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Cocoa sustainability initiatives and the environment: mapping stakeholder priorities and representations

A thesis submitted to the
University of Manchester
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy: Development Policy and Management
in the Faculty of Humanities

Year of presentation: 2015

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School of Environment, Education and Development
Institute for Development Policy and Management

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III. Abstract

The University of Manchester

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Thesis title: Cocoa sustainability initiatives and the environment: mapping stakeholder priorities and representations

Date: 14 December 2015

Given growing concerns regarding the chocolate sector's long-term future, ever more private-sector, public-sector and civil-society stakeholders have become involved in initiatives aiming to make cocoa production more 'sustainable'. However, despite the omnipresent term, stakeholders' understandings of associated environmental, commercial and socio-economic priorities diverge: while transforming cocoa into a more attractive livelihood for farmers is paramount for some, others prioritise links to global environmental challenges. A third dimension encompasses commercial concerns related to securing supply, an increasing qualm given projected cocoa shortages and ever-rising concentration in the marketplace.

This research argues there are considerable tensions between different stakeholders' commercial, socio-economic and environmental priorities in cocoa sustainability initiatives especially in light of the sector's intensifying challenges. Further tensions emerge between underlying drivers and representations, as public-facing communication continues to emphasise altruism rather than commercial necessity, locating engagements in 'nice-to-have' rather than 'business imperative' territory. Based on documentary analysis, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and participant observation, this thesis aims to capture how cocoa-sector changes have driven shifts in stakeholder priorities and representations, incorporating voices from across the initiatives ranging from cocoa producers to chocolate consumers.

Utilising a modified global production networks lens to represent the full spectrum of stakeholders involved, the research maps three cocoa sustainability initiatives incorporating conservation or carbon measures in terms of power and embeddedness, stakeholder drivers and representations. While identifying tensions, it also argues that acknowledging divergent understandings of the polysemic 'sustainability' concept constitutes an opportunity for a much-needed redressing of power and embeddedness asymmetries to address systemic issues threatening the sector's future. However, the thesis also observes that despite protestations of partnership, few actors are willing to contemplate the systemic changes in favour of more equitable treatment and power distribution which would be required to safeguard the sector's long-term viability.

This thesis's contributions include its unprecedented critical exploration of the diverging socio-economic, commercial and environmental drivers which diverse stakeholders associate with cocoa sustainability, the meanings they create towards the public, and the link to underlying power and embeddedness structures. These analytical foci have proved instrumental in unpacking emerging tensions, which are likely to grow more marked as cocoa shortages become more acute and understandings of sustainability continue to diverge.

IV. Declaration

No portion of the work referred to in the thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.

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VI. Abbreviations

CSR	Corporate social responsibility
EUR	Euro (currency)
FAQ	Frequently asked questions
FGD	Focus group discussion
FHIA	Fundación Hondureña de Investigación Agrícola (Honduran Foundation for Agricultural Research)
FiBL	Forschungsinstitut für biologischen Landbau (Research institute for organic agriculture)
FLO	Fairtrade Labelling Organizations International
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (German agency for international development)
GPN	Global Production Network
GVC	Global Value Chain
HoC	House of Commons
ICCO	International Cocoa Organization
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
IOU	'I owe you' – informal document acknowledging debt, promissory note
n.d.	No date
NIO	Nicaraguan córdobas
RA	Rainforest Alliance
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USD	United States dollars
UTZ	UTZ Certified
WCED	World Commission on Environment and Development
WCF	World Cocoa Foundation

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لعائلتي المغربية: شكرا جزيلا لكم!

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S.D.G.

jek
December 2015

1. Introduction

The cocoa sector is reverberating from seismic changes. For decades, initiatives to improve cocoa production's social and environmental circumstances had chiefly been the domain of small-scale, 100% ethical chocolate manufacturers or had entailed only partial range adjustments. Now, also industry heavyweights are entering into far-reaching commitments (Confectionery News, 2012a-c; Fountain and Hütz-Adams, 2015). Beyond pre-existing pressure from consumers and civil-society organisations, projections of long-term shortages in cocoa supply have precipitated shifts in scale and nature of these sustainability initiatives¹, transforming them from nice-to-have into business imperatives. Firstly, recent engagements demonstrate a different level of urgency driving particularly private-sector actors given looming supply shortages. Secondly, private-sector stakeholders are engaging directly with growers, posing new challenges for cocoa producers in terms of bargaining power asymmetries. A third key difference results from growing public awareness regarding environmental matters and cocoa agroforestry systems' propensity for addressing global environmental challenges such as conservation and carbon sequestration. Given these shifts in initiatives' outlook and acuteness, my overarching research question is:

How are cocoa-sector shifts driving changes in stakeholder priorities and representations in cocoa sustainability initiatives, particularly regarding the environment?

The underlying story is twofold: firstly, consumers and civil-society organisations have been making known their preference for products which leave less of a mark on customers' conscience. Chocolate firms have responded, frequently enlisting certification schemes including Fairtrade, organic, Rainforest Alliance and UTZ Certified, which serve a dual purpose: they aid implementation on the ground, while also lending brands their credibility as independent labellers. Certifiers have flourished in recent years, partly spurred by multi-stakeholder initiatives e.g. in the Netherlands and Germany which aim to shift national cocoa consumption towards certified supply. Secondly, in addition to consumer pressures, forecasts of demand outstripping

¹ Although so many stakeholders of conflicting persuasions use 'sustainability' as to render it devoid of analytical value, I will use 'cocoa sustainability initiatives' as an umbrella term for initiatives aiming to increase the environmental, socio-economic and commercial resilience of cocoa production.

current supply by 25% in 2020 and thus palpable threats to chocolate businesses' long-term survival have caused increasing concern (Hütz-Adams and Fountain, 2012; Thornton, 2010). This is changing the framing of social and environmental concerns including growers' low socio-economic returns and poor environmental practices, causing stakeholders to regard them as serious issues whose resolution is essential. As more players pledge allegiance to 100% certified supply by decade's end, the question where these supplies are to come from becomes more pressing. In parallel, fears have grown that certification may not offer a sufficient lever to address these systemic threats, causing businesses to engage directly with growers (Confectionery News, 2012b).

My fundamental argument is that changes in the cocoa sector are causing tensions between and within the diverse socio-economic, environmental and commercial priorities which civil-society, private-sector and public-sector stakeholders bring to the table, with their drivers variously dovetailing, intersecting and colliding. Given rising shortage concerns, I argue that engaging with sustainability has morphed from nice-to-have to self-serving business imperative in the chocolate sector, affecting stakeholders' power and embeddedness relations. However, despite sustainability's omnipresence, stakeholders' framings of the polysemic term and their understandings of what socio-economic, commercial and environmental priorities are paramount and can resolve shortage fears vary considerably, causing tensions. Further tensions exist between underlying priorities and the meanings stakeholders create in public-facing representations.

Against the backdrop of shortage projections, these tensions in cocoa-related production networks merit investigation in terms of power and embeddedness relations, actors' precise constellations of drivers, and the meanings stakeholders create in public representations. The reason is that civil-society, private-sector and public-sector stakeholders have vastly different perceptions of how to define or bring about sustainability, and the relative importance of commercial vis-à-vis socio-environmental priorities. My research focus on initiatives with an environmental focus, which have recently grown in number and scale, adds an environmental dimension to socio-economic and commercial considerations, bringing in another layer of complexity. As one strength of the global production network (GPN) lens is conceptualising diverse stakeholders and their power and embeddedness, I will utilise this heuristic framework to unpack tensions, while also engaging with its strengths and limitations. As case-studies, I will examine three cocoa sustainability initiatives with an environmental focus to investigate tensions between and within stakeholders, drivers and representations, applying the GPN lens to map

them. A key contribution of this thesis will be exploring to what extent the changed sector and changed drivers also prompt actors to make systemic changes in terms of equitable treatment and distribution of power throughout their cocoa sustainability initiatives, investigating drivers' and representations' interdependencies with power and embeddedness relations.

My study splits the overarching research question examining how sector shifts are driving changes in stakeholder priorities and representations especially in environmental terms into four constitutive sub-questions, which this chapter will explore briefly. The first sub-question investigates one prominent aspect of the study's conceptual framework, the GPN lens, in terms of its strengths and limitations in conceptualising these new developments in the cocoa sector.

1. To what extent does the Global Production Networks framework help understand shifts within cocoa sustainability initiatives?

1.1 To what extent does the GPN framework help analyse the multitude of actors influencing initiatives' set-up and priorities?

1.2 To what extent does the GPN framework help unpack shifts and tensions in terms of different stakeholders' priorities and representations?

The first, analytical research sub-question creates a link between the cocoa sustainability initiatives to be investigated and GPN debates. Following the critical review of my conceptual underpinnings in the literature in chapter 2 and the discussion of research methods in chapter 3, the fourth chapter will focus on this question. In combination with the critical review, it will outline the strengths of the GPN framework in highlighting particularly the power and embeddedness dimensions and their relationship with stakeholder tensions. However, it will also engage critically with the framework's limitations, thereby answering research sub-questions 1, 1.1 and 1.2. Chapter 4 will argue that while the GPN framework provides a useful lens, two complementary elements of analysis can enhance its contribution to this study. Firstly, given the considerable diversity of chocolate-sector stakeholders now influencing products' physical and ideational genesis, a wider perspective of who is considered relevant to the investigation is necessary to safeguard holistic analysis. A second argument is that exploring stakeholder priorities and public-facing representations, and tensions between and within them, reveals new insights regarding the links between particularly power and embeddedness in the GPN framework.

Building on these conceptual discussions, investigating transformations in cocoa sustainability initiatives is at the heart of the second research sub-question:

2. What is new in sustainability initiatives in the chocolate sector?

2.1 What socio-economic, commercial and environmental objectives govern initiatives?

2.2 What major trends are visible, particularly from a GPN perspective?

The second sub-question's two facets investigate what goals govern initiatives in the socio-economic, commercial and environmental dimensions, and relate findings to wider trends and particularly power and embeddedness considerations. Chapter 5 will discuss these aspects in an overview of the chocolate sector, emphasising challenges and emerging tensions. Chapter 6 will answer sub-questions 2, 2.1 and 2.2 with reference to the three cocoa sustainability initiatives selected as case-studies. The initiatives, explored through in-depth fieldwork incorporating voices from European stakeholders and the Latin American producing contexts, have been chosen as all three include significant environmental components while encompassing diverse approaches and stakeholder types. Chapter 6 will explore their set-up in terms of stakeholders involved, their objectives, and particularly power and embeddedness from a GPN perspective. The chapters argue that there is a connection between the cocoa sector's growing precarity, pre-existing power and embeddedness asymmetries between for instance cocoa producers and chocolate companies, and the complex tensions emerging between civil-society, private-sector and public-sector actors and their diverse objectives. The chapters emphasise the links between power and embeddedness considerations in cocoa and the nuanced tensions found in initiatives, with later chapters to explore particularly the frictions resulting from diverging stakeholder priorities and representations.

Building on the prior mapping, the third research sub-question emphasises a key research theme, stakeholder drivers:

3. How are new drivers affecting cocoa sustainability initiatives with an environmental focus?

3.1 Who and what have been important drivers?

3.2 How do initiatives reflect trade-offs and tensions between priorities among different GPN stakeholders?

3.3 What are the implications of these drivers and tensions for producers' and other stakeholders' reality?

As sustainability is a much-quoted, but ill-defined concept, different stakeholders' underlying socio-economic, environmental and commercial drivers will partly be incongruent, leading to tensions. Chapter 7 will therefore explore for the three case-studies what congruences and incongruences there are between different public-sector, private-sector and civil-society stakeholders' priorities, answering the different parts of research sub-question 3. The chapter will argue that there are considerable divergences between different stakeholders' nuanced constellations of drivers. At the same time, due to the above-discussed power asymmetries, lead actors can imprint their commercial priorities on the rest of the supply chain even if other stakeholders' priorities are located more in the socio-economic or environmental domains, affecting stakeholder realities.

The final sub-question strikes a link from underlying drivers to the representations put forward towards the chocolate-buying public.

4. In relation to these drivers, what representations surface in cocoa sustainability initiatives especially regarding the environment?

4.1 How do different stakeholders' representations diverge?

4.2 What interactions are there between drivers and prevalent representations?

Research sub-question 4.1, mirroring the analysis of stakeholders' diverging drivers in the three case-studies from the previous chapter, looks into different stakeholders' representations and the extent to which they diverge, while 4.2 identifies interactions between drivers and representations firstly in terms of congruences of meaning, but also what meanings different representations create. Answering research sub-questions 4, 4.1 and 4.2, chapter 8 argues that representations deployed across all three case-studies highlight the altruistic nature of initiatives. The meanings created thus suggest a nice-to-have, philanthropically motivated engagement rather than the business imperative 'sustainability' has become. This incongruence creates tensions with the sector's overall sense of urgency, and the nuanced, complex priorities established previously.

Drawing on the preceding analysis, chapter 9 builds bridges to establish a wider analytical and empirical narrative for the thesis, while appendix 4 contains recommendations for diverse stakeholder groups. Chapter 9 highlights the links between the thesis's analytical and empirical findings, particularly regarding power and embeddedness, and their relations to identified tensions between and within priorities and representations. It summarises how the thesis answered its analytical and empirical research sub-questions and offers wider observations regarding the study's implications for further research and the chocolate sector. The most salient contributions include the analysis of tensions in initiatives emerging from diverging stakeholder drivers and of their links to underlying power and embeddedness relations. The chapter argues based on my findings that the severity of the sector's challenges requires answers involving multiple stakeholder types, with the sector now including more diverse actors in its sustainability initiatives. Nevertheless, only few stakeholders are willing to embrace the systemic changes in terms of trade and equity required to safeguard the sector's long-term socio-economic and environmental viability. As long as marked power and embeddedness asymmetries persist, different understandings of sustainability and of what socio-economic, environmental and commercial objectives are ends, what are means, are likely to cause further tensions between diverse public-sector, private-sector and civil-society stakeholders.

Methodologically, I will combine a mapping utilising an expanded GPN framework with a comparative study of three initiatives, drawing on detailed fieldwork encompassing voices from European and Latin American contexts across three cocoa-related production networks and beyond. Chapter 3 will explore my use of documentary analysis, key informant interviews, focus group discussions and participant observation to answer my research questions and make original contributions, which are fourfold. Firstly, my thesis contributes knowledge regarding the environmental side of cocoa sustainability initiatives, which have been underresearched in the past. As public awareness of and willingness to fund environmental matters increases, cocoa sustainability initiatives have to accommodate a third, environmental dimension beyond socio-economic and commercial concerns. This adds a further layer of complexity beyond existing and documented frictions between socio-economic and commercial aspects, with this research exploring the nuanced tensions between the domains. Secondly, researching cocoa-and-environment-related GPNs holistically is another original contribution, as most studies focus on parts of the overall production process. I argue, however, that a comprehensive GPN analysis

can unpack tensions between and within priorities and representations, and power and embeddedness relations, which may escape partial analyses.

A third key contribution is developing and applying the constellations of priorities model, i.e. a systematic analysis of stakeholder priorities in the socio-economic, environmental and commercial dimensions. The model offers both a practical and an analytical contribution as a way for stakeholders to advance knowledge on their own and others' priorities and help facilitate the rebalancing of diverse actors' socio-environmental priorities vis-à-vis the continuing primacy of commercial considerations. This observation links to my final, counterintuitive, contribution concerning the relationship between sustainability initiatives and systemic inequities in the chocolate sector. Despite initiatives' protestations of partnership, the analysis finds that few cocoa sustainability initiatives attempt to redress the fundamental power asymmetries complicit in bringing about the sector's current challenges in the first place. Rather, in condensing production networks, multiple initiatives contributed to a further concentration of power in Northern buyers, exacerbating existing asymmetries.

2. Conceptualising cocoa, agroforestry, networks, drivers and representations: analytical underpinnings

This chapter will build my study's conceptual underpinnings to answer its overarching research question:

How are cocoa-sector shifts driving changes in stakeholder priorities and representations in cocoa sustainability initiatives, particularly regarding the environment?

To provide context for the analytical and empirical investigation to follow, chapter 2 will review the challenges facing the cocoa sector before discussing the rise of cocoa sustainability initiatives and particularly agroforestry initiatives within them. These sections explore the aforementioned sector transformations, both in terms of the consumer-facing rationale emanating from civil-society pressure, and the added urgency resulting from the chocolate sector's concern over long-term shortage fears. As my thesis argues that cocoa sustainability initiatives have shifted in response to the sector's challenges, sections 2.1 and 2.2 will also explore links to stakeholder engagements, for instance discussing certification. Part of the analysis also highlights the possibilities for addressing global environmental challenges which cocoa agroforestry systems offer, exploring cocoa sustainability's environmental dimension.

The following section, 2.3, discusses how to analyse cocoa-chocolate production networks. It explains the thesis's choice of the GPN framework to conceptualise the case-studies, engaging with its strengths and limitations ahead of a more in-depth exploration of suggested expansions in chapter 4. My argument is that while GPNs are well-suited for this analysis, this study's focus on diverse actors and complex tensions requires further complements, which I will apply to the three case-studies encompassing diverse initiatives and stakeholders. Section 2.4 will outline how the thesis will conceptualise different stakeholder priorities in my three case-studies, laying the foundation for my argument of nuanced tensions between stakeholders' socio-economic, environmental and commercial priorities. Public-facing communication, representations and spectacle are the focus of section 2.5, which prepares the framework to conceptualise the diverse and complex meanings created in stakeholders' representations in my three case-studies. Overall, the conceptual underpinnings will allow later chapters to investigate how tensions in priorities and representations illuminate equally tension-ridden links between power and embeddedness. First, however, the following section will explore the cocoa sector's lay of the land.

2.1 The chocolate sector: the lay of the land

Cocoa is a source of livelihood for 40 to 50 million people and is produced in tropical regions in Africa, Latin America and Asia, constituting an export item for ca. 60 countries (FAOSTAT, 2015; UNCTAD, 2011; WCF, 2012; World Bank, 2011). An estimated 5 to 6 million farmers, 90% of whom are smallholders², generate over 90% of world cocoa production, which is forecast to reach 4.2 millions of metric tonnes for the 2014-2015 crop season (Hütz-Adams and Fountain, 2012; WCF, 2012; ICCO, 2015a, b). The chocolate sector demonstrates considerable concentrations, geographically in cocoa production, and commercially in cocoa processing and chocolate manufacturing. Firstly, over two-thirds of global cocoa originate from Africa, forecast to be 73.2% for the 2014/15 cocoa year (ICCO, 2015a; cf. figure 2.1.1). Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, the two top-producing nations, customarily account for ca. 60% of the annual crop (ICCO, 2014, 2015a, b; cf. figure 2.1.2).

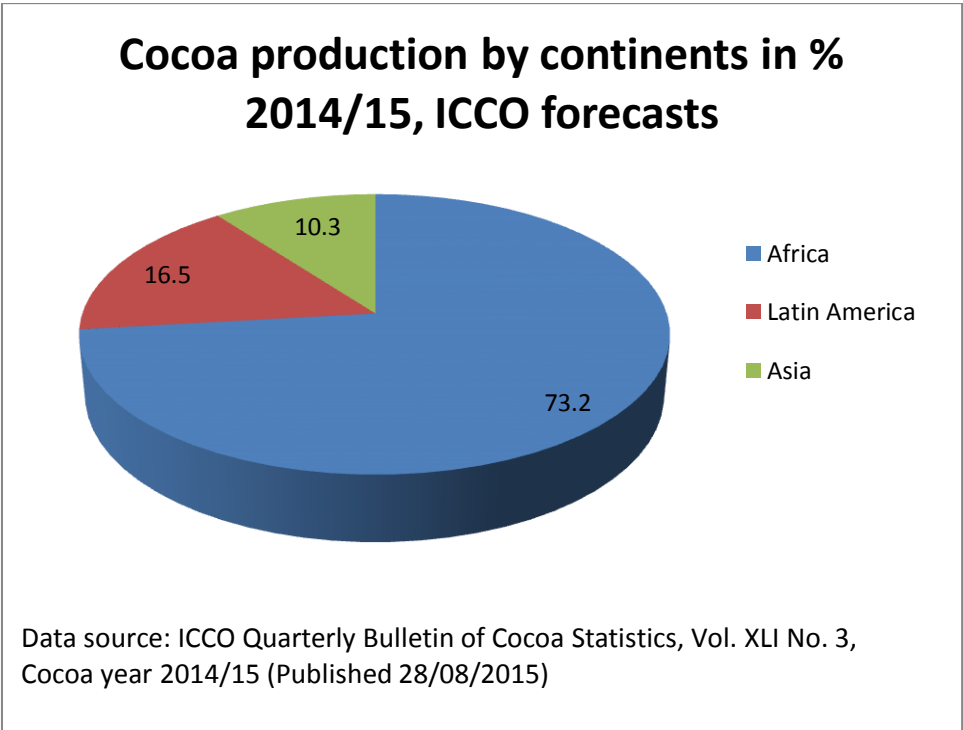


Figure 2.1.1: Cocoa production by continents 2014/15, based on ICCO forecasts (2015b), in %.

² Definitions of smallholders vary, being based partly on plot sizes (e.g. Hütz-Adams and Fountain, 2012:3), partly on reliance on family labour. The Ethical Trading Initiative refrains from quantitative designations, but notes different attributes indicative of smallholders: producing comparatively small volumes on small plots of land, low resources, vulnerability in supply chains and dependence on family labour (ETI, 2005:13).

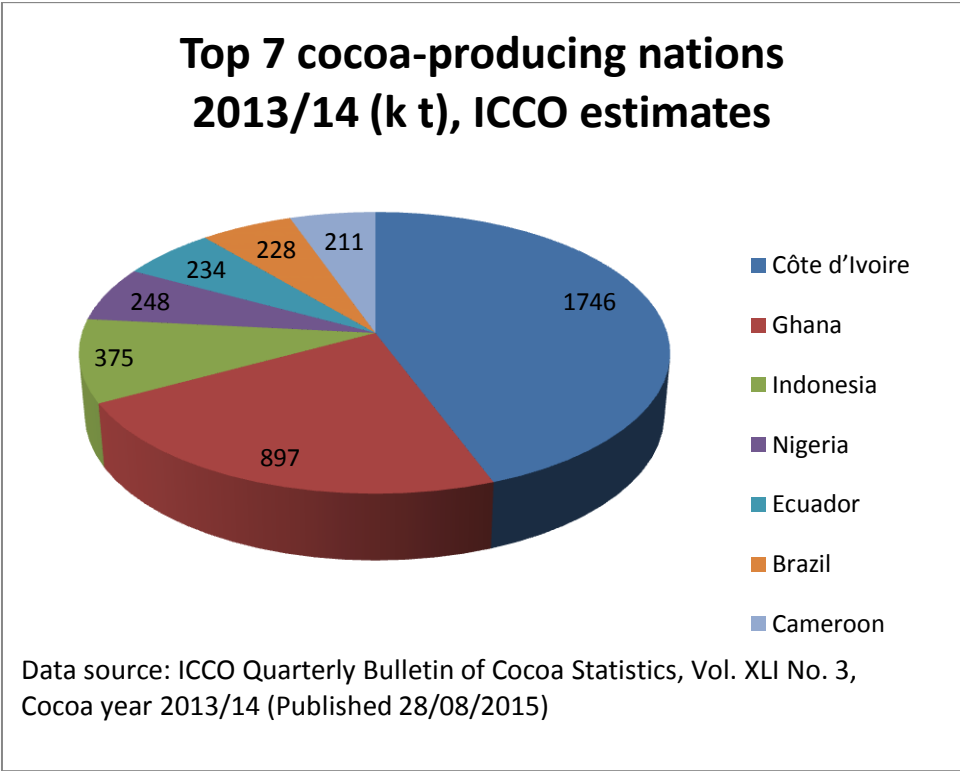


Figure 2.1.2: Top 7 cocoa-producing nations 2013/14, based on ICCO estimates (2015b) in thousands of metric tonnes.

In addition to geographical concentration, there are also only a handful of multi-national corporations that control cocoa processing and brand manufacturing, respectively. Switzerland-based Barry Callebaut, US-based Archer Daniels Midland (ADM) and Cargill accounted for 40% of the world’s cocoa grindings in 2006 (UNCTAD, 2008:23), with Singapore-based Olam now completing the top four (Fairtrade, 2011a:7). For traders-grinders, supply shares certified by either Fairtrade, UTZ Certified³ or Rainforest Alliance vary, but generally have seen a rapid rise in recent years. Switzerland-based Ecom has expanded its share to 23% in 2013, followed by US-based Cargill, at 21%, which has recently overtaken US-based Blommer at 19%, followed closely by Olam at 18% (Fountain and Hütz-Adams, 2015:24; Hütz-Adams and Fountain, 2012:10). For most, this roughly doubles their share from only two years before. Barry Callebaut, by far the largest grinder in absolute terms, follows at 13%, with ADM at only 10% (Fountain and Hütz-Adams, 2015:24; Hütz-Adams and Fountain, 2012:10).

³ UTZ Certified is a certification scheme which has emerged from UTZ Kapeh, a programme which originally certified ‘good coffee’ (incidentally the meaning of these two words in the Mayan language Quiché), but now certifies other agricultural commodities including cocoa and tea.

Concentration is equally prevalent in chocolate manufacturing, dominated by Kraft/Cadbury, now renamed Mondelez, Nestlé, Mars, Hershey's and Ferrero (Candy Industry, 2015; Fountain and Hütz-Adams, 2015:26; Hütz-Adams and Fountain, 2012:8). Mars, Nestlé, Mondelez and Hershey's combined for 43% of the sector in 2010 (Candy Industry, 2010). The largest manufacturer Mondelez used 11% certified cocoa within their total 450,000 tonnes in 2013; second-in-class Nestlé aims to rise from 1% in 2011 via 11% in 2013 to 29% in 2016, while third-largest manufacturer Mars, equally at 8% for 2011, aims to attain a staggering 51% by 2016 via a 2013 share of 30% (Fountain and Hütz-Adams, 2015:26; Hütz-Adams and Fountain, 2012:11). Multiple large-scale manufacturers, including Mars in 2009 and Ferrero and Hershey in 2012, have pledged to use 100% certified cocoa by 2020 (Confectionery News, 2012c; Fountain and Hütz-Adams, 2015:25). This amalgamation of large-scale commitments again recalls the issue of where this volume of certified cocoa is to come from.

These observations confirm two assumptions. Firstly, one stakeholder's changed requirements, i.e. a brand manufacturer's desire to demonstrate compliance with certification schemes, has an impact throughout the sector on the traders, certifiers, cocoa producers and development partners with whom it works. Secondly, these successive hubs of corporate power create commercial pressure particularly on stakeholders outside the dominating companies to safeguard long-term availability of their key ingredient in the quality they require. Recent mergers, such as Kraft/Mondelez taking over Cadbury (FT, 2012), Barry Callebaut obtaining Petra Foods's cocoa unit (Bloomberg, 2012), and Cargill acquiring ADM's cocoa business (Cargill, 2015), confirm continuous concentrating forces in the sector. Against this backdrop, levels of private-sector concern regarding the future availability of cocoa in the quality and at prices which stakeholders desire have risen. As a consequence, monthly cocoa futures prices on the stock market (Futures Trading, 2014) have seen considerable fluctuations, beginning a slow ascent from 2006 to a peak in early 2011 of USD3,400, twice the 2006 levels. Following a drop, late 2013, 2014 and 2015 saw a rise back to between USD2,800 and USD3,200 (Futures Trading, 2015).

Given increasing concentration and rising prices in the marketplace, fears of long-term supply shortages (Confectionery News, 2012a-c) are transforming businesses' conception of 'quality' in the chocolate sector. Compliance with social and environmental requirements can constitute one 'quality' adding value and grower income (Barrientos and Asenso-Okyere, 2009:91). Quality of food is a social and material construct (Fold, 2000:93), with different cultures, stakeholders and

consumers attaching diverging values to taste, origin or production circumstances (Cidell and Alberts, 2006:999-1000; Renard, 2003). How different stakeholders conceive of 'quality' is a key question for convention theory (Cidell and Alberts, 2006). This theory posits that different trade actors will define 'quality' quite differently, ranging from price considerations to ethical notions. Whereas market-based regimes are determined by prices, industry-based regimes highlight standardisation of physical features. Thirdly, domestic-based regimes appreciate location and brand as well as transparency and trust, while civic-based regimes prioritise social and environmental aspects (Cidell and Alberts, 2006:1000-1001; Fold, 2000:95; Renard, 2003). These notions may differ and have to be negotiated between and within different stakeholders (Fold, 2000; Raynolds and Wilkinson, 2007:37): while some consumers' definition may be civic-based, grinders may champion price or industry-based notions. Again, this diversity of conceptions of quality and thus priorities highlights the importance of nuanced conceptualisations of the tensions which these divergences may entail between diverse stakeholders.

Overall, a move beyond price orientation towards multiple food qualities has seen social and environmental factors seeping into buying decisions (Barrientos and Smith, 2007:108; Millard, 2011:367) as consumer concerns render 'premium' chocolate, corporate social responsibility (CSR) and certification business opportunities (Lee, Gereffi and Beauvais, 2010). Growing expectations regarding cocoa quality may offer opportunities for 'upgrading'. Upgrading means ameliorating products, services or stakeholder capacities at different production stages (Gereffi et al., 2001). Process upgrading improves operations e.g. by increasing efficiency, product upgrading heightens the sophistication of objects sold, whereas functional upgrading has stakeholders adding competencies such as design capabilities (Humphrey and Schmitz, 2000:3-4). 'Social upgrading', according to Barrientos, Gereffi and Rossi (2010:6-7), means enhancing workers' capabilities as social actors. Becoming certified is an example of upgrading. Compliance thus constitutes a quality enhancing the product sold and adding value through differentiation for manufacturers and income for growers.

Securing supply of the required quality is an ever more pressing concern for private-sector actors in the cocoa sector (Barrientos, 2014). As experts expect demand to be 25% over 2009/10 and equal up to 5m tonnes by 2020, there are doubts as to whether it can be met (Thornton, 2010; Hütz-Adams and Fountain, 2012), which has caught the sector's attention (Barrientos, 2014). Various factors have amalgamated to produce these doubts as to whether high quality of produce and production can be sustained long-term. Environmental aspects include reduced possibilities

to expand into natural forest (Clay, 2004:174), conventional farming practices degrading resources, and the uncertainty of climate change impacts (CIAT, 2011; Ofori-Boateng and Insah, 2014). Socio-economically, there is the rising average age of cocoa-growers, poor working conditions and returns (Barrientos et al., 2008; Hainmueller, Hiscox and Tampe, 2011:59). A key issue has been that net returns for cocoa growers have been dwindling for decades (Fountain and Hütz-Adams, 2015; Hütz-Adams and Fountain, 2012; Südwind, 2012a), meaning the next generation of cocoa growers need to see production's economic viability improved. Commercially, the above-mentioned ever-concentrating oligopolistic structure of the chocolate market is causing further concern (Barrientos, 2014) given fears of truncated supply and rising prices.

This amalgamation of socio-economic, commercial and environmental factors is prompting ever more private-sector, public-sector and civil-society stakeholders to engage in initiatives improving diverse aspects of cocoa production (Glin, Oosterveer and Mol, 2015:44). At the same time, this multiplicity of underlying purposes and understandings of 'sustainability' also means there are tensions between commercial and social objectives (Mason and Doherty, 2015) as well as with the third environmental dimension. After all, public constructions of harmony between environmental and socio-economic drivers as exercised for instance by transfrontier conservation discourse (Büscher, 2010:263) have often proved simplified. This thesis's key research focus is thus to explore in more depth how tensions manifest themselves, between and within different stakeholders' drivers and representations. The following section will explore how businesses' principal driver for engaging with cocoa sustainability has shifted from nice-to-have to business imperative, and some tensions which diverging motivations may entail.

2.2 The rise of 'cocoa sustainability initiatives': from niche to imperative

2.2.1 Certification: rising popularity and criticism

As interest in corporate responsibility has proliferated, so has interest in labelling through private voluntary standards, particularly in food, which bring together partly antagonistic actors in a space eluding states' and international organisations' regulatory scope (Gereffi, Garcia-Johnson and Sasser, 2001:64). Certification institutions usually unite certain rules such as a code of conduct, and monitoring mechanisms (Gereffi, Garcia-Johnson and Sasser, 2001:57) giving rules their teeth (Blowfield and Dolan, 2008:12). One common categorisation of certification initiatives divides them by provenance (Gereffi, Garcia-Johnson and Sasser, 2001:57-58): a company itself

designs first-party certification, second-party certification originates from trade associations, external third-party certification comes through e.g. an NGO, and fourth-party certification from governmental or multilateral institutions. Auditing by NGOs is popular, as this third-party vetting brings increased credibility (Klooster, 2006:541) towards consumers, investors and fellow suppliers. This also renders certifiers stewards of virtue granting legitimacy (Blowfield and Dolan, 2008).

The question arises whether there is a 'victim of its own success' pattern influencing the expected and offered stringency of certification requirements. Certification in forestry is claimed to have been at its most rigorous in its first large-scale manifestation, the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC; Klooster, 2006:542). Successful standards such as FSC or the Fairtrade seal increase demand, spreading the clientele beyond Reynolds's 'mission-driven' buyers (2009), which will be explored below, towards circles seeking token engagements. This causes tensions between e.g. the roots of fair and ethical trade as a social movement, and commercial pressures resulting from mainstreaming, raising fundamental questions regarding the movement's future development (Doherty, Davies and Tranchell, 2013). As altruistic commitment weakens, demand for malleable schemes rises, constituting a double-edged sword: while expansion stems from the desire to increase producers' market access (Wilkinson and Mascarenhas, 2007:128) and marks success, it potentially also constitutes dilution (Smith, 2008:4). Given the ramifications of underlying motivations, identifying drivers is therefore crucial.

Other points of criticism fault certification and standards for their power to exclude developing countries and farmers from market access through high application and audit costs (Henson and Humphrey, 2008:1; IIED and Consumers International, 2005:7; KPMG, 2012), and an uneven distribution of costs and benefits between corporations and growers (Kilcher, 2007:47). Equally, questions have surfaced whether standards have arisen chiefly to avoid regulation in sectors which civil society has placed under particular scrutiny (Gereffi, Garcia-Johnson and Sasser, 2001:57-9). Moreover, there is a question whether standards, a geographically limited phenomenon as demand from e.g. Chinese buyers is frequently not attached to these conditionalities (Kaplinsky, Terheggen and Tijaja, 2010:323-325), may imprint Northern values. Driven by demand in industrialised countries, they may project Northern representations and ideas, imposing supposedly universal values and monitoring processes, including their technical-rationalist biases, conceived in consumer societies (Blowfield and Dolan, 2008; Klooster, 2006; Tharoor, 1999). Consequently, they may not reflect the priorities of intended beneficiaries in

developing countries (Henson and Humphrey, 2008:16), as the degree to which producers can participate in standards' conception and development varies (Bendell, 2005:362).

Further difficulties with certification are how to quantify ecological criteria such as 'habitat preservation', define 'good performance', aggregate different indicator types and information entailing diverging biases (Dudley et al., 2005:461; Foresight, 2011:154-8) and ontological and epistemological assumptions, or tailor general criteria to local conditions (Blowfield, 2003:22; Lewandowski and Faaij, 2006:100; Van Dam et al., 2008:776). For standards mixing environmental and socio-economic goals, the dilemma of whether both are attainable in parallel returns (Klooster, 2006:542). Moreover, certification is inherently partial, as its unique selling proposition is guaranteeing that a particular, restricted group of growers utilise socio-economic and environmental practices which comply with regulation against a backdrop of general non-compliance. For instance, landscape-level environmentally friendly management could yield better results for biodiversity than the current system of certifying individual entities (Interview #132, research). Equally, those entities that have been audited may become islands without due consideration for the social, economic and environmental circumstances of wider communities (Neilson and Pritchard, 2009:157). The partiality also extends to who can participate among consumers, with premium-price certification products partly out of the price range of certain strata of society. Building on this general overview of certification and some of its criticisms, the following section will explore the diverging foci and priorities of four certification types popular in the chocolate sector (Millard, 2011): fair trade, organic, Rainforest Alliance and UTZ Certified. A recurring issue for all certification schemes popular in cocoa are difficulties in matching supply and demand, as businesses claim there is not enough certified cocoa, but considerable volumes meeting certifiers' requirements continue to be sold uncertified (Fountain and Hütz-Adams, 2015).

2.2.2 Certification in the chocolate industry

Although certification schemes generally aim to challenge relations causing ecological and social issues (Raynolds, 2006:49), there are differences in priorities between different standards (KPMG, 2013) and thus also those who choose them. Equally, the multitude of different schemes with differing priorities has become a source of confusion for consumers (Willmann and Kabelitz, 2009).

The longest-established chocolate certification scheme is Fairtrade (Hütz-Adams and Fountain, 2012), a certification scheme of Fairtrade Labelling Organizations International (FLO) and the best-known among all fair trade schemes. The philosophy of fair trading, rooted in establishing socio-political connections between Northern consumers and Southern producers bridging their very different life realities, promotes a supply-chain concept enabling small producers to access markets at fair prices, thereby targeting production and trade conditions alike (Croft, 2006:69; Raynolds, Murray and Taylor, 2004:1113). Fairtrade's approach provides fixed premiums above market prices, which are partly paid individually, partly pooled into community-managed social funds invested through farmers' decision-making, as well as access to credit, long-term partnerships, and capacity-development activities, while promoting farmer co-operatives (Fairtrade, 2011a:11; ICCO, 2005:3-4; Nelson and Pound, 2009:4). Overall, there is consensus Fairtrade can provide economic benefits to those producers able to meet its requirements, while evidence on social or empowerment impacts is mixed (Nelson and Pound, 2009:6-18). Demand for Fairtrade-certified cocoa more than doubled from 14,000 tonnes in 2009 to 35,000 tonnes in 2010 globally (Fairtrade, 2011a:12-13), increasing to a retail sales volume of 54,485 metric tonnes by 2013 (Fairtrade International, 2014). Although the market share of Fairtrade-certified cocoa is miniscule at 1% (Max Havelaar, 2011:3), demand for fair and organic cocoa has been steadily increasing, with Europe the largest buyer (CBI, 2008:12).

A further example of certification is production in accordance with organic principles, demand for which has continually increased globally even during the economic downturn, with exceptions in some countries (Soil Association, 2012). Organic certification is particular as its focus is less environmentally degrading modes of production, with social goals only attached implicitly through higher prices and the 'fairness' principle, one of the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements' four pillars (IFOAM, 2014). Organic labelling is particularly attractive for farmers already operating low-input systems due to agrochemicals being unavailable (Crucefix, 1998:45). Moreover, organic production does not automatically decrease yields as organic intercropping may offer more products on the same surface (Kilcher, 2007:43). By seizing Northern consumers', companies' and countries' willingness to pay for sustainable production, organic production offers avenues to reward ecosystem services which are essential for food production, but currently uncoded (Foresight, 2011:139). Organic cocoa is subject to considerable price volatility, due to small volumes and inconsistent quality, but attains elevated retail prices, up to three times higher than for conventional retail chocolate in the UK and the U.S. (Pay, 2009:8). Consequently, the ecological modernisation argument of environmental protection offering a pathway to further socio-economic development may apply, as this avenue

can reduce agriculture's environmental cost while increasing its financial viability (Clay, 2004:41). Organic cocoa cultivation totalled 227,000 hectares worldwide or roughly 2.3% of the global harvested cocoa bean surface in 2013, while the crop surface increased fivefold from 2004 to 2013, although partly attributable to better data availability (FiBL and IFOAM, 2015:90, 91). Almost 90% of organic cocoa surfaces are located in Latin America (FiBL and IFOAM, 2015:90).

A third certification scheme is 'Rainforest Alliance' (RA), mostly certifying agricultural commodities from developing countries. As the name suggests, RA standards highlight wildlife, water and ecosystem conservation (Ethical Corporation, 2007) while also promoting producer livelihoods. It enables farmers to differentiate produce and attain higher prices, constituting a de-facto premium (Blowfield, 2003; Ellis and Keane, 2008:18). Furthermore, it offers flexibility to producers as they may initially have lower proportions of certified produce in coffee, tea and flowers, improving gradually (HoC, 2011:85), safeguarding incomes also in a transition period. It has relations with Kraft/Mondeléz, Mars, Nespresso, Magnum, Galaxy, Tesco, Lidl, Blommer and Mars's Dove, the first U.S. mainstream brand to switch (Rainforest Alliance, 2011b, 2012a; TriplePundit, 2012). Its 2013 production already exceeded what had been projected as a goal for 2015 (Fountain and Hütz-Adams, 2015; Hütz-Adams and Fountain, 2012). In 2012, producers involved in the 'Greening the Cocoa Industry' project by United Nations Environment Programme, Global Environment Facility and RA generated over 360,000 tonnes of cocoa in accordance with RA requirements: this means the project attained its goal of offering the world market 350,000 tonnes by 2016 four years early, achieving a 266% year-on-year increase (Rainforest Alliance, 2013). At almost 10% of world production, this is a substantial volume, which RA aims to increase to 900,000 tonnes by 2020 (Hütz-Adams and Fountain, 2012). Rainforest Alliance now has overtaken Fairtrade, which seemed unlikely as recently as 2009, when Fairtrade was five times the size of RA (cf. figure 2.2.2.1).

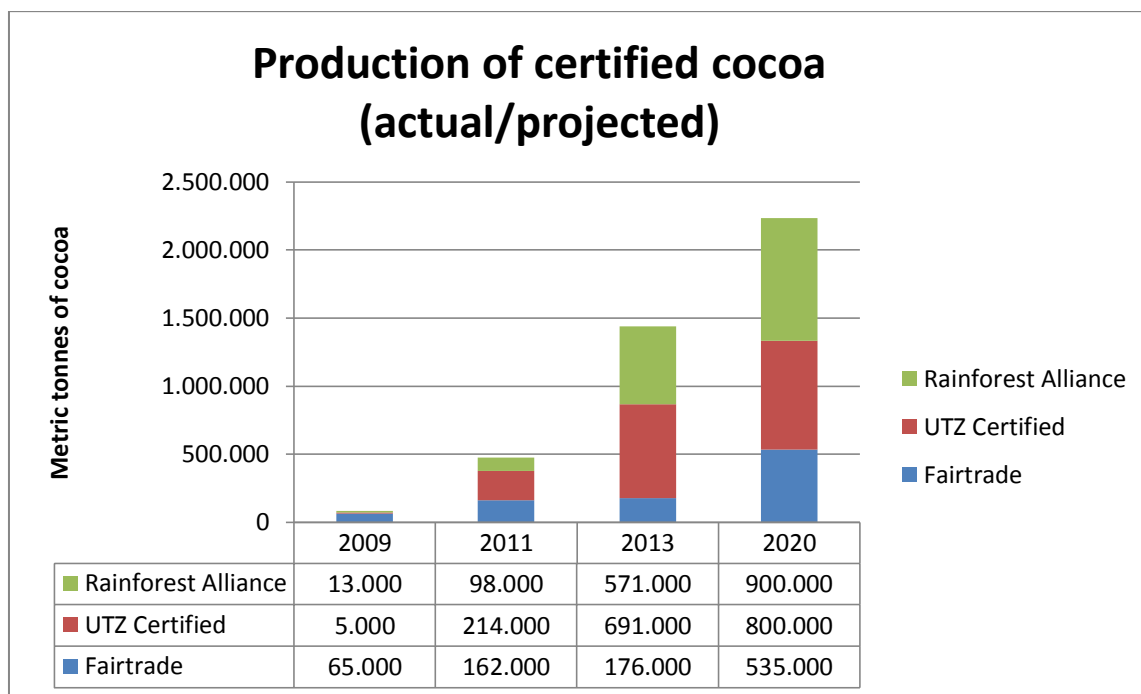


Figure 2.2.2.1: Production of certified cocoa for different certifiers (actual and projected).

Source: Author based on Hütz-Adams and Fountain (2012), Fountain and Hütz-Adams (2015).

UTZ Certified, originally UTZ Kapeh, has now branched out into cocoa, tea and rooibos from coffee origins (UTZ, 2011a). Its requirements concern health and safety, farm management, labour and environmental protection (UTZ, 2011a), with compliance costs met mostly by producers (Ellis and Keane, 2008:54). UTZ also focuses not on premiums, but farm management, with the label arguably the most market-driven and buyer-led (Ethical Corporation, 2007). Expressly aiming for ‘large scale in the worldwide market’ (UTZ, 2011a), UTZ expanded certified cocoa by 740% from 2009 to 2010 (UTZ, 2011b) through cooperations e.g. with Noble, Mars’s Balisto and Lidl, growing from 5,000 to 214,000 tonnes in two years. Its 2011 volume was one quarter higher than Fairtrade’s, with UTZ aiming to produce 800,000 tonnes by 2020 (Hütz-Adams and Fountain, 2012). Akin to Rainforest Alliance, its 2013 production levels already exceeded its original goal for 2015 (Fountain and Hütz-Adams, 2015; Hütz-Adams and Fountain, 2012), by almost 75%. UTZ and Rainforest Alliance’s focus on farmer training (Balisto, 2011a,b, Rainforest Alliance, 2011a) dovetail with their reputation as more market-oriented, with some criticising allegedly weak criteria which only uphold current standards rather than demand improvement (Raynolds, Murray and Heller, 2007; Renard and Pérez-Grovas, 2007).

Although the speed of growth varied across different schemes and their distinct priorities (cf. figure 2.2.2.1), certification's growth in cocoa has proceeded at breakneck speed overall. With certified cocoa production seeing three-digit percentage growth rates within a matter of years, consumer pressure cannot sufficiently explain certified cocoa morphing from niche status into clusters of practice. Systems research on socio-technological transitions uses this terminology to describe formerly isolated, rare occurrences morphing into common practice (Geels, 2002), mirroring the evolution from isolated cases of buyers preferring certified supply to ever more major industry stakeholders altering their buying patterns. This rapid transformation suggests that beyond the consumer-facing rationale, there are other factors lending urgency to 'sustainability initiatives', confirming one argument of this thesis. The following two sections will engage with business imperatives driving 'sustainability' and the tensions resulting from stakeholders' differing priorities.

2.2.3 First thrust: consumer and civil-society pressure for 'sustainability'

'Sustainability' is everywhere. What is now a conceptual triumvirate of ecological balance, economic security and social justice started out in forestry, championing that no more trees be cut over a period than could grow back (Grober, 2010). 250 years on, 'sustainable development' has moved into common parlance, partly in the wake of the Brundtland Report's definition as 'meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (WCED, 1987). The term resurfaces everywhere, enjoying popularity amongst the most diverse stakeholders, from keen environmentalists, policy-makers of diverse persuasions, to business actors. However, their understandings of what it entails vary greatly. For instance, in 2008, Shell's marketing department used it to advertise extracting fuel from oil sands, much to the chagrin of environmentalists criticising the practice for its environmental toll. WWF-UK lodged a complaint with the Advertising Standards Authority about Shell misleading the public by claiming its extractive practices were sustainable. Somewhat ironically, Shell wheeled out the Brundtland definition to emphasise human development was predicated on affordable energy (Guardian, 2008). This anecdote presents in a nutshell two key issues with 'sustainable development' and 'sustainability' (Adams, 2009): firstly, the Brundtland definition turns 'sustainable development' into a wobbly tripod by reducing the environmental aspect to a facilitator function for socio-economic development. Secondly, it illustrates the term's use by stakeholders of opposing convictions, leaving it devoid of analytical value given the multiplicity of underlying, contravening definitions. However, it is this inflationary use that also makes the term hard to ignore. The chocolate sector has recently seen the establishment of the 'Roundtable

on a Sustainable Cocoa Economy’ and the German ‘Sustainable Cocoa Forum’. The omnipresent commitments to ‘sustainability’ mean the term is virtually everywhere, thus retaining a descriptive value despite its analytical hollowness. However, its polysemy also necessitates a critical engagement with stakeholders’ underlying understandings, with my study aiming to establish the tensions which hidden diverging framings can entail.

‘Sustainability’ has become all things to all people, an apolitical, uncritical catch-all basin for all manner of definitions, delineations and drivers. For instance, in the perennial debate regarding what should take precedence, the environmental considerations the global North partly champions or the socio-economic advances some in the global South prioritise (Munasinghe, 2001:16), both sides of the debate can make reference to ‘sustainability’ as their declared goal. ‘Sustainability’ becomes a thin veneer to cover up unarticulated differences, the common denominator everyone can agree on if no other agreement is attainable. What is sustainable or unsustainable may lie in the eye of the beholder, or, even more complicated, what may be ‘sustainable’ in one respect will be branded as such regardless of adverse attributes. For cocoa sustainability initiatives, a socio-economic framing of ‘sustainability’ would require improving producer livelihoods, while commercial sustainability means safeguarding supply long-term, with an environmental understanding emphasising links to global environmental challenges. For instance, boosting cocoa productivity per hectare to increase incomes at the expense of environmental degradation is one classic dilemma, highlighting why identifying stakeholders’ objectives and priorities in ‘sustainability’ initiatives is crucial. This thesis argues that such differing priorities may require trade-offs and create tensions, exacerbated by stakeholders’ vast differences in context and life realities between e.g. cocoa producers and chocolate consumers.

Irrespective – or because – of fluid underlying understandings, ‘sustainability’ considerations as part of corporate responsibility have found their way into mainstream business thinking. Since consumers have begun exerting pressure on companies to show they care (Hughes, 2001), Adam Smith’s invisible hand now promotes ethical awareness (Steurer et al., 2005:276). Whether through changes in organisational or individual principles or supplier relationships becoming scrutinised, corporate responsibility considerations, albeit framed differently across companies (Blowfield and Murray, 2011), have become imperative in most companies (KPMG, 2011), even for small and medium-sized enterprises (Murillo and Lozano, 2006:227). The ability to communicate commitments through logos or labels is crucial (Zadek, 1998). According to Newell and Frynas (2007), some businesses view CSR as an outgrowth of PR, with ‘reputation/brand’

trumping ‘ethical considerations’ as companies’ chief motivation for CSR in a 2011 KPMG survey of 3,400 companies. Similarly, businesses frequently favour supporting unrelated causes philanthropically over fundamentally altering their operations (Utting, 2007:699). Research into companies’ rationales for offsetting their carbon emissions confirms CSR drives one third of the enterprises surveyed, while a mere 7% cited ‘greening the supply chain’ in 2011 (Peters-Stanley and Hamilton, 2012:38). Conversely, this also has led to criticism of ‘sustainability’ and CSR rhetoric being more thought-out than the actions to make good on it (Utting, 2007). Similarly, some assert CSR only produces minor adjustments, co-opting manageable demands to silence those fundamentally questioning the justifiability of corporations’ clout (Utting, 2000:viii; Utting, 2007:706) or the capitalist system as a whole (Kallio, 2007:165). Other issues include the frequent omission of Southern representatives and priorities in measures’ conception (Bendell, 2004:46; Utting, 2007:700), and NGOs’ legitimacy in claiming to speak for workers or communities (Utting, 2007:705). Incidentally, these accountability and representativeness considerations also resurface regarding certification.

However, the sheer fact that ‘sustainability’ has to be integrated into businesses reiterates that in origin, it is alien to profit-driven logic unless indispensable to business viability. One could argue that businesses bringing in corporate responsibility or sustainability departments demonstrate a desire to improve their operations’ footprint through in-house experts; viewed malevolently, however, one could see establishing CSR divisions as a confession of past malfeasance and compartmentalisation to avoid changing business operations fundamentally. CSR requires continuous trade-offs between profit maximisation and doing the ‘right’ thing given civil-society pressure (Kolstad, 2007:143). The mining industry’s leading role in conducting CSR activities (KPMG, 2011:18) is unsurprising as their operations tend to be tied to a particular location long-term, providing compensation as entitlements, not gifts (Yakovleva, 2005). Their ties to a location and the need for long-term thinking are key parallels to the cocoa sector. The cultivation of *Theobroma cacao*, literally ‘the food of the gods’ in its Latin name, is equally restricted to finite land resources, in the case of cocoa those available within 20° latitude either side of the equator, requiring continuous engagement with stakeholder communities in those zones. Given finite land resources and ever-rising demand for cocoa, there is a palpable shift from mostly communication-oriented thinking towards business-oriented responsibility. Cocoa trader Armajaro’s sustainability policy cites responsibility as being critical to its business’s ‘ongoing economic viability’ (2012:1); in other words, it constitutes good business to care about cocoa production’s environmental and socio-economic circumstances. This is a different logic, and a more active than reactive driver, than responding to consumer pressure, confirming the need to

examine the consequences of this shift. The following section will begin to engage with these changes.

2.2.4 Second thrust: securing 'sustainability' of supply

Given cocoa shortage projections, Friedman's idea that any action diminishing shareholders' value is the only true violation of corporations' responsibility (Kolstad, 2007:138) appears in a different light. Not caring enough about the long-term availability of chocolate businesses' key ingredient may now affect shareholder value. Although precise projections differ concerning the supply-demand gap by 2020 and beyond, there is consensus the cocoa sector is heading for a considerable shortage. Current annual production levels oscillate around 3.5 to 4m tonnes, with demand projected to surpass 4.5m by 2020 according to Fairtrade (2011a:2), or 5m given growing demand from emerging markets (Hütz-Adams and Fountain, 2012). Whichever projection is accurate, the general sense is the same: there is a problem, and it needs addressing as it affects the chocolate industry's survival. The reasons for the projected deficit are numerous. Socio-economic factors include inadequate returns and poor working conditions, amalgamating to make cocoa-growing an undesirable prospect for following generations and rendering declines in farmer populations likely given cocoa farmers' rising average age (Hainmueller, Hiscox and Tampe, 2011). Equally, given limited cultivation possibilities, there are fears there may be ever fewer surfaces into which cocoa production can expand as current production practices cannot continue indefinitely given their environmental toll. Moreover, there is uncertainty regarding climate change's effects. Commercially, ever growing concentration (Gereffi, 2014) in the cocoa sector is aggravating supply concerns, with limited productivity a further threat.

Although none of these challenges have emerged out of the blue, how chocolate companies perceive them has changed. Previously, companies 'outsourced' socio-economic and environmental concerns to certifiers. However, given looming supply shortages, there is now a direct threat to businesses' survival emanating from social and environmental production circumstances, adding urgency. These risks make investors question how businesses vying for their money are addressing these risks, employees ponder how secure their job is, and businesses worry about their key ingredient's availability. Concerns which formerly could be held at bay through outsourcing are knocking on the door. Chocolate businesses are realising they can no longer extricate themselves from growers' socio-environmental circumstances. What used to be distant growers' concerns are morphing into more immediate worries for the private sector, affecting the very foundation of their business plan as cocoa production's socio-environmental

circumstances are encroaching upon their business activities. Although awareness of the problem and its long-term potential impact on supply security is rising, there is no panacea. The fact that the concentrated and competitive chocolate industry is beginning to come together through dozens of multi-actor partnerships (Bitzer, Glasbergen and Leroy, 2012) to address issues collectively exceeding individual actors' scopes, is but one indication of the issue's severity.

Virtually all large-scale chocolate companies have now entered the 'sustainability' fray. Now, beyond small-scale, 'mission-driven' chocolate companies, industry heavyweights are getting involved to shore up their businesses' long-term resilience, frequently engaging directly with growers. If the rule holds that allocating budget expenditure indicates ownership, the rapidly growing funds for 'sustainability' are telling. Mondelez committed USD400 million in late 2012 to a ten-year 'Cocoa Life' programme, emphasising its commitments to Fairtrade and RA remained unchanged, but that it was moving beyond certification towards direct investment in the supply chain (Confectionery News, 2012b). Similarly, Lindt & Sprüngli established its own charitable foundation, aiming to ensure traceability and compliance throughout its Ghanaian supply chain by 2020 (Confectionery News, 2013d). The realisation is thus that certification alone may not be a sufficient lever to address the cocoa industry's systemic threats, shifting sustainability initiatives' entry points towards businesses engaging directly with cocoa growers. It is thus a commercial motivation that is promoting socio-environmental awareness to stem the tide of potential next-generation cocoa farmers choosing to engage in other occupations and address environmental factors further curtailing supply.

Confirming this thesis's argument of changing understandings of cocoa sustainability, this is but one of several shifts in initiatives which warrant exploration, especially now since the underlying issues will persist going forward. As civil-society, private-sector and public-sector stakeholders have diverging understandings of what sustainability is or is to entail, and how significant various commercial or socio-environmental priorities are in bringing about 'sustainability', tensions are likely to grow more marked in future. Another observable change, and a further layer of complexity and potential source of tensions, is the growing number of sustainability initiatives seeking to incorporate environmental concerns reflecting consumers' growing environmental awareness. Cocoa agroforestry systems can address both biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration goals, as the following section will explore.

2.2.4.1 Cocoa agroforestry in focus

Multiple factors have played into the increasing number of initiatives incorporating environmental aspects. Firstly, environmental interest in the global North has grown, with businesses targeting environmentally-minded clienteles to boost their reputation and raise money. Both conservation and climate change became the subject of world-spanning conventions in 1992, with related donor funds and increasing public awareness offering new financing opportunities crucial in the face of growing pressure to engage with sustainability. Possible trade-offs include that despite public representations of harmony between conservation and development (Büscher, 2010:263), efforts to maintain biodiversity may clash with reducing poverty, for instance by limiting populations' use of natural resources (Adams et al., 2004:1146; Scholfield and Brockington, 2008:29). Nevertheless, the conservation of biodiversity continues to have a reputation as a good cause (Brockington, 2009:26), with partnerships with biodiversity-focused certifier Rainforest Alliance and products with certified biodiversity benefits, such as 'shade-grown' (Worldwatch Institute, 2009), on the rise. Others argue that turning biodiversity into a business to save the former while benefiting the latter constitutes commodification, imparting commodity form to goods, services and societal relationships not previously imprinted with market values (Blowfield and Dolan, 2008:8; Jackson, 1999:97; West, 2006:284-5). On the other hand, given spreading degrading, productivity-maximising practices, agroforestry systems intercropping cocoa with other species offer an opportunity to use the land while potentially promoting biodiversity (Tscharntke et al., 2015) or afforesting to mitigate climate change. While the resulting action may be identical, i.e. incorporating environmental concerns into production networks, some of the above motivations are consumer-facing, such as introducing a label, while others are grower-facing, such as safeguarding biodiverse production environments. As all divergent drivers, these incongruencies thus offer potentials for tension.

Cocoa cultivation can offer hope for conservation and carbon sequestration alike for several reasons (Rice and Greenberg, 2000:167). Some adduce that cocoa production, given its ensuing loss of soil fertility, can mark the first step towards deforestation (Clay, 2004:128), emphasising cocoa production's toll given its considerable nutrient consumption (Filiou and Kenny, 2009:53). However, firstly, its impact on natural biodiversity can be reduced if production uses already cleared lands (Rice and Greenberg, 2000:170,173), which UTZ makes a certification condition (UTZ, 2009, 2010). As full-sun approaches may boost productivity, but also affect biodiversity adversely, recent conversions to systems without shade particularly in West Africa have caused concern (GEF, 2010). Various scholars have emphasised the potential of shaded cocoa-farming

as environmentally sound land use, meeting ecological and economic objectives (Asare, 2006:4; Bentley, Boa and Stonehouse, 2004:242; Donald, 2004). Shaded cocoa agroforestry, an approach in which trees of various heights alternate with cocoa trees (Ndoye and Tieguhong, 2009), is less environmentally detrimental than full-sun approaches (Bentley, Boa and Stonehouse, 2004:242). Moreover, cocoa agroforestry systems can offer benefits of food security and household income diversification from multiple food crops and timber beyond the mere cocoa income (Cerda et al., 2014; Somarriba et al., 2014). Furthermore, diverse agroecosystems have been shown to bestow greater resilience unto growers to cope with the effects of climate change, with better-trained farmers also attaining higher yields under this system (Jacobi et al., 2013).

Consequently, there has been an increasing recognition that cocoa agroforestry systems offer potential to address global environmental challenges such as conservation and climate change mitigation (Asare, 2006:4; Finegan, 2005; Franzen and Borgerhoff Mulder, 2007:3836), while diversifying incomes. Scholars have variously compared and contrasted full-sun approaches, primary forest and different types of shaded cacao agroforests, examining levels of diversity for different species including birds, ants, beetles and trees (e.g. Anglaaere et al., 2011; Bisseleua, Missoup and Vidal, 2009; Faria et al., 2007). Generalising across countries, continents, intercropped trees and shaded approaches is difficult. Nevertheless, although shaded agroforests frequently are not as biodiverse as natural forests (Bentley, Boa and Stonehouse, 2004:243), they are an improvement over full-sun approaches and offer habitat-protecting and connecting benefits particularly for restricted-range endemic and migratory species (Franzen and Borgerhoff Mulder, 2007:3839,3844; GEF, 2010:7). Moreover, intercropped economic non-cocoa trees can diversify and improve incomes (Franzen and Borgerhoff Mulder, 2007:3844). By offering continuous rewards for ecologically beneficial conduct, the approach thus counteracts the lop-sided incentive structure of decisions being dictated by short-term considerations such as boosting yields (Rice and Greenberg, 2000:171) through full-sun.

Farmers are key agents in combating climate change as agriculture contributes a high share of emissions and offers one third of total abatement potential (Deutsche Bank, 2011:1; Worldwatch Institute, 2009). Agroforestry approaches, promoting the cultivation of crops in forest environments, play a particular role, as they can maintain existing carbon stocks in forests or sequester carbon through afforestation (Montagnini and Nair, 2004:293) and can help cut emissions from 13 million hectares' worth of deforestation a year (Diaz, Hamilton and Johnson, 2011:10). Equally, scholars have emphasised the possibilities ascribed to cocoa shade systems in

terms of safeguarding existing carbon stocks (Kolavalli and Vigneri, 2011:212). Although many initiatives are nascent (Seidu, 2010), shaded cocoa farms can store twice the carbon of full-sun systems (Filiou and Kenny, 2011:55). Conservation and carbon measures in cocoa production thus offer the potential of reconciling environmental viability with safeguarding livelihoods.

However, conservation and carbon measures in cocoa also harbour another danger of incongruent drivers between and within GPN stakeholders, with this research focus constituting one of my original contributions. Before section 2.4 explores how this research will conceptualise diverging socio-economic, environmental and commercial priorities, the following section will first discuss how it aims to map the chocolate sector and cocoa sustainability initiatives in conceptual terms. As the above discussion has shown, there is a need to conceptualise the many civil-society, public-sector and private-sector stakeholders active in the cocoa sector to understand initiatives' structures and shifts. The GPN framework, as argued above and further explored in the following section, can help unpack initiatives and especially stakeholders' power and embeddedness relations which are crucial to understanding stakeholder motivations as well as their public-facing communication. In later chapters, the analysis of priorities and representations, two key interests of this research, will feed back into conceptualising power and embeddedness relations between diverse GPN stakeholders. The following section will outline some of the GPN framework's strengths, laying the foundation for my analyses of tensions between and within drivers and representations.

2.3 Conceptualising the chocolate sector through GPNs

A solid conceptualisation capturing the diversity of cocoa sustainability initiatives will be crucial to understanding underlying power and embeddedness relations between civil-society, public-sector and private-sector stakeholders, and particularly the tensions accompanying them. To represent intermediaries and linkages morphing inputs into final products in ever more globalised trade relations, scholars have developed different conceptualisations of the geographies of trade⁴. A fundamental caveat is firstly that these are heuristic models which only represent in a simplified manner a highly complex reality of interconnections, circular relationships and culs-de-sac (Kaplinsky and Morris, 2000). Another caveat is that different concepts including 'value chains', 'global commodity chains' and others, have been used so widely that definitions and boundaries

⁴ For a brief overview, see e.g. Gereffi et al. (2001).

vary. Some (e.g. Leiter and Harding, 2004) identify parallels between global commodity chains, filières or commodity systems analysis, many agree distinctions and overlaps are not clear-cut (Bair, 2009; Henderson et al., 2002). One fairly uncontested assessment is, however, that chain and network relations are growing ever more important, regulating access to markets. Consequently, developing-country producers are virtually obliged to participate (Gereffi, Humphrey and Sturgeon, 2005). The following paragraphs will non-exhaustively highlight aspects of various schools of thought relevant for my thesis. I also explore briefly why I consider the GPN framework to be the most suitable to analyse initiatives and unpack tensions between stakeholder drivers and representations, with the discussion continuing in section 4.1 in answer to my first, analytical research sub-question regarding the strengths and limitations of GPNs.

The 'chains' concept forms the basis of several conceptualisations, partly thanks to Michael Porter's work (1985, 1990), who coined it as firms' management of relationships with other firms, seeking cost advantages and differentiation (Humphrey and Schmitz, 2000). Broadening Porter's firm-focused concept by emphasising an endpoint and the multitude of labour processes involved, Hopkins and Wallerstein (1986:159) established commodity chains, 'a network of labor and production processes whose end result is a finished commodity'. Nevertheless, the definition based in world-systems theory neglects social and geographical embeddedness previously analysed by Polanyi (1957) and the multiple intertwining networks, stakeholders and activities including distribution required to bring products to consumers. The polycentricity of chains, incorporating consumers, civil society, development agencies and businesses alike (Isenhour, 2011:7), as well as the polycentricity of governance (Ostrom, 2012) are key insights particularly regarding cocoa.

Further refining the chain metaphor into global commodity chains, Gereffi, Korzeniewicz and Korzeniewicz (1994:1) speak of inter-organisational 'networks clustered around one commodity or product', being 'situationally specific, socially constructed, and locally integrated'. This concept addresses numerous shortcomings of previous models by emphasising various organisations involved in a product's genesis, similar to the further developed global value chains idea. Gereffi's dichotomy of buyer- and producer-driven chains was justifiably criticised as crude (Fold, 2002:230) and rigid (Raikes, Jensen and Ponte, 2000:21). However, moving beyond, Gereffi, Humphrey and Sturgeon (2005:83-84) established five governance models for global value chains:

- i) arm's-length markets, in which prices dominate supplier-buyer relationships;
- ii) modular systems with codified production processes;
- iii) relational models governed by trust- and reputation-based connections;
- iv) captive models forcing suppliers to sell to dominant firms, and
- v) hierarchical models, i.e. vertically integrated firms.

This conceptualisation is useful to emphasise the importance of thinking about value-chain governance and the factors driving relationships. For instance, Reynolds and Wilkinson (2007:36) state that fair trade relationships typically are relational given their mostly trust-based transactions, but may shift, as they may evolve towards captive systems if dominant Northern buyers seize power asymmetries. However, the categorisation is only useful peripherally for this study as it harbours too strong a focus on private-sector actors. Secondly, these models are likely to be subject to negotiation between different segments of production networks, akin to definitions of quality as explored above. Nevertheless, the factors driving relationships, such as reputation for relational models, will play a key role throughout my thesis, as section 2.4 will explore in detail.

Scholars developed the global production networks approach partly to conceptualise a greater diversity of stakeholders beyond the commercial actors in a value chain, as my research question requires given the cocoa sector's complexity and diversity. To develop previous scholarly work on value and commodity chains and move further beyond the firm focus which still surfaces in the above-explained five governance models, researchers have elaborated the 'global production networks' approach (Coe et al., 2004; Henderson et al., 2002; Coe, 2011). Through the 'network' metaphor, they aim to capture multi-dimensional, multi-layered processes (Henderson et al., 2002), better representing than chains a world of increasingly dense, intricate and flexible interconnections (Neilson and Pritchard, 2009:37). They remedy analytical disjunctions and emphasise the social and institutional processes within which the production of goods, services, knowledge, capital and labour are embedded, and their variances between stakeholders (Henderson et al., 2002:444-7). Equally, strengths of the GPN framework particularly compared with the global value chain concept (Coe, Dicken and Hess, 2008a, b) relevant for this study include the variety of actors it can represent, its flexibility in terms of geographical scale, the importance of socio-spatial contexts, and a nuanced expression of power relationships. Henderson et al. (2002:447) establish three analytical categories underlying GPNs:

- i) value in terms of creation, enhancement and capture of value,
- ii) corporate, collective and institutional power, and
- iii) territorial and network embeddedness, with Hess (2004) adding societal embeddedness.

I will apply a GPN approach to represent shifting and diverging stakeholder priorities, social and institutional asymmetries, and retrace power and embeddedness, but enrich it as explained below to represent highly diverse stakeholders in business, state and civil-society and their interrelationships in morphing cocoa beans into retail chocolate. Given my focus on tensions within cocoa sustainability initiatives, my study will highlight how the different facets of power and embeddedness have shifted, with the value aspect only an implicit focus as a function of shifts in power and embeddedness. This emphasis on power and embeddedness within the GPN framework implicitly also is a nod to Neilson and Pritchard's (2009:49) focus on the importance of institutional, geographical and historical context in analysing production relations, and to Coe (2011) and his highlighting power and embeddedness as key concepts within GPN analysis.

One reason for applying the GPN framework, which I will discuss further in section 4.1, is that it combines multiple strengths which render it well-suited for this analysis. Firstly, it offers the possibility to analyse complex situations in a systematic manner, as the categories, and further subdivisions for instance into societal, network and territorial embeddedness, provide a sufficiently nuanced framework to construct an in-depth analysis cognisant of multi-dimensional and multi-scalar processes. A further advantage is the focus on non-sequential, parallel processes in multi-actor and multi-stakeholder networks, highlighting the multitude of interrelations beyond any binary categorisations of producer- or buyer-driven chains: it goes beyond 'vertical' linkages adding value and 'horizontal' relationships pertaining to territory or society (Weller, 2006). The parallel or intertwined natures of multidimensional processes involving multiple stakeholders (Stabell and Fjeldstad, 1998) can find reflection in global production networks. Given GPNs' pronounced focus on embeddedness, they can help unpack how actors are rooted on and within multiple scales and dimensions, e.g. the above-explained society, network and territory. The framework can thus provide a panorama beyond individual 'boxes' within chains or networks (Bair, 2009), giving equal space to diverging stakeholder perspectives.

Further strengths of the GPN framework include its attention to social and institutional asymmetries as well as the wide diversity of stakeholders involved. Given GPNs' emphasis on the relevance of differing social and institutional contexts between and among stakeholders, they can underline how stakeholders' 'home' backgrounds and the priorities this embeddedness comes with may shape their behaviours throughout GPNs, potentially causing tensions in social and institutional contexts elsewhere (Hess and Coe, 2006). Equally, the framework crucially recognises the importance of paying attention to a diversity of stakeholder types involved in networks beyond the long-studied firms, encompassing public and private sectors and civil society alike. Particularly in development studies, going beyond private-sector actors and capturing the relevance of non-firm stakeholders including government legislators and civil-society organisations is crucial to generate well-rounded, accurate knowledge rather than a partial, firm-centric view. This attention to a diversity of stakeholders also allows and requires the involvement of a broad range of perspectives from stakeholders throughout the network, from cocoa producers to consumers, which is a key objective of this study.

One shortcoming of the 'network' metaphor, however, is that it somewhat neglects intermediate spaces between the stakeholders and the transactions. The 'cluster' (Dicken and Malmberg, 2001) and particularly the 'archipelago' metaphor address that, as section 4.1 will explore further. Advocated e.g. by Hein (2000) and Veltz (2005), the idea harks back to geographical archipelagos, encompassing a group of islands and what is between them. Applied to GPNs, the notion highlights the vicinities of stakeholders ('nodes') and relationships ('lines'), the 'under-water' currents and forces emerging from or pressing onto them. This focus also ties in with researching the drivers in various stakeholders which underlie 'sustainability' concerns, and the tensions resulting from divergences. This 'archipelago' thinking can draw attention to aspects which may not receive the same scrutiny in a conventional GPN mapping: for instance, a conventional mapping may not represent that Hershey's signing up to 100% certified cocoa, stunning some critics (Confectionery News, 2012c), was preceded by competitors Mars and Ferrero also committing to 100% certified cocoa. This would be one example of an underwater current, i.e. pressure on a GPN actor emanating from two players not involved in the production network itself, which a conventional GPN mapping may not capture, but an archipelago conceptualisation can. A second complementary aspect, which will also be further explored in 4.1, will be emphasising the multiple links and interconnections between power and embeddedness, particularly in response to changes in the cocoa sector. Given this research's sub-questions 3 and 4 on priorities and representations, respectively, there is a need to conceptualise stakeholder drivers and stakeholder representations through a complement to the GPN framework.

Analysing the tensions resulting from diverging priorities and interactions with public-facing meanings will augment the initial conceptual analysis regarding stakeholders' power and embeddedness relations, with empirical observations thus enriching my analytical findings on GPNs and particularly power and embeddedness.

Overall, this research will employ an expanded GPN approach to capture my case-study initiatives incorporating environmental measures, analysing particularly power and embeddedness through the GPN framework. Chapter 4 will explore to what extent the GPN framework helps unpack these cocoa sustainability engagements, analysing both the effects on local processes and links to global issues (Bolwig et al., 2010:182). Sections 2.4 and 2.5 will explain how I aim to complement the GPN framework in order to conceptualise stakeholder drivers and stakeholder representations, respectively.

2.4 Conceptualising drivers

As my central research question aims to explore critically diverse stakeholders' priorities in cocoa sustainability initiatives, there is a need to conceptualise the diverging drivers bringing about nuanced constellations of priorities and tensions. Beyond the GPN framework, this research thus aimed to develop a model which can capture, and highlight differences between, stakeholder priorities. The reason is that, as ever more stakeholders engage with 'sustainability', it is important to identify the understandings of sustainability and underlying drivers they contribute vis-à-vis other actors. Beyond contributing to the overarching research question, this also answers the third sub-question investigating the drivers underlying stakeholder engagements. One source of inspiration was Lukes's (2005:109) insight that actor interests are unlikely to be unitary, but manifold in nature, with a model to reflect those interactions and conflicts within and between actors necessary for this thesis. Lukes (2005) also emphasises the importance of not just the exercise of power, but also the capacity to do so, highlighting that the exercise of power need not be explicit, but may result from latent mechanisms. I argue that priorities are similarly often located in the implicit realm given an unthinking collective agreement on 'sustainability' without clarifying stakeholders' diverging understandings of what it is to entail. Some stakeholders' priorities will be more manifest than others' in sustainability initiatives, testifying to differences in interests and capacity to project them onto other stakeholders. Analysing priorities can thus produce insights on stakeholders' power and embeddedness connections in production networks,

with my model aiming to provide a systematic framework for assessing them and the tensions that can arise.

Further inspiration stemmed from Reynolds's (2009) study in which she argued that even though the behaviour of buyers of ethically traded coffee may have been identical, i.e. buying coffee with a fair seal, their underlying drivers had a considerable impact on the resulting initiatives. I also argue that given diverging drivers, stakeholders will be located in different places on various spectra. One such continuum is whether the focus is on overhauling the current system, or upholding the system, but tweaking it to be fairer or more sustainable (Renard, 2003). A further spectrum is Polanyi's (1957) distinction between markets being embedded in society or society being embedded in markets. All these continua breed tensions as ever more actors engage with 'sustainability', including actors beyond traditional Fairtrade or certification supporters who see such engagements as a way of improving risk management or product differentiation. Reynolds (2009) distinguishes between three types of buyers of ethically traded coffee: 'mission-driven' buyers fully subscribe to the ethos of fair trade, seeking to support its philosophy throughout their operations. By contrast, 'quality-driven' buyers are chiefly after the gourmet supplies they hope to secure by buying labelled rather than non-certified supplies, with 'market-driven' buyers finally tapping into the business opportunity which they believe the certification represents: while they live up to the auditing requirements the standard entails, they pursue mainstream business operations beyond their niche engagement with the seal.

While Reynolds (2009) stresses that the buyer types inhabit a continuum rather than distinct categories, it is evident that the underlying priorities influence all relationships in the network. For instance, mission-driven buyers may be more concerned with a partnership-based setting, while market-driven stakeholders prioritise traceability. Tensions on the above-mentioned continua arise for instance between the different degrees to which stakeholders recognise that they can no longer extricate economic activity from socio-environmental considerations, and between those encouraging a mission-driven transformation of the sector, and those favouring a market-driven, minimalist alteration of some practices.

While inspiring this research in terms of the importance of focusing on underlying drivers, Reynolds's tripartite distinction is nevertheless not perfectly apt for this study for three main reasons. Firstly, regarding her second category of 'quality-driven' buyers, convention theory's

insight (Cidell and Alberts, 2006; Renard, 2003) holds that what different stakeholders take ‘quality’ to be may differ considerably, requiring negotiation (Fold, 2000). Especially when it comes to chocolate, conceptions of what constitutes high quality vary also between nations (Cidell and Alberts, 2006). Secondly, the distinction, in line with Reynolds’s research focus, looks exclusively at buyers of fairly traded supplies, which is but one of several certification types relevant in my case-studies. Thirdly, it is exclusively focused on the ‘buyer’ stakeholder type within the chain. In her study, Reynolds also discusses Gereffi, Humphrey and Sturgeon’s (2005) fivefold categorisations of value chains, arguing that their focus on lead firms is too narrow. I would like to use the same rationale to develop a classification usable for various stakeholder types. Market-driven, mission-driven and quality-driven cannot provide much descriptive insight beyond the private-sector. For non-governmental organisations, producers or development agencies, circumscribing their drivers in those terms would leave out considerable dimensions. As my research questions require engaging with a range of stakeholders and analysing the tensions pertaining to their priorities and representations, my study warrants a broader-use framework.

Consequently, I have devised a model for analysing stakeholder priorities which will be usable to characterise stakeholder behaviour throughout the network. Franzen and Borgerhoff Mulder (2007:3836) identify ‘competing cocoa policy demands such as improving productivity, reducing negative biodiversity impacts, and increasing the social and economic sustainability of production’, highlighting that these objectives can require trade-offs. When put in more abstract terms, these demands could be surmised under three main dimensions, which have also come out of stakeholder conversations:

- (i) socio-economic considerations with a particular link to the local producer and cooperative level;
- (ii) the environmental dimension, encompassing local concerns relating to protecting resources such as soil and water, and the global level of conservation and carbon sequestration through afforestation and conserving existing forests (Bolwig et al., 2010; Guha and Martinez-Alier, 1997; Simmons, 1997);
- (iii) the commercial level highlighting the commercial side of the cocoa production network. This sphere is predominantly, but not exclusively the purview of Northern actors, as higher yields and higher quality cocoa production can be in Southern producers’ and cooperatives’ interest to boost incomes.

The axes within the socio-economic, environmental and commercial dimensions partly derive from Franzen and Borgerhoff Mulder's (2007) paper and partly have come out of my research. My tripartite conceptualisation deviates from Franzen and Borgerhoff Mulder, who subsume socio-economic and commercial considerations under 'economic' vis-à-vis 'ecological' aspects, and equally strays from the most common distinction between social, economic and environmental sustainability. The reason for both is largely identical. For instance, although safeguarding supplies and improving producer livelihoods are both rooted in economic-commercial interests, my delineation emphasises they are by no means congruent. Particularly multinational, large-scale buyers still have an interest to keep cocoa prices as low as possible to ensure the viability of their commercial operation, which, however, is at odds with producers' socio-economic interest to make a viable livelihood from their work. Consequently, I would argue that my conceptualisation, more usefully than either economic-ecological or social-economic-environmental, delineates the diverging socio-economic vis-à-vis commercial priorities in a way that facilitates analysing the Southern and Northern stakeholders involved, their power and embeddedness relations and the tensions which may emerge.

In my model, all three dimensions, socio-economic, environmental and commercial, encompass four inter-connected and frequently inter-dependent, but partly virtually incompatible axes (cf. figure 2.4.1 below). The motivations listed in the diagram, which do not aim to be exhaustive, represent the priorities which interlocutors from my case-studies raised most frequently, partly using umbrella terms such as 'income' to accommodate drivers related to income increases and income diversification. The aim is to provide a framework to assess and self-assess systematically the drivers prevalent in different stakeholders to identify diverse constellations as a basis for conversation, informed decision-making and behavioural adaptation. Key questions permeating all axes and dimensions are the time frame and geographical scale on which stakeholders aim to achieve them, which may cause further tensions.

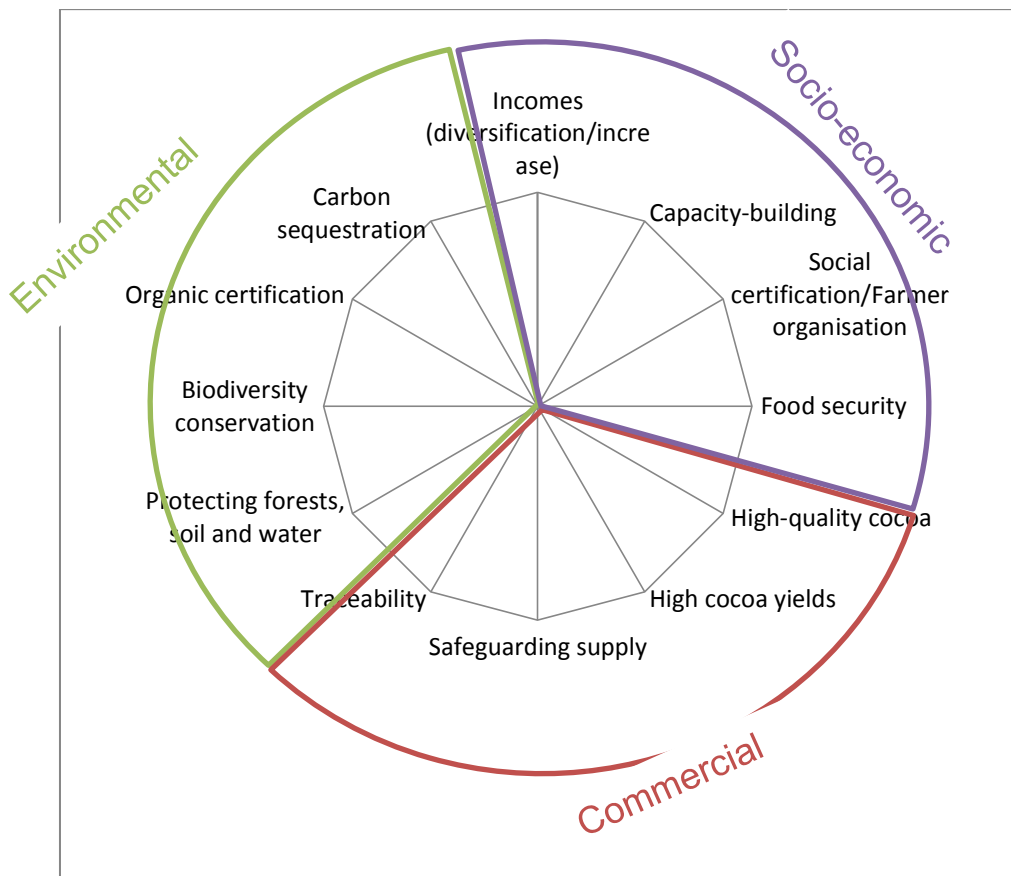


Figure 2.4.1: Constellation of priorities model.

Source: Author.

As figure 2.4.1 visualises, in the socio-economic dimension, the most pervasive motivation cited by interlocutors was improving farmer incomes: while some primarily focused on increasing cocoa prices for farmers, numerous stakeholders also argued for the importance of diversifying incomes, for instance through diverse agroforestry systems (Interviews #142, private sector; #43, research; #69, development; #74, government). While this may seem counterintuitive initially, as diversified cocoa agroforestry systems may mean less attention to and inputs for cocoa, more diversified systems produce diversified incomes, spreading risk, while often also making a key contribution to another axis: food security. For producers in rural areas with poor access to transport, every additional crop coming out of diverse systems is an asset by boosting both household nutritional variety and security and avoiding expenses. Farmer organisation, another axis, is a key concern for instance for Fairtrade and other primarily socially minded certification schemes, but also for numerous NGOs and development agencies hoping to facilitate long-term immanent support within communities e.g. through capacity-building, the fourth socio-economic axis. Potential trade-offs within this dimension include food security reducing cocoa yields and

thus incomes, and farmer organisations requiring funds to operate which otherwise could have benefited farmers directly; equally, capacity-building may come out of private-sector or NGO budgets thus unavailable to farmers.

The environmental dimension equally encompasses four axes. Carbon sequestration denotes afforesting or reforesting spaces in cocoa communities with a view to offsetting greenhouse gas emissions. This aspect prioritises the speed at which trees grow, which may cause choices in favour of non-native rather than endemic trees and thus for carbon rather than conservation (Twin/NRI, 2013). There is an interaction also with the income diversification dimension given potential additional premiums for carbon credits. A second axis is organic certification, which requires abiding by strict standards when it comes to inputs, but also entails premium prices and can be a matter of conviction for stakeholders. A third aspect is conserving biodiversity, which may clash not only with the carbon sequestration aspect in terms of a trade-off between choosing native, slow-growing and non-native, fast-growing trees, but also with commercial quests to maximise yields by eliminating intercropped trees in full-sun approaches. Finally, there is the protection of forests, soils and water, which is a crucial motivation for many producers on account of water availability and erosion; again, there may be a clash with high-input, productivity-maximising techniques particularly regarding the preservation of forests.

The third dimension is the commercial sphere. Given shortage concerns, this dimension has grown in importance, but also risks overshadowing other priorities. One aspect of this is ensuring that the quality of cocoa produced lives up to buyers' standards. The socio-economic axis of capacity-building is key in this context, as cocoa quality, beyond genetic make-up, is crucially determined by fermentation and drying, i.e. post-harvest processing steps which are partly in the hands of cooperatives. The second axis, the question of how to attain higher yields, has ties to agronomy's emergence as a normative discipline (Sumberg, Thompson and Woodhouse, 2013), with particularly agronomists and technicians constructing 'good farmer' narratives (Kumar, 2014) in accordance with their organisations' priorities and agenda. While it is in producers' own best interest to improve their productivity to ensure that they can maximise yields from the land they own, the logic of increasing yields can also promote reducing attention to intercropped food sources and replacing existing genetic material with hybrid varieties which can withstand pests more easily and produce higher yields irrespective of management. Both those approaches, partly promoted as what 'good farmers' would do, do not necessarily serve growers' long-term best interests, depending on what buyers they wish to target and crops they require for household

food security. Thirdly, on safeguarding supply, buyers are increasingly engaging directly with producers, rather than the indirect approach via NGOs and certifiers they previously employed, partly to obtain control of the entire process, partly to ensure closer ties with producers to avert risks and improve supply chances long-term. Finally, traceability is increasingly important, which also has a strong risk aversion component in terms of diverting partial responsibility to certifiers. My ‘constellation of priorities’ model offers a tentative visual representation of these three dimensions and their diverse axes, as a visualisation may aid in starting conversations between stakeholders. I will represent priorities in terms of a binary presence or absence, with priorities classed as ‘present’ highlighted in colour and connected with other present axes for better readability, as the following diagram shows (figure 2.4.2):

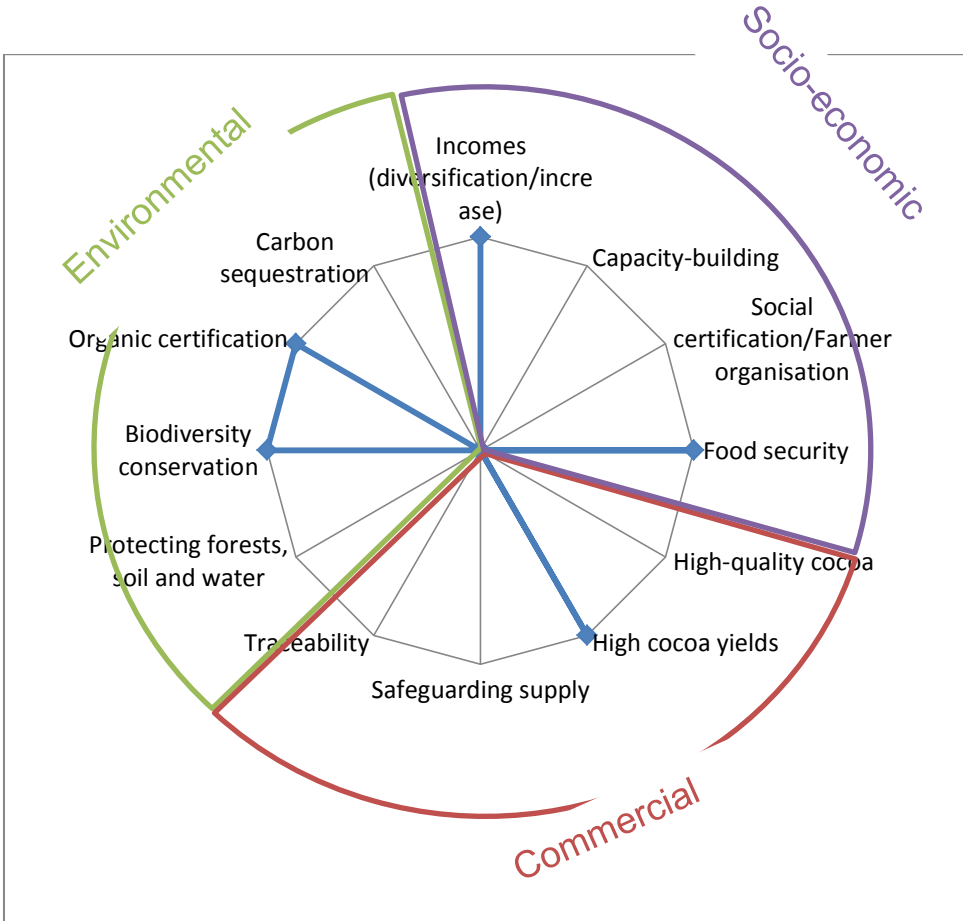


Figure 2.4.2: Constellations of priorities model with present priorities highlighted.

Source: Author.

In summary, the ‘constellation of priorities’ model can help conceptualise diverging stakeholder drivers in the chocolate sector in terms of three dimensions, the socio-economic, commercial and environmental spheres. By offering a tentative, systematic, but non-exhaustive opportunity to

map stakeholders' priorities in terms of binary presence or absence of certain priorities in three dimensions, it hopes to offer starting points for conversation between different stakeholders in the comparison of assessed and self-assessed drivers. The hope is that, beyond facilitating analysis here, the model may have real-world use for practitioners through a proposed visualisation as one of the research's original contributions. In the thesis structure, the conceptualisation through the constellation of priorities model will follow the GPN mapping introducing all three case-study initiatives in chapter 6. Chapter 7 will then explore congruences and tensions between different stakeholders' priorities, building the bridge towards stakeholders' public-facing representations, explored in chapter 8 for all case-studies. The idea is that the initial conceptual analysis of power and embeddedness in the GPN mapping will grow more nuanced from analysing the tensions arising from conflicting priorities, and their complex interactions with the public-facing meanings created. My empirical observations will thus iteratively feed back into the analytical exploration of GPNs, and particularly power and embeddedness, emphasising the implications of these connections for further research into trade relations as well as the interactions between stakeholders prioritising socio-economic, environmental and commercial considerations. The final section of this chapter will now discuss how I aim to conceptualise stakeholders' public-facing communication, another facet of the overarching research question aiming to analyse cocoa-sector changes' implications for cocoa sustainability initiatives, stakeholder priorities and representations.

2.5 Conceptualising representations

The meanings created through representations play a key role in shaping consumption. As Bryant and Goodman (2004:344) have argued, consumption in the global North increasingly is portrayed as the new activism. Indeed, companies present choosing what to eat or wear as a way to 'make a difference' (Bryant and Goodman, 2004:344). Successfully projecting such notions is predicated on representations, i.e.

'the signs and symbols – whether they are sounds, written words, electronically produced images, musical notes, even objects – [which] stand for or represent to other people our concepts, ideas and feelings ... Representation through language is therefore central to the processes by which meaning is produced' (Hall, 1997a:1).

While acknowledging the importance of visual representations (Kothari, 2014), this study will focus on verbal and written representations. In keeping with Hall's constructionist approach, which takes from the reflective approach the idea that signs have a material dimension, but also recognises the dynamic, ever-negotiated nature of meaning from the intentional approach (1997b), this thesis will attempt to analyse representation in terms of the 'production of meaning through language', i.e. how stakeholders 'use signs to communicate meaningfully with others' (Hall 1997b:28). With O'Shaughnessy and Stadler, language mediates all learning about our world (2005:73). The communication between private sector, civil society, public sector and the general public rests on such representations, i.e. presenting again (O'Shaughnessy and Stadler, 2005) what sustainability initiatives entail. Analysing representations can thus yield valuable insights both for identifying tensions between cocoa sustainability stakeholders and their priorities, and for relating them back to underlying power and embeddedness aspects. After all, any purchase, from consumers and other production network stakeholders, comes with omnipresent manifestations of spectacle, i.e. commodified images conveying meaning and connotations and thereby mediating social relations (DeBord, 1971).

Consuming the product also is consuming its meaning as published through advertising (Baudrillard, 1976, 1988, 1998, 2001). One example of this (Bryant and Goodman, 2004:354) is the possibility to associate with 'nature', both as a place and as a style of living. This is one of many paradoxes, as buying products in itself undermines the non-consumptive lifestyle associated with them. In some ways, chocolate bars with links to rainforests exemplify a failure to challenge the Northern cognitive dissonance of continuing degrading practices while supporting far-away causes (McAfee, 1999), which are to make up for the destructive lifestyles rendering them necessary in the first place. This disjuncture also harks back to John Muir's idea of 'a wilderness ethic as an escape from the evils of modern civilization' (Kalamandeen and Gillson, 2007:167). This point also relates to Carrier's question whether capitalist markets may contradict the values they suggest consumers can attain through 'ethical consumption' (2010:675-680). The fundamental tension between the notion of altering existing practices, and doing it through conventional channels, also comes through in Goodman's call (2010:115) for developing 'alternatives to the alternatives', as some of what started out as 'alternative' consumption models are now part of conventional food systems courtesy of their mainstream distribution channels (Goodman, Maye and Holloway, 2010:1783). A further paradox, which applies to nature, but also beyond, is Büscher's observation (2010:261) of 'derivative value': he argues that value is inherent not in what is, but in the normative derivation of what should be according to those imprinting their own meanings on nature and communities alike. All four paradoxes surface repeatedly

throughout this study given cocoa stakeholders' reliance on all techniques, from associating with 'nature', via neglecting to question conventional consumption channels, to what should be being more valuable than what is. Representations thus also play a crucial role in generating support for projects and policies (Lewis, Rodgers and Woolcock, 2014a:28), constituting conduits to exert power, enhance embeddedness and mediate between different stakeholders' priorities, meriting exploration.

In communication on development contexts, representations acquire even greater significance. For language and signs, Hall (1997b:28) distinguishes between communicating regarding objects, people and events in the 'real world', and imaginary things. Given the distance in relation to life-reality and geography between many Northern consumers and producers in the global South, development issues discussed in representations may as well be imaginary. This distance, and the concomitant inability to juxtapose represented claims with first-hand life experience, can benefit those aiming to represent a certain reality, e.g. about the cocoa sustainability initiative they are involved in, given consumers' lack of alternative first-hand information. Baudrillard's observation (1998:25) that humans are surrounded by objects rather than other human beings in the current age of affluence is even more true for this case given the physical separation between those producing and those consuming, with the products consumed, and those producing them, commodified through the narratives of those deploying representations. Carrier emphasises that tourists are often subject to 'carefully managed and mediated experiences' hiding that very management and mediation from view (2010:680) – while tourists, being *in situ*, may still have a chance to burst the bubble, this is different for Northern consumers who may have no way of accessing first-hand information on the cocoa initiative they seek to support. As Crush argues, how 'development is written, narrated and spoken' through vocabularies and imagery utilised and authority asserted, is very much worthy of attention (1995:3). How stakeholders represent dissenting voices and tensions, or neglect to do so, regarding individual initiatives and the cocoa sector, also implicitly constructs power and embeddedness relations.

A related paradox regarding consumption from development contexts is how stakeholders construct a need for outside assistance (Crush, 1995:10), i.e. a narrative of communities requiring 'help'. A priori, this suggests lop-sided relationships of power and embeddedness between GPN stakeholders. Multiple stakeholders and particularly consumers represent paying a fair price as an act of charity, seeking to 'help' producers and cocoa communities. Constructing a narrative of 'helping' thus aims to galvanise support, rather than create equitable, power-symmetrical

relationships with cocoa communities. With Feuerbach (1956 [1841]), this is an example of decorum being more important than being, with appearances becoming the essence of life and style trumping substance. The media of communication act as a transformative agent, not mirroring, but representing reality in a certain way (Lewis, Rodgers and Woolcock, 2014b:4), in this case showing cocoa communities as in need of ‘help’ and private-sector, public-sector and civil-society stakeholders answering this call. As Bryant and Goodman (2004:355) emphasise, fair trade products, or more generally products dubbed ‘sustainable’ as investigated by this study, have narrative and material production moments, acquiring a dimension of a ‘moral economy’ (Goodman, 2004). In terms of shaping power, embeddedness, and value throughout the production network, both moments are crucial. Representations project the power of the authors and stewards of these instances of communication, while also producing and reproducing actors’ embeddedness in their territories, networks or societies, and implicitly enhancing value. Given my focus on tensions, there is thus also a question to what extent actors communicate any friction between stakeholders if aiming to maintain a coherent image of ‘helping’.

In particular in settings which involve some element of virtuous consumption, i.e. consumers believing that they make a difference to a desirable cause through a purchase, as well as circumstances involving a considerable distance between stakeholders, spectacle assumes as much material form as e.g. the chocolate bar they come with. This recalls Goodman’s ‘developmental consumption’ (2010:105), which firstly refers to consumption becoming a ‘tool’ of development. This understanding suggests that individuals in the global North can influence livelihoods in the global South through consumption, represented as an opportunity to promote development. Secondly, not only products, but also producer environments and livelihoods become commodities: development becomes saleable in the marketplace. As Goodman (2010:105) highlights, developmental consumption, in neither of its two facets, promotes engagement with who can participate, among producers and consumers alike, nor with the question of whether ever more consumption is desirable given its toll on human and natural resources. As always, these images are predicated on consumers’ acceptance of them (Boorstin, 1971). The ‘difference-making’ discourse accompanying purchases thus takes on material form, with particularly certifiers becoming stewards of virtue for products bearing certification seals (Blowfield and Dolan, 2008). All three case-studies will demonstrate how the chocolate bars to be sold, and implicitly the related sustainability initiatives, are predicated on the notion that their consumption promotes a more aware alternative to the norm, and the representations constructing this reputation.

Representations are a crucial tool in mediating relationships between consumers and producers of 'ethical' products, with Silverstone's (2007) notion of 'proper distance' useful in conceptualising these connections. As again Bryant and Goodman (2004:357) observe, stakeholders often deploy narrative testimonies encompassing Southern producers or Northern consumers to construct the narratives they wish their product and their 'sustainability initiative' to be associated with. Creating relationships linking consumers and producers across the North-South divide was an innovation of fair trade (Raynolds, 2002:404). Silverstone contends that media are a crucial conduit in determining relationships and senses of responsibility between the subjects and audiences of reports: 'We need to be close but not too close, distant but not too distant' (2007:172). As Silverstone argues, news reports often create only 'screen deep' connections as they 'screen out' whatever may not be amenable to viewers (2007:120), with the screen thus simultaneously a screen, window, frame, mask and barrier (2007:20). This is an especially difficult balance to strike in development contexts and, in this study, cocoa sustainability initiatives, as there is by virtue of geography and life-realities a considerable distance between those producing cocoa and those buying the chocolate. Following Tallontire and Nelson (2013), I will aim to unpack narratives and representations used to identify underlying tensions between stakeholders and their differing contexts. I will analyse drivers and representations in terms of tensions between them, but also of the meanings stakeholders seek to create, identifying also implications for power and embeddedness.

When looking at the cocoa sector in particular, it is important to recognise the shift in the industry also in terms of representations. Describing the early days of fair labels, Renard (2003:89-90) highlights the importance of shifting from consumers having to frequent special shops for two available ethically traded products towards having these products commonly available. According to her, this required a changed message which was interesting to a larger public and appealed 'more to humanitarian sentiments than to political convictions' (2003:90). In a sense, a shift of a similar magnitude has happened in the cocoa sector. Averting long-term supply-security risks, more than ethical qualms, has become a chief driver, as this thesis will demonstrate. For my analysis, this means it is important to note that the overall shift in the cocoa sector has encouraged the participation of actors who may be primarily driven by commercial objectives, but nevertheless employ mission-driven representations to harness the positive associations with 'sustainable' behaviour responsive consumers may espouse. This creates tensions, bringing to the fore power and embeddedness asymmetries between different

stakeholders. In this context, one point of interest will also be what aspects stakeholders neglect to emphasise in their communication, including sustainability initiatives' limited scale vis-à-vis the cocoa sector at large, their initiatives' actual ability to combat e.g. national deforestation, or considerable lead-times until a planted cocoa tree yields pods.

In summary, this chapter has reviewed my analytical pillars in the literature. The chapter's argument is that projected shortages have exacerbated challenges in the cocoa sector, causing shifts in cocoa sustainability initiatives in terms of initiatives' structure, the priorities driving stakeholders, and the meanings they create in representations, with divergences producing tensions. For this research focus, I argue that the GPN framework, with some complementary modifications, is a suitable tool to map initiatives and tensions in-depth given GPNs' strengths in conceptualising multi-dimensional, multi-scalar processes in terms of their power and embeddedness aspects, and giving space to diverse stakeholders' perspectives. I further argue that analysing stakeholders' socio-economic, environmental and commercial drivers through the proposed constellation of priorities model, and the meanings stakeholders create in representations, can help understand initiatives' direction. Emerging tensions in drivers and representations alike help unpack changes in initiatives, particularly in terms of power and embeddedness relations, with the analysis of priorities and meanings thus enriching the initial GPN mapping. Successive sections in chapter 2 have laid the analytical groundwork to answer all four analytical and empirical research sub-questions in turn, firstly the analytical sub-question exploring the possibilities and limitations of the GPN framework in chapter 4. Chapters 5 and 6 will apply my GPN lens empirically, mapping first the chocolate sector in general and then my three case-study initiatives in particular in terms of power and embeddedness. Section 2.4 drew up a model to assess stakeholder drivers systematically across the socio-economic, commercial and environmental dimensions, to be applied in chapter 7. The final section of this chapter provided the basis to review stakeholder representations across my three case-studies in chapter 8, prior to the concluding chapter 9 relating empirical findings back to analytical considerations. First, however, the following chapter will discuss my thesis's research design and methods.

3. Research design and methods

After the previous chapter outlined my study’s pillars in the literature to facilitate my analytical and empirical investigation in later parts, this chapter aims to outline the research design and the four qualitative research methods which I used to answer my research questions, primarily the overarching research question:

How are cocoa-sector shifts driving changes in stakeholder priorities and representations in cocoa sustainability initiatives, particularly regarding the environment?

The research question’s focus on stakeholder priorities, representations and their tensions necessitates incorporating a broad range of voices to map the initiatives, identify priorities and representations, and unpack tensions. As argued above, the GPN framework is well-suited to accommodate these perspectives. To promote a rich tapestry of viewpoints and triangulate different data sources, this research utilised four different methods. Documentary analysis, semi-structured interviews, participant observation and focus group discussions were chosen to help unpack multi-stakeholder priorities and representations, and tensions between them, to answer the overarching research question regarding their link to cocoa-sector shifts. The different research methods contributed iteratively, but to varying degrees, to the different research sub-questions (cf. table 3.1).

Research sub-question	Principal research methods
1. To what extent does the Global Production Networks framework help understand shifts within cocoa sustainability initiatives?	Documentary analysis, interviews, participant observation
2. What is new in sustainability initiatives in the chocolate sector?	Documentary analysis, interviews
3. How are new drivers affecting cocoa sustainability initiatives with an environmental focus?	Interviews, participant observation, documentary analysis
4. In relation to these drivers, what representations surface in cocoa sustainability initiatives especially regarding the environment?	Focus group discussions, documentary analysis, participant observation

Table 3.1: Use of different research methods for research sub-questions.

Source: Author.

The chapter's argument is that a key part of my qualitative investigation was drawing on diverse sources to generate new knowledge and combining different methods to test and verify findings. It also argues that the three case-studies and four methods in combination contributed pertinent data to help the following analytical and empirical chapters give relevant answers on different aspects of the research focus, from the shifts in cocoa sustainability initiatives to the case-studies' make-up, stakeholder priorities and representations, and particularly tensions between and within them. After discussing the reasons for choosing the comparative case-study approach and the four methods this research employed, this chapter will reflect in successive sections on the structure of fieldwork (section 3.2) before explaining my confidentiality strategy and the rationale for selecting different case-studies and interlocutors (sections 3.3 and 3.4). Section 3.5 will discuss my different qualitative research methods in turn. It will engage, *inter alia*, with the types of documents analysed, the breakdown of interviewees, the composition of focus groups and the possibilities of participant observation. The final section highlights issues and challenges encountered in fieldwork, prior to a brief conclusion to the chapter.

3.1 Rationale underlying three comparative case-studies and four research methods

I chose to analyse three separate case-studies in my study, comparing and contrasting them in terms of their make-up, priorities and representations, in order to identify links from cocoa-sector shifts to tensions for all three. I selected three cases, *i.e.* 'instances of a class of events' (George and Bennett, 2004:17), in this case synonymous with cocoa sustainability initiatives. The case-studies were intrinsic, explored thanks to the unique knowledge they can contribute, but also instrumental as they can offer insights into mechanisms (Stake, 2007:121) beyond one GPN. The logic behind selecting three case-studies was that human learning in part is based on accumulating context-dependent knowledge on diverse cases (Flyvbjerg, 2006). A comparative case-study approach made it possible for my thesis to go into depth on every individual initiative, but also generate knowledge based on the analysis of not one, but three diverse cases incorporating diverse stakeholders, scales and mechanisms.

For the three case-studies, the research's epistemological goal was, beyond identifying patterns, also to locate underlying structures, identifying stakeholders and power and embeddedness relationships which connect them. This also included archipelago actors who conventionally may

have been conceptualised as outside the mapping's remit. The case-studies, as mentioned before, were selected to represent a diversity of stakeholders from public sector, private sector and civil society, offering ample opportunity for comparison within and between initiatives. The objective of using case-studies was to understand stakeholder behaviour not from a rule-based vantage point, but based on observed instances to attain a nuanced perspective on real-life developments, which is particularly important in social sciences given the lack of success in producing context-independent, predictive theory (Flyvbjerg, 2006). I aimed to be cautious concerning general conclusions from case-studies (Thomas, 2007), with my research not representative (Laws, 2003:403). Equally, the objective was not to develop hypotheses.

Nevertheless, I believe a detailed study of interrelationships in concrete cases (Thomas, 2007:313), particularly in the comparison, has contributed valuable insights regarding wider mechanisms by analysing priorities and representations, identifying what tensions emerge within and between them, and assessing implicit links to power and embeddedness relations. Beyond the opportunity to analyse data from three different networks rather than one case-study, the diversity of cases under investigation also allowed a multi-scalar analysis which furthered the understanding of tensions, power and embeddedness within the cocoa sector at large. The GPN framework's multi-scalar analysis, focus on institutional and social context, and facility to map and assess systematically diverse cases are three strengths well-suited to a comparative case-study approach. At the same time, as case-study focused research entails a heightened risk of researcher bias (Stake, 2007:133), I aimed to verify findings through information from and interviews with representatives of academia, manufacturers, traders, retailers, NGOs, certifiers and donor organisations within and beyond the production networks investigated in detail.

The rationale behind using four different methods to answer my research questions was that they draw on different sources and types of knowledge to produce more empirically sound findings and facilitated triangulation of information. While one hope was detecting incongruences between words and actions and identify potential misstatements (Olsen, 2012:183), I was also cognisant incongruences themselves may constitute interesting findings. By nature, analysing a complex production network incorporating various stakeholders will require drawing on a multitude of written sources (Barrientos, 2002; Kaplinsky and Morris, 2000), requiring documentary analysis. Interviews with relevant stakeholders from private sector, public sector, academia and civil-society were to grant access to unwritten knowledge, particularly to help contextualise underlying drivers, obtain reactions on representations, while also providing me

with data on power and embeddedness relations. Participant observation helped situate the initiatives within the sector, and proved particularly useful in verifying findings on power and embeddedness relations, as well as drivers. Focus group discussions offered an opportunity to incorporate the views of some responsive consumers, proving useful in particular regarding representations. All four methods, discussed in more detail in section 3.5, provided invaluable insights to answer my research questions.

While this complementary strategy enriched the research by drawing on diverse data-collection methods, the approach also required managing the transition between very different sources of data. Using four separate qualitative methods, I was conscious that both interviews and focus group discussions are heavily informed by the researcher (Neilson and Pritchard, 2009:57), requiring for triangulation also data from events and documents created independently of my presence, through documentary analysis and participant observation. At the same time, shifting between different methods required managing the transition between insider and outsider roles for me as a researcher. This was equally a factor in evaluating and analysing different types of data conscious of my function in collecting them, and inevitable researcher bias in drawing conclusions.

3.2 Fieldwork structure

As table 3.2.1 visualises, I divided my fieldwork into three phases. It encompassed an initial period in Europe after the granting of fieldwork approval in November 2013 until early January 2014, a second phase in Nicaragua from January to April 2014, and a final phase in Europe from late April to early September 2014.

Phases	Documen- tary analysis	Interviews	Focus groups	Participant observation
1) Phase 1 in Europe (November 2013- January 2014)	x	x	x	x
2) Phase 2 in Nicaragua (January-April 2014)	x	x		x
3) Phase 3 in Europe (April-September 2014)	x	x	x	x

Table 3.2.1: Fieldwork structure by phases.

Source: Author.

While most phases encompassed all research methods, the accents varied, with phase 1 encompassing particularly documentary analysis, phase 2 including a heavy focus on interviews, and phase 3 on focus group discussions.

3.3 Confidentiality in my research

As part of ethical approval and on the recommendation of a University Research Ethics Committee, I chose to use pseudonyms for organisations and locations and anonymise stakeholders throughout my three in-depth case-studies. For this reason, hyperlinks which could reveal locations or organisations behind pseudonyms are not included in the reference list. All stakeholders requested, welcomed or accepted this strategy except one, who wished to lodge his disapproval as he believed that this strategy encouraged making unqualified remarks ‘off the record’. Throughout my thesis, I will label quotes or information obtained through interviews by interviewee code and a brief reference to the stakeholder type from which they originate (e.g. ‘producer’ for cocoa producers, ‘cooperative’ for representatives of cooperatives, and ‘development’ for development agency staff). Appendix 7 contains a full list of interviews conducted, interviewees’ codes and stakeholder types, distinguishing as in table 3.5.2.1 between cocoa producers, representatives of cooperatives, research, civil society, development cooperation, government or private-sector. In case of a dual affiliation e.g. between cocoa producer and representative of a cooperative, the labelling will depend on the position from which they were speaking to me on the day. Again for reasons of confidentiality, no organisation names or countries are included in the list of interviews. It proved impossible to anonymise the four key certifiers in the cocoa sector, as any discussion would nevertheless reveal their identities irrespective of any pseudonyms used; however, I maintain confidentiality by only identifying stakeholder types when referencing interview data.

3.4 Selection of case-study initiatives

My hierarchical list of criteria for case-study site selection was as follows:

1. Suitability for research focus

The suitability of the production networks for the intended research focus was paramount.

2. Access and willingness to cooperate

An important criterion was different stakeholders' willingness to cooperate as this was likely to influence my ability to gain access to relevant information.

3. Diversity of lead stakeholders

Another key consideration was selecting case-studies with differing lead actors to safeguard a diversity of structures.

4. Exploration of case-study/country in prior research

Another factor related to the originality of my research, i.e. to what extent the case-studies had featured in prior research.

5. Conservation, carbon or both

I aimed to select initiatives which, put together, would cover different types and combinations of conservation and carbon considerations.

6. Language

The rationale was that conducting research in a setting where I spoke interlocutors' first language would benefit the research by allowing nuanced exchanges without requiring interpreters.

7. Researcher safety

Preference was given to politically stable producer countries.

An early stage of the research process encompassed drawing up a list of cocoa sustainability initiatives encompassing biodiversity and carbon measures, yielding over twenty initiatives active across the world. I applied the above list to all options and conducted a preliminary GPN mapping to select potential case-studies. While aiming to choose diverse initiatives in accordance with the above-mentioned criteria, I kept some variables constant, such as the cocoa production context of Latin America, and the sales context of Germany. Being home to over 90% of organic

cocoa surfaces (FiBL and IFOAM, 2015:90), Latin America appeared conducive to researching cocoa sustainability's environmental side. Moreover, Latin America, the birthplace of *Theobroma cacao*, seemed a viable starting point also because smallholders particularly in Central America tend to cultivate cocoa in diverse agroforestry systems incorporating multiple crops to improve income and food security (Cerda et al., 2014:971). All three case-studies, explored briefly below and mapped in detail in chapter 6, have strong ties to Latin America.

Case-study #1: A partnership of German-Colombian municipalities producing 'Our Chocolate'

The first case-study encompasses municipalities from Germany and Amazonian Colombia, with funding from the German federal ministry for development cooperation to support rainforest protection and climate change mitigation through cocoa agroforestry systems, and promote engagement in renewable energy systems. The idea was for cocoa produced in Amazonia to be processed into chocolate sold in German partner municipalities as 'Our Chocolate', thereby creating a self-sustaining project through a fair and an organic certification, and a sense of ownership at both ends facilitating behavioural change.

Case-study #2: Tree kids, Iller Chocolate and Planet Concern

The case-study of 'World Choc' brings together a Swiss chocolate-maker, Iller, aiming to produce ethically sound and carbon-neutral chocolate, a children-for-children NGO planting trees to combat climate change, and an implementing NGO realising cocoa-timber agroforestry systems. The idea was for timber trees to sequester carbon as well as diversify household income, with the project active in Peru, Honduras as well as Ghana. Unlike case-study 1, there is virtually no public-sector engagement, but prominent civil-society involvement through NGO Tree kids and implementing NGO Planet Concern.

Case-study #3: Floral and Nicaragua

This case-study details chocolate company 'Floral' working with cocoa producers, cooperatives, NGOs and development agencies in Nicaragua. The cooperation aimed to counteract spiralling deforestation and poor living conditions with an agroforestry approach. Intercropping cocoa with food crops and promoting shade and organic principles, it contributed to diversified household incomes through premium prices, to food security and environmental protection. Moreover, it entailed multiple cocoa cooperatives and two public-private partnerships between the company

and different civil-society and public-sector partners. Recently, the company has shifted to purchasing land for in-house cocoa production, and from the organic standard to UT'Z Certified.

The three initiatives' selection dovetails with the objective of highlighting cocoa sustainability initiatives with conservation and carbon measures, which merit exploration given environmental issues' growing importance as part of overall growing supply-security concerns. The initiatives lend themselves to comparison given their differing networks, priorities and representations, being driven by a variety of stakeholders from public-sector, civil-society and private-sector. In chapters 6, 7 and 8, my research compares and contrasts systematically the initiatives' set-up, priorities, and representations, respectively. These chapters will introduce in more detail than these brief summaries initiatives' complex webs of stakeholders, priorities and representations, as well as underlying power and embeddedness relations. In terms of set-up, the first case-study, Our Chocolate, encompasses limited volumes sold locally, aiming to establish a direct North-South partnership between two communities. Municipal and civil-society actors at both ends have ensured that one manufacturer handles bean grinding and chocolate production, thereby bypassing large-scale traders and processors. The second case, World Choc, is a youth NGO-driven venture to raise further funds to plant trees. The production network equally sought to establish a direct, relational, trust-based connection (Gereffi, Humphrey and Sturgeon, 2005) between the cooperative-based manufacturer and growers to shore up security of certified supplies. Finally, Floral started out with a relational initiative involving multiple cooperatives, NGOs and government agencies, with its recent move to in-house production an integrated, hierarchy-based network in terms of Gereffi, Humphrey and Sturgeon's categorisation (2005). Retracing the interactions between stakeholders comparatively through a GPN lens particularly in terms of power and embeddedness has produced fascinating insights given the diversity of networks involved.

Equally, the initiatives' differing priorities and representations merit discussion. I will firstly analyse what priorities in the socio-economic, environmental and commercial dimensions drive stakeholders, highlighting the tensions in particular. For Our Chocolate and World Choc, the bars' main selling points in the North are climate-saving properties, which do not necessarily dovetail with cocoa producers' focus on socio-economic improvement. Equally, tensions are likely to emerge from companies' focus on supply security, compared with civil-society or public-sector actors' focus on socio-economic and environmental measures. Beyond priorities, the final point of investigation will examine the meanings created by representations in public-facing

communication. This encompasses the meanings created regarding the initiatives in general and particularly stakeholders’ underlying drivers, such as whether they are located in the socio-economic, environmental or commercial dimensions. Again, tensions may emerge between different stakeholders’ public-facing representations and also with the underlying drivers established in the previous chapter. Despite all differences between different stakeholders, there are also enough similarities between the three case-studies to create the basis for a study viable within the confines of a thesis. Parallels include the conscious elimination of intermediaries in all three initiatives, the Latin America-Germany connection, and the shared focus on environmental matters. Overall, this thus suggests that the three diverse initiatives lend themselves to in-depth examination through the below-explored four qualitative research methods of documentary analysis, key informant interviews, focus group discussions and participant observation.

3.5 Research methods

3.5.1 Documentary analysis: using and critically assessing a broad range of sources

The documents cited in this research (cf. references) form part of a larger pool of documents kindly made available by interlocutors or identified as relevant in internet research, totalling over 300 sources ranging from websites via researcher reports to press releases. The following table breaks down how many documents of different types this research drew on:

Type	Total
Website content	72
Sustainability/CSR reports	16
Press releases	8
NGO/researcher reports	195
Media publications	28
Consumer surveys	2
Total	321

Table 3.5.1.1: Total number of documents analysed in the research, broken down by type.

Source: Author.

Documentary analysis was a relevant factor for all four research sub-questions (cf. table 3.1 for details). As table 3.5.1.1 shows, the research sought to verify data from any one source through data from other sources. This diversity of sources was instrumental as the information necessary for a production network mapping will not be available in one place (Barrientos, 2002; Kaplinsky and Morris, 2000), which implicitly also extends to the sources necessary to review GPNs’ analytical suitability. As throughout the research and across different methods, documentary

analysis aimed to draw on a variety of sources published by public-sector, private-sector and civil-society stakeholders to illuminate complex constellations of actors and power asymmetries across the chocolate sector. The research aimed to use different types of sources cognisant of their origin and limitations, consulting sustainability reports, online materials, press releases, media publications, printed interviews, and secondary consumer surveys. Critically assessing their quality, audience and agenda was crucial as they are not objective representations of reality (Laws, 2003), but have undergone prioritisation, editing, and other individual and organisational filters. Equally, their provenance (Barrientos, 2007) down to divisions in an organisation, and intended audience (O’Laughlin, 2007) ranging from profit-conscious shareholders to ethically aware readers, were crucial for assessing e.g. why documents may utilise certain types of representations over others.

3.5.2 Key informant interviews

Another key method, relevant to answering all sub-questions (cf. table 3.1), was speaking to representatives from all three initiatives and beyond, as individuals’ perceptions and priorities are an important source of data (Woodhouse, 2007). Interviews have shortcomings: they only elicit what interlocutors want to share, do not necessarily represent actions accurately (Laws, 2003:297) and are a bounded, non-neutral process between interviewer and interviewee (Fontana and Frey, 2007). I aimed to minimise researcher bias by applying great care in wording my questions and considering interviewees’ perception of me (Woodhouse, 2007:169). A further strategy to minimise bias was posing open-ended questions (Mikkelsen, 2005:176) such as an initial ‘What can you tell me about your work?’, allowing interlocutors to direct the conversation without me feeding in keywords. I also aimed to contextualise interlocutors’ statements in terms of life histories, organisational backgrounds, perspectives and priorities, yet also accepting interlocutors’ accounts vis-à-vis others’ as equally valid perspectives. While aiming to encourage and represent this richness in my analysis, I also cross-referenced interview findings with data from documentary analysis, focus groups and participant observation.

A key objective was incorporating the perspectives of representatives from the entire chocolate production network, encompassing private-sector, public-sector and civil-society actors in producer and consumer countries, from cocoa producers and cooperatives to retailers and chocolate businesses. My purposive selection of interlocutors (Mikkelsen, 2005) aimed to encompass key informants from and map all three distinct case-studies, but also go beyond to capture wider perspectives from the chocolate sector. Table 3.5.2.1 shows my interlocutors and

the types of their organisational affiliations. While the largest group of interlocutors were cocoa producers at 21 out of 96 total interviewees, a key objective of my research was involving various perspectives from public-sector, private-sector and civil-society representatives to reflect diverse views across the production network. For instance, eleven government representatives, 13 private-sector and 18 civil-society actors safeguarded the inclusion of a variety of perspectives across different types and levels of public sector, civil society and business.

Time	Location	Producers	Civil society	Cooperative	Research	Government	Development agency	Private sector	Certifier	Total
Phase 1										
Nov to Dec 2014	Europe		3		2	3	1	3		12
Phase 2										
Jan to Apr 2014	Nicaragua	20	13	6	6	4	8	6	2	65
Phase 3										
Apr to Sep 2014	Europe	1	2	1	2	4	2	4	3	19
ALL		21	18	7	10	11	11	13	5	96

Table 3.5.2.1: Breakdown of interviewees by stakeholder type.

Source: Author

I adapted my interview strategy by interview mode, i.e. direct or electronic communication, and by stakeholder type. As table 3.5.2.1 shows, I conducted 96 interviews, with over three-quarters held in person given a perception of better results than by indirect communication methods, i.e. phone, Skype or e-mail. In in-person interviews, stakeholders appeared to appreciate someone coming from far away to hear their perspective, yielding better, more open conversations than electronic communication; however, if stakeholders preferred indirect communication, I respected their request as part of the appreciation I aimed to show for their time and expertise. I was keenly aware that while different interviewees may work for or represent organisations, I could not assume that their statements reflected the views of their organisation, again aiming to verify data. With illiterate or semi-literate respondents, I attempted to adapt my interview style, turning the exchange more into a conversation. With other respondents, I conducted semi-structured interviews to retain flexibility, with key issues defined in advance, but using open-ended questions (Woodhouse, 2007). Some core interview questions were identical for all stakeholders of the same type, such as different certifiers, while ca. 30% of questions were tailored to necessity or formulated spontaneously. I always offered to send respondents my questions in advance, which was requested ten times. With some stakeholder types, what interlocutors did not say was just as important as what stakeholders did cover. While I initially presented interlocutors with my conceptual model of constellations of priorities in commercial, socio-economic and environmental dimensions, it soon became clear that this was more confusing than helpful to interviewees. I therefore altered my interview tactic to begin with an open-ended question about interlocutors' work (cf. appendix 3 for some sample questions).

In phases 1 and 3, with the exception of four participants who preferred to answer questions by e-mail, I arranged an interview either by Skype, phone or in person, which I recorded with the consent of participants and then transcribed. I utilised the same approach for my three focus group discussions. As advised by a fellow PhD student, I refrained from utilising a tape recorder in Nicaragua to avoid making interviewees uncomfortable due to the technology and thereby changing the conversational context, but resorted to note-taking on a note pad and entering my notes into my computer immediately after the interview, a process I also utilised for participant observation. Given my training in interpreting and note-taking, the notes combined with my memory of encounters immediately afterwards allowed me to enter fairly complete notes into my computer, including some verbatim quotes from interlocutors. After transcription and entry, I open-coded the data using Nvivo to locate themes for initial analysis, followed by axial coding to

identify and categorise themes prior to a final instance of selective coding to reintegrate my findings with the theory when writing up the data into chapters (Mikkelsen, 2005:181).

3.5.3 Focus group discussions with responsive Northern consumers

Focus group discussions (FGDs) have helped to illuminate particularly the fourth research sub-question on representations in public-facing communication, the meanings they create and their links to underlying drivers (cf. appendix 8 for a list of FGDs conducted). One strength of focus groups is that they generate data on a researcher-directed subject (Morgan, 1997); a further advantage is the opportunity to gain access to social interaction, usually unspoken group norms and processes (Bloor et al., 2001) and the dynamics of social practice (Kamberelis and Dimitriadis, 2007). Equally, they give researchers a chance to experience participants' worlds, eliciting perceptions, opinions, beliefs and assessments (Puchta and Potter, 2004:67). The method's downsides include complex data analysis, groups being dominated by individuals (Mikkelsen, 2005:301) and, as with interviews, discrepancies between words and action (Stewart, Shamdasani and Rook, 2007:115). For these reasons, they are commonly used in tandem with other methods for triangulation. Their use can broadly be classified into exploratory purposes for constructing survey questionnaires or scoping unfamiliar topics (Morgan, 1997:22-25), or following up on survey findings or interviews (Bloor et al., 2001; Morgan, 1997). In my study, I used FGDs in both an exploratory and a follow-up capacity with Northern responsive consumers regarding consumer perceptions of the chocolate sector in general and different aspects of sustainability and my three case-studies in particular, exploring and verifying what consumers thought of different initiatives' representations.

Three focus groups with a total of 28 participants took place in phases 1 and 3 of my fieldwork in Europe. Contrary to my initial plan, given large distances between cocoa producers and poor availability of public transport in Nicaragua, I refrained from organising producer FGDs as the inconvenience involved would have been indefensible ethically and rendered likely attendance levels low, conducting more interviews and participant observation instead. I ran the same basic session structure three times with Northern responsive consumers, with different constellations of participants of different age, education level and gender (Morgan, 1997). I purposively selected pre-existing groups of responsive Northern consumers to facilitate conversation (Laws, 2003:298); additionally, I was familiar to the three groups to minimise inhibitions which may arise from the presence of strangers or participating in a study with an unfamiliar researcher. I

proposed participating in a FGD to all three groups several weeks in advance so as to ensure a certain time during which group members could raise concerns and questions with me directly. All groups received a standard information sheet in advance, with the objectives of the research, the goal of the discussion and the modalities of consent verbalised at the outset of the sessions. I chose one group with a high level of environmental awareness – a local conservation group –, one group with social awareness – a church choir –, and one group to cover the economic/business corner of the oft-cited ‘sustainability triangle’ – the communications department of a non-food transnational firm. While thus attempting to safeguard inter-group diversity of backgrounds, I also selected groups with considerable intra-group diversity in terms of gender, age, education, professional and disciplinary backgrounds, and degrees of familiarity with the developing world (cf. table 3.5.3.1 below). As the objective was never to be representative, I feel this approach was adequate in safeguarding a broad diversity of opinions amongst the 28 discussants.

Focus groups		M	F	<45 years	>45 years	Higher education	Secondary education	Total	
Phase 1	FGD1 (environmental)								
Nov to Dec 2013	Europe	Participants 1a-1i	6	3	6	3	5	4	9
Phase 3	FGD2 (social)								
Apr to Sep 2014	Europe	Participants 2a-2k	3	8	4	7	7	4	11
Phase 3	FGD3 (economic)								
Apr to Sep 2014	Europe	Participants 3a-3h	2	6	5	3	6	2	8
			11	17	15	13	18	10	28

Table 3.5.3.1: Breakdown of participants in the three focus group sessions conducted.

Source: Author

The FGDs followed a pre-set, yet flexible schedule. The schedule consisted of:

- i) an initial presentation of the research and the conditions of consent, which included agreeing ground rules in a participatory fashion,

- ii) offering 14 common certification labels as visual stimuli to choose from and discuss as a scene-setting and ice-breaking exercise,
- iii) conducting a type of ranking exercise regarding priorities commonly associated with cocoa sustainability initiatives, and discussing related issues in an open-floor setting,
- iv) conducting a second ranking exercise from a different perspective with ensuing discussion, and
- v) a variant of choice experiments using the examples of my three case-studies for selection and discussion.

The agreed ground rules included only one person speaking at any given time, and participants not being attacked on a personal level for opinions and perceptions voiced. I also emphasised that everyone had the right to speak, but no-one had any obligation. The first joint exercise (ii), the 'visual stimulus' part of the session, consisted in each participant selecting one out of 14 common certification labels. Afterwards, they had to explain why they selected it, such as the associations they have with the label's philosophy or the degree to which they take the label into account in their own consumption decisions, encompassing 'green' labels, 'fair' labels as well as an empty card. This first task also fulfilled the purpose of an ice-breaker exercise, with every group member immediately being accorded the opportunity to speak, while the task and question were also general enough to allow participants to contribute their experience. The aim also was to test participants' familiarity with a variety of certification schemes, while ascertaining to what extent they knew and trusted different labels.

The second exercise, (iii), consisted in me asking participants to rank a variety of benefits commonly ascribed to certification schemes in terms of how important they considered them to be. The ten benefits were:

- i) protection of biodiversity
- ii) certification
- iii) climate protection
- iv) agricultural trainings
- v) better incomes for farmers
- vi) human rights

vii) supply security

viii) social measures

ix) innovation

x) against child labour.

I asked participants to state which of these benefits they considered to be particularly important when making their own consumption choices. This was to be done by placing three 'dots' on those out of the ten benefits deemed most relevant for participants as consumers (cf. picture 3.5.3.1 and appendix 1 for a full breakdown of the votes).



Picture 3.5.3.1: Stylised example of allocation of 'dots' to different benefits.

Source: Author.

The first 'open floor' question asked participants to explain their preferences. This also involved considering what potential trade-offs may be necessary between different types of goals, such as socio-economic, environmental and commercial goals as well as between different environmental goals such as safeguarding biodiversity and sequestering carbon. This question was to bring out participants' ability to distinguish between different types of goals and reflect on their

compatibility. The second allocation task entailed a shift in perspectives. Revisiting the ‘three dot’ allocation task, it asked participants what benefits they thought would be most likely to be important to cocoa producers. The objective of this set of questions was to encourage participants to shift their perspective from their own views towards what others in the production network may consider paramount. The exercise thus brought out consumers’ own normative spectacle as to what certification ought to entail, while also making recourse to consumers’ notions about farmers and their priorities. All three groups remarked on the difficulty of making a decision based on only a list of buzzwords as opposed to in-depth knowledge. I explained that this is the very problem with many sustainability engagements, as information provided on chocolate wrappers or websites is partly limited to buzzwords.

The final exercise consisted in a task similar to ‘choice experiments’ settings (Michaud, Llerena and Joy, 2012) utilised in environmental valuation approaches to ascertain the public’s appreciation of different attributes of environmental goods at different prices. I summarised my three case-studies on paper notes in bullet point format based on initiatives’ own publicity materials to test participants’ responses to representations, as table 3.5.3.2 visualises. The information provided to participants encompassed key properties of the initiatives concerning stakeholders involved from private-sector and civil society as well as their certification status, the lead actor in the GPN and their prices as follows:

Initiative name	1) Our Chocolate	2) World Choc	3) Floral
Type, lead actors	Local North-South partnership	Tree kids: climate protection by children for children	Popular chocolate company in Germany, family business
Differentiating characteristics	Climate alliance/Local Agenda 21	Chocolate manufacturer compensates all emissions in the chain	Renewable energy (partly own production)
Producer countries	Colombia: rainforest protection, indigenous farmers	Peru, Honduras, Ghana	Cooperation with organic cocoa cooperatives since 1990 in Nicaragua
Certification	Vegan, but no certification	Fairtrade, Zero Climate	No certification/organic
Price	EUR1.80/50g; give-aways	EUR1/100g; EUR1.25/100g organic	EUR0.89/100g; EUR0.99/65g organic

Table 3.5.3.2: Mimicking a ‘choice experiment’ in FGDs.

Source: Author.

In turn, I asked the participants for their immediate reaction to hearing cases 1, 2 and 3, requesting attitudes regarding credibility, certification status, prices and overall impressions. The final exercise was to generate concrete reactions to my three case-studies and their representations, with the questions which participants asked about the different cases just as relevant as their attitudes and perceptions. Juxtaposing the three case-studies also allowed cross-comparisons, eliciting opinions on the relative credibility of the three different initiatives under research, which I will revisit particularly in chapter 8. At the end of the sessions, I always asked for feedback on the exercise's usefulness. Several months after the sessions, I also fed back some research findings to all three discussion groups.

3.5.4 Participant observation

To supplement documents, interviews and focus groups, my aim in observing cocoa-related events was to gain a sense of cocoa stakeholders' day-to-day workings and debates regarding various framings of sustainability. Participant observation is a method well-suited to obtaining a holistic picture of contexts (Jorgensen, 1989), a key objective throughout my research. It supplements and triangulates people's verbal messages with observations of their behaviour. By observing activities, circumstances and people within situations, consciously noticing what may otherwise be blocked out (Spradley, 1980:54), I assumed a panoramic position of observing proceedings, partly in a non-participatory, partly in a passive position (Spradley 1980). Heightened awareness of the insider-outsider experience as well as introspection on my function proved crucial (Spradley 1980:56), particularly in data analysis for different events.

As my presence could not help but influence the outcome (Laws, 2003:304), although to varying degrees between public-facing events, international conferences and local decision-making committees, the quality of results depended on participants not perceiving me as detrimental to open discussion, which I aimed to ensure through preparatory conversations where applicable. Some of the events I observed, such as a meeting of different cooperatives or a municipal cocoa commission, were fairly closed settings (Jorgensen, 1989:43), with access predicated on a sufficient level of trust. As participant observation yields insights on observable behaviour, which only to a degree relates to drivers and representations, it mostly could give inspiration on what questions to ask in interviews, as well as verifying interview data or documentary evidence. A further difficulty was analysing the data generated (Laws, 2003:304): firstly, any group, its inherent hierarchies, and inner working, are likely to be difficult to decipher initially, necessitating follow-

up or preparatory conversations with individual group members to avoid skewed conclusions. Secondly, by the nature of this method, I did not direct the discussions, meaning parts of the data were less useful content-wise, but did produce insights into power and embeddedness, which are key issues for my work. Every event brought useful insights and data regarding case-studies and sector. In total, I was able to observe 160 cocoa stakeholders across the three phases. As table 3.5.4.1 below shows, they encompassed voices from civil society, public sector and private sector from across my three case-studies and beyond, with their contributions facilitating new insights and triangulating and verifying other findings.

Participant observation at nine cocoa-related events: two in phase 1, five in phase 2, two in phase 3

Time	Location	Producers	NGO	Coopera- tive	Academia	Govern- ment	Develop- ment agency	Private sector	Certifier	Consumers	Total
Phase 1											
Nov to Dec 2014	Europe		1			2	1	5		24	33
Phase 2											
Jan to Apr 2014	Nicaragua	26	21	38	5	2	3	7	1		103
Phase 3											
Apr to Sep 2014	Europe	2				7				15	24

Table 3.5.4.1: Breakdown of participants observed at cocoa-related events.

Source: Author

3.6 Issues regarding fieldwork

Throughout my research, I complied with University ethical approval requirements. This included trying to ensure informed consent in a sensitive manner while on fieldwork: if participants were semi-literate or illiterate, I did not utilise formal written consent forms so as not to scare interlocutors, but explained verbally what my research and consent entailed. In institutional settings, i.e. with interlocutors accustomed to paperwork, I sent participant information sheet and consent form by e-mail before conducting the interview. I made it a habit of also asking after the interview whether the participant was still in agreement with me using our conversation for my PhD. Thankfully, no-one rescinded their consent. In terms of approaching participants, the response to my requests for interviews as well as participation in focus groups was positive, surprisingly so to my mind. Only ca. 15% of the individuals whom I approached did not reply or declined to participate in my study, with all major stakeholders but one proving supportive. Interlocutors were generous with their time and expertise and expressed interest in my eventual findings. Equally, my three FGDs brought high actual compared with promised participation, and appreciation from participants for the learning outcomes obtained.

Family circumstances forced me to be in Nicaragua only from January to April 2014; however, I do not think that this limited my ability to further my understanding of the sector given the kind support of interviewees and well-immersed actors. While there and after my return, health issues surfaced; these only precluded my participation in one event, which would have been useful as further background, but was not integral to mapping the three initiatives I selected. As I also reviewed all event presentations, I am hopeful the complications did not affect my research results irreparably.

Feeding back to participants has been a key motivation in my work. Two months after leaving Nicaragua, I summarised and fed back some findings, which met with considerable interest and feedback from stakeholders. Furthermore, I have shared findings and stayed in touch with stakeholders informally; in addition, I aim to provide an executive summary of policy-relevant PhD findings in German, Spanish and English. Finally, I organised several public-engagement sessions with Northern responsive consumers.

This chapter has argued that the combination of four qualitative methods has provided useful data to answer my overarching and subordinate research questions, highlighting where the data underlying my empirical findings and feeding into analytical observations has come from. It also has argued that the three case-studies selected can prove useful in advancing knowledge on cocoa sustainability and beyond through comparative analysis, which later empirical chapters will exemplify. Chapter 4 will now engage with the GPN framework's strengths and limitations in anticipation of its empirical application in later chapters based on collected documentary, interview, focus group and participant observation data.

4. The usefulness and limits of the GPN framework

So far, my thesis has outlined its theoretical underpinnings and its chosen research design and qualitative research methods. Chapter 2 critically reviewed the literatures surrounding the cocoa sector's challenges, global production networks, and elaborated my thesis's analytical foundations in terms of analysing stakeholder priorities and representations. Its argument was that the cocoa sector has seen shifts affecting cocoa sustainability initiatives, with projected cocoa shortages set to aggravate existing tensions and asymmetries between stakeholders and their diverging socio-economic, environmental and commercial priorities. It equally argued that my chosen conceptual lens of the GPN framework, with some complementary elements, is well-suited to capture the diversity of stakeholders active in the sector and the intricacies of their power and embeddedness relations, and also lay the groundwork for later empirical analyses of tensions in terms of priorities and representations. Chapter 3 presented how I have chosen my case-studies and my qualitative research methods, emphasising the role of documentary analysis, interviews, focus group discussions and participant observation in answering different parts of my research questions. The chapter argued that the four methods and a comparative analysis of the three case-studies chosen can contribute relevant and original knowledge on cocoa-sector shifts, cocoa sustainability initiatives and stakeholder tensions arising in relation to priorities and representations, with the chapter's exploration helping to contextualise the findings presented in later empirical chapters.

A crucial aspect of my study is the GPN framework, a key tenet of my conceptual approach. Before applying it in practice to the cocoa sector and in particular the three case-studies chosen, I aim to test the framework's usefulness and limits in this chapter, elaborating the complementary ideas I have chosen to enrich the approach. In so doing, I aim to answer my first research sub-question in this chapter:

1. To what extent does the Global Production Networks framework help understand shifts within cocoa sustainability initiatives?

1.1 To what extent does the GPN framework help analyse the multitude of actors influencing initiatives' set-up and priorities?

1.2 To what extent does the GPN framework help unpack shifts and tensions in terms of different stakeholders' priorities and representations?

The chapter will argue that the GPN lens is a suitable analytical framework, but also detail to what extent I will complement it to accommodate this study's research focus. The chapter's first section will discuss why this study uses the GPN framework rather than other conceptualisations to capture how changes in the cocoa sector have influenced cocoa sustainability initiatives. The second and third sections, in turn, will highlight which slight additions to the GPN framework I aim to implement to capture the environment of the crowded, competitive chocolate sector. While section 4.2 will detail the theoretical underpinnings and practical benefits of applying the 'archipelago' metaphor in answer to research sub-question 1.1, section 4.3 will address how analysing priorities and representations can highlight interdependencies between power and embeddedness in response to 1.2. Both sections will introduce conceptual matters prior to practical examples from cocoa sustainability initiatives. Building on chapter 2, they will also continue to lay the analytical groundwork for my empirical chapters. The final section argues in summary that both expansions utilised in this study provide a valid complement to the existing theoretical toolbox of GPN analyses for certain studies.

4.1 Discussion of the GPN framework: strengths and limitations

This chapter aims to answer the first research sub-question, analysing to what extent the GPN framework can help understand cocoa sustainability initiatives' shifts. The above-argued challenges in the cocoa sector also cause questions as to how to best conceptualise the cocoa sector's power and governance structures. In the past (e.g. Fold, 2002; Barrientos and Asenso-Okyere, 2009), scholars have used the notion of a bi-polar governance structure to characterise the dominance of brand-name chocolate manufacturers and traders-grinders. Others have used successive oligopolies (UNCTAD, 2008:vi) to reflect the hubs of concentration. I will use both conceptualisations with caution as they focus on private-sector actors and thus do not capture the variety of stakeholders involved in cocoa sustainability initiatives which I hope to reflect. I will aim to emphasise specifically cocoa producers, who are not represented by either metaphor, and the diversity of public-sector and civil-society stakeholders active in cocoa sustainability initiatives. As projected shortage fears are prompting cocoa-sector shifts, multipolar governance with various hubs of power beyond Northern corporate actors may eventually become the most viable characterisation, as the polarity of networks can be subject to change (Ponte and Sturgeon, 2014).

As introduced in section 2.3, the multi-dimensional and multi-scalar analysis the GPN framework allows is well-suited to this thesis's overarching research question investigating shifts in the cocoa sector and their impact on stakeholder priorities and representations in sustainability initiatives. In recent years, the global production networks (GPN) framework as elaborated within the Manchester School (Coe et al., 2004; Henderson et al., 2002; Hess and Coe, 2006) has gained increasing prominence in analysing how different types of stakeholders interact on multiple levels in the genesis of a good or service (e.g. Liu and Dicken, 2006). While remaining a heuristic, simplified representation of complex and dynamic situations, it emphasises a relational perspective, focusing on different sets of actors' inter-related actions (Coe, Dicken and Hess, 2008b:272). It brings together observations on GPNs in three separate dimensions (Henderson et al., 2002:444-447), facilitating systematic assessments of intra- and inter-stakeholder relations and social and institutional asymmetries in terms of:

- i) value in terms of creation, enhancement and capture of value,
- ii) corporate, collective and institutional power, and
- iii) territorial and network embeddedness, with Hess (2004) adding societal embeddedness.

This study will principally focus on power and embeddedness, analysing value primarily as a facilitator for bringing about changes in power or embeddedness. Within this subordinate role, the study will build on GPNs' customarily broad perception of value (Henderson et al., 2002), analysing particularly non-monetary benefits in terms of reputation, organisation, relation, brand and capacity and their interactions with power and embeddedness.

Embeddedness comprises relationships situating stakeholders within networks, territories and societies, be they social, economic or personal (Weller, 2006:1252). Building on Hess (2004:176-177), societal embeddedness signifies the way a stakeholder's 'roots' and background, as well as its home location's legislative and regulatory environment, shape its behaviour. Secondly, network embeddedness concerns a stakeholder's relations with other actors in the network as well as its importance to the network; finally, territorial embeddedness encompasses a stakeholder's anchoring in a particular location or region (Henderson et al., 2002). For all types of embeddedness, a point of interest for this study will be how stakeholders aim to enhance or leverage their embeddedness, producing and reproducing how they are embedded in a context.

Equally, Polanyi's (1957) distinction of economic activity being embedded in society, or society being embedded in economic activity, is an important conceptual nuance for this study given the increasing number of commercially-minded stakeholders now involved in cocoa sustainability. In keeping with Neilson and Pritchard's (2009) argument regarding the importance of institutions, extending them to mean habits of thought with Granovetter (1985; Neilson and Pritchard, 2009:49), this study will understand embeddedness to also encompass embeddedness within conventions and norms, and the interactions between those different levels of anchoring.

Finally, for the purposes of this study, power, building on Max Weber, is having at one's disposal the means to instigate in someone else a desired perception, preference or behaviour (Weber, 2005 [1922]). This perspective usefully covers this thesis's focus on representations, i.e. representing or presenting again (O'Shaughnessy and Stadler, 2005) a version of events towards other stakeholders, producing certain perceptions, behaviours or motivations. The exercise of power may be overt or covert, with the ability to impose one's will often attributable to asymmetries in wealth, bargaining position or standing. With Lukes (2005:109), however, not only the actual exercise of power is relevant, but also the capacity and disposition to exercise such power, emphasising the importance of latent mechanisms. This thesis would contend that a key factor influencing whether the capacity to exercise power entails an actual projection of power is to be found in different actors' embeddedness in network, territory and society as established by Hess (2004). This is but one link between power and embeddedness, which are connected by a complex two-way interdependent relationship which section 4.3 will explore in more detail.

There are various reasons for applying the GPN framework to this study, with section 2.3 already highlighting some strengths. These include the opportunity for systematically analysing complex situations through a sufficiently nuanced framework cognisant of multi-scalar and multi-dimensional processes. Power and embeddedness and their subdivisions into network, territorial and societal as well as corporate, institutional and collective power, allow reflecting non-sequential, parallel processes in as diverse a network as the case-studies under review here. GPNs' embeddedness focus can help unpack rootedness and belonging on multiple levels between and within society, network and territory. Further GPN strengths include its awareness of stakeholders' social and institutional backgrounds, which allows analysing how various types of embeddedness shape stakeholder behaviours throughout GPNs. Finally, its attention to public-sector, private-sector and civil-society stakeholders facilitates an engagement beyond the long-studied private sector with the importance of diverse actors, a key focus of this study.

I have chosen the GPN framework as against a global value chain (GVC) analysis as its explicit incorporation of diverse stakeholders, as well as GPNs' attention to social and institutional contexts, is better suited to my analysis of the chocolate sector than GVCs' greater firm focus. Firstly, chocolate's nature as a treat consumed in the global North, but originating in the global South, and its history of media attention means there are multiple civil-society stakeholders active in the industry, which nuanced analyses ought to recognise. Secondly, given cocoa's status as a fairly high-value export commodity and thus a source of employment and foreign exchange, governments have interests in cocoa production networks as legislators and partners, which analytical frameworks should reflect. Finally, the GPN framework, not least by virtue of its nature as a 'network', offers the potential to recognise and reflect a larger diversity of processes. Beyond sequential steps adding value within a 'chain', it can represent multi-scalar and multi-dimensional processes and particularly the tensions and push-pull relationships in as competitive and scrutinised a marketplace as the chocolate industry. I thus do not follow Neilson and Pritchard's (2009:56) proposition that tropical primary commodities are better conceptualised through a chain given the production process's centring around one singular commodity. In part, my rationale follows Neilson and Pritchard's own argument that there is an 'iterative interplay between different geographical scales' (2009:231): my contestation is that my research focus is better accommodated through a network given its intended focus on the relational dynamics connecting multiple scales and stakeholders.

Although I thus do not consider value chains overall a suitable framework for analysis for this particular study, there is one categorisation which I aim to draw upon (cf. section 2.3) given particularly the usefulness of a relational conceptualisation (Gereffi, Humphrey and Sturgeon, 2005:83-84):

- i) arm's-length markets, in which prices dominate supplier-buyer relationships;
- ii) modular systems with codified production processes;
- iii) relational models governed by trust- and reputation-based connections;
- iv) captive models forcing suppliers to sell to dominant firms, and
- v) hierarchical models, i.e. vertically integrated firms.

As elaborated above as a shortcoming of GVCs, these models are too focused on inter-firm linkages within the private sector to do justice to the diversity of stakeholders I aim to incorporate into my comprehensive study of cocoa production networks. Nevertheless, I will draw particularly on ‘relational’ and ‘captive’ connections in analysing my case-studies. As explained above, there is a priori a connection between fair trade and relational models, with the direct engagement between chocolate companies and producers meeting their specific quality needs entailing a risk of captive relations, as my case-studies will explore.

This study will apply the original understanding of the GPN framework rather than the recently published GPN 2.0 idea (Yeung and Coe, 2014). The reason is that for the purposes of this study, which places considerable focus on diverse stakeholders from civil society, public sector and private sector, the original GPN’s multi-scalar and multi-dimensional analysis seems more apt. GPN 2.0 implies a strong focus on firms, thereby reversing a key advance which had prompted GPNs’ development compared with the private-sector-focused GVCs in the first place. Similarly, the three competitive dynamics which Yeung and Coe (2014) argue drive global production networks, emphasising cost-capability ratios, market development and financial discipline, cannot sufficiently explain the dynamic evolution observed in the chocolate sector. Only in the original GPN variety does the framework offer the analytical strengths to unpack interactions regarding a variety of actors detailed below, which I believe are essential for my study. By contrast, key global value chain scholars have recently advocated moving the framework more towards a focus on social and public governance (e.g. Gereffi and Lee, 2014) and thus societal and institutional context, albeit still stopping short of the benefits the original GPN conceptualisation can offer given my focus.

Equally, I have chosen GPNs over stakeholder analysis. Stakeholder analysis aims to identify relevant actors and their stakes in a project to be implemented (Frame, Gordon and Mortimer, 2010). It has been used for multiple contexts and purposes (Reed et al., 2009), becoming another instance of polysemy and all things to all people given the multitude of underlying methodologies and objectives. One reason it is not suitable for this research is that it is usually used for ex-ante evaluations prior to a project’s implementation (Jepsen and Eskerod, 2009). Both normative stakeholder analysis, which highlights enhancing legitimacy through actor involvement, and instrumental stakeholder analysis, constituting a pragmatic mapping of likely stakeholder behaviours (Reed et al., 2009:1995-6), are snapshots of the future. This research seeks to unpack in retrospect tensions between stakeholders in implementation, unlikely to be detected front-end

given imperfect knowledge of inter-actor relations and histories. Equally, stakeholder analysis follows a varying constellation of influence, impact or interest, or the 4Rs of rights, responsibilities, revenues and relationships e.g. in natural resource management (Reed et al., 2009). Given the important commercial aspect of my case-studies, I believe they are better captured through a framework centring around a product's genesis. Finally, as various analyses from development practice (e.g. USAID, 1991; GTZ, 2007) and project management (Jepsen and Eskerod, 2009) demonstrate, stakeholder analysis often aims to assess an actor landscape from the vantage point of one particular organisation seeking to implement a policy or measure. My own academic analysis aims to fill a different role and therefore departs from a different premise. In order for this analysis to carry value for a broad range of stakeholders, as is its intention, it cannot embrace any single vantage point and assess from there, but ought to adopt a panoramic, non-participating stance.

A recent critique by Lepawsky and Mather (2011), which lumps together global commodity chains, global value chains and global production networks, has criticised the alleged linearity of all three frameworks, disapproving that studies define beginnings and ends of chains to be observed. The first thing to be said is that, as the authors acknowledge, but do not appreciate fully, GPNs set out precisely to do away with the linearity of value or commodity chains, aiming to reflect the multidimensionality of networks and the diversity of stakeholders' social and institutional contexts. While some studies have not done this sufficiently, as Coe, Dicken and Hess (2008b) acknowledge, my study aims to place a particular focus on multi-scalar relations and stakeholder diversity. From their vantage point of an electronic-waste study, Lepawsky and Mather (2011) critique linearity, arguing that the subject of their research particularly in the informal economies of developing countries ceases to be waste, i.e. the end of a chain, but is reused and recycled into multiple other commodities. It may be true that for the subject of their study, which comes into being where many value chains have already stopped observing, there are no clear-cut beginnings and ends; however, essentialising from a study of waste goods that there should be no beginnings and ends in conceptualising production processes appears rather bold. Lepawsky and Mather (2011) criticise a GPN study on video games for neglecting to consider the video game's long-term presence in users' lives or the origin of the plastics involved in packaging. However, a focus on everything related to a video game's genesis and use risks diluting the research focus to a point where conclusions regarding any part of the 'on-going economic activity' become impossible as the infinite breadth of the research, given limited resources and time, will not allow going into depth. Moreover, in the food sector, there usually is

a well-defined end point, which is the consumption of the purchased good. There is no doubt that this consumption serves as the starting point for a number of e.g. nutrition studies, but not every interesting insight is automatically relevant within the research focus's scope.

When applied to my own research, Lepawsky and Mather (2011) would probably advocate that I look at not only cocoa growers, chocolate manufacturers, certifiers, NGOs, development agencies, government and chocolate consumers, but go beyond: explore retail chocolate being broken into bits and resold in informal economies, the marketing companies involved in putting out campaigns to promote a new type of chocolate bar, and the local economy from which cocoa growers purchase staple foods. All these studies would be worthwhile and may yield interesting insights. However, in the interest of concision and relevance, I choose to have a research focus on chocolate production to ensure I can produce valuable, actionable insights and conclusions for the stakeholders I focus on. However, there is a certain conceptual parallel between Lepawsky and Mather's (2011, 2013) advocacy of thinking about ever-fluid boundaries rather than beginnings and ends, and my focus on not only physical, but also narrative production moments, as well as my 'archipelago' metaphor arguing for consideration of a wider range of actors. While I do not support Lepawsky and Mather's rejection of chains and networks, I share their scepticism towards defining stakeholders as being inside or outside of networks. As I will explain in section 4.2 on the archipelago metaphor's relevance and in later chapters, civil-society, public-sector and private-sector actors in the vicinity of stakeholders involved in a product's genesis may have just as much impact on how, why, where and with what consequences it comes to be, as those directly involved in cultivation or distribution.

Despite the strengths of the GPN framework, a cursory analysis of the chocolate sector suggested that slight additions may help understand more fully recent changes in sustainability initiatives from nice-to-have to business imperative in this crowded marketplace. In particular given my focus on tensions between different cocoa sustainability stakeholders, an analytical lens able to reflect the full diversity of civil-society, public-sector and private-sector stakeholders will facilitate analysing their diverse motivations for engaging in initiatives. The two complements firstly concern the incorporation of the 'archipelago' metaphor, and secondly the emphasis on the multitude of links between power and embeddedness emerging in the analysis of priorities and representations. Both of these complements can help unpack cocoa sustainability initiatives in terms of my key research interests, i.e. the shifts occurring in response to the cocoa sector's increasing challenges, and the tensions connecting different stakeholder types possessing diverse

power and embeddedness abilities. The following sections discuss what these complements can contribute, beginning with archipelago.

4.2 Capturing the full spectrum and diversity of stakeholders: ‘archipelago’ as a semantic vehicle

My first analytical proposition concerns the question of delimiting what stakeholders are seen as affecting or being affected by the network. This section aims to answer research sub-question 1.1:

1.1 To what extent does the GPN framework help analyse the multitude of actors influencing initiatives’ set-up and priorities?

Against the backdrop of the changing, crowded cocoa marketplace, this research argues for the significance of analyses considering the full spectrum of actors who can influence production networks, with ‘archipelago actors’ one possible semantic vehicle to emphasise this importance. As stated before, the GPN framework aimed to move beyond prior frameworks’ firm focus, although studies often retain an emphasis on private-sector actors or only parts of the network. This study, by contrast, aims to show the full spectrum which GPN analyses can illuminate, engaging with the full diversity of private-sector, public-sector and civil-society stakeholders and also with actors in the vicinity of stakeholders conventionally viewed as ‘inside’ GPNs. In nature, an archipelago comprises not only the small islands visible above water, but also the water in between, including underwater currents and pressures emanating from and pressing onto individual islands. Various scholars have applied this metaphor to study the global economy and its structure, drawing attention to the economy of the archipelago, i.e. the polarisation between uneven economic gains at network hubs, i.e. the ‘nodes’ of the network, and exclusion in marginalised areas in between (Hein, 2000; Veltz, 1996). Whereas most past archipelago analyses have emphasised uneven development on the macro or meso levels of the global, national or regional economies or sectors (e.g. Hess, 2009; Veltz 1996), my analysis will focus on the micro, local scale of network actors, inspired particularly by Hein’s work (2000). It will apply a fairly literal reading of what a natural archipelago constitutes and focus on the vicinity of individual GPN stakeholders, asking how actors based there may have a bearing on stakeholder behaviour and relations throughout the GPN.

An important reason for utilising the archipelago metaphor stems from the chocolate sector’s crowded and competitive nature. These archipelago actors located in the vicinity of actors physically producing chocolate may not have a direct connection into the network, but can still affect GPN operations through their influence on the GPN stakeholders’ actions. They may encompass private-sector actors launching a new product affecting others’ market shares, public-sector actors altering subsidies or import legislation, or civil-society stakeholders triggering media and consumer pressure. Some may argue that this archipelago metaphor adds little to the overall network conceptualisation. It is meant as a complement to GPNs rather than a fully-fledged theory. However, it can add to the framework as it draws attention to the stakeholders, in black contours below (figure 4.2.1), which conventional GPN analyses may underrepresent. A conventional GPN mapping would be likely to focus on stakeholders with direct connections, i.e. ‘lines’ representing movements of resources, to other stakeholders or ‘nodes’ in the network. This is likely to underrepresent stakeholders not directly connected to the exchange of cocoa, chocolate or monetary funds going into the network, but whose presence in the figurative vicinity of network ‘nodes’, i.e. stakeholders, causes them to influence stakeholders and, by extension, the overall GPN. While their actions may eventually be detectable in ‘node’ behaviours, only widening the GPN focus to also encompass them can unpack sub-surface connections of power and embeddedness.

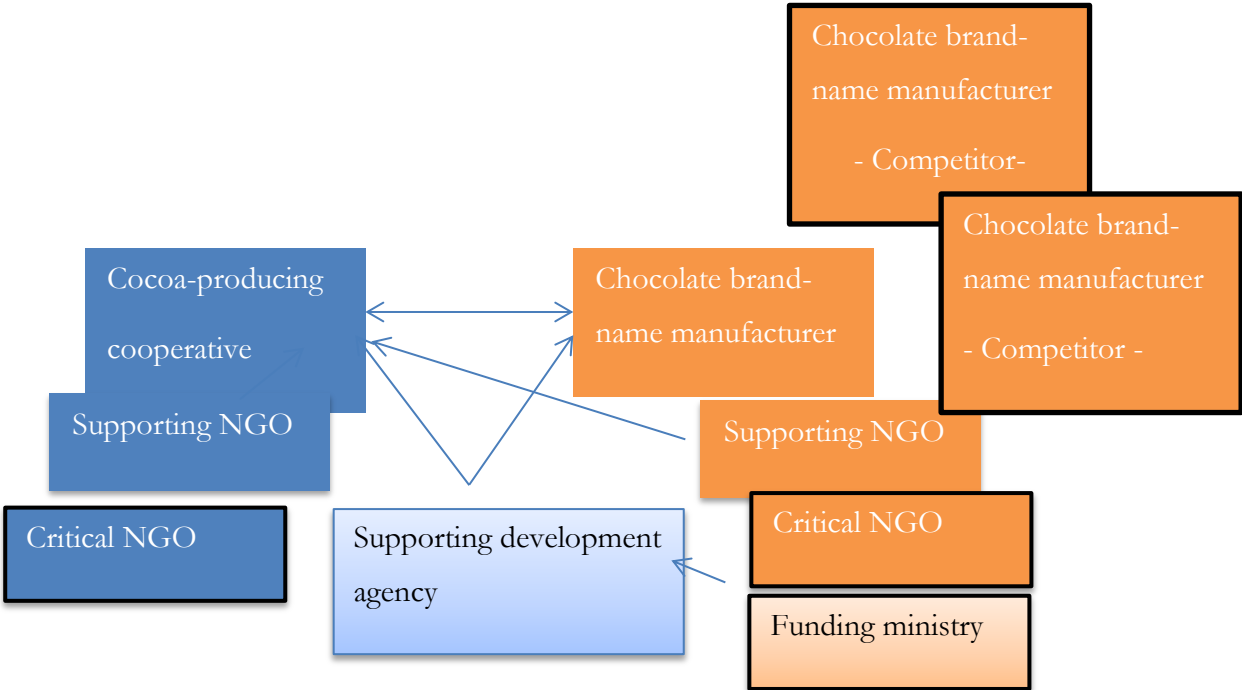


Figure 4.2.1: Analysis cognisant of archipelagos.

Source: Author.

Building on figure 4.2.1's stylised representation, there are several scenarios in which archipelago actors' actions would affect stakeholder behaviours. Given the current shift towards certified cocoa, competitors opting for certification may cause the GPN manufacturer to switch to certified cocoa as well to safeguard societal and territorial embeddedness, showing the corporate power of an archipelago actor. A further source of pressure may stem from critical NGOs scrutinising stakeholders, bringing to bear collective power. Thirdly, legislation passed by public-sector actors in cocoa producer countries or chocolate consumption markets equally may encourage certification, demonstrating the relevance of institutional power. Without an awareness of sub-surface connections and actors not involved in physical chocolate production, but nevertheless influencing it, the shift would reverberate in multiple GPN stakeholders, but only become more understandable if observers widened their scope of analysis towards the vicinities of the nodes within the network. I will briefly draw on empirical data to underscore the potential insights gained from incorporating archipelago stakeholders in analyses.

One example of the archipelago metaphor's usefulness is the recent growth in companies committing to use 100% cocoa vetted by a certifier. The U.S. chocolate company Hershey made this announcement in late 2012, yet only after Ferrero had equally committed in early 2012 and Mars had signed up in 2009 (Confectionery News, 2012c). Previously, an alliance of NGOs had called on Hershey's to revise its supply policies with a particular focus on eliminating child labour (Confectionery News, 2012d). Hershey's move of signing up to 100% certification five months later surprised critics. NGO 'Stop the Traffik Netherlands' commended Hershey on its positive first step: according to the NGO, civil-society pressure, the overall bleak long-term situation for cocoa production and competitors' moves may have contributed to Hershey's shift (Confectionery News, 2012c). An interesting parallel is also that all three chocolate manufacturers have pledged to switch to 100% certified by exactly the same year, 2020. A conventional GPN mapping may not have reflected sufficiently the impact, in a competitive marketplace, neither of civil-society scrutiny nor of two other chocolate companies entering into commitments. Equally, an archipelago understanding is more likely to reflect that Hershey's commitment has contributed to a near doubling of UTZ Certified's cocoa volume from 2011 to 2012 on the back of UTZ's co-operations also with Mars, Ferrero and five of Germany's top ten retailers (UTZ Certified, 2012).

This example, to be complemented in chapter 6 with further details from my three case-studies, demonstrates why an archipelago metaphor is helpful to capture multi-scalar interconnections

and pressures in cocoa sustainability initiatives. Firstly, it can help emphasise the importance of collective, institutional and corporate power exercised by civil society, legislators or competitors in a crowded marketplace. While none of the three are direct exercises of power in the sense of one stakeholder with greater bargaining power cajoling another stakeholder into agreement, the collective power a civil-society coalition can wield over a commercial enterprise is particularly relevant in our current age of omnipresent multi-medial representations. In the above example, the corporate power of large-scale competitors came to bear on fellow commercial market actors indirectly, influencing behaviour given a dual fear of falling behind in the race for long-term cocoa supplies and in consumers' perception. In terms of embeddedness, NGO and civil-society stakeholders brought to bear their own societal and territorial embeddedness, prompting Hershey, given its own embeddedness in U.S. society and its awareness of the competition, to change course. Embeddedness and power relations thus bestowed on archipelago stakeholders the power to influence intra-network decision-making, with below-the-surface archipelagic pressures encouraging a network stakeholder to change its behaviour and thus causing ripple effects across the network. The semantic vehicle of the archipelago thus helped to illuminate below-the-surface linkages between competitors in the same crowded marketplace, representing also how these complexities and civil-society pressures created a commercial incentive for following sustainability principles.

To counteract the risk of actors disappearing 'in the "sea" of network relations' (Hess and Yeung, 2006:1195), the archipelago perspective can thus be a useful tool especially in the chocolate sector to reflect its innate diversity and complexity of interrelationships. After all, there are considerable pressures emanating from and pressing onto individual 'nodes' in the network which may not register in a conventional GPN mapping as stakeholders are not involved in the GPN itself, but relevant exogenous forces. Kaplinsky and Morris (2000:52) correctly observe that most heuristic representations of supply chains constitute but an abridged actor mapping, simplifying a notoriously messy reality to facilitate its representation through a model. However, I would argue that given the competitive forces in the chocolate sector and considerable civil-society scrutiny, attempting to represent the most influential among archipelago actors is particularly pertinent. As the metaphor covers the vicinity of network actors irrespective of their geographical location or societal standing, it is so flexible as to be applicable to Northern and Southern contexts alike, to civil-society, private-sector and public stakeholders. This apt nuance can ensure that illuminating scrutiny not only highlights the GPN stakeholder, but also extends to diverse contexts and influences around them, able to reveal archipelago stakeholders prodding, probing, pushing or

pulling in power-asymmetrical, peer-pressure or other interrelationships in complex interactions with different embeddedness dimensions.

In a sense, expanding the scope towards actors which are relevant for analysis, but not immediately involved in the production of a good or service constitutes the next logical step from the advancement which GPNs themselves constituted. GPNs moved from global value chains' firm-focused analyses towards studies incorporating a wider scope of public-sector and civil-society actors (Barrientos, Gereffi and Rossi, 2010); in advocating the extension towards non-firm actors, Coe, Dicken and Hess (2008b:279) argue that past analyses have partly neglected to focus comprehensively on the spatial, cultural and social environment within which intra-network actors are grounded. The archipelago metaphor can be a vehicle to remedy that and take the analysis one step further towards actors on the periphery, to paint an even fuller picture of the 'multi-actor and multi-scalar characteristics of transnational production systems' which GPN analyses aim to represent (Coe, Dicken and Hess, 2008a:267). Expanding the scope may offer explanations for phenomena which can be described in terms of power and embeddedness, but cannot be explained through them in a satisfactory manner as their key originators did not have obvious connections into the network.

Conceptually for GPN research, the archipelago metaphor can therefore be a useful tool to widen and deepen the scope of analysis. It may widen the investigation to incorporate stakeholders which may not have a direct 'line' into the network, but whose behaviour nevertheless has an impact on intra-network activities, even though a somewhat arbitrary distinction between 'intra' and 'extra-network' stakeholders based on input-output transformations may previously have deemed them insignificant. Equally, it may deepen analysis in revealing below-the-surface linkages between e.g. brand-name chocolate manufacturers and their competitors connected by complex interactions between power and embeddedness, a particular interest for my research.

4.3 Capturing stakeholder priorities and representations: conceptualising interactions between power and embeddedness

Research sub-question 1.2 explores the usefulness of the GPN framework specifically in relation to unpacking shifts and tensions between stakeholders' diverging priorities and representations:

1.2 To what extent does the GPN framework help unpack shifts and tensions in terms of different stakeholders' priorities and representations?

As this research aims to identify stakeholders' priorities and representations in cocoa sustainability initiatives, there is a need to add to the GPN framework to analyse priorities and representations, but connect back to the GPN categories of power and embeddedness in particular. Section 2.4 developed the constellations of priorities framework to assess stakeholders' socio-economic, commercial and environmental drivers given the tensions which divergences may create. Section 2.5 explained the analytical basis for analysing representations, emphasising the role public-facing communication plays in shaping individuals' consumption. While chapters 7 and 8, respectively, will apply these frameworks to my three case-studies, this section aims to highlight conceptually the ties between the two analytical GPN categories this research focuses on, power and embeddedness, and drivers and representations, as well as the mutual insights these links can offer. The argument is thus that an analytical lens bearing in mind the complex interdependence of power and embeddedness, and emphasising interactions with priorities and representations, can help unpack the dynamics driving changes in cocoa sustainability initiatives.

Firstly, there are multiple complex, tension-ridden links connecting power and embeddedness. As established in 4.1, this thesis understands power principally with Weber (2005 [1922]), paralleling his focus on the ability to elicit in other stakeholders perceptions or behaviours throughout the network. This perspective is useful also given my focus on representations, i.e. stakeholders representing or presenting again (O'Shaughnessy and Stadler, 2005) towards others a version of events to elicit certain perceptions, motivations or behaviours. As discussed above, however, not only the actual exercise of power is relevant, but also the capacity to control (Lukes, 2005), i.e. latent mechanisms enabling stakeholders to assert their interests and understandings e.g. of sustainability. My thesis argues that embeddedness has a considerable influence on whether the disposition to exercise power entails an actual projection of power. Embeddedness in this thesis, following Hess (2004), means stakeholders' rootedness in a context, encompassing a stakeholder producing and reproducing norms from its home society, a stakeholder's acceptance in a territory, and its importance to a production network. Implicitly, given the considerable discrepancies in life realities, geography and context between diverse cocoa stakeholders, this also means that different stakeholders bring different types of embeddedness to bear on the network

at different scales. Consequently, unpacking this diversity is another reason for the GPN mapping. For instance, as chapter 6 will detail, corporate actors in cocoa sustainability initiatives usually have high network embeddedness as stakeholders throughout the network are dependent on a commercial, well-paying outlet for the cocoa produced, and cooperatives, NGOs or producers, particularly in remote settings, may struggle to find other viable buyers, boosting companies' corporate power.

A brief empirical segue to Floral's activities in Nicaragua can help illustrate this chapter's analytical argument of complex ties between power and embeddedness, and priorities and representations helping to illustrate them. As sections 6.3, 7.3 and 8.3 will explore further, the company has enhanced its territorial embeddedness in Nicaragua by hiring personnel who themselves are well-embedded in civil-society organisations and communities. The company's embeddedness both aided and was enhanced by the establishment of long-term supply and support relationships with producers and cooperatives facilitated by their corporate power, with the company also leveraging their employees' embeddedness in the community and thus their collective power. Similarly, their societal embeddedness in Germany as an award-winning employer aided and was enhanced by the power they extracted from being a family-owned business. Representations of having family-driven values and striving to provide customers with high-quality, ethically sound products proved a recurring theme.

This example confirms both the above and multiple other observations about complex links between power and embeddedness. Companies' embeddedness in the network, and the network's dependency on their function as an individual actor, contrasts sharply with the network being largely independent of individual cocoa producers: as long as there is cocoa to buy, it need not come from any particular individual. This recalls that the chocolate sector is dominated by successive oligopolies, rather than a multipolar governance structure. While cocoa producers' power notionally is on the rise given cocoa shortages, their low network embeddedness and fragmentation prevent them from projecting their collective power. Corporate actors' embeddedness in producers' territory and their home, consuming society, both predicated on depicting themselves as working with producers, do not alter producers' virtual interchangeability for other producers generating similarly small volumes. A further observation in this sense is corporate actors' power being enhanced through partners' territorial or societal embeddedness stemming from their credibility as civil-society actors or youth-driven organisations, demonstrated in the Floral case by their continuous partnership with environmentally oriented

NGOs as well as hiring former NGO workers. An implicit aspect here is also the link to value, as a key outcome for commercially driven stakeholders is ultimately enhancing the commercial value they can extract from their operations by leveraging power and embeddedness to sell more products.

Power and embeddedness can have a mutually constitutive and interdependent, but partly also adversarial relationship. All three forms of embeddedness, in network, society and territory, are predicated on actors working together with other stakeholders and communities, rendering these relationships liable to change should another actor, on the strength of their own embeddedness and power, choose to challenge another actor's embeddedness. As the ability of governments to exercise their legislative and regulatory power and of civil society organisations to project their mobilised power is predicated on their own societal and territorial embeddedness, their power can challenge particularly corporate actors' embeddedness. In Floral's case, as explored later in the thesis (cf. 6.3, 7.3 and 8.3), a regulatory change by Central American and European Union legislators prompted them to shift from organic to a different certifier, to the chagrin of some civil-society partners more inclined to support the organic cause. Somewhat conversely, stakeholders may also choose to prioritise embeddedness over challenging power asymmetries. As the analysis will confirm, cocoa sustainability initiatives reproduce existing power inequalities by failing to emphasise the chocolate sector's shortcomings, focusing instead in all three empirical cases on socio-economic and environmental benefits of their work. Emphasising existing poor practices would draw attention to stakeholders' own implication in producing or perpetuating them. Instead of challenging power, they thus prioritise remaining embedded in territory, network and society by not questioning prevailing representations of altruism, which also has a link back to Boorstin's (1971) point that images are predicated on the consuming public's willingness to accept them. Clearly, in the partly contradictory, frequently interdependent link between power and embeddedness, a key part is played by both differing drivers underlying stakeholder behaviour and the representations upon which both embeddedness and power depend.

A key insight regarding the relationship between embeddedness and power, and extending even to drivers and representations, stems from Polanyi's (1957) fundamental distinction between whether one holds the economy to be embedded in social relations, or society to be embedded in economic relations. As later chapters will show empirically, this fundamental discrepancy in outlook between stakeholders is one key source of tensions in cocoa sustainability initiatives. In

accordance with the dictate of most economic activity, chocolate's private-sector actors had prioritised the pursuit of economic profitability over all social or environmental considerations, with cocoa prices plummeting, degrading practices spreading and livelihoods becoming ever more precarious over the last few decades. As supply security has recently become an ever more acute concern, corporate actors increasingly have become forced to engage with social and environmental aspects to fend off long-term shortages. However, social and environmental concerns are a means towards attaining commercial ends, rather than the end in themselves which they are for many civil-society and public-sector actors. Moreover, this discussion also raises the question, which I will investigate in detail in chapter 8, whether representations' public-facing focus on social and environmental dimensions create meanings of altruism incongruent with underlying commercial drivers. Evidently, the issues of whose representations are most prominent and what end they serve in terms of enhancing whose embeddedness, are also linked to underlying power relations.

While representations suggest that companies have shifted towards economic activity being embedded in social relations rather than vice versa, my research argues that underlying priorities continue to emphasise the primacy of economic relations. The constellations of priorities framework introduced in section 2.4 and applied to the case-studies in chapter 7 shows that there is a considerable spectrum of socio-economic, environmental and commercial drivers which stakeholders may associate with cocoa sustainability. My analysis will show that while the commercial dimension is a key concern for private-sector actors, many civil-society and public-sector actors view it as a means to an end towards attaining their own socio-economic and environmental goals, causing tensions. However, as chapter 8 will detail, private-sector stakeholders, despite commercial concerns, forefront social and economic drivers in public-facing communication, creating meanings of altruism which civil-society and public-sector stakeholders do not contest. Private-sector, public-sector and civil-society stakeholders thus use their own power to project representations of altruism, upholding existing notions of embeddedness. The dichotomy between economic or societal concerns taking precedence also resurfaces in Reynolds's above-discussed distinction between market-driven actors and mission-driven actors (2009). The market-driven variety's focus on traceability and business as usual betrays that they fall on the former side of the spectrum, whereas mission-driven buyers' subscription to social goals suggests the opposite. This tension also harks back to Renard's (2003) distinction between whether tweaking or transforming the system is an actor's principal objective in engaging with ethical trade ideas. Again, the question of whose intentions and drivers become manifest in cocoa

sustainability initiatives, and how they are projected and represented, produce valuable insights regarding underlying power and embeddedness relations.

The writings of Raynolds (2009), Renard (2003) and Polanyi (1957) all bring out different facets of the tensions between stakeholders' commercial, socio-economic and environmental priorities and with the meanings created by representations, which are at the heart of this thesis. Indeed, one of its premises is the notion that these contradictions in themselves are worthy of investigation and can yield considerable insights. The first tension is the discrepancy between commercial drivers and stakeholders deploying mission-driven representations in uncontested communication channels. The latter is an expression of the power of Northern-based civil-society, public-sector and private-sector organisations in a vacuum of expression from Southern network stakeholders' voices. A second tension emerges between highlighting socio-economic and environmental aspects in terms of maximising societal or territorial embeddedness. It suggests a contradiction between appealing to Northern-based organisations' home societies and their interest in green issues, and enhancing territorial embeddedness in Southern host communities by emphasising a socio-economic interest in improving communities' lot. For both tensions, there is a question whether consumers or civil society have an interest in challenging this friction and promoting alternative communication channels. After all, such engagement would also shift their own commitments from the realm of mission-driven actions into necessity-based reactions. This could adversely affect the embeddedness, power and value benefits Northern actors can extract from their commitments, rendering them beneficiaries of the status quo and reducing the incentive to challenge it. Consequently, the thesis will explore to what extent different actors' representations create meanings of mission-driven, transformational motivations for all stakeholder types involved and the tensions generated.

With Hall (1997a, b), the importance of analysing not only discrepancies between representations and reality, but also the meanings of these representations is crucial, particularly in relation to as amorphous and polysemic a concept as sustainability. As introduced in chapter 2 and confirmed throughout the thesis, sustainability is all things to all people, conceptualised here through commercial, socio-economic and environmental dimensions. The thesis argues and will show in chapter 7 that these priorities associated with 'sustainability', a term everyone can agree on easily, vary considerably between different stakeholders. Both power and embeddedness are relevant factors here. The type of embeddedness stakeholders are seeking, be it in producers' territories or in consumers' societies, will predetermine the type of meanings of 'sustainability' they put forth

as likely to ingratiate them with socio-economically conscious territories or environmentally aware societies, as later chapters will show. Equally, their embeddedness in the network, i.e. their position of power vis-à-vis other stakeholders, will predetermine to what extent they can impose their meanings and priorities of ‘sustainability’ on other network stakeholders. Sustainability’s fundamental fuzziness allows all stakeholders to paint their engagement as ‘sustainable’ according to their own criteria and constellations of priorities as analysed in the thesis. These fundamentally different starting points to what sustainability is or is to entail also explain some stakeholders’ arrangement with the status quo of power asymmetries in the cocoa sector. Not only is the status quo beneficial to many, the concept’s fuzziness also allows a representation, within and between actors, of a minor improvement as the desired ‘sustainability’. Consequently, instead of addressing power asymmetries by transferring ownership to cooperatives in the global South or encouraging cocoa producers to develop their own counterpoint voices to the dominant narrative, transformational necessities lose out to tweaking the status quo. Tweaking business as usual perpetuates and reproduces producers’ existing powerlessness and lack of viable livelihoods, while representations suggest the opposite. Indeed, this enactment of power to sell certain representations also suggests an awareness of the ability to maximise societal, territorial and network embeddedness through representations, especially in the current age of media and social media involvement creating a spectacle of participation for consumers and producers alike.

In summary, this section has highlighted the importance of bearing in mind the multiple, complex links between power and embeddedness from a GPN angle, the partly constitutive, partly antagonistic, but frequently interdependent relationship between the two aspects. As later chapters will demonstrate more fully, representations in relation to underlying drivers play a key part in determining power and embeddedness manifestations in cocoa sustainability initiatives. The above section therefore aimed to demonstrate the importance of taking this relationship into account, emphasising the linkages, interactions and interdependencies between power and embeddedness illuminated through a focus on drivers and representations. For instance, a firm’s corporate power partly hinges on their network embeddedness, i.e. their importance to the network. Conversely, if a company’s embeddedness in cocoa producers’ territories shrinks, this may affect both their network embeddedness and corporate power on account of network stakeholders looking for alternative sales outlets, as the Floral example demonstrates (explored further in sections 6.3, 7.3 and 8.3). Equally, German municipalities’ territorial embeddedness in Colombia may decrease long-term given their focus on environmental representations vis-à-vis Colombian stakeholders’ socio-economic focus (explored further in 6.1, 7.1 and 8.1). These

complex interdependencies between power and embeddedness, and indeed priorities and representations, prove both the GPN framework's suitability for such analyses, but also the need to pay closer attention to these interrelationships and interdependencies creating tensions.

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter has examined the usefulness and limitations of the GPN framework, and the need for two complementary lenses in conducting this study on tensions between cocoa sustainability stakeholders. It has shown that the answer to the first research sub-question regarding the usefulness of the GPN framework in understanding cocoa sustainability initiatives is that it does help understand shifts in the complex web of actors in the chocolate sector. The discussion underscored the framework's potentials in terms of a systematic assessment of power and embeddedness, multi-scalar and multi-dimensional processes, and analysing the full spectrum of non-firm stakeholders and differing social and institutional contexts. Later chapters will test this argument empirically, hoping to conceptualise shifts in priorities and representations within cocoa sustainability initiatives cognisant of all relevant stakeholders and processes on all levels.

In answer to research sub-question 1.1 regarding the usability of GPNs in understanding diverse actors, this chapter has argued that combining the GPN framework with a broader scope of analysis through the archipelago metaphor can be particularly useful in crowded and heavily scrutinised sectors. It may help produce otherwise elusive insights by extending sufficient attention towards stakeholders who have no direct links into the GPN, but may exert pressure on intra-network actors, leading to behaviour changes reverberating throughout the GPN. Whereas conventional analyses may have detected the resulting phenomena, they may not be able to unpack them sufficiently but for the broader archipelago perspective. The angle can explain relations, tensions and shifts in studies of industries in which a multitude of actors from civil society and public sector are active and in which intense public scrutiny may encourage 'herd behaviour'. In such settings as the cocoa sector, the archipelago metaphor can help to represent nuances of power, embeddedness and value in material and narrative production processes which conventional analyses, due to their focus on intra-network stakeholders, may not have reflected adequately. As the above examples have demonstrated and later chapters will detail empirically, in explaining intra-network phenomena, elements of corporate or collective power became relevant which were exogenous to physical production, coming under the category of currents stemming from or pressing onto islands under water. Whereas GPNs have sought to widen the analytical

scope in terms of actor types, moving beyond GVCs' private-sector stakeholders to incorporate also public-sector and civil-society actors, there may be a case for broadening the scope beyond what has traditionally been regarded as the 'Global Production Network'. As the analysis has shown, actors relevant to unpacking network relations and particularly tensions are not just the stakeholders involved in the linear genesis of a good or service, but also the various stakeholder types in their vicinity, which some may have deemed beyond the boundary or edge of the GPN. I therefore consider archipelago actors a useful semantic vehicle to encourage analyses of stakeholder relations and especially tensions taking account of the full expanse and diversity of relevant stakeholders, and will use the concept in my empirical analysis.

Equally, I argued, and will examine empirically throughout chapters 6, 7 and 8, that a lens cognisant of the links between power and embeddedness especially in relation to drivers and representations can yield relevant insights into the tensions underlying stakeholder relations. In answer to research sub-question 1.2 on the GPN framework's usability to represent priorities and representations, the chapter found that an awareness of these dimensions through the previously elaborated conceptualisations (sections 2.4 and 2.5) can yield valuable insights regarding power and embeddedness. It established that there are complex interlinkages between power and embeddedness, two aspects which are partly predicated on one another, partly working in tandem, partly in a contradictory fashion. The brief presentation of empirical data suggested that corporate and collective power can have a mutually reinforcing relationship with societal embeddedness, encouraging companies to have a strong awareness of public-sector and civil-society positions to enhance their standing in their own society.

Conceptually, examining in more detail the links between the two categories, as well as the relationship with priorities and representations, and the tensions emerging between stakeholders within this nexus thus contributes knowledge. Exploring particularly representations is another key dimension, as exercising and enhancing power and embeddedness are predicated on public-facing communication, but also are manifest through it. Similarly, the ability to enforce priorities, and maintain existing power asymmetries, is predicated on existing power and embeddedness relations within the network. Chapter 7 will discuss stakeholders' diverging priorities and their ability to project them through initiatives, while chapter 8 will continue the conversation with a focus on representations and their role in stakeholders leveraging or enhancing power and embeddedness. First, however, the following chapters will lay the groundwork through an

analysis of first the cocoa sector in chapter 5, and then a mapping of my three case-studies from a GPN perspective with a particular focus on power and embeddedness.

5. The lay of the land: current developments in cocoa sustainability initiatives

After the first four chapters explored my thesis's underpinnings in terms of literature and methods as well as the analytical implications of its chosen conceptual framework, this chapter begins to apply its analytical lens to the broader chocolate sector. Previous chapters established the projections of cocoa shortages which have caught the sector's attentions, leading to an ever growing number of stakeholders and industry heavyweights engaging in 'sustainability', albeit with a broad range of motivations. Against this backdrop, my analysis will use documentary analysis, interviews, focus group discussions and participant observation to clarify how sector shifts are altering stakeholder priorities and representations in cocoa sustainability initiatives, and what tensions they produce. This chapter will draw primarily on documentary data to apply its expanded GPN lens to the broader chocolate sector and particularly stakeholders' power and embeddedness relations. Before focusing on my three case-studies in the following chapters, I aim to explore first on the industry level shifts and tensions connecting cocoa sustainability stakeholders in terms of socio-economic, commercial and environmental objectives, and major trends emerging particularly in relation to the GPN perspective. My goal in mapping the sector is to begin investigating whether my argument suggesting considerable tensions between different stakeholders' understandings of sustainability, and a likely aggravation as projected cocoa shortages grow more acute, is valid. The chapter will also begin the exploration of stakeholders' power and embeddedness relations, and their link to any one actor's ability to imprint their goals and representations on overall initiatives.

Consequently, this chapter will answer the second research sub-question regarding the chocolate sector at large, before chapter 6 will refer to my three case-studies:

2. What is new in sustainability initiatives in the chocolate sector?

2.1 What socio-economic, commercial and environmental objectives govern initiatives?

2.2 What major trends are visible, particularly from a GPN perspective?

This chapter's argument is that there is a multitude of tensions emerging between diverse stakeholder objectives in the sector, but also in relation to power and embeddedness. Within this diversity, private-sector actors tend to prioritise commercial drivers in response to the cocoa

sector's challenges, creating tensions with civil-society and public-sector stakeholders with other priorities. The first section will contextualise initiatives by discussing key structures within the chocolate sector, including a stratification of chocolate companies, before focusing on some examples of cocoa sustainability initiatives. Section 5.2 will highlight major trends in these chocolate-sector responses in answer to research sub-question 2.2, particularly overarching developments regarding sustainability efforts and certifiers. A third section will be devoted to answering research sub-question 2.1, detailing socio-economic, commercial and environmental objectives in initiatives and underlining the previous argument of considerable tensions between different stakeholders' motivations. The final part of section 5.3 will summarise, building a bridge from sector-level observations to the three case-studies analysed in chapter 6.

5.1 Governance and challenges in the cocoa sector

My thesis argues that the nature of sustainability initiatives in the cocoa sector has shifted, from being nice-to-have towards a business imperative for companies' own long-term survival. Section 2.1 outlined some challenges which the cocoa sector is currently facing given an amalgamation of commercial, social and environmental factors prompting stakeholders to worry about the long-term availability of cocoa in the quality they require. There is a spectrum of motivations underlying engagements which this thesis aims to explore. Whatever motivations or actions accompany a sustainability initiative or sustainability policy as published by e.g. cocoa trader Armajaro in 2012, there is no-one to stop stakeholders from branding it sustainable, as demonstrated by increasingly popular first-party logos. The act of selling under a logo, establishing an initiative or publishing a sustainability policy in itself is thus not indicative of depth or quality of engagements, further demonstrating the above-argued broad spectrum of motivations.

Given the diverse nature of actors in the chocolate sector in general and private-sector actors in particular, a consideration which can help understand companies' behaviour is the market segment which initiative and chocolate company target. I am basing this distinction on Barrientos and Asenso-Okyere's (2009:93) three-fold categorisation into high-quality 'niche' chocolate answering to consumers' sophisticated requirements, mainstream quality also including basic socio-environmental concerns, and low-value, lower-quality chocolate. In addition, I am adding insights from convention theory (Cidell and Alberts, 2006; Fold, 2000) which posits that conceptions of 'quality' may differ between stakeholders, requiring negotiation. Utilising

Sylvander’s work (1994, 1995), Renard (2003) establishes four coordination types or ‘regimes’ for defining food quality under convention theory:

Type	Stakeholders define quality based on ...
Market-based regime	Price
Industry-based regime	Existence of standardised physical features (including aspects of certification, primarily in terms of product standards)
Domestic-based regime	Interpersonal connection with product ‘identity’, i.e. brand/geographical provenance, transparency, trust
Civic-based regime	Environmental and societal aspects of production, direct links between consumer and producer (including aspects of certification, primarily in terms of process standards)

Table 5.1: Categorisation of regimes according to convention theory.

Source: Author’s own compilation based on: Cidell and Alberts (2006:1000-1001), Fold (2000:95), Renard (2003).

The distinction which I make (cf. table 2.1) for industry-based and civic-based regimes between process and product aspects of standards parallels the above-explained difference between process and product upgrading (cf. section 2.1; Humphrey and Schmitz, 2000:3-4). The distinction applies also regarding process standards and product standards (Nadvi, 2008), setting norms and requiring adaptation primarily in terms of socio-environmental processes underlying production, or final products e.g. in terms of permissible limits of hazardous substances in the item. Whereas industry-based requirements under convention theory would focus on standardised physical features, such as the presence or absence of mould within cocoa beans, civic-based process attributes would include the manner in which a product comes to be, e.g. in terms of labour conditions, health and safety or ecology. For instance, Cidell and Alberts (2006) specify that fair trade exchanges and direct consumer-producer partnerships are examples of the civic doctrine.

As in the case of drivers, stakeholders will define their requirements in diverse constellations, as there will be price limits even for stakeholders interested in civic-based notions and seeking to buy ethically sound chocolate. Consequently, merging convention theory and Barrientos and

Asenso-Okyere's categorisations, the following categorisation is useful in understanding the chocolate sector and sustainability initiatives in terms of the chocolatier's target market segment, and the conceptions of quality they predominantly deal with. While there are some overlaps between categories, a rough distinction is nevertheless instructive:

- (i) low-end chocolate: The chocolate in this market segment is of lower quality, but high volume. Price is the determining feature.
- (ii) mainstream quality: Given the chocolate bars' price and reputation, consumers increasingly expect their purchase to meet some socio-environmental requirements. Beyond these domestic and civic-based connotations, there is also an element of standardisation in terms of the characteristics of supplies, and a price element since there is an upper limit to what customers are willing to pay.
- (iii) high-quality 'niche' chocolate: Consumers are very conscious of chocolate's social and environmental provenance and are willing to pay premium prices. There is often a strong civic-based connotation, but with an industry-based element given the cocoa properties necessary to produce gourmet-quality chocolate.

In recent years, initiatives have evolved across all three market segments. There are pitfalls and risks for stakeholders across all three. For instance, as Melo and Hollander (2013) point out, alternative, high-quality, niche food networks pose an opportunity, but also a risk for cocoa producers as they build on elastic demand from luxury niche markets. Conversely, while mainstream and low-end markets may offer steadier demand, margins may be smaller and thus less attractive to cocoa producers per unit, with quality requirements still stringent. While my three case-studies detailed in later chapters are mainstream or niche, the following paragraphs will detail three initiatives from the low-end and mainstream segments to illustrate the situation in other parts of the chocolate sector.

5.1.1 Low-end: Lidl

Lidl, a German bargain-price chain increasingly active across Europe, is a prominent example of caring about cocoa sustainability from the low-end segment of the spectrum. After Lidl, somewhat counterintuitively as a bargain-price chain, pledged to attain 100% certified cocoa in its own brands by 2020 in 2011, it began to rely on a four-pronged strategy. Within its intra-company campaign 'On the way to tomorrow', represented by a prominent green-heavy label on many certified products, its approach 'Chocolate EVERYONE gets a bit of' harnesses the

support of certifiers UTZ Certified, Rainforest Alliance and Fairtrade (Lidl, 2012). Each of the three main cocoa certifiers supported different lines within Lidl's own-brand chocolate and chocolate-based products. For a time, Lidl also collaborated with German development agency GIZ, with this collaboration on its website now replaced by Lidl's engagement in the context of their founding membership in Germany's Forum on Sustainable Cocoa.

In some ways, working with multiple cooperation partners may appear somewhat arduous. It means maintaining relations with more stakeholders, which may cost more time and resources than most companies' approach of focusing on one or two certifiers. Equally, it will mean having to ensure that cocoa complying with three different standards will be available at all times, which may pose logistical bottlenecks. Conversely, having existing relations with different certifiers may also work in Lidl's favour, spreading risk and safeguarding supply across different certification models. Their four-pronged approach also maximises the number of logos they can use in representing their commitment towards the public, and the collective and institutional power, societal and territorial embeddedness they can harness from associating with different certification schemes. There were times when Lidl would advertise their partnerships in Germany with UTZ, Rainforest Alliance, Fairtrade and German international development agency GIZ on multiple posters in their shops. Their definition of quality, beyond the obvious significance of price to a discount supermarket chain, thus also encompasses an element of marketability of their commitment, as well as their societal or territorial embeddedness: following a number of PR scandals revolving around working conditions of German staff, this was a story working in Lidl's favour by harnessing the collective and institutional powers of its partners. The engagement is part of a wider initiative they have termed 'On the way to tomorrow', symbolised by a green tree on their products (Lidl, 2012). This logo thus harnesses an idea of environmental improvement as the unifying theme of its efforts to alter its commercial trajectory, tapping into growing public environmental awareness. Despite this visual representation, however, their constellation of priorities has a prominent commercial dimension, emphasising traceability and supply security.

The degree to which Lidl relies on its three certifiers varies considerably. The first collaboration they established was with Fairtrade (Lidl, 2013a). The publicity text highlights the bridge built between producers and consumers and suggests that Lidl and Fairtrade will convince consumers to shift consumption habits (Lidl, 2013a). As to chocolate products in their Fairtrade-certified 'Fairglobe' range, there is one 100g-chocolate bar and one line of Fairglobe chocolate biscuits. Secondly, they use Rainforest Alliance for one 'Bellarom' dark chocolate bar (Lidl, 2013b). Lidl's

website emphasises the ecological aspect of the Rainforest Alliance partnership in terms of responsible land use and biodiversity. Interestingly, however, it is only one type, the 64% cocoa Bellarom bar, which is Rainforest Alliance-certified. All other eight Bellarom varieties, as well as Lidl's most popular 'Fin Carré' line (Lidl, 2013c) with its 12 varieties, are UTZ Certified. UTZ's prominence is likely to be related to its focus on the German market, and to UTZ's aim to be market-oriented in its delivery (cf. 2.3.1.2). Two of Lidl's organic biscuit lines with chocolate also have UTZ certified cocoa, suggesting that Lidl has a clear UTZ partnership focus.

While lop-sided in its UTZ focus, Lidl's commitment to sustainability in its chocolate range is also pioneering. Attaining 100% certified cocoa for its own brands by 2012, and thus eight years before its original intention of 2020, it has overtaken several mainstream and high-quality, niche chocolate brands who either have not yet entered into a definite commitment, or are working towards it. By obtaining UTZ certification for its 100g bars selling at EUR0.39, Lidl proves that price sensitivity is no obstacle to certification and is also likely to reach segments of the population not usually buying certified products. Lidl's move also resolves the paradox of some high-priced certification products making it impossible for some strata of society to join the 'aware' and 'caring' population by way of purchase. Nevertheless, the focus on only certification and the absence of wider civil-society or public-sector partners is noteworthy, creating a power and embeddedness monopoly for Lidl. Their reliance on certification contrasts with the efforts of mainstream Nestlé and Mondeléz, both of whom have established their own programmes aiming to improve cocoa production's social and environmental viability.

5.1.2 Mainstream: Nestlé's Cocoa Plan and Mondeléz's Cocoa Life

As explained in section 2.1, Nestlé and Mondeléz are two of the handful of brand-name chocolate companies controlling about half of the global retail market. Switching cocoa in KitKat bars sold on the British Isles to Fairtrade in 2009 (Fairtrade, 2009) marked the beginnings of the 'Cocoa Plan' which Nestlé established in 2009, a campaign prominently advertised by eponymous 'Nestlé Cocoa Plan' labels on its products. The initiative was to invest USD100m over ten years in Côte d'Ivoire, Ecuador, Ghana, Indonesia, Mexico and Indonesia. The Cocoa Plan has three main pillars (Nestlé, 2013), aiming to facilitate more profitable farms for farmers, improve social conditions and procure high-quality, sustainable cocoa. While six subpoints of the plan concern supply security and better quality cocoa, only two sub-points tackle social matters, namely the elimination of child labour and facilitating school attendance, while one is environmental (Nestlé,

2013). As for most CSR and ‘sustainability’ ventures, the above-discussed question of the extent to which the drafting process incorporated farmers’ own priorities recurs also in this case. Nestlé interweaving three socio-environmental concerns with six concerning the heart of its business demonstrates it perceives a need to safeguard its core operations, highlighting the commercial dimension of their constellation of priorities.

Similarly, the ‘About the Cocoa Plan’ document emphasises improving supply (Nestlé Cocoa Plan, 2013a), reading in some ways like a manual on increasing farm productivity. Its paragraphs discuss plant propagation, tree improvement techniques such as grafting, while also discussing farmer field schools encompassing training on e.g. pruning, drying and pesticides. It is only at the end of the document that ‘About the Cocoa Plan’ dedicates 0.5 pages each to social conditions and eliminating child labour. It remains vague on what training on environmental issues precisely entails, which contrasts with the detail to which it discusses the perceived advantages of its accelerated plant propagation scheme. It does not detail how farmers’ own priorities were or were not involved in the process of drawing up the Cocoa Plan (Nestlé Cocoa Plan, 2013a).

Overall, there is a dual focus in the presenting document on increasing supply and highlighting Nestlé’s active, leading role in the process. The Cocoa Plan is to function as a means of boosting supply security through improved productivity, better plants, farming practices and agricultural training, an example of the direct involvement between businesses and farmers seen increasingly in recent sustainability initiatives, demonstrating a focus on corporate, commercial interests. Interestingly, unlike in earlier communications on Nestlé’s activities e.g. with the Fairtrade certified Kavokiva cooperative in Côte d’Ivoire, the involvement of certifiers including UTZ and Fairtrade in the Nestlé Cocoa Plan does not feature at all in the presenting document. In Nestlé’s Cocoa Plan, there appears to be an interesting bifurcation: either the Cocoa Plan itself is deemed a sufficient reference point to satisfy certification-conscious consumers, or UTZ Certified is the most common partner (2013a, b, c). For the U.S., Nestlé highlights that 100% of Nestlé Everyday Crunch Bars use cocoa from Nestlé Cocoa Plan farmer groups. Interestingly, the ultimate goal is to have all U.S. confectionery cocoa coming from Nestlé Cocoa Plan farmers rather than from independently certified sources. This also suggests a greater sense of trust on the part of Nestlé in its embeddedness in consumer societies, in the production network and potentially even in producer territories, as the main source of credibility is the company name itself rather than a prominent NGO headlining the engagement. Secondly, Nestlé’s Cocoa Plan website (2013c) clarifies the relevance of standards, with Fairtrade certifying four-finger KitKats

in the UK, and UTZ certifying 30% of KitKat in Europe excluding Belarus, Ukraine and Russia, the goal being to have all KitKat products UTZ Certified by 2014. From the original KitKat partnership with Fairtrade in 2009, this constitutes an interesting shift. This dovetails with the findings highlighted in chapter 2 regarding UTZ's recent exponential growth.

Although Nestlé has responded to cocoa-sector challenges with a more direct engagement in the supply chain, their principal priorities appear to be securing supply for their company long-term rather than changing the overall terms of the trade. In terms of the above-developed constellation of priorities model (cf. section 2.4), their drivers thus are primarily located in the commercial dimension. While this is hardly a surprising insight, it is interesting to note that this becomes obvious even from Nestlé's own representations in publicity documents upon careful inspection and review. Equally, Nestlé holding the reins and relying strongly on first-party certification through its Cocoa Plan means that power will mostly remain in the hands of the company, potentially further strengthening its own corporate power as opposed to transferring it to civil-society, public-sector or Southern partners. However, it also runs the risk that the civil society credibility and thus collective power which NGOs and certifiers can bring to the table will rub off less on the business, boosting their own power, but lessening embeddedness. The initiative may thus be less embedded both in cocoa producers' territory, in consumer societies and among core and archipelago actors, given the focus on deriving credibility from Nestlé itself rather than high-impact NGO and certifier stakeholders.

The pan-Mondeléz cocoa sustainability initiative entitled 'Cocoa Life' worth USD400m encompasses the five bullet points of 'Farming. Community. Livelihoods. Youth. Environment' (Mondeléz, 2013b, c, d; Cocoa Life, 2013a, b, c). In late 2012, the company pledged to invest USD400m over ten years with a view to supporting 200,000 farmers and one million people in cocoa-farming communities (Mondeléz, 2013a): this will include a USD100m engagement in Côte d'Ivoire to facilitate an income-doubling for 75,000 farmers (Mondeléz, 2013d). Building on the prior Cadbury Cocoa Partnership (Cadbury Cocoa Partnership, 2008) and also active in Ghana, India and the Dominican Republic, it has linked with partners including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Worldwide Fund for Nature, NGO CARE, the Consensus-Building Institute and Anti-Slavery International to fulfil its declared mission of transforming the supply chain. It hopes to benefit farmers through improving yields and incomes, eliminating child labour, increasing cocoa's attractiveness for young generations, community and youth activities, and environmental considerations (Mondeléz, 2012). While the

first two foci are a direct continuation of the Cocoa Partnership's pillars, both child labour/youth and the environment as explicit objectives are somewhat unprecedented. Defining as non-negotiable principles that Cocoa Life be farmer-centric, committed to partnerships and aligned with procurement, the company cites child labour, gender equality and independent verification through third parties including an external Advisory Council as three pillars of the programme (Cocoa Life, 2013b). The fourth aspect of environmental awareness dovetails with the UNDP-supported programme 'Greening the Sustainable Cocoa Supply Chain in Ghana', which continues a prior programme supported by UNDP and the Global Environment Facility GEF (UNDP, 2013). Given growing percentages of farms using full-sun approaches, the project aims to understand the relationship between cocoa farming and the environment and changes required to ensure farming systems' long-term viability (UNDP, 2013). The new environmental focus, motivated by the potential impact of increasing environmental degradation on the security of long-term supply, also incorporates public-sector, private-sector and civil-society partners, including UNDP, the World Cocoa Foundation, Ghana's marketing board COCOBOD, Cadbury/Mondeléz, CARE, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, and World Vision.

The Cocoa Life initiative's objectives and setup suggest that supply security and productivity are crucial, indicating that the company's constellation of priorities gravitates towards the commercial dimension. Based on the objectives defined for the national programmes for Dominican Republic, India, Ghana, and Côte d'Ivoire (Mondeléz, 2013b, c, d, e), improving productivity appears to constitute a pervasive focus. Through direct involvement with cocoa producers, they thus hope to boost supply security, a more prominent goal than in the prior Cadbury Cocoa Partnership which, building on research from the Institute for Development Studies, Sussex, and the University of Ghana (Cadbury Cocoa Partnership, 2008; Cadbury, 2013; Croft and Cole, 2011:109), aimed to encompass public-sector and civil-society partners in an effort to enhance farmer benefits. The involvement of civil-society and public-sector actors in Cocoa Life thus had these partners contributing their collective and institutional powers to enhance the initiative's societal and territorial embeddedness. Nevertheless, Mondeléz remains the only large-scale private-sector actor involved as well as the only large-scale investor, ensuring a *primus inter pares* position and bringing to the table the unopposed corporate power of one of the largest food companies in the world. Mondeléz's attempt to collaborate with a range of stakeholders from public sector and civil society may suggest a greater concern to tap into a societal rootedness and thereby ensure societal embeddedness in consumer countries, and network and territorial

embeddedness in partner countries. Nevertheless, as with Nestlé, the company itself rather than certifying stewards of virtue is considered a source of credibility. Another parallel is the focus on safeguarding supply rather than altering the terms of trade between North and South, despite Mondelez's declared goal of transforming the sector. A final observation is the environmental focus of its Ghanaian initiative, dovetailing with this research's choice to focus on three case-studies incorporating environmental measures explored from the next chapter onwards.

5.2 Trends and developments regarding sustainability in the chocolate sector

The above sections as well as chapter 2 reference on several occasions the multitude of different certification schemes prominent in the chocolate sector. Given growing public awareness of environmental issues and their pertinence to cocoa production both as a limiting factor and cocoa agroforestry's potential link to global environmental challenges, the following section discusses in more detail how different standards make reference to biodiversity and climate change. It focuses on the four standards most prominently used in the cocoa sector, notably Fairtrade, organic, Rainforest Alliance and UTZ Certified. Going beyond the magnitude of different schemes in cocoa volumes established in section 2.2.2, the section discusses the details of different certifiers' environmental provisions, further supporting this thesis's argument that what different stakeholders understand 'sustainability' to entail in the socio-economic, environmental and commercial senses differs considerably. It also shows that tensions result from the divergence of these priorities, as certain foci may take precedence over others for some stakeholders. Following this analysis, in closing, the chapter will briefly touch on one key trend regarding cocoa sustainability initiatives, emphasising the increasing rate of government involvement in initiatives using the example of the German market, the home of several key stakeholders in my three case-studies discussed later.

5.2.1 Environmental provisions in different certification schemes

Fairtrade: biodiversity and climate change requirements

In 2011, Fairtrade (2011c:5) added numerous provisions on environmental conduct to its standard for small producer organisations. They encompassed core requirements as well as development provisions, the former being compulsory, the latter coming under continuous improvements which collectively have to exceed a basic level. As core provisions (2011c:20), the

standard stipulates that small producer organisations, from the outset of working with Fairtrade, i.e. Year 0, must ensure cultivated areas comply with national legislation, and must avoid negative impacts on protected areas and areas with high conservation value as defined by FSC. From Year 1, another core requirement is that wild harvesting from uncultivated areas be in keeping with collected species' survivability. In terms of development requirements (Fairtrade, 2011c), Year 3 requires awareness-raising to prevent the collection or hunting of rare or threatened species and the introduction of invasive species; for year 6, the two provisions concern firstly reporting on activities which members implement to protect biodiversity, and secondly maintaining buffer zones around water and between production and areas of high conservation value.

Overall, regarding biodiversity (Fairtrade, 2011c:19-21), there are thus two core and four development requirements, with no further core requirements added after Year 1. Regarding climate change provisions (2011c:21), there are only two development requirements, also added in 2011, which concern energy use and reporting on activities for reducing emissions and improving carbon sequestration. By comparison, labour conditions cover seven pages, while biodiversity and climate provisions fit on 2.5 pages. Interestingly, the majority of environmental requirements were newly introduced in 2011, supporting the observation of growing environmental awareness.

Organic: biodiversity and climate change requirements

The German 'Naturland' 2000 standard, an organic standard, illustrates how to set up cocoa plantations, recommending the sequence of trees to plant from years 1 through 11, including forest trees, bananas, maize, rice or pineapple. It explains the causes of most cocoa diseases, including monocropping systems, ignoring natural forest system rotations, too little distance between system varieties and degraded soils, to be remedied by applying organic principles throughout the system (Naturland, 2000). The document somewhat differs from other standards as it not only defines management requirements, i.e. making provisions for what conduct is acceptable, but sets permissible thresholds in products such as residues of harmful substances in cocoa (Naturland, 2000:11-12). This recalls the above-mentioned distinction between process and product attributes and standards: the Naturland standard defines a number of product attributes, whereas the other standards place far more focus on process attributes indiscernible from the final product. The document's focus, just as in the 2014 standard of the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM, 2014), is clearly on environmental matters. The

latter standard, among nine subheadings, only has one concerned with social justice, with all others bar two, which focus on processing and labelling, pertaining to safeguarding environmental or animal protection: overall, 28 pages are devoted to environmental issues, vis-à-vis four to social justice (IFOAM, 2014).

Rainforest Alliance: biodiversity and climate change requirements

The focus within the Rainforest Alliance standard, issued by the Sustainable Agriculture Network, is clearly more on environmental issues than Fairtrade. Out of the ten headlines which the standard comprises, only three are not related to environmental issues: community relations, occupational health and safety, and fair treatment and good working conditions (Rainforest Alliance, 2010; cf. also appendix 5). RA defines 15 critical criteria for cocoa, non-compliance with which results in an assessment of non-conformity (Rainforest Alliance, 2010:8). Out of these fifteen critical criteria, seven concern working conditions or social relations, one is a logistics and management issue, with the remaining seven demonstrating an environmental focus. Logistically, critical criterion 1.10 concerns the non-mixing of certified and non-certified produce (Rainforest Alliance, 2010:18). Regarding social and health issues, critical criteria cover discrimination of workers, worker pay, forced and child labour, personal protective equipment for agrochemicals, and the interests of local populations (Rainforest Alliance, 2010). In terms of environmental foci, the critical criteria require conservation programmes, preserving natural ecosystems, waste disposal, amongst others (Rainforest Alliance, 2010). Carbon is an issue only in non-critical criterion 10.6, requiring that farms implement measures to cut greenhouse gas emissions and increase carbon sequestration (Rainforest Alliance, 2010:44). The critical criteria thus confirm the clear focus on conservation and ecological issues, although they also show an emphasis on workers' rights.

UTZ Certified: biodiversity and climate change requirements

UTZ Certified's cocoa code of conduct (2009; cf. also appendix 6) dedicates one of seven chapters to natural resources and biodiversity. Every chapter has defined control points with either mandatory or additional status. The code (UTZ, 2009) requires a certain number of mandatory points per chapter to be attained in any given year, rising from 6 via 14 to 20 in both years 3 and 4. In addition, varying numbers of additional control points in years 1 through 4 are compulsory. With requirements becoming more stringent from year 1 to year 4, the environmental chapter includes provisions on soil erosion, water sources, shade trees, protected

areas, forests and endangered species. Points mandatory in all four years include no wood from native or protected forests being utilised for drying cocoa, no degradation and deforestation of primary forest, no encroaching on protected areas, irrigation water not depleting sources, and conserving water sources (UTZ, 2009:20-22). The standard only mentions climate change mitigation in passing, stating it is addressed through the forest cover component of its forest and biodiversity requirements (UTZ, 2009:5).

Similarly, in the 2014 'Core Code for Group Certification' (UTZ, 2014), out of the only 13 environmental control points, three remain additional throughout all four years, while two more only become mandatory in Year 4. Climate change is covered in only one control point requiring documentation on measures assisting members in adapting to climate change, only mandatory in Year 4; by contrast, the standard has a no-deforestation clause compulsory from Year 1 (UTZ, 2014). By comparison, only four of 60 mandatory control points are environmental in Year 1, with 10 of 113 mandatory points environmentally focused by Year 4 (UTZ, 2014:6). In comparison with management, farming practices and working conditions, the environment takes up less attention in the standard. By comparison, there are far more control points mandatory from the outset when it comes to health and safety and working conditions (UTZ, 2014:6). Training on handling pesticides and an age limit on their use, entry limits on recently sprayed areas and use of personal protective equipment are examples of control points for health and safety mandatory in all four years (UTZ, 2014:16,29). When it comes to workers' rights, interaction with trade unions, information about labour rights, freedom of association, collective bargaining, no forced labour nor child labour, respectful treatment of workers and no discrimination are equally mandatory (UTZ, 2014:27-28). Overall, although there is thus a clear awareness of environmental factors, there are more conditions applicable from the outset to safeguard social and labour conditions.

In summary, the section demonstrated that the four standards under review entail very different requirements and priorities, with divergences as to what is to take precedence creating tensions. The environment has only come to feature prominently in the Fairtrade standard in recent years, also playing a secondary role in UTZ Certified's standard. It has greater significance in Rainforest Alliance's code, with the organic standard, unsurprisingly, placing the greatest importance on environmental matters. The broad range of aims and objectives which the certification schemes promote underlines my argument of different stakeholders associating diverse priorities with 'sustainability'. The section has demonstrated that whereas all four certification schemes may

claim to further ‘sustainability’, their understandings of what it is or is to entail vary considerably, as shown by their varying foci. By extension, the certification schemes stakeholders choose to cooperate with also suggest an inclination towards certain constellations of priorities, as chapters 6 and 7 will explore in more detail regarding the three case-studies chosen.

5.2.2 Increasing public-sector involvement in multi-stakeholder initiatives

The German ‘Sustainable Cocoa Forum’ was founded on 13 June 2012 in Berlin as an unprecedented initiative bringing together two German ministries, civil-society and private-sector representatives from chocolate industry and grocery retailing (GIZ, 2012a, b). It exemplifies the new impetus behind cocoa sustainability initiatives and challenges facing cocoa producers and manufacturers, retailers and traders (GIZ, 2012b). On the one hand, producer incomes are insufficient, and cultivation is marred by low yields and often not compatible with environmental concerns. On the other hand, retailers and manufacturers face a lack of security regarding quantity, quality and delivery times, and risks to their reputation (GIZ, 2012b). The Forum thus constitutes another example of the amalgamation of commercial, environmental and socio-economic drivers encouraging a deviation from past practice, bringing together private sector, public sector and civil society to address a problem no one entity can tackle. In October 2013, the Forum counted 76 members, with the vast majority from chocolate industry, but also encompassing 14 representatives of civil society, two federal ministries and four retailers plus two private-sector industry associations (cf. appendix 2). The Forum’s membership has grown from the original 32 members to now also encompass most key processors, manufacturers and grocery retailers in Germany, including Ritter Sport, Lindt & Sprüngli as well as Cargill (Sustainable Cocoa Forum, 2012a, 2012c, 2013).

The members pledge to support the Forum in its ‘activities to improve sustainability in the cocoa sector’ (Sustainable Cocoa Forum, 2012b:1). According to the membership declaration, joining parties pledge ‘to make a measurable contribution to improving the living conditions of cocoa farmers and their families, to combating social grievances and environmentally degrading practices in cocoa cultivation, by way of concrete measures to be coordinated closely with representatives of cocoa-producing countries’ (Sustainable Cocoa Forum, 2012b:1). Two voices from each stakeholder group are represented on the steering committee, encompassing a total of eight representatives from civil society, retailers, industry and government. In addition, a

representative of the Forum is involved in Côte d'Ivoire's national cocoa platform given the country's role as most important cocoa exporter to Germany (BDSI, 2012).

A question mark in the composition concerns the heavily represented group of chocolate industry stakeholders (Sustainable Cocoa Forum, 2013). Almost fifty members of the chocolate industry committed themselves to membership, demonstrating again the importance of comparisons with competitors and implicitly of archipelago actors' commitments in the crowded chocolate sector. One element of checks and balances are the 14 civil-society partners. Another aspect intended to secure parity is the steering committee structure, encompassing two members from each stakeholder type, with the two civil-society voices including research institute Südwind and a rotating member out of the triad of Rainforest Alliance, Fairtrade and UTZ. In a 2012 press release, Südwind (2012b) called on the Association of the Confectionery Industry, a partner in the Forum, to increase their goal of having 50% of cocoa certified by 2020 to 80%, referencing a goal set in the Netherlands by another initiative in which the public sector has played a key role. On the other hand, despite the notional parity of power in the steering committee, there is a question whether the chocolate industry may drive proceedings in some situations, given their overwhelming majority and availability of human resources to contribute to working groups. For instance, this thesis's contention of the variety of drivers associated becomes exemplified in the Forum's stated objective of sustainable cocoa production, as different stakeholders will disagree on what priorities this entails. For instance, civil society may consider improving living conditions paramount, while some private-sector actors may prioritise safeguarding cocoa supply in the required quality. In other words, while civil society and producer countries would place cocoa farmers at the centre, the top priority for industry members may be cocoa produced, and the human element only indirectly, affecting the Forum's overall outlook. This illustrates the underlying tensions in initiatives bringing together various stakeholder types, with this thesis arguing such frictions are likely to increase as the sector further concentrates and cocoa shortages grow more acute.

The Forum's inception, welcomed by civil society and industry alike, was an example of stakeholders attempting to move beyond successive oligopolies. There may be question marks how different stakeholders will define sustainability and whether the diversity of Forum stakeholders can reach a workable equilibrium, as their constellations of priorities in terms of their socio-economic, environmental and commercial drivers are likely to differ considerably, causing tensions. However, this diversity also means that joint conclusions may have far-reaching

effects. The Forum represents the collective power of civil society, the corporate power of industry associations, chocolate industry and retailers, and the institutional power of two German ministries, in addition to their representatives' individual power. Members are embedded in production networks encompassing societies and territories all over the globe and are likely to improve their respective embeddedness in locales, networks and social settings given their commitment to the Forum. The ever-increasing membership also suggests that stakeholders expect it to create and enhance value for themselves, with memberships and active contributions advertised prominently e.g. on websites (Rainforest Alliance, 2012c; BVLH, 2012; Südwind 2012b), thereby also again demonstrating the importance of representations. This initiative, one of several involving prominent public-sector stakeholders in the chocolate sector, also allows stakeholders to move beyond existing successive oligopolies towards a more collaborative coexistence to address the cocoa sector's systemic challenges.

5.3 Summary of socio-economic, environmental and commercial objectives

When revisiting the constellations of priorities model introduced first in section 2.4, the above-discussed initiatives offer some insights on how cocoa-sector shifts have influenced initiatives and particularly stakeholder drivers.

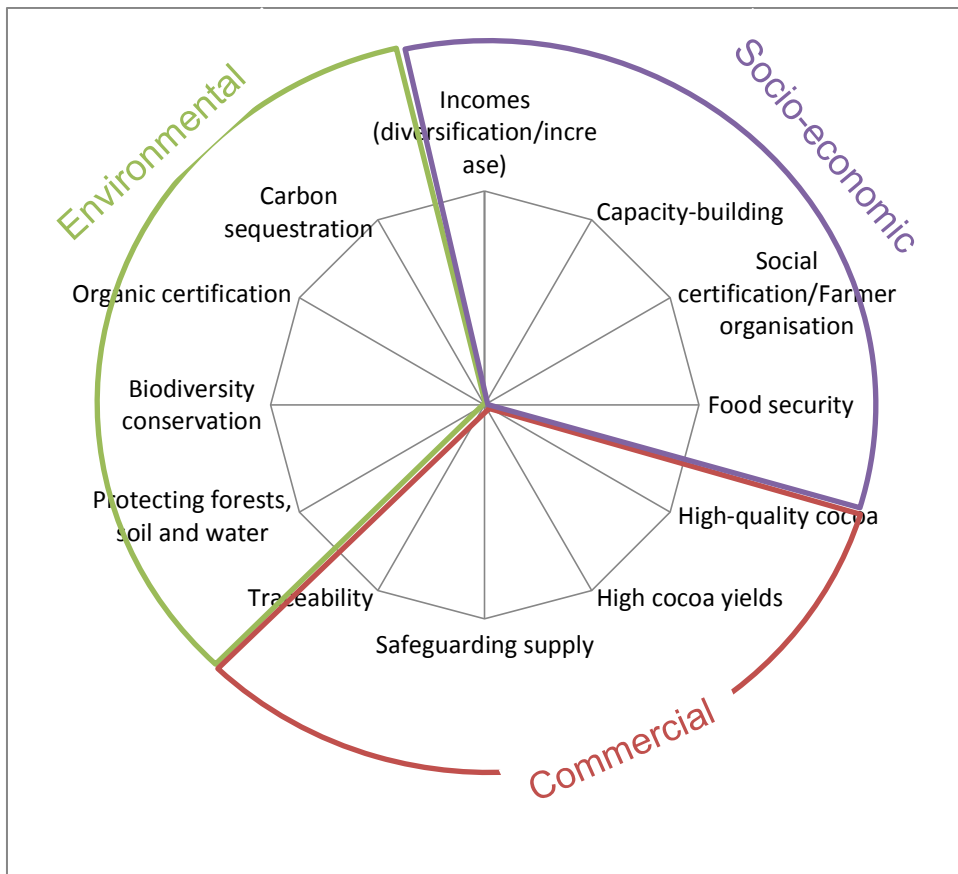


Figure 5.3.1: Constellation of priorities model.

Source: Author.

The chapter has solidified the impression of some clear cocoa-sector shifts regarding particularly the rise of supply security, an objective firmly located in the commercial dimension of the above diagram (cf. figure 5.3.1). Supply security, an axis in the commercial dimension, is a recurring theme in a number of the above-discussed initiatives as in the engagements debated in chapter 4. For Lidl, Mondeléz and Nestlé, and also in the Sustainable Cocoa Forum, there is a clear commercial impetus. The principal objectives are located in the commercial third of the above model, primarily to be found in safeguarding supply through improved productivity, and partly improving traceability to fend off potential scandals. Nestlé and Mondeléz both directly work with farmers, thereby circumventing the usual trading or processing intermediaries, with this direct involvement also strengthening relations with suppliers to maintain long-term cocoa availability. Nestlé and Mondeléz involved public-sector and civil-society partners in their initiatives, albeit to varying degrees, to enhance embeddedness while safeguarding their own corporate power through direct connections with producers. Lidl's engagement equally was geared towards acquiring cocoa complying with its own quality standards as part of a wider

company ‘sustainability’ strategy, reinforcing the commercial aspect. Clearly, tensions arise between these commercial drivers and the socio-economic or environmental priorities civil-society or public-sector partners bring to the table, as later chapters will explore regarding my three case-studies.

Against the backdrop of projected shortages, supply security is also a key consideration for the members of Germany’s Sustainable Cocoa Forum, a further example of an initiative uniting diverse stakeholders with diverging priorities. The shifts and shortage fears in the sector have served inside and outside the Forum as a key catalyst for companies to consider how to improve socio-economic living conditions and environmental practices. It remains to be seen to what extent industry and civil-society priorities can be made compatible to form a cogent and coherent initiative with palpable success. Equally, the diversity of actors represented is likely to cause tensions. This may start from the imperatives and implications inherent in different stakeholders’ interpretations of ‘sustainability’, via the question of whether human rights compliance is as desirable a ‘quality’ in cocoa supplies as thorough and even fermentation, and may end with the goals and objectives to be set for individual actors and the association as a whole. The initiative thus brings together a diversity of definitions of ‘quality’ and priorities, with the commercial dimension, simply by virtue of members from private sector outnumbering public sector and civil society, again very prominent. However, the very presence of civil-society and public-sector members for whom socio-economic and environmental priorities take precedence again causes tensions with commercially focused constellations of priorities.

Moreover, it is no longer only premium-price manufacturers engaging in sustainability initiatives. Lidl defied their cut-throat-price reputation to face, and master eight years early, the challenge of changing own-brand chocolate to certified cocoa, constituting an example of a low-end manufacturer engaging in a sustainability initiative. According to observers, this may not only put pressure on other supermarket chains to follow suit, but also encourage premium-price chocolate manufacturers to expedite their efforts to catch up with the discount supermarket chain (Interview #30, research). However, an interesting aside is that Lidl’s move also opens up the world of certified chocolate products to lower income strata – Lidl’s EUR0.39 own-brand UTZ bars make the privilege of buying ‘fair’ treats more accessible across Northern society.

Lidl's story of change is also further evidence of UTZ's rise in importance. Some will view UTZ sceptically given the certifier's reputation as being more market-oriented than other schemes. However, the ever-rising number of sweets producers, including biscuit-makers Bahlsen, and supermarket chains, including Lidl and Aldi, choosing UTZ Certified as their primary cocoa certifier are palpable exemplifications of UTZ Certified's growth by several hundred percent in a matter of years. This meteoric rise also constitutes a shift from prior initiatives, which most frequently partnered with Fairtrade or organic. This recalls the distinction Raynolds (2009) makes between different types of buyers: the mission-driven buyer who is 100% behind the ethos of fair trade, the quality-driven enterprise looking for gourmet coffee, and the market-driven business purchasing fair supplies as a commercial opportunity. Further research will have to show whether this distinction may have shifted, with market-driven buyers gravitating towards other certifiers and particularly UTZ, i.e. certification schemes considered more market-oriented and able to safeguard the sector's future through traceability, agricultural training and environmental awareness. One of my three case-study initiatives will further explore the consequences resulting from a shift towards UTZ certification, highlighting implications and ripple effects particularly on cocoa producers and cooperatives. By extension, this also emphasises the previous observation regarding the importance of conceptualising archipelago actors and their role in precipitating such changes, with various cocoa-sector stakeholders shifting towards certification.

A question regarding all public-facing representations utilised is whether there may be a deliberate objective to represent environmental and social improvements as straightforward, easy solutions so as to promote a sense on supporters' and consumers' part of being able to attain absolution by paying mark-up indulgences for their chocolate indulgence. Problematizing the necessary technical and infrastructural preconditions and the societal implications, as well as the commodification and fetishisation of nature and labels inherent in the process, would lead consumers to question private-sector, and civil-society, representations of 'it can be done', which are a prerequisite to open consumers' wallets and hearts. Equally, the question may arise to what extent stakeholders and consumers themselves were complicit in bringing about inequities in the first place. Complicated, problematized representations would defeat the purpose of consumer communication, i.e. leveraging monetary and ideational support and promoting societal and territorial embeddedness, and would also pull into question the overall feasibility of mitigating climate change by planting more trees. On the other hand, it is also consumers' acceptance of consuming illusions and their own desire to 'help' which makes the perpetuation, the production

and reproduction of simplified spectacle possible. Chapter 8 will discuss these and other paradoxes regarding stakeholder representations in more detail.

A final observation is that all low-end and mainstream initiatives investigated in this chapter exemplify sustainability initiatives perpetuating existing power asymmetries. Rather than altering trade models fundamentally by developing more equitable, power-sharing governance structures for cocoa, they increase sustainability engagements, yet without promoting ownership and decision-making capacity from the global South. Equally, companies' initiatives usually are not to support the cocoa sector at large, but are focused on a limited set of beneficiaries of their 'sustainability' activities only. There is a question as to whether this continuation of business as usual will suffice to address the fundamental questions challenging the cocoa sector's future, which later chapters will explore.

Overall, this chapter has aimed to provide a broader overview of the chocolate sector prior to the more detailed investigation of three mainstream and niche initiatives in the following chapter. It aimed to answer for the chocolate sector research sub-question 2 regarding novelties in cocoa sustainability initiatives. The chapter discussed the sector's structure in terms of low-end, mainstream and niche market segments, detailing the lay of the land within which cocoa sustainability initiatives have seen considerable changes. It applied a GPN lens to several low-end and mainstream initiatives in the chocolate sector, providing a backdrop to the predominantly mainstream and niche initiatives to follow in the next chapter. In answer to research sub-question 2.2 regarding wider trends in the cocoa sector especially from a GPN perspective, emerging tendencies confirmed various aspects of this thesis's arguments, including the aggravating concern of supply security, and the tensions it causes with predominantly socio-economically and environmentally minded constellations of priorities.

The increasing involvement of public-sector stakeholders confirms both the gravity of the challenges the chocolate sector faces, and adds stakeholders with their own distinct sets of priorities to existing tensions between private sector and civil society. Concomitant with divergent priorities, there is also disagreement between these actors as to what sustainability is to entail, or put differently, what is means, what is end between diverging socio-economic, environmental and commercial objectives, which the chapter analysed in answer to research sub-question 2.1. Despite shifts in drivers, it appears even recently initiated sustainability engagements

perpetuate existing power asymmetries between North and South. The following chapters will explore to what extent all these trends are present also in the three case-studies selected, applying my analytical framework to the initiatives and exploring each of them in turn. Based on the analysis in chapter 5 regarding the chocolate sector in more general terms, chapter 6 will now contribute knowledge on shifts and new developments from a GPN perspective regarding my three case-study initiatives.

6. Introducing and mapping the case-studies: symmetries and asymmetries

Chapter 5 sought to apply my conceptual framework developed in chapters 2 and 4 to the chocolate sector at large to provide a backdrop to the three case-studies incorporating conservation and carbon measures which this chapter investigates. In the last chapter, I utilised my expanded GPN lens emphasising the full spectrum of cocoa-sector stakeholders and the complex interrelationships between power and embeddedness to analyse the cocoa sector at large. The aim was to identify socio-economic, commercial and environmental objectives of different stakeholders as well as major trends visible across different initiatives, particularly in relation to the GPN foci of power and embeddedness. In conjunction with this analysis, the previous chapter also began exploring some of this thesis's arguments. It confirmed that cocoa-sector challenges and shifts have an impact on cocoa sustainability initiatives, causing ever more especially private-sector stakeholders to make sustainability commitments. It also showed that private-sector stakeholders' commercial concerns are continuously rising in importance, creating tensions with public-sector and civil-society foci on socio-environmental issues. It also entailed the observation that sustainability initiatives rarely seek to alter the cocoa sector's large-scale existing power asymmetries, e.g. between global North and global South or commercial and non-commercial actors. Using particularly interview and documentary data, this following chapter aims to answer the same sub-question as the previous chapter regarding the three case-studies, aiming to establish whether their in-depth analysis will confirm the previously established wider trends:

2. What is new in sustainability initiatives in the chocolate sector?

2.1 What socio-economic, commercial and environmental objectives govern initiatives?

2.2 What major trends are visible, particularly from a GPN perspective?

The chapter will argue that diverging drivers create considerable tensions, which also affect underlying power and embeddedness relations between different stakeholders. The previous chapter has outlined the challenges facing a concentrated, competitive chocolate sector, with projected shortages aggravating tensions. While notionally cocoa shortages may bestow greater power on the collective of cocoa producers, I argue the reality of the cocoa sector's successive

oligopolies, producers’ fragmentation and resulting low network embeddedness mean that power remains in the global North, demonstrating an important link between power and embeddedness as argued in chapter 4. The initiatives instigated do not aim to redress existing power asymmetries, neither on the micro level of initiatives nor across the macro-sector scale, which is demonstrated by Northern actors projecting their commercial priorities onto initiatives. Frequently, these create tensions with civil society’s and public sector’s socio-environmental drivers. The initiatives detailed in this chapter have contributed some socio-economic and environmental improvements much appreciated by producers, with the balance between diverging drivers an ongoing negotiation subject to power and embeddedness factors. To examine this proposition, I will address each initiative’s configuration of stakeholders and objectives in turn before analysing them through a Global Production Networks lens, focusing on power and embeddedness. The final section, 6.4, will conduct a comparative analysis regarding GPN observations, case-studies’ environmental side, and cursorily priorities and representations, which will be discussed in detail in chapters 7 and 8. As an overview, table 6.1.1 shows brief information on the three case-studies (all anonymised as explained in section 3.3):

Name	Initiator	Reason for selection
Our Chocolate	Municipalities	Niche, local. Strong local/public-sector connotation
World Choc	Climate NGO	Niche/mainstream. Strong civil-society presence (children-for-children NGO)
Floral	Chocolate manufacturer	Mainstream manufacturer. Shift: social development to in-house production

Table 6.1.1: Case-study initiatives selected.

Source: Author.

6.1 Initiative 1: Our Chocolate. A partnership between municipalities

6.1.1 Network configuration and introduction

The story of Our Chocolate began at a 2011 climate change mitigation conference aiming to promote intercontinental partnerships between municipalities. The idea of chocolate produced with cocoa from the Southern municipality, but sold as a ‘local’ endeavour in the North was born to combine long-term socio-economic opportunity for farmers with climate change mitigation through avoided deforestation (Climate Alliance, 2013a, b). As visualised in diagrams 6.1a, b and c presented below, it brought together two adjacent municipalities in Colombia harbouring

protected areas and indigenous reserves, and several municipalities in Germany. Funding from a climate-conservation facility from the German development ministry brought in EUR500,000 from 2013 to 2016, teaming up the two Colombian municipalities of Tilón and Comuno with two German counterparts, Otterbach and Immenhof.

The Colombian partnership territory has high conservation value – the national park is now the largest terrestrial park in Amazonia – and high deforestation rates (Interview #143, development). In the municipalities of Tilón and Comuno, 70 farmer families grow cocoa on small parcels without pesticides and artificial fertilisers, with environmental viability and local income generation a priority (Interview #143, development). Beans are fermented and dried in the sun by farmers in a decentralised manner, sorted and packaged in sacks made of local agave fibres (Interviews #143, development; #18, civil society). The remoteness-dictated decentralised processing also means every sack of beans will have a unique quality, rendering small-scale processing into chocolate by a bean-to-bar manufacturer necessary (Interview #135, private sector). Large-scale operations hinging on uniform quality for uniform outcomes would not choose to process such beans. The cocoa is taken by boat out of the remote area and shipped by container to Rotterdam (Interview #143, development). At destination, the German small-scale bean-to-bar chocolate manufacturer Friedrich transforms the fine-flavour cocoa into Our Chocolate, which several municipalities give away or sell in tourist information or speciality shops (Interviews #18, civil society; #19, private sector; #44, government; #135, private sector; #136, #137, government; Neuheim, 2012, 2013). The commercial partners, manufacturer and retail outlets alike thus come under the ‘niche’ category, targeting a high-value, high-quality market segment. In addition, the manufacturer has begun using the cocoa for other products, even though this expansion has been marred by unreliable supply (Interview #135, private sector).

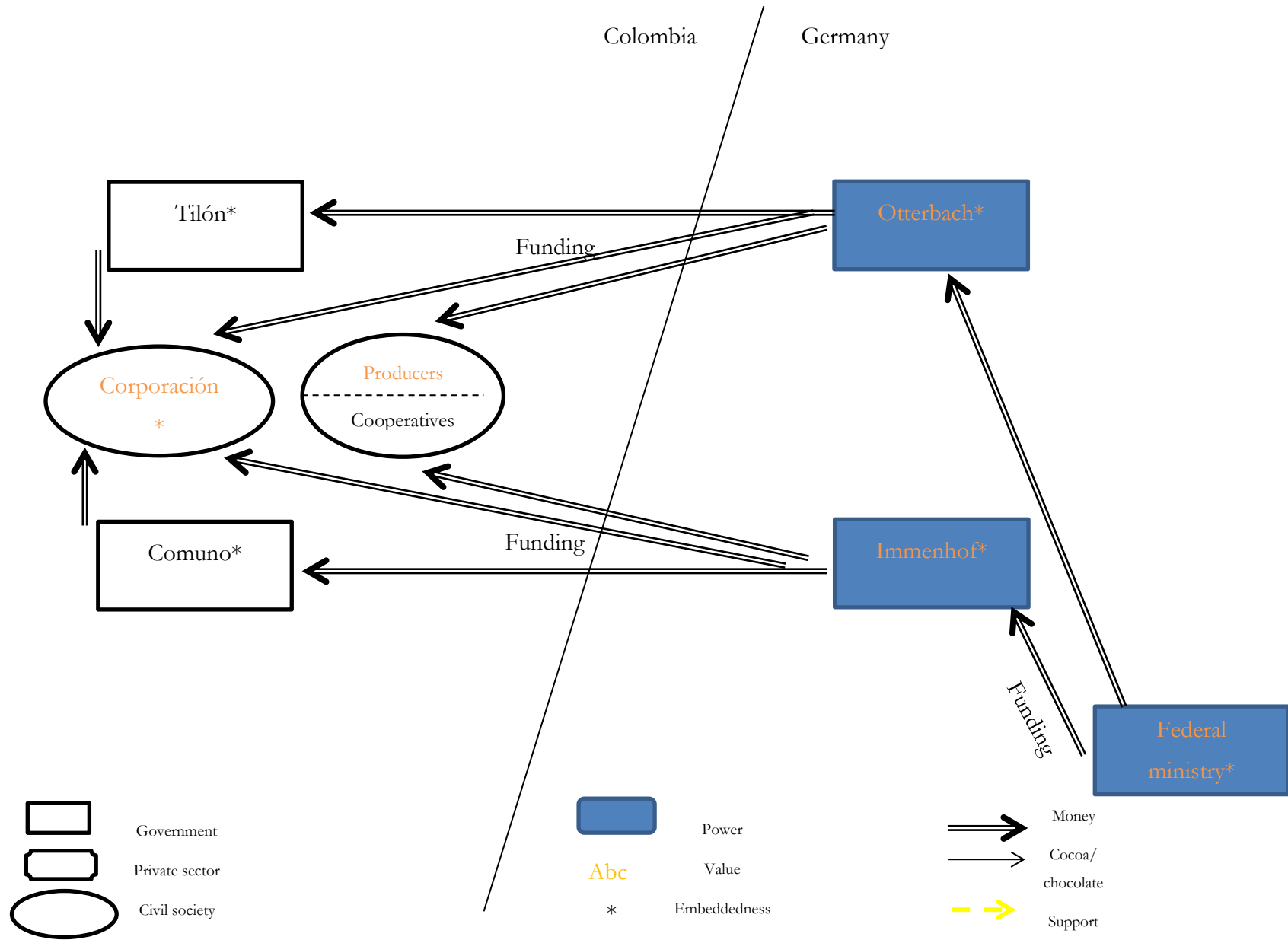


Figure 6.1a: Network configuration of Our Chocolate – funding only.

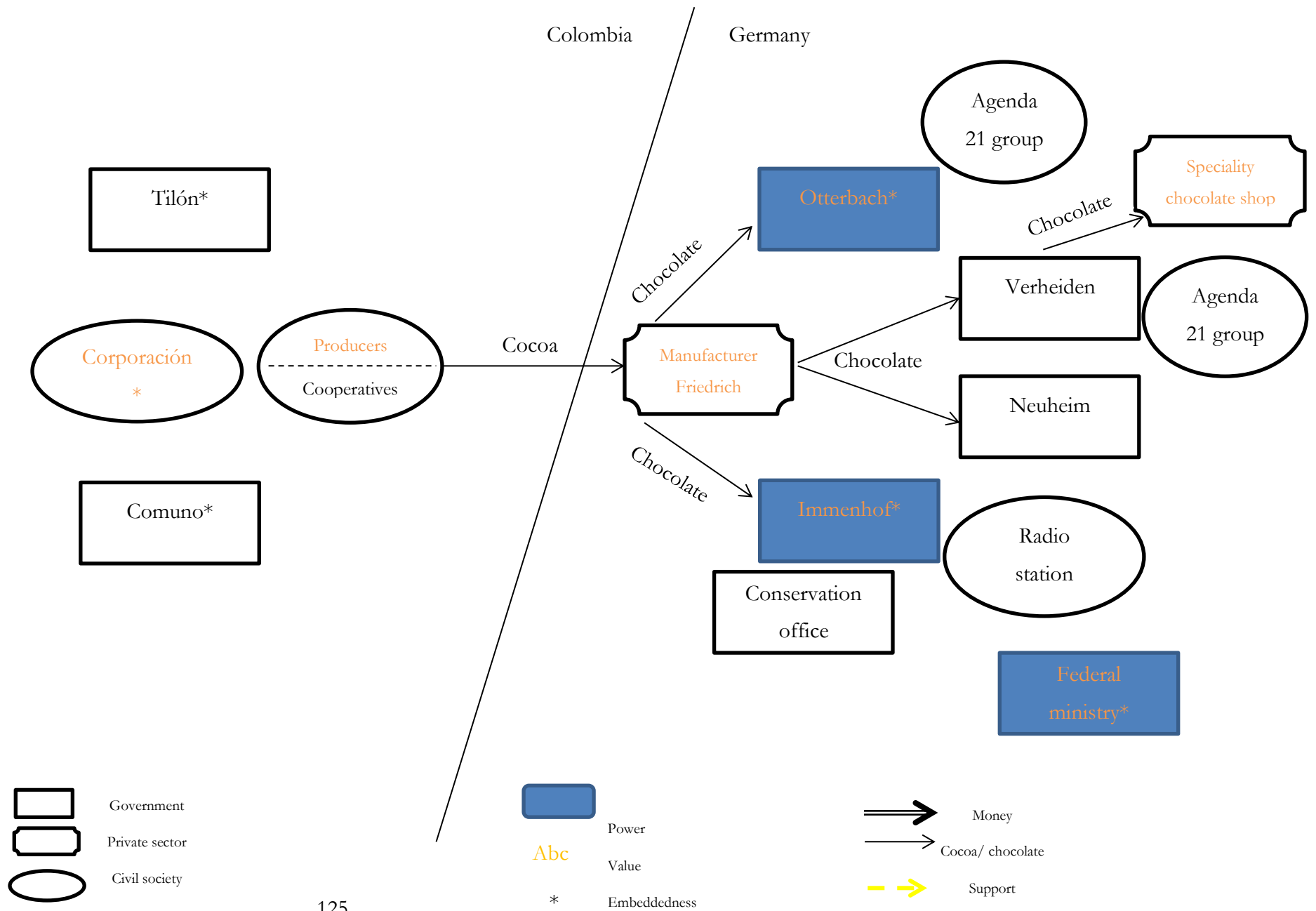
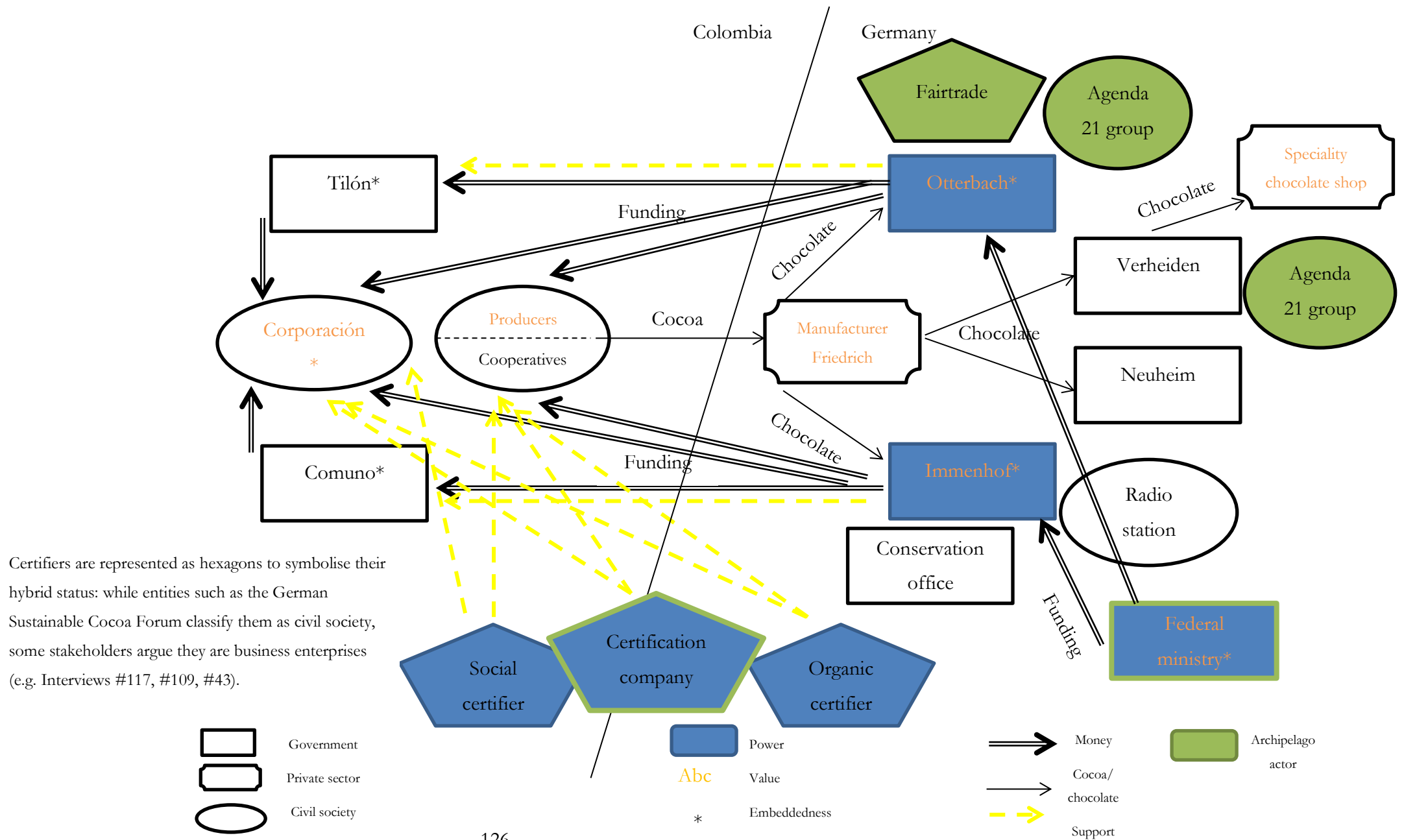


Figure 6.1b: Network configuration of Our Chocolate – cocoa/chocolate only.



Certifiers are represented as hexagons to symbolise their hybrid status: while entities such as the German Sustainable Cocoa Forum classify them as civil society, some stakeholders argue they are business enterprises (e.g. Interviews #117, #109, #43).

Figure 6.1c: Network configuration of Our Chocolate initiative – full.

The above simplified diagrams 6.1a, b and c provide a visual GPN mapping of the initiative of Our Chocolate showing all relevant stakeholders. The Colombian municipalities of Tilon and Comuno are partnered with two German municipalities, Otterbach and Immenhof, with Verheiden and Neuheim also involved as supporting municipalities also selling Our Chocolate on the German side. Figures 6.1a, b and c build on each other, depicting first the flows of money, then the flows of cocoa/chocolate, before finally providing an overview of the initiative. The diagrams show that the flows of funding primarily originate in the global North, foreshadowing the later analysis of power residing predominantly in the North. Diagram 6.1c also shows the multitude of organisations clustered around the municipalities in the global North, demonstrating the municipalities' efforts to safeguard the project's societal embeddedness. Similarly, NGO 'Corporación' was established in Colombia as part of the project to encourage territorial embeddedness in the global South, with civil society at both ends jointly working towards the initiative's overall goal of producing behavioural change. Diagram 6.1c also shows highlighted in green the archipelago actors explored below in section 6.1.2, emphasising the influence of civil-society groups on certification choice, the significance of the company implementing certification, as well as the impact of the federal ministry providing funds. Ordinary GPN analyses alone would be unlikely to draw attention to these actors as relevant influences on the power and embeddedness relations explored further below, with the analysis thus benefiting from the complementary archipelago perspective discussed in detail in section 4.2.

6.1.2 Socio-economic, environmental and commercial objectives

Being funded by a federal ministry as a climate partnership, the project has clearly defined objectives (Interview #44, government; Otterbach, 2014c). In terms of socio-economic components, building up a supply chain for fair and organic cocoa, improving electrification through renewable energy and promoting knowledge on indigenous matters in Germany are among higher-order objectives. The approach is to boost incomes for cocoa farmers through prices above world markets.

'We want to grow cocoa in agroforestry systems, with fruit trees, which are very important for food security, and timber trees for income. A lot of forest has been destroyed through agriculture, we are aware of that and want to change that, and we also need to find opportunities for our young generation.' (Interview #138, producer)

The approach is to protect biodiversity as production takes place near a national park covering 68,000 hectares (Parques Nacionales, 2013; Verheiden, 2011). The national park is home to three biomes, a large variety of plants, and various mammals and birds at risk of extinction (Parques Nacionales, 2013). The environmental aspects also encompass promoting knowledge on environmental protection and cocoa production in German and Colombian municipalities.

The 50-gram-bars are to bear multiple certification labels: beyond a ‘climate partnership’ label, the project aims to add organic certification, a fair, social label certifying small producers, and potentially its own first-party standard to highlight the remote origin and production by mostly indigenous growers:

‘The main objective is to reduce the deforestation rate in our region and trigger an awareness-raising effect in the population, so we need strict seals.’ (Interview #143, development)

Archipelago actors, highlighted in green in diagram 6.1c, play a key role in explaining the adherence to multiple standards. As the funds from the federal ministry originated from an environmental facility, natural resource protection through organic techniques is key. In terms of the ‘fair’ certification, the presence of active civil-society Agenda 21 groups in Immenhof and Verheiden and ties to local Fairtrade certifiers and activists in Otterbach as a ‘Fairtrade town’ has encouraged this compliance (Interviews #18, civil society; #136, #137, government; #143, development).

Overall, there is a strong awareness-raising aspect, including joint internet platforms, delegation visits and educational offers. This also includes the chocolate bar giving an occasion to ‘tell a story’:

‘With this chocolate, we really want to highlight how important it is to [protect] this biodiversity, to emphasise what people’s life reality is, and that it is really our obligation to prefer these types of chocolate, which are also better in quality terms and also pay a fair price.’ (Interview #23, government)

This quote reinforces the importance of representations. Given the use of public funds, however, it is striking that there have not been more monitored facts to back up the narrative. Narratives highlighting the importance of stopping deforestation and protecting biodiversity by providing incomes do exist, but do not encompass, as in other chocolate-cum-mitigation projects, quantifying carbon emissions generated to offset them through afforestation (Interviews #18, civil society; #143, development). The lack of focus on monitoring also means that there are no data demonstrating how cocoa production interacts with the local resource base, or what effects, if any, are observable on the level of global carbon emissions. Narratives regarding the benefits of cocoa agroforestry systems as implemented by the project exist, but cannot be verified. While one could argue that a small-scale project in its infancy does well not to spend half its budget on monitoring, this strategy also jeopardises the trust upon which awareness-raising and behavioural change hinge.

The project aims to differ from other approaches in multiple respects. The impetus for the venture originated between German and Colombian municipalities, with funds supplied primarily by the German government and the private-sector chocolate manufacturer being chiefly an implementer rather than driver. Capacity-building and certification support for the Colombian side thus come only at the cost of cooperating with the German government entities rather than a corporate actor. This lack of prominent commercial expertise also means supply is patchy, with both the bean-to-bar manufacturer and a speciality chocolate shop reporting severe supply shortages threatening the viability of their business proposition given customers' expectations of constant availability (Interviews #19, #135, private sector). Secondly, the project is notable through the virtual absence of intermediaries, cutting out their usual profit margins (Interview #135, private sector). Finally, while other municipalities have elected to rebrand existing chocolate bars as their own chocolate, this initiative aims to build a supply chain from scratch in a remote Amazonian region, which the initiative has presented as unique.

6.1.3 The GPN perspective

As discussed in chapters 2 and 4, the GPN analysis in my thesis, given its focus on shifts and the links to priorities and representations, emphasises the power and embeddedness dimensions and value only implicitly. In terms of power, the distribution of influence in this initiative is largely asymmetrical between Germany and Colombia, contravening the partnership-based principles which are to govern climate alliance partnerships (Verheiden, 2011). Funding stems from the

archipelago federal ministry via German municipalities. The German ministry pays EUR500,000 from 2013 to 2016 to the project, while the Colombian municipalities only cover 10% of project costs, which is considerable by local standards, but a very limited contribution overall (Interviews #44, government; #143, development). An emerging farmer cooperative structure may offer opportunities for empowerment over time. Currently, both the obligations of monitoring outcomes and setting the agenda primarily fall with German municipalities, within the ministry's overall policy directives and concrete recommendations for this project. While the locus of corporate power theoretically also lies in Germany, two factors curtail it. Firstly, the project deals with very small volumes of only three tonnes per year, and it is project, and thus institutional rather than commercial, staff who are in charge of order logistics. However, without the corporate power of a specialised bean-to-bar manufacturer, the project could not have succeeded. The certification scheme preference, usually strongly market-driven, again emanates from project staff's desire to produce endemic 'speciality, fine-flavour cocoa, not the acid volume cocoa from West Africa' with unique selling propositions (Interview #140, civil society). The lack of familiarity with organic cocoa certification in Colombia means that the certification company supporting implementation is crucial for capacity-building (Interview #140, civil society) – despite offices in Latin America, the company hails from Germany, furthering power asymmetry despite attestations to partnership.

Some power in implementation lies with Colombian project staff and municipalities. The recognition of one Colombian municipality by the province as a 'defender of water and environment' heightens the municipality's institutional power in seeking funds nationally and internationally. However, participant observation at project presentations raised the question to what extent the focus on Our Chocolate may stifle priorities outside the cocoa-mitigation purview. Colombian requests for funding pertaining to waste disposal, electrification and fending off petrol companies' seismic exploration barely found discussion among public-at-large or decision-makers, which further confirms the prior suggestion of power asymmetry. As the project prioritises awareness-raising, chocolate has more potential as a conversation starter than far-away waste disposal facilities. The professed focus on direct partnership may render power somewhat more symmetrical in the public-facing realm. The collective power of citizens, civil society and indigenous peoples, embodied in visiting Colombian delegations, and the concomitant 'first-hand information' have been instrumental in communication with policy-makers and public-at-large, as decision-makers and public attested to during delegation visits which I observed. However, 'first-hand information' requires qualification: both public and

internal communication from Colombia will usually be effected in Spanish, which few staff in the German municipalities understand. With project staff thus translating between Spanish and German, they have a crucial conduit function representing the project internally and towards the public, which chapter 8 will discuss in more detail. Of course, there is also a key link from this public-facing representation aspect, to the project's territorial and societal embeddedness both in Colombia and in Germany given this crucial communication and conduit function for project staff in mediating between the loci.

Regarding embeddedness, there have been pre-existing links between particularly Comuno and Immenhof, and between Otterbach and the country of Colombia, creating some familiarity and mutual territorial embeddedness. The project's involvement in a war-ridden rainforest territory has also sparked particular respect on the Colombian side (Interview #143, development). The requirement of establishing farmer organisations to earn fair certification requires production and projects to be well-rooted within their local communities in Colombia, indigenous and otherwise. Territorial embeddedness in German municipalities is relevant for distribution channels as the chocolate bars invoke the spectacle of territorial belonging: the chocolate bar has been sold as Our Chocolate in tourist offices and speciality shops in several municipalities, one of which also stated that local ties were more important to customers than the chocolate's social and environmental credentials (Interview #19, private sector). Another municipality has appointed some of its staff as Our Chocolate tasters to prepare its wider distribution (Interviews #136, #137, government).

A commonality is Our Chocolate's specific reference to embeddedness in both Germany and Colombia, rendering its double-local credentials a unique selling proposition, even though, incidentally, the bean-to-bar manufacturer is not local to any of the German municipalities. Producing the bar at origin would increase territorial embeddedness of the final chocolate bar, and allow far greater value capture in Colombia, but likely exceed budgets. Regarding network embeddedness, the Colombian side depend on selling their produce to this somewhat captive supply chain as there would be no other well-paying sales outlet, adding to power asymmetries. These observations also support the argument that while cocoa shortages and the resulting increase in prices have facilitated the initiative in itself, it perpetuates existing power discrepancies between North and South instead of bridging them by granting Southern stakeholders ownership stakes or opportunities to produce chocolate in the South.

Given the project's focus on awareness-raising, societal embeddedness plays a considerable role. Mutual visits of delegations, partnerships between schools and radio stations and exchanges of technical expertise on watershed and forest management improve familiarity with each other's societal and territorial-environmental circumstances. Visits create more immediate partnership than the spectacle of direct links many other 'sustainability' initiatives invoke. Given the provenance of funding, ministry monitoring requirements apply, thereby imposing reporting norms embedded in and originating from the European context on Latin American stakeholders. Incidentally, a similar assessment also applies to the chosen certification schemes. While the fair smallholder certification used has its roots in Latin America, the organic standard as well as the implementing company come from Germany, risking Northern-based assumptions regarding measurability of parameters, record-keeping and literacy.

On the Colombian side, the project has generated much-needed income opportunities for farmers (Interview #138, producer), which now also extend beyond Our Chocolate thanks to the bean-to-bar manufacturer expanding its volumes. Conversely, the private-sector actor, although foregoing profits given the venture's non-lucrative nature, thus has reaped a relational benefit by establishing direct ties with suppliers independently of cocoa brokers and stock markets, improving its territorial embeddedness in Colombia. Growing cocoa organically alongside fruit and timber trees offers multiple income strands and food-security benefits for farmers in Tilón and Comuno, while also offering potentials for younger generations to make a living locally, thereby boosting collective power. Still in Colombia, the project sources locally grown and made agave-fibre cocoa-bean sacks, creating revenue opportunities beyond cocoa.

The project purchasing cocoa at origin and paying producers in cash (Interview #143, development) saves producers transport costs and avoids income gaps resulting from farmers receiving 'IOU' promissory notes rather than cash, with this move also improving the project's embeddedness in Colombia. Furthermore, the project cutting out intermediaries and shouldering capacity-building and certification costs increases the value producers can capture, although it further concentrates power in Northern buyers. A key method to empower Colombian producers is an organic certification and the social smallholder label (Interviews #18, civil society; #136, government), which are to ensure higher prices and a self-sustaining project, while also boosting communities' collective power by building capacities and potentially opening up other sales

outlets. Finally, the project enables the German government to enhance its territorial embeddedness, by reiterating its commitment to indigenous rights and environmental advocacy (Interview #138, producer), highlighting the importance of the federal ministry as an archipelago actor providing funding. The alignment of preferences thus facilitated boosting mutual embeddedness in Germany and Colombia.

The importance of representations for power and embeddedness surfaces in two main respects. Firstly, the rhetoric regarding the project's uniqueness creates societal embeddedness and enhances governments' institutional power in Germany and Colombia. Given the increasing number of cooperation projects and growing scepticism concerning the credibility of NGOs, certifiers or their labels (Focus group discussion (FGD) 1, FGD2 and FGD3), conveying a unique, trustworthy project is crucial. However, these representations nevertheless advocate a need to 'help' Southern stakeholders, with the increase in embeddedness thus predicated on prioritising Northern embeddedness over Southern empowerment. The funds thus boost embeddedness in Germany and Colombia for the ministry itself, being seen as active also on the municipal scale, and for municipalities in Germany and Colombia, which, however, hinges upon stakeholders' representations of the project. The second aspect is more in omission: several years pass between planting cocoa trees and reaping significant cocoa bean harvests. The cocoa currently used for Our Chocolate bars does not emanate from project trees – a circumstance which the project neglects to mention, but which could influence embeddedness in Colombia and Germany. If consumers did not feel a direct connection to the project, which a lack of 'project cocoa' in the chocolate bars might cause, this may affect their willingness to accept Our Chocolate as an investment-worthy project. Akin to projected cocoa shortages, their impacts on the sector and stakeholders' role in bringing them about, this is another case of representational omission working in favour of Northern stakeholders, their power and embeddedness advantages: the fear would be that such details may confuse Northern consumers, dissuading consumption. Chapter 8 will discuss the project's representations in more depth.

6.2 Initiative 2: World Choc, a confluence of like-minded stakeholders

6.2.1 Network configuration and introduction

World Choc demonstrates a confluence of parallel intentions by like-minded stakeholders, as figures 6.2a and 6.2b illustrate visually below. Tree kids, a tree-planting NGO 'by children for children', aims to sell a carbon-neutral chocolate bar to raise awareness and funds for climate

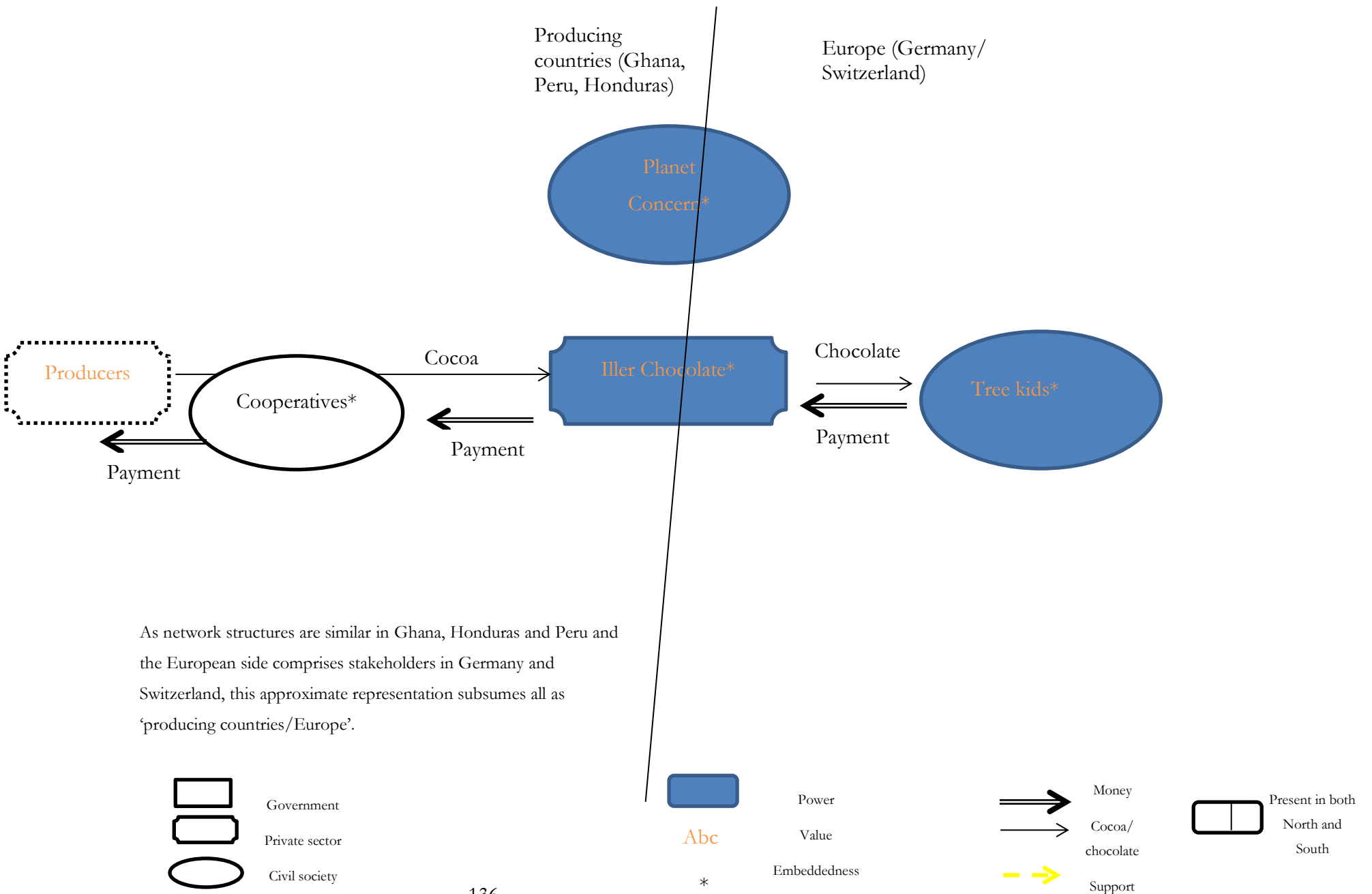
change mitigation. Iller Chocolate, an organic/Fairtrade chocolate manufacturer at the premium end of the mainstream segment, produces a carbon-neutral bar, meaning all emissions generated in production are offset in cocoa communities. Planet Concern, a reforestation/conservation NGO, supports farmers in intercropping their cocoa trees with high-value timber shade trees for additional income (Interview #26, civil society). The bar is child-friendly all around: it only costs EUR1, affordable even on scant allowances, and is a sweet milk chocolate unlike other Fairtrade-certified bars with unusual ingredients. With various actors doing without their profits (Interview #134, private sector; Tree kids, 2013a), the price remains acceptable to consumers in the highly price-driven German market. Beyond price and high quality lauded by private-sector and focus group interlocutors (Interview #134, private sector; FGD1, FGD2, FGD3), the chocolate bar comes with Fairtrade certification and a Zero Climate seal, explaining the presence of multiple certifying bodies and foundations in the GPN diagram 6.2b below. The packaging (Tree kids, 2013b:3) suggests the product is:

‘just as we children want all products to be: climate-neutral and Fairtrade, because we do not want cocoa farmers’ children to harvest cocoa beans for us, but them to go to school like us.’

The idea is for the chocolate to be ‘double Fairtrade’: beyond the Fairtrade premium, farmers have the added benefit of being able to sell high-value timber trees long-term for income (Interview #26, civil society).

The chocolate has been driven by a children’s NGO promoting tree-planting. As the chocolate wrapper explains, one primary-school student dismayed by adults’ lack of progress on climate change proposed in a school presentation that children should plant one million trees inspired by Nobel laureate Wangari Maathai (Tree kids, 2013b:3). Originally, the children’s NGO envisaged that one thousandth of the chocolate industry’s profits globally should be donated to tree-planting. When this failed, the NGO’s global board suggested launching its own chocolate, i.e. a non-staple food product that is a child favourite (Interview #26, civil society). While their Swiss manufacturing partner’s certified, climate-neutral product had failed as an up-market own-brand item in a UK supermarket (Interview #134, private sector), the children’s NGO’s venture succeeded in having various supermarket chains selling the product especially in Germany (Interview #26, civil society). Since, their creative marketing approaches have raised awareness

and funds, including in-shop tasting sessions or ‘choco mobs’, i.e. impromptu chocolate-advertising events in retail shops (Interview #142, private sector). The project appears clearly mission-driven (Raynolds, 2009), hovering between the mainstream market in terms of price and the luxury, niche market in terms of the unique selling propositions of multiple certification schemes and the tree-planting it entails.



As network structures are similar in Ghana, Honduras and Peru and the European side comprises stakeholders in Germany and Switzerland, this approximate representation subsumes all as 'producing countries/Europe'.

Figure 6.2a: Network configuration for World Choc – only cocoa/chocolate and payment flows.

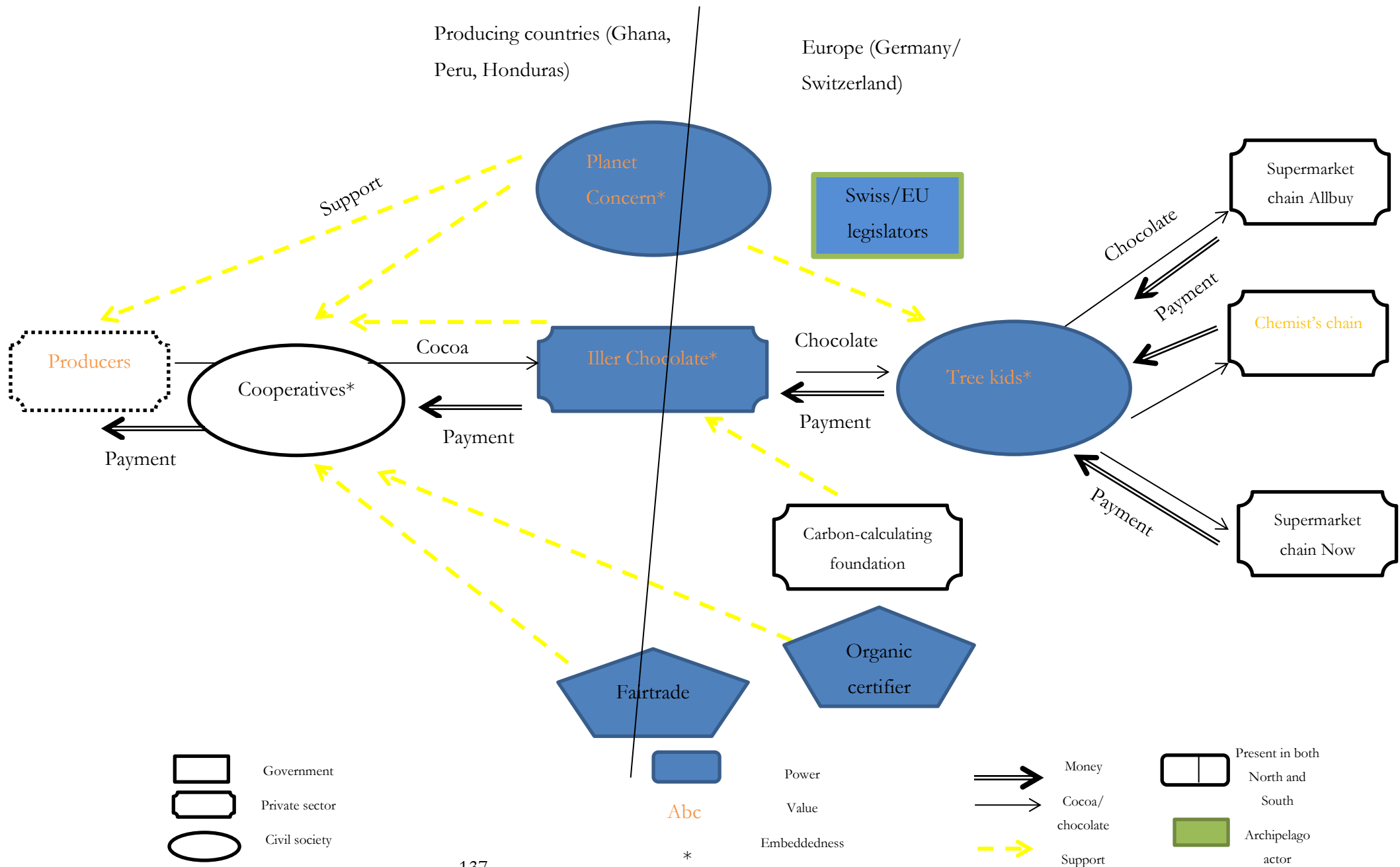


Figure 6.2b: Network configuration for World Choc – full.

Again, the two simplified GPN diagrams provide a visual overview of World Choc showing all relevant stakeholders and the flows of funding, cocoa/chocolate and support which connect different actors. Figures 6.2a and b build on each other, depicting first the flows of money and cocoa/chocolate, before providing an overview of the initiative. The diagrams show the prominent civil-society presence of Tree kids and Planet Concern, foreshadowing the later analysis of the importance of safeguarding embeddedness through representations. It also demonstrates the singular relevance of the sole private-sector actor involved in the initiative, providing a sales outlet and chocolate for sale, respectively. Equally, it shows an actor with an archipelagic significance, the Swiss and EU legislators, their carbon regulations and the conducive societal climate for tree-planting which they promoted. The below analysis fleshes out what the above diagrams represented.

6.2.2 Socio-economic, commercial and environmental objectives

Socio-economically, there is a consensus between NGO and private-sector stakeholders to use Fairtrade cocoa. NGO Tree kids considers it the only independently audited certification to satisfy the children's desire to provide producers with fair livelihood opportunities and their children with education (Tree kids, 2013a). Interestingly, the private-sector stakeholder, unlike private-sector representatives in some other initiatives, argues that it is the only certification aiming to tackle cocoa-sector issues holistically by paying producers fairer compensation, unlike other certifiers whose subscribers chiefly aim to avert risk while keeping prices low (Interviews #34, civil society; #134, private sector). There is also an element of pursuing an alternative to current practice while securing long-term supply quantity and quality by boosting farmers' incomes. A clear objective is also the increase and diversification of incomes through high-value timber: research in Honduras demonstrated that combining different precious timber trees with cocoa can quintuple farmers' incomes (FHIA, 2007).

There is an interesting intertwining between socio-economic and commercial objectives in the lead firm. The company, working under a cooperative umbrella organisation, currently buys 95% of its cocoa from Fairtrade cooperatives, with 23% of its sales bearing certification labels (Iller Chocolate, 2012). The same concept of climate-neutral chocolate with fair certification was launched as an own-brand product in an upmarket British supermarket in 2011. However, it was unsuccessful owing to consumers not seeing enough of a unique selling proposition in the

premium-price item (Interview #134, private sector). Now, the product has become the ‘most successful Fairtrade chocolate bar’ in Germany (Interview #26, civil society):

‘This chocolate bar’s great success is thanks to the NGO’s strong marketing. ‘Children for children’ is a positive story; consumers who are sensitive to sustainability issues are used to hearing negative reports about child labour and respond well, with positive emotion to the NGO’s concept.’ (Interview #134, private sector)

A compatibility of priorities, coupled with appealing representations towards consumers, thus were key in safeguarding the initiative’s success. Further along the supply chain, the project also attracted the support of retailers with compatible objectives. Multiple stakeholders were willing to forego their profits (Interview #134, private sector), causing the price to remain child-friendly. The number of sales outlets for World Choc has grown, with multiple organic and conventional supermarket chains willing to host chocolate-tasting sessions and other creative-action events (Interview #142, private sector).

The approach combines diverse socio-economic and environmental objectives. Calculating all emissions throughout the supply chain in cooperation with a foundation (Tree kids, 2013a) is a priority, i.e. the carbon generated in raw materials, operations, packaging, distribution and at the consumer level, thus demonstrating a similarly comprehensive analysis as Ntiamoah and Afrane (2008) conduct regarding cocoa’s overall environmental impact from production to processing. The company offsets, but also aims to reduce carbon emissions to address criticism that offsetting may remove emission-cutting incentives: they thus implement a dual mitigation-and-reduction objective. Similarly, the chocolate-maker switched from conventional power sources to run-of-the-river hydropower in 2010, cutting operational emissions per 100g-bar in half (Iller Chocolate, 2012:16). Although energy remains the highest single contributor, emissions have decreased from 2,503 in 2008 to 1,426 tonnes of CO₂ in 2012, despite a production capacity 20% higher than 2008 (Iller Chocolate, 2012:16). There is an interesting discrepancy between the communication in North and South, which will be discussed in more detail in chapter 8. Communication towards Northern consumers emphasises the project’s environmental credentials, with social goals chiefly as an added benefit, while the emphasis is reversed in the global South (Interview #30, research).

Offsetting occurs through an innovative approach compensating for emissions within the supply chain through afforestation projects with cocoa communities in Ghana, Honduras and Peru (Iller Chocolate, 2013a). The network is thus an example of greening the supply chain in contrast to the more common practices of supporting unrelated causes philanthropically (Utting, 2007:699) or purchasing carbon credits elsewhere (Peters-Stanley and Hamilton, 2012:38). Offsetting is the children's NGO's original premise, with the chocolate bar advertising that it plants one tree for every five 100g-bars sold (Interview #26, civil society). Beyond the environmental benefits, the high-value timber planted also boosts and diversifies producer incomes, although registering tree ownership in farmers' names for permission to fell trees once they have reached maturity remains an issue (Interviews #30, #129, research). As discussed below, in all three target countries farmers can only benefit monetarily from trees planted if they are registered in their name, requiring efforts on the part of project partners. The implementing NGO, specialising in afforestation and conservation, utilises a community-based monitoring system for carbon sequestered. The Peru project is certified under Rainforest Alliance's Verified Carbon Standard (Tree kids, 2013a). The Ghana and Honduras ventures are still in early stages, although Honduras is already moving towards Gold Standard certification (Planet Concern, 2013c, 2014c).

6.2.3 The GPN perspective

From a GPN perspective, there is only one key corporate stakeholder, Iller Chocolate, monopolising all corporate power. Given its membership in a cooperative group, its starting point is somewhat different from a purely profit-seeking corporation. To be 'responsible' and 'make a contribution towards solving the challenges in the cocoa sector' (Interviews #127, #134, private sector), the company aims to add to Fairtrade by also supporting afforestation projects with cocoa cooperatives. It seeks to assert sector-wide its perspective that certification is only a basis for a more comprehensive commitment given the chocolate sector's manifold challenges. Within the initiative, the degree to which producers depend on them as buyers varies: while in Honduras, they are virtually the only significant exporter of cocoa, producers in Ghana have other options given the sector's well-established nature. The buyer's corporate power and their commitment to Fairtrade as preferred certifier predetermined the certification choice for partner cooperatives, exemplifying a further link between power and embeddedness.

The initiative helped boost the collective power of Tree kids, the children's NGO. The chocolate bar enabled them to go beyond advocacy towards managing a supply-chain stake, and allowed

activists to acquire new skills in promoting a saleable fundraising instrument. Beyond the necessary capacity-building on designing and managing agroforestry systems and quality-assuring processing, the carbon aspect entailed further knowledge transfer for producer communities. The implementing NGO Planet Concern administered further support in Ghana, Peru and Honduras for registering tree ownership in producers' names, a key prerequisite for their long-term valorisation (Interviews #30, #129, research). Efforts to establish community tree nurseries in Honduras and Peru, and a cooperative-operated sawmill in Peru, promote local entrepreneurship and provide a further, diversified income strand (Planet Concern, 2013b, 2013c, 2014a, 2014c), boosting collective power also in cocoa-producing communities. There is thus an effort to promote spill-over into the local economy beyond cocoa. Moreover, newly gained knowledge e.g. on carbon credits and good agricultural practices may help to promote income, farmer organisation or food security, boosting collective power as well as the company's and Planet Concern's territorial embeddedness. Certification, and the management of multiple certification schemes (cf. table 6.2), also requires and entails greater capacities in terms of farmer organisation and documentation, even though the choice was predetermined by Iller's corporate power. While certification is often held to increase market opportunities for producers, the multitude of certification schemes the company asks for in this case primarily boosts its own relevance to and embeddedness in the network, as producers would be unlikely to obtain premiums for all separate certifications from most other buyers, a point which I will further explore in section 6.4.1.

Country	Cocoa certification	Carbon certification	Wood certification
Ghana	Fairtrade	N/A	N/A
Honduras	Fairtrade, organic	Gold Standard	FSC
Peru	Fairtrade, organic	VCS (Rainforest Alliance)	FSC

Table 6.2: Certification schemes in different sites for the World Choc initiative

Source: Author based on Planet Concern (2013a-c, 2014a-c, 2015a-c).

The venture's ownership structure ensures that all corporate and most collective power remains with Northern stakeholders. Unlike the pioneering Day Chocolate/Divine venture in the UK which established cocoa producers as co-owners (Doherty and Tranchell, 2005), the lead firm's cooperative trustees remain in the global North. Despite board members and supporters from

the global South contributing to the children's NGO and local Southern staff working for the implementing NGO, both headquarters remain in Europe. For the children's NGO, the chief need for transparency and accountability in order to harness activists' and consumers' collective power is towards the German public. It also seeks to prove, in cocoa and beyond, that products generated with Fairtrade and ecological certification can be viable propositions, aiming to have every product produced in 'the way [children] want it to be – carbon-neutral and Fairtrade' (Interview #26, civil society). While producers and cooperatives hold some collective power through determining cocoa quality and managing carbon-sequestering trees, collective and corporate powers from the funding and paying North are paramount.

Institutionally, although the public sector is not directly involved, there is an archipelagic relevance from legislation. The Swiss government, highlighted in diagram 6.2b as an archipelago actor, legislating mandatory reductions in domestic carbon emissions affected the lead firm's corporate policy (Iller Chocolate, 2012:16). Identical EU-level legislation of 20% cuts over 1990 by 2020 equally favoured a conducive societal climate and embeddedness in Germany for the children's cause, emphasising again the importance of also considering archipelago actors in the analysis. Secondly, the initiative is required to register every tree planted in farmers' names in Ghana, Honduras and Peru to avoid others exploiting the high-value wood without rewarding farmers. In sum, despite protestations of global partnership and some power in the global South, power is asymmetrically centred in driving and funding European stakeholders, as the sources of institutional, corporate and collective power hail from Europe.

Concerning societal embeddedness, the initiative's focus on transparency in public communication promoted a rootedness in the target market. The detailed information made available by the civil society actors through websites and social media created a climate conducive to activist commitment and consumer buy-in. After initial locally based territorial support for the youth initiative, international support has followed, fulfilling the objective of fund-raising and heightening the project's credibility. The chocolate has become the most successful Fairtrade bar in Germany, which stakeholders attribute to successful marketing and the 'children for children' story (Interviews #26, civil society; #134, private sector). NGO Tree kids aims to go beyond certification requirements by being Fairtrade and ecological twice over (Interview #26, civil society). It argues that it satisfies Fairtrade criteria through premiums and added income opportunities from carbon credits and timber, and ecological requirements through both the children's NGO and the implementing NGO planting trees. This willingness to go the extra mile

in both respects is rather unique, earning reputational standing in source and target territories. The lead firm's network embeddedness varies somewhat by producer country, as they purchase most of their cocoa from Ghana, but are not virtually the only buyer; for Honduras, they have assisted in reinvigorating the cocoa sector through capacity-building, providing a reliable selling option, and good prices (Interviews #127, #134, private sector; #92, development). Conversely, producers' and cooperatives' network embeddedness will vary subject to how dependent they are on this buyer, with captivity much higher for Honduras than Ghana given the virtual absence of alternative sales outlets.

The buy-in from private-sector actors thanks to the children's NGO's societal embeddedness and credibility has favoured the diffusion of World Choc, with local child activists inspiring embeddedness throughout Germany. In the detailed information provided as part of the transparency focus, the children's NGO often makes reference to the expertise of a specialised foundation and the implementing NGO, thereby attempting to highlight their embeddedness in the network, the partnership-based approach and other stakeholders' buy-in. This thus produces an interesting constellation of their collective power being in some ways predicated on their network embeddedness and other stakeholders' approval, an unusual link between power and embeddedness emphasising this thesis's argument of the importance of investigating these variegated connections. By contrast, as investigated in chapter 5, most large-scale cocoa-sector initiatives, while emphasising partnerships, will highlight their presence in the 'driver's seat', presumably to ensure that goodwill and societal and territorial embeddedness will fall on them. Of course, public-facing transparency also is a representational means towards furthering societal embeddedness, with both of these and other representational aspects to come under scrutiny in chapter 8.

Overall, the initiative has created considerable reputational benefits, boosting power and embeddedness for various stakeholders. The children's NGO has demonstrated its ability to go beyond advocacy and awareness-raising. It generates money and organisational value by expanding capacities through its creative fund-raising activities for a child-friendly product, which also increases the organisation's collective power. The underlying 'children for children' idea enhances the NGO's societal and territorial embeddedness in the target market. As the key driver in terms of marketing, Tree kids has succeeded in proving the viability of a 'sustainable' product while also turning the chocolate into Germany's most successful Fairtrade chocolate (Interview #26, civil society), not least owing to the high quality and reasonable price thanks to the private

sector foregoing profits (Interview #134, private sector). Again, trading or processing intermediaries were cut out, as in the other two case-study initiatives, thereby increasing incomes for cocoa producers and also boosting the private-sector stakeholder's territorial embeddedness through direct contacts. Beyond world-market prices, producers in Peru receive organic and Fairtrade premiums, while Ghanaian producers get prices set by the national cocoa board plus the Fairtrade surcharges, with Honduran producers receiving USD4,000 per metric tonne: the lead firm aims to re-establish cocoa as a viable livelihood opportunity in Honduras, partly through this incentive price (Interviews #127, #134, private sector). The implementing NGO's parallel afforestation efforts further boost incomes and thereby embeddedness, with high-value timber a long-term additional income strand, a medium-term prospect for carbon credits and a short-term budget booster given staggered premiums for planting and care (Interviews #134, private sector; #30, research).

The company combining diverse agroforestry systems with income from timber, premiums for planting high-value timber, and carbon credits, enhances their direct connections to and thus embeddedness with producers. Given growing concerns over long-term availability of cocoa, and certified cocoa in particular (Interview #135, private sector), the lead firm's cooperation with certified producers through a positively connotated initiative yielding diversified income is likely to entail relational benefits, including making the 'business case for cocoa to the young generation' (Interview #134, private sector). The emphasis on ensuring accurate calculations and offsetting also boosted embeddedness of Tree kids, Planet Concern and the carbon-calculating foundation on the ground (Interview #30, research). This project aims to present cocoa as a viable livelihood by combining environmental and social concerns into higher incomes for producers, thereby also boosting long-term supply security. Later chapters will explore to what extent there may be contradictions due to this dual socio-economic and environmental mission, with such potential tensions in part also due to variegated links between power and embeddedness. One such competing relation exists between safeguarding territorial embeddedness in the global South through socio-economically inclined representations and boosting societal embeddedness in the global North with environmental emphases (Interview #30, research). Another interesting tension exists between the company's corporate power and their interest in long-term supply, and civil society's collective power predicated on environmentalists' approval.

6.3 Initiative 3: Floral and Nicaragua. An initiative in several acts

6.3.1 Network configuration and introduction

Floral prides itself on 'being different'. The lead firm advocates quality and emphasises its family-owned tradition and the values of caring beyond the bottom line which this entails. As part of a company commitment to environmentally friendly behaviour, their production facilities include solar panels and a combined heat-and-power plant, with electricity supplied by a local renewable-energy provider and carbon emissions to be offset in its own cocoa plantation (Floral, n.d.e, f). In 2013, a consumer survey ranked them among Germany's favourite brands (Absatzwirtschaft, 2013), an assessment confirmed by focus group discussions (FGD1, FGD3). They have reinforced this standing by investing in product lines appreciated by responsive stakeholders, a prerequisite for achieving competitive advantage from social awareness (Castaldo et al., 2009:13). For the company, this has been organic flavours, with its introduction predating most other mainstream companies' commitments. As organic is only a small single-digit percentage of sales (Frankfurter Rundschau, 2011), their main business remains the mainstream chocolate market. However, they seek to position themselves at mainstream's premium end, quality- and representations-wise.

Their commitment to organic chocolate dovetails with their activities in Nicaragua since 1990. Legend has it that after a member of the owner family visited the country, support measures to promote cocoa-growing as an environmentally friendly livelihood commenced in the early 1990s (Interview #34, civil society).

'Cocoa is a key ingredient for our products, which we source from Third World countries. We therefore have a particular responsibility towards these countries. Of course, protecting tropical forests needs support from industrialised countries. We aim to make our contribution.' (Floral n.d.e:para 6)

There was thus a dual premise: to counteract deforestation and poor living conditions through diversified cocoa agroforestry systems, thereby combining environmentally friendly farming with improved farmer incomes.

The initiative has seen various phases. The collaboration began as a social development project involving NGO World Partnership and farmer groups who later evolved into the country's first cocoa cooperative. While the company supported producers, cocoa quality did not live up to Floral's high standards, being exported to Costa Rica and Honduras instead (Interviews #34, civil society; #94, private sector). By 2005, given the continued lack of high-quality supplies and allegations regarding improper management in the cooperative, the company was, according to a civil-society observer, 'about ready to throw in the towel in Nicaragua' (Interview #101). However, a development worker offered to facilitate organic-cocoa sourcing, launching the initiative's second phase, entailing capacity-building, processing infrastructure and cooperatives, a public-private partnership and cocoa-sourcing on ever larger scales, organic and conventional. While this cooperation, visualised in diagrams 6.3a and 6.3b, continues, the company's engagement now encompasses its own plantation on 1,300 hectares, unprecedented for a chocolate manufacturer (Interview #33, private sector). Evidently, the company's priorities have evolved considerably across the phases, which chapter 7 will explore in more detail: while increasing their supply-chain control, they also are taking on risk which growers used to bear.

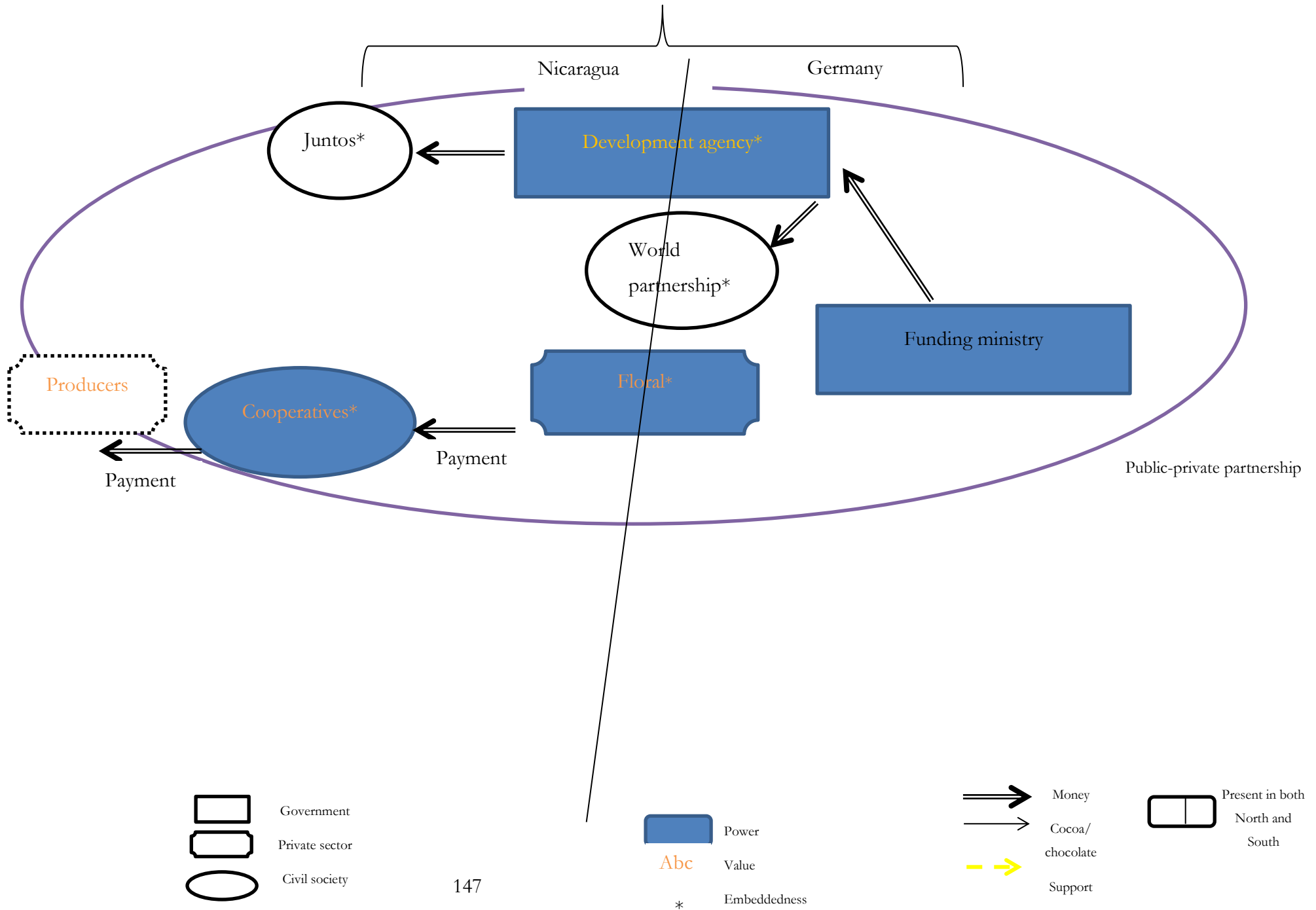


Figure 6.3a: Network configuration for Floral's cooperative-based model – only funds and cocoa.

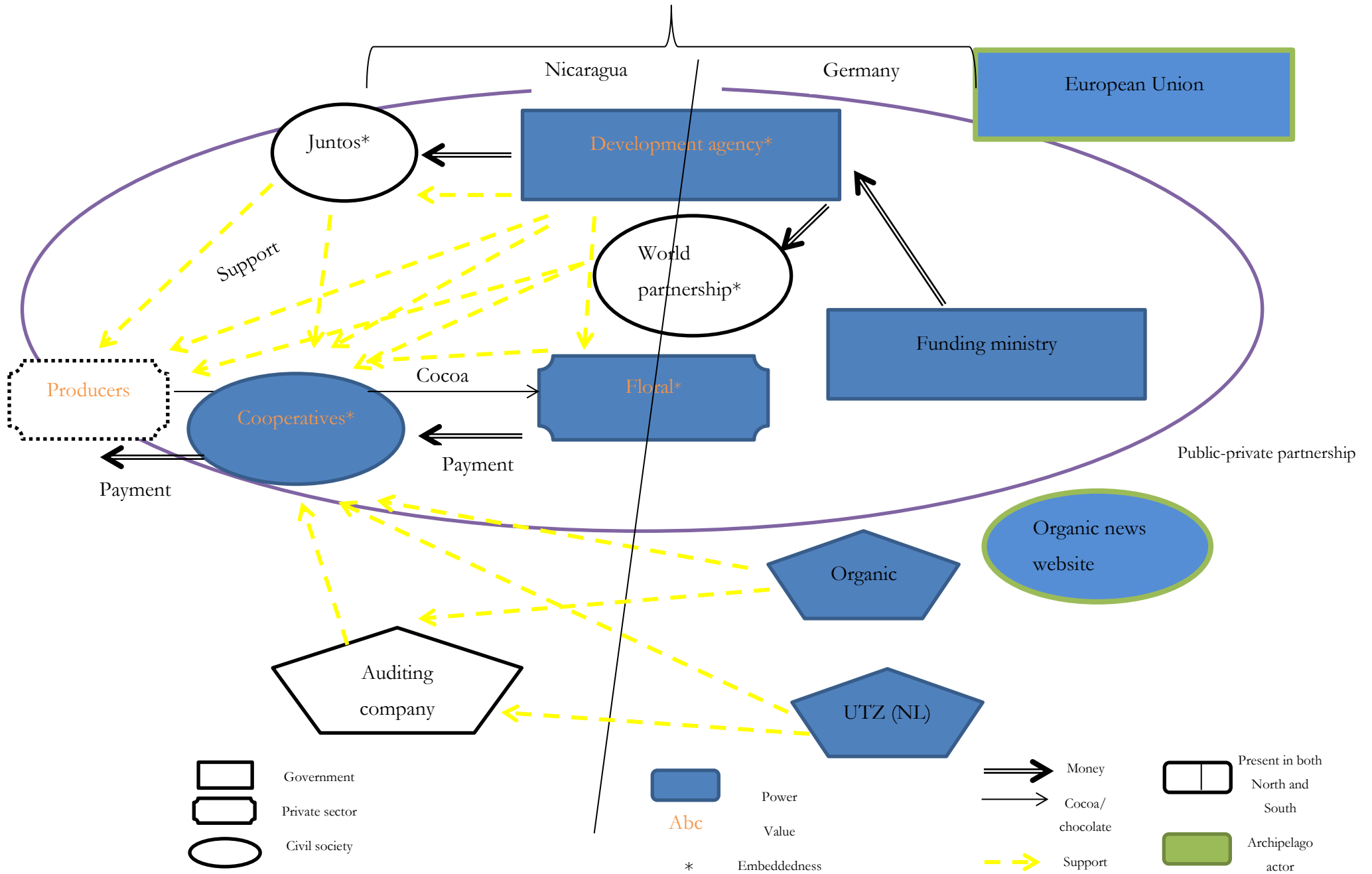


Figure 6.3b: Network configuration for Floral's cooperative based model – full.

Again, the two simplified diagrams 6.3a and 6.3b provide a visual overview of brand manufacturer Floral's cooperation with Nicaragua, showing all relevant civil-society, private-sector and public-sector stakeholders in the cooperative-based iteration of their initiative (phase 2). Figures 6.3a and b build on each other, depicting first the flows of money and cocoa/chocolate, before providing an overview of the initiative. The diagrams show the complex constellations of stakeholders, involving 'Juntos' in civil society, development agencies and certifiers vis-à-vis one private-sector agent, foreshadowing the later analysis of the company holding considerable corporate power. Equally, it shows the presence of organic and UTZ certification, and the public-private partnership enshrining the overall cooperation until recently. Diagram 6.3b also highlights two archipelago actors explored in more detail below, the European Union affecting proceedings through its legislative framework, and civil-society presence 'Organic news', a website.

6.3.2 Socio-economic, commercial and environmental objectives

The different stages of the initiative also entailed different socio-economic, commercial and environmental objectives, as chapter 7 will discuss in more detail. The socio-economic dimension was paramount in the first 'development project' phase: cocoa-farming was to be a viable livelihood strategy.

'We know that whatever [cocoa] we produce in high quality, we can always sell to Floral; they provide a good, stable market, unlike we see in [other crops].' (Interview #80, cooperative)

Beyond good prices, with 80% initially paid directly to producers to safeguard sizeable immediate benefits (Interview #93, private sector), the cooperation between Floral, NGO World Partnership and development agency also provided training on cocoa-farming and processing, while also building up Nicaragua's first cocoa cooperative.

Initially, socio-economic objectives were paramount, with environmental objectives manifest through agroforestry systems. Environmentally, agroforestry is preferable to forest destruction for cattle-rearing, with rainforest protection in line with the company's green objectives (Interview #90, development). For the first ten years, commercial objectives were thus virtually

absent. However, after the company, according to its own calculations, had spent EUR3 million (Interview #34, civil society) and fifteen years supporting a cooperative without palpable returns, a shift occurred towards commercialisation in phase 2. With another NGO, Juntos, another public-private partnership and ever more producers, volumes have increased. Continuous training and capacity-building from the company helped decrease volumes rejected due to quality flaws. Supply encompassed both conventional and organic, with organic cocoa drawing an extra premium beyond the Floral surcharge the company used to incentivise production.

‘We are quite happy with the services Floral offers. Like everyone else, we have had contacts with other buyers [with] lower quality requirements. But no-one can offer Floral’s prices, because they process their cocoa themselves.’ (Field notes 26/02/14, representative of cooperative)

For the NGO involved, given its commitment to the environment, the environmental viability and income diversification opportunities were a priority, dovetailing with German development cooperation’s objectives. With heightened commercial objectives, cocoa exports to Germany rose, reaching almost 700 metric tonnes in 2012 (GIZ, 2013). Nevertheless, the volumes never attained the targeted 1,500 metric tonnes (Interview #54, private sector).

Given ever-rising cocoa futures prices and centripetal forces in the already concentrated cocoa-processing market (Brand Eins, 2013), the company bought 2,000 hectares of land to grow cocoa on ca. 1,300ha under certified conditions, with the rest integrated into the Mesoamerican biological corridor and dedicated to carbon-offsetting. There are concerns to what extent this move may affect the cooperative-based model.

‘The intention of the [owner] family might be to have [...] cocoa from their own plantation [...] [But] they have experienced some difficulties with cooperatives in the past, so this may be their Plan B.’ (Interview #117, civil society)

In phase 3, socio-economic benefits such as capacity-building thus shift from many producers, including spill-over effects into the local economy, towards few plantation staff, with some

ancillary benefits for adjacent cocoa cooperatives given the company's interest in ensuring its processing facilities are used fully (Interview #54, private sector).

'For [Floral], an integrated agroforestry system is the right balance between economy and ecology.' (Interview #33, private sector)

Integrating the space into the Mesoamerican biological corridor and working with Nicaraguan universities to safeguard conservation (Interview #54, private sector) ensure a level of academic oversight and continuous habitats which would be nigh impossible for hundreds of small-scale plots. Equally, having the plantation certified under the 'Gold Standard' for carbon-offsetting is easier for a large-scale plantation with good records, as is selling high-value shade timber trees. This additional strand of income points to the heightened commercial objectives, which also encompasses better control over quality through managing growing and processing with in-house specialists. This could thus be read as an example of Gereffi, Humphrey and Sturgeon's integrated value-chain model, in which firms seek to move critical functions in-house to increase control (2005), resulting from increasing concerns for supply security.

In terms of my analytical framework as discussed in chapters 2 and 4, this also confirms the importance of archipelago actors in the chocolate sector's concentrated oligopolies, supporting this thesis's argument of projected shortages prompting far-reaching shifts in the chocolate sector. Mergers and acquisitions between the handful of companies dominating processing as well as commitments to increase percentages of certified supply across the sector are threatening to further limit high-quality supply at reasonable prices, prompting Floral's move towards increasing in-house supply. While not only aiming to consolidate corporate power, Floral also sought to increase societal embeddedness among German consumers by emphasising the move's altruistic properties in terms of its socio-economic and environmental benefits. This is another one among the many complex links between power and embeddedness, supporting the argument explored in section 4.3 as part of my analytical discussion of the important links between GPNs' power and embeddedness dimensions. Chapter 8, focusing on representations, will provide further details on Floral's public-facing communication regarding the shift towards in-house production, and the objectives which the company forefronted.

6.3.3 The GPN perspective

Beginning with collective power, the influence of producers extends to controlling growing and, to an extent, cocoa quality. Equally, they decide to whom to sell – while selling to Floral may be most attractive money-wise, there are alternative buyers including local kiosks, travelling salesmen, and a gourmet chocolatier seeking high genetic quality. The former two options are also available outside of cooperatives' pre-arranged pick-up times and can offer immediate payment or kiosk credit. Floral seeks to counteract these tendencies by offering cooperatives bonuses for loyalty or increasing volumes: the company thus also harnesses the collective power of cooperatives, who have an incentive to encourage members to sell to them. Cooperatives have power over bean transport, fermentation and drying, which are integral to bean quality. They have a crucial conduit function in providing a sales outlet to farmers and safeguarding quality.

Due to the company's strong public-relations awareness, the German public has collective power over it. With consumers increasingly aware of 'sustainability', the company's self-image of a value-driven family business works as a disciplining instrument, demonstrating the power of representations. Portraying itself as different creates expectations, which exert coercive power. Equally, the collective power of a particular stratum of society manifested itself when in spring 2013, the company intended to pay only premiums for UTZ rather than organic certification in future. As the 'Organic news' website, dedicated to reporting news on organic products, reported this (Organic news, 2013), various shops threatened to stop selling the company's organic flavours, leading the company to revoke its announcement and continue to pay organic alongside UTZ premiums. This is a clear example of an archipelago actor not involved in chocolate production exerting influence, felt across the network as even a cooperative representative in Nicaragua recounted the story (Interview #108). This example, also represented graphically in diagram 6.3b, confirms this thesis's argument of the importance of analysing GPNs holistically.

Floral's corporate power is omnipresent. Floral paying above-average prices to keep other buyers at bay exacerbates producer dependencies as some other large-scale cocoa buyers therefore do not even try their luck in Nicaragua (Interviews #51, #63, #101, civil society). This makes the company a factor in all cocoa-related, even political, decision-making (Interview #33, private sector). While it has provided training and capacity-building, infrastructure and facilities to drive down the rejection rate from the former 17% to only 5.5% in 2014 (Interviews #93, #94, private sector), an NGO worker reported that some cooperatives cannot explain why their beans pass

one week and are rejected another week, causing difficulties given the lack of well-paying alternatives (Interview #57, civil society). Floral's agenda-setting power thus also extends to quality standards. Given their buying power in the market, there are few to no incentives for cooperatives to follow other parameters, nor to even seek knowledge on alternative techniques or norms. The same goes for planting material, as genetic make-up may prevent producers from being able to sell to gourmet buyers (Interview #64, private sector) if they use the varieties Floral or cooperatives provide, some of which are more resistant to pests, but lose out to traditional varieties in terms of organoleptics. Finally, despite Floral's positive reputation across-the-board given their long-term commitment, their recent shift from organic to UTZ certification, constituting 'five steps back' in terms of environmental stringency according to an NGO worker (Interview #51), and Floral's acquisition of land for in-house production shows that this dependency, despite its voluntary nature, has risks for producers. A relevant archipelago power here is the European Union: on account of an Association Agreement between Central America and EU, traceability of all food imports will become obligatory, prompting the company's move towards UTZ which is considered strong on traceability (Interviews #100, private sector; #141, certifier). Equally, the archipelagic relevance of Floral's competitors and their growing sustainability commitments, and the importance of processing oligopolists further concentrating in an already dense marketplace, play a part in explaining the initiative's evolution over time.

The corporate power of certifiers also is worth mentioning. While there may be some debate whether certifiers are private-sector or civil-society bodies (Interviews #117, civil society; #109, cooperative; #43, research), this thesis considers them hybrids with roots in civil society, but able to exert corporate power, with different certifiers located in different places on the private-civil society spectrum. Certifiers have power as setters of standards by which auditors, producers and cooperatives have to abide. Despite requirements for public participation in standard revision under the ISEAL Alliance (Interview #124, certifier), there is nevertheless a sense of powerlessness among some standard-takers vis-à-vis standard-makers (Interviews #103, 104, producers; #109, cooperative). More generally, consumers' and certifiers' societal embeddedness in the global North is the moral and commercial basis of certification requirements, with certifiers' need for embeddedness producing an instance of corporate power given requirements' ramifications.

For its own plantation the company has a clear vision. Firstly, it is the most effective way for a 'medium-sized company in the international comparison' to maximise influence on cocoa

production's social and ecological circumstances (Floral, 2013a:1), again invoking the family-owned business and its obligation to assert its values. Conversely, it could be a template for chocolate manufacturers to expand control and safeguard supplies long-term, as currently smallholders produce up to 90% of world cocoa (Hütz-Adams and Fountain, 2012): this resembles an 'integrated' network architecture in which the company moves key functions in-house (Gereffi, Humphrey and Sturgeon, 2005). In terms of power and embeddedness structures, this also enhances corporate power by eliminating intermediaries from the supply chain, while safeguarding that consumers associate all embeddedness benefits from this certified venture with the company rather than other stakeholders. This constitutes another complex connection between power and embeddedness, which also causes tensions with intermediaries such as cooperatives or producers who are no longer part of the in-house production network. Equally, there is a rhetoric of remedying through investment the lack of progress in smallholder farming (DW, 2013; brand eins, 2013), a part of the 'helping' narrative I will explore in chapter 8. As argued above, Floral's move was in part prompted by the actions archipelago actors throughout the sector took in relation to projected cocoa shortages, increasing their commitments to certified cocoa supply or merging with other stakeholders to further concentrate the oligopolistic marketplace. The shift does not address power asymmetries by moving some power e.g. related to production or ownership to Southern producers to augment buy-in and boost supply security that way, for instance through a model sharing ownership with producers akin to Divine/Day Chocolate (Doherty and Tranchell, 2005). Instead, Floral's move exacerbates existing power asymmetries while retaining all embeddedness benefits for the company.

Regarding institutional power, the German ministry and cooperation agencies exerted influence through the conditions attached to funding. This includes monitoring and indicators, and co-setting the endeavour's original organic direction. A prominent research institute's institutional power is manifest through their planting materials designed to withstand certain pests or attain higher productivity. They develop genetic varieties assuming certain management techniques or inputs (Interview #51, civil society), thereby imparting notions of what constitutes 'good' agronomic management and 'good farmers', which recalls the previously discussed strong normative connotations of those narratives (Kumar, 2014; Sumberg, Thompson and Woodhouse, 2013). Moreover, the genetic varieties recommended and given out to growers also predetermine the types of mainstream or niche buyers to which producers can sell. Cooperatives also harbour institutional powers given their vital link function in channelling resources and implementing certification schemes, even though corporate power may supersede their vote.

Given the public-sector's, cooperatives' and the research institute's positive standing, their power also has a link to their, the project's and the company's embeddedness.

For network embeddedness, the lead company helped its standing in Nicaragua by establishing a long-term commitment. As cocoa-growing entails a time lag of several years and thus, without support, is not a pursuit for the poorest (Interview #91, development), trust in the buyer's long-term interest is crucial in producers' decision-making. The company's direct processing enhances their network embeddedness by increasing points of contact with cooperatives and producers, while removing other intermediaries from the network. The company also has supported its standing by hiring individuals who had previously worked for NGOs or development agencies, utilising their expertise and social capital in terms of motivating and managing network stakeholders. Finally, the company directors have aided network embeddedness:

[The company head] came and said to an assembly of producers, in Spanish: 'We need your cocoa. We want to make chocolate. We want you to share in our revenue.'
(Interview #34, civil society)

'It was not a cold business relationship ... there was a personal connection between [the company director] and producers, [the director] also came to visit several times.'
(Interview #93, private sector)

However, moving away from organic may hurt the company's standing with network stakeholders for whom a commitment to the organic cause constitutes their *raison d'être*, from cooperatives and producers to NGOs and consumers or retailers in Germany. This is thus another interesting tension between increasing embeddedness among those consumers for whom certification rather than a specific certification type is the priority, and embeddedness with champions of the organic cause.

In Nicaragua, producers, cooperatives, NGOs and development agencies appreciate Floral's long-term presence and willingness to support. A key factor in deepening the company's territorial embeddedness among producers has been their willingness to move from producers receiving de-facto IOUs in exchange for cocoa, to the company making available interest-free

funds to cooperatives to pay producers in cash immediately. This has strengthened the company's standing also vis-à-vis travelling salesmen whose immediate payment formerly gave them a competitive edge (Interview #92, development). The company's overall positive experiences in Nicaragua and familiarity with terrain and legislative environment also prompted it to base its new plantation in the country, favoured by government support and high soil quality (Interview #33, private sector). The long-term partnership involving commercial, NGO and development-agency actors has also provided all three with reputational benefits and territorial embeddedness, with producers and cooperatives well aware of the support provided (Interviews #80, cooperative; #72 and #75, producers; #34, civil society). Concerning societal embeddedness, German cooperation's focus on environmental aspects is rooted in high environmental awareness in the home country (Interview #91, development). One recent example was the Federal Republic of Germany pledging EUR500m annually to biodiversity conservation (BMZ, 2014). A further contributing factor was the environmental priority agreed with the Nicaraguan government in negotiations on the foci of development cooperation, with both aspects translating to an environmental focus.

The company's embeddedness in Nicaragua is further boosted by the steady incomes from Floral prices stabilising cooperative and household budgets in the highly diversified Nicaraguan agricultural economy (Interview #53, research) even when prices for staple foods or export crops fluctuated (Interviews #80, #108, cooperative; Interview #106, producer). While home-fermented cocoa can get prices from 12 to 15 Nicaraguan córdobas (NIO) per pound, fresh cocoa at Floral prices would draw NIO24 per pound, also sparing producers the manual labour of cocoa-drying (Interviews #82, civil society; #104, producer). For cooperatives, receiving good prices for cocoa also permitted engaging with not-so-lucrative food crops which are vital for local and national food security (Interview #117, civil society). This allowed cooperatives to increase their collective power while furthering the company's embeddedness in the territory. Equally, the presence of a stable buyer was beneficial for cooperative development (Interview #108, cooperative). For German partners, given a particular focus on environmental protection issues in Germany (Interviews #91, development; #100, private sector), the combined livelihood and biodiversity benefits enhanced embeddedness in German society as well as the Nicaraguan territories. For the lead firm, the initiative enhances their territorial embeddedness by strengthening direct ties with producers and securing high-quality supplies, demonstrating another interesting link between power and embeddedness.

Increasing product sophistication through higher-skilled processing steps and organic certification also aided collective power for cooperatives, providing skills which have multiple uses. Given the need for cocoa beans to be processed within 24 hours after the pods are opened, large distances and poor roads, cooperatives needed to acquire skills and infrastructure regarding fermentation and drying, which partly are also usable for other crops. Through built capacities, producers and cooperatives attained higher prices than by selling non- or briefly fermented cocoa to travelling salesmen. Increasing product sophistication, the omission of intermediaries and cooperative processing allowed greater value capture, also entailing brand benefits for the ‘different’ company. Organic certification, a common upgrading strategy, entailed greater incomes for producers and organic cooperatives while also increasing their collective power, and conversely boosting the company’s embeddedness.

The GPN perspective is very different in phase 3’s plantation-based model. Excepting cocoa cooperatives adjacent to the plantation which are able to use Floral’s processing infrastructure for their own cocoa, the only civil-society or public-sector partners are universities, which are unlikely to improve embeddedness as much as civil-society cooperation and direct ties to cooperatives and producers. Given the overall shifts in the cocoa sector, averting risks pertaining to purchasing cocoa supplies from unverifiable stock-exchange sources can increase Floral’s societal embeddedness in Germany, reducing dependency on other suppliers and world-market prices. Given its 100% ownership stake in the plantation, the company thus enhances its corporate power by moving key growing and processing functions in-house, reducing rejection rates and improving output quality. Conversely, the only socio-economic opportunities for the local economy stem from wages and further training for staff. The lead firm presents their new venture as an enhancement of socio-economic and environmental responsibility:

‘Consistently auditing cultivation and working conditions in mostly smallholder structures worldwide is not viable for us in terms of human and financial resources. However, fair working conditions and protecting the environment are key values in our 100-year company philosophy.’ (Floral 2013a:1)

This argument, to be explored in more detail in sections 7.3 and 8.3, is somewhat ironic given the tensions the move has created with civil-society partners, cooperatives and producers. The plantation-based model eschews two key benefits which current thinking demands from

chocolate manufacturers aiming to improve the sector's 'sustainability' (Interviews #43, research; #142, private sector), and which the cooperative-based system has entailed: diversification and higher cocoa prices for cocoa producers.

6.4 Comparative observations

6.4.1 Observations from a GPN perspective

From a GPN perspective, there are similarities and divergences across the three initiatives. Among the similarities is that the intertwining of socio-economic and environmental priorities was to boost incomes and thereby enhance the lead actors' embeddedness in producer territories and home societies. In the first initiative, Our Chocolate, the local economy extracted additional income from manufacturing cocoa sacks, while World Choc's additional income strands encompassed carbon sequestration and precious timber. Beyond this conjoint objective of improving producers' livelihoods, the initiatives pursued different environmental objectives, including mitigating climate change by reducing deforestation, promoting carbon sequestration and protecting rainforests through agroforestry. Consequently, agroforestry system designs diverged: while Our Chocolate uses food security-promoting fruit trees and sellable timber trees, World Choc clearly prioritises additional income from timber trees sequestering more carbon than fruit trees. Floral, finally, pursued different approaches in its cooperative-based and plantation-based models: while the former promoted the use of intercropped food crops and fruit trees in line with government recommendations (De campesino a campesino, 2008; MEFCCA, 2013), the plantation-based system only includes precious timber.

The three initiatives, in pursuing divergent approaches, thus also demonstrate this thesis's argument of a plethora of understandings of sustainability translating to a broad spectrum of socio-economic, environmental and commercial priorities, which chapter 7 will explore in more detail. The different approaches also show the tensions which exist between different stakeholders' priorities and their preferences for implementation in practice, including e.g. carbon sequestration or food security. Moreover, different stakeholders' statuses of power and embeddedness will have a considerable impact in terms of their ability to project their priorities onto the initiative. This thus confirms the argument elaborated in section 4.3 regarding the links between stakeholders' power and embeddedness relations, and the degree to which they influence what actors can imprint their understandings onto the initiatives as a whole, despite diverging interpretations from other stakeholders. Later chapters will discuss this observation particularly

regarding commercial priorities, virtually exclusively the domain of private-sector actors, but nevertheless prominent foci.

Concerning power, notwithstanding the power the producing side attains from controlling cocoa-bean quality, all three initiatives demonstrated a considerable concentration of power in the global North. The private-sector actors, funding ministries or NGOs are all based in Switzerland or Germany, respectively. While capacity-building on processing management and administration may enable cooperatives to access different markets long-term, short-term there are no other avenues to pursue. Equally, while some value-adding functions which of necessity must be carried out close to origin, are based in the global South, further value-adding processing stages such as the production of cocoa butter occur in the global North, with power thus remaining concentrated in the global North. Overall, there is thus a power asymmetry, and no attempt, beyond supporting farmer organisation as required by seals, by Northern stakeholders to remedy that through co-ownership of the production venture and thus ultimately project profits, even though Our Chocolate defined citizen ‘empowerment’ in Colombian municipalities as an objective. In all three cases, institutional power exercised by archipelago actors proved crucial. The conditions defined by the funding body for Our Chocolate, legislative ordinances regarding tree tenure and carbon reductions in the second initiative, and finally the Association Agreement between Central America and the European Union for Floral were instrumental factors.

Across all three initiatives, cutting out intermediaries enhanced the value for upstream producers and cooperatives, while boosting embeddedness by securing supply for lead actors and increasing their corporate power long-term. Against the backdrop of ever-increasing concentration of cocoa-processing (Cargill, 2015; Confectionery News, 2013e; UNCTAD, 2008) and ever more companies making ‘sustainability’ commitments, all three initiatives condense networks, i.e. cut out intermediaries to ensure higher cocoa prices for producers and cooperatives while still maintaining competitive retail prices. This is thus an example of Lukes’s (2005:109) point that power over others is not always counterproductive, leading to higher prices for producers, but also fewer buying outlets. Immediate access to producers through closer ties between North and South also enabled chocolate manufacturers for World Choc and Floral to exert greater control over how cooperatives process cocoa, a key factor in determining eventual quality. Equally, it also allowed all three drivers behind the initiatives, private sector/civil society in World Choc, private sector in Floral, and public sector in the first network, to determine cooperatives’ certification choices. In tandem with the quality requirements set, this dynamic can serve as a mechanism to

project Northern power and thereby increase captivity, excluding other potential buyers. In return, producers particularly in Central America received prices far above world markets. Especially in Nicaragua, boosted prices have served as a much-needed buffer against the vagaries of other food price curves. All three initiatives thus exemplify the absence of middlemen which, according to Carrier (2010:680), is often presented as a hallmark of ethically viable projects, but also means here that lead actors increase power asymmetries through sustainability initiatives, concentrating more power in themselves by condensing the network.

Regarding embeddedness, all three initiatives aimed to establish close ties between lead firm/municipality and Southern cocoa producers. The first initiative utilised pre-existing municipal partnerships and project staff with experience bridging the gap between the two contexts. World Choc chose to work with Peruvian communities who are familiar with the partners, and have Honduran staff and an NGO partner building up the sector in Honduras. In the third network, Floral have continuously hired Nicaraguan staff who worked for NGO and development partners, bringing on board their territorial and societal embeddedness. Their long-term embeddedness also facilitated the gradual evolution of Nicaragua's cocoa exports to Europe. In societal embeddedness terms, all three initiatives, one through the public sector, two through civil-society entities, aimed to promote societal acceptance of their ventures in the target country and at home, with representations crucial for boosting embeddedness through communication with consumers and public-at-large. In some ways, aspects of all three initiatives could thus be characterised as relational in Gereffi, Humphrey and Sturgeon's supply chain categories (2005).

A key question for producers and their ability to exert power over buying stakeholders is to what extent they can switch to other buyers. On the one hand, as all initiatives name partner municipalities or cooperatives in publicity and internet materials, this bestows a certain counterbalancing power on these partners, and creates a need for lead actors to maintain good relations with them so as not to contradict the partnership terms agreed explicitly with funding bodies or implicitly with consumers. However, this only slightly diminishes lead actors' overall dominance given a palpable lack of alternative buyers paying premium prices. Exceptionally, in World Choc's partnership with Ghana, the cooperative does have other buyers to sell to, although growers would lose the lead firm's premiums for planting trees. In all other cases, switching to another buyer would involve substantial additional costs in terms of transport or processing, or require foregoing considerable surcharges and premiums. Nevertheless, producers

may choose to forego additional income in exchange for flexibility on quality sold or time when cash is received. A related question is at what point income lost would be so prohibitive as to deter farmers completely, although a question worth discussing is whether the relationship is voluntarily captive as alternative outlets are available, but far less attractive. In World Choc's Honduras case, cooperatives' partnership with Iller involves so many certifications there are unlikely to be alternative buyers offering premiums and restitution for costs incurred for all schemes. The very specific needs of lead firm and supporting NGOs, requiring fourfold certification, serve as a binding tool, rendering the venture largely captive. As certifications are sources of credibility and embeddedness for Northern stakeholders' relationship with consumers, they also inform stakeholders' relations with Southern partners. At the same time, their complex combination in this case renders it less likely that producers will answer projections of power by finding alternative buyers. This captive outcome is somewhat ironic since certification is often hailed as allowing producers to access alternative markets.

The analysis also confirmed that utilising a network metaphor and extending it to include archipelago actors yielded vital insights. The research demonstrated a multitude of intricate connections between power and embeddedness aspects connecting all stakeholders. For this research, given the prominent involvement of public-sector and civil-society actors, the analysis showed that focusing only on private-sector actors immediately involved in production would fail to further a profound understanding of the complex dynamics and interdependent connectivities driving the above-described networks. While private-sector lead firms are decisive actors, civil-society and public-sector stakeholders at multiple geographical scales equally have proved very relevant. The 'relational view of the world' which the GPN framework aims to represent thus appears best-suited (Coe et al., 2008b:272) to capture the complex relations between power and embeddedness shown in this chapter. As posited hypothetically in my theoretical considerations and confirmed through analysis, I cannot follow Neilson and Pritchard (2009:56)'s argument that a chain metaphor tends to be better suited to represent research into tropical primary commodities given my research objective of representing the whole network and a wide array of stakeholders relevant for the study. This thesis has argued and confirmed in this chapter that the institutional, territorial and societal context of production and the multitude of relevant civil-society, public-sector and private-sector actors are crucial in understanding initiatives' underlying power and embeddedness relations. Archipelago actors proved relevant stakeholders throughout, for instance through competitors entering into sustainability commitments or processing companies further merging. Equally, in all three initiatives, an intricate web of civil-society and

public-sector stakeholders alongside the prominent private-sector actors have played a key role in shaping the initiatives, with the tensions arising from their diverse priorities further discussed in chapter 7.

6.4.2 Observations regarding production networks' environmental dimension

Regarding the environmental dimension, several diverse tensions are evident across the three initiatives. In a region of high deforestation, but also numerous protected areas, Our Chocolate aims to create a livelihood alternative to slash-and-burn agriculture and cattle-rearing compatible with protecting biodiversity and rainforest. Through agroforestry systems intercropping cocoa with fruit and timber trees, they are to conserve local biodiversity while also preventing deforestation-induced greenhouse gases: given the venture's origin in governmental climate-change funds, a link to mitigating global warming is prominent. In terms of Bolwig et al.'s (2010:182-3) distinction between the local or global scales at which supply chains affect the environment, the initiative incentivises maintaining rainforest cover locally by creating a livelihood alternative the terms of which also include upholding forest cover, with concomitant benefits for local biodiversity and larger ecosystems given the area's high conservation value. The global-level objectives thus set the agenda for agroforestry-system designs locally, although there is also a strong food-security element. Even within the environmental dimension, there is thus a tension between diverging conservation and carbon sequestration concerns. Chapter 7 will explore in more detail both these frictions and other trade-offs with socio-economic and commercial aspects which this chapter touched upon.

The tension between biodiversity and carbon concerns, and the ability to incentivise them through socio-economic measures, is even more apparent in the second initiative. Tree kids, a key driver both in the initiative and for the overall marketing, has a clear focus on global-level climate change mitigation. World Choc has calculated the precise greenhouse gases emanating from chocolate-bar production, and aims to compensate them in-chain. The global-level objectives immediately link to local-level choices promoting afforestation, with a need to incentivise careful management now through care premiums as trees' monetary value will only materialise in roughly 20 years from timber sales. Environmentally, there are questions regarding trade-offs (Twin/NRI, 2013) e.g. between planting slow-growing endemic trees boosting local biodiversity, and choosing fast-growing non-native trees without the same habitat-preserving properties. According to the implementing NGO (Planet Concern, 2013b, 2013c, 2014a-c), their agroforestry-system designs

never include more than 10% non-native trees; however, the speed at which trees sequester carbon matters given the children's NGO's premise. There is thus a tension between local and global, between biodiversity and carbon concerns, which chapter 7 will explore further.

Floral's initiative has seen an interesting evolution overall and in its environmental dimension, also demonstrating tensions. Originally, it began from a similar premise as Our Chocolate, creating livelihood opportunities to halt rainforest destruction locally. A more global connection came through organic certification in the mid-2000s. The strongest link to the global level, however, is through Gold Standard certification for offsetting on its own plantation. It is thus mirroring the approach GPN 2's lead firm Iller innovated. The plantation also has a link to global ecosystem conservation through its integration into the Mesoamerican biological corridor. With the lead firm switching from organic to UTZ certification, some argue this means a lesser commitment to local environmentally friendly practices, but a greater commitment to global processes and the concomitant opportunities for certification. The global thus outweighed some local environmental benefits, showing another example of tensions even within the environmental dimension. There is also a link to embeddedness and power relations, with the shift to UTZ in part in an effort to demonstrate a verifiable commitment to socially and environmentally viable production as other chocolate-sector actors are shifting to 100% certified. Beyond this embeddedness aspect, this move also testifies to Floral's asymmetrical power given other actors' inability to challenge this choice even if it contravened their own organic convictions.

6.5 Conclusion

In answer to research sub-question 2 concerning novelties in cocoa sustainability initiatives, this chapter has aimed to map and compare the three selected case-studies of Our Chocolate, World Choc and Floral through a GPN lens. The analysis has emphasised power and embeddedness relations and their connections, while also going beyond conventional GPN studies in highlighting archipelago actors and tensions particularly in relation to the priorities and representations which later chapters will explore. The comparative study showed the diversity of the three case-studies under investigation, encompassing different public-sector, civil-society and private-sector actors. Consequently, the resulting initiatives differ considerably in terms of the market segments they target, scale, stakeholders and structures. A commonality was, however, that all three initiatives produced tensions between different stakeholders' socio-economic,

environmental and commercial goals in answer to research sub-question 2.1, which the following chapter will explore in more detail. In several cases, archipelago actors from civil-society, public-sector, or private-sector competition, which conventional analyses may have overlooked, played key roles in creating or exacerbating tensions, confirming this thesis's argument for the benefits of holistic analyses in furthering the understanding of complex initiatives.

In answer to research sub-question 2.2 regarding trends in cocoa sustainability initiatives from a GPN perspective, a further point of similarity were the power and embeddedness asymmetries all three initiatives, despite their diversity, displayed. While all initiatives employed representations of partnership, to be explored in chapter 8, the GPN analysis in this chapter showed for all three analyses that power, corporate, collective and institutional, predominantly lay in the global North, with public-sector, private-sector and civil-society stakeholders. Despite protestations of partnership, they do not seek to redress pre-existing power asymmetries in the cocoa sector, which have contributed to several of the socio-economic, environmental and commercial challenges it currently faces. Despite the notional power shift to those able to resolve projected cocoa shortages, i.e. producers, the initiatives as currently constituted perpetuate power differentials by neglecting to shift ownership or production shares to the global South. Indeed, all three initiatives' elimination of intermediaries and concomitant condensing of networks furthered rather than remedied power imbalances. This fundamental asymmetry also ensures lead actors' continuing societal embeddedness in the global North, given the power differential's likelihood to perpetuate Southern stakeholders' status as recipients of the 'help' stakeholders offer. It also shores up buyers' network embeddedness, given initiatives' continuing need for commercial outlets in the global North and funding. Lead actors' territorial embeddedness in the global South may not benefit as much, but still increases thanks to the improved social and environmental circumstances of production which most initiatives seek to entail. Despite differences in the details, these findings were confirmed by all three initiatives, exemplifying the complex links between power and embeddedness which this thesis considers a crucial point of interest in GPN analyses.

In summary, this chapter has argued and confirmed that there is a web of complex tensions and relationships between power and embeddedness in the three initiatives, partly constitutive, partly contradictory, but often interdependent. This chapter further confirmed persisting power asymmetries favouring Northern lead actors, including public-sector, private-sector and civil-society entities, vis-à-vis Southern cocoa producers. While, much to producers' appreciation, all

three initiatives entailed higher incomes and various facets of greater socio-economic and environmental awareness on the part of Northern actors, these shifts occurred at the micro level of individual efforts: they did not entail changes in power distribution throughout the network, let alone polarity shifts on a macro, sector-wide scale. Indeed, one could argue that cutting out intermediaries, while increasing grower prices, increased power asymmetries in the initiatives by furthering monopsonistic structures with only one viable buyer. At the same time, there was a persistent attempt to enhance Northern, particularly private-sector, actors' embeddedness through direct ties with cocoa producers with a view to shoring up supply security long-term. Increasing embeddedness with Northern stakeholders is in part predicated on projecting conducive representations towards the public-at-large and consumers in particular, which will be analysed in chapter 8. First, chapter 7 will build on this chapter's analysis of power and embeddedness structures to explore the constellations of priorities for different public-sector, private-sector and civil-society stakeholders in North and South, and their ability to assert them within initiatives.

7. Stakeholder priorities: convergences, divergences and tensions

Building on the broader view of the chocolate sector which chapter 5 provided, chapter 6 applied the previously established conceptual framework to my three case-studies to unpack particularly the power and embeddedness aspects of the cocoa sustainability initiatives. Through a slightly expanded GPN lens, it mapped and critically explored Our Chocolate, World Choc and Floral, three initiatives incorporating conservation and carbon measures, in terms of civil-society, public-sector and private-sector stakeholders and their power and embeddedness relations. The two complementary analytical tools of considering especially the diverse links between power and embeddedness, and exploring also archipelago actors with no obvious link into the cocoa network, but who nevertheless have a material impact on the bar's production, provided useful insights. It found that, confirming my thesis's arguments, there are multiple shifts in the chocolate sector also manifest throughout these initiatives. These trends concern firstly the growing importance of commercial concerns against the backdrop of shortage fears, secondly the diversity of civil-society and public-sector stakeholders involved by the private-sector in tackling unprecedented challenges, and finally unchanged or even exacerbated power and embeddedness asymmetries between North and South. This chapter aims to build on these findings in order to deepen our understanding of the tensions emanating from this diversity of actors, their multiplicity of priorities and the power and embeddedness asymmetries they face. To this end, it aims to use particularly interview, documentary and participant observation data to highlight different stakeholders' priorities and emerging tensions in answer to the third research sub-question:

3. How are new drivers affecting cocoa sustainability initiatives with an environmental focus?

3.1 Who and what have been important drivers?

3.2 How do initiatives reflect trade-offs and tensions between priorities among different GPN stakeholders?

3.3 What are the implications of these drivers and tensions for producers' and other stakeholders' reality?

To answer the above research sub-question, this chapter will apply the constellation of priorities framework introduced in section 2.4 (cf. figure 7.1) to the three initiatives under investigation. The previous chapter demonstrated power and embeddedness asymmetries and some tensions

between different stakeholders' objectives across my three case-studies. Through the framework, chapter 7 will analyse stakeholder priorities systematically in terms of socio-economic, commercial and environmental dimensions. The objective is to identify points of divergence as potential sources of tension between private-sector, public-sector and civil-society stakeholders across the initiatives, exploring drivers and their implications for different stakeholders' realities as well as connections to the complex power and embeddedness relations established previously. Applying the model introduced in section 2.4 to different stakeholders, this chapter will map the binary presence or absence of twelve priorities for stakeholders in three dimensions. The colourful dots represent presence of a priority, with the colourful lines connecting them for clearer visualisation (cf. figure 7.1):

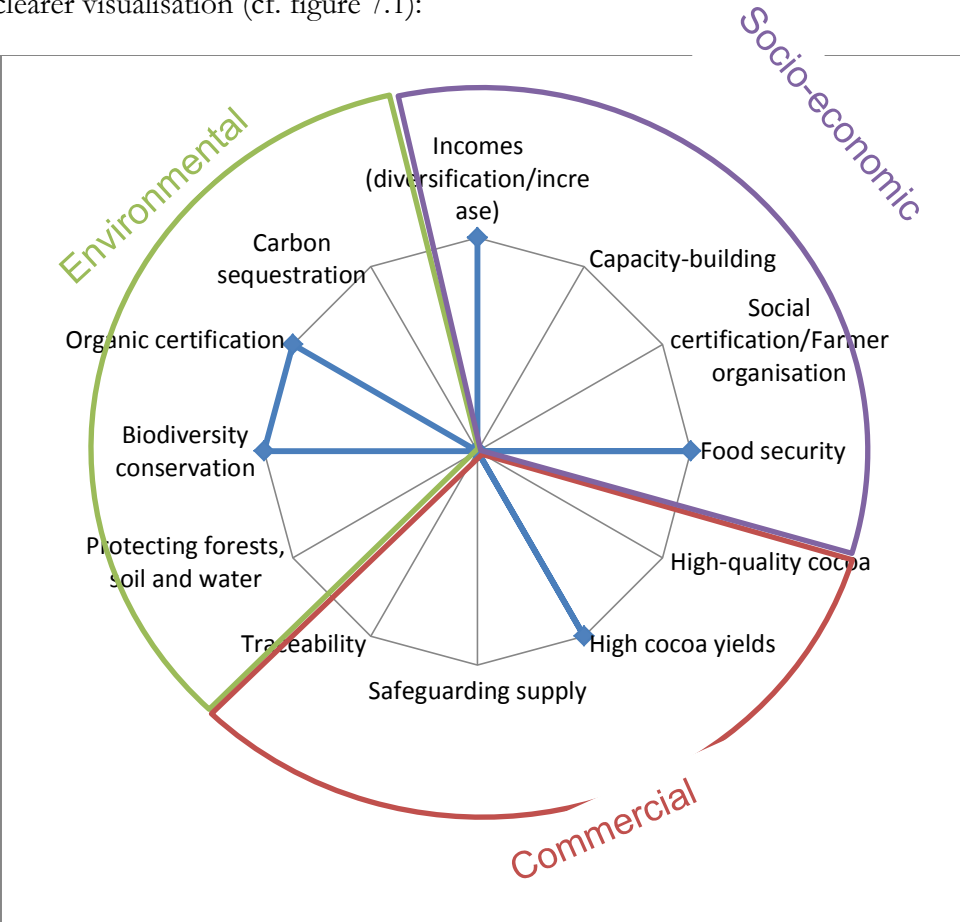


Figure 7.1: Constellations of priorities model (example).

Source: Author.

As explained in section 2.4, the idea of constellations of priorities expands on Reynolds's (2009) tripartite distinction of mission-driven, quality-driven and market-driven coffee buyers, creating one key contribution to knowledge of my research. The research develops a framework usable beyond private-sector actors reflecting convention theory's insight regarding the divergences

between different network stakeholders on definitions of quality and priorities (Cidell and Alberts, 2006; Fold, 2000; Raynolds and Wilkinson, 2007; Renard, 2003).

The chapter's argument is that stakeholders' socio-economic, environmental and commercial priorities variously dovetail, intersect and collide, meriting discussion to analyse the ramifications of these interactions for initiatives and stakeholders on the ground. To enhance the potential for usability in practice, the framework also encompasses a tentative visual representation of priorities as a spider-web diagram, which is consciously kept simple to keep it usable, albeit at the expense of being a simplified representation of complex, dynamic realities. The chapter posits that even in initiatives with apparent congruences between stakeholders, socio-economic, environmental and commercial priorities diverge upon closer examination, with tensions becoming apparent and offering the potential for trade-offs and dilemmas. Expanding on chapter 6, the first three sections will, in turn, discuss different stakeholders' priorities in the three initiatives, highlighting congruences as well as potentials for tension. A point of interest will be links to power and embeddedness, such as an actor's ability to imprint priorities on an initiative given their power or embeddedness dispositions. The fourth section will discuss observations comparatively, highlighting firstly compatibilities or incongruences of socio-economic, commercial and environmental drivers across the three initiatives. Further points of interest are the spectrum of drivers underlying certification decisions in the three initiatives and the rise of commercial drivers, establishing the foundation for chapter 8's discussion on the types of representations which stakeholders forefront, and their links to priorities.

7.1 Our Chocolate: Congruences and divergences in priorities

In terms of the network extent, Our Chocolate comprises two core and two peripheral municipalities on the German side, and two Colombian municipalities, with the venture funded by the federal ministry and bean-to-bar manufacturer Friedrich the only prominent private-sector stakeholder (cf. diagram 6.1c for detailed visualisation through a GPN lens). Within the limits of this simplified representation, German and Colombian municipalities' priorities in the socio-economic, environmental and commercial dimensions are remarkably similar, as diagrams 7.1.1 and 7.1.2 show:

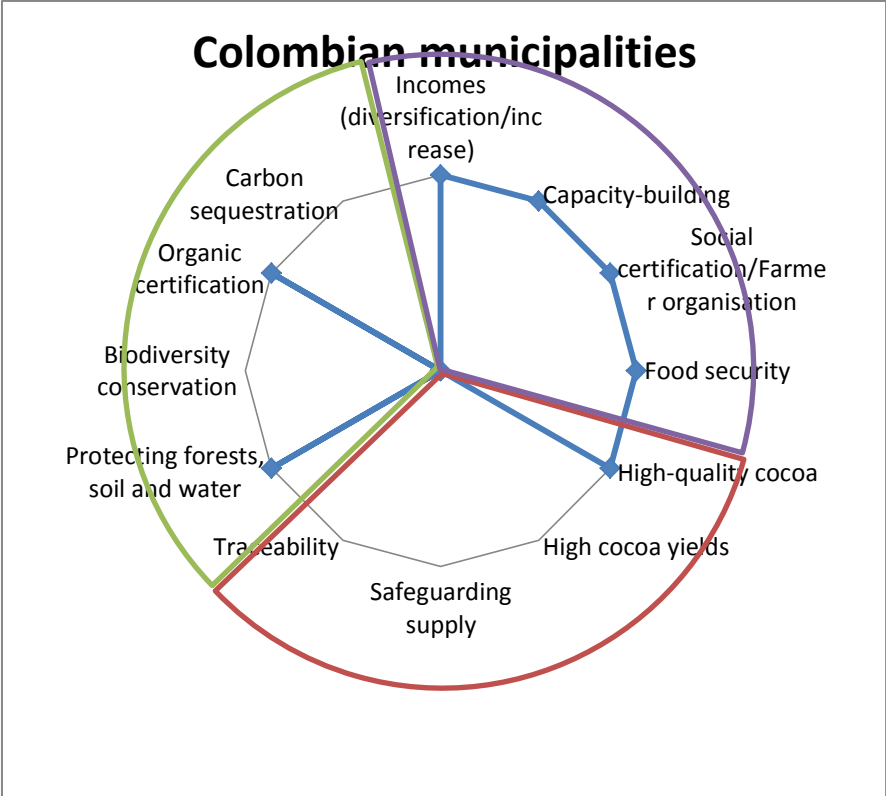


Figure 7.1.1: Constellation of priorities for Colombian municipalities.
Source: Author.

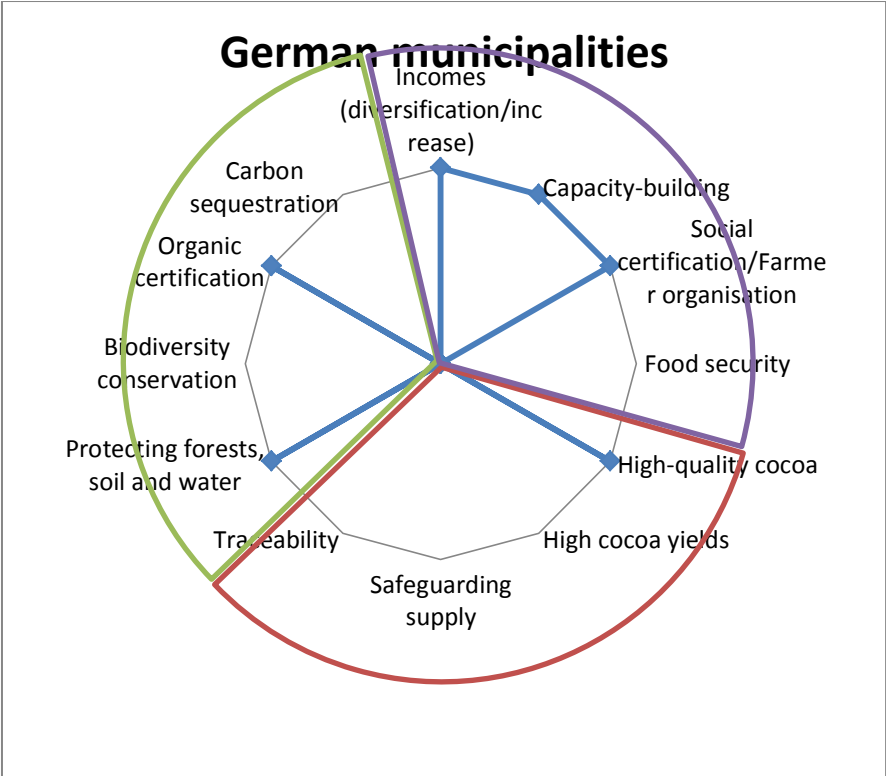


Figure 7.1.2: Constellation of priorities for German municipalities.
Source: Author.

The two diagrams (cf. 7.1.1 and 7.1.2) depict virtually identical constellations of priorities. They show that socio-economically, there is an emphasis in both German and Colombian municipalities on diversifying and increasing incomes, building capacity among their own and partner populations and attaining a seal specifically certifying smallholder producers, which entails organising small-scale farmers in two cooperatives. Beyond these socio-economic goals, a commercial priority is producing high-quality cocoa with unique selling propositions to garner high prices in Germany, with the environmental side represented by attaining organic certification, unprecedented for cocoa in Colombia, and protecting forests, soil and water. For the Colombian side, as 7.2.2 demonstrates, augmenting food security through diversified agroforestry systems is a further socio-economic priority which is less prominent for the German side. Despite this one discrepancy, there are thus clear overlaps between the municipal actors' drivers. However, closer examination beyond the diagrammatic illustration between and within German and Colombian public-sector actors shows some divergences.

Firstly, priorities underlying the certification choice offer potential for tensions. The smallholder certification scheme which the initiative has selected is an offshoot of Fairtrade Labelling Organizations specifically to support and certify small-scale producers. The scheme has its origin in Latin America, i.e. in the same cultural context within which cocoa production occurs. The reason project staff cite for choosing it is its accessibility and less bureaucratic nature than the Fairtrade certification by FLO (Interview #143, development). However, two of the German municipalities are Fairtrade towns and have vocal Fairtrade civil-society advocates in their constituencies. Given these close ties to FLO rather than its offshoot, there is thus a potential for tension going forward. Various German municipalities are in agreement that first-party certification by way of the project's own seal may also be useful to safeguard strict criteria (Interview #143, development) and credibility irrespective of certifiers, who may or may not be trustworthy (Interview #18, civil society). German municipalities' previously established powerful standing puts them into a strong position to assert their certification priorities.

Divergences surface also when considering priorities which fall outside of the cocoa initiative's immediate purview. As mentioned above, German municipalities place a considerable accent on raising awareness for the importance of climate and rainforest protection and a parallel need to improve livelihoods. They see the rainforest product as a vehicle to raise awareness and sensitise their citizens for the significance of paying higher prices to benefit Southern partners (Interview #23, government). However, this focus on having a conversation starter with positive

connotations for most people – i.e. chocolate – risks requests outside the cocoa purview not being credited with the necessary attention. As mentioned in section 6.1.2, the project also entails an electrification component through renewable energy. However, there appears to be a discrepancy in terms of how prominently the German municipalities and the Colombian side view this priority. Comparing presentations and reports prepared by Colombian and German delegations is instructive. The Colombian delegation gave a presentation to decision-makers in Immenhof on the ‘climate cooperation for climate protection between the municipalities on renewable energy and organic and fair certified cocoa’ (Corporación Tílón, 2014:2). Beyond citing renewable energy first and cocoa second, out of four specific objectives stated, three are purely and one semi-related to renewable energy:

- ‘(i) Mounting solar panels
- (ii) Repairing small hydropower plant
- (iii) Technology transfer and ‘capacity development’ on renewable energy with public participation
- (iv) Combining renewable energy with value-added chain for cocoa in agroforestry systems.’ (Corporación Tílón, 2014:2)

In terms of Colombian project staff’s priorities, renewable energy is thus the far more important instrument than cocoa. If climate protection is to be the overarching project goal alongside livelihood support (Interview #139, government), this is probably a realistic assessment given cocoa’s current limited scale. Equally, their socio-economically focused perception of project priorities also suggests that the way Northern stakeholders proposed this project to them at least offered room for this interpretation, recalling the question whether Northern stakeholders prioritise socio-economic priorities when communicating with the global South. Similarly, a report by *campesino* (farmer) and indigenous groups from the area (Tílón, 2014) requests long-term support over 15 years to establish viable livelihood activities to replace cattle-rearing, the principal livelihood source driving deforestation. Cocoa is but one of the possibilities advocated among producing timber, fruit, silvopastoral approaches, renewable energy and ecotourism. The report also emphasises that external support should work in conjunction with existing strong social ties which have allowed the communities to establish health centres, infrastructure and usage agreements. This characterisation is incongruent with some voices within the German municipalities presenting the *campesino* and indigenous communities as in need of assistance, an

interesting divergence to be explored in chapter 8. Overall, Colombian partners' focus clearly reaches further than cocoa, with cocoa with environmental properties a means to socio-economic ends.

By contrast, in public presentations, German municipalities Immenhof and Otterbach emphasise chocolate and awareness-raising. For its climate partnership with Comuno, Immenhof lists the following principal objectives:

- ‘1) Empowering citizens for sustainable consumption
- 2) Long-term partnership, including awareness-raising
- 3) Promoting the sale of a Fairtrade-certified, organic chocolate
- 4) Improving living conditions and protecting biodiversity in Comuno, including off-grid solar panels and waste management
- 5) Empowering rural populations, especially indigenous populations’ (Immenhof, 2014:4-10)

Otterbach cites the following key objectives for its ties to Tilón:

- ‘1) Building up a value chain for organic and Fairtrade-certified cocoa in Colombia
- 2) Improving electrification and reducing carbon emissions
- 3) Raising awareness for environmentally friendly waste management
- 4) Raising awareness in Tilón to protect rainforests, biodiversity and waters
- 5) Spreading knowledge on climate and rainforest protection and cocoa production in Germany
- 6) Raising awareness in Germany for indigenous culture’ (Otterbach, 2014c:1-4)

Incidentally, the German municipalities' lists explicitly seeking Fairtrade certification further confirm the above argument of a potential for tension between some stakeholders favouring FLO's Fairtrade standard and others advocating the Latin American smallholder seal. While the

wordings differ in the detail, the emphasis for Otterbach and Immenhof overall is predominantly on selling a product appreciated in Germany which provides a livelihood to indigenous peoples in the rainforest, and concomitant awareness-raising for the importance of protecting forests and promoting livelihoods:

‘Some people say: forests are important to me. Others say: it’s more the people that are important to me. But you cannot separate the two. But if [the combination] allows people to get interested in the product, then I think that’s a good thing.’ (Interview #23, government)

Public-facing communication through newspapers or project publicity is often even more selectively focused on the sweet conversation starter (Extra Tipp, 2014; Merkur Online, 2012; Neuheim, 2013). The rationale is that a chocolate bar, consumable, purchasable and supportable in Germany, is more likely to raise awareness among schoolchildren and adults than solar panels or waste management facilities far-away. However, a concomitant danger is that the story to be told may supersede dissonant voices and dictate reality, with the considerable power asymmetries between stakeholders exacerbating the risk. While the funding body appreciated the project’s intention to promote local communities’ participation (Interview #44, government), this divergence of priorities may jeopardise in implementation this strength from the application.

A further difference of priorities surfaces when comparing municipal and commercial actors. As stated above, commercial actors are less prominent in this initiative than in other ventures, with project staff handling ordering and transporting cocoa supplies and Friedrich, the chocolate manufacturer, in more of a conduit than lead function. Cocoa volumes are small, and the certification process for organic and the smallholder label, which takes roughly three years to complete, has only begun. As most German municipalities do not have a functioning sales infrastructure, there is no acute need yet for regular chocolate deliveries. However, this has led to supply shortages for those actors for whom regular supply is a priority, namely a speciality chocolate shop and Friedrich, the bean-to-bar manufacturer hoping to use Colombian cocoa for other orders (Interviews #19, #135, private sector). The manufacturer obtained Colombian cocoa similar in quality through brokers; however, the speciality shop has been unable to take larger orders e.g. for Christmas give-away Our Chocolate as the manufacturer, given a lack of project supply, could not guarantee delivery.

This is another example of tensions caused by diverging stakeholder priorities. For commercial partners, reliability of supply is crucial given customers' expectations of regular, available supply as is customary in Europe. Supply security is thus a priority for GPN 1's private-sector actors, not in terms of a long-term shortage, but of satisfying immediate demand. For German municipal partners, safeguarding supply was not mentioned in any interview as a driver, translating to a lack of focus given their powerful position. The emphasis is rather on establishing a functioning project which meets the approval of funding body and citizens. While this incongruence is understandable from both sides' viewpoint, it risks precluding the establishment of stable supply-and-demand relationships, which is key to fulfilling stated long-term objectives including a functioning supply chain and contributing to climate protection. On the one hand, the absence of high demand allows gradual project development, as section 7.3 will confirm regarding Floral and Nicaragua. On the other hand, no sales infrastructure precludes greater volumes and limits overall project impact regarding socio-economic and environmental benefits, and the network's self-sufficiency and longevity post-project. Patchy supply thus threatens establishing durable commercial relationships, safeguarding demand, and attaining socio-economic as well as funding-mandated climate priorities, with this divergence of priorities one prominent instance of tensions affecting multiple stakeholders' realities in answer to research sub-question 3.3.

A further divergence of priorities concerns customer associations. Whereas municipalities focus on highlighting the social and environmental circumstances of production, emphasising indigenous producers and climate-protecting credentials, customers at a speciality chocolate shop in one municipality reportedly were most taken with the bar's local ties. Using the chocolate bar as a souvenir was principally attractive for business owners and individuals, with social and environmental circumstances secondary (Interview #19, private sector). In terms of convention theory, this suggests a strong domestic-based element. Evidently, these local connotations can only sell within the municipalities, reiterating the bar's likely abiding small-scale, very niche status. This would thus limit the project's number of farmer participants and overall impact, as well as fulfilment of its climate-related goals. Responsive consumers in focus group discussions, while noting the chocolate's strong cocoa flavour, voiced scepticism regarding the currently absent third-party certification and the likely impact of the initiative given the small volume of 3 tonnes a year (FGD1, FGD3). The local territorial embeddedness in this case works against a broader societal embeddedness beyond the municipalities' borders, while also curtailing the venture's collective power given its geographically limited appeal.



Figure 7.1.3: Constellation of priorities for German ministry in Our Chocolate.

Source: Author.

As figure 7.1.3 shows, there is a focus on environmental and socio-economic benefits resulting from the provenance of funds from an environmental facility within the ministry for co-operation and development. This origin also creates a need for ministry oversight, and a concomitant requirement to demonstrate and monitor whether those goals were met. The facility was to support projects relating to biodiversity and climate change implemented by municipalities or non-governmental organisations. As the project's attraction to the funding body lay in conserving natural resources and rainforest while providing livelihoods and participation (Interview #44, government), effects on resources and communities would be important to demonstrate. It has proved difficult elsewhere to prove a causal relationship between cocoa livelihoods and reduced deforestation, although many development actors subscribe to this hypothesis (Interview #123, development). While not spending half of the project budget, as other initiatives do (Interview #30, research), on monitoring is understandable for a nascent initiative, lack of continually recorded data may render reporting back and proving a correlation

difficult. For instance, the absence of baseline data may hinder the project counting towards carbon reduction targets which municipalities involved in federal climate partnerships have to meet by 2015. One civil-society observer doubts whether measuring the project's carbon reductions would be feasible, arguing the project's social and biodiversity aspects are principal (Interview #18, civil society). Irrespective of the absence of data, there is a strong narrative linking cocoa, livelihood opportunities and halting deforestation, with the priority more on narrative than documentation.

Overall, stakeholders demonstrate prominent environmental and socio-economic priorities, suggesting strong ethical commitments. Firstly, German and Colombian municipalities are investing considerable resources in developing a new rather than utilising an existing chocolate bar and rebranding it, as other towns have done. Equally, the choice of certifiers is telling. Rather than utilising Rainforest Alliance or UTZ Certified, two schemes considered more market-oriented by some, the project aspires to use one social certification supporting small-scale producers, and one strict organic standard to ensure the cocoa garners additional premiums and raises awareness at production and consumption. Beyond the above-mentioned domestic-based understanding of quality under convention theory, there is thus also a civic-based and an industry-based element. This harks back to the above theoretical considerations in chapter 2 building on Fold (2000) and Cidell and Alberts (2006) regarding the importance of negotiating understandings of quality between diverse stakeholders with diverging priorities. Finally, the strong focus on awareness-raising also reinforces the project's mission-driven nature in terms of Reynolds's (2009) categories. It is interesting to note, however, that the initiative has only become possible thanks to cocoa becoming more viable as a livelihood against the backdrop of projected shortages. Reinforcing the previous chapter's point about increasing public-sector involvement, public-sector actors, thanks to growing environmental consciousness, had the chance to drive a sustainability initiative in answer to research sub-question 3.1. Regarding research sub-question 3.3, tensions between public-sector priorities and commercial partners' drivers proved to influence stakeholders' and especially producers' reality on the ground, with power and embeddedness asymmetries a factor in producing dilemmas. As my thesis has argued, divergences can cause tensions.

7.2 World Choc: Congruences and divergences in priorities

For World Choc, priorities appear largely congruent, as the initiative unites stakeholders who already were pursuing similar goals in NGO Tree kids, planting trees to combat climate change, manufacturer Iller Chocolate, already offsetting emissions in-chain, and NGO Planet Concern, implementing various carbon and conservation projects. Consequently, the divergences and tensions between priorities are more subtle, but nevertheless present, as figures 7.2.1 and 7.2.2 will show. In some ways, children's NGO Tree kids drove the venture, aiming to raise funds and awareness for their mission of planting trees to halt climate change through a luxury product which children love (Interview #26, civil society). This also means that chocolate is, to a degree, interchangeable: chocolate is a means to an end to get more activists and consumers to support their cause.

‘The children want to show that it is possible to manufacture products in a way that is ecological[ly viable] and Fairtrade. ... [They] want every product to be the way they want it to be: carbon-neutral and Fairtrade. They do not want other children to have to work for them, while they themselves go to school. And the children chose to start with their favourite product: chocolate.’ (Interview #26, civil society)

There is thus an intention to make far more products than just chocolate carbon-neutral and Fairtrade. Chocolate was chosen as the first since cocoa lends itself to agroforestry and thus afforestation, the children's actual objective. Equally, it is of particular interest to children, their key constituency, with the concomitant enthusiasm conducive to proving that a carbon-neutral and Fairtrade product is a viable commercial proposition. However, as a different product would also be conceivable, the commercial dimension of the diagram, such as securing supply or promoting traceability, is not particularly relevant to the children's NGO, as figure 7.2.1 shows.

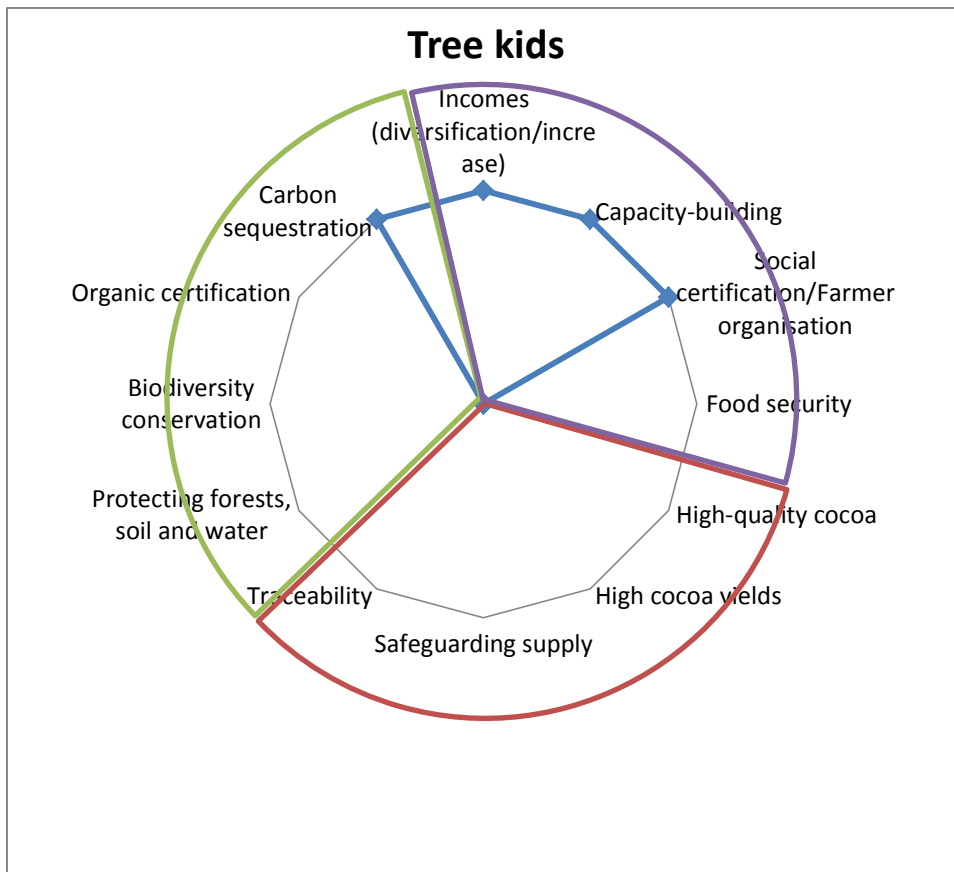


Figure 7.2.1: Constellation of priorities for Tree kids.

Source: Author.

As figure 7.2.1 visualises, in socio-economic terms, there is a clear focus on ensuring that farmer families do not go hungry, and on incomes, as part of the commitment to utilising Fairtrade certification. A further socio-economic priority is capacity-building to plant and manage trees for carbon sequestration, again emanating from the children’s tree-planting mission statement. There is an interesting aspiration that the chocolate bar be ‘Fairtrade and ecological twice over’ (Interview #26, civil society). The aim is for the combination of Fairtrade certification and higher incomes from afforestation premiums to render the chocolate bar double Fairtrade, ‘tackling poverty at its root’, while the self-donned ‘double ecological’ label stems from planting one tree for five bars sold and Planet Concern planting further trees (Interview #26, civil society). Tree kids’ rhetoric frequently displays a naivety reminiscent of their roots as a children’s NGO, including poverty being tackled ‘at the root’. A further example is the equivalence between planting trees and having an ‘ecological’ product, irrespective of the differences between various axes of the environmental dimension which I will discuss further below.

A key concern for the NGO, also in some ways characteristic of a children’s NGO, is transparency towards activists and supporters. They have a 2,500-word frequently asked questions (FAQ) section explaining various issues from the chocolate being wrapped in aluminium foil rather than plastic, to how emissions to be offset are calculated (Tree kids, 2013a). The desire for transparency is a somewhat unique feature which can galvanise the support of particularly young activists and consumers who can feel part of a quest to change the way trade operates, supporting a cause which ticks socio-economic as well as environmental boxes. The desire for transparency finds its limits in intellectual property of particularly its commercial partner, Iller Chocolate. For instance, the question concerning the chocolate recipe’s composition remains unanswered, being described as a trade secret (Tree kids, 2013a). Especially for a children-for-children venture, this transparency is a key cornerstone to increase territorial and societal embeddedness among their key consumer group, i.e. children in German-speaking Europe, with their collective power predicated on mobilising and expanding this constituency.

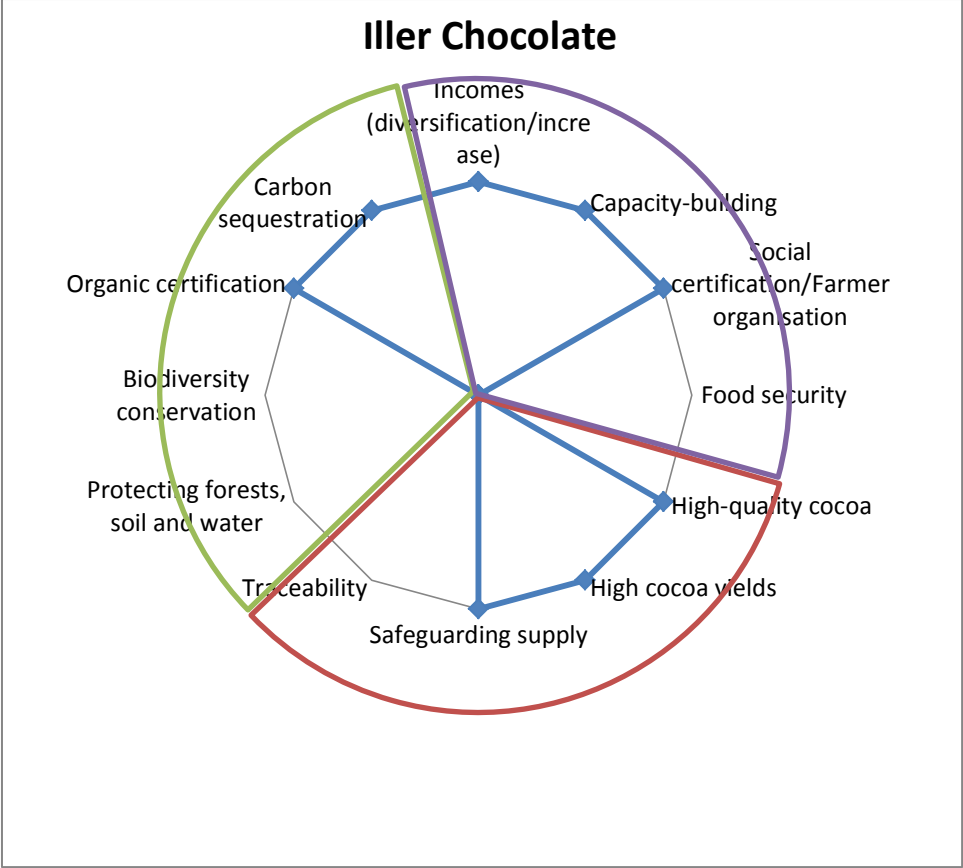


Figure 7.2.2: Constellation of priorities for Iller Chocolate.

Source: Author.

Evidently, the constellation of priorities is considerably different for the chocolatier, as figure 7.2.2 shows, compared with the carbon sequestration and socio-economic focus for Tree kids. Iller Chocolate, part of a cooperative group, leans towards the mission-driven persuasion, as shown by the presence of several socio-economic and environmental priorities including income increases and carbon sequestration (cf. figure 7.2.2). Nevertheless, as a business enterprise, commercial aspects are important, as the strong presence of commercial priorities including safeguarding supply and promoting high-quality cocoa and yields demonstrates. Given their mission-driven stance and the premium end of the mainstream market they aim to serve, safeguarding supplies of high-quality, certified cocoa is even more crucial than for competitors who customarily purchase all cocoa anonymously at the stock exchange. This may partly explain their support for reinvigorating the Honduran cocoa sector. With ever more chocolate manufacturers committing to using certified sources, some question where the farmers and cooperatives able to provide high-quality certified produce are to come from in the long term. So far, the recipients of certification have been farmers already organised in cooperatives, i.e. 'low-hanging fruits' in terms of the resources required to get them certified compared with the vast majority of farmers working individually (Interview #142, private sector).

Iller's engagement in Honduras thus reaches beyond this target group, expanding the overall supply base of producers cultivating certified cocoa. Given the specificity of its certification and quality requirements and centripetal forces in cocoa processing, the company needs to safeguard supply in the desired quality. Conversely, the company's desire to increase its percentage of Fairtrade-certified cocoa overall from 95% to 100% (Iller Chocolate, 2012) also predetermines the certification choice for all cooperatives with whom they work. As discussed above, the company's expectations require multiple certification schemes (cf. table 6.2). The company priorities, and certifiers' standards, thus have repercussions throughout the supply chain, with Northern priorities informing Southern reality in answer to research sub-question 3.3.

Equally, Iller's aim to ensure future generations consider cocoa a viable livelihood also encompasses a supply-security priority. To improve viability, they combine Fairtrade premiums with additional bonuses for afforestation and particularly carbon credits for cocoa communities in Peru, Honduras and Ghana:

‘[This is] to make a contribution towards solving the challenges in the cocoa sector, going one step further than Fairtrade by supporting afforestation projects with Fairtrade cooperatives. All types of certification are a basis towards a more holistic sustainability engagement. Sequestering carbon or climate neutrality is only one aspect of the plantations. The most important aspect is that small-scale farmers’ income will multiply in the long term from the cultivation of precious timber. Growing cocoa in diversified systems is an attractive business case for the young generation.’ (Interview #134, private sector)

There are several interesting aspects in this quote about Iller’s engagement. It exemplifies a desire to demonstrate especially to commercial stakeholders that certification is but one tool with which to engage so as to safeguard the sector’s overall long-term viability. Moreover, it confirms two arguments of this research. Firstly, growing concerns over the long-term viability of cocoa make stakeholders think about improving the socio-economic and environmental circumstances of production. Secondly, environmental goals are a conduit to improve incomes, or conversely, better incomes incentivise the carbon or conservation goals which actors pursue.

However, there is a clear discrepancy with the mission driving NGO Tree kids. Iller Chocolate considers carbon sequestration as a way for producers to earn better incomes, thus motivating young generations and safeguarding cocoa supplies long-term. This is thus a different outlook from ‘Tree kids’, for whom planting trees to mitigate climate change is their key driver, with the chocolate bar serving as a means to an end. The relationship between means and end is thus reversed between the two stakeholders, with one set of drivers rooted in socio-economic and ultimately commercial considerations, and the other one emanating from an environmental motivation. The dimensions principally driving stakeholders therefore differ, which may give rise to tensions in determining the initiative’s direction long-term.

In concrete terms, these differing motivations affect afforestation designs. If carbon sequestration is the primary concern, as both ‘Tree kids’ and Iller Chocolate’s offsetting commitment would suggest, tree growth speed is a key parameter for selection. Tree height and circumference are also relevant, with the combination the basis for carbon credit calculation. If socio-economic considerations are paramount, crucial criteria will be the expected price per cubic metre of timber, and the production of cubic metres per hectare. A third layer of complexity

comes in once you add biodiversity conservation. While further research will be necessary to determine the specifics, a safe assumption is that native trees will have a higher likelihood of boosting local biodiversity than non-native, exotic trees (Interview #30, research), with implementing NGO Planet Concern only allowing certain percentages of non-native trees (Planet Concern, 2013b, 2013c, 2014a, 2014b, 2014c). A final dimension is intercropped species' compatibility with and effects on cocoa trees, a key criterion certainly for Iller Chocolate. An element of this is also the ratio of cocoa to shade/timber trees or *Musaceae*/banana plants within the plantation, and the ramifications this entails for food security, cocoa yields as well as the likely long-term timber yields, all of which may vary considerably.

These diverging priorities become palpable across the different project sites when looking at Planet Concern's reports (2013b, 2013c, 2014a, 2014b, 2014c), which detail also what plantation models are utilised in different sites. In Honduras (Planet Concern, 2013c, 2014c), particularly the model of planting trees separated from cocoa cultivation on degraded lands allows a far greater density of trees, which is more in line with 'Tree kids' priority of planting trees, yet basically separates cocoa and afforestation. In Peru, the model of planting on damaged and unused lands already accounts for over half of all plantations, while the two models combining timber with cocoa, either through intercropping or on fields' boundaries, only combine for 45%, identical with the previous years (Planet Concern, 2012, 2013b, 2014a). While the separate model allows for more carbon sequestration opportunities, this approach not only requires more land to plant, it also does not further Iller Chocolate's cocoa supply; cocoa volumes would only increase if the plantation's management was shifted towards a less environmentally beneficial, low-shade strategy, which would contravene the implementing NGO's environmental, agroforestry-based approach. Moreover, a further danger is that, given the considerable income potential high-value trees offer, and particularly at high densities of over 1,000 trees per hectare, such division may enhance the risk of reduced attention and resources expended to further the production and management of cocoa trees, which thus would contravene Iller Chocolate's intention of safeguarding cocoa supply long-term. As commercial pressures rise in future, it remains to be seen how they materialise and whether they affect the agroforestry systems principally chosen, such as models with fewer shade trees in cocoa plantations, but increased afforestation elsewhere. The example illustrates the tensions arising even in the environmental dimension due to diverging understandings of and resulting priorities regarding sustainability.

For Honduras, research by the Honduran foundation for agricultural research, FHIA (2007), has shown that a combination of cocoa and native cedar trees (*Cedrela odorata*) generate the highest margins over an 18-year assumed life of a plantation, yielding USD39,000 per hectare. This exceeds by approximately a quarter the yields which a combination of laurel (*Cordia megalantha*) and cacao yields per hectare, while leguminose-cacao only yields USD4,220 per hectare. As Planet Concern (2013c) states, laurel tends to have fast growth speed, while the cedar only grows slowly. There is thus a potential conflict between carbon sequestration from fast growth, and the socio-economic income from wood, with cedar generating about a quarter higher incomes from timber (FHIA, 2007:1). Moreover, there is the interplay with cocoa, with cedars triggering cocoa yields and thus cocoa incomes also roughly 25% higher per hectare (FHIA, 2007). Planet Concern's projections expect two-thirds of the increase in producer incomes to originate from timber; however, better cocoa incomes will begin far sooner than timber income, which only commences ten years after project start (Planet Concern, 2013c). Another factor are inputs required, with cacao-laurel and cacao-cedar both causing costs to the farmer of USD5,205 per hectare, while the cacao-leguminose combination only requires USD4,651 (FHIA, 2007), although NGO and chocolatier provide support and funding in this initiative. This example illustrates that, depending on priorities, different collaborators may have diverging opinions on preferable agroforestry designs, which may cause disagreements.

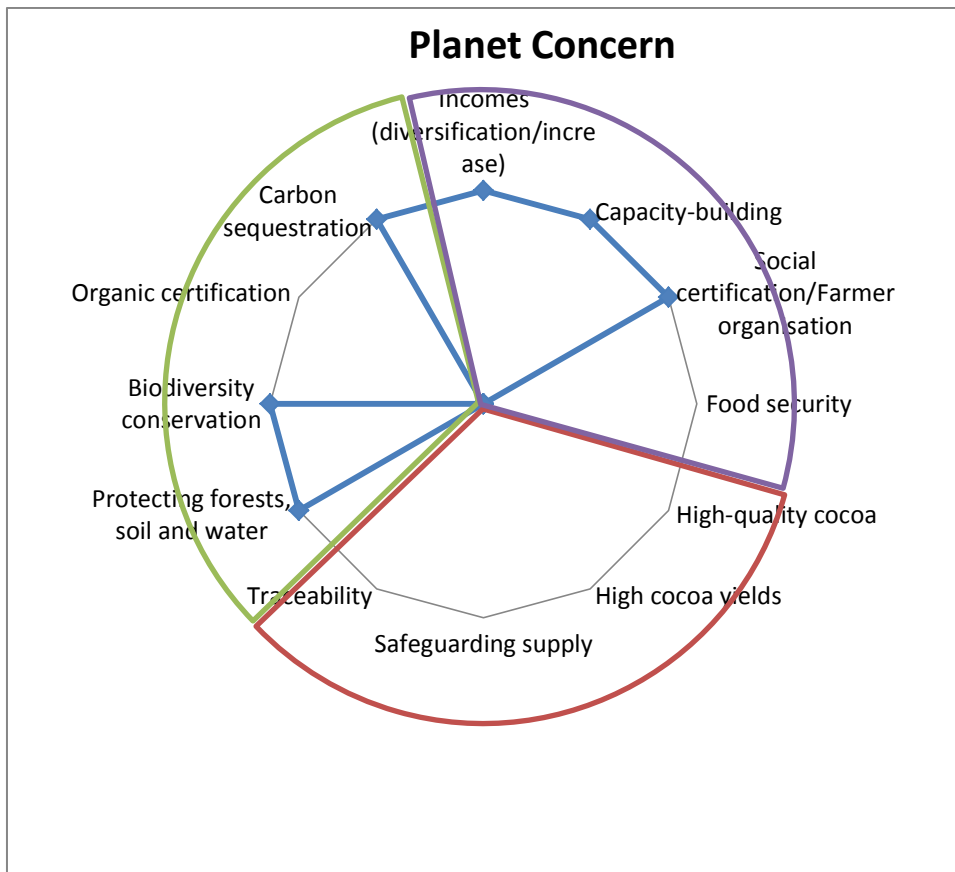


Figure 7.2.3: Constellation of priorities for Planet Concern.

Source: Author.

This finally leads to the implementing NGO and its priorities. Figure 7.2.3 depicts their rootedness in the environmental dimension, demonstrated by three ecological priorities ranging from carbon sequestration to conservation and protecting forests, soil and water, resulting from their organisational focus on conservation and reforestation projects. While socio-economic drivers such as boosting income or capacity are also present, there are no commercial priorities. In different Planet Concern projects with other partners, various foci were paramount, yet protecting forests and conserving biodiversity are cross-cutting, with carbon sequestration through afforestation a particular focus in this initiative given the driving stakeholders' leanings. Equally, given the organisation's close cooperation with communities, the socio-economic dimension features prominently. They hire and develop local technical teams conducting capacity-building and monitoring (Planet Concern, 2013b, 2013c, 2014a-c), usually in cooperation with farmer organisations and cooperatives. As one researcher observed (Interview #30), this socio-economic thrust is what producers are most aware of in project sites, although the

promotion towards the global North emphasises projects' environmental credentials, a representational discrepancy which chapter 8 will explore further.

The retail chains involved in selling the chocolate, finally, bring commercial and reputational concerns to the table (Interview #142, private sector). Their willingness to sell the Fairtrade, carbon-neutral product suggests an attitude sympathetic to the initiative's priorities, and recognition of the business opportunity it represents. In the commercial dimension, supply security is important given the significance of selling products which address long-term viability issues. Equally, associating their brand with a children-for-children story can harness part of the aforementioned feel-good aspect and heighten their societal embeddedness, while enabling own staff to support a cause they consider worthy (Interview #142, private sector).

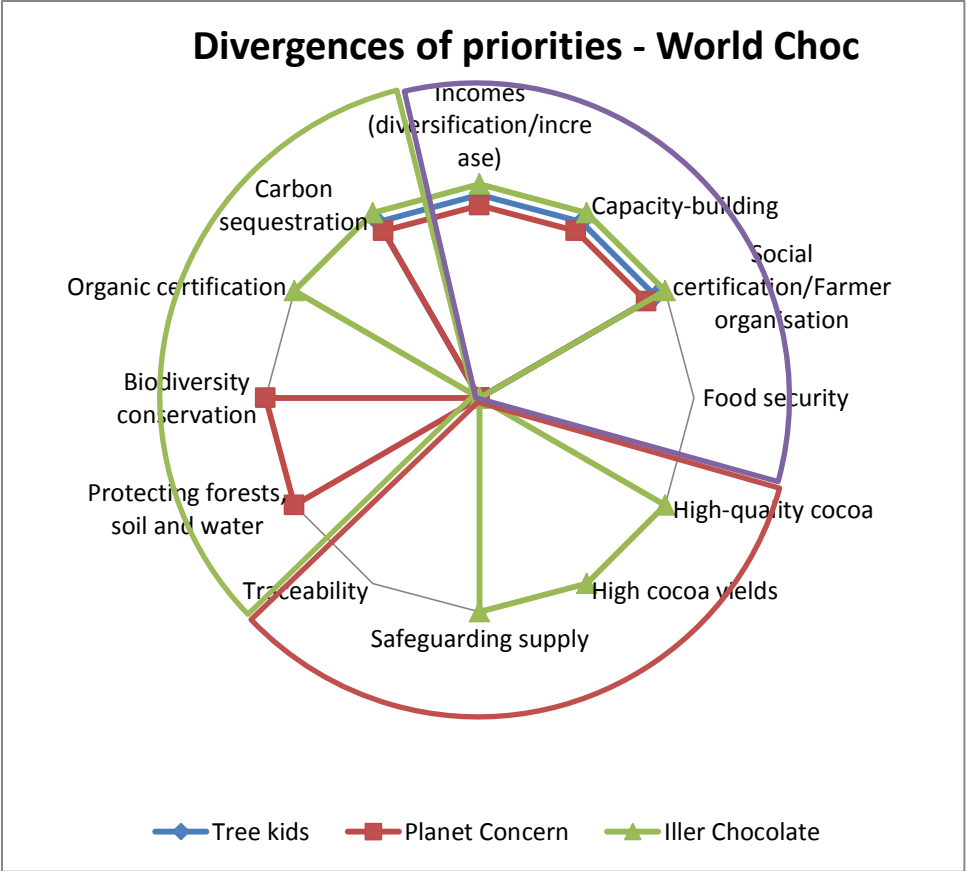


Figure 7.2.4: Divergences of priorities for World Choc.

Source: Author.

Overall, as figure 7.2.4 shows, there is a considerable congruence in priorities in general in terms of carbon sequestration, boosting income, capacity-building and social certification. However, priorities diverge in the detail. Iller's commercial priorities of securing high-quality cocoa supplies and Planet Concern's diverse environmental priorities including biodiversity conservation are not shared by all stakeholders, with particularly agroforestry design an example where diverging priorities have a considerable impact on producer realities. These tensions arising from stakeholders' diverging priorities support this thesis's argument of substantial differences which have been aggravated by chocolate-sector shifts. Firstly, the lead firm aspires to trigger sector-wide changes to improve supply security long-term given projected sectoral shortages. Secondly, multiple certification schemes safeguard supply for the lead firm, as few other buyers would pay premiums for all certification schemes, thereby creating a tighter relationship with producers: in this instance, multi-certification does not further producers' and cooperatives' collective power, but rather increases corporate power. Concerning Reynolds's (2009) tripartite distinction as well as convention theory's regimes, there is a parallel finding. While stakeholders may self-categorise as mission-driven in this initiative and predominantly see civic-based coordination occurring, there are also elements of the market, particularly in terms of divergences on what is end, what is means between altruistic and commercial considerations. In relation to research sub-question 3.2, commercial pressures and growing environmental consciousness and thus two key shifts in the chocolate sector facilitated civil-society actors functioning as drivers and a private-sector actor developing a new *modus operandi*. Despite these advances, however, power asymmetries persist, as ownership, production and headquarters remain in the global North, with the above-discussed concentration in the chocolate sector reinforcing the commercial sector's perceived need for such lop-sided relations.

7.3 Floral: Congruences and divergences in priorities

7.3.1 Constellations of priorities in phase 1

Over the course of Floral's engagement in Nicaragua, the lead firm's priorities have shifted considerably. As discussed in section 6.3, the initiative began its life as mostly a social-development project involving a group of farmers, an NGO and a development agency.



Figure 7.3.1.1: Constellation of priorities for Floral, phase 1.

Source: Author.

There was a dual narrative involving environmental and socio-economic drivers in phase 1, as shown in figure 7.3.1.1. Cocoa-growing was to be a silver bullet to protect rainforests and provide an income alternative to reduce pressure on forests, reflected in the above constellation of priorities by the environmental driver of protecting forests and strong socio-economic drivers including boosting incomes. Also in the socio-economic sense, improved food security through agroforestry was a priority, while capacity-building and farmer organisation were to help facilitate developing cocoa towards a viable export sector. A mutually reinforcing relationship linked social and environmental benefits. The company's prominent environmental priorities implicitly facilitated social benefits, which conversely were to safeguard environmental resources, recalling Bryant and Goodman's (2004) argument about rainforest narratives evoking strong responses in the global North. Commercial priorities, besides the long-term aspiration of potentially sourcing cocoa, were virtually absent. Beyond the lead firm, the engagement involved German-Nicaraguan NGO World Partnership active particularly in Malapa, which proceeded to become Nicaragua's cocoa capital.

With continuous company and NGO backing, as producers were keen to found a cooperative (Interview #34, civil society), the first of its kind, Macacao, was established in 2000. Given the country's socialist advocacy of collective ventures, building up cooperatives was welcome. As cocoa did not live up to Floral's high quality requirements, exports began to Costa Rica and Honduras. From 2002 to 2005, a public-private partnership connecting development cooperation, Floral and the cooperative was implemented, constituting, following Alves (2009), a private-sector-led initiative prominently involving public-sector and specifically development cooperation. This also exemplifies an aspiration among development actors to partner with private-sector stakeholders as part of the 'solution' to poverty (Prieto-Carrón et al., 2009:980). However, individuals within the cooperative faced allegations of mismanagement and abuse of funds in the mid-2000s. In tandem with the continuing lack of cocoa for export, Floral was about to end its engagement in Nicaragua (Interview #101, civil society) when a second public-private partnership to develop organic cocoa came to fruition.

The changes in the initiative also confirm this thesis's argument of shifting mind-sets in the cocoa sector. The first phase in some ways fell into Utting's (2007) category of supporting unrelated projects philanthropically, given the lack of commercial benefits. Indeed, Floral has claimed in a newspaper interview they did not make their engagement public in its first fifteen years (Frankfurter Rundschau, 2011), foregoing PR and brand benefits. Nevertheless, it was the continuous lack of high-quality cocoa that fuelled commercial reorientation for the second phase. Conversely, it was only the initial absence of strong commercial drivers that made the sector's development possible. Many companies will only become engaged in a country if suppliers can guarantee a certain volume (Interview #117, civil society). This is predicated on the government and small-scale producers making initial high-risk investments to develop the sector. The development rather than business mind-set, which are quite distinct (Newell and Frynas, 2007), was thus a vital foundation for producers trusting the buyer's continuous presence enough to make necessary investments, furthering the company's embeddedness and long-term its power. This observation supports my thesis's overall argument of chocolate-sector shifts precipitating different drivers in initiatives.

7.3.2 Constellation of priorities in phase 2

In the second phase, with a different NGO, a new public-private-partnership project and ever more cooperatives involved, the lead firm’s priorities clearly shifted towards increasing export quality and quantity, as 7.3.2.1 shows:

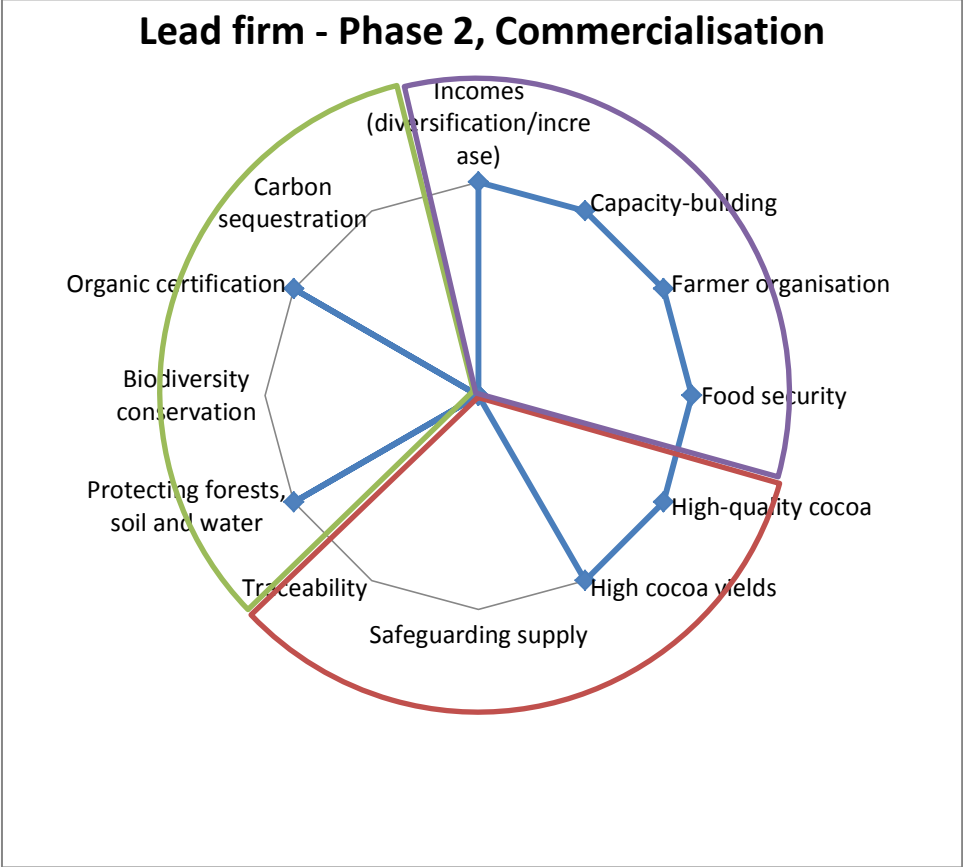


Figure 7.3.2.1: Constellation of priorities for Floral, phase 2.

Source: Author.

Figure 7.3.2.1 shows that, compared with phase 1, socio-economic aspects including capacity-building and income increases persist, yet high-quality cocoa and high cocoa yields have taken a prominent place, with organic certification an addition from the environmental domain. Moreover, compared with phase 1, two commercial priorities, i.e. high yields and high cocoa quality, have entered the initiative. As phase 2 continues to this day, the above constellation of priorities has also seen a change over time, as Floral has recently switched from organic to UTZ certification partly due to a newly emerged traceability priority. Ironically, the company’s switch to UTZ due to EU traceability requirements may not make supplying cocoa producers better off,

who had already received attractive prices even for conventional cocoa. In fact, several interlocutors reported that Floral's USD200 premium per metric tonne does not cover compliance costs (Interviews #51, #101 civil society; #120, cooperative) given the fixed costs certification entails (IIED and Consumers International, 2005), requiring higher productivity. This has threatened the company's territorial embeddedness with some cooperatives who are either losing money due to the switch or are very environmentally minded, preferring organic certification.

In this cooperative-based model, which is predicated on producers trusting the company's long-term presence, cooperatives possess some traction to formulate own priorities. International funding bodies welcome the involvement of cooperatives based on the rationale that cooperatives can sustain support once funders' finances have run out (Interviews #83, #123, development). Their participation thus can become an essential condition for projects, requiring that local project staff maintain good relations with cooperatives, which in turn can give cooperatives some counterbalancing power. Equally, they control cocoa quality in terms of production and processing as well as transport. Given cooperatives' crucial conduit function, providing essential services to farmers such as capacity-building and technical support while facilitating cocoa production for the lead firm, all stakeholders feel cooperatives' absence in case of collapse, which mismanagement may precipitate (Interview #83, development). In theory, this bestows a certain position of strength onto cooperatives. However, in practice, their ability to contribute priorities often finds its limits in the company's directions, as following other quality parameters or selling to other buyers would result in lower returns due to higher rejection rates or lower prices.

The following example illustrates the prior point. Cooperative Macacao started out as the first cocoa cooperative to be established in Nicaragua with the company's long-standing support. For some years, quality was inferior to Floral's standards, being exported to Central America. The cooperative, as the nucleus of collective cocoa production, became a model which other cooperatives in the country followed (Interviews #74, government; #108, cooperative). However, it now occupies a far less prominent place in Floral's supplier structure. Several factors have contributed. Firstly, in the mid-2000s, there were allegations of mismanagement against individuals within the cooperative. In tandem with the continuing absence of high-quality, exportable cocoa supplies, this caused the company to discontinue support to the cooperative in 2005 (GIZ, 2013). Secondly, other cooperatives emerged based on their model, with 20

associations, also including Macacao, today supplying to Floral. A final factor is the company’s recent move from the organic philosophy which the cooperative subscribes to towards UTZ certification, which many consider less strict (Interviews #51, civil society; #108, cooperative). The key disagreement between Floral prioritising traceability and the cooperative standing by organic certification thus has contributed to a less close relationship. In a manner of speaking, while the company prioritises a process attribute in prioritising traceability, the cooperative stands by the product attributes of organically produced cocoa and the ecological benefits this entails. As figure 7.3.2.2 shows, organic certification is a key priority for the cooperative, with Floral’s switch to UTZ removing one key point of agreement between the cooperative and the company.

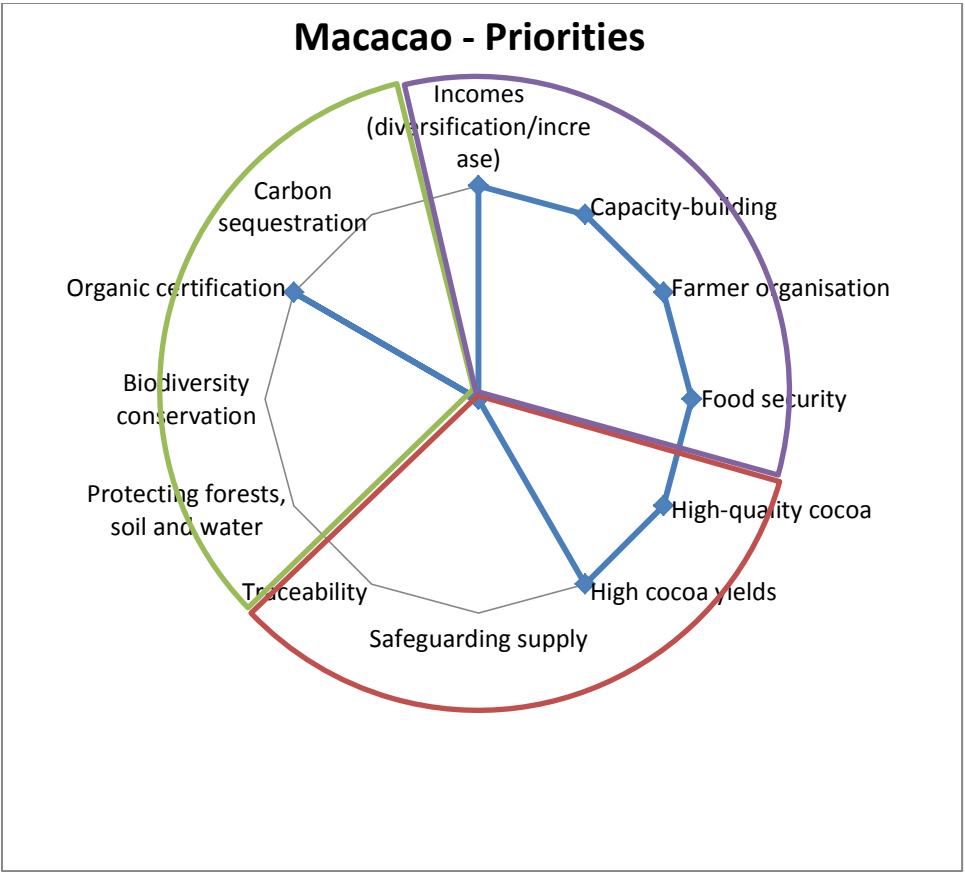


Figure 7.3.2.2: Constellation of priorities for Macacao.

Source: Author.

The cooperative now also exports to other buyers besides Floral, while Floral’s principal support priorities lie with cooperatives adopting UTZ Certification or dual certification with organic (Interview #92, development). Interestingly, however, this has not altered Macacao’s poster cooperative status in the company’s marketing in Germany. This again illustrates both the

importance of aligning priorities, which in this instance have now diverged over preferred certifiers, and the crucial significance of representations.

A final point of comparison is with German development cooperation and NGO Juntos, a key partner in the most recent public-private partnership.

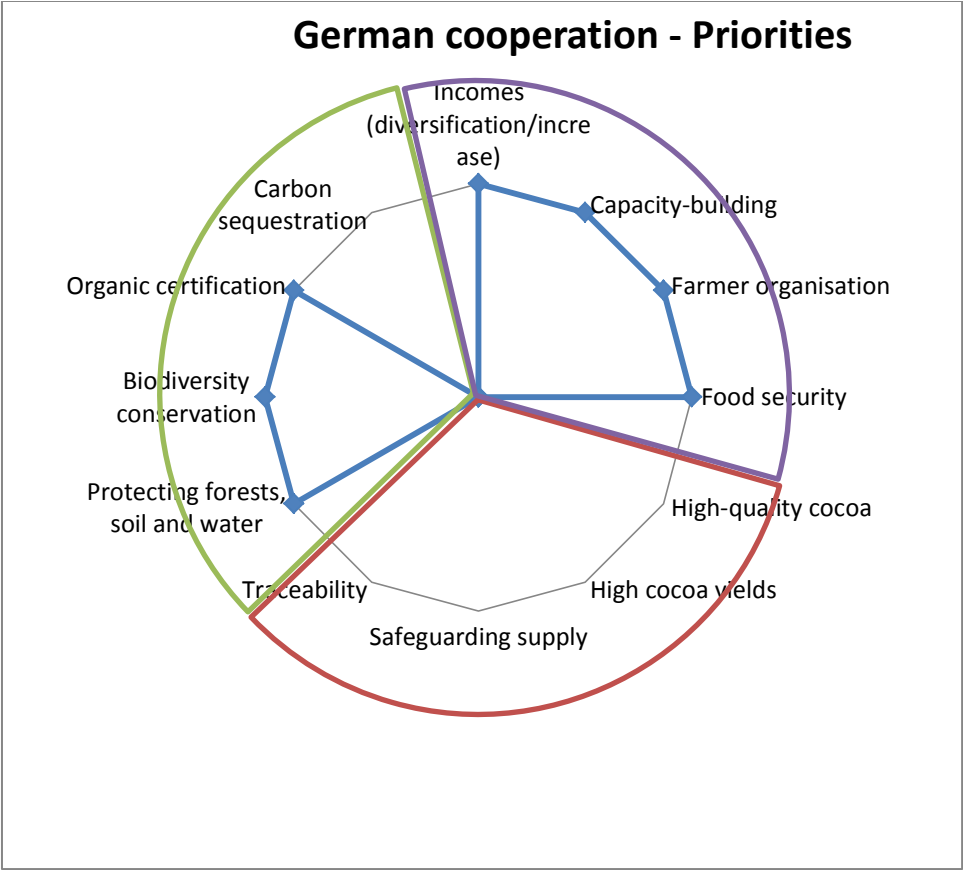


Figure 7.3.2.3: Constellation of priorities for German cooperation.

Source: Author.

Figure 7.3.2.3 confirms visually that, for German cooperation, and similarly for Nicaraguan NGO Juntos, which has been a key partner in implementing German cooperation’s recent cocoa projects in the country, all axes in the environmental dimension are relevant with the exception of carbon sequestration. Commercial priorities do not feature, only as a means to an end towards attaining socio-economic goals such as improving income or promoting farmer organisation. While they worked with Floral for over a decade, German cooperation’s activities in cocoa in Nicaragua have now shrunk. This is in part due to several EU governments cutting their support

after allegations of intransparent elections (#62, civil society). Nicaragua has lost its status as a focus country for German cooperation, meaning the previous priority areas of environment/agriculture, water/sanitation and good governance have shifted to just water (Interview #52, development; Foreign Office, 2014; Country Information Portal, 2014). While the development funding cycle played its part, this tension in priorities and between organic and UTZ preferences also contributed to the discontinuation. German cooperation also began in the 2010s a cocoa-focused project with indigenous populations which, for the first time, did not involve Floral, but a different company interested in gaining a foothold in Nicaragua (Interview #59, development).

7.3.3 Constellation of priorities in phase 3

In the third phase, the network has shrunk, and the constellation of priorities has shifted towards a stronger commercial and environmental focus, as figure 7.3.3.1 shows. Interestingly, the company presents its shift as a seamless continuation and necessary extension of previous social and environmental awareness.

‘Consistently auditing cultivation and working conditions in mostly smallholder structures worldwide is not viable for us in terms of human and financial resources. However, fair working conditions and protecting the environment are key values in our 100-year company philosophy.’ (Floral, 2013a:1)

However, where the previous phase encompassed multiple civil-society and public-sector actors, only the lead firm and some university partners feature here. As figure 7.3.3.1 shows, the company’s focus is strongly on commercial and environmental aspects in this phase, including all four commercial priorities and three environmental drivers excepting organic certification. By contrast, only one socio-economic benefit is present.



Figure 7.3.3.1: Constellation of priorities for Floral, phase 3.

Source: Author.

This also means the recipients of socio-economic benefits are now very different. In the cooperative-based model, beneficiaries are cocoa producers and cooperatives, with good prices stabilising rural economies and facilitating the cultivation of not-so-profitable, but essential food crops. In the plantation-based model, benefits are limited to plantation workers, who receive good salaries, capacity-building and further training opportunities. To utilise processing infrastructure on their plantation fully, Floral aims to support and buy from farmers and cooperatives surrounding the plantation (Interviews #54, private sector; #66, civil society). To an extent, the spillover into local economies may thus continue. However, compared with a hypothetical scenario in which the plantation's entire production of 2,000 to 3,000t was purchased through cooperatives, the benefits for local economies are smaller. Crucially, this is indeed hypothetical, as the country's total authorised exports stood at 2,600t in 2013 (CETREX, 2014), a lot of which was of quality inferior to Floral's standards. While it is important to note that the cooperative-based model with its income, farmer organisation and food security benefits

continues, Floral's plantation has triggered some concerns whether prices and support may decrease as the cooperative-based system is no longer the sole recipient of attention and funds.

Commercial priorities are even more prominent than in phase 2, as figure 7.3.3.1 visualises. Whereas most smallholders in Nicaragua diversify, the plantation is geared singularly towards cocoa, with interspersed shade trees to bring additional income from timber. Consequently, the company can orientate all priorities in terms of inputs, management techniques and genetic material towards attaining the highest-possible yields in the highest-possible quality. In-house specialists, mechanisation and proximity to processing will facilitate attaining the uniform and high-quality cocoa the company requires, with the in-house move thus expanding its corporate power, eliminating other network nodes and also the possibility of other buyers purchasing cocoa. While this is theoretically an unmitigated success for supply security, it is worth noting this also means the company will bear all input and management investments and all the risk regarding production losses which farmers used to shoulder. As large-scale plantations in Brazil in the past have been wiped out by diseases, observers question the long-term viability of the venture, although specific pest-resistant genetic material may reduce the risk (Interview #57, civil society). As other chocolate manufacturers pledge to use certified cocoa, a key commercial aspect is having the plantation comply with either Rainforest Alliance or UTZ standards or both regarding working conditions and environmental circumstances (Interview #33, private sector). This thus confirms the argument of cocoa-sector shifts affecting cocoa sustainability, with certification and shortage pressures transforming the engagement to encompass an own-production component.

Environmental priorities also feature more prominently. While some critics accused the company of taking away land from smallholders, private-sector, NGO and cooperation workers report that the land was acquired from large-scale cattle-rearers (Interviews #57, #66, civil society; #92 development; #54, private sector). Floral has introduced soil-improving plants and other measures to prepare the highly livestock-compacted soil for cultivation, with full production to be reached by 2017/2018 (Interviews #54, #100, private sector). The company aims to offset carbon emissions through afforesting the degraded surfaces with high-value timber trees, mirroring Iller Chocolate's approach from the World Choc initiative. While the land totals 2,000 hectares, only ca. 1,300ha are to be planted with cocoa, with the remainder integrated into the Mesoamerican biological corridor to combat habitat fragmentation, to be overseen by Nicaraguan universities (Interviews #54, #100, private sector). Anecdotally, Floral employees have witnessed

the return of sloths and panthers given the new absence of hunting and bomb-fishing (Interview #54, private sector). This reappearance suggests that there were local residents beyond the owners who previously benefited from the land's resources, recalling the effects of erstwhile exclusionary conservation strategies.

Attaining the new commercial and environmental priorities is predicated on the changed socio-economic approach, demonstrating trade-offs between those diverging drivers. As previously discussed, the shift from organic to UTZ Certification is predominantly thanks to traceability considerations given the EU-Central America Association Agreement. In-house cultivation facilitates matters in this respect, with everything now in the company's hands. This mirrors the risk aversion and communication friendliness relevant in other chocolate actors' decisions to move towards certification. Finally, managing their own plantation allows maximising yields, using high-yield, pest-resistant varieties and yield-maximising techniques across the board. Processing on-site with top-notch infrastructure and well-trained staff will also contribute towards optimising quality and quantity as required by German headquarters. Environmentally, continuous land under corporate ownership also facilitates stakeholders deriving material benefits. For instance, extracting timber requires government permits and expert assessments in Nicaragua, which some small-scale farmers do not or cannot venture into given low resources, literacy and knowledge of bureaucracy. A large-scale company, by contrast, has the financial and human resources, and likely returns from timber extraction, to make these investments. The same principle of a system bias applies regarding carbon certification, which is easier to obtain and maintain for one continuous, corporate operation than e.g. 400 small-scale farmers. Equally, biodiversity benefits are easier to monitor for continuous land. Implementing these priorities thus rests on altering the initiative's socio-economic paradigm.

The spectrum of diverging priorities and resulting tensions also emerges in reference to convention theory's regimes introduced in chapter 2. The social development phase was primarily civic-based, yet the increasing number of producers and farmers morphed the cooperation into a more market-based setting. The shift also involved moving from organic towards UTZ Certified. Since prior large-scale plantations have been marred by pests, it is unsurprising the company reserves the right to combat pests in ways which organic agriculture would prohibit. Questions meriting further research would be if civic-based to market-based usually occurs at a certain scale, and whether the transition to a different certifier often occurs in parallel. Despite the lead firm's changes, other actors' priorities have changed less, with Macacao still adhering to a civic-based

mode. This divergence has affected embeddedness, with the stakeholders drifting apart and a similar evolution occurring for German cooperation. In answer to research sub-question 3.2, there is thus a marked tension and dilemma, with the following section to analyse whether this observation holds across the initiatives.

7.4 Comparative observations

7.4.1 Inextricable links, and contradictions, between socio-economic, commercial and environmental concerns

In terms of links and contradictions between the three dimensions of the constellations of priorities model, the analysis regarding the initiative involving multiple German and Colombian municipalities raised the question whether the absence of prominent commercial priorities jeopardised attaining the initiative's long-term socio-economic and environmental goals. Different levels of government drive the initiative; the retail infrastructure to sell Our Chocolate is scant in some municipalities and non-existent in others. Unlike the other two initiatives, there is thus no strong lead firm providing expertise and safeguarding the evolution of a viable commercial infrastructure by establishing sales expertise in Colombia and a scalable retail infrastructure for chocolate. The analysis of Floral's initiative showed that the initial social-development-project phase was vital in building up the sector and cocoa growers' trust. However, only with commercialisation did cocoa supplies augment in quality and quantity enough to ignite the vital, investment-inducing reliability of demand.

Without long-term commercial sales outlets, the fulfilment of a project's long-term socio-economic and environmental priorities are doubtful as embeddedness alone without sales outlets cannot suffice. Given the funding parameters, the municipalities' project operates under a limited timeframe of four years, which is barely sufficient for cocoa trees hypothetically planted on the project's first day to begin producing reasonable yields. Consequently, it would seem all the more important to secure the project's autonomy and thus fulfil the socio-economic and environmental priorities driving municipal stakeholders. Without project funding and retail channels, the alternative income strand for Colombian *campesinos* and indigenous peoples dries up, contravening the project's stated objective of creating a long-term, self-sustaining production network sparking behavioural change in the municipalities. A further point is to what extent the current low levels of productivity can sustain dual certification fees once the project no longer bears them, which has proved a problem in other double-certified cocoa projects (Interview #62, civil society).

Current export levels of three tonnes per year, and the involvement of only seventy families, question to what extent this initiative can alter deforestation dynamics in the Colombian Amazon to fulfil the goals formulated towards the funding ministry. The project's strong focus on behavioural change may contribute to wider influences than just farmer families. However, it is unclear to what extent any such behavioural change regarding deforestation will be sustained in the absence of good incomes. A further factor is the absence of strong monitoring practices, making it difficult to trace whatever change there may be. Again, this spectrum of diverging drivers offers a potential for tensions.

A parallel across all three initiatives is that cocoa-chocolate, for some actors, is a means to an end, while it is the end for others. In the World Choc initiative, NGO Tree kids has as its key objective planting trees to halt climate change. Thanks to cocoa agroforestry systems, chocolate lends itself to afforestation and reducing forest degradation, and the product is a favourite among the children's NGO young primary constituency. However, the principal driver was raising funds and awareness for tree-planting. Similarly, the German municipal actors in the municipalities' Our Chocolate initiative were looking to find a product grown in the rainforest which would find consumers in their own constituency. The two key objectives were thus protecting the rainforest and finding a viable source of income. In both cases, this harbours the potential for tensions given commercial actors' naturally far greater attachment to chocolate itself. This also reinforces the point, recalling Fold (2000) and Cidell and Alberts (2006), concerning the importance of recognising how conceptions of quality and priorities differ at different network nodes, and require negotiation. Preserving rainforests and providing a viable income source is precisely the original premise of the third initiative's lead firm. Over time, Floral moved towards a greater interest in augmenting export quantity and quality. Meanwhile, some cooperatives and also development cooperation partners remained in a mind-set with greater environmental or socio-economic priorities than commercial interests, with cocoa more of a means to the end of socio-economic development and environmental preservation. Given cocoa prices rising and cocoa trading and processing growing ever more oligopolistic, Floral shifted to a new, 100% owned plantation venture without other stakeholders. These discrepant interpretations of means-end relationships cause tensions, with the question of whose constellation of priorities wins out partly predicated on stakeholders' network embeddedness and ability to project power.

Another parallel across the three initiatives were the questions they raised about agroforestry, yet another polysemic concept akin to sustainability.

‘We support cocoa since it offers the whole package under agroforestry systems. It facilitates the restoration of areas formerly used for cattle-rearing. It is a defence against the advancing agricultural frontier and slash-and-burn practices, ... while offering additional income to families given the good prices paid.’ (Interview #82, civil society)

As the above analysis has shown, the different priorities associated with agroforestry are an example of the tensions which may arise from divergent drivers spanning the socio-economic, environmental and commercial domains. Depending on the specific benefits sought, agroforestry models and shade tree types may differ. Motivations in the environmental domain would include reintegrating compacted surfaces previously used for cattle-rearing into the forest surface, which can reduce erosion or increase water-holding capacity. A reforestation priority would thus entail consequences for the system’s design. Speed of growth, tree height and diameter may be principal if carbon sequestration is the primary goal, while other factors such as tree origin and habitability for local biodiversity would be paramount if conservation is the first goal. In socio-economic terms, interspersing plantains, fruit such as citrus, guava or papaya, and beans or manioc within cocoa agroforestry systems is crucial if governments or development actors seek to boost food security. If growing cocoa is the primary concern, there may only be intermittent, high-value timber shade trees, offering little room for food security-boosting plants. Pointedly, stakeholders with whatever primary goal still refer to ‘agroforestry’ as a silver-bullet solution, as if there was a clearly defined, uncontested concept, somewhat akin to sustainability. As in the case of sustainability, however, agroforestry can serve different purposes depending on underlying priorities, with the use of the terms partly serving to heighten embeddedness or safeguard existing power relations, suggesting a desirable concept on which everyone can agree irrespective of underlying divergences.

As previously hypothesised in elaborating the conceptual framework and demonstrated visually in the constellation diagrams, the above analysis showed that the incongruences between socio-economic, environmental and commercial priorities regarding sustainability and agroforestry provide potential for tensions. Whereas private-sector actors require cocoa-chocolate to run their commercial operations, NGO, government or development actors mostly pursue priorities located in the socio-economic or environmental domains. The links and interdependencies between these priorities require finding a balance, subject to constant renegotiation as stakeholders and dynamics evolve, e.g. against the backdrop of the chocolate sector’s growing challenges. To an extent, commercial priorities are important for a project to become self-sustaining. Equally, it is crucial for environmentally minded projects to satisfy socio-economic

goals, as World Choc resolved by paying producers premiums for tree-planting. The evolution of the third initiative showed that while initially, a gradual development of the Nicaraguan cocoa sector was predicated on the absence of strong commercial priorities, only the certainty of purchase at attractive prices gave producers and cooperatives the confidence to expand cocoa-growing. However, as the third initiative also showed, with commercial interests including securing supply and safeguarding traceability rising in the sector, growing commercial pressures may overwhelm other priorities, which this chapter's final section will discuss.

7.4.2 Stakeholder drivers underlying certification

The spectrum of motivations for subscribing to, supporting, complying with or devising certification schemes exemplifies in a nutshell the argument of diverging priorities and dilemmas. Firstly, for companies, there is a range of drivers in terms of Reynolds's (2009) above-discussed tripartite distinction between mission-driven, quality-driven and market-driven buyers. Some companies, with Renard (2003), wish to alter trade's *modus operandi* socially and environmentally, which all three firms involved in the above initiatives would claim, albeit to varying degrees. A factor which has risen to increasing prominence in the market-driven category is supply security. While companies are less likely to highlight it in public-facing communication, they acknowledge in conversation that long-term supply is an increasing concern (Interviews #54, #134, #135, #142, private sector), which is partly related to social and environmental factors limiting cocoa producers' ability to meet rising demand, partly to the very concentrated marketplace. Rather than altruism, risk aversion is a primary driver for engaging with certification.

The motivations underlying certification choices are varied among cooperatives and producers, but quite business-driven. Given Iller Chocolate's very specific requirements, the World Choc initiative's cooperatives have to comply with between one and four certification schemes, with the resources required for complying with multiple schemes almost prohibiting selling to other buyers who may not be willing to pay premiums for all. In the municipalities' initiative, project staff, acting in a quasi-commercial capacity, equally pursue one socially minded and one organic certification. However, there is also an affinity among some cocoa producers to the organic philosophy (Interviews #70, #72, #110, #138, producers). Equally, several cooperatives supplying to Floral in GPN 3 were fervent advocates of producing in an environmentally friendly manner (Interviews #108, #109, cooperative; #56, certifier). For them, Floral switching from organic to UTZ Certification against the backdrop of the Association Agreement entailed a

change (Interviews #108, #120, #121, cooperatives). Some organically minded cooperatives embraced UTZ as an added opportunity for capacity-building, while others remained sceptical, looking for other buyers instead. While selling to other buyers is an option in theory, many buyers either do not pay similar prices, or do not require similar organic quantities as Floral did (Interviews #109, #121, cooperatives), with the choice thus again quite commercially driven.

Thirdly, certifiers' own motivations for including or excluding different requirements vary considerably. Fairtrade originated, and continues to work from, a premise of altering the unjust status quo and attaining fair trading relations. The organic movement aims to minimise adverse human impacts on the environment. Rainforest Alliance, as the name suggests, has strong roots in preserving habitats and working environments. UTZ Certified, finally, has a focus on good agricultural practices, working conditions and traceability. The latter two are widely considered more market-oriented (Interviews #108, cooperative; #92, #143, development; #54, private sector; #51, civil society; #141, certifier). There is thus a considerable spectrum, and all four score quite differently in terms of priority constellations. Consequently, as argued before, certification choices send a signal what priorities their adherents consider most important. Based on the leanings discussed above, there is a certain affinity between Reynolds's mission-driven buyers choosing Fairtrade and organic, and market-driven buyers opting e.g. for UTZ Certified. A potential bifurcation emerges between those favouring certification schemes considered more market-oriented and able to safeguard the sector's commercial future, and those interested in Fairtrade's historical forte of social-justice-based connections, or organic's environmental affinity. If taken seriously, Fairtrade's original premise of establishing politicised, social-justice-motivated connections between Northern consumers and Southern producers could challenge companies' ability to enact their own corporate priorities and power or their unilateral determination of public-facing representations.

Finally, NGO and development partners also recommend different schemes based on their own priorities and philosophies. Development or NGO actors often consider certification standard procedure (Interviews #51, civil society; #123, development) to safeguard long-term socio-economic or environmental benefits. Some NGOs with church ties may be most inclined to support Fairtrade certification (Interview #62, civil society). Given strong environmental motivations in German development cooperation (Interviews #44, government; #91, development), there is a preference for organic certification, which also allows cocoa-growing activities to draw funds from conservation or climate change facilities. NGOs with a strong

environmental ethos will equally gravitate towards this certification, as both the initiatives involving World Choc and Floral demonstrated, or create a carbon-neutral certification to satisfy consumers' new demand for this priority, as for Our Chocolate and World Choc. However, Floral's shift from organic to UTZ Certification did not lead the ministry to terminate its support immediately, as the presence of a strong commercial buyer is too important not to maintain. Also in other projects than the above-explained, development partners may go along with supporting the certification which the international buyer wishes to pursue (Interview #63, civil society), as the view that certification is better than no certification is pervasive.

Despite this spectrum of motivations and the diversity of certification requirements explored in section 2.2.2, one civil-society observer (Interview #117) calls into question to what extent different schemes do share the same logic and cannot escape the trappings of business.

“The certification process is beset by a fundamental problem: they have to be as imperfect and corrupt as all companies in the world. They are all born of the same logic, which is the logic of business. They pass through a period of growth, then they fall into decadence and loss of credibility. ... And producers see: ‘they come to audit me, but I see that there is corruption in the processes – so why should I be squeaky clean in what I do?’

(Interview #117, civil society)

While this is a rather harsh view which does not bear out the nuances between different schemes' priorities explored above, it recalls the previously discussed question of whether certification schemes collectively are aptly characterised as civil-society, or have civil-society roots, but also a strong business outlook. Again, further research would be necessary to explore this question. For this thesis, chapter 8 will explore in more detail the rationale of certification in terms of the representations utilised.

7.4.3 The rise of commercial concerns and their ramifications

All three initiatives, albeit to varying degrees, have confirmed the hypothesis of shifts in the cocoa sector at large altering cocoa sustainability initiatives, and increasing commercial pressures for private-sector actors. The municipalities' initiative showed an interesting relationship between socio-environmental goals and commercial pressures. The current absence of scale, benefiting

less than 100 farmer families, pulls into question to what extent the project's ambitious goals are attainable, for instance regarding slowing down the prevalent deforestation rate, raising awareness and altering behaviours. However, this is only superficially an anomaly from the overall rise of commercial pressures. The increasing cocoa and cocoa futures prices globally make constructing a cocoa-growing project a viable income opportunity for the Colombian partner municipalities. Project participants are aware of projected shortages, ageing cocoa trees in West Africa and climate change, as well as the opportunity with which these growing concerns present their project (Interviews #143, development; #137, #139, government). In combination with increasing public awareness of climate change, this confluence favoured boosting income through cocoa for environmental ends. While projected cocoa shortages also present a challenge to bean-to-bar manufacturer Friedrich, the small volumes they consume, and the specialist processing expertise they harbour, give them some independence.

The below diagram 7.4.3.1, already touched upon in section 7.2, represents divergences and parallels between different stakeholders' priorities in the World Choc initiative. It depicts considerable overlaps regarding carbon sequestration and socio-economic priorities, but also discrepancies resulting from one NGO's environmental and the company's commercial focus.

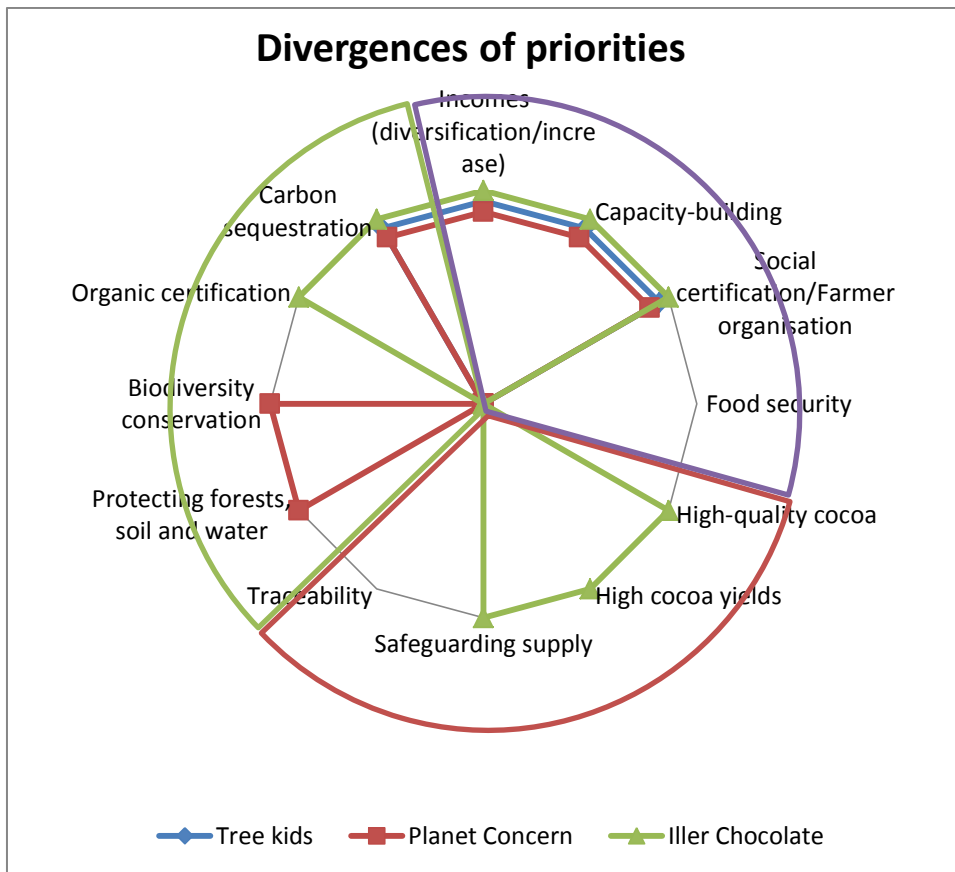


Figure 7.4.3.1: Divergences of priorities in World Choc (GPN 2).

Source: Author.

Even though commercial priorities are solely the domain of the company in the above diagram (figure 7.4.3.1), these drivers play a considerable role in the initiative. The company's intention is to demonstrate the 'business case' of using an ethical approach. They seek to provide multiple income strands to cocoa farmers, proving the viability of cocoa livelihoods to younger generations, and to show the value of engaging with sustainability beyond certification. The engagement of Tree kids opened a commercial window to sell their chocolate in Germany, introducing market-based elements to the theoretically mission-driven venture. Even a venture which pursues socio-economic goals including complying with the requirements of Fairtrade certification, and goes beyond that by providing income from environmental measures, thus has underlying commercial drivers acutely related to the cocoa sector's long-term viability. Further evidence is the company's engagement in reinvigorating cocoa in Honduras, a long-term, macro-scale investment much easier to rationalise given the cocoa sector's tribulations and the company's need to safeguard high-quality supplies. For Tree kids, by contrast, the only commercial objective is raising money for tree-planting. Since they mostly care about chocolate as consumers, this raises a potential for future tensions. Equally, their child-like enthusiasm in

seeking to be ‘double Fairtrade’ and ‘double ecological’ will find its limits in what is commercially viable while maintaining a chocolate price affordable even on scant allowances. As commercial pressures on Iller Chocolate are likely to mount in coming years, there is potential for tensions between the commercial partner, the children’s and the implementing NGO, which boasts green credentials, but is in some ways tied to the funder’s priorities.

Diagram 7.4.3.2 shows the evolution over time of the chocolate company’s priorities in the initiative involving Floral, demonstrating the prominence of commercial considerations including safeguarding supply and high-quality cocoa in later iterations of the initiative.

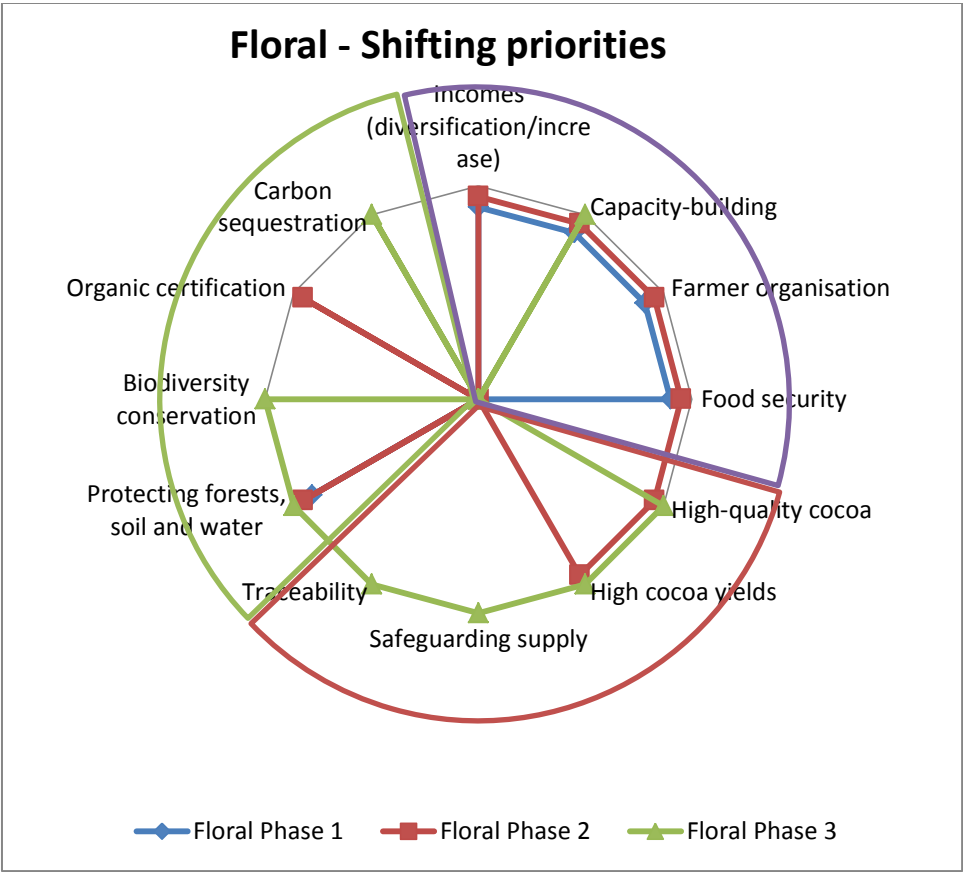


Figure 7.4.3.2: Shifting priorities of Floral over time.

Source: Author.

While commercial viability was a prerequisite for fulfilling environmental goals in the municipalities’ initiative, Floral demonstrates a somewhat inverse relationship between commercial and socio-economic goals in its more mature phase in the initiative’s life-cycle. Following an initial presence of social development priorities and absence of commercial

priorities, against the backdrop of rising cocoa futures prices, its commercial interests intensified, eventually taking on the form of its own plantation. In some ways, it constitutes the epitome of intensified commercial concerns given the absence of socio-economic benefits to cocoa producers from the plantation itself.

Following monthly cocoa futures prices on the stock market is instructive in this case (Futures Trading, 2014). As presented in section 2.1, from slow ascent beginning in 2006, price increases gathered momentum throughout 2007 and 2008, eventually reaching a peak in early 2011. This is the same year that Floral purchased its plantation land and that the cocoa-centred climate partnership between German and Colombian municipalities began, with the relationship between Tree kids and Iller Chocolate beginning the following year. In 2008, a previous peak in futures prices, Iller Chocolate started its commitment to reinvigorating the Honduran cocoa sector (Iller Chocolate, n.d.), as Floral's cocoa activities in neighbouring Nicaragua intensified. Simultaneously, another worrying trend for chocolate brand manufacturers continued. In 2008, UNCTAD reported only a handful of companies controlled half of worldwide cocoa processing, with the top four proceeding to merge into a Big Three and a Big Two (Confectionery News, 2013e; Cargill 2015). These two market developments thus create ever-increasing commercial pressures to shore up future high-quality cocoa supplies, with several interviewees from the private-sector and beyond acknowledging the importance of commercial pressures (Interviews #33, #134, #135, #142, private sector; #139, government; #143, development; #43, research). With Carroll and Shabana (2010), there has been a shift in cocoa sustainability initiatives from creating positives towards avoiding negatives, with the focus no longer on generating benefits for producers, cooperatives and companies, but avoiding negatives in terms of cocoa shortages, oligopolistic dependence and unsatisfactory purchasing options given rising cocoa futures prices.

Overall, to answer research sub-question 3 concerning the impact of new and diverging drivers on cocoa sustainability initiatives with an environmental focus, the analysis confirmed this thesis's argument that diverse stakeholders bring multiple socio-economic, environmental and commercial drivers to bear on cocoa sustainability initiatives, causing tensions. As the cocoa sector has seen shifts including increasing shortage fears, also cocoa sustainability initiatives have transformed, with public-sector, private-sector and civil-society stakeholders contributing a variegated spectrum of drivers. One observation across the three initiatives was that commercial concerns play an important role, with stakeholders from the private-sector and other fields acknowledging the importance of safeguarding long-term cocoa supplies and concentrating

market forces in driving their engagements. These commercial pressures are likely to grow in importance as global demand for cocoa rises and climate change becomes more acute. Tensions persist, and are likely to grow more severe, since actors and archipelago actors, particularly competitors, have different understandings of how to define or bring about sustainability, and the relative importance of commercial vis-à-vis socio-environmental priorities.

Increasing awareness of environmental matters has opened a window for environmentally focused initiatives, and for engagement from civil-society and public-sector actors beyond ever powerful lead firms, answering research sub-question 3.1 concerning who and what drivers underlie cocoa sustainability initiatives. The tensions and trade-offs between socio-economic, environmental and commercial concerns as explained above affect the reality of stakeholders throughout the network and particularly cocoa producers, as raised by research sub-question 3.3. Given the immediacy of supply-security pressures, particularly public-sector and civil-society stakeholders, but also long-term-oriented private-sector stakeholders have a responsibility to safeguard also environmental and socio-economic priorities against commercial primacy. Sustainability initiatives are also a risk aversion strategy, the risk being that cocoa is only available to those willing to pay high prices for it (Interview #135, private sector). Conversely, this could mean that cocoa prices skyrocket towards the levels which, in purchasing power parity, cocoa prices used to command decades ago (Südwind, 2012a), and which they ought to command again according to Fairtrade's CEO (Confectionery News, 2015). In answer to research sub-question 3.2, there are diverse examples of trade-offs and tensions between the different dimensions across the three initiatives, evident for instance from preferences for different agroforestry systems. Interestingly, despite the trade-offs arising from divergent drivers, stakeholders' public-facing representations neglect these tensions, focusing instead on altruistic and philanthropic images, as the following chapter will detail.

7.5 Conclusion

In summary, the analysis presented firstly an analytical and several empirical points on the third research sub-question investigating the question of how new drivers are affecting cocoa sustainability initiatives, particularly regarding the environment. Cocoa sustainability initiatives with explicit environmental goals are a fairly recent phenomenon, also linked to growing commercial concerns, heightened environmental awareness among consumers and the need to render cocoa a more viable livelihood. The analytical constellation of priorities model, one of my

thesis's contributions to knowledge, offers a viable starting point to capture the multitude of commercial, socio-economic and environmental drivers and their divergences between stakeholders. The chapter unpacked and mapped congruences and divergences as well as the tensions emerging from them, demonstrating that commercial drivers were principal in private-sector actors, while the prioritisation of civil-society and public-sector actors leaned more towards socio-economic and environmental aspects. It also showed, in answer to research sub-question 3.3, how those divergent priorities affect producer and other stakeholder realities.

A key empirical insight was commercial drivers' ambiguous, dual role. While they open the door for socio-economically and environmentally motivated production network actors to find commercial partners for their measures, commercial imperatives also cause tensions with NGOs' and development actors' core competencies and drivers. This finding, answering research sub-question 3.1 concerning who and what have been important drivers, thus confirmed the thesis's argument of a broad spectrum of drivers requiring trade-offs, as means and ends are often reversed between private-sector actors on the one hand, and public-sector and civil-society stakeholders on the other hand. For instance, for private-sector actors, commercial drivers and their achievement, such as safeguarding supply security of the qualities and price ranges they desire, is the end, while altering socio-economic and environmental factors is the means to sustain the cultivating populations and surfaces. For many non-governmental and development organisations, the priorities are exactly reversed. Commercial outlets are a necessary vehicle to safeguard the overall attainment of the income increases or carbon sequestration they covet, but are not inherently an organisational priority. These divergent understandings of ends and means are one source of tensions among many identified in the chapter, answering research sub-question 3.2 concerning trade-offs between priorities.

Environmental measures have functioned as a door-opener for new funds and new actor groups to take an interest in cocoa sustainability, as argued by this research. As the public at large has grown more aware of the importance of climate change mitigation and biodiversity conservation, funds have become available from both public-sector donors and responsive consumers. This also has a linkage back to the previously discussed ends and means which are reversed. Chocolate companies contribute a vested interest in terms of safeguarding chocolate availability long-term, viewing environmental measures such as carbon sequestration or organic certification and the concomitant additional income sources for cocoa producers and cooperatives as a way towards attaining this goal. By contrast, for environmental activists, chocolate is a means towards raising

awareness given cocoa agroforestry's propensity for promoting afforestation and biodiversity, but interchangeable for other products also suitable as an awareness-raiser and conversation starter. As stated above, the question of whose understanding dominates and becomes manifest in stakeholder reality is also a matter of power and embeddedness, striking the link back to the previous chapter.

The analysis showed throughout the three initiatives that such and other divergences in priorities offer the potential for tensions between actors as argued by this research, jeopardising the initiatives' viability. With funding and power usually firmly located with private-sector actors and power asymmetry increasing through corporate concentration, this differential also provides the explanation as to why the commercial drivers, which are a priority virtually exclusively with private-sector actors, occupy a prominent place. At the same time, socio-economic and environmental priorities are crucial for initiatives' long-term ability to address shortage concerns in the chocolate sector, as a continuation of commercially focused poor practices would fail to address the systemic challenges causing shortage fears in the first place. Even actors for whom commercial concerns are paramount thus have an intrinsic interest in socio-economic and environmental priorities not being submerged. However, this deviates from the position of oligopolistic power to which private-sector actors are accustomed, while also requiring that they share some network embeddedness with actors whose primary concerns are socio-economic or environmental priorities, which few private-sector stakeholders are willing to implement.

The analysis in this chapter has thus confirmed the thesis's argument of considerable tensions between different stakeholders' commercial, socio-economic and environmental drivers, requiring in-depth analysis. At the same time, the analysis has also underscored that the cocoa sector's challenges are driving home to private-sector actors that, with Polanyi (1957), the notion that society was merely an adjunct of markets was flawed. Society, understood in the broadest sense as both the human and the physical environment within which economic activity takes place, is a necessary prerequisite for their commercial interests to come to pass. Private-sector actors cannot solve the cocoa sector's manifold challenges by themselves, as the emergence of diverse multi-stakeholder initiatives has demonstrated. Against private-sector actors' natural instincts, addressing systemic challenges effectively will mean addressing tensions between priorities by ceding partial control of production networks to actors who have not commercial, but socio-economic or environmental concerns at heart in order to safeguard their own commercial interests long-term.

In the cocoa sector, this means working with stakeholders such as civil society, producers, governments and certifiers to make cocoa-growing a livelihood which is more viable socio-economically and sustains producers' environments in the long term. Such actor constellations will not further private-sector actors' corporate power, but rather reduce it, thereby requiring companies to enter largely uncharted territory. Moreover, this would reduce private-sector actors' network embeddedness by increasing the importance of other stakeholders. While likely to increase their territorial embeddedness with producers, it would be unlikely to improve their societal standing in their home societies: such changes would be difficult to represent in a way that would enhance their own rootedness without emphasising the part they have played in bringing about this problematic state of affairs in the first place. This is but one of many paradoxes which emerge in conversations about priorities and representations in the chocolate sector. The following chapter will analyse the representations which stakeholders used in my three case-studies, exploring their meanings and unpacking tensions.

8. Representations and drivers: links and incongruences

This chapter focuses on the last aspect of my research focus, representations in cocoa sustainability initiatives. The previous chapter, building on the GPN mapping of the three case-studies as well as the prior analysis of the cocoa sector, applied my conceptual framework to explore the tensions emerging between different stakeholders' drivers in the three case-study initiatives under investigation. With the help of the constellation of priorities model, one of my original contributions, it critically explored how civil-society, public-sector and private-sector stakeholders' priorities variously dovetailed, intersected or collided. It unearthed considerable tensions between different stakeholders' socio-economic, environmental and commercial priorities, and links to the previously established power and embeddedness relations. For instance, while commercial priorities are predominantly the domain of private-sector stakeholders, their privileged power and embeddedness position within production networks allows them to imprint these ideas on wider initiatives. As cocoa shortages grow more acute in the foreseeable future, this insight renders further tensions likely between stakeholders prioritising secure supply and stakeholders hoping to improve cocoa production's socio-environmental circumstances. Building on these insights, this chapter will use especially focus group, documentary and participant observation data to explore the relations between priorities, power and embeddedness and the meanings which stakeholders create in public-facing communication, investigating how actors represent their engagements:

4. In relation to drivers, what representations surface in cocoa sustainability initiatives especially regarding the environment?

4.1 How do different stakeholders' representations diverge?

4.2 What interactions are there between drivers and prevalent representations?

In answer to research sub-question 4, this chapter aims to discuss different stakeholders' representations and show what links there are between underlying drivers and the representations which different stakeholders use to discuss their engagements. Chapter 7 established that stakeholder priorities diverge, producing tensions. However, against this diversity of drivers, this chapter argues that representations remain focused on environmental and socio-economic issues, with the meanings produced primarily related to philanthropy rather than the commercial drivers playing a key part in the cocoa sector, as previously established. Furthermore, it is first and

foremost environmental issues which are forefronted in representation, alongside other benefits to consumers such as unique chocolate tastes, with socio-economic benefits to producers only of secondary importance. Again, these divergences create tensions. The chapter further argues that the focus on philanthropy decreases the likelihood that the public will ask questions about the global North's and especially the private sector's role in bringing about some of the sector's most pressing challenges, perpetuating systemic asymmetries and poor practices. At the same time, representations of 'helping' also are predicated on answering consumers' desire to 'help' rather than extend fair treatment throughout the network. The first three sections, as in previous chapters, will discuss the representations visible in each of the three initiatives, highlighting divergences and convergences in response to research sub-question 4.1. Section 8.4.1 will examine the relationship between representations and socio-economic, environmental and commercial drivers, answering research sub-question 4.2. In section 8.4.2, I will look at narratives of uniqueness and partnership surfacing across the three initiatives, with 8.4.3 picking up a theme from the previous chapter to discuss representations in relation to certification. The final section will critically engage with the premise of 'helping' and to what extent Northern stakeholders may magnify the need for their collaboration in representations to galvanise public support, with the final section concluding.

8.1 Our Chocolate: Representations vs. drivers

8.1.1 The chocolate wrapper

The meanings which Our Chocolate's various wrappers deploy differ from the findings of both the power and embeddedness mapping and the priorities identified in the previous chapter, exemplifying tensions. The German municipalities use different paper sleeves to sell the same 50g dark-chocolate bar, with the images vastly and the words slightly different. Firstly, Immenhof utilises an image of its own town hall on the front, with the words inside the wrapper (Immenhof, 2014:3) as follows:

"This chocolate helps to support small-scale farming families in Comuno and Tilón who wish to protect their rainforest from deforestation through sustainable agriculture. Agroforestry, as the practice is called, in the rainforest preserves biodiversity of plants and animals and protects the climate. The small-scale farmers receive a fair price for their commitment and the special quality of their cocoa. ...

Through climate partnerships between Immenhof and Comuno as well as Otterbach and Tilón, the small-scale farmers are receiving advice, training and support in further

developing this particular rarity: cocoa certified under strict organic standards and traded fairly.’

Firstly, while the GPN mapping showed that power was mostly located on the German side, the wrapper places the agency in wishing to protect ‘their’ rainforest on Colombian farming families. Secondly, it establishes a direct link between buying chocolate and protecting rainforests thanks to a viable livelihood for producers, i.e. a simplified automatism between incentive and incentivised behaviour. This neglects that the recent planting of cocoa trees and the small volumes cannot yet sustain a viable livelihood, with project money, only mentioned in the final paragraph, the current actual source of funding. This also does not emphasise that drivers underlying deforestation include global demand e.g. for oil as well as beneficiaries of deforestation within those communities.

In terms of socio-economic vis-à-vis environmental representations, before there is any indication of families receiving a fair price, already rainforest, deforestation, biodiversity and climate have found mention, with the proximity to national parks also emphasised. As the initiative has not yet attained neither fair nor organic certification, it is interesting it would strike this link to two entities which, with Blowfield and Dolan (2008), are stewards of virtue. At the end, there is again a reference to how ‘special’ this chocolate is, a recurring theme, although double-certified cocoa is hardly as unique as the wrapper suggests. Overall, this communication directed towards Northern audiences thus emphasises the environmental side and generally benefits to the North such as the chocolate’s special properties. It also neglects to emphasise the socio-economic objective of electrification from renewable energy which, as established in chapter 6, is key to Colombian project staff. While it places agency with Colombian partners, the representation’s very focus on benefits to the North and neglect of renewable energy exemplifies the actual distribution of power.

Otterbach’s wrapper (2014b) bears no resemblance visually to Immenhof’s wrapper, with the front picture showing the Colombian Amazon, thus emphasising their embeddedness in the partner culture rather than their own territory. The text is very similar, again placing the agency for the desire to protect the rainforest with small-scale farming families. A third municipality, Verheiden, has now altered its design, from showing its town hall to a parrot displayed on the front, emphasising nature (Verheiden, 2014). It has now chosen to brand its chocolate as an ‘Agenda 21’ product to increase the appeal beyond its own municipality through social and

environmental credentials rather than just its local appeal. The inlay highlights the chocolate bar's outstanding taste and benefits for a national park, emphasising that paying a fair price for cocoa beans helps protect carbon-sequestering rainforests (Verheiden, 2014). Again, there is thus the emphasis on the benefits to the consumer, i.e. the outstanding quality, biodiversity protection and climate change, rather than socio-economic benefits.

8.1.2 Internet presentation

Internet presentations of the initiative equally highlight the benefits to the global North in environmental and organoleptic terms. On the German Agenda 21 website, Immenhof presents its climate-chocolate initiative under the heading 'A partnership with tasty fruits – Chocolate as a climate protection measure' (Agenda 21, 2013). As on the wrapper, the first paragraph highlights the importance of protecting the world's climate. Unlike the wrapper, however, it emphasises the relevance of demand for furniture, paper and oil driving deforestation and resource exploitation. A parallel to the wrapper is the key role which Colombian actors play. It points out the relevance of indigenous communities requesting support from municipalities, highlighting the need for external assistance to protect and preserve rainforests. The text then states:

'a manifesto was passed which not only required the European cities to do everything for climate protection, but also support the indigenous peoples of Amazonia in securing their rights and continuing to preserve the rainforest through sustainable agriculture. Growing cocoa is one such notable agricultural pursuit.' (Agenda21, 2013:para 2)

There is an interesting duality of drivers between the social goal of securing indigenous rights and the environmental objective of preserving the rainforest. If the relationship between cocoa cultivation and preserving rainforests is already indirect, any potential relationship between cocoa-growing and securing indigenous rights would be even more tenuous as the decision-making required to secure indigenous rights in community and society extends to levels which cocoa-generated income cannot reach. The project's imagery parallels the logic of socio-economic incentives entailing environmental results, which fair and environmental certifications commonly deploy. Moreover, the text creates an immediate connection between consumers' choice of chocolate and the importance they attach to rainforest protection. Further paragraphs highlight the significance of carbon sequestration and the benefits of agroforestry systems offering habitat for rare birds, monkeys and insects (Agenda 21, 2013). Unlike World Choc,

however, the narrative only invokes carbon sequestration benefits without offering quantitative substantiation.

Otterbach's online presentation (2013, 2014a) again depicts the climate partnership under the heading of establishing a high-quality, high-value cocoa chain, to be subjected to organic and fair certification. One article (Otterbach, 2013) highlights that supermarkets and ethical trade shops are to sell the chocolate in future, thus again emphasising the immediate benefits to consumers in the global North. However, although the text claims that climate protection and biodiversity are their focus (Otterbach, 2013), the text does not provide details on how climate protection is to be achieved; instead, it focuses on the logistics of transport from the remote region, organic and fair certifications, and project partners. It is interesting to note that throughout the online presentations of Otterbach and Immenhof, the chocolate aspect and thus benefits to Northern consumers play the most important role, whereas commercial drivers and the socio-economic side of electrification, a key concern for the Colombian municipalities as established in section 7.1, barely feature.

8.1.3 Focus group discussions

Views on the initiative differed in my focus group discussions with purposefully selected responsive consumers (cf. section 3.5.3 for details on discussions and participants). Focus group participants, who were not geographically biased by living in any municipality involved, predominantly voiced concerns regarding the current lack of official certification and the small scale. The first, environmentally conscious group noted the discrepancy between the organic and fair principles the cocoa is to aspire to, and the absence of any third-party certification, likening the initiative to dealing in papal indulgences.

‘The municipalities seem to have thought: Great, we should do something [about] climate change, so let's make a chocolate.’ (Participant 1b)

‘To me, this chocolate seems like a modern phenomenon, there's Agenda21, EU, 2013, we have to do something good ... , so Immenhof will think: Let's do a chocolate.’ (Participant 1f)

Participants in the second group disagreed, noting that the small scale rendered it more believable and created direct partnership:

‘Those are smaller-scale initiatives, ... there are direct ties to the Colombian municipalities, and I was thinking that ... leads to a different type of a personal commitment. (Participant 2k)

‘This chocolate is the most credible for me because there are personal contacts there, they know exactly who they are buying from.’ (Participant 2a)

The two discussions thus demonstrated the spectrum of sources of credibility, with the first group viewing certification as a source of trustworthiness, while the second group considered the small scale and concomitant direct partnership the initiative’s greatest asset. In the third group, certification was not considered very credible; the participants appreciated local partnership and the absence of commercial drivers. However, as analysed in the previous chapter, a participant emphasised that the lack of scale also endangers impact:

‘The story of municipalities, it sounds great, but it is completely negligible when it comes to economic effects, and it’ll also be the first to die, certainly after one term of office ... It’s a nice thought though.’ (Participant 3h)

Clearly, the question of whether making measurable changes to climate and behaviours is feasible for a four-year project with less than 100 families is salient. Interestingly, unlike in my focus groups, questions regarding impact did not surface in a public project presentation in Immenhof. Instead, representatives of government and public lauded the project for building up a partnership-based supply chain from scratch and trust through personal visits. The absence of questions also raises the point whether the lack of measurability actually matters, whether for such a small-scale project, creating spectacle and amenable representations through images, videos and an internet platform creates greater societal embeddedness than a focus on monitoring. At the same time, this also suggests a subscription to Feuerbach’s style over substance argument (1956 [1841]). Similarly, one audience member at the public meeting asked for the chocolate wrapper to display not Immenhof’s town hall, but make a connection to the ‘story to be told’ and display some images from Colombia. The comment, in opposition to a

retailer's observation regarding the importance of the chocolate's local German ties as a souvenir (Interview #19, private sector), thus places the unique selling proposition in the narrative of rainforest protection and the 'story told', rather than substantive details on farmer families reached or carbon sequestered.

8.1.4 Analytical observations

The intention of creating partnership recurs frequently. Unlike the distant strangers for which developmental initiatives frequently seek to invoke support from the global North (Corbridge, 1998), this initiative aims to create partnership on multiple levels between German and Colombian municipalities to encourage a sense of responsibility and behavioural change. At a public meeting, German project staff, interpreting Colombian stakeholders' statements from Spanish into German, added considerable explanations for instance highlighting the project's remoteness. While this is an attempt to bridge the divide and create partnership, it implicitly also further emphasises the vast discrepancy in life reality between consumers and producers, while also giving more of a voice to German project staff and prioritising their interpretation of the situation. This observation highlights various tensions between stakeholder realities and different types of embeddedness. The added explanations also play up the need for external assistance (Crush, 1995) and risk to paint 'individuals, governments and communities as 'underdeveloped' and treated as such' (Escobar, 1995:213). Evidently, that is at odds, as established in chapter 7, with the self-assessment by *campesinos* in Tilon and Comuno highlighting the strength of community, showing a divergence of representations in answer to research sub-question 4.1. Equally, a German translation being twice as extensive as the Spanish original creates a sense of power being located among German rather than Colombian stakeholders, which reflects the finding from chapter 6's GPN mapping, but is at odds with other project representations (cf. 8.1.1). As interpreting best-practice would suggest an interpretation not exceeding the original text's length, even members of the public present at the meeting observed that this suggested an imbalance of power between Colombian speakers and German project staff.

This instance thus saw German institutional power projected at the expense of collective power from Colombian communities, prioritising Northern over Southern embeddedness in the German consumer communities. Similarly, this chapter confirmed that Colombian municipalities' priority on socio-economic benefits and electrification did not find nearly as much mention in representations as direct benefits for German consumers such as chocolate and environmental

protection, reflecting the finding of tensions from chapter 7. These factors call into question the spectacle of multi-scalar partnership, instead highlighting that Northern stakeholders have the power to create meanings conducive to their intended purposes of awareness-raising and advancing their own societal embeddedness, creating tensions.

Besides partnership, the idea of a unique initiative with closer links between consumers and producers also recurs regularly, akin to Goodman's (2010:115) developing 'alternatives to the alternatives'. The project's initiators argue the chocolate is unique firstly due to its provenance from a remote, very sparsely populated area in Colombia. They thus highlight that the chocolate bar is to serve as a tool for development (Goodman, 2010), emphasising the direct connection between Northern consumers and Southern producers to justify the premium price and again enhance societal and territorial embeddedness for German municipalities. Equally, the project's proponents highlight the links to global environmental challenges, firstly the location in a biodiversity hotspot in the Colombian Amazon, and secondly the project's agroforestry premise as a non-destructive livelihood alternative. Thirdly, while other towns rebrand existing bars as Our Chocolate, these municipalities argue they are the only German project to attempt creating a cocoa supply chain from scratch. One final aspect of the uniqueness rhetoric is the processing in Germany by a bean-to-bar manufacturer into a bar with a distinctive aroma specific to this fine-flavour Amazonian cocoa.

Overall, the environmental benefits which this venture is to bring interested consumers alongside the chocolate's outstanding quality and taste are thus the focal points of the representations. While mentioning the need for electrification, which Colombian stakeholders prioritise, would emphasise the considerable livelihood distance between consumers and producers, the current representations construct a joint venture of environmental protection facilitated by consumers and enacted by producers, reiterating the 'partnership' and 'helping' meanings which the initiative rests on. Beyond the assumed automatism, also the gap between the actual small scale and the represented intended effects on deforestation and rainforest livelihoods raises questions, thrown up several times by focus group discussants. The analysis raised further questions regarding the extent to which Northern vis-à-vis Southern representations found a voice in the venture, emphasising the predominantly German-dominated images and communication channels directing attention to environmental benefits as opposed to Colombian municipalities' chief focus of electrification and renewable energy. Moreover, the emphasised notion of 'helping' recurring throughout the German municipalities' representations paradoxically also limits the choices of

those the narrative purports to help, setting boundaries for expected, environmentally friendly conduct for Southern producers.

8.2 World Choc: Representations vs. drivers

8.2.1 Chocolate wrapper

The representations deployed for World Choc's wrapper also show interesting tensions. World Choc's paper-made outer packaging only bears the chocolate's name, the slogan 'Saving the world one piece at a time', and the three logos of Tree kids, Fairtrade and Zero Climate (Tree kids, 2013b:1). On the reverse, the wrapper tells its story in a child-friendly manner:

'Saving the world has never been so delicious!

Forget Superman! True heroes do not have laser eyes nor spandex suits, but photosynthesis. That's how trees turn CO₂ into clean air to breathe. Sound complicated? It is! But that's how great trees are. But one thing they are not: delicious. And that's why World Choc exists.

Traders and manufacturers do without their profit and donate it to the youth initiative 'Tree kids'. And they plant enough trees to make the production of every chocolate bar completely climate-neutral. But that's not its only superpower. Because World Choc, first and foremost, is supernaturally chocolaty.' (Tree kids, 2013b:2)

The chocolate primarily targets 'Tree kids' young constituency, explaining 'Superman' and the simplified language. The wrapper builds on 'Tree kids' primary goal of planting trees to combat climate change, again highlighting the chocolate's status as a means to an end. No socio-economic representations concerning improving farmers' lives are indicated, the focus is singularly on sequestering carbon. As in the municipal initiative, the wrapper references a consumer benefit, i.e. the bar's 'super-chocolaty' taste, and the environmental, and indirectly also consumer, benefit of carbon sequestration. The Fairtrade logo on the front is the only evidence of any socio-economic goals on the wrapper's outside, with further information on the inside of the outer paper packaging (Tree kids, 2013b:3):

'We children from 'Tree kids have developed this chocolate to be just as we children want all products to be: climate-neutral and Fairtrade, because we do not want cocoa farmers' children to harvest cocoa beans for us, but them to go to school like us.'

The text recounts 'Tree kids' work in 193 countries, planting over 12 billion trees and training young ambassadors for climate justice. It then explains that '20 cents of every World Choc bar goes directly to Tree kids, and we plant one tree for every five bars' (Tree kids, 2013b:3). The following paragraph in the text explains options for getting involved, such as giving one bar to every friend or conducting a chocolate-tasting session.

The frequent use of 'we' and the invitation to contribute to World Choc fulfil a dual use. Firstly, they create a sense of ownership, perpetuating the children-for-children storyline crucial to the bar's commercial success. Secondly, they remove all sense of distance, creating a community with the joint tree-planting cause. Again, the wrapper places the accent on the environmental side and the personal benefit to consumers, while there is no mention of the looming cocoa shortages, and the socio-economic side only features in passing. The rationale appears to be that taste and tree-planting will be most likely to create embeddedness by instigating community, with the environmental focus further evidence of the importance of archipelago legislators' regulatory interventions in promoting a societal climate conducive to climate change mitigation. The environmental side is emphasised towards the global North, evidently considered more likely to draw support than the socio-economic properties highlighted towards cocoa producers (Interview #30, research). The meanings created thus vary considerably between the constituencies addressed, from emphasising environmental challenges and tasty benefits to the added income sources.

8.2.2 Internet representations

Planet Concern, the implementing NGO, publishes on their website project summaries and update reports (Planet Concern, 2012, 2013a-c, 2014a-c, 2015a-c), which again emphasise altruistic, particularly environmental aspects. Their summary of the reinvigoration of the Honduran cocoa sector shows their focus is the environmental domain and indirectly socio-economic issues (Planet Concern, 2015a). The first set of issues mentioned as in need of rectification are environmental challenges, including pesticide use, deforestation, depletion of water resources and climate change, with social issues including child labour only stated second. Similarly, in discussing the Peruvian, VCS-certified initiative, all four objectives cited as project goals emphasise environmental objectives, with even the socio-economic goal of income increases to incentivise reforestation (Planet Concern, 2015b). The other objectives cited are exclusively environmental: deforestation, agroforestry and carbon credits (Planet Concern,

2015b). This reinforces the point from chapter 7 about environmental issues being the organisation's primary focus, and their environmental priorities being more nuanced than Tree kids' primary concern of carbon sequestration.

Tree kids clearly aims for transparency as a children-for-children endeavour since it seeks to produce an 'honest product' (Interview #26, civil society), being active on multiple social media platforms. Firstly, regular chocolate contributions in terms of pictures from chocolate-tasting sessions populate its facebook page (Tree kids, 2015). Secondly, on its own website, Tree kids offers 2,500 words of frequently asked questions (FAQs) on World Choc (2013a). On multiple occasions, the section discusses Iller Chocolate in the first person plural: while the information is published on Tree kids' website, it stems from Iller Chocolate and was summarily pasted. However, the NGO's desire for transparency finds its limits in the chocolatier's commercial principles, leading for instance to an inability to publish their precise chocolate recipe online for full disclosure (Tree kids, 2013a), demonstrating a tension between the NGO's desire to express transparency in representations and the chocolatier's commercial priorities.

Tree kids' FAQ section also discusses the product's climate neutrality. The text references the Zero Climate label, de facto a first-party certification awarded by Planet Concern which requires that emissions generated be sequestered elsewhere. The section concludes that:

'The chocolate with the logo is thus not only produced in a climate-free manner, but is a climate-free product overall, and we work with specialists for calculation and afforestation.' (Tree kids, 2013a: Logo Zero Climate, 1., para 6)

This is interesting firstly because of the claim that the chocolate is produced in a 'climate-free' manner, which is problematic as emissions are still produced, only offset. Equally, the statement extends the claim not only to production, which the company can control, but also to transport, distribution and consumer-level emissions. Ironically, the website later acknowledges that 'a medium-sized chocolatier ... cannot make a significant impact on the deforestation rate in a producer country' (2013a: Logo Zero Climate, 3., para 2), thereby also questioning the previous claim of being able to produce a 'climate-free' product and the simplistic logic of saving the climate by purchasing a chocolate bar.

Discussing afforestation's palpable benefits for small-scale farmers, Tree kids' website stresses that even Fairtrade and Zero Climate certification do not suffice to 'capture holistically the comprehensive advantages' (2013a: Logo Zero Climate, 5., para 1) which Iller's procurement approach entails through direct connections, Fairtrade certification and afforestation. It declares income increases such as from intercropping precious timber in cocoa agroforestry systems to be 'indispensable when speaking about sustainability in the cocoa sector, also to secure the quality and quantity of our most important ingredient' (Tree kids, 2013a: Logo Zero Climate, 5., para 2). This admission from Iller Chocolate via Tree kids is an astonishingly frank acknowledgement of the importance of safeguarding cocoa as an ingredient long-term, thus proving an exception to the predominantly socio-economically and environmentally driven representations observed so far. However, it only comes under point five, oddly listed as one benefit of afforestation for smallholders.

Iller Chocolate's website, by comparison with Tree kids, is far less extensive. Multiple pages documenting their commitments in different countries frequently only feature one-paragraph summaries of initiatives (Iller Chocolate, 2015a, b):

'For us, a direct and personal cooperation means that we know the Fairtrade cooperatives from whom we purchase cocoa and procure as directly as possible. Of course we are regularly on the ground, visit cocoa farmers in their villages and discuss their needs and joint projects. This partnership brings advantages for everyone involved.' (Iller Chocolate, 2015b: para 1)

The company's account draws on both Fairtrade and cooperatives as sources of societal embeddedness. Nevertheless, the explanation is rather concise and perfunctory, unlike Tree kids' FAQ section, but written in simple language to also accommodate young Tree kids supporters who have found their way onto the chocolatier's website. Taking the direct partnership a step further, there are also passages recounting cocoa farmers' perspectives:

'For him, who already was committed to environmental protection before there was an official programme to afforest the Amazonian region, the sustainable cultivation of cocoa

is a dream come true. The cocoa farmers will jointly plant approximately two million trees to sequester carbon, improve soils and protect water resources. Besides, [he] receives fair prices thanks to Fairtrade and additional income from the tree-planting premiums and selling carbon certificates. ... he will even earn enough to facilitate better education for his daughter.' (Iller, 2015c: para 2)

The structure is telling. The newspaper-style text emphasises in detail the importance of environmental goals and environmental benefits from tree-planting, with the socio-economic benefits only discussed at the end. The attention which the environmental side receives suggests an assumption that environmental objectives will draw more support than improving family incomes, with several key words including afforestation and sequestering carbon represented as a dream scenario for the cocoa producer. Equally, the socio-economic aspect of incomes facilitating an education for the producer's daughter only is mentioned in passing at the end of the paragraph: after all, it would draw attention to the gulf in life realities between those reading the statement, and the person at its centre, recalling Silverstone's concept of proper distance (2007). Commercial goals are only secondary, even on the chocolatier's website, creating tensions between these altruistic meanings and the previously established commercial concerns.

8.2.3 Focus group discussions

As in the case of the municipal initiative, reactions in the focus group discussions differed. The first, environmentally rooted focus group knew of Tree kids and lauded the chocolate's taste, yet several participants expressed scepticism at the NGO's heavy reliance on marketing and the 'how' of offsetting:

'It seems to me a chocolate that really makes a big deal out of its story ... yes, it may be environmentally certified and Fairtrade, but I am sceptical of how credible these are anyway.' (Participant 1a)

'Author: This claim of offsetting emissions, do you find that credible?

1a&1c&1e: No.

1e: Immediately the question also is: What are they planting, where, how ... what are the tree species.

1a: Eucalyptus!

1g: Also: What emissions are they taking into account?

1e: Even just: What tree am I planting how and where, and who do I talk to about it?’

The second group, with a church background, looked more favourably on the initiative:

‘2k: I had never heard about Tree kids before, but if it was founded by children ... that is really a great initiative.

2h: Definitely.

2k: And if children are behind it, then there is a different level of ...

2d: Enthusiasm.

2k: Enthusiasm, and optimism, and creativity ...

2b: And the economic side is just secondary.’

These statements thus echo the positive response to the children-for-children concept which a private-sector representative had cited as a key factor in the initiative’s marketing success (Interview #134, private sector). Focus group 3 concurred:

‘3g: I really like that thought of planting trees, ... and the fact that they really get involved at the point of origin, I like that. And I may also not be entirely objective as I tasted the chocolate earlier, and it tastes really great [Agreement from three other participants].’

While it is important not to overstate the significance of only three focus group discussions, the results nevertheless suggest that the two key assumptions which apparently guided the wrapper’s authors reflect key consumer concerns, i.e. consumer benefits in terms of taste and planting trees. Especially the third discussion confirmed the importance of selling a product with good taste and a memorable unique selling proposition. However, all three focus group discussions also underscored the scepticism prevalent among some consumers regarding seals, with half of all focus group participants prioritising other factors in terms of assessing initiatives’ credibility, such as the involvement of children.

8.2.4 Analytical observations

World Choc aims to be different from business-as-usual in several ways. One objective was demonstrating the commercial viability of Fairtrade and carbon-neutral products. The contingency of this commercial viability on a children-for-children story calls its replicability into question, as two of three focus groups appreciated the children-for-children story as a factor, in combination with high chocolate quality, in motivating future purchases. Secondly, the immense detail available in the FAQ section is testament to Tree kids' transparency goal, which finds its limits in commercial secrets. However, while Tree kids' rhetoric frequently displays a naivety reminiscent of their roots as a children's NGO, including poverty being tackled 'at the root', there are some issues. For instance, regarding Tree kids' claim of producing a 'climate-free' chocolate, there is a parallel to the claim of the chocolate being 'double ecological' and 'double Fairtrade' raised in section 7.2. 'Climate-free' may make for a catchy phrase, but is just as naïve in ignoring the complexities of altering deforestation and emissions trajectories as the equivalence between planting trees and having an 'ecological' product, which omits the tensions between different environmental goals and the details of agroforestry designs. 'Climate-free' neglects there are nevertheless carbon emissions generated, akin to the omission in the 'double Fairtrade' moniker that the extra income is not a premium, but stems from the tree-planting which the company specifically asked for. There is a question to what extent this naivety, required to produce a concise, coherent 'green' message, may embody Carrier's point of a tendency to obscure people and processes involved in bringing a product to market (2010). Again, these observations highlight the complexities and tensions created between different GPN stakeholders' power and embeddedness relations.

The predominant drivers the initiative emphasises towards consumers are thus environmental, with socio-economic objectives only secondary behind the higher-order objective of tree-planting. Despite one mention of the importance of safeguarding the long-term availability of supply, the influence of key commercial drivers established in the previous chapter is not reflected in representations, showing a discrepancy between drivers and representations in answer to research sub-question 4.2. However, in answer to research sub-question 4.1's point about divergences between stakeholder representations, representations proved quite similar between stakeholders in this initiative, yet differed considerably in the level of detail offered. There is a link back to my analytical framework in terms of the importance of analysing all types of GPN stakeholders involved, as the level of detail offered in some ways correlates with the type of actor,

and the type of embeddedness on which they draw as a key source of credibility. Whereas the private-sector actor draws on its high network embeddedness and increases societal embeddedness in Europe by association with the two civil-society bodies, the civil-society entities themselves need to boost their societal embeddedness, the source of their collective power, through transparency, reflected in the plethora of details and documents offered about their involvement. Overall, the meanings created thus again emphasise the initiative serving the greater environmental good as well as the consumer's concrete individual benefit from outstanding taste, with focus groups confirming that tree-planting and gourmet aroma are indeed key criteria. This confirmation, and their commercial success, thus suggests that the strategy is succeeding in enhancing societal and territorial embeddedness for Northern private-sector and civil-society actors alike. The relations, however, nevertheless perpetuate the asymmetries between Northern and Southern stakeholders in terms of power and embeddedness connections to Northern consumers, highlighting a recurring tension.

8.3 Floral: Representations vs. drivers

8.3.1 Chocolate wrapper and sustainability documents

On its wrappers, Floral primarily presents standard information such as ingredients, and certification logos where applicable. While the standard wrapper does not have any label, the organic flavours display three logos, firstly of an environmental initiative the company supports, secondly the organic logo, and thirdly, on the back, an UTZ Certified logo. Details are available in the sustainability report (2011):

‘Long before organic agriculture became a subject everyone is talking about, the company CEOs founded the project ‘Macacao’ in Nicaragua in 1990. The idea of the family business owners was as good as it was ambitious: they aimed to promote the production and marketing of sustainably grown cocoa, protect natural forests and offer local producers a secure livelihood.’ (Floral, 2011:6)

This representation seeks to establish the company as being ‘different’, which will prove a recurring theme. Firstly, it depicts the company as a pioneer in sustainability awareness and engagement at-origin, enhancing embeddedness from this notion of a value-driven operation. Secondly, it paints Macacao as a ‘project’ rather than a cooperative, suggesting a need for help as

opposed to supporting a farmer-led collaborative entity; this also implicitly prioritises the company's embeddedness over the cooperative's. The report then continues on the 'helping' theme, explaining that it was initially 170 'smallholders who learned how to keep cocoa trees, secure quality and not only cultivate, but also market organic cocoa' (Floral, 2011:7-8), introducing a recurring 'quality' theme of benefits to all customers from the engagement. The benefits to Nicaraguan cocoa farmers are embodied by the testimony of a company-logo-wearing producer, stating that (Floral, 2011:6):

'My father was one of the first Macacao farmers; now three generations of our family work in the project.'

This harks back to Bryant and Goodman's observation (2004:357) about stakeholders employing narrative testimonies to create links between Southern producers and Northern consumers, while reinforcing the 'project' representation instead of the cooperative notion.

The 'company philosophy' document declares the company's aim (Floral, 2013b:18) 'to do business in harmony with nature. We use resources effectively [... and] try to waste as little as possible', continuing the representation of being a value-driven company striving to minimise environmental impacts. The report then states (2013b:18):

'We initiate and successfully implement measures which positively affect people whose livelihoods are the cultivation of cocoa and other resources.'

Interestingly, the report was published in July 2013, after the decision to buy land to grow cocoa had already been taken, potentially explaining the reference to 'people whose livelihoods are the cultivation of cocoa', thus also including plantation labourers and not only the independent cocoa producers which Floral had previously supported.

8.3.2 Internet representations

The company's website continues the theme of a 'different' operation. Firstly, on 'certification', unlike most chocolate companies cooperating with the main cocoa standards, i.e. UTZ Certified,

Rainforest Alliance, organic or Fairtrade, the company's most prominently featured cooperation is with a scheme developed by a university (Floral, 2014). The document highlights that Floral was the first chocolate company to pass the certification and the verification audit by the 'Centre for sustainable business' in 2014 (2014:1). This firstly refers back to the aforementioned focus on presenting the company as 'different' and a pioneer in social and environmental awareness. Secondly, it links to the previously discussed pressure resulting from archipelago actors as industry stakeholders increasingly move towards certified cocoa supplies. The company thus shifts towards third-party certification, but on its own terms with a unique selling proposition, i.e. a certification they were the first chocolatier to obtain.

An environmental focus highlights planting trees to compensate for carbon emissions, having caught on from NGO Tree kids (Floral, n.d.a). This involves promoting tree-planting visually through a logo on their organic line, while also making their own 'Floral Forest' of 250,000 trees by 2016 (Floral, n.d.a). Floral will donate a real tree for any drawn or crafted tree sent in by the public and for every 'tree shirt' purchased online, thereby creating a sense of consumer participation. The campaign slogan is 'together for more climate justice', which is rather ambitious phrasing since the objective is planting trees rather than augmenting at-risk communities' capacities or cutting emissions in the global North. The objective thus is to create an idea of joint responsibility for planting trees, and the company living up to its duties as a 'different' company. Similarly, a document on 'sustainability goals' states (Floral, n.d.b) that carbon neutrality is to be achieved by 2022 thanks to Gold Standard carbon certificates from their Nicaraguan plantation, with the land fulfilling a dual commercial and environmental purpose.

The 'pioneer' and the 'helping' narratives come out strongly in another document on cooperative Macacao in the company website's extensive sustainability section (Floral, n.d.c:1).

'Since 1990, Floral has been supporting smallholders in Nicaragua in sustainable cocoa cultivation. Many farmer families find themselves in a vicious circle of population growth, extensive agriculture, decreasing soil fertility, deforestation of tropical forests and growing impoverishment.'

The text highlights their pioneering, longstanding commitment and altruistic, socio-economic and environmental rather than supply-security benefits. Also the text's ensuing explanation of agroforestry measures in terms of the benefits to reforestation and 'nature' and boosting incomes emphasises socio-economic and environmental benefits, reinforcing the need for 'help' while neglecting to mention cocoa (Floral, n.d.c:2). The text further cites Floral's premium cocoa prices and ends on the addition of its own in-house, model plantation, which 'will deliver ecologically and socially sustainable cocoa' (Floral, n.d.c:2). The text emphasises the oft-used representation that the plantation constitutes 'the logical consequence of Floral's almost 25-year engagement in Nicaragua' (Floral, n.d.c:2), neglecting to engage with the considerable shift in approach in terms of bearing risks, controlling quality and supporting labourers rather than smallholders as discussed in chapter 7.

The document 'Floral on its way to its own sustainable cocoa' continues this narrative in terms of a 'product responsibility' (n.d.d):

"The goal is as clear as it is ambitious: ecologically and socially cultivated cocoa for Floral. ... buying land and starting its own sustainable cocoa cultivation is the most effective way to exert maximum influence on ecological and social conditions in cocoa cultivation.' (Floral, n.d.d:1).

The text reiterates the intent of exerting influence on cocoa's social and ecological circumstances, although the logic as to why an in-house plantation is the means of choice remains opaque. It suggests a desire to motivate others to follow their example, which may worry smallholder producers, and the idea that this is a more effective approach than sourcing certified smallholder cocoa (Floral, n.d.d). Although hardly any other venture could be more commercially focused than establishing in-house production, there is no mention of supply-security benefits. The text details the plantation's afforestation and agroforestry credentials and promotion of biodiversity as well as integrated agriculture's avoidance of carbon emissions and goes on:

'Beyond ecological aspects, social matters are the primary driver for Floral to get involved here. High safety standards, medical care, extensive further training opportunities and

payment above minimum wage safeguard fair and safe working conditions.’ (Floral, n.d.d:2)

As stated above, there is an exclusive focus on environmental and social benefits, thus again emphasising ‘helping’ as explained in section 2.5 and implicitly reinforcing the power asymmetry between Floral and cocoa communities. The document neglects to highlight the paradigm shift, the commercial interests involved and the very different group of beneficiaries, the assumption thus being that the greatest value and embeddedness can be captured from meanings of altruism. There is thus a clear tension between the meanings created by representations emphasising social and environmental concerns, and underlying drivers with the intensifying commercial motive established in the previous chapter. Nevertheless, the very existence of this extensive sustainability library on the website is in part attributable to shifts in the cocoa sector, particularly competitors and other archipelago actors pressuring the company to pledge 100% certified cocoa by a certain year: to maintain and further its embeddedness as a ‘different’ company, it publishes details on how it helps cocoa farmers beyond certification. Even the very commercial move towards in-house production obtains an altruistic bent, with the environment featuring particularly prominently.

German development cooperation’s internet presentation differs in terms of benefits and agents (German cooperation, n.d.:2). They present the cooperation with producers, cooperatives and Floral as a multi-level success story. They highlight their macro-level support to the agricultural ministry in formulating a new national cocoa policy, and work in coordination bodies at the meso, regional level. On the micro level, they emphasise the increased cultivation surface for cocoa agroforestry, a ‘long-term, economically attractive and ecologically viable land use’, and, crucially, the improved income, triggering ‘a growing interest in expanding these forest-conserving agroforestry systems’, the oft-quoted causal rationale (German cooperation, n.d.:2). While Floral in its own documents presents itself as a key driving agent, German cooperation highlights its own contributions, painting Floral as the receiving end of export-quality cocoa triggering socio-economic income improvements. Similarly, a document detailing German cooperation’s experience with value-chain approaches (2011:63-67) highlights German cooperation’s work rather than Floral’s. While the document critically discusses the balance between ownership and external support, it again presents the majority of agency and activities as stemming from German cooperation, while acknowledging the importance of working with an exporter paying ‘fair prices’ and sourcing cocoa long-term (German cooperation, 2011). There is

thus a tension between these representations and Floral's account of their cooperation on cocoa in Nicaragua, with the need to highlight one's own contribution exacerbated by sector pressures. However, the power and embeddedness differentials identified in chapter 6's GPN analysis also prescribe what stakeholders can project their representations, with Floral's representations dominant.

8.3.3 Focus group discussions

The focus groups again demonstrated a spectrum of opinions. Several participants in the first discussion had a positive attitude towards Floral given their status as an award-winning employer:

'I only know Floral because ... as employers, they have won several social awards. But ... they don't advertise it on the wrapper ... most would write in big letters what awards they won.' (Participant 1b)

'If I feel like chocolate, then ... I will buy Floral because I know there is a socially responsible company behind it, ... at least their employees in Germany are ok, and ... at least I am not supporting [a big corporation].' (Participant 1f)

A story emerges of 'not as bad as the others'. Since Floral has demonstrated social awareness in Germany without advertising it, these consumers are more willing to lend credence to their being 'different' and behaving responsibly elsewhere. Equally, their status as a family-owned enterprise gives them an edge over big corporations here. The second focus group shared this view:

'I think it's a good thing that a company like Floral gets involved like that I like the others' chocolate [better], but ... now that I know that Floral is doing something, I'd rather buy theirs, and if I see the [organic] seal, on the more expensive one, then all the more. ... because I know that I'm not just getting good quality, but I'm also ... maybe not socially responsible, but I'm doing something good.' (Participant 2j)

Again, Floral is considered the lesser of the mainstream chocolate evils, with even a slightly higher price acceptable in exchange for a positive contribution.

The third focus group, with a business background, voiced doubts as to who the higher organic price will benefit.

‘3f: We all think: Yes, we want to do something good for the environment and the producers, so that a bit of money gets to them, so we say: Yes, we are paying attention to [seals], but ultimately, it may also be us calming our conscience ... Who knows if any of that is correct?’

3h: ‘That is generally the desire of all industry, to ... make consumers question the trust in these seals ... that saves some big corporations a lot of money.’

3c: ‘I am willing to pay more, also for organic seals, if I knew that it also gets to where it is needed. Now if I see that Floral produces chocolate with an organic seal and without ... isn’t it simply a bigger profit margin for Floral if they sell it as organic?’

The question of how much more money remains with cooperatives or producers for certified cocoa was a concern also for this research, leading to the following rough calculation:

Type	65 g	100g
Conventional		EUR0.89
Organic	EUR0.99	EUR1.52 (extrapolated)
% organic more expensive per 100g		71%

Table 8.3.3.1: Comparison between conventional and organic Floral chocolate

Source: Author.

Data obtained from one Nicaraguan cooperative in early 2014 had cooperatives paying producers 9.5 instead of 8.5 Nicaraguan córdobas per organic pound in pulp, i.e. only 12% more than for conventional. While Floral paid cooperatives an organic premium of USD200 per metric tonne, this only increased costs for Floral by less than 6% given prices of ca. USD3,400 paid to cooperatives in early 2014. While there are extra transport and handling costs to keep conventional and certified cocoa separate, there is nevertheless a considerable discrepancy between the 6% higher raw-material costs and the organic retail price standing 71% above the conventional price, per 100g bar as shown in table 8.3.3.1. The focus group’s concern is therefore salient, recalling Renard’s (2003) point about the importance to responsive consumers of higher premiums staying where, according to them, they should, i.e. with producers.

8.3.4 Analytical observations

Interestingly, the representations used to characterise Floral's engagement do not change despite the paradigmatic shift to in-house production, creating a tension between the commercial driver and socially and environmentally focused representations. The company presents this shift as a seamless continuation, as partly quoted before:

'For us as a comparatively small medium-sized company, acquiring land and becoming involved in sustainable cocoa cultivation is the most effective way to exert maximum influence on the ecological and social conditions of cocoa cultivation ... Consistently auditing cultivation and working conditions in mostly smallholder cultivation structures worldwide is not viable for us in terms of human and financial resources. However, fair working conditions and protecting the environment are key values in our 100-year company philosophy. Therefore we have chosen to take this step, which is admittedly unusual for a chocolate producer. After all, we stand for a 'different' chocolate in various ways.' Company head cited in press release (Floral, 2013a:1)

Firstly, the company characterising itself as a 'comparatively small medium-sized' company is at odds with its popular position in Germany, but also underscores the concentrated oligopolies in the global chocolate market: vis-à-vis some cocoa heavyweights, it is indeed smaller. Secondly, this again brings up the idea of the company being 'different'; their continuous engagement in Nicaragua also is to boost their dual claims of being a 'different, value-driven' company to whom creating a high-quality product for consumers is key, thus aiming to boost their territorial embeddedness in Germany. Equally, it aids their prominent position and territorial embeddedness in Nicaragua, which could not be paralleled in a volume cocoa-producing country with multiple exporters. Thirdly, the admission that they have neither sufficient financial nor human resources to audit smallholder production is refreshingly honest as most private-sector stakeholders represent certification as a panacea. Interestingly, the following sentence highlights their commitment to fair working conditions and environmental viability as key values, emphasising the altruistically focused representations in opposition to the previously established underlying commercial motives.

Overall, the analysis confirmed that altruistic representations emphasising socio-economic and environmental benefits are manifest most prominently to boost embeddedness, creating tensions as these meanings diverge from the previously established commercial priorities motivating private-sector actors. The previous chapter established that predominantly commercial and some environmental concerns brought about Floral's shift towards in-house production, which also creates a virtual power and embeddedness monopoly for Floral. This chapter has shown there are tensions between these drivers and the social and environmental values which it has emphasised as the catalysts precipitating the move. Equally, there is a strong suggestion that the lead firm aimed to capture value and embeddedness for itself instead of other actors by creating altruistic meanings and utilising representations of 'helping', constructing a need for outside assistance rather than equal trading partnerships. Again, this perpetuates existing power asymmetries rather than attempting to bridge them by shifting production or ownership potentials to the global South, opting instead for in-house production. In terms of the overarching research question, the wider changes in the cocoa sector thus clearly help in contextualising these shifts. Price hikes and increasing trader concentration caused the move to in-house production, with competitors' choices to augment their own certified cocoa volumes offering an incentive to emphasise social and environmental considerations in explaining the shift.

8.4 Comparative observations

8.4.1 Relationships between socio-economic, environmental and commercial representations and underlying drivers

The analysis in this chapter demonstrated that the primary representations utilised in all three initiatives stem from the socio-economic and environmental dimensions rather than the supply-security aspects identified as important private-sector drivers in the previous chapter. The only commercial driver mentioned is of producing high-quality, good-tasting products, highlighting a further consumer benefit beyond a clean conscience. Combating deforestation is the focal point of municipalities' communication, with Tree kids and Iller Chocolate equally focusing on their activities' environmental benefits. Floral also emphasises the environmental side, highlighting producers' viable livelihoods primarily as a means to the end of environmental protection and attaining better quality for customers. Those defining representations assume that, rather than supply security, it is socio-economic and environmental benefits that render chocolate 'good' in the sense of Goodman's moral economy (2004), with organoleptics and taste also playing a key role. The representations deployed, of the mission-driven rather than market-driven persuasion in

terms of Reynolds's categorisation (2009), thus create meanings emphasising altruism – a paradox since commercial interests to safeguard supply in answer to cocoa-sector challenges play a key role for private-sector actors, as established in the previous chapter. There are two main issues likely to mar sustainability initiatives' success. Firstly, the severity of projected shortage concerns, while prompting more initiatives, also exacerbates tensions, between drivers and representations, but also within socio-economic, environmental and commercial drivers. Secondly, they neglect to address the power and embeddedness asymmetries this research has identified, pulling into question whether the initiatives could bring about the systemic changes the cocoa sector requires. While I agree with the logic of Tallontire and Nelson's claim that unpacking narratives can serve to illuminate worldviews underlying actor behaviours (2013:31), this study has also shown a considerable discrepancy between representations and drivers, highlighting a complex relationship in answer to research sub-question 4.2.

In terms of Polanyi's distinction between whether economic activity is embedded in society, or vice versa, there is also a considerable tension. The previous chapters established that, while there are still strong commercial motives, the shifts in the chocolate sector are causing some stakeholders to recognise that they can only continue their economic activity long-term if they prioritise improving its socio-environmental circumstances. Representing socio-environmental concern as altruism, however, suggests that social considerations are still a mere optional adjunct to their own market considerations. Representing them as 'nice-to-have', as opposed to the business imperative which this thesis has argued they have become, also questions to what extent companies are engaging with poor practices causing the shortage fears in the first place, including productivity maximisation driving monocultures or low prices threatening livelihoods. Acknowledging existing socio-environmental inequities would threaten the power and embeddedness benefits which stakeholders can extract from their initiatives, framing engagements as emerging from self-serving necessity rather than as aligning with consumers' desire to 'help'. However, failing to acknowledge inequities equally risks not finding adequate answers to the systemic issues threatening the sector's long-term survival given the severity of projected shortages.

Stakeholders aiming to span the North-South divide are caught in a complex web of tensions. This also means that the representations addressing different stakeholders, ranging from cocoa producers to chocolate consumers, will have to take into account different experiences and expectations. The focus on altruistic activities and benefits to Northern consumers in the form of

taste and a lighter conscience proved effective for most focus group participants, who professed a desire to ‘help’ cocoa producers. There is thus also an expectation from consumers to see representations related to ‘helping’, precipitating a further tension and complexity for stakeholders whose drivers may be commercial, but whose representations are to emphasise altruism to meet expectations and boost value and embeddedness while preserving power. Again, spectacle thus produces and reproduces reality: consumers anticipate that representations will meet their expectations of ‘helping’, which prescribes the representations stakeholders can deploy at the behest and within the confines of consumers’ expectations. Conversely, the representations private-sector, public-sector and civil-society stakeholders use to represent and sell their initiatives prescribe the contribution consumers can make by buying ‘ethical’ chocolate, at the behest and within the confines of Northern stakeholders’ spectacle for public consumption. This communication channel, generally closed to Southern stakeholders, and its contents thus also perpetuate existing power asymmetries and decrease the likelihood of systemic changes, pulling into question to what extent equal partnership with the global South is attainable through the present format.

The diverse tensions this research has identified, within and between socio-economic, environmental and commercial drivers and with the meanings which representations create, are a challenge for any solution to bring about ‘sustainable’ supply. The meanings created in the three cases, emphasising altruism rather than necessity, also prevent the recipients of representations from engaging with the governance shortcomings rendering sustainability initiatives necessary in the first place. However, focus group discussions also confirmed that responsive consumers wanted to ‘help’ cocoa producers, suggesting it is in lead actors’ interest to deploy representations of altruism over the benefits which manufacturers and consumers gain from initiatives. At the same time, this also means that Northern representations uphold existing dynamics and enhance Northern embeddedness rather than creating non-deterministic connections between consumers and producers. However, tensions may be more likely to be resolved amicably between diverse GPN stakeholders if initiatives could address some power and embeddedness asymmetries to create a space for equitable and equal negotiation of diverging understandings of ‘sustainability’. In this way, existing power and embeddedness asymmetries would no longer force a premature agreement on the dominant stakeholder’s understanding of sustainability. Instead, I would argue that discussions of what sustainability is to entail for different stakeholders could become a tool to address power and embeddedness asymmetries, with the constellations of priorities model one possible vehicle.

A further noteworthy point is the prioritisation of environmental over socio-economic representations towards the global North. Firstly, there is the novelty aspect of environmental protection which the well-established notion of boosting producer livelihoods cannot boast. Secondly, utilising Silverstone's 'proper distance', i.e. the idea that audiences 'need to be close but not too close, distant but not too distant' (2007:172) to feel responsibility towards the subjects of a media report, yields an interesting result. I would argue that in the cocoa sustainability initiatives analysed here, this proper distance is easier to construct on the environmental than the socio-economic level. Socio-economically, chocolate consumers, i.e. audiences of cocoa sustainability initiatives, and cocoa producers, i.e. report subjects, are 'worlds apart' (Interview #117, civil society), in terms of the livelihoods they pursue, the buildings they inhabit, or the priorities they seek by engaging in these initiatives, which, simplified, encompass subsistence at one end and 'helping' at the other. Indeed, this considerable discrepancy is a crucial prerequisite for the 'helping' narrative and construction of a need for outside assistance (Crush, 1995) which I will explore later.

Conversely, an 'embeddedness' or sense of community between these – in themselves vastly heterogeneous – groups is easier to establish narratively in the environmental sphere. Firstly, there is a less morally charged common enemy. Climate change, species extinction and rainforest destruction are represented and perceived as amorphous transformations threatening us all, while the inequities of the global trading system are perpetually constructed by human choice and particularly the actions of the global North, companies and consumers alike. Consequently, all three initiatives construct a sense of a joint opportunity to challenge climate change and rainforest destruction through the initiatives, the focus being on the positive notions of planting trees rather than rectifying human-induced human suffering. Constructing unifying aspirations to aid 'nature' and thus a sense of embeddedness, all three initiatives highlight cocoa producers' desire to protect their biodiverse environments with Northern funds, resurrecting the rainforest narratives which Bryant and Goodman (2004) identified as sales-friendly. In my argument, I essentially posit that the accuracy of the representation deployed in terms of its congruence with observed events is immaterial to the construction of 'proper distance' and common ground, partly because of some audiences' overriding aspiration to 'help'. Further research is required to investigate the tension between my claim made with specific reference to the case-studies detailed above, and the idealist tone which permeates Silverstone's aspiration of the possibilities which the media offer.

Consequently, all three initiatives highlight their environmental credentials over the socio-economic side, neglecting to mention the supply-security dimension, which thus supports the thesis's argument of complex and tension-ridden connections between and within stakeholder priorities and representations. This both reveals an interesting relationship between drivers and representations in answer to research sub-question 4.2, and highlights that, unlike priorities, stakeholders showed a remarkable similarity in what they assumed would best sell their initiatives in response to sub-question 4.1. The idea of creating community by downplaying the socio-economic against the environmental side not only deprioritises socio-economic considerations such as electrification, but also reaffirms the unidirectional projections of power which the initiatives purport to upstage through 'partnerships', a further questionable narrative which the following section will explore.

8.4.2 Stories of 'uniqueness' and 'partnership'

Two recurring stories throughout the three initiatives are 'partnership' and 'uniqueness'. Following Corbridge's vocabulary of duties between richer Northerners and distant strangers (1993:451), the idea is to transform strangers into partners, and create producer-consumer links spanning Reynolds's North-South divide (2002), such as joint environmental responsibility funded by one and enacted by the other. While the mutual delegation visits e.g. in the municipalities' initiative have a potential to come close to actual partnership, the majority of connections established in all three initiatives, with Silverstone (2007), are screen-deep: they prompt purchases, but engagement only in the framework set by representations' boundaries, despite claims of partnership or increasing climate justice through tree-planting. One difficulty is the above-explained gulf in life realities, with representations designed to span, but partly inadvertently reinforcing existing divergences in priorities and income between initiatives' stakeholders. In Iller Chocolate's representation (2015c) of a cocoa producer's testimony to environmental protection, the gulf in life realities becomes evident when the text emphasises that only this cocoa-tree-planting project will allow the producer to earn enough to safeguard his daughter's education, which, while aimed at reinforcing the 'helping' narrative, also highlights the only screen-deep connection.

There is a parallel rhetoric highlighting initiatives' uniqueness and pioneering nature particularly regarding the municipalities' initiative. For the municipalities' initiative, it is true that most other

German municipalities seeking to have their own chocolate have rebranded existing double-certified chocolate bars rather than building a cocoa production network, with Our Chocolate's efforts meeting with positive reactions from the public in the German municipalities. However, there is a question whether the discrepancy between sought benefits and actual project scale may nullify the basis for the 'alternative to the alternative' story (Goodman, 2010) of being a better, more trustworthy alternative. Given the limited scale of less than 100 farmer families being involved directly in income generation, there is a question how behavioural changes or noticeable influence on deforestation and carbon emissions are to arise from awareness-raising alone if there are no large-scale income-generating opportunities replacing the forest-degrading pursuits driving deforestation.

Moreover, the chocolate bars' intended status as 'unique' and 'more ethical' food is at odds with their distribution through conventional channels (Goodman, Maye and Holloway, 2010:1783). Whereas the municipality-based initiative to date mostly relies on speciality shops, World Choc and Floral have used conventional channels from the outset. Although the intention may be to fund 'unique' projects employing environmentally or socially viable modes of production, these measures function as unique selling propositions creating greater demand for a slightly different product, rather than engaging with the environmental consequences of ever-increasing consumption via conventional distribution channels. The sale of 'unique' virtue and capitalisation on enhanced embeddedness thus occurs through the conduits carved by conventional consumption, another paradox among many. Even more paradoxically, this also means that World Choc and Our Chocolate, the initiatives in which private-sector actors reportedly do without their margins, free-ride on the margins which distribution channels obtain from other products. Equally, their 'partnership' extends to a limited number of producers rather than challenging partiality and entrenched injustices across-the-board, as I explore below.

8.4.3 Certification and representations

One chief motivation for sourcing certified cocoa is capitalising on the positive representations which independent third-party certification evokes in most consumers' minds, producing a positive meaning through the visual language of the logo (Hall, 1997b). The meanings which these logos create suggest altruism and virtue (Blowfield and Dolan, 2008; Goodman, 2010). The compliance with certain standards is confirmed through auditing and a label, meaning that ultimately, brand manufacturers pay schemes to provide their label on the wrapper, as they might

pay someone else to provide design. This also means deferring partial responsibility for overseeing operations to these, with Blowfield and Dolan (2008), stewards of virtue, as some stakeholders construe certification as a risk management strategy. This recalls Ewen's point of style industries turning grassroots movements into saleable commodities (1988:248-53) for instance regarding Fairtrade. Consequently, several interlocutors classified certifiers not as civil society, but as businesses, calling for them to be treated as such (Interviews #18, #117, civil society; #43, research). The representations which companies seek from certifiers create a situation akin to the 'bubble' which all-inclusive tourists experience, 'carefully managed and mediated experiences that hide the management and the mediation from view' (Carrier, 2010:680).

A first issue with certification is that it sets out from a logic of partiality, seeking not to alter the terms of trade across-the-board, but safeguard first that some producers enjoy better social or environmental circumstances of production than most. This flaw also explains why the International Cocoa Organisation (ICCO) favours national-level standards (#125, government). Nevertheless, most certification schemes make no attempt to certify at the macro-level, such as countries, or the meso-level, such as regions, although this may be preferable from a biodiversity standpoint (Interview #132, research), but alter the micro-level of plantations or producers. A paradox in this context is that the label's unique selling proposition is predicated on its partiality and essentially captures additional value from the spectacle of embeddedness in producers' society and territory. However, the seal would have no need nor opportunity for that if socially and environmentally viable production was the norm rather than the exception, thus conversely benefiting from existing power differentials favouring Northern companies. Another key challenge is that certification, its auditing and verification requirements and underpinning tacit knowledge stem from the global North (Hughes, 2001:402). It is certifiers' own embeddedness in the global North that enables them to project their powerful, value-capturing representations. While documenting inputs and outputs of land is useful for informed decision-making, it is also predicated on literacy, the availability of paper or light, and administrative abilities, which are no matter of course in rural areas where the next road is four hours by mule away.

Finally, conventional wisdom has it that certification leads to 'better', more ethical products due to auditing and fairer prices, recalling Goodman, Maye and Holloway's (2010) construction of 'good' and 'bad' food. The representations tied to the municipalities' initiative and to World Choc emphasise the benefits to people and planet resulting from purchasing this rather than other

chocolates, utilising fair and environmental labels to vouch for this higher calibre, as is increasingly common throughout the sector. Until early 2013, Floral pursued a different approach, largely relying on its good reputation as a family-owned business to certify its engagement in Nicaragua instead of committing significant resources to Fairtrade certification. Reports from farmers suggest Floral and its partners supported key tenets of social certification even without formal audits, providing training for producers and cooperatives, post-harvest processing infrastructure, and a ‘Floral premium’ of up to USD500 per metric tonne on top of world market prices to incentivise expanding production surfaces. While Floral only did this for the ‘low single-digit percentage’ of overall cocoa obtained from Nicaragua (Frankfurter Rundschau, 2011), this thus offered certification benefits such as premiums, support and training without entailing certification obligations; at the same time, initially, the company did not advertise their contributions in Europe to enhance their own embeddedness. Clearly, this is one special case, which is also now past as Floral from 2013 began to transition towards UTZ certified cocoa from Nicaragua, rendering any extrapolations or generalisations difficult. However, even anecdotally, the case suffices to pull into question the representation that only certification can ensure producers get a better deal. In fact, it provides further evidence of the chapter’s contention of the complexities and tensions between diverging priorities and representations across the chocolate sector, which have been exacerbated by cocoa shortage fears, but not to the point that private-sector stakeholders would change power asymmetries on a large scale: instead, their chief priority is safeguarding supply, with socio-economic and environmental measures, and representations, constituting means to this end.

8.4.4 The premise of ‘helping’

A recurring phenomenon is cocoa communities being constructed as in need of outside assistance to earn a living and sustain their environments (Crush, 1995:10). It creates a notion of an act of charity, of ‘helping’, rather than simply paying a fair price to all network stakeholders, i.e. treating them in the manner all production-network stakeholders would like to be treated. Fundamentally, the ‘helping’ narrative prescribes precise boundaries within which both the helping is to occur, and the ends to which this ‘helping’ is to serve, imposing Northern spectacle of rainforest and acceptable behaviour therein so as to produce Southern realities. However, not only private-sector, public-sector and civil-society stakeholders play a part in this, but also responsive consumers and the representations they anticipate. The focus group discussions demonstrated that ‘helping’ recurred frequently as a motivation for consumers to engage with cocoa sustainability initiatives, as the below quote shows exemplarily:

‘[With Fairtrade,] what I mostly care about is the ideational value ... – [the products] taste good, but the main idea is really to help somewhere.’ (Participant 3e)

This anticipation of consumers’ ‘ethical’ consumption ‘helping’ Southern producers, which recurred frequently across all focus groups, limits the representations stakeholders can use if they expect to tap into consumer support, with these limited representations in turn restricting how consumers can perceive Southern stakeholders’ experiences. However, there were also some focus group voices doubting the premise of external assistance in terms of the cultural imperialism which the global North ‘helping’ conjures up, and the guilty reflexes of the global North ‘wanting to do something good’ (FGD participant 1e) because ‘we have been causing damage for 500 years now’ (FGD participant 3h). The municipalities’ initiative, given funding originating from the ministry for development cooperation, invokes a priori a need for external assistance, although mutual visits may encourage seeing beyond that. For World Choc, the ‘helping’ for focus group participants crucially also extended to supporting the children committing themselves to make a difference. For Floral, the need for external assistance was a staple throughout certainly phase 1 and phase 2 of its engagement in Nicaragua.

A priori, helping means a charitable act between someone giving, although there is no obligation to, and someone receiving without giving anything in return. This is an odd depiction of an interaction whereby a Southern party grows cocoa which Northern parties transform into chocolate. Firstly, there is a return for assistance. Secondly, the narrative suggests that producers are in need of charity rather than consumers being in need of chocolate, with the latter image likely to become more accurate as supplies grow scant. Finally, ‘helping’ suggests paying a fair price is charity, rather than acceptable conduct among network stakeholders seeking a long-term relationship. Regarding Silverstone’s proper distance (2007), Northern and Southern stakeholders in a ‘helping’ scenario are simultaneously closer and more distant than in a business-only relationship, as there is a suggested act of charity creating an emotional return for consumers, but also more distant as there is no equal standing between the parties.

A final point concerns the tone which ‘helping’ introduces amidst cocoa-sector changes prompting shifts in sustainability initiatives. The question is whether the construction of need may be more valuable to stakeholders than the notion of a business transaction. Firstly, this goes

to the issue of enhancing embeddedness by cultivating a unique selling proposition for chocolate, which has an added benefit of aiding producers and cooperatives. As consumers who respond to this logic will also appreciate this idea of helping individuals, this representation thus boosts the company's standing and embeddedness among inclined consumers, as the focus group discussions showed for all three initiatives. Secondly, this added value can earn the company higher mark-ups. However, this depiction of a charitable, nice-to-have act rather than a self-serving business imperative also is a limitation in redressing existing power and embeddedness asymmetries in the cocoa sector at large in favour of a more multipolar, equitable network, which is likely to become necessary to introduce the systemic changes which can safeguard the industry's long-term future.

8.5 Conclusion

This chapter sought to analyse the representations deployed by different stakeholders in cocoa sustainability initiatives. In answer to research sub-question 4.1 concerning the divergences of representations between stakeholders, it found that private-sector, public-sector and civil-society stakeholders' representations were remarkably similar, unlike the divergent drivers established in chapter 7. Regarding research sub-question 4.2 examining the relationship between those drivers and representations, the chapter found that stakeholders predominantly utilised environmental representations first, given the initiatives' and thus the assumed audience's environmental slant, and socio-economic second, with supply-security-driven representations largely absent. This is in part owing to consumers seeking to engage on a basis of 'helping' producers rather than paying a fair price. I also discussed some paradoxes of the representations employed, highlighting the stories of partnership and uniqueness, the partiality of certification and the 'helping' premise.

Chapter 8 found considerable evidence supporting my argument of manifold tensions between and within drivers and representations, in part due to the considerable discrepancies in life realities between different sustainability stakeholders. It observed also that socio-economic and environmental representations were far more conspicuous than the commercial drivers identified in the previous chapter. Within this spectrum, environmental representations were more prominent towards constituencies in the global North. Analytically, the GPN framework helped make relevant observations on representations bolstering territorial, network and societal embeddedness, and enhancing corporate, collective and institutional power. By considering a wide array of stakeholders, unpacking their power and embeddedness relations as well as

priorities and representations, it discovered a complex web of tensions between and within diverse stakeholders' drivers and public-facing communication. One analytical insight is that it was the institutional and corporate power of certain actors that enabled them to spread the representations from which they sought to extract value. Concomitantly with the meanings created, the representations also cemented existing power structures. As the 'helping' spectacle produces and reproduces reality, consumers expect to 'help' by supporting initiatives, limiting stakeholder representations which in turn limit how Northern consumers can perceive experiences and ask questions about how the cocoa sector's current predicament came about. This also means there is no expectation of initiatives or stakeholder motivations deviating from the past, meaning that public-sector, private-sector and civil-society stakeholders do not stand to benefit in power and embeddedness terms from altering the existing representational paradigm of altruism and philanthropy.

The meaning which representations currently create is that business as usual, with unchanged power structures, is a workable solution, the only exception being slightly higher prices and more intensive, individual 'sustainability' efforts. The degree to which different stakeholders are willing to acknowledge that improving socio-environmental circumstances is crucial for their economic activity varies considerably. As the cocoa sector's challenges continue to aggravate, it remains to be seen whether stakeholders willing to cede power in favour of palpable systemic socio-environmental improvements for Southern stakeholders could benefit, as existing models characterised by power asymmetries and static poor practices prove increasingly untenable. If taken seriously, cocoa shortage fears across the sector raise more profound questions challenging environmentally and socially degrading practices and inequities. The tension between priority constellations gradually embracing the importance of socio-environmental circumstance vis-à-vis representations continuing to consider socio-environmental considerations as a mere adjunct of economic activity further complicates the debate.

In my analysis of the multitude of tensions connecting socio-economic, environmental and commercial drivers and stakeholder representations, their divergences appear difficult to negotiate between diverse public-sector, private-sector and civil-society actors. As stakeholders continue to disagree on what sustainability is or should involve, formulating questions regarding what sustainability is to mean is difficult, as these questions could entail far-reaching implications regarding sector governance and dominance. This increases the likelihood that power and embeddedness asymmetries as analysed above will persist, or even intensify as corporate

concentration advances and cocoa shortages grow more acute. On the other hand, the current shortage fears and growing importance of ‘sustainability’ also offer an opportunity to engage in a conversation from which dominant stakeholders were able to abstain for decades, as the final chapter building bridges from empirical to analytical findings will discuss.

9. Concluding thoughts

This chapter aims to bring together this research's overarching empirical and analytical findings in relation to the research questions, and secondly emphasise the contributions it has made. Following an overview of the chocolate sector, the thesis has conducted a GPN mapping of three cocoa sustainability initiatives involving conservation and carbon measures. It has compared and contrasted the constellations of priorities for civil-society, private-sector and public-sector stakeholders involved. A final focus have been the public-facing representations which stakeholders used to advertise their engagement towards the public, analysing how representations interacted with prevalent drivers, and meanings created. Based on my analysis, recommendations for different stakeholder groups, aiming to feed back findings attained thanks to interlocutors' time and generosity, are subsumed in appendix 4.

In terms of the overall narrative, empirical observations have confirmed my argument that cocoa-sector shifts have prompted changes in cocoa sustainability initiatives, transforming engaging with sustainability from nice-to-have into a business imperative. Socio-economic concerns regarding farmer age and livelihoods for young generations, environmental worries about limited cultivation surfaces and climate change, and commercial considerations stemming from the concentrated cocoa marketplace being dominated by ever-contracting successive oligopolies have amalgamated into severe shortage fears. While this has prompted ever more particularly private-sector actors to engage with sustainability, opening up opportunities for public-sector and civil-society actors to find commercial partners for their programmes, the paradigm shift has also introduced a wider spectrum of priorities. This has caused tensions between and within stakeholders' socio-economic, environmental and commercial drivers. More private-sector, public-sector and civil-society stakeholders are engaging with 'sustainability', although their understandings of what it is, what it is to entail, and what socio-environmental vis-à-vis commercial priorities can bring it about, differ considerably.

The thesis therefore has argued that different stakeholders' framings of sustainability in socio-economic, commercial and environmental terms and their concomitant priorities variously intersected, dovetailed and collided in my case-studies. There is an intricate link to power and embeddedness structures, as it is private-sector stakeholders' privileged position within production networks which allows them to foreground commercial priorities which are less important to most civil-society and public-sector actors. The examination of meanings created in

public-facing communication has shown that representations emphasise altruistic, philanthropic motivations, neglecting to engage with the fundamentally unsound socio-economic and environmental practices contributing to the shortage concerns, which again benefits Northern stakeholders. The study has found that despite protestations of partnership, none of the three initiatives fundamentally altered power asymmetries between global North and South. Indeed, there is even a question as to whether the elimination of network intermediaries, while boosting grower prices, also aggravated asymmetries by promoting quasi-monopsonistic structures.

After I explore my empirical and analytical findings in relation to the research questions in more detail below, the final section will outline my thesis's contributions, opportunities for further research and my work's implications for sustainability initiatives. The advances in knowledge which my thesis has contributed encompass insights on cocoa sustainability initiatives' environmental side, holistic GPN analyses, the constellations of priorities model, sustainability initiatives' inter-relations with power structures, and an observation on Silverstone's proper distance. Further research is necessary regarding different aspects of certification, the future of sustainability initiatives in the chocolate sector, and power and embeddedness relations, as section 9.2 will detail.

9.1 Building bridges: Empirical and analytical findings

Fundamentally, my thesis argues that there have been two thrusts underlying the current rapid expansion of cocoa sustainability initiatives, with the first capitalising on responsive consumers, but the second stemming from a perceived business imperative. Firstly, there is a notion that companies showing themselves to be more ethically responsible will improve their embeddedness with the growing cohort of responsive consumers and stakeholders. This dimension has recently also acquired an environmental aspect given growing public awareness. This category inhabits, to a degree, the 'nice-to-have' sphere, capitalising on the business opportunity which responsive consumers constitute. However, a second thrust has recently emerged which has transformed 'sustainability' thinking into a business imperative. The second thrust stems from concerns about the long-term ability of cocoa production to meet demand, resulting on the demand side from emerging markets' hunger for chocolate. On the supply side, socio-economic factors driving shortage fears include the increasing average age of cocoa farmers in West Africa and the livelihood's lacking attractiveness for young generations (Barrientos et al., 2008; Hainmueller, Hiscox and Tampe, 2011; Hütz-Adams and Fountain, 2012), while climate change and spreading

degrading practices on limited production surfaces are among the environmental causes for concern (CIAT, 2011). Commercial challenges include the ever-contracting, oligopolistic marketplace, raising questions whether manufacturers will be able to source supply at their desired quality and price long-term (Confectionery News, 2012a-c; UNCTAD, 2008).

This amalgamation of factors from the socio-economic, environmental and commercial dimensions is causing private-sector actors to question where cocoa which satisfies their price, quality and ethical standards is to come from in the long term. Consequently, supply security and thus a predominantly commercial impetus occupies a far more prominent place than before, justifying the following overarching research question:

How are cocoa-sector changes driving shifts in stakeholder priorities and representations in cocoa sustainability initiatives, particularly regarding the environment?

To answer this question, the study first mapped the cocoa sector in general before analysing three cocoa sustainability initiatives incorporating environmental measures from a GPN perspective, bearing in mind also archipelago actors. A second step analysed stakeholder drivers in terms of socio-economic, environmental and commercial goals through the constellations of priorities model. Finally, the study investigated how the previously identified drivers related to the meanings created in stakeholders' public-facing representations.

The research has confirmed several of my initial arguments. Firstly, empirical data from the three case-studies and beyond confirmed that cocoa sustainability initiatives have changed across low-end, mainstream and niche markets in response to cocoa-sector shifts. Secondly, all three initiatives confirmed the research's second contention regarding different stakeholders' framings of sustainability and thus socio-economic, environmental and commercial priorities partly dovetailing, but partly diverging considerably, entailing tensions. Investigating different constellations of priorities proved that diverging stakeholder understandings require discussion. The examination of how stakeholders represented these priorities and their overall initiatives towards the public yielded interesting insights into the meanings created, which foregrounded not underlying commercial drivers, but altruistic, socio-economic and environmental drivers more likely to create embeddedness and incite support. The meanings created thus do not draw

attention to fundamentally unsound socio-economic and environmental practices such as poor livelihoods and degrading productivity maximisation which have contributed to the shortage concerns. Instead, they emphasise that sustainability thinking is still nice-to-have and an altruistic pursuit which entails benefits for cocoa producers, mirroring the first thrust of sustainability as a business opportunity. In this way, Northern-dominated representations perpetuate the asymmetric power and embeddedness relations they purport to bridge, standing in the way of the systemic changes the cocoa sector's challenges require.

More specifically, the first, analytical, research sub-question aimed to establish what lessons concerning the GPN lens's analytical usefulness this study can yield:

1. To what extent does the Global Production Networks framework help understand shifts within cocoa sustainability initiatives?

1.1 To what extent does the GPN framework help analyse the multitude of actors influencing initiatives' set-up and priorities?

1.2 To what extent does the GPN framework help unpack shifts and tensions in terms of different stakeholders' priorities and representations?

In response, my thesis firstly demonstrated in chapters 2 and 4 the rationale for choosing GPN vis-à-vis other frameworks, but also made a case for rethinking GPN analyses' premise and practice in multiple senses. The first analytical complement championed greater awareness of the intricate links between power and embeddedness in highlighting stakeholder priorities and representations in the socio-economic, environmental and commercial domains, proposing there are multiple complex relations between power and embeddedness. The proposition is that analysing shifts in cocoa sustainability initiatives demonstrates intricate linkages between particularly power and embeddedness in the GPN framework, showing somewhat unexpected interactions between the dimensions. While in theory, the growing scarcity of supply would cause producers to wield greater collective power, the configuration of cocoa-chocolate global production networks pits the producer collective against powerful oligopolies in both the processing and the brand manufacturer segments, mostly located in the global North. Oligopolists, highly embedded in the network, can exert considerable corporate power against producers' collective power, with the latter hampered by producers' fragmentation and individual

small volumes, which render them less embedded in the network and more replaceable. While companies in particular are now working to enhance their territorial embeddedness in cocoa communities, deploying representations of partnership, the research showed that unilateral decisions such as changing certifiers or neglecting socio-economic Southern priorities demonstrated this construct to be flawed. In the Floral case-study, the lead firm prioritised the ability to demonstrate to their home society embeddedness through a well-known third-party certification in UTZ. As a result, they adversely affected their territorial embeddedness in the producer country, with some partners beginning to look for alternative buyers. At the same time, a recurring thread is that stakeholders create meanings emphasising socio-economic and environmental altruism rather than commercial drivers, as philanthropy is more likely to enhance embeddedness in consumer and producer territories than pure commercial necessity.

A second analytical proposition concerns defining the stakeholders deemed relevant for analysis. This study has shown the importance of conducting analyses incorporating the full diversity of actors exerting an influence over production networks, with archipelago actors one possible semantic vehicle. While the GPN framework in part was specifically conceived to move beyond global value chains' firm focus, many GPN studies nevertheless retain an emphasis on the private sector or only investigate parts of the network. By contrast, this study sought to demonstrate the full potential of the GPN lens, engaging firstly with civil-society, public-sector and private-sector actors, and secondly with stakeholders populating the vicinity of actors traditionally defined as being inside GPNs. In the spirit of Hein (2000), who applies the image of the archipelago not just on the macro or meso levels, but also on the micro scale of network actors to investigate spaces between network nodes, my analysis foregrounds not just the node 'islands' visible in an aerial snapshot, but also their immediate vicinities. The research has argued, and confirmed, that beyond production network nodes, i.e. the 'islands' visible above water, the archipelagos will also contain invisible actors active below the water surface whose actions cause considerable ripple effects in terms of power, value or embeddedness. These effects may eventually be detectable in 'node' behaviours, but be difficult to explain without unpacking the full complexity of stakeholder interactions.

Analysing archipelago actors completes the picture on three empirical observations cited in support of the first analytical proposition concerning the importance of diverse connections between power and embeddedness. Floral changing certifier was due in part to the European Union signing an Association Agreement with Central America requiring traceability of food

imports and thus favouring certifiers deemed more able to safeguard traceability. The impact on embeddedness stemmed from adverse reactions among NGOs and some cooperatives preferring organic certification, affecting the company's territorial embeddedness. A civil-society archipelago actor's potential impact became clear also regarding Floral: a website providing information on organic issues caused the company to continue to pay premiums for organic cocoa in order to avoid negative publicity. This thus demonstrated the potential of a civil-society actor's collective power to affect the lead firm's embeddedness in its home society and among consumers. Finally, multiple private-sector heavyweights choosing to source only certified cocoa in future prompted rising concerns about future supply and sustainability. While none of these heavyweights had a direct hand in the final chocolate bars produced in one of the three initiatives, their behaviours caused peer pressure throughout the sector to follow suit so that private-sector actors could maintain power and safeguard embeddedness. All three examples thus demonstrate that a comprehensive analysis considering even civil-society, public-sector and private-sector actors not involved in physical chocolate production yields a more profound analysis of power and embeddedness impacts. In some ways, this is a logical continuation of GPNs' advances, resembling how GPNs went beyond GVCs' firm focus in rethinking who is inside or outside the frame of analysis. From an analytical standpoint, the multitude of tensions between and within stakeholder priorities and representations also emphasises the importance of conceptualising archipelago actors in unpacking trade-offs and dilemmas.

In summary, the combination of the two analytical propositions created new knowledge by showing the importance of considering a wide range of actors to identify intricate links and tensions between stakeholders in terms of power and embeddedness. Following Polanyi (1957), there is a distinction between understanding society to be embedded in economic activity, and economic activity to be embedded in society. The challenges facing the chocolate sector are forcing private-sector actors considering society as an adjunct of the market to reconsider their stance, while working with public-sector and civil-society actors for whom socio-environmental considerations are paramount. The research has demonstrated emerging tensions, with private-sector stakeholders paying higher prices, much to producers' appreciation, but failing to shift decision-making power to the global South in answer to the severity of the sector's questions. While private-sector stakeholders thus have shifted their positions slightly in response to projected shortage fears, recognising the importance of socio-environmental considerations to a degree, consumer expectations and stakeholder representations continue to tie power and embeddedness to the premise of stakeholders 'helping' cocoa communities. Consequently, the

research found that even initiatives claiming to bridge existing power and embeddedness asymmetries perpetuated them, as Northern stakeholders were still unwilling to cede control to Southern stakeholders in a way that would address the poor practices bringing about the sector's challenges in the first place. Given individual actors' inability to address these issues effectively, solutions sufficing to safeguard the sector's future are predicated on engagement in multi-stakeholder initiatives and sharing of power and embeddedness among more actors, a novel concept for most. This goes against the grain of stakeholders' self-interest and would shift the sector from the present successive oligopolies towards a more multipolar constellation, rendering it a worrying proposition for some. Nevertheless, I would argue that such moves are necessary to initiate the far-reaching changes required to overcome a multitude of existing tensions inherent in diverse power and embeddedness asymmetries to make the sector more fit to deal with systemic issues, according to my analysis.

As the thesis has argued that cocoa-sector changes are altering sustainability engagements, the second research sub-question investigated what is new:

2. What is new in sustainability initiatives in the chocolate sector?

2.1 *What socio-economic, commercial and environmental objectives govern initiatives?*

2.2 *What major trends are visible, particularly from a GPN perspective?*

I have argued that the second thrust driving changed sustainability initiatives, stemming from a supply-securing impetus, has gained ground in recent years, causing ever more chocolate actors to increase their 'sustainability' activities. The thesis firstly investigated in chapter 5 wider objectives and trends throughout the chocolate sector to contextualise the three case-studies selected, investigating various low-end and mainstream actors. Chapter 6 then mapped the three mainstream and niche case-studies with environmental aspects through a GPN lens particularly in terms of power and embeddedness, emphasising the need to consider diverse and also archipelago actors and the intricacies of interrelations between power and embeddedness. The engagements resulting from the 'business imperative' thrust frequently pair up chocolate companies in direct relationships with farmers to enhance companies' societal, territorial and network embeddedness to safeguard supply security. In my three case-studies, they also upheld existing power differentials between corporate actors vis-à-vis producers' collective and

governments' institutional power. Although my case-study initiatives pay cocoa prices exceeding world market levels, it is noteworthy that they nevertheless do not fundamentally challenge the status quo and common socio-environmental shortcomings, confirming a continuing dominance of Northern-based actors. These shortcomings include most cocoa producers' poor livelihoods and incentives favouring resource exploitation, the inability of fragmented smallholder producers to bargain effectively with oligopolistic buyers, and the absence of chocolate production infrastructure in the global South. Dominant actors tweak 'business as usual' only as far as necessary to promote long-term cocoa availability while maintaining power asymmetries and enhancing societal and territorial embeddedness for themselves. Evidence from research participants suggests that these observations apply even more markedly for other cocoa-sector cases, which show the hesitation against moving towards a multipolar sector and instead demonstrate centripetal, concentrating forces which do not address the industry's fundamental problems.

At present, answers in the transformational spirit required by the cocoa sector's systemic challenges are still in their infancy in the sector. Only few, marginal stakeholders are willing to rethink the flawed practices causing socio-economic and environmental issues in trade relations between cocoa producers and cocoa buyers. For most actors, society continues to be an adjunct of economic activity, with socio-environmental improvements only required to facilitate business's continuation; however, this view still fails to recognise the magnitude of existing precarities and necessary changes to power and embeddedness constellations to address stakeholder tensions. With the majority content to tweak the symptoms rather than address causes, stakeholders are wont to represent recent measures increasing sustainability engagements as sufficient and considerable progress. The logic is that communication depicting them as necessity-based would fail to enhance embeddedness with Northern consumers. In theory, increasing cocoa shortages may augment collective power for cocoa producers. However, the fragmentation of producers and persisting successive oligopolies in the global North owning value-adding infrastructure mean that an actual shift of dominance is unlikely. Northern actors continue to control decision-making and communication channels, enforcing their priorities and communicating their representations, thereby enhancing embeddedness and cementing power structures. The dynamic thus accentuates the North-South divide which initiatives' 'partnerships' purport to bridge, with Northern stakeholders' societal and territorial embeddedness thus outweighing other stakeholders' interests. This, alongside many other tensions, complicates 'sustainability' thinking in the cocoa sector given stakeholders' very different power and

embeddedness positions in leveraging the concept, and their manifold socio-economic, environmental and commercial priorities and representations in relation to what they take it to mean.

If taken seriously, this engagement with the above-explained multitude of tensions offers an opportunity to question entrenched perceptions on existing vested interests and the ability to negotiate them with and between private-sector, public-sector and civil-society actors, from global North and global South equally. It offers the chance to recognise, for the cocoa sector and beyond, that socio-environmental circumstances are what economic activity is embedded in, bestowing genuine power unto whomever has the best plan for improving them rather than maximising market opportunities. Given the multitude of actors and tensions, the greatest likelihood of success again stems from a multi-stakeholder engagement with the very tensions creating complications, so as to increase the likelihood of resolving them collectively. Although this contravenes ingrained, vested power and embeddedness interests for stakeholders in supposedly comfortable positions of influence in the cocoa sector, resolving the sector's precarious challenges will require enlisting outside-the-box solutions which go beyond any one actor, but distribute power and embeddedness more evenly. It would require recognising individual actors' limitations and the need for genuine equal partnership to overcome them. It also would require that particularly Northern stakeholders acknowledge that socio-environmental improvements for the global South are not a privilege, but a right, not in the spirit of charity, but equity. The sector's future hinges on private-sector, public-sector and civil-society stakeholders practising a collective socio-environmental engagement which recognises existing tensions and uses them as an opportunity to incorporate all stakeholders in a more equitable fashion, a principle worth applying also beyond the cocoa sector.

Capturing the commercial, socio-economic and environmental priorities driving stakeholders was a crucial contribution, explored in chapter 7:

3. How are new drivers affecting cocoa sustainability initiatives with an environmental focus?

3.1 Who and what have been important drivers?

3.2 How do initiatives reflect trade-offs and tensions between priorities among different GPN stakeholders?

3.3 What are the implications of these drivers and tensions for producers' and other stakeholders' reality?

Concerning the third research sub-question, there are firstly two analytical and then multiple empirical points. The research sought to develop a conceptual model to capture commercial, socio-economic and environmental drivers and their divergences between stakeholders, drawing on Reynolds (2009), Franzen and Borgerhoff Mulder (2007), Renard (2003) and Cidell and Alberts (2006), amongst others. The constellations of priorities are to analyse and reflect visually stakeholders' diverging drivers. The engagement with other stakeholders' drivers and understandings of 'sustainability' may open an opportunity to engage seriously with the sources of power and embeddedness which actors currently rely on and leverage, and whether they are sufficient to bring about the required change to safeguard the long-term viability of cocoa-related economic activity. The small shifts in most stakeholders' current perceptions are unlikely to suffice, but engagement with fellow stakeholders may open the door for acknowledging existing vested interests, and the long-term threats which emanate from only engaging peripherally with socio-environmental improvements instead of ceding power and embeddedness as part of these changes. Secondly, the persistent predominance of Northern-based power means that commercial priorities are at risk of overshadowing socio-economic and environmental priorities, thereby jeopardising the very long-term survival of business activities which they seek. This analysis also unearthed a further tension between Polanyi's question of whether economic activity is embedded in society, or society embedded in economic activity. While the fundamental shifts in the chocolate sector suggest that some market actors have moved towards a recognition that economic activity is dependent upon improving its socio-environmental circumstances as a key priority, representations continue to paint a picture of socio-environmental awareness being 'nice-to-have' and optional.

A key empirical finding was the dual and ambiguous role commercial drivers occupy. The analysis has demonstrated that commercial drivers were principal in private-sector actors, while the prioritisation of civil-society and public-sector actors leaned more towards socio-economic and environmental aspects, causing tensions throughout all initiatives. While commercial drivers allow socio-economically and environmentally motivated GPN actors to find private-sector partners, commercial imperatives also continually threaten to overwhelm NGOs', development actors' and

governments' priorities, with means and ends usually reversed between them and private-sector actors. For instance, the research found that for private-sector actors in World Choc and Floral's initiatives, safeguarding supply security is the end, while altered socio-economic and environmental circumstances are the means. By contrast, multiple non-governmental and development organisations across the three initiatives viewed commercial outlets as necessary instruments to attain the afforestation or higher income they seek. The analysis showed that such and other divergences in priorities offer a potential for tensions. There is also a linkage to power and embeddedness asymmetries, as Northern and private-sector actors' privileged position regarding resources and decision-making power also explains why their commercial drivers are so prominent in initiatives.

Environmental benefits have attracted new funds and new actor groups to cocoa sustainability. As both conservation and climate change have been growing in significance in the global North's consciousness, multiple cocoa sustainability initiatives have discovered cocoa agroforestry as a way to make chocolate and address global environmental challenges, justifying my investigation of initiatives' environmental side. With increasing public awareness, funds have become available from public-sector donors, civil-society actors and responsive consumers. However, there is a connection back to the diverging perceptions of what are ends, what are means discussed above. For chocolate companies, environmental narratives are a means towards attaining their end of safeguarding cocoa supply. For environmentalists, chocolate is often largely interchangeable as a product, as long as the item can serve as an awareness-raiser and conversation starter. An observation from all three initiatives is the prominent focus on environmental benefits in public-facing communication towards the global North, whereas the emphasis is more on socio-economic aspects when communicating with producers and cooperatives working in the global South. Both the questions of whose priorities and whose meanings prove dominant have a linkage back to power and embeddedness asymmetries between stakeholders.

The importance of representations in mediating meanings and relations between stakeholders in global North and South explains the focus of the fourth research sub-question:

4. In relation to these drivers, what representations surface in cocoa sustainability initiatives especially regarding the environment?

4.1 How do different stakeholders' representations diverge?

4.2 What interactions are there between drivers and prevalent representations?

While drivers also encompass the commercial dimension, representations remain focused on socio-economic and environmental benefits, with the meanings produced thus exclusively related to philanthropy and altruism. This empirical point also has an analytical dimension, as the research also found relevant insights regarding representations through the GPN framework. As alluded to above, analysing shifts in cocoa sustainability initiatives in terms of drivers and representations has demonstrated multiple complex interactions between bolstering territorial and societal embeddedness, and enhancing corporate, collective and institutional power. One analytical insight in this context is that institutional and corporate power enabled certain stakeholders to spread the representations enhancing their embeddedness. Concomitantly with the meanings created, the representations also created territorial and societal embeddedness for different stakeholders, but predominantly for the private-sector.

Interestingly, despite drivers diverging between different stakeholders, the meanings created in representations are virtually identical within the same initiative. Key reasons include the reputational benefits driving ‘nice-to-have’ sustainability engagements. The reasons are also to be found in the meanings which chocolate-sector actors prefer not to produce related to the unjust and unviable practices underlying sustainability’s transformation into a business imperative, including poor producer livelihoods and productivity-maximising techniques degrading cultivation surfaces. However, acknowledging these causes could create consumer-based urgency for an overall reform addressing root causes, not symptoms, which few chocolate actors are willing to engage with at this stage, as it would be tantamount to recognising the importance of socio-environmental considerations as the foundation within which economic activity is embedded. After all, it would threaten to question both the power and embeddedness they can extract from their engagement. This speculation is based on three factors. Firstly, highlighting flaws in chocolate-sector relations would draw attention to fundamental flaws such as continually low cocoa prices and bargaining power slanted towards oligopolistic actors in the global North which chocolate actors have long failed to acknowledge, let alone rectify. Secondly, the embeddedness benefits of engaging with ‘sustainability’ (Blowfield and Dolan, 2008; Goodman, 2010; Peters-Stanley and Hamilton, 2012; Utting, 2007) would dissipate, as it would no longer be philanthropic, but self-serving, and fail to meet consumer expectations of ‘helping’. Finally, it would reduce the ability to outsource responsibility for environmental and social considerations

to NGO, certifier or development-agency partners, acknowledging the sector's interconnectedness.

A fundamental insight in my thesis is that, despite representations of 'sustainability', this did not mean the two companies and public-sector lead actors under investigation were making systemic changes in the power structures governing initiatives. While they did, much to producers' appreciation, commit to longer-term relationships, pay premium prices and provide funding for environmental or infrastructural measures, these commitments only changed relationships at a micro-producer level, while neither effecting holistic changes at the meso-network level, let alone at the macro-global level. This was the case for my three case-study initiatives as well as other engagements presented more briefly in the above analysis, all of which shared a fundamental partiality in terms of only improving production circumstances for a select few growers, and only under the auspices of sustainability engagements rather than as part of equitable trade practice. Although several companies stated they aimed for a changed sector, none of the three case-study initiatives nor of other engagements detailed in the thesis implemented power-shifting measures such as producing chocolate in the global South, providing producers with an ownership share, let alone challenging the need for ever more cocoa on account of the environmental consequences of resource extraction. Indeed, cutting out intermediaries and condensing the production network, while increasing prices for growers, also further concentrated power in Northern buyers, creating quasi-monopsonistic structures: this thus also means that the initiatives increased rather than decreased power asymmetries, boosting public-sector and private-sector buyers.

My analysis of developments in the cocoa sector also has relevance for broader debates on power, politics and development projects. Foucault (1991) highlights the importance of recognising that any state of affairs, however undesirable some stakeholders may perceive it to be, will nevertheless have some beneficiaries, a highly relevant observation regarding the above-made point about Northern actors' reluctance to challenge the status quo. He emphasises that delinquency may aid politicians who wish to represent themselves as tough operators, to perpetuate a climate of fear in need of the tough operator they have fashioned themselves to be. In the chocolate sector, the continued powerlessness of cocoa producers, albeit under slightly better socio-environmental terms, serves civil society, public sector and private sector as it gives them projects to complete. These may go awry, as Ferguson (1994) observes, but nevertheless offer an outlet for altruism and projection of dreams and aspirations which Northern

stakeholders and consumers deem worthy. This is another inherent contradiction, as stakeholders assume that securing funding to help is predicated on utilising well-rehearsed representations, not challenging them. This premise thus perpetuates their papal indulgences and *raison d'être*, while ensuring slightly better cocoa livelihoods and avoiding fundamental upheaval. This also means that the same criticism levelled at certification for its partiality above also applies to the initiatives explored in this thesis, as they do not strive to remedy, only tweak the issue at hand, driven principally by concerns including the long-term viability of business operations. The current initiatives do not draw attention to the actual, more far-reaching need for change; at the same time, enhancing the Northern lead actors' societal and territorial embeddedness is predicated on representations of altruism rather than necessity to answer consumer expectations of 'helping'. This is thus another instance where utilising the GPN categories of power and embeddedness in terms of priorities and representations yields key insights.

There is an integral link from the above tensions and contradictions to a broader conceptual observation regarding the imperative to 'sell'. Miller's (2008) work asks what 'things' in thirty Londoners' houses have to tell us about the people who have chosen to surround themselves with them. My thesis to a degree turns this question on its head, asking what initiatives have to tell us about the people who are trying to sell something through cocoa sustainability. First of all, it confirmed the initial assumption that the commercial, socio-economic and environmental priorities stakeholders associated with 'sustainability', i.e. what they take sustainability to mean or wish it to entail, vary considerably. As in the Shell example cited in 2.2.1.1, a variety of stakeholders wheel out sustainability to mean a variety of things and bring about a variety of objectives. Despite this polysemy, however, a key insight is that even those stakeholders whose constellation of priorities did not feature one of the commercial drivers such as supply security or high-quality cocoa supply, nevertheless have an interest in selling their own version of what the initiative is or entails. Stakeholders, from the two companies and public-sector stakeholders functioning as lead actors to various civil-society and public-sector partners, took care to represent the commendable, but in a holistic sector view comparatively small alterations of providing better incomes to some producers or protecting some forests as holistic change, bringing 'unique' 'partnership'.

There is another inherent contradiction in maximising supply and sales in the name of sustainability. A recurring theme in my thesis was an almost ubiquitous concern, in public-sector, private-sector and civil-society alike, with selling something through representations of

sustainability employed, be it chocolate with a conscience, carbon-neutral chocolate, chocolate produced in partnership, themselves and their services, or a bit of all. To a degree, this is inevitable as a characteristic of human interaction, with this research, through references cited and methods explained, equally aiming to sell its rigour and the validity of its arguments in the hope of gaining academic acceptance and its findings being useful and used by those who very kindly helped bring them about. However, a question is how this need to sell products and ideas alike, a manifestation of sorts of Bourdieu's tyranny of the market (2003), colours human interaction. Given the immediate availability of a plethora of feel-good stories, images and representations, and conversely damning stories, images and representations at the push of a button, the public attention span for complex, multi-layered stories is limited. Moreover, our age tends to grant justification to what you do and how you do it only if you can sell your representations of it in public by leveraging the power you have accrued, the embeddedness you have built. The imperative to sell presupposes, and thus perpetuates, the consuming public's thirst for easily digestible images which do not challenge one's own role in producing inherent inequities, in chocolate and beyond. All network interactions are coloured by underlying commercial motives, with appeals to 'sustainability' failing to question what effects maximising sales or supply have long-term on network stakeholders and the environment. Commercialisation thus prioritises enhancing societal and territorial embeddedness, and thus ultimately capturing value, over challenging shortcomings in terms of power symmetry, common sense or actual sustainability in the sense of viable resource extraction rates.

Overall, the meaning created so far in the analysed cocoa sustainability initiatives is that business as usual is fundamentally the right and sound approach, the only exception being the slightly scaled-up 'sustainability' efforts which individual sector actors will pursue. Beyond the first thrust of the business opportunity of consumer awareness, the business imperative underlying the second thrust raises more profound questions also challenging the sector's long-term viability, which the sector is as yet unable to answer. Only few and generally marginal actors have a willingness to question and change the whole system in the way the second thrust would require it, in the spirit of recognising that economic activity is embedded in society and not vice versa. Most are content to doctor the symptoms rather than address the causes, as the causes would require fundamental alterations in operations and resources, such as paying much higher cocoa prices throughout the sector rather than to a few beneficiaries of 'sustainability' measures. While notionally, cocoa shortages would contribute to an increase in power for producers vis-à-vis oligopolistic brand manufacturers, the smallholder-dominated producer structure, fragmentation

of cocoa producers and Northern-controlled value-adding infrastructure renders a redressing towards a multipolar sector challenging. Through their powerful standing and their privileged access to communication channels compared with most cocoa producers, Northern stakeholders have the forum to enforce their priorities and communicate their messages, enhancing embeddedness and cementing power structures. However, with connections established on Northern actors' terms, this dynamic functions to reinforce the North-South divide they purport to bridge. Safeguarding cocoa availability long-term, and thus socio-environmental benefits from it, is predicated on the sector at large moving towards a serious engagement with the changed socio-environmental practices necessary to protect their economic activity long-term.

To address systemic issues, I would argue changes far beyond the – already sizeable – price hikes all three buyers in my case-studies offered would be required. Addressing these inequities would firstly require the whole sector to increase cocoa prices significantly, rather than having a limited number of companies pay slightly higher prices to a limited number of beneficiaries of a well-publicised 'sustainability' measure. Far beyond that, addressing these issues would mean no longer prioritising selling an actual or ideational product through favourable representations of oneself. It would mean acknowledging the fundamental tenet of fairness, of treating other stakeholders across the production network as one would have others treat oneself, as a priority throughout the network to bring about actual long-term 'sustainability'. It would mean accepting and applying a far-reaching sense of fundamental responsibility for environment and fellow network stakeholders, going further than my case-studies: this would also mean that buyers would no longer divert responsibility to certifiers through labels, but buyers, civil society and certifiers would acknowledge such measures' inherent partiality and the importance of addressing issues holistically, even at the expense of saleable commodities such as labels or damning press releases.

Addressing these issues would also involve acknowledging and altering the power concentration in successive mostly Northern oligopolies, a concentration that is exacerbating shortage concerns and is increasing not decreasing. It would also involve addressing the degrading practices which have defined the cocoa sector for decades, conjuring up the very socio-economic and environmental issues causing the fear of cocoa shortages now. It would involve paying significantly higher cocoa prices to producers. More generally, it would involve designing networks which are mission-driven in the sense of establishing partnerships with shared benefits, power and responsibility for Southern actors rather than perpetuated Northern dominance, on

the part of civil-society, private-sector and public-sector alike. It would involve accepting rather than shirking responsibility for the environment and between humans, a principle which would merit application not only in cocoa sustainability initiatives, but much further afield.

9.2 My contributions to knowledge, further research and implications

Building on these insights, my thesis's first contribution to knowledge concerns the environmental side of cocoa sustainability initiatives, which have been underresearched in the past. As public awareness of and willingness to fund environmental matters increases, cocoa sustainability initiatives accommodate a third, environmental dimension beyond socio-economic and commercial concerns, with this research providing findings on nuanced tensions exacerbated by the presence of a third domain. As the tensions between divergent drivers are likely to grow further, this dynamic and its implications for initiatives required investigating the complex web of socio-economic, environmental and commercial priorities. Secondly, researching cocoa-and-environment-related GPNs holistically has also made an original contribution, as most studies focus only on parts of the process. I argue that a GPN analysis incorporating views from stakeholders ranging from cocoa producers to chocolate consumers can yield understandings regarding drivers and representations which are likely to escape partial analyses. This research has shown that its approach of incorporating a wide array of interlocutors has contributed to advances in understanding tensions between and within stakeholder drivers and representations, and complex nuances in terms of power and embeddedness relations.

A third key contribution to knowledge, both for theorists and practitioners, has been developing and applying the constellations of priorities model, i.e. a systematic analysis of stakeholder priorities in the socio-economic, environmental and commercial dimensions. The model allows stakeholders to map their own and other stakeholders' drivers to identify congruences and divergences, offering both a practical and an analytical contribution as a way for stakeholders to advance knowledge and engage in necessary conversations about initiatives' direction. This framework, which could also be used for other foci with different designations for the axes, may enable stakeholders to identify starting points for necessary conversations, providing a suitable model amid ever-rising environmental and particularly commercial concerns. A fourth, related, contribution concerns the relationship between sustainability initiatives and power asymmetries. While power asymmetries have indirectly contributed to the sector's existing challenges, for instance through poor prices favouring degrading practices to maximise productivity, the study

found that the initiatives investigated did not seek to redress power asymmetries; rather, the elimination of intermediaries in the production networks, while boosting grower prices, also may exacerbate existing asymmetries.

Finally, my thesis also raises a question on Silverstone's observation of 'proper distance', i.e. the idea that the connection between audience and subjects of media reports is predicated on them constructing a notion of being 'close but not too close' (2007:172). My argument is that in my case-studies, this construction proved easier to attain in the environmental sense, with climate change and biodiversity destruction being the common enemy rather than morally charged discrepancies in life realities and Northerners' role in creating existing inequities. While this is a contribution to knowledge, it also merits further research as to its validity in other cases, and more generally the circumstances under which proper distance can be constructed most conducive, including whether the absence of guilt and presence of accurate representations facilitates the process.

This question pertaining to the construction of 'proper distance' is the first among several questions for further research arising from my thesis. My argument that environmental aspects proved more fertile ground in which to sow common understandings than the morally charged socio-economic field was based in multiple case-studies prioritising environmental over socio-economic representations towards an inclined public. In this, I did not engage with the degree to which notions of environmental or socio-economic common ground were misconceptions. Implicitly, the argument thus also suggests that the accuracy of the representations deployed is largely immaterial to the construction of Silverstonian 'proper distance', and common ground more broadly between stakeholders. Partly, this is attributable to the desire to 'help' which surfaced strongly both in focus group discussions held with responsive consumers, and in subsequent public engagement activities organised to share this thesis's findings with the interested public. The first question for further research is thus examining the tension between the claim emanating from my case-studies, and the idealist tone which permeates Silverstone's vision of how media and communication can facilitate connections. This also touches on a question raised regarding especially the Our Chocolate case-study characterised by a palpable lack of monitoring. It would be interesting to establish firstly to what extent audiences' willingness to support a cause, and chocolate bar, hinges on the accuracy of conceptions used to construct 'proper distance'-based connections, and by extension to what extent the presence of a credible narrative rather than demonstrable facts is paramount.

A second area for further research relates to stakeholders' associations with, and resulting success of, different certification schemes. As this thesis showed, certification schemes are growing considerably in the chocolate sector. Particularly UTZ Certified and Rainforest Alliance have seen and are projected to experience rapid growth also in the future. Stakeholder associations with the schemes vis-à-vis Fairtrade and the organic cause varied considerably: some large-scale buyers appreciate that UTZ's and RA's priorities and understandings pertaining to 'sustainability' are more congruent with their own commercial priorities than e.g. organic's uncompromising abstinence from pesticides or Fairtrade's focus on socio-political connections and social justice. There is thus a question to what extent Fairtrade and organic as currently constituted may be more amenable to Reynolds's (2009) 'mission-driven' stakeholders, i.e. actors whose priorities are predominantly located in the socio-environmental dimensions, while 'market-driven', commercially oriented stakeholders favour schemes which consider socio-environmental advances primarily as means to the end of commercial viability.

Further research could thus firstly conduct a broad analysis of what chocolate-sector stakeholders associate with different types of certification schemes, as well as an in-depth examination of the socio-economic, environmental and commercial priorities stakeholders subscribing to different schemes bring to the table. The constellation of priorities framework may be one possible vehicle for the latter aspect of the analysis. A related point would be further research into the viability and implementability of the national-level standards some stakeholders favour over the current micro-level, inherently partial approach, which this research would also commend. Two further points for further research related to standards question ingrained assumptions about certification, firstly with Floral demonstrating that companies can bring socio-economic advances to producers even *sans* certification, and secondly with Iller's requirement of multiple certification schemes creating a tighter bond with cocoa producers, rather than opening up further markets for them. Both would merit further investigation as to their presence also in other cases, and their analytical implications for how we think about certification schemes.

A third area for further research concerns the links between power and embeddedness which section 4.3 engaged with in more detail. Based on my analysis, this partly reinforcing, partly contravening relationship would merit further exploration both conceptually and empirically. Conceptually, further analysis could unpack linkages between different types of power, i.e.

corporate, collective and institutional, and different types of embeddedness in society, territory and network. Empirically, a potential meta-study of existing GPN analyses could highlight what relationships between different aspects of power and embeddedness have already been investigated, and whether any trends emerge. Especially given current conversations on the need to reconsider the GPN and GVC frameworks, such studies may produce relevant insights for the debate.

A fourth implication of my thesis requiring further research is whether ‘sustainability initiatives’, given Northern buyers’ aspiration to increase control of production networks, may actually entail a heightened risk of power asymmetries. This research found that in all three case-studies, Northern buyers established direct connections without intermediaries to Southern growers and cooperatives. My research beyond the case-studies suggests that the aspiration to increase direct contact with cooperatives without the detour via traders or processors is common also in other sustainability initiatives. While this entailed higher prices for cooperatives and growers in my case-studies, much to their delight, there is a question to what extent this leads to quasi-monopsonistic structures, as there are no other viable sales outlets offering comparable prices to growers. Despite all protestations of partnership, this dynamic thus perpetuates and may increase existing power asymmetries between Northern buyers and Southern stakeholders, requiring further research into the presence and extent of this phenomenon beyond the above-detailed case-studies. A related point is that my thesis has focused on the effect of trade relations on income levels, neglecting to engage with labour relations or intra-household income distributions. While I do consider them instrumental in improving growers’ socio-economic situation, my thesis’s research focus did not allow an in-depth engagement with them, although I would welcome further research exploring them.

A final question for further research, constituting almost an inverse issue from the last point, is the extent of systemic shifts which would be necessary to address the far-reaching challenges in the chocolate sector in a way that safeguards its long-term viability for all stakeholders. The question arising from this research is whether a changed approach involving power-sharing and similar largely uncharted territory would be necessary to ensure corporate actors can avert moments of crisis, safeguard greater buy-in and benefits for Southern stakeholders, and overall improve cocoa production’s socio-environmental circumstances. Clearly, for the chocolate sector, this is a vital question, which is likely to exceed the scope of any one study. However, based on my research, I would argue that extending Southern stakes in the infrastructure and benefits of

the global cocoa trade would allow Southern growers and cooperatives more leeway to operate, improving incomes and ownership. Beyond socio-economic and environmental benefits to Southern stakeholders, this is also likely to shore up the viability of cocoa production at large, decreasing incentives to degrade surfaces, increasing the likelihood of young generations investing their talents in cultivating cocoa, and improving the chances for and terms of Southern participation in global production networks. As this would be largely uncharted territory for Northern oligopolists, contravening the tendency to increase control or even move production in-house demonstrated in this thesis, the rationale for this move would have to be well-documented to convince stakeholders, particularly those standing to cede control, of its viability. However, against the backdrop of rising sector concentration and acute shortage projections, balance-of-power structures are likely to be subject to a restructuring anyway. In my view, those seeking genuine partnership are more likely to experience a positive outcome than those least willing to change.

Building on the final area for further research, my thesis entails several implications for the future of sustainability initiatives in the chocolate sector. Fundamentally, my argument is that safeguarding the viability of the chocolate sector's future will require a systemic shift in governing trade relations. Given projected severe shortages, the crisis notionally shifts power away from oligopolists towards the stakeholders who produce the cocoa on which the rest of the production network depends: growers and cooperatives. However, my thesis raises serious questions as to whether Northern oligopolists indeed are willing to take seriously the notions of listening to growers and improving their socio-environmental circumstances beyond whatever minimal tweaking they deem necessary to safeguard cocoa production long-term.

My findings substantiate this point in two key respects. My analysis suggests firstly that there are already considerable tensions between and within the variegated socio-economic, commercial and environmental priorities which civil-society, public-sector and private-sector stakeholders, in my case-studies and beyond, bring to the table. As cocoa-sector challenges grow more acute, tensions are likely to follow suit. On the one hand, this constitutes an opportunity as posited above to utilise this honest analysis of varying tensions as a chance to reconsider also ingrained asymmetries between stakeholders. However, this opportunity can only materialise if Northern stakeholders are prepared to incorporate Southern growers' and cooperatives' views and interests not as a means to the end of attaining higher cocoa supplies, but as a valuable asset worth taking seriously to enhance their own operations through innovative ideas. My research suggests that

this willingness is generally low at present. Consequently, there is a risk that with rising cocoa shortages, private-sector actors' focus on commercial aspects will exacerbate trade-offs with socio-environmental priorities. In this scenario, civil-society and public-sector actors, whose involvement has been heightened by the crisis, acquire accentuated importance as gatekeepers.

The analysis established that, as cocoa shortages begin to manifest themselves, commercial priorities are likely to grow even further in importance for private-sector actors. Stakeholders whose drivers primarily lie in socio-environmental considerations therefore have a key function to highlight trade-offs and tensions between commercial and socio-environmental considerations, and the importance of the latter in safeguarding the former. Conversely, stakeholders who still perceive socio-environmental considerations as a means to an end in safeguarding their primary commercial interests have a duty to listen and take on board suggestions addressing systemic issues threatening the chocolate sector. While some adjustments may hurt them in the short term, they are likely to safeguard their businesses' survival in the long term by addressing issues instrumental for the sector's long-term viability.

Secondly, another systemic issue which urgently needs to be addressed concerns power and embeddedness asymmetries. Resolving this point would involve going beyond the much-needed and much-welcomed price increases which all three case-studies brought for growers. Given prevalent discourses of 'partnership' throughout initiatives active across different market segments and scales, my finding of sustainability initiatives partly heightening existing asymmetries was surprising. In my three case-studies and beyond, chocolate companies have responded to shortage fears by removing intermediaries such as traders and processors from the production networks, dealing directly with growers. While this increases prices for growers and cooperatives, it also risks eliminating other selling options for them and constructing quasi-monopsonistic settings. At the same time, this approach fails to promote greater shares in power, embeddedness and value for Southern stakeholders through shared ownership in production and infrastructure, which would facilitate addressing several of the socio-economic, environmental and commercial factors causing issues in the first place.

In fact, these mechanisms replicate or even worsen the same concentrated governance structures at the micro-level of initiatives, rather than correcting the concentrating forces which have caused significant macro, sector-level concerns and trialling polycentricity at the scale of initiatives.

Greater Southern involvement could help reduce pressures to degrade existing surfaces, increase returns and capacities for growers and cooperatives, while also spreading out concentrated power, thereby offering an avenue to address several of the factors which have contributed to the current crisis in the first place. Evidently, sharing power and loosening control are uncharted territory for most Northern oligopolists. However, the magnitude of the current crisis requires innovative solutions. I would argue that it is in Northern stakeholders' own best interest to reduce their own profit and marketing shares in a chocolate bar's price in favour of Southern stakeholders' and particularly growers' benefits. On the basis of my findings, equitable treatment of all stakeholders across the production network, boosting their capacities through higher prices and fair participation, would be a first step in this direction.

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Appendix 1: Full votes of focus group participants

The below figures show the results for focus group discussions 1 (FGD1), 2 (FGD2) and 3 (FGD3). In Round 1, I asked participants to vote for different goals commonly cited as important for ‘sustainability’ according to their own preferences as chocolate consumers, Round 2 requested voting from the perspective of cocoa growers (cf. section 3.5.3 for details).

	<i>FGD1, Round 1</i>	<i>FGD1, Round 2</i>	<i>FGD2, Round 1</i>	<i>FGD2, Round 2</i>	<i>FGD3, Round 1</i>	<i>FGD3, Round 2</i>
Against child labour	2	2	2	0	2	0
Innovation	0	1	0	1	0	0
Biodiversity	6	2	7	2	3	1
Climate protection	5	2	7	0	4	1
Certification	0	0	1	7	0	0
Better income for cocoa growers	2	8	8	9	8	11
Agricultural training	0	2	0	2	1	0
Human rights	6	3	4	1	4	3
Supply security	1	1	2	8	0	3
Social measures	5	6	2	3	2	5

Appendix 2: Members of Sustainable Cocoa Forum as of 5 October 2013

Source: author's compilation based on Sustainable Cocoa Forum, 2013

Public sector	Private sector – Industry
Federal Ministry for Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection	Albrecht & Dill Trading GmbH
Federal Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development	Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG
	Bahlsen GmbH & Co.KG
	Bayer Crop Science
Industry associations	Barry Callebaut AG
Association of German Confectionery Industry	Brandt Zwieback – Schokoladen GmbH & Co. KG
	Bremer HACHEZ Chocolate GmbH & Co.KG
Federal Association of the German Retail Grocery Trade	Cargill GmbH
	Chokoladefabriken Lindt & Sprüngli GmbH
Association of companies involved in dealing raw cocoa	Chr. Storz GmbH & Co. KG
	Conrad Schulte GmbH & Co.KG
	Continental Bakeries Deutschland GmbH
World Cocoa Foundation	Delfi Cocoa (Europe) GmbH
Civil society	Eisbär Eis GmbH
Fairfood International	Euromar Commodities GmbH
Fairtrade International	Ferrero Deutschland GmbH
Food, Beverages and Catering Trade Union	Forest Finance Service GmbH
GIGA – German Institute for Global and Area Studies	Foundation of the German cocoa and chocolate industry
	Frankonia Schokoladenwerke GmbH
Infozentrum Schokolade	Fuchs & Hoffmann GmbH
INKOTA network	Gebr. Jancke GmbH
Jacobs Foundation	Girrbach Süßwarendekor GmbH
Rainforest Alliance	Griesson – de Beukelaer GmbH & Co. KG
Schokoladenmuseum Köln GmbH	Gustav Berning GmbH & Co. KG
Solidaridad	Gut Springenheide GmbH
Südwind-Institut	H.C.C.O. Hamburg Cocoa & Commodity Office GmbH
UIREVI Germany	H.D. COTTERELL GmbH & Co. KG

UTZ Certified	Halloren Schokoladenfabrik AG
ZNU – Centre for Sustainable Enterprises. Private University Witten/Herdecke	Hanns G. Werner GmbH & Co. KG Hans Riegelein & Sohn GmbH & Co. KG
Private sector – Retailers	Henry Lambertz GmbH & Co. KG
LIDL Stiftung & Co. KG	International Sustainability & Carbon Certification GmbH
Real SB Warenhaus	Kessler & Comp. GmbH & Co. KG
REWE Group	Kraft Foods Deutschland Services GmbH & Co. KG Lebkuchen-Schmidt GmbH & Co. KG
Tegut – gute Lebensmittel GmbH & Co. KG	Lübecker Marzipan-Fabrik v. Minden & Bruhns GmbH & Co. KG
	Ludwig Schokolade GmbH & Co. KG
	Ludwig Weinrich GmbH & Co. KG
	Mars Incorporated
	Martin Braun Backmittel und Essenzen KG
	mkm GmbH – Manufaktur für Genießer
	Nestlé Deutschland AG
	Rübezahl Schokoladen GmbH
	Rüdesheimer Confiserie Pralinen GmbH & Co. KG
	Stollwerck Schokoladen Vertriebs GmbH
	August Storck KG
	Ulmer Schokoladen GmbH & Co. KG
	United-Agro-Alliance GmbH
	Verdener Keks- und Waffelfabrik Hans Freitag GmbH
	Vollers Hamburg GmbH
	Wetzel Oblaten- und Waffelfabrik GmbH
	Wilhelm Gruyters GmbH & Co. KG

Appendix 3: Sample interview questions

Example of questions in key informant interview with a certifier:

- What can you tell me about your work?
- What motivations underlie particularly the environment section of your standard - for instance, what has driven the decision to include a 'no-deforestation' provision?
- One of my arguments is that stakeholders in the cocoa value chain bring very different commercial, environmental and socio-economic objectives to the process, which variously intersect or dovetail. What would be your perspective on this?
- What is your perspective on the cocoa sector's future development?
- In your opinion, who is certification really for?

Appendix 4: Implications for different stakeholder groups

This section aims to bridge the divide between thesis and practice to feed back some insights to the research participants from whose expertise, generosity and time I benefited greatly. It will discuss different recommendations for different stakeholder types in turn, building directly on the results of the above analysis.

1 Cocoa producers

Various recommendations emerge for cocoa producers, although several of them are predicated on engagement with other stakeholders. Firstly, the study confirmed the research's hypothesis of ever-growing commercial drivers from private-sector actors. On the one hand, this represents a risk as demonstrated by the thesis, with commercial objectives threatening to overwhelm environmental and particularly socio-economic goals in initiatives. However, increased demand can also entail greater collective power for producers. Producers' fragmentation renders enacting it difficult; however, farmer organisation can improve bargaining power and standing, especially for cooperatives offering particular cocoa qualities. A key support would be breaking the continued Northern dominance of representations through own communication channels. Independent communication not under the auspices of Northern partners with own agendas, would help to remedy the existing shortcoming of Northern private-sector, public-sector and civil-society stakeholders speaking for Southern producers, disempowering them. Resurrecting Fairtrade's original premise of establishing direct politicised connections between Northern chocolate consumers and Southern cocoa producers to enhance social justice could promote greater equality between stakeholders. Small-scale ventures, particularly those transforming cocoa into chocolate in the global South, offer a high likelihood of power shifts to the global South, addressing one key criticism of this thesis. However, these ventures, ranging from chocolate production in a small-scale cooperative, to operations selling chocolate in-country and internationally, often struggle in setting up export channels to better-off customers in the global North. This finding harks back to the successive oligopolies dominating the chocolate sector, and the importance of legislation.

A final aspect, predicated on public-sector support, would be establishing national-level standards. The International Cocoa Organisation advocates this approach (Interview #125, government). This way, minimum standards for cocoa prices, health and safety requirements, working conditions and environmental conduct would not be conditional upon the somewhat

haphazard ability of individuals or cooperatives to comply with standards. This would address my previous criticism of certification's partiality on the country level by guaranteeing certain standards for all national cocoa producers and buyers. From a socio-economic point of view, this would not make better prices conditional on the somewhat fortuitous ability to sell the product at a good price and with a certification premium. Rather, the added certification benefits would be universal across a country, thereby also encouraging improvements such as eradicating exploitative child labour through improved livelihoods across the board rather than select audited farms. Environmentally and particularly from a biodiversity perspective, cocoa agroforestry on a landscape level outweighs the benefits of individual compliant farms. Incidentally, this also applies for 'social' diseases such as moniliasis which can spread even on a well-managed farm if adjacent plots are less well-kept.

2 Cooperatives

In the above-sketched recommendations for cocoa producers, cooperatives of producers play a key role in several suggestions. One such aspect is in providing financial and administrative resources to establish communication channels with the global North, with another being supporting national-level certification to address partiality and dependence on commercial certifiers. Even beyond their role in facilitating improvements for cocoa producers, cooperatives occupy a crucial conduit function for and between public-sector, private-sector and civil-society actors. For NGOs and public-sector actors, supporting cooperatives helps to demonstrate their support's relevance to society at large. Donors frequently view cooperatives, being rooted and embedded in the local territory, as vehicles to safeguard long-term capacity-building and support structures even beyond the duration of project funding (Interviews #83, #123, development). For cocoa producers, cooperatives often provide a vital sales outlet for multiple crops, boosting household incomes and food security. If cooperatives fail to function for whatever reason, this dual socio-economic benefit ceases, removing training, capacity-building and access to finance while forcing producers to sell at lower prices elsewhere. For private-sector actors, cooperatives crucially make supply available, safeguarding quality and quantity. Against this backdrop, a key recommendation to safeguard cooperatives' long-term functioning would be to extend administrative and financial training opportunities beyond current management towards other interested cooperative members to have a second guard available.

A key further aspect is establishing alternative export channels, a more viable proposition for cooperatives than individual producers. All three initiatives investigated in my study saw producers and cooperatives in somewhat captive situations, with one primary commercial outlet available and all other options practically prohibitive by virtue of the considerable price delta. While all three buyers paid premium prices, there were still virtual monopsonies, dictating quality requirements which cooperatives partly struggled with. By producing cocoa with a unique selling proposition, be it a certain certification scheme or exceptionally high quality, cooperatives can establish an export channel providing premium prices. An example could be Green & Black's Maya Gold chocolate, with the company contractually obliged to source the cocoa from one specific cooperative in Belize, with double certification providing a premium price. An approach which would safeguard further value shares for the global South would be constructing infrastructure to move further processing steps up to and including chocolate production to the South, although this is likely to exceed most cooperatives' budgets. Export channels, and non-prohibitive import provisions, for this Southern-manufactured chocolate are a crucial requirement to safeguard adequate returns for processing and manufacturing. Approaches increasing incomes in the global South could strengthen fellow cooperatives' bargaining position vis-à-vis Northern oligopolies, contravening Northern interests.

3 NGOs

One key recommendation for NGOs, akin to the recommendations for development agencies, concerns transferring knowledge to the local and producer level. Particularly for producers in rural settings, capacity-building from NGOs and development agencies by way of cooperatives is often the only source of knowledge to improve plantation management, cocoa cultivation and harvesting. While there is often no shortage of printed materials including manuals, the final step transforming this into practical application is crucial. A second key recommendation concerns cooperatives, a crucial link for NGOs and development agencies to safeguard their ideas' rootedness beyond their own project funding cycles. Supporting and strengthening cooperatives through capacity-building can also help redress some power imbalances resulting from successive oligopolies which dominate the chocolate sector. The more strong farmer organisations can counteract this Northern dominance, the more likely are mechanisms which boost household incomes, support diversified agroforestry systems, improve food security and limit environmental degradation. A final recommendation for NGOs concerns promoting Southern incomes through project funding decisions and priorities. Chocolate being manufactured at origin by small-scale

cooperatives or chocolate manufacturers can redress some power asymmetries. This requires industrial infrastructure and skills which cooperatives frequently cannot finance on their own.

4 Development agencies

While many NGO recommendations equally apply for this stakeholder group, a key point for the development-agency level concerns their long-term presence as their funding flows are often more stable than for smaller-scale NGOs. Firstly, their multi-year, government-supervised presence can provide the stability necessary for organic, gradual progression, while also lending themselves to multi-year crops such as cocoa. Government negotiations with bilateral and multilateral funding bodies can provide the partner governments with more of a say in the evolution of development-agency projects than some NGO or local-government initiatives following other objectives. Development agencies' close collaboration with governmental institutions in both North and South also means they can lobby for national-level standards through established communication channels with public-sector, civil-society and private-sector stakeholders, rendering them uniquely placed to support national-level standards institutionally across multiple partner countries. Equally, their unique quasi-public-sector function also bestows upon them a gatekeeper function especially in public-private partnerships, and a responsibility when it comes to mitigating the rise of commercial drivers in the private sector.

5 Government

National-level governments, in global North and South, play a key part as gatekeepers, for instance as legislators and in establishing national-level cocoa standards. Southern governments would have to dedicate resources to developing standards with the International Cocoa Organisation and other stakeholders, and implementing them, while Northern governments as food importers and donors would also have to lend support. Moreover, their gatekeeping role involves safeguarding that companies' activities entail palpable benefits short-term and long-term. With the above analysis showing ever-rising commercial drivers, especially national-level governments also have a role to play in promoting initiatives' non-commercial benefits and potentially providing a counter-voice to unilateral private-sector communication. A further key point is the relevance of governments as legislators. In one of the cases explored, an Association Agreement between the European Union and Central America prompted a paradigmatic change in the lead firm's certifier preference. For regulating food imports and setting taxes on cocoa-bean, semi-processed or chocolate bar imports, regulators have a key role in shaping where value-

adding processes such as chocolate production can occur, affecting power constellations in the chocolate sector. Local governments' role, beyond gatekeeping locally and feeding back to the national level, proved crucial regarding the framing of the North-South relationship in the municipalities' initiative, which used Northern-dominated representations to frame the conversation and generate notions of partnership between Northern and Southern stakeholders, and consumers and producers. While focus group discussants and members of the public as witnessed by participant observation viewed direct links between Northern and Southern municipalities positively as an opportunity for direct contact, equal partnership is predicated on all parties being able to contribute priorities, a key prerequisite for equal footing.

6 Private sector

Retailers only played a secondary role in this analysis. Nevertheless, a key recommendation for them is promoting small-scale ventures to support initiatives not forming part of any cocoa oligopoly, which is vital to strengthen other actors and improve alternative export channels for cooperatives and cocoa producers, thereby redressing persisting power asymmetries. By supporting 'alternative' products, retailers can also encourage a greater diversity of cocoa types beyond the commonly consumed high-volume Forastero quality. Similarly, a key recommendation for small-scale chocolate companies based in the global South is continuing to support a broad variety of cocoa genetic quality of interest to consumers willing to pay premium prices, as the spread of productivity-maximising standardised hybrid or genetically modified varieties threatens their business model. A broad genetic pool can contribute to long-term availability by promoting varieties more resilient to changing climate or biodiversity circumstances, being in all cocoa stakeholders' long-term interest.

The primary private-sector actors examined were Northern-based chocolate companies, for whom, as demonstrated, commercial drivers and particularly supply-security concerns have grown in importance. All three initiatives rely on premium prices for high-quality supply, with these stable sales outlets appreciated by growers and encouraging expansion of a multi-year crop. This mutually beneficial measure both boosted supply security and household incomes. However, all initiatives are predicated on or driven by growing commercial drivers, which are set to increase further in importance, threatening to jeopardise other socio-economic and environmental goals. This tension will aggravate as demand continues to rise and climate change effects grow more visible. A key recommendation for private-sector stakeholders is thus not to allow short-term

commercial considerations to jeopardise long-term supply security by reducing cocoa prices or switching predominantly to in-house production. Socio-economic measures to shore up long-term availability include continuing to pay premium prices, relying on smallholders to spread risk and support local economies, and helping diversify household incomes to safeguard socio-economic viability. Environmentally, this would mean continuing to implement biodiversity and climate change-protecting measures to boost household incomes and safeguard producing environments, while steering clear of the productivity-maximising, but surface-degrading practices used elsewhere. Commercially, shifting production power and ownership shares to the global South could help redress existing successive oligopolies in the cocoa industry, while also giving Southern actors a greater-than-miniscule share in production network gains to increase ownership and safeguard the sector's long-term viability.

The analysis demonstrated that Northern stakeholders often omitted in communication commercial drivers in favour of altruistic and mission-driven depictions. This omission makes it highly improbable for responsive consumers to engage with the fundamental poor practices including low socio-economic returns and productivity-maximising degradation which are threatening cocoa supply long-term. A key recommendation would therefore suggest promoting ways for consumers to engage with underlying inequalities directly, e.g. through direct communication channels to cocoa producers rather than an engagement through the prism of Northern commercial communication. This would allow the informed choice for consumers which one NGO called for as a key goal, as well as encouraging companies themselves to engage with 'sustainability' as the business imperative it is to their own survival.

7 Consumers

A recurring question in the focus group discussions and in sessions organised to feed back findings to interested consumers was advice on how to support producers rather than other network stakeholders. Rather than recommending one certifier or initiative, my study prompted me to encourage responsive consumers to research certifiers' and stakeholders' concrete sets of priorities, and their compatibility with their own preferences, and thus assume responsibility for their own consumption choices. I emphasised that especially chocolate production in the global South and other initiatives which safeguard higher value-capture at origin ought to be considered. It highlighted to consumers that non-certified chocolate bars sold at less than half the price most brand manufacturers charge, will be likely to have instances of socio-economic or environmental

bad practice somewhere. Certified or premium-price choices cannot eliminate that possibility, but reduce its probability. A key recommendation was encouraging individuals to go beyond communication provided by initiative stakeholders on public-facing websites, attempting to obtain information also from critical NGOs and Southern stakeholders directly. Clearly, this will be limited by individual capacities regarding language skills, research competencies, time and data availability. However, as this research established multiple senses in which the suggestion of immediate, bias-free producer-consumer connections through Northern-dominated representations was flawed, individual awareness and corresponding research can facilitate informed choice and can help ensure there is indeed a congruence between consumers' and initiatives' priorities.

Appendix 5: Extract from Sustainable Agriculture Network's Standard

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Taken from Rainforest Alliance (2010:3)

Appendix 6: Extract from UTZ Certified's Code of Conduct

Structure of the UTZ CERTIFIED *Good Inside* Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct consists of 174 control points, divided into 3 parts and 7 chapters:

Part I: Production practices

Chapter 1: Good agricultural practices p 10

- 1.A Cocoa farm establishment and rehabilitation²
- 1.B Cocoa farm maintenance
- 1.C Soil management and fertilization
- 1.D Integrated pest management and crop protection
- 1.E Harvest and post-harvest product handling

Chapter 2: Cocoa communities..... p 16

- 2.A Healthy & safe production practices
- 2.B Workers' rights

Chapter 3: Natural resources and biodiversity..... p 20

- 3.A Soil
- 3.B Water
- 3.C Forest & biodiversity³

Part II: Group responsibilities

Chapter 4: Effective implementation of this Code of Conduct..... P 23

- 4.A Organization
- 4.B Risk-based implementation
- 4.C Producer training

Chapter 5: Product flow control..... p 26

- 5.A Product flow control

Chapter 6: Social responsibilities..... p 28

- 6.A Accountable and transparent management structure
- 6.B Education
- 6.C First aid and emergency health care

Part III: Internal control system

Chapter 7: ICS..... P 31

- 7.A Management of the ICS, ICS staff
- 7.B Internal standard and contracts
- 7.C Internal inspections and registration of producers
- 7.D Record keeping

Taken from UTZ Certified (2009:5)

Appendix 7: Interviews conducted

Interviewee code	Stakeholder type	Interview date
#18	Civil society	12/11/2013
#19	Private sector	12/11/2013
#23	Government	16/12/2013
#26	Civil society	13/12/2013
#30	Research	02/12/2013
#33	Private sector	13/01/2014
#34	Civil society	13/11/2013
#38	Private sector	12/12/2013
#39	Research	09/11/2013
#40	Development agency	19/11/2013
#41	Government	10/02/2014
#43	Research	21/11/2013
#44	Government	28/11/2013
#46	Research	20/01/2014
#51	Civil society	20/01/2014
#52	Development agency	20/01/2014
#53	Research	20/01/2014
#54	Private sector	27/01/2014
#55	Research	28/01/2014
#56	Certifier	30/01/2014
#57	Civil society	27/01/2014
#58	Research	26/01/2014
#59	Development agency	28/01/2014
#61	Civil society	22/01/2014
#62	Civil society	24/01/2014
#63	Civil society	23/01/2014

#64	Private sector	29/01/2014
#65	Research	29/01/2014
#66	Civil society	30/01/2014
#67	Certifier	31/01/2014
#69	Development agency	03/02/2014
#70	Cocoa producer	06/02/2014
#71	Cocoa producer	10/02/2014
#72	Cocoa producer	10/02/2014
#73	Civil society	10/02/2014
#74	Government	10/02/2014
#75	Cocoa producer	11/02/2014
#76	Cocoa producer	11/02/2014
#77	Cocoa producer	12/02/2014
#78	Cocoa producer	12/02/2014
#79	Cocoa producer	19/02/2014
#80	Cooperative representative	12/02/2014
#82	Civil society	13/02/2014
#83	Development agency	13/02/2014
#84	Government	13/02/2014
#85	Cocoa producer	11/02/2014
#86	Civil society	17/02/2014
#88	Cocoa producer	20/02/2014
#89	Cocoa producer	21/02/2014
#90	Development agency	22/02/2014
#91	Development agency	25/02/2014
#92	Development agency	03/03/2014
#93	Private sector	04/03/2014
#94	Private sector	04/03/2014

#95	Government	05/03/2014
#96	Government	05/03/2014
#97	Cooperative	05/03/2014
#98	Cocoa producer	05/03/2014
#100	Private sector	06/03/2014
#101	Civil society	10/03/2014
#102	Private sector	10/03/2014
#103	Cocoa producer	11/03/2014
#104	Cocoa producer	11/03/2014
#105	Cocoa producer	11/03/2014
#106	Cocoa producer	11/03/2014
#108	Cooperative representative	12/03/2014
#109	Cooperative representative	19/03/2014
#110	Cocoa producer	18/03/2014
#111	Civil society	18/03/2014
#112	Cooperative representative	18/03/2014
#113	Cocoa producer	18/03/2014
#114	Cocoa producer	18/03/2014
#116	Cocoa producer	20/03/2014
#117	Civil society	24/03/2014
#118	Civil society	21/03/2014
#120	Cooperative representative	27/03/2014
#121	Cooperative representative	28/03/2014
#122	Civil society	03/04/2014
#123	Development agency	17/04/2014
#124	Certifier	22/04/2014
#125	Government	23/04/2014
#126	Certifier	28/04/2014

#127	Private sector	27/05/2014
#129	Research	17/06/2014
#132	Research	23/06/2014
#133	Development agency	15/06/2014
#134	Private sector	19/06/2014
#135	Private sector	23/06/2014
#136	Government	26/06/2014
#137	Government	26/06/2014
#138	Cocoa producer	07/07/2014
#139	Government	07/07/2014
#140	Civil society	07/07/2014
#141	Certifier	28/08/2014
#142	Private sector	27/08/2014
#143	Development agency	02/09/2014

Appendix 8: Focus group discussions

FGD 1 – Focus group discussion 1 (2013). First focus group discussion, with environmentalist participants. Effected on 5 December 2013 [audio-recorded].

FGD 2 – Focus group 2 discussion (2014). Second focus group discussion, with church choir. Effected on 23 April 2014 [audio-recorded].

FGD 3 – Focus group 3 discussion (2014). Third focus group discussion, with communications department of international non-food company. Effected on 29 May 2014 [audio-recorded].