

Business-NGO Collaboration

Partnerships for Biodiversity



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Front page pictures

1. BirdLife International – HeidelbergCement: A quarry with a mosaic of different habitats (HeidelbergCement, 2013a, p. 48).
2. WNF – Eneco: Wind turbines at sea (WNF, 2010).
3. Wetlands International – Royal Dutch Shell: An Arctic wetland (Wetlands International, n.d.b).

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Preface and acknowledgements

Here before you lies the result of six months of research: my master thesis to obtain a master's degree in Social and Political Sciences of the Environment, titled "Business-NGO Collaboration. Partnerships for Biodiversity". The collaboration between businesses and NGOs has the potential to be very valuable and to have a large impact on the conservation and improvement of biodiversity all around the globe. However, businesses and NGOs encounter certain challenges during these partnerships, which potentially makes working together difficult. Studying these challenges and analysing how to cope with them has proven to be a very interesting subject. I would like to thank all interviewees, both experts and employees from partnering organisations, who were willing to make time to share their knowledge and expertise on the partnership process.

This study has been conducted in cooperation with ARCADIS Netherlands. Therefore I would like to thank ARCADIS for giving me the opportunity to study these partnerships. I would also like to thank my colleagues at ARCADIS in Arnhem for the pleasant months of working at the office and the insight they have given me into the practice of environmental consultancy. I am especially grateful to my external supervisor, Reinoud Kleijberg, for his guidance and comments.

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I hope you will enjoy reading the end result.

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Summary

Over the past decades partnerships between the different spheres of society (state, market and civil society) have become increasingly recognised as a way to promote sustainable development. The focus of this study is on partnerships between actors from the market and civil society spheres: businesses and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Interaction between businesses and NGOs has become more frequent with a larger geographical and substantial span whilst also shifting from being mainly confrontational to more collaborative. Business-NGO partnerships are defined as *collaborative agreements in which actors from market and civil society are involved in a non-hierarchical process, through which these actors strive for a sustainability goal*.

The scientific literature on partnerships mainly focuses on the partnering process, while it pays less attention to the outcomes and results of partnerships. This study attempts to link the partnership process with partnership outcomes by specifically analysing business-NGO partnerships that are addressing biodiversity issues. This study is part of a graduation research that is conducted in cooperation with ARCADIS. This study seeks to analyse which challenges partnering organisations encounter when engaging in a partnership during the formation, implementation and evaluation stages. The study also looks at the potential role for a third or external party in supporting the partnering business and NGO. The central research question is the following:

What challenges do businesses and non-governmental organizations face when engaging in strategic biodiversity partnerships during the formation, implementation and evaluation stages of the partnership process and how can third parties contribute to alleviate these problems?

Chapter 2 of this thesis addresses the theoretical framework that guides the study. Four theoretical concepts are described and interconnected: the shift from government to governance, the shift from nature protection to biodiversity, business-NGO partnerships and organisational aspects and collaboration challenges. The hypothesis formulated in this chapter states that partnerships between businesses and NGOs are expected to face two main challenges. Firstly, the inherently conflicting core logics and the differing motives of the parties involved, and secondly, the fact that business-NGO partnerships are a new and developing strategy.

Chapter 3 described the methodological approach to this thesis, which consists of a review of scientific literature and a case study on three partnership cases: between BirdLife International and HeidelbergCement, between WWF Netherlands and Eneco, and between Wetlands International and Royal Dutch Shell. The objective of this study is not to generalise its findings, but to focus on certain typical aspects that are found in the analysis of these business-NGO partnerships. The analysis focuses on three major aspects: (1) the variety of motives of businesses and NGOs for engaging in partnerships, (2) the partnership's structure and the possible obstacles businesses and NGOs face when engaging in a partnership, and (3) the potential role for third or external parties in supporting business-NGO partnerships.

Chapter 4 forms the empirical heart of the research as the findings from the three partnership case studies are described and discussed. After shortly introducing the partnering organisations each case

continues with analysing the motives for each organisation to engage in the partnership. Next, the goals or objectives of the partnership are described. Subsequently, the formation, implementation and evaluation stages are addressed, thereby also paying attention to the challenges partnering organisations encounter during the partnership. Finally, the potential role for a third party in supporting business-NGO partnerships is discussed.

Chapter 5 returns to the central question of the thesis. We can conclude that businesses and NGOs face two main challenges when engaging in a partnership during the formation, implementation and evaluation stages: (1) their inherently conflicting core logics and differing motives and (2) the fact that business-NGO partnerships are a new and developing concept. Coping with these challenges is a process of building trust, getting to know each other and learning by doing. Third parties can contribute to alleviate these challenges by playing a supporting role in which they act as an intermediary between the parties, thereby providing guidance and facilitating an unbiased collaboration process between the two partners. The actual implementation of the partnership remains the responsibility of the partnering organisations, as this is the entire value of engaging in a business-NGO partnership.

When engaging in a partnership both businesses and NGOs have to be aware of their differences with regard to their respective backgrounds. Learning and understanding each other's language and culture benefits the communication between the two organisations. The importance of expectation management makes discussing the differing motives and objectives for engaging in the partnership vital in order to get clear what (not) to expect from each other. These discussions are also important in order to build a relationship of trust between the partners. By establishing such a relationship, the opportunity to learn from each other improves while reducing the chance of surprises along the way. A last recommendation for partnering organisations is to construct a strong organisational structure and to embed the partnership into the organisation of both business and NGO in order to ensure good management and commitment.

The most obvious role for a third party is facilitating the discussion between the two partner organisations as both experts and partnership representatives identify the opportunity for such a role. A third party can act as a neutral and unbiased intermediary that helps bridging the differences between the partnering organisations. A third party can potentially even bring organisations that are looking for a partnership together, thereby initiating new collaborations. Another role in this stage of the process is to perform due diligences prior to the formation in which the risks of cooperating for both parties are analysed. Independent verification of the partnership's results by an external party might be a possibility in the years to come when the partnership matures. However, it will be necessary for the external organisation to position itself in the market as an unbiased organisation with scientific knowledge and expertise on biodiversity. Currently most partnering organisations have trouble identifying consultancies as being unbiased external organisations that can perform such a task. It is therefore vital to show the added value of involving an external party.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Partnerships and other (public-) private governance mechanisms have become increasingly recognized over the past decades as ways to promote sustainable development (Visseren-Hamakers, Leroy & Glasbergen, 2012). Since the mid-1990s the interest for intersectoral collaboration, that is collaboration between the different spheres of society (state, market, civil society), has taken off. Intersectoral partnerships are defined as “collaborative agreements in which actors from two or more spheres of society (state, market and civil society) are involved in a non-hierarchical process, and through which these actors strive for a sustainability goal” (Van Huijstee, Francken & Leroy, 2007, p. 77). Collaboration through partnerships can help both parties to stretch resources, overcome past failures and address common priorities (Getha-Taylor, 2012). The focus of this study is on partnerships between actors from the market and civil society spheres: businesses and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

One explanation for the rise of intersectoral collaboration is that it is a response to the democratic deficit caused by processes of liberalization, privatization and globalization during the 1980s and 1990s. The 1992 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Rio de Janeiro is seen as another explanation for the rise of intersectoral collaboration (Van Huijstee et al., 2007). Agenda 21, which is the Action Plan for the 1990s and beyond, was adopted at the Rio Summit in 1992 and presented a set of strategies and programmes to halt and reverse the impacts of environmental degradation and to promote global sustainable development (Tolentino, 2012).

The link between intersectoral collaboration and sustainable development in Agenda 21 was twofold. Firstly, it was stated that, given the complexity of sustainability problems, all societal spheres have to be involved to tackle these problems. Secondly, the concept of sustainable development stresses the importance of social equity, environmental health and economic wealth, for which all resources and responsibilities are allocated to different societal spheres (Van Huijstee et al., 2007). The goals of Agenda 21 included the promotion of partnerships for sustainable development amongst governments, as well as between governments and non-governmental parties. However, Agenda 21 omitted the potential of partnerships between NGOs and businesses, which was never seen as a feasible option by the drafters of the Agenda (Tolentino, 2012).

Nonetheless, profound changes have been taking place over the past two decades in the interactions between NGOs and businesses. A first change is the growing frequency and intensity of the contacts between businesses and NGOs. Whereas first contacts between businesses and NGOs were relatively sporadic, these days many NGOs and businesses cherish longstanding, rather intensive, cooperative relationships with each other (Van Huijstee, 2010). The second change is the increased geographical and substantial span of business-NGO interactions. Van Huijstee states that “a firm and an NGO may discuss a whole pallet of concerns related to situations all over the globe” (2010, p. 15). A third change can be observed in the character of business-NGO interactions, which has shifted from being mainly confrontational to a more collaborative stance or a combination of the two (Van Huijstee, 2010).

Ten years after Agenda 21, at the 2002 WSSD in Johannesburg, partnerships were declared to be an important tool for implementing sustainable development (Van Huijstee et al., 2007). Since then, the popularity of the concept of partnerships has grown rapidly, both in the number of partnerships as in the scientific literature on the subject (Bitzer, 2011; Kolk et al., 2008; Schouten et al., 2012; Visseren-Hamakers et al., 2012). However, the literature on partnerships mainly focuses on the partnering process, while it pays less attention to the actual outcomes and results of their efforts. Van Huijstee et al. (2007) note that “empirical research into their actual contribution to sustainable development deserves more attention”. Nonetheless, literature on partnership outcomes remains limited (Berlie, 2010; Hansen & Spitzack, 2011; Pedersen & Pedersen, 2013; Van Huijstee et al., 2007). This study attempts to link partnership processes with partnership outcomes.

This is done by looking at possible knowledge deficiencies in the partnering process between two types of organisations from different societal sectors: businesses and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The focus of this study is on business-NGO partnerships addressing biodiversity issues. NGOs are seen as part of civil society. Civil society, also called the “third sector” or “non-profit sector”, is used to describe all aspects of society that extend beyond the realm of the public and private sectors (Teegen et al., in Yaziji & Doh, 2009, p. 3). Van Huijstee, Pollock, Glasbergen and Leroy (2011) note that, although there is no uncontested definition, civil society is commonly considered to be non-governmental and non-profit.

Similarly, the term NGO is used to refer to all organisations that are neither part of government, nor a private, for-profit enterprise (Yaziji & Doh, 2009, p. 4). NGOs are “private, voluntary, non-profit organisations whose members combine their skills, means and energies in the service of shared ideals and objectives” (Mawlawi, in Rivera-Santos & Rufin, 2010, p. 56). Rivera-Santos and Rufin state that “NGOs engage in the provision of public goals through private means” (2010, p. 56). NGOs can be categorised on the basis of two dimensions: (1) whom the NGO is designed to benefit and (2) what the NGO does. The first dimension distinguishes self-benefiting from other-benefiting NGOs. The second differentiates between advocacy NGOs and service NGOs. Figure 1.1 displays this typology of NGOs. Since this study addresses partnerships focused on biodiversity, the focus lies on advocacy, other-benefiting NGOs (bottom right in figure 1.1).

Beneficiary	Self	Alcoholics Anonymous Chess clubs	Labor unions Trade associations
	Others	Salvation Army CARE	WWF Amnesty International
		Service	Advocacy
		Type of activity	

Figure 1.1 Typology of NGOs and examples (Yaziji & Doh, 2009, p. 5)

Businesses are actors operating in the market sphere. Corporate citizenship is a term that refers to the role of businesses as responsible actors in the community they are embedded in (Battisti, 2009). Three stages of corporate citizenship can be distinguished, following Habisch (Habisch, in Battisti, 2009). Businesses can act as sponsor, partner or citizen. As sponsor, businesses contribute money,

products, services and human resources to the community. In the case of businesses as partners, they aim to address problems in the community by working with partners from other sectors. When seen as citizens, businesses take overall responsibility to ensure sustainable societal development (Battisti, 2009, p. 96). The second stage of corporate citizenship, businesses as partners, is particularly relevant when addressing partnerships between businesses and non-governmental organisations.

This study is part of a graduation research and is carried out in cooperation with ARCADIS. ARCADIS is interested in developments concerning governance, also including partnerships. ARCADIS seeks to gain more knowledge about the collaboration processes within partnerships, and wants to examine what possible role external parties can play in assisting partnerships in international biodiversity projects. Based on information found in literature and interviews, this thesis ultimately seeks to explore the possible role of ARCADIS in supporting business-NGO partnerships by analysing potential knowledge gaps partnering organisations experience when cooperating.

1.2 Research objective

As was mentioned in the previous section, this study attempts to identify possible knowledge gaps that businesses and NGOs encounter when engaging in partnerships focused on biodiversity. The objective of this study is to:

Analyse the formation, implementation and evaluation stages in the partnership process in order to identify the potential challenges that businesses and NGOs face when engaging in partnerships focused on biodiversity and to explore how third parties can contribute to alleviate these challenges.

The three different stages mentioned in this research objective are partnership formation, implementation and evaluation. The formation of a partnership is a process that starts prior to the existence of a partnership relationship, after which it proceeds from the initial stages to the maturity stage and thereafter (Seitanidi, 2010). Within this stage, the focus lies on the partners' organisational characteristics, the evolution of the relationship and the partners' motives. The stage of partnership implementation refers to the interactions between the parties within their relationship. Here, the analysis focuses on partnership building and partner dynamics (Seitanidi, 2010). Partnership evaluation refers to the measurement of partnerships results, both within the partnering process (such as changed relationships or organisational structures) as in results on the ground (e.g. improved biodiversity). Partnership outcomes include organisational, social and societal benefits (Seitanidi, 2010).

1.2.1 Societal relevance

Visseren-Hamakers states that biodiversity is a major environmental field and "one of the main and established international environmental issues" (2009, p. 14). The complexity of the issue, for instance caused by its global and interconnected character, makes it difficult for the international community to reach biodiversity targets. New governance mechanisms such as partnerships may contribute to slowing down or halting biodiversity loss. However, in order for businesses and NGOs

to really contribute to biodiversity issues, it will be necessary for the partnership to actually achieve results. By analysing different phases in the partnership process and by identifying knowledge gaps or other shortcomings within these phases this study contributes to a better understanding of the partnership process. This may be relevant to practitioners in NGOs and businesses, and - although not being the focus for this study - as well for governmental actors. By studying the possible role for external parties, such as ARCADIS, within partnerships this thesis is also relevant for external experts, facilitators or advisors who seek to contribute to business-NGO partnerships.

1.3 Theoretical framework

When conducting scientific research, every study needs to be based on certain analytical or theoretical frameworks to organise the research findings. The theoretical framework for this study follows in chapter 2. However, the main theoretical concepts are briefly introduced here in order to give a first insight.

Governance

Today, the concept of governance is generally understood as the practices through which societies are governed. Modern liberal democracies are seen as consisting out of three institutional domains or spheres: state, market and civil society. Whereas these three spheres in the past were viewed as separate, recent decades have seen a shift to a view that stresses the interdependencies between state, market and civil society. This shift is often referred to as 'the shift from government to governance' (Glasbergen, 2011). Some theorists associate the concept with *new* forms of socio/political interaction, while others use it to describe *different ways* in which co-ordination is achieved (Meadowcroft, 2007). Further elaboration on the concept of governance follows in chapter 2 of this thesis.

Biodiversity

During the 1980s and 1990s, the concept of biological diversity, or biodiversity, gradually gained global recognition. In previous years the concept of nature conservation was used in conservation agreements. However, nature conservation policy had several shortcomings, for example because of its limited scope and the conflicts it provoked between environmental groups and 'user groups' (such as farmers or logging companies) (Arts, 2000). To overcome these shortcomings the concept of biological diversity was introduced. Biological diversity refers to "the variability among living organisms from all sources, including, *inter alia*, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part: this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems" (UNEP, 1992, p. 3). This notion of biodiversity makes the concept much broader than the traditional concept of nature conservation (Arts, 2000).

Business-NGO Partnerships

Whereas the relationship between NGOs and businesses traditionally used to be characterised by mistrust and conflict, partnerships are now promoted by companies, international agencies and NGOs as the most effective way to reach sustainable development (Pedersen & Pedersen, 2013). Partnerships are considered to have high potential outcomes because of the diverse and complementary resources that businesses and NGOs bring to the collaboration. However, because of their differing culture and language, NGOs and businesses may encounter some challenges when

partnering. In chapter 2, two main challenges are addressed: first, that businesses and NGOs have inherently conflicting interests and logics, and second, the fact that partnerships are a new and developing instrument for sustainable development.

Organisational aspects and collaboration challenges

Every organisation has to possess several organisational elements (e.g. strategic management and supporting staff), it has to structure its organisational system and must coordinate its workers. How this is shaped is different for every organisation and depends on an organisation's sector, size, age, and other factors. Establishing a new organisation, such as a partnership, therefore provides several practical challenges. A partnership implies the cooperation of two organisations, which brings about additional collaboration challenges. The balance of power, inter-organisational communication and dealing with differing cultures and languages are examples of these collaboration challenges. These organisational challenges are addressed in further detail in chapter 2.

Based on the above, figure 1.2 displays a research model that visualises the structure of this study.

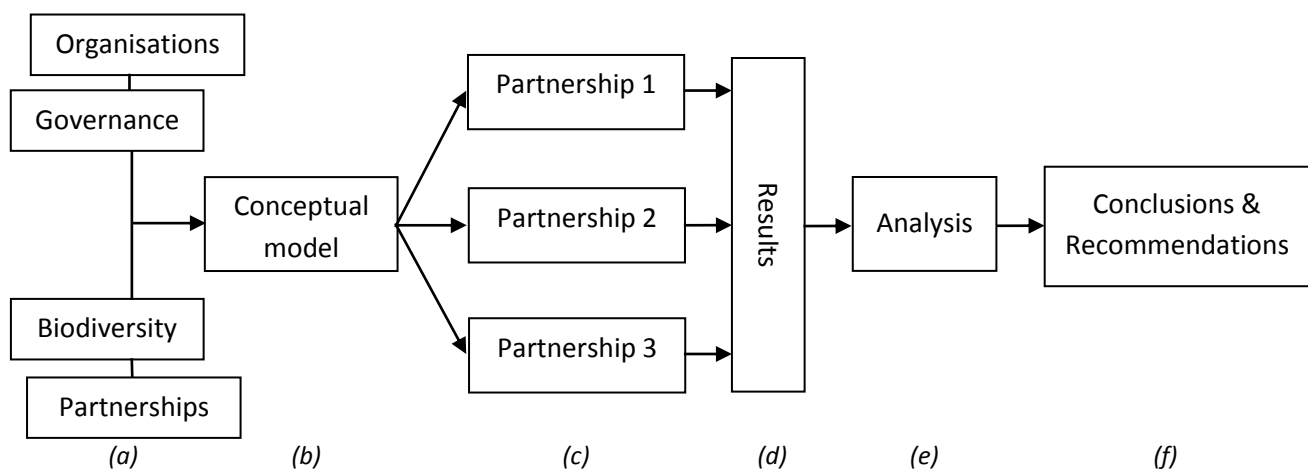


Figure 1.2 Research model

(a) Building upon knowledge from literature on governance, biodiversity, partnerships and organisation theory, (b) a conceptual model is composed (see chapter 2). This model is operationalized and used to (c) analyse three partnership cases. (d) The empirical results found in the three partnership cases are compared and evaluated. (e) After analysing these results, it is possible to (f) formulate conclusions. Based on these conclusions, recommendations are formulated, both for practitioners working at NGOs and businesses as for third parties such as ARCADIS.

1.3.1 Scientific relevance

Partnerships between actors from the market and civil society sectors are a relatively new addition to the institutional spectrum of forms of collaboration. As market and civil society actors have very different cultural backgrounds, it is likely that partnering organisations encounter certain challenges in their collaborative efforts. It is therefore scientifically relevant to study the inner workings of these partnerships in order to analyse which challenges partnering organisations encounter and what causes them. Also, as was noted in the introduction to this chapter, literature on partnerships mainly

focuses on the collaboration process, while paying less attention to the outcomes and results of partnerships. In addition to this lack of attention on outcomes and results, literature on partnerships also pays less attention to the potential role of external parties in supporting partnering organisations. By including the evaluation stage of the partnership process in this study and by looking at the possible role for external parties, this thesis attempts to contribute to the further refinement of theories on business-NGO cooperation in this respect.

1.4 Research questions

Central research question

The objective of this study is to identify possible knowledge gaps and defects in capacities that businesses and NGOs encounter when engaging in partnerships focused on biodiversity. This leads to the following central research question:

What challenges do businesses and non-governmental organizations face when engaging in strategic biodiversity partnerships during the formation, implementation and evaluation stages of the partnership process and how can third parties contribute to alleviate these problems?

This central question is answered by using three *sub-questions*. The first sub-question focuses on the motives for businesses and NGOs for engaging in partnerships with each other. As the partnering organisations in business-NGO partnerships have different backgrounds and goals, their motives for engaging in partnerships are likely to be different as well. To what extent this is the case is also analysed, which makes the first sub-question:

1. What are the motives for businesses and non-governmental organisations to engage in partnerships and to what extent are these motives similar?

The second sub-question in this study focuses more specifically on the potential challenges businesses and NGOs encounter when engaging in a partnership. Three different partnership stages are distinguished to structure the analysis: partnership formation, partnership implementation and partnership evaluation. This results in the following sub-question:

2. What major challenges do businesses and non-governmental organisations face during the formation, implementation and evaluation of the partnership?

Building upon the challenges found in sub-question two, the third and last sub-question analyses the potential role for external parties in supporting business-NGO partnerships. By asking partner organisations representatives to what extent they see a role for an external party it is also possible to examine if these organisations are receptive to the idea of a third party supporting the partnership. This leads to the last sub-question being:

3. To what extent can external parties support business-NGO partnerships?

1.5 Thesis outline

Following this first introductory chapter, chapter 2 addresses the theoretical framework of this study. This chapter reviews scientific literature on the shift from government to governance, on the shift from nature protection to biodiversity, on business-NGO partnerships, and on organisational aspects and collaboration challenges, ultimately leading to the visualisation of this framework in a conceptual model. Chapter 3 elaborates on the methodological research approach, after which we enter the empirical section of this thesis. Chapter 4 gives an insight in the partnership cases studied by describing and analysing the information found in interviews and literature on the partnerships between BirdLife International and HeidelbergCement, between WNF and Eneco and between Wetlands International and Royal Dutch Shell. Based on the results of this analysis, chapter 5 presents the conclusion of this research, accompanied by a reflection and recommendations for practitioners in business-NGO partnerships, as well as for external supporting parties.

2 Theoretical framework

As was stated in section 1.3, this chapter addresses the theoretical framework for this study. Four theoretical concepts are described and interconnected. First, paragraph 2.1 addresses the shift from government to governance. Second, paragraph 2.2 describes the shift from nature protection to biodiversity. Third, paragraph 2.3 links the previous two concepts to the emergence of business-NGO partnerships. Fourth, paragraph 2.4 addresses the organisational aspects and collaboration challenges which businesses and NGOs potentially have to deal with when the two organisations start to cooperate. Finally, paragraph 2.5 combines all concepts by designing a conceptual model.

2.1 From government to governance

Modern liberal democracies are viewed as consisting of three institutional domains or spheres: state, market and civil society (Glasbergen, 2011; Van Huijstee, Pollock, Glasbergen & Leroy, 2011). In the classical view on governing, the boundaries between these three spheres are strict and cannot be crossed. According to this view, societal governing is the exclusive task of the government (state), and is organized through hierarchies. However, recent decades have seen a shift in the tasks and responsibilities of the three spheres. Boundaries separating the spheres are fading and more emphasis is put on the interdependencies between state, market and civil society (Glasbergen, 2011). This development is often referred to as the *shift from government to governance*.

Over the past decades, the term ‘governance’ has been increasingly used to discuss the changing responsibilities of public authorities and the varied ways how modern society is governed (Meadowcroft, 2007). The shift from government to governance reflects a new role for the state, but also for market and civil society. Within this new view, public choices have to be made in a context where multiple actors from multiple spheres are involved. This makes actors from market and civil society responsible for public issues as well (Glasbergen, 2011). The governing style of the state has shifted from ‘command and control’ towards a more ‘enabling’ style (Peters & Pierre, 2001), in which the state enables a debate between the three spheres. In this light, business-NGO partnerships can even be seen as governance *without* government, as state actors are not included in these arrangements.

Contemporary use of the term ‘governance’ is shaped by debates about ‘good governance’. Although the definitions of international bodies differ, ‘governance’ today is generally understood by referring to practices through which societies are governed (Meadowcroft, 2007). The United Nations, for example, is one of the international bodies that promotes good (public) governance. According to the vision of the UN, good governance includes eight main principles: rule of law, consensus-building, participation, responsiveness, transparency, accountability, equitability and inclusiveness, and effectiveness and efficiency (Crabbé & Leroy, 2008). These criteria can be seen as a kind of benchmark for good public governance. Within political science ‘governance’ is broadly used in two distinct ways by different groups of scientists. Some theorists associate governance with *new forms* of socio/political interaction, while others use governance as a more general term that embraces *the different ways* in which co-ordination is achieved (Meadowcroft, 2007, p. 300).

Pattberg (2004) distinguishes between three forms of governance that have differing purposes and actor-constellations: public, hybrid and private governance. The purpose of the first form of governance, public governance, relates to “the provision of services and implementation of international norms through comprehensive or issue specific international organisations, as well as rule-making in international negotiations” (Pattberg, 2004, p. 54). The actors involved include international organisations, governments and government agencies. Hybrid forms of governance are often referred to as public-private partnerships (PPP), but may also include other cooperative arrangements between private and public actors. Pattberg’s third form of governance is of particular interest for the purpose of this study. This third form of governance is based on the sole involvement of private actors. The purpose of this form of governance relates to “the establishment and maintenance of global public goods through service provision, rule-making and its implication” (Pattberg, 2004, p. 54). Private actor-constellations include the involvement of firms, business associations, advocacy networks, think tanks and non-profit organisations.

2.2 From nature protection to biodiversity

During the 1980s and 1990s, the concept of biological diversity, or biodiversity, gradually gained global recognition. Traditionally, the protection of the diversity of species on Earth was addressed by establishing sectoral conservation agreements at a global level. One of the main objectives of such an agreement was “to protect nature from adverse human intervention” (Arts, 2000, p. 122). The establishment of protected areas, or nature parks, was the main policy instrument to achieve this objective. The establishment of these protected areas, however, was not sufficient to protect the Earth’s diversity of species because of the fact that the number of nature parks was simply too small to have any real effect. Also, when looking at the legal aspect of nature conservation, the concept of protected areas placed natural environments outside these areas beyond the law (Arts, 2000), thereby making these environments extra vulnerable. In addition, the concept also provoked conflicts between conservation groups, who wish to *conserve* rural areas, and user groups (such as farmers or logging companies), who wish to *develop* these areas (Arts, 2000).

To overcome these shortcomings the notion of biological diversity was introduced in 1984 by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Biological diversity was defined as “the variability among living organisms from all sources, including, *inter alia*, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part: this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems” (UNEP, 1992, p. 3). Three levels of biological diversity are distinguished within this definition: ecosystem diversity, species diversity and genetic diversity (Hannigan, 2006). Similarly, Arts notes that the concept of biological diversity incorporates three main areas of concern: (1) problems relating to genetic erosion and genetic engineering, (2) endangering and extinction of species, and (3) destruction and loss of ecosystems (2000, p. 123). Bringing together these three different aspects makes biological diversity as a concept more comprehensive in comparison to the traditional concept of nature conservation.

In 1987, a few years after its introduction, the concept of biological diversity was adopted by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and introduced into a global convention: the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), which was designed to address issues concerning the protection of biodiversity on a global scale (Arts, 2000). Successive to the introduction of the concept,

a second innovation in international nature conservation policies was the emphasis on the sustainable use and the sharing of benefits of biodiversity (Arts, 2000). The notion of sustainable use linked biodiversity to economic development, which elevated biodiversity loss from a purely environmental problem to a wider socio-political problem (Hannigan, 2006). An example of an initiative that connects the concept of biodiversity with economic benefits (the so-called 'ecosystem services') is The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB). The objective of TEEB is to assess the economic implications of changes in biodiversity and ecosystems (TEEB, 2010).

A third innovation in nature conservation policies that is described by Arts (2000) was the involvement of NGOs and other actors from the civil society sphere in the drafting and implementation process of the CBD. A fourth and final innovation was that the protection of biodiversity complemented the previous approach that was solely focused on establishing protected areas (Arts, 2000). According to the CBD, protecting biodiversity should take place everywhere, not only in protected areas. Summarising, in addition to a shift from government to governance, it is possible to observe a second shift: *the shift from nature protection to biodiversity*.

2.3 Business-NGO partnerships

As can be concluded from the above, both the shift from government to governance and the shift from nature protection to biodiversity refer to an increasing involvement of market and civil society actors in addressing societal and environmental issues. The growing involvement of market and civil society parties has resulted in the formation of new collaborative arrangements. Over the past decades, partnerships and other (public-) private governance mechanisms have become increasingly recognised as ways to promote sustainable development (Visseren-Hamakers, Leroy & Glasbergen, 2012). Partnerships are seen as forms of intersectoral or cross-sector collaboration: collaboration between the different sectors or spheres of society (state, market and civil society). Van Huijstee, Francken and Leroy define intersectoral partnerships as "collaborative agreements in which actors from two or more spheres of society (state, market and civil society) are involved in a non-hierarchical process, through which these actors strive for a sustainability goal" (2007, p. 77). Given that this study in particular focuses on partnerships between business and NGOs, this definition can be used and modified to define business-NGO partnerships as *collaborative agreements in which actors from market and civil society spheres are involved in a non-hierarchical process, through which these actors strive for a sustainability goal*.

The scientific literature on partnerships distinguishes two major perspectives. The first perspective is an institutional perspective on partnerships, in which partnerships are seen as "new arrangements in the environmental governance regime" (Van Huijstee et al., 2007, p. 76). The focus here lies on the role that partnerships serve in the society at large. Within this first perspective, partnerships are understood as new institutional arrangements that can contribute to the governance of environmental and related issues. The second perspective on partnerships is an actor perspective, in which partnerships are studied as "instruments for the advancement of actor-specific goals" (Van Huijstee et al., 2007, p. 81). This approach focuses on the functioning of partnerships, and sees partnerships as an instrument to achieve certain goals or to solve specific problems of individual actors. Authors choosing this perspective look more into the partnerships themselves, while society only serves as a background for the study (Van Huijstee et al., 2007). When working from this

perspective, the role of partnerships in the society at large is of secondary importance. This study also uses this actor perspective to analyse business-NGO partnerships. When working from this perspective, the partnership itself is the object of the study, whilst the focus is less on the instrumental value of partnerships compared to other forms of governance.

Partnerships between actors from different sectors are promising instruments for addressing challenging societal problems. Getha-Taylor (2012) notes that partnerships can help stretch resources, overcome past failures and address shared priorities. As was mentioned in the above, this study specifically focuses on partnerships between businesses and NGOs. The hypothesis of this study is that these partnerships between businesses and NGOs are troubled by two main challenges. Firstly, the inherently conflicting core logics and the differing motives of the parties involved, and secondly, the fact that these collaboration arrangements are a new and still developing concept.

2.3.1 Inherently conflicting core logics and differing motives

Interactions between for-profit and non-profit organisations do not always flow naturally, caused by their inherently conflicting core logics and their differing motives. Jamali and Keshishian state that “developing and sustaining partnerships is a complex and dynamic process, especially when the parties involved come from different sectors and have different cultures and philosophies (2008, p. 281). Similarly, Battisti notes that although partnerships between actors from different sectors potentially provide “productive and innovative potential because of their diversity and their ability to complement each other, these characteristics have a potential to cause conflict” (2009, p. 97). Van Huijstee et al. (2011) describe five areas of potential tension between the core logics of the market and civil society spheres, inspired by Waddell (2005): realm, central unit(s), power form, resources accessible and knowledge. Figure 2.1 displays an overview of the differences between the core logics of the two spheres, which are described in further detail below.

	Market sector	Civil Society sector
Realm	Economic system	Social system
Central unit(s)	Owners	Members
Power form	Money	Group
Resources accessible	Capital/financial assets	Volunteer/membership assets
Knowledge	Economic/business	Community/issue

Figure 2.1 Areas of potential tension between market and civil society (Van Huijstee et al., 2011, p. 47)

First of all, actors from the market and civil society spheres are operating within different realms. Businesses operate within an economic system, whilst NGOs work within a social realm. In case of a business-NGO partnership, the economic realm is likely to dominate the created area of overlap, which may pose risks for NGOs as they have to remain rooted in the social realm to avoid criticisms of having been co-opted by the market (Van Huijstee et al., 2011). Secondly, businesses and NGOs have different core stakeholders. Whereas for businesses this refers to the company’s owners or shareholders, for NGOs it includes the organisation’s members which are representing wider community interests (Van Huijstee et al., 2011). When cooperating, both parties have to find a common ground to work on, whilst making sure that they can sell their agreement to their respective central units, who might potentially have conflicting interests. A third difference can be found in the

variety of power forms that businesses and NGOs possess. A business derives its power mainly from money, whilst a NGO acquires its power from different factors, such as collective group membership and a high degree of societal trust (Van Huijstee et al., 2011). Power can also be derived from the size and professional nature of the involved business and NGO. Partnerships are characterised by complex power interplays, but neither market nor civil society has an advantage over the other actor per se (Van Huijstee et al., 2011).

A fourth difference is that businesses and NGOs possess different resources. In the context of a partnership, businesses bring economic resources as well as the potential to act as an example for other businesses within their sector. NGOs, on the other hand, possess environmental expertise, public trust and the ability to improve the image of companies. These resources potentially complement each other. However, the trade-off between the different assets can provide a challenge, in particular for the NGO partner as it has to maintain its independence and public integrity while accepting a business' financial assets (Van Huijstee et al., 2011). The fifth and final difference in core logics between market and civil society actors is their respective knowledge base. Whereas a market actor has economic or business knowledge, a civil society actor possesses community knowledge or knowledge on particular issues. Van Huijstee et al. (2011) note that it is likely that economic or business knowledge will be dominant in a partnership, which may endanger a NGO's structural independence from the market sector.

In addition to these inherently conflicting core logics, businesses and NGOs also have different individual motives for participating in partnerships with each other. Jamali and Keshishian (2008) mention several motives for businesses and NGOs to engage in partnerships with each other. For businesses, the most important motives are increased legitimacy, positive reputation effects, increased social status, recognition, and opportunities for learning in the field of corporate social responsibility (CSR). For NGOs, on the other hand, motives include increased competition for limited funding, escalating societal needs, hostile environmental forces, and sustainability concerns. Van Huijstee et al. (2007) describe similar motives. They mention that NGOs are particularly interested in the capabilities and resources that business actors possess, and in the opportunity a partnership offers to scale up their activities. Businesses, on the other hand, are interested in the specialist knowledge and expertise of NGOs, in gaining more legitimacy or credibility, and as well as for 'eco-marketing reasons'. However, having different motives does not necessarily have to lead to conflicts. Partnering organisations can make trade-offs by giving up some of their conflicting interests in order to prevent or reduce the risk of tensions.

Issues that occur in business-NGO partnership are in particular related to mistrust, misunderstanding and power imbalances (Kolk, Dolen & Vock, 2010). Mistrust can be the result of a business' concerns related to the provision of confidential information with the NGO partner, or the NGO's confidence in the business partner's objective for social improvement, rather than only benefits for public relations purposes. Second, misunderstandings can be caused by diverging objectives and expectations of both partners, particularly during the early stages of the partnership. Power imbalances can be created by both partners, either by the higher brand equity and better stakeholder relationships of a NGO, or the financial resources of the business partner. However, the differences between the two sectors do not necessarily have to provide cooperation problems. As Pedersen & Pedersen for instance state: "Having different motives for partnerships is, in itself, not a problem as long as the partners are

aware of the differences” (2013, p. 8). As was mentioned earlier, partners can also make trade-offs in order to cope with their differing motives.

2.3.2 *New and developing*

Whereas the relationship between businesses and NGOs traditionally used to be characterised by mistrust and confrontation, partnerships are now promoted as the most effective way to reach sustainable development (Pedersen & Pedersen, 2013; Rondinelli & London, 2003). This rise of the partnership concept is often related to the disappointment with traditional structures and approaches to solve global challenges and address common needs (Getha-Taylor, 2012; Pedersen & Pedersen, 2013). Whereas social and societal problems used to be held the responsibility of the public sector, actors from civil society gradually took over some of these responsibilities, either proactively or because of the desire of the public sector to outsource risky or costly responsibilities (Seitanidi, 2008). In addition, in the context of corporate social responsibility (CSR), actors from the market sphere have begun to value the positive reputational benefits that come with taking some responsibilities for social problems (Seitanidi, 2008).

In terms of outcomes, partnerships between market and civil society actors have a high potential because partnering organisations have, as was also described above, diverse and complementary competencies and resources which can be drawn together in order to achieve certain goals more effectively. Jamali and Keshishian state that “Businesses have enormous resources at their disposal and are differentiated by their managerial efficiency, technical expertise, creativity, dynamism, and access to finance” (2009, p. 279). NGOs can complement these business resources, as they possess expertise and knowledge on what has to be done, are mission driven, and are better in reaching the impoverished (Jamali & Keshishian, 2009).

Partnerships between NGOs and businesses often initially start out as voluntary and temporary collaboration arrangements. Such a collaboration arrangement can evolve over time, ultimately leading to more professional and institutionalised forms of collaboration. Following Austin (2000), three major stages within the partnering process can be distinguished. The first stage is the philanthropic stage, in which the nature of the relationship between business and NGO is characterised as that of a charitable donor and recipient. Second is the transactional stage, in which the parties involved exchange resources to address certain activities. The third and final stage is the integrative stage. This is where “the partners’ missions, people, and activities begin to merge into more collective action and organizational integration” (Austin, 2000, p. 71). A visualisation of the three different stages is displayed in figure 2.2.

<i>Nature of Relationship</i>	<i>Stage I (Philanthropic)</i>		<i>Stage II (Transactional)</i>		<i>Stage III (Integrative)</i>
Level of engagement	Low	⇒	⇒	⇒	High
Importance to mission	Peripheral	⇒	⇒	⇒	Central
Magnitude of resources	Small	⇒	⇒	⇒	Big
Scope of activities	Narrow	⇒	⇒	⇒	Broad
Interaction level	Infrequent	⇒	⇒	⇒	Intensive
Managerial complexity	Simple	⇒	⇒	⇒	Complex
Strategic value	Minor	⇒	⇒	⇒	Major

Figure 2.2 Collaboration Continuum (Austin, 2000, p. 72)

As partnerships between businesses and NGOs evolve over time and become more complex, moving from left to right in figure 2.2, partnerships gradually become more institutionalised, ultimately leading to the emergence of organisation-like structures (Van Huijstee, 2010). However, for a partnership to move from stage I to stage III is not self-evident and does not follow automatically, yet yields debate and controversy. This process brings with it certain challenges, which are addressed in the next section.

2.4 Organisational aspects and collaboration challenges

So far, scientific literature on partnerships departing from an organisational perspective is rather limited. Therefore, in this study, partnerships are analysed as organisations ‘in statu nascendi’: starting as voluntary, temporary, small-scale arrangements, gradually evolving into more institutionalised and professional organisation-like structures. The evolution of a partnership brings with it several organisational aspects and collaboration challenges, which are addressed in further detail below.

2.4.1 Practical organisational challenges

Mintzberg (1980) distinguishes five basic elements of an organisation. (1) The *operating core* (employees who produce the basis products and services or directly support this process), (2) the *strategic apex* (an organisation’s top management and personal staff), (3) the *middle line* (managers sitting between the operating core and strategic apex), (4) the *technostructure* (an organisations’ analysts, such as accountants and work schedulers), and (5) the *support staff* (groups that provide indirect support to the organisation, e.g. public relations or cafeteria). The relevance of these elements depends on the type and size of the organisation at hand.

Mintzberg (1980) also describes several tasks for organisations to coordinate their work and to manage their organisation. Some sort of supervision might be necessary to coordinate an organisation’s workers, work processes, outputs and skills must be standardized, and workers have to communicate with each other. Moreover, the organisation has to structure its organisation into certain units, train new employees, plan its actions, control its performance, etc.

In summary, to function adequately, organisations need to have certain functional structures in place, they have to structure their organisational system, and they must coordinate their workers. This provides several practical challenges that have to be taken into account when forming new organisational structures, such as partnerships. In the case of partnerships, these organisational structures are the result of a combined effort of two different organisations. The collaboration process that takes place between two organisations brings about additional aspects and challenges.

2.4.2 Collaboration challenges

Mintzberg, Jorgensen, Dougherty and Westley (1996) address several aspects important to collaboration. One of the factors that Mintzberg et al. address is the importance of communication for successful collaboration. Another important aspect is the balance of power. Various researchers have shown that power imbalances between collaboration participants appear to be one of the main

reasons for failure of inter-organisational collaboration (Mintzberg et al., 1996). Mastery of the issues by collaboration managers, which is very important in relationships within a vertical hierarchy, can backfire in an inter-organisational context. Too much preparation may result in a lack of flexibility when formulating certain goals or policy measures, ultimately leading to disagreement rather than agreement (Mintzberg et al., 1996).

Every inter-organisational collaboration effort brings with it several organisational challenges. Huxham (2000) distinguishes two areas that can seriously affect the ability of collaborations to deliver their potential: structural complexity and diversity. Firstly, collaborative governance systems contain structures that display very complex features. Huxham (2000) differentiates between six inter-related dimensions of structural complexity: working relations, organizational membership, governance and task structures, pluralism, ambiguity and dynamics. The first dimension of structural complexity refers to the nature of the working relationship between the organisations. The working relationship within collaborations can differ from simple forms, for example when a limited number of individuals from both organisations communicate through regular meetings, to more complex forms, for example when a large number of individuals collaborate in a variety of ways and on a variety of levels. The second dimension Huxham distinguishes, organisational membership, refers to the degree to which collaboration members can be seen as organisations. Whereas some collaboration members will be backed by organisations that also provide certain resources, other members are involved only on the basis of their personal capacity. Huxham states: "The degree to which a whole organization is involved, rather than just an individual, generally varies from one member to another" (2000, p. 342).

The third dimension of structural complexity concerns governance and task structures within the collaboration arrangement. Collaborations can be built on regular meetings of committees with representatives from both organisations, but often collaboration takes place on the basis of committees on several levels. Partnering organisations customarily also directly employ staff and in some cases even new small-scale organisations are created. The fourth dimension refers to pluralism, as the number of partnerships and the variety of different subjects that are addressed continues to expand. This results in a complex system of inter-linked collaboration efforts, where one partnership's action can influence the working environments of other partnerships. Huxham identifies ambiguity as a fifth dimension of structural complexity. Ambiguity relates to the level of clarity about who collaboration members actually are, what they represent and what their capacities are. A lack of clarity on these aspects can potentially lead to confusion among the collaborating parties. The sixth and final dimension of structural complexity refers to the dynamics of collaborating. Over time, partnerships can change their purpose, the individuals involved can take on new roles or move out of partnerships, and even the partner organisations may change.

In addition to structural aspects, collaborative advantage also depends on the diversity of the members, giving the collaboration the potential to create synergy (Huxham, 2000). Diversity, however, also brings with it a context of possible ways for success to fall apart. Within this aspect, Huxham distinguishes another three dimensions: resources and aims, language and culture, and power. The first dimension of diversity refers to the different resources and aims that organisations bring to the partnership. Although these different resources provide the basis for collaborative advantage, they also relate to the differing organisational purposes of the partners. This means that

each organisation has different or even hidden reasons for being involved in the partnership, which can potentially lead to conflict and disagreement. The second dimension of diversity concerns the language and culture of the partnering organisations. As was addressed in the previous paragraph, different organisations have different embedded professional languages and different organisational cultures, which can potentially result in friction when cooperating with each other. The third dimension of diversity refers to the real or perceived differences in power between the partner organisations. Power differences can occur when organisations feel vulnerable because of the significantly smaller or bigger scale of their partner or when individuals from one organisation have a higher status than their counterparts from the other organisation.

2.4.3 Institutionalisation of business-NGO interaction

Businesses and NGOs both have developed new organisational strategies, policies and structures to cope with their increased interaction and the corresponding challenges (Van Huijstee, 2010). Whereas businesses used to have limited or conflictual strategies regarding their interactions with NGOs, they gradually learned to anticipate potential NGO scrutiny and developed corporate engagement strategies concerning their engagement with NGOs. NGOs similarly developed organisational strategies to cope with their increased interactions with businesses, gradually institutionalising their approach to deal with business partnerships.

Van Huijstee (2010) notes that, in addition to these strategies, businesses and NGOs have also developed new organisational policies in regard to their increased interaction with each other. Companies have started to develop a wide range of CSR policies, partly driven by their cooperation with NGOs, but also because of the pressure businesses experience from NGOs. These CSR policies now start to gradually institutionalise within these business organisations. The partnering strategies of NGOs in turn have transformed into more formal policies, or 'rules of conduct'. By doing so, NGOs standardise the decision making processes related the choice of partners, development of partnerships and management of projects to maximise the partnership's effects while minimising the risks of legitimacy loss or loss of autonomy (Van Huijstee, 2010).

The increased interaction between businesses and NGOs also results in the development of new organisational structures within both organisations to manage their cooperation (Van Huijstee, 2010). Within the organisational structures of both businesses and NGOs, new job positions and organisational units are created to guide their inter-organisational relationships, which further institutionalises business-NGO interaction.

2.5 Conceptual model

Building upon the previous sections, figure 2.3 now displays the conceptual model of this theoretical framework.

Flowing from left to right, the model starts with the two cooperating partners: a business party and a NGO. Influenced by the shift from government to governance on the one hand and the shift from nature protection to biodiversity on the other, these two parties are motivated by a variety of factors to form a partnership in order to make a contribution to biodiversity. However, the process of

working together to achieve this contribution is affected by two groups of potential challenges, one concerning practical organisational challenges, the other concerning challenges in the collaboration process between the two organisations.

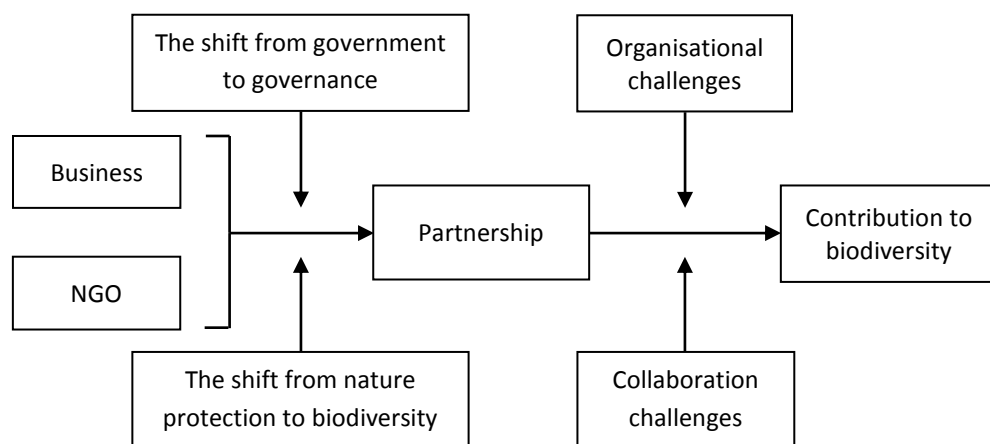


Figure 2.3 Conceptual model

3 Methodology

This thesis basically focuses on three major aspects of business-NGO partnerships. First of all, it analyses the variety of motives of businesses and NGOs for engaging in partnerships. Secondly, the partnership process is studied by looking at how the partnerships parties structure their partnerships, but also by analysing the possible obstacles these parties face when engaging in a partnership. Thirdly, it explores the potential facilitating role for third parties in supporting business-NGO partnerships. To structure the analysis of these three aspects this research project uses a certain methodological approach, which is described in further detail in this chapter.

First, paragraph 3.1 addresses the empirical philosophy in which this research is positioned. Subsequently, paragraph 3.2 describes the research strategy for this study. The criteria that were used in the selection of partnership cases are also discussed in this section. Paragraph 3.3 gives an overview of the different research materials used, as well as a description of the way in which research data is collected. Thereafter, paragraph 3.4 provides an operationalization by defining the major aspects that play a role within this study. Finally, paragraph 3.5 addresses the reliability and the validity, both internal and external, of the research approach.

3.1 Empirical philosophy

When conducting a research project, one can take several empirical philosophical starting points. This study can be partly positioned in a naturalistic tradition of doing research. Naturalism is also known other names that describe essentially the same methodological position, such as ‘positivism’, ‘empiricism’ and ‘behaviouralism’ (Moses & Knutsen, 2012). A naturalistic approach implies that the researcher believes that there is a ‘Real World’ out there, which can be discovered by thinking, observing and recording his experiences carefully. Naturalism seeks to discover and explain patterns that are assumed to exist in nature (Moses & Knutsen, 2012, p. 8). The naturalistic tradition in this study can be seen in the fact that a certain phenomenon (a partnership) is observed, and that this phenomenon can be analysed or studied.

Despite this resemblance with the naturalistic research tradition, the main philosophical tradition for this study is a constructivist approach. Constructivism “recognizes the important role of the observer and society in constructing the patterns we study as social scientists” (Moses & Knutsen, 2012, p. 9). In contrast to naturalists, constructivists note that we do not just experience the world in an objective and direct manner, but that our perceptions are influenced by the way we interpret the ‘Real World’. Moses and Knutsen state: “Consequently, constructivists recognize that people may look at the same thing and perceive it differently” (2012, p. 10). Following this constructivist tradition, the objective of this study is not to generalise its findings, but to focus the attention on certain typical aspects that are found in the analysis of business-NGO partnerships. Also this study uses a very qualitative research strategy to study these partnerships, which is illustrated in the remaining of this chapter.

3.2 Research strategy

This research uses a combination of two strategies for studying partnerships, firstly building a basis by conducting a review of scientific literature, followed by a multiple case study to gather experiences from the 'real world'. The main characteristic of a literature review is that it uses material which is produced by others. Three categories of existing material can be distinguished: literature, secondary data, and official statistical material (Verschuren & Doorwewaard, 2010). This study primarily uses existing literature, such as books, articles or papers. The scientific literature used in this research focuses on a variety of theoretical concepts: on the shift from government to governance, on the shift from nature protection to biodiversity, on business-NGO partnerships, and on organisational aspects and collaboration challenges. The results of the literature review are found in the theoretical framework in chapter 2 of this research, in which these four concepts are discussed and interconnected.

The theoretical insights derived from the literature review are next compared with experiences collected from real life partnerships. As was mentioned in the previous chapter, this study uses an actor-perspective when analysing these partnerships. Working from this perspective, the partnership itself and the processes within these collaborations are the primary objects of the study. Van Huijstee et al. state that: 'The research method most frequently used within the actor perspective is the in-depth case study' (2007, p. 82). A case study is an in-depth study into one case or a small set of cases, which aims at gaining rich, detailed information by examining aspects of a certain case in detail (Thomas, 2013). By doing so, a case study will not specifically yield information that is suited for generalisation, but does provide a detailed view which can be used to better understand other cases and similar processes. This research also uses a case study as the primary research strategy in order to retrieve in-depth information on the motives of partnership parties, as well as on the process of collaboration, which is then used to answer the central research question of this study.

Case study research is a qualitative approach in which the researcher may either study a single case or multiple cases (Creswell, 2013). This research uses a small set of three partnership cases, making this case study a multiple case study. These three cases are used to test the hypothesis of this study, which is that business-NGO partnerships are troubled by two main challenges. First, the inherently conflicting core logics and the differing motives of the businesses and NGOs involved, and secondly, the fact that these partnerships are a new and developing concept. These cases are also used to explore the possible role for facilitating parties within the partnership process. More on the selection of these three cases follows in the next section.

3.2.1 Case selection

As was mentioned above, three partnership cases are selected for this study. Prior to the selection of the three partnership cases a long-list of partnerships was composed, using partnership documents, news articles, websites and other relevant sources of information. On the basis of this list the following partnerships are chosen: between (1) BirdLife International and HeidelbergCement Group, between (2) Wetlands International and Royal Dutch Shell, and between (3) WWF Netherlands and Eneco. Given that this research specifically focuses on biodiversity partnerships, the partnerships between these parties are all addressing biodiversity issues.

While not aiming to produce generalizable information, the three partnership cases are chosen with certain criteria in mind in order to provide a relatively varied selection. A first criterion for the case selection was the sector in which the partnering business was active. The three business parties involved in this study are all active in different business sectors. HeidelbergCement Group is active in the mining sector, in which the company is the global market leader in aggregates and a prominent player in the fields of cement, concrete and other downstream activities. Royal Dutch Shell is an Anglo-Dutch multinational company that is active in the oil and gas sector, and one of the most valuable companies in the world. Eneco is a Dutch multinational company that operates in the energy sector, where it focuses on the production, trade and supply of energy.

In addition to these different business sectors the case selection also accounted for choosing a variety of different partnering NGOs, namely BirdLife International, Wetlands International and WWF Netherlands. As most NGOs have more than one partnership with a business party, choosing multiple partnerships from one NGO could potentially provide a detailed insight into the partnership process from the NGO side. However, the choice of three different partnering NGOs is expected to yield a greater wealth of information. Given that it is likely that the selected NGOs use different approaches when partnering with businesses and potentially have different motives for engaging with companies, this selection can provide a more diverse overview.

The type of partnership was another criterion in the partnership selection process. All three partnerships are examples of integrative partnerships. As was described in the previous chapter, the integrative phase of a partnership is where the missions, people and activities of both partner organisations begin to merge into frameworks with more collective action and organisational integration (Austin, 2000). Within this phase the partnership process is rather complex and institutionalised to a great extent. Choosing three integrative partnerships is expected to provide the opportunity to analyse all different targeted aspects within this study. These partnerships formulate partnership goals, implement partnership policies, and also evaluate the results of their efforts, thereby providing a basis to analyse if they possibly encounter certain obstacles within their collaboration. A criterion that is linked to the institutionalised character of the cases is the year in which the partnership was initiated. By making sure that the partnership has been active for some years it is more likely to encounter collaborative arrangements that have had some time to settle, organise and institutionalise. Figure 3.1 provides an overview of the partnerships, displaying the parties are involved, the business sectors in which they are active, the partnership type and the year of initiation.

	Partnering organisations	Business sector	Partnership type	Year of initiation
1	BirdLife International & HeidelbergCement Group	Mining	Integrative	2011
2	Wetlands International & Royal Dutch Shell	Oil & Gas	Integrative	2008
3	WWF Netherlands & Eneco	Energy	Integrative	2011

Figure 3.1 Overview of selected partnerships

3.3 Research material and data collection

A case study uses a variety of sources to collect information and data on the cases at hand, e.g. observations, interviews, audio-visual material, and documents and reports (Creswell, 2013). The remaining of this section first addresses which sources are used in this study, after which it describes the way of collecting data.

3.3.1 Research material

As was described in the above, the first part of this study consists of a literature review in order to form a basis for the remaining research. This literature review uses scientific literature in order to collect information on the shift from government to governance, on the shift from nature protection to biodiversity, on business-NGO partnerships, and on organisational aspects and collaboration challenges. The literature studied consists of books, papers and articles from scientific magazines. After analysing the scientific literature on the subject, an overview of business-NGO partnerships that focus on biodiversity was created in order to select partnership cases to study. To produce this long-list of partnership cases, information was collected using a variety of different sources, such as websites, press articles, partnership factsheets, and other relevant sources. The partnership long-list is used to select the three partnership cases that are analysed in more detail.

The analysis of these three cases is done by using two main sources of information: interviews and literature. The literature used to study the three cases is largely similar to the sources used to produce the partnership long-list (websites, press articles, etc.). However, as the three partnership cases are now studied in more detail compared to their first selection, these documents are also analysed more thoroughly. After composing a first insight in the partnership cases using the literature, semi-structured interviews are conducted with representatives of the partnering organisations, as well as with experts on the subject of partnerships. Semi-structured interviews combine a structured list of subjects to be covered together with the freedom to follow up points if necessary (Thomas, 2013). These interviews are used to verify the insights derived from the literature and to gather additional information on the motives for engaging in the partnership, the collaboration between the two parties and the potential role for facilitating parties within the partnership process.

3.3.2 Data collection

The literature used in this research is drawn from a variety of sources. The scientific literature used in the literature review is gathered mainly using the search engine and database of the Radboud University Library, Google Scholar and websites of partnership knowledge institutes, such as the Maastricht Utrecht Nijmegen Programme on Partnerships (MUNPOP) and the Partnership Resource Centre (PrC). The literature and documents that are used to analyse the three partnership cases are collected primarily through the websites of the partnering organisations as well as via news websites.

As was mentioned above, the interviews are conducted with two main groups of interviewees: representatives from partnering organisations and experts on the subject of partnerships. Whereas the expert interviews are conducted in order to collect an external view on the partnership field, the

interviews with partner organisation representatives are held to gather real-life information and experiences. The interviews with the representatives of partnering organisations are conducted using similar interview guides in order to collect comparable data and cover a variety of subjects, e.g. the motives for collaborating, the goals of the partnership, and the communication between the two parties. The structure of the expert interviews varies to a greater extent, depending on the individual expertise of the interviewee. The different interview guides used in this study are to be found in Appendix B of this report.

The interviews are preferably conducted face-to-face, as this usually results in a higher quality conversation given the fact that the researcher is also able to notice informal communication and body language of the interviewee. Most of the interviews were conducted in Dutch, given that in most cases this was the native language of both the interviewee and the researcher. Three interviews with partner organisations (BirdLife International, HeidelbergCement and one of the interviews at Shell) were done in English. The interviews are recorded, after which the recordings are processed into transcripts. A transcript is a written form of something that was originally in spoken words (Thomas, 2013). The information on the partnership case retrieved from these transcripts is next compared with the other partnership cases and combined with the original findings that were derived from the literature. An overview of interviewees is displayed in Appendix A.

Interviewees are sometimes quoted to illustrate the findings from the partnership cases. Quotes from interviews that were conducted in English are cited directly. Quotes from interviews in Dutch are translated by the researcher as literally as possible, thereby keeping in mind the original content. To clarify that these quotes are translated, the references for these quotes mention this by using the abbreviation “TbTW”, meaning “Translation by Tobias Wolters”.

3.4 Operationalization

As was described in the introduction to this chapter, this thesis focuses on three major aspects of business-NGO partnerships: the variety of motives of businesses and NGOs for engaging in partnerships, the partnership process and the possible obstacles these parties face when engaging in partnerships, and the potential facilitating role for third parties in supporting business-NGO partnerships.

The first aspect, the variety of motives for engaging in partnerships, is analysed by studying partnership documents and by directly asking business and NGO representatives about their motives to cooperate with a business or NGO in general, and more specific, their motives for choosing their respective partners. As was mentioned in section 2.3.1, the most important motives for businesses to partner with NGOs are the specialist knowledge and expertise of NGOs, increased legitimacy and credibility, positive reputation effects, increased social status, recognition and opportunities for learning in the field of corporate social responsibility. For NGOs, the main motives include the interest in capabilities and resources that businesses can offer, the opportunity to scale up their activities, increased competition of limited funding, escalating societal needs, hostile environmental forces and sustainability concerns. When addressing the motives for collaborating, interviewees were also asked about the objectives of the partnership, as these two subjects are closely related.

The second aspect, the partnership process and the possible obstacles businesses and NGOs face when engaging in partnerships, is studied in a similar way, namely by document analysis and interviews with partner organisations. As described in section 1.2, the partnership process is divided into three subsequent stages: partnership formation, implementation and evaluation. These three stages are studied by looking at how the partner organisations run through these stages, as well as by analysing the potential obstacles they face within the partnership process. In order to collect additional information on the partnership process, interviewees are also asked about the process of communicating with each other. As stated in section 2.3, it is expected that business-NGO partnerships face two main challenges: the inherently conflicting core logics and the differing motives of the parties involved, and the fact that these collaboration arrangements are a new and still developing concept. Asking partner organisation representatives which obstacles they encountered during the three partnership stages makes it possible to verify the insights that derived from the review of scientific literature.

Finally, the third aspect, the potential facilitating role for third parties within business-NGO partnerships, is explored by interviewing experts in the field of partnerships as well as by asking partner organisation representatives directly if they see a possible role for third parties in the partnership process to help address some of the challenges partner organisations face.

3.5 Reliability and validity

LeCompte and Goetz state that “In all fields that engage in scientific inquiry, reliability and validity of findings are important” (1982, p. 31). This section gives some attention to these aspects by addressing the reliability and validity, both internal and external, of this research.

3.5.1 Reliability

Thomas states that “reliability refers to the extent to which a research instrument such as a test will give the same result on different occasions” (2013, p. 138). In this study reliability refers to the extent to which the study can be replicated and if other researchers would generate similar conclusions as the original researcher (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982), as no real physical research instruments are used. However, when using a qualitative research approach, perfect reliability is hard to accomplish because the strategy for collecting data, for example conducting interviews, is hard to copy a hundred percent. Therefore, in order to provide reliable results, it is important for a researcher to give an insight in his way of collecting data as well as in the interpretation of data and the way it is processed.

This chapter contributes to the provision of this insight, by describing the empirical starting point of this study, the research strategy, the way of selecting partnership cases, the research material, the manner of collecting data, which interviewees are interviewed and the operationalization of the theoretical concepts. Also, adding the interview guides that were used in the interviews (see Appendix B) makes it possible to follow a similar approach as the original researcher, and even makes it possible to conduct similar interviews.

3.5.2 Internal and external validity

LeCompte and Goetz state that “internal validity refers to the extent of which scientific observations and measurements are authentic representations of some reality” (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982, p. 32). Internal validity thus addresses the extent to which a study’s findings are legitimate. In this study, internal validity is taken into account in the literature review as well as in the three case studies. The validity of the findings from the literature review is increased by the fact that a variety of different articles, books and authors is used to form the first basis of the research. The validity of these first findings is further enhanced by comparing real-life experiences from three partnership cases. The respective validity of the real-life insights into these partnerships is reinforced by making sure that representatives from both sides of the partnership are interviewed, thereby collecting information from both sides of the story.

The internal validity of the research is further enhanced by the fact that this study was conducted in a similar way by Jade Brunsting, who also is a master’s student of Social and Political Sciences of the Environment, using the approximately the same research structure but with different partnership cases. This provided the opportunity to analyse if findings, observations and conclusions from both studies corresponded to some extent, thereby increasing the internal validity of both studies. The internal validity is also strengthened by making sure that interviewees have a similar understanding of certain concepts and terms as how they are used in this study. The validity of a concept was ensured by using multiple questions in which different synonyms were used to address a certain subject. For example, when asking interviewees about their motives for engaging in a partnership, multiple questions were asked using terms like ‘motives’, ‘reasons’ and ‘considerations’.

External validity refers to “the degree to which such representations may be compared legitimately across groups” (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982, p. 32). External validity thus represents the degree of generalizability of a study’s findings. This study does not pursue a high external validity or generalizability of its empirical findings. A case study approach implies that one case or a small number of cases is studied in depth. Given that the studied cases only represent a small sample of the whole partnership spectrum, the selected cases are not comprehensive enough to ensure a valid representation of every possible partnership case. Therefore, the external validity of this study probably is relatively limited.

4 Analysing the partnership cases

This chapter describes and discusses the empirical findings from the three partnership case studies. The partnership between BirdLife International and HeidelbergCement is addressed in paragraph 4.1, followed by the partnership between WNF and Eneco in paragraph 4.2 and the partnership between Wetlands International and Royal Dutch Shell in paragraph 4.3. These paragraphs are structured in the same way. In order to introduce the partners, each paragraph starts with a short description of the partnering organisations. Subsequently, the next section continues with analysing the motives for each organisation to engage in a partnership. After that, the next section describes the goals or objectives of the partnership. Next, the three different partnership stages (formation, implementation and evaluation) are addressed, thereby also paying attention to the challenges partnering organisations encounter in each individual stage. Thereafter, these challenges are discussed in more detail when focusing on the collaboration challenges of the partnership. Finally, each paragraph is concluded by discussing the potential role for a third party.

4.1 The BirdLife International – HeidelbergCement partnership

4.1.1 The partnering organisations



BirdLife International is one of the world's largest nature conservation networks, with 120 domestic partners organisations worldwide (e.g. 'Vogelbescherming' in the Netherlands), and more than 13 million members and supporters. BirdLife's international secretariat acts as an umbrella organisation for its partners by coordinating and supporting the network. The organisation was founded in 1922 and strives to conserve birds, their habitats and global biodiversity. BirdLife does this by focusing on the sustainable use of natural resources. As part of its global strategy BirdLife tries to work with businesses in order to achieve sustainable use of natural resources (BirdLife International, n.d.a).

HEIDELBERGCEMENT

HeidelbergCement is a global market leader in aggregates and a prominent player in the fields of cement, concrete, and other downstream activities. The company is one of the world's largest manufacturers of building materials, noted at the German stock index (DAX), and active in more than 40 countries across the world, on more than 2500 locations, with around 52,000 employees and revenue of € 14.0 billion in 2012. The core activities of HeidelbergCement are the production and distribution of cement and aggregates, two essential raw materials for concrete. Downstream activities include activities such as ready-mixed concrete, concrete products, and concrete elements, as well as other related products and services (HeidelbergCement, n.d.).

4.1.2 Motives for partnering

For BirdLife International, the most important motive for partnering with a business was the direct impact BirdLife could have on biodiversity in relation to business activities. BirdLife spends a lot of time, knowledge and resources trying to influence government policies, but businesses and

companies are ultimately the ones implementing these policies. Boris Barov, Conservation Programme Coordinator of the BirdLife – HeidelbergCement partnership, states:

[...] there is a lot of scope for working with businesses in order to make sure that these policies are implemented in a proper way, that the overall business attitude towards the environment is sustainable or is at least put in the long-term perspective rather than short-term gain perspective, which very often leads to increased levels of environmental sustainability thinking. (personal communication, April 23, 2014)

Engaging with the business sector gives BirdLife the opportunity to achieve its goals by using two different strategies. The traditional angle of lobbying governments to adopt specific legislation is reinforced by working together with the businesses that have to implement this legislation. When engaging with businesses, BirdLife attempts to identify specific sectors, and specific players within these sectors with whom if they engage they can have the most impact. Barov explains:

We aim to identify leaders in their sectors that are able to set the trends afterwards for others to follow, and that are developing the overall industry attitude towards a certain issue [...] Because we cannot engage with everybody, neither can we engage with opportunistic companies or on random contacts. (personal communication, April 23, 2014)

In 2008, when HeidelbergCement wanted to build a global strategy for the company regarding biodiversity, the company realised that this was not possible with in-house knowledge only. Dr. Michael Rademacher, Director Biodiversity and Natural Resources and Programme Director of the BirdLife Cooperation at HeidelbergCement, states: “We have about 12 biodiversity experts in the company, but of course we are all working in the company. So we need people that can see where we are, who can assess us” (personal communication, May 12, 2014). The motive for engaging with a NGO was therefore mainly so that an external party could assess HeidelbergCement’s work on biodiversity and provide something like an approval for their efforts.

A higher visibility was another motive for HeidelbergCement to work with a NGO. Rademacher: “... NGOs have completely other networks [...] and we are not experienced in bringing the message to channels outside our cement world” (personal communication, May 12, 2014). However, public relations were not the reason to start a partnership. Rademacher states:

We are not interested in that. And for that it is also too expensive. It’s really that we want to have an outcome, public relations is coming at the end. Of course, we talk about our projects, we talk about what we are doing, but that was not the reason why we have done this partnership, definitely not. (personal communication, May 12, 2014)

HeidelbergCement addresses biodiversity for a couple of reasons. A first reason is that “nobody in a company like HeidelbergCement, a mining company, has interest to destroy nature”, Rademacher states, “our employees want to work in a company which takes care of these things” (personal communication, May 12, 2014). A second motive, which is more important from a business perspective, is that HeidelbergCement’s value chain starts at mining sites. Rademacher:

If we lose our mining sites, we lose the right to mine, we cannot produce one ton of cement. So it's clearly to save our raw materials, long term, but also to reduce the risks of stopping of all activities. [...] One of the main issues regarding our permissions is that stakeholders blame us because of the landscape destruction. We realised that if we as a company are taking that seriously into account that we, OK we destroy something, but also after that we can create something. [It] helps us to reduce the risk that we lose our raw material reserves, so that's really important. (personal communication, May 12, 2014)

Of course, as HeidelbergCement is a business company, its interest in biodiversity is also partly money-driven. Rademacher: "to take care of the theme will save us money, definitely" (personal communication, May 12, 2014). By having a reliable relationship with a NGO, HeidelbergCement's plants experience fewer conflicts with the surrounding communities compared to other plants. Rademacher also notes that BirdLife in addition acts like a radar system, by providing early warnings by picking up what is going on in the field of biodiversity and what will be future developments. By cooperating with BirdLife, HeidelbergCement does not have to spend time and resources on following these developments themselves.

4.1.3 Partnership goals

The primary goal of the partnership is "to further improve the protection of biodiversity associated with quarrying sites" (BirdLife Europe, 2011). BirdLife International and HeidelbergCement aim to improve biodiversity protection and restoration standards at Heidelberg's mining sites. They aim to design mineral extraction operations in such a way that they do not only reduce the negative impact of mining on landscapes and biodiversity, but also create opportunities for rare species and habitats (BirdLife International, n.d.c). Old quarry sites are interesting from a biodiversity point of view because they provide a chance to imitate environments which are otherwise rare in Europe.

The partnership, which started in 2011, is based on a three year contract, which is renewed after these three years to provide some flexibility. There are specific goals for these first three years. HeidelbergCement and BirdLife International target the development and implementation of a Biodiversity Conservation Programme in Europe and Central Asia.

- **2012:** During the partnership's first year, a set of European conservation objectives for species and habitats are jointly defined and quarries are prioritised for biodiversity action. These objectives are gradually integrated into the standard biodiversity practices at quarry sites via Biodiversity Management Plans. Where it is necessary and feasible, local and national conservation projects are jointly implemented.
- **2013:** During the second year, the partnership focuses on the development of specific projects, which are formulated locally but in line with the European biodiversity objectives. Within these projects the local management of the HeidelbergCement companies works together with BirdLife's national partners to design, implement and monitor the projects.
- **2014:** In the third year, the success of the European projects is documented and evaluated, after which the programme is assessed for replication in other regions where HeidelbergCement is active (HeidelbergCement, 2013a).

The total budget for the partnership during the first three years was 260,000 euros per year. The budget for the initiation and implementation of biodiversity projects amounts 60,000 euros per year. This project budget is used for fundraising to raise additional funds for projects, for example through contributions by HeidelbergCement's local plants or by applying for subsidies. By doing so, BirdLife has been able to increase the project budget to about 300,000 euros. Barov explains: "And we have spent less than what we have in our budget, so we are managing to raise much more money if we use it as a seeding fund" (personal communication, April 23, 2014).

When selecting the location of quarries, HeidelbergCement takes both economic and environmental aspects into account. This is because mining activities completely transform the existing landscape (HeidelbergCement, 2013b). Prior to the development of a new quarry or the expansion of an existing one, Heidelberg implements a permission process, which includes an environmental impact assessment and – in the case of the development of a quarry in an area of exceptional biological value – special biodiversity studies. In this case, the company also specifies the necessary compensatory measures.

4.1.4 Partnership formation

The initiation of the partnership happened more or less after an event which BirdLife organised in Brussels, in which they invited businesses to talk. One of these businesses was HeidelbergCement. At that time HeidelbergCement itself was also looking for a partnership, and BirdLife was one of the NGOs at the top of their list. HeidelbergCement chose to work with BirdLife International for a couple of reasons. One of them was that BirdLife's organisational structure was similar to that of HeidelbergCement. Rademacher: "We needed some time to find a NGO which is visible to work with us, fits very well because they are in a similar way organised as our company. So they [BirdLife] have these many country partnership organisations, and then this top organisation, a bit like HeidelbergCement" (personal communication, May 12, 2014). In addition, BirdLife was seen as an experienced NGO, not only in nature protection and biodiversity but also in EU policy for example, which makes it possible to work on both at policy level and operational level.

Barov states: "So, it's a kind of mutual identification of the possibility [...] it came naturally on both sides" (personal communication, April 23, 2014). However, as HeidelbergCement is a mining company, BirdLife had to run a big consulting process with its partner organisations prior to the decision to cooperate. Prior to the forming of the partnership, BirdLife carried out a due diligence process which evaluated HeidelbergCement's policies, performance and stakeholder opinion regarding biodiversity. Barov explains: "So we went through this process regarding HeidelbergCement and we were able to identify them as one of the companies having high standards in this respect" (personal communication, April 23, 2014).

Initial meetings between the two organisations started in 2011 at director level, which lead to the signing of a partnership agreement in September 2011. This agreement set out the goals of the partnership in writing, the mechanisms for the partnership, the responsibilities of both parties, and how to handle potential conflicts or disputes. Before the formation of the partnership HeidelbergCement already had some policies regarding biodiversity, which were later revised with

the help of BirdLife. The goals of the partnership were developed in a small working group, after which they were sent to both organisations' directors for approval.

In the initial phase of the partnership, BirdLife and HeidelbergCement developed an agreement containing year-specific targets: where they wanted to be in one year, in two years, etc. This made it possible for HeidelbergCement's managing board to follow up on the partnership's progress.

4.1.5 Partnership implementation

During the first period of the partnership both organisations tried to get to know each other. In 2012 BirdLife and HeidelbergCement carried out a so-called proximity study, which assessed which mining sites are in biodiversity sensitive areas. This study looks at where the location of the HeidelbergCement sites are in different countries in respect to areas interesting for biodiversity, such as protected areas or important birds and biodiversity areas. HeidelbergCement has 425 mining sites in Europe and 153 of them were identified as having a high biodiversity value. These 153 sites were split up in four: sites with high priority and high opportunity, sites with high priority but limited opportunity, sites with lower priority... etc. In the meantime a couple of pilot projects were developed to have some demonstration material of the partnership. An example of such a project is displayed in box 4.1. These projects are used to communicate externally and internally about the partnership and what can be achieved.

Half of the 153 sites are now covered by Biodiversity Management Plans and 15 local biodiversity projects have been set up. As this is only 10% of the sites that were identified, Barov states "So there is a lot more to do" (personal communication, April 23, 2014). Rademacher notes that the implementation of the Biodiversity Management Plans (BMP) is tricky: "[...] you develop a theoretical paper and then the operation should implement that" (personal communication, May 12, 2014). Similarly Barov states that "The implementation is always the tricky bit, because you can set the goals but then you have to deliver" (personal communication, April, 23, 2014). Therefore, in some countries the local BirdLife partner organisation helps the plant manager to implement these BMPs.

Habitat Management through Natural Grazing

The Gerhausen quarry, located in Baden-Württemberg, Germany (see figure 4.1), is an old limestone quarry of HeidelbergCement. Former quarries provide locations for ecological processes as natural succession develops when quarry activities come to an end. However, the natural development ultimately leads to the growth of scrub and then forest, thereby also losing certain rare and threatened habitat, plant and animal species. Maintaining the initial open structure and associated plant communities can be ensured through grazing or other forms of disturbance. Grazing animals stimulate small-scale dynamics, thereby increasing the diversity of habitats and habitat structures (BirdLife International, n.d.b).



Figure 4.1 Project location (BirdLife International, n.d.b).

The Gerhausen quarry provides an opportunity to promote biodiversity of species and habitats that are rare in Europe, such as calcareous grasslands. Such grasslands have decreased dramatically in recent years despite the fact that they are amongst the most species rich communities in Central Europe. HeidelbergCement works with NABU (BirdLife's German partner) in order to make sure that the open structure of the quarry remains intact, thereby increasing the species richness in the quarry and the surrounding area of 75 ha. This is done by the establishment of a semi-wild herd of primitive cattle, descendant of the Aurochs, and Konik horses to graze the area (BirdLife International, n.d.b). These animals maintain open ponds and reduce the cover of shrubs and trees, while their droppings fertilize the soils and attract insects, and in turn birds, reptiles and amphibians.



Figure 4.2 Primitive cattle and Konik horses provide natural grazing (BirdLife International, n.d.b).

Box 4.1 Project example: Habitat Management through Natural Grazing

BirdLife and HeidelbergCement both experience several challenges within the implementation process. A first challenge is to make sure that BirdLife's partner organisations see cooperating with HeidelbergCement's local companies as a significant priority, because "in many countries they already see quarries as not a big problem for nature" (Rademacher, personal communication, May 12, 2014). Implementing the partnership goals is troubled by the fact that in some countries where BirdLife and HeidelbergCement want to be active BirdLife does not have a strong partnering organisation. Also, in some cases these partner organisations have far more pressing issues they want to address than quarries. Barov notes: "So finding a way of framing this into a conservation project that is a significant degree of priority is another challenge" (personal communication, April 23, 2014). Barov states that the economic crisis has been another challenge, causing biodiversity not to be always at the top of the priority list at some mining sites.

HeidelbergCement and BirdLife try to assess these challenges by traveling to mining sites and by meeting local plant managers as well as BirdLife's local partners to try to develop concept plans to solve problems related to biodiversity. By informing these local contacts about the partnership and by explaining how it can work out they try to reduce the distrust at the local level.

4.1.6 Partnership evaluation

The partnership evaluation is done by the partnership's steering committee, which is one of the mechanisms in the partnership. This committee meets twice a year (by contract) and discusses the potential obstacles they face. In addition to this steering committee, HeidelbergCement reports once or twice a year about the partnership to its management board. The partnership is also mentioned in BirdLife's annual activity report, where the partnership's main achievements are displayed.

At the end of 2014, after the first three years of the partnership, BirdLife and HeidelbergCement will jointly produce an evaluation report. This report is used in the proposal for the continuation of the partnership for the next three years. Barov states: “We will have to work through a list of criteria or indicators that we had in our partnership agreement in order to report the progress. For example, one of them is how many of the sites which were identified as high priority we were actually able to work on, and so on” (personal communication, April 23, 2014). Rademacher gives a similar example:

We expected that we get at least ten partnership projects in three years initiated, which seems not very ambitious but you have to know that there is a lot of organisation behind it. We have BirdLife, the country organisation and our organisation, so it’s not easy. And we achieved already 14 [projects], so I’m quite happy. (personal communication, May 12, 2014)

Despite the fact that there is a lot more to do, BirdLife and HeidelbergCement are planning to expand the partnership activities to HeidelbergCement’s sites in Africa and Asia. The goal that is proposed for the next three years is to do a similar proximity analysis in Asia and Africa and also develop BMP’s for mining sites there. A big aspect in Africa and Asia is also the engagement of the local community, which is something the parties would like to incorporate within their biodiversity projects.

In addition to the evaluation of the partnership as a whole, HeidelbergCement has also developed a list of ten indicators to assist local quarries in measuring and controlling biodiversity before, during and after extraction (HeidelbergCement, 2014). Three of these indicators are dedicated to habitats (see figure 4.3), whilst the seven remaining indicators address species (see figure 4.4). Quarry managers themselves use these indicators to examine the successfulness of their biodiversity restoration efforts.

Indicators dedicated to habitats	
Title	Description
Habitats	Number of habitats per extraction site / area of the extraction (ha).
After-use	Area of the extraction site with after-use nature conservation (ha) / area of the extraction site (ha) with after-use cultivated landscape (ha) / area of the extraction site (ha)
Wanderbiotopes	Area of the wanderbiotopes in an extraction site (ha) / area of the extraction site (ha)

Figure 4.3 Indicators dedicated to habitats (HeidelbergCement, 2014).

Indicators dedicated to species	
Title	Description
Number of species plants A	Number of the plants species in the extraction site / area of the extraction site (ha)
Number of species plants B	Number of plant species in the extraction site / number of the plant species in the surroundings
Number of species animals A	Number of selected animal groups in the extraction site / area of the extraction site (ha)
Number of species animals B	Number of selected animal groups in the extraction site / number of selected animal groups in the surroundings
Endangered species A	Number of species in a given taxocoenosis based list of

	species / total number of species on the same given taxocoenosis based list of species
Endangered species B	Number of endangered species in an extraction site / number of endangered species in the surroundings
Species of the Species Action Plans	Occurrence and / or number of individuals of the species of the Species Action Plans

Figure 4.4 Indicators dedicated to species (HeidelbergCement, 2014).

4.1.7 Collaboration challenges

The communication side of the partnership is the main weakness of the partnership so far, which makes it more difficult to make the partnership and its results better known. Barov states: “We changed our communication officers once or twice in that period, which resulted in interruptions and people are changing and the whole agenda has to be restarted” (personal communication, April 23, 2014). Rademacher also mentions communication as a challenge: “Communication on both parts is a little bit a weakness, because we have to communicate more” (personal communication, May 12, 2014).

Rademacher mentions a second challenge that has to do with the structure of both organisations, as the two parties are completely differently organised. BirdLife is more consensus, discussion oriented when making decisions, while at HeidelbergCement this is done in another way. Regarding the difference in organisational structure, Rademacher states that both parties have to be patient and learn from each other. Rademacher: “I mean, it’s like that, that they have longer ways to decide things. That is something we have to accept as HeidelbergCement” (personal communication, May 12, 2014).

In addition, a challenge in the initial phase of the collaboration was to bring the two organisations together technically: how to organise the collaboration and to link the two organisations. Sometimes it is still difficult for BirdLife to directly contact HeidelbergCement subsidiaries, because some of them are a bit reluctant to cooperate at first. Rademacher explains: “It’s very difficult for a NGO from the outside to intrude our system” (personal communication, May 12, 2014).

Despite these challenges, both Barov and Rademacher are positive about the collaboration between the two parties. Barov states: “I think it is going very well. We have really productive relationships with the company at its global management level” (personal communication, April 23, 2014). Rademacher experiences working together with BirdLife as perfect. The partnership is a combination of a high scientific level, experienced project management and good fundraising, among other things. Rademacher states: “I cannot say anything negative recently, it’s really working well” (personal communication, May 12, 2014).

4.1.8 The potential role for a third party

The involvement of third party has not been discussed between the two partners. However, Barov indicates that several times he bumped into situations where there was a clear role for a third party. Barov states: “One most obvious aspect was science. There are many scientific aspects of our work in

partnership ambitions and projects and so on, which would benefit from scientific advice, external scientific advice, or an objective look at what we want to do” (personal communication, April 23, 2014). Another area where external input could be welcomed is in the communication work of the partnership, for example in producing attractive and interactive materials like videos, website content or blog content.

HeidelbergCement and BirdLife have not done any independent or external evaluation of the partnership. Barov: “That’s probably an interesting idea, but yeah, hasn’t been discussed so far” (personal communication, April 23, 2014). Barov also sees a role for external parties in the development of goals and targets for the partnership in such a way that it later can be measured and evaluated periodically and at the end of the process. This higher level of the partnership is where a consultant could contribute, as Barov explains: “We haven’t discussed this and I don’t know what other people might have as a view, but my personal expectations are that it is more like a role for consultants” (personal communication, April 23, 2014). On a local level BirdLife often operates like a third party by providing the role of mediator and facilitator between BirdLife’s partner organisation and HeidelbergCement’s local plant management. Barov states: “And one of the roles which I’m providing is to identify such cases and try to mediate or help the parties meet and discuss” (personal communication, April 23, 2014).

Rademacher has a different view on the role for a third party. He states that he does not see a role for consultancies within the partnership: “[...] as we have now twelve ecologists, as we have me as director, my assistant is now there, we don’t need that” (personal communication, May 12, 2014). In partnerships where the organisations have no in-house knowledge there could be a role for consultants, but in this partnership that is not the case he states: “Maybe after ten or fifteen years, but recently we don’t see that’s necessary” (personal communication, May 12, 2014).

4.2 The WNF – Eneco partnership

4.2.1 The partnering organisations



The WNF, which stands for ‘Wereld Natuur Fonds’, is the Dutch branch of the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF). WWF is an international environmental not-for-profit organization. Its mission is to conserve biodiversity globally through the protection of important and vulnerable habitats and to combat the threats posed to such areas. Its main activities focus on raising awareness, educating the public, and raising funds for nature conservation. Since its establishment, WWF has opted for a collaborative approach with all stakeholders. This has become particularly visible when considering WWF’s collaboration with the business sector. Since the 1990s, WWF has initiated various fully-fledged partnerships with market parties (WWF, n.d.).



Eneco is a Dutch energy company that is one of largest producers and suppliers of natural gas, electricity and heat in the Netherlands. Eneco focuses completely on sustainable energy, which it sees as the only option, and has ‘sustainable energy for everyone’ as its mission. Following this mission, Eneco does not invest in coal or nuclear energy, but concentrates on electricity and heating from renewable sources

such as wind, solar, hydro and geothermal energy. With about 3500 employees, Eneco supplies the energy demands of 2.1 million companies and households. Apart from the Netherlands, Eneco is also active in Great Britain, Germany, France and Belgium (Eneco, n.d.). Eneco is the first and only energy company that has been declared a Climate Saver by the WWF (WWF, 2013a).

4.2.2 *Motives for partnering*

For WNF, the motive for working with businesses is closely linked to the organisation's mission. They see that biodiversity is threatened by certain production systems and commodity chains. With this in mind WWF started a global initiative to explore which hundred businesses influence the fifteen commodity chains which WWF analysed that have an impact on biodiversity and important natural areas. The goal of WWF is to work with these businesses in order to influence or change their business policies in such a way that WWF's interests are incorporated. WWF Netherlands does this for businesses that are located in the Netherlands. Jeroen Klomp, Major Account Manager and coordinator of the partnership at WNF, states that this was the main motive to start working in teams with businesses in order for WNF to influence these companies' sustainability policies and decisions (personal communication, June 5, 2014).

WNF's motive for specifically choosing to work with Eneco was also linked to WNF's mission. In addition to commodity chains, energy policy is seen as another important theme, in particular regarding the relation between the way people use energy and climate change with its impact on biodiversity. Therefore, WNF also aims to promote the use of renewable energy, such as solar and wind energy. Klomp states: "So therefore Eneco was a logical party in the Netherlands to collaborate with" (TbTW, personal communication, June 5, 2014), given that Eneco's mission is relatively similar to WNF's goals for the energy sector. By working together with a leading energy company like Eneco, WNF aims to achieve a wider impact on the energy sector in which Eneco acts like an example for other companies in the sector. Klomp states: "That's what we try to achieve together, to involve other parties within a wider setting in order to strengthen this movement" (TbTW, personal communication, June 5, 2014).

Also, working with a business party ensures a more direct impact. Klomp notes that "what we see is that businesses operate faster than governments. And that's time that we don't have, so there is a real sense of urgency therein" (TbTW, personal communication, June 5, 2014). Financial motives do not play a role in WNF's decision to partner with businesses, as WWF worldwide has decided not accept any money from businesses other than recovering costs, such as people's commitment and potentially a working budget. Klomp states: "we want to step away from the idea that it is about sponsoring" (TbTW, personal communication, June 5, 2014).

Funny enough, Eneco's department responsible for the partnership during the first three years was 'Sponsoring and Activation'. Although the partnership was more comprehensive than only sponsoring, Eneco's Manager Sponsoring and Brand Activation, Enrico Damo, was coordinating the partnership at Eneco's side given his internal network within the company. The most important motive for Eneco to work with a NGO was to gain credibility for the company's sustainable business policies. Damo states: "By making sure you are linked to an independent party, and by making an

agreement, your whole mission [...] gains in credibility” (TbTW, personal communication, June 16, 2014).

Another motive for Eneco to partner with WNF is the positive effect on the company’s reputation. Eneco tries to distinguish itself by focusing on a more sustainable image compared to their competitors on the energy market. By partnering with WNF, Eneco aims at getting increased recognition for its mission. Damo states: “in that respect, we have been able to put Eneco more on the map than we could have achieved without WNF” (TbTW, personal communication, June 16, 2014). Other motives for Eneco to partner with WNF include the exchange of knowledge or expertise and an increased sense of pride amongst Eneco’s employees, but these seem to be of minor importance compared to positive reputation effects and increased credibility.

4.2.3 Partnership goals

The partnership between Eneco and WNF has a more indirect link to biodiversity in comparison to the other two partnership cases. Eneco is a member of WWF’s Climate Savers programme, in which Eneco is contributing to the transition of the European power sector towards 100 per cent renewable energy by 2050. The goals of the partnership between WWF and Eneco include (WWF, 2013b, p. 8):

- Eneco received WNF’s Climate Saver certificate as the first business in the Netherlands and as the first energy company in the world. This makes Eneco one of the cleanest energy producers of Europe on which it is constantly checked by WNF.
- Sustainable electricity production will be 20 per cent of total supply in 2013 (status end 2012: 12.6 per cent).
- Between 2011 and 2013, CO₂ emissions from all production facilities will not exceed an average of 300 grams/kWh (status end 2012: 227 grams/kWh).
- By 2013 the CO₂ emissions resulting from internal business operations will be 50 per cent lower than in 2007 (status end 2012: 48 per cent).
- With about 2 million Eneco customers and almost 1 million WNF-donors, WNF and Eneco are able to move more people to save energy, use green energy and to join in sustainable projects. To encourage this, WNF and Eneco set up a variety of actions.
- With WWF, develop and promote a vision and action programme to help the Heijplaat district of Rotterdam to become climate neutral by 2020.

Eneco also supports WWF’s Heart of Borneo Initiative and contributes to raising public awareness on energy conservation and clean energy. Budget-wise, the partnership is situated between 500,000 and 1,000,000 euros (WWF, 2013b).

4.2.4 Partnership formation

Prior to the partnership with Eneco, WNF had a partnership with Essent, another Dutch energy company. However, when RWE (a German energy company) took over Essent, WNF unilaterally cancelled the partnership because RWE had different policies around nuclear energy and coal, which didn’t match WNF’s view on a sustainable energy policy. After that, WNF started to look around for another possible partner company in the Dutch energy sector. At the time, WNF already had some contacts with Eneco, who were just starting to focus on full sustainability, which made the switch to another partner easier (Klomp, personal communication, June 5, 2014). Before deciding to partner

with Eneco, WNF ran a due diligence in which the company's finances, ambitions and business policies were thoroughly assessed. This due diligence was executed by an independent external party.

During the initial phase of the partnership, Eneco and WNF also paid attention to the "theory of working together" (Klomp, personal communication, June 5, 2014). Together both parties did a session with an external expert in which they looked at the practice of partnerships. Within this session they focused on things like the processes within partnerships, building a relationship of trust, the initiation of projects, and achieving common value.

4.2.5 Partnership implementation

The implementation of the partnership initially made a flying start both on the substantive side as on the communication side. However, as the partnership progressed, the communication side of the agreement proved to be difficult to implement. WNF and Eneco had different approaches in mind for the implementation of the initial goal of moving people to use renewable energy, in particular in relation to communicating about it to the outside world.

Eneco wanted to launch certain product-based campaigns, which were meant to be supported and approved by WNF, in order to attract more customers for Eneco and more donators for WNF. WNF, however, did not want to be associated with a specific product. Klomp states:

There we did not always find each other. We can communicate about the partnership in that we strive to a world with renewable energy, but we are not a party who sell a product. (TbTW, personal communication, June 5, 2014)

However, Eneco's marketing and communication group is used to communicating through specific products. The fact that WNF did not want to be associated with a product ultimately made that the planned commercial campaign was never launched. Damo notes:

The biggest problem in the end is that WNF wants to ensure that they are an independent party and that we want WNF to underline that what we are doing is good. [...] I think that has been a judgement error in the design and the agreements prior to that first contract. (TbTW, personal communication, June 16, 2014)

Despite these differences in the communication side of the partnership, Klomp and Damo both note that they are happy with what has been achieved on the more substantive side of the partnership, in particular in relation with the Climate Savers agreements. Damo states: "On the substantive side, I think it has been a really valuable partnership. And I think that that is also the reason that we are still talking about the continuation of the partnership" (TbTW, personal communication, June 16, 2014).

4.2.6 Partnership evaluation

Eneco's Climate Saver programme was evaluated every two years by an external party. Ecofys, a consultancy in renewable energy and other energy related themes, evaluated Eneco's Climate Saver progress after which the results were discussed together with WNF.

After the first three years, Eneco's and WNF's partnership coordinators worked together to evaluate the entire partnership. This was not done by an external party. Each coordinator first gathered input from their respective colleagues who were involved in the partnership inside the organisation. Inside Eneco, Damo combined the internal input after which it was cast into a concluding advisory document. This was then presented to Eneco's brand marketing committee, which includes Eneco's CEO, and the heads of each department, such as business, consumers, and corporate communication. Next, both partnership coordinators put their findings together after which the evaluation report was presented to the partnership steering committee. This steering committee included Eneco's director Corporate Communication and their director Retail together with WNF's counterparts, and met four times per year.

The goals that were set in the partnership agreement were used as indicators for analysing the results of the partnership. Most of these goals were achieved, excluding the goals on communication. Klomp states: "we found out that that is not the way we must work together" (TbTW, personal communication, June 5, 2014). Damo even states: "I think that if you evaluated it solely on what it did yield on the commercial side, there would not have been enough ground to continue" (TbTW, personal communication, June 16, 2014). The substantive side of the partnership, however, proved to be valuable enough for both organisations to continue their collaboration. Given this failure on the commercial side of the partnership, Eneco and WNF have decided to take a more substantive approach, thereby leaving any commercial objectives out of the next agreement.

The evaluation then served as input for a partnership contract for another three years. Based on this evaluation, WNF set up a document containing three scenarios for the continuation of their collaboration. The first scenario was to stop collaborating, the second was to continue in the same way and the third scenario was to intensify their collaboration (Klomp, personal communication, June 5, 2014). Eneco had also concluded that it wanted to continue with the partnership, but wanted a different approach. Therefore the third scenario was ultimately chosen, in which both parties would focus more on a substantive collaboration and abandoning the communication side of their partnership.

Another adjustment within this second agreement has to do with the partnership's governance model. These changes include which people are involved, the frequency of the meetings, the content of the meetings and the decision-making processes. Although these aspects were already written down quite rigorously in the first contract, the focus now more lies in getting the right people on board. Klomp states: "We found out that, from our perspective, there was a strong marketing-communication focus in the first partnership. What we want is to focus more on the substantive side" (TbTW, personal communication, June 5, 2014).

4.2.7 Collaboration challenges

As was described in the above, the main challenge within the partnership had to do with Eneco's and WNF's disagreement about the implementation of the commercial communication objectives that were incorporated in their first partnership agreement.

Other challenges within their collaboration had to do with the differing nature and culture of both organisations. Klomp states “Of course, we have societal objectives, and of course, they have financial objectives. Within that you try to find a common ground” (TbTW, personal communication, June 5, 2014). Finding this common ground is an intensive and lengthy process, which easily takes a year and requires a lot of communication from both sides. In addition, Damo also indicates that Eneco experienced that there is a big difference in working speed between a NGO and a business, which is difficult to cope with for a business party.

Another challenge the partnership faced had to do with the organisational structure. In particular on WNF's side there were a lot of personnel changes, both within the steering committee as within the substantive team that worked on the partnership. These two groups both completely changed, resulting in Klomp being the only stable factor during the years and also leading to delay as people had to understand what the partnership was about and get up to speed.

4.2.8 The potential role for a third party

Eneco and WNF have involved third parties at times during the partnership. One example of that is the due diligence that WNF have carried out by a third party. Both parties have also consulted Ecofys for advice on certain substantive topics. In this case an external party made a contribution by playing the role of a facilitator of knowledge or expertise, and by making the partnership objectives measurable.

In addition, Klomp tells that sometimes third parties can also play a role in the facilitation of the partnership process, Klomp states: “You sometimes have moments in which you reach, well not a deadlock, but you reach a point where you need an external [party] to facilitate certain processes” (TbTW, personal communication, June 5, 2014). Such external parties could be involved in the partnership at an ad hoc basis. In addition to this facilitating role, Klomp also sees a potential role in the evaluation of the partnership.

However, Damo, in contrast to Klomp, does not see such an evaluating role for the partnership, he states: “that is something we know better ourselves, because we experienced it. Therefore, I think the evaluation has to be shared, signed, by both parties” (TbTW, personal communication, June 16, 2014). Damo also doubts the potential influence an external party may have regarding the evaluation of the partnership, he states: “If you involve such an advising party, then people have to be open for that. [...] And being open is the biggest challenge I think” (TbTW, personal communication, June 16, 2014). In addition he states: “I also do not know such a party within the Netherlands, which is that good, which I would entrust” (TbTW, personal communication, June 16, 2014).

Klomp does not see a role for an external party on the process side of the collaboration, for example by having an external project leader of the partnership. Klomp expects that working with an external project leader will lead to fewer results, he explains: “With these activities, you need the internal ownership and commitment, with the steering group, with project leaders and people who know the organisation well” (TbTW, personal communication, June 5, 2014).

4.3 The Wetlands International – Royal Dutch Shell partnership

4.3.1 The partnering organisations



Wetlands International is the only global not-for-profit organization that focuses on the conservation and restoration of wetlands. Wetlands International tries to protect and restore wetlands for all the values that they possess. This means that Wetland International does not focus solely on the natural value of wetlands, but also for example on livelihood issues, reduction of poverty among people living in wetland areas, preventing calamities, et cetera. Worldwide, Wetlands International has 18 offices and a staff of approximately 150 people. Its head office is based in the Netherlands. In the context of the partnership, Wetlands International provides knowledge about wetlands areas, their values and advice on how to manage them in a more sustainable way (Wetlands International, n.d.a).



Royal Dutch Shell is an Anglo-Dutch multinational oil and gas company, and one of the world's most valuable companies. Shell's headquarter is located in The Hague, the Netherlands. Shell topped the 2013 Fortune Global 500 list of the world's largest companies. The objectives of the Shell group are "to engage efficiently, responsibly and profitably in oil, oil products, gas, chemicals and other selected businesses and to participate in the search for and development of other sources of energy to meet evolving customer needs and the world's growing demand for energy" (Shell, n.d.).

4.3.2 Motives for partnering

The most important motive for Wetlands International to start a partnership with a business party was to be able to have a direct impact on wetlands. Wetlands International traditionally used to protect and restore wetland areas predominantly by working with governments. However, Wetlands International witnessed that the landscape of responsibilities for the environment is shifting. Governments are increasingly unable to take responsibility and guide businesses in minimising the impact they have on, for example, wetlands. This has to do with reduced budgets and/or a lack of capacity, among other things, particularly in developing countries. Ward Hagemeyer, Corporate Relations Manager at Wetlands International, states: "So we see that by only working with governments we can achieve less and less, we can no longer fully cover our objectives" (TbTW, personal communication, June 5, 2014).

Given the fact that governments are unable to guide these businesses in protecting the environment, how well or how environmentally friendly a company operates is often up to the company itself. Therefore Wetlands International tries to work with businesses to protect the values of wetlands, in particular with large business parties that also have their own environmental goals. Hagemeyer states: "And by directly working together with the company we are able to influence on a company level what they see as good" (TbTW, personal communication, June 5, 2014). Businesses are thus starting to have a more important role than they used to within this landscape of responsibilities. Hagemeyer notes:

[...] you see that it becomes increasingly important for us to work together with businesses because they in fact cause the changes on the ground. They are the ones pumping oil out of the ground, they are the ones laying a pipeline. (TbTW, personal communication, June 5, 2014)

By working together with a business, Wetlands International is able to focus on specific areas or on specific themes they want to change, which are more difficult to accomplish when they would only work with countries or governments.

The motive for Wetlands International to partner specifically with Shell had to do with a personal connection between both organisations on the one hand, and the impact that the oil and gas sector has on wetlands on the other hand. Many oil and gas companies operate in wetlands and the sector as a whole has a large footprint when it comes to their impact on wetlands. More on the personal connection between the two organisations at the start of the partnership follows in paragraph 4.3.4 when addressing the first stages of the partnership.

In addition to the impact an oil and gas company has on wetlands, Shell also is a well-known company, both in a negative and a positive way, as well as it is a leader in the oil and gas sector. Shell can therefore also act as an example for other companies in the sector. Hagemeijer explains: “And if we can achieve something with Shell, we can also reach other companies in the sector via Shell. So we deliberately chose such a big player.” (TbTW, personal communication, June 5, 2014). Selecting Shell as a partner has thus been a very deliberate choice.

For Shell, the main motive to start a partnership was that they experienced a lack of knowledge when they had to deal with certain issues, so-called non-technical risks. Shell realised that they did not have all the answers and sometimes were surprised by these non-technical risks, for example in the 90s with Brent Spar. Steven de Bie, Shell’s former partnership manager states that “it comes from an honest observation, to say: We do not perform well, it could be better, but we do not have the knowledge to do so” (TbTW, personal communication, June 10, 2014). Gertjan Roseboom, Senior Environmental Manager at Shell, similarly states:

We know we do not know it all ourselves. We know that there are organisations that are better at recognising and working on such themes. That is when we thought: That is something we can learn from. (TbTW, personal communication, June 16, 2014)

The knowledge and expertise that a NGO brings to a partnership is seen by Shell as being of greater value than the input they receive from consultants. Wetlands International, for example, approaches certain issues from a different perspective, they look at issues from a different view. When looking at a specific project of Shell, Wetlands International is able to foresee certain risks which Shell would not notice without Wetlands’ input. As the knowledge that a NGO brings to a partnership is used by Shell to deal with these so-called non-technical risks, partnering with a NGO also can be seen as a form of risk management for the company. With the help of Wetlands International, Shell is able to develop alternative approaches and solutions, thereby designing a better and more robust project, with less chance of surprises or protest or with less chance of delay regarding permits for example.

Shell feels that the knowledge and expertise that a NGO like Wetlands International brings to the partnership is of greater value than the input they receive when only working with consultants. Roseboom states:

The idea is that, like Wetlands with their knowledge on wetlands and everything connected to wetlands, if they would work together with us on a project in a wetland the project will improve, both for Shell as for the wetland itself, compared to when we would try that on our own or only with our contractors, our consultants. (personal communication, June 16, 2014)

Working with a NGO thus provides a real added value to certain projects of Shell. This added value is further increased by Wetlands International's contacts and network, as Wetlands International is a NGO with different offices all around the world. These local offices combine the expertise on wetlands with knowledge on the situation in that particular area.

Shell has a variety of different partnerships with different NGO partners. In addition to the partnership with Wetlands International, Shell also has partnerships with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and Earthwatch. The reputational value that business-NGO partnerships offer is another motive for Shell to work with NGOs as it is also linked to Shell's license to operate. With the help of their NGO partners, Shell is able to design better projects that achieve better outcomes in terms of environmental value, which in turn is favourable for the company's reputation and potential future projects. Therefore Shell also mentions the results of their partnerships for example in their annual report. Roseboom notes: "Because we see that it can have a certain reputational value when things go well" (personal communication, June 16, 2014). However, there is also a seam side to this, as Roseboom adds: "There is also a reputation risk when things go wrong and we would get into a fight with our partner" (personal communication, June 16, 2014).

In the end, Shell's partnerships with NGOs represent a certain economic value. The work that is done in collaboration with Wetlands International for example improves Shell's core business and activities. Paying attention to certain aspects in projects that are situated in wetlands is not only beneficial for nature and biodiversity, but also for Shell as a company. Despite the fact that both the company and Shell's employees working on these projects see nature conservation as an important topic, their efforts always have to be linked to Shell's core business. Roseboom explains:

If it does not contribute to the bottom line of Shell, if we cannot explain that it contributes to the bottom line of Shell, then it would not receive as much attention as it is receiving now. (personal communication, June 16, 2014)

It becomes clear in the above that Wetlands International and Shell have differing to collaborate with each other. However, they also do have certain areas in where their objectives overlap. Hagemeyer explains: "And if we look at that overlap, we can distinguish three different themes as being beneficial for both parties." (personal communication, June 5, 2014). These three different themes or objectives bring us to the goals of the partnership, which are addressed in the following section.

4.3.3 Partnership goals

The partnership between Wetlands International and Shell was initiated in 2008 for a period of five years. For this period, Wetlands and Shell signed a 'Collaborative Partnership Agreement' in which they formulated three themes or objectives for the partnership.

1. The first objective of the partnership is to enhance the sustainability performance of Shell. This objective focuses on improving Shell's sustainability standards to decrease the company's impact on wetlands.
2. The second objective is for Wetlands International to learn from Shell's business knowledge and capabilities. Within this theme Shell transfers certain business skills to the organisation of Wetlands International. For example, how to run an organisation efficiently, how to show leadership and how to set up certain processes within an organisation.
3. The third objective of the partnership is for Wetlands International and Shell to work together in protecting wetland areas where possible.

These themes are derived from Wetlands International and Shell looking at overlapping drivers and objectives and are identified as being valuable for both sides as well as realistic to achieve. Hagemeyer states about these objectives:

So we have taken those [objectives] as a guide, thereby also looking at what we can realistically achieve together. We have not included that we want Shell's portfolio to have 20 per cent renewable energy. We would like to see that, but that simply is not realistic. So we have looked at where our overlapping drives and objectives are and what is realistic, what sets an ambition level that challenges both parties, but remains within reach. (TbTW, personal communication, June 5, 2014)

The objectives of the partnership are deliberately formulated in such a way that the objectives are not described very precise and clear, but remain a bit open. The third objective, for example, does not mention the precise geographical areas where Wetlands International and Shell focus their attention and effort. The objectives are designed not to be precise goals with targets and measurable indicators, but are formulated open so that there is no end to all. Hagemeyer explains:

[...] the first objective is never finished, improving the sustainability performance [of Shell] is never finished. It has happened, there has been an improvement, but it can always be better. So we have embarked on this path, we have achieved a lot, but there remain points which can be improved. (TbTW, personal communication, June 5, 2014)

Another important feature of the partnership is that Wetlands International and Shell have a 'critical friend' relationship. This implies that the partnership creates a safe environment for both organisations to work together, build on trust, in which they are also free to criticize each other's working methods. Anne Romeo, Environmental Consultant at Shell, states:

You need a party, a critical friend, that will really give you advice on conservation that wasn't just given to you, to us, because we paid for it. So people that weren't just a consultant, but

have a different view and different expertise than we had. (personal communication, June 16, 2014)

As the first contract of the partnership has ended in 2012, Wetlands International and Shell have recently renewed their collaboration and are now engaged in a 'Collaborative Framework Agreement' for four years, from 2013 to 2017. The objectives of this new engagement remain largely the same to the first five years of the partnership. The project budget of the partnership is financed by Shell and amounts a total of 500,000 euros per year, so from the 2013 to 2017 the overall budget amounts 2,000,000 euros (Wetlands International, 2013).

4.3.4 Partnership formation

As was mentioned in the previous two sections, the partnership was initiated in 2008 and formed on the basis of a personal connection between the two organisations. Individuals from both organisations, Ward Hagemeijer at Wetlands International and Steven de Bie at Shell, knew each other in advance. They looked at a possible collaboration on the protection of birds as they saw that migratory birds cross a whole series of Shell's companies on their way from the Arctic region to South Africa or Australia. The first idea was therefore to see if these companies could work together in taking their responsibility in the protection of migratory birds.

This first idea, however, was drawn much broader as Shell started to think about the value of starting a partnership with a NGO. Shell started with making a list of organisations with whom they thought they could improve their core business in order to be more sustainable. Examining all these organisations, however, also made the preparation process much longer. Similarly, Wetlands International conducted a very thorough risk analysis prior to their decision to cooperate with Shell, thereby looking at the advantages and disadvantages of a possible partnership. These risks for example involved Wetland International's reputation, financial independence and if it would really be possible to achieve something by working together. In this initial stage of forming the partnership both Shell and Wetlands International provided complete openness and made their motives for collaborating very clear to each other. Hagemeijer states: "We know that Shell is there to make money and they know that we are there to protect wetlands. We respect that of each other." (TbTW, personal communication, June 5, 2014).

The ultimate goal in this formation stage of the partnership was designing a contract that suited both organisations. Formulating this contract took a couple of years. Shell wanted to cover its risks as much as possible, which meant the involvement of lawyers and very voluminous legal documents. For example, one of the issues of importance for Shell was a certain degree of confidentiality within the partnership as many of the first stages of Shell's projects are commercially confidential. Wetlands International on the other hand seeks to be as open and transparent as possible, as well as remaining an independent party. Other considerations that had to be taken into account were the level of ambition of the partnership's goals and the number of years the contract would stand. Aligning these different requirements of both organisations was a long process with lots of meetings, but ultimately led to the signing of the partnership agreement by the CEOs of both Shell and Wetlands International. After this both organisations could focus on the substantive side, the implementation of the partnership.

4.3.5 Partnership implementation

The process of implementing the objectives of the partnership proved to be rather difficult during the first few years after signing the partnership agreement. Both Shell and Wetlands International indicate that during this first period it was difficult to set up and design projects that were valuable for both organisations. The fact that the objectives of the partnership were formulated very open, may have contributed to these difficulties. Formulating these objectives was a challenge when signing the partnership agreement but implementing these objectives was a second major challenge. One obstacle was that both parties experienced difficulties in working together because of the differences between the two organisations. Hagemijer states: “A lot of energy in the first period of the collaboration has gone into understanding each other. Because we didn’t have any experience in dealing with businesses, it is a totally different culture.” (TbTW, personal communication, June 5, 2014). Roseboom similarly states: “[...] it always stays difficult to really implement projects and to make them successful, because we are very different organisations.” (TbTW, personal communication, June 16, 2014). More attention to this challenge is paid in section 4.3.7 of this chapter.

A second obstacle Shell and Wetlands faced was to find projects that were valuable for both organisations and in which both parties felt that they could support each other. As Romeo states: “... trying to get things [projects] that are business relevant as well can be a bit of a challenge.” (personal communication, June 16, 2014). In some cases Wetlands International’s project proposals were not relevant to Shell because there was no link between the project and Shell’s core business and in some other cases Shell’s proposals were not in line with the objectives of Wetlands International. Hagemijer states:

From both sides we worked within our organisations to improve the understanding of the other party’s perspective. Over time, this has led to that we communicate better with each other, that we know better what to expect from each other, that we know better what not to expect from each other, and that we got similar ambitions. And that subsequently created the circumstances to produce good projects successfully. (TbTW, personal communication, June 5, 2014)

Working together to design projects thus requires a certain degree of understanding of each other’s objectives, but also leads to a certain degree of delineation as the project has to be relevant for both parties. As Roseboom states: “[...] so there are things that we do not do: which you haven’t come around to, which are too difficult, or which are too far apart. [...] There must be a link with our business” (TbTW, personal communication, June 16, 2014).

These challenges have taken a lot of time to solve and overcome, much more time than people from both organisations originally expected. Hagemijer notes: “[...] I think that only in the fourth year the partnership really got going and the first results became visible.” (TbTW, personal communication, June 5, 2014). Despite the initial difficulties, Wetlands International and Shell have set up and implemented several projects since. These projects are very varied and are located all around the world, from the Arctic to the Niger Delta and from Brunei to Iraq. In Southern Iraq, for example, Shell and Wetlands International work together in the Mesopotamian Marshlands (see box 4.2). These

projects have, in contrast to the open objectives of the partnership, very clear goals with specific deadlines for when these goals have to be achieved.

Conserving and restoring the marshes of Southern Iraq

The Mesopotamian Marshlands are located in the lower floodplains of the Tigris and the Euphrates (see figure 4.5) and once were the largest wetlands in the Middle East. However, by the year 2000 90% of the wetland area was destroyed due to large scale water drainage by the regime of Saddam Hussein. After the fall of the regime 30% of the marshes were reflooded again (Wetlands International, n.d.c). Furthermore the wetland area experiences the consequences of agriculture and large dams in neighbouring countries, as well as the high density of land mines in the area.

A small part of the marshes have remained which lies close to the border with Iran. This area, which is known as the Hawizeh Marsh, is the only Ramsar wetland of international importance in Iraq. Some of the world's largest oilfields are situated right below the marshes. Shell and Wetlands International work together to minimise the negative impact of the oil field developments on biodiversity, ecosystem value and the services the wetlands provide, as the production of oil requires vast amounts of water. One of the goals of this project, for example, focuses on "Contributing to an on-going dialogue on the planning and design of all installations and activities so that they do not affect the marshes, thereby ensuring that future restoration opportunities will not be hampered." (Wetlands International, n.d.c). By working together Wetlands and Shell try to make the oil development contribute to the restoration of the marshes.

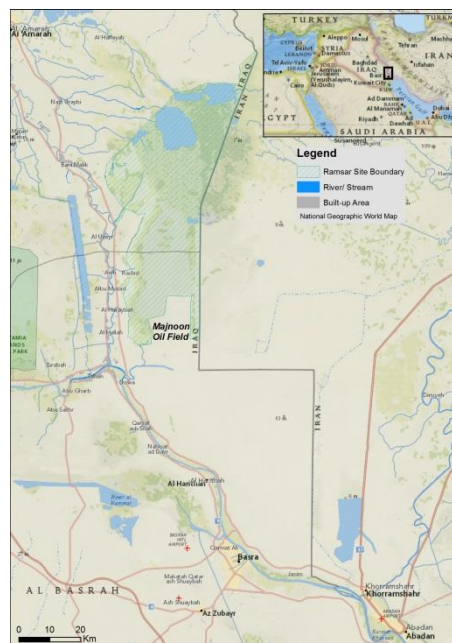


Figure 4.5 Location of the Hawizeh Marsh (Wetlands International, n.d.c)



Figure 4.6 The Hawizeh Marsh (Wetlands International, n.d.c)

Box 4.2 Project example: Conserving and restoring the marshes of Southern Iraq.

However, in addition to the challenges Shell and Wetlands International encounter when working together on the level of the partnership, they also encounter several project-specific challenges. Many of the partnership's projects are located in unstable countries. The project in Iraq described in box 4.2, for instance, is troubled by a variety of challenges, such as the poor security situation in Iraq, cultural differences between the organisations at the level of the global partnership and the local organisations, and capacity issues of the local organisations. Getting these projects off the ground proves to be very complicated in certain cases, but despite these challenges Shell and Wetlands International are able to make progress and to achieve the project goals.

4.3.6 Partnership evaluation

During the partnership's first contract period (from 2008 to 2012) two evaluations of the partnership as a whole have been conducted. The number and time of these evaluations were set in the partnership agreement. Half way during this five year period a mid-term assessment was carried out by an external consultant. This assessment was intended to check whether the partnership was on the right track and, if this was not the case, to adjust certain things. The consultant was asked to analyse, given the partnership's objectives, which information was needed to check if Shell and Wetlands were on the right track and if there already was some progress made. On the basis of this task, the consultant collected information by using different techniques (e.g. surveys) and screened both organisations.

The end evaluation of the partnership was conducted after five years at the end of the first partnership agreement. Both Shell and Wetlands International conducted this evaluation independently by themselves within their own organisation to see if the partnership had enough value to renew their collaboration. After this was done, both parties discussed their findings. This evaluation was also done using a variety of techniques, such as an internal evaluation using surveys and by process monitoring. Both parties did not use any specific quantitative indicators in this evaluation, as it proved to be difficult to design such indicators given the partnership's relative open objectives. Because of these open objectives, results are hard to measure and to assign to specific actions or projects. Hagemeyer states:

“[...] some of the effects that are achieved are subjective. Some of the effects fall within the confidential sphere, so you can't publish that. Some of the effects lie within the behaviour and the mindset of individual people or Shell's personnel.” (TbTW, personal communication, June 5, 2014)

Measuring the effectiveness of the partnership objectively is also difficult because baseline measurements often are missing. The evaluation was therefore mainly focused on the process of collaborating, thereby using a variety of process indicators. As Romeo notes:

It's more about: how are we working together? And are we actually delivering what we said we would? And is this helping? And are we concentrating on the right kind of work? And are we concentrating on the right kind of projects? What else could we do together? That kind of things. (personal communication, June 16, 2014)

On the basis of this evaluation, both Shell and Wetlands International have decided to renew their collaboration in 2013. Hagemeyer states: “That is one of the best indicators for the process until then” (TbTW, personal communication, June 5, 2014). In addition to the evaluation of the entire partnership, Shell and Wetlands also evaluate the individual projects. Given that these projects are very varied, which indicators and time scale are used very much depends on the project at hand.

4.3.7 Collaboration challenges

As was mentioned in section 4.3.5, both Shell and Wetlands International experienced challenges in working together caused by the differences between the two organisations. Because of these differences, the first few years were fairly slow and laborious. Both parties didn't have any real experience in working with a business (for Wetlands International) or a NGO (for Shell) in the way they did in this partnership. In addition to this lack of experience, they also saw that both their organisational cultures and languages were very different. As Hagemeijer states:

Thus, both sides really had to work on even understanding each other's language. It simply is a whole different way of expressing objectives, of all the words that are being used, jargon. But the whole thinking process is also different, assessment frameworks are different, company culture is different, different value within the company and the organisation. (TbTW, personal communication, June 5, 2014)

Similarly De Bie states: "That are really two different worlds. Those engineers are used to think in certain concepts. But for a wetland expert every wetland is different." (TbTW, personal communication, June 10, 2014).

In addition to the differences in culture and language, Shell and Wetlands also experienced challenges regarding the differences in working methods and speed. In Shell, for example, large teams of employees work on certain projects with enormous speed and production capacity, while Wetlands International is a much smaller organisation which makes it hard for them to keep up. Hagemeijer states: "You see how big the speed differences are in the various stages of the process. Synchronising those processes has proven to be very difficult. That is one of the big problems that we have." (TbTW, personal communication, June 5, 2014). Wetlands and Shell are also used to working with different methods and producing different end products. As Roseboom notes:

Wetlands has a number of people working for them that have a science background and are used to big reports with large note devices. And in the end we only want a paragraph. Well, that is such a big difference. (TbTW, personal communication, June 16, 2014)

Given these differences, it has taken some time to get used to working with each other within projects. Wetlands International sought to be involved in Shell's project in an early stage in order for them to try to design the project in a more sustainable way. De Bie states: "And they really had to fight hard to do that" (TbTW, personal communication, June 10, 2014). At first, Shell's engineers were not keen on changing their methods, as those methods had been proven to work and to be the most efficient. Other reasons why working together took some time was that these first stages of these projects are commercially confidential and, more importantly, these designs have to be made very fast in order for Shell to make a bid on a certain block.

However, by learning from each other's methods, by getting to know each other and by building trust between one another, the success of working together on projects is increasing. Expectation management is of major importance within this process. De Bie notes: "It is a very long process of getting used to each other. You know, you have to express your expectations. We started without

expressing our expectations” (TbTW, personal communication, June 10, 2014). Over the years the partnership’s expectation management has slowly improved. Romeo states: “The expectation management was not good, or was not there. And I think now it is being seen as, the way we are working now is being seen as quite successful and everyone seems happy about it” (personal communication, June 16, 2014).

This progress is caused by a better understanding of each other, but also because Shell’s environmental department has a better overview of the projects that are coming in, which makes it easier to involve Wetlands at the right time. At the moment, Shell also has an employee seconded within Wetlands International to improve the understanding of their language and cultural differences. Another thing Wetlands International and Shell changed when working in projects was of organisational nature. The partnership’s projects became more solid by making sure that there was a team behind every project with one member of Wetlands International, one member of Shell headquarters and one member of Shell’s local subsidiary. These three parties are then responsible for the project’s progress.

4.3.8 The potential role for a third party

Hagemeijer tells that Wetlands International often uses external experts or other parties in their work. Wetlands is only a small organisation of about 200 employees around the world, so often they do not have the capacity to do all the work themselves. Therefore they collaborate with all kinds of parties, such as universities and consultants. Wetlands International also has specific specialist groups on certain themes, for example on ecosystem restoration. The groups consist of external specialists on certain topics and are used by Wetlands International to acquire information and expertise when the organisation’s own staff is less well known with a topic. In addition to obtaining knowledge and expertise, external parties are also used to facilitate certain discussions or work processes. Hagemeijer explains:

If we identify a joint project or a joint problem and we want to find a solution, than it is a bit odd in principal to let one of the parties facilitate the process, because you can almost expect a certain degree of bias, even unintended, and steering in the results. So if you can put an independent advisor, facilitator on that, who only has eyes for the process and not for the content, than both parties can be fully involved on the basis of content and optimally move through the process to achieve the best result. (TbTW, personal communication, June 5, 2014)

Evaluating the partnership’s projects is not seen to be of major importance, but Wetlands and Shell do try to make peer reviewed publications about their methods and results whenever possible. This is also beneficial for the transparency of Wetlands’ and Shell’s actions.

At Shell, both Roseboom and Romeo are a little more reserved when it comes to the involvement of third party. The only place where external parties could contribute according to Romeo is at the provision of knowledge, she states:

The only place where I see it is sometimes in the kind of subcontractor type of people, for specific scientific or other knowledge, because these people are more experienced in that

type of work than Wetlands International would be. But for a process and stuff like that I don't really see it. [...] I don't think it would help that much, I don't think there would be a place for it. (personal communication, June 16, 2014)

Roseboom sees a potential role for a third party in the facilitation of the partnership process, as a kind of intermediary, but not necessarily in the partnership between Shell and Wetlands International. He states: "It is fairly simple for that. And I think we did not have any moments where we were completely stranded or that we did not understand each other." (TbTW, personal communication, June 16, 2014). Roseboom and Romeo also do not see a role for a third party in project management or in carrying out projects. Romeo explains: "I mean, if you are talking about the project management and carrying out projects by a completely different person, then you're taking away the value of the partnership." (personal communication, June 16, 2014).

When discussing the potential role for a third party in the evaluation of the partnership, Roseboom states:

It is also valuable if you leave that up to the organisations themselves. But then together, so not two separate reports, but together one report, one collective story. If you do that then you obviously have a fantastic conversation about it, which is much more important than the report itself. So to leave that to somebody else... (TbTW, personal communication, June 16, 2014)

Shell thus is a little more reserved when it comes to the involvement of third party in the partnership process, whereas Wetlands International is a somewhat more open to the idea. An important note to end with is that if a third party wishes to play a part in the partnership process, it should have a real added value to the partnership.

5 Conclusion

Building on the findings from the literature review and the three partnership cases, this chapter now presents the conclusions of this study in paragraph 5.1 by answering the central research question and sub-questions as formulated in paragraph 1.4. Next, paragraph 5.2 reflects on the research by discussing the theoretical framework and methodology used in this thesis. Paragraph 5.3 finally ends this chapter by formulating recommendations both for practitioners in business-NGO partnerships as for external parties that seek to support these partnerships.

5.1 Conclusion

The central research question, as formulated in paragraph 1.4, is the following:

What challenges do businesses and non-governmental organizations face when engaging in strategic biodiversity partnerships during the formation, implementation and evaluation stages of the partnership process and how can third parties contribute to alleviate these problems?

Three sub-questions are used in order to provide an answer to this central research question. These three sub-questions address the three aspects of business-NGO partnership that are central to this study: (1) the motives for businesses and NGOs to engage in partnerships, (2) the major challenges businesses and NGOs face during the formation, implementation and evaluation of the partnership, and (3) the potential role for external or third parties in supporting business-NGO partnerships. The sub-questions are now answered using this same order.

1. What are the motives for businesses and non-governmental organisations to engage in partnerships and to what extent are these motives similar?

The motives found in the literature review match those found in interviews with representatives of the partner organisations. These motives can be divided into two different types: (1) normative motives and (2) instrumental motives. Normative motives for engaging in a partnership are based on a certain ideal, a real sustainability concern. Instrumental motives, on the other hand, are more pragmatic by nature and see a partnership as a means of gathering knowledge or expertise for example. When analysing what motives businesses and NGOs have for engaging in partnerships, it shows that these motives are mainly instrumental.

For NGOs, the main motive for engaging in partnerships is the direct impact NGOs can have by working together with businesses in order to achieve the organisation's mission (conserving or improving biodiversity). The traditional methods of NGOs are no longer sufficient as working only with governments does not lead to enough results. Particularly in developing countries governments often have insufficient resources and lack the capacity to take responsibility when it comes to taking care of the environment. Although NGOs keep working with governments, they can have a greater and more direct impact by also working together with businesses. Another motive for NGOs to work with businesses is the exchange of business knowledge and capabilities. Business parties are often

more experienced in running efficient organisations. By working together, NGOs seek to learn from their business partners to manage the NGO's organisation and its projects more efficiently. NGOs also engage in partnerships with businesses to get access to business resources, such as money and manpower. Gathering more resources enables NGOs to do more and increase their impact. However, it has to be noted that NGOs are very careful when it comes to accepting money from business parties. As the reputation of being an independent party is very valuable for a NGO's credibility, NGOs make sure not to become too dependent on business funds. A last motive for NGOs to work with businesses is that their business partner can influence other companies in the respective sector by setting the example.

For a business, the main motive to work together with a NGO is to improve its credibility. An independent party, such as a NGO, that monitors and approves a company's sustainability efforts is of great value for the company. The independent view of a NGO partner makes a company's sustainability efforts more credible, which also improves a company's legitimacy. Another important motive is reduction of risk in relation to a company's core business. A NGO has a different view on a company's operations and is therefore also able to see potential risks that are often overlooked from a business perspective. Reducing the risk of stopping operations and a loss of resources is particularly interesting for companies that are resource dependent, which is especially visible in the cases of HeidelbergCement (mining sites) and Shell (drilling sites). A motive related to this is learning and obtaining NGO knowledge on biodiversity. A NGO's expertise improves the sustainability and biodiversity policies of a company, which in the end also leads to a more robust core business. Another motive for businesses to engage in partnerships is an improved recognition or visibility of the company's efforts, partly due to access to NGO networks. Improved recognition and visibility are in turn beneficial for a company's reputation, which gives it a competitive advantage over other companies in the sector. A last reason for a business to work together with a NGO is because of sincere sustainability concerns inside the company. This motive is normative in nature, as it is based on a certain sustainability ideal. Taking care of sustainability concerns can also lead to an increased sense of pride amongst employees.

Summarising the above, figure 5.1 now provides an overview of the normative (N) and instrumental (I) motives for businesses and NGO to engage in partnerships with each other.

Motives for engaging in partnerships	
<i>NGO</i>	<i>Business</i>
Achieving the organisation's mission (conserving or improving biodiversity) (N)	Improving the company's credibility and legitimacy (I)
A greater and more direct impact through measures on the ground (I)	Reduction of risk in relation to a company's core business (I)
Learning and exchange of business knowledge and capabilities (I)	Learning and exchange of NGO knowledge on biodiversity (I)
Access to business resources (money and/or manpower) (I)	Improved recognition, visibility and reputation (competitive advantage) (I)
Influencing other companies in the sector by setting the example (I)	Sincere sustainability concerns inside the company (N)
	An increased sense of pride amongst employees (I)

Figure 5.1 Overview of motives for engaging in partnerships.

Figure 5.1 demonstrates that NGOs and businesses have quite different motives for engaging in partnerships. However, having differing motives does not necessarily mean that partnering organisations have unbridgeable differences when it comes to the objectives of the partnership. Setting the objectives is nonetheless often a lengthy process and does provide a challenge as both NGOs and businesses sometimes expect and want different things from the partnership and each other. When the partnership grows bigger and more successful, thereby also involving more people and departments, this process might become even more complicated as each individual brings his own individual objectives and motives. However, in most cases business and NGO partners are able to find their common ground by exchanging views and discussing their differences in an open setting.

2. What major challenges do businesses and non-governmental organisations face during the formation, implementation and evaluation of the partnership?

The results from the literature review suggest that partnership parties are troubled by two main challenges: (1) their inherently conflicting core logics and the differing motives, and (2) the fact that business-NGO partnerships are a new and developing concept. These two types of challenges are also found in the interview data from the partnership case studies.

In addition to the different motives and the challenge of finding a common objective, as described in the answer to sub-question 1, businesses and NGOs also encounter challenges concerning their inherently conflicting core logics. The first aspect to this challenge is the differing culture and language of business and NGO partners. Businesses and NGOs use different jargons and have different ways of formulating objectives, which makes it difficult at first to communicate with each other. Both organisations also have major differences when it comes to culture and organisational structure. Businesses follow a more hierarchical structure, while NGOs are more consensus-oriented and therefore also take more time to make decisions. In most cases business parties do have larger organisations with more employees than NGOs, which often leads to a difference in working speed as NGOs need more time than businesses. This provides challenges when working together on a tight project schedule.

Businesses and NGOs that engage in partnerships do often have limited experience with working with each other. This provides challenges as a business-NGO partnership is a new strategy for both organisations. In relation to their conflicting core logics, businesses and NGOs often have to learn and adapt in order for them to work together. A NGO with more experience in working with businesses, such as BirdLife International, seems to have less trouble in adapting to the way businesses work. Having a better understanding of a partner's culture and language makes adapting to their ways easier. Another challenge is setting up an efficient and well-organised organisational structure. This is vital in order to manage the partnership and implement projects efficiently. Another challenge of organisational nature is that the basic management of the partnership is sometimes difficult due to 'normal' managerial problems such as personnel changes. Training new employees and getting them up to speed takes time and slows the partnership's progress down.

Partnership parties also find it difficult to implement the objectives that were set in their agreements. Although both parties agreed on these objectives after some debate, the same debate fires up again when it comes to implementing these objectives, as both organisations sometimes have different

ways of working. Overcoming this implementation challenge requires finding a common ground that is beneficial and feasible for both organisations. However, this also means that more ambitious projects or objectives are left behind.

Coping with these challenges requires learning from each other's culture, language and methods. By getting to know each other and by building personal relationships and trust between one another, partnering organisations are able to learn and improve their collaboration. This, in turn, leads to more success when implementing the partnership's objectives. Expectation management is of major importance within this process. Knowing what to expect from each other prevents frustration and improves the quality and success of the partnership.

3. To what extent can external parties support business-NGO partnerships?

Partner organisations are overall quite wary to the idea of involving a third party in the partnership process. However, an interesting note to this is that in all three cases it seems to be that NGO parties are more receptive to the idea of involving a third party than their business partners. Nonetheless, interviews with experts on partnerships and with partner organisations show that there are aspects in partnerships where external parties potentially can play a supporting role.

In all partnership cases businesses and NGOs use external parties and experts to gather knowledge, expertise or scientific advice, for example on setting objectives, implementing projects or making objectives measurable. Gathering this information is mainly done by involving universities and/or consultants. However, the partnering organisations feel that the actual collaboration process and the implementation of projects should remain their own responsibility. Both sides expect the value of the partnership to be lost in case a third party, such as a consultancy, would take over these aspects. Business parties in particular note that they expect that if a third party would execute these tasks, the value of working with a NGO partner will be lost, thereby undermining the entire essence of the partnership. Also, as partnerships are complex and challenging, both sides fear that involving a third party will make a partnership even more complex than it already is.

Although the potential role for a third party in the implementation of a partnership is limited, there are other aspects to a partnership where a third party can contribute. Interview results show that both experts of partnerships and partnership representatives see a facilitating role for a third party, thereby acting as an unbiased discussion leader during discussions and negotiations. In this role, a third party can act as an intermediary between business and NGO in order to ensure an unbiased process in which both sides are equal. Another role for an unbiased third party is to evaluate the process side of a partnership. In the partnership between Wetlands International and Shell, for example, a consultant was hired to conduct a mid-term evaluation. An evaluation that is done by a neutral party ensures an evaluation that is as unbiased as possible. There is also a potential role for a third or external party in the communication side of the partnership. A third party could assist and advice partnering organisations in the production of interactive communication material, such as a short films and websites.

Experts and consultants state in interviews that they expect that there also might be a role for a third party in giving an objective look at what partnerships achieve. In this case, a third party would verify

the partnership's efforts by measuring and evaluating the results of partnership projects on the ground. However, partnership representatives do not see the verification by a third and neutral party as being important. This is particularly the case for business parties, as they expect their NGO partner to verify the business' efforts as the NGO is an independent organisation as well. Involving an external party to conduct a second verification is not seen as an added value. The fact that partner organisations studied in this research do not see the value of a verification by a third party might be caused by the respective age of the partnership cases that were chosen in this study. The partnerships studied are relatively recent, ranging from three to five years, which might cause an external verified evaluation not to be of major importance yet.

Answering the central question

Now, returning to the central question of this thesis, we can conclude that businesses and NGOs face two main challenges when engaging in a partnership during the formation, implementation and evaluation stages: (1) their inherently conflicting core logics and differing motives and (2) the fact that business-NGO partnerships are a new and developing concept. Coping with these challenges is a process of building trust, getting to know each other and learning by doing. Third parties can contribute to alleviate these challenges by playing a supporting role in which they act as an intermediary between the parties, thereby providing guidance and facilitating an unbiased collaboration process between the two partners. The actual implementation of the partnership remains the responsibility of the partnering organisations, as this is the entire value of engaging in a business-NGO partnership.

5.2 Reflection

Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework used in this study has proven to be quite successful in guiding the research. By describing the shift from government to governance and the shift from nature protection to biodiversity it was possible to explain the emergence of business-NGO partnerships that focus on biodiversity issues. The two main challenges that were expected to occur based on the literature review, caused by the inherently conflicting core logics and differing motives of the partnering organisations and by the novelty of this kind of collaboration, were also found in the partnership cases. However, as the main focus of the research was on motives, challenges and the role for a third or external party, some aspects that were described in the theoretical framework have remained rather underexposed. The concept of biodiversity, for instance, could have been more emphatically addressed, for example by examining if business and NGO definitions of the concept are different and if this potentially leads to discussions during the formation stage of the partnership. The operationalization of all theoretical aspects into the main themes of the research can therefore be seen as a weakness of the theoretical framework used. Despite this weakness, the theoretical framework provided enough guidance to conduct this study.

Methodology

The methodological approach to this study, a review of scientific literature followed by a multiple case study, made it possible to gather rich and detailed information on the partnership process and the potential supporting role for an external party. Especially the interviews with experts and partnership representatives have yielded valuable insights. This would not have been possible to the

same extent with any other method. However, the methodological approach does also present a couple of weak points. A first weakness is the limited sample of three partnership cases. Although generalisation was not a goal, the limited amount of partnership cases potentially makes the findings from the study relatively case-specific. Another weak point is that in most case studies only one employee per organisation was interviewed, which was due to time and resource constraints. This may have resulted in a rather one-sided view of how the organisation experiences the partnership. Only in the case of Shell multiple employees were interviewed, which also immediately led to a more detailed and richer insight in the organisation's view.

5.3 Recommendations

While keeping in mind the restrictions mentioned in the previous section, this paragraph addresses the recommendations both for practitioners in business-NGO partnerships and for third or external parties that seek to support these partnerships.

Recommendations for partnering organisations

When engaging in a partnership both businesses and NGOs have to be aware of their differences with regard to their respective backgrounds. It is vital that both sides of the partnership invest in getting to know the culture, language, motives and objectives of their partner organisation. Learning and understanding each other's language and culture benefits the communication between the two organisations. The importance of expectation management makes discussing the differing motives and objectives for engaging in the partnership vital in order to get clear what (not) to expect from each other. These discussions are also important in order to build a relationship of trust between the partners. Partnering organisations have to take time to build such a relationship, but this will ultimately make the partnership stronger and better able to cope with discussion and disagreement. By doing so, the opportunity to learn from each other improves while reducing the chance of surprises along the way. A last recommendation for partnering organisations is to construct a strong organisational structure and to embed the partnership into the organisation of both business and NGO in order to ensure good management and commitment.

Recommendations for third parties

The most obvious role for a third party is facilitating the discussion between the two partner organisations as both experts and partnership representatives identify the opportunity for such a role. A third party can act as a neutral and unbiased intermediary that helps bridging the differences between the partnering organisations. A third party can potentially even bring organisations that are looking for a partnership together, thereby initiating new collaborations. Another role in this stage of the process is to perform due diligences prior to the formation in which the risks of cooperating for both parties are analysed. Independent verification of the partnership's results by an external party might be a possibility in the years to come when the partnership matures. However, it will be necessary for the external organisation to position itself in the market as an unbiased organisation with scientific knowledge and expertise on biodiversity. Currently most partnering organisations have trouble identifying consultancies as being unbiased external organisations that can perform such a task. It is therefore vital to show the added value of involving an external party.

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Appendix A: Overview of interviewees

Organisation	Interviewee	Subject	Case/expert	Date
Birdlife International	Boris Barov	BirdLife International-HeidelbergCement partnership	Case	April 23, 2014
HeidelbergCement Group	Michael Rademacher	BirdLife International-HeidelbergCement partnership	Case	May 12, 2014
WNF	Jeroen Klomp	WNF – Eneco partnership	Case	June 5, 2014
Eneco	Enrico Damo	WNF – Eneco partnership	Case	June 16, 2014
Wetlands International	Ward Hagemeijer	Wetlands International – Royal Dutch Shell partnership	Case	June 5, 2014
Royal Dutch Shell	Gertjan Roseboom	Wetlands International – Royal Dutch Shell partnership	Case	June 16, 2014
	Anne Romeo			
De Gemeynt	Steven de Bie	Partnerships in general; Potential role for external party; Wetlands International – Royal Dutch Shell partnership	Expert & case	June 10, 2014
Wageningen UR	Ingrid Visseren-Hamakers	Partnerships in general; Potential role for external party	Expert	December 17, 2013; February 20, 2014
Partnership Resource Centre	Marieke de Wal	Partnerships in general; Potential role for external party	Expert	May 20, 2014
ARCADIS	Bianca Nijhof	Partnerships in general; Potential role for external party; ARCADIS' current role	Expert	June 13, 2014

Appendix B: Interview guides

B.1 Case study interview guide [EN]

Interview with [interviewee], [function] at [organisation]. Conducted by Tobias Wolters, master's student Social and Political Sciences of the Environment, Radboud University Nijmegen.

Background

- Use of recording equipment
- Reason interview (one-pager)
- Interview structure

Introduction

1. Could you describe your role or function within [organisation]?
 - a) Which department or unit within [organisation] is involved in the partnership?

Motives

2. What was the reason for [organisation] to collaborate with a NGO/business (in general)?
 - a) Which considerations played the biggest role?
3. Which party initiated the partnership? [organisation] or [partner organisation]?
 - a) What was the motive to cooperate with [partner organisation] specifically?
 - b) Were there any doubts prior to the decision to cooperate?
 - If so, why? (If not, why not?)
4. Were the motives to cooperate the same for both parties?
 - a) Did both parties have different motives?
 - b) If so, how are these differing motives handled?

Goals/ambitions

5. What is the goal of the [involved organisations] partnership, and why?
 - a) How is [organisation] (as an organisation) connected to this goal?
 - b) How did [organisation] and [partner organisation] work together to formulate this as a goal?
 - What were the challenges within this process?
6. What makes a partnership (as an instrument) suited to achieve this goal?
 - a) What makes a partnership more suited than another strategy?
7. Has the goal of the partnership been achieved so far?
 - a) If not, was the goal maybe too ambitious? Have some aspects been lost?
 - b) What is the plan to achieve this goal despite the fact that it isn't achieved yet?

Collaboration

8. How was the initial relation between [organisation] and [partner organisation] prior to the forming of the partnership? Or in the initial phase of the partnership?
9. How did the collaboration in the initial phase of the partnership go?
 - a) What did you do to build up a relationship of trust?
10. How do you experience working with [partner organisation] at this moment?

Implementation

11. How do [organisation] and [partner organisation] implement the partnership goals?
 - a) How are the partnership goals implemented? In which phase is the implementation process? Are there any tangible implementation agreements, plans or actions?
 - b) What are challenges within the implementation process?
 - c) How are these challenges handled?

Evaluation

12. Do [organisation] and [partner organisation] evaluate the results of the partnership?
 - a) If so, in what way do these evaluations take place?
 - How often? By who?
 - What specific indicators are used? What kind of knowledge is needed?
 - What challenges occur in this process?
 - b) If not, why not?
13. To what extent has the partnership process been successful? Has the collaboration with [partner organisation] been satisfying?

Communication

14. How does the communication process between [organisation] and [partner organisation] take place?
 - a) Is there a special communication strategy set up? Or certain agreements?
15. How does the partnership communicate with the outside world? (for example by showing successful projects in the media or to stakeholders)
16. How does your organisation communicate about the partnership internally? How was the partnership with [partner organisation] received within the organisation?

Summarise

- Briefly summarise the interview. So you are happy about this, less happy about this. Then introduce the possible role for third parties.

Role for third parties

17. Do you see a role for third parties (for example by giving advice or evaluation results) in the collaboration process?
 - a) If so, what kind of role? What kind of knowledge gaps can a third party fill? In what stage do you see a possible role for a facilitating party? What kind of third party? What are potential requirements for these third parties? Advantages/disadvantages?
 - b) If not, why not?
18. Did you experience a need for the involvement of a third party during the partnership process? For example in advising on the formation and implementation of objectives, or in evaluating partnership outcomes?

Conclusion

- Do you have anything to add that we didn't address during the interview?
- Thank you for your time and information.

B.2 Case study interview guide [NL]

Interview met [interviewee], [functie] bij [organisatie]. Gehouden door Tobias Wolters, masterstudent Milieu-maatschappijwetenschappen, Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen.

Introductie

- Gebruik opnameapparatuur
- Reden interview (one pager)
- Structuur van het interview

Inleiding

1. Kunt u een beschrijving geven van uw rol/functie binnen [organisatie]?
 - a) Welke afdeling binnen [organisatie] is betrokken bij het partnership?

Motieven

2. Wat was de reden voor [organisatie] om de samenwerking met een bedrijf/NGO (in het algemeen) aan te gaan?
 - a) Welke overwegingen speelden de grootste rol?
3. Welke partij initieerde het partnership? [organisatie] of [partnerorganisatie]?
 - a) Waarom is er specifiek voor samenwerking met [partnerorganisatie] gekozen?
 - b) Waren er voorafgaand aan het besluit om samen te gaan werken twijfels?
 - Zo ja, waarom? (Zo nee, waarom niet?)
4. Waren de motieven voor het aangaan van de samenwerking gelijk voor beide partijen?
 - a) Was er sprake van verschillende motieven?
 - b) Zo ja, hoe wordt er met deze verschillende motieven omgegaan?

Doelen/ambities

5. Wat is het doel van de samenwerking tussen [organisatie] en [partnerorganisatie], en waarom?
 - a) Hoe is [organisatie] als organisatie verbonden aan dit doel?
 - b) Hoe is het proces van doelvorming verlopen? Op welke wijze is dit doel opgesteld?
 - Wat waren de uitdagingen binnen dit proces?
6. Wat maakt een partnership (als instrument) geschikt voor het bereiken van dat doel?
 - a) Wat maakt een partnership meer geschikt dan een andere strategie?
7. Is het doel bereikt?
 - a) Zo niet, was het doel te ambitieus? Zijn er in het proces punten verloren gegaan?
 - b) Wat is het plan om die doelen alsnog te bereiken?

Samenwerking

8. Hoe was de relatie tussen [organisatie] en [partnerorganisatie] voordat het partnership werd gevormd?
9. Hoe verliep de beginfase van de samenwerking tussen [organisatie] en [partnerorganisatie]?
 - a) Wat hebt u gedaan om het vertrouwen op te bouwen?
10. Hoe ervaart u de samenwerking met [partnerorganisatie] op dit moment?

Implementatie

11. Hoe verloopt de implementatie van de doelstellingen van het partnership?
 - a) Op welke manier worden die doelstellingen van het partnership geïmplementeerd? In welke fase bevindt de implementatie zich nu? Zijn er concrete overeenkomsten, plannen of acties?
 - b) Wat waren de moeilijkheden binnen dit implementatieproces?
 - c) Hoe is er met deze moeilijkheden omgegaan?

Evaluatie

12. Evalueren [organisatie] en [partnerorganisatie] de resultaten van het partnership?
 - a) Zo ja, op welke wijze wordt deze evaluatie uitgevoerd?
 - Hoe vaak? Door wie?
 - Wordt er gebruik gemaakt van specifieke indicatoren?
 - Wat voor kennis is hiervoor nodig?
 - Welke moeilijkheden komen de partijen hierbij tegen?
 - b) Zo nee, waarom wordt hier geen aandacht aan besteed?
13. In hoeverre is het proces van het partnership succesvol gebleken? Is de samenwerking met [partnerorganisatie] bevallen?

Communicatie

14. Hoe verloopt de communicatie tussen [organisatie] en [partnerorganisatie]?
 - a) Hebben partners bijv. een speciale communicatie strategie opgesteld? Of bepaalde overeenkomsten?
15. Hoe wordt er over het partnership naar buiten gecommuniceerd? (bijvoorbeeld door het laten zien van successen aan de media of aan aandeelhouders)
16. Hoe wordt er over het partnership intern gecommuniceerd? Hoe is de samenwerking met [partnerorganisatie] binnen [organisatie] opgevat?

Samenvatten

- Even het voorgaande samenvatten. U bent dus tevreden over dit, kritisch over dit... Vervolgens de mogelijke rol voor derde partijen introduceren.

Rol voor derde partijen

17. Ziet u voor derde partijen een rol weggelegd (bijv. in de vorm van advies of evaluatie) binnen het samenwerkingsproces?
 - a) Zo ja, wat voor rol? Aan wat voor kennisbehoeften kan een derde partij bijdragen? In welke fase van het partnership is er mogelijk een rol? Wat voor een derde partij kan een rol spelen? Wat zijn mogelijke criteria voor de selectie van zo'n partij? Voordelen/nadelen?
 - b) Zo nee, waarom niet?
18. Hebt u hier tijdens de samenwerking behoefte gehad aan de bijdrage van een derde onafhankelijke partij? Bijv. voor adviezen bij het opstellen of implementeren van doelen en het evalueren van resultaten?

Afsluiting

- Hebt u nog dingen toe te voegen die we niet hebben besproken?
- Bedanken voor het interview

B.3 Expert interview guide [NL]

Interview met [interviewee], [functie] bij [organisatie]. Gehouden door Tobias Wolters, masterstudent Milieu-maatschappijwetenschappen, Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen.

Introductie

- Gebruik opnameapparatuur.
- Reden interview
- Structuur interview

Inleiding

1. Kunt u allereerst een beschrijving geven van uw achtergrond?
2. Wat doet [organisatie]? Wat voor diensten leveren jullie?
 - a) Wanneer speelt u uw rol en wanneer werkt dat goed?
 - b) Wat is de behoefte van de partijen die bij u langskomen? En blijkt dat ook hun echte behoefte te zijn?

Waarom partnerships?

3. Wat zijn de motieven van bedrijven en NGO's voor het aangaan van partnerships?
4. Wat maakt een partnership meer geschikt dan een andere strategie?

Bijzonderheden van biodiversiteit partnerships

5. Wat onderscheidt partnerships tussen bedrijven en NGO's van partnerships waarbij de publieke sector is betrokken? (afgezien van het feit dat er andere partijen betrokken worden)
 - a) Zijn deze bedrijf-NGO partnerships bijv. effectiever? Sneller resultaten?
6. Wat zijn de specifieke kenmerken van partnerships tussen bedrijven en NGO's die zich focussen op biodiversiteit?
 - a) Wat maakt een 'biodiversiteitspartnership' anders dan bijv. partnerships die zich bezighouden met ontwikkelingshulp etc.

Obstakels

7. Welke obstakels komen de partijen tegen wanneer zij een partnership aangaan?
 - a) In hoeverre is er sprake van twee verschillende werelden?
 - b) Hoe kan hiermee worden omgegaan?

Evaluatie

8. Hoe worden partnerships tussen bedrijven en NGOs over het algemeen gemonitord/gemeten?
 - a) Welke moeilijkheden komen de partijen hierbij tegen?
 - b) Welke partij (NGO/bedrijf/derde) levert de kennis op dit gebied?

De rol van derde partijen

9. Hoe kunnen derde partijen een rol spelen (bijv. door advisering of evaluatie van resultaten) in het partnership proces?
 - a) Aan welke kennisbehoeften kunnen deze partijen een bijdrage leveren?
 - b) In welke fase van het partnership kunnen partijen een rol spelen?
 - c) In hoeverre wordt deze rol al door dergelijke partijen uitgevoerd?
 - d) Wat zijn de voor- en nadelen van het betrekken van een derde partij?

10. Wat zijn de trends op dit gebied? Is er sprake van een toenemende betrokkenheid van dergelijke partijen?
- a) Is er een toenemende vraag naar dit soort partijen?

Afsluiting

- Hebt u nog dingen toe te voegen die we niet hebben besproken?
- Bedanken voor het interview.