A Study of Greenpeace Campaigns

Environmental Communication of Video Game Console Developers

By: Peder Santesson
Supervisor: Magnus Boström
Abstract

This thesis explores the three campaigns Greenpeace has made towards the video game console producing companies, Sony, Microsoft and Nintendo. Using a qualitative approach I investigate how communication from an environmental organization may affect companies and what challenges Greenpeace face when they develop campaigns in relation to companies. Even though the industry is quickly expanding, almost no one had ever discussed video game consoles in relation to the environment. The situation changed when Greenpeace included Microsoft and Nintendo in their 6th edition of the “Guide to Greener Electronics”. In this guide companies in the consumer electronic industry were ranked based on their environmental communication and Microsoft and Nintendo received a very low score. Greenpeace was critiqued for the way their guide was carried out. The “Clash of the Consoles” campaign was an internet video summarizing the critics towards the game console producing companies from “Guide to Greener Electronics”. The campaign “Playing Dirty” investigated chemicals in the consoles and concluded that the companies followed legislation on regulated chemicals, but on unregulated chemicals high levels was fond in some cases. Greenpeace is usually known for using a direct approach with striking images in their campaigns. But in these cases no striking images have been used which makes it harder for them to gain sympathy for their campaigns. The concept of CSR which is socially constructed has great importance for environmental communication. However CSR has a large number of different interpretations. As shown in the thesis Greenpeace and the three companies focus on different aspects of CSR.

Keywords: Communication, CSR, Greenpeace, Electronics, Social movements, Video Game consoles
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1. Introduction/Background

The market and the use of consumer electronics is constantly increasing and gets more and more advanced, but at the same time the lifespan of these goods get shorter which generates more electronic waste (e-waste). Greenpeace refers to the UN which estimates that 20-50 million tons of e-waste is produced annually in the world. This waste might cause a risk for both the environment and human health. Some of this e-waste might end up in scrap yards in developing countries affecting the local environment (Greenpeace 2008, p. 4).

Most of the focus on consumer electronics has been on the environmental impacts of mobile phones and TVs. Very little has been said about the impact of the video game industry which must be considered to be quite remarkable since what in regarded as the first video game, “Spacewar” was developed as early as 1962 and the first commercial video game console, Magnavox Odyssey was released 1972 in the United States (Super Play, 2004 p. 2). The market of video game consoles is “one of the fastest growing markets in consumer electronics” (Greenpeace, 2008 p.3) comparable to both the movie and music industry. Therefore the video game consoles are interesting since they haven’t had a proper environmental investigation until the end of 2007 when Greenpeace released the 6th edition of “Guide to Greener Electronics” which ranked companies’ environmental performance based on their environmental communication. The report “Clash of the consoles” followed up “Guide to Greener Electronics” and “Playing Dirty Analysis of hazardous chemicals and materials in games console components” (hereafter referred to as “Playing Dirty”) focused on chemical analysis of the three consoles.

This thesis focuses on four actors: Greenpeace which is the environmental organization who wrote the reports and Sony, Microsoft and Nintendo which are the three dominating video game console developers. A brief history of the actors can be read below. The release years of different consoles mentioned refers to the European release. The consoles mentioned are a summary of the most important consoles of the three companies that have been released in Europe, therefore they are fewer compared to the US and Japanese market. The majority of the consoles mentioned have received updated versions.

Greenpeace is one of the world’s most recognized environmental organizations. Founded 1971 in Canada the organization has grown to become a global organization. They are famous for their direct approach in their campaigns, a tactic which involves the use of strong images and non-violence confrontation.
Sony is a Japanese company established in 1946 (Sony Corporation, 2010b, p.41) with 171300 employees today (Sony Corporation, 2010b, p.43). Sony released its first console, PlayStation (PSX) in 1995, followed by PlayStation 2 (PS2) (2000) and PlayStation 3 (PS3) (2007). PlayStation Portable (PSP) was released in 2005 (Sony Computer Entertainment Europe 2010).

Microsoft was founded in 1975 in the USA. The company has 89000 employees today. 54000 of them work in the US and 35000 internationally (Microsoft 2010, 2011 p. 14). Microsoft is the newest of the three companies in the console producing industry releasing XBOX (2002) and XBOX 360 (2005) (Super Play, 2004 p.3 and Microsoft Corporation 2006, p 2).

Nintendo is the company that has been a game console producer for the longest time of the three companies that dominates the market today. The company was founded in September 1889 in Japan and incorporated in November 1947 (Nintendo, 2010c p. 48). In 2010 the company had 4225 employees (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2010a). Nintendo has released the following stationary consoles: Nintendo Entertainment System (NES) (1986), Super Nintendo Entertainment System (SNES) (1992), Nintendo 64 (N64) (1997), Nintendo Gamecube (2002) and Nintendo Wii (2006). The portable consoles released has been: Game Boy (1990), Game Boy Color (1999), Game Boy Advance (2001), Nintendo DS (NDS) (2005) and Nintendo 3DS (2011) (Nintendo of Europe GmbH, 2011).

2.1 Research Problem

This thesis will focus on the video game consoles, and illuminate a part of consumer electronics which hasn’t been investigated much previously. The environmental impact of consumer electronics was investigated by Greenpeace based on the environmental information disseminated from companies in the 1st edition of “Guide to Greener Electronics” published in August 2006, where Sony was included. Microsoft and Nintendo were not included until the 6th edition published in November 2007. Since the Greenpeace campaign evaluated the environmental performance based on the three companies own communication, the result was controversial for an industry which previously has received little attention regarding their environmental performance. This started a debate on how the report was done. “Clash of the Consoles” was an internet campaign which summed up the “Guide to Greener
Electronics” report in a humorous way, trying to get the attention from an audience used to computer animation.

In “Playing Dirty” Greenpeace investigated chemicals in these consoles at their own laboratories. The report showed a difference on what chemicals Greenpeace believes should be regulated and the ones that are regulated under EU legislation. Greenpeace thinks EU regulations cover too few chemicals and believe several unregulated chemicals found in video game consoles could be harmful for people and the environment.

All these campaigns were done during a short period of time covering the years 2007-2010 (2006-2010 if the first time Sony was a part of the “Guide to Greener Electronics” is included), which will be the focus of this thesis. I will also look at older sources, both on other parts or electronics and other subjects relating to the one I have chosen.

Greenpeace is one of the most well-known environmental organizations in the world with a goal of creating a greener society. Influencing corporations to go green is an important goal of the organization. Therefore it is interesting to look at the ways Greenpeace campaigns might have affected the companies. The thesis will also discuss the obstacles that may occur when a Non Governmental Organization (NGO) such as Greenpeace investigates companies and how the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) can be perceived differently.

I will also look at Greenpeace as a social movement and its special relation to the media as well as the way Greenpeace has carried out their campaigns and communicated the results in order to get a full understanding.

The focus of this thesis will be on stationary video game consoles, not computer gaming. The stationary of interest are: Nintendo Wii, Sony PlayStation 3 and Microsoft XBOX 360. To lesser extent portable consoles such as Nintendo DS and Sony PlayStation Portable will be mentioned. During the writing of this thesis the new portable console Nintendo 3DS have just been released, but it is too new to be included here.

2.2. Research objective

The purpose of this thesis is to explore how the campaigns by an environmental NGO might affect companies in an industry that have not been much investigated before. By using literature and studies on closely related subjects as well as information from both Greenpeace and the three companies mentioned I will be able to get a clearer picture of the campaigns
since I look at it from both Greenpeace and the companies’ perspective. In order to obtain a better understanding I will use, 1) Media analysis, 2) social movement theory and 3) CSR-perspective as theories for investigating my topic.

The reports from Greenpeace will be used to understand how Greenpeace perceives the issue. From the companies I will look at the Annual and CSR reports of 2007 and 2010. The Annual and CSR reports of 2007 have been chosen since they were the latest version of these reports available at the time the 6th version of the “Guide to Greener Electronics” was made. The 2010 Annual and CSR reports were the latest reports available at the time of writing this thesis. When I look at this information it will help me to improve my understanding on the challenges Greenpeace has faced when doing these campaigns.

2.3. Research questions

1. How may communication from an environmental organization affect companies?

2. What are the challenges that an NGO such as Greenpeace face when it develops campaigns in relation to companies?

2.4 Research methodology and methods

I will use social constructivism as an overall approach to explain and discuss my findings in the Analysis and Discussion part at the end of the thesis. The reason for choosing this approach is that social constructivism can be interrelated to the theoretical perspectives that I use. Social constructivism can be divided into two parts, according to Best (1989): strict constructionists believe that one can’t make any assumptions from an objective reality (Anderson, 1997 p. 13). The contexted constructionists believe that claims-making involves judgment over certain conditions (Anderson, 1997 p. 14). It is therefore hard to be objective.

According to the social constructivist approach language is important for how reality is constituted (Livesey, 2001 p. 59). To illustrate how social constructivism can work we can use the word “environment” as an example. The word itself can be very abstract and represent different meanings to different people (Corbett, 2006 p. 60) as well as having an emotional
label attached to it. An environmentalist can be seen in a positive way, as someone trying to protect the environment or be referred to in a stereotypical and negative way e.g. “tree-hugger” or “hippie”, someone who wants to disturb people, their livelihood and to restrict freedom (Corbett, 2006 p. 59). The same goes for an organization such as Greenpeace (Grant, 2001, p. 338). When discussing social constructivism Hannigan (2006) talks about claims-making. How an issue is viewed and its progress is much dependent on the social actor which makes the claim (Hannigan, 2006 p. 63). In order for the claim to be seen as valid it is extra important that it is backed up by a scientific authority (Hannigan, 2006 p. 77).

Social constructivism can be applied to e.g. the CSR concept since it has such a large number of different definitions and interpretations. It will be used to analyze both my research questions.

The thesis studies the phenomena of an environmental organization trying to influence a part of an industry. The fact that little has been written about this my topic might be an obstacle. Therefore I will use a qualitative approach where I collect information from several sources both on my subject and subjects closely related to the one in this thesis (Creswell, 2007 p.36). I will compare them to each other in order to find similarities and increase validity which is referred to as triangulation. I will use Greenpeace campaigns as a starting point, and then other literature as well as other sources to get a better understanding of the video game consoles’ environmental communication and its environmental impact. Greenpeace has also made two videos about their campaigns which can be accessed on the internet pages of Greenpeace France (2007)¹ and Greenpeace International (2008b)². The videos will be analyzed from the same perspective as written material.

As for theories, I will divide my thesis into three sections which will be: media analysis, social movement theory, and CSR perspective. These are interconnected as we will see throughout the thesis as well as in the analysis and discussion. CSR will receive the largest amount of space of these above mentioned theoretical sections as I believe it is extra important in order to gain more knowledge of corporate communication. When comparing the companies own environmental communication between 2007 and 2010 I will see if there is any difference in communication between the two chosen years in the Annual and CSR reports. If so, it may indicate a possible effect from Greenpeace campaigns. The reason for choosing these two types of reports are that annual reports are one of the main ways for corporations to communicate the most important aspects of the previous fiscal year.

¹ http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x4eqq7_la-guerre-des-consoles-a-commence_videogames
² http://www.greenpeace.org/international/en/multimedia/videos/Playing-Dirty/
(Fredriksson 2008 p. 82). Annual reports are mostly written for the investor audience because the law demands it (Fredriksson, 2008 p.84). CSR reports are the main tool for companies to communicate what they do beyond what they are required by law.

The success of Greenpeace campaigns depends much on the amount of attention they will be able to receive. I will discuss the relation and asymmetrical dependency between social movements and the media in order to get a better understanding of why Greenpeace uses spectacular actions for their campaigns. I will apply this assumption of Greenpeace using spectacular actions in order to see how valid it is for the three campaigns. This is done in order to be able to answer the second research question.

Greenpeace is also a part of the environmental movement which can be seen as a part of the social movement. Social movements consist of many different actors with different tactics. In my empirical data I will discuss Greenpeace tactics, its ideological stance and history in order to gain a better understanding on how and why they choose to campaign in the way that they did. This information will also be important for discussing the second research question.

I will make analyses of 2007 and 2010 Annual and CSR reports or equivalent to see the issue from the companies’ perspective and how they actually perceive CSR. I have chosen to look at the 2007 version of the Annual and CSR report since it was the latest reports available at the time all three investigated companies were included into “Guide to Greener Electronics” The 2010 versions were the latest reports available at the time of writing this thesis. A problem that I am aware of is the short time span which the research of the companies covers. This problem cannot be avoided since the topic is new and the latest version of “Guide to Greener Electronics” was published in October 2010. If I am able to see a possible difference between the 2007 and 2010 version of the Annual and CSR report, then there are possibilities that Greenpeace campaigns have had some effects.

Much of the information on Greenpeace campaigns in general comes from scientific literature compared to articles on my topic in relation to the video game industry which mainly comes from video game magazines or websites writing about the industry. The main audience of the magazines and game sites are those that are interested in learning about the best new games. Therefore they have different intended audience.

I have contacted representatives from both Greenpeace and the companies’ who gave statements on the campaigns in different magazines and websites at the time these campaigns were newly released. These contacts were made by e-mails and telephone calls. A problem I encountered was that in most cases the people that were spokespersons for Greenpeace or the
companies a few years ago now have different tasks and therefore they couldn’t make a comment on the questions that I asked. Therefore I did not gain much extra knowledge from these contacts.

I have three appendixes in order to make the reading easier. In Appendix I, I have placed a List of definitions. Appendix II shows a Full scoreboard of all editions of Greenpeace “Guide to Greener Electronics” and Appendix III gives a List of chemicals appearing in the “Playing Dirty” campaign.

3. Theory

For my thesis I have chosen to look at media analyses, social movements’ theory and CSR-perspectives as theories which will guide me towards a better understanding of the issue.

3.1 Media analysis

Media is of major importance regarding agenda setting and is often viewed as the “Fourth Estate; alongside with the executive, the legislative and the judiciary” (Anderson, 1997 p. 46). Gamson and Wolfsfeld (1993) agree and argue that movements are more dependent on media than the opposite. There are three major reasons for this: (Gamson, Wolfsfeld, 1993 p.116)

1. Mobilization, in order to reach their supporters
2. Validation, by being in the media spotlight the movement can be seen as important
3. Scope enlargement, refers to attracting third parties in order to get more people involved

Carroll and Ratner (1999, p. 3) summarizes the above mentioned that there is an asymmetrical dependency between movements and the media. By this we can see that getting media attention can be very crucial for an environmental organization. Others argue that media usually prefers spectacular unusual events (Hannigan, 2006 p. 84) because people get more touched by an issue if they can visualize it (Anderson, 1997 p. 149). This could show that media has a symbiotic relation to movements since Greenpeace are known for using these spectacular images in their campaigns. Greenpeace is especially known for their relation to
the media which I will come back to in the empirical data section.

### 3.2 Social movement theory

A social movement is defined as “organized, collective forms of action”, which “operate outside of mainstream political institutions” (Anderson, 1997 p. 77). Social movements can be divided into old and New Social Movements (NSM). What is common for New Social Movements which Greenpeace is a part of, is that they usually have been founded since the 1960s and 70s. They are often less rigid when it comes to their organizational structure (Yearley, 2005 p. 11) compared to the old movement which is more hierarchical. Environmental movements can sometimes have a mix of both, their organization can be traditional conservation with a top-down approach while radical networks can be more bottom-up (Anderson, 1997 p. 78). Environmental organizations which are a part of the social movement often see themselves as operating in a global interest and representing humanity (Yearley, 2005 p. 27). The purpose of these environmental organizations is often to challenge the status quo and put pressure on the ones that they are campaigning against (Corbett, 2006 p. 301). With the social movement thinking in mind we will get a better understanding of Greenpeace roots. Creating a debate of an issue can make the public more aware of the problem. I will investigate to what extent Greenpeace has managed to do this.

### 3.3 CSR perspective

CSR is an important phenomenon for corporations because it is the way in which companies communicate what they do beyond what they are legally forced to. The construction of CSR can be traced back to the 1950s (Carroll, 1999 p. 268) but at that time the concept was mostly referred to as just Social Responsibility (SR) (Carroll, 1999 p. 269).

After sustainable development started to become widely known in the 1990s the Triple-Bottom line became a convenient metaphor. The Triple Bottom line refers to communication with stakeholders on economic prosperity, social justice and environmental quality (Wheeler, Elkington, 2001 p.1). At the same time we could see a large increase in corporate environmental reporting, especially in North America and Europe (Wheeler, Elkington, 2001 p.2). CSR has then changed, been expanded, gotten more alternative meanings and today the
concept has many different interpretations (Corbett, 2006 p. 252).

The many interpretations of the CSR concept can be both its strength and its weakness, giving just one definition can be tricky. There are a large number of different CSR definitions. Dahlsrud (2006 p. 4) has looked at 37 definitions and thinks CSR can be divided into five dimensions:

1. *The environmental dimension*, here we can see concerns of how the business affects the environment and how to improve the production

2. *The social dimension* focuses on the social aspects of the business such as how communities are affected

3. *The economic dimension* sees CSR from a business perspective and promotes the economic development

4. *The stakeholder dimension* focuses on all kinds of stakeholders affected varying from employees to communities

5. *The voluntariness dimension* deals with moral issues and accountability

Dahlsrud discusses that the environmental dimension is the one that has had the lowest ratio of these five dimensions historically. A reason for this might be that the environment wasn’t included in the early definitions of CSR thus lowering its influence. The World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) differentiates between Corporate Environmental Responsibility (CER) and Corporate Social Responsibility (Dahlsrud, 2006 p. 5) which makes it more confusing. This is the reason why some companies have separate environmental reports while others include it as a part of their CSR report. The most common definition of CSR found by Dahlsrud (2006) was the one stated by the Commission of the European Communities in 2001 which define CSR as: “A concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interactions with stakeholders on a voluntary basis” (Dahlsrud, 2006 p.7). This is the definition I have in mind when talking about CSR. I will come back to Dahlsrud’s five
dimensions when I discuss the companies CSR reports. Dawkins (2004) has found that there is a difference between what companies focuses on regarding corporate responsibility based on their region. US stakeholders emphasize contribution to communities. Northern Europe sees environmental issues as very important and in Japan employment issues are of great concern (Dawkins, 2004 p. 112).

There are several reasons for a company to engage in CSR reporting. A good environmental performance and reporting could be essential for how the brand is perceived (Gueterbock, 2004 p. 270). This type of information is important for the investment community, since it tells about possible risks which could cost an investor much money if anything goes wrong. Communicating about the environmental performance can be seen as a way of showing openness (Gueterbock, 2004 p. 265). Openness is important in the aspect of trust, credibility and reliability (Gregory, Miller, 1998 p. 101) which could also improve a company’s reputation. In order to improve how the brand is perceived many companies donate money to charity or engage in other initiatives which could be everything from NGO partnerships, clean up programs and awareness increasing initiatives (Jose, Lee, 2007 p. 315). Dawkins (2004) refers to statistics which shows that 49 % of British adults (16+) tend to agree and 25 % strongly agrees with the statement “If I had more information about companies’ social, environmental and ethical behavior this would influence my decision about what I buy” (Dawkins, 2004 p. 115).

There are those that criticize the CSR concept though. These people believe that there can be a gap between what companies say they do in an Annual or CSR report and what they actually are doing (Cerin, 2002 p. 61). As we learned earlier, language could be seen as constructed. By using the right jargon and reporting methods a company could portray itself in a more positive way than it actually is, therefore CSR could be seen as a PR trick (Boström, 2001 p. 251). This is often referred to as greenwashing. Greenwashing is “when an organization tries to substitute an environmentally friendly image for a lack of performance” (Corbett, 2006 p. 254).

Based on Dahlsrud’s five dimensions I will analyze which dimensions are the most prominent in the CSR reports, and if the concept is mentioned in the Annual reports. I will also look at the just mentioned reasons for engaging in CSR (showing openness, improving the brand and charity) as well as see if the companies follow their own claims. This will be
done in order to possibly find common themes and what parts of CSR the company’s focus on. I will then compare it to what aspects of CSR Greenpeace emphasize.

4. History of Greenpeace and their campaign tactics

Greenpeace is one of the most well-known NGOs in the world with a logo as recognizable as most large corporations (Zelko, 2004 p 127). Greenpeace started from the “Don’t make a Wave Committee” which was an offshoot of Sierra Club’s British Columbia branch that was created in 1969 (Carroll, Ratner, 1999 p. 7). Greenpeace was founded in 1971 in the same time period as the environmental concern rose throughout the world (Corbett, 2006 p. 65). Greenpeace quickly expanded and Greenpeace International was founded in 1979 (Boström, 2001 p. 75).

Greenpeace as an organization has several characteristics which they are well-known for. Nonviolence and civic disobedience are important (Carroll, Ratner, 1999 p. 9) which has its roots in popular ecology, radical pacifism and the anti-nuclear movement (Zelko, 2004 p 129). They see themselves as “warriors of the rainbow” who will protect the earth from environmental destruction (Zelko, 2004 p 130). “Rainbow Warrior” was also the name of the famous Greenpeace vessel used for protesting against nuclear testing’s in French Polynesia.

Greenpeace want to illuminate issues which aren’t talked about enough and are seldom seen in the media (Boström, 2001 p. 74). By giving focus to a new issue they hope others will follow and give it attention. They usually focus on one question at a time (Boström, 2001 p. 126). If another environmental organization is campaigning for a certain issue in a satisfying way, then Greenpeace doesn’t have to since the issue already has been brought up on the agenda.

Greenpeace is known as an organization which prefers acts before talk, an organization which makes things happen, puts demands on corporations and achieves the most results. This is often seen as direct actions which some believe to be on the legal margin. Direct actions usually get large media coverage (Gueterbock, 2004 p. 269). These actions often make use of “image events” which takes advantage of the demands of striking pictures from media. The tactic is based on a belief that these images can make people feel uncomfortable and therefore
more willing to act against what is experienced as wrong (Cox, 2006 p. 177). Another expression for the same campaigning idea is "mind bombs", images that will get into people’s minds and are intended to create a new awareness, (Cox, 2006 p. 248) break people’s comfortable equilibrium and change their worldviews (DeLuca, 1999 p. 1).

As a result of the direct actions, Greenpeace can be seen to have a symbiotic relation to mass media (Carroll, Ratner, 1999 p. 14). Media likes these actions because they are spectacular and will make a great news story. From this perspective Greenpeace can be seen as a news creator in the way that they are skilled at creating news. There are two different tactics for creating news. The first Direct actions could be boycotts, marches, protests, strikes and non-violent campaigns such as e.g. road blockings and chaining oneself to fences or equipment. The second, Institutional actions could be: lawsuits, writing petitions and releasing reports (Corbett, 2006 p. 300). The institutional actions are the ones that have been used in the Greenpeace campaigns relating to the video game consoles.

Greenpeace tactics has its downsides. Many regard Greenpeace as less serious compared other environmental organizations e.g. World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) (Boström, 2001 p. 168). Another problem is that environmental organizations in general can be seen in a negative way. Corbett (2006, p. 310) writes that “A common perception of environmentalists is that they stand against things far more than they stand for things” (Corbett, 2006 p. 310). Others criticize Greenpeace for not just sticking the facts in order to get media attention and that they might frame an issue in a certain way in order to make it appear more serious (Yearley, 2005 p. 156).

5. The three Greenpeace campaigns

5.1 Guide to Greener Electronics

The environmental impact of video game industry had been almost ignored until 2007 when Greenpeace decided to include the two remaining console developing companies in their 6th edition of “Guide to Greener Electronics”; Nintendo and Microsoft. Sony had been a part of the guide since the first edition of the guide, published in August 2006.

With the campaign, Greenpeace limits themselves to environmental issues but states that
“The guide does not rank companies on labour standards, energy use or any other issues, but recognises that these are important in the production and use of electronic products” (Greenpeace International, 2007). What Greenpeace looks for is that chemicals should be identified and future plans should be clear (Greenpeace, 2011). Timelines and ways to ensure that something will be done must be shown such as elimination of chemical substances. Takebacks should be voluntary and more than just what the law forces the companies to do should be emphasized (Greenpeace International, 2007).

The following major categories were investigated in their guide; chemicals, e-waste and energy. The three categories were then divided into smaller subcategories. The scores given in each subcategory varied from “Bad” (0), “Partially bad” (1+), “Partially good” (2+) and “Good” (3+). The scores were then summarized and each company could receive a total of 0-10 points. Greenpeace way of giving scores caused a controversy since Nintendo got the lowest possible result ever, 0/10. Microsoft also received a poor score with 2, 7. Only Sony with 7, 3 managed to pass. Greenpeace based their scores on public information such as reports from the companies’ websites as well as they talked to them which made the issue a two-way process (Greenpeace, 2011). Greenpeace was accused by critics of being badly informed and the reason for the low score was Greenpeace inability to access the information needed.

When looking at all the editions of “Guide to Greener Electronics” we can that the score the companies have been given have varied over time. Sony’s score has varied from 4.0 at the lowest to 7, 3 at the highest. Microsoft’s score has been 1, 9 at the lowest and 4, 7 at the highest. Nintendo’s score of 0 has slowly risen to 1, 8. See Appendix II for a full list of each companies score in all editions.

Fredrik Schaufelberger at the Swedish computer and video game magazine Level writes that after the Greenpeace report the gaming community was divided into two camps. The first one saw environmental goals as rather useless while others signed protest lists. Shortly after the report was published it was shown that the Greenpeace report lacked scientific significance according to critics (Schaufelberger, 2009 p. 51). The reason was that Greenpeace way of judging the companies based on their environmental communication was seen as arbitrary.

Nintendo’s score of 0/10 was controversial while other companies’ results received much less attention. Erik Albertsen at Greenpeace Nordic said that they don’t want people to stop
playing games; they just want to make the industry more open and greener (Schaufelberger, 2009 p. 54). If the video game industry manages to do this, it is a sign of seriousness and it can help to promote green competition (Schaufelberger, 2009 p. 52).

The console developers have been criticized for poor information on how to recycle their products (Schaufelberger, 2009 p. 53). According to Iza Kruszewska at Greenpeace International, Nintendo claimed that people like their products so much that it will not cause any waste (Schaufelberger, 2009 p. 54).

When compared to other forms of consumer electronics Greenpeace believes that the video game consoles are lagging behind. On energy efficiency, Wii uses much less energy than XBOX 360 and PS3, but compared to the energy star standard for PC which was also used for consoles, they are far behind (Greenpeace, 2008c). Greenpeace believes that environmental issues seem to be of lower priority in console developing compared to e.g. PCs, mobile phones and TVs (Greenpeace, 2011). She said that there would be little reason for a company to be working much with environmental issues internally and not communicating about it even if there is a chance this might be the case (Schaufelberger, 2009 p. 52).

The report tries to make companies loosen their corporate secrecy on supply chains and enhance transparency. Transparency, as we saw in the part on CSR is important in order to see if a company actually is doing what it claims to (Greenpeace, 2008c). Greenpeace believes that transparency is the consumer’s right to know about possible environmental risks of a product. Legal regulations are seen as a minimum and Greenpeace wants companies to go beyond the legal requirements. But in order for companies to be more transparent there needs to be a demand for it. The reason why little has happened before was due to weak demand earlier according to Schaufelberger (2009 p. 54). This belief was confirmed when I talked to Patrik Johansson (2011), Press officer at Bergsala AB the importer of Nintendo’s products to Scandinavia. He told me that very few have ever asked about Nintendo’s products in relation to environmental issues.

Greenpeace updates the criteria for the newer versions of the “Guide to Greener Electronics”. Compared to the 6th version we can see that Individual Producer Responsibility (IPR) is seen as very important and should be emphasized (Greenpeace International 2010). Greenpeace pays extra attention on IPR regarding recycling which they believe shouldn’t only be offered in a satisfying way in just western countries, but also all over the world (Greenpeace International 2010).
On the blog “Making waves” Tom Dowdall at Greenpeace discusses the reactions and in most cases harsh criticism after the 6th edition of the “Guide to Greener Electronics”, “However there was also criticism from some technology sites (Ars Technica, BoingBoing, Guardian) and several angry emails from the public, mainly focusing on Nintendo getting 0/10” (Dowdall, 2007).

Dowdall (2007) lists a summary of the most common critique they have received as well as the answers:

“It’s unfair just to rank Nintendo because of a lack of public information/didn't Greenpeace contact Nintendo in advance?”

Greenpeace answers that they gave Nintendo several chances to answer but they didn’t. Ranking the public information is to ensure transparency.

“The research in general appears lazy”

For a company it is important to have the information public to promote transparency and it’s also good for competition. There is always some company secrecy and the ranking is a step towards more openness.

“Penalty points are arbitrary”

Greenpeace claims that they clearly state when a penalty point is given (Dowdall, 2007).

On their special webpage answering questions regarding the campaign, Greenpeace states that report has created change since the 1st edition of the report in the way that companies have removed the worst chemicals. They exemplify their claims a reference to Sony’s US take back system has greatly improved (Greenpeace, 2008c).

5.2 Clash of the Consoles

In December 2007 Greenpeace also made a video campaign on the internet called “Clash of the Consoles” which sums up the most important aspects of “Guide to Greener Electronics”. The campaign features a “machinima” (often refers to a video from a video game which has been dubbed with other voices for comical purposes) styled 1 minute, 32 second video were the three companies’ environmental behavior and results was presented as a parody featuring
the famous mascots of the respective system, Mario (Super Mario series) (Wii), Kratos (God of War series) (PS3) and Master Chief (Halo series) (XBOX 360). The video shows a post apocalyptic scenario were the three heroes walk in a world with fire and a huge mountain of broken consoles.

The narrator gives statements such as:

This December, three great heroes of the video game universe will come together to battle the most dangerous threat the world has ever known, themselves!

One console may not sound like a threat, but try 60 million.

With no safe way to dispose of or recycle these toxic video game systems, the only way these heroes can survive is to race for the greenest game console ever (Greenpeace, France, 2007).

On the web page related to “Clash of the Consoles” the public could sign e-mails and send them to the CEOs or President of each company: Howard Stringer (Sony), Steven A. Ballmer (Microsoft) and Satoru Iwata (Nintendo) in order to encourage the companies to take more environmental responsibility (Greenpeace International, 2008a).

The reason for using “machinima” was according to Greenpeace to “get our campaign message across” (Greenpeace, 2011). The campaign criticized all consoles in an equal way unlike “Guide to Greener Electronics”. The video stated that none of the three console producing companies come close to developing a green console.

The reactions of the campaign saw Greenpeace as too demanding and the electronics site I4U News can be used to illustrate the criticism towards the campaign Lugmayr (2007) commented it in an ironic way referring to possible harm if small children licked on certain cables: “Kids, this also means no sucking on the Wii console if you are lucky enough to get one this Christmas”.

5.3 Playing Dirty campaign

Since “Guide to Greener Electronics” was seen as unscientific by critics, Greenpeace based their campaign “Playing Dirty” on research from their own labs. When talking about chemicals there are a large number of studies done on products varying from food, hygiene
products, clothes and electronics. Computers and mobile phones are different types of consumer electronics where studies have been carried out before. Similar to the “Guide to Greener Electronics” campaign, little has been written on the relation between game consoles and chemicals.

Many chemicals might be a problem when the product is disposed. Much of the e-waste might be exported to developing countries. As a result of what Greenpeace see as a loophole in EU law e-waste is allowed to be shipped to other countries disguised as “second-hand goods”. Greenpeace estimates that 25-75 % of the second hand goods can’t be reused and therefore they shouldn’t have been allowed to be exported (Greenpeace 2008b p. 10). This export might cause negative environmental and health effect for local people. Greenpeace exemplifies with an e-waste recycling area in China where children had high levels of lead in their blood (Greenpeace 2008b, p. 8). If hazardous chemicals are phased out the negative environmental effects and health threats for people can be decreased.

In May 2008 the report “Playing Dirty” was published. The report concluded that Sony, Microsoft and Nintendo followed chemical regulations according to the RoHS (Restriction of Hazardous Substances) Directive (2002/95/EC) which is one of the most important regulations on chemicals. The problem according to Greenpeace is that it doesn’t cover all the ones used in electronics; many of these that are unregulated are quite common in electronics. When Greenpeace looked at unregulated chemicals high levels was found in some cases in the game consoles (Greenpeace, 2008 p. 6).

The consoles used for Greenpeace test was bought in November 2007. The Wii console used was the newly released console. The XBOX 360 used was the Elite model and the PS3 used was the 40GB model. Since the time of the test newer models of both XBOX 360 and PS3 have been released which are more energy efficient. The newer model of XBOX 360 uses 50 % less energy than the original model (Greenpeace International, 2010). The new PS3 model weights 30 % less and also uses less electricity (Schaufelberger, 2009 p. 52).

The analyses of the dismantled consoles were done at Greenpeace Research Laboratories based in the University of Exeter, UK (Greenpeace, 2008 p. 4). The focus of the analysis was on cadmium, lead, hexavalent chromium, mercury and certain brominated flame retardants (BFRs) which are regulated under the RoHS 2005/84 Directive. Tests were also carried out for unregulated substances such as polyvinyl chloride (PVC) and beryllium containing alloys. All the three consoles were found to follow the RoHS regulations in the way that cadmium, mercury and hexavalent chromium was not found at all. Chromium and lead was found but at very low concentrations (Greenpeace, 2008 p. 4).
In more than 50 % of the analyzed components bromine was found at levels “over 1 % of the total composition of the material in almost all cases” (Greenpeace, 2008 p. 4). The amount varied much, in some cases high levels was found. As an example, the housing fan of PS3 contained 13, 8 % bromine and the housing material in Wii contained 12, 5 % (Greenpeace, 2008 p.4). To summarize the bromine levels, they varied from 558 ppm to 138000 ppm, which could cause concerns since what can be seen as high levels are according to Greenpeace more than 1000 ppm (0, 1 %) (Greenpeace, 2008 p. 11).

PVC was found in flexible materials such as cable coatings and wires. When PVC is used in such materials it requires the use of plasticizers and softeners. These are in many cases phthalate esters (phthalates). PVC was found at high levels in XBOX 360 and PS3. Interestingly, if game consoles would have been classified as toys, these levels would not have been allowed according to EU regulations (Greenpeace, 2008 p.4).

In the components of Wii the levels of beryllium found was mostly none or only 0, 01 %. Both the XBOX 360 and PS3 had 0.01 % in most cases but the XBOX 360 had 0, 35 % in one component and 1, 95 % in another. The PS3 had 1, 75 % beryllium in one component and 1,852 % in another (Greenpeace, 2008 p.16). See Appendix III for more information on the chemicals found and possible health problems that they might cause.

Greenpeace claims that even though improvements as a result of legal restrictions and to some extent also by voluntary commitments from corporations have been made, there is still much to do (Greenpeace, 2008 p.3). They refer to commitments stated by these three companies, and argue that more needs to be done; at least the companies should be able to reach their own pledges (Greenpeace, 2008 p.5) which Greenpeace believes are a bit vague sometimes. A summary of their pledges are shown below.

Microsoft made commitments to phase out PVC and BFRs (Brominated Flame Retardants) until 2010 (Greenpeace, 2008 p.3).

Sony made similar commitments but only on the mobile products, including PSP but not PS3 (Greenpeace, 2008 p.3).

Nintendo committed them to phase out PVC, but didn’t give a timeline for when this should happen (Greenpeace, 2008 p.3).

Greenpeace admits that their tests had flaws. The scope was limited and it was not possible to tell if every individual material or component followed RoHS (Greenpeace, 2008 p.18) thus they might have missed to find chemicals in the untested materials (Greenpeace, 2007 p.8).
A video for Playing Dirty was also made which shows scientists wearing protective gloves dismantling the three consoles in a lab. In the end a text says: “TEST RESULTS Although manufactures have taken some steps to reduce contamination, games consoles still contains hazardous chemicals”. Directly after it says “Microsoft. Nintendo. Sony”. This is shown in green text. Afterwards texts with possible health effects pop up in green and red text, ending with “Clean up your game” (Greenpeace International, 2008b).

Greenpeace states the importance of substitutes for chemicals used. Greenpeace found components were the companies had made efforts to avoid hazardous substances and was surprised why substituting hasn’t been done in a larger extent when there were clear possibilities of doing so (Greenpeace, 2008 p.19). Sony is interesting because they also produce laptops and other hardware therefore Greenpeace thought it would be interesting to compare these other types of consumer electronics with PS3. The PS3 had higher proportions of PVC, bromine and phthalates compared to equivalent materials in the VAIO TX laptop (Greenpeace, 2008 p.5). If the amount of chemicals used in computers could be minimized, then the same thing should apply for video game consoles. Greenpeace claims that console manufactures are lagging behind, and that more can be done according to Zenia Al Hajj at Greenpeace International (Chalk, 2007). By this Greenpeace is implying that eco-design should be used also in video game consoles. Mobile phone producing companies such as Motorola, LG, and Philips and also Sony’s own joint venture Sony Ericsson have implemented eco-design in their products, so there is little reason why this couldn’t be done in game consoles (BBC News, 2007).

“Playing Dirty” received much less attention in the video game press compared to “Guide to Greener Electronics”. The reactions from the companies were similar e.g. a spokesperson at Nintendo said: “We make sure that all our products comply with European standards which we understand are the highest in the world” (Chalk, 2007). With this statement, the spokesperson was referring to the European Waste, Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive.

The reactions on the “Playing Dirty” campaign could be seen in relation to CSR. The different views can then be summarized in that Greenpeace argues that more should be done, while the companies’ claims that laws are being followed and critics argue that Greenpeace is too demanding.
6. Annual and CSR reports of the three studied companies

In order to be able to understand what the three console developing companies see as important regarding CSR I have investigated the Annual and CSR reports of 2007 and 2010 from each company. My reading shows that annual reports mostly state the financial aspects but CSR might get mentioned in these reports. In the CSR reports we can find what the companies claim to do beyond what they are legally forced to. Below I develop certain themes in what the companies’ state in their Annual and CSR reports or equivalent and I will relate it to what I have learned on CSR earlier in the thesis. If the companies mention something on video game consoles relating to CSR issues I will also write about it. As far as it is possible I will state what aspects that are the most important in the report and see if there are some changes when comparing the 2007 versions with the 2010 versions. After describing what the companies were saying in their Annual and CSR reports I will end with a table summarizing the number of pages focusing on environmental issues and the total number of pages in the reports. I will also account for if the CEO or President of the companies have talked about environmental issues in the beginning of each report. If the CEO or President of a company talks about environmental issues it a sign that it has great importance.

6.1.1 Sony Annual Report 2007

Sony is the most versatile of the three companies with many different businesses such as; cinema, music, TVs, cameras, digital books, Sony Pictures and mobile phones with joint venture Sony Ericsson (Sony Corporation, 2007a). Sony uses much space in the report to talk about the newly released PS3 as well as many of their other products and goals for the future which can be read in “Letter to Shareholders: A message from Howard Stringer, CEO” (Sony Corporation, 2007a p. 4).

Sony used the slogan “Sony United” referring to uniting their wide range of products businesses, technology and people in order to be able to “transform into a new Sony” (Sony Corporation, 2007a p. 9). The top management is interviewed and we can read about the new “HD World” (Sony Corporation, 2007a p. 11) including technologies such as OLED, Blu-Ray (13) and much more. The PS3 is seen as a symbol of “Sony United” in which 50 departments have worked together (Sony Corporation, 2007a p. 18). The BRAVIA TV is presented as a product with technology that lowers energy consumption which received the Sustainable Energy Europe Award by the European Commission. Also their newly built office used high
efficiency heating systems (Sony Corporation, 2007a p. 55).

Most of the text in the report talks about the company’s products and financial aspects such as: selling statistics (Sony Corporation, 2007a p. 27), stocks, investments, exchange rates and cash flows. On corporate governance Sony talks about the importance of showing openness (Sony Corporation, 2007a p. 48). Sony has the compliance system “Sony Group Code of Conduct”. “The Sony Pledge of Quality” wants to ensure satisfied customers (Sony Corporation, 2007a p. 89). Sony gives reference to Social Responsible Investing (SRI) and have included indices such as the Dow Jones Sustainability Indexes and the FTSE4Good Global 100 index (Sony Corporation, 2007a p. 52).

Sony has four pages devoted to CSR. It is pretty much a summary of the CSR report which they also are referring to. CSR is done through environmental conservation, chemical management, quality control, corporate governance, social contribution programs and efficient resource use (Sony Corporation, 2007a p. 52). Technological innovation is seen as essential in order to promote CSR and sound business practice (Sony Corporation, 2007a p. 52).

The environmental management is based on ISO 14001 standards. On Climate, Sony is a part of the “Climate Savers Program” (Sony Corporation, 2007a p. 89). Important regulations mentioned are: RoHS, WEEE and the new REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation, and Restriction of Chemicals) from June 2007 (Sony Corporation, 2007a p.89). The risk factors listed are financial ones. The environment is mentioned in relation to changed regulations which could result in increased costs (Sony Corporation, 2007a p. 89).

On voluntary contributions we can see sponsoring of film projects, music, science, photography and student projects (Sony Corporation, 2007a p. 55). “For the Next Generation” refers to programs that educates youth about sustainable society (Sony Corporation, 2007a p. 55).

6.1.2 Sony CSR Report 2007

Sony has published environmental reports in 1994, 1997, 1999 and 2001. The Social and Environmental Report was published in 2002. In 2003 the scope was widened to a CSR report. The report is written with a focus on the following areas: Management, Product Responsibility, Employees, Community, Environment and other CSR Initiatives (Sony
Corporation, 2007b p. 2). The way the report is structured goes pretty well with Dahlsrud’s five dimensions described earlier on in the CSR section.

Sony sees innovation and sound business practice as essential. Special consideration should be taken towards: shareholders, stakeholders, employees, customers, business partners, suppliers, local communities and other organizations (Sony Corporation, 2007b p. 2). Howard Stringer writes in “Message from the CEO” that CSR is seen as a passion and core value at Sony. The company’s view on CSR can be divided into two aspects: “Upholding Sound Business Practice and “Initiatives for the Next Generation”. The first aspect is about creating standards, such as the “Sony Group Code of Conduct” and make sure that it is based on the Electronic Industry Code of Conduct (EICC). The EICC is collaboration between members to ensure that social responsibility is taken into consideration in the whole supply chain. The second aspect focuses on preserving a global environment for the next generation. A way to reach this goal is by having energy efficient technology (Sony Corporation, 2007b p. 5).

Ryoji Chubachi, President and Electronics CEO, argue that CSR is the cumulative result of every employee. Sony must also switch to more renewable energy since many conventional energy sources most likely will be depleted in the future. Being seen as environmentally friendly is essential for the company: “We can be a highly competitive company with stable growth strategies, but if we pollute the environment and are a bane to our communities we will alienate our employees” (Sony Corporation, 2007b p. 7).

The management part gives an overview of the company structure (Sony Corporation, 2007b p. 21). In this part we can read about compliance hotline systems, several regional compliance systems and Sony Group Code of Conduct (Sony Corporation, 2007b p. 24). The Sony Supplier Code of Conduct consists of the following main areas: legal compliance, labor, health and safety, environment management system and ethics (Sony Corporation, 2007b p. 13).

The environmental part gets the largest amount of space in the report. Four key environmental issues have been identified: global warming, natural resources, management of chemical substances and natural environment (Sony Corporation, 2007b p. 49). Sony gives special recognition to the climate change issue and estimates their total carbon dioxide (CO$_2$) emissions to be 20.21 million tons. Their new headquarter is used as an example and is expected to produce 40% less CO$_2$ emissions compared to conventional buildings. The “Green Power Certification System” is an effort from Sony to increase its use of renewable
energy (Sony Corporation, 2007b p. 11). Sony signed a contract in April 2007 to buy 10 million kilo watt hours from geothermal energy each year (Sony Corporation, 2007b p. 60). New technologies, partnerships (such as the one with WWF on the Climate Savers Programme) and emission trading are seen as important ways to deal with the issue (Sony Corporation, 2007b p. 10).

Sony has several programs for the future. The Green Management 2010 and Green Partner Environmental Quality Approval Program are seen as especially important programs (Sony Corporation, 2007b p. 48). The Green Management 2010 are targets that should have been achieved until the year 2010. Sony gives charts and graph over the progress on greenhouse gas efficiency and resource efficiency (Sony Corporation, 2007b p. 52). They also give explanations for how these numbers are calculated. For the targets for Green management 2010 Sony lists the progress into “Target”, “Base Fiscal Year”, Target Fiscal Year” and “Progress by Fiscal 2006”. Three areas are listed: prevention of global warming, resource conservation and chemical substance management (Sony Corporation, 2007b p. 53). The goal for CO$_2$ is to decrease the 2000 level by 7 % until 2010, (Sony Corporation, 2007b p. 65) but at the same time Sony writes that the PS3 launch contributed to a CO$_2$ increase. The BRAVIA TV and the VAIO laptop are used as examples were Sony has managed to build energy efficient technologies (Sony Corporation, 2007b p. 55).

Sony talks about a number of other different ways to reduce the environmental impact. Making logistics more efficient is seen as important in order to reduce the environmental impact (Sony Corporation, 2007b p. 61). Packaging is also important and should be environmentally friendly and not contain any hazardous chemicals (Sony Corporation, 2007b p. 57). For product recycling, Sony wants to ensure end of life solutions by complying with national and regional laws. The most important laws are: Home Appliance Recycling Law in Japan, the WEEE Directive from the EU and the Electronic Waste Recycling act from the state of California (Sony Corporation, 2007b p. 62). Sony writes about environmental accidents in Sony plants during the last year, and what can be done to prevent it from happening again (Sony Corporation, 2007b p. 68).

There are many regulations for chemicals. In Europe, the RoHS Directive is very important; Sony also has their own statements called “Management Regulations for Environment-related substances to be controlled which are included into Parts and materials” (SS-00259) (Sony Corporation, 2007b p. 58). Steps have also been taken to comply with
REACH. PVC and BFR get special attention as substances where work is being done in order to eliminate them when it is possible (Sony Corporation, 2007b p. 59).

CSR is also a part of the employees area which is given much consideration. For the employees there are initiatives for diversity in the company, (Sony Corporation, 2007b p. 35) evaluation (Sony Corporation, 2007b p. 37) and also training programs (Sony Corporation, 2007b p. 38). Other important aspects are about employee health (Sony Corporation, 2007b p. 39) and risk reduction (Sony Corporation, 2007b p. 40). On product responsibility, Sony has the “Sony Pledge of Quality” to ensure consumer satisfaction, (Sony Corporation, 2007b p. 31) customer feedback and customer service (Sony Corporation, 2007b p. 31).

The Community part is guided by the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (Sony Corporation, 2007b p. 41). With “The Next Generation” slogan Sony priorities activities in two areas; promoting education for children and contributing to the building of a sustainable society (Sony Corporation, 2007b p. 42). Under the slogan “For the Next Generation” Sony has several projects, such as promoting science, technology labs and music (44). The volunteer program ”Someone Needs You” encourages employee participation in various projects in large cities all over the world (Sony Corporation, 2007b p. 46). Sony also takes part in environmental projects such as: promoting green spaces, creating wildlife sanctuary and three planting (Sony Corporation, 2007b p. 69). To support communities, Sony has worked with UNICEF and Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders) (Sony Corporation, 2007b p. 43). Sony Computer Entertainment Inc collaborated with Stanford University’s “Folding@Home” ™ in which the PS3 computing capacity was used for research. Other types of charity include Sony donating money to earthquake victims in Pakistan and donating cameras to children for photo projects (Sony Corporation, 2007b p. 5).

6.1.3 Sony Annual Report 2010

Sony’s Annual Report 2010 states the financial highlights from the previous year and overviews the business (Sony Corporation 2010 p. 2). The CSR section has become smaller compared to the 2007 version, but instead we find the 9 pages “Letter to the Shareholders: A Message from Howard Stringer, CEO” in which we can read about challenges and how the company has evolved (Sony Corporation, 2010a p. 5). He talks about how technology can be
important for solving the environmental challenges and that Sony has a goal to reach a “Zero Environmental Footprint” (Sony Corporation, 2010a p. 13). Using environmentally conscious products and responsible recycling are mentioned as ways to reach this goal.

6.1.4 Sony CSR Report 2010

Compared to the 2007 version the 2010 CSR report greatly increased from 74 to 270 pages. Sony sees CSR from two perspectives. The first talks about doing business in relation to the laws and internal policies. The second talks about CSR from the perspective of human rights, labor conditions and the environment (Sony Corporation, 2010b p.34).

On sustainability, Sony focuses on two areas. The first one is sustainability for business purposes such as looking at the whole supply chain. The second one is contributing to the sustainable society, global environment and biodiversity. In the report the phrase “For the Next Generation” is repeated several times (Sony Corporation, 2010b p. 1) which tries to capture their message. Sony gives a list for how the progress has been for the goals they give. Similar to the 2007 version the goals are divided into: “Target”, “Base Fiscal Year”, “Target Fiscal Year” and lastly “Progress by Fiscal Year 2009” (Sony Corporation, 2010b p.91) were we can follow what they promised and the progress. In some cases clearer goals have been given e.g. an exact percentage, other times it is vaguer. This also applies for the results. In many cases their own goals are met.

On chemicals, Sony refers to the chemical regulations REACH and the (Sony Corporation, 2010b p. 93) RoHS Directive (Sony Corporation, 2010b p.142). New for this report is that Sony adopts the precautionary approach and classifies substances as: “prohibit use”, “eliminate use by a specified date”, or “reduce the amounts releases and transferred” (Sony Corporation, 2010b p.141). Sony promotes the use of alternatives for PVC (Sony Corporation, 2010b, p.145) and BFRs when such are available and don’t result in technical problems. On video game consoles, Sony states that phthalates are not used in the bodies of PSP and PSPgo units (Sony Corporation, 2010b p.146).

The environmental areas Sony focus on in their report are: climate change, resources conservation, chemicals management, biodiversity conservation (Sony Corporation, 2010b p.82), sites, products and services, logistics, product recycling, environmental communication, environmental technology and environmental data (Sony Corporation, 2010b p.
p83). Sony also talks about supporting IPR in the recycling of products (Sony Corporation, 2010b p.173). Other important environmental aspects are risks. The risks Sony talks about are on-site environmental risks such as soil and groundwater contamination (Sony Corporation, 2010b p.154) and safety in factories in events of fire or an earthquake (Sony Corporation, 2010b p.59).

Sony gives much attention to employee satisfaction and Code of Conduct rules for internal standards which consist of: general standards, respect for human rights, conducting business with integrity and fairness and ethical personal conduct (Sony Corporation, 2010b p.13). In the report we can see new projects for the future. At the end of Fiscal Year 2009 Sony formulated “Green Management 2015” which are Sony’s goals until that year regarding environmental activities (Sony Corporation, 2010b p. 97). In April 2010 the “Road to Zero” plan was launched. The purpose of the plan is to achieve zero environmental footprint (Sony Corporation, 2010b p.3). Innovative environmental technology is seen by Sony as one of the main ways of achieving this goal. The BRAVIA TV is still used as a positive example and it is mentioned several times in the report as a positive example where Sony has begun using an own eco logo on it (Sony Corporation, 2010b p.188) as well as receiving the EU Eco-flower (Sony Corporation, 2010b p.119).

Sony contributes to charity in several different projects such as the World Cup 2010 in which Sony let 15000 South African children watch the games, donations to earthquake victims in Haiti, Chile and China, volunteer activities and benefit concerts. Several other projects are done such as “Sony Forest” (Sony Corporation, 2010b p.158), Wildlife Sanctuary (Sony Corporation, 2010b, p.159), eagle conservation (Sony Corporation, 2010b p.160) and contribution to children’s education (Sony Corporation, 2010b p.197).

6.2.1 Microsoft Annual Report 2007

In the Annual Report, Microsoft talks about their about new products which include Windows Vista, Windows Mobile 6 and Microsoft Silverlight. We can also read about investments for the future (Microsoft Corporation, 2007a p. 2). With the slogan “Unlimited Potential” Microsoft refers to their goal of creating economic and social possibilities for the people in the world with the help of technology (Microsoft Corporation, 2007a p. 3). Microsoft sees it as a global goal to put a computer in every home in the world in order to promote the knowledge economy according to William H. Gates III (Chairman of the Board) and Steven
A. Ballmer (CEO) (Microsoft Corporation, 2007a p. 4). We can see a reference to CSR in the way that Microsoft talks about helping minorities and women to realize their potential. This is done by encouraging them to enter the technology industry.

Microsoft speaks about the company and the financial performance (Microsoft, 2007a p. 6) and goes on to talk about the business of the previous year. This includes taxes, revenue, stocks and cash flows. The risks mentioned are only financial risks (Microsoft, 2007a p. 32). On video game consoles we can read that the product life cycles are fast (about 5-7 years) (Microsoft, 2007a p. 11).

6.2.2 Citizenship @ Microsoft 2007-2008

Instead of having CSR reports Microsoft has Citizenship reports, which works in the same way. When clicking on the Citizenship report for 2007-2008 on Microsoft’s homepage you are redirected to the five page brochure called “Citizenship @ Microsoft 2007-2008”.

Microsoft sees technology as something that contributes to socio-economic development and with the right type of technology there is no limit to what a person can achieve (Microsoft Corporation 2007b p. 2). Microsoft’s citizenship commitments focus on the following key areas:”transforming education, enabling jobs and opportunities, encouraging local innovation and industry collaboration, helping to create a safe and secure computing ecosystem, and maintaining high standards of accountability in our business practices” (Microsoft Corporation, 2007b p. 2). The “Unlimited Potential” slogan which was launched in 2007 brings together Microsoft’s corporate citizenship with the goal of reaching out to the five billion people who do not have access to the possibilities of technology. A strong business community goes hand in hand with social improvements in a country according to Microsoft (Microsoft Corporation 2007b p. 2). Charity and community gets much attention, especially in relation to education .They talk about interrelated areas for their work with “Unlimited Potential” which has the goal of “transforming education, fostering local innovation, and enabling jobs and opportunities” (Microsoft Corporation, 2007 p. 3). The Partnership in Learning (PiL) is a five year initiative which aims at offer curricula, training programs, software and grants in 101 countries (Microsoft Corporation, 2007b p. 3).
The Microsoft Student Innovation Suite aims at making computers more accessible and affordable (Microsoft Corporation, 2007b p. 3). The “Imagine Cup” which Microsoft sponsors is a global innovation competition for high school and University students all over the world. The “Partnership for Technology Access” program helps small businesses to buy a PC (Microsoft Corporation 2007b p. 3). “Students to Business” (S2B) helps with internships. The “Community Technology Centers” (CTS) provides IT education for hundreds of thousands of people each year (Microsoft Corporation, 2007 p. 3).

Other types of charity beyond education are donating money to the American Red Cross after the hurricane Katrina. Technology is seen as important for quick communication during crisis (Microsoft Corporation 2007b p. 4). A small part of the report gives attention to the environment. The Sustainable Business Practice accounts for the environmental stewardship. It can be divided into the following areas: reusing and recycling of materials, energy efficiency and non-toxic products (Microsoft Corporation, 2007b p. 4).

6.2.3 Microsoft Annual Report 2010

In the 2010 Annual Report Microsoft talks about their business and products. They develop software (e.g. operating systems, software development tools, business solution applications, server applications, Bing), hardware, services and solutions. The company’s business is divided into five segments: Windows and Windows Live Division, Server and Tools, Online Services Division, Microsoft Business Division and Entertainment and Devices Division (EDD) (Microsoft Corporation, 2010a p. 7) which XBOX 360 belongs to.

The global recession gets much attention in the report. Other important aspects they discuss are new technology (Microsoft Corporation, 2010a p. 1). Similar to the 2007 year report, Microsoft states that there is high competition as well as the average life cycles of these game consoles vary from five to ten years (Microsoft Corporation 2010a, p. 10). A key message in the report is that Microsoft states “our mission is to enable people and businesses throughout the world to realize their full potential” (Microsoft Corporation, 2010a p. 6) which will be possible with the help of their technology.
6.2.4 Microsoft Citizenship Report 2010

According to the CEO Steven A. Ballmer, the company should not only be concerned on what they do as business, but also about the way it’s done (Microsoft, 2010b, p. 4). This means that sustainable economic growth is of great importance (Microsoft Corporation, 2010b, p. 3). Microsoft has divided their commitments in three parts; “Program description”, “We said We Would” and “We have” (Microsoft Corporation, 2010b p. 15). Those three parts are repeated several times in the report. The report is guided by several international frameworks; UN Millennium Development Goals, UN Global Compact, Carbon Disclosure Project, The Global Network initiative and The Global Reporting Initiative (Microsoft, 2010b p. 8).

Regarding environmental issues, technology is now seen as an important part towards the goal of development. Microsoft sees their environmental expertise as a driving force for development. It is therefore a goal to make it accessible to as many people as possible. The technology itself creates jobs and incomes for the communities (Microsoft Corporation, 2010b p. 13) as well as promoting education for everyone, which is seen as a human right (Microsoft Corporation, 2010b p. 14).

Microsoft states three core areas on environmental sustainability: (Microsoft Corporation, 2010b p. 38).

1. Technology to improve eco-efficiency

2. Accelerate the technological breakthrough. The reason for this is that improved technologies are seen as a tool to solve environmental challenges

3. Show environmental leadership. This means that sustainable practices should be included into business

On CO₂, Microsoft has four different areas identified; travel, data centers, buildings and computer labs (Microsoft Corporation, 2010b p. 41). Other important areas are; recycling, waste reduction and reducing the environmental impact throughout the whole supply chain. An aspect not talked about in the citizenship report is chemicals.

Microsoft talks much of social development in their report. An important slogan which we recognize from “the Citizenship @ Microsoft 2007-2008” is “Unlimited potential” that equips NGOs with technology (Microsoft Corporation, 2010b p. 21). Other forms of charity to promote charity are: schools and education, donating money, providing expertise to
organizations in areas with earthquakes disasters such as Chile and Haiti, and expertise in the H1N1 outbreak (Microsoft Corporation, 2010b p. 26).

6.3.1 Nintendo Annual Report 2007

Nintendo states that their basic strategy is to be “expanding the worldwide gaming audience” according to President Satoru Iwata (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2007a p. 1). One way which Nintendo has done this has been by increasing the number of females and seniors that play video games (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2007a p. 16). An important aspect is that Nintendo’s products should be seen as fun. The Wii console is seen as “a machine that puts smiles on surrounding people’s faces” and the NDS as “a machine that enriches the owner’s daily life” (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2007a p. 1).

The Annual report mainly focuses on sales (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2007a p. 3) and gives an overview of the company’s history from 1889 to present (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2007a p. 8). The report mainly describes financial aspects. When discussing different risk factors, these are mainly financial. In relation to insecurities with new products, Nintendo talks about the short life cycle of the products. On “other risks” Nintendo writes that changes in environmental regulations may affect the company’s performance (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2007a p. 18).

6.3.2 Nintendo CSR Report 2007

Nintendo states that this is their first CSR report. Because of that, they are aware of possible flaws: “some areas of our efforts and activities might seem insufficient, and some of the provided information may seem incomplete, but we believe that this report will serve as an incentive for us to further our efforts toward improvement” (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2007b p. 2).

Satoru Iwata discusses the role of CSR for Nintendo in the four pages long “Message From the President”. The aim of Nintendo is to “Put Smiles on the Faces of Everyone involved with Nintendo” something which is constantly repeated throughout the report (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2007b p. 3). Nintendo strives to provide entertainment which is defined as “something that brings pleasant surprises with the purpose of putting smiles on the faces of all those involved” (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2007b p. 3).
Nintendo gives a reference to CSR which “refer to responsibilities that corporations have towards its stakeholder including society and the environment” (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2007b p. 3). This definition is quite similar to the definition from the Commission of the European Communities, which Dahlsrud (2006) found to be the most common. CSR is also seen as compliance with different laws and regulations (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2007b p. 3). Therefore Nintendo considers CSR to be: “activities that put smiles on the people of everyone involved with Nintendo” (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2007b p. 3). If this is achieved, then it is seen as the “ultimate realization of CSR” (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2007b p. 4). Everyone, customers, employees and shareholders should be smiling. A goal is also to involve the whole family in the gaming experience. Games are seen to contribute to people discovering new sides of them, communication opportunities, bringing people together and much more (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2007b p. 6).

On environmental issues we can read that the “Wii News Channel” (accessed by going online with the Wii console) which shows a rotating virtual globe people can click on to read about news events from all over the world is used as an example. By showing the rotating globe Iwata argues that it will help improve the environmental thinking of people and create a feeling that we all share one common planet (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2007b p. 4). This is supposed to give people a better understanding that everything we do on the planet is interconnected. Ultimately this might make people to think more about global, social or environmental or issues (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2007b p. 5).

The environmental aspect of the report gets four dedicated pages. The aim is to provide a “healthy planet for future generations” (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2007b p. 19). These pages are divided into two headlines: “Protecting the Earth for Future Generations” and “Eco-Friendly Products” (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2007b p. 19, 21). The recycling part focuses on what is done in the offices, such as separating waste in different materials (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2007b p. 20). Nintendo writes that the transition of waste and water usage has increased compared to previous year (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2007b p. 20).

In the section “Eco-Friendly Products” Nintendo talks about the importance of compliance with laws. The component and packaging materials are selected in a way which makes recycling as easy as possible. “Green Procurement” is the name of the work with eliminating harmful substances. Nintendo mentions the RoHS Directive which they complied with three months before the directive took place (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2007b p. 21).

Chemicals are identified and divided into “Banned substances”, “Substances Subject to
Early Withdrawal” and “Substances under Application Control” (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2007b p. 22).

Nintendo talks about selling statistics which show a large increase in sales and income (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2007b p. 12). As a result of higher sales the CO₂ emissions have increased (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2007b p. 19). Much of Nintendo’s production is made by external companies (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2007b p. 5). This is called the fabless production model. Nintendo believes it is important that they share their vision of CSR (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2007b p. 19). The employees get much attention. The Internal Control System Committee is used to ensure sound management structure (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2007b p. 26). The Compliance manual and compliance Committee is to ensure that measures are taken for a good working environment. Some of the employees are also interviewed in the report and talk about their job at Nintendo (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2007b p. 29).

The customer satisfaction and customer service is given special attention (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2007b p. 15) as well as the employees. A good work environment is seen as essential (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2007b p. 17).

Under the headline “Nintendo and the Community” we can read about what Nintendo does for charity. The “Game Seminar” is an opportunity for people to learn about game production for free. The character Super Mario is used for the poster of the “Children’s Rights Hotline” (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2007b p. 23). Nintendo sponsors teams and sport events in Kyoto (the city of Nintendo’s headquarter in Japan). The DS system is used in schools to help the students learn English and also used in treatments of people with memory loss (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2007b p. 24).

6.3.3 Nintendo Annual Report 2010

The President of Nintendo, Satoru Iwata states that their goal is to increase the gaming population in the world, its social acceptance and make people smile (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2010b p. 7). Nintendo’s report focuses on financial aspects from the fiscal year. Similar to Microsoft they also state that the life cycles of the products are short and that they change depending on consumer preferences (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2010b p. 19). Again, Nintendo gives long overviews of the company’s history all the way from 1889. The risk factors that are
stated are mostly related to financial aspects such as exchange rates and stock performance (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2010b p. 33) but an environmental issue is mentioned, in relation to environmental regulations which might affect the financial performance (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2010b p. 20).

6.3.4 Nintendo CSR Report 2010

Similar to the Annual Report of 2007 Nintendo early state that they use the fabless production model (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2010c p. 9). For this reason they want their production partners to share their values on CSR (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2010c p. 9) and ensure that they comply with REACH, RoHS, and the Toy Safety Directive. A supplier who meets Nintendo’s standards gets certified as “Green suppliers” and “Green parts” (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2010b p. 35). For on-site inspection, Nintendo uses “Procurement Guidelines” with nine criteria’s varying from health, fair trade, environment and safety (Nintendo 2010c p. 10). Throughout the report employees and community gets much attention.

Nintendo is the company that by far uses the largest amount of pictures and portrays smiling people. Again, Nintendo states that their ultimate responsibility is to be “putting smiles on the faces of everyone we touch” (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2010c p. 3). The word “smile” is constantly repeated throughout the report. They talk about the positive health effects of games and the joy of exercising in more physically active ways such as Wii Fit. The goal to improve the social acceptance of video games from the Annual report is repeated again (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2010c p. 4).

On environmental issues Nintendo talk about limiting chemical substances, reducing energy consumption in offices as well as from their own products. Nintendo has divided chemicals into three categories: “banned substances”, “substances subject to early withdrawal” and “substances under application control”. PVC and BFRs get extra attention and are subject to replacement as long as it doesn’t affect the safety negatively (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2010c p. 34). Nintendo states that they have initiated several standards for eco-friendly and energy efficient products and sees it as their responsibility to follow the precautionary principle (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2010c p. 34). On the disposal part of their products, just a few lines are mentioned (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2010c p. 36).

For charity, Nintendo contributes to several projects such as: Children’s Rights hotline, donating DS consoles and support for schools in bushfire affected areas in Australia,
(Nintendo Co Ltd., 2010c p. 40) supporting an organization helping children undergoing treatment, healthier life style campaigns (Nintendo Co Ltd., 2010c p. 41) and literacy campaigns (Nintendo 2010c p. 42).
Table 1. Summary of the Annual and CSR reports of 2007 and 2010.

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### Annual Report 2010

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### CSR Report 2010

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<td>Nintendo</td>
<td>7/49</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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^3 Environmental regulations are mentioned in the way that they can affect performance and financial position.

^4 The report is called “Citizenship @ Microsoft 2007-2008”.

^5 N/A stands for “Not available”.

^6 Refers to the “Wii News Channel” and “putting smiles on people’s faces”.

^7 Included in “Letter to Shareholders: A Message from Howard Stringer, CEO”.

^8 Environmental regulations are mentioned in the way that they can affect performance and financial position.

^9 The report is called “Microsoft Citizenship Report 2010”.

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7. Analysis

This thesis has illuminated a part of consumer electronics which has received very little attention before regarding its environmental impact. Just by publishing the 6th edition of the report “Guide to Greener Electronics” and to a lesser extent also “Clash of the consoles” and “Playing Dirty” Greenpeace managed to put attention on the issue. They managed to get the video game press and websites to report on an issue which they usually don’t report about. Instead of just the ordinary information about the latest games, consoles and the people in the industry, video game journalists started to write about possible negative effects on the environment from the game consoles.

Greenpeace is an environmental NGO and a part of the social movement. One of the purposes of such an actor is to create a debate on what they believe to be wrong. They are well-known for their confrontational direct approach of their campaigns which many see as radical. This tactic can be seen as both their strength and their weakness, similar to a double edged sword. By using the direct approach, Greenpeace is depending much on media in order to get their message to the public. In the case of the three campaigns we can go back to what we learned in the theory section about the relation between Greenpeace and the media. Greenpeace tactic of using “image events” has the intention of shocking people in order to make them more likely to act. This way of campaigning suits the media well since these images are often what makes people interested in reading an article. Greenpeace gets validation that their issue is important when they get media attention. But in these three campaigns Greenpeace did not use “image events” or any radical approach and therefore couldn’t get as much sympathy as they could have received if they had used it, which made it harder to see the connection of video game consoles and a possible environmental effect. In “Guide to Greener Electronics” there weren’t any images, “Clash of the consoles” had an animated video and “Playing Dirty” had a video of scientists’ dismantling the consoles. But there were no clear connection between the videos and real environmental damage.

The 6th edition of “Guide to Greener Electronics” was the campaign that caught the most attention from the video game media and started debates on video game discussion forums. Greenpeace scoreboard was the particular aspect that first caught people’s attention. Nintendo’s 0/10 and Microsoft’s 2, 7/10 raised questions about what Greenpeace based their scores on. When it became clear that the verdict was based on the environmental communications of these companies Greenpeace received much critics about being unfair in their evaluation and that these companies didn’t do anything legally wrong. Relating to
Hannigan (2006) and also Yearley (2005) when making a claim, the validity is much affected on the claims-maker, Greenpeace was not seen to have scientific back-up as critics claimed after the “Guide to Greener Electronics” campaign therefore many saw it as unfair. This was most likely one of the main reasons why the “Playing Dirty” report was backed up by results from Greenpeace own laboratories.

It is here CSR becomes interesting. Greenpeace was interested in what the three companies do beyond what they are required by law. According to Greenpeace, what the law forces companies to do should be seen as a minimum. Being open about their environmental performance is something which makes companies more trustworthy, and if they start to compete for showing the best environmental performance it will most likely lead the industry in a greener direction. As we have learned so far in the thesis openness is one of the key aspects of CSR. The aspect of openness was one of the key reasons why Nintendo received the 0/10 verdict in the 6th edition of “Guide to Greener Electronics”. Nintendo did not provide Greenpeace with the information they wanted and therefore no points were given. We must remember that a company has no legal obligation to provide an NGO with this information thus Greenpeace has to rely on the company being willing to do so voluntarily.

As we have seen the concept of CSR is diffuse and socially constructed. Therefore it is not surprising that Greenpeace and the companies seem to have focused on different parts of the CSR concept. If we look at Dahlsrud’s (2006) five dimensions (environmental, social, economic, stakeholder and voluntariness) Greenpeace main focus is on the environmental dimension. They do touch upon social aspects such as fair trade when talking about e-waste being exported to developing countries. All the five dimensions can be found in the three companies’ CSR reports of 2007 and 2010 (Citizenship report in Microsoft’s case) with a varying amount of focus received. When trying to find common themes I can see some similarities. All reports give much attention to: environmental issues, Code of conduct which involves information on the internal work as well as the companies’ employees satisfaction and lastly charity through all kinds of projects or donations.

Microsoft and Nintendo give special focus on some parts of CSR in their reports. Microsoft gives the social dimension and stakeholder dimension a special standing already by calling the reports “Citizenship @ Microsoft 2007-2008” and “Citizenship Report”. Microsoft puts much faith in the technological development as a key aspect of achieving a better society.

Nintendo gives very much attention to the “putting smiles on the faces of everyone we touch” aspect of their products. This is repeated over and over again. This important part of their CSR report is tricky to fit into any of Dahlsrud’s five perspective. It could possibly fit
into the Stakeholder dimension in the way that it can be seen as customer satisfaction with the products. But from Greenpeace perspective it would be hard to see this as a part of CSR rather than just PR.

As mentioned earlier by Dawkins (2004) which I wrote in the CSR section US stakeholders usually emphasize communities. This was a clear case for Microsoft that put much attention on the issue. Japanese stakeholders give much attention to employee issues. Again this was true for the case of both Sony and Nintendo.

One of the reasons for these sometimes different focuses of CSR has to do with the concept being socially constructed. There is no right or wrong answer on which CSR definition to use, or which parts of the definition to focus on. Here we have one of the major problems concerning CSR. Greenpeace mainly focuses on one dimension of CSR while the companies see the environment as one of many important aspects. It is therefore hard to judge the campaigns based on one aspect of a diffuse concept.

The “Clash of the Consoles” campaign was simply much just a short video version of what had been stated about the three console producing companies in “Guide to Greener Electronics”. The animated video was used to reach out to a public used to these kinds of videos.

“Playing Dirty” looked at chemicals in the three consoles at Greenpeace own labs in the UK. There was a bit hard to see a clear result from the campaign compared to “Guide to Greener Electronics”. The campaign stated that all the three companies followed the requirements for chemicals under regulations, but unregulated chemicals were in some cases found at what Greenpeace believe could be classified as high levels. Unlike “Guide to Greener Electronics” there was no clear verdict on which console who was “the best” regarding chemicals. The campaign was a call for stricter regulations on chemicals.
8. Discussion

It is quite remarkable that video game consoles and the video game industry have received so little attention regarding their environmental impact before Greenpeace campaigns. What is seen as the first video game was made almost half a century ago and the first commercial console was released in 1972. Why it took so long time before a proper investigation took place is hard to answer, but most likely no one ever thought of game consoles in relation to their environmental impact. Greenpeace as part of the environmental movement has a goal of illuminate an issue on which little has been said about. They did manage to put the issue on the agenda even though their actions in some of the campaigns caused a backlash on themselves resulting in massive critique.

If we take a look at the 1st research question, it is hard to draw any conclusion whether or not the Greenpeace campaigns have had any impact on the companies just by looking at the Greenpeace verdict from “Guide to Greener Electronics”. As mentioned earlier, Greenpeace believes that their “Guide to Greener Electronics” campaign has had some effect in the way that companies have removed the worst chemicals. The final score of both Sony and Microsoft have varied both up and down, making it hard to see a connection. Nintendo’s final score has in all versions been at the last place, but the score has slowly risen and never decreased compared to a previous version of “Guide to Greener Electronics”. This might suggest that the Greenpeace campaign has had some impact on Nintendo, but it is too early to draw a firm conclusion on that.

When looking at the Annual and CSR reports they had one thing in common, namely in all reports we can see faith in the possibilities of technological development in order to solve environmental issues.

When comparing the 2007 versions of the Annual and CSR reports with the 2010 version I found out that in all cases the amount of information in these reports had increased. This could be a sign that Greenpeace reports have had some effects, but it could also be an effect of the overall increase in the general environmental awareness during the last years. There was no clear correlation between the increased amount of pages in the CSR reports and the score from Greenpeace. Nintendo’s score has slowly increased, but Sony and Microsoft’s have varied. This could be related penalty points that Greenpeace are punishing companies with for failing to keep a promise that they have made. It could also be a result of higher demands in later versions of “Guide to Greener Electronics”. But at the same time we must also remember that the general public’s interest in environmental issues has risen much the last years which
could make it more like a trend to portray oneself as environmentally friendly as possible. Even though the amount of information has increased in the CSR reports it is still hard for a reader to get a clear picture of the environmental effect of just the video game consoles.

If a company is seen doing a poor job with their environmental communications it doesn’t necessarily mean that their actual environmental performance is bad. This was a critique Greenpeace received with their “Guide to Greener Electronics” campaign. Relating back to what Iza Kruszweska said, why should a company choose not to communicate about a measure which improves the environmental performance of the company? Reporting about environmental measures is something which would most likely be positive for the company brand.

If we move on to the 2nd research question we saw that after the “Guide to Greener Electronics” Greenpeace received much criticism. It seems likely that these criticisms made Greenpeace more careful in the “Playing Dirty” campaign were they didn’t give a final verdict stating that any console was better than the other. Their own tests in the laboratories helped to increase the validity of the report and they managed to avoid the critique of being arbitrary which is similar to what Hannigan (2006) said regarding claims making. In “Playing Dirty” it’s easy to get the impression that Greenpeace wants to show that there is a huge lack in the EU chemical regulations since many chemicals which Greenpeace argue could be harmful for both people and the environment are not regulated. Greenpeace say that there are substitutes available and states the possibilities for improvement. Since Greenpeace doesn’t consider EU law as strong enough on chemicals they therefore tried to affect the companies directly with the campaign.

Another issue that could possibly be used to explain the 2nd research question is the poor competition among the video game console developing companies. There are only three companies, Sony, Microsoft and Nintendo that dominate the whole industry. There are no green alternatives available to choose between. Both the XBOX 360 and PS3 have gotten smaller and more energy efficient versions but from Greenpeace perspective it is still not enough. Other parts of consumer electronics have come much further than the game console producing industry and Greenpeace asks why the same isn’t done with video game consoles. There also seems to be a low demand from consumers for greener video game consoles. As mentioned earlier, when talking to Patrik Johansson at Bergsala AB he said that almost no one had ever asked any questions about Nintendo’s consoles in relation to the environmental issues before. If there is no demand from consumers requesting greener video game consoles,
I believe there are arguably little incentives from the companies to provide these products. This contradicts what Dawkins (2004) mentioned regarding the British studies which said that if consumers are aware of companies’ environmental, social and ethical behavior then it would have an affect deciding whether or not to buy a product. But in this case of video game consoles there seems to be little interest from consumers. The CSR reports presents an overview of the whole company’s environmental impact, but there are no energy markings or any other labels on the boxes of the consoles which makes it hard for the consumer to get an idea of the consoles environmental impact when buying it at the store. Greenpeace campaigns are one first step in order to create an awareness which might affect the demand for more information and greener consoles.

One of the most surprising findings I have made in this thesis regards the media analysis. If Greenpeace would have acted the way as expected from media theories, we would have seen striking images. Thus wasn’t the case in Greenpeace campaigns. If we would compare with an industry which is seen a much more environmentally damaging, like the oil industry it would be easier for Greenpeace to use “mind bombs” by showing environmental damage from e.g. an oil leak. But in these campaigns Greenpeace didn’t show any images representing the real world that clearly stated the connection between the video game consoles and negative environmental effects. “Clash of the Consoles” showed an animated dystopia with a mountain of used consoles and “Playing Dirty” showed scientists dismantling consoles, but there were no pictures from the real world. Corbett (2006) talked about two news creating tactics, direct and institutional actions. Greenpeace normally uses direct actions, but in these campaigns their focus has instead been on the institutional actions. For this reason Greenpeace lost one of their trump cards of campaigning, namely strong visual images, therefore they were not able to get as much attention for these campaigns that they could have had if they had showed a clearer visual connection between the game consoles and environmental damage.

The contribution of my thesis is to show the difficulties of being the first organization that questions a part of an industry’s environmental performance and show the hardships Greenpeace encountered with their campaigns.
9. Conclusions

Video game consoles are the part of the consumer electronics which have received little attention before Greenpeace campaigns. Greenpeace illuminated this issue with three campaigns over a short period of time, “Guide to Greener Electronics”, “Clash of the Consoles” and “Playing Dirty”. With these campaigns Greenpeace put the issue regarding the environmental impact of video game consoles on the agenda, and also made magazines, internet sites and forums aware of the issue.

Greenpeace faced some challenges with their campaigns. The “Guide to Greener Electronics” campaign received much critique for evaluating the environmental performance of Sony, Microsoft and Nintendo based on their environmental communication. Critics claimed that Greenpeace investigation was unscientific and arbitrary. “Clash of the Consoles” was much a summary of the console producing companies result from “Guide to Greener Electronics” using an animated video clip. As a result of the CSR concept being socially constructed with a large number of definitions, I have noticed a difference in how Greenpeace and the three companies perceive CSR and what could be expected from them. Greenpeace wants companies to go well beyond what the law requires with their report and give special attention to the environmental issues. Sony, Microsoft and Nintendo see environmental issues as one important part of CSR among others. This very wide definition may be a problem to Greenpeace in the way that they have to convince the audience that their interpretation, which sees the environmental perspective as the most important is the most relevant.

When looking at the Annual and CSR reports from 2007 and 2010 I could see that the amount of information, both on CSR issue as well as other issues had increased between these years in the Annual and CSR reports. This could indicate a possible impact of Greenpeace campaigns, but it could also just be an effect of the overall increased environmental awareness over the last years.

The critique from the “Guide to Greener Electronics” campaign made Greenpeace more careful in the “Playing Dirty” campaign where they looked at chemicals in the video game consoles. All the video game consoles passed the test on regulated chemicals, but when looking at unregulated chemicals Greenpeace found high levels in some cases. This report can be seen as a call for stronger chemical regulations in the EU. Because of what Greenpeace saw as poor regulation they tried to affect the companies directly with the campaign when the law wasn’t seen as enough.
Greenpeace are well-known for their direct approach of campaigning which often uses spectacular images. A video of scientists dismantling the consoles in “Playing Dirty” was used as well as the animated video “Clash of the Consoles”. But these videos didn’t show a clear correlation between the game consoles and possible negative environmental side effects.

I argue that my thesis covers an interesting topic and that there is need for further research, preferably by other organizations than just Greenpeace since the issue today can much be seen as Greenpeace vs. the game console developing companies. More research could hopefully create more interest in the issue at consumers which could result in a greening of the gaming industry.
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Microsoft Corporation (2010a) Annual Report 2010

Microsoft Corporation (2010b) Citizenship Report 2010


Nintendo Co Ltd., (2010b) Annual Report 2010

Nintendo Co Ltd., (2010c) CSR Report 2010


Sony Corporation (2010a) Annual Report 2010

Sony Corporation (2010b) CSR report 2010


Appendix I List of definitions

**Console:** The machine for playing video games.

**Greenwash:** When a company tries to portray itself as more environmentally friendly than it actually is.

**Environmental footprint:** usually referred to as ecological footprint. It is a tool used to measure the environmental impact, e.g. from a company.

**Machinima:** is a phenomenon popular on sites such as YouTube in which a clip from a video game is dubbed or altered for comical purposes.

**ppm** (Parts Per Million)

**Precautionary principle (precautionary approach):** A principle which states that the industry should prove that their activities are safe and don’t threaten human health or the environment. Caution should be taken even if the cause and relationship effect isn’t scientifically proven yet.
## Appendix II Full scoreboard of all editions of Greenpeace Guide to Greener Electronics

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<thead>
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Appendix II. Scoreboard featuring the final score given to Sony, Microsoft and Nintendo in all editions of “Guide to Greener Electronics published”. N/A stands for “Not Available” (Greenpeace, 2008d).

Appendix III List of chemicals

The chemicals listed here are the ones that were found from very low to high concentrations in the “Playing Dirty” campaign. They include both regulated and unregulated chemicals.

Beryllium (Be) is a substance which during the processing and the recycling process produce fumes, dust and beryllium oxide. Negative health effects can be chronic beryllium disease (CBD) as well as that beryllium and beryllium compounds can be carcinogenic (Greenpeace, 2008 p.16).

BFR (Brominated Flame Retardants): There are several types of BFRs. Some are known to be persistent in the environment, and highly toxic. The bromine can cause problems during the disposal and recycling of the product (Greenpeace.org, 2007p. 11).

Bromine (Br): Bromine could cause problems at the recycling level. Polymeric-bound bromine can form toxic chemicals which during the destruction and processing can be persistent and bio accumulative (Greenpeace, 2007 p.8).

Chromium (Cr) Chromium might bio accumulate and can have carcinogenic properties (Brigden et al. 2000).

Lead (Pb) is often used as a solder component. The negative health effects of lead can be effects on the nervous system especially at children (Greenpeace.org, 2007 p. 11).
**Phthalates** Greenpeace looked at several phthalates such as: DEHP, DiNP, (Greenpeace, 2007, 21) DEHP can affect sexual development in mammals. DiNP is forbidden in toys if there is a risk that children could place them in their mouths (Greenpeace, 2008 p.4).

**PVC** (**Polyvinyl chloride**) is often used in cable and wire coatings. PVC poses a problem since phthalates are often used with PVC. Its chemical structure causes problems for the manufacture and waste handling (Greenpeace.org, 2007 p. 11).