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A case study of the social construction of a Green discourse

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Keywords: Green discourse, social construction, discourse analysis, symbols and power

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Abstract:

This master thesis focuses on understanding the construction of an environmental discourse and its driving forces. It makes use of Social Constructionism theory, Symbolic Interactionism and Foucault's perspective on discourse and power to understand the dynamic of a corporation's environmental discourse and society. The analysis of the empirical data has shown that society plays an important role on the construction of business's environmental discourses, which make both society and companies responsible for improving business practices regarding the environment.

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I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Name, Last Name: Ana Carolina Marciano

Acronyms:

CSR – Corporate Social Responsibility

CER – Corporate Environmental Responsibility

DA - Discourse Analysis

FSC- Forest Stewardship Council

CEFLOR- Brazilian Forest Certification

1. Introduction

1.1- Motivation:

The discussion regarding sustainability and sustainable development are in the mainstream of modern life. Different social groups like civil society organizations and corporations are all engaged in the Green discourse. Green is defined by the Free online dictionary (2011) as a *“supporter of a social and political movement that espouses global environmental protection, bioregionalism, social responsibility, and nonviolence”*. A discourse is defined by the same source as *“verbal expression in speech or writing”* among others definitions. Therefore a green discourse can be understood as a form to communicate about the environment and also use the environment as a tool to communicate. It is about bringing the environment to the center of the discussion using different set of symbolic tools to establish, “what is said”, “how is said” and “what is not said” in order to construct a reality, to communicate.

Society in general has been concerned with environmental issues, quality of life and sustainability. As society gets more conscious regarding environmental issues, questions have been raised whether it is possible that environmentally hazardous business can become sustainable or not. It has long been known that the pulp industry lies at the top of the list of hazardous business. It brings a direct impact to the environment. Moreover, it has strong impacts in local communities. Motivated by the discussion around the unsustainability and frenzy around the pulp industry, the author’s overall goal with this work is to understand the industry environmental discourse, looking into a company environmental strategy, communication and implementation of the referred strategy through the perspective of environmental communication.

1.2- Background

Paper is one of the essential goods of contemporary civilization. It is speculated that average year production is around 300 million tons of paper (Resource Conservation Alliance) in which most of them is consumed by western countries (Ibid). The production of paper requires an extensive monoculture of eucalyptus, usage of chemicals as well as a large consumption of water. Some civil society organizations in Latin America (WRM 2003; Lang 2007 p35) are pointing out to the expansion of areas of eucalyptus monoculture and naming them as “green deserts”. The organizations call green desert because the eucalyptus tree absorbs a great amount of water from the soil. Since it is an Australian species from the desert areas, the tree has long roots which are able to drain deep and an abundant amount of water. Therefore, the increasing of areas with eucalyptus tree is causing serious environmental and social impacts, such as biodiversity loss,

desertification, eviction of families in small communities and others. In Brazil where the research was conducted the paper industry is well known by the impacts mentioned above. In addition, there is a concern regarding the safety of the communities around the plantation due to the use of chemicals which is common used in this kind of activity. According to Cerri (2006) (in Böhn and Brei 2008 p. 340) *“the pulp and paper industry is considered to be one of the three most polluting industries of the planet, together with the leather and metallurgical industries”*.

On the other hand the pulp industry and International financial institutions claim that the industry brings development (Lang, 2007 p. 6). The companies frequently argue they respect the environment, create new jobs and improve the community life. These different points of view raise discussion regarding the environment and consequently make society to reflect about the issues.

Undoubtedly, environmental ideas are playing an important role in society nowadays. Government, communities and civil society organizations are becoming more aware of the issues, consequently started to demand more.

In order to tackle constraints regarding the environmental issues and also show sustainability ambitious, corporations coordinate different types of social and environmental strategies which is known/ labeled as corporate social responsibility or corporate social environmental responsibility.

CSR definition and practices are still very broad and regularly depend on stakeholders points of view (see table 1). In some definition it might include either environmental and social aspect or only one of the aspects. It depends on stakeholders, locality and what kind of business. Most of the companies still use the CSR for defining social and environmental responsibility strategies but each day more and more companies are using CSR to social responsibility and CER to environmental responsibility, but it is a topic still in discussion. In this present work when CSR is mentioned it will always be in the concept of corporate environmental social responsibility including both aspects, social and environmental. However the focus of this research is on the environmental strategies of a pulp industry.

Table1 – Different definitions of CSR

Corporate Social Responsibility definition	Source
“As a principle stating that corporations should be accountable for the effects of any of their actions on their community and environment”	Frederick W, Post J, Davis K 1992(as cited in Dahlsrud 2006: 11)

<p>"as the set of practices and behaviors that firms adopt towards their labor force, towards the environment in which their operations are embedded, towards authority and towards civil society"</p>	<p>Foran,2001(as cited in Dahlsrud 2006 p10)</p>
<p>"A concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis."</p>	<p>European Commission 2001</p>
<p>"It is an ongoing ethical posture of companies in the consumer market and society. Much more than social action and philanthropy, social responsibility, in our view, should be the premise and basis of business activity and consumption. Encompasses the concern and commitment with the impacts to consumers, the environment and workers...." (Free translation by the author of the paper)</p>	<p>Idec –Brazilian Institute for Consumer Protection (guide to the consumer social responsibility 2004 p 4)</p>

To understand the emerge of the CSR, environmental responsibility or green discourse it is important to be situated in history, in other words, it is important to know how society perceived and perceive the environment as well as corporations.

1.2.1-Green Corporation and Environmental Movement

The first environmental concerns are dated form the late 19th century in the United States. However only with the release of the book Silent Spring from Rachel Carson in the 60"s that society started to pay more attention to environmental issues and demand more quality of life. Certainly, the 60"s was when the environmental social movement began significantly. At this time, society began to draw attention to the use of chemicals and how they were discarded and the effects on the environment and health. At this point people were creating awareness that all actors, including corporations should act responsibly toward the environment. Short after, the conservationist ideas were arising to the scenario and demanding more and more protection to nature. In parallel the anti- nuclear movement has grown fast and also the Club of Rome¹ announced very catastrophic news regarding

¹ It is a global think tank formed by different actors of society, such as politicians , scientists, activists, economists and businessmen who produced a report called "Limits to Growth", where they show their concerns regarding the rapidly growth of world population.

population growth and the foresee lack of natural resources. Still in the 70"s and late 80"s respectively, the movement become a bit more politicized with the United Nations Conference(1972) in Stockholm as well the Brundtland report, Our Common Future, where the ideas of sustainable development shaped and changed the way different actors perceive the environment and development. At this point the environmental movement became more flexible and less radical. It is also at these two decades 70 and 80's that corporate social responsibility strategy came to play. Le, F. and Bullis, C. (in May et al 2007 p 322) put forward the idea that the chemical leak in Bhopal, India called attention to the international community regarding the fact that corporations should have accountability toward the environment and community surroundings their activities. Different events led to an upheaval in society in order to require better public policies and best practices by companies. Since corporations were and still are "*responsive to multiple stakeholders*", (ibid) changes began to be done in order to get recognition and be known as good practitioners. Meanwhile the sustainability reports came into sight in the US, "*they were initiated mainly by public pressure and aimed at the presentation of the company's influence on the environment*" (Petereit 2008 p 9). In addition corporations were afraid of bad publicity. In summary, it is, without a doubt, that the changes were and are reactions to social changes and social pressure.

In the 90's media communication plays an important role in these social changes since they are ~~responsible~~ for also constructing the ecological perspective. Hajer 1995 claims that the 90's is the age of the ecological modernization where perceptions play an important role in defining the environment (p 260). Nowadays all these different concepts and groups have been advocating their causes which make society a melting pot of different opinions and attitude toward the environment. It was influenced by these pressures that corporations started to construct their environmental perspective and/or discourse. It is important to highlight that an environmental perspective is related to attitude and values, that is, "*It is a conceptual framework*" (Charon 2007, p.4). In this framework people add values, emotions, knowledge and experience. Therefore an environmental perspective is when environmental values are added to the frame that one sees the world. On the other hand, a discourse is about language and practices and do not need to be part of a value. It is rather about what actions one does. However "*It incorporates widely accepted understandings, social practices, and institutional forms.*" (Fairclough, 1992)(in May et al 2007p. 338).Hence, an environmental discourse focuses on the environment as a tool to reach objectives.

The eco-communication, a term used by Livesey and Graham, (in May et al 2007p. 336-347) emerged as an important tool to help in the corporations' interaction with society and its direct stakeholders. This eco-communication can be seen as a shift in social paradigm, that it, it is a change on the way corporation discourses about their practices. This eco-talk "*is a way of communicate adopting the sustainable development concepts, aggregates collaboration with communities, NGO's and civil society groups*". (ibid: 336). In short the eco-communication started to respond to society's new framework. For instance, Silberhorn and Warren 2007 presents three main reasons for CSR practices, which are: financial purposes, values and stakeholders purposes. Furthermore, Raditya, D. highlights based on Mikkilä 2005 that "*forest corporations' main reason to start working ethically is changing of values, globalizations of corporations, societies, and politics, establishing a*

positive image, and compliance to future regulations and standards" (2009 p 10). Therefore it is certain that society plays an important role on business environmental discourse.

1.3 -Objectives and Research questions

More and more corporations are trying to prove to society their environmental friendly practices. This approach is even more apparent among natural resources-based industries. Accordingly, a discourse around environmental practices is constructed in order to present society its correct practices or attempts, therefore be trustworthy.

Those strategies, formerly known as CSR or CER, are constructed and supported by a green discussion which is constituted with the direct or indirect help of civil society organizations, stakeholders, shareholders and governments. Some of those stakeholders influences the companies directly with partnerships and supporting the business construct and communicate their green reputation. Other stakeholders influence companies indirectly when they demand changes on behavior, attitude or policies. The interaction, positive or negative between stakeholders and companies, creates a set of demands, knowledge and practices.

This paper will try to understand the dynamic of the construction of an environmental discourse and look into the perspective of corporations and see how society and companies influences each others in constructing an environmental responsibility strategy. It is important to understand how society influences corporations' environmental discourse looking into the corporations' perspective. However, to understand this dynamic it is necessary to look from the inside of a firm perspective, and observe their relation with society and the environment. Hence to fill up a gap in Institutional research regarding the field of environmental responsibility this study aims to analyze the construction of the environmental discourse of a corporation, from the view point of its communicative strategies and internal key collaborators.

In order to reach these objectives the researcher will try to answer the following questions with the perspective of environmental communication, that is, the researcher will try to understand *"how people perceive the environment (constitutive), and create change"* (Sriskandarajah N. 2011) when trying to answer the following questions:

- 1-How the green discourse of a business is constructed?
- 2-What are the driving forces to the green discourse?
- 3-How does the company communicate the discourse for its stakeholders?

In this paper the research will primarily focus on these three questions in order to try to find as many fulfilling answers as possible. The research will be based on interviews with key employees, document analysis, and analysis of the channels of communication used by the company, for instance, website, radio show and newspaper and newsletter.

1.4 Delimitations:

- 1- Empirical and Method: The study is delimited by using a pulp company as a case study. First, for practical reason and second because of green discourses are related to perspectives however the work presents the perspective of its business without trying to impose the belief that all companies act in the same way, but a pattern can be identified and used to understand similar cases.

1.5-The Corporation – the subject of the study

The company chosen to be the focus of the research and help to understand the development of a green discourse is Veracel S/A. This company is a joint venture of the Swedish-Finnish Stora-Enso and the Brazilian Company, Fibria. Both shareholders have equal percentage of shares of the product delivered. Veracel does not sell any product to the public, in other words, all the cellulose produced is divided equally between the shareholders. The company is responsible for a large area of eucalyptus forest, pulp production and transportation of the final product. It is located in the Northeast state of Bahia, in Brazil in an area that covers ten municipalities where there is still a few spots of Atlantic Forest. The company is located in an area well known for conflicts regarding land reforms as well as quality of life of traditional communities and Indigenous people.

There are a few reasons why the author of the research chose the company as a case study. First, paper has an important role in modern society and it is important to understand what is behind the product that society consumes every day. Second, the company, even though young, has an interesting history of conflicts with civil society organizations, NGO's, local communities and Government. Therefore to understand the construction of the environmental discourse is important to note that if the conflicts affected the company in a way that they changed their relationship with society and /or improved their environmental discourse. It means that society influences corporations' and vice-versa. That is, any relationship that happened between the company and society is important for understanding the progress of the Green discourse. In addition, the interest of the researcher in Veracel is that the corporate is relative young; it has few years of activities which enables the researcher to have a better and overall view of the environmental discourse. Therefore the researcher is able to track down the discourse since the beginning of its activities until the present time. Hence the study can be better defined and effective.

The present thesis work is divided in six chapters. In this chapter, the first one, the author briefly gave an overview of the pulp industry regarding its environmental impact, in particularly a discussion on CSR definition is raised. In addition, a review of the environmental movement history is undertaken in order to help the understanding of the raising of the environmental perspective in business. The writer then continues with the objective of the research and the research questions. The next step of the introduction

chapter is a profile of the company which is the subject of the case study. In chapter 2, the study presents the methods and methodology used to collect data as well as how the collection of the data took place. Further, in chapter 3, a summary of the main important points of the theories which the researcher have considered to be significant to interpret the findings of an empirical study is described. In chapter 4, the findings of the empirical study and the analysis of it are presented. The discussion of the data collected is presented on chapter 5. To conclude in chapter 6, the writer brings together the conclusion and a recommendation.

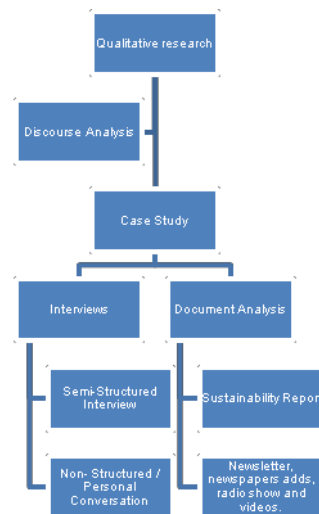
2. Methodology

This paper is trying to understand discourse however it was conducted through the form of a qualitative research based on the different methods to collect data as well as analyze it. A qualitative research is *“any type of research that produces findings not arrived at by statistical procedures or other means of qualification”* (Strauss and Corbin 1998, p10). In other words, this research is not about samples and formulas, there is no right or wrong results. The use of qualitative method provides a holistic view of the subject which can encourage a discussion of other topics not originally considered. Therefore it opens to a possibility of emerging new theories. In addition, only qualitative research can cope with value-laden queries. Therefore, in order to understand discourses constructed by different individuals the qualitative method is the best method that can properly be applied according to the researcher's point of view. The interpretative approach is also important to contribute to an understanding of the ~~relation~~ of society and corporation and to what extent society influences the corporations. The analysis of the data and discussion will also depend on how the author perceives the world. Even though the researcher tries to keep distance and attempt to show different perspectives, she is also aware that every research is biased.

The choice of qualitative research for this topic is an advantage because it explores in detail the material collected. On the other hand, this type of research can be considered subjective. But, considering the characteristic of the research questions the subjectivity of the method becomes one of the important aspects to answer the research questions.

The qualitative methods used to conduct the work were interviews and document analysis. Both methods were used with the frame of a case study and analyzed by discourse analysis method. Therefore this work will reflect critically on the data collected in order to achieve the research objectives. See figure 1 for an overview of the methods used.

Figure 1- Methods scheme:



2.1- Methods

2.1.1- Case study:

The researcher chose a case study to delimitate the work and also understand better the evolution and construction of the environmental discourse of a corporation. A case study is “a *specific instance that is frequently designed to illustrate a more general principle*” (Nisbet and Watt, 1984 p.72 in Cohen, L. et al 2001p.181). The method gives an in depth view of the subject researched and it enables the researcher to have a macro understanding of similar cases. That is, the case study can be seen as a model to represent reality.

As it was detailed explained on the topic 1.4, this study is about the environmental discourse of Veracel S/A, a pulp industry. The company was used as a model to comprehend environmental discourses of pulp/forest corporations, as well to help reduce the gap between academia and real life. The advantages of using this method is “*depth, high conceptual validity, understanding of context and process among others*” (Flyvberg, 2011 p 314). But there are also disadvantages, which are limitations and the fact that the company may not be a good representative of the others hence the results might not be applied in general cases.

Within this case study method other research methods like interviews and document analysis were applied with the purpose to collect data.

2.1.2-Interview:

Interview is a conversation between at least two persons, which can be formal or informal and have different purposes. It can be carried out in different ways, for instance, face to face, written or phone interview.

The interviews in this research *“involve the gathering of data through direct verbal interaction between individuals”* (Cohen et al 2001 p. 268). In order to collect data as well as complement the data collected by the document analysis. The author of this paper conducted seven interviews with key internal stakeholders. They are from the sustainability, communication and forest departments as well as people from the private reserve of natural patrimony area (Veracel Station). Four of them responded to a semi-structured interview and 3 of them to a non-structured/ informal conversation.

According to Cohen et al 2001 p.270 an interview can be conducted in different ways, such as group interview, ethnographic interview, semi-structured, open ended, structured among others . The semi structured interviews of this research was pre organized with a set of questions and topics that should be addressed during the interview process. The questions and the topics were a guide to help the interviewer to keep track of the subject and do not let the interviewee deviate the subject. The advantage of this technique is that the interviewer is more flexible to have follow up questions or delve into a specific subject. However, this kind of technique limits the findings as the interviewer simply follows the topics prepared in advance.

The open-ended/informal conversation is a technique where the interviewer has no pre-arranged questions. The only commitment is to the topic; therefore the interviewer leaves the interviewee free to tell a story. Even though, it can be free the interviewer still have to keep track of the topic otherwise the interviewee can shift to other topics which are not interesting to the research. The three open-ended interviews were conducted, one as form of a power point presentation and the other two as a conversation with the interviewees. The disadvantage of the open-ended interviews is that it is less orderly and complicates the organization of the material. But the advantage is that the individual being interviewed feel more comfortable.

2.1.2.1- Limitation

The number of interviews was limited because of few constraints. First, when dealing with corporation the hierarchical structure should be respected according to corporations’ social rules. Consequently the researcher was only able to talk to people mostly in managing position and analysts, which may be considered a drawback for the research since it limits the assessment of different point of views; however, be able to interview mainly managers and analysts gave the researcher the opportunity to observe exactly how people in higher positions in corporations express themselves in relation to other actors and environmental

aspects. Furthermore, the researcher could talk not only with high-ranking officials but also with a technician who besides working on his duty as a forest technician he also functions as an informal facilitator for the relationship of the company and community. He was important to complement the interviews with managers and analysts and give a glance at other prospects within the company.

The second constraint was the pace of a corporation which is intense thus it does not leave time for external disturbances. Even though there were limitations of personnel to interview, the researcher considers that the most important people were interviewed and the data fulfills the expectations.

2.1.3 – Document Analysis

Document analysis consists of analysis of several documents in order to gather information regarding a subject. *“Like other analytical method in qualitative research, document analysis requires that data be examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge”* (Corbin and Strauss 2008 in Bowen G. 2009 p 2). Document consists of written material or images, available as a printed version but also online version. Nowadays companies’ “websites are a great source of information and it is an important tool when analyzing discourses. It is important to highlight that to be considered a document it should not have any intervention of the person doing the research.

In this research the document analysis involves written material which includes six sustainability reports from 2005 until 2010, advertisement and articles in local newspaper, company’s internal newspapers, newsletter, videos as well as audio material (podcasts from the company radio show). All the documents are available on the corporation website.

The analyses of the documents as well as the interviews were done through discourse analysis.

2.1.4 –Discourse Analysis

This paper makes use of discourse analysis to discuss, interpret, and reflect critically upon the data collected. The method gives a holistic and systematically views of the data revealing different perspectives and leaving to the reader the interpretation of the information and the construction of their own reality. It is used to discuss text not intentions, that is, it is used to analyze ideological constructions.

Discourse is verbal expression in speech or writing², but on a social sciences perspective it is also a social construction, which makes us analyze it from a social and

² Definition according to the free dictionary. Source: <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/discourse>

historical context. According to Fairclough 1992 in Jørgensen and Phillips 2002 discourse is a social practice which reproduces, create knowledge, identities and social relations but it is also part of a dialectical relation with social structures and practices. It is constitutive and constituted. The analysis of the discourse aims to understand the communication and consequently the society and how they construct that specific discourse. The main point is to highlight the way language/ symbols are used to construct, control and organize knowledge and social practices. It also examines the way people use language in the construction of their reality. Hence, discourse analysis consist in identifying within the text some kind of pattern and/or categories, and within a theoretical framework try to understand how and why those symbolic objects became a pattern and turned into reality.

DA studies changes and social interactions. It analyzes symbols and mainly language as a social practice, in other words, it highlights the way language/symbols are used to construct, control and regulate knowledge.

The role of the analyst, the author of this paper, is *“to work with what has been said and written, exploring patterns in and across the statement and identifying the social consequences of different discursive representations of reality.”*(Phillips, L. and Jørgensen, M. 2002:21). The analyst is responsible to deconstruct into categories and show the different outlooks.

The method provides an ongoing debate, it is subjective and systematic, it makes society reflect upon the subject and try to adapt to better practices. However DA does not give an objective answer, it is not about prompting the correct or incorrect answers. DA rather gives material to an ongoing debate and argumentation.

The data of this work was divided into five categories, and then the text was deconstructed interpreted with the use of power and discourse concepts by Michel Foucault and the social constructionism theory outlook of Berger and Luckman (1969). In addition in a micro-level the author uses the symbolic Interactionism as a perspective to understand communication and interactions. The referred theory is present in the work by the author's perspective, that is, the author experiences and sees the world through the window of a symbolic interactionism perspective

2.1.5 – Criticism to the Sources

This research relies on the interview of company's key collaborators and documents which are available on the company website. It is known that showing one perspective turn the research more bias as it is normally. However the different types of method used and the use of discourse analysis to analyze data, reduces the bias of the work.

The use of the website to collect data is not usual but it is getting progressively common; moreover, it has proven on research that corporations "websites are important source of research material, according to Raditya 2009 view.

3. Reference Theories

In this section the author presents an outline of the theories which she consider vital to understand the construction of an environmental discourse of a corporation. The first theory approached is the Symbolic Interactionism which explains communication through interpretations of symbols and interaction.

In order to understand the communication process and the creation of a discourse it is necessary to understand the process in a micro level as well. The interactionists state that society rises from a process of action and interaction, only able to take place through interpretations of symbols. Since this work concentrates in understanding the green communication, the Interactionists perspective helps to understand the symbols the company shares with society in order to create their reality.

The second theory approached is the social constructionism which helps to explain how phenomena are socially constructed. That is, in this case study the theory tries to explain how a social group (corporation/institution) constructs reality. Social constructionists are very enthusiastic about symbolic Interactionism shared meaning concepts therefore both theories complement each other on the understanding of the data. In addition, social constructionism helps to understand the reality, the objective world achieved by the use of language or other symbols. Furthermore, social constructionists focus on meaning and power in the construction of knowledge. For this reason the author makes a use of Foucault's power and discourse perspective in the third part of the reference theory chapter. The researcher argues that the use of Foucault's concepts complement the understanding of the data collected and answers the research questions.

3.1- Symbols and Reality

What is reality? According to Junior, J. "*Reality is how the world is*" (free translation, 1984), the free online dictionary defines reality as "*the quality or state of being actual or true*" or "*something that it is real*". But the question is how people know that things are real or not. Newton sitting under the tree saw an apple falling and concludes an important physics gravitation law. For Natural Scientists, Physicians and Mathematicians scholars this event was real, for the reason it was experienced, seen and proved by mathematical symbols and/or formulas. For Social Scientists, more specifically for the social constructionism school, they would argue that Newton experienced a physical reality but the mathematical representations were constructed socially, the mathematical symbols

could not exist without society. Ian Hacking (1999) would argue that undeniably gravitation is all over the place, it is a fact and it is not depended on society. However the idea of gravitation is social constructed.

Reality is a social phenomena, in other words, society constructs itself through a symbolical world where interpretations of symbols give meaning and consequently reality. Symbols give meaning to reality. They are the tools that allow individuals to understand themselves and the world surrounded. Symbols are social objects, language and acts. It is responsible for our interaction and understanding as human beings. We normally do not think about them all the time because it is present in everything we do. They can be abstract or concrete, therefore language is important to externalize and describe the world. A definition of a symbol will depend on the social object the individual is acting toward. In addition the individual perspective and the interaction of this individual with its social group and also the interaction with the symbol plays an important role in defining what a symbol is and if it is real or not. To illustrate the symbolic interactions we can use the property of laurel as an example. A laurel leave in some societies is considered only an herb with the functionality of seasoning food. However in another group it can be considered also a medicine to aid in digestion. These two groups have different meaning to one object. They interpret the meaning of laurel in a different way. They constructed the meaning of laurel according to their own perspective and experiences. Only people within that second social group share the meaning of Laurel as medicinal. Another illustration is an environmental issue. It can have different meaning for different groups; an environmental disaster may not be considered an environmental disaster in different societies. The well-known example is a flooding. Flooding is defined by different groups according to their experiences. For instance, for people in Netherlands it is a manageable reality so far. The country makes continuously use of technology aiming to manage flooding, which compared to Australia where flooding is connected with single occasions of disaster. To other groups, one may experience flooding as lack of infrastructure and governance. Different perspectives to the same phenomena, different definitions as well, therefore different knowledge. The construction of knowledge is done by the interpretation of symbols and interaction between two or more individuals. These interactions are responsible for creating a social reality and consequently form society. Therefore there is a dialectical relation between symbols and society; where one is the product of the other. According to Charon *"it is the symbols that translate the world from the physical sense reality to a reality that can be understood, interpreted, dissected, integrated and tested"*.(2009 p.59) The symbols are important to understand society through a communicative perspective, that is, there is no communication unless there is a symbolic interaction according to Symbolic Interactionists. That it is to say, the interaction between social individuals give meaning to symbols therefore create a reality, i.e., knowledge which rises from interactions of individuals inserted in a social group. This knowledge goes through a process of subjective reality until it is typified and turned into an objective reality, in other words, it becomes real.

3.2- Construction of reality through discourse

Society is a product of “*humans’ choices*”, that is, it constructs itself. It is built by habits and facts which are chosen according to a frame that it is convenient to that social group. Particularly, society is a human product, but also humans are society product. It is an ongoing dialectical relation. For instance language is a product of society interaction; it is one of the most important symbols. It is responsible to give meaning to the social world, but it is also society creation.

Language as a symbol is fundamental in social constructions and consequently discourses. It helps turn facts and habits into social constructions and therefore reality. When the social constructionism concept is implied, it means that the object we say it is social constructed, for instance a discourse, it depends on society to its existence. That is to say, a discourse is dependent on society and its perspective. According to Ian Hacking (1999), a social construction concept is applied not only to facts, kinds and things but also to ideas and beliefs. There are several things such as citizenship, gender; environmental good practices and law which are clearly social constructed. But beliefs, things and ideas are socially constructed too. All of them are created and defined according to how a social group frames its world.

Discourse

A discourse is formed by symbols (language) and therefore is constructed by the social group who shares the meaning and the interests on that discourse. A discourse helps to construct a reality. Our reality is only a reality because of the discourse we create to construct and support it. It is language that translates and put it concrete word what we experience and we know. Language according to Berger and Luckman typify the experiences and enables to put the experience together in different categories, in which make senses not only to a single person but the others who share the meaning and the same symbols. Language is “*capable not only of constructing symbols that are highly abstracted from everyday experience, but also of ‘bringing back’ these symbols and appresenting them as objectively real elements in everyday life.*” (Berger, P. and Luckman, T. 1966 p.55). It creates collective knowledge and it is also responsible to force society into patterns (ibid 53). In addition helps to create and legitimate a discourse.

As stated in Kress and Van Leeuwen (2001), “*discourses are developed in specific social context and in a specific manner which will keep the needs of the social actor, inserted in the context*” (p.4). It is constructed in order to fulfill needs and perspectives. Still, in accordance to Kress and Van Leeuwen, a discourse is constructed and involves objectives, evaluation, interpretation and legitimation (2001). Even though a discourse is created through interaction in a social group, not all discourses are fully accepted. It may be only real to some individuals. However, it is constantly constructed in order to please as many individuals as possible, since these individuals are responsible to keep it and put in practice that objective reality. Therefore a pragmatic interest is what will become truth to

that group. On the other hand, reality, rules, discourses are reinvented all the time because it is a product of human activity. It is a dialectical process where human activity produces discourses but also these discourses are responsible to stimulate human actions. It "*gives meaning to the world*" (Fairclough 1992).

Society constructs and deconstructs the discourses, institutions and structures. In Berger and Luckman (1969) words, a social order only exists because it's a product of societal activities. It is an ongoing process of acquiring knowledge and turning this knowledge into a habit and then these habits become concrete, an institution. This means that knowledge is turned into an objective reality. As soon as a discourse reaches this point it is rooted in the society. Therefore only in this way, as the objective world, social formations can be transmitted to a new generation. In order to change it, the whole process of interactions have to take place again, that is, the subjective discourse turn into an objective discourse, then it turn into a habit and an institution. (See fig 02- appendix 01).

Society is subject to habits according to Berger and Luckman(1969); therefore it implies that actions should be repeated several times with the same effort in order to turn into real, an institution. For instance, the fashion business. Every six months a new collection of new type of clothes is released. The business creates a discourse using different communicative strategies to make society wear those specific types of clothes. Those clothes became the "it" (must have) pieces of clothes. The fashion business make them turn into a habit, until it is typified and then become an institution, a "*typification of habitualized actions*" (Berger and Luckman). This was only possible because of the interaction between people and the fashion business. Another example would be if one imagines a fictitious corporation A interacting with a social group who does not have the knowledge of environmental good practices. Most likely the company will not have the best practices or discourse related to the environment, in other words, the company probably will emphasize more other subjects than environmental subjects. However as soon that group gets in contact with environmental friendly ideas they start to demand the corporation to change the policies and behavior toward the environment. Consequently the company might emphasize more on environmental subjects. The knowledge regarding the environment will be constructed and improved in the relation between this group and company. This interaction can be peaceful or through a conflict therefore the result to this relation is a new meaning to good environmental practices.

It is significant to highlight that Ideology, discourse, habits and ideas can be constructed through a conflict, consensus or even through imposition. The main idea is that reality only will become reality that we perceive, legitimate, when it turns into a habit. Then that knowledge will be transferred through generations as a concrete knowledge. Furthermore, a discourse can be institutionalized but not legitimized therefore not effective in its purpose. To summarize, an "*institutional knowledge transfer always implies control and legitimation, in which produces new meaning already connected to institutional*

process”(Free translation of Berger and Luckman 1969 p.96 and 122). In addition it needs an explanation and justification.

3.3- Understanding Environment Discourses Through the perspective of Foucault

Foucault, in the History of Sexuality highlights that “sexuality” is produced by discourses and institutions. The reader of this thesis is probably arguing what is the connection between sexuality and environment. The author argues that understanding the construction and maintenance of environmental discourse can be framed by Foucault’s theory of sexuality, to a certain extent. First, it should be clear that society’s environmental perception is produced by the interpretation of symbols shared by that social group as it was explained in the paragraphs above. Language, as one of the most important symbols is responsible to turn into reality the meaning of environmental friendly practices. The discourse and institutions (considering society formed by a group of different institutions therefore a macro institution) create environmental problems as well as environmental perspectives that we claim that it is good/right or bad/ wrong.

Recently society has been bombed with images of nature in every kind of activity, with the purpose to grab attention and/or sensitize. Corporations deal with images of nature to advertise, communicate (reports), and even as symbolism of a brand. They discuss about sustainability in all instance of their speech. However, all the discussion and over usage of the environment occasionally is not related with being environmental friendly or not. According to Foucault it is a way of power to be organized.

Society demand and helps the corporations construct their environmental perspective but the company’s also add their own perspective, in order to regulate and organize their own discourse. It is a dialectical relation between society and companies, that is, society wants companies to have a green discourse and the companies, once they have it, they try to frame it and regulate it with their own business perspective. Therefore society as an institution supports it. When applying Foucault’s view there is a role of the environment which is power/relation by certain individuals or institutions. That is, the environmental discourse helps to establish a power relation. Power *“does not work negatively by forcefully dominating those who are subject to it, it incorporates them , and is ”productive” in the sense that it shapes and “retools” them to fit in with its needs”* (Fairclough 1992 p.50). This power comes from the relation between power and knowledge, where the process to acquiring knowledge is where power is exercised. Consequently, this new way of acquiring power is denominated by Foucault as Biopower. This Biopower brings life and *“its mechanism of explicit calculations and made knowledge/ power an agent of transformation of human life”* (Foucault 1981p.143). It is not a power like in a dictatorship to oppress and spread fear. It is a power that shows only the good side of things and what these things can do well for people.

It is evident that there is a whole set of symbolic mechanism that supports an environmental discourse, as well the transformation of this discourse. The need of having a forest down to provide material to modern society and meanwhile support other conservationists activities, such as environmental strategies (CSR) to compensate and preserve the environment is social constructed, that is, nature needs to be compensated in a certain way in order to all actors feel some kind of relief. People must feel that they had their work done. A nature-resource based products type, like pulp industry is always involved in paradoxical actions, like cut forest and then sponsor conservational programs. These kind of compensational activities are socially decided in order to mitigate the impacts, however not always these activities are biological compensating. It is just a way of society feel better for not damaging the environment that "much". A corporation, even though nature-source based products type, does not have the necessity of sponsoring programs of environmental education or recycling, these different activities might not compensate the other in a biological perspective. But the need of these varieties of activities was social constructed. Society wants to see these activities as a form of compensation. Society, governments, Institutions in general constructed the way company's should behave and organize their activities regarding environmental practices. The acceptance is related to how many activities the company has. In this matter it enables us to see the power of society. For example a nature- source based product company is said that to have a bigger impact in the environment therefore organizations, communities, and governments demand more of this companies regarding environmental practices. This kind of companies comparing to the other, frequently have more CSR activities focus on the environment. Society created the necessity of nature-based company to have a more effective and visible environmental discourse. It is a classical case of we produce ourselves. Society has a power relation with private institutions. It is an ongoing dialectical process where the result is a green discourse and society satisfaction. But in fact, it has an opposite effect of good practices. In relation to sex Foucault writes *"There has been a constant optimization and an increasing valorization of the discourse on sex; and that this carefully analytical discourse was meant to yield multiple effects, by a deployment that cannot be adequately explained merely referring it to a law of prohibition."*(1978 p.23) Rephrasing and understanding through an environmental discourse perspective, he meant that over communication/discourse might have the effect of alienation or restriction. In fact the excess of discourse might foresee to build an analytical environmental discourse, reorient and even change the very meaning of being environmental friendly. Everything is molded and kept by institutions. In short, while companies produce discourses and massively keep them, society maintains and reinforces therefore it makes visible the power relation between these two institutions. However this power relationship does not mean dominance and oppression, power in a sense of " (...) multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate and which, constitute their own organization; as the process which, through ceaseless struggles and confrontations, transforms, strengthens, or reverses them; as the support which these force relations find in one another (...)" (ibid 92). This power will be

determined by what one discourse is about and how it is done therefore who holds the power can motivate further discourses. In summary, the one who controls the discourse it is the one who is able to exercise power. The over discourse of a subject may not clarify the subject or create awareness, it rather aim to shape the society in a certain way, that is, an over discourse rather aims to control and mold society in accordance to it. Therefore, it is what Foucault called bio-power where excessive positive discourse is produced in order to exercise power over the group.

4- Empirical Data and Analysis

In this chapter the author presents the empirical data and the analysis of the material. The section is divided in five categories which the author considered important for the understanding of the data. The categories are sustainability, conservation, CSR- environmental responsibility, practices vs. discourse and communication.

4.1- Sustainability

The reason of choosing sustainability as a category is because the company's discourse involves the sustainability talk as one of the main strategies for its environmental discourse. In addition they express that their main goal is to be known as a global benchmark for sustainability.

“Sustainability is integrated in all stage of the production” (source: Sustainability Report)

The definition of sustainability according to the companies and the main actors putting it into practices are important views to understand the company's environmental perspectives.

What is sustainability?

Sustainability means ***“to provide the best for the planet - both for today as well as future generations -, to listen to and understand the different demands and needs around us”*** (source: Sustainability Report)

To the communication coordinator ***“sustainability is how my business can have a long term activity bringing benefits, preserving the nature. How my business can be sustainable and still give profit, keep its economical role.”***

“Sustainability is to make use of the environment but still guarantee the future generation a quality environment, always questioning the use of the natural resources” (source: sustainability manager)

The three definitions it might be interpreted as different point of views regarding sustainability but all of them present an essence of a business perspective, that is, there

are common words that show business perspective such as **provide, bring, understand,** and **profit**.

The company definition mention, ***provide the best***, which shows a corporative paternalistic perspective. It implies that corporations are responsible for providing something to society and even to nature. It is described as part of their role. They say they provide the planet and it is not the other way around.

Bring benefits and give profit- It illustrates the economical aspect of a company, that is, the main role of a company is to have profit therefore even though dealing with sustainability the overall goal of a corporation should be taken into account.

On the second statement, the actor recognizes clearly the main goal is profit. However, the definition of sustainability of the company and the sustainability manager avoid using the word profit combined with sustainability. Perhaps because they may believe society do not perceive profit and environmental concerns as matching concepts.

Sustainability is ***“use the environment but still guarantee the future...”*** It shows the opposite idea of providing the best for the planet. On the other hand, the statement still presents the paternalistic point of view of corporations where they consider themselves responsible for *guaranteeing, providing and bringing benefits*.

The company has a vision which is to be recognized as ***“global benchmark for sustainability, highlighting that it is an environmental responsible, socially beneficial and economically viable A Sustainability agenda was created to accomplish the objectives.”*** (Source: Sustainability Report)

The corporation is influenced by the rising of environmental awareness in society. Hence they want ***“to be recognized as a benchmark”***. This quote display the company’s necessity of being legitimized by society, in order to the sustainability discourse become an institution and be transferred to future generations. The company needs the public to share the same meaning of sustainability practices as them.

In a social constructionism frame their sustainability practices is still a subjective reality. Their interpretation of sustainability is only real to them so far. Therefore they are working in their definitions and practices in order to be legitimized.

The Construction of the sustainability concept with the help of society

During the researcher process of collecting data the word sustainability is used several times by the company’s actors as well in their communicative material. In some moments the researcher has noticed that the sustainability word/ concept are used in the place of CSR. The literature explains this shift implying that CSR practices, especially forestry business are still an object of distrust to society (Raditya, D. 2009:01). Thus the company may avoid the usage of CSR to classify their sustainability practices in order to have a

closer relation and/or be accepted by society. The need of being accepted by stakeholders is implicit when they describe their objectives and highlights the active dialogue with stakeholders. See quote below:

“All activities are guided by sustainability agenda which has the following objectives: competitive operations, environmental best practices in forest management, better environmental practices in the production of cellulose, strong social commitment, and generation of positive economical impacts to the region and active dialogue with stakeholders.” (Source: Sustainability Report)

The active dialog with stakeholders infers that the company need stakeholders acceptance or legitimation of their sustainability practices, consequently they need the local stakeholders to understand their sustainability and confirm as genuine. Regarding this matter it is apparent when the interviewee stated “...***we have a challenge to make sustainability attractive to all actors...***” she continues “***sustainability for people is what makes this deal good for them***” (Source: communication coordinator). This statement raises different interpretations. Sustainability is treated like a product that they have to sell, but it also implies that stakeholders perceive sustainability as a product as well. It implies they perceive it should bring back some advantage to them. In this study actors and corporation are interacting in order to share the same meaning for sustainability. In addition, it can be interpreted that the company need the actors to accept them and respond positively to their actions. It important to stress that in both statements there is no implicit intention in raising knowledge rather react and respond to what people desire.

Even though raising knowledge is not mentioned the company carries out environmental education activities at Veracel Station. The activities focus on teaching environmental good practices like, recycling, preservation of the forest and no hunting. The necessity of doing this kind of activities with the community is to bring them closer to the company, but also teach them that cutting trees and hunting are not good for the environment. The activities are mostly focus in what the company thinks, and the stakeholders need, for instance like mentioned in one of the interviews; one of the communities needed a computer classroom and a library. Another example was a community that needed quality water to drink. The company intervened between the community and the government to bring water to the group and in the first case the company paid for the classroom. These examples bring to the discussion the role of the company and its stakeholders. It raises the concept of power relations between society and the corporation. It is a power relation that not always the oppressed is in a negative situation. Therefore one can frame with Foucault's concept of Biopower. On the analyst interpretation, the company uses different types of strategies which apparently are good to society but the main idea is to take over control. At this moment the “oppressed” (community) is still in control even though they might not know. The stakeholders can demand, but when the company replies to the demands it may entail they are being accepted little by little and consequently they are exercising this Biopower.

“Dialog promotes sustainability” (source: Sustainability Report). Dialog to them means to listen to what people want and then develop strategies, they are aware that society is more conscious about environmental issues. This shows that there is an interaction between society and the company. Together they create a reality, a concept of sustainability that meets their expectations. The improvement in the communication/dialog with stakeholders is happening because the company has experienced conflict situations with the community and civil society organizations. In addition, society awareness has been changing the way the corporation perceives the environment.

“Market has been very demanding in the subject, stimulated by aware consumption movements. There are an increasing number of consumers selecting their products from evidences of good environmental practices” (Source: Sustainability Report)

“Marketing has been very demanding...” (Source: Sustainability Report) – It shows the stakeholders driven values of the company but also show the importance of society in constructing a company environmental strategy. All the actors interviewed always stated that the company does not sell “shelf products», that is, the company does not sell products direct to the public; however, they are still worried about people’s reaction and demands. The author is being redundant in its analysis but it is important to show how the corporation is dependent on society, and how people are shaping them defining their sustainability practices. In addition, the interviewees and the corporation documents relentlessly repeat its dependency on society and especially stakeholders. In summary, the material shows that the company is constructing their meaning to sustainability sharing the same meaning with society, that is, society plays an important role on the way Veracel defines sustainability. Both actors through time with different interactions is constructing and changing the meaning.

The below statement implies that society has been demanding more and more. In addition people are more attentive to corporation’s activities and the consequences of their acts. Veracel is aware that people are paying attention to their activities therefore the strategy is to use symbols to make the sustainability more visible and tangible to stakeholders.

“Sustainability has a different component ... In the past companies were concentrated on the cost of progress... companies only took environment as consideration when something had happened.” (Source: Communication Coordinator). According to the same source companies now want to mitigate their impact.

Sustainability as Tangible

Veracel Station a natural private reserved area is considered ***“the tangible symbol of the company”*** (source: different actors). In this area they organize different activities with different social groups in order to tutor about environmental good practices. The station is a symbol that portrays the conservationists values of the company. In addition it is where the company environmental discourse turns partly into reality. The company uses the place to different activities related to environmental education and scientific research.

Visitors are mainly local schools and institutions, and company's employees and local communities' members which they take part in different types of workshops. Both employees and a few members of the communities are used as informal facilitators of the company green discourse.

4.2- Conservation

The researcher opted for using conservation as a category because the company claims that their main environmental strategy regards conservation and protection of the natural resources, therefore conservation plays an important role in understanding the company's environmental discourse.

Veracel Station is the symbol of the conservational claims of the company as well as the symbol of the environmental strategy. Along with the Atlantic Forest project³, Veracel station represents the company conservational wishes. Therefore common people can assess the conservationist aspect better on the station while Institutions, like civil society organizations, Government and International certification accepts well the Atlantic Forest Project as it deals with reforestation. The station is highly portrayed as a symbol of the company good environmental behavior.

In a symbolic Interactionism logic, Veracel Station is a symbolic representation of the company good practices and environmental value. It induces society to see the company as conservationist, even though a pulp business is classified as hazardous. This symbolism is embedded in a big environmental discourse which aims to turn the company into a sustainability benchmark.

“Veracel station: Preserved Paradise” (source: Sustainability Report)

What is not often mentioned is that the Atlantic Forest project and the Natural reserved area are part of certification requirements as well as Government policies. Therefore one can conclude that their strategies are strongly based on stakeholders' demands and these demands may require better practices in which the company can do at the time of the requirement and continuous with it. Like the Atlantic Forest project that has expanded through the years.

Atlantic Forest project coordinator: ***“when we started the program was actually a conduct adjustment agreement (...) however it was an incentive for us to keep going”***

³ Atlantic Forest project- It is a replanting project that aims to plant 400 acres per year of native plants in the private areas of Veracel in order to promote biodiversity. However the project started as a conduct adjustment term where the company was obliged by law to replant native trees as part of an adjustment conduct term. The company was condemned to replant 200 acres per year for a certain period of time, but at the end of this time the company decided to keep going with the project.

Technical manager of Veracel station: ***“Due to the wish to be certified by FSC the company had to indicate an area with high conservational value according to the principle number 10 from FSC. However the organization did not accept they wanted more preserved areas since the company had more than a hundred thousand acres. Therefore the company identified more 5 areas.”***

The author of this paper argues that it is a paradox when a nature-based hazardous business has a conservationist green discourse however, the author believes based on the data collected that one of the reasons for the conservationist strategy is related to the social group they interact. As Brazil is a country with large forest area and with plenty of deforestation issues, the conservationist ideas are very present on society lives, that is, society perceives forest protection as a an important environmental friendly behavior. Furthermore, it is important to highlight that Veracel environmental practices are not only related to conservation, it includes income generation (honey production and products made with piassava), workshops, network of odor perception and even projects on fisheries among others. The researcher reckons this excess of activities gives an idea of superficial practices, not embedded in the company values. It gives the impression that every new society demand the company adapts to new activities and keeps this ongoing process of creating new strategies. However, none of them has meaningful environmental value. On the other hand, the fact that the environmental strategy seems unclear and changeable any time the actors demand, shows how the companies value are driven by stakeholders and they are the ones responsible for shaping the institution and its discourse. See the words underlined below to corroborate the research interpretation.

“Veracel knows that the financial success and the perennality of its operations in the region depend on the environmental protection and involve the equation of social issues, respecting the particularities of the place where it is installed, and with a good relationship management.”(Source: Sustainability Report)

The researcher goes further interpreting the power relation between the company and society where society is exercising power when demanding more things to the corporation. It is possible to see in the above quote this evidence when they mention **good relationship**. It is an evidence of society exercising power directly or indirectly. However the company is aware of this power and makes use of the green discourse in an inflated way in order to have the control, or show at least that they have the control. In other words, the over environmental discourse, the excess of environmental discourse, might not have the positive intention of creating knowledge. It rather intend to the company achieve its overall goal. It is an exercise of power by the company.

4.3 - CSR - Environmental Responsibility

CSR is the strategy where the company shows more explicit its green discourse. The company defines CSR as social and environmental responsibility they believe the social and environmental aspects are connected. The environmental responsibility according to the sustainability manager is ***“preservation and conservation”***. However

the company interacts with a diverse number of stakeholders. Even though keeping the approach of preservation and conservation they built their strategy according to their stakeholders.

The environmental strategies were constructed to fulfill international certification requirements. Regarding this issue the sustainability manager stated: ***“the certification requirements were guides to our environmental strategies”*** therefore the combination of certification rules and other stakeholders is responsible to shape the company green strategies.

“Practices oriented by three principals of Global Pact, investments in environmental control, investments in technology for the operations, to be in accordance with the legislation” (Source: Sustainability Report) -The word oriented and to be in accordance implies society pressure.

The CSR strategy is first mentioned by the company in the sustainability report in 2006, since then it has been changing through years. In the same year it mostly interpreted in the report as welfare practices, like security, education and infra-structure projects. In 2007 CSR is interpreted with a slight different perspective.

“From 2007 on a new focus was given to social projects supported by Veracel, aimed at generation of incomes, providing economic alternatives to the inhabitants of neighboring communities and preventing the rural depopulation. Education and health are also themes of this program” (Source: sustainability report)

From the sustainability report of 2007 until the one in 2010 it is recognizable that the company is modeling its environmental responsibility. The company external communication analyst also claimed that society was changing regarding environmental and social issues.

In 2008, the strategy had a significant change including the team working with communication and the sustainability department. They argue they abandoned the welfare practices or are trying to. But it is still possible to see projects where the company substitutes the state presence. The employees reported different stories where the company had to take the role of the state, for instance, the clean water problem and the computer and library room that has been mentioned before. (Source: external communication analyst and sustainability manager and technician at Veracel Station).

It is important to place emphasis on the fact that CSR is about perspectives; there is no right or wrong definition. It depends on all actors involved in the interaction and their perspective.

Regarding internal CSR practices, it is mostly related to certification compliance. See the statement below to understand.

“...but the social and environmental issue is present in their work routine because of the certification.(...) we do not have a lot of activities regarding environmental education, the employees are aware about recycling and so on because it is part of the plant routine.” (Source: Communication Coordinator)

If they need a recertification they adapt to what international stakeholders want. The need of a certification is considered important because nowadays society has grown awareness regarding environmental issues; therefore companies certificated are considered more trustworthy.

4.4- Practice vs. Discourse

The company practices inserted in the CSR strategy are: Veracel Station (environmental education and scientific research), Atlantic Forest project (reforestation), Income generation (production of products using piassava and production of honey), management of solid waste, project connected to public health (workshops) and quite often infra-structure projects like the construction of hospital, school and roads.

The environmental discourse goes around the above mentioned practices as well the government policies and certification. In addition, the company creates a discourse where sustainability has to be mentioned as part of every activity they are engaged in. Therefore they create a pattern justifying every activity as a way of achieving sustainability. Actually sustainability is the pattern. It is the word that everybody understands as a goal to reach, even though they are still building the concept of it. The company use different types of communicative strategy to repeat the environmental discourse and force them into society. There is a repetition which the researcher analyzes as an attempt to turn into a habit and consequently a reality for them and society.

The researcher understands that the environmental discourse is deeper than the practices, that is, there is a whole set of objectives to accomplish when creating the discourse. The practices often occur in response to stimulus of society. They are tools to create the discourse. The discourse itself is constructed with the collaboration of society and it can only be constructed through interactions; however the discourse aims domination and fulfillment of specific goals of the company. It is an exercise of power. It is an attempt to try to bring back to them the power. In order to accomplish that, they urge to achieve a good relationship with different stakeholders.

The environmental discourse is always connected with another discourse.

“In 2007, Veracel hired the Federal University of Viçosa (MG) to study climate scenarios for Southern Bahia in the next 40 years. As it depends on abundant precipitation to keep the current levels of productivity, the company would like to know how global warming would possibly affect the region’s microclimate.”

The company is not interested on the global warming just because it is part of their strategy to take care of the environment. It is also a concern if the climate will

affect its plantation. The green discourse also helps in the paternalistic approach, when the company on its radio show gives information regarding environment, health and so on. The company takes the perspective of the citizens and acts as if their main objective would be care about the citizens and maintain societal values, assuming the State position. However they are taking the perspective of the citizens, reflecting their own identity in relation to the expectations of the citizens. And thus, constructing and legitimating its discourse.

The construction of the green discourse and the attempt to try to interact with society and listen to their demand it is related to the past history of conflicts with communities and government. They are aware of the criticism and the opposition of some actors therefore it is fundamental to their strategy to be successful in the adaptation of the discourse and promote the right practices.

The author of this paper highlights the paradoxical relation between discourse and practices of the company. The company business is considered hazardous, in addition it is extractive. On the other hand the corporation creates a discourse on conservation and protection of the environment. The author would argue that in generally the practices are not in accordance to the discourse or vice-versa.

4.5- Communication

Communication plays an important role in the making of the environmental strategy. Veracel is trying to improve the communication with society and in special local stakeholders. They say it is important to listen to the actors and know what they want and perceive.

The communication department works with three dimensions, economical, social and environmental. However the social and environmental dimensions are the one they consider more important.

“We monitor what is the public interest” (source: communication coordinator)

The researcher observed and analyzed different medium of communication and concluded that the communication is the most important tool the company has to achieve their sustainability goal. Regarding the communicative strategies and discourse Veracel emphasizes more the way they communicate the sustainability than the practical strategy which is the real action. Practices are connected to the discourse but the discourse is bigger in order to turn those practices real, in order to make those practices work in accordance to their perspective. The analyst infers that language plays an important role in turning the environmental strategy known. In addition, they use language in different ways according to the social group they are directing the message. In fact, listening to what the social group wants and how they communicate they adapt their speech.

In the year of 2008 the company environmental strategy became the most important strategy in the company. They wanted to change the relationship with the community and also achieve the sustainability benchmark goal; therefore a good relationship with stakes

was important. A new communication team was hired in order to work on the green/social communication. They claim they have learned with the past as one can see in the statement below.

“After problems with different stakeholders, such as NGO’s, social movement and Government institutions the company hired a communication team” (source: communication coordinator)

According to the analyst perspective this statement has important points to be analyzed when understanding the process of constructing a discourse and also communication in general. First, the statement raises the question if the team is there to improve the dialog in order to create awareness or the team is there because they are responsible for making the green discourse happen with the help of society. It implies that the dialog is good for them to have a better discourse and consequently be better understood and received by stakeholders.

In the external communication analyst words” regarding the past conflict is because ***“the company was too closed”*** her chief continues saying that: ***“Our communicative strategies had problems in the past because it was concentrated in propaganda now we are more related to publicity and also public utility. We talk more to the public.”*** On the researcher perspective these two declarations imply a verification that the green discourse is constructed with the help of the community but not with a genuine objective of being environmental friendly rather with the objective of acceptance and be recognized. The use of the word publicity confirms that, they want to gain public interest.

Veracel faces a number of barriers in communicating their green strategy. They are: high number of illiteracy, including functional illiteracy which is according to the Brazilian State is a person who can read poorly and sign the name but he/she cannot interpret; the past conflicts and the myths regarding the eucalyptus; pressure from the social movements among others. To tackle the barriers and interacts with people and produce an ongoing discourse they make use of different medium of communication. They are the website which focuses in the international and also outsiders stakeholders like students, civil society organization and also the shareholders, internal newsletter, advertisements in the local newspaper and web portal and a radio show.

The researcher observed that in the website, language is well used to show the ~~company green practices.~~ In addition they use different tools like videos and podcast. The website presents all the communicative strategy material used in the environmental strategy. This medium is the most important in communicating the environmental responsibility strategy and consequently the green discourse. It has long been known that corporations’ websites are the main medium to show CSR practices and Veracel does not do different. (Wottrich and Sastararuji, 2008)

Veracel also makes use of newsletters for the employees and outside the company, where they buy space in all major region newspapers and internet portal. There the CSR has a face, and it can be an employee or members of the community.

The research understands that the use of employees, members of the community, common citizens subtly implies that people are part of the transformation. In addition, the images suggest a close relation between people and the corporation. Somehow it helps to get people's attention, sensitize.

The communication department said regarding the newspaper ***“people do not like propaganda therefore we try to humanize all our strategy and write like a newspaper article but always with an easy vocabulary”***. On the investigator perception even though they say they do not want to advertise it looks advertisement but not an advertisement of the company rather an advertisement of the green discourse.

Veracel also buy some space in the local radio stations, which is the best medium to reach a bigger number of people. They have a few minutes show which they call “Action and Citizenship” and the presenters claim that this show brings Veracel closer to the listener. In fact, it actually take closer because they use different contents related to the listener daily life and always connected to some environmental tips and how Veracel is environmental responsible. To complement the show they put specialists and also the own community and employees to talk and say hello to the listeners. The company claims that they want to be closer to people and know what they want. However the researcher argues that they need the public to legitimate their discourse as well as they need them to restore power. Likewise they want to exercise their power through the over discourse around the environment.

The sustainability report is another medium that shows the environmental practices and it is also where the discourse is organized and put it all dimensions together. The company tries to make it as easy as possible to be understandable to different stakeholders. The report is where they unite all the different micro discourse constructed within the different interactions.

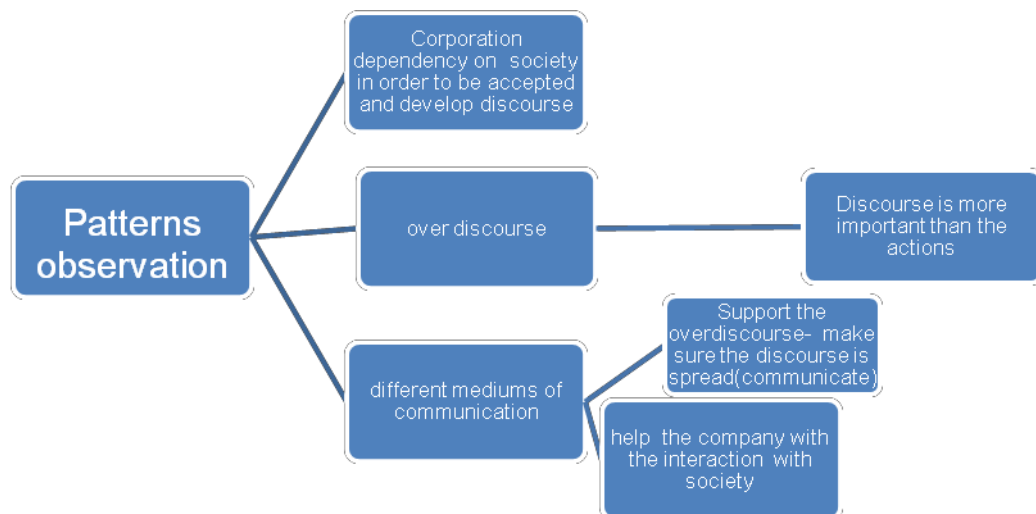
Another way of communicating the eco-talk is using the employee as an informal facilitator. They claim they want ***“to maximize the potential of the employees as agent of change, without being evasive.”***(Source: communication analyst). However there are a few employees that one can see clearly that plays the role of facilitators because they usually live in the communities and work in the company. The researcher has talked to one informally and he confirms that he helps the community to communicate with the company but he also helps the company to reach the community.

5- Discussion

In this section the researcher will combine the empirical data and the reference theory to attempt to answer the research questions presented in the introduction chapter.

5.1 Patterns observed

During the research process patterns were observed. In figure 03 is displayed a summary of these patterns.



Based on the case study we could observe the dependency of corporations on society in order to be accepted and develop their discourses. In order to be recognized the corporations use a discourse in every way and every place which characterizes an over discourse, that is, the use of the discourse to have an effect, influence on or achieve objectives. It is significant to highlight that in the case study the discourse as an entity was even more important than the actions it was talking about. Regarding communication, the medium of communication are used to support the discourse and make sure it is spread. In addition, communication helps in the interaction with the society.

5.2 Green Discourse

How the green discourse of a business is constructed? - A discourse is supported by a number of activities that turn it real and tangible. It is formed by interactions of society and corporations. In the case study, the discourse is influenced by stakeholders and certification. It is believed that certified businesses are better received by society. They are considered more trustworthy than others when certified. Moreover, social movements, civil society organizations, governments and common citizens are responsible for stimulating corporations to improve their environmental discourses. It is known that

society is better informed regarding this issue presently. The access to information is wider therefore exposes more people to different types of information as a result we have a more informed and demanding society.

The green discourse is interdependent of society. The study showed that there are two main reasons for its interdependence. First, it is economically disadvantageous to be involved in a conflict. Second, corporation, even though not selling products to the general public, like Veracel it still needs to have a good image. Companies depend on society to function as well as to help them build their strategies. In the case study, we can see that company and communities co-habit the same space, where each actor has its role and interact with each other. In these symbolic interactions they exchange meaning therefore construct their reality which is not intentional rather a *“quality appertaining to phenomena that we recognize as having a being independent of our own volition (we cannot „wish them away“)* (Berger and Luckman, 1966 p 13).

Corporations take the role of the other (society/stakeholders), that is, they *“imagine the world from the perspective of society”* (Charon 2007 p 107) in order to create their discourse and be accepted by people. Conglomerates need society to buy their products but also to be supportive to their activities, meanwhile society needs business to create jobs and move the economy. It is a dialectical relation where one depends on the other and vice-versa. In the study, it was noticed that corporation normally have different types of activities to corroborate an environmental discourse, for instance, environmental education activities, workshops, income generation activities, replanting and so on. However, none of the described activities, among others, focus on raising knowledge regarding environment. Most of them are informational and aim to fulfill stakeholders' practical demand and the companies' objectives. However it is important to notice that even though not aiming to raise knowledge the interactions between these two institutions will always result in some new understandings.

Practices (actions) are the tangible part of an environmental discourse .It is what shows the discourse is real. But a discourse is not only practices. It is a melting pot of symbolic interactions where language, images and actions are used to reach objectives. In the case study, the practices were countless. In addition, Veracel had tried to cover as many subjects as possible. The author argues that have all these different types of activities turns the environmental practices superficial. On the other hand, it can be an advantage to the company, because the actions reach a larger amount of people which would be beneficial to the effectiveness of the discourse and the company sustainability benchmark objectives. The different practices makes the discourse to be present in every circumstances which might characterize an over discourse, which framed by Foucault's concept it can intend alienation or even domination. This domination can be observed in the power relation between company and society. Society exercises power in relation to companies when they request for better practices or when they call for actions which are favorable to them. They exercise this power to make corporation construct and change

their strategies. However corporations are aware of these social power therefore they use the over discourse to exercise power in relation to society. They highlight the good practices and the good consequences of their actions to society in order to exercise their power. According to Foucault's concept this would be what he called Biopower.

The power relation between society and corporation will depend on the interactions. The power is exercised in accordance to their needs. It merges between them. In the case study it is presented two examples of how society exercise power regarding the company but then, how the company come back to power using the environmental strategies. The first case which has been mentioned several times in this paper was a local community who wanted clean water and only accepted talking to Veracel when they facilitated the acquisition of it. Another example, also mentioned several times in this paper was about a community that needed a library and computer room and Veracel constructed. Both examples illustrate the way the company interacts with people and how people can exercise their power. However, when they replied to the demand they start to exercise power, they communicate their good practices repeatedly in order to achieve their objectives but also show how virtuous they are.

Sometimes the discourse can be incoherent with the companies' practices or the business activities. In the case of Veracel the environmental discourse is based on conservationist and preservationist perspectives but the business is an extractive business. Therefore the discourse plays an important role in hiding the extractive practices and highlighting the good environmental practices as well the good relation with the community.

Regarding the effectiveness of the discourse it is necessary that a subjective reality turns into an objective reality in order to become an objective discourse. Framing by a social constructionism theory it is understood that the discourse is incorporated to the society through the experiences. And the experiences are acquired through a number of activities promoted by the company. The aim of those activities is to put in practice the reality, that is, the discourse is repeated and put in practice until it turns into a habit then it becomes a concrete institution (objectified). It is when the discourse is a concrete reality that society internalizes and takes it as truth. As soon as the discourse reaches this stage means that it is institutionalized and it turn bigger than the practices and the stakeholders therefore at this stage the discourse is independent. It is an institution which means *"there is a reciprocal typification of habitualized actions by type of actors"* (Berger and Luckman, 1966 p 72)

Language

The case study highlights the power of language in constructing and supporting a discourse. Language translates the discourse to a more concrete strategy; turn it real and tangible and even manipulable. The use of symbolic words which has significant meaning to society helps the discourse to connect more with people, for instance sustainability. In the study, Veracel makes use of the world sustainability in different ways in order to show

a concrete environmental strategy. In addition, it is used to construct a strategy and give a view to a goal, something that should be reached. We can see that the meaning is defined little by little through the interactions with the communities and the company while both achieve their agendas.

5.3- Driving forces

What are the driving forces to the green discourse? - The way a green discourse is constructed has directly relation to its driving force. In the study, it is showed that the company needs to be accepted by society, that is, society should be able to share the same meanings with the corporation regarding environmental and social issues in order to Veracel achieve its objective. The environmental strategy is built and developed in accordance to stakeholders requirements, that is, companies are aligned with the stakeholders desire and with its business objectives. The combination of two is responsible for creating an environmental discourse and its strategies.

In the study, it is possible to see that the corporation has been trying to improve dialog with the community in order to build the discourse. They wish to have a better acceptance and generate satisfaction within its stakeholder. Veracel showed that improving dialog helped them have better accepted environmental strategies, that is, made them improve their discourse. The company has proven to be in all different stage in trying to find the suitable strategy. The study showed that corporations are stakeholders driven, that is, people are responsible for shaping the company's perspective. Not only people inserted in the company but also the ones surrounding it. Corporations are aware that currently society is more aware of environmental issues and their power of transformation. In addition society values and relationship with corporations have been changing through time. The results of this case study showed that society wishes are taken into account in company's strategies and the power relation between them emerges according to their interactions.

5.4- Communicative Strategy

How does the company communicate the discourse for its stakeholders?-The communication strategies are used to advertise the discourse but also to improve the dialog, to make people closer to the company. The communicative medium mainly used is the corporation websites where they can tell people all the CSR strategies and people can write back. In the case study, forced by the past conflicts the company uses others medium to talk to people. They adapt according to their stakeholders. The dialog with stakeholders" increases according to the business need to be accepted by society.

The researcher observed that the strategies are informational which can or cannot raise knowledge regarding the environment. However knowledge may not be the first priority when creating a discourse and communicating it. But some kind of knowledge will always be a consequence of an interaction. The case study also showed that the CSR strategies purposes are first, to comply with policies and certification. Second, a tool to be

known and be closer to people in order to reach specific objectives. Therefore the way they use the communicative strategies could be considered even manipulative because they use images of common people succeeding in their relation with the company in order to make the community feel that they are part of the process. Veracel has a unique strategy, a show in a radio station that leaves some space for people send a message to the community and this attitude shows more clear the process of making people to be related to the company, to be part in the transformation. The excess of medium used to communicate an environmental discourse may be considered harmful in the perspective of Foucault's work but it is positive in the perspective of a business. Foucault would argue that the works intend to dominate however the researcher would argue that the over communication is intended to construct the discourse, if one say an environmental discourse is socially constructed therefore the repetitions are important in order to turn the discourse into a habit, then an institution which is known by all and perceived as reality.

5.5 Exception to patterns

There some exceptions presented in the Veracel case study such as the Atlantic Forest project. The project started because of government and policy demand. They needed to comply with an adjustment term. However after the period stipulated by the government to comply with the law, the company kept carrying on with the project. This result infers that policies and social pressure can actually change business behavior toward the environment, or at least stimulate good practices. On the other hand, the project may have continued not because the company changed its perspective but because it can get a positive response from society and help them achieve its objectives. However no matter the reasons keeping the project can have a positive impact in the environment which is an advantage to both society and the natural environment.

In summary it can be concluded that society changes of perspectives and social pressure through environmental policies, direct dialog or conflict can have good results in changing business environmental practices.

5.6 This paper results and past work

The researcher argues that there exist some disagreement between this paper and past work related. During the preparation of the research the author did not find any paper that would discuss that the responsibility of constructing an environmental discourse is both from society and company through their interactions. Many past work are concentrated on showing power relation focusing in the idea of the corporation as the dominant actor; the oppressor dominating the communities, the oppressed. (Lang, Cris 2007; Brei and Bohm 2010). However the results of this research show that this power relation is reciprocal. Both have the chance to exercise power. In addition in the process of building a discourse the case study showed that the relation between society and business work as a physical law, action and reaction. Society demands more and corporations react back. They are aware of the drawbacks of a conflict. Their overall goal is profit therefore it

is important to have consumers on their side. There are several cases of companies trying to reach their goals without considering society and resulted in famous conflicts and boycotts. The famous case of Shell and the Ogoni made businesses took a big step to take accountability to the communities at large. And the newest case of Greenpeace and Nestlé, where after a period of online advocacy from the NGO, Nestlé decided to talk and taking into account the organization request since they could not more control the bad publicity online. In the case study it shows the same tendency, stakeholders know what they want and the company interact with them in order to create a discourse that try fulfill both actors expectations. Certainly, the relationship is not simple and it is an ongoing interaction in order to create new discourses.

6. Conclusion

In this chapter the author presents the conclusion of this work and a small reflection for future work.

This research aimed to look into the environmental discourse of corporations, the driving forces and the communication of it. To achieve this goal the author used a case study to delimitate the study and understand better the dynamic of a corporation's green discourse. In order to comprehend the data collected the researcher made use of social constructionism theory, symbolic Interactionism and Foucault's Biopower and discourse concepts. The material was analyzed with the use of discourse analysis with the aim to deconstruct the discourse and understand it.

The results showed that corporations' discourses are highly dependent on society and its perspectives. The interaction between business and society is an ongoing action reaction relation. In addition the work point out the importance of symbols in creating a discourse where what is said about practices/ actions is more important than the real practice. Regarding communication, the study shows that it is an important tool to spread the discourse, keep it and turn it into an institution. In addition communicative strategies showed to be important to keep the over discourse and help the corporation to exercise power.

To conclude, regardless the limitations which can be faced in a case study the research goal was successfully achieved. It provided important insights on a green discourse of forest corporations.

For future work with similar goals it is expected that the researcher make use of different methods and take consideration of the shortcomings of this work in order to enrich the research field of environmental communication.

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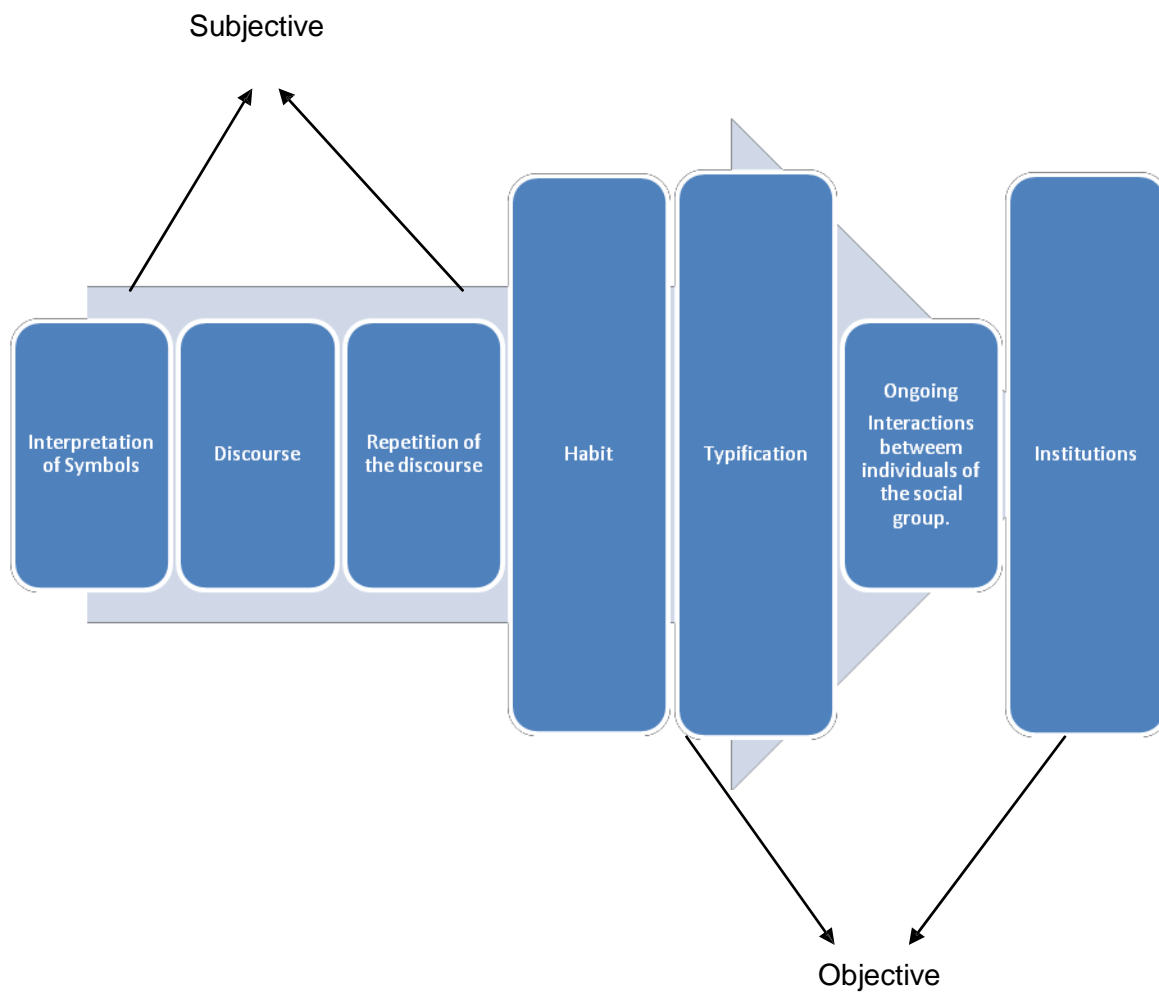
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8- Appendices

8.1- Appendix 1- Fig.02- The process of objectification of a discourse



8.2- Appendix 2. Interview guideline

Topics	Questions	Objective
Sustainability Environmental strategies and policies	<p>What is sustainability?</p> <p>What are the motives/driving force to an environmental responsibility strategies and policies?</p> <p>□ Value, stakeholders or performance driven?</p> <p>What are the activities considered part of the environmental responsibility and policies?</p> <p>How the environmental responsibility and policies are communicated internally and externally?</p>	<p>To know how the actors of this organization perceive sustainability and establish a dialog.</p> <p>Motivation to do, drivers of Corporate environmental responsibility and policies.</p> <p>Know their environmental perspective</p>
Company's Environmental discourse	<p>When did it start?</p> <p>What has changed from the beginning and now?</p>	<p>To find out if the discourse was constructed because of society demand.</p> <p>Know the company's environmental history.</p> <p>Check if the environmental speech of the actors is in accordance with the reports.</p>
Environmental and social responsibility.	<p>What is the company definition? If they separate the concepts?</p> <p>Is the environmental and social responsibility considered policies or strategies? Can you clear it out?</p> <p>What is the relation with both strategies?</p>	<p>To know how it works and clarifies the strategy and policies.</p> <p>Driving force</p>
Environmental responsibility	<p>Is it a strategy or policy? What are the practices?</p> <p>Who is the target group?</p> <p>Who is responsible for implementing the Environmental responsibility?</p> <p>What is the relation of the strategy/policy with the</p>	<p>Communication Strategies and how is the process of implementation</p>

	<p>company's objectives?</p> <p>How is the environmental responsibility implemented and communicated? Internally and externally? What are the medium?</p> <p>How is evaluated? Barriers? Response?</p>	Evaluation
CSR Literature: Forest companies are well known for their environmental responsibility in response to stakeholders' pressure, good image and reputation.	<p>What do you think of this statement?</p> <p>Has the company been replying to these stimuli? In the 2009 sustainability report the president of the company highlights the company's attitude toward stakeholders demand.</p>	
Conservation area- Veracel Station.	<p>What does Veracel Station represents for the company?</p> <p>What are the target stakeholders and the benefits of the station?</p>	<p>Meaning of the Station and if it is in line with the environmental strategies and policies.</p> <p>Environmental practices</p> <p>Implementation of the activities</p>
Sustainability report	<p>One of the reports it stated: "Improving communication with the public is a constant agenda for the company" – How do you communicate?</p> <p>How was the report debated? 2009 report -"show more clarity in the treatment of information..."</p> <p>"To more accessibility to the report it was designed as a newspaper" But what is the accessibility? Medium? Is it only available on the website? What about the communities around the business?</p> <p>Different channels to communicate are mentioned, do they work? What can be done to improve?</p>	Understand the sustainability report most important, comprehend the company's environmental speech/discourse.
Global Responsibility	Why Veracel is mentioned on Stora Enso campaign?	

