THE CHANGING NATURE OF CORPORATE-ENVIRONMENTAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION RELATIONSHIPS: A WHISTLER CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Tourism has been strongly affected by the forces of globalization which have driven market demand and increased competition. Many tourism corporations are adopting strategic management approaches such as consolidation and the development of corporate environmental strategies in order to gain competitive advantages. These strategies have had profound implications for some destinations in which the corporations operate.

The purpose of this study is to examine the changing nature of relationships between a tourism corporation and an ENGO at a mountain resort destination. A case study was undertaken in Whistler of British Columbia, in which the relationships between a major corporation (Intrawest: W-B) and a community based ENGO (AWARE) were examined. Various research tools were used to meet this research objective. A literature review was conducted to establish a framework for assessing business-ENGO relationships. Qualitative interviews with key informants from AWARE and the Whistler community were used to elicit perceptions of the relationships in consideration.

Findings suggest that AWARE and W-B has become stakeholders for each other as far as the environment and development of Whistler are concerned. Over the years, AWARE has begun to develop strategies and campaigns which give a new priority to the pursuit of practical solutions. This operating style coincide with a fundamental shift in AWARE's attitude towards W-B, which has evolved from mostly antagonism to collaboration. It is believed that the trend towards more collaboration between the two will extend into the future. Overall, it is perceived that these changes have been partially driven by W-B's increasingly proactive responses to local environmental challenges.

The researcher specified the positive and negative implications of the changing relationships for Whistler's sense of place. In the end, several management recommendations relevant to the study's findings were presented.

DEDICATION

To my family with love

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AWARE:	Association of Whistler Area Residents for the Environment
CI:	Conservation International
DAWN:	Development Alternatives with Woman for a New Era
ENGO:	Environmental Non-Governmental Organization
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organization
RMOW:	Resort Municipality of Whistler
SLUG:	Sustainability Learning and Understanding Group
TMI:	The Mountain Institute
TNC:	The Nature Conservancy
TNS:	The Natural Step
W-B:	Whistler-Blackcomb
WFSG:	Whistler Fisheries Stewardship Group
WTO:	World Tourism Organization

CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

1.1 STUDY RATIONALE

Tourism has been strongly affected by the forces of globalization. In combination, fundamental economic, political and technological changes have driven market demand and increased competition (Keller 2000). In response to this environment, many tourism corporations are adopting strategic management approaches to increase their competitiveness (Crotts et al. 2000). In the resort sector, especially in mountain resort destinations, two major strategies through which resort corporations seek to gain competitive advantage are evident (Gill and Williams forthcoming): consolidation (e.g. mergers and strategic alliances) (Keller 2000), and the development of corporate environmental strategies (Bhat 1996).

These management approaches have accrued competitive advantages and increasing power to some resort corporations. At the same time they have had profound implications for some destinations in which the corporations operate. A primary concern is that tourism destinations might be captured in the overwhelming influence of tourism corporations – a process being referred to as "corporatization" of place (Rothman 1998). In such situation, the destinations face the risk of losing their original sense of place (Hall and Jenkins 1995; Coleman 2001). As Horner (2000:13) states *"resorts will evolve at the intersection of capital that is simultaneously local and global, public and private; consequently their form, function and image as marketed will be the outcome of the relative power of the actors representing these sources of capital"*. Tourism literature also shows that loss of sense of place may lead to the standardization and homogenization

of tourism places (Kelly and McConville 1991; Harvey 1993; Norkunas 1993; Doorne 1998; Horner 2000).

These possibilities have inspired an overarching research program titled "Corporatization and Environmentalism of Places" at Simon Fraser University[1]. The questions guiding this overarching research program are *"with respect to place and local environments, what forces are driving the strategic decisions of mountain resort corporations and what influences do these decisions have on the character of destinations?"* The research program focuses on the resort sector, specifically in mountain areas. It intends to embed an understanding of corporate responses to an increasingly competitive environment within local geography and history.

This study is nested in the overarching research program, but focuses specifically on one tourism community stakeholder group – the Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (ENGOs) at resort destinations. Other research shows that not only are ENGOs an important community stakeholder group, but they also play a variety of roles at tourism destinations. These roles include:

- Involvement in community development initiatives (Steck 1998; Karkut 1999; Barkin and Bouchez 2000);
- Promoting local capacity building (Lama 2000; Tonderaki 2000);
- Functioning as a watchdog for the environment (Gardner 1993b; Burns 1999; Jamal 1999; Singh and Singh 1999); and,
- Finding solutions for sustainability objectives (Roberts and Simpson 1999; Tonderaki 2000).

Because of ENGOs' activities at resort destinations, some of them have established high levels of status and influence on local political arenas and issues (Hall and Jenkins 1995). They also represent a positive force in protecting local values from being captured by powerful business operations (Coleman 2001).

This study uses the Resort Municipality of Whistler in British Columbia as a case study, because it has the elements that cover all the concepts discussed in the focus of this research. The Intrawest Corporation, which is a leading developer and operator of mountain resorts in North America and a leader in developing a proactive environmental management program for mountain operations has its flagship resort operation in this community (Todd and Williams 1996). Similarly, there is a well-established community ENGO based in Whistler – the Association of Whistler Area Residents for the Environment (AWARE). It has been especially active in addressing issues related to resort development and environmental protection in the Whistler area.

1.2 PURPOSE OF STUDY AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The overall objective of this research is to examine the changing nature of relationships between a tourism corporation and an ENGO at a mountain resort destination. This research focuses on the perspective of the ENGO.

Research Questions

Within the context of the resort destination chosen for this study – Whistler, BC, the more applied research questions guiding this study are:

1) What is the nature of the relationship between AWARE and Intrawest Corporation?

    a. Is there any relationship between AWARE and Intrawest?

      b. How can the relationship between them be characterized?

      c. What will be the future directions for their relationship?

2) What are the implications of this relationship for AWARE with regard to its agenda of issues and activities?

      a. Has AWARE's operating agenda and style changed over time?

      b. What are the factors influencing AWARE's change in agenda and style?

      c. Has AWARE's attitude towards Intrawest changed over time?

      d. What are the factors influencing change in attitude?

      e. What are the implications of this relationship for the community

1.3 METHODS

Method One: Literature Review

A literature review was carried out in order to develop a framework for assessing the nature and the implications of business-NGO relations. In particular, three areas of literature were explored. First, the traditional roles that ENGOs have played in a tourism context were explored. This provided the assessment criteria needed for analyzing ENGOs' relationships with other sectors. Then, the existing research concerning business-NGO relations was reviewed to determine the trends for, and the factors that influence, such relationships. The third area of the literature review investigated the influence of power in a tourism context, to help identify the possible management implications of keeping the power balance between business and ENGO for tourism planning and development at resort destinations. The literature review helped to establish an assessment framework for evaluating the nature of relationships between an ENGO

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and a corporation with respect to corporate environmental strategies. The assessment framework guided the form and content of the qualitative interview used in the case study.

Method Two: Case Study

Based on the findings of the literature review, a case study was undertaken at Whistler BC. One major component of the case study involved the administration of qualitative interviews. In particular, respondents from AWARE and the Whistler community were asked to express their perspectives concerning AWARE – Intrawest relationships. The assessment criteria established through the literature review guided the development of the interview questions. The case study findings were analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively, using frequencies and other basic statistical methods where appropriate.

1.4 REPORT ORGANIZATION

This report is divided into six chapters, including this introduction. Chapter Two reviews three areas of the literature that are relevant to the study. Chapter Three describes the methods used in the study. The primary research technique is a case study, in which qualitative interviews are used to elicit AWARE and community members' opinions on the evolution of relationship between Intrawest and AWARE. Chapter Four presents the findings of the case study, which, in addition to describing the results of the interviews, provides background information on the Whistler community, the Intrawest Corporation and AWARE. Chapter Five discusses the themes that emerged from the case study and provides management implications regarding building cordial relationships between Intrawest and AWARE. Finally, Chapter Six issues conclusions and recommends areas of further inquiry which would complement this research.

CHAPTER TWO - LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This review examines three general areas of literature that are relevant to this study. It begins by identifying the traditional roles that NGOs have played especially in the context of tourism. This provides the assessment criteria needed for analyzing ENGOs' relationships with other sectors. Then, the existing research concerning business-NGO relations is reviewed to determine the trends for, and the factors that influence, such relationships. The third section of this review investigates the influence of power in a tourism context. This helps identify the possible management implications of keeping the power balance between business and ENGO for tourism planning and development at resort destinations.

The review culminates with the presentation of an assessment framework and criteria for evaluating the nature of relationships between an ENGO and a corporation with respect to the development of environmental strategies. The assessment framework guides the form and content of the qualitative interview used in the case study presented in Chapter Four.

2.2 NGO ROLES

2.2.1 Definition and Classification of NGOs

In general, NGOs are defined as private, self-governing, not-for-profit organizations that are geared to improving people's quality of life (Vakil 1997; Clarke 1998). They are civil society groups whose primary purpose is the promotion of environmental and/or social

goals rather than the achievement of economic power in the marketplace or political power through electoral processes (Bendell 1998; Pike 1999; Suresh et al. 1999).

Discussions about the roles and behaviour of NGOs cannot be appropriately framed without agreed upon units of analysis. Prior research suggests that suitable indicators might include:

- orientation, levels of operation, client group and degree of commodification (Elliott 1987; Bratton 1989; Wolch 1990);
- sector of activity (Salamon and Anheier 1992);
- evaluative attributes such as accountability, control over resources, level of participation (DAWN1985; Fowler 1985).

In an attempt to encompass many of the previously mentioned assessment attributes, while aiming for comprehensiveness, clarity and simplicity, Vakil (1997) developed a more comprehensive framework for describing and classifying NGOs (Table 1). Most of the attributes presented in Table 1 have varying implications with respect to this study.

1) Orientation attribute refers to the type of roles and activities in which NGOs engage. Many NGOs manage two or more orientations at the same time. More importantly, they may evolve from one to another major orientation over time due to internal or external factors.

2) An NGO's level of operation determines the boundaries within which it performs specific roles and interacts with other sectors.

3) Sectoral focus provides another theme for describing NGOs. The type of sector that an NGO deals with can influence its structure, operating procedures, resource requirements and management strategies (Vakil 1997).

NGOs comprise such a large and complex group due to their varying size, scope, purpose and linkages. Contextualizing NGO types helps to scope this research and identify the criteria suited to selecting the ENGO to be examined in Chapter Four's case study.

Table 1: NGO classification

Attribute			Comment
Essential	Orientation	Welfare	Deliver services to specific groups based on the charity model
		Development	Support activities, which facilitate community capacity-building
		Advocacy	Influence policy- or decision-making related to particular issues
		Development Education	Educate citizens of the industrialized countries major development issues e.g. global inequity, debt
		Networking	Channel information and provide technical and other assistance to lower level organizations and individual
		Research	Use participatory research to acquire knowledge
	Level of Operation	International	Operate at different geographical levels
		National	
		Regional	
		Community-based	
Contingent	Sectoral Focus	Agriculture	Sectoral focus is a natural sorting factor in classifying NGOs
		Housing	
		Environment	
		Etc.	
	Evaluative Attributes	Accountability	Evaluative attributes should be situated within the framework of essential attributes
		Efficiency	
		Participation	
		Congruence with Aims of feminism	
		Etc.	

Source: adapted from (Vakil 1997)

2.2.2 General ENGO Roles

For this study, specific attention is paid to Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (ENGOs). They can be defined as citizen interest groups whose activities

include efforts to promote environmental conservation (Gardner 1993a). Conservation refers to activities that strive to protect or promote the natural integrity, and/or components of ecosystems through rehabilitation or the prevention of negative impacts on ecosystems (Gardner 1993a). Gardner (1993a) describes ENGOs as being:

- voluntary membership organizations;
- not aiming to be profit-making;
- autonomous in their decision making;
- providing mainly services rather than material benefits; and
- seeking changes on behalf of their members, wider society, and/or the environment.

ENGOs can play important roles in the field of development (Burns 1999). The World Commission on Environment and Development (1987) identifies the following general roles for ENGOs:

- planning, monitoring, evaluating, and carrying out projects;
- creating and maintaining public awareness and political pressures that stimulate governments to act in an environmentally responsible manner;
- identifying risks, assessing environmental impacts and designing and implementing measures to deal with them.

More recently, ENGOs have exhibited more extensive skills in scientific and technical exchange, policy making and policy implementation. This has supplemented their more traditional roles in campaigning, activism and ideological consciousness raising. As a result, many ENGOs are filling a wider spectrum of roles with respect to environment (Gardner 1993b; Yearley 1996). Burke (in Clarke 1990) identifies the specific functions of an ENGO as being a(n):

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- *whistle blower-* alerting the public, the government and other groups;

- *watchdog* - monitoring legal processes and agreements;

- *ferret* - digging for information and conducting investigations;

- *broker* - carrying information between parties and actors;

- *orchestrator* - facilitating and engineering events;

- *scout* - scanning for future problems;

- *educator* - education of specialists, concerned parties and the public;

- *innovator* - developing new responses, solutions and policies;

- *demonstrator* - demonstrating new responses and solutions.

2.2.3 ENGO Roles in a Tourism Context

In the context of tourism, NGOs have played important roles for at least the last two decades (Burns 1999). Their activities have extended into various fields related to tourism including development initiatives, human rights concerns and environmental issues (Connolly 1999). Although the centrality of ENGOs in addressing tourism and environmental issues cannot be doubted, a systematic summary of their roles is scarce and remains a challenging task due to the intertwining and evolving nature of ENGO activities. This section reviews the roles that are most relevant to the focus of this study. They relate to four main themes, namely, development initiatives, capacity building, guarding the environment, and generalized solution-oriented initiatives.

Development Initiatives

Improvement Projects

Many NGOs seek to encourage grassroots development where the beneficiary is the general public (Burns 1999). In tourism contexts, this role implies influencing on-the-ground projects to protect the environment and to benefit tourism development. Activities

related to this role include conservation, habitat enhancement, and infrastructure improvement projects. For example, in the state of Oaxaca, Mexico, a local NGO called the Center for Ecological Support (CES) worked with the native communities in reforestation and watershed restoration projects. These projects, which enabled the development of a stronger productive system to support the local communities and their cultures, were part of a broader effort adopted by CES to promote community welfare. These improvement initiatives also created a favourable environment to attract visitors, which started a viable ecotourism economy for the local communities (Barkin and Bouchez 2000).

Development Planning

NGOs can offer destination communities technical assistance because of specific expertise in tourism planning and environmental management (Steck 1998). For example, in Bosnia-Herzegovina, a local NGO called 'Friends of Nature' envisioned a rural tourism development plan for the region. Working with the municipal authorities and local people, the organization was instrumental in planning and carrying out many development initiatives. These included maintaining a clean natural environment, ensuring biodiversity, averting a rapid build-up of industrial activities, and building an eco-house as a focal point for the region's development activities (Karkut 1999).

Capacity Building

Awareness Raising

NGOs can help raise environmental awareness through providing training and educational programs (Tonderaki 2000). Research shows that increased local capacity can result in various environmental benefits such as increased awareness and reduced environmental degradation (Tonderaki 2000). The initiative, which the Mountain Institute (TMI) has taken in several Asian mountainous communities offers a specific example.

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TMI is a USA-based NGO, which works in several developing countries helping village communities and national parks plan for, and manage, community-based tourism (Lama 2000). TMI has conducted a series of educational programs and training workshops on environmental, and community-based tourism, as well as education at various rural destinations including Kikkim, India, and the Langtang National Park of Nepal. Research shows that these efforts have resulted in various environmental benefits such as cleaner trails, improved campsites and villages, and more responsible tourism practices of community members (Lama 2000).

Community Empowerment

NGOs have also been actively engaged in empowering communities through initiating participatory processes, facilitating community participation, and restoring community rights to natural resources (Derman 1995; Barkin and Bouchez 2000). They perform these functions through their organization's expertise and their access to financial resources (Barkin and Bouchez 2000). For example, a Nepal based NGO, the Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP) has been playing an important role in improving human development values at the local level. One of their management objectives was to teach people conservation-related skills (ACAP 1997). Since 1990, ACAP has conducted projects aimed at improving human capacities. Their capacity building initiatives include offering tourism development and management training programs, educating the community through ecological programs, as well as enhancing the status of women by creating an empowering equal role for them in decision-making processes regarding conservation and tourism development (ACAP 1997).

Guarding the Environment

Environmental Campaigns

Many ENGOs are strong advocacy groups mobilizing actions against environmental violators. The advocacy role encompasses a great variety of activities undertaken by ENGOs to strengthen and expand the accountability of government and industry. Examples of such activities include: research, education, publicity, lobbying and protesting, and pursuing civil disobedience activities (Gardner 1993b). At tourism destinations, ENGOs have been instrumental in identifying deleterious effects certain activities create in critical environment, and bringing about ecological sound development (Singh and Singh 1999). For example, the Goa Foundation, a local NGO situated on the western coast of India, has played a key role in voicing concerns regarding the local resort and hotel development which has brought serious environmental impacts to this area. They have identified damaged aquifers, spoiled landscapes and polluted coasts associated with the development. Goa Foundation has also filed writ petitions and moved court actions against construction and expansion of a number of resorts and hotels along the coast, and mobilized actions against a proposed golf course development project in this area (Ecoforum 1993; Singh and Singh 1999).

Evaluation of Government and Industry Performance

ENGOs may also play the role of an objective evaluator concerning environmental issues. At tourism destinations, NGOs have worked to monitor, evaluate and counteract the activities of large corporations and governments, and have helped to integrate the interests of local communities into planning programs and plans (Burns 1999; Jamal 1999). For example, the UK Centre for Economic and Environmental Development (UK CEED) is an NGO committed to the promotion of environmental excellence within enterprises, governments and individual activities (Dixey 1999). In 1994, UK CEED conducted a 'destination audit' to assess the environmental impacts of the British

Airways Holidays at the tourism destination of Seychelles. After finding out that the greatest environmental impacts arose from infrastructure development and inadequate waste management, CEED suggested that British Airways Holidays review the environmental performance of its suppliers, particularly hotels (UK CEED 1994). Furthermore, besides evaluating the performance of industry, NGOs have been involved in critiquing government policy in the hope of making it more just for local stakeholders (Suresh et al. 1999). For example, UK based NGO, Tourism Concern has undertaken campaigns for creating more ethical and fairly traded tourism for people in underprivileged countries such as Burma (Tourism Concern 2000).

Destination Research

NGOs, depending on their nature and mandate, may also engage in conducting ecological, sociological, economic, political, or even marketing research. In tourism contexts, NGOs may focus on a particular place or issue of tourism importance, and report and document in detail specific tourism movements in that area. Their research activities may include creating data banks associated with relevant news-clippings and case studies, conducting surveys with local groups, and using such background information for particular scientific research on environmental, socio-political and related issues (Suresh et al. 1999). For example, the Nature Conservancy (TNC), a US based environmental NGO, has been working on encouraging alternative economic opportunities, such as marine safaris, in an attempt to divert destructive fishers to ecotourism oriented pursuits, in the Komodo National Park of Indonesia. TNC has carried out many research activities related to community surveys and marine monitoring in order to provide information for updating local management plans and marine reserve systems, including the rehabilitation of coral reefs. Such research results are designed to contribute to strengthening the marine resource management capacity of the area's Park Authority (TNC 2004).

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Solution-oriented Initiatives

Stakeholder Dialogue

NGOs can facilitate communication between indigenous people and governments, both from top-down and from bottom-up. Moreover, they are also in a unique position to share information horizontally by networking with other organizations or other sectors (William 1991). In tourism contexts, communication, cooperation and moving towards collaboration among stakeholders is a fundamental ingredient to sustaining ecosystems and facilitating more reliable forms of tourism development (Tonderaki 2000). For example, the Pirin Tourism Forum (PTF), a local NGO in the Pirin mountain area of Bulgaria, has been instrumental in bringing together representatives of the local municipalities in the region, to work in partnership in advancing tourism opportunities, and promoting the region as an area with a distinctive and coherent traditional culture and identity. Moreover, PTF has involved the Pirin National Park Authority (a branch of the Bulgarian National Forestry Committee) in the tourism project. Therefore, it acted as an interface between the locally based municipalities and the relevant departments of central government. Roberts and Simpson's research (1999) shows that the role of PTF in overcoming institutional fragmentation, political polarization and public/private sector conflict in the area has been invaluable.

Programs and Tools for Conservation

Many NGOs are involved in establishing programs and developing tools for conservation. In a tourism context, a typical example lies in NGO initiatives to promote ecotourism to communities as a means of fostering conservation of natural resources and also supporting the aspiration of local populations (Swanson 1992; Wearing and Neil 1999). Conservation International (CI), a US based NGO, has adopted ecotourism as an innovative vehicle for creating economic alternatives to rainforest destruction. Since 1989 CI has worked with local communities in conservation areas to develop over a

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dozen ecotourism projects including canopy walkways in Brazil and an eco-lodge in Bolivia. These projects have proven to be both economically and ecologically sustainable (Sweeting and McConnel 1999).

Principles and Codes for Sustainable Development

There are numerous NGOs that have conducted tourism and environment-related research, and formulated guidelines for monitoring and assessing tourism activities. Their work often focuses on different perspectives other than that provided by other stakeholders such as developers, entrepreneurs and planners (Suresh et al. 1999; DMRussel Consulting Inc. 2003). Their management guidelines often highlight a number of environmental, economic and social concerns, and identify key principles and practical measures for attaining more sustainable forms of tourism development. At an overarching level, the World Tourism Organization (WTO) has prepared a series of sustainable tourism development principles (WTO 1998). At a regional level, an example of the guideline approach is illustrated in the *Ten Principles on Ecotourism* prepared by WWF Sweden (Sharp 1995).

2.2.4 Summary

The ENGO roles reviewed in the previous sections are summarized in Table 2. Special emphasis is placed on themes tied to the purpose of this particular research. Understanding these roles provides a basis for analyzing ENGOs' relations with other sectors. In addition, these roles can be used as indicators for evaluating ENGOs' focus of activities at tourism destinations.

Table 2: Summary of ENGO roles

Development initiatives
Provide onsite technical assistance through collaborating on improvement projects and the analysis of alternative approaches
Help plan community tourism development
Capacity building
Launch educational/awareness programs and training on tourism and environmental issues
Develop participatory programs to empower disenfranchised groups in planning and management, to support the integrity of local cultures and economies
Guarding the environment
Mobilize stakeholder actions against local polluters and environment violators
Monitor and evaluate industry actions and government activities regarding effects on local environment
Conduct research on ecological and/or socio-cultural sensitivity of destinations
Solution-led, sustainability-oriented initiatives
Initiate community stakeholder dialogue to address development/environment concerns
Establish programs for conservation and sustainable development
Develop and implement principles and codes of conduct for sustainable tourism development

2.3 NGO-BUSINESS RELATIONS

This section identifies various factors that influence NGO-business relations related to environmental concerns. To understand the nature and significance of these factors it is essential to examine the evolution of environmental group actions, the strategies businesses adopt to respond to environmental challenges and, most importantly, the ways in which NGOs and businesses affect each other's perspectives. It is also important to note that often the characteristics of NGO-business relations are embedded in factors associated with globalization and sustainable development.

2.3.1 The Changing Outlook and Tactics of Environmental Groups

The Evolution of the Western Environmental Thinking

The orientation and focus of ENGOs has evolved through three waves of thinking. They are as follows (Murphy and Bendell 1997a):

- The first wave focusing on habitat and wildlife conservation began in the early 1900s. It was based on a preservation ethic and led to the establishment of North America's first national parks;

- The second wave focused on lobbying for legislation and regulation changes. It began in the late 1960s and was based on a holistic ecological ethic, which gave rise to the first major environmental campaigning groups pushing for increasing regulation to protect people from industrial pollution; and

- The third wave focused on market-based approaches. It began in the mid-late 1980s and was based on a solutions ethic, which embraced socio-economic concerns and placed increasing emphasis on seeking workable solutions.

The Characteristics of the Third-Wave Environmentalism

The Third-Wave Environmentalism can be characterized as being focused on:

1) *Increased capacity*: The late 1980s saw the popularization of environmental issues and a heightened profile for them on the political agenda. This helped environmental groups become better funded and more powerful (Murphy and Bendell 1997a; Rawcliffe 1998). As a result, this period has seen environmental groups evolve into corporate organizations with:

    - large membership and sponsorship income;
    - business-like management structures and networks;

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- increased scientific research capabilities; and

- sophisticated public relations and campaign capabilities (Rawcliffe 1998).

2) *Emerging partnerships*: As a result of the preceding increased capabilities and more sophisticated approaches, environmental groups have become further institutionalized. This shift has been marked by their gradual acceptance by, and sometimes invitation to participate in, policy and business communities (Rawcliffe 1998). For many NGOs, influencing policy through dialogue rather than protest has become a real option. As a result, many environmental groups have developed extensive knowledge of government and industry. This has led, in many cases, to the development of individual contacts, friendship, and even formal partnerships (Rawcliffe 1998).

3) *Shifts towards solution-focused advocacy*: The ENGOs have become increasingly more pragmatic with respect to their role in bringing societal change. Therefore, the focus of their environmental campaigns has begun to shift towards finding and implementing solutions to sustainable development and to examining market mechanisms as vehicles for achieving their objectives (Elkington 1997; Murphy and Bendell 1997a).

NGOs' Strategies towards Business

NGOs demonstrate a wide disparity in terms of campaign focus, geographical base, operating approach, and management style. These inherent differences extent to their strategies in dealing with businesses, whether through true partnerships or in dialogue (Elkington and Fennell 1998). To make the diversity easier to grasp, Elkington and Fennell (1998) distinguish between four main types of NGO, based on two sets of behavioural characteristics (Table 3):

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Table 3: Typology of NGOs

NGO Characteristics	Polarizer Business-friendly: avoids alliances with companies; prefers confrontation to collaboration	Integrator Business-friendly: seeks productive relationships with companies, prefers collaboration to confrontation
Discriminator **Scrutinizes company performance: takes relative environmental progress into account in target and partner selection**	❑ Highly strategic and adaptive ❑ Understands the issues within the industry and assesses company's progress against the industry's best practices	❑ Sophisticated and intelligent ❑ Brings trust and openness to partnerships ❑ Brings credibility to the project
Non-discriminator **Ignores company performance: tends to view all companies as fair game**	❑ Adopts adversarial instead of collaborative strategy ❑ Regards companies as environmental problems, not part of the solution	❑ Forms save and cordial partnerships especially for company's marketing or public relations exercises ❑ Not particularly focuses on company's environmental record or commitment

Source: Adapted from Elkington and Fennell (1998)

1) *Integrator to polarizer:* This set of criteria can be used to assess the extent to which the NGO seeks to integrate the role of businesses and "public interest" groups in order to achieve environmental goals. Integrator behaviour, at one end of the spectrum, places a high priority on developing productive relationships with business stakeholder, and strives to identify non-confrontational, "win-win" strategies. Polarizer behaviour, at the other end of the spectrum, makes strategic decisions not to develop close working relationships with business. It prefers to concentrate its energies on performing watchdog roles.

2) *Discriminator to non-discriminator:* These criteria describe how NGO behaviour discriminates between companies within an industry with respect to their real or

perceived environmental commitment and performance. Discriminator behaviour, at one end of the spectrum, focuses on understanding the issues facing a particular industry and on tracking the progress made by individual companies compared to industry benchmarks. Non-discriminator behaviour, at the other end of the spectrum, does not focus particularly on companies' relative environmental performances, but rather focuses on assessing the environmental burden of the industry in general.

Although NGO strategies cover a wide array of behaviours – from initial attempts at dialogue with business to direct action protest, and from media campaigns/consumer education to formal partnerships with business - the dominant practice in the third-wave environmentalism is one of cooperation and partnership with the business community (Murphy and Bendell 1997a).

2.3.2 Factors Affecting NGO-Business Relations: NGO Perspective

Organizational style and the choice of tactics are due to the maturing process of the environmental group itself, as well as its responses to changing historical, political, social and legal factors (Rawcliffe 1998). The factors behind the changes are explored from the following perspectives:

1) *Broadened environmental agenda*: Since the late 1980s, the increased resource and support for some NGOs has enabled them to expand their campaign agenda (Rawcliffe 1998). At the same time, in many developed countries, industry, governments and the public, have turned to the wider green movement for ideas and solutions (Murphy and Bendell 1997a). The broadening of the environmental agenda to incorporate the concept of "sustainable development" highlights the key role that business can, and must, play in environmental matters. With this new found common

ground, NGOs have begun to realize that business participation is essential to the development of any long-lasting solutions. This gives rise to environmental groups' collaboration with business and industry (Murphy and Bendell 1997a; Elkington and Fennell 1998; McIntosh et al. 1998).

2) *Public "cry-wolf" fatigue*: The move away from a blame culture towards a solutions culture is also the result of the so called "public cry-wolf fatigue" (Murphy and Bendell 1997a). Environmental groups have often adopted scare tactics in order to get immediate public attention on key issues. While effective in the short term this strategy is unsustainable in the longer term, since public perception of the environment is often best understood in terms of incremental change. The acceptance of incremental progress calls for constructive approaches rather than radical actions, which are best achieved through working in partnerships (Murphy and Bendell 1997a).

3) *Governance gap:* A significant change in relations between business and NGOs has taken place within an intensified period of international economic activity, commonly referred to as "globalization" (Newell 2000). The continuing development of the global market, with increasingly mobile capital and industry, has served to weaken the power of national governments to set their own policy agenda (Murphy and Bendell 1997c; Newell 2000). The perceived and actual decline in the regulatory role of the nation-state in the face of globalization has led to gradual disillusionment by NGOs with government as a provider of solutions. As an alternative, many NGOs are seeking new alliances with private sector partners (Elkington 1997; Murphy and Bendell 1997a; Newell 2000).

4) *Business Commitment:* The changing response of business to environmental

challenges and an increasing recognition of corporate social responsibility have meant

that business leaders are increasingly listening to and engaging with

environmentalists. This change in business culture is a key factor in the emerging

forms of third-wave environmentalism from which partnerships with businesses can

be forged (Murphy and Bendell 1997c). A more comprehensive analysis of this

changing business response is provided in the next section.

2.3.3 The Business Response to Sustainable Development

The Concepts of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) refers to the commitment by business to behave

ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of

the workforce and their families as well as of the local community and society at large

(Holme and Watts 2001). The definition demonstrates that CSR is an inclusive concept,

which implies corporate responsibilities extending into four different areas, i.e. the

workplace, marketplace, environment, and community. Corporate environmentalism and

the stakeholder theory are at the heart of such an overarching business perspective.

Corporate Environmentalism

Since the early 1990s, corporations have increasingly embraced environmental protection

as part of their competitive strategies (Berry and Rondinelli 1998). These strategies have

included varying combinations of five environmental management initiatives:

- waste minimization and prevention;
- demand-side management;
- design for environment;

- product stewardship; and

- full-cost accounting (Berry and Rondinelli 1998).

The adoption of a corporate environmental philosophy and/or management strategy reflects a firm's understanding of the importance of its relationships with the biophysical environment, and with stakeholders such as regulatory agencies and environmental organizations (Hart 1997).

Stakeholder Theory

Stakeholder theory was introduced in Freeman's publication *Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach* (1984). Stakeholder are defined as "any group or individual who can effect or is affected by the achievement of an organization's objectives" (Freeman (1984). According to Freeman (1984), there are two categories of stakeholders – primary and secondary. Primary stakeholders are customers, suppliers, local communities, the environment, and future generations. Secondary stakeholders include government agencies, competitors, and social pressure groups.

A corporation can more effectively maintain a competitive advantage if it involves its stakeholders in the strategic planning process, production, and delivery of goods or services. These stakeholders can influence the corporations' overall efficiency and effectiveness (Harrison and St. John 1996). According to Svendsen (1998) the link between positive stakeholder relationships and competitive advantage has been manifested in at least four areas:

- *Risk reduction* - The failure to establish and nurture stakeholder relationships creates shareholder risk.

- *Innovation* - Strong relationships with and between employees, and with supply chain and business alliance partners are a prerequisite for innovation.

- *Resources* - A dense network of relationships provides resources and information necessary for the development of new markets and opportunities.

- *Brand value* - Relationships are the source of a good reputation and enhance brand value, both of which create a myriad of business benefits.

Driving Forces behind CSR

There are various driving forces advancing CSR on the global policy agendas of many companies. However, "globalization" seems to be the one word that sums up the complexity of these forces (Newell 2000). As Keller (2000) observes, globalization is a mega-trend that is resulting in the internationalization and integration of all social, political and cultural relations. The pressure which globalization places on existing political and economic structures creates a fertile ground for a range of specific factors underpinning the CSR agenda:

- *Supply chain* – the marketplace and some regulators are demanding that firms control their operations and manage "upstream" and "downstream" resource and environmental effects associated with their materials, products and services (Gibson and Peck 2000). Through this, corporations that have adopted a more progressive view of CSR pass these responsibilities down the supply chain by simply refusing to do business with companies that are not like-minded (Ping 2002);

- *Brand image* – a brand image is an aggregate of the thoughts that customers or investors associate with a particular company symbol, from a product logo to a stock market listing. Brand image has become so important that changes to it can have significant effects on profitability or value of some companies(Hart 1997; Svendsen

1998). A company's environmental and social performance holds both positive and negative potentials for its brand images (Murphy and Bendell 1997b).

- *NGO pressure* – NGOs are all about keeping companies honest. Developments in telecommunications and information technology have provided many NGOs with greater knowledge, voice and power (Bray 1998). In an age of global communications there is nowhere to hide on the world stage and NGOs can exploit this transparency for maximum benefit (Bray 1998; Ping 2002).

2.3.4 Factors Affecting NGO-Business Relations: Business Perspective

In the contexts of CSR, corporate environmentalism and the stakeholder theory, businesses may enter into partnerships with NGOs for the following reasons:

1) *Credibility with market and public* – A company may need to build and maintain its reputational capital (brand), which links to its credibility with markets, the general public, and further, brand image (Bendell 2000). Many NGOs carry public credibility with them on environmental and social issues. This enables them to affect corporate credibility (by association), which creates either for strategic assets, or liabilities, depending on the company's performance (Bendell 1998; Svendsen 1998).

2) *Objective evaluation* - By working with NGOs, companies can access "outside" perspectives and improve self-awareness regarding "inside" practices (Harrison and St. John 1996). Moreover, the watchdog function of NGOs can help make businesses act in less unprincipled, and more sustainable and responsible ways (Plante and Bendell 1998).

3) *Cross-fertilization of thinking* – NGOs can be a source of new ideas and critical

thinking (Bendell 2000). Many companies invite public interest group members to

participate in their strategic planning processes either as advisors or board members

(Harrison and St. John 1996; Rondinelli and Berry 2000). Research shows that

participation by NGOs in designing and implementing voluntary initiatives can be

crucial to ensuring the effectiveness and credibility of these initiatives (VanNijnatten

1998).

4) *Greater efficiency in resource allocation* – Financial and natural resource savings, or

eco-efficiencies, can be achieved through partnerships with environmental groups due

to their expertise and ability to mobilize volunteer energy (Murphy and Bendell

1997a). Moreover, NGO contacts and relations can be one of the assets of business

(Plante and Bendell 1998).

5) *Heading off negative confrontation* - Partnerships with environmental groups can

bring good public relations and publicity (Harrison and St. John 1996). Another

benefit of it may be that the NGO groups involved would be less likely to protest or

seek government intervention if they perceived prospects for corporate performances

to be enhanced because of their involvement (VanNijnatten 1998).

6) *Stakeholder engagement* – Corporations can be a social institution as much as

economic entities. Therefore management needs to consider the impact of their

business operations on the citizenry or general public, who are ultimately influenced

and affected by the operations (Plante and Bendell 1998). NGOs are often

stakeholders in companies, whether they are formed by groups of people who are

affected by a firm's operation, or groups representing interests of others (e.g. wildlife

and/or environment) that are affected by a firm (Bendell 2000). Based on this

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understanding, an increasing number of companies view engagement with NGOs as part of a coherent strategy for the pursuit of responsible entrepreneurship and corporate sustainability (Bendell 1998).

2.3.5 Summary

Assessing NGO-Business Relations

Elkington and Fennell (1998) developed a spectrum of possible types of relationships between NGOs and companies – from the traditional adversarial position to a fully collaborative strategic alliance (Table 4). This framework can help assess the nature of NGO-business relationships. Despite the wide array of relationships that may exist, two key trends seem to be taking hold:

- *Increasing corporate boldness* - Some companies are interested in moving up the ladder of NGO relationships, taking on progressively more collaborative (and challenging) partnerships; and

- *Safety in numbers* – Many companies have opted to interact with a range of NGOs, rather than cast their lot in with one particular organization. Similarly, NGOs are wary of partnering with an individual company, preferring to work in coalitions, or at least share experiences, with other like-minded organizations (Elkington and Fennell 1998).

Table 4: Types of NGO-business relationship

Type	Indicator
Challenge	Media campaigns and boycotts; reactive responses from company
Sparring partner	Periodic exchanges; "healthy conflict"; reactive or proactive responses from company; formal or informal communication
Support	Financial contribution to support project, in kind of charitable giving, sponsorship, gifts and secondments
Product endorsement	Endorsement by NGO; eco-labelling; verification; initial assessment of company practices; ongoing information exchange
Company endorsement	Ratings; certification; initial audit of company practices and reporting; ongoing information exchange;
Site or project dialogue	Environmental mediation; EIAs; formal communication process; joint agenda development
Strategy dialogue	Discussions over business issues; joint agenda development; research; formal communication process and results dissemination
Project joint venture	Formal partnership for duration of project; collaboration in project planning and development; financial support from business
Strategic partnership	Formal partnership or public alliance; full business participation; jointly developed principles or strategy

Source: Adapted from (Elkington and Fennell 1998))

Factors Influencing NGO-Business Relations: Summary

The review in the previous sections shows that within the overarching background of globalization, factors that influence NGO-business relationships come from both the NGO, and the business side. These factors are summarized in Table 5. These criteria are used to form a framework suited to assessing the nature of relationship between corporations and NGOs in the case study in Chapter Four, as well as to form the basis for identifying the factors that influence the relationship in consideration.

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Table 5: Factors influencing NGO-Business relationship

Drivers of business engagement with NGOs	Drivers of NGO engagement with business
❑ Improve credibility with market ❑ Improve credibility with public ❑ Need for objective evaluation ❑ Cross-fertilization of thinking ❑ Greater efficiency in resource allocation ❑ Desire to head off negative public confrontations ❑ Desire to engage stakeholders	❑ Growing interest in markets ❑ Disenchantment with government as provider of solutions ❑ Need for more resources, e.g. funding, technical and management expertise ❑ Desire to partner with business to gain credibility with government ❑ Cross-fertilization of thinking ❑ Greater leverage in making things happen

Source: Adapted from (Elkington and Fennell 1998)

2.4 INFLUENCE OF POWER

This section reviews several relevant theoretical concepts related to the notion of power. The review of the influence of power serves two purposes for this study. First, it generates additional criteria for assessing the nature and the outcome of relationship between business and NGO, which are used in the case study. Second, it provides the basis for understanding and explaining the dynamics of community tourism development, and suggests implications for effective tourism management.

2.4.1 The Basic Concepts in Power

Generally, power can be conceptualized as all forms of successful control by A over B (Lukes 1974). By definition, power is an overarching concept, which is inextricably linked to a set of other related concepts. A typology of various power concepts presented

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in Table 6 lists the range of possible empirical applications of power. They can help to clarify this multifaceted concept.

Table 6: Typology of power and related concepts

Concept	Meaning
Authority	B complies because he/she recognizes that A's command is reasonable in terms of his/her own values, either because it content is legitimate and reasonable or because it has been arrived at through a legitimate and reasonable procedure
Coercion	Exists where A secures B's compliance by the threat of deprivation where there is a conflict over values or course of action between A and B
Force	A achieves his objectives in the face of B's non-compliance
Influence	Exists where A, without resorting to either a tacit or overt threat of severe deprivation, causes B to change his course of action
Power	All forms of successful control by A over B - that is, of A securing B's Compliance

Source: adapted from Hall (2003)

Other definitions of power suggest that the meaning of "control" can be twofold. First, power is an individual or a group's ability to control over resources required by others (Greenwood 1992). Second, as Weber (1947; also in Mitchell et al. 1997) described, power is the ability to control the outcomes of a social interaction. In this regard, Pfeffer (1981) defines power as a relationship among social actors in which one social actor, A, can get another social actor, B, to do something that B would not otherwise have done.

2.4.2 Power and Resources

Wolfe (1959) defines a resource as anything, such as property, money, skills, competence or knowledge, owned by an individual that can be made available to others so as to help satisfy their needs. Mitchell et al. (1997) explore implications of resource dependency in an organizational setting and suggest that power accrues to those who control resources

needed by the organization. The power accrual resulting from resource possession determines the importance of a stakeholder to management and creates differentials among parties (Pfeffer 1981; Mitchell et al. 1997).

In a tourism context, power comes from an individual or an organization's ability to control the resources required for tourism development (such as labour, capital, culture and natural resources) and to secure personal returns from tourism development (Harsanyi 1971; Nagel 1975; Kayat 2002). According to Kayat (2002), there are five determinants of power in a tourism community. They are:

- ownership of land;
- access to capital (accumulated stock of wealth);
- knowledge level (resulting from education and experience);
- energy level (resulting from physical conditions and dedication); and
- leadership position in the community.

Resources not only establish the status of power, but also determine the way power is exerted. Etzioni (1964; also in Mitchell et al. 1997) suggests the following categorization of power influence according to the type of resources involved:

- coercive power is based on the physical resources of force, restraint;
- utilitarian power is based on material or financial resources; and
- normative or social power is based on symbolic resources such as esteem, acceptance.

Therefore, a party to a relationship has power, to the extent it has or can gain access to coercive, utilitarian, or normative means, to impose its will in the relationship.

2.4.3 Power and Stakeholder Relationship

Power is an important indicator for assessing stakeholder relationships (Eden 1996; Mitchell et al. 1997; Araujo and Bramwell 1999). The framework devised by Mitchell et al. (1997) summarizes the different nature of relationships according to various power dependence indicators (Table 7).

Table 7: Power dependence framework for stakeholder relationship

Power dependence: stakeholder dominant
Firm dependent on stakeholder
- the stakeholder interacts with the firm and thus makes the firm's operation possible
Stakeholder has power over firm
- the stakeholder asserts to have one or more of the kinds of stakes in the firm
- the stakeholder can and is making its actual stakes known to the firm
- the stakeholder has the ability to influence the firm's actions
- the stakeholder can affect the achievement of the firm's objectives
Power dependence: firm dominant
Stakeholder dependent on firm
- the firm is significantly responsible for the stakeholder's well-being
- the stakeholder holds a moral or legal claim on the firm
Firm has power over stakeholder
- the stakeholder is affected by the achievement of the firm's objectives
Mutual power-dependence relationship
Firm and stakeholder mutually dependent
- the stakeholder depends on the firm in order to achieve personal goals;
- the firm depends on the stakeholder for its existence;

Source: adapted from Mitchell et al. (1997)

Moreover, possession of power does not necessarily imply actual or intended use in a relationship (Hall and Jenkins 1995; Mitchell et al. 1997). Rather, the exercise of power is triggered by conditions that are manifested in two other attributes of the relationship: legitimacy and urgency (Mitchell et al. 1997). Legitimacy relates to perceptions that the interests or claims of a stakeholder are appropriate or desirable, with these perceptions

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being based on socially constructed values and beliefs. Urgency arises from "the degree to which stakeholder claims call for immediate attention" (Mitchell et al. 1997: 867).

Power gains authority through legitimacy and is exercised through urgency, and therefore, the combination of the three attributes determines the salience of stakeholder in a relationship (Mitchell et al. 1997). Based on this observation, stakeholders can fall under various categories based on the possession or attributed possession of one of the three attributes (Figure 1). In a tourism context, these three attributes have significant influences on which stakeholder groups become involved in, and control the outcome of, the collaborative planning arrangement around an issue (Araujo and Bramwell 1999).

Figure 1: Stakeholder typology: one, two, or three attributes present

POWER — LEGITIMACY

1 Dormant Stakeholder

4 Dominant Stakeholder

7 Definitive Stakeholder

2 Discretionary Stakeholder

5 Dangerous Stakeholder

6 Dependant Stakeholder

3 Demanding Stakeholder

8 Nonstakeholder

URGENCY
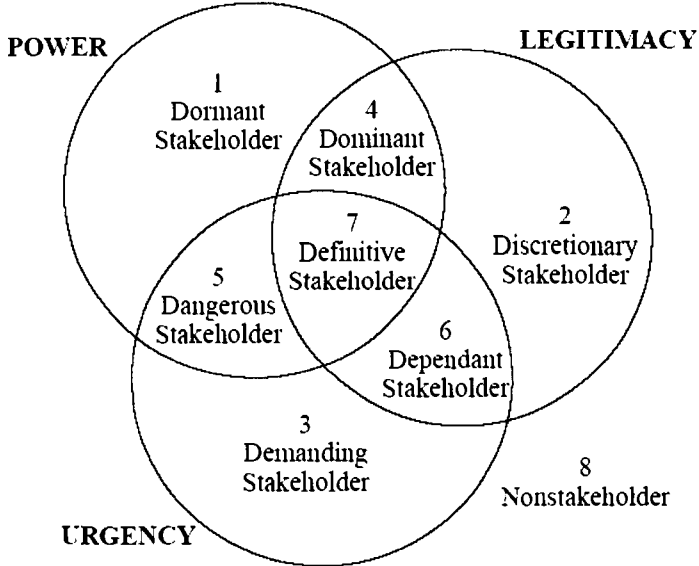
Source: Mitchell et al. (1997)

2.4.4 Power and the Politics of Tourism

Tourism, like other forms of economic development, such as mining and forestry, takes place against a background of contesting interests (Fallon 2001), with local, national and trans-national interests competing for control of resources (Aditjondro 1995; Hirsch and Warren 1998). This competition for, and consumption of, resources represent the politics of tourism (Hall 1994), and politics is about power, i.e. who gets what, where, how and why (Lasswell 1936; also in Hall and Jenkins 1995). Therefore, power is clearly a key element in understanding the political dimensions of tourism as it governs the interplay of individuals, organizations, and agencies influencing, or trying to influence, the formulation of tourism policy and the manner in which it is implemented (Hall 1994).

Interest groups, the associations which make claims, either directly or indirectly, on government so as to influence policy, are a major component in determining policy settings (Matthews 1980). They can be classified into producer interest groups such as corporations, non-producer groups such as NGOs, and single interest groups (Matthews 1980). In the process of tourism policy making, it is not surprising to see that interest groups often differ in their abilities to achieve their objectives as a result of their difference in terms of resource possession (Hall and Jenkins 1995).

The Power of the Producer Interest Group in Tourism

Business interest groups exert substantial influences on tourism policy making from the following two aspects:

1) Business occupies a privileged position in many policy agendas by possessing key economic power, which affects employment, prices, growth and material standards of living. All these items are utilized by governments at all levels to measure progress towards specified goals (Greenwood 1992).

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2) Business not only dominates some policy agendas but also actively engages in interest group activities to supplement its privileged position (Lindblom 1977), thanks to its triple advantage – economic muscle, expertise and access (Greenwood 1992). These activities include:

- providing expert information to policymakers;
- cultivating relations with government in order to be part of a "policy community";
- implementing public functions via self-regulatory mechanisms (Greenwood 1992).

Due to the aforementioned reasons, the political system is tilted heavily in favour of the more well-off producer groups, i.e. the businesses, despite the growth of public interest, consumer, environmental and community-based organizations in the last two decades (Schlozman and Tierney 1986).

The Power of the Non-producer Interest Group in Tourism

Despite the undoubted strength of business interests in determining tourism policy, non-producer groups have had a dramatic impact on tourism policy-making over the last few years (Hall and Jenkins 1995). For example, the relatively high prominence of sustainability issues on the contemporary tourism policy agenda is due in no small part to the activities of environmental groups, such as Greenpeace (international), the World Wildlife Fund (international), the Sierra Club (United States and Canada), the National Trust (United Kingdom, Australia) and various national park and wilderness organizations (Hall and Jenkins 1995).

The growing presence of non-producer groups at national and international policy level is largely due to their following strengths:

- strong grassroots links;

- field-based development expertise;
- the ability to innovate and adapt;
- process-oriented approach to development;
- participatory methodologies and tools;
- long-term commitment and emphasis on sustainability;
- cost-effectiveness (World Bank 2003).

Thanks to these qualities, non-producer groups are increasingly finding themselves being drawn into the institutional structure of policy making (Hall and Jenkins 1995). It is likely that the continued growth of non-producer group interest in tourism will further lead to reduced business influence in some areas of tourism policy-making (Hall and Jenkins 1995).

2.4.5 Power Relations in Tourism Communities

Peck and Lepie (1989) observe that the nature of tourism development in any given community is the product of complex interrelated economic and political factors. The implications of power in the context of a tourism community are reflected in two aspects: community participation, and representation of place.

Power and Community Participation

Community participation is widely regarded as an essential ingredient in tourism planning and policy-making (Murphy 1985; Inskeep 1991; Gunn 1994). In this respect, collaborations among stakeholders to develop policies for a destination are the subject of growing interest among researchers (Susskind and Elliot 1983; Benveniste 1989; Bramwell and Broom 1989; Lane 1994; Healey 1997). While community based tourism collaborations may offer advantages to stakeholders and destinations, their effectiveness

is subject to difficult challenges, such as power imbalance among stakeholders (Hall and Jenkins 1995; Jamal and Getz 1995; Pearce et al. 1996).

Hall and Jenkins (1995) suggest that the power of stakeholders is often unequal due to factors such as resource allocations, policy ideas, and institutional practices embedded within a community. This power imbalance enables some groups and individuals to exert greater influence over the tourism planning process than others (Hall and Jenkins 1995; Pearce et al. 1996). In some occasions, community participation may merely be regarded as tokenism, because powerful actors may have already defined alternatives before public participation even begins. In such cases, if any changes do occur as a result of the participation process, they may simply be changes at the margin (deLeon 1994). As Clegg and Hardy (1996) warn that power can be hidden behind the façade of "trust" and the rhetoric of "collaboration", and used to promote vested interest through the manipulation of, and capitulation by, weaker partners. Since power imbalance related to stakeholders can inhibit both the initiation and the success of collaboration (Jamal and Getz 1995), a failure to recognize this will make for ineffective community participation process (Pearce et al. 1996).

Although some researchers suggest that power imbalances can be overcome through a collaborative process that presents the best chance of meeting everyone's needs (Jamal and Getz 1995), its effectiveness is questioned by other researchers based on the observation that power relations actually are so embedded in society that they always affect the nature of the collaboration, and can even preclude collaborative action (Reed 1997; Bramwell and Sharman 1999). Based on this observation, Reed (1997) states that power relations are not simply hurdles to be overcome by creating better mechanisms, but rather are endemic to development processes. Consequently, it is more important to study

the implications of power relations to community tourism, rather than explore how power can be balanced or convened.

Power and Representation of Place

By its very nature, tourism is explicitly related to notions of place through tourism promotion and development. From the perspective of human geography, place refers to "locales in which people find themselves, live, have experiences, interpret, understand and find meaning" (Peet 1998: 48). Tourism affects place in a number of ways:

- routing and zoning affects the scope of place;
- marketing and visitation create images of place;
- visitor expectancies resulting from image advertising, may in turn, reinforce the representations of place;
- the organization of history in tourism settings transforms the cultural and historical life of communities and, hence, transforms place (Norkunas 1993).

All these effects suggest that place, and the representation of place has become a social process (Hall and Jenkins 1995). The social construction of place is intimately related to power relations. As noted by Norkunas (1993), the "ideology of the powerful is systematically embedded in the institutions and public texts of tourism and history". Furthermore, Hall and Jenkins suggest that the application of models of community participation in tourism planning, which assume the pluralistic allocation of power within a community, may unwittingly serve to reinforce existing power structures and representations of history to the exclusion of other interests. For example, it has long been acknowledged that heritage tourism is an essential element in the representation of the winners' view of history (Hewison 1988; Hollinshead 1992; Hall 1997; Timothy and Boyd 2003).

Several examples in the field of urban and heritage tourism show that the "constructed place" and exclusion or under-representation of diverse interests may result in monotony and homogeneity of tourism places (Kelly and McConville 1991; Harvey 1993; Norkunas 1993; Doorne 1998). This implication reminds tourism researchers to consider the means by which power structures have potentially served to lead to a one-dimensional representation of place to visitors, which ignores the complex range of place histories that often exist. By revealing the richness of place and the power structures that often serve to restrict inclusive representation of place, one may well reinforce the uniqueness that comes from place complexity rather than allow places to submit to the serial monotony of contemporary place competition (Hall and Jenkins 1995).

2.5 AN ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

Table 8 lists the criteria for assessing the nature of, and the factors that influence, the relationship between NGOs and businesses with respect to corporate social responsibilities. These criteria are derived either directly or through inference from the three areas of literature reviewed in this chapter. This assessment framework guides the qualitative investigations conducted as well as the results presented in Chapter Four's case study findings.

Table 8: Assessment framework for ENGO-business relationship

Question	Assessment criteria
Nature of the ENGO-business relationship	What are the events that create interactions between the ENGO and the corporation?
	Has a relationship formed during the interactions?
	What are the responses they each take upon the interaction?
	Does the corporation regard the ENGO as its stakeholder?
	Does the ENGO regard the corporation as its stakeholder?
	What are the future directions of their relationship?
Factors that influence the relationship	What are the roles that the ENGO takes at the destination?
	To what extent has the ENGO been involved in these roles?
	Has the ENGO's style and approach changed over time?
	For what reasons has the ENGO's style and approaches changed over time?
	What assets and qualities does the ENGO possess?
	In the ENGO's perception, what resources does the corporation possess?
	What would be needed to build a stronger, more collaborative relationship between the ENGO and the corporation?
Implications of the relationship	Can the ENGO influence the corporation's decision-making process regarding its environmental strategies?
	At what level, can the ENGO exert such influences?
	Can the corporation influence the ENGO's activities?
	In what ways can the corporation exert such influences?

CHAPTER THREE - METHODS

In addition to the preceding literature review, the study's methods included a case study, in which a qualitative interview approach was employed as a central tool for data collection. This chapter describes the objectives and procedures of the case study.

3.1 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE AND QUESTIONS

The overall objective of this research is to examine the changing nature of relationships between a tourism corporation and an ENGO at a mountain resort destination. This research focuses on the perspective of the ENGO.

Research Questions

Within the context of the resort destination chosen for this study – Whistler, BC, the more applied research questions guiding this study are:

1) What is the nature of the relationship between AWARE and Intrawest Corporation?

   a. Is there any relationship between AWARE and Intrawest?
   b. How can the relationship between AWARE and Intrawest be characterized?
   c. What will be the future directions for their relationship?

2) What are the implications of this relationship for AWARE with regard to its agenda of issues and activities?

   a. Has AWARE's operating agenda and style changed over time?

b. What are the factors influencing AWARE's change in agenda and style?

c. Has AWARE's attitude towards Intrawest changed over time?

d. What factors explain AWARE's change in attitude?

e. What are the implications of this relationship for the Whistler community?

3.2 CASE STUDY

3.2.1 Case Study Selection

A case study is an appropriate research strategy to use when the investigator wants to ask 'how', 'why' or 'what' questions in order to describe, explore or explain a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context (Yin 1994). Using a case study approach for this research helps to better understand the extent to which a corporation's environmental strategies have influenced a community stakeholder group.

The Resort Municipality of Whistler in British Columbia was chosen as the case study site because it is convenient and has all the unique elements discussed in the focus of this research. While Whistler has many features in common with other mountain destination in North America, some perceive Whistler as a one company town due to the fact that it is the flagship resort operated by North America's leading developer and operator of mountain resorts – the Intrawest Corporation. The Corporation is also a leader in developing a proactive environmental management program for mountain operations (Todd and Williams 1996). In addition, Whistler has a community based ENGO – the Association of Whistler Area Residents for the Environment (AWARE). The organization has been active in addressing issues related to resort development and environmental protection in the Whistler area.

3.2.2 Data Collection

Data collection for the case study occurred between April 2003 and December 2003. The primary data collection involved the use of a qualitative interview approach. Collecting documents from Whistler's official website, and articles from Whistler's local newspaper named the "Pique" constituted the second method for data collection.

3.3 QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS

3.3.1 Interview Instrument

The interview is one of the most important techniques for gathering information in case study research (Yin 1994). Moreover, the interview is appropriate to use when the researcher requires extensive data on a small number of complex topics (Burns 2000) and aims to investigate these topics with a small number of "key" individuals using mainly open-ended questions (Gilham 2000).

To gather data for this study, a semi-structured interview approach was adopted. This technique involved the preparation of an interview guide, which acted as a checklist for a set of predetermined topics and questions that were explored during the interviews. It also allowed for a great deal of flexibility, as the order and actual wording of the questions were not as rigid as those in standardized interview approach (Patton 1990). Moreover, with the flexibility, the interviewer was free to probe for clarification and elaboration of responses (Patton 1990).

Pre-testing was undertaken with two colleagues and an AWARE respondent upon completion of the draft interview guide. Its purpose was to identify any difficulty with the wording, construction or meaning of questions, and to ensure relevancy and completeness

of the interview instrument. The pre-testing in this study resulted in improvements of wording and format of the final interview guide.

The interview guide (Appendix B) consisted of 20 questions addressing two main thematic areas associated with AWARE-Intrawest relationships. These themes were a) AWARE's agenda/style/attitude, and b) assessing AWARE and Intrawest relationships. The interview guide used mostly open-ended questions, as they allowed respondents freedom in discussing issues spontaneously, rather than only permitting them to address preconceived options (Pearce 1982). To supplement the open-ended questions, nominal (question 5) and ordinal scaling questions (question 14 and 18) were also employed. In many cases, scaling questions were asked, but respondents were given the opportunity to explain their responses in an open-ended manner.

3.3.2 Sampling and Recruitment Process

Case study researchers typically use purposeful or criterion-based sampling method (Burns 2000). This involves the non-random selection of information-rich cases according to the presence of specific criteria defined by the researcher (Patton 1990). Among all the other community groups at Whistler, AWARE was purposefully selected as the study organization for the case study based on the following criteria:

- The organization was expected to be focusing on environmental issues. This suited the researcher's purpose of exploring its perceptions towards corporate environmental strategies.

- The organization was expected to be community-based. AWARE was perceived to represent and be accountable to, the community and its sense of place.

- The organization was expected to have already been operating in Whistler for a considerable period of time. AWARE's presence in the community was believed

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to be long enough for the relationship between the organization and the corporation to evolve significantly.

- It was essential that the case study organization be transparent and collaborative in its operations. This criterion was set in order to ensure the accessibility of data necessary for the research. AWARE was perceived to be such an organization.

Potential interview respondents were initially identified through discussions with key contacts in Whistler. In addition, other interview respondents were pinpointed during the interview process with the initial interviewees. Some community members were also identified as key respondents due to the fact that they were perceived to be able to offer insights about the research topic based on their personal background (e.g. personal history, career background). These respondents represented an additional data source. Their insights offered a data triangulation for the information gathered from AWARE respondents.

Prior to the interview period, all participants received a brief description of the research (Appendix C), which familiarized them with the issues that were to be explored in the interview. This information was provided in compliance with Simon Fraser University's Research Ethics Regulations.

3.3.3 Sample Distribution

Table 9 outlines the demographic characteristics of the interview respondents. It describes their gender, representation, and length of active involvement in AWARE (for AWARE members only). Males made up nearly two-thirds (63%) of the respondents. Over two-thirds of the respondents (69%) were members of AWARE. A high proportion of them (72%) were actively involved in AWARE for at least three years.

Table 9: Demographic characteristics of interview respondents

Characteristic	Category	Percentage of Respondents
Gender (n=16)	Female	38%
	Male	63%
Representation (n=16)	AWARE	69%
	Community	31%
Length of active involvement in AWARE (n=11)*	Up to 1 year	9%
	More than 1 year and less than 3 years	18%
	More than 3 years and less than 5 years	36%
	More than 5 years	36%

*: The time period only applies to AWARE members, hence n =11.

3.3.4 Interview Process

Sixteen semi-structured interviews were conducted between August 3rd and December 3rd, 2003, at various locations in Whistler Village. The interviews ranged in duration from 15 to 97 minutes. At the start of the interview, the participants received a consent form (Appendix D), in compliance with Simon Fraser University's Research Ethics Regulations. The purpose of the consent form was to: (1) inform the participants of the nature of their involvement, (2) obtain their written permission to be interviewed, and (3) allow them to determine how they wanted to be identified in the study.

Upon the approval of the respondents, the interviews were tape-recorded in order to maintain researcher attentiveness, avoid researcher selectivity of responses, and accurately capture complex and detailed information for subsequent data analysis (Weiss 1975; Patton 1990; Gray and Guppy 1994). In most cases, it appeared that the presence of the tape recorder did not inhibit responses from participants.

3.3.5 Data Analysis

All interviews were transcribed and typed verbatim. The transcription process helped the researcher to sort the relevant information and form an overall picture of the case study findings. The interview data were then categorized into themes that were developed from a combination of the interview content and the literature. This information was analyzed in quantitative and qualitative ways where appropriate. Some responses were analyzed using frequency techniques and described through percentage distribution and mean responses. Others were grouped and reported collectively based on similarities or internal consistency of the data.

The analysis of the responses to Question 2 of the interview guide (Appendix B) needs to be highlighted because it involved the calculation of an engagement index. Question 2 asked respondents to fill out a checklist containing various types of activities an ENGO might participate in a community. For each activity, the checklist provided "*Yes*" and "*No*" categories. Under the "*Yes*" category, four specific role indicators were provided, i.e. *Advisor, Facilitator, Collaborator,* and *Leader*. Respondents were asked to check all categories and indicators that applied to AWARE.

An engagement index was developed to analyze the data gathered from this question. An engagement index is an indicator that represents an organization's relative strength of involvement in a specific activity. The index was calculated on the assumptions that:

- An organization could exhibit varying types of engagement (e.g. advisor, facilitator, collaborator, or leader) associated with any specific community activity (e.g. involvement in community improvement projects).

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- Each type of engagement represents a different level of involvement strength. Moreover, the scale of indictors used in Question 2 (*Advisor, Facilitator, Collaborator,* and *Leader*) represents an increasing level of involvement strength.

Based on these premises, the calculation for the engagement index follows three steps:

- Each role indicator (e.g. *Advisor*) was assigned a weight according to its perceived strength of engagement type in a specific activity. Therefore, the weightings for the indicators, i.e. *Advisor, Facilitator, Collaborator,* and *Leader* were respectively 1, 2, 3, and 4.

- All checklists were scored. The scoring for the indicators followed a presence-absence method, i.e. indicator checked = 1, indicator unchecked = 0. If the category "*No*" was checked with respect to a certain activity, all indicators under the "*Yes*" category of that role should score zero.

- An engagement index could be calculated based on the summed weightings associated with each type of engagement activity. For example, for the activity of "*involvement in community improvement projects*", respondent X's responses were: *Yes* (checked), *Advisor* (checked), *Facilitator* (unchecked), *Collaborator* (checked), and *Leader* (checked). The individual engagement index for this activity was: $1*1 + 0*2 + 1*3 + 1*4 = 8$. This represents that respondent X perceived AWARE to have been intensively involved in community improvement projects of Whistler.

- A general engagement index for a certain activity was determined by averaging all corresponding individual engagement indexes.

3.4 STUDY LIMITATIONS

As a qualitative study, this research was affected by all inherent assumptions of qualitative research. The limitations of the research strategies are discussed in the following paragraphs.

3.4.1 Limitations of Case Study Approach

Richness and depth of interpretation are benefits associated with the case study approach. However, a potential drawback is that the findings and conclusions of this study are specific to the experiences of AWARE and the Whistler community. This limits the ability to generalize these findings beyond the study area.

A further limitation related to the design decision to choose a single case study site (Whistler) and a single case study organization (AWARE) versus multiple sites and organizations. While this decision was bounded by the specific sampling criteria of this research, findings from a single study made it difficult to confirm the research results.

3.4.2 Limitations of Interview Approach

This study employed semi-structured interview approach. The weakness of this approach is that interviewer's flexibility in wording and sequencing questions may result in substantially different responses from different persons. The differences can reduce the comparability of interview responses.

Another shortcoming of the interview approach in this study concerned the interview instrument. While the validity of each question can be justified, the questionnaire was a little bit long (some respondents were obviously tired by the end of the interview). Combining some the questions, which in some cases provided redundant information,

would have helped to shorten the interview. Open-ended interview approaches supply a wealth of data; however, they pose difficulties in terms of coding such a vast array of open-ended material. In this study, coding open-ended responses was manageable given the relatively small sample size.

Moreover, some of the more specific questions about AWARE and its relationship with Intrawest were difficult to answer especially for respondents who were no longer involved in AWARE, or spent limited time in the Whistler community. For this reason, the total sample size varied slightly for some questions. Non-response error also arose from two respondents' limited time commitments to the interviews so that the researcher did not have the chance to finish asking all the interview questions.

3.5 SUMMARY

A case study approach was employed in this research. Moreover, a qualitative interview approach was used as a central tool for data collection. The next chapter will present the case study findings and demonstrate the extent to which this study was able to answer the research questions directing this project.

CHAPTER FOUR – FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings and analysis of the case study. It is divided into two sections. The first section sets the context of the case study by describing the study area, Whistler, BC, outlining the environmental practices of Whistler's largest business, Intrawest/Whistler-Blackcomb Corporation (W-B). It also profiles the undertakings of the largest local ENGO, the Association of Whistler Area Residents for Environment (AWARE). The second section describes the findings emanating from the interviews in more detail according to the following themes:

- AWARE's change in agenda and style;
- Interactions between AWARE and W-B; and
- Assessment of the relationship between AWARE and W-B;

4.2 BACKGROUND

4.2.1 Whistler, British Columbia

Whistler was formally created as a planned resort in 1975 and was the first legislated Resort Municipality in Canada. Located in the Coast Mountains, the Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW) covers 12,630 hectares and encompasses the Blackcomb and Whistler ski areas as well as the lower Whistler Valley.

Tourism in this region began in the early decades of the 20th century with the development of a few small lodges for summer recreation around the valley lakes. However, it was the advent of downhill skiing in this area in 1966 that lead to the

development of the resort community of Whistler and the subsequent large-scale influx of tourists. Today, Whistler is recognized as one of the top ski destinations in the world. In 1996, it became the only resort in history to be simultaneously named "Number One Ski Resort in North America" by the *Snow Country*, *SKI* and *Skiing Magazines*.

Although internationally acclaimed as a ski resort, Whistler has evolved into a four-season destination resort thanks to its pristine backcountry, challenging terrain, and glacial lakes, which provide the opportunity for both winter and summer activities. Today, Whistler attracts tourists from around the world all year round, and the prosperous municipality is home to approximately 10,000 permanent residents.

Due to Whistler's fast development, the municipal government, local residents and businesses have become concerned about the resulting environmental impact. Determined to *"build a thriving resort community that emphasizes the quality of life for its residents and ...move toward environmental sustainability"*(RMOW 2000), Whistler has adopted the Natural Step framework as a means to mobilize the community and integrate the principles of sustainability into the daily activities of businesses and community residents (RMOW 2000).

Many perceive Whistler as a one company town due to the presence and domination of Intrawest's Whistler-Blackcomb (W-B) operations. In 1997, Intrawest Corporation, owner of Blackcomb Mountain acquired Whistler Mountain, making the resort company one of the largest ski resort development companies in the world, and positioning W-B the number one business in town. It not only operates both mountains, but also owns a significant percentage of the destination's accommodations, retail businesses and tour operations.

Among the various organizations and associations that form the Whistler community, the Association of Whistler Area Residents for the Environment (AWARE) has played an active role in the stewardship of Whistler's natural resources. Founded in 1989, AWARE is a membership-centered organization that exists to improve the quality of life by protecting Whistler's natural heritage and moving towards environmental sustainability.

4.2.2 Intrawest Corporation: Whistler-Blackcomb (W-B)

Intrawest Corporation has three business entities: the Resort Operations Group, the Resort Development Group and Club Intrawest. It is the Resort Operations Group, Whistler-Blackcomb (W-B), that has been and continues to be intimately involved in the development of Whistler. The Planning and Environmental Resource Team of W-B which includes a Mountain Planning and Environmental Resource Manager, an Environmental Co-ordinator, and a Project Co-ordinator, is responsible for all land use decisions on the mountains including the locations of lifts, restaurants, trails and roads. However, it requires community approaval for all the development activities.

Many in the industry perceive Whistler-Blackcomb to be the flagship of Intrawest's mountain resorts. It has enjoyed a high reputation in the industry for its environmental practices. Besides the Golden Eagle Award that W-B won in 2003 for *Overall Environmental Excellence*, it has won five Silver Eagle Awards over the past decade for excellence in *Stakeholder Relations, Environmental Group Relations, Habitat Protection*, and *Environmental Education*.

W-B's management recognizes that the success of its product depends upon the sustainability of its natural environment. Since 1993, the company has been developing an extensive Environmental Management System (EMS) to effectively manage operations that impact the environment. It is now working to design and implement a

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comprehensive environmental strategy that can be employed by other resorts. With a commitment to sustainability and environmental excellence, W-B has implemented a number of protection and prevention initiatives in the following areas:

- fish and wildlife management
- forest, soil and watershed management
- low impact land use decisions
- environmental education
- water conservation
- energy conservation
- solid waste management
- fuel and hazardous waste management
- community outreach
- incorporating the Natural Step framework into daily operations

4.2.3 The Association of Whistler Area Residents for Environment (AWARE)

The Association of Whistler Area Residents for the Environment (AWARE) is a volunteer driven non-profit organization. The organization was originally formed in 1989 with a mandate to push for a recycling program for the Resort Municipality of Whistler BC. Since then, it has been active on environmental and sustainability issues in the Whistler Valley, and has been regarded as the voice for the environment in the South Coast Mountain Range of British Columbia. Table 10 outlines the profile of AWARE, describing its mission, approaches, and focus of concern.

The organization consists of an elected Board of Directors, around 300 members annually, and an executive board consisting of a President, two Vice-Presidents, and a Treasurer. Over the years, AWARE has developed a balanced approach to achieving its

environmental sustainability goals. It perceives this balanced approach as the only option

for the future from both an environmental and economic point of view.

Table 10: A profile of AWARE

Mission:
>To improve Whistler residents' the quality of life by protecting the natural heritage and moving toward environmental sustainability.

Approaches:
>Working together with and supporting other organizations and individuals; Being a watchdog; Advocating; Educating and inspiring.

Focus of Concern:
- Whistler's Watersheds: Educate the public, ensure the ongoing health of wetlands, and advocate for preservation for unprotected area.

- Wilderness Backyard: Advocates for protection of critical remaining fragments of wilderness in the South Coast mountains of British Columbia.

- 2010 Olympic Games: Advocate for the most environmentally sound Olympic Winter Games ever held by promoting principles of sustainability at both the operational and strategic levels within the Olympic Organizing Committee.

- Sustainability: Help the community of Whistler to move to a more sustainable future by contributing in the following areas: Whistler: It's Our Nature; Transporation; and Composting.

4.3 INTERVIEW RESULTS

This section presents the results from the qualitative interviews. Comments quoted in this

section were expressed by AWARE respondents unless otherwise stated.

4.3.1 AWARE's Change in Agenda and Style

The interview respondents all felt that as a community environmental organization,

AWARE had gone through changes in its agenda and style of operation over the years.

Their comments are integrated into subsections 4.4.3.1 to 4.4.3.3, which identifies and

describes three stages in AWARE's overall evolution. Each subsection relates to what were AWARE's agenda and style, how the agenda or style changed, and respondents' comments about the change.

4.3.1.1 The Single Issue Group: 1989 – Early 1990s

AWARE's Change in Agenda

In 1989, AWARE started as a single-issue organization with a small group of dedicated people trying to promote recycling in Whistler. This occurred due to their dissatisfaction with the municipal government, which had not put a recycling plan in place for the community. Therefore, AWARE decided to *"show the government how recycling can be done"* and *"there are people who want to do it"*. Their campaign proved to be successful, as the municipal government started a recycling program which has continued ever since.

Following the success of the campaign, AWARE decided to continue as an environmental group for Whistler and take on wider environmental issues. At that time, these environmentalists were only a very small fraction of the community. As a result, they were not getting *" enough attention either from the community or from the government, let alone the developers"*.

While some public attention was drawn by AWARE through its endorsement and support of campaigns started by individuals outside AWARE, e.g. the "Save the Marsh" campaign, it was the Green Lake golf course project in late 1989 that put AWARE under the spotlight. Due to a developer's proposal to build a golf course near the Green Lake area, a community open house was held inviting speakers to voice their opinions of the proposal. AWARE participated and lobbied against the project because it involved development on wetlands. Despite the fact that the municipal government finally

approved the project, some improvements to the project were made, such as non-pollution of streams during construction and more strict control of herbicide use, thanks to AWARE's advocacy activities. The group regarded their contribution to these improvements as "*making the best of a bad job*".

In addition to these environmental benefits, their partial success was a catalyst for AWARE's evolution as an organization. Based on interview responses, the implications of this success can be identified:

1) *Credibility establishment* – AWARE had established itself as a credible organization in the community through the participation process. As a result, the community began to see AWARE as a legitimate and credible vehicle for getting their environmental concerns voiced in Whistler. Developers also recognized that AWARE's endorsement was important and began to contact AWARE before any project, seeking endorsement or opinions, although it was not a legal mandate to consult with ENGOs in Whistler.

2) *Acceptance by government* – The municipal government recognized AWARE as an important third party organization and began to pay more attention to it as a community group. The government later funded it through the community legacy fund.

3) *Internal awareness* – The golf course development issue raised awareness inside AWARE and shifted the organization's attention from recycling to land-use issues (e.g. wetland and other ecological sensitivity issues), thereby broadening its interests and operating agenda.

Due to the internal broadening of interests and the acceptance by the public, the business community and the government, AWARE gradually grew as an organization and began

to take on more issues related to the local environment. Respondents regarded this as a positive change for AWARE. One respondent stated:

> "AWARE was THE (emphasis made) place to go to when it comes to people's environmental concerns."

AWARE's Change of Style

AWARE's style during its initial period can be characterized as being confrontational and an "outsider" to any processes. It basically confronted the municipal government's pro-development attitude, which AWARE found inappropriate. According to the respondents, AWARE's antagonistic and aggressive approaches were due to its position of being on the outside of any other groups in the community (e.g. the municipal government, and the business community), and its unfamiliarity with the local political system.

However, several respondents acknowledged that there were merits in adopting a *"controversial"* style and not being afraid of *"pointing fingers at sources of problems"*. As one respondent commented:

> "Environment has got no one to speak for it. That's why it is of importance for AWARE to take extreme stand if environment might be jeopardized by development."

4.3.1.2 The "Environmental Sink": Early 1990s - 2000

AWARE's Change in Agenda

While AWARE was in the process of developing into a full-fledged and credible environmental organization in Whistler, it encountered a difficult challenge: community members brought so many environmental issues for AWARE to react to, its undertakings became *"very situation specific"* and it suffered from limited financial and human

resources. As a result, AWARE was neither organized nor effective in its approaches. By early 2000, AWARE had accumulated 106 issues it wanted to address. As one respondent characterized the situation:

> "AWARE became the 'environmental sink' for Whistler ... and we just kept throwing in more and more issues ... it was organizationally unworkable."

AWARE's Change of Style

In this stage, AWARE's approaches were largely reactionary, as community members put more and more environmental issues on its agenda. However, rather than remaining on the "*outside*" of Whistler's political arena, AWARE was driven gradually towards the "*inner circle*" of Whistler's decision-making body by some external factors:

1) *Change in government style* – The municipal government became more proactive in terms of protecting the environment and there was a less need for AWARE to be confrontational with it.

2) *Community expectation* – The supportive community members generally did not want AWARE to be radical in its approaches to addressing environmental concerns (e.g. blockade streets, picket sites). AWARE perceived that the general public expected things to move forward with respect to local environment through "*participation rather than protest*".

Moreover, these external forces brought internal changes for AWARE. It began enjoying being "*part of the solution*" and having the reputation of being "*reasonable*". While most respondents regarded AWARE's change favourably, some of them voiced concerns with this shift. According to one respondent, the balance between being inside and outside of a decision-making process was a tough line to walk because:

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"By sitting at the table, we can better affect the decision-making process ... but at the same time, we kind of muted ourselves, because when we sit at the table and be part of the process, it was hard to turn around and criticize it, and that's such a difficult situation."

4.3.1.3 The Strategic Organization: 2000 - Present

AWARE's Change in Agenda

AWARE's official transition to a third stage was marked by the introduction of new members with a business background to the organization. They convinced AWARE to conduct a strategic planning session in 2000. The planning session took many months to complete and had several implications with respect to AWARE's agenda:

1) *"Choosing the battle to fight"* – The thinking underpinning the planning session was that AWARE could not *"fight every battle"* and had to focus its energy on the things that they were going to affect change, as opposed to being *"fully diluted"* in its 106 issues. As a result, although it was hard to prioritize certain environmental issues over the other, the need to becoming focused and working effectively as a group had been well acknowledged by AWARE members.

2) *Prioritizing members' interests / expertise* – During streamlining its campaigns, AWARE started to focus more on the issues at which its members' interests and expertise lie, rather than reacting to what others outside the organization wanted them to address. It was realized that this proactive approach would ensure AWARE *"more chance of success"* in its projects. This was because the people involved had both passion and expertise to follow through the projects.

In the summer of 2000, following much discussion and debate, the group members finally decided on four strategic issues that would be the focus of AWARE's activities. They were the *Elaho,* the *Lilloet LRMP, Composting, and Wetlands* campaigns. The

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following year AWARE reorganized these issues into six projects (i.e. the *Wetlands,*
Composting, Transportation, 2010 Olympic Bid, Sustainability, and the *Wilderness*
Backyard campaigns).

AWARE's Change of Style

As AWARE's gradually moved towards the "inside", it became more participatory and
collaborative. However, the most dramatic changes for AWARE was its evolution from
being reactive to being proactive, from following traditional campaign rules to adopting
more strategic approaches. These changes are described in detail in the following
paragraphs.

1) *Being proactive* – AWARE shifted from reacting to people's emerging environmental
   concerns to taking the lead in setting its operation agenda. Its decision to initiate the
   Olympic Wildlife Refuge campaign was a specific example of its new proactive
   approach. The campaign was initiated because AWARE members believed that "*it*
   needs to happen".

2) *Building partnerships* – While seeking to be "part of the solution", AWARE paid
   more attention to developing strategic approaches for achieving its goals. According
   to the respondents, AWARE's style in this stage became "*more political*" and seeking
   to "present itself as a respectable stakeholder". This was achieved through:

   - realizing that interactions with other players happened in a reciprocal fashion,
     in a sense that "*you give a little and you get a little*" (Community
     Respondent); and,
   - developing contacts through out the administrative and development
     community.

Because of AWARE's participatory and collaborative approach, it was invited to sit on the committees of several other community groups, e.g. the One Whistler (the business community) and the Citizen Advisory Committee (the community in general).

3) *Adopting business approaches in organizational structuring* – AWARE members also realized the need in balancing between campaign-oriented and organization-oriented development. In this regard, it adopted business-like approaches in its organizational restructuring (e.g. setting up an Executive Committee, streamlining its decision-making process, establishing a fundraising committee).

Factors Influencing AWARE's Change

Internal factors were instrumental in AWARE's change of agenda and style during this stage, rather than external forces as was the case in the two previous periods of AWARE's evolution. These factors can be grouped under five categories.

1) *Personal influence* – The most frequently cited reason for AWARE's change was those individuals who joined AWARE around 2000 and led the organization in its transition. One respondent characterized the shift in personal background as *"from tarot card readers to bankers and accountants"*. These individuals had different approaches and philosophies concerning managing AWARE, which are *"more sophisticated and business like"*. At the same time, people who preferred the old way (i.e. grassroots campaigners) left AWARE and moved on to other things. Under the new leadership AWARE attracted a different crowd of people to the organization.

2) *Broader Worldview* – AWARE realized through what it had accomplished in the past that it was more effective in bringing meaningful changes in society, through being a strategic collaborator as apposed to being a confrontational polarizer.

3) *Diverse interests* – The diverse interests/opinions existed internally often imposed a difficult challenge for AWARE regarding to its decision-making. Sometimes, a *"middle-of-the-road"* position had to be taken when disparity in people's opinions were unable to resolve.

4) *Resource limit* – AWARE's scope of activities was limited by its funding. It felt the difficulty of trying to accomplish its goals with limited funding, and therefore decided to explore alternative ways through *"working with other groups"*.

5) *Common ground in community* – Whistler's embracement of the Natural Step framework (TNS) was a turning point for fostering partnerships in the community. It brought different organizations onto *"the same side of the table"*, and created a shift in AWARE's approach to things. The new approach became *"one of a partnership, i.e. working together as opposed to pushing from outside"*.

Despite that all respondents perceived the outcome of AWARE's change to be neutral, i.e. *"part of its maturing process"* and just a *"different choice of approach"* (Community Respondent), certain concerns were expressed in this regard, e.g. AWARE was referred to as *"AWARE- light"* and its watchdog role was considered to be having *"less teeth"* after the change. However, in general, the strategic thinking (i.e. achieving environmental goals through partnership building) seemed to be taking hold in the current AWARE. As one respondent expressed:

> "I think it is probably more effective to let the people be dissatisfied with their perceptions on our inability to stand up, yell and scream, and to have

real changes occurring in businesses, so that on-the-ground things can happen."

4.3.1.4 AWARE's Engagement in Community Activities

Table 11 presents respondents' perceptions of AWARE's roles in different community activities. These activities clustered around four categories, i.e. community development initiatives, community capacity building, guarding the environment, and offering solution for sustainability. The numeric values listed in the table (e.g. 7) indicate the number of respondents who believed that AWARE had taken on a certain role with respect to a specific community activity (n = 8).

Table 11 depicts the following findings with respect to each category of activities:

1) Regarding the activities related to community development initiatives, AWARE mainly played less intensive roles such as advisor and collaborator.

2) AWARE played a variety of roles in the activities related to community capacity building. It took strong leadership roles in raising community's awareness on environmental issues.

3) Compared to other categories of activities, AWARE played limited roles in activities related to guarding the environment.

4) AWARE played a variety of roles in "solutions" related activities. However, its involvement was more prominent in advisor, facilitator and collaborator roles, and less in leadership roles.

Table 11: AWARE's engagement in community activities

Category / Activity	Advisor	Facilitator	Collaborator	Leader
Community development initiatives				
Involvement in community improvement projects	7	3	6	4
Involvement in community development plan	8	2	5	2
Community capacity building				
Awareness raising on environmental issues	4	5	6	7
Develop programs to encourage community participation in planning and management	4	4	4	2
Guarding the environment				
Action against local polluters and environment Violators	3	0	2	4
Monitor and evaluation of industry and government performance regarding local environment	5	1	1	3
Conduction of ecological researches on site	3	2	4	3
Offering solution for sustainability				
Involvement in community stakeholders dialogue to address development/environmental concerns	5	5	6	4
Establishment of programs and tools for conservation and sustainable development	5	2	8	2
Development and implementation of principles and codes for community sustainable development	4	2	3	1

Table 12 presents AWARE's level of engagement in the various types of activities it played in Whistler, as perceived by respondents. The general engagement index (e.g. 6.5), representing AWARE's level of engagement in a specific activity and under certain time period (e.g. pre 2000), is the mean score of the corresponding individual engagement indexes derived from respondents' answers. The method for calculating the engagement index was described in Chapter Three. In this study, more emphasis was placed on comparative values and change in values over time, rather than absolute values.

Table 12: AWARE's level of engagement in community activities

Category / Activity	Pre 2000 (n=2)	Post 2000 (n=6)	Overall (n=8)
Community development initiatives			
Involvement in community improvement projects	6.5	5.7	5.9
Involvement in community development plan	5.5	4	4.4
Community capacity building			
Awareness raising on environmental issues	5.5	8.2	7.5
Develop programs to encourage community participation in planning and management	4	4	4
Guarding the environment			
Action against local polluters and environment violators	6	2	3
Monitor and evaluation of industry and government performance regarding local environment	3	2.7	2.8
Conduction of ecological researches on site	4	3.7	3.8
Offering solution for sustainability			
Involvement in community stakeholders dialogue to address development/environment concerns	5.5	6.3	6.1
Establishment of programs and tools for conservation and sustainable development	3	5.8	5.1
Development and implementation of principles and codes for community sustainable development	1	3.3	2.8

Table 13 displays the mean scores of the general engagement indexes (in Table 12) with respect to their corresponding activity categories. It provides an overview of AWARE's involvement in the four categories of activities and highlights the trend of its shift between the categories over time.

Table 13: AWARE's level of engagement in activity categories

Activity Category	Pre 2000 (n=2)	Post 2000 (n=6)	Overall (n=8)
Community development initiatives	6	4.9	5.2
Community capacity building	4.8	6.1	5.8
Guarding the environment	4.3	2.8	3.2
Offering solution for sustainability	3.2	5.1	4.7

Overall, the most intensive engagement was in activities related to community development initiatives and capacity building. This corresponds well with AWARE's position as a community-based and community-focused organization. Several trends in AWARE's shifting focus are apparent. They are as follows:

1) AWARE's involvement in community development projects has become less intensive in recent years. This situation probably reflects the decreasing level of development activities in Whistler during this time period.

2) Relatively less focus has been placed on guarding the environment in the post 2000 period. One reason could be that AWARE has worked as a partner with the government and businesses, rather than as a third party evaluator on environmental issues. An alternative explanation could be that Whistler's local government and businesses have shown stronger commitments to sustainability, and require less monitoring by third parties like AWARE.

3) AWARE has become more engaged in community capacity building and sustainability issues in recent years. Explanations of this shift include:
   - AWARE's growing interests in broader community issues;
   - its focus on collaborative approaches that involve other community stakeholders;
   - the emergence of sustainability as a strategic focus of the Whistler community in recent years.

4.3.1.5 AWARE's Attitude towards Business

All respondents were asked to position AWARE along two scales related to its attitudes towards business. Each scale's numerical values ranged from "1" to "5". On one scale, "1" indicated "not business friendly" and "5" indicated "business friendly". On the other

scale, "1" represented "not business focused" and "5" denoted "business focused". Respondents were also asked to position AWARE's attitudes on these scales for three different time periods (i.e. 10 years ago, 5 years ago and the present).

Responses from AWARE and community respondents are highlighted in Figures 2 and 3. Both Figures depict a clear trend. They suggest that AWARE has become friendlier towards, and more focused on, business. However, AWARE and community respondents differed regarding where AWARE was positioned 10 years ago. Figure 3 shows that community respondents, to a greater extent than AWARE representatives, perceived the organization to be more antagonistic towards business 10 years ago. Community and AWARE respondents' perceptions largely converged during the next two time periods. Figure 4 integrates AWARE's positions on both scales during different time periods. AWARE's attitudes towards business has been characterized using terminology derived from the literature review in Chapter Two.

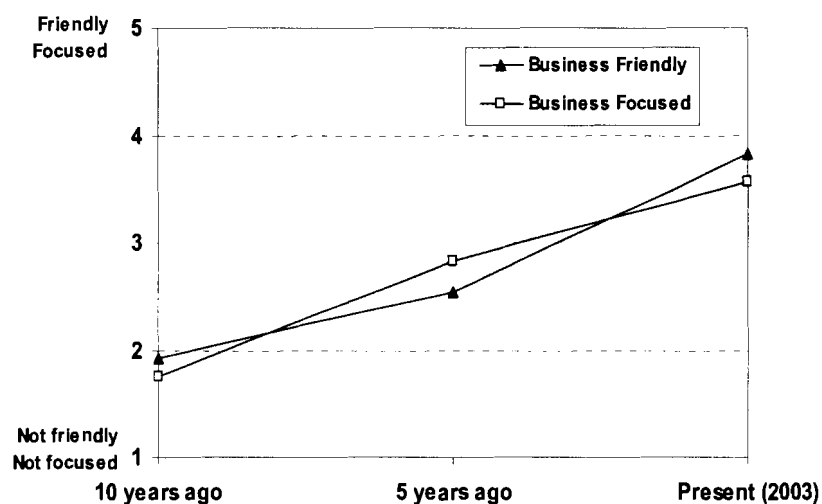*Figure 2: AWARE's perception of its attitude towards business*

Figure 3: Community perception of AWARE's attitude towards business
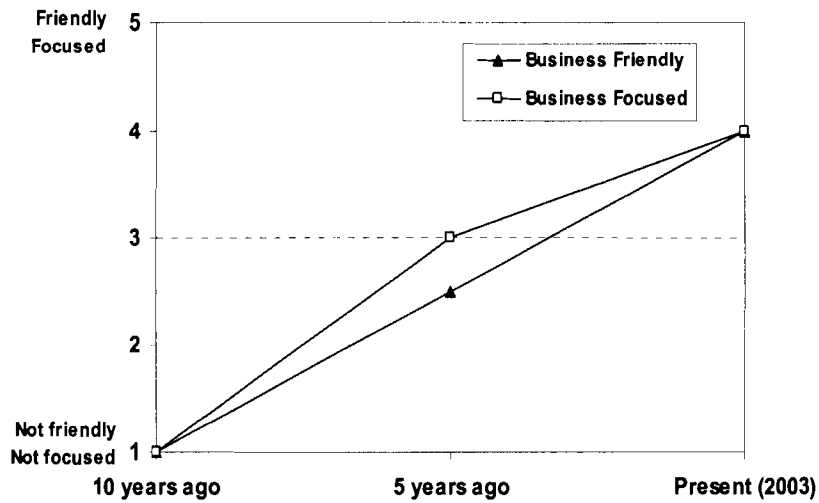
Figure 4: AWARE's characteristics with respect to business

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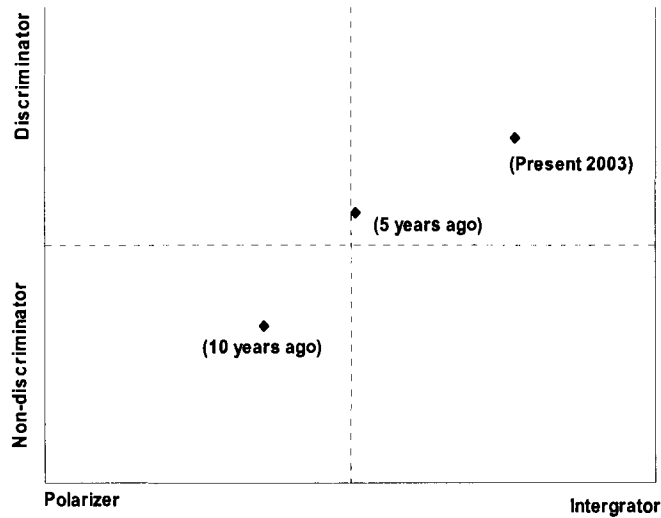
4.3.1.6 Summary of AWARE's Change in Agenda and Style

Table 14 presents a summary of AWARE's change in agenda and operating style, as well as the reasons for its changes as expressed by respondents.

Table 14: Summary of AWARE's change in agenda and style

Characteristics	Drivers for evolution
The single issue group: 1989 – early 1990s	
Agenda: Promoting recycling in Whistler Taking on more environmental issues *Style:* Confrontational, advocating and pushing for an issue Being "outside" of community processes	▪ Participation in community open house raised awareness ▪ Attracted attention from community, government, business
The environmental sink: early 1990s – 2000	
Agenda: Reacting to every issue brought to its attention Having 106 issues on agenda *Style:* Reactionary in nature Moving to the "inner circle" of community decision-making	▪ Community expectation of a participatory group ▪ Government's commitment to environmental protection
The strategic organization: 2000 – present	
Agenda: Focusing on six campaigns Emphasizing more on organizational development *Style:* Proactive, participatory, collaborative Focusing on building partnerships Adopting business-like strategies	▪ Characteristics of new leadership ▪ Integrated worldview ▪ Diverse interests on AWARE's Board ▪ Prospects of more support through partnerships ▪ Common ground in the community (e.g.TNS)

4.3.2 AWARE and W-B Interactions

4.3.2.1 Overview of interactions

Respondents were asked to identify the milestone events that created the need for interaction between AWARE and W-B. Table 15 presents the list of events perceived to be important by the respondents. In this section, a description of these events is provided in chronological order. The description of each event relates to two aspects:

- what were the issues? and,
- what were the interactions?

Table 15: Perceived milestone events for AWARE and W-B interaction

Events	Percentage of Respondents (n=16)*
Shared personnel between W-B and AWARE	75%
TNS Early Adopter agreement, related initiatives	69%
Piccolo Flute issue (Garibaldi Park boundary change in 2002)	63%
W-B Environmental Fund	56%
Emerald Forest deal	25%
Habitat Improvement Team (HIT)	19%
Garibaldi Park boundary change in early 1990s	6%

*: Since respondents could list as many events as desired, percentages do not sum to 100%.

Garibaldi Park Boundary Change: 1989 to 1990

In January 1989, Blackcomb Skiing Enterprises (who owned the Blackcomb Mountain and later became W-B after a merger) submitted a proposal to the British Columbia Ministry of Parks, requesting removal of an area from Garibaldi Park to allow further expansion of their ski area. This action became the focal point of subsequent public hearings in the Whistler community. Following considerable debate, the Minister of

Parks announced that a small area of the Park could be removed for alpine skiing purposes. One respondent recalled that there were some interactions between the Blackcomb company and AWARE on this issue. However, the interaction was limited to personal interactions rather than actions at organizational level. That respondent described:

> "Arthur Dejong who works for Blackcomb would come to AWARE and attend open house meetings in the community. It was rather his personal commitment to make this connection than a corporate decision."

The Emerald Forest preservation 1995 - 1998

In an effort to protect a wetlands corridor between the Green and Alta Lakes, the municipal government of Whistler set about expropriating land in the Whistler Valley. However, the Emerald Forest was a missing piece of the puzzle. Unlike the rest of the land in the network, which was all Crown land, the Emerald Forest was under private ownership. In the face of a booming property market in Whistler, the owner was anxious to realize the land's value by undertaking a real estate development. The municipality, the owner, and Intrawest Corporation subsequently negotiated a three-way deal, in which Intrawest purchased the forest from the owner and then deeded the land to the municipality for preservation. In exchange, Intrawest was granted development rights, by the town council, to build a new hotel in Whistler's upper village, a location deemed to be of minimum environmental impact.

The deal was quite a contentious issue for the community because 452 bed units associated with the hotel development were not accounted for in the Official Community Plan. On this issue, AWARE put its priority on wetland preservation and supported the proposal. They facilitated the process by building awareness on the importance of

wetlands and forest connectivity and they advocated for the proposal both in the community, and privately with the government and businesses.

Shared Personnel between AWARE and W-B: since 1998

Allana Hamm, the Environmental Co-ordinator for Whistler Blackcomb Mountain Resorts, has been a director for AWARE since 1998. She has attended AWARE meetings, participated and co-ordinated many of its activities, and. to avoid conflict of interests, she has withdrawn from decisions concerning actions that involve W-B. Most AWARE respondents (91%) pointed out that the "*link*" created through Allana Hamm facilitated the communication between AWARE and W-B. One respondent described:

> "The advantage I see is that Alana knows what goes on in AWARE, she
> knows what the activities are, and she is supportive of that. It is another
> way to get the ear of the senior people of W-B."

Habitat Improvement Team (HIT): since 1998

The Habitat Improvement Team (HIT) was established by W-B in 1998. It is an action-oriented group of volunteers, who offer their environmental stewardship services to NGOs in Whistler such as AWARE and the Whistler Fisheries Stewardship Group. The group has been active since the summer of 1998. It runs from May until September and involves people going out into the community to work on projects for these local groups. W-B provides the tools and transportation while the volunteers provide the labour.

TNS Early Adopters Agreement, and related initiatives: since 2000

In March 2000, Dr. Karl-Henrik Robert, founder of The Natural Step (TNS), visited Whistler and spoke at a number of sessions about this, a system for understanding sustainability. As a result of these presentations, an early adopters group of the TNS

framework formed in Whistler. Its founding members consisted of the Whistler Municipality, Tourism Whistler, Whistler/Blackcomb, AWARE, Whistler's Foto Source and the Fairmont Chateau Whistler. This initiative represented *"a group of local stakeholders working together to make Whistler the first sustainable resort community in the world"* (RMOW 2000). For AWARE and W-B, the Early Adopters Agreement indicated a formal and ongoing partnership. It has since led to a series of other sustainability initiatives that involve both organizations. These sustainability initiatives include:

- Whistler's community program to promote and support sustainability, called Whistler. It's Our Nature. It grew out of the Early Adopters of TNS framework and is managed by the Whistler Centre for Sustainability.

- Sustainability Learning and Understanding Group (SLUG), which involves people from Tourism Whistler, W-B or any business in town that has an interest in sustainability. The group meets every month and is a forum for people to talk about everyday challenges associated with sustainability issues.

The Whistler Blackcomb Environment Fund: since 2001

The Whistler Blackcomb Environment Fund was established in January 2001 to help finance community environmental projects in Whistler. A volunteer board of staff members manages the Environment Fund. The board identifies key projects in the Whistler Valley, which can be funded from start to finish and then oversees the implementation of those projects. AWARE was one of the beneficiaries of the W-B environment fund.

The Piccolo Flute Issue: 2002

In the summer of 2002, W-B made a proposal to the provincial government regarding a boundary change to Garibaldi Park. W-B claimed that there was an error in the park boundary. By addressing this error, W-B would be able to put another ski lift in the Piccolo Flute area on the north face of Whistler Mountain. The proposed development in the Flute caused much concern due to the emotional attachment of the community to Flute's pristine nature. AWARE openly expressed its opposition towards the proposal, as one respondent described:

> "We took it to the public, we had it on the newspapers and the television, we presented before council, any form we could take. We made it very clear that their behaviour was entirely unacceptable and we would like to see the decision reversed..."

According to AWARE respondents, W-B's reactions towards the opposition were very low-key. They ran tours to take people who were concerned about the issue to see what the actual net impact might be. The respondents perceived that W-B took such a low-key response because there was no pressure on the corporation from any civil disobedience or aggressive actions. Due to the opposition from AWARE and the general public, the proposal has been withdrawn for the moment.

4.3.2.2 Characteristics of AWARE and W-B Interactions

Table 16 presents a summary of those events perceived as milestones for creating interactions between AWARE and W-B. The nature of the interactions has been characterized by using the terminology derived from the literature review in Chapter Two.

Table 16 shows that AWARE and W-B has interacted with each other throughout the existence of the ENGO. These interactions have occupied a variety of levels and have ranged from the traditional adversarial positions to fully collaborative strategic

partnerships. It is apparent that the interactions have been dynamic rather than static. Therefore, it is difficult to predict a future path, which the two organizations would walk down. This is because the nature of the interactions has been significantly affected by the contextual conditions associated with each event. However, despite the uncertainty, the interactions between AWARE and W-B have generally been ongoing and collaborative during recent years.

Table 16: The characteristics of AWARE and W-B interactions

Time period	Events	Type of interaction
1989 – 1990	Garibaldi Park boundary change	Challenge
1995 – 1998	Emerald Forest deal	Project dialogue
Since 1998	Shared personnel between W-B and AWARE	Personal connection
Since 1998	Habitat Improvement Team (HIT)	Support
Since 2000	TNS Early Adopter agreement, related initiatives	Strategic partnership
Since 2001	Whistler Blackcomb Environment Fund	Support
2002	Piccolo Flute issue	Challenge

4.3.3 Assessing the Relationships between AWARE and W-B

This section presents the perceived interrelationship between AWARE and W-B as expressed by respondents. Focusing on the nature of the stakeholder relationships, it addresses specific concerns related to:

- the degree to which respondents consider a stakeholder relationship exists;
- the kind of assets/qualities AWARE and W-B bring to the stakeholder relationship;
- the reasons for them to enter a partnership relationship;
- the kinds of influence they can exert upon each other;
- the factors that affect their relationships; and

- the perceived future directions of their relationships.

4.3.3.1 Stakeholder Relationship

Respondents' perceptions on whether AWARE and W-B regarded each other as a stakeholder are summarized in Table 17. For comparison purposes, responses from AWARE and community respondents are separated.

Table 17: Perceptions of stakeholder relationship

Question	AWARE Perspective (n=11)			Community Perspective (n=5)		
	Yes	No	Uncertain	Yes	No	Uncertain
Does W-B regard AWARE as stakeholder?	55%	9%	36%	80%	20%	0%
Does AWARE regard W-B as stakeholder?	91%	0%	9%	80%	0%	20%

Most community respondents (80% for both questions) perceived W-B and AWARE to be in a stakeholder relationship. From AWARE's point of view, most respondents (91%) perceived W-B to be AWARE's stakeholder. About half of them (55%) believed that W-B regarded AWARE as a stakeholder. More than a third of AWARE respondents (36%) were uncertain about W-B's attitude towards AWARE. Quotes illustrating the uncertainty include:

> "For the boundary change issue ... I think I am not aware of any consultation that really occurred with the community or with AWARE. W-B didn't engage the community when they could have."

> "I don't know if AWARE has been seen as a stakeholder, or just someone they need to keep their eye on."

4.3.3.2 AWARE and W-B's Assets and Qualities

Respondents were asked to identify W-B and AWARE's assets and qualities, which would allow them to become mutual stakeholders. The perceived assets and qualities of W-B and AWARE are summarized in Tables 18 and 19, respectively.

As Table 18 shows, W-B's strongest perceived asset (75%) is its possession of resources (e.g. physical, financial and human). The rest of the perceived assets are all to a certain extent related to W-B's power as a result of its resource possession (e.g. the power to control the local economy, implement projects, demonstrate accomplishment both in and outside the community, and influence local politics), with the exception of credibility in the Whistler community. Only one respondent (8%) perceived this to be one of W-B's assets.

Table 18: W-B's assets and qualities

W-B's Assets and Qualities	Percentage of Respondents (n=12)*
Resource possession, physical, financial and human	75%
Economic engine and the biggest employer in Whistler	50%
Greater leverage in making things happen due to large impact/capacity	33%
Power of demonstration, influence within and beyond boundary	33%
Political influence/power	17%
Credibility in Whistler community	8%

*: Since respondents could list as many assets as desired, the percentages do not sum to 100%.

As Table 19 shows, AWARE's strongest asset is perceived to be the high status and credibility it enjoys in the Whistler community. AWARE's other strong assets are believed to be related to its ability to be a watchdog for the environment and raise community awareness (56% of respondents), knowledge and expertise (44% of

respondents), and the individuals involved (33% of respondents). Only one respondent believed that the ability to impact the community through its activities was an asset to AWARE. The reason why this asset was low on the overall ratings provided by respondents might be AWARE's limitations in the resources it has available to leverage influence on community issues.

Table 19: AWARE's assets and qualities

AWARE's Assets and Qualities	Percentage of Respondents (n=9)*
High credibility in the community	78%
Watchdog function, the ability to raise community's awareness and make business alert of environmental practices	56%
Knowledge, expertise and professionalism regarding environment	44%
Passionate and dedicated persons involved	33%
Influence of AWARE's activities in the community	11%

*: Since respondents could list as many assets as desired, the percentages do not sum to 100%.

In comparing the asset lists of AWARE and W-B, some complementary resources emerged. Resource possession and credibility were respectively perceived to be W-B's highest (75%) and lowest (8%) profile assets. For AWARE, the order was reversed. Credibility (78%) was believed to be the organization's highest profile asset. Leverage was believed to be its lowest profile asset (11%).

4.3.3.3 Reasons for NGO-Business Partnership

Respondents were asked to express opinions about their level of agreement with each of the thirteen reasons for corporations and ENGOs to establish partnerships with each other. Their responses were summarized in Tables 20 and 21. For comparison purposes, community and AWARE responses were summarized separately.

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Table 20: Drivers of partnership from business perspective

Why business partner with ENGO	Mean[a]	
	AWARE[b]	Community[c]
Improve credibility with market	4.1	4.0
Improve credibility with public stakeholders	4.1	3.5
Need for objective evaluation on environmental actions	2.6	3.3
Cross-fertilization of thinking in dealing with environmental issues	3.1	3.3
Greater efficiency in resource allocation	2.2	2.8
Desire to head off negative public confrontations	3.8	4.8
Desire to engage stakeholders for public relation purposes	3.4	3.3

a: Mean scores based on a scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = somewhat disagree; 3 = uncertain; 4 = somewhat agree; 5 = strongly agree.
b: n = 8
c: n = 4

AWARE and community respondents held common perceptions concerning why W-B might want to partner with AWARE. All those initiatives were related to the company's desire to improve its credibility and public image. The top reasons were:

- improving credibility with public stakeholders (84% agree);

- improving credibility with the market (83% agree);

- heading off negative public confrontations (75% agree);

- engaging stakeholders for public relation purposes (50% agree).

Most community respondents (75% agree) perceived that corporations might partner with ENGOs for *"objective evaluation on environmental actions"*. However, only a quarter of AWARE respondents (25% agree) believed this to be the reason for W-B to build partnerships with AWARE. According to them, W-B did not reach out to AWARE asking for external perspectives. One respondent explained,

> "They've never asked us for objective evaluation. They are only inspired by their own objectives and thinking."

Table 21: Drivers of partnership from ENGO perspective

Why ENGO partner with business	Mean[a]	
	AWARE[b]	Community[c]
Growing interest in market	2.3	1.8
Inability to get things done through the government	2.2	3.5
Need for more resources, e.g. funding, expertise	3.2	4.5
Desire to partner with business to gain credibility with government	2.2	2.5
Cross-fertilization of thinking	3.4	2.8
Greater leverage in making things happen	3.7	4.5

a: Mean scores based on a scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = somewhat disagree;
  3 = uncertain; 4 = somewhat agree; 5 = strongly agree.
b: n = 9
c: n = 4

AWARE and community respondents reported common levels of agreement on the importance of some reasons for AWARE to partner with W-B. Overall, the top reasons were related to:

- Need for more resources, e.g. funding, expertise (77% agree)

- Greater leverage in making things happen (76% agree)

However, AWARE and community respondents were at odds with respect to the importance of some of the other reasons for partnership building. Most community respondents (75%) agreed that the inability in getting things done through the government might be a reason for AWARE to partner with W-B. Only a few respondents (11%) from AWARE shared the same view. One respondent commented:

> "I think it is the opposite in Whistler, we have a really progressive and awesome government, which is totally pro-solution."

In addition, a majority of AWARE respondents (55%) perceived cross-fertilization of thinking to be a good reason for AWARE to partner with W-B. However, only a small portion (25%) of community respondents agreed that this was a viable reason for such partnering.

4.3.3.4 Perceptions of Mutual Influence

Respondent were asked to express their opinions on the degree to which AWARE could influence W-B's environmental strategies and vice versa. Their responses are presented in Table 22.

Table 22: Perceptions of mutual influence of AWARE and W-B

Question	AWARE Perspective (n=10)			Community Perspective (n=5)		
	Yes	No	Uncertain	Yes	No	Uncertain
Can AWARE influence W-B's decisions?	50%	50%	0%	40%	40%	20%
Can W-B influence AWARE's decisions?	70%	30%	0%	80%	20%	0%

Overall, the potential influence of W-B on AWARE was perceived to be greater than AWARE's effects on W-B. Community respondents were more convinced than AWARE informants that this situation existed. Moreover, respondents believed that W-B might affect AWARE's decision-making by:

1) partnering with AWARE on issues and projects. One respondent observed,

"Because they are at the same table during lots of processes ... Whistler-Blackcomb might be in a better position now to try to negotiate with AWARE and AWARE is now being more accommodating."

2) sponsoring and supporting AWARE's activities. One respondent commented,

"Through their environmental fund, they funded some of our activities, ... even just in the attitudes that they are supportive, we will be less likely to come out and just 'slam' them because of the mutual respect that we have."

3) selectively putting manpower and resources into AWARE's activities which are critical to the company's interests. One respondent commented,

"I think they are definitely self-serving to a point where they want to be involved in the initiative that could be a flagship event".

4) excelling in their environmental practices thus making AWARE redirect its attention and energy to other issues. As explained by one respondent,

"They do a good job without our direction a lot of times. They have people like Allana and Arthur. I think AWARE's resources are so limited that we have to fight battles where people like Allana and Arthur don't exist".

AWARE respondents split entirely regarding their perceptions on AWARE's influence on W-B. Half the respondents stated that AWARE could influence W-B's environmental strategies through:

1) facilitating change through personal connections with W-B's employee. As described by one respondent,

"Allana Hamm who works for Whistler-Blackcomb has been sitting on AWARE's Board of directors. Things come up just out of common discussion, that has a lot to do with Alana's link to AWARE".

2) exerting normative pressure on W-B's higher management. As explained by one respondent,

"The senior VPs, the boss of the two VPs all live in this community... they are members like everybody else. They understand what goes on here and the way people think. The influence is at that level, the community level. ... Because they know that AWARE has a lot of general support, they don't want to just ditch us. They wouldn't do that out of respect. That would hurt them in the community too."

3) presenting itself as a credible and powerful force guarding the environment so that it has the potential to *"give W-B a pause and make it rethink"* about its decisions that might affect the environment. As one respondent described,

> "W-B was very aware of AWARE to a point that if they were planning a major project that they know might interest AWARE, they'd talk to AWARE first. ... There would be no point in doing something so irresponsible that they would get AWARE angered up and for the whole community to be against them."

The other half of the AWARE respondents held the opposite opinion and believed that AWARE could not exert any influence on W-B. Several explanations were given in their perceptions. They were as follows:

1) W-B was perceived as being only interested in following its own agenda. One respondent indicated:

   > "As opposed to the local government which is more responsive to public and to voters, I think W-B was pretty much on their own agenda, trying to work within its own standard of what's good for the environment, putting efforts towards environment initiatives as much as it felt was important from their standpoint. I don't think it would necessarily be very responsive to any point that we would've brought it from the outside."

2) W-B was perceived to have shown no commitment to fully engaging AWARE. One respondent explained,

   > "They don't call us up and ask for advice on things they are going to do, and they certainly don't listen if we offer either".

3) W-B's engagement with AWARE was perceived to have been limited to the level of keeping a good public image. One respondent commented,

   > "We are the only environmental group in town, we are like the cool kid in the class, people want us sitting with them at their lunch table. But on the inside, they don't care what we have to think. They just like to be seen with us."

4) AWARE was perceived to not have a strong focus on W-B's activities, thus having little influence on its initiatives.

4.3.3.5 Factors Influencing the Relationships between AWARE and W-B

Respondents were asked to identify the factors that they believed to have influenced or could potentially influence the relationships between AWARE and W-B. They provided 65 responses in total. These responses fell into nine categories of factors (Table 23)

Table 23: Perceived factors influencing the relationship

Factors	Percentage* of participants (n = 16)	Number of responses (n = 65)	Percentage of responses
AWARE's style/approach	69%	17	26%
Personal influence	81%	16	25%
Common ground among all players	50%	10	15%
Corporate practices	50%	9	14%
Communication	25%	4	6%
Corporate sponsorship	19%	3	5%
External forces (public, market)	19%	3	5%
Contingent issues	19%	3	5%

*: Since respondents provided multiple responses, the percentages do not sum to 100%.

AWARE's collaborative and participatory approach was the most frequently identified (26%) factor to have influenced the relationship between AWARE and W-B. Respondents believed that high credibility, a non-polarizing worldview towards all stakeholders in the community, and strategic approaches are the preconditions for AWARE to foster a partnership with W-B.

Most respondents (81%) pointed out that personal influence was instrumental in enabling the existing relationship. These respondents referred to the receptive personalities of AWARE's board members, and the dual roles of a specific person who acted as W-B's Environmental Co-ordinator as well as a director for AWARE in this regard.

Finding a common ground among all players in the community was deemed to be an important factor in the relationship building between AWARE and W-B by around half of the respondents (56%). They referred to both the TNS Early Adopters Agreement and Whistler: it's Our Nature initiative as providing a valuable chance for cooperation between AWARE and W-B.

Half the respondents (50%) felt that W-B's corporate practices could influence the ENGO-business relationships that existed. Factors related to corporate practices emerging from the interviews that helped to build and sustain the relationships between the two entities included:

- W-B's development and environmental practices in the past, present, and future;
- W-B's commitment to sustainability;
- W-B's ongoing commitment to engaging community stakeholders.

Some informants (25%) felt that ongoing efforts to encourage communication were important in influencing partnership development. One respondent explained,

> "An open line of communication is really important, especially for alleviating conflicts. We would have a lot more conflicts if we found out they were doing projects behind closed doors than if they were bringing it right to the table and giving us a chance to provide input".

Finally, a few respondents pointed out corporate sponsorship (19%), external forces (e.g. public expectation and market pressure) (19%), and contingent issues (e.g. any event that may happen in the community in the future) (19%) to be important factors affecting relationships between AWARE and W-B on specific issues.

4.3.3.6 Perceptions of Future Relationships

A number of questions attempted to gauge respondents' perceptions and attitudes on the future evolution of the relationship between AWARE and W-B. Respondents were asked to express their perceptions of what the future directions of the relationships between the two entities would be. They were also asked to indicate whether a stronger collaboration between the two would be desirable. The results are presented in Table 24.

Table 24: Perceptions of future collaboration between AWARE and W-B

Category	Perceived future collaboration			Desirability of stronger collaboration		
	More	Less	Uncertain	Yes	No	Neutral
Overall	67%	0%	33%	60%	33%	7%
Community	50%	0%	50%	75%	0%	25%
AWARE	73%	0%	27%	55%	45%	0%

Overall, no respondent predicted a declining level collaboration between AWARE and W-B in the future. A majority of respondents (67%) anticipated that the collaboration would be strengthened, while a third of the respondents (33%) were uncertain about the future evolvement. In comparison, a higher percentage of AWARE respondents (73%) anticipated increased collaboration in the future than did the community respondents (50%).

A majority of the respondents (60%) believed that it would be desirable for the two organizations to have a stronger relationship, while a third (33%) disagreed. One respondent (7%) held a neutral opinion towards the issue and commented,

> "If it was a stronger relationship with a clear focus of what they are trying to achieve with respect to environment or sustainability, then it could be valuable. But if it was a stronger relationship where AWARE was sort of being co-opted, then it would be undesirable." (Community Respondent)

Most of the community respondents (75%) believed a stronger relationship between the two organizations would be desirable. In contrast, AWARE respondents showed some divergence on this issue. Only a slight majority of them (55%) thought it would be desirable to strengthen the collaborations and the rest of them (45%) felt it would be more desirable to keep a distance.

It was mostly due to concerns about protecting AWARE's credibility that the respondents suggested that a stronger relationship would not be desirable. More specifically, their concerns included:

- *Keeping independence* – Respondents believed that the Whistler community needs an environmental group that *"can work independently and speak out freely without having to worry about hurting relationships"*. Moreover, the value of *"taking extreme position"* was acknowledged. According to some respondents, upon a contentious issue, it was better to *"start from two extremes and meet in the middle"* than to *"work from the middle right from the start"*.

- *Avoiding the "trade-off" dilemma* – It was believed that AWARE might find itself captured in a dilemma if in closer collaboration with a corporation e.g. W-B. This is because that a corporation might be important partners and sponsors on certain environmental campaigns and yet at the same time promoting development projects that contradicts with AWARE's environmental objectives. Can AWARE enjoy the benefits of a partnership with a corporation and mobilize actions against the corporation's development projects at the same time? The trade-offs involved would increase the difficulty in AWARE's position taking and decision-making.

- *Pessimism towards ENGO-business collaboration* – One respondent held low expectations towards the outcome of such a relationship and stated,

"AWARE's focus is on the community, and W-B's is not. A tighter relationship wouldn't achieve much, because ultimately they wouldn't really care. They should, but they don't."

4.3.3.7 Considerations for W-B

Respondents were asked to express opinions about elements needed for strengthening the collaboration between AWARE and W-B. Based on their comments, the following considerations for W-B were identified:

1) *Communication of environmental vision* – Respondents believed that W-B should consider widely communicating its environmental vision to AWARE and the Whistler community. It was perceived that this would foster understanding and trust towards the company. In addition, it was recommended that W-B could effectively communicate its vision by:

   - expressing the vision in an engaging way, e.g. posting in W-B's offices and on local newspapers.
   - communicating the vision in consistent behavior, words and deeds.
   - making all decision-making and governance actions build toward the vision, and making company's daily actions communicate the vision, i.e. "walking one's talk".

2) *Commitment to sustainability* – Respondents perceived that if the partnership between AWARE and W-B was to be strengthened in the future, W-B should demonstrate an ongoing commitment to sustainability. This would facilitate trust and help improve the company's image in the community, thereby supporting a strong and balanced partnership with AWARE and other community stakeholders. More specifically, it was recommended that ecological sustainability objectives be integrated into W-B's management objectives at the highest governance level. This would facilitate changes

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in personal and corporate behaviours so that they align with ecological sustainability principles.

3) *Support for local initiatives* – Respondents acknowledged W-B's support for local initiatives through its Environmental Fund. It was believed that W-B's grant-making practice could be enhanced by declaring more specific funding criteria.

4) *Stakeholder audit* – It was recommended that W-B could conduct a formal stakeholder audit, to determine the key stakeholders to the corporation, and recognize potential power of them. The audit might raise W-B's awareness of the benefits of collaborating with its community stakeholders especially the local environmental groups. It would also help W-B seek ways of supplementing its existing resources and creating synergies for the common cause in the community.

5) *Formalized cooperation with stakeholders* – Respondents believed that W-B might benefit from formalized cooperation and collaborative planning among key community stakeholders. In this regard, a co-ordinated organizational structure and process for W-B's collaboration with AWARE as well as other groups in the Whistler community was believed to be necessary. More specifically, it was perceived that W-B could enhance its partnership building by:

- promoting its vision of partnership building to key stakeholders;
- defining responsibility for day-to-day liaison with stakeholders;
- investing in the necessary information technology and training for implementing the partnerships;
- communicating success and limitations of the partnerships to stakeholders; and,
- preparing research reports on the partnerships to ensure that lessons can be learned.

4.4 SUMMARY

This case study described how changes occurred in AWARE associated with its operating agenda, management style and attitudes towards business over time, based on respondent perceptions. It then outlined the interactions between AWARE and W-B and highlighted the characteristics of each interaction between the two entities. This was followed by a comprehensive assessment of the relationships between AWARE and W-B with respect to evaluative indicators such as the existence, influence, underlining factors, and future directions, of the relationships. Implications of such relationships are discussed in Chapter Five – Discussions and Management Implications.

CHAPTER FIVE – MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter outlines the potential management implications associated with the findings of the study. The first section highlights the themes related to NGO-business relations that have emerged from the study. The second section discusses the implications of the research findings. The third section offers recommendations, which are primarily directed at AWARE.

5.1 THEMES

5.1.1 Convergence

The case study demonstrates that over the past few years, the power and status of AWARE in Whistler community has increased and the focus of AWARE has begun to shift towards finding and implementing solutions from enacting campaigns. AWARE's change in its management style has also induced a fundamental shift in its attitudes towards business. As demonstrated by the research, AWARE's attitudes towards W-B have evolved from being antagonistic during the first few years of its operations to encouraging more collaborative activities in recent years.

This trend has been at least partially driven by W-B's increasingly proactive responses to local environmental challenges. The corporation's responses are exemplified in its various initiatives associated with the adoption of an environmental management system, the initiation of various environmental projects, and the incorporation of TNS framework into its business practices. The convergence of these actions has created an opportunity for new forms of partnerships between AWARE and W-B.

Based on comments received during this investigation, it is expected that in the future both the extent and degree of collaboration between them will increase. Indeed, a majority of respondents believed that a strengthened collaboration between AWARE and W-B is desirable.

5.1.2 Lack of Understanding

Despite the emerging evidence that AWARE and W-B are entering a new era of partnership, the study demonstrates a perceived lack of understanding both towards the partners' strengths and the potential benefits that can be yielded from a collaborative process. This is exemplified in the following findings:

1) Most respondents believed that both AWARE and W-B regard each other as their stakeholders. However, they perceived AWARE to be a low profile stakeholder for W-B who could only exert limited influence, if any, on W-B's decision-making. This is contrasted with the perceived high degree of influence that W-B might exert upon AWARE. Respondents suggested that this imbalance was induced by the dominant economic power that W-B possesses. However, the study also shows that the high status and credibility enjoyed by AWARE in the Whistler community embodies both the moral power of the stick (via protest) and the convening power of the carrot (via collaboration). Both of these characteristics represent supplemental and valuable assets for W-B. However, these mutual benefits have yet to be fully recognized by both parties especially W-B.

2) Literature suggests several factors that can be influential in encouraging the engagement of businesses and NGOs. These include the need for objective evaluations, cross-fertilization of thinking, and creating greater efficiency in resource

allocation. Respondents in this study felt that W-B did not recognize these potential benefits for partnering with AWARE.

5.1.3 Crucial Factors

This study suggests that the process of engagement between AWARE and W-B has stemmed from a number of factors. The key factors appear to be related to:

- AWARE's solution-oriented agenda and collaborative style;
- the vision and commitments of certain individuals; and
- the nature of W-B's environmental practices.

The section on "convergence" has already discussed the implications of the first and the third factors. However, the important role of individuals in facilitating business-NGO partnerships has not been examined. On a basic level, personal contact between stakeholders is a critical element that brings benefits such as external ideas, understanding of the other side's perspective, and sharpening one's own arguments etc. At a higher level, this study highlights the value of the individual commitment, ingenuity and bravery in stepping outside one's role as corporate managers or ENGO leaders in an attempt to become part of a solution. The ability of individuals to assume new responsibilities and try new ways of working is at the heart of the emerging partnership between AWARE and W-B.

While these three factors are frequently cited in the study as being promoting collaborative relationships between AWARE and W-B, they represent difficult management challenges as well due to their volatile nature. For example, the individuals involved in facilitating such partnerships could withdraw from future engagements for a number of reasons. These include averting personal and professional risk, or simply,

changes in personal interests. In addition, AWARE's style and approaches tend to be highly sensitive to change in its leadership as well as other contextual conditions. As a result, AWARE might return to its original adversarial approaches to addressing environmental concerns. These challenges suggest the need to extend the relationship well beyond personal connections and issue-dependent relations to establishing formalized process-oriented partnerships.

5.1.4 The Paradox of Relationship

Some AWARE respondents are interested in working with W-B more closely in order to bring on-the-ground changes. Some fear a loss of integrity and identity that could result from being (or being seen to be) co-opted by W-B. They expressed that the new AWARE should return to its core advocacy role and function as an independent 'outsider'. The disparity in respondents' attitudes towards the collaboration between AWARE and W-B represents the paradox of the relationship. Implications of this paradox are twofold:

- *A challenge* – some AWARE respondents viewed the increasing collaboration between AWARE and W-B with deep suspicion. They questioned whether it could yield true progress or it simply lead to muted actions by AWARE. Others saw improved relations with W-B and other private sector stakeholders as a necessary tactic in trying to change unsustainable business practices and achieve a greater good for the society. AWARE needs to grapple with the disparity of opinions within its organization, if it was to speak with one voice and take positions more resolutely.

- *A potential* – the different attitudes towards partnering with business stakeholders imply the existence of a force of vigilance. This will always remind AWARE to maintain independence and accountability to its mandate in its partnerships. It is important because notwithstanding the value of closer co-operation between AWARE

and W-B, there remains a need for a critical and independent voice in Whistler's public arena. Moreover, the independence and option of being able to resort to conflict or undertake overt pressure against potential unsustainable environmental practices is often an important precursor to meaningful forms of business-NGO partnerships.

The paradox of business-NGO partnerships is inevitable given that it brings together the apparently competing agendas of business and NGOs. The challenge facing partnering organizations is not to try to resolve paradoxes but rather to manage them effectively and learn from the experience. With this perspective in mind, the researcher later offers a series of recommendations for AWARE.

5.2 DISCUSSION

The trend and the factors affecting business-NGO relationships have been well documented in the field of business management during recent years. The findings of this research are able to verify such a trend as well as some of the instrumental factors in the context of a mountain resort destination – Whistler, BC. The research is nested in an overarching research program, the intent of which is to embed a "place" into an understanding of the influence of corporate environmental strategies. With this overarching research intent in mind, it is appropriate for the researcher to further explore the implications of the research findings for Whistler's sense of place.

It can be inferred from the community's vision statement that Whistler's sense of place includes the following components:

- *Pristine nature* – "premier mountain resort" and "rugged mountains";

- *Community* – "thriving resort community", "quality of life for residents" and "diversity of its people";

- *Sustainability* – "growth management", "environmental sustainability" and "financial stability";

- *Comfort* – "first class services";

- *Experiences for hosts/guests* – "we and our visitors will enjoy an optimum mix of world-class recreational opportunities"; and

- *Uniqueness* – whistler offers combination of comfort, excitement of experiences and pristine nature and it respects "the diversity of its people".

AWARE's solutions-oriented agenda and the strengthened collaboration between AWARE and W-B in addressing local sustainability issues hold several positive implications for Whistler's sense of place:

1) The initiatives resulting from collaboration between AWARE and W-B can more effectively address local environmental issues, thereby protecting the *pristine nature* that is highly cherished by locals as well as visitors. In addition, the common ground achieved between the two entities (e.g. TNS early adopters agreement) represents a strong force in achieving local *environmental sustainability*. This contributes to Whistler's image of being a sustainable destination.

2) W-B's proactive responses to local environmental challenges, and the fact that the two traditionally conflicting groups (AWARE and W-B) formed partnerships help reinforce the harmonious ambiance at the destination. With respect to the concept of *comfort* related to Whistler's first-class services, it is unlikely that this would be negated by overt actions (e.g. demonstration and picket) taken by AWARE, given the nature of its relationships with W-B.

However, it is believed that the strengthened collaboration between W-B and AWARE, and AWARE's "light" agenda also hold threats to Whistler's sense of place. These negative implications are perceived as follows:

1) Well-defined goals and objectives are prerequisites of successful partnerships. However, the down side of a well-defined agenda is that the ability of responding to contingent issues and the desire for championing new initiatives could be undermined. Through selectively putting manpower and resources into AWARE's activities which are critical to W-B's interests, and excelling in their environmental practices thus making AWARE redirect its attention and energy to other issues, W-B might dominate the local agenda. While containing an environmental component in its mission statement, Intrawest's vision is basically business oriented. The key elements of Intrawest's vision for its resorts are: four season resort, service and hospitality, respect for nature, uniqueness of the cultural and geographical setting of each resort, and playground for the western world. It is believed that Whistler's sense of place (*e.g. community, quality of life, social diversity*) will be compromised if it is captured in Intrawest's standardized business vision.

2) Through being more focused on its well-defined agenda, AWARE's has put less emphasis on responding to the environmental issues that are highlighted by community members. As a result, community members may lose a major vehicle for voicing their environmental concerns. With respect to the local public arena, this may imply an under-representation of community values and interests. Literature suggests that inhibited community participation and under-representation of diverse interests may result in monotony and homogeneity of tourism places.

3) When the previously mentioned features of Whistler are impacted, its *uniqueness* diminishes as well because the balance among comfort, excitement of experiences and pristine nature is undermined.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AWARE

It is apparent that an emerging partnership between AWARE and W-B exists. This partnership may not be an appropriate means for addressing all issues and concerns that AWARE will want to address. However, if planned and implemented appropriately, partnership can offer both AWARE and W-B useful tools for discussing and promoting the sustainable development in Whistler. In this regard and with the themes discussed in the previous section in mind, the researcher offers recommendations for managing future relations between AWARE and W-B.

5.3.1 Capacity Building

For capacity building, AWARE needs to consider strengthening and diversifying its fundraising practices.

Based on the comments received from interview respondents, AWARE's activities were often bounded by its limited human and financial resources. Therefore, it is recommended that AWARE's fundraising committee should consider reaching beyond the region and gain access to more funding source. The internet offers a convenient and efficient way for seeking funding opportunities. For example, the US-based Fundsnet Online Services (located at http://www.fundsnetservices.com) can be a useful gateway website. The Fundsnet is a privately owned website created for the purpose of providing non-profit organizations with information on financial resources available on the Internet. The website offers different search options by listing the categories of funds (e.g. Canada

funders, environment). For example, the researcher was able to locate the following prospective funding sources for Canadian environmental projects through browsing under the category of "environment" at the website:

- Friends of the Environment Foundation (located at: http://www.td.com/fef/)
- The Pathways to Nature (located at: http://www.nfwf.org/programs/programs.htm)
- Wilburforce Foundation (located at: http://www.wilburforce.org/)

Moreover, it is important for AWARE to investigate and participate in initiatives that aim to provide a long-term stable funding base which is not tied to single-issue project funding. For example, AWARE might consider applying for funding from the National Environmental Treasure (the NET, located at http://www.oursafetynet.org/). The NET is an initiative that designed to develop a long-term sustainable endowment fund for the environmental community. The trust fund for this public charitable foundation has been raising funds through campaigns encouraging each Canadian to donate $1 for the environment. In total, 50% of the money raised will be distributed to ENGOs to promote their capacity building (National Environmental Treasure 2000). It is believed that this type of funding allows AWARE more flexibility in designating the money for capacity building purposes rather than being bounded by the scope of a specific project.

AWARE could benefit from joining forces with other organizations in Whistler, and thereby combining resources and creating synergy in promoting changes in the business community.

AWARE and the Whistler Fisheries Stewardship Group (WFSG) have joined forces in a partnership project of designing and constructing an interpretive viewing platform in Whistler. This partnership project sets a greater example of how combined energy and expertise can help more effectively raise awareness about Whistler's local wetland habitats. It is recommended that AWARE should continue its partnership approach and

seek more collaborative opportunities with local environmental groups. These groups may include the Whistler Offroad Cycling Association, the Jennifer Jones Whistler Bear Society, the Whistler Angling Club etc.

Moreover, it is recommended that AWARE should join forces with local schools on educational programs (e.g. through environmental speaker series) and hands-on projects with respect to local environment. For example, one respondent expressed that the wetland baseline data gathering, a project which AWARE is currently involved in, can be a suitable biology project for the local grade 10 students. The collaboration will benefit:

- the local students in terms of raising their environmental awareness, and bringing them closer to on-the-ground stewardship projects; and
- AWARE from the perspective of more effectively utilizing local human resources.

5.3.2 Agenda and Style

Encouraging innovative thinking and problem identification within AWARE is important.

The study shows that AWARE places an increasing emphasis on solution-oriented activities. A concern associated with this agenda is that solutions and problems are relative. A focus on solutions, to some extent, defines AWARE's ability and desire to identify and address emerging issues in Whistler. Some would argue that society needs solutions if it is to continue evolving, but before solutions must come problem identification. Therefore, environmentalists who advocate the solutions agenda need to ask themselves: who is going to champion new problems in the future?

For example, one community respondent pointed out that AWARE had not been a very strong watchdog against W-B's expansion of ski runs across the landscape. It was

perceived that this issue was not addressed by AWARE because of its "solutions" orientation. This orientation was also exemplified in AWARE's limited involvement in the Whistler Creek development. It was perceived that AWARE recognized that "*development happens and AWARE can help the development happen in the right way*". However, more than one third of the AWARE respondents (36%) believed that it was not an environmental group's sole mandate to find solutions and thereby "*being reconciliatory*" and "*accepting compromises for a greater good*".

In spite of AWARE's collaborative and participatory approaches, AWARE needs to keep up its adversarial, uncompromising advocacy and action oriented roles in order to maintain the pressure and incentives for companies to adopt sound environmental practices.

Partnerships with W-B should not necessarily spell the end of protest actions when needed. Where there is corporate irresponsibility, AWARE should be respected for their ability to call the corporations to account and awaken the general public of social and environmental abuses.

5.3.3 Strategy

In order to facilitate on-the-ground changes, AWARE needs to seek greater leverage points inside W-B as well as the business community in Whistler.

It is important that AWARE correctly identifies and reaches core people within W-B who are the ultimate decision makers of the corporation's environmental actions. Without such linkages to key influencers, external ideas suggested by AWARE are likely to be dissipated before they reach core management decision makers. Moreover, incremental changes in the headquarters can result in more substantial change throughout all its

operations. In this regard, AWARE needs to gain access to key decision makers in the lead company: Intrawest Corporation.

5.3.4 Partnerships with W-B

AWARE needs to manage internal disparity of attitudes regarding partnering with W-B.

It was expressed that AWARE members exhibited different opinions towards partnering with business. AWARE needs to understand that partnership with W-B (and other business stakeholders in Whistler) will inevitably imply a dilemma for the organization given that the partnership brings together the apparently competing agendas of business and NGOs. With this in mind, it is probably more effective for AWARE to find a way to manage the situation and learn from the experiences, than try to resolve the disparity of opinions. It is recommended that AWARE should participate in a facilitated session. The purposes of this session will be:

- to evaluate AWARE's willingness to take a leap of faith and accept the ambiguity inherent in the idea of partnerships with business; and
- to help AWARE reach an internal agreement of the organization's position towards partnership building with W-B and other businesses in Whistler.

It is believed that this agreement will help prevent internal tensions within AWARE, which will likely result in low morale and mixed messages going out to potential partners.

AWARE needs to ensure that the partnerships are planned and implemented appropriately, provided that it made the commitment to partner with W-B.

AWARE needs to understand that if planned and implemented appropriately, partnerships can offer both business and AWARE useful tools for discuss and promote

sustainability. From this perspective, some common lessons from literature can be learned for the successful management of the partnership process. A business-NGO partnership checklist is suggested by Murphy and Bendell (1997a), associated with three phrases of partnership process, i.e. partnership initiation, implementation, and evolution. The suggestions below represent a selection of Murphy and Bendell's (1997a) recommendations that seem to be of particular relevance to AWARE.

Partnership Initiation

- Identify partnership purpose: process-oriented, project-oriented or product-oriented;
- Define the problem, the common ground and the opportunity;
- Define clear and defensible objectives and action plans;
- Assess the organizational capacity to perform the required tasks;
- Identify key people in the organization to lead the partnership process;
- Engage critical stakeholders in the process and decide on mechanisms for their future input, and establish for continued collaboration;
- Inform counterparts in environmental groups working on similar issues;
- Identify and target those sectors of the business with the greatest capacity to act quickly;
- Seek corporate disclosure of information to the environmental groups and the public;
- Be open about the potential pitfalls of working with business.
- Launch the partnership in an open public forum;

Partnership Implementation

- Support participant needs and interests with an emphasis on personal contact;
- Be adaptive and revise goals if necessary;

- Think creatively about new management systems to facilitate the partnership developing;

- Lobby government to support the initiative;

- Develop a policy on relations with business if one is not already in place;

- Consult external experts to analyse the implications of the partnership;

- Seek feedback from business parnters about the organization's role and contribution to the partnership;

- Don't let financial, resource and skills limitations restrict the growth of the partnership;

- Don't take money for partnerships which involve a public endorsement of participating business.

Partnership Evolution

- Attempt an assessment of the financial efficiency of the partnership;

- Assess expenditure against environmental gains and more abstract goals.

- Celebrate the success and share the credit;

- Support research into the initiative in order to identify lessons learned and new initiatives to be supported;

- Publish summaries of success and failures;

- Examine the potential to formalize achievements;

CHAPTER SIX - CONCLUSIONS

This chapter presents the major conclusions for the study, as well as provides recommendations for further research.

6.1 SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

This research established a framework for assessing business-NGO relations. The overall purpose was to assess the changing nature of the relationships between a community-based ENGO and a multinational corporation in Whistler BC, and to identify the various factors influencing the change. A literature review, a case study and a subsequent qualitative analysis were undertaken to achieve this paper's purpose.

In examining the evolution of the relationships between AWARE and W-B, this study verifies what is documented in the literature: over the years, AWARE has begun to develop strategies and campaigns which give a new priority to the pursuit of practical solutions. This operating style coincided with a fundamental shift in AWARE's attitudes towards W-B. The study demonstrates that the relationship between AWARE and W-B has evolved from mostly antagonism to dominantly collaboration.

Regarding the nature of the relationship between the two, most respondents perceived that AWARE and W-B had become stakeholders for each other as far as the environment and development of Whistler are concerned. However, it was believed that that W-B has not fully recognized AWARE's assets which might be supplemental and valuable to W-B. Due to this lack of understanding, it was difficult for AWARE to exert influence on W-B's decision-making related to its environmental practices. In spite of the fact that a

thorough mutual understanding between the two entities has yet to be achieved, and contextual conditions can largely influence their relationships, it is anticipated that the trends towards more collaboration between the two will extend into the future.

Both the literature and the study suggest that the evolution of business-NGO relations stems from the convergence of a number of factors. This study verifies some general factors documented in the literature. These factors are:

- identification of a common ground;
- external forces such as market and public expectation;
- W-B's desire to engage AWARE for improving credibility; and
- AWARE's need for support and greater leverage in bringing on-the-ground changes.

However, key among the identified factors in this study appear to be:

- AWARE's solution-oriented agenda and collaborative style;
- the influence of certain individuals in both AWARE and W-B; and
- the nature of W-B's environmental practices.

These factors share two features that they are all interrelated, and they are all prone to change. The volatility of these factors imposes a challenge to the emerging partnership between AWARE and W-B.

Moreover, some factors identified in the literature were not verified as being influential in this study. These factors were: need for objective evaluation, cross-fertilization of thinking between business and environmental groups, and greater efficiency in resource allocation. This finding implies that in order to build a meaningful partnership to achieve the common goal of sustainable development in Whistler, mutual understanding between

the two parties has to be nurtured, and the benefits of collaboration has to be clearly demonstrated.

It is suggested that the collaborative relationship between AWARE and W-B, and AWARE's solution oriented agenda hold both positive and negative implications for Whistler's sense of place. More specifically, it is believed that synergy and the harmonious ambiance created by their partnership helps protect Whistler's pristine nature and reinforce Whistler's image of being a place of "*comfort*". However, at the same time, Whistler's uniqueness as well as its emphasis on social diversity and community values may be undermined due to the well-defined local agenda controlled by W-B and yet not challenged by AWARE.

6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The process of conducting research generates new questions. This study brought to light the need for further inquiry in the following areas:

- There is a need to further examine the relationship between AWARE and W-B from the perspective of W-B. This will help verify the findings of this research such as the perceived convergence of business and environmental thinking, and the instrumental factors affecting the relationships between AWARE and W-B.

- Similar studies could be conducted with W-B's other local stakeholders in the Whistler community such as other local environmental groups, home owners, and elected officials.

- Similar studies could be conducted in Intrawest's other resorts such as Tremblant and Blue Mountain. This will help externally validate the key findings of this study.

- The research lends itself to further exploration of the factors that are instrumental in influencing the NGO-business relations. Particularly important needs relate to: personal influences, organizational culture, communication and the establishment of common ground.

APPENDIX A – ETHICS APPROVAL

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF RESEARCH ETHICS

BURNABY, BRITISH COLUMBIA
CANADA V5A 1S6
Telephone: 604-291-3447
FAX: 604-268-6785

April 13, 2004

Ms. Na Xu
Graduate Student
School of Resource &
 Environmental Management
Simon Fraser University

Dear Ms. Xu:

Re: The Changing Nature of Corporate-Environmental
Non-Governmental Organization Relationships:
A Whistler Case Study
SSHRC

The above-titled ethics application has been granted approval by the
Simon Fraser Research Ethics Board, in accordance with Policy R 20.01,
"Ethics Review of Research Involving Human Subjects".

Sincerely,

Dr. Hal Weinberg, Director
Office of Research Ethics

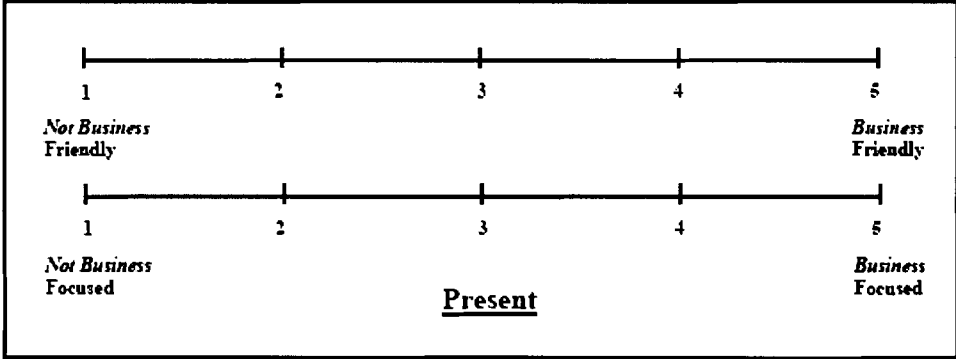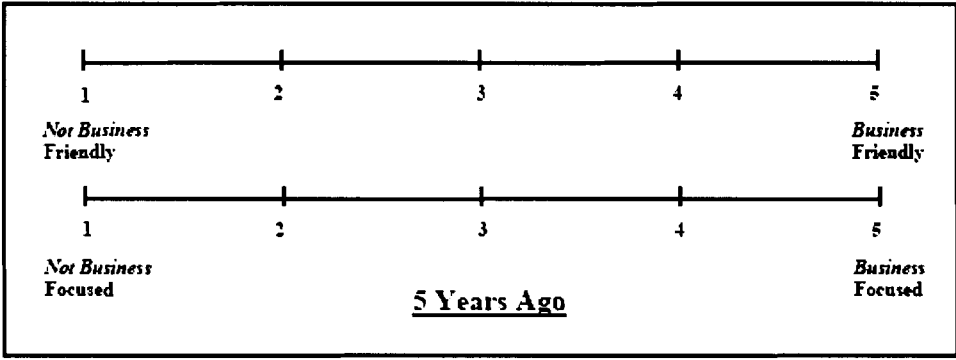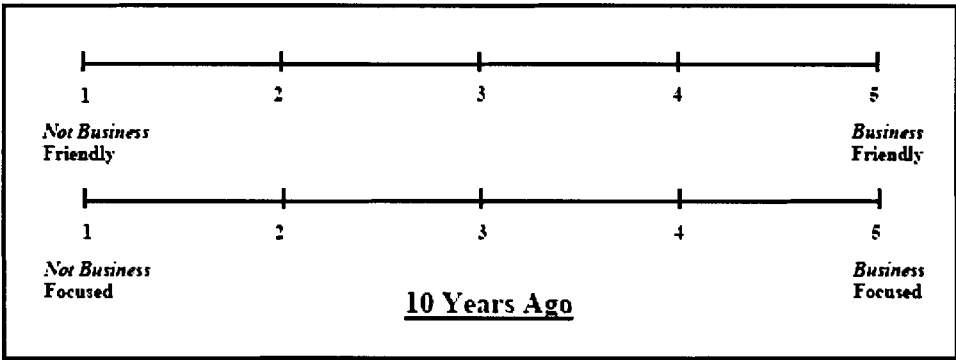# APPENDIX B – INTERVIEW GUIDE

Thematic Area I:

About AWARE agenda, style, and attitude to business

1)   What are the main themes of AWARE's activities or campaigns at Whistler?

2)   Has AWARE, as an ENGO at a tourism destination, participated in any of the following activities in the past 10 years? If yes, to what extent has AWARE been involved in these activities? (Please check all boxes that apply).

Community Activities	Yes	Advisor	Facilitator	Collaborator	Leader	No
Collaborate on community improvement projects or analysis of alternative approaches	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Help plan community development	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Launch educational and awareness programs and trainings on environmental issues	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Develop participatory programs to encourage community participation in planning and management	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Support the use of traditional knowledge	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mobilize actions against local polluters and environment violators	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Initiate dialogue among community stakeholders to address development/environmental concerns	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Disseminate knowledge and information to community	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Monitor and evaluate industry and government performance with respect to local environment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Conduct ecological or socio-cultural researches of the destination	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Establish program as tools for conservation and sustainable development	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Develop and implement principles and codes for sustainable development of the community	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other (please specify)						

3) In your opinion, has the operating agenda and style of AWARE at Whistler changed over time since you became involved in its activities (or its foundation in 1989)?

4) If there has been a change, what are the reasons for the change?

5) Has AWARE's attitude towards business changed over time? Within each time period, how would you position AWARE along the scales presented below?

6) Could you please comment on the reasons for AWARE's attitude change?

```
├────────┼────────┼────────┼────────┤
1        2        3        4        5
Not Business                        Business
Friendly                            Friendly

├────────┼────────┼────────┼────────┤
1        2        3        4        5
Not Business                        Business
Focused          10 Years Ago       Focused
```

```
├────────┼────────┼────────┼────────┤
1        2        3        4        5
Not Business                        Business
Friendly                            Friendly

├────────┼────────┼────────┼────────┤
1        2        3        4        5
Not Business                        Business
Focused          5 Years Ago        Focused
```

```
├────────┼────────┼────────┼────────┤
1        2        3        4        5
Not Business                        Business
Friendly                            Friendly

├────────┼────────┼────────┼────────┤
1        2        3        4        5
Not Business                        Business
Focused          Present            Focused
```

Thematic Area II:

Assessing AWARE and Intrawest relationships

7) For the period of 1990 to 2003 (*or, for the period that you became involved in AWARE activities*), what do you feel were the major events that created points of interaction between AWARE and Intrawest? Please elaborate on each interaction with respect to:

    a. What was the main issue?

    b. What position and actions were taken by AWARE?

    c. How did Intrawest respond to AWARE or to the whole community?

8) Was there a relationship formed between AWARE and Intrawest as a result of the interaction?

9) How would you characterize the relationship between them?

10) What do you think are the future directions of the relationship between AWARE and Intrawest?

11) In your opinion, would a stronger relationship between AWARE and Intrwest be desirable?

    a. How close should the relationship between AWARE and Intrawest become?

12) Do you think AWARE regards Intrawest as its stakeholder?

13) What qualities and assets does Intrawest possess that make it important to the activities of AWARE?

14) From your perspective, how do you agree that each of the following elements to be the reason why AWARE wants to partner with Intrawest and other corporations?

(strongly disagree = 1; somewhat disagree = 2; uncertain = 3; somewhat agree = 4; strongly agree = 5)

- Growing interest in markets _____
- Inability to get things done through the government _____
- Need for more resources (e.g. funding, technical, management expertise _____
- Desire to partner with business to gain credibility with government _____
- Cross-fertilization of thinking _____
- Greater leverage in making things happen _____

15) Can Intrawest influence AWARE's decision-making regarding AWARE's activities and campaigns? Through which ways, can Intrawest exert its influences?

16) Do you think Intrawest regards AWARE as its stakeholder?

17) What qualities and assets does AWARE possess that make it important to the activities of AWARE?

18) From your perspective, how do you agree that each of the following elements to be the reason why Intrawest wants to partner with AWARE?

    (strongly disagree = 1; somewhat disagree = 2; uncertain = 3; somewhat agree = 4; strongly agree = 5)

    - Improve credibility with market _____
    - Improve credibility with public stakeholders _____
    - Need for objective evaluation of environmental actions _____
    - Cross-fertilization of thinking in dealing with environmental issues _____
    - Greater efficiency in resource allocation _____
    - Desire to head off negative public confrontations _____
    - Desire to engage stakeholders for public relation purposes _____

19) Can AWARE influence Intrawest's decision-making process especially with regarding to its environmental strategies? At what level is AWARE most effective in exerting its influences?

20) Overall, what do you think are the major factors that influence the nature of relationships between an ENGO like AWARE and a corporation like Intrawest?

APPENDIX C – PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Dear Respondent,

My name is Na Xu and I am a graduate student in the School of Resource and Environmental Management at Simon Fraser University. I am in the process of conducting research related to Environmental Non-government Organisations (ENGOs) with my supervisors, Drs. Peter Williams and Alison Gill at SFU.

More specifically, I am interested in examining how a community-based ENGO perceive and manage their relationships with corporations in areas related to environmental programs and issues. The overriding objective is to assess the changing nature of relationships between an ENGO and a tourism corporation at a mountain resort destination. We have selected Whistler as a case study community for this research because of the wide array of environmental programs and initiatives that have been developed in this destination over the past decade. I conducted some interviews with a few AWARE members in the past two weeks. My interview participants including Ms. Tina Symko (AWARE co-ordinator) have suggested that you are a key person to talk to concerning your perspectives on this topic, given your involvement in AWARE activities. While, your individual responses will be kept completely confidential, they will be reported collectively in my research along with those of other people I intend to interview.

Would it be possible for you to share about 40 minutes of your time to participate in a personal interview with me in this topic? If so, I would be pleased to conduct the interview at a time and place that was convenient to you.

Would you kindly contact me to indicate your willingness to participate, as well as to suggest the most appropriate timing for the interview? You can email me at xna@sfu.ca or call me at (604) 729-6648 (cell) or (604) 630-6079 (home), to discuss alternatives.

Thank you very much for your help. I look forward to your reply.

Yours Sincerely,
Na Xu

APPENDIX D – CONSENT FORM

Introduction

The University and the interviewer conducting this interview subscribe to the ethical conduct of research and to the protection at all times of the interests and safety of all research participants. This form and the information that it contains are given to you for your own protection and full understanding of the procedures we will be using in this interview. Your signature on this form will signify that:

- you have received a document which describes the interview intent, content, and procedures that we will use to report findings provided by you and the other participants; and the efforts will we will use to protect the confidentiality of your own views, as well as those of the other participants;
- you have had an adequate opportunity to consider the information in the documents provided; and
- you voluntarily agree to participate in the project.

Consent

Having been asked by the Centre For Tourism Policy and Research of the School of Resource and Environmental Management at Simon Fraser University to participate in this interview, I have read the procedures specified in the interview documentation.

I understand the procedures to be used in the collection of information in this interview;

I understand that I may withdraw my participation in this interview at any time;

I also understand that I may register any complaint I might have about the interview with Dr. B. Lewis, Dean of the Faculty of Applied Science of Simon Fraser University;

I may obtain copies of the results of the interview findings, upon completion by contacting Dr. Peter Williams of the Centre For Tourism Policy and Research;

I have been informed that the specific research information that I provide will be held confidential by Dr. Peter Williams, at the Centre For Tourism Policy and Research;

I agree to participate by orally providing my personal perspectives and suggestions on those issues outlined in the interview content guide provided to me.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Signature:_____   Witness:_____

Date: _____

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