

## Press release

### **Evolution of relations between NGOs and companies: coalitions, lobbying, partnerships... NGOs stand as a new power that companies can no longer overlook**

*More than 330 NGOs – companies partnerships numbered in France today*

Paris, 28<sup>th</sup> June 2006 - Novethic and Manifeste published today an exclusive study "Panorama of NGOs - companies relations: which evolution for which influences ?" Involving over 561 NGOs (385 of them French) listed in the [www.wwo.fr](http://www.wwo.fr) database enriched by numerous case studies on recent campaigns involving large companies or banks by NGOs, this recapitulative study numbers 334 partnerships between companies and NGOs and reveals the new trends of NGOs - companies relations.

#### **An important development of NGOs - companies partnerships**

Since 2002, the trend to partnerships between companies and NGOs is on the rise. Large international NGOs have almost all started closer links with the private sector. This phenomenon is concentrated: the 334 partnerships numbered by the [www.wwo.fr](http://www.wwo.fr) site originate from 80 NGOs (out of 561).

One third of such partnerships – that is 129 – is managed by only 14 NGOs. Two highly distinct types of partnerships appear: geared to corporate sponsorship (premium to the logo, low constraints) or genuinely strategic (mutual commitments, global corporate social responsibility approach, follow-up and reporting clauses). The financial facet of partnerships is a key factor: 17 qualitative interviews of NGOs' managers, of all sizes, show that 2/3 of them wish, through partnerships with companies, to increase the share of their budget derived from private resources.

#### **The NGO, spokesman for the general public and a "must" interlocutor for companies**

The action methods of NGOs clearly evolved from a contesting stance to reform and partnership dynamics. Currently a full share player in the legislative, political and economic debate, the NGOs do upset the power balances and reach up to the debate at the same level, with at times, the same tools as companies. Faced with the trust of the public (70% of French people consider they are right in campaigning against multi national corporations) NGOs are becoming the reference organizations for civil society.

#### **From lobbying to shareholder activism, NGOs now use all possible tools to change the rules of the game**

Relegated for years to a "watch out and see" role, NGOs also extend their modes of action so as to manage to change regulations since they cannot influence the behaviour of individual companies. Punctual coalitions (Alliance pour la Planète) or sector based alliances (Banktrack on finance), purchase of company stocks (Amnesty International), lobbying (REACH European regulations), increased role of consumers' associations (law suits filed by UFC)..., through the study of concrete cases the study investigates these new action patterns and the increasingly professional bend of NGOs. Campaigns against banks (the Bakou-Ceyhan pipeline, the Sakhalin II project, 'Mon argent a-t-il bonne conscience ?' (Is my money clean?...)) are specific illustrations of the clout and effectiveness of the methods used.

#### **Increasing media coverage, a symbol of the influence of NGOs**

The NGO's' press coverage level globally doubled between 2002 and 2006, a sign of the growing interest of the media for the social player they have become and the causes they advocate. The highest coverage ranking NGOs in the media over the past four years are Oxfam and Greenpeace for international organizations and "UFC Que Choisir" in France.

**About Novethic:** A subsidiary of the Caisse des Dépôts, Novethic is a research, information and expertise centre on socially responsible investment and corporate social and environmental responsibility. Its website [www.novethic.fr](http://www.novethic.fr) is a source of reference information for the players of responsible economy

**About "Manifeste":** created in 2002, Manifeste, the agency for responsible communication, provides advice to large companies, public institutions and NGOs. Manifeste also publishes the [www.wwo.fr](http://www.wwo.fr) website, an information site on NGOs/companies relations.

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