimed at raising awareness among employees and cooperative shareholders.

### **Endorsement from a reputed third-party**

NGOs benefit from a very high level of trust and credibility among the general public. One motivation for companies to partner with NGOs is to benefit from a third party endorsement that will provide more credibility to some of their activities and possibly lead to gains in their reputations.

## However, partnerships with NGOs are not risk-free

### **A partnership is not an insurance policy against campaigns**

It is a fact that NGOs have often attacked companies in the past and will continue to do so in the future. This is a complex issue from a corporate perspective. Big multinational companies often work in several areas of business areas. By entering a partnership in one specific sector of their activity, they often take the risk of being more exposed to potential attacks in all other areas. This risk increases with the fact that there is often a multiplicity of opinions within one NGO, making conflicts and campaigns at local or national level less predictable.

However, companies occupy a sensitive position since they face the risk of being confronted with the permanent threat of censure by NGOs if their practices are considered to be harmful to the environment or to society, and yet they do not necessarily have the means to avoid such mistakes without external help. It was emphasised that the actions of certain NGOs are inevitable: either companies are exposed to the risk of attacks and loss of image, or they take a more reasoned risk by accepting the need to communicate with NGOs.

Furthermore, the distinction between being attacked or gaining cooperation is not as clear-cut as one may think. In a report for Covalence<sup>2</sup>, Antoine Mach pointed out that for every nine cases where pressure was exerted on companies by NGOs, seven cases later turned into active cooperation.

NGOs that attended the meeting were very clear on the fact that a partnership is not an insurance policy against a campaign by the NGO. They are not willing to make any concessions to businesses in terms of changing their focus or their aims in order to adapt to the needs of the latter. By involving the private sector in their actions is just another way of attaining their goals. Yet, it is more likely that an NGO is going to inform a company of an imminent campaign if there is already a strong relationship between the company and the NGO on a different issue.

Confidentiality of information is also an issue. In the framework of the discussions taking place between financial institutions that have signed up to the Equator principles and NGOs the latter have asked for detailed information on project finances in order for them to monitor the implementation of the principles of project financing. In most cases this is totally unacceptable to financial institutions.

Finally, some local NGOs have unstable structures, employing a mix of permanent and volunteer staff that can raise problems of competence and reliability.

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<sup>2</sup> Antoine Mach, Covalence, "Le pouvoir des ONG sur les entreprises: pression, partenariat, évaluation", 2002 available at <http://www.covalence.ch/docs/annCHTMfr.pdf>



### **How to avoid risks**

During the meeting, several companies stressed that taking some precautions may help in avoiding risks:

- Although the chemistry and personal ties between those involved in the company and the NGO are important, companies have to establish a formal co-operation with the organisation, rather than with an individual within the organisation.
- Even if the NGO is very competent on specific issues in one country, it is important to check whether this competency extends to other countries.
- It is better to avoid partnering with an organisation if you know that it is looking for an opportunity to target your company or sector.
- It may be worth investing some time in gaining a better understanding of the NGO's trustworthiness. By being a member of the steering committee of Transparency International, Hydro got involved in the development of the guidelines designed to avoid bribery. Through the detail of these discussions, Hydro became much more familiar with the NGO, and mutual trust developed between the two organisations.
- Companies and NGOs have to be focused on common targets in the partnership. Cooperation needs to be organised around specific issues, otherwise there is more likelihood of disagreements and conflicts.

Risks also exist on the NGO side since they have to be transparent in the eyes of their grassroots members. They risk their reputation and credibility when associating with businesses that do not measure up to the expectations of their constituents and peers

### **How to develop a successful partnership?**

While the chemistry of each partnership will have a number of unique aspects, there will be much that partners can take from the experience and share with others by contributing case studies to "recipes for success".

### **Key ingredients for a successful partnership**

The most important considerations are common interests and goals that truly demonstrate a real synergy between partners. To make it work, it is essential to invest sufficient time and energy into the partnership.

A jointly agreed memorandum of understanding or an agreed contract detailing the objectives and clear budgetary arrangements will also contribute to the success of the alliance. Clear targets must be set, individuals must be made responsible and the advancement of targets must be checked regularly in order that problems can be tackled at source rather than become exposed when it is too late. Transparency and regular communications between the parties are crucial throughout the entire process.



The company has to be committed at a very high level of management to ensure that decisions do not become just empty promises. For instance, Coca Cola's CEO personally instigated work on HFC-technology and the adoption of a pro-active attitude and dialogue with Greenpeace. As a result, the dialogue with Greenpeace on HFC was observed very seriously across the whole organisation.

A steering committee that includes members of the company's senior management team and the NGO has proved to be a useful mechanism. Offering a considerable share of the decision making power to the NGO may contribute to convincing it of the good will of the company and contribute to the generation of trust in the partnership. At the end of the day, the important conclusion is that the governance of the partnership needs to be very carefully devised.

Despite the fact that their views on genetic engineering and its opportunities and risks differed widely, Novozymes, the biotech-based world leader in enzymes and micro-organisms, allied itself with the Danish Society for Nature Conservation (DN), the largest conservation NGO in Denmark, to give discussions on genetic issues a more prominent position in education. The project, called Genius, was created for young people aged between 14 and 18 years and comprised tools and activities that had been jointly developed including the Genius Magazine, a set of role plays, a video, and an interactive website. In order to produce a balanced communication, experts from both sides were involved, - however, DN had the final editorial control for the material produced. The partners estimate that a third of Danish youth has been using the material produced.

Carrefour approached the International Federation of Human Rights (FIDH) for help in implementing its commitment to respecting Human Rights in 1997. A dialogue between the company and the NGO the following year led to an agreement on various aspects of the issue.. To implement them, Carrefour and the FIDH created a partnership, INFANS, an association under French law, whose role is to monitor social risks, carry out spot checks and to identify local NGOs able to oversee the roll-out of Carrefour's initiative in the field. The majority of seats on the Board of INFANS are occupied by the NGO.

The financial aspects of partnerships are often important for NGOs now that public funding is tending to become increasingly more difficult to acquire, while collecting money from individuals is a tenuous and time-consuming exercise. Amnesty International made it clear that money was not necessary for its organisation to engage in partnerships (for instance, the partnership between Amnesty International and Casino on supply chain issues does not involve a financial payment by the supermarket). Other NGOs such as WWF consider that financial contributions from companies ensure that corporate partners develop a strong involvement in the alliance and have more consideration before just walking away from it, thereby ensuring that the partnership becomes sustainable in the long term. It is important to have complete transparency and trust on the financial aspects of the project.

It is possible to develop a partnership despite opposed views. Novozymes and DN decided to promote discussions on genetic engineering jointly, despite opposite views on the topic. A very

clear written agreement was made to avoid confusion or misunderstanding. After an initial phase of understandable cautiousness and defensiveness, trust developed and all the people involved on each side were able to make full and constructive use of each other's competence.

Indeed, personal relationships do matter, since all the individuals involved in the joint project on each side must be dedicated and able to work constructively together in order to achieve common goals.

During the meeting, participants agreed that starting a joint project together with an NGO and business competitors was frequently not a problem. Indeed, it seems often helpful to join forces with others, as the partnership will then be able to attract more attention and play a greater role, encouraging others to follow suit.

## How to select the right partners?

Certain companies have pre-defined guidelines for selecting a partner, for others it is more a matter of adapting to the particular circumstances of each partnership. In both cases however, a thorough research on the chosen NGO is the first essential step.

Before entering a partnership, it is very important to know exactly what kind of organisation the company is dealing with: is it known for taking an "aggressive" stance or is it considered to be a more "business-friendly" NGO? What is its goal and operating processes? Who are its constituents?

Levi Strauss doesn't proactively look for partnerships, it leaves it up to NGOs interested in co-operation with the company to start a dialogue first. However, once initial contacts have been established, Levi Strauss further investigates the NGO's mission, practices and the context in which it operates in order to assess whether to pursue a dialogue and then the possibility of co-operation.

Admical and Fondation de France suggest the use of the 'carré des comptabilités'<sup>3</sup> methodology in order to identify whether the identities, projects, means and interests of the company and the NGO are compatible.

- 1<sup>st</sup> step: define clearly the characteristics of your own organisation
- 2<sup>nd</sup> step: define clearly the characteristics of your potential partner
- 3<sup>rd</sup> step: measure how complementary you and your potential partner are to one another (suggested scale: similar - close - complementary - far - contradictory).

	<i>NGO Identity</i>	<i>NGO project</i>	<i>NGO means</i>	<i>NGO interest</i>
<b>Company Identity</b>				
<b>Company project</b>				
<b>Company means</b>				
<b>Company interest</b>				

<sup>3</sup> Admical and Fondation de France, Nouvelles alliances dans la sphère privée: entreprises et ONGs, August 2002, <http://www.admical.asso.fr/default.asp?contentid=35>

In general, the multiple factors implicated in the explanation of a partnership make it difficult to apply a strict set of guidelines equally to all the parties. For instance, other companies, organisations or international institutions may also be involved in the process. Also, local NGOs may already have a project to which the company should conform rather than starting further small scale projects.

A “wish-list” of characteristics to look for in a potential NGO partner emerged from the discussions during the two workshops:

- Competences (they matter more than size) and track record
- Capacity to scale up and grow the project on a broader scale (geographically, and in terms of size and impact)
- Consistency in the behaviour, professionalism and a record of stability/reliability
- Business approach in its management
- Strong position of the NGO in the community/within its own sector
- Ability of the NGO to access resources and make multilateral partnerships that can ensure the sustainability of projects in the longer term
- Ability of the NGO to remain independent from the company or government
- Interest in opening a dialogue
- International visibility

The independence of the NGO is a guarantee of its credibility. Working with critical NGOs such as Greenpeace is therefore a plus because of its credibility and authority in the field.

In addition, it is worth remembering that NGOs such as Médecins Sans Frontières, the International Committee of the Red Cross and WWF all have their own criteria in how they decide whether to engage in a business partnership. For instance WWF takes into account the following fundamental issues:

- Partner - Is the partner the one with whom WWF can achieve most in this area?
- Perception - How will the engagement be perceived?
- Communication - What are the communication objectives and opportunities?

In the case of WWF, any partnership proposal is examined by all departments within WWF before being accepted, to ensure that the activities of the selected company are compatible with all WWF's work areas (e.g. climate change, freshwater, species). Médecins Sans Frontières will not partner with a company that: is involved in producing and selling arms; has breached international law; participates in activities contrary to the ILO conventions or that harm health or the environment; is an extractive industry, or participates in any other activity/sector that does not correspond to the image and beliefs of the NGO.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Groupe One, SEE Management Files N° 14, July 2003 'les partenariats entreprises/ONG' available at [http://www.groupeone.be/fr/seemf14\\_1.html](http://www.groupeone.be/fr/seemf14_1.html)

## **What levels and structures should be involved in relationships with NGOs?**

Partnerships can be developed at different levels in a company - depending on the structure of the company, and the independence of national offices, the corporate centre will be more or less involved in the development of all partnerships.

The corporate centre is involved in NGO alliances and relationships at global as well as national level within Coca-Cola. This is due to the fact that the brand is internationally known, hence a difficulty in one country may trigger an NGO action or a boycott in another country. Therefore, the company needs at corporate level to have an overview of existing local links, and in certain situations will work to develop wider alliances with global NGOs.

Other companies like Johnson & Johnson, McDonald's, and Novozymes, leave a lot of freedom to their people working at national level. None of them has formal guidelines, they only have the requirement to inform the corporate centre about developments. However, it was recognised that in some cases, the corporate centre is not informed about certain initiatives, which could possibly lead to difficulties.

Microsoft has developed guidelines for partnerships with NGOs, but they remain flexible so that they can be adapted to suit different situations. Microsoft assesses the viability of a partnership by answering questions such as: does the NGO have credibility and the capability to support the project? Does it have a sustainable plan? Will the project be continued after the partnership ends?

BP recently developed a new approach aimed at engaging civil society organisations more consistently across different countries.

The headquarters of BP International in London follow the progress of international framework partnerships.

The London HQ is also responsible for defining guidelines for the establishment of partnerships at regional and local level to ensure effective networking among the organisations chosen by BP's overseas offices. A list of priorities is regularly reviewed - the national offices can engage with civil society organisations to develop actions that fit within these and local priorities. Appropriate levels of social and community investment reflect its business presence in the country.

There is also some flexibility for local offices to become involved in other areas of activity that they consider important, based on the needs at national level and specific business operations. BP has also developed a network of regional co-ordinators to manage relationships with civil society, which also ensures that information between the country and the national companies is widely shared in a coherent manner.



Negotiating a partnership with an NGO at international level, but with the actual implementation managed by the company's country representatives together with the NGO offices at national level may seem ideal. However, the local offices of an international NGO are often very diverse and often have priorities that do not match local priorities. In practice, implementation of global agreements at local level has often proved to be complicated, especially when the implementation of major projects extends beyond Europe.

Sodexho's experience with international NGO networks revealed that these networks may not always function in a coherent and cohesive way. There may be difficulties in sharing information internationally. This seems particularly true for assessments of multinational companies. In addition, the national NGO offices did not always seem willing to defend positions to convince their international colleagues within the NGO network. In such a situation, a company would need to communicate individually with the various NGO offices at national level.

Even if an agreement is reached at an international or European level, the European/international office may not be able to exert sufficient influence on the local NGO offices to ensure cooperation. Indeed, for each partnership, the International secretariat of Care has to contact the country representations to 'sell' them the project. Also, some NGOs follow different approaches to partnering with companies in different countries. For instance training programmes for company managers - Amnesty International in Norway has been providing training to company managers on a chargeable basis whereas Amnesty International's UK branch just will not entertain the idea of training company managers.

## Formal partnership or informal cooperation?

There are many other means to be explored beyond formal partnerships. Indeed, some NGOs may be totally opposed to partnerships and/or financial relationships with companies, but may accept being part of a steering committee or participate in a stakeholder dialogue.

Several companies have developed steering committees or stakeholder panels in order to exchange views and get feedback from stakeholders. Sodexo prefers to get feedback from NGOs through one-to-one meetings. These forms of dialogue and engagement are also less rigid and easier to develop outside formal contractual relationships.

Greenpeace is well known for its campaigns against very visible brands and doesn't formally partner with companies. It refuses any cooperation with certain sectors such as extractive and chemicals industries. However, a campaign against the use of HFC gases that replaced the ozone-damaging CFCs that targeted Coca-Cola, MacDonald's and Unilever sparked a positive response from the three companies and developed into dialogue and informal cooperation.

Coca-Cola's engineers were already working on alternative solutions, yet dialogue with Greenpeace, which had already been working on a specific HFC-free technology, led Coca-Cola to understand the problem better and learn of possible solutions. Several meetings took place, which helped Coca-Cola define a public commitment for the introduction of new technologies within the company. The common agenda with Greenpeace made it easier to implement new measures. Coca-Cola kept Greenpeace up to date on its progress, including all the challenges and delays it encountered in its programme. Appreciating there was always a risk that Greenpeace would resume its campaigns should these delays become unacceptable for the green activist organisation, Coca-Cola concluded that being completely transparent would help build trust and lead Greenpeace to recognise its good faith.

Coca-Cola and Greenpeace, together with Unilever, MacDonalds, and UNEP also joined forces in June 2004 to organise a conference in Brussels aimed at convincing refrigeration plant manufacturers and industries using refrigeration to engage in efforts to reduce the environmental impact of refrigeration.

Depending on the company, the 'grey area' for relationships with NGOs on an informal basis may be more or less controlled. Some companies (for instance companies listed in the US that have to apply Sarbanes-Oxley rules) have to control every detail of any financial relationship they may have with NGOs. Thus, in some companies there are internal control procedures in place that complicate financial relations between the two parties. Others may be less meticulous about this monitoring.



## How will relationships between companies and NGOs look like in the coming years? Some decisive points

Business-NGO relations and partnerships have become a very topical issue: such alliances are well profiled in sustainability reports and books, they increasingly attract the interest of the media, they are dealt with during conferences, in discussions within business federations in France and Belgium, etc. Those who have experience of alliances and dialogue tend to emphasise the benefits and positive aspects, but also acknowledge that there is: a resulting pressure on the company to deliver, the involvement of considerable resources, and the need for the relationship to evolve to adapt to new situations.

Strategic relations with NGOs through partnerships or dialogue within stakeholder committees or advisory groups seem to have become almost a 'must' for those aiming at becoming leading and responsible businesses.

However, how partnerships evolve in the future will depend on many developments. Just a few examples from an extensive list include:

- Will NGOs be able to maintain their record high level of trust and credibility among the general public and answer the challenges of increasing transparency and clearer governance?
- Are NGOs able to cope with the growing number of alliances and become professional partners - without becoming de facto consultants and monitoring experts? And, are those with an advocacy, activist stance, losing contacts with their grass root members and/or creating internal divisions?
- Will trade unions become more active in issues related to CSR? Will trade unions reveal the key role they can play in working constructively with the management to answer challenges such as HIV/AIDS: working conditions across the supply chain, or even environmental issues? Will tri-partite projects and alliances involving both trade unions and NGOs become the norm on certain issues such as conditions of employment of labour?
- Will an increasing number of NGOs manage to secure funding and find specialisation differentiating them from their competitors?





## **ANNEX I: FOCUS ON BUSINESS-NGO COOPERATION IN SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL AUDITING<sup>5</sup>**

Some companies have asked NGOs to audit their environmental reporting or their supply chain. In these cases, NGOs play the role of an external auditor or adviser/verifier.

What are the benefits and difficulties related to the involvement of NGOs in supply chain auditing? How should NGOs best be involved? What are the respective/complementary expertise and roles of trade unions, NGOs, certification bodies and global auditing firms?

### **Why do companies work with NGOs to perform social or environmental audits?**

NGOs often possess local knowledge, which is crucial for a thorough audit. Knowing the language enables interaction with the workers, while the use of a translator may lead to inaccuracies and lack of trust from the persons being interviewed. Knowledge of the context in which the audited site operates (e.g. labour shortage, presence of schools in the village, etc.) and knowledge of the national and local laws is also very important.

NGO representatives may be more knowledgeable about social and environmental issues than firms specialised in quality or financial audit, for which these issues are usually new.

Some companies are keen to tap into NGOs' expertise in this field as well as their credibility as a critical, challenging partner.

Lafarge's worldwide partnership with WWF covers several environmental aspects, including quarry rehabilitation and CO2 emissions. There are key performance indicators and objectives jointly agreed by the two organisations, whose implementation is monitored and reviewed by the WWF team.

In addition, NGO representatives are likely to inspire more trust in workers than specialised firms driven by commercial interest and which may be less independent of the company's management.

However, NGO's staff, contrary to specialised audit firms, may lack sufficient understanding of audit requirements and methodologies. Interestingly, neither NGOs nor trade unions have been so far accredited as auditors for the SA8000 standard. While this process is open to them, the conditions (for instance in terms of training and experience of auditors) are difficult to meet for NGOs or trade unions.

It is therefore important to carefully reflect on which NGO to involve, and how to involve it.

<sup>5</sup> This part is based on the discussions that took place during a meeting on "Involving NGOs in social and environmental auditing" organised by CSR Europe and Orse in Paris on 7 July 2004.

## **Which NGOs should be involved, and how best to involve them?**

### **While some NGOs specialise in auditing, for others it is rather a new area**

It is important to draw a distinction between organisations whose main activity is auditing and other NGOs who have decided to engage in the auditing process more recently in the framework of business partnerships as a way of achieving their aims, such as the FIDH (International Federation for Human Rights) or Amnesty International.

The FIDH decided to get involved in social auditing as a result of discussions and interest expressed within Carrefour. The NGO follows the auditing methodology and process and now provides advice to the company on its approach to supply chain monitoring. In addition to internal controls, Carrefour is mandating specialised audit companies such as SGS to carry out independent social audits of its suppliers. Finally, the FIDH is conducting a few additional third party audits randomly in some of the suppliers' own premises (around 5 audits per year). The NGO acknowledges that, as a result of its engagement with Carrefour, it has had to learn more about social auditing mechanisms.

Vérité in the United States has specialised since 1995 in social auditing.<sup>6</sup> In the environmental field, the conservation NGO Rainforest Alliance has developed considerable experience over the last ten years in auditing in the forestry, agriculture and tourism sectors against criteria designed to protect the environment, wildlife, workers and local communities it has developed.

Chiquita has been working with the Rainforest Alliance for the certification of its banana farms since 1992 in the framework of the 'Better Banana Project'. Since 2000, the Rainforest Alliance has been certifying all the farms owned by Chiquita. The strong involvement of an independent NGO in addition to internal auditors has helped the company achieve the perception that it is serious in its commitments.

The Dutch NGO, SOMO, offers research on labour conditions in certain industries, sectors or company supply chains, but it is commissioned by trade unions, employee councils, development, environmental, fair trade and consumer organisations, rather than by a company's management<sup>7</sup>.

### **Different levels of involvement in the auditing process are possible**

NGOs are involved at different levels in the audit process. Even if they are not actually performing the audits, local NGOs are often involved indirectly as an independent source of information by a company's internal or external auditors.

While certain companies have established bilateral partnerships on supply chain auditing, cooperation between a company and NGOs on this aspect also happens within the framework of multilateral initiatives.

<sup>6</sup> Vérité is a non-profit organization created in 1995 that conducts social audits and research through a network of regional field-based coordinators who screen, train and lead audit teams. Vérité works in partnership with research, labour, women's rights and community development NGOs. [www.verite.org](http://www.verite.org)

<sup>7</sup> [www.somo.org](http://www.somo.org)

An example is the Fair Labour Association<sup>8</sup>, that was created on the initiative of companies in the textile sector. The FLA has now a membership comprising companies, universities (that joined following the anti-sweatshop campaign in the United States) and a few NGOs. The FLA contracts with accredited monitors to conduct independent monitoring of each company's high risk facilities, works with companies to remedy problems identified in their facilities and independently verifies and accounts for company's internal compliance programmes.

Syngenta decided to join the FLA when it became clear that the company was facing cases of employment of child labour in the cotton fields in India. The FLA is helping Syngenta in its actions to combat the problems surrounding child labour by advising the company on how to improve its management system and work with local NGOs and local communities to better monitor cases of the employment of child labour.

Some companies have also decided to join the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI)<sup>9</sup> a tripartite initiative that has succeeded in involving NGOs and trade unions as well as companies. The ETI organisation does not conduct audits per se. Its aim is to identify and promote good practice in the implementation of codes of labour throughout the world. However, member companies report annually on progress in their implementation of the ETI code. The ETI also runs experimental projects to tackle areas of code implementation that are particularly challenging and training programmes for companies and suppliers. Companies appreciate the ETI's non-compliance approach that allows improvement and learning through the exchange of views and feedback from both NGOs and trade unions in a 'safe' environment.

Boots started initial discussions with the Ethical Trading Initiative in 1998. These discussions resumed in late 2001 and Boots joined it in 2003 after a cultural change that saw more engagement with external stakeholders and more communication of the company's CSR activities. For Boots, the ETI provides useful learning opportunities through discussions within the membership the Group and direct links with and feedback from NGOs and trade unions.

## Challenges related to the involvement of NGOs in auditing processes

Companies have been experimenting with various models in order to involve NGOs in the auditing process. However, in the case of social auditing, trade union representatives at various levels seem to be crucial allies that need to be involved in the process. Each company will need to carefully reflect, based on its sector, location and structure, on how best to work with its internal quality/social audit team, its trade unions, professional auditors and NGOs.

On account of their knowledge of local issues, local NGOs are useful, but they may lack technical expertise to conduct an audit competently and interpret issues related to human

<sup>8</sup> [www.fairlabor.org](http://www.fairlabor.org)

<sup>9</sup> [www.ethicaltrade.org](http://www.ethicaltrade.org)

building and further improvement are needed, in particular because it can be anticipated that in the future, social audits that are currently taking place predominantly in the textile and agriculture sectors will be extended to other sectors such as the automobile industry.

François Beaujolin, lecturer and President of the Fondation des Droits de l'Homme au travail, believes that NGOs from the 'North' will increasingly supervise audits, using a network of local partners to perform the actual audits. There should also be a growing specialisation among NGOs. Some will act as a contact point for local participants. Others will focus on explanations, improvement and implementation of norms, while a third group will help companies to develop efficient auditing processes.

A certain fatigue seems to be developing among suppliers because of the multiplicity of differing demands and requirements sought after by their clients. Co-ordinated approaches within a sector may be the most effective strategy. This is already in place in France in the retail sector. In the framework of the retail trade association FCD, co-operation developed to ensure that all companies use common criteria and share the information on particular audits to avoid a supplier from being subjected to multiple audits. Should more integrated approaches within certain sectors develop, co-operation with NGOs may take place increasingly at the level of trade associations and business federations.

Finally, all the participants agreed that audits are only part of the solution to improve social conditions in companies' supply chains. It is equally important for companies to ensure that the purchasing department is aware of social issues in the supply chain, since the price offered to suppliers often has an impact on wages and working hours of workers in the supply chain.

Companies such as Décathlon or BIC have developed training programmes for their purchasing department. This enables them to limit the risks of ambiguous situations in which the company's purchasers would offer a price that is questioned in the audit process. NGOs may also be useful partners in these activities. Indeed, training and awareness-raising are aspects in which NGOs such as FIDH and Amnesty International are also becoming involved.

## ANNEX II: SELECTED CASE STUDIES OF PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN COMPANIES AND NGOS

### Overview of Partnerships Profiled

	PARTNERS		FOCUS
	Comp./Activity	NGO/Sector	
<b>Energy</b>	Hydro Energy and Aluminium	Transparency International (TI) Fight against Corruption	Development of business principles for countering bribery
	Rio Tinto Mining	BirdLife International Conservation	Including conservation objectives in mining activities
	Suez Energy and environmental management	ESSOR Development aid in Portuguese speaking countries	Provide access to clean water for local populations and local development project establishment
	Total Oil	Pro-Natura Sustainable development at local level	Helping local communities in Nigeria to develop their own activities
<b>Finance</b>	Groupe Caisse d'Epargne Bank	WWF Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sustainable management of natural, cultural and human heritage</li> <li>- Developing solutions for environmentally-friendly investments</li> <li>- Awareness raising about ecological impact of human activity</li> </ul>
<b>Food</b>	Unilever food, home, personal care	WWF Conservation	Sustainable fishery
	Chiquita Food marketing, production and distribution	Rainforest Alliance Conservation	Sustainable production of banana
<b>Healthcare</b>	Johnson and Johnson Healthcare and cosmetics	Sparadrap Support to families with diseased children	Information distribution and business development
	Novozymes Biotechnology	Danmarks Naturfredningsforening Conservation	Creation of an educational project – Genius- to create discussion among teenagers about genetic engineering
<b>Tourism</b>	Thomas Cook Travel operator	CARE Development aid	Sustainable tourism
	Accor Hotel catering and travel services	ECPAT Organization against commercial sexual exploitation of children	Fight commercial sexual exploitation of children by providing information to tourists in concerned areas
<b>ICT</b>	Microsoft Software conception	Red Cross, UNHCR Humanitarian aid	Opening of a community technology learning centre in St Petersburg, Russia
	Cable & Wireless Telecommunications services	Childnet international Securing internet contents and preventing user risks for children	Inform and give key elements to parents and children about the risks of internet and how to avoid them through a website, award and documentation
<b>Services</b>	FedEx Express Transportation	Environmental Defence Sustainable Development	Reducing transportation vehicle pollution
	Randstad Temporary staffing	VSO Development aid working with volunteers	Improving volunteer recruitment procedures and encouraging Randstad employees and temporary workers to contribute expertise or volunteer



## Workshop Series: Engaging with NGOs: challenging but rewarding?

NGO CONTRIBUTION	COMPANY CONTRIBUTION	ACTIVITIES & PROJECTS CONDUCTED TOGETHER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Providing the company with information about corruption</li> <li>- Creation of the committee for the development of business principles for countering bribery</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- One of the initiators of TI in Norway, member of their board</li> <li>- Member of the steering committee for the development of business principles for countering bribery</li> </ul>	Creation of Transparency International in Norway
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Expertise in conservation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Involvement of local subsidiaries in ecotourism development and financial support to projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Birdwatching events involving employees and local communities</li> <li>- Ecotourism development at local sites</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Local expertise</li> <li>- Promoting the use of clean water</li> <li>- Contributing to the acceptance of paid water distribution services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Providing a local water distribution service at a low price in Manaus, Brazil</li> <li>- Financing development aid</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Providing access to clean water and sanitation for poor population</li> <li>- Implementing local development programmes</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Local expertise</li> <li>- Project Management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Financing development aid</li> <li>- Helping local populations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Contributing to economic growth and encouraging democracy at local level</li> <li>- Development of local development initiatives by Pro-Natura thanks to Total funding</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Participating in discussion and information sessions</li> <li>- Providing expertise on environmental criteria to be considered in investment</li> <li>- Involvement in local pilot projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Informing employees and clients about sustainable development matters</li> <li>- Reflecting on criteria for environmentally friendly investment</li> <li>- Involvement in local pilot projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development of environmentally responsible investment criteria</li> <li>- Cooperation at local level on pilot projects</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mobilising skills, knowledge and networks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mobilising skills, knowledge and networks</li> </ul>	Creation of an independent organism as a result of the collaboration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establishing audit criteria for sustainable banana growing</li> <li>- Conducting annual audits of banana plantations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 100% banana farms certified since 2000.</li> <li>- Spreading good practices to suppliers</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Expertise in dealing with diseased children</li> <li>- Distribution of information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Financial contribution</li> <li>- Contribution to Sparadrap's publishing program with material for wider publications and distribution</li> <li>- Expertise in business planning and strategy business development through the "High Potential Development Program" with J&amp;J France:</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Expertise in engineering</li> <li>- Involvement in creation of joint products</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Expertise in engineering</li> <li>- Involvement in creation of joint products</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Joint products: website and magazine 'Genius'</li> <li>- Animation of discussion groups</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assessing the company's needs</li> <li>- Employee training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fundraising for CARE development projects</li> <li>- Creation of sustainable tourism charter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development of sustainable tourism indicators</li> <li>- Development of information distributed to hotels clients</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Providing information</li> <li>- Creation of information distribution supports (flyers, employee training)</li> <li>- Establishment of a code of conduct</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Distributing information in strategic places (hotels)</li> <li>- Putting employees through training programs</li> <li>- Signature of the code of conduct</li> </ul>	Joint information and awareness raising campaign
Creation and management of the centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Monetary and material donations to create the centre</li> <li>- Training education personnel for the centre</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Expertise on Internet safety for children</li> <li>- Expertise in awareness raising</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Funding for the website and awards</li> <li>- Expertise in events management for the website</li> <li>- Employee involvement to talk about internet safety in local schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cable &amp; Wireless Childnet Awards</li> <li>- Kidsmart: information website for parents and children</li> </ul>
Expertise, counselling	Investment, innovation	Joint initiative to reduce pollution: invitation for car companies to submit low pollution car projects.
Managing volunteers across the world and monitoring development aid projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Staff information and encouragement to participate in volunteer activities for VSO</li> <li>- Providing expertise to help in professionalise VSO's recruitment system: expertise contribution</li> </ul>	

## **HYDRO AND TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL:** **Fight against corruption**

### **Partners:**

**Transparency International (TI)** is an international NGO with the mission to work to create change towards a world free of corruption. TI has its head office in Berlin and a worldwide network of offices. TI is issuing a number of documents relating to transparency and corruption, such as the yearly TI Corruption Perception Index.

**Norsk Hydro (Hydro)** is a Fortune 500 energy and aluminium supplier based in Norway and operating in more than 40 countries with 36,000 employees. Hydro is a leading offshore producer of oil and gas, the world's third-largest aluminium supplier and a leader in the development of renewable energy sources.

### **The Partnership:**

Hydro was among the initiators of Transparency International Norway, as it was seen important to have a close contact with TI through its direct presence in the country. Hydro has a representative at TI Norway's Board. Hydro is also a member of the Steering Committee for the development of Business Principles for Countering Bribery and has close contact with the TI Secretariat in Berlin.

The cooperation between Hydro and TI was presented as a case during the Round Table "Improving Knowledge about CSR" at the European Multi Stakeholder Forum on CSR.

### **Results:**

This cooperation has given Hydro the opportunity to be actively involved in the development of the business principles regarding corruption, making them as relevant and practical as possible for business. These principles form the basis for Hydro internal work in order to create awareness and requirements related to transparency and corruption, which is called the Hydro Integrity Programme.

TI also provides Hydro with information on general corruption issues and country specific information and is a discussion partner if dilemmas need to be addressed.

Hydro regards this partnership as an integral part of its long term CSR strategy and important in the efficient implementation of the Hydro Integrity Programme, e.g. the challenging task of verifying compliance with the anti-corruption policy.

### **For further information:**

TI's website and report:      [www.transparency.org](http://www.transparency.org)  
   [www.globalcorruptionreport.org](http://www.globalcorruptionreport.org)

TI Norway's website:        [www.transparency.no](http://www.transparency.no)

Hydro's website:              [www.hydro.com/en](http://www.hydro.com/en)



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## **RIO TINTO AND BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL:**

### **Birdlife conservation**

#### **Partners:**

**Rio Tinto** is a world leading mining company, providing minerals and metals for industries across the world.

**Birdlife International** is an international confederation of national bird conservation organisations. Its headquarters are in Cambridge, England. Through its member organisations in 101 countries, it manages conservation projects affecting birds.

#### **The Partnership:**

In 2001 Rio Tinto and Birdlife International set up an agreement for a long-term collaboration in the area of conservation. Mining activity can be a support for biodiversity since flooded gravel pits are very attractive areas for birdlife. The idea is therefore to take the environmental repercussions of mining activity into consideration and include these concerns into the management of the sites. This includes integrating the total life cycle of the site by including projects for its reconversion after exploitation.

#### **Results:**

The partnership developed into several different operations:

- The annual Rio Tinto bird watching event began three years ago and has now become a global event: last year 43 bird watch events were organised on Rio Tinto mining sites.
- The development of avi-tourism at the Richards Bay site in the KwaZulu-Natal region of South Africa is a four year programme managed by the Rio Tinto local subsidiary Richards Bay and Birdlife International South Africa. It plans to set up an eco-tourism area. An information centre has already been set up with hides built and guides trained. Work has begun to develop a long-term plan to conserve the area.
- Other sites are also being considered for developing eco-tourism in Madagascar and at the Damara Tern in Namibia.

#### **For further information:**

- Birdlife International website: [www.birdlife.net](http://www.birdlife.net)
- Rio Tinto website: [www.riotinto.com/default.aspx](http://www.riotinto.com/default.aspx)
- "Building a relationship" in *Ethical Performance Best Practice*, spring 2003.

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## **SUEZ AND ESSOR:**

### **Access to water and local development**

#### **Partners:**

**ESSOR** is a French NGO created in 1992, specialized in supporting local development aid programs in Portuguese speaking countries such as Brazil and Mozambique.

**SUEZ** is a multinational corporation specialized in energy and environment, number one worldwide in urban water and sanitation services. **Aguas do Amazonas (AdA)** is a local subsidiary of SUEZ in Manaus (Brazil).

#### **The Partnership:**

It was initiated in 2001 on recommendation of the French Embassy in Brazil. Ondeo, (the name under which SUEZ carries out its water activities) had recently acquired the majority of the municipal water company in Manaus. The problem was that the local population had so far very unequal access to clean water (some had to pay very high price for it while others got it for free) and was therefore likely to have difficulties to accept the installation of an individually paid distribution service.

Therefore the mediation of an NGO familiar with the local situation was needed. Water being a basic commodity fundamental to human development, the project aims at two main goals:

- provide equal access to clean water and sanitation for poor populations
- implement local development programs to permit a long term benefit for the local population.

For both partners, the long term development goal of the project is to reach 95% coverage in water, improving thus living conditions and health status of poor communities.

#### **Results:**

AdA was able to acquire new clients and to extend the water distribution service to the poorest populations thereby improving their sanitary situation. The partnership enabled ESSOR to promote the use of clean water among the local population, thus improving hygiene.

In the second year, 4760 families were given access to clean water, which represents a 134% growth compared to the first year. The majority of illegal connections to the water distribution service were regularized, and 70% of the users are now up to date on their bill payments (the average ratio being of 54% for the whole Manaus concession and of 15% in poor areas).

The price of water paid by these communities was lowered thanks to specific pricing structure negotiated between the communities and Aguas do Amazonas. In addition, two local associations connected to the project were able to constitute a community social fund thanks to their contract with AdA.

## For further information:

- SUEZ website: [www.suez.com](http://www.suez.com)
- ESSOR website: [www.cyo.com/essor/index.html](http://www.cyo.com/essor/index.html)
- Projet d'accompagnement social urbain dans 3 quartiers défavorisés de Manaus Brésil ; Rapport intermédiaire d'exécution 2e année: mars 2003- février 2004 », ESSOR, Mars 2004.
- BREUIL, Lise, Laboratoire Gestion de l'Eau et de l'Assainissement ENGREF, « La construction progressive d'un partenariat à Manaus entre ESSOR, Aguas do Amazonas et les autorités locales de Manaus » available at : [www.engref.fr/labogea/Manaus5.pdf](http://www.engref.fr/labogea/Manaus5.pdf)
- VERGER, Olivia; WHITE, Gavin; IMS, "Les partenariats Entreprises/ONG dans le cadre de démarches sociétales"; [www.imsentreprendre.com](http://www.imsentreprendre.com)

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## **TOTAL AND PRO-NATURA:**

### **Local development around a production site in Nigeria**

#### **Partners:**

**Pro-Natura International** is an NGO created in Brazil in 1985 to promote community driven sustainable development. Its international Headquarters are now in Paris.

**Total** is a worldwide leader in oil production.

#### **The Partnership:**

In 2003 Total opened a new oil extraction site in the Niger Delta off the shores of Nigeria. The aim of the partnership is to contribute to the development of local communities. Some 100 000 people living in the Rivers State and the Akwa Ibom near the production site are directly benefiting from the programme. The participative approach focuses on helping local communities producing and implementing their own development plan.

In 2003 two Foundations for local development were created (Opobo Nkoro and Eastern Obolo), they are the local governance democratic structures.

#### **Results:**

The particularity of this partnership is its global approach to local development. It shows to what extent the impact of a company in an area goes beyond its immediate activity. For Total it is an opportunity to implement their sustainable development policy in a pro-active manor and for Pro-Natura another chance to contribute to human development through a participative approach.

#### **For further information:**

- Total sustainable development report 2003, available at:  
[http://www.total.com/csr2003/fr/p6/p6\\_3.htm](http://www.total.com/csr2003/fr/p6/p6_3.htm)
- Pro-Natura website: <http://www.pronatura.org.br/fr/home/>

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## **GROUPE CAISSE D'EPARGNE AND WWF :**

### **Taking the environment into account**

#### **Partners:**

The **Caisse d'Epargne Group** is composed of cooperative credit institutions operating as ordinary banks. With its 44,700 employees, its 4700 local agencies and 26 million clients, it is the third largest bank in France.

**WWF (World Wildlife Fund)** is an international conservation organisation, with a worldwide notoriety and a global network active in over 90 countries.

#### **The Partnership:**

The partnership was concluded in July 2003. It covers three areas:

- Ensuring that the management of natural, cultural and human heritage in France becomes more sustainable
- Developing solutions linked to the core business of the group Caisse d'Epargne
- Raising awareness among employees, shareholders, clients, and partners about the ecological impact of human activities whilst sharing innovative solutions combining the expertise of WWF and Caisse d'Epargne Group.

#### **Results:**

In 2003, this partnership has led to concrete actions:

- Various sessions focusing on sustainable development were organised in the framework of the group's university. WWF representatives have intervened in local branches.
- The preparation of sessions aimed at cooperative shareholders and the boards of local savings companies
- Environmental criteria have been introduced in the selection process of local and social economy projects to ensure that they do not have negative environmental impacts as well as support the development of projects related to environmental protection.
- Customers such as local government and associations have been informed about WWF pilot projects in France including on sustainable habitat.
- Advice and support has been provided to the Caisse d'Epargne on local pilot projects.
- Joint production of a short version to the book produced by WWF « Planète Attitude, les gestes écologiques au quotidien » for cooperative shareholders and persons employed by the group.

The partnership has brought several benefits for the company: a different vision and approach, the opportunity to discover new concepts, new pilot projects, and cooperation on themes that were unfamiliar to the Group Caisse d'Epargne, especially environmental issues.

Difficulties that the partners needed to overcome include different work methods and pace, as well as stakes and rationales that were sometimes conflicting with each other.

The challenge for such a partnership is to focus on core business issue rather than becoming a mere sponsoring exercise.

## For further information:

- [www.groupe.caisse-epargne.com](http://www.groupe.caisse-epargne.com) : --> "Le groupe" --> "Un groupe solidaire"

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## **CHIQUITA AND THE RAINFOREST ALLIANCE:**

### **The better banana project**

#### **Partners:**

**Chiquita** is a leading international marketer, producer and distributor of fresh and processed foods. The company has marketed bananas, its best-known product, for more than 100 years.

The **Rainforest Alliance** is an international conservation organisation working in 53 countries to certify farms as well as forestry and tourism operations that meet their standards for balancing environmental, social and economic considerations.

#### **The Partnership:**

Chiquita started working with the Rainforest Alliance in 1992 on the 'Better Banana project'. The Rainforest Alliance and associated members of the Sustainable Agriculture Network conduct annual audits on both a scheduled and unannounced basis in order to certify that banana farms follow its nine environmental and social standards for agriculture.

Audits measure performance against the following nine criteria:

- Ecosystem conservation
- Wildlife conservation
- Fair treatment and good conditions for workers
- Community relations
- Integrated crop management
- Integrated waste management
- Conservation of water resources
- Soil conservation
- Environmental planning and monitoring

Farms must meet several criteria. These include a record-keeping and monitoring systems that document management practices changes and impacts; no evidence of "fatal flaws" or flagrant environmental or social problems; an active program of improvement in all areas; and a plan that schedules needed improvements.

#### **Results:**

After more than ten years of auditing, there has been remarkable progress toward more eco-friendly production and healthier working and living conditions. The Rainforest Alliance audits make it possible to pursue improvement year by year. For instance, they have identified challenging issues to be addressed by the Chiquita divisions across Latin America: worker health and safety, agri-chemical usage and water consumption. Since 2000, the Rainforest Alliance has been certifying 100% of farms owned by Chiquita.

Chiquita has also influenced many independent producers who sell their fruit to Chiquita to follow these same standards and to date, over 70% of these producers' farms have achieved the Rainforest Alliance's Better Banana Project certification.

This cooperation has been the subject of an extensive study: "Smart Alliance: How a Global Corporation and Environmental Activists Transformed a Tarnished Brand", J. Gary Taylor & Patricia J. Scharlin, Yale University Press, 2004.

### **For further information:**

- Chiquita's website  
[www.chiquita.com/chiquitacr02/envirosocial\\_01a\\_1.htm](http://www.chiquita.com/chiquitacr02/envirosocial_01a_1.htm)
- Rainforest Alliance's website:  
[www.rainforest-alliance.org/programs/agriculture/certified-crops/bananas.html](http://www.rainforest-alliance.org/programs/agriculture/certified-crops/bananas.html)

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## **UNILEVER AND WWF:**

### **The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)**

#### **Partners:**

**Unilever** is a multi-local multinational making food, home and personal care products and has operations in around 100 countries around the world.

**WWF (World Wildlife Fund)** is an international conservation organisation, with a worldwide notoriety and a global network active in over 90 countries.

#### **The Partnership:**

In the early 1990s, evidence from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) showed that over-fishing had put global stocks of fish for human consumption at serious risk. Unilever, as one of the world's largest fish buyers, responded with the commitment to buy all fish from sustainable sources. An important element of the company's approach in this field has been to co-operate with NGOs.

Together with WWF, in 1996, Unilever took the first steps to establish an independent organisation - the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC). Unilever and WWF have different motives but a common purpose: the need to ensure the long-term sustainability of global fish stocks. In 1997, the two organisations signed an agreement about the establishment of this organisation.

The two partners then launched an inclusive, global consultation process with stakeholders around the world to establish an environmental standard based on the FAO Code of Conduct For Responsible Fisheries. This process involved eight workshops and two expert drafting sessions resulting in Principles and Criteria for Sustainable Fishing. Unilever and WWF each brought wide-ranging skills, knowledge and networks to support the process of developing the MSC.

#### **Results:**

The MSC became a fully independent non-profit organisation in 1999. The MSC promotes sustainable fishery by labelling products to reward environmentally responsible fishery management and practices. The fishery certification procedure is a multi-stakeholder process, and the MSC label can be found on various products from different companies around the world. The MSC also assesses and accredits independent third party certifiers for fisheries.

This partnership is therefore a good example of how a bilateral partnership led to the creation of an independent organisation involving many stakeholders.

#### **For further information:**

- MSC Website: [www.msc.org](http://www.msc.org)
- about MSC:  
[www.unilever.com/environmentsociety/sustainability/fish/supporting\\_msc.asp](http://www.unilever.com/environmentsociety/sustainability/fish/supporting_msc.asp)

## **JOHNSON & JOHNSON AND SPARADRAP:**

### **Aiding hospitalised children**

#### **Partners:**

**Johnson & Johnson** was founded in 1886 and is the world's most comprehensive and broadly based manufacturer of health care products, as well as a provider of related services, for the consumer, pharmaceutical and medical devices and diagnostics markets.

**SPARADRAP** is a charitable organisation created in 1993 to help families and professionals with children suffering from diseases or who are hospitalised. Sparadrap informs patients and parents on the stay in hospitals about the possible surgical treatments that patients may experience. Sparadrap organises trainings for healthcare professionals who wish to improve the children's stay in their hospitals and also gives advices and tools to better inform the patients.

#### **The Partnership:**

Johnson & Johnson has contributed to the organisation's publishing programme, ensuring an increased capacity for the organisation to distribute booklets, documentation and educational material.

In 2003, Sparadrap was invited to participate in the French Johnson & Johnson High Potential Development Programme, where it received assistance for the development of a business plan and advice on future planning and strategy.

#### **Results:**

This partnership and especially the High Potential day have increased the awareness within the company around CSR. 50 young managers and future leaders of the company got a better understanding of Corporate Social Responsibility: it is more than a donation for which we feel good about. These skilled managers and leaders gave Sparadrap financial and marketing advices. Together with representatives of the association, they have prepared a good business plan that should help Sparadrap to better achieve its mission, to better focus and have a greater impact. This was an important day because it showed that "in-kind" support -here a transfer of skills and competences- can be as important as cash support.

#### **For further information:**

- Johnson & Johnson Europe CSR report 2003: [www.jjeurope-csr.com](http://www.jjeurope-csr.com)
- For more information on SPARADRAP: [www.sparadrap.org](http://www.sparadrap.org)

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## **NOVOZYMES AND THE DANISH SOCIETY FOR NATURE CONSERVATION:**

### **Genius, an education project on genetic engineering**

#### **Partners:**

**Novozymes** is the biotech-based world leader in industrial enzymes and microorganisms. It was established in 2000 after a demerger from the pharmaceutical company Novo Nordisk, and currently employs about 3,900 employees world wide.

**The Danish Society for Nature Conservation (Danmarks Naturfredningsforening or DN)** was established in 1911 and is the biggest nature conservation and environmental organisation in Denmark.

#### **The Partnership:**

The idea behind this partnership was to make a trustworthy and balanced communication/ information package. Novozymes and the rest of the Novo Group have partnered with the Danish Society for Nature Conservation (DN) to launch a large educational project, called Genius. The intention was to create a qualified discussion around genetic engineering and the ethical and moral questions it raises.

The aim of the partners is to contribute to giving discussion on genetic issues a more central positioning in education. Genius was created for youth between 14 and 18 years old. Novozymes and DN jointly develop tools and activities including the colourful Genius Magazine and the [www.geniusweb.dk](http://www.geniusweb.dk) website, on which ways to involve students and give them insight into the debates presented. Danish students in 9th and 10th grades were invited to make their own manuscript for a TV talk-show on genetic engineering. The best manuscript was used as the basis for a TV show made by the Danish National Broadcast system, and the show was later shown on DR-TV. It should be underlined that it is not Novozymes and DN, but all stakeholders around gene technology who express themselves in the material.

One of the challenges in this communication project was to find a common style of communication.

#### **Results:**

More than 13,500 copies of the Genius magazine, 175 videos, and 230 role play collections have been distributed until now, and partners have had a lot of positive feedback.



The two characters appearing in the Genius Magazine

## For further information:

- [www.geniusweb.dk](http://www.geniusweb.dk)

About the partnership:

- [www.novozymes.com/cgi-bin/bvisapi.dll/aboutus/aboutus.jsp?id=16448&lang=en](http://www.novozymes.com/cgi-bin/bvisapi.dll/aboutus/aboutus.jsp?id=16448&lang=en)
- [www.dn.dk](http://www.dn.dk)

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## **CABLE & WIRELESS AND CHILDNET INTERNATIONAL:** **Making the Internet safe for children**

### **Partners:**

**Cable & Wireless** is a leading international telecommunications company. With customers in over 80 countries, the company provides IP, voice and data services to business customers and to residential customers in some areas, and also services to other telecom carriers, mobile operators, content providers, applications and internet services.

**Childnet International** is a non-profit organisation established in 1995, based in London, with the mission to “help make the internet a great and safe place for children” . The organisation works with a number of partners including international companies to help promote the benefits of the internet for children as well as provide information on the dangers of internet for children.

### **The Partnership:**

The partnership was established in 1998 on the initiative of Childnet who was looking for funding for a website about the dangers of the Internet for children and how to avoid them. However this relationship rapidly grew into an exciting common international project: The Cable & Wireless Childnet awards programme.

The Cable & Wireless Childnet Awards were launched in 1998, with the goal of helping to inspire young web entrepreneurs to develop positive internet projects, which benefited children internationally. Each year the awards grant a prize to the best and most innovative websites, giving these junior concepts a chance to pursue their web creation projects.

Another joint project between Childnet and Cable & Wireless is the Kidsmart Internet safety awareness programme, which Childnet runs in schools both in the UK and abroad. The website [www.kidsmart.org.uk](http://www.kidsmart.org.uk) gives information about a range of resources available to young people, teachers and parents including, leaflets posters, role-play exercises, classroom activities and a seminar for parents. The website contains a lot of safety information and advice to parents on how they can help their children avoid the risks.

### **Results:**

The Cable & Wireless Childnet Awards have grown rapidly and their success can be measured by the increasing number of participants each year. Last year's awards were held in London and attracted almost 300 entries from 50 countries.

The Kidsmart partnership answers one of parents and adults main concerns since according to a UK survey by GetNetWise, three-quarters of adults say to be extremely concerned about children's Internet habits. (Source: Ethical Performance best practice, Spring 2003, “Making the Web safer”)



## For further information:

- On the partnership:  
[www.cw.com/about\\_us/company\\_profile/corporate\\_responsibility/community/key\\_projects/cr\\_community\\_keyproj\\_03\\_01.html](http://www.cw.com/about_us/company_profile/corporate_responsibility/community/key_projects/cr_community_keyproj_03_01.html)
- Cable & Wireless website: [www.cw.com/new](http://www.cw.com/new)
- Childnet International website: [www.childnet-int.org](http://www.childnet-int.org)
- Cable & Wireless Childnet Awards website: [www.childnetacademy.org](http://www.childnetacademy.org)
- Ethical Performance, best practice, spring 2003; "Making the web safer"

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## **MICROSOFT, THE RED CROSS AND THE UNHCR IN RUSSIA: Providing technology-skills training to refugees**

### **Partners:**

**Microsoft Corporation** was founded in 1975 and is the worldwide leader in software, services and solutions for individuals and businesses.

#### **The Red Cross in Russia**

The Russian Red Cross Society was founded in 1867, and joined the International Federation of Red Cross/ Red Crescent Societies in 1934. Similar to other national societies, the Russian Red Cross act as auxiliaries to the public authorities of their country in the humanitarian field and provide a range of services including disaster relief, health and social programmes.

#### **UNHCR**

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees was established on December 14, 1950. Today, a staff of around 5,000 people in more than 120 countries continues to help some 20 million persons who have been forced to leave their homes.

### **The Partnership:**

The Russian Red Cross and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), in partnership with Microsoft, have joined forces to establish a Community Technology Learning Centre (CTLC) focused on the learning and educational needs of refugees in April 2004 in St Petersburg. The centre offers IT skills development, hardware, software training to help participants learn how to use technology and how to benefit from it to improve their opportunities in life. It also provides free hours for access to Internet, which enables refugees to get the latest news from their home countries and for completing the paperwork necessary for work applications, immigration services, etc.

The Red Cross is responsible for the daily administration and running of the centre.

Microsoft's contribution to this partnership is multi-faceted and encompasses contributions in cash, in kind and know-how. Through its global community investment programme called Unlimited Potential, Microsoft made a donation to the Russian Red Cross and the UNHCR of €57,700 in cash and software. The grant covers the costs of facility renovation, equipment, furniture, IT library, IT training and learning materials, Internet access, and administration for one year.

At an early stage in the project Microsoft contacted its certified-technology-education partners to provide free training for the CTLC staff who are composed of local residents. One of the Microsoft Certified training centres ("Support") organised a number of IT skills trainings during a period of one month for a group of seven people (among them was one refugee teacher). The courses covered: MS Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint), Publisher, Internet user, Managing and Maintaining Windows Server, Managing and Maintaining Windows OS, Building and Managing Web-Sites.

After graduation, a teacher from the "Support" training centre became a mentor for the CTLC staff addressing all kinds of questions related to the methods of teaching IT and making classes more effective. The Russian Red Cross staff also participated in the IT skills training, which helped them to deal in a more efficient way with paperwork and accounting.

## Results:

The St. Petersburg centre is expected to serve an estimated 4,000 refugees from Afghanistan and Africa, along with hundreds of Russian residents with disabilities. The centre plans to teach 130 refugees and asylum seekers in 2004. The first two groups of refugees completed their training and received their certificate of completion in May, thus achieving better employability. As of today, four groups of refugees are trained while four new groups will start in mid September.

Persons who have been trained at the Technology Learning Centre have received basic knowledge of contemporary information technologies and initial PC skills. They comment that the key outcome of their attending the classes has been real progress toward integration in local society. Virtually all graduates have wished to continue their studies and improve their skills.

Children of refugees and asylum seekers have proved particularly diligent. As they prepare for an independent life in the future, they feel the need to have IT training. Furthermore, as they receive additional knowledge at the Centre, the children feel more confident when they deal with their peers at school and at home.

Challenges that the centre faces, but is presently trying to address include learning difficulties due to poor command of Russian as well as difficulties to pay for transportation to the centre. Local and social integration may also become easier if Russian citizens can be involved in the classes side-by-side with refugees. Therefore, UNHCR and Microsoft are planning to teach mixed groups, which will consist of refugees and people with disabilities.

## For further information:

- [www.microsoft.com/presspass/features/2004/jun04/06-01Refugees.asp](http://www.microsoft.com/presspass/features/2004/jun04/06-01Refugees.asp)
- [www.redcross.spb.ru](http://www.redcross.spb.ru)

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## **FEDEX AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENSE :**

### **Sustainable mobility**

#### **Partners:**

**Environmental defense** is an American non-profit organisation created in 1967 dedicated to protecting the environment and people including future generations.

**FedEx express**, a subsidiary of **FedEx inc.**, is the world's largest express transportation company.

#### **The Partnership:**

In 2000 Environmental Defense confronted Fedex with the problem of pollution due to their large number of vehicles circulating daily. Holding some scepticism at the beginning, Fedex soon saw the financial and legal benefit of finding a way to reduce CO2 emissions. Therefore in 2001, the two partners jointly invited car manufacturers to submit designs for low emission trucks. The contract was awarded to Eaton Corporation who presented a hybrid vehicle using both electricity and diesel, these are expected to reduce particulate emissions by 90%, decrease smog-causing emissions by 75% and increase fuel economy by 50%.

#### **Results:**

In November 2003 Fedex had purchased 20 hybrid vehicles to test in four cities. The company hopes to replace its 30,000 medium-duty trucks with hybrids over the next 10 years. The two first vehicles were inaugurated in March of this year in Sacramento, California by Governor Schwarzenegger.

If 10,000 Fedex trucks were replaced by the OptiFleet E700 hybrid vehicle, smog causing emissions would be reduced by 2,000 tons per year, the equivalent of taking all passenger vehicles off New York City streets for a month.

A legislation draft is being introduced by Senator Orrin Hatch, which would provide a tax credit for companies using hybrid vehicles. Other companies including The U.S Postal Service, Pepsi-Frito Lay and even the U.S Army have expressed interest in the new technology.

#### **For further information:**

- Environmental Defense website: [www.environmentaldefense.org](http://www.environmentaldefense.org)
- On the partnership:  
[www.environmentaldefense.org/partnerships.cfm?ContentID=3585&Page=2&subnav=alliance\\_project\\_fullstory&project=fedex\\_clean\\_vehicles&colorback=f4f4f4](http://www.environmentaldefense.org/partnerships.cfm?ContentID=3585&Page=2&subnav=alliance_project_fullstory&project=fedex_clean_vehicles&colorback=f4f4f4)
- FedEx Website: [www.fedex.com](http://www.fedex.com)

## **RANDSTAD AND VSO:**

### **Mobilising volunteers against poverty**

#### **Partners:**

The **Randstad Group** is one of the largest temporary and contract staffing organisations in the world, active in Europe and North America.

**VSO International (Voluntary Service Overseas)** is an international development charity that works through volunteers from a wide range of professions. VSO was established in 1958 and is by far the largest independent volunteer-sending agency in the world. Since its creation, VSO has sent out more than 29,000 volunteers to work in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, the Pacific region and, more latterly, Eastern Europe.

#### **The Partnership:**

The partnership was established in 2004.

The Randstad Group is providing financial support and promoting VSO to Randstad's staff, temporary workers and client companies. Randstad will also help VSO to professionalise VSO's recruitment and selection activities by putting Randstad expertise at the disposal of VSO and support more skilled volunteers. Some Randstad employees or flex-workers may go on a volunteer placement themselves, others will help VSO identify professionals to become volunteers or fundraise to support VSO's work.

The partnership is aimed at creating a sense of team spirit and shared involvement across Randstad and its companies. It will also show how the group can make a tangible difference to the world's poor by sharing knowledge related to its core competences and mobilising its network of branches and staffing employees.

#### **Results:**

Randstad Group and VSO International are building a partnership step by step, carefully managing expectations and mobilising resources from both parties. The partnership with Randstad aims at enhancing VSO's outreach in Europe and North America, by increasing its ability to recruit and place volunteers with local partners in developing countries. It will also give Randstad group's employees the possibility to support a common project that really makes a difference on a world scale.

#### **For further information:**

- Brochure available on Randstad's web site:  
[www.randstad.com/holding/corporate-information/corporate-involvement/social-responsibility.xml](http://www.randstad.com/holding/corporate-information/corporate-involvement/social-responsibility.xml)
- For more information on VSO: [www.vso.org.uk](http://www.vso.org.uk)

## **ACCOR AND ECPAT:**

### **Promoting human rights through sustainable tourism**

#### **Partners:**

**ECPAT** is an international network of organisations working together to eradicate the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

**Accor** is an international hotel catering and tourism services group represented in 140 countries around the world and some 17 hotel brands known worldwide.

#### **The Partnership:**

The partnership was initiated in 2001 in order to promote sustainable tourism by informing and alerting tourists about the consequences of commercial sexual exploitation of children. During the first year, Accor participated in the public opinion mobilisation campaign on the subject in France by handing out information leaflets in the travellers' handbooks and giving information to the personnel via intranet. In 2002 Mercure, Novotel and Sofitel Thailand engaged in an information campaign together with ECPAT addressing the clients of the hotels as well as the personnel. Accor signed ECPAT's Code of Conduct for the protection of children and against sexual exploitation in travel and tourism.

325 agencies of the Accor group participated in the new ECPAT awareness campaign on sexual tourism: documentation distribution and information to the employees. The fundraising event "Walk for Children" was led in Bangkok.

#### **Results:**

For Accor this partnership serves as an opportunity to promote their sustainable development values in a proactive way. Through its engagement in the fight against sexual tourism, the group clearly demonstrates its ethical background to its clients.

For ECPAT the cooperation with Accor allows the group to reach a larger audience and get across their message directly to tourists.

#### **For further information:**

- VERGER, Olivia; WHITE, Gavin; "Les partenariats Entreprises/ONG dans le cadre de démarches sociétales, premiers éléments d'analyse » ; IMS, juin 2004.
- Accor website, Sustainable Development section:  
[www.accor.com/fr/groupe/dev\\_durable/engagement.asp](http://www.accor.com/fr/groupe/dev_durable/engagement.asp)
- ECPAT website: [www.ecpat.com/eng/index.asp](http://www.ecpat.com/eng/index.asp)

## **THOMAS COOK AND CARE:**

### **Sustainable tourism**

#### **Partners:**

**CARE France** is one of the 11 member organisations of CARE International and was created in 1983. CARE is one of the largest worldwide private development aid organisations.

**Thomas Cook France** (formerly Havas Voyages) is part of the international travel and tour operator Thomas Cook.

#### **The Partnership:**

The partnership between CARE France and Thomas Cook France began in 2003 on the initiative of Havas Voyages. Within the three year period of the partnership, it set out to achieve the following:

- to bring awareness to customers about sustainable development on their travel location by creating a "Travellers' Charter"
- to train the employees in the field of sustainable tourism
- to increase consideration for social and environmental concerns in the group's decisions (product development and management, supply chain control, local collaborators)
- to contribute to the development of sustainable tourism by participating in international institutions and local initiatives; and finally raise funds for participation in CARE's development projects.

#### **Results:**

In 2003 the main achievements were in the area of internal management with the creation of an ethical committee and of a training programme for the collaborators. In the field of customer relations, a traveller's ethical guide was created. A call on local agencies to participate in the sustainable development effort was launched in cooperation with the various destinations. Finally, the partners defined a series of "sustainable tourism indicators" for the hotels managed by Thomas Cook.

In 2004, the effort of internal training was pursued, new operations for fundraising were initialised, a product management study was made on the social and environmental impact of vacation villages. A general campaign was launched to teach the public about sustainable tourism with the "Visa for a responsible traveller". Thomas Cook France joined the Tour Operator Initiative (TOI) for sharing best practices in sustainable tourism.

Both partners declared to be satisfied for the moment and are looking forward to the growth of the project at an international dimension.

## For further information:

- To learn more about the partnership, visit:  
[www.carefrance.org/wcm\\_uploads/common/Dossier%20de%20presse.pdf](http://www.carefrance.org/wcm_uploads/common/Dossier%20de%20presse.pdf)
- Thomas Cook France on sustainable tourism website:  
[www.thomascook.fr/docs/Tourisme\\_durable.htm](http://www.thomascook.fr/docs/Tourisme_durable.htm)
- CARE France website: [www.carefrance.org/index.cfm](http://www.carefrance.org/index.cfm)
- Also see: « Havas et CARE s'associent pour développer le tourisme responsable », [www.novethic.fr](http://www.novethic.fr)

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CSR Europe is a business driven network of over 65 multinational companies and 19 European national partner organisations helping companies achieve sustainable growth and increased competitiveness by placing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in the mainstream of business practice. CSR Europe is a service oriented organisation and meets the specific needs of its members and partners. Furthermore, CSR Europe acts as a broker between practitioners involved in various aspects of CSR and participates as a business voice towards the EU institutions on the issue of CSR.

[www.csreurope.org](http://www.csreurope.org)

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ORSE – Observatoire sur la Responsabilité Sociétale des Entreprises, is a French network designed to study and promote socially responsible investment (SRI) and corporate social responsibility (CSR) and national partner organisation of CSR Europe. ORSE is a multistakeholder organisation bringing together researchers and other experts involved in various fields related to sustainable development, for the sake of its 80 member organisations: listed companies, asset management firms, banks and insurers, professional organisations, trade unions and NGOs.

[www.orse.org](http://www.orse.org)

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