

Corporate responsibility through value chain collaboration
– The case of the Swedish soy dialogue

Louise Åhlman

Supervisor: Cecilia Mark-Herbert, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences,
Department of Economics

Examiner: Karin Hakelius, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences,
Department of Economics

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Summary

An increasing world population places ever growing demands on the Earth's capacity for food production. Soy is an agricultural commodity of great importance in the global food system, but it is also accompanied with several severe sustainability challenges. Voluntary initiatives aiming to promote more responsible soy production exist and some companies who use soy in their operations have participated in efforts for more responsible sourcing. However, the uptake of these practices by businesses is limited while the production of soy is projected to double by 2050. A rare positive example of companies collaboratively setting targets for responsible soy on their consumer market is the *Swedish soy dialogue*. It consists of 27 companies and organizations from different parts of the Swedish food industry, who in 2014 issued a declaration of intent stipulating they would source 100 percent responsibly produced soy by 2015. The dynamics forming this value chain collaboration are yet unexplored.

The aim of this study is to explain how value chain collaborations for more responsible sourcing can be formed and identify what the perceived enabling factors in such a process are. A qualitative case study of the Swedish soy dialogue was conducted and addressed the research questions of how the collaboration was formed, why actors chose to engage, and what the key perceived enabling factors in the formation process were. Themes guiding the empirical study were derived through an initial literature review. The empirical data was mainly collected through semi-structured interviews with actors involved in the dialogue. The organizations included represented different value chain perspectives and were WWF Sweden, LRF Dairy Sweden, Lantmännen, Arla Foods, HKScan Sweden, Martin & Servera and Coop Sweden.

The results of the study demonstrate that many factors influenced the forming of the Swedish soy dialogue. There were both main drivers and supporting drivers for engaging in the dialogue – overarched by a problem realization and an aspiration to create a level playing field between actors in the value chain. Key activities leading up to the official declaration of intent, where actors publicly committed to more responsible soy, were mapped and explained – divided into the phases of outreach, collective learning and joint action/innovation. Several factors influencing and enabling the formation process were found. These are related to the categories; network design and organizational structure, relationships between stakeholders, stakeholder characteristics and institutional conditions. The collaborative network unites different types of actors from the entire Swedish value chain, where some execute the commitment and others have a supportive role. It is not a closed network, but aspires to promote a wide adoption of more responsible sourcing of soy among Swedish market actors.

Diverse aspects have explanatory value for how the Swedish soy dialogue was formed, signalling that a holistic approach is warranted when studying collaborations addressing sustainability challenges. An important insight is the necessity of recognizing the context surrounding an initiative, since this can affect the conditions for the enablers which are possible to influence. However, everything cannot be planned since network formation often involves complex dynamics and the Swedish soy dialogue has demonstrated a flexible and evolving structure. National initiatives, such as this example, are part of a larger context of initiatives promoting responsible soy. How these different efforts can complement each other and what purpose they fill is worth reflecting upon. National initiatives represent a promising way forward for increased market dispersion of sourcing responsible soy, and the Swedish soy dialogue can hopefully serve as an inspirational example for the future.

Sammanfattning

Trycket på världens odlingsbara mark ökar i takt med en ständigt växande befolkningsmängd. Soja är en gröda med flera goda egenskaper som spelar en viktig roll i den globala livsmedelsförsörjningen. Däremot är odlingen av soja associerad med flera olika typer av hållbarhetsutmaningar. Det existerar frivilliga initiativ för en mer ansvarsfull sojaproduktion, och vissa berörda företag har deltagit i aktiviteter som syftar till att främja mer ansvarsfulla inköp av soja. Detta sker dock i begränsad omfattning, samtidigt som världens sojaproduktion beräknas ha fördubblats till år 2050. Den *svenska sojdialogen* är ett av få positiva exempel på hur företag gemensamt har fastställt mål för inköp av ansvarsfullt producerad soja på sin konsumentmarknad. Sojdialogen består av 27 företag och organisationer från olika delar av den svenska livsmedelsbranschen. 2014 utfärdade de en avsiktsförklaring som stadgade att de senast år 2015 ska använda sig av 100 procent ansvarsfullt producerad soja. Hitintills är dynamiken för hur detta värdekedjesamarbete bildades ännu outforskad.

Syftet med denna studie är att förklara hur värdekedjesamarbeten för mer ansvarsfulla inköp kan bildas och identifiera de upplevda möjliggörande faktorerna för en sådan process. En kvalitativ fallstudie av den svenska sojdialogen har genomförts och har behandlat forskningsfrågor om hur samarbetet bildades, varför aktörer valde att engagera sig i dialogen och vilka de viktigaste möjliggörande faktorerna i processen var. En inledande litteraturrenövring gav teman som vägledde den empiriska studien. Empirisk data samlades huvudsakligen in genom semistrukturerade intervjuer med deltagande aktörer i dialogen. De deltagande organisationerna i studien representerade olika värdekedjeperspektiv och var WWF Sverige, LRF Mjolk, Lantmännen, Arla Foods, HKScan Sverige, Martin & Servera och Coop Sverige.

Resultaten av studien visar att många faktorer påverkade bildandet av sojdialogen. Det existerade både huvudsakliga och understödande drivkrafter för deltagande i dialogen. Insikten om problematiken kring soja och skapandet av en jämn spelplan mellan värdekedjeaktörer var huvudsakliga drivkrafter för att delta. Nyckelaktiviteter, som ledde fram till den officiella avsiktsförklaringen med mål för ansvarsfullt producerad soja, kartlades och förklarades. Aktiviteterna delades in i faserna: uppsökande verksamhet, kollektivt lärande och gemensamma åtgärder/innovation. Flera faktorer som har påverkat och möjliggjort processen för bildandet av sojdialogen identifierades. Dessa relateras till kategorierna: nätverksdesign och organisationsstruktur, relationer mellan aktörer, aktörernas egenskaper och institutionella förutsättningar. Det samarbetsinriktade nätverket förenar aktörer från hela värdekedjan, där vissa genomför åtagandet medan andra understödjer det. Nätverket är inte slutet, utan strävar efter att främja ökade inköp av ansvarsfullt producerad soja bland svenska marknadsaktörer.

Flera olika aspekter har förklaringsvärde för hur den svenska sojdialogen bildades, vilket indikerar att ett holistiskt angreppssätt är motiverat vid studier av värdekedjesamarbeten som adresserar hållbarhetsutmaningar. Studien har gett insikt i att det är viktigt att ta hänsyn till den givna kontexten för ett samarbete eftersom det påverkar hur olika möjliggörande faktorer potentiellt kan designas. Dock kan inte allt planeras då bildandet av nätverk ofta involverar komplex dynamik, och sojdialogens struktur har visat exempel på flexibilitet och utveckling. Nationella initiativ på konsumentmarknader, såsom detta exempel, är en del av ett större sammanhang av initiativ för att främja ansvarsfullt producerad soja. Vilken roll dessa olika initiativ kan fylla och deras syfte är värt att betänka. De nationella initiativen representerar en lovande väg framåt för att öka marknadsspridningen av ansvarsfullt producerad soja och den svenska sojdialogen kan förhoppningsvis utgöra ett inspirerande exempel inför framtiden.

Abbreviations

CSR – Corporate Social Responsibility

CR – Corporate Responsibility

FSC – Forest Stewardship Council

GM – Genetically Modified

GMO – Genetically Modified Organism

IDH – Sustainable Trade Initiative

IDS - Initiative Sustainable Soy

LRF – Lantbrukarnas Riksförbund (*Federation of Swedish Farmers*)

MSC – Marine Stewardship Council

NGO – Non Governmental Organization

RSPO – Round Table on Sustainable Palm Oil

RTRS – Round Table on Responsible Soy

SSD – the Swedish soy dialogue (*not an established abbreviation; used within this study*)

TBL – Triple Bottom Line

WWF – the World Wide Fund for Nature (*previously World Wildlife Fund*)

Table of Contents

1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 PROBLEM BACKGROUND	1
1.2 PROBLEM	2
1.3 AIM AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	3
1.4 DELIMITATIONS.....	3
2 METHOD	4
2.1 RESEARCH DESIGN	4
2.2 LITERATURE REVIEW.....	4
2.3 CASE STUDY.....	5
2.3.1 <i>Unit of analysis</i>	5
2.3.2 <i>Data collection</i>	6
2.3.3 <i>Data analysis</i>	7
2.4 CRITIQUE AND QUALITY ASSURANCE	7
2.5 ETHICAL ASPECTS	9
3 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES	10
3.1 CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY	10
3.2 STAKEHOLDER THEORY.....	10
3.3 COLLABORATION FOR SYSTEMS CHANGE	11
3.3.1 <i>Why collaborate on sustainability challenges?</i>	12
3.3.2 <i>Activities in forming network collaboration</i>	14
3.3.3 <i>Factors enabling collaboration</i>	16
3.4 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK.....	19
4 THE EMPIRICAL STUDY	20
4.1 THE COLLABORATIVE CHARACTER OF THE SWEDISH SOY DIALOGUE	20
4.1.1 <i>Initiation and inclusion of stakeholders</i>	20
4.1.2 <i>Work procedures</i>	21
4.1.3 <i>Framing the problem and determining goals</i>	21
4.1.4 <i>Learning and information sharing</i>	22
4.1.5 <i>Timeline and key activities</i>	22
4.2 COMMUNICATED DRIVERS AND PERCEIVED ENABLING FACTORS	23
4.2.1 <i>The NGO – WWF Sweden</i>	23
4.2.2 <i>The industry association – LRF Dairy Sweden</i>	25
4.2.3 <i>The animal feed manufacturer – Lantmännen</i>	26
4.2.4 <i>The consumer goods manufacturer – Arla Foods</i>	27
4.2.5 <i>The meat company – HKScan Sweden</i>	28
4.2.6 <i>The food service company – Martin & Servera</i>	30
4.2.7 <i>The retailer – Coop Sweden</i>	30
5 ANALYSIS	32
5.1 THE COLLABORATIVE CHARACTER OF THE SWEDISH SOY DIALOGUE	32
5.1.1 <i>The stakeholder network</i>	32
5.1.2 <i>Phases in forming the network</i>	33
5.2 DRIVERS FOR ENGAGING IN THE SWEDISH SOY DIALOGUE	35
5.2.1 <i>Problem nature</i>	35
5.2.2 <i>External influence</i>	36

5.2.3 Intrinsic motivation.....	36
5.2.4 Potential benefits	37
5.2.5 Level playing field	37
5.3 ENABLING FACTORS FOR THE COLLABORATION	38
5.3.1 Institutional conditions in the Swedish food industry.....	39
5.3.2 Stakeholder characteristics	39
5.3.3 Relationships between stakeholders	39
5.3.4 Network characteristics	40
6 DISCUSSION	42
6.1 ADDRESSING RESPONSIBLE SOURCING COLLABORATIVELY	42
6.2 DRIVERS FOR COLLABORATIVE ENGAGEMENT.....	43
6.3 ENABLERS IN THE FORMATION PROCESS.....	45
7 CONCLUSIONS.....	47
7.1 KEY FINDINGS AND CONTRIBUTIONS	47
7.2 QUALITY OF THE RESULTS AND FUTURE RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES	49
BIBLIOGRAPHY	50
<i>Literature and publications</i>	50
<i>Internet</i>	53
<i>Personal communication</i>	56
APPENDICES	57
APPENDIX 1 THE SOY PROCESSING CHAIN	57
APPENDIX 2 OFFICIAL PARTICIPANTS IN THE SWEDISH SOY DIALOGUE	58
APPENDIX 3 INTERVIEW GUIDE	59
APPENDIX 4 EMPIRICAL BACKGROUND	60
A.4.1 Responsible sourcing in the agrifood sector.....	60
A.4.2 The soy value chain.....	60
A.4.3 Collaborative initiatives for more responsible soy	61
A.4.4 Responsible soy in the Swedish context	63
APPENDIX 5 COMMUNICATED ORGANIZATIONAL STANCES ON SOY	65
FIGURES	
Figure 1. Different constellations of collaboration (Peloza & Falkenberg, 2009, p 98).....	11
Figure 2. A paradigm shift in stakeholder engagement (Svendsen & Laberge, 2005, p 97).....	12
Figure 3. Time line over activities (own interpretation, based on meeting protocols and respondents' additions).....	22
Figure 4. An illustration of the SSD network (own interpretation based on empirical data).....	32
Figure 5. The aspects studied and overview of main empirical findings.....	47
Figure 6. Soy product flows and processing of soybeans (WWF, 2014b, p 16).....	57
Figure 7. Simplified overview of actors in the soy value chain for food use (van Gelder et al., 2014, p 6)....	60
TABLES	
Table 1. Overview of the study's respondents and interview process.....	6
Table 2. Different drivers for participating in collaborative initiatives, targeting sustainability challenges	13
Table 3. Examples of suggested activities in different phases of network convenor	15
Table 4. Overview of different enabling factors for collaborations.....	16
Table 5. Conceptual framework employed in the study.....	19
Table 6. Overview of activities in different phases of the network formation.....	33
Table 7. Synthesis of empirical findings of drivers.....	35
Table 8. Synthesis of empirical findings of possible enablers.....	38
Table 9. The largest food industry companies in Sweden 2010/2011 (Lindow, 2012, p 11).....	63

1 Introduction

In this chapter, the background and problem underlying the study is presented. Thereafter, the aim and research questions are stated, together with the delimitations made.

1.1 Problem background

The population of the planet we live on is steadily increasing and so are the pressures on the arable land; the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations estimate that the world has to increase food production with 60 percent by 2050 in order to feed its population (Alexandratos & Bruinsma, 2012). Soy is an agricultural commodity with many positive attributes, including a high ratio of protein, which makes it very suitable in different kinds of products (see **Appendix 1** for an overview of the soy processing chain). It is foremost used as feed to livestock (WWF, 2014b), meaning an increase in meat consumption also entails increases in the demand for soy. Lately, soy has also emerged as an agro-fuel option, adding to the usage alternatives and market demand (Wilkinson, 2011). The largest producing countries, with 93 percent of the production, are Brazil, Argentina, the United States, China, India and Paraguay (WWF, 2014b). During the last 50 years, soy production in the world has increased ten times the original amount – from 27 to 269 million tons (WWF, 2014b).

With an expansion of soy cultivation, many negative environmental and social consequences have followed. Bartholdson *et al.* (2010) describe these effects as fivefold. First, the expansion of soy production leads to the destruction of valuable eco-systems (of particular relevance is South-American rainforest and grassland). Second, the change in land use, often involving deforestation, increases greenhouse gas emissions. Third, indigenous and local people are often marginalized and their rights ignored in areas of soy production. Fourth, soy production is often associated with an extensive use of pesticides. This can be harmful to both the environment and people in the surrounding area. Fifth, there is evidence of slave-like working conditions for the labor involved in the production.

Clearly, there are many sustainability¹ related challenges concerning the production of soy. Even so, it is a very important crop on the world market and essential in many corporations' operations and for the economic development in production countries. It is currently one of the most profitable agricultural products in the world (WWF, 2014b). The term “*wicked problem*” has been coined to describe problems that have “*cause-effect relationships that are difficult or impossible to define, cannot be framed and solved without creating controversies among stakeholders and require collective action among societal groups with strongly held, conflicting beliefs and values*” (Dentoni *et al.*, 2012, p 1). Hospes *et al.* (2012) argue that many sustainability challenges are clear examples of wicked problems, and the production of global agricultural commodities (such as soy, palm oil and coffee) in a sustainable way is a subject of worldwide controversies.

Taking responsibility for the impacts caused by business operations has more and more become an imperative for today's corporations (Waddock *et al.*, 2002; Scherer & Palazzo, 2011). Rainey (2010) argues that it is necessary that companies extend their responsibility outside of the boundaries of their own facilities, into their supply networks. Going beyond legal requirements can be a way for companies with global operations to fill a regulatory vacuum in states with weak legal enforcement (Scherer & Palazzo, 2011). A range of voluntary initiatives involving companies, aimed at promoting responsible sourcing in the global food system, have emerged from the late 20th century and onwards (Barrientos &

¹ This study employs the triple bottom line-perspective (Elkington, 1997) in viewing the concept of sustainability; meaning it consists of both environmental, social and economic aspects.

Dolan, 2006). Responsible sourcing has gained increased popularity as a means of corporate responsibility (CR). In sourcing soy in a more responsible way, a measure can be to only buy soy certified according to RTRS (Round Table on Responsible Soy) or ProTerra standards². There have also been national consumer country commitments, where industry actors collaboratively have agreed upon targets for more responsible soy. One such newly started collaborative initiative is the Swedish soy dialogue (SSD³), consisting of 27 Swedish companies and organizations within the food industry (see Appendix 2) committing to sourcing 100 percent responsible soy by the year of 2015 (www, Jordbruksaktuellt, 1, 2014).

1.2 Problem

Even though some measures have been taken to create a more sustainable soy industry, the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) concludes that the development is worrying and that consumer countries in Europe are not taking enough responsibility for soy production. The production of soy is projected to double by 2050 and the transition to where companies source soy responsibly is going very slow (WWF, 2014b). Since soy products are part of a long value chain and mostly not directly sold to consumers, the consumer pressure for more responsible soy risks being low since they rarely come into direct contact with the product. Market initiatives could therefore be particularly appropriate in addressing sustainability challenges related to soy.

There are some initiatives for more responsible soy on the rise and the SSD is described as one of few positive current examples (WWF, 2014a). Such a national initiative has the potential to serve as a platform for the collective action needed in order to deal with wicked problems, and Swedish companies are described as frontrunners in responsible sourcing of soy which is greatly attributed to the national commitment (WWF, 2014a). WWF (2014a, p 21) conclude that the reason companies generally are sourcing so little responsible soy is that the complexity deepens the further down the supply chain a company is situated; *“Because soy is embedded in most meat, dairy and eggs, it can be especially difficult for retailers and manufacturers to know how much soy they are using. Switching to responsible soy to cover all these uses can seem like a daunting and complex task”*. In order to solve alike complex problems, many authors stress the importance of collaborations, which can make expertise and resources available (Blowfield & Murray, 2008; Stadtler, 2011; Nidumolu *et al.*, 2014). Urgent global sustainability challenges require collaboration since they are beyond the capabilities of individual companies to solve (Nidumolu *et al.*, 2014).

However, all collaborative efforts entail challenges. Partnerships involve a dynamic interplay of trust building, creating collaborative advantage, establishing flexible contracting and creating legitimacy and social power (Glasbergen, 2011). Van Huijstee and Glasbergen (2010) point out that challenges also can be present in the stakeholder context. Currently there are 27 companies and organizations in Sweden that actively participate in the SSD (supported by WWF Sweden), but there are still large market actors outside of the agreement. The agrifood market is highly competitive, both within Sweden and internationally, meaning collaboration might not be easy to achieve. Little is still known about what influences firms to participate in collaborations aimed at wicked problems (Wassmer *et al.*, 2014).

Nonetheless, the SSD is an empirical example where actors from across an industry voluntarily have established criteria for more responsible sourcing jointly – and potentially overcome the type of challenges mentioned above. There is little research on these national commitments and the dynamics which have enabled the formation of networks for value

² Initiatives for more responsible soy are presented in further detail in section A.4.3.

³ SSD – Swedish soy dialogue; this abbreviation is used within this study, but is not an established abbreviation.

chain collaboration. Glasbergen (2011) concludes that the research on dialogue practices involving corporations and non-governmental organizations (NGO's) is in an exploratory phase in terms of partnering, since they are a rather recent phenomenon. Since the importance of such collaboration seems widely acknowledged, a deepened study of the Swedish case could provide insights in enabling factors for future industry efforts. It could also add to the current theoretical understanding of the phenomenon.

1.3 Aim and research questions

The aim of this study is to explain how value chain collaborations for more responsible sourcing can be formed and identify what the perceived enabling factors in this process are.

The study focuses on the case of the Swedish soy dialogue and responsible sourcing of soy. In order to reach this aim, the following research questions are posed:

- How was the Swedish soy dialogue formed?
- Why did actors choose to engage in the collaboration?
- What were the key perceived enabling factors in the formation process?

The Swedish soy dialogue is a recent and rare example of an industry-wide collaborative national initiative addressing responsible sourcing of soy. The main focus of this study is on the formation process which led to a formalized declaration of intent (issued in April 2014), as this just recently took place. How this formation process occurred could give interesting empirical and theoretical insights, relevant to a wide audience.

1.4 Delimitations

Several delimitations are made within this study. The empirical case of the SSD provides a geographical delimitation to the Swedish food industry context. The agrifood industry is the largest user of soy products, and the study will not discuss other industries' usage of soy. The focus is on the formation process and the study does not try to evaluate the actual effect from the collaboration at this point since the goals regarding responsible soy are set to be achieved during the ongoing year of 2015. Since the focus is on the SSD and its dynamics, the study is delimited from a deeper investigation of the internal processes in individual actors' organizations.

Responsible soy is a debated term and critique exists towards the concept and different certification schemes. This study does not try to evaluate the sustainability effects of these products, but rests on the understanding that there exist attempts to produce more responsible soy than in conventional production. Since the focus is on the current usage of soy, the study is also delimited from a discussion of possible substitute products.

There are also methodological delimitations in the study. It is not a longitudinal case study, but instead focuses on a snap-shot view (concerning a process) of a recent event. All official participants in the SSD are not included in this study; the focus is on gaining an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon based on selected participants' perceptions (the selection is further explained in section 2.3.1). The study does also not include actors who have chosen not to participate in the SSD or other stakeholders, these perspectives could be interesting to include in future research.

Delimitations concerning the theoretical perspective of the study are also made. The study's theoretical perspective departs from the concept of corporate responsibility (see section 3.1) which is a relatively new research field consisting of sometimes ambiguous terms. The key term employed has been *collaboration*, related to sustainability challenges in a wide sense, and the study is delimited from an in-depth analysis of the theoretical divisions between varying definitions of collaborative initiatives.

2 Method

Here, the chosen research approach is presented and motivated. Quality assurance measures taken and ethical aspect of the study are also discussed.

2.1 Research design

Conducting research in an open system environment where external influences can affect the situation poses challenges (Robson, 2011). The difference between the context and content of the study can be somewhat arbitrary and “*the actual configurations of structures and processes are constantly changing making definite prediction impossible*” (*ibid.*, p 37). Even though it is impossible to predict the future under these circumstances, the past can be explained after determining the former configuration in existence (*ibid.*). Robson (*ibid.*) states that an abductive approach is particularly appropriate under such circumstances. This means it is possible to cycle between deduction and induction. This study has employed an abductive approach since it deals with an open system environment and a research area that is under development.

By observing a phenomenon in its real life context, patterns of influencing factors can be determined and thereafter be compared with a theoretical framework (Robson, 2011). Such a flexible research design was deemed appropriate since it allows for modifications following discovery of new information in a study (Yin, 2003). Jacobsen (2002) argues for that an explorative research problem requires a method that can obtain nuanced data and is perceptive of unexpected conditions. This often means focusing on few units of analysis in order to obtain nuanced views. In this study, such an intensive research design was considered suitable due to the explorative nature of the research problem at hand. The collection of qualitative data is particularly suitable for such a research design (*ibid.*), how this was carried out is explained further on in this chapter.

2.2 Literature review

The literature review is essential in contextualizing the work at hand (Ridley, 2008). Robson (2011) highlights that the literature review should include various features involved in the phenomenon studied, and how they might be related to each other. An initial structured literature review was conducted in this study, in order to clarify the current body of knowledge. The scientific quality of the literature was validated by mainly focusing on peer-reviewed articles with recent publication dates. Since many concepts in the research field have different interpretations, a table of relevant keywords and synonyms/related concepts was produced. Examples of key words used in the literature search are variations of *partnership*, *multi-stakeholder collaboration*, *networks*, *ethical sourcing* and *dialogue* – supplemented with search terms covering different aspects of sustainability. Searches were mainly carried out through Google Scholar and through Uppsala University Library’s search engine.

Yin (2003, p 9) stresses that a literature review is not an end in itself, but a way to “*develop sharper and more insightful questions about a topic*”. The results of the literature review provided the basis for the conceptual framework of the thesis, and relevant themes employed in the following study. The theoretical framework can serve as a blueprint and guide the collection and analysis of data (Yin, 1994), which also was the method employed in this study. Ridley (2008) points to the usefulness of revisiting the previous literature in the discussion chapter, which was also done in order to contextualize the findings of this study. Since an abductive approach was deemed appropriate, the literature review helped in guiding the study, and inductively derived findings from the study could also be discussed and compared with the theoretical framework.

2.3 Case study

“A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (Yin, 1994, p 13). According to Yin (1994, p 9), a case study is particularly appropriate when “a how or why question is being asked about a contemporary set of events over which the investigator has little or no control”. The research questions of this study fulfilled these conditions, motivating the appropriateness of a case study. The research area also covered a contemporary phenomenon interconnected with its context. Case studies are particularly appropriate when a research field is fairly unexplored (Eisenhardt, 1989). Several authors indicate the need for more research in this seemingly fairly undeveloped field, which further motivated a case study approach. Case studies often rely on multiple sources of information and benefit from being guided by theoretical propositions developed beforehand (Yin, 2003). This guided the design of this study, where several different types of sources were used and, as mentioned, a conceptual framework was developed beforehand.

2.3.1 Unit of analysis

A central concept in case studies is the unit of analysis which is in focus (Jacobsen, 2002). The phenomenon studied has been the network of the SSD. The core of the SSD is the participating organizations and their relations to other actors and context. The unit of analysis could therefore be seen as a network in a specific setting. The study focused on the Swedish food industry with regards to soy. This commodity is associated with many sustainability problems and is mainly used for feed products, meaning it is highly relevant to investigate possible measures for improvement in the food industry. Little previous research on this kind of national value chain collaboration had been undertaken, and it is the first case study of the SSD collaboration to date.

There are several ways to select organizational units included in a specific study. Jacobsen (2002) points to the fact that selection always should be based on the purpose of the study. In the selection stage it can be wise to start with actors selected based on specific criteria and then evaluate if you will receive the needed information (*ibid.*). One of the strengths of a flexible method is that it is possible to then include actors based on other criteria, which can be derived from the initial participating actors (*ibid.*). The organizations that were included in this study were chosen on the primary criteria of getting the perspectives of different kind of value chain actors, who had insight into the formation process of the SSD. The participating actors in the SSD were categorized into six industry sectors; animal feed manufacturers, consumer goods manufacturers, retailers, food service, meat and egg companies and industry associations. The first five categories were based on a previous categorization made by WWF⁴ and industry associations were an addition to the SSD network structure. Another important addition was the NGO category, since WWF Sweden has played a part in promoting the SSD formation.

It was established that **Arla Foods**, **LRF Dairy Sweden** (previously The Swedish Dairy Association), **Lantmännen**, **HKScan Sweden** and **WWF Sweden** were involved in the SSD from an early stage and all had representatives in the collaboration’s work group. **Martin & Servera** were the only food service company in the dialogue and were invited to participate in the study to include this specific perspective. The selection of a retail organization was based on the availability and willingness of those specific company representatives to participate, and **Coop Sweden** was the first company to accept the invitation. Table 1 gives an overview of the participating organizations and respondents.

⁴ Categorization made in the report *Soy Report Card 2014* (WWF, 2014a).

Table 1. Overview of the study's respondents and interview process

Organization/ Category	Representative	Interview date/type	Summary sent/verified
WWF Sweden / NGO	Lena Tham, <i>Senior Advisor, Market Transformation</i>	2015-03-26 / Face to face interview	2015-05-04 / 2015-05-18
LRF Dairy Sweden ⁵ / Industry association	Christian Swensson, <i>Specialist Dairy Cow Feeding</i>	2015-03-27 / Telephone interview	2015-05-09 / 2015-05-28
Lantmännen / Feed manufacturer	Gustav Kämpe, <i>Sustainability Project Manager</i>	2015-03-26 / Face to face interview	2015-04-23 /
Arla Foods / Consumer goods manufacturer	Kjell Lundén Pettersson, <i>Senior Manager, CR</i>	2015-03-31 / Face to face interview	2015-05-04 / 2015-05-27
HKScan Sweden / Meat company	Vera Söderberg, <i>CR Manager, Environment (HKScan)</i>	2015-03-27 / Face to face interview	2015-04-24 / 2015-07-27
Martin & Servera / Food service company	AnnaLena Norrman, <i>Director of Sustainability and Quality</i>	2015-04-09 / Telephone interview	2015-05-10 / 2015-05-26
Coop Sweden / Retailer	Anneli Bylund, <i>Responsible for Sustainability Strategies and Health</i>	2015-04-21 / Face to face interview	2015-04-23 / 2015-04-24

Table 1 illustrates that the value chain perspectives from all six industry categories were represented. The study focused on the perspectives of representatives from these selected organizations. The respondents chosen were the company representatives with the greatest insights in the formation process of the SSD. They often had positions as CR-managers or similar. Jacobsen (2002) means that an important selection criteria for respondents is the expectation on the type of information they can provide. By here focusing mainly on respondents who had actively been part of the SSD work group, rich and valid information about the formation process was thought to be readily obtained. Another selection criterion is gaining a broad and varied picture (*ibid.*). Therefore it was important to also include respondents from organizations operating in other parts of the value chain, even if they had not been part of the work group. These were the retail and food service representatives.

2.3.2 Data collection

Yin (1994) states that it is advisable with multiple sources of evidence in case study research. It is recommended to use both primary and secondary data, since these different kinds of sources can verify and strengthen the results found and also lead to interesting contrast effects (Jacobsen, 2002). This case study therefore included both primary and secondary data. The secondary data included material from the SSD database of documents (which access was provided to), webpages, corporate documents and publications in order to enhance the contextual knowledge of the case. The primary data consisted of material collected during interviews with representatives from the chosen organizations.

Semi-structured interviews are a common method for data collection in research with a flexible design (Robson, 2010). In this case, semi-structured interviews were chosen since they permit modifications in the questioning process during the interview and allow for follow up questions (*ibid.*). At the same time, they include some structure on what topics or themes that could be covered (*ibid.*). Such themes were derived from the literature review and formed the basis for an interview guide that was developed (see **Appendix 3**).

All interviews were recorded (with the permission of the respondent), transcribed (to written language) and sent to the respondent for verification. The interviews lasted between 40 minutes to 1,5 hours (depending on the availability of the respondent and his or her insight in the formation process of the SSD). When possible, face to face interviews were carried out. In two cases, telephone interviews were necessary due to the geographical distance to the respondents. Quality assurance measures were undertaken already during the interviews, since

⁵ Previously The Swedish Dairy Association (-2012), became LRF Dairy Sweden in 2013.

the researcher frequently verified statements by follow-up questions, a technique suggested by Kvale (1997). Interviews and transcriptions were carried out in Swedish, and translation to English in the thesis has been the responsibility of the author.

2.3.3 Data analysis

According to Yin (2003, p 109) “*the analysis of case study evidence is one of the least developed and most difficult aspects of doing case studies*”. Jacobsen (2002) describes the analytical process as consisting of three steps; description, systematization and categorization (and reduction) and combination (interpreting data etc.). If the study departs from an interview guide, the themes used in it can serve as the first categories employed in the analytical process (*ibid.*). Categories arising from the empirical data can also emerge. When analyzing the collected data in this study, respondents’ answers were transferred to different categories that corresponded to the themes from the conceptual framework. Jacobsen (2002) also advises that similarities and differences between units are presented and that illustrations of connections can be useful. Organizing data into matrices or temporal schemes are ways to put the case study evidence in order (Yin, 2003). These techniques were used in this study, where data was categorized into tables and a temporal scheme was outlined since the studied phenomenon was a process.

Besides from being familiar with the tools for handling data, Yin (2003) stresses that a general analytical strategy needs to be determined. This strategy aids in efforts to treat the evidence fairly, in the production of compelling analytic conclusions and also in ruling out alternative interpretations (*ibid.*). In cases when qualitative data form the substantial part of the study it is especially important to give detailed attention to the principles of the analysis (Robson, 2011). Robson (*ibid.*) describes thematic coding analysis as a straightforward general approach which can be used in many settings. This approach was chosen as the analytical method of the study and the phases outlined in Robson (2011) were followed. Thereby the researcher first got familiarized with the data (and transcribed all interviews), then generated initial codes and identified themes (combining findings from the theory with findings arising from data), thereafter constructed thematic networks and finally integrated and interpreted the findings. Display techniques were used to clarify the analysis, and examples were included in the thesis.

2.4 Critique and quality assurance

Flexible studies do not permit the use of statistical generalizations. Robson (2011) on the other hand points out that external generalizations still can occur; meaning that convincing evidence for factors that can contribute to the understanding of other situations can be obtained. Yin (1994, p 31) describes it as “*analytic generalization*” where “*previously developed theory is used as a template with which to compare the empirical results of the case study*”. In order to ensure a high quality in this study, generalizations to other contexts than the case at hand were not conducted. By having presented the findings of the case study of the SSD, the reader has the possibility to interpret how they relate to other contexts, thereby enabling external analytic generalizations.

Quality assurance measures were undertaken throughout the research process, and some have already been touched upon in the previous sections. Robson (2011) suggest several ways to operationalize the terms reliability and validity in flexible design research, in order to establish a study’s trustworthiness. The validity of qualitative research can be defined as “*how accurately the account represents participants’ realities of the social phenomena and is credible to them*” (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p 124). Threats to the validity in qualitative research can stem from different aspects involved, namely; description, interpretation and theory (Robson, 2011). To ensure a valid **description** of the data, all interviews were

recorded to allow for the writing of transcripts. This also allows the researcher to focus on the topic and dynamics of the interview (Kvale, 1997). The respondents were asked to verify the written transcript of their interview in order to make sure it correctly reflected their opinions and views, and Robson (2011) highlights that verification of transcripts is a useful quality assurance measure. The respondents received transcripts where the interview was presented in written language, since Kvale (1997) advises that some editing of transcripts returned to respondents can be desirable. Robson (2011) also means that thematic coding analysis seldom requires word for word transcripts. The respondents were given the opportunity to withdraw statements or add corrections to the transcript. All respondents apart from one used the opportunity to verify their interview transcript. The **interpretations** drawn in a study should be possible to trace and alternative understandings, not consonant with the chosen **theory**, should be considered (Robson, 2011). It is therefore of great importance that the researcher clearly presents how interpretations are drawn. The researcher can also clearly give example of the data the interpretation is based on (Kvale, 1997). To counteract these threats towards the validity of the study, the empirical material was transparently presented in the thesis and interpretations were clearly motivated. The researcher was sensitive to alternative understandings which could surface during the study, and also included an inductively derived theme in the results.

All research which involves people face threats concerning bias and rigour (Robson, 2011). Triangulation is one measure which can be used to counteract this threat (Jacobsen, 2002; Robson, 2011), and multiple data sources were used in the study; stemming from e.g. interviews, documents in the SSD database and webpages. By including respondents with different value chain perspectives, it was also possible to compare their views of the formation process. Peer debriefing is another possible quality assurance measure (Robson, 2011), which occurred during several occasions throughout the research process. During multiple seminars, the research was reviewed and discussed with peers in the research field. Member checking is also a useful strategy to counteract researcher bias (Robson, 2011). As mentioned, the respondents received the interview transcripts and were asked to verify that it correctly reflected their meanings and views. Additional clarifications from respondents were also asked for in certain occasions, if ambiguities still existed. Maintaining a clear audit trail while carrying out a study can also strengthen the study's validity (Robson, 2011). All data collected was organized and saved, this included raw data (interview recordings), transcripts, and tables with categorizations of the data used in the analysis.

Robson (2011) points to that the audit trail also is a measure to ensure the reliability of a study. The concept of reliability within qualitative research, means that the results can be affected by the research method chosen (Jacobsen, 2002). The reliability of results from interviews can be threatened by the interviewer effect and context effect (*ibid.*). This means that the presence of the interviewer and the place where the interview takes place can influence the results. To counteract these threats, the interviewer (who was the same person for all interviews) aimed at acting similarly in all interviews and let the respondent choose interview site and form (face to face or via telephone). Jacobsen (2002) also mentions unsatisfactory registration and analysis of data as threats to the reliability. These threats were handled through full recordings and transcriptions of the interviews and meticulous work with the categorization and analysis of the collected data. Documenting the procedures employed also enhances the reliability of a qualitative study (Yin, 2014), and this was done through accounting for the research procedure in this method chapter, including the interview guide in appendix 3 and constructing a case study database.

2.5 Ethical aspects

Several ethical aspects need to be taken into consideration when conducting research. Four key areas to reflect upon are; informed consent, confidentiality, consequences and the role of the researcher (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). In this study, all respondents were given information about the study (in the form of a study outline and conditions for participation) before their participation. They also received a summarized interview guide before the interviews. Since the respondents were interviewed as company representatives, anonymity was not offered, and this was made clear beforehand. They were on the other hand informed about the possibility to withdraw statements from interview transcripts that they were asked to validate. This was one measure to reduce the risk that the respondents would face negative consequences after participating in the study. It was also made clear that the participation in the study was voluntary and that they were free to discontinue their participation at will. The researcher has acted independently in searching to answer the study's aim, meanwhile being transparent with the ethical considerations mentioned above and the different choices made. Another aspect of relevance is that the SSD uses the Chatham House Rule⁶, which the researcher was asked to respect also when conducting this study. This means that no other actors in the SSD, other than the presented voluntary respondents, were mentioned explicitly in the thesis in order to respect this guideline.

⁶ The Chatham House Rule can be used during meetings to encourage openness and information sharing. It reads as follows: *“When a meeting, or part thereof, is held under the Chatham House Rule, participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed.”* (www, Chatham House, 1, 2015).

3 Theoretical perspectives

In this chapter, key concepts and theoretical starting points are clarified and explained. A literature review of previous research has been conducted and the conceptual framework used in the study is presented.

3.1 Corporate responsibility

To whom are businesses responsible for their actions? Traditionally, economists have claimed that companies are responsible towards their shareholders, and should have the ultimate goal of maximizing profits (see e.g. Friedman, 1970). However, businesses do not operate in a vacuum, separated from the society and nature. Porter and Kramer (2011, p 64) mean that companies tend to view value creation narrowly, *“optimizing short-term financial performance in a bubble while missing the most important customer needs and ignoring the broader influences that determine their long-term success”*. Elkington (1997) popularized the concept of *“the triple bottom line” (TBL)*, where businesses are considered to have a threefold purpose; economic, social and environmental. The need for a wider definition of corporate responsibility, which also takes social and environmental aspects into consideration, has become evident.

The concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has become a known term, reflecting altering stances in the view of to whom businesses are accountable. It is not a clear cut task to define the concept of CSR since there is a vast supply of literature attempting to do so and the number of definitions is abound (Crane *et al.*, 2008; Borglund *et al.*, 2012). Crane *et al.* (2008, pp 7-9) suggest that instead of adding to the complexity of defining CSR, it is useful to look at the characteristics of the CSR-concept. They mean that six characteristics are evident in the concept; *voluntariness, internalizing or managing externalities, multiple stakeholder orientation, alignment of social and economic responsibilities, practices and values and going beyond philanthropy*. These characteristics help in understanding the meaning of CSR in a general sense.

The wideness of the concept also means that there are many different perspectives on CSR, such as a pure *“business case for CSR”* or a more political view of CSR (Crane *et al.*, 2008). Scherer and Palazzo (2011, p 899) discuss that there has been a development in society towards *“political CSR”*, meaning that firms have started *“to assume social and political responsibilities that go beyond legal requirements and fill the regulatory vacuum in global governance”*. Many firms are today operating globally where some states might have weak institutions and law enforcement (*ibid.*), where responsible business might be dependent on voluntary efforts by firms. There is also literature that characterizes organizations based on different stages of their CSR-development, or maturity if so will, and activities they undertake. Examples include Carroll’s (1991) *“pyramid of corporate social responsibility”* and McElhaney’s (2008), *“corporate responsibility landscape”*. A recently proposed concept, developing CSR further, is *“shared value”* (Porter & Kramer, 2011); meaning companies should create economic value in a way that also creates social value. This means expanding the view of stakeholders taken into account in business operations.

3.2 Stakeholder theory

Stakeholder theory addresses the issue of to whom companies are responsible and was developed and made popular by Freeman (1984). According to stakeholder theory, businesses are interconnected with society and have social responsibilities to its key stakeholders (Williams, 2014). There has been a paradigm shift in the purpose of business, where more and more business leaders see creating value for stakeholders as their purpose of business (*ibid.*). Waddock *et al.* (2002) mean that stakeholders both expect and pressure firms to take a greater

social responsibility and look beyond simply the economic bottom line. They divide stakeholder pressures into three groups; primary stakeholder pressures (from owners, employees, customers, suppliers), secondary stakeholder pressures (from NGOs/activists, communities, governments) and social and institutional pressures (such as rankings, emergence of global principles and standards, triple-bottom line reporting/accountability). Blowfield and Murray (2008) instead divide stakeholders into three sectors; business, government and civil society. They mean that the term partnership in a CSR context usually refers to one between different sectors, but it can also be partnerships within a sector (*ibid.*).

3.3 Collaboration for systems change

Partnerships are one way to implement corporate responsibility activities and such collaboration occurs between different stakeholders (Blowfield & Murray, 2008). There has been a trend in favoring partnerships in corporate responsibility activities lately (*ibid.*) and Nidumolu *et al.* (2014, p 3) points to their potential; “*new partnership models can protect the environment and create value for everyone*”. The literature regarding different types of collaborative action among corporations for more responsible practices employs many different terms and the characteristics of different collaborations can also be somewhat different. A common feature for partnerships is the idea that different stakeholders jointly can achieve outcomes that would have been impossible to achieve for a single organization (Blowfield & Murray, 2008). Different types of partnerships place different kinds of demand on the degree of commitment, involvement and resources employed by participants (*ibid.*). They can also span over different levels of society (such as regionally, nationally or internationally) and can evolve over time (*ibid.*).

It is possible to categorize partnerships based on the type of stakeholders involved. Seitanidi and Lindgreen (2010) categorize partnership activities into four areas; nonprofit and business interactions, government and business interactions, government and nonprofit interactions and tripartite social interactions (including all three kinds of stakeholders). Many studies have in particular examined business-NGO engagements (Blowfield & Murray, 2008). Pelozo and Falkenberg (2009) expand the common dyadic view of a single NGO collaborating with a single firm, to a matrix of different possible collaborative constellations (see figure 1).

	Single NGO	Multi- NGO
Single firm	Focused contribution	Diffused contribution
Multi- firm	Shared contribution	Communal contribution

Figure 1. Different constellations of collaboration (Pelozo & Falkenberg, 2009, p 98).

Pelozo and Falkenberg (2009) stress that meta-problems demand collaborations between several firms and NGO’s, moving beyond dyadic collaboration. They call collaborations between a single NGO and multiple firms “*shared contribution*” and mean that coordinated efforts between these actors on complex social or environmental problems can benefit all firms involved (*ibid.*). This collaborative constellation entails that firms can share resources, and the NGO can ensure the long-term maintenance of the collaboration since it stays in place while participating firms may shift over time (*ibid.*).

Some partnerships can be described as stakeholder networks which are convened by an organization to tackle challenges it cannot address on its own (Blowfield & Murray, 2008). Once created, the network has a life of its own and cannot be controlled by a single organization. Svendsen and Laberge (2005, p 91) conclude that “*the role of network convenor is new for most companies, and it involves different ways of thinking, being and engaging beyond the more traditional approaches to managing bilateral stakeholder relationships*”. The network approach could thereby both entail challenges and possibilities

for the participating actors. The view of network collaboration is moving from an established organization-centric view to a network focused view, where stakeholders gather around a common challenge (see figure 2) (*ibid.*).

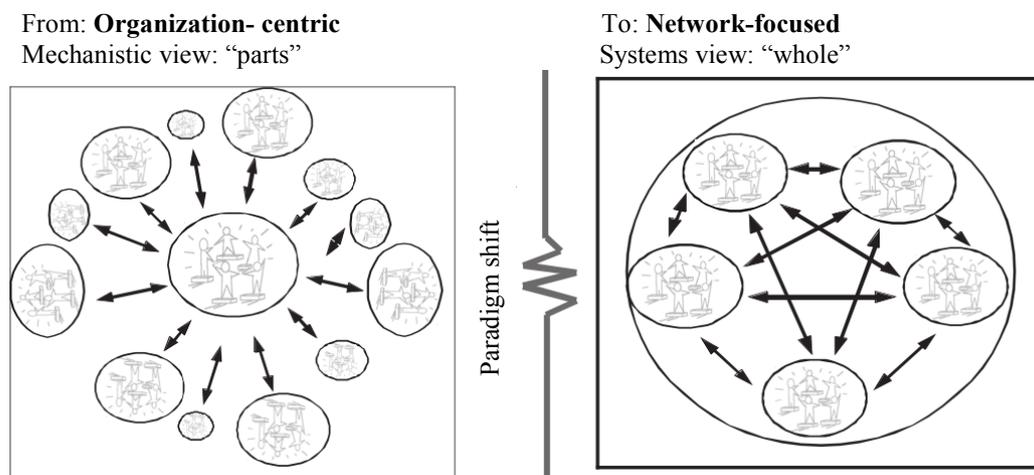


Figure 2. A paradigm shift in stakeholder engagement (Svendsen & Laberge, 2005, p 97).

As the figure illustrates, the emerging paradigm is a systems view where awareness and concern is given to the network of relationships that exist around an issue (Svendsen & Laberge, 2005). A stakeholder network is more than the sum of its parts (*ibid.*). Roloff (2008) suggests moving from traditional stakeholder theory to issue-focused stakeholder management when looking at multi-stakeholder networks⁷. This means that an issue affecting the organization's relationships with other stakeholders is put in focus instead of the organization itself (*ibid.*).

The following sections draw on research covering a wide definition of partnerships and network collaboration, all addressing some sort of sustainability challenge. This is in order to obtain a wide overview of themes of possible relevance for the current study. It is also deemed appropriate since the characteristics of the SSD collaboration are not yet fully determined – and a wide blueprint for the empirical study seems suitable.

3.3.1 Why collaborate on sustainability challenges?

In response to complex social-ecological challenges, different types of collaborations between businesses and NGO's have been created with increased magnitude since the mid 90's (Bitzer & Glasbergen, 2015). These collaborations have been especially common in addressing issues in global value chains and are often initiated in developed countries by multinational corporations and international NGO's with the aim of changing production conditions in developing countries (*ibid.*). Bitzer and Glasbergen (2015) conclude that partnerships are perceived to have the potential to bring about "*sustainable change*" through two premises. First, they enable the utilization of complementary resources and capabilities from businesses and NGO's respectively. Secondly, they also stand for a constructive approach to market-based approaches aiming at promoting development. Although many authors point to the potential of collaborations when it comes to tackling wicked problems; some caution is warranted. Bitzer and Glasbergen (2015) point to that the ability of partnerships to overcome unequal power relations among value chain actors is contested. They also see limitations in

⁷ Roloff (2008, p 234) defines multi-stakeholder networks as consisting of "*actors from business, civil society and governmental or supranational institutions*" who come together to find "*a common approach to an issue that affects them all and that is too complex to be addressed effectively without collaboration*".

voluntary market-based approaches, and their ability to solve complex social-ecological problems is questioned (*ibid.*).

Table 2 shows a synthesis of the different themes related to drivers for collaboration found in previous literature. Previous research suggests that the four themes of *problem nature*, *external influence*, *intrinsic motivation* and *potential benefits* serve as explanatory factors to collaborative initiatives for different sustainability challenges. Earlier studies have according to Vurro (2010) found their explanations to why firms collaborate from two different origins; a utilitarian or an altruistic view. The utilitarian view sees it e.g. as a strategy to gain competitive results or a way to answer to pressing stakeholder demands. The altruistic view employs an ethical lens and sees partnerships as a way to address sustainability issues successfully.

Table 2. Different drivers for participating in collaborative initiatives, targeting sustainability challenges

Theme	Manifestation	Key references
Problem nature	Wicked problem, meta-problems, Complex socio-ecological challenges, Complex issue, Collective action needed, Collaborative advantage, Co-opetition	(Peloza & Falkenberg, 2009) (Bitzer & Glasbergen, 2015) (Blowfield & Murray, 2008) (Turcotte & Pasquero, 2001) (Vurro <i>et al.</i> , 2010)
External influence	External influence from stakeholders (media, customers, NGO, industry association, government, competitors etc.), Institutional pressure, Network position, Competitive dynamics	(Peloza & Falkenberg, 2009) (Roberts, 2003) (Waddock <i>et al.</i> , 2002) (Vurro <i>et al.</i> , 2010) (Wassmer <i>et al.</i> , 2014) (Stadtler, 2011)
Intrinsic motivation	Taking responsibility the right thing to do – on industry/organization/personal level, In line with (sustainability) strategy, Meet regulatory gap, Show commitment to organization’s own values/principles/policies	(Mena & Palazzo, 2012) (Roberts, 2003) (Blowfield & Murray, 2008) (Bendell, 2003) (Wassmer <i>et al.</i> , 2014) (Stadtler, 2011)
Potential benefits	Economic (brand image, access to new markets, avoid litigation, gain competitive advantage, reputation), Relational (forum for interaction, showcase to other stakeholders), Power (market positioning), Risk reduction, Legitimacy (“license to operate”), Increased innovation, Knowledge sharing, Sharing of capabilities, Complementary resources, Improved efficiency in chain	(Peloza & Falkenberg, 2009) (Schouten & Glasbergen, 2012) (Bäckstrand, 2006) (Roberts, 2003) (Blowfield & Murray, 2008) (Vurro <i>et al.</i> , 2010) (Turcotte & Pasquero, 2001) (Bendell, 2003) (Wassmer <i>et al.</i> , 2014) (Stadtler, 2011)

Problem nature

Several authors highlight that many types of wicked problems (or meta-problems as they are also called) require some sort of collaborative solution since they cannot be adequately solved by individual organizations (Peloza & Falkenberg, 2009; Vurro *et al.*, 2010; Bitzer & Glasbergen, 2015). The realization of the complexity of the problem can be a driver for organizations to enter into collaborative initiatives. This is closely tied to the concepts of *collaborative advantage* (see e.g. Glasbergen, 2011) and *co-opetition*. Co-opetition is based on companies realizing that “*a coordinated effort is useful for solving more complex social or environmental problems, and alleviation of these social problems can benefit all firms involved*” (Peloza & Falkenberg, 2009, p 102). Turcotte and Pasquero (2001) have studied multi-stakeholder collaborative roundtables and conclude that this kind of collaboration can be helpful in giving direction to “*meta problems*”, but that there should be some caution regarding their real problem solving potential.

External influence

Closely linked to stakeholder theory, there is the driver of external influence. The company interacts with its environment and reacts to signals from its surroundings (Stadtler, 2011). Examples of stakeholders who can influence the company (and who all have an interest in

CSR) are authorizers, business partners, customer groups and external influences such as interest groups, community members and reporters (Roberts, 2003). The influence can enact as stakeholder demands the company needs to answer to (Waddock *et al.*, 2002; Vurro *et al.*, 2010), affecting the company's readiness to enter into collaborations promoting responsible practices. Entering some sort of partnership can be a way to maintain positive relationships with stakeholders and the company's position in the community or market (Stadtler, 2011). Apart from stakeholder pressure, influences can also occur from the external environment (Wassmer *et al.*, 2014). Government failure, institutional pressures, network position and competitive dynamics are factors possibly affecting companies decision to enter into collaborations, and more research is needed regarding the effect of the latter two (Wassmer *et al.*, 2014).

Intrinsic motivation

Tightly correlated to the concept of CSR and an extended view of the firm's responsibility, we find different intrinsic drivers which motivate organizations to enter into collaborations. Entering into a collaboration aimed at a certain sustainability issue could be a way to do the right thing and take responsibility (Blowfield & Murray, 2008; Nidumolu *et al.*, 2014). This can be the case both on a personal manager level (Bendell, 2003) and for the entire organization. The company's own values, principles and strategies might also affect the decision to join a collaborative initiative. It can be a way to manifest the commitment to their internal operating statutes (Stadtler, 2011). Wassmer *et al.* (2014) conclude that firm's environmental strategy obviously influences its engagements in environmental collaborations. However, this is a promising avenue for future research since more insights are needed on the link between strategy and collaborative behavior (Wassmer *et al.*, 2014). Voluntarily entering into some sort of multi-stakeholder initiative which tries to fill a regulatory gap by issuing soft law regulation, can be a way for companies to address the lack of regulation regarding social and environmental externalities on the global business arena (Mena & Palazzo, 2012).

Potential benefits

A company might also identify several benefits (in addition to those already mentioned) arising from participating in a collaboration. Economically, the company could improve its brand, gain access to new markets, prevent litigation, gain a competitive advantage or attract talented employees (Vurro *et al.*, 2010; Stadtler, 2011; Wassmer *et al.*, 2014). Roberts (2003, p 163) especially points out that companies have to maintain trust in their brand, and effective management of social and environmental issues is a key part of "*maintaining a good reputation*". She concludes that companies are more likely to implement ethical sourcing initiatives if there are identifiable benefits from action or risks from inaction (*ibid.*). It could also be a way to gain power on the market or to improve the legitimacy (and the license to operate) of the company (Turcotte & Pasquero, 2001; Bäckstrand, 2006; Vurro *et al.*, 2010; Schouten & Glasbergen, 2012). Self-regulation can be seen as a means of legitimization (Peloza & Falkenberg, 2009). Blowfield and Murray (2008) highlight that many companies can see some sort of business case of partnerships for implementing corporate responsibility. Engaging in the collaboration, seen as a forum for interaction, can lead to knowledge sharing, sharing of capabilities and resources and lead to increased innovation (Turcotte & Pasquero, 2001; Peloza & Falkenberg, 2009).

3.3.2 Activities in forming network collaboration

Earlier studies of collaborations and partnerships have chosen to categorize the process in different ways. Some authors suggest stage models of partnerships (e.g. Selsky, 2005; Seitanidi & Crane, 2009), which has been criticized of providing broad and not very informative categories (Glasbergen, 2011). Some studies attempt to categorize the nature of different partnerships (e.g. Austin, 2000; Austin & Seitanidi, 2012), as either philanthropic,

transactional, integrative or transformational. Yet other authors explain activities involved in building collaborations or partnerships, which will now be explored in further detail.

Glasbergen (2011) proposes a framework for understanding partnerships for sustainable development analytically; *the ladder of partnership activity*. It consists of five core activities; building trust, creating collaborative advantage, constituting a rule system, changing a market and changing the political order (*ibid.*). His framework incorporates the external changes partnerships eventually can achieve. As the partnering process progresses “*a gradual shift will take place from a focus on interactions among partners themselves to interactions of the partnership with its relevant external environment*” (*ibid.*, p 3).

Svendsen and Laberge (2005) choose to categorize the process of convening a stakeholder network into three phases of activity; outreach, collective learning and joint action/innovation. Each of these phases involves several different types of activities. The authors highlight that networks often cycle between the different phases several times and the relationships evolve during the process (*ibid.*). Table 3 shows activities proposed in convening networks, based on Svendsen and Laberge (2005) and the early phases with internal interaction of Glasbergen’s (2011) ladder of partnership activity.

Table 3. Examples of suggested activities in different phases of network convenor

	Activities		
Svendsen & Laberge, 2005	Outreach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Framing of the key issue/question - Identifying and involving members of the system - Defining the goals of the network - Articulating and agreeing on guiding principles and network norms - Sharing of background information - Establishing timely and effective communication linkages and methods 	Collective learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop new knowledge about the issue and larger system - Define possible scenarios - Construct shared meanings that allow people to understand each other and work together effectively - Clarify common ground and differences in perspectives, interests and needs - Build trust and commitment 	Joint action/innovation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clear project-specific goals - Shared vision for the network - Action plan
Glasbergen, 2011	Building trust <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collaborative interaction, atmosphere of mutual trust - Create minimal structure and ground rules 	Creating collaborative advantage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nurture own special interests - Making the mutual benefit of collaboration explicit - Sense of fairness (balance between benefits and costs among partners) 	Constituting a rule system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Formalization of rules - Contracts to signify commitment - Sanctions for failing to comply

The table above shows that the process of convening a partnership or network requires several activities. In common for both frameworks is that the partnership results in some kind of commitment taking place. Glasbergen (2011, p 8) describes the third phase as changing the partnering process fundamentally since “*voluntarism is replaced by formal commitment*”. In the process of reaching this commitment, activities tied to framing the issue, building trust and developing knowledge are mentioned by both Svendsen and Laberge (2005) and Glasbergen (2011). Glasbergen (*ibid.*) also stresses that in order for a partnership arrangement to be viable, the partners’ opportunities should outweigh the risks of participating; hence the collaborative advantage (the mutual benefit of collaboration) needs to be made explicit. Important to note is that these phases might not be as clear-cut and follow in a direct sequential order in reality. Glasbergen (*ibid.*) means that they present an idealized form of the partnering process and that partnering in fact is “*a continuing process with many feedback loops*”. Enablers for collaborations are further explored in the following section.

3.3.3 Factors enabling collaboration

A synthesis of enabling factors for collaborations found in previous literature is provided in table 4. Since this study focuses on the formation process for a collaboration, this has also been the focus of the literature review. Enablers relating to four different categories can be discerned, namely *institutional conditions*, *stakeholders*, *relationships* and *network*.

Table 4. Overview of different enabling factors for collaborations

Cat.	Theme	Manifestation	Key references
Institutional conditions	Characteristics of the institutional conditions in the industry	Structure of value chain, Type of lead firms, Role of governmental policies, Similar industry/culture	(Schouten & Glasbergen, 2012) (Peloza & Falkenberg, 2009)
Stakeholders	Characteristics of participating stakeholders	Collaborative mind-set/capability, Alignment to own strategy/mission/values. Fit between own activities and network activities, Representatives with authority, Senior level commitment	(Van Huijstee & Glasbergen, 2010) (Wassmer <i>et al.</i> , 2014) (Austin, 2000) (Cohen, 2003) (Seitanidi & Crane, 2009)
Relationships	Characteristics of the relationships between stakeholders	Prior experience of collaboration, Personal connections, Facilitating actor (such as NGO), Partnership brokers, Strong industry associations, Similar CSR-goals/culture, Common ways of working	(Wassmer <i>et al.</i> , 2014) (Austin, 2000) (Cohen, 2003) (Peloza & Falkenberg, 2009)
Network	Characteristics of the organization/structure/design of the network	Appropriate time-frames, Resources, Shared expenses, Equitable management structure, Level playing field, Flexibility, Reporting mechanisms, Confrontational power, Credible rule system, Accountability, Small start group with key organizations	(Glasbergen, 2011) (Bendell, 2003) (Schouten & Glasbergen, 2012) (Seitanidi & Crane, 2009) (Bäckstrand, 2006) (Svendsen & Laberge, 2005) (Austin, 2000) (Peloza & Falkenberg, 2009) (Cohen, 2003) (Nidumolu <i>et al.</i> , 2014)(Wassmer <i>et al.</i> , 2014)
	Inclusion of large/important/diverse stakeholders	Broad base, Balanced representation, Large companies/markets leaders (powerful), NGOs with professional knowledge	(Glasbergen, 2011) (Bendell, 2003) (Bäckstrand, 2006) (Svendsen & Laberge, 2005) (Peloza & Falkenberg, 2009)
	Shared goals/vision/principles/meanings	Framing issue, Defining goals jointly, Common vision, Realistic expectations, Ambiguous concepts, Flexibility, Action plans, Link self-interest and shared interest, Create a clear path with quick wins	(Wassmer <i>et al.</i> , 2014) (Turcotte & Pasquero, 2001) (Bendell, 2003) (Schouten & Glasbergen, 2012) (Svendsen & Laberge, 2005) (Austin, 2000) (Cohen, 2003) (Nidumolu <i>et al.</i> , 2014)
	Information/Communication/Learning	Sharing of expertise, Open sharing of information, Forum for collaboration/deliberation, Continual learning	(Bendell, 2003) (Peloza & Falkenberg, 2009) (Bäckstrand, 2006) (Svendsen & Laberge, 2005) (Austin, 2000) (Turcotte & Pasquero, 2001)
	Perceived positive attributes of network	Trusted, Open/Transparency/Access, Friendly, Truthful, Perceived problem solving potential, Perceived legitimacy, Collaborative advantage, Innovation, Social power, Build/Maintain trust—through appreciative inquiry and creating deeper meanings	(Van Huijstee & Glasbergen, 2010)(Glasbergen, 2011) (Bendell, 2003) (Schouten & Glasbergen, 2012) (Bäckstrand, 2006) (Svendsen & Laberge, 2005) (Peloza & Falkenberg, 2009) (Cohen, 2003) (Nidumolu <i>et al.</i> , 2014)

Institutional conditions

Schouten and Glasbergen (2012) have studied how collaborative arrangements (in their case roundtables for soy and palm oil) can develop more sustainable alternatives to current practices that become accepted as an authoritative norm. They mention several institutional factors that can affect the development of interactions among stakeholders, e.g. the structure of the commodity chain, type of lead firms and the role of governmental policies (*ibid.*). The

structure of the commodity chain refers to that high vertical or horizontal integration alleviates the progression of governance initiatives (*ibid.*). Lead firms refer to those who are in a position to “*set the parameters under which other actors in the chain operate*”, and if they are more vulnerable towards critical consumerism they might be more committed to different standards (*ibid.*, p 76). These factors (in addition with government policies) can all influence “*the degree of collaborative advantage for different groups of stakeholders*”(*ibid.*, p 80). Peloza & Falkenberg (2009) also conclude that firms coming from similar industries or cultures might easier be able to work together. Even though some aspects of institutional conditions have been mentioned here, research has to date not fully explored how institutional dynamics are linked to organizational processes of collaboration (Vurro *et al.*, 2010). Generally in the field of CSR research, an overemphasis on the content of CSR activities has led to the neglect of investigating institutional factors which might influence such activities (Basu & Palazzo, 2008). This category therefor seems highly relevant to explore further.

Stakeholders

How the different stakeholders involved in collaboration are perceived by other participants can greatly affect the evolvement of an initiative. Perceiving other stakeholders as cooperative, open, committed, truthful and motivated to listen can enable collaboration (Van Huijstee & Glasbergen, 2010). Actual firm capabilities are closely linked to perceptions, and Wassmer *et al.* (2014) point out the importance of firms collaborative capabilities. Austin (2000) mentions several enablers contributing to the strength of a collaboration. The alignment of firms’ strategies, missions and values to the ones of the collaboration play an important role in determining the richness of the collaboration (*ibid.*). Another crucial component tied to the participating stakeholders is the characteristics of the people involved. Cohen (2003, p 109) states; “*strip away the theory and rhetoric, and the concept of partnership is all about people from different backgrounds working together on a common goal*”. These representatives should for example have a commitment to the issues involved in the partnership and be invested with the authority to make decisions (*ibid.*). Within each participating stakeholder’s organization, it is also important to secure senior level commitment to the collaboration (Seitanidi & Crane, 2009).

Relationships

Several enabling factors associated with the relational characteristics between stakeholders have been found in previous literature. Wassmer *et al.* (2014) conclude that enabling factors for collaboration according to previous studies are prior experience of collaborating and capabilities and reputation. Several authors mention conditions which serve the potential to strengthen relationships between stakeholders and in turn enable collaboration. Peloza and Falkenberg (2009) mean that the presence of strong industry associations can entail that there is an existing infrastructure and connectivity and that stakeholders share existing social networks. Even if the associations themselves do not participate in CSR activities, they can help support shared contributions in a collaboration (*ibid.*). Having an actor who facilitates the relationships between actors, such as an NGO (*ibid.*) or a partnership broker (Cohen, 2003) are also described as enabling factors. An NGO can facilitate agreements on acceptable operating standards and act as a third party (Peloza & Falkenberg, 2009). Shared values and common ways of working between stakeholders can also be enablers for partnerships (Wassmer *et al.*, 2014).

Network

The characteristics of the collaborative network have great potential in enabling or hindering collaborative endeavors and there are many studies examining specific factors for this. Several authors point at the *organizational design and structure of the network* as important for successful collaboration. This can for example include determining appropriate time-

frames (Bendell, 2003), mobilizing resources (Cohen, 2003; Peloza & Falkenberg, 2009; Seitanidi & Crane, 2009), an equitable management structure (Cohen, 2003), creation of a level playing field (Peloza & Falkenberg, 2009), developing rules and reporting mechanisms (Bäckstrand, 2006; Schouten & Glasbergen, 2012) and starting out with a small group of key organizations (Nidumolu *et al.*, 2014). The level playing field can consist of standards agreed upon by member companies, who in a self-regulating manner determine proactive standards for addressing a common problem (Peloza & Falkenberg, 2009).

Authors also mention the *process of including stakeholders* in the collaboration as an important enabling factor (Bendell, 2003; Svendsen & Laberge, 2005). In order for a collaboration to gain acceptance, it is helpful to include a broad base of actors and aim at having a balanced representation between stakeholder groups (Bäckstrand, 2006; Peloza & Falkenberg, 2009). It can be especially helpful to include large companies or market leaders who have some sort of market power (Glasbergen, 2011). In collaborations addressing sustainability challenges, the importance of including an NGO with professional knowledge is also stressed (Peloza & Falkenberg, 2009; Glasbergen, 2011).

Creating a *shared understanding of the network's goals, vision and meanings* can also enable collaboration. Jointly defining viable goals is essential in partnerships (Cohen, 2003), and it is important to frame the key issue at hand (Svendsen & Laberge, 2005). It is also important to build realistic expectations (Bendell, 2003) and determine an action plan (Svendsen & Laberge, 2005). Preserving some ambiguity in definitions and solutions can facilitate consensus (Turcotte & Pasquero, 2001). Bendell (2003) also stresses that flexibility in agreements, where it is possible to develop goals over time, can enable collaboration. Nidumolu *et al.* (2014) suggest that linking organizational self-interest to the shared interest of the network can enable collaboration. Cohen (2003) concludes that partnerships must establish a balance between stakeholder goals that overlap, and those that are in conflict, and provide enough benefits for all stakeholders without compromising their essential beliefs. Determining a clear path forward, which also emphasizes quick wins (as opposed to long term goals) can help generate momentum and commitment (Nidumolu *et al.*, 2014).

A possible advantage with entering into a collaboration with other stakeholders, which is also mentioned as a potential benefit under drivers, is the access to new information. A collaborative network can function as an arena for *joint learning and sharing of information or expertise*. Both Bäckstrand (2006) and Turcotte and Pasquero (2001) talk about forums for interaction and deliberation between stakeholders. Open sharing of information in stakeholder dialogues is deemed as an important success factor (Bendell, 2003). Continual learning is a factor which significantly can contribute to the strength of a collaboration (Austin, 2000). Svendsen and Laberge (2005) see collective learning as an important phase in network convenor. This can both develop new knowledge about the focus issue and larger system, and lead to shared meanings and the creation of trust and commitment between stakeholders (*ibid.*).

How stakeholders perceive the network, in terms of different *positive attributes*, can also enable or hinder collaboration. The more cooperative and friendly the atmosphere is perceived to be, the more collaborative the process is deemed to be (Van Huijstee & Glasbergen, 2010). A key concept mentioned in earlier studies is trust (Bendell, 2003; Cohen, 2003; Svendsen & Laberge, 2005; Peloza & Falkenberg, 2009; Glasbergen, 2011; Schouten & Glasbergen, 2012; Nidumolu *et al.*, 2014). Trust can be built in several ways, Svendsen and Laberge (2005) propose that network members need to find ways of working together that build trust, mutual understanding and commitment; e.g. through openness and information sharing. Nidumolu *et al.* (2014) suggests that trust can be built through appreciative inquiry (e.g. focusing on

strengths and possibilities) and the creation of deeper meanings (e.g. fostering a sense of belonging and connecting the head and the heart). Another key concept is collaborative advantage (Glasbergen, 2011; Schouten & Glasbergen, 2012); stakeholders perceive the collaboration to be able to reach outcomes they cannot reach individually.

3.4 Conceptual framework

This chapter has presented the theoretical starting points for the study. It has explained how the traditional paradigm of businesses solely being profit maximizers, has evolved into a new paradigm where terms such as corporate social responsibility and the triple bottom line are corner stones. Organizations are no longer seen as only responsible towards their owners, but to a wider audience of stakeholders, as described in stakeholder management. The chapter also presented a review of the current state of knowledge regarding collaborations to address sustainability challenges. In table 5, a summary of the main concepts are shown. This serves as a starting point in the empirical study and provides useful guidance in the following analysis and discussion sections.

Table 5. Conceptual framework employed in the study

Concept	Description
Characteristics of collaborations addressing sustainability challenges	Different types of collaborations/partnerships addressing sustainability challenges and their characteristics are explained; moving from an organization-centric to a network focused view, where stakeholders organize around a specific challenge (Svendsen & Laberge, 2005). Key concepts of relevance for this study are <i>stakeholder networks</i> (Svendsen & Laberge, 2005) and <i>business-NGO collaboration</i> (Peloza & Falkenberg, 2009).
Drivers for collaboration	Drivers for collaboration are grouped into four themes; <i>problem nature, external influence, intrinsic motivation, potential benefits</i> . For examples of manifestations and key references, see table 2.
Phases/Activities in forming collaborations	Different phases/stages of forming partnerships and collaborations. Possible phases are <i>outreach, collective learning and joint action/innovation</i> . Examples of partnering activities are given, see table 3. Key references are Svendsen and Laberges' (2005) <i>phases of stakeholder network convenor</i> and Glasbergen's (2011) <i>ladder of partnership activity</i> .
Enablers for collaboration	Enablers for collaboration are grouped into four categories; characteristics of the <i>institutional conditions in the industry</i> , characteristics of <i>participating stakeholders</i> , characteristics of <i>relationships between stakeholders</i> and different characteristics tied to the <i>collaborative network</i> . For examples of manifestations and key references see table 4.

Many authors highlight the necessity and potential of collaborations among stakeholders in tackling sustainability challenges and various features of such collaborations have been described; such as types, phases, drivers and enablers. The first concept - *characteristics of collaborations*- provides guidance in describing **what** certain collaborations look like. The second concept – *drivers for collaboration* – helps explain **why** different stakeholders decide to engage in collaborations. The third concept - *phases/activities in forming collaborations* – provides guidance in describing **how** collaborations can evolve and **what** activities that can take place. The fourth concept – *enablers for collaboration* – aids in explaining **how** collaborations can be enabled. In total, this **addresses the aim of the study** – to explain how value chain collaborations for more responsible sourcing can be formed and what factors enable such collaboration.

4 The empirical study

*This chapter presents the results of the empirical study. First, a summarized presentation of the dialogue process is presented. Second, the perspectives of the different respondents regarding drivers and enablers for the collaboration are presented. For an empirical background on responsible sourcing, the structure of the soy value chain, initiatives for more responsible soy and the Swedish food industry's role in soy sourcing; see **Appendix 4**.*

4.1 The collaborative character of the Swedish soy dialogue

The following sections describe the character of the SSD collaboration and give an overview of the key activities leading to the declaration of intent, publicly issued in April 2014.

4.1.1 Initiation and inclusion of stakeholders

Discussions of starting the SSD occurred already at the end of 2011 between WWF Sweden, Arla Foods, Lantmännen and the Swedish Dairy Association (pers. com., Lundén Pettersson; Tham, 2015). These four actors agreed to gather actors from the Swedish agricultural production to inform of the problems with soy, this was what initiated the SSD (pers. com., Tham, 2015). These four actors were all members of the RTRS and had some pre-understanding on the issue; this partly gave the foundation for the SSD (pers. com., Lundén Pettersson, 2015).

Early on it was established that a work group was necessary to drive on the process. It was open to join the work group (pers. com., Bylund, 2015) and the actors who continuously have been engaged in it are WWF Sweden, Lantmännen, Arla Foods, LRF Dairy Sweden (formerly The Swedish Dairy Association), and HKScan Sweden. It was natural that the initiating organizations were included in the work group (pers. com., Lundén Pettersson, 2015). The persons in the work group have had somewhat different focus; some worked with the calculation models, some with leading meetings and others on including stakeholders in the dialogue (pers. com., Lundén Pettersson; Swensson, 2015).

The SSD has been open to join for interested actors (pers. com., Söderberg, 2015). When working on including actors, the work group has mainly targeted the largest companies that they knew had an agenda that corresponded with the SSD (*ibid.*). There was a lot of work on including stakeholders in the beginning, and it was mostly the work group who were involved in this even though they tried to engage others as well (pers. com., Tham, 2015). WWF Sweden had the most contacts with retail and brands and did not have a buyer-seller relationship, which Tham (*ibid.*) thinks might have made it easier for them to make contact. Kämpe (pers. com., 2015) describes it as you talked to the people you knew in your network and tried to get as many as possible to join. Swensson (pers. com., 2015) says that you somewhat targeted your own industry segment and for example sent out invitations or called people, inviting them to join.

The actors participating in the SSD are both feed manufacturers, varying types of food producers, retailers, food service and industry associations (see Appendix 2). The coverage of actors from different industry categories varies. Kämpe (pers. com., 2015) sees that the SSD is still missing actors from food service and processed food. Meat companies are also not that well represented (pers. com., Lundén Pettersson, 2015). Norrman and Bylund (pers. com., 2015) think that retail actors are covered quite well, but not the food service sector. Norrman (pers. com., 2015) points to that the producers participating in the dialogue are the frontrunners in these kinds of issues. Several respondents say that the reasons actors choose not to participate vary. Tham (pers. com., 2015) says that actors are always welcome to meetings in the SSD, even if they do not sign the declaration of intent. The ambition is to

include more actors that place demands on soy. There have been organizations monitoring the SSD-process, but who have not signed the declaration of intent (*ibid.*). Some organizations support the process (e.g. industry associations), but it is the participating companies that pay the potential costs (pers. com., Kämpe, 2015). According to Tham (pers. com., 2015), the industry associations have signed as supportive actors and have taken the responsibility to discuss the issue with their respective member companies.

4.1.2 Work procedures

Many of the respondents describe the SSD as an informal dialogue process, rather than a formal organization (pers. com., Kämpe; Norrman; Swensson; Tham, 2015). The structure is described as originating from the work group (pers. com., Bylund; Kämpe; Tham, 2015). Norrman (pers. com., 2015) thinks that it was necessary to have a work group to keep it all together. There is no pre-determined hierarchy in the SSD and no official chairman (pers. com., Swensson, 2015). There are also no specific resources allocated to the SSD; the work conducted by the work group is based on their voluntary commitment and their organization's support (pers. com., Swensson; Tham, 2015).

Tham (pers. com., 2015) says that the structure of the dialogue process was not consciously designed beforehand. Lundén Pettersson (pers. com., 2015) thinks that the structure has both evolved and been planned. The initiating actors, forming the work group, had a lot of previous experience from other projects. The work group has had separate meetings, between the large dialogue meetings, where they have worked on preparing the agendas for the large meetings and made contacts with potential participants (*ibid.*). During the dialogue process, it was decided meeting to meeting when the group should meet again (pers. com., Kämpe, 2015).

The early meetings were designed to convey a picture of the problem and create an understanding among participants (pers. com., Lundén Pettersson, 2015). It was an active choice to have a neutral moderator during the early meetings, in order for participants not to feel that there was some kind of hidden agenda behind the dialogue (*ibid.*). The Chatham House Rule has also been employed throughout the process, which many actors describe as an important enabler for an open and honest dialogue (pers. com., Kämpe; Lundén Pettersson; Swensson; Söderberg; Tham, 2015).

4.1.3 Framing the problem and determining goals

The goals and declaration of intent in the SSD were developed collaboratively by the participating actors. Early on, it was decided to “*park*” certain issues that were considered impossible to deal with in the forum of the dialogue (pers. com., Lundén Pettersson, 2015). This was mainly the **GM** (genetically modified)-issue. The work group developed the foundation and thereafter presented a draft of the declaration of intent in the large group (*ibid.*). The work group had some preparation meetings before this (pers. com., Kämpe, 2015). The draft was discussed in the large group and revised. There was a circulation for comments in order to collect the opinions of the group (*ibid.*). Swensson (pers. com., 2015) perceived it to be an inclusive process where you tried to reach a consensus agreement.

The declaration of intent (*internal document*) stipulates that the sourced soy should be certified by a third party according to a credible standard such as RTRS, ProTerra or KRAV. Companies can buy either physically certified soy or certificates for responsible soy (see explanation in section A.4.3) as a first step. The time plan for the dialogue states that 60 percent of all soy used should be certified or covered by certificates in 2014. In 2015, the goal is that 100 percent of all soy used should be certified or covered by certificates. It is up to each participating company to account for their progress in their sustainability reports. The declaration of intent also states that companies will take responsibility for what they have the

power to influence in their own value chain. The scope includes the soy used in feed for animal products and soy products for human consumption. The first scope for retail and food service includes their private labels, goods produced specifically for their company (but with a different brand) and meat products (pers. com., Lundén Pettersson, 2015). Voluntary industry policies in Sweden on only using GM-free soy has led to the usage of third party certified soy, which in some cases include sustainability criteria (pers. com., Tham, 2015). The Swedish feed industry has agreed to supply RTRS or ProTerra soy, meaning they cover the soy reaching the Swedish production (pers. com., Swensson, 2015). Swedish producers thereby currently largely fulfill the criteria stipulated in the declaration of intent (pers. com., Tham, 2015). This also entails that retailers and food service are held accountable for their imported commodities, which are not necessarily produced with certified soy. This likewise applies to such producers who in part have imported produce; Tham (*ibid.*) explains that e.g. Arla Foods and HKScan take responsibility for imported produce used in their operations.

As a part of determining the scope and working procedures within the retail sector, separate meetings were held. During these meetings, the work group supported the retail and food service actors and made sure that the scope agreed upon in the large group was maintained (pers. com., Lundén Pettersson, 2015). The process of determining how to calculate soy content has been very transparent and the large group in the dialogue has approved the choices made (*ibid.*). Norrman (pers. com., 2015) thinks that it felt like the work group listened to the complicated challenges retail and food service faced and provided plausible suggestions for work procedures.

4.1.4 Learning and information sharing

The SSD has greatly contributed to learning and information sharing, according to many respondents (pers. com., Bylund; Norrman; Swensson; Söderberg, 2015). Tham (pers. com., 2015) says that the work group has put in a lot of effort into accomplishing this. The work group, together with retail, put in a lot of effort in calculating key ratios for example (*ibid.*). The extra work with these calculations led to a revision of the time plan (which first stated that the process could finish in 2013) (pers. com., Lundén Pettersson, 2015). It is also mentioned that it was helpful to receive an increased insight in the different perspectives of different actors (pers. com., Norrman; Söderberg, 2015).

4.1.5 Timeline and key activities

The timeline (see figure 3) shows the activities that took place between the initial meeting between actors (in April 2012) and the final released declaration of intent (in April 2014).

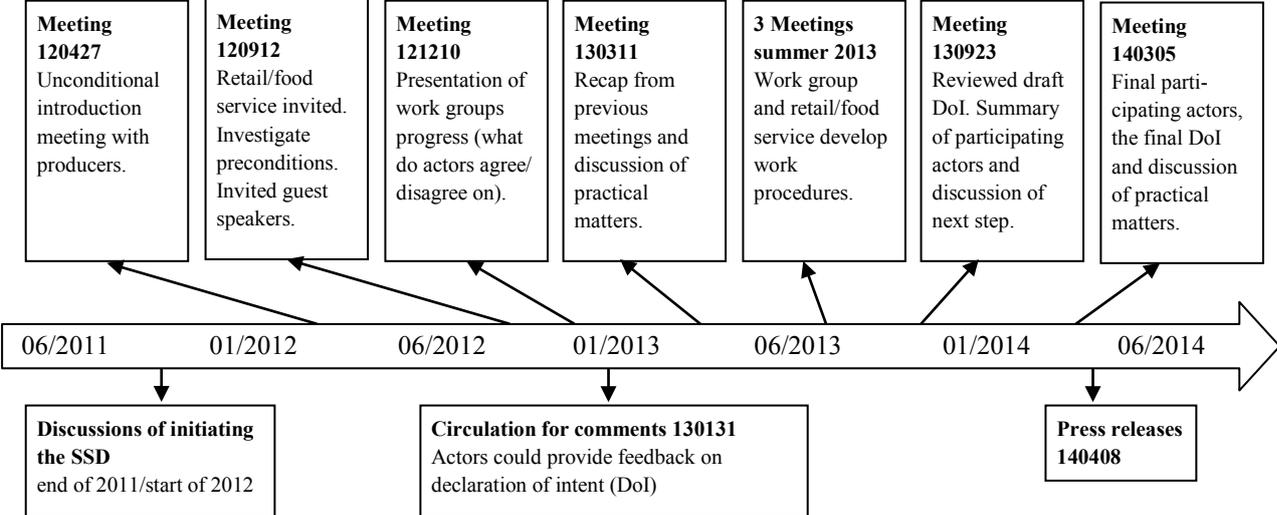


Figure 3. Time line over activities (own interpretation, based on meeting protocols and respondents' additions).

The participants at the meetings have varied over time, and some actors that participated at meetings did not sign the final declaration of intent. Between meetings, the work group that was formed has performed different preparatory activities (these are not accounted for in the figure). A joint statement regarding the declaration of intent was produced, and then individual actors could choose how to convey this through their respective channels of communication. In figure 3, it is shown that press releases were sent out in April 2014.

The initial meetings in the SSD, where the issue was presented to stakeholders in the value chain, was seen as an important event by some respondents (pers. com., Bylund; Lundén Pettersson; Tham, 2015). The meeting in April 2012, where actors from the Swedish production participated, was focused on exposing and discussing the problems with soy in a versatile way (pers. com., Tham, 2015). It led to problem realization and that it was determined that more actors from the value chain had to be included (*ibid.*). Lundén Pettersson (pers. com., 2015) sees the meeting in September 2012 as crucial for the development of the SSD. During the meeting, different value chain actors started talking to each other and they managed to create a mutual understanding of the problem. Here, the work group realized it would be possible to start some kind of dialogue. Bylund (pers. com., 2015) says that the meetings in the beginning, where the issue was presented, helped to establish credibility in the dialogue.

The separate meetings held with retail and food service actors (during the summer of 2013) were also an important event according to several respondents (pers. com., Bylund; Kämpe; Lundén Pettersson; Norrman; Tham, 2015). Norrman (pers. com., 2015) thinks that these meetings led to a better understanding between retail and food service actors and helped them to move forward in the process. It also enabled the work group to gain a greater understanding of the challenges retail and food service faced (*ibid.*). Respondents from the work group think that these meetings helped in establishing the working procedures possible for retail and food service to implement (pers. com., Kämpe; Lundén Pettersson; Tham, 2015). Lundén Pettersson (pers. com., 2015) points out that it was very important to get these actors to join the SSD, otherwise it would have meant an increased burden for Swedish producers.

4.2 Communicated drivers and perceived enabling factors

Here, the different organizational perspectives on drivers for engaging in the SSD and enablers for the collaboration are presented. The organizations have different roles in the value chain and the data is from interviews conducted in this study (see overview in table 1). For more background information on the organizations' officially communicated stances on soy, see **Appendix 5**.

4.2.1 The NGO – WWF Sweden

Drivers

WWF works to protect nature and had identified soy production as one of the greatest environmental threats (pers. com., Tham, 2015). Globally WWF has started work with better production standards through the RTRS. WWF is very dialogue oriented and it is a strategy to work together with companies (*ibid.*). “*All actors affected by the problem should be included to find a solution*”, Tham (*ibid.*) concludes. She has been responsible for WWF Sweden's work with palm oil and soy for the last 10-15 years, and she early on had discussions about soy with Arla Foods, Lantmännen and the Swedish Dairy Association. Together with representatives from these three organizations, Tham started discussions about initiating the SSD at the end of 2011 or start of 2012 (*ibid.*).

Tham (*ibid.*) describes the shape of the soy value chain as similar to a champagne glass. There are many consumers and soy producers but a limited number of companies who account for

large parts of the trade. Therefore it is most effective to target the actors in the narrowest part of the supply chain, and approach the issue from the market side (*ibid.*). WWF has a strategy of targeting the market side and connecting the markets and production for 15 global commodities, including soy (*ibid.*). It is also more resource effective to engage multiple actors in collaborations. Tham (*ibid.*) says that WWF works a lot with individual companies as well but it is often resource intensive. “*You have to look at the problem, see what a possible solution is and what constellation is needed to solve it*” (*ibid.*). WWF Sweden concluded that even if they had deeper collaborations with some of the actors, they would not be able to provide them with the conditions for a solution by working individually (*ibid.*). Tham (*ibid.*) explains that WWF is convinced that we in the future will see more collaboration between actors, both due to the fact that the problems cannot be solved individually and in order to share risks. WWF has an important role to play in making sure the initiatives have a sufficient level of ambition.

Enablers

Tham (*ibid.*) mentions several enabling factors in the formation process of the SSD. She thinks that there has been increased attention about the problem. Recently there has been media attention, e.g. “*Matens pris*” on Swedish radio, reports by Swedwatch and different research reports, where the South American soy is highlighted as a problem and contributor to deforestation (*ibid.*). Another enabling factor she mentions is the consensus approach in the SSD; it was not a “*blame game*” (*ibid.*). They tried to have an open atmosphere and used the Chatham House Rule and invited a neutral moderator in the beginning (*ibid.*). Tham (*ibid.*) got the feeling that some of the actors might not have met before and that the SSD gave them the chance to listen and understand each other, it was not the traditional seller-buyer relationship. She thinks that the fact that all actors contributed during meetings helped in creating a mutual understanding; everyone faced different challenges and got room to talk and describe them (*ibid.*). The understanding of the different challenges and that everyone tried to solve them as best as they could was an important success factor (*ibid.*). That the process took a bit longer time than first expected was probably helpful since it enabled retail actors to gain internal acceptance and develop internal procedures to carry out the commitment (*ibid.*).

WWF Sweden’s role as an initiator and driver of the process was probably important, but Tham (*ibid.*) points out that there also is a maturity in businesses where they understand the importance of the issue. Through previous work in WWF Sweden, Tham had contacts with retail and food service actors, which was useful in summoning the initial SSD meetings. Crucial for the process has throughout been the SSD work group and Tham (*ibid.*) thinks that it was very important that some actors already had commitments in place in their organizations regarding soy and had the personal commitment to be part of the work group.

Framing the problem and deciding on certain aspects to “*park*” has also been important in the process. It was important to be clear in the beginning about what issues should be handled within the SSD and what issues should be dealt with in other contexts (*ibid.*). WWF for example has a clear position about not actively supporting GM crops. But they internally decided, due to several reasons, that the SSD was not an appropriate context to drive this issue in and agreed to “*park*” it. The important goal in the SSD was to reach a commitment to using more responsibly produced soy. It was also important for WWF Sweden, and other actors, that a “*level playing field*” between Swedish production and imported goods was obtained, in order for Swedish producers to not lose competitiveness and incur increased costs (*ibid.*).

With regards to the Swedish food industry, Tham (*ibid.*) thinks it was important that there already was an industry agreement on the use of non-GM feed. This meant that the SSD did not start from scratch; actors already had experience in placing certain demands on the feed.

Tham also sees that there is an increasing realization among businesses about the production conditions of their inputs, and that the conditions sometimes are unacceptable. This evolvement is also tied to the increased transparency and access to information globally (*ibid.*).

4.2.2 The industry association – LRF Dairy Sweden

Drivers

The Swedish Dairy Association was one of the organizations involved in the initiation of the SSD and in 2013 this organization became LRF Dairy Sweden. Swensson has been the representative participating from start. He thought the collaboration in the SSD sounded like a smart idea and thought it was a good continuation of being RTRS members, which the Swedish Dairy Association had been from an early stage (pers. com., Swensson, 2015). They joined the RTRS since they saw that the usage of soy meal in dairy production is not sustainable in the long run; but while it is still used it should be as sustainable as possible. The commitment shown from WWF in the soy issue and more and more companies joining the RTRS (e.g. Lantmännen) provided a starting point for creating engagement from even more actors, which led to the start of the SSD (*ibid.*).

One of the motivations in creating the collaboration was to also include actors from retail and food service (*ibid.*). Feed produced according to RTRS standards costs a bit more which means that these kinds of demands from Swedish producers would imply an increased cost. To not reduce the competitiveness between Swedish production and imported goods, it makes sense that retail and food service take responsibility for the indirect soy in imported goods as well (*ibid.*). Swensson (*ibid.*) means that working together probably was the only way to move forward in the issue and thinks that WWF Sweden put them on the right track.

There had also been external pressure from NGO's (e.g. reports from Swedwatch) and media attention (e.g. "Matens pris" on Swedish radio P1) about the problems with soy. Swensson (*ibid.*) thinks that this provided the starting point for the engagement from the dairy industry. The increased attention on the issue led to higher pressure on companies, meaning the susceptibility to initiatives like the SSD increased. Swensson (*ibid.*) explains that it can be challenging to discuss the soy issue in the dairy industry, since it often raises the question of why soy is used in the first place. Some actors want to stop using soy altogether and replace it with other alternatives.

Swensson (*ibid.*) mentions several benefits rising from engagement in the SSD. He has personally learnt more about certified soy, gained access to information and seen how WWF work. It has also expanded the participants' network of contacts. Regarding societal benefits, he thinks that the SSD puts some pressure on soy producers in foremost Brazil. In Sweden, the benefit for society could be slow knowledge development about the issue.

Enablers

There were several factors that enabled the creation of the SSD, according to Swensson (pers. com., 2015). He thinks that the problem was easy to grasp, meaning there was a concrete problem to focus on. The engagement from WWF Sweden from start, which is a well-respected NGO, was also an enabler. Starting out with a small group committed in the issue was another contributing factor. The fact that the Chatham House Rule was used probably contributed to a more open discussion (*ibid.*). He also reflects upon that it was important to find the right entrances to retail actors, and having some industry knowledge was necessary in this work. The main challenge was getting these types of actors to join the collaboration. The decision to join needed to gain approval in the organizations and there were challenges in

calculating the soy usage with such a large amount of commodities. Part of the solution was the continuous process and never giving up. The process has also been a bit flexible.

The Swedish food industry is characterized of having relatively few actors who often meet in different contexts, which could have been beneficial to the SSD process (*ibid.*). The fact that there are many agricultural cooperatives also leads to different pre-existing relationships, since organizations have the same owners; Swedish farmers. Another contributing factor could have been the Swedish culture of being more project and group oriented than in other countries (*ibid.*). The SSD could be seen as a “*Swedish*” solution where they have tried to listen to participating actors. Swensson (*ibid.*) thinks it would have been harder to succeed if someone would have decided beforehand how the collaboration should have been carried out. The non-hierarchical structure made it more fun for everyone involved, but the down-side could have been that it then took longer time.

4.2.3 The animal feed manufacturer – Lantmännen

Drivers

Lantmännen has long experience of working with soy issues in different ways and became an RTRS member around 2007/2008 (pers. com., Kämpe, 2015). The commitment in RTRS is based on a realization of the problems with soy production; the RTRS was seen as almost the only way to handle the problems (*ibid.*). The reason behind being involved in the small group initiating the SSD was both the company’s RTRS commitment and the wish to create a “*level playing field*” between Swedish production and imports (*ibid.*). Kämpe (*ibid.*) means that it was important to include retailers and imported goods in the dialogue; otherwise the Swedish productions’ competitiveness could have been negatively affected.

There had been some stakeholder pressure about soy before the SSD; Kämpe (*ibid.*) mentions reports issued by Swedwatch which provided the foundation for a wider commitment in the soy value chain. However, the issue has not reached consumers to any great extent since it is far back in the value chain, but there was a realization that Lantmännen had to deal with the problem. Engaging in the SSD could be seen as a proactive decision, both by Lantmännen and retail-actors that might have wanted to prevent ending up in another “*palm-oil discussion*”.

Lantmännen has a strong brand profile with the slogan “*Good food from Lantmännen*” which also motivated the importance of handling the issue, even if it wasn’t directly tied to the company’s food products (*ibid.*). Lantmännen is both a feed manufacturer and a consumer goods manufacturer. Bad publicity in one production segment could have led to negative effects on other segments as well. The SSD was also well in line with Lantmännen's sustainability strategies.

A collaborative action plan has been important to Lantmännen and an important driver for them (pers. com., Kämpe, 2015, p1). The collaborative approach has meant you could help each other and reach larger volumes of certified soy. It has also entailed more open discussions with other actors in the food chain. The dialogue has contributed to developing the understanding of other actors and has facilitated information sharing. The societal benefit from the SSD is a more sustainable food product (*ibid.*).

Enablers

Kämpe (pers. com., 2015) means that the goal with the SSD was to reach a joint declaration of intent where the “*rules*” of the dialogue were established. He is unsure what specifically led to this being accomplished. The main challenge was to establish the scope of the SSD and get the commitment in place (*ibid.*). He thinks that the Swedwatch reports and “*Matens pris*” on Swedish radio gave power to start the process. The SSD was a way to deal with the issue before it got too “*hot*”, and it was not a consumer driven issue (*ibid.*).

In regards of the industry characteristics which could have contributed to the formation, Kämpe (*ibid.*) comes to think of the Swedish consensus approach. The Swedish industry also consists of a limited amount of actors (meaning there are relatively few actors to start a dialogue with) that often have established sustainability departments (with resources and knowledge to handle sustainability issues). From a producer perspective, you have quite a strong industry association, LRF (*ibid.*).

During the process the relationships between actors have significantly evolved, according to Kämpe (*ibid.*). Apart from taking a greater responsibility for soy, the dialogue between actors in the value chain has improved. He thinks that the Chatham House Rule has enabled the process and contributed to openness and honesty. Trust has been built between actors. Other factors contributing to building confidence could have been that there was not an appointed person driving the project; it was based on everyone's voluntary commitment. The fact that the work group put in resources in the work process might mean that others felt gratitude for this which might have helped in building a helpful atmosphere (*ibid.*). The work group constellation, with somewhat different roles and competencies, might also have enabled the process (*ibid.*).

4.2.4 The consumer goods manufacturer – Arla Foods

Drivers

Arla Foods has been working with soy issues for many years, and Lundén Pettersson (pers. com., 2015) got engaged in the issue in 2009. He was involved in presenting information to the board that led to the corporate decision (taken 2010) of working towards sourcing responsibly produced soy according to the RTRS criteria. In 2012 a plan was presented on how Arla Foods was going to buy RTRS certificates for their production. In 2014 it was decided that they would buy certificates to cover 100 percent of their production globally (*ibid.*). Lundén Pettersson (*ibid.*) explains that the main reason for this was credibility. It is a company's actions and not its talk that determines if you are credible or not, he argues. It is part of Arla Foods corporate identity, with “good growth”, to look at the entire value chain.

The main driver for Arla Foods to be part of the initiation of the SSD was the realization that “we need to do something about this” (*ibid.*). The company was also a RTRS member, and as such you have a responsibility to try to expand the membership base. Lundén Pettersson means that the initial group involved in the SSD saw that they had the opportunity to do something on their own market in Sweden. It was important to increase the volume and demand for certified soy to increase the confidence from certified soy producers (*ibid.*).

There had been some stakeholder attention about the problems with soy, mainly from environmental groups, but Lundén Pettersson (*ibid.*) does not think there was an immediate crisis at the time of the initiation. He sees this more as a proactive strategy since there was a realization that some parts of the soy production were indefensible. It was also clear that the issue was not consumer driven. Action needed to be taken further up in the value chain, before the consumers, which was a driver for engaging in the SSD (*ibid.*).

Several benefits are possible from the SSD, e.g. that the members can show that they are making efforts and doing something to address the problem (*ibid.*). It has also led to a network of contacts where you have others to discuss issues with. Lundén Pettersson (*ibid.*) thinks that confidence has been built between organizations and a feeling of mutual trust. They have seen that it is possible to create discussions following the Chatham House Rule, and will continue dialogues in some issues with certain persons (*ibid.*).

Enablers

Lundén Pettersson (pers. com., 2015) thinks that an important enabler in the formation process was the ambition to create a “*level playing field*” that was reasonably fair. No one should lose from it. Another factor was the openness. It has been important with openness and common respect during the development of the dialogue, according to Lundén Pettersson (*ibid.*). They tried to place the efforts in the SSD in a larger context and create a common understanding of the issue. The work together with retail and food service actors was also crucial (*ibid.*). Lundén Pettersson means that it was very important that these actors joined the SSD; otherwise it would have increased the burden for the Swedish producers. The separate meetings between the work group and retail and food service helped in developing the methods for them to handle the issue. These things put together were the most important enablers, according to Lundén Pettersson (*ibid.*).

Enabling factors tied to the industry characteristics could according to Lundén Pettersson (*ibid.*) be that there previously had been other discussions over organizational borders in Sweden. This meant that people knew each other from before, which could have contributed in the SSD process. There had for example been collaborative work in the palm oil issue before the SSD which means actors already had some connections with each other and had started to understand the others’ preconditions (*ibid.*). Tham from WWF Sweden had worked with this issue and Lundén Pettersson thinks that she has been very important to the SSD. He means that WWF has a very high confidence as an interlocutor in Sweden, from all types of market actors. They are respected for their way of dealing with discussions. Tham’s network of contacts has also been extremely valuable for the SSD process. Lundén Pettersson (*ibid.*) also mentions the Swedish consensus culture as a possible contributing factor.

Lundén Pettersson (*ibid.*) explains that it was an active decision to have a neutral moderator at the second meeting in the SSD. They wanted to avoid actors feeling like they were forced into something or that there was a hidden agenda. It was important to be open and transparent and the Chatham House Rule was used (*ibid.*). Lundén Pettersson (*ibid.*) says that he also could contribute in setting the tone of meetings; he has worked with coaching meetings before and had such a role in the dialogue. He concludes that it is all about engaging people and making sure they have a good feeling about the collaboration; otherwise there is no driving force. Representing Arla Foods, who already had internal commitments and is a RTRS-member, meant he could contribute with extra information and show the conviction of his company in the issue.

4.2.5 The meat company – HKScan Sweden

Drivers

HKScan Sweden had not actively worked with the soy issue before the SSD (pers. com., Söderberg, 2015). Söderberg (*ibid.*) saw that it was an important issue to handle, and this personal interest was a reason for the early engagement in the SSD. She means that you are always interested in improving conditions if you are aware of that a problem exists. Söderberg (*ibid.*) also thinks that companies participating in the SSD could have seen it as a risk management strategy. If the issue received negative media attention, these companies would have a strategy to present on how they deal with the problem (*ibid.*). Further on it also has the potential to increase consumer demand for their products, but there has up until now not been any noticeable pressure from consumers regarding the issue. This could be due to that soy is too far back in the value chain to reach consumers’ consciousness (*ibid.*).

Soy is an important issue for HKScan Sweden since their brand is based on animal welfare and environmental and social responsibility. Söderberg (*ibid.*) thinks that the problems with soy are likely to be more important to consumers who purchase Swedish meat, and all Scan

labelled products are made out of Swedish produce. After joining the SSD, HKScan Sweden was the only meat company to be green ranked in WWF's survey *WWF Soy Report Card*, which Söderberg (*ibid.*) thinks sends a positive signal to external stakeholders. In the long run; the SSD can be beneficial for the entire CSR-work of HKScan Sweden, showing that efforts are being made throughout the value chain (*ibid.*). Another important factor for HKScan Sweden in engaging in the SSD was to create more equal terms between Swedish produce and imported goods, in order for Swedish producers not to lose competitiveness (*ibid.*).

Söderberg (*ibid.*) thinks that the collaborative approach in the SSD has been very helpful. The collaboration has provided good examples of companies already working with the issue. It has meant that you could work more efficiently and gain access to experts on the topic. It also opened contacts to the RTRS, who provide much support to member companies. Working together made everything much easier than trying to solve the issue on your own, according to Söderberg (*ibid.*). Specific benefits for HKScan Sweden were access to knowledge, others to discuss calculation models with and insight into the retailer perspective. The collaboration aimed to achieve the same price level between domestic and imported produce and has led to greater network connections and facilitated learning. Söderberg (*ibid.*) sees that the SSD can lead to a reduction of environmental and social impacts in South America and serve as a good example for other future initiatives.

Having a proactive strategy on soy has also been extended to apply for the entire corporate group of HKScan. Söderberg (*ibid.*) explains that she presented the SSD to the management who then decided that the entire corporation should certify all soy; in addition to that HKScan Sweden should follow the SSD commitment. They realized the need to be proactive in the issue, and not joining could pose a risk (*ibid.*).

Enablers

The main enabling factors in the SSD process, mentioned by Söderberg (pers. com., 2015), were that some of the organizations already were engaged in the issue. These were mainly WWF Sweden, Arla Foods and Lantmännen. They could share their knowledge and help others to move forward. It was also important that actors from the entire value chain joined, “*from feed to retail*” (*ibid.*). There was a risk that some producers might not have joined if retail had not decided to participate (*ibid.*). The fact that retail actors had worked with similar supply chain issues before and had a systems perspective could have helped in engaging them in the SSD (*ibid.*). It could also have helped that they initially had a limited scope to cover; it would have been difficult to cover all products at once (*ibid.*).

With regards to the industry character, Söderberg (*ibid.*) thinks that Swedish companies might have come relatively far in their CSR work and that there could be more transparency and openness than in other countries. There are also rather few actors who cover large market volumes. If the participating companies had an agenda in line with the SSD and someone responsible for environmental or CSR issues, this could have contributed to the decision of joining the SSD. The fact that many representatives work close to retail representatives in other contexts could also have enabled the SSD creation (*ibid.*).

Enabling factors tied to the organizational structure of the SSD are according to Söderberg (*ibid.*) the presence of a work group and a few spokespeople. It was also important to have a democratic atmosphere where actors could participate and share their opinions and views. She thinks that the Chatham House Rule contributed in this. The engagement in the issue from WWF Sweden was also important, as well as the fact that the **GMO** (genetically modified organism) discussion was delimited from the SSD (*ibid.*).

4.2.6 The food service company – Martin & Servera

Drivers

Martin & Servera received information about the SSD and the possibility to join through Tham, who had been invited to the company to talk about palm oil (pers. com., Norrman, 2015). Norrman (*ibid.*) explains that Martin & Servera had not worked with responsibility issues related to soy before the SSD, inter alia because their customers had not started placing demands on this. The main reason for them to engage in the SSD was that they saw this as an important sustainability issue since it affects key environmental and social conditions (*ibid.*). Norrman (*ibid.*) also points out that Martin & Servera are large suppliers to public customers, who often are frontrunners in placing sustainability demands in public procurement. Engaging in the SSD could therefore be seen as a proactive move where Martin & Servera wanted to be “*one step ahead and not one step behind*” these kind of demands, according to Norrman. They had not experienced any stakeholder pressure regarding the soy issue prior to the SSD engagement (*ibid.*).

Norrman (*ibid.*) says that Martin & Servera strongly believe in collaborations, it leads to stronger leverage in an issue when you have a joint problem realization and shared goals. It is also easier for Martin & Servera to place demands on suppliers if they know that other retail actors are doing the same thing. Benefits for the participating actors in the network of the SSD are a safety in sharing the same work procedures in an area; Norrman (*ibid.*) thinks that if you work similarly you can obtain more benefits than if actors work individually. For Martin & Servera it was an easy decision to join the SSD; they had worked with similar issues for a long time and their owners had signaled that these kinds of issues were important to work with (*ibid.*). Hopefully the SSD can affect the behavior of actors in other countries when they see how the Swedish collaboration worked (*ibid.*).

Enablers

Norrman (*ibid.*) sees the main enablers for the SSD as the work group and the separate meetings with retail/food service actors. She thinks that the people in the work group and their attitudes have been important. It was also of importance that it consisted of both industry representatives and an NGO representative. The work group helped drive the SSD forward; they always provided proposals which the rest of the group could start the discussion from (*ibid.*). The separate meetings with retail/food service during the summer of 2013 helped in creating a better understanding between retail and food service actors, and by understanding each actor’s challenges it was possible to move forward (*ibid.*).

Regarding relationships between different actors, Norrman (*ibid.*) thinks that prior relationships between retail actors could have affected the SSD in a positive way. They have previously worked together through the Swedish Food Retail organization. It was also positive that Martin & Servera and Axfood belong to the same industry group; they knew each other and had experience of collaborating with each other (*ibid.*). Martin & Servera are also company partners to WWF, which Norrman (*ibid.*) thinks contributed in a positive way since they had had contacts with each other before. She felt that the atmosphere in the SSD was a bit tentative at start, but as time went on actors started to understand each other and a more positive atmosphere developed. The main challenge in the SSD was connected to this; Norrman (*ibid.*) means that the participating organizations had very different starting points and prerequisites.

4.2.7 The retailer – Coop Sweden

Drivers

Coop Sweden had not actively worked with soy issues prior to the SSD, apart from being aware of the GM-free soy agreement in Sweden (pers. com., Bylund, 2015). They had

participated in dialogues concerning palm oil, where WWF was involved, and had experience of collaborating with other actors in the Swedish food retail industry (*ibid.*). Bylund (*ibid.*) explains that the main reason for Coop Sweden to engage in the SSD was to ensure that the company does not contribute to further deforestation due to soy production. Generally, she thinks it is important to establish problem recognition and a belief that an issue is important and that you have the possibility to make a difference (*ibid.*).

Coop Sweden did not perceive any direct stakeholder pressure with regards to more responsible soy, prior to the SSD. However, they had a sustainability strategy that identified certain areas the company had to deal with, and soy has been one of those issues for a longer time period (*ibid.*). Coop Sweden also has a main goal of being “*the good force within Swedish food retail*” and the SSD engagement is a way of showing that action has been taken (*ibid.*). It is not used in customer communication right now, but could be a future communication opportunity.

Bylund (*ibid.*) thinks that the collaborative approach of the SSD has been very important. Her views are tied to competitiveness; Coop Sweden cannot take on an extra cost if other large retail actors do not do it as well. It is important to create a level playing field and to create a feeling of everyone taking responsibility for their part, according to Bylund. After presenting the business case to the board; a decision to sign the declaration of intent in the SSD and to become RTRS members was taken in January 2014 (*ibid.*).

Enablers

Bylund (*ibid.*) sees the main enabling factors for the SSD and the declaration of intent as the will in the participating organizations and a readiness to commit, even though it entails an extra cost. She thinks it was very important that there were a few organizations that already had commitments in place, e.g. Lantmännen. It was also important that retail and food service had the possibility to meet separately and develop the conditions for a level playing field (*ibid.*). In this process, Bylund (*ibid.*) thinks that it was important that you were open with your plans and that there also was some flexibility in how the commitment could be carried out.

With regards to the characteristics of the food industry, Bylund (*ibid.*) thinks that there is a tradition in Sweden to work collaboratively in competition-neutral issues; it creates a greater leverage. In industry discussions of sustainability and quality issues she states; “*I think that we are quite used to finding consensus solutions and working collaboratively*” (*ibid.*). Within retail and food service, there is experience of collaborations and you might have worked together with other organizations regarding palm oil.

Bylund (*ibid.*) thinks that some organizations greatly have contributed in moving the dialogue forward. WWF has contributed with strong credibility and they have an appreciated pragmatic approach. The representatives in the work group have also contributed to the process. According to Bylund (*ibid.*), the work group has performed a lot of helpful work; if they had not done so much work, it would have been more difficult to enter into the SSD.

There was always an open and honest dialogue between actors during the process (*ibid.*). The atmosphere in the collaboration varied and it improved towards the end, when retail actors could present commitments from their boards. Bylund (*ibid.*) thinks that the work group was a bit loosely defined with no clear leader. She is not sure if this was a strength in the collaboration. There is a need to have someone pushing it forward. Overall, Bylund (*ibid.*) concludes that the process has been very positive and it feels like they have made a great improvement.

5 Analysis

In this chapter, the empirical findings are analyzed with the help of the conceptual framework presented in chapter 3. The analysis focuses on; the network design of the SSD and the formation process, the question of why stakeholders chose to engage in the dialogue and the perceived enabling factors for the collaboration.

5.1 The collaborative character of the Swedish soy dialogue

The following sections illustrate the network design of the SSD and what activities have taken place in forming the network.

5.1.1 The stakeholder network

Mapping the organizational arrangement of the SSD is essential for understanding the collaborative character of the network. In figure 4, an illustration of the SSD based on the empirical study is shown. In the center of the dialogue there is **the issue** of more responsible sourcing of soy, which stakeholders gather around. Putting the issue in the center, instead of a certain organization, represents a new paradigm in viewing stakeholder networks (Svendsen & Laberge, 2005; Roloff, 2008). Partnerships can be categorized according to the type of actors involved, and according to Seitanidi and Lindgreen's (2010) categories, the SSD is a non-profit and business interaction. Collaborations like the SSD, between a single NGO and multiple firms, are by Peloza and Falkenberg (2009) labelled “*shared contribution*”. In this collaborative structure; firms can share resources and the NGO can help to ensure the long-term maintenance of the collaboration (*ibid.*). Seitanidi and Lindgreen (2010) mention collaborations where governments play a role, but this has not been the case in the SSD. In the figure, the firms are categorized into *retail and food service* and varying types of *producers*, since this view was manifested in the empirical study. The first meetings of the SSD were divided between producers and retail/food service and separate meetings with only retail/food service actors were also held. The scope of the dialogue implies that producers generally have a Swedish production focus, whereas retail/food service are accountable for soy in imported goods. If Swedish producers in addition use imported produce in their operations, they are also accountable for the soy content in these products.

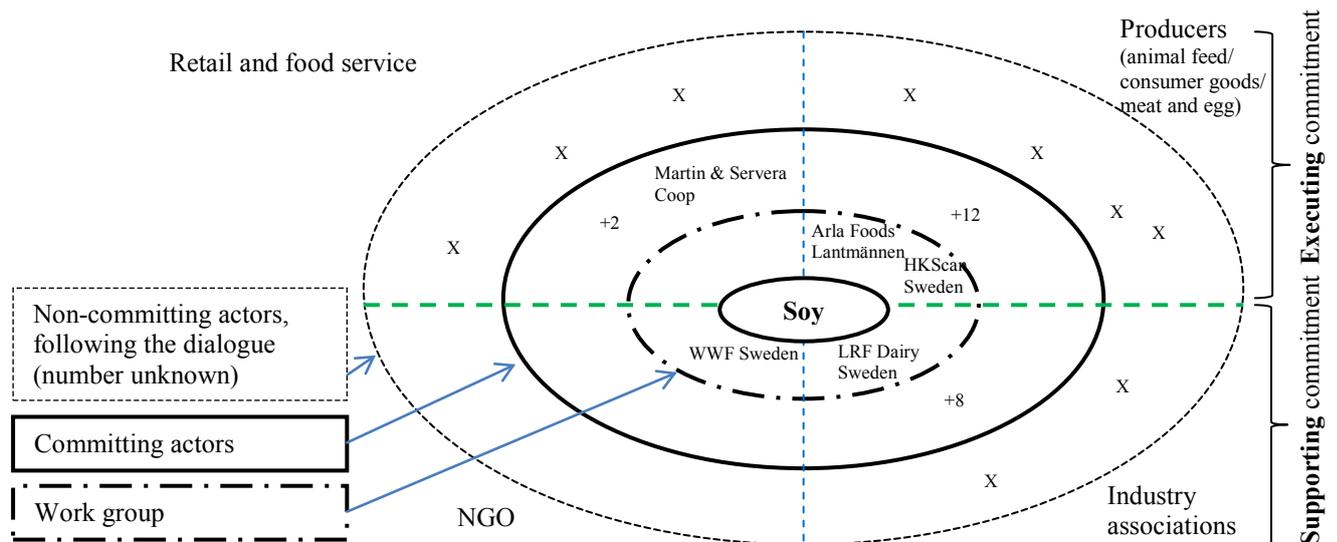


Figure 4. An illustration of the SSD network⁸ (own interpretation based on empirical data).

⁸ WWF Sweden are not included in the official list of participants in Appendix 2 and LRF Dairy Sweden are a part of “*Lantbrukarnas riksförbund*” (LRF), who are included in the list.

Respondents say that the work with the SSD was initiated by a small **work group**; this is illustrated in the second layer surrounding the issue. According to Nidumolu *et al.* (2014), having a small group of committed founders can prevent logjams in initiating a collaboration. The work group has consisted of a mix of organizations; an NGO, an industry association and actors from the Swedish production. It is lacking a representative from retail and/or food service. The work group constellation has not been fixed, and it has not been closed for more or new members to enter. The third layer includes all **actors who officially committed** to the terms in the declaration of intent, issued in April 2014. See Appendix 2 for a full list of all actors (the figure indicates the number of actors in each category). The outer layer in the figure illustrates that actors also have **participated in the dialogue at some point, but ultimately have not signed the declaration of intent**. The dialogue is not closed for actors who have not signed the declaration of intent (pers. com., Tham, 2015), they can still attend meetings and receive information if they so wish. Outside of this network, there are of course also actors in the industry who have not come into contact with the SSD.

The figure illustrates that the SSD is not a closed or clearly defined network. Actors can move between being active work group members, to being participating actors. Even though an official commitment has been stated (the declaration of intent), actors from outside the dialogue or who have followed it are still welcome to transition to the “inner layers” of the SSD. The figure also shows that some actors actively execute the commitment, by actually applying the rules in their operations and buying physically certified soy or certificates, whilst others have a supporting role (pers. com., Kämpe; Tham, 2015). The supporters (the NGO and the industry associations) do not have their own business operations with soy, but can influence other actors.

5.1.2 Phases in forming the network

Svendsen and Laberge (2005) propose that there are several steps necessary in convening stakeholder networks; *outreach*, *collective learning* and *joint action/innovation*. Table 6 provides an overview of the manifestations of different partnering stages found in the empirical study.

Table 6. Overview of activities in different phases of the network formation

Phases of activity	Empirical findings regarding activities
Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initial meetings aimed at developing a mutual understanding of the problem and defining the scope of the dialogue (both regarding goals and network actors) - Initial actors (forming a work group) contacted potential participants in their networks - Determining rules for meetings (the Chatham House Rule) - Inviting experts to share their knowledge
Collective learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Openness with knowledge from different organizations during meetings - Identifying areas needing more knowledge development and addressing this (e.g. separate meetings with retail/food service) - Opening to feedback on collective declaration of intent (e.g. circulation for comments)
Joint action/innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finalizing the declaration of intent, stating the goals and time plan for the initiative - Issuing press-releases in April 2014

The timeline (see figure 3 in section 4.1.5), largely based on meeting protocols and extracts from the interview data, suggests that the SSD has gone through activities matching the phases of network convenor suggested by Svendsen and Laberge (2005) (see examples in table 6). During the outreach phase, the focus was on creating a mutual understanding of the problem and defining rules and scope of the dialogue (pers. com., Lundén Pettersson, 2015), largely corresponding to activities proposed by Svendsen and Laberge (2005). Collective learning for instance means knowledge development about the issue and clarifying common grounds and differences in perspectives and needs (Svendsen & Laberge, 2005). The SSD

meetings meant knowledge was shared among participants, and extra meetings (with retail and food service) were held when the need was identified (pers. com., Bylund; Kämpe; Lundén Pettersson; Norrman; Tham, 2015). In the joint action or innovation phase; clear goals are set up and an action plan can be developed (Svendsen & Laberge, 2005). The SSD resulted in a declaration of intent issued in April 2014, which stated the goals and the time plan for implementation. This declaration of intent was delayed (pers. com., Tham, 2015), which could be attributed to the consensus approach and collective learning process. Glasbergen (2011) points out that building collaborative partnerships is a continuous process, with many feedback loops, and this corresponds to the SSD process. He also highlights the importance of building trust and creating a collaborative advantage, both which might have evolved out of the above mentioned activities. The last step mentioned by Glasbergen (2011), constituting a rule system with contracts and possible sanctions, is probably the point least developed in the SSD. It is each participating organizations responsibility to account for their progress in their sustainability reports (according to the declaration of intent). This could have the disadvantage of possible future non-compliance, but also the benefit of enhancing a trusting atmosphere.

5.2 Drivers for engaging in the Swedish soy dialogue

Table 7 presents the author’s summary of the potential drivers mentioned by respondents, accounted for in section 4.2. The drivers in bold text were especially emphasized as contributing to the actor’s own engagement in the SSD.

Table 7. *Synthesis of empirical findings of drivers*

Org.	Drivers
WWF Sweden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Soy production great environmental threat, and WWF work to protect nature - Important to include actors affected by a problem in finding a solution; WWF have a dialogue orientation and collaborative approach with companies (e.g. global work with RTRS) - WWF play an important role of safeguarding the level of ambition in collaborative initiatives - Most resource effective to target market side and work collaboratively - Problem needs collaborative solution
LRF Dairy Sweden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Thought the SSD was a smart idea and a good continuation of being RTRS-members - Involved in RTRS due to recognition of problems with soy and an aspiration of having as sustainably produced soy as possible in Sweden, meanwhile it is used - External pressure and attention made companies more susceptible to initiatives like the SSD - Important to include retail and food service in the collaboration in order not to reduce competitiveness of Swedish producers – level playing field possible through collaboration with actors across value chain
Lantmännen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RTRS-members (due to realization of the problems with soy production), a driver for initiating the SSD - Wish to create a level playing field between Swedish production and imported goods: important to include retailers in the collaboration - Proactive decision to deal with the problem, it was not consumer driven - Some stakeholder pressure could have provided the foundation for a wider commitment in the value chain - Strong brand profile made it extra important to handle the issue - The SSD was well in line with Lantmännen’s internal sustainability strategies - Wanted a collaborative action plan, enables reaching larger volumes and other benefits
Arla Foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Realization that something had to be done since some parts of the soy production were indefensible, part of a proactive strategy - Not a consumer driven issue, action was needed further up in the supply chain - Internal commitments for working towards responsible soy and RTRS-members: way to show credibility and in line with the corporate identity of “good growth” - Responsibility to expand membership base as RTRS-members, and increasing demand for certified soy would increase the confidence from certified soy producers
HKScan Sweden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Saw the importance of handling the issue, which led to an early engagement in the SSD - Risk management strategy for participating organizations, possibly long-term increased consumer demand - Need to be proactive, no noticeable consumer pressure - Brand based on animal welfare and environmental/social responsibility - The collaborative approach has been very helpful and facilitated the work on finding solutions - Important to create equal terms between Swedish produce and imported goods
Martin & Servera	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Important sustainability issue affecting important environmental and social conditions - Proactive decision: some customers might place demands on responsible soy in the future - Strong belief in the benefits of collaborations, can lead to greater benefits than individual work - Long experience of working with similar issues - Owners signaling these kinds of issues are important to work with
Coop Sweden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that the company does not contribute to more deforestation due to soy production - Internal sustainability strategy identifying soy as an issue important to deal with - Showing action in line with the company goal of “<i>being the good force within Swedish food retail</i>” - Collaborative approach important in not losing competitiveness and creating a level playing field

In the following sections (5.2.1-5.2.5), a continued analysis of these empirical findings is presented, grouped according to the themes derived from the literature review, supplemented with an empirical addition of “*level playing field*”.

5.2.1 Problem nature

Previous research has shown that the nature of the problem can be a driver for collaboration in itself, since many wicked problems cannot be solved adequately by individual organizations

(Peloza & Falkenberg, 2009; Vurro *et al.*, 2010; Bitzer & Glasbergen, 2015). All respondents mention (in different wordings) that the problem itself motivated their decision to join or initiate the SSD, and it is emphasized as a main driver. It seems that many respondents had identified that collective action was needed and desirable (pers. com., Tham; Norrman; Kämpe, 2015). Naturally, WWF as an NGO working with environmental issues, have a unique insight into the problem and seem to have been strong promoters of the collaborative initiative of the SSD (pers. com., Swensson; Tham, 2015). It also seems that many organizations had realized that this was an important issue for market actors to handle, due to the fact that it was not a consumer driven issue (pers. com., Kämpe; Lundén Pettersson; Söderberg, 2015). Some organizations lacked concrete action plans for soy before the SSD (pers. com., Norrman; Bylund, 2015), and the SSD might have been seen as a way to engage in an issue too complex to solve individually (as suggested by Turcotte and Pasquero, 2001; Peloza and Falkenberg, 2009).

5.2.2 External influence

Prior to the SSD initiative, there had been some media attention concerning soy and the Swedish industry's role. Some respondents think that this could have affected the readiness for companies to enter into the SSD, even though they do not see it as a main driver (pers. com., Kämpe; Swensson, 2015). Tham (pers. com., 2015) says that there had been increased attention about the problem and these external signals might have promoted engagement, as Stadtler (2011) also suggests. Interesting to note is that several respondents mention that there had not been much pressure in the issue from customer groups and consumers. Entering into the SSD was instead described as a proactive decision (pers. com., Kämpe; Lundén Pettersson; Söderberg; Norrman, 2015). Interest groups are described as stakeholders possibly influencing a company (Roberts, 2003), and WWF could be seen as such an actor that has been involved in promoting the creation of the SSD. Their influence has not been described as demanding or pressuring, but instead constructive promoters who are viewed as trusted collaboration partners (pers. com., Lundén Pettersson; Swensson, 2015). Wassmer *et al.* (2014) points out that external influence also can stem from environmental conditions such as network position and competitive dynamics. The *level playing field* condition mentioned by respondents (pers. com., Bylund; Kämpe; Swensson, 2015) could be seen as tied to these factors and is elaborated on in section 5.2.5.

5.2.3 Intrinsic motivation

Arla Foods, Lantmännen and LRF Dairy Sweden (previously the Swedish Dairy Association) were all members in the RTRS prior to the SSD (pers. com., Lundén Pettersson; Kämpe; Swensson, 2015) and this seems to be an underlying motivation for initiating the SSD. Many respondents also mention internal values and strategies which correlated to those of the SSD (pers. com., Bylund; Norrman; Lundén Pettersson; Söderberg; Swensson; Kämpe, 2015). Stadtler (2011) means that engaging in a collaborative initiative can be a way to show commitment to these internal operating statutes. The representatives of organizations joining later on mention internal values and visions which contributed to the engagement in the SSD, such as "*being the good force within Swedish food retail*" (pers. com., Bylund, 2015), having owners prioritizing commitment in these type of issues (pers. com., Norrman, 2015) and having a brand strongly based on added value (such as animal welfare) (pers. com., Söderberg, 2015). Kämpe (pers. com., 2015) and Lundén Pettersson (pers. com., 2015) both stress that the SSD coincided with internal commitments and strategies in their organizations. The personal commitment of managers can also play an important role when entering a collaboration (Bendell, 2003). This personal commitment is both mentioned and manifested in the empirical study. Söderberg (pers. com., 2015) and Swensson (pers. com., 2015) both mention that they saw the importance of working with the issue and introduced this to their

organizations. The work group members have also voluntarily put in working hours and effort into the SSD, without receiving compensation (pers. com., Swensson; Tham, 2015).

5.2.4 Potential benefits

The potential benefits respondents see with the SSD collaboration are both environmental, social and economic. The respondents think that the SSD can contribute in alleviating the negative social and environmental effects of soy production. They also mention economic benefits in terms of risk reduction, improved brand or image and access to collaborative partners. These types of benefits are also mentioned in earlier studies (Turcotte & Pasquero, 2001; Peloza & Falkenberg, 2009; Vurro *et al.*, 2010; Stadtler, 2011; Wassmer *et al.*, 2014). When engaging larger parts of the organization, it is also mentioned that the business case of participating needed to be made explicit (pers. com., Bylund, 2015). Although possible economic advantages are mentioned, respondents seem to think that these are in the long-term, rather than short-term (pers. com., Norrman; Söderberg, 2015). Roberts (2003) states that ethical sourcing initiatives are more likely to be implemented if there are clear benefits from action, or risks from inaction, which makes these rather uncertain benefits (and risks) interesting to note. These long-term unclear benefits could be connected to the lack of consumer drive in the issue.

5.2.5 Level playing field

A recurring theme among the interviewed participants is the term *level playing field*. To create a collaboration promoting equal terms among different value chain actors seems to have been an important driving force. Essentially this was aimed at creating equal terms between Swedish production and imported goods (pers. com., Kämpe; Swensson; Söderberg, 2015). The Swedish producers therefor saw the importance of including organizations distributing imported goods in Sweden, such as retailers and food service. As previously mentioned, Swedish producers largely lived up to the criteria in the SSD due to industry policies and usage of certified soy. Retail and food service actors also mention the term *level playing field*, with somewhat different emphasis. It seems that the competitive dynamics, as mentioned by Wassmer *et al.* (2014), could have played a role in the commitment. Bylund (pers. com., 2015) mentions that the collaborative approach was important in not losing competitiveness and incurring extra costs, compared to ones competitors. That the three largest retail chains in Sweden all committed and worked out procedures together, meant that they incurred equal costs.

5.3 Enabling factors for the collaboration

Table 8 presents the author’s summary of the possible enablers, which were mentioned by respondents during the interviews.

Table 8. Synthesis of empirical findings of possible enablers

Org.	Enablers	
WWF Sweden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased external attention about problem (e.g. media/reports) - Consensus approach - Creation of common ground/understanding - Business maturity/realization - WWF as initiators/drivers - SSD work group as dialogue promoters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Actors with commitments in place serving as inspiration/good examples - Framing the problem and “parking” certain aspects - Level playing field (fairness) - Could build upon earlier agreement on non-GM feed - Global trend with increased transparency and access to information
LRF Dairy Sweden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Problem easy to grasp and concrete - WWF; their engagement from start and good reputation - Small group committed to the issue from start - The Chatham House Rule contributed to a more open discussion - Industry knowledge by SSD representatives making contact with retail actors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Swedish food industry has relatively few actors who often meet. There are many agricultural cooperatives, leading to pre-existing relationships. - Swedish culture: project/group/consensus oriented - The non-hierarchical structure of the SSD made it more fun
Lantmännen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agreeing on rules/scope - External attention gave power to start the process - Swedish consensus approach - Limited amount of industry actors, often with sustainability departments - Strong industry association for producers (LRF) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Openness, honesty and trust in the dialogue (helped by the Chatham House Rule, no appointed leader, based on voluntary commitment) - Work group; their efforts could have contributed to a helpful atmosphere. Constellation of different roles/competencies.
Arla Foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Level playing field (fairness) - Open atmosphere (from e.g. neutral moderator, the Chatham House Rule, setting positive discussion tone) - Create common understanding and provide a context - Extra work/meetings with retail/food service to establish possible working procedures - Swedish consensus culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Previous discussion over organizational borders in the industry, e.g. about palm oil - WWF: High confidence as interlocutors and large network of contacts. - Experienced actors with commitments in place (could provide information and recommend to park the GM-issue)
HKScan Sweden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some actors already engaged in the issue (e.g. WWF, Arla Foods, Lantmännen); could share knowledge and drive others forward - Important that actors from the entire chain joined - Limited initial scope for retail actors to cover - Swedish companies have come relatively far in CSR work. More openness/transparency than in other countries. - Few industry actors with large market volumes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal agendas of actors in line with the SSD and someone in charge of CSR-issues - Having a work group and a few spokespeople - Democratic atmosphere (helped by the Chatham House Rule) - WWF: important with their engagement in the issue - Delimiting the SSD from a GMO-discussion - Retail actors had previous experience of working with similar issues
Martin & Servera	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work group; constellation, attitudes and mix of NGO/industry - Separate meeting with retail/food service (promoting understanding) - Prior relationships between retail actors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Martin & Servera company partners to WWF - had been in contact before - Development of a positive atmosphere and common understanding
Coop Sweden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organizational will to participate and commit - Some actors that already had commitments in place (e.g. Lantmännen) - Separate meetings with retail/food service (developed conditions for level playing field) - Tradition in Sweden to work collaboratively and find consensus solutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WWF contributed with strong credibility and pragmatic approach - Work group: performed work needed for some organizations to be able to join - Open and honest dialogue

In the following sections (5.3.1-5.3.4), a continued analysis of these empirical findings is presented, grouped according to the categories derived from the literature review.

5.3.1 Institutional conditions in the Swedish food industry

The fact that the organizations in the SSD network all come from a similar industry or culture is a factor that can enable collaboration (Peloza & Falkenberg, 2009). When describing their view of the Swedish food industry, respondents conclude that it consists of a limited amount of actors who often meet (pers. com., Kämpe; Swensson; Söderberg, 2015). This could indicate high integration, mentioned as an enabling factor by Schouten and Glasbergen (2012). Many respondents also find that consensus approaches are common in the Swedish context and that there is a tradition of working collaboratively (pers. com., Bylund; Kämpe; Lundén Pettersson; Swensson, 2015). Tham (pers. com., 2015) thinks that there is a global trend with increased transparency and the access to information has increased. There had been external attention about the soy problem prior to the SSD, which Kämpe (pers. com., 2015) thinks gave power to start the process. In the Swedish context, there already existed industry agreements on non-GM feed, which Tham (pers. com., 2015) thinks meant that they had something to build upon when initiating the SSD. This agreement also meant that the entry barrier for some actors was low, since they did not have to pay an extra cost by joining the SSD (pers. com., Swensson; Tham, 2015).

5.3.2 Stakeholder characteristics

Certain stakeholders in the SSD are mentioned as having acted as enablers for the collaboration to take place. Respondents see WWF Sweden as having had a very important role as promoters of the dialogue (pers. com., Bylund; Lundén Pettersson; Söderberg; Swensson; Tham, 2015). They are appreciated and credible as interlocutors, according to Bylund (pers. com., 2015) and Lundén Pettersson (pers. com., 2015). The perception of other actors in a positive manner can enable collaboration (Van Huijstee & Glasbergen, 2010). Another important stakeholder characteristic, mentioned as enabling the SSD process, was the commitment in RTRS by several of the initiators (pers. com., Bylund; Lundén Pettersson; Söderberg; Tham, 2015). These actors could serve as inspiration and role models and also contribute with information to the SSD. The richness of a collaboration can also be influenced by the alignment between stakeholders internal strategies and values and the ones of the collaboration (Austin, 2000). The goal of the SSD, promoting more responsible sourcing of soy, seems to have coincided with several organizations' own values and strategies. The people participating in a collaboration can greatly influence the process (Cohen, 2003), and Lundén Pettersson (pers. com., 2015) also highlights the importance of engaging the representatives participating in the dialogue. Several respondents mention a strong collaborative atmosphere between individual members of the work group, and Tham (pers. com., 2015) thinks that it was very important that some actors had the personal commitment to form the work group in the SSD. Cohen (2003) concludes that the people involved will influence the chances of success more than any other aspect.

5.3.3 Relationships between stakeholders

Preexisting relationships between stakeholders, and experience of collaborating, can be an enabling factors for collaborations (Wassmer *et al.*, 2014). Respondents mention several prior experiences of collaborating with other participants in the SSD. Industry discussions on palm oil had taken place before the SSD (pers. com., Bylund; Lundén Pettersson, 2015), and WWF played an important part in this. Previous relationships between retail actors are especially mentioned as a possible enabler (pers. com., Norrman; Söderberg, 2015). An enabling factor according to Peloza and Falkenberg (2009) can be strong industry associations who contribute in building social networks. Both the Federation of Swedish Farmers (LRF) and the Swedish Food Retail organization are seen as contributing to this connectivity in the industry (pers. com., Bylund; Kämpe; Swensson, 2015). Having an actor who serves as a mediator of relationships can also contribute in building collaborations (Cohen, 2003; Peloza &

Falkenberg, 2009). Many respondents identify WWF Sweden, the NGO stakeholder, as taking on this role in a successful manner.

5.3.4 Network characteristics

Previous literature suggests several characteristics tied to the network that can be possible enablers of network collaboration (see table 4). The enablers which have surfaced in the empirical study are mainly tied to *the organizational design and structure of the network, a shared understanding of the networks goals, vision and meanings, joint learning and sharing of information and perceived positive attributes.*

Regarding the organizational design, the work group is mentioned as the core of the organizational structure by all respondents. The groups work with driving on the collaborative process and performing different activities is emphasized as an important enabler (pers. com., Bylund; Kämpe; Norrman; Söderberg; Swensson; Tham, 2015). Bylund (pers. com., 2015) means that the work they performed was necessary for some organizations to be able to join the dialogue. Norrman (pers. com., 2015) also thinks that the work group constellation, with a mix of different stakeholders, and the attitudes of the people involved promoted the dialogue. Nidumolu *et al.* (2014) suggest that it is helpful to start a collaboration with a small group of engaged organizations, and the work group of the SSD fits such a description. Swensson (pers. com., 2015) thinks that the work group members were committed to the issue from start. Another enabler tied to the organizational design, is the ambition to create a level playing field in the collaboration (Peloza & Falkenberg, 2009). Several work group members also say that creating such a level playing field also was a driver for the SSD (see section 5.2.5). In order to be able to create this fairness in the industry, it was important that actors from the entire chain joined (pers. com., Söderberg, 2015). Respondents' views differ slightly on how the quite informal structure of the SSD enabled or slowed down the process. Swensson (pers. com., 2015) thinks that the non-hierarchical structure made the work more fun and that the lack of predetermination in how the collaboration should be carried out was an enabler. Kämpe (pers. com., 2015) sees that the lack of a formally appointed leader might have helped to form a positive atmosphere. Bylund (pers. com., 2015) perceived the work group as loosely defined with no clear leader, and means this could have reduced the drive in the dialogue. Swensson (pers. com., 2015) also sees that the informal structure might have reduced the speed of the dialogue. Bendell (2003) points to that flexibility in agreements, and developments over time, can be a possible enabler which might indicate that the lack of predefined structure could have helped in some ways.

This flexibility is also manifested in the knowledge development that took place during the dialogue. The extra meetings between the work group and retail/food service to clarify their way forward is clearly identified as enabling the SSD (pers. com., Bylund; Lundén Pettersson; Norrman, 2015). Actors realized that the complexity in determining viable working procedures among these actors required extra meetings (pers. com., Bylund; Kämpe; Lundén Pettersson; Norrman; Tham, 2015). Sharing of information and continual learning are factors which can strengthen a collaboration (Austin, 2000) and the SSD seems to have had the function of a forum for interaction and deliberation, as mentioned by Bäckstrand (2006) and Turcotte and Pasquero (2001).

Several enablers connected with the goals and principles of the SSD have been mentioned by respondents. The process has involved contextualizing the problem and determining the scope of the dialogue. Swensson (pers. com., 2015) perceives that the problem in focus was quite easy to grasp and concrete, and Tham (pers. com., 2015) and Lundén Pettersson (pers. com., 2015) say that they intentionally tried to create a common understanding among participants. It was also crucial to determine what the dialogue should cover, and delimiting the

discussions from the GMO-issue was an important enabler (pers. com., Lundén Pettersson; Söderberg; Tham, 2015). Svendsen and Laberge (2005) also emphasize the importance of framing the key issue at hand.

How participants perceive attributes of the collaboration can be an important enabler and this can also be discerned as an important factor in the SSD. Respondents say that they often have perceived the atmosphere as positive, open, honest and democratic (pers. com., Bylund; Norrman; Swensson; Söderberg; Kämpe; Lundén Pettersson, 2015). A cooperative and friendly atmosphere is identified as promoting collaboration (Van Huijstee & Glasbergen, 2010). Lundén Pettersson (pers. com., 2015) mentions several practices which could have contributed to this atmosphere, such as the Chatham House Rule, employing a neutral moderator, and attempts to create a positive discussion tone during meetings. Several respondents see that there has been a progression towards a more positive atmosphere, as time went by (pers. com., Bylund; Norrman, 2015). This could be explained by the occurrence of several activities promoting trust, such as finding ways of working together and information sharing (as suggested by Svendsen and Laberge, 2005). Norrman (pers. com., 2015) mentions that actors developed a better understanding of one another's challenges as time progressed.

6 Discussion

In this chapter, the results in the analysis are further discussed and compared with results from previous research. The structure follows the research questions of the study. The results are contextualized with other responsible sourcing measures taken in the agrifood industry, related to soy or the Swedish food industry (see the empirical background in Appendix 4).

6.1 Addressing responsible sourcing collaboratively

Collaborations addressing wicked problems have increased in magnitude over the past decades, and their potential is stressed by many (Blowfield & Murray, 2008; Stadler, 2011; Nidumolu *et al.*, 2014). Voluntary initiatives aimed at promoting responsible sourcing have surfaced in many different forms in the global food system (Barrientos & Dolan, 2006), and country initiatives for more responsible soy have occurred in both producer and consumer countries (Wilkinson, 2011). Having conducted this study on the national collaborative initiative of the SSD, several interesting insights on its collaborative character and activities leading to a commitment for more responsible soy have surfaced.

When it comes to the types of stakeholders involved, a pre-understanding of the SSD was that it includes actors ranging from the feed industry to retail shelves in Sweden. The soy value chain is said to have many actors at the end of the chain, and consumer facing companies often have a less dominant position than the small number of trading companies who import soy (Schouten & Glasbergen, 2012). Different types of collaborations place different types of demands on participants and they can involve different types of actors and span over different levels of society (Blowfield & Murray, 2008). The empirical study has shown that the SSD both consists of companies, taking on an executing role in their business operations, and organizations supporting the commitment (e.g. WWF Sweden and industry associations). Even though the end of the soy value chain is characterized as dispersed (Schouten & Glasbergen, 2012), the Swedish food industry is generally described as concentrated (Lindow, 2012). Many of the larger actors in the industry (see table 9) are included in the SSD. It was mentioned as important to include retailers and food service in the SSD, since they import many products containing soy (directly or indirectly). Producers could therefore be seen as mainly accountable for Swedish produce, and retail/food service as accountable for imported produce. In the initial steps of framing the issue, identifying all members of the system at hand is important (Svendsen & Laberge, 2005).

Zorzini *et al.* (2015) mean that responsible sourcing initiatives can target parts or all aspects of the TBL-framework. By demanding soy with third party certification according to existing certification schemes for responsible soy, demands on environmental and social standards are made by the committing actors in the SSD. The antecedent work with these standards (see Appendix 4), where WWF also have played an active role as promoters, shows how different aspects of more responsible soy can be handled in different forums. The issue is shaped by the complex value chain conditions (Schouten & Glasbergen, 2012), and both production and market conditions are required to be addressed. Whilst the standards focus on production conditions, the SSD focuses on the market conditions for a wider adoption of sourcing responsible soy, which ultimately can lead to improved environmental and social conditions. The economic aspect of the TBL-framework could be seen as addressed since the SSD provides guidance on who shall pay the price for the responsible soy, by setting up a scope aimed at promoting fairness between different stakeholder groups in Sweden. The RTRS-process, making a more responsible soy product available on the market through its certification scheme, has also provided the foundation for the national initiative in the Netherlands (van Gelder *et al.*, 2014). The Dutch national initiative's underlying purpose of

increasing market demand for responsible soy is overarching also in the Swedish initiative. This implies an aspiration for a large uptake which could explain why the SSD is not a closed network and that more value chain actors are welcome, and also that actors are welcome to meetings to learn more about the issue even though they do not commit to the official declaration of intent. The presence of WWF as promoters in a diverse range of initiatives (e.g. national initiatives in Sweden, the Netherlands and Switzerland, the RTRS and ProTerra) manifests their standpoint of the need for collaborating with businesses in transforming markets (www, WWF, 3, 2015). In handling the complex issue of responsible soy from a Swedish perspective, these preceding initiatives could have been helpful and inspirational.

The empirical study has presented an overview of the activities that took place in the formation process of the SSD. The structure of the activities were well in line with the categories presented by Svendsen and Laberge (2005), including phases of *outreach*, *collective learning* and *joint action/innovation*. The activities are illustrated as sequential phases, but there has also been some overlap and revisiting between phases. An interesting finding was the lack of pre-determination in how the SSD should be played out and formed. An inherent feature with collaborative networks is said to be that once created, they have a life of their own and are not easily controlled (Svendsen & Laberge, 2005). The collective learning processes could therefore also have helped form the network design to a certain extent, when the dynamics between its parts was made more evident.

The study also identified some differences compared to previous research, where Glasbergen's (2011) phase of *constituting a rule system* presents an area of divergence. There is a formalized declaration of intent in the SSD, but direct sanctions for non-compliance are not mentioned. This emphasizes the voluntary nature of the SSD, often characterizing CSR activities (Crane *et al.*, 2008). Different voluntary initiatives have occurred before in the Swedish food industry, and many respondents discussed the perceived consensus culture, which might indicate that sanctions are not as suited in this setting. That there are many interrelated factors both affecting organizations' drive to participate and enabling the collaboration was evident in the study of the SSD, and this is discussed further in the following sections.

6.2 Drivers for collaborative engagement

Corporate responsibility that reaches beyond the boundaries of a single company, into its supplier networks, has been stressed as an imperative for today's companies (Waddock *et al.*, 2002; Rainey, 2010; Scherer & Palazzo, 2011), and the SSD is an example of this phenomenon. Soy is a global commodity associated with many sustainability challenges and voluntary efforts by firms have the potential to help in filling regulatory gaps in global governance (Scherer & Palazzo, 2011). But what are the drivers for voluntarily engaging in collaborative initiatives, aimed at responsible sourcing? Wassmer *et al.* (2014) point out that little is still known about what influences organizations to engage in collaborations addressing wicked problems, adding to the relevance of the empirical findings of this study regarding drivers. Several themes found in previous research (*problem nature*, *external influence*, *intrinsic motivation* and *potential benefits*) gave useful guidance in analyzing the drivers mentioned by respondents, and manifestations tied to all themes were found. The study also provided an empirical addition of the theme *level playing field*.

The study has shown that several drivers for engaging in the SSD coexisted among organizations, overarched by a problem realization and an insight into that collective action was needed. The fact that collective action was seen as needed is both attributed to the problem nature (in the form of a complex socio-ecological challenge) and potential benefits stemming from collaboration; such as the level playing field condition, which the SSD aimed

to achieve. Glasbergen (2011) mentions that a challenge in building partnerships is establishing collaborative advantage and making the mutual benefit of collaboration explicit – and the SSD had the goal to address both the core issue of responsible soy and the practical conditions for fairness in how market actors could find a practical solution. Many respondents mention that responsible soy was not a consumer driven issue, and that something had to be done by market actors – it was a proactive decision to engage in the SSD. In the long term, it could also entail risk reduction, an improved corporate image and help build relationships with industry actors. This long-term perspective, going beyond pure financial performance and taking broader influences into account, follows the logic proposed by Porter and Kramer (2011) regarding shared value.

Supporting drivers were also organizations' internal commitments and strategies. All actors meant that the SSD corresponded to their company's values and strategies, and the initiating actors were already RTRS-members. Another possible supporting factor, motivating a broader set of organizations to engage in the SSD, was the external attention the soy issue had received prior to the SSD. External stakeholder pressure is a driver mentioned by many authors (Waddock *et al.*, 2002; Roberts, 2003; Vurro *et al.*, 2010; Stadtler, 2011), and it can stem from different types of stakeholder groups. Other empirical examples (see Appendix 4) have shown how stakeholder pressure can motivate organizations to enter into collaborations, such as NGO influence in the Netherlands, leading to the national commitment of the IDS (van Gelder *et al.*, 2014; WWF, 2014b). Consumer pressure in the palm oil issue (www, Dagens Nyheter, 1, 2015) could also have influenced collaborative initiatives for responsible palm oil in the Swedish food industry. Even though there had been some attention about the problems with soy in Swedish media, the consciousness about the problem among consumers was seen as low according to the respondents, partly due to the embeddedness of soy which is mentioned in many reports (WWF, 2014a). An interesting aspect of the SSD is therefore its proactive nature, and lack of acute stakeholder pressure. This is also a factor which could have affected the conditions for the formation process.

Different types of value chain actors were included in this study; the perspectives can be divided into the NGO, industry associations, varying types of producers and retail/food service. A reflection regarding similarities and differences regarding drivers shows that there foremost are similarities among the organizations included in the study, as apparent from the previous discussion and empirical results. WWF Sweden has especially clear drivers in the problem nature and intrinsic motivation, due to their role as an independent NGO. These drivers were also evident among initiating actors with a prior RTRS-engagement. An underlying difference in preconditions for actors is what kind of production they are to take responsibility for, according to the SSD-scope. The perspectives differ between Swedish producers/industry associations (who account mostly for Swedish production) and Swedish retail/food service (who account for imported produce). An emphasized driver, awarded an own theme in the analysis was the *level playing field*, which addressed this divide. This driver was mentioned by all respondents, even though they had somewhat different perspectives, and fairness in setting up the terms for the SSD seems to have been both a driver and an enabler. In the context of the Swedish food industry, problems with low profitability in sectors close to the agricultural production are highly topical (Lindow, 2012), and earlier industry policies on non-GM soy (which induce a price premium) have been criticized by producers as hindering the Swedish industry's competitiveness relative imported produce (www, Sveriges Radio, 2, 2013). Respondents mentioned that it was important to ensure that the SSD did not lead to a reduction of Swedish producers' competitiveness, and this further motivated the inclusion of a broad spectrum of value chain actors, also taking imported produce into account.

6.3 Enablers in the formation process

Previous studies showed that several potential enabling factors for collaborations addressing wicked problems exist, and these were categorized into four categories which guided the empirical study (see table 4 for an overview). Enabling factors related to all four categories were found, and several interesting insights regarding this specific context surfaced. It is interesting to note that there is the occurrence of enablers both associated with given preconditions, and associated with designed conditions.

The network formation took place in a unique context with unique participants, which some enablers can be tied to. This is related to the theme institutional conditions, and how institutional dynamics influence collaborative processes is to date not fully explored (Basu & Palazzo, 2008; Vurro *et al.*, 2010), adding to the relevance of these findings. A few insights into the institutional conditions in the Swedish food industry are briefly mentioned in Appendix 4, giving a background to the study of the SSD. The Swedish food industry is described as concentrated in relation to other European markets (Lindow, 2012), and this condition is also mentioned by respondents. The limited amount of market actors could have enabled the formation of the collaboration, as suggested by (Schouten & Glasbergen, 2012). An interesting finding, adding to the picture of the industry, is what is described as a Swedish consensus culture. These conditions might differ from the Dutch or Swiss market conditions, where national initiatives also have occurred. There had also been voluntary regulatory conditions which could have enabled the SSD (e.g. the non-GM feed agreement) and media attention, which was specifically tied to the Swedish market.

An enabler both tied to institutional conditions and stakeholder characteristics is the presence of lead firms. From a value chain perspective, Schouten and Glasbergen (2012) see lead firms as those who have the possibility to set the operating standards in the chain. Firms initiating the SSD are some of the largest on the Swedish market (Lindow, 2012) and have high profile brands. Criticism had also been given to some of these actors in the media attention preceding the SSD (Bartholdson *et al.*, 2010). When looking at the soy value chain (see figure 7), it is interesting to note that the initiators did not come from the industry sectors closest to consumers, who often are more committed to different standards due to their vulnerability to reputational damage (Roberts, 2003; Schouten & Glasbergen, 2012). Factors which might have influenced this is the embeddedness of soy (Schouten & Glasbergen, 2012) and the lack of consumer pressure. This can be contrasted to the issues with palm oil, which eight out of ten Swedish consumers claim they are aware of, and often avoid purchasing products containing it (www, Dagens Nyheter, 1, 2015).

With regards to the initiating stakeholders, there is also reason to see the RTRS-process as an enabling factor for several reasons, as mentioned in the analysis. WWF were the initiators of the RTRS (Wilkinson, 2011), and have similarly been an important promotor of the collaboration in the SSD. The RTRS also enabled the creation of lead firms from the aspect engagement in the soy issue – and these were mentioned as important for setting an example for others in the SSD. The Dutch national initiative (IDS) on the other hand preceded and was developed in parallel with the RTRS, and might have needed strong external NGO pressure (WWF, 2014a) in another manner than the SSD.

It is important to remember that stakeholders can be seen as both the participating organizations, and their representatives. Several manifestations of personal commitment to responsible soy and the SSD have been seen in this study, and this enabler (Cohen, 2003) should not be underestimated. However, this could also be seen as a potential future challenge; if representatives change over time, the engagement in the SSD could be affected. According to Peloza and Falkenberg (2009), the NGO stakeholder in a collaboration can have

the function of ensuring its long-term maintenance – and it will be interesting to see if this will be the case in the SSD. The respondents seem to have a very positive impression of WWF’s approach, who openly aims to have a collaborative approach with businesses (www, WWF, 3, 2015). Glasbergen (2011) concludes that not all NGO’s might be able to create collaborative advantages in partnerships, and combining campaigning and partnering can be a barrier for securing long-term collaborative advantage. WWF Netherlands were for example seen as much more successful as collaboration partners than Greenpeace, in a case with partnerships for sustainable energy, since WWF “*better spoke the language of business and operated in a business-like style*” (Glasbergen, 2011, p 6).

Previous industry discussions concerning palm oil and active industry associations were seen as enablers in the study, in support with findings by Wassmer *et al.* (2014) and Pelozo and Falkenberg (2009). An interesting reflection about the palm oil discussions, is that they took place in the Swedish Food Federation and the Swedish Food Retail organization respectively (www, Livsmedelsföretagen, 1, 2014; www, Dagens Nyheter, 1, 2015). The SSD has instead gathered actors from both the production side and retail side to jointly establish a commitment including as many market actors as possible. It is possible that this could be explained to some extent by the different problem characteristics with palm oil and soy.

There also existed enablers more or less deliberately designed, foremost tied to the network itself. Even though the structure of the collaboration has been described as informal and evolving as the collaboration progressed, some design choices are emphasized as enablers. Having a work group driving the SSD, designing (and delimiting) the goals to promote a level playing field, providing information about the issue and allowing knowledge development – are all factors which respondents saw as important. These factors all lay the foundation for how participants perceive the collaboration and help build more intangible attributes, such as a trusting atmosphere. Trust is mentioned as a key concept in previous studies (Bendell, 2003; Cohen, 2003; Svendsen & Laberge, 2005; Pelozo & Falkenberg, 2009; Glasbergen, 2011; Schouten & Glasbergen, 2012; Nidumolu *et al.*, 2014), and this study supports this finding and shows several practices which can be employed to promote it. An awareness of the characteristics of the stakeholders, relationships and industry is yet warranted since these give preconditions important to take into account.

Reflecting upon what previous research has found being enabling factors which are not seen in the SSD case is also worthy of attention. Related to the organizational structure, available resources and shared expenses are mentioned as enabling factors (Cohen, 2003; Pelozo & Falkenberg, 2009; Seitanidi & Crane, 2009). The study shows that the SSD does not have any assigned resources, but is based on the voluntary efforts by participating actors. This could entail both challenges and opportunities – it might slow down the process but also enhance the collaborative atmosphere. It also places a larger importance on the personal commitment of the representatives involved. Compared to the Dutch National initiative, which has received financing from the Dutch government (WWF, 2014b), there is an interesting difference. The SSD demonstrates that organizations voluntarily can gather around an issue and invest their own resources for the common goal of a larger group – also manifesting that a collaborative advantage most likely is identified. The future development of this structure will be interesting to follow.

7 Conclusions

This chapter presents the main findings of the study and the empirical and theoretical contributions made. The quality of the results is also discussed and opportunities for future research are suggested.

7.1 Key findings and contributions

The aim of this study was to explain how value chain collaborations for more responsible sourcing can be formed and identify what the perceived enabling factors in such a process are. It focused on the case of the Swedish soy dialogue (SSD) and responsible sourcing of soy. Three research questions were stated and the results provide guidance in answering the study's aim. These addressed how the SSD was formed, why actors chose to participate and what the perceived key enabling factors in the formation process were. This study has taken a broad approach and been designed to let a multitude of potential influencing factors surface, since previous research suggests that many aspects regarding the phenomenon are still unclear and since network collaboration often involves complex dynamics. The areas of the SSD collaboration studied are shown in figure 5, summarizing the main empirical findings regarding the formation process.

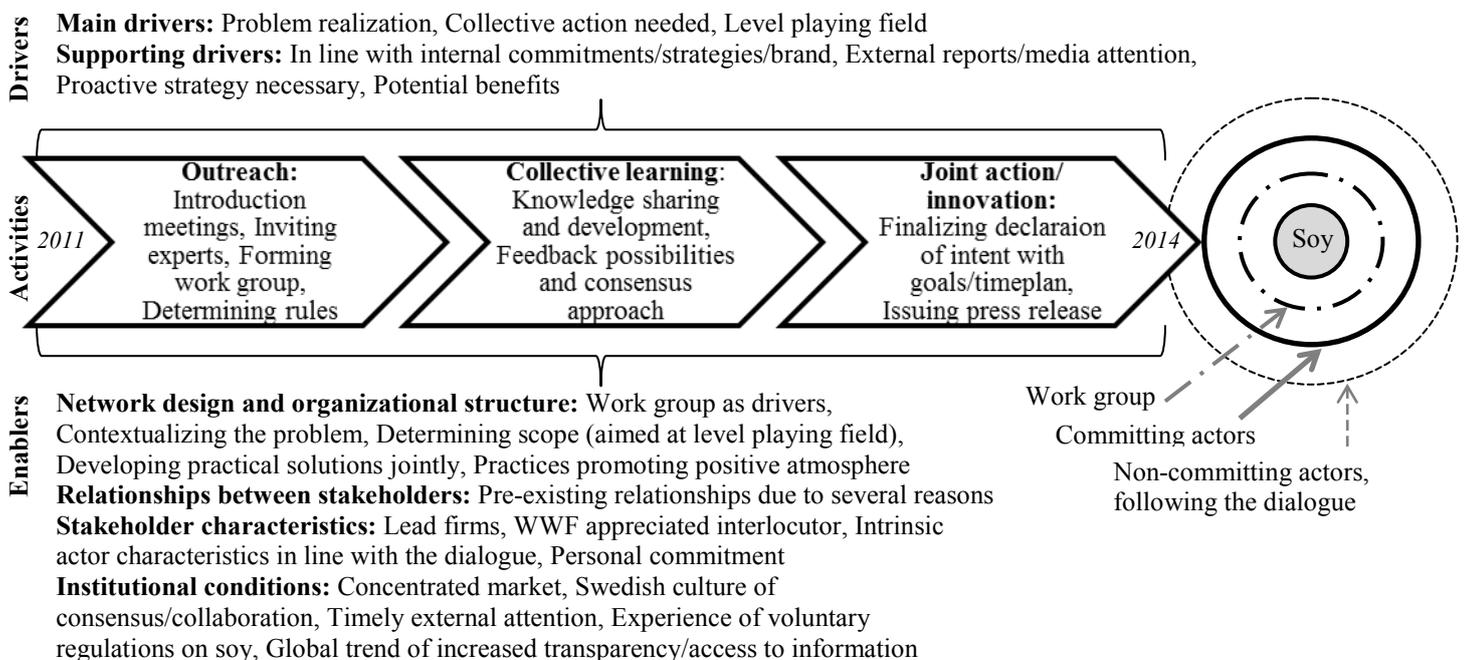


Figure 5. The aspects studied and overview of main empirical findings.

Previous research provided the suggestion of four explanatory themes for drivers; *problem nature*, *external influence*, *intrinsic motivation* and *potential benefits*. This study shows that drivers within all these themes co-exist among actors in the SSD. The theme *level playing field* is also an inductively derived theme from the study, which shows the importance for fair conditions between actors as a driver in value chain collaboration. Respondents mentioned that there were both main drivers, emphasized as influencing the own organization to engage in the SSD, and supporting drivers, which could have prepared the way for a broader engagement in the value chain (see figure 5 above). The pro-active nature of the decision to engage in the SSD was mentioned by many respondents. The study has included representatives from diverse value chain actors, ranging from feed production to retail, and the perspectives regarding drivers mainly showed similarities. The emphasized concept of a level playing field - where a need for imported produce being included in the scope of the

SSD in order for Swedish producers to maintain competitiveness - manifested the clearest difference in stakeholder perspectives. Generally there was a high awareness of the sustainability problems with soy production, and this seems to have pervaded as a driver throughout the dialogue.

The study has given interesting insights into the collaborative character of the SSD. Collaborations can include a variety of stakeholders, and in the SSD they are possible to categorize into an NGO, industry associations, different types of producers and retailers/food service. The network illustration in figure 5 demonstrates that the collaboration has different engagement levels. First there is the work group, which has been described as promoters of the SSD and planners of the activities undertaken. Thereafter, we have all the actors officially committing to the declaration of intent issued in April 2014. Lastly, there are actors who have followed or follow the dialogue, but for various reasons have chosen not to sign the declaration of intent. There is also a distinction between stakeholders who execute the commitment (producers and retailers/food service), and those who support it (NGO/industry associations). These different levels and roles were an interesting finding, and also the openness for actors to transition between levels or to participate during meetings but not commit to the SSD declaration of intent. The purpose of the SSD, promoting responsible soy with a focus on the Swedish market, could be an influencing factor for this openness. In order to create a level playing field, a wide adoption by market actors is desirable. The figure above also demonstrates important activities leading up to the declaration of intent, and follows phases proposed by previous studies. Even though the phases are illustrated sequentially, the SSD demonstrated a lack of predetermination and revisiting between activities when needed. During these activities, several enabling factors influenced the process and are now concluded.

The structured literature review gave many suggestions of possible enabling factors in forming collaborations addressing sustainability challenges in different forms. These were divided into themes and categories which were proven helpful in analyzing the rich empirical results. The main categories of enablers were *institutional conditions*, *stakeholder characteristics*, *relationships between stakeholders* and *network design and organizational structure*. Enablers on all levels were found, as seen in figure 5, and a detailed analysis was given in section 5.3. An interesting reflection is that there are both enablers tied to given preconditions and those tied to designed conditions in the network. In the long run, some given conditions could of course be changed and are not static. For practitioners, this implies that an awareness of the specific context is important in seeing what could enable a specific collaboration. Several designable enablers, tied to the organizational structure, were also found and might be useful under other circumstances as well. Previous studies have highlighted that people, collaborative advantage and trust are key concepts tied to the successful formation of collaborations. By consisting of engaged people, showing how joint action could promote fairness and viable working procedures within the industry and employing practices enhancing a positive atmosphere and trust – the SSD manifests enablers tied to these key concepts.

There were also several findings that were not entirely in line with what previous research has suggested as being important enablers. The SSD does not have specific resources dedicated to it, but is based on the voluntary commitment of participating actors. Having a rule system with possible sanctions is also mentioned in other studies, in order for organizations to be accountable for possible incompliance, but this was not clearly developed in the SSD. The SSD is generally described as having a loose and flexible organizational structure, based on voluntary commitments, and this could be explanatory factors for these differences.

The contributions from this study are of both theoretical and empirical nature. Starting from a structured literature review, showing the diverse aspects possible to take into account when studying collaborations addressing wicked problems, gave relevant themes which guided the empirical study. The area is still in an exploratory phase, and many studies have focused only on parts of what has here been employed as a holistic conceptual framework. The SSD showed several similarities with results from earlier studies and gave insight into that many different factors help explain how a collaboration between value chain actors is formed and enabled. This indicates that there are explanatory limitations to studies focusing only on certain parts of collaborations, instead of the overall picture. Since national initiatives for more responsible sourcing of soy are still rare (and studies of them even more so), the mapping of the SSD collaboration has given many empirical contributions relevant for practitioners and academia. An interesting observation arising from the study is the importance of the context surrounding a collaboration. Even though collaborations are stressed as promising means for addressing complex problems by many, they are not a panacea. The SSD study highlights that it is important to take the problem nature and context into account and see how the collaboration can be designed in order to address the issue in an effective way.

Achieving a more sustainable soy production is a complex challenge, and a range of initiatives exist that try to promote this development, consisting of a multitude of different stakeholders. The SSD should not be viewed in isolation of other initiatives, but as a piece of a larger puzzle. As a consumer country initiative, it targets the Swedish market and serves as a way to diffuse practices for responsible sourcing of soy and develop practical approaches for this aim – made available for different value chain actors. The future development, and possible expansion, of the dialogue will be interesting to follow. Hopefully it can serve as an inspirational example for other upcoming endeavors for the promotion of responsible soy. The increasing pressures on arable land, and soy's usefulness as an agricultural commodity – underlines the importance of a more responsibly managed soy production and is pertinent for sustainable development.

7.2 Quality of the results and future research opportunities

This case study has been focused on gaining an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon in a specific setting, the formation of the SSD in the Swedish food industry. Several quality assurance measures have been undertaken throughout the study to ensure valid and reliable results (see section 2.4), in order to provide a fair reflection of the case. Even though the choice of research approach does not permit statistical generalization, analytic generalizations are possible (Yin, 2003; Robson, 2011), and could lead to interesting insights in other contexts. It has been clear that the SSD has been greatly influenced by its own specific context, and further research in other settings presents a promising future addition to the body of knowledge in the field. Several other suggestions of future research have also surfaced during this research project. The research approach could be modified to allow for an expanded collection of empirical data. This could be done through e.g. surveys, participatory observation of the continued dialogue or performing an extended longitudinal case-study. The selection of respondents could be broadened to include more participants or stakeholders currently not included in the SSD – to gain new perspectives on the phenomenon. It would also be of interest to perform a comparative case study of the Swedish case in relation to other national initiatives. Further on, an evaluation of the effects from the SSD would also be of interest to investigate. Other aspects possible to investigate further, which have been briefly touched upon here, are the financial and communicational aspects of the issue.

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Lundén Pettersson, Kjell

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Norrman, AnnaLena

*Director of Sustainability and Quality, Martin & Servera
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Swensson, Christian

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Söderberg, Vera

*CR Manager, Environment, HKScan
Personal interview (2015-03-27)*

Tham, Lena

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Appendices

Appendix 1 The soy processing chain

Figure 6 below outlines the product flows in the soy processing chain, demonstrating its diverse usages.

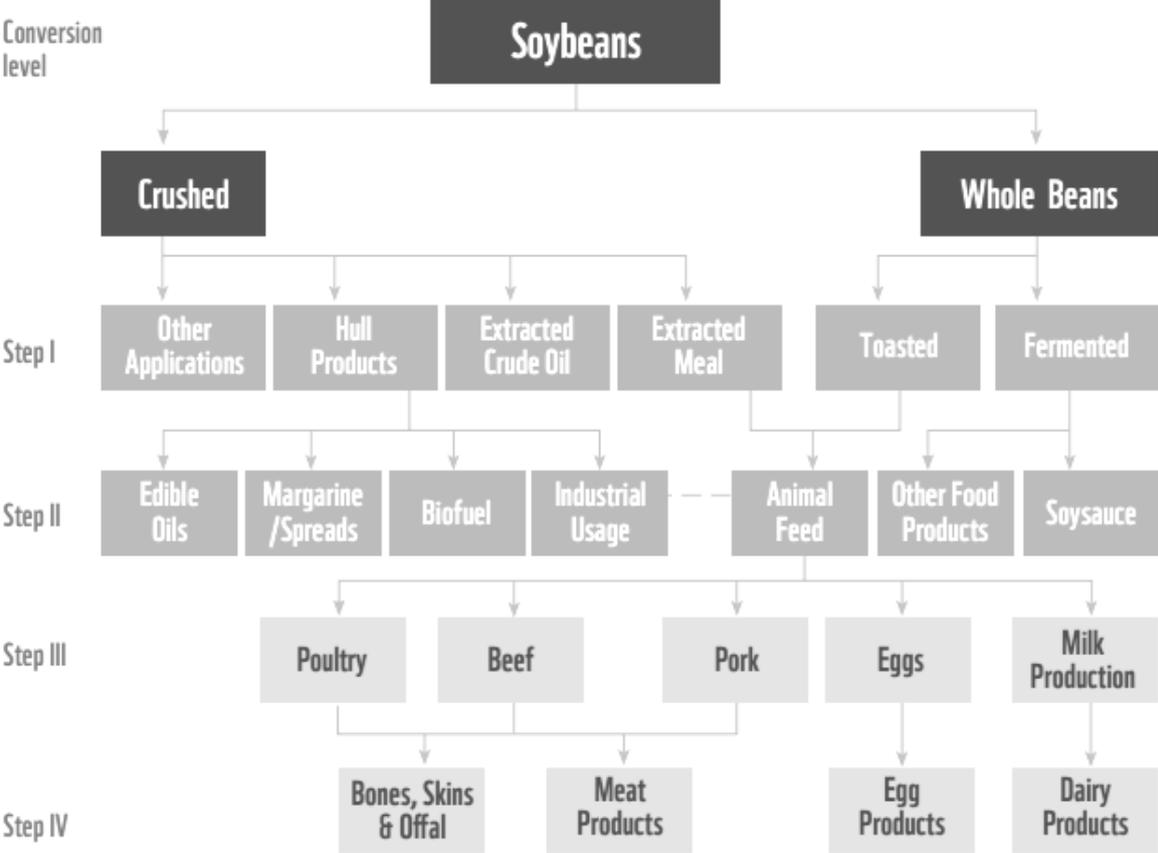


Figure 6. Soy product flows and processing of soybeans (WWF, 2014b, p 16).

There are three main usage areas for soy, namely for feed, food or biofuel (WWF, 2014b). Around three-quarters of the world’s soy is crushed into soy meal, which in turn is used for animal feed (*ibid.*). Around 6 percent of soybeans are directly used for human consumption, although animal food products often contain embedded soy since livestock are fed soy in their feed (*ibid.*). Soy oil can be used in both cooking, biofuel and consumer goods, e.g. cosmetics or soap products (*ibid.*). The emulsifier lecithin, a soy derivative, can also be found in processed food such as chocolate, ice cream and baked goods (*ibid.*). The many steps of soy processing and various end products are apparent in the figure above.

Appendix 2 Official participants in the Swedish soy dialogue

Below, the organizations listed as official participants in the SSD are accounted for with their Swedish namings (based on the declaration of intent and press release, in April 2014).

Companies and organizations endorsing the declaration of intent:

Arla Sverige AB
Henri De Sauvage Nolting, MD

Axfood Sverige AB
Hans Holmstedt, Purchasing Director

Bjärefågel i Torekow AB
Martin Ingemarsson, Head of Animals

Coop Sverige AB
Johnny Capor, Acting MD

Dalsjöfors Kött AB
Magnus Larsson, MD

Guldfågeln AB
Martin Lindström, MD

Gäsene Mejeriförening
Marcus Jansson, MD

HKScan Sweden AB
Göran Holm, EVP, Consumer Business
Scandinavia

ICA Sverige AB
Dan Jacobson, Head of Fresch Produce

Ingelsta Kalkon AB
Peter Andersson, MD

KLS Ugglarps AB
Jonas Tunestål, MD

Knäreds Kyckling AB
Johan Karlsson, MD

Kronfågel AB
Magnus Lagergren, MD

Lagerbergs AB
Peter Lagerberg, Head of Animals

Lantmännen ek för.
Johan Andersson, Head of Sector
Lantmännen Lantbruk

Martin & Servera AB
Håkan Åkerström, MD

Nyhléns Hugosons Chark AB
Magnus Nilsson, MD

Skånemejerier AB
Björn Sederblad, MD

Skövde Slakteri AB/Gudruns
Ove Konradsson, MD

Organizations supporting the declaration of intent:

Branschorganisationen Svensk Fågel
Maria Donis, MD

Branschorganisationen Svenska Ägg
Astrid Lovén Persson, Operations Manager

Branschorganisationen Svenskt Kött
Maria Forshufvud, MD

Föreningen Foder & Spannmål
Erik Hartman, MD

Lantbrukarnas Riksförbund
Helena Jonsson, Chair of the Federation

Svenska Avelspoolen AB
Hans Agné, MD

Sveriges Nötköttsproducenter
Jan Forssell, Chair

Svenska Fåravelsförbundet
Bertil Gabrielsson, Chair

Appendix 3 Interview guide

Main questions in the semi-structured interviews⁹.

General information about the role in the SSD and the SSD process

- How did you/your organization first get involved in the SSD-process?
- What has been your role, respectively your organizations role, in the SSD-process?
- What have been the key events in the formation process leading to the SSD commitment in April 2014? (*see timeline*)

Before the SSD

- How did your organization work with responsibility issues related to soy before the SSD?
- Have you had any previous experiences in collaborating with other actors on environmental/social challenges?
- What motivated the need for the SSD collaboration?

Drivers for engaging in the SSD

- How does the collaborative approach in the SSD help in working with responsibility issues related to soy?
- What kind of experiences do you have of pressure from stakeholders regarding soy?
- How did your organizations principles and/or strategies regarding CSR/sustainability-issues affect your decision to engage in the SSD?
- What benefits do you think can be reached through the SSD (*for your organization/for the network/for the society*)?
- What was the main reason for your organizations choice to engage in the SSD?

The design of the SSD

- How has the organizational structure of the collaboration evolved and how would you describe it?
- How were different actors included in the collaboration?
- How representative of the industry would you say that the actors in the SSD are?
- How were goals and visions for the SSD defined?
- How do you communicate within the SSD?
- How do you perceive that the SSD has contributed to information sharing and learning?
- How would you describe the atmosphere in the SSD?

Enabling factors for creating the SSD and the declaration of intent

- Why did you ultimately succeed in creating the SSD and the declaration of intent? What were the key enabling factors?
- How have the following factors affected the creation of the SSD and the participants' commitment?

Industry character

The character of participating organizations

Relationships between organizations

The organizational structure of the network

- What have been the greatest challenges in the SSD-process?
- What potential do you think the SSD has in contributing to a solution in the soy issue?

Is there anything more you would like to add that hasn't been addressed?

⁹ Wordings slightly modified depending on type of actor interviewed. Respondents received a Swedish translation of the main questions before the interviews (which were conducted in Swedish).

Appendix 4 Empirical background

This appendix gives an overview of the empirical context considered relevant for the study at hand. Initiatives for responsible sourcing, with special focus on soy, are described. An overview of the Swedish industry context regarding soy is also given.

A.4.1 Responsible sourcing in the agrifood sector

As part of an organization’s CSR efforts, responsible sourcing is an activity gaining increased popularity. A range of voluntary initiatives, aimed at promoting responsible sourcing in the global food system, have emerged from the late 20th century and onwards (Barrientos & Dolan, 2006). Barrientos and Dolan (2006) mention a variety of initiatives, such as labelling schemes (e.g. Fair trade), sector based initiatives involving groups of companies and other stakeholders (e.g. the International Cocoa Initiative) and cross sector initiatives with multiple stakeholders (e.g. the Ethical Trading Initiative). As with the concept of CSR, responsible sourcing is associated with a myriad of terms, such as “supply chain management”, “sourcing”, “buying”, “purchasing” or “procurement” with variations regarding what type of sustainability dimensions they cover (Zorzini *et al.*, 2015). From a triple bottom line framework, they can include both social and environmental dimensions or either one of them (*ibid.*) In dealing with wicked problems in the agrifood value chain (such as issues related to soy or palm oil production); expanding companies’ perspective on sourcing to *responsible* sourcing, which also incorporates environmental and social concerns, represents a promising way forward.

A.4.2 The soy value chain

The soy value chain is described as having an hour glass structure, with many actors at the top and bottom of the chain and greater concentration of actors in the middle (Schouten & Glasbergen, 2012). This is a contrast to the palm oil value chain, which has a fairly concentrated structure of the production and trade (*ibid.*). An overview of the actors involved in the soy value chain is shown in figure 7.

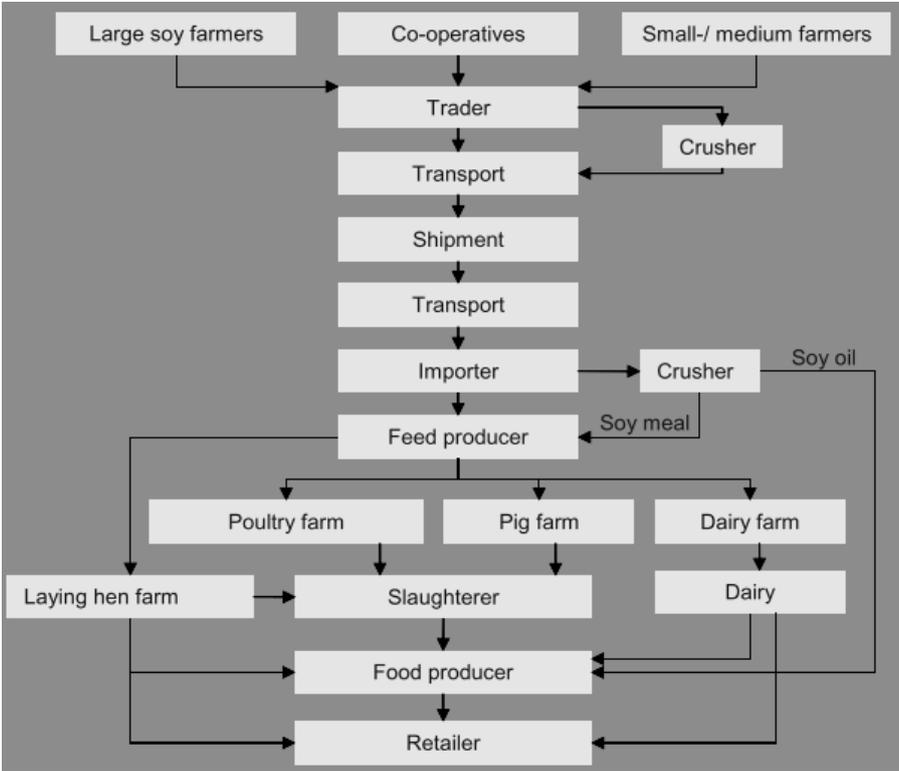


Figure 7. Simplified overview of actors in the soy value chain for food use (van Gelder *et al.*, 2014, p 6).

As the figure illustrates, the value chain starts with the cultivation of soy beans, and there are large differences in sizes of farms (van Gelder *et al.*, 2014). Soy is sold to a small number of trading companies, who are not brand-driven in the same manner as consumer facing companies, and who have a dominant position in the soy value chain (Schouten & Glasbergen, 2012). With palm oil on the other hand, consumer facing companies have more dominant positions (*ibid.*). The soymeal is thereafter sold to the feed industry and is used as an ingredient in compound feed (van Gelder *et al.*, 2014). The feed is used in the production of different animal products. Slaughterhouses, dairies and other users who pose quality requirements on the products are also part of the chain and “*have influence on the specification of the feed*” (*ibid.*, p 6). Some animal products are then further processed within the food industry. The end products resulting from the process are thereafter sold to consumers through different retail businesses (*ibid.*). There is a challenge regarding incentives for companies in the value chain to act for more responsibly soy due to the lack of product visibility (Schouten & Glasbergen, 2012). Since most soy is used for feed to produce animal products, it is not visible as an ingredient in products sold to consumers and therefore not exposed in the same way as palm oil (*ibid.*).

A.4.3 Collaborative initiatives for more responsible soy

Despite challenges, there currently are several different measures taken for the promotion of more responsibly produced soy. Companies have responded by making individual and/or collective voluntary commitments and by engaging in certification schemes developed in collaboration with civil society organizations (WWF, 2014b).

Voluntary certification

In relation to soy, several voluntary certifications and ecolabels for products exist. Wilkinson (2011) means that the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) initiatives marked the start of the migration of this strategy to a broader commodity market, including soy. Certification can be a way for “*manufacturers and retailers to make verifiable claims about the sustainability of their products*” (WWF, 2014b, p 71). A variety of organic certifications can be applied to soy, although only a very small part of soy production is organic (*ibid.*). There exists Fairtrade labeled soy, which was introduced on the market in 2009 (Wåhlin, 2012). It has been applied to soy products sold directly to consumers and is produced in small volumes by small-scale producers (*ibid.*).

RTRS and ProTerra

It is possible to buy soy certified according to RTRS or ProTerra certification schemes. WWF (WWF, 2014a, p 5) state that these multi-stakeholder initiatives are based on “*robust environmental and social criteria and third party auditing systems as well as other attributes that define credible certification schemes*”. RTRS-certified soy has been available on the market since 2011 and originates predominantly from South America (WWF, 2014a). Organizations can buy physically certified soy or RTRS-certificates, which guarantees that the corresponding amount of RTRS soy is produced (Wåhlin, 2012). Up to 2014, only 55 percent of the available RTRS soy had been sold (mostly through the certificate trading scheme), which according to WWF (2014a) could mean that certified producers lack incentives to stay certified. They see an increased market demand for RTRS soy as vital in ensuring the incentives for producers to be certified. Sales of ProTerra certified soy have been stable, and ProTerra state that most of the certified soy is sold (WWF, 2014a). Wåhlin (2012) means that the two criteria are similar, the difference lies in that ProTerra only certify non-GM soy whilst RTRS accepts both non-GM and GM-soy. The ProTerra certification has existed since 2006 and is based on the Basel criteria, originally developed by WWF Switzerland and Coop Switzerland (WWF, 2014a).

The RTRS organizes yearly conferences where criteria for responsible soy is established and this initiative has gained wide support from traders, agrifood industry and agribusiness associations (Wilkinson, 2011). Bartholdson *et al.* (2010) mean that these kinds of initiatives can complement governmental efforts and it is important to include stakeholders in the process. The RTRS consist of approximately 150 member organizations and has four member categories; producers, industry, trade and finance (Schouten & Glasbergen, 2012). The roundtable was initiated by WWF in 2005, as part of their general strategic goal of developing similar roundtables for all major agricultural commodities (Wilkinson, 2011).

Consumer country initiatives for responsible sourcing

Country initiatives for more responsible soy exist in both producer and consumer countries. Wilkinson (2011) means that the divide between movements for responsible soy in consumer countries in the North and producers in the South is becoming less evident. There is an increased autonomy of southern movements, “*reflecting both the accumulation of domestic competences and the greater global importance of developing economies*” (Wilkinson, 2011, p 2024). Wilkinson (*ibid.*) describes the participation of civil actors, representing social and environmental interests regarding global agrifood commodities, as a European phenomenon. China is increasingly becoming the focus of global soy trade, and it is not clear if China will allow civil society to take on this role in a similar way (*ibid.*). Examples of movements for more responsible soy with a southern focus can be found in Hospes *et al.* (2012). When it comes to consumer country initiatives, WWF have audited companies in the soy value chain and conclude that Swedish and Dutch companies are frontrunners in responsible sourcing of soy (WWF, 2014a). They see this as greatly attributed to their national commitments (*ibid.*).

In *the Netherlands*, a strong coalition of NGO’s have pushed businesses to take responsibility for soy and they have the highest number of RTRS members in a consumer country (WWF, 2014a). The Dutch Soy Coalition consists of seven NGO’s, including WWF Netherlands, and this coalition was instrumental in convening the national commitment to certified soy in the Netherlands (WWF, 2014b). The first national initiative, called Initiative Sustainable Soy¹⁰ (IDS), was temporarily established in 2008 to facilitate the process of introducing RTRS to the Dutch market (van Gelder *et al.*, 2014). IDS consisted of feed industry and major companies who committed to buying 85 000 tons of the first RTRS certified soy and “*initiating the opening of the global market for RTRS soy*” (www, WWF, 5, 2011). In 2011, the main actors in the Dutch food chain committed to aim for 100 percent RTRS certified soy by 2015 (WWF, 2014b). Actors from the feed sector, dairy and meat industry, farmers, food businesses and retailers were included and the commitment covered the Dutch production of animal products (*ibid.*). The commitment received support from the Dutch government’s Sustainable Trade Initiative (IDH), who financed half of the investment required to shift the Dutch soy requirements to RTRS (WWF, 2014b). To achieve the initiatives goals; they have set up “*the Foundation for the Supply Chain Transition to Responsible Soy*” which helps producers in South America to shift to RTRS certified production (WWF, 2014b).

Switzerland is another country where a national commitment for responsible soy exists, and WWF state that Switzerland has “*the most advanced market for responsible soy*” (WWF, 2014a, p 45). The Soy Network Switzerland is a national alliance consisting of 14 organizations, including; soy buyers, manufacturers, producer associations, retailers and WWF Switzerland (WWF, 2014b). The goal of the initiative is that at least 90 percent of soy for the Swiss market should be responsibly produced by 2014 (*ibid.*). The network states that between May 2014 to April 2015, soya purchasers who are network members purchased

¹⁰ In Dutch: *Stichting Initiatief Duurzame Soja* .

240 000 tons of certified soy, meaning 93 percent of the soy came from responsible production (www, Soy Network Switzerland, 1, 2015).

Initiatives spanning over national borders also exist. Examples include initiatives by the Consumer Goods Forum and IDH's soy program. The Consumer Goods Forum represents 400 global manufacturers and retailers and have made commitments to work for more responsible sourcing of commodities such as soy, palm oil and beef (WWF, 2014b). The IDH soy program can be described as a public-private partnership that is jointly funded by the Dutch, Swiss and Danish governments together with private companies (*ibid.*). The program is aimed at making the soy sector more responsible at an institutional level (*ibid.*).

A.4.4 Responsible soy in the Swedish context

The Swedish food industry is the fourth largest industry in Sweden (Lindow, 2012). The production has a high proportion of small businesses, although few large companies account for the majority of the production (*ibid.*). Lindow (*ibid.*) describes the production as concentrated, where the large companies stand for 75 percent of the turnover in each product category. Table 9 shows the 10 largest producing companies in the industry 2010/2011. The industry consists mainly of limited companies, even though it traditionally has had a high share of cooperatives. Profitability in the industry is relatively constant, even though the sub-sectors nearest to the agricultural production (e.g. meat industry and dairies) have the lowest profitability (*ibid.*). The market concentration in the Swedish retail sector is high and it consists of few and large actors (*ibid.*). The three largest retail chains are ICA, Coop and Axfood. Together they account for 90 percent of the turnover; hence the market concentration is high (*ibid.*).

Table 9. The largest food industry companies in Sweden 2010/2011 (Lindow, 2012, p 11)

Company	Sales (m sek)
AarhusKarlshamn	16.695
Lantmännen Food/Total	14.708/37.896
Arla Foods Sverige	14.472
HKScan Sverige	9.446
Vin & Sprit	4.803
Unilever Sverige	4.007
Kraft Foods Sverige	3.392
Nordic Sugar	3.360
Atria Scandinavia	3.341
Skånemejerier	3.305

Soy in Sweden

Lantmännen and Svenska Foder are the largest Swedish importers of soy (Wåhlin, 2012). They also buy large volumes of soy from the Norwegian soy supplier Denofa (*ibid.*). Around 385 000 tons of soy products are imported every year into Sweden, according to Bartholdson *et al.* (2010). The soy comes as soybean meal and is mainly used for concentrated feed, and most of the soy originates from Brazil (Wåhlin, 2012). The usage of soy for feed means that soy becomes embedded in food products further down the value chain. A previous discussion, related to the issue of placing demands on soy, is the issue of GM-soy. Swedish industry associations have through industry policies regulated that GM-soy is not to be used in the Swedish production (www, Sveriges Radio, 2, 2013). Loxbo (2009) argues that voluntary industry restrictions of GM-soy usage, entails a cost disadvantage for Swedish producers compared to producers from other countries. The restrictions stemmed largely from the Swedish Dairy Association's policy, which affected most of the Swedish animal farming (*ibid.*). In 2014, it was deemed that the policy in the Swedish dairy industry was in conflict with competition laws, and companies could instead individually decide whether they wanted to source GM or non-GM soy (www, ATL Lantbrukets affärstidning, 1, 2014). Most of the Swedish dairies stated that they would continue to have their own policies on GM-free soy (www, ATL Lantbrukets affärstidning, 2, 2014). The price premium for purchasing non-GM soy has increased, as compared to GM-soy (www, Sveriges Radio, 2, 2013).

Critique towards the industry

There has been media attention in Sweden regarding soy and its negative effects on people and the environment. The most notable reports include “*The price of food*”¹¹ on Swedish radio P1 and audit reports from Swedwatch. The radio feature, sent in 2010, showed the negative effects from soy production with a focus on the use of pesticides (www, Sveriges Radio, 1, 2010). Swedwatch is a Swedish non-profit organization that reports on the relations between Swedish businesses and developing countries, with a focus on social and environmental concerns (www, Swedwatch, 1, 2015). In 2010, they issued the report “*More meat and soy – less rainforest*”¹², where they exposed problems associated with soy production in South America and how Swedish businesses were involved (Bartholdson *et al.*, 2010). In the follow up report “*More soy and less diversity – an audit of the soy import from Brazil*”¹³, released in 2012, it was concluded that the attention on the soy issue in media pushed the examined companies sustainability work forward (Wåhlin, 2012). The report concludes that Swedish production of meat is going down, and more meat from animals bred on soy is being imported. Swedwatch urged the Swedish retail sector to take greater responsibility for these products and highlighted that actors in the entire supply chain needed to take action for more responsible soy (*ibid.*). In the WWF audit report *Soy Report Card 2014*, 88 European companies were assessed on their work towards responsible soy. Several Swedish companies are said to have taken a leadership role in responsible soy, e.g. HKScan Sweden, Lantmännen and Arla (categorized as Danish in the report) (WWF, 2014a). The national commitment of the SSD is said to have contributed to the fact several Swedish companies were frontrunners in their sectors (WWF, 2014a).

Previous responsible sourcing experiences

A related responsible sourcing issue for the Swedish food industry is palm oil. There has been a collaborative initiative originating from the Swedish Food Federation, where member companies pledge to only use certified palm oil (according to RSPO¹⁴ principles) in goods produced in Sweden by 2015 (www, Livsmedelsföretagen, 1, 2014). The Swedish Food Federation consists of 850 member companies, both small and large food producers (www, Livsmedelsföretagen, 2, 2015). There is also an agreement within the Swedish Food Retail organization, where companies are obliged to switch to certified palm oil in their own brands by the end of December 2015 (www, Dagens Nyheter, 1, 2015). Eight out of ten consumers know about palm oil and many consumers choose not to buy products containing palm oil (*ibid.*). That certified palm oil exists is relatively unknown among consumers, according to a recent survey (*ibid.*). Since December 2014, it is according to EU regulation mandatory to declare on products if they contain palm oil. The retail chains have noted that consumers are engaged in the palm oil issue, and many are negative regarding the usage of it (*ibid.*).

¹¹ Reported in Swedish under the title “*Matens pris*”, with a radio feature called “*Sojan som förgiftar*”/“*The soy that poisons*” (www, Sveriges Radio, 1, 2010).

¹² Issued in Swedish under the title “*Mer kött och soja – mindre regnskog*” (Bartholdson *et al.*, 2010).

¹³ Issued in Swedish under the title “*Mera soja mindre mångfald – en granskning av sojaimporten från Brasilien*” (Wåhlin, 2012)

¹⁴ RSPO – Roundtable on Sustainable Palmoil

Appendix 5 Communicated organizational stances on soy

WWF

The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) is an international network of local WWF-organizations, such as WWF Sweden, across the world (www, WWF, 1, 2015). It is a non-profit and independent conservation organization, working on stopping environmental degradation (*ibid.*). On their webpage, WWF states that they are concerned about the negative effects from irresponsible soybean plantation expansion (www, WWF, 2, 2015). Negative effects are foremost deforestation and negative impacts on communities and workers (*ibid.*). WWF state that their view is that businesses should be a positive driving force in the strive for sustainable development (www, WWF, 3, 2015). A collaborative approach with businesses, who realize the value of sustainable practices, is to them the best way to transform markets (*ibid.*). WWF works on many fronts to tackle the impacts of soy (www, WWF, 2, 2015). They monitor the soy industry and its sustainability impacts and issues the audit report “*Soy report card*” (WWF, 2014a). WWF has previously acted as partners to several initiatives for responsible soy (e.g. the Dutch Soy Coalition and the Soy Network Switzerland) and want to promote consumer country initiatives (WWF, 2014a). WWF also participate as members in the RTRS, a forum for stakeholders which they initiated in 2005 (www, WWF, 4, 2012).

LRF Dairy Sweden

LRF Dairy Sweden promotes Swedish dairy production on behalf of the Swedish dairy farmers, dairies and livestock associations (www, LRF Dairy Sweden, 1, 2015). They do not see imported soy as a long term solution for a sustainable dairy production (www, LRF Dairy Sweden, 2, 2015). Instead they are working on a feed strategy that intends to replace imported soy with locally grown, competitive protein feed. The feed strategy states that unsustainable imported feed should gradually be replaced and from 2015 only certified soy (RTRS/ProTerra) should be used (*ibid.*).

Lantmännen

Lantmännen is a Swedish cooperative industry group, active in every stage of the value chain (www, RTRS, 1, 2015). In the core business, agriculture, approximately 180 000 tons of soybean meal is used in feed to livestock (*ibid.*). Lantmännen state that they have specific strategies to safeguard their responsibility with respect to soy and palm oil (www, Lantmännen, 1, 2014). They see soy as a specific risk commodity and actively participate in stakeholder dialogues and support standards for more sustainable production (www, Lantmännen, 1, 2013). In 2013 they had a target of 50 percent RTRS-certification for their total imports of soy and this target was achieved (www, Lantmännen, 1, 2014). In the annual report for 2014, Lantmännen say that 60 percent of their soy purchases were covered by RTRS certification in year 2014 (www, Lantmännen, 2, 2015). They also mention that they have committed to achieve 100 percent RTRS certification in 2015, in accordance with the SSD commitment (*ibid.*). Lantmännen are RTRS members (www, RTRS, 1, 2015) and say that they were one of the first companies in the world to buy RTRS certified soy in 2011, when it came on the market (www, Lantmännen, 2, 2015).

Arla Foods

Arla Foods is an international dairy company and cooperative which uses soy in cow’s feed and as an ingredient in some products (www, RTRS, 2, 2015). In the CSR Report for 2014, the company explains that they in January 2012 decided to bring forward “*the transition to responsible soy in view of the negative impact that soy bean farming could have on humans and the environment in South America*” (www, Arla Foods, 1, 2015, p 45). The goal for Arla Foods is to ensure that all soy in the cows’ feed should be grown according to RTRS criteria (*ibid.*). The company reached its goal in 2014, when all soy used was covered with certificates

or was ProTerra certified (*ibid.*). By 2015, all soy used for animal feed should be farmed in accordance with RTRS criteria. Arla Foods is a current RTRS member (www, RTRS, 2, 2015) and according to the 2014 CSR report (www, Arla Foods, 1, 2015); they are the largest purchaser of RTRS certificates for soy in the world.

HKScan Sweden

HKScan Sweden, a part of the HKScan group, is the largest meat company in Sweden selling meat products under brands such as Scan and Pärsons (www, HKScan, 1, 2015). The HKScan group is a RTRS member and wants to ensure that all soy used in their value chain reaches the requirements of the RTRS by 2018 (www, HKScan, 2, 2015). They state that they are one of the largest meat producers in Europe and think that their commitment to the RTRS can contribute substantially to a responsible development (*ibid.*). They also write on their webpage that; “*HKScan Sweden has appointed a national time plan for responsibly produced soy together with the participants of the Swedish soy dialogue*” (*ibid.*). This means that HKScan Sweden should reach 60 percent of responsibly produced soy during 2014 and 100 percent by year 2015 (*ibid.*).

Martin & Servera

Martin & Servera is a family owned Swedish food service company, delivering goods and services to Swedish restaurants and caterers (www, Martin & Servera, 1, 2015). On their webpage (www, Martin & Servera, 2, 2015), Martin & Servera describe their policy on soy and how they take responsibility. Soy used in feed for the production of their own goods (private labelled products and imports) should be produced in a responsible manner, and this applies to both animal foods and soy products for human consumption (*ibid.*). The soy should be certified by a credible third party standard, and initially Martin & Servera will buy certificates with the ambition to switch to physically certified soy in the future (*ibid.*). They also mention that they have active dialogues with their suppliers and are part of the SSD (*ibid.*). In the sustainability report for 2014 (www, Martin & Servera, 3, 2015) they state that their goal is to buy certificates for the volume of soy used in the production of their own goods, and that they plan to buy these retrospectively for 2014. The volume for 2015 will be summarized at the end of 2015 and certificates bought before the end of the year. Their goal is 100 percent responsibly produced soy, in their own goods, for 2015 (*ibid.*).

Coop Sweden

Coop Sweden is co-operatively owned grocery retail group, accounting for 21,5 percent of the grocery retail market in Sweden (www, RTRS, 3, 2015). In their annual report for 2014 (www, Coop Sweden, 1, 2015), they mention their voluntary SSD commitment. From 2015 they want to make sure that products bought in Sweden, both Swedish and imported produce, should be produced with certified soy (*ibid.*). Coop Sweden state that they are working on promoting a more sustainable development in soy production and that they see an improved certification system as a means for this (www, Coop Sweden, 2, 2015). For 2014, 60 percent of the soy used in Coop Sweden’s own brands will be covered by certificates, in line with the SSD commitment (*ibid.*). For 2015, this is increased to 100 percent. Several products covered by certificates, where soy is used in the feed, are mentioned such as; meat, farmed fish and dairy products (*ibid.*). Coop Sweden is a current RTRS member (www, RTRS, 3, 2015).