

Organizing for social sustainability

Bureaucratization in meta-organizations

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Abstract

Global rules are often issued by non-state organizations producing standards, action plans, rankings and indicators with the aim of influencing the behavior of individuals and organizations. These organizations are in many cases meta-organizations which have other organizations rather than individuals as members. They are an important link in the process of creating and diffusing global definitions in the ideoscape of influential policy concepts like sustainable development. This paper explores how two meta-organizations, the FLO and the Organic Forum shape the concepts of fair trade and organic food providing ideas and content to the social dimension of sustainability in the global landscape. We argue that this takes place through a process of bureaucratization in which fair trade and organic food become formalized, precisely defined and made visible. This in turn decides how or even if the social dimension of sustainability can be made into policy.

Keywords: bureaucratization, social sustainability, meta-organization, fair trade, organic food

Introduction

The recognized difficulties for nation states to cope with transnational phenomena such as environmental problems, international labor conditions and global trade by traditional legal means have opened up for new types of regulation in the global arena (Brunsson & Jacobsson 2000). Most often these rules are issued by non-state organizations producing standards, action plans, rankings and indicators with the aim of influencing the behavior of individuals and organizations. These organizations are in many cases meta-organizations (Ahrne and Brunsson 2008), which have other organizations rather than individuals as members. Meta-organizations such as the ILO (International Labour Organization), OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) or SAMC (Swedish Association of Management Consultants) are increasingly important actors for understanding contemporary processes of regulation and coordination of political activities. As they exist on global, international, national and local level their significance should not be underestimated. Even though they do not have much formal authority over their members, meta-organizations are crucial for understanding through which

mechanisms globalization takes place (Ahrne & Brunsson 2008). Among other things, they take active part in giving meaning to powerful concepts shaping reality and activities of organizations and individuals (Meyer et al 1997).

One such concept is *sustainable development* and its three dimensions: economic-, ecological- and social. Studies indicate that the social dimension is often the one most difficult to define in actual projects and policies (Dillard et al. 2009). One explanation for this might lie in the way that the concept is filled with meaning and spread at various governance levels. Many meta-organizations dealing with sustainability policies issue voluntary rules for states or other organizations to follow. It is important to understand that the definition of sustainability takes place on many parallel arenas, both at national and international level, and that meta-organizations are an important link in the process of diffusing global definitions in the ideoscape of sustainability (Appadurai 1996). The notion of ideoscape tells us that ideas transcend organizational borders and form new boundaries based on where ideas travel. This motivates a closer study of their role in defining what social sustainability can mean. Some examples are international organizations like the FSC (The Forest Stewardship Council), and the ISO (International Organization for Standardization), regional ones such as the EAPN-EU (European Anti-Poverty Network) and national examples like the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise and the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA).

In this paper we look into how two meta-organizations, The Fairtrade Labelling Organization International (FLO) and A Swedish platform organization for organic food production (Organic Forum) shape the social dimension of sustainability, providing ideas and content to the concept in the global landscape. The FLO and the Organic Forum work on developing policies that are closely interlinked with sustainability. The FLO works on policies regarding fair trade as a means for achieving sustainable market interactions and the Organic Forum works on policies regarding organic food as a means for achieving a more sustainable food production and consumption. Both organizations use what can be labeled soft governance techniques such as standards and action plans as a means for developing policies. The two cases focus on topics that are highly relevant for understanding how the social dimension of sustainability becomes defined and subsequently

made use of by other organizations. They constitute examples of a global and a national meta-organization, both contributing to the ideoscape of social sustainability on different levels.

We argue that the defining process takes place through a process of bureaucratization in which policy buzzwords like sustainable development gain its content. In that sense, bureaucratization is also politics although not as easily recognizable as an open power struggle. We speak of bureaucratization in the Weberian sense, in that the policy processes are guided by formal rules, clearly defined policies and decision making hierarchies, have archived written documents as its products and so forth (Weber 1958:196-224). Furthermore, a central feature is that there exists certain predictability in the decision making within the organization (Ahrne 1989:58-59). Focus here is on the processes of bureaucratization which we divide in three analytical dimensions. First we have formalization, where more and more procedures in the organizations such as meetings and the like become routinised and scripted by formalized structures. Second, precision where there is an ongoing work to divide and categorize and make the concept at hand more and more precisely defined. Third, visibility, where an ongoing work in making the policy visible through published action plans and standards and also by making these objects into actors in the global arena of the sustainable development debate. For example through the use of web-sites and newsletters. It is thus possible to argue that the bureaucratization processes pushes the idea of social sustainability through a filter of procedures making it properly packaged into different compartments, boxes and categorizations (cf. Handelman 2004).

The data has been collected through participant observation, interviews and document studiesⁱ. In the FLO, we have followed their work in determining its standards and criteria for fair trade since 2006. This has been done through interviews and document studies. In the case of Organic Forum, the development of the action plan 2010 for increased organic production and consumption was studied during 2008-2009. The meta-organization the FLO springs out of the fair trade movement. The Fair trade movement has been active since the 1940s, but it was not until the 1988 that the first fair trade label was developedⁱⁱ, the Max Havelaar label in the Netherlands. This is sometimes referred to in the literature as the shift from the alternative trade dominant movement to the certification/labeling dominant movement (see, for example, Nicholls & Opal 2004; Raynolds et al 2007:17). Since 1988, a number of different fair trade labels have

been developed. Many of these fair trade labeling organizations soon started to cooperate and in 1997 this cooperation was formalized into a meta-organization, the Fairtrade Labelling Organisation International (FLO) (see, for example, Renard 2003, Raynolds et al 2007; Reinecke 2008, Thedvall 2009). In 2002, the FLO developed their own label, which most national labeling initiatives now use. In reference to the label standards are developed to be used to monitor that the products keep within the scope of the fairtrade label. It is through the process of organizing the FLO's work and developing the standard that the notion of fair trade is defined and made precise. The ambition of the FLO and its standard is to take into account all the dimensions of sustainable development, but with a focus on social sustainability. It is therefore a good case for studying how the bureaucratization process contributes to the definition of social sustainability and how it is made sense of in a global arena.

The Organic Forum is as most meta-organizations a national one. Established in 2002, it functions as a meeting place for actors interested in developing organic production, and in contributing to construct Sweden's position within the EU concerning these issues. The Organic Forum is partly financed by the Swedish Board of Agriculture and is located at the Royal Swedish Academy of Agriculture and Forestry. Organic food production has steadily increased during the last two decades. The increase was particularly tangible the first five years after the EU-accession in 1995, which made targeted support available for the sector. During 2007, the growth of the market for organic food products was estimated to 25-30%, but shortages in supply in certain products were still seen as a persistent problem. In order to increase production and consumption of organic food stakeholders under the leadership of the Organic Forum was set to form an Action plan. The participating organizations were consumer and producers, labeling organizations, representatives from the environmental movement and public authorities (See Casula Vifell & Soneryd 2010 for a more thorough account).ⁱⁱⁱ The Action plan's target was to increase the overall production to 25 percent until 2010. Furthermore, 20 percent of the cultivated land should also be used in an ecologically sustainable way. The set target was a political goal decided by the government and the parliament and the plan was a means for achieving it. The target involved sustainable production and consumption in all three dimensions, which means that it constitutes a good case for studying how the bureaucratization process within a meta-organization might influence the respective weight and relation of the dimensions.

Governance through Bureaucratization

As meta-organizations lack formal means for controlling their members, the use of various government techniques that build on soft means for achieving coordination and adherence to policies become important. Soft governance is also often associated with meta-governance, which is a concept used to describe the ‘governing of self regulative networks’ (Sørensen & Torfing 2007). Different theoretical approaches have been used to describe the driving forces behind an increasing meta-governance and topics related to the set up, management and outcomes of meta-governance activities are amply explored in recent literature (see, for example, Sørensen & Torfing 2007). In such studies, the role of the state actors as meta-governors is well investigated (O’Toole 2008), but state actors are not the only ones trying to govern networks of various kinds. Our cases illustrate examples of meta-organizations performing meta-governance and the particular consequences that follow from this.

We take a somewhat narrower approach to meta-governance in looking at a particular type of practice that could be labeled governance through bureaucratization. If the content of a certain policy is soft in the sense not binding, meta-organizations might still be able to exercise authority over its members by forcing them to comply with certain established processes. In studies of soft law, time management and process governance have been identified as having a large impact on the behavior of those towards whom the governing practices are directed (Jacobsson 2004; Thedvall 2006, 2009; Casula Vifell 2009). The role of temporal disciplining in having the network participants performing the same type of tasks during a specific time, and meeting common deadlines are two such examples.

We argue that making actors take part in the actual set up or formalizing of activities such as setting up committees who hold regular meetings, and in the development of templates for documents should be viewed as a governance tool. Hence, one way of making individuals and/or organizations governable without formal authority to govern is to involve the actors in standardizing processes in the form of labels, common action plans, indicators, codes, rankings and the like. The work of classifying individuals, things and ideas into categories and boxes is part of what Handelman calls the *bureaucratic logic* (2004:5, also see Thedvall 2006). The concept refers to the ordinary, everyday practices in bureaucracies and the corridors of power of

inventing and applying classification (Handelman 2004:5). These practices to a great extent shape the objects of policy-making, in that they provide definitions of what is desirable, possible and thinkable. It will affect the way that policies are formulated and in turn what fair trade and organic food might mean. Furthermore, it is in the process of developing the action plans or the labels that policies are built into bureaucratic structures such as performance evaluations, benchmarks or certification schemes. It becomes a form of meta-governance where bureaucratic processes and structures gently force the organizations taking part in the schemes to order their policies and idea in the direction of the label or the action plan. These bureaucratic processes take on a life of its own with continuous improvements making the standard or the action plan more precise, formal and visible in a circle of setting goals, evaluating and setting new goals in the quest for finding the ‘best’ criteria for the label or action plan. In this way meta-organizations have the power to determine what social sustainability might mean in the world. It is exercised through their ability to make impersonal rules (cf Barnett and Finnemore 2004:3) thereby hiding power struggles and political aspects of negotiating the notion of social sustainability (cf Miller & Rose 1990). In the following section, we will give examples of how governance through bureaucratization is played out in the FLO and the Organic Forum.

Bureaucratization in the FLO and the Organic Forum

Formalization of the process

In this first section we argue that the formalization understood as the establishment of hierarchical decision making structures and formal rules as well as the specialization and division of labor (Simon 1957) creates predictability – a central bureaucratic value. With a particular formalization of activities certain types of procedures and working methods automatically follows while others become seen as inappropriate (Røvik 2000). Some actors are also more or less apt for the chosen procedures (Bryer 2010). Our argument is also that this process has consequences for shaping what social sustainability means.

The FLO

In 1997, the national fair trade labeling schemes^{iv} began to cooperate in the meta-organization, the FLO, and together decide on a standard for fair trade. The decision-making processes of forming the fair trade standard have since then become more and more complex. The governing structure has expanded both hierarchically and horizontally. This has resulted in formalizations of the process of creating what fair trade might mean. The procedures to govern the organization have become so complex that there is a need to have both a nomination and a governance committee. In 2004, the process was further formalized when FLO was divided into FLO e.V and FLO-Cert. This was partly a result of FLO-Cert becoming ISO 65 Accredited, which states that standard setting and the certifying organization cannot be the same. Now, FLO-Cert is an independent profit-making organization that certifies producers and traders according to the FLO e.V standards. A new management team was also added to the organizational hierarchy. The FLO has also changed membership to also include the producer organizations^v which means that they now have a say in what the standards may or may not include.

The formalization of the FLO organization has made its message more authoritative in the global arena since it represented more people united as one, but it also meant more negotiations and compromises in what fair trade might mean. The actors' room for maneuver has shrunk significantly. At the same time more and more of the work of developing the standards has been left to the standard unit at the FLO only monitored by the Standard Committee and the Board of Directors, since the process has become more complex. The process of developing the standard has in this way become formalized affecting the division of tasks between the participants. During the thirteen years of its existence the FLO has grown expansively both in membership and in scope. In the years to come the organization of the FLO will continue to formalize its organization. It is visible in the strategy document. It is also visible in the growing list vacancies at both FLO e.V and FLO Cert (Thedvall 2009). This formalization process affects what fair trade and in turn social sustainability might stand for in the global arena.

The Organic Forum

The action plan format chosen by the Organic Forum implied among other things short deadlines which meant that the appointment of members to formal governing bodies were made from already established networks around the meta-organization mainly focusing on farming issues.

There was also no time for other types of formalization like circulation of documents for comments due to the pressure of meeting the deadlines. This meant that there were no alternative routes for social issues to be brought to the table and that for instance organizations dealing with social aspects of sustainability never received any invitation to take part in any of the activities that was supplied throughout the formalization of the process. This means that the formalization takes on particular traits due to this choice of model for achieving the collective action which in turn limits the interpretation of sustainability to also include social aspects.

Another example of how the process of formalizing activities affects the content of sustainability is the specialization of tasks. The Action plan was developed in the model of a project and projects often take place in a setting and within the framework of a more permanent organization such as the Organic Forum. This proved to be important in how the project was formalized (also see Bell & Morse 2007; Sahlin-Andersson & Söderholm 2002). The Organic Forum leadership meant that organizations taking part in the steering group, and further on synthesis groups, were found in the pre-existing network of actors around the meta-organization the Organic Forum. This meant that already at the outset some issues came to fall outside the scope of the plan. Ecological aquaculture and organic fish products are such example. These issues are clearly related to organic food production and consumption, but the Organic Forum network mainly included organizations dealing with what is generally seen as organic farming. Furthermore, as the first steering group was unable to finalize its task due to too different opinions on the content of the plan, a new steering group with an even more narrow representation was appointed by the first group. It emphasizes the importance of the bureaucratization of the process for the content of the Action plan, since this was done to be able to meet the deadline. The discussions were expected to become easier if those actors guided by strong mandates and ideologically biased arguments were excluded.

Precision of scope

Precision entails the process of defining the scope of an activity, in these cases the fair trade standard and the Action plan for organic food. According to this logic, processes of precision are a central feature of bureaucracies as they aim to organize activities in a rational and stable manner (Weber 1958; Barnett & Finnemore 2004; Handelman 2004). In the following section we

show how the scope of sustainability becomes more precisely defined and limited through the creation of specific categories, like organic food or small scale farming.

The FLO

The FLO's vision of fair trade is to make the working and trade conditions better for the poorest of the poor. In their quest to fulfill this vision they have developed a label, the fair-trade label, governed by standards. Standards are in themselves bureaucratic, since they have to be defined to form rational and stable categories that are possible to use in different contexts. Built in the bureaucratic processes is the continuous, but impossible, pursuit after the best, most rational standards. It creates a need for constant improvement as well as a need to expand the scope of the standard. There are also standards developed for new products all the time (Thedvall 2009). New products are also continuously included in the old standards. There has also been changed in the set up of the standards. In the beginning there were only standards for products produced by small producer organizations. At this stage there are also general standards for organizations that have hired labor such as plantations and the trader organizations as well as specific product standards for small producer organizations, trade organizations and organizations that employ hired labor. This in an attempt to make the categorizations of actors clearer, from only being about 'small farmers' to now include 'small producer organizations', 'hired labor' and 'traders'. Through this process the standards are expanding their area of what may be standardized, but also making the standards more precise.

Furthermore, the standards are constantly revised. One example is the generic standards for small producer organizations changed 1 January 2009. In the old version the small producer organization was not able to be dependent on permanent hired labor. In the new version it is possible to have permanent hired labor. A producer that grow products that are highly labor dependent may have permanent hired labor, but the farm size have to be a specific hectare per crop and the farmer needs to spend most of her/his time on their own farm and so forth. This has major consequences for who will be able to participate in the fairtrade labeling scheme. It has a major impact on who might be considered to engage in social sustainability issues. The whole document is also filled with examples of more precision in the standard, where the same section in the former standard document was a few sentences long and now takes up half a page. (for

examples, see Thedvall 2009). The rules for what is needed to become fairtrade labeled have become more precise within each area.

The Organic Forum

In the case of the Organic Forum, the aforementioned formalization proved to have an impact on the precision of scope since actors representing social issues were not present in the governing bodies and could not actively put particular topics on the table. The consequence was that the precision was centered on already agreed upon definitions in the narrow group of participants. This was furthermore enforced by formal deadlines which limited the time for reflections and longer discussions on the meaning of particular concepts.

The formal mandate for the Action plan which the Organic Forum worked with was set up by the government and parliament decision, but the formulations were vague and left considerable room for interpretation. The adherence to sustainable development as a main goal was spelled out, but there was no definition of the concept as a whole or of its different dimensions. Instead the scope of the Action plan and the precision of sustainability were partly decided by the type of actors that came to be included, and of how their interaction was organized.

To take one example, a number of synthesis groups were tasked with different topics relating to the plan and were asked to produce reports for the steering group. Joint knowledge production is often described as an important part of meta-governance and is described as affecting the content of interaction within a network (Ehrmann & Stinson 1999; Klijn & Edelenbos 2008). This is an important place for the definition of concepts and interpretation of data to be used in an Action plan and may also become decisive for shaping what issues may be included or not. There were six areas where knowledge production took place: primary production, knowledge and competence building, the branches, private consumption, large scale household and restaurants and commerce and markets. Clearly none of them dealt directly with social aspects of sustainability while ecologic and economic issues were well represented. Several of the groups drifted somewhat from their original mandate, but this was in the end considered as a positive thing as it revealed some issues that the steering group had not realized the importance of before. However, no group drifted outside the boundaries of dealing with the ecological and economic

pillar or of including more topics on the agenda or widening the definitions on organic food. In the final action plan the sections dealing with obstacles and limitations for increased production/consumption as well as the proposed solutions all focus around economic consequences of increasing the ecological sustainability of the production system.

The precision of scope of the project was furthermore partly shaped by the previous plans that had been made within the topic of organic food. This was not the first attempt of using action plans as a method of policy development within this policy area. In 1994 the parliament took the decision to aim for an increased production of 10% until 2000, and a consecutive plan focused on the years up until 2005. These plans were all clearly focused on farming products. To conclude, the scope of the plan became a lot more narrowly defined than what its original mandate allowed for through the process of precision.

Visibility of output

The final dimension of bureaucratization that we see as clearly shaping the content of sustainability is the process of rendering policy output visible. This is to be understood as part of Weber's notion of the importance of the written document as a record of decisions increasing stability and predictability (Weber 1958). When policies become visible, actors are constrained and enabled in their understanding and usage of, in this case, fair trade and organic food. Hence it becomes difficult to develop policies building on other definitions than the established ones (cf Thedvall 2006). In meta-organizations using soft measures of governance, this dimension is especially important since part of their influence is decided via 'regulation by publication' (Snyder 1994:199).

The FLO

In the case of the FLO, the standards are published and distributed through the web-site and the certification organization, FLO-Cert. Setting a standard is part of making visible what are important criteria for a producer, trader and retailer to fulfill if they want to use the fairtrade label. The writings have to express the intent as it was meant. The meaning of the label has to be visible in text through documents such as the 'general standards' or the 'product standards'. The

visibility of the process becomes more and more important in making the members comply with the goals of the meta-organization. In the process of making policy visible through standards all sorts of complementary documents are written to make sure that the standard is interpreted as intended by the FLO. There are explanatory documents and training manuals, policy documents such as 'Standard operating procedure. Development of Fairtrade standard' or 'Standard operating procedure. Complaints against Fairtrade standard'. The pile of written documents explaining what the FLO and the fairtrade label is all about is getting higher and higher

The FLO also strives towards being more visible as an organization. This includes making visible its operating procedures such as writing down its terms of references, nomination procedures, certification mark manuals and so forth. The FLO has also launched a new business model 'Making the Difference'. The New Global Strategy for Fairtrade'. It was put forward during the summer 2009. At the same time the FLO also launched a new web-site, again. Its web-site is one of the instruments used to make the FLO visible in the world. It is at the web-site that the standards are published and made official. The latest examples are soybeans and pulses in February 2009 and gold in March 2010. In addition has the scope of nuts and oil seeds standard expanded through so-called easy entrance. It is now possible to have fairtrade labeled almonds. The same goes for fresh vegetables standard that since 1 September 2009 include sweet potatoes. To conclude, in the process of making the notion of fair trade visible through documents and the web-site the scope of the social dimension in relation to fair trade is restricted, since further work on the standard is based on what has been written before.

The Organic Forum

In the case of the Organic Forum, the Action plan, the evaluations, newsletters and best practice presentations that were spread further reinforced the narrowed definition of sustainability as only actions dealing with organic farming (producers, consumers or retailers). Hence, it was difficult for organizations approaching organic food from a social perspective to find anything that tied into their activities. The way in which the plan is made visible directs the attention towards certain aspects of organic food that had been previously defined and formalized.

The Action plan document itself was a report printed in color and distributed to the participant organizations and handed over to the minister for agriculture. Furthermore, The Organic Forum has a website on which information on the plan was published continuously during the project and also after its conclusion. The website also contains the newsletter sent out by an assigned evaluator. This was seen as an important part of spreading awareness of the plan and pushing members to comply as the newsletters present activities and statistics of the issues raised in the plan. Comparisons are also made between different sectors such as meat, milk and bread production where good and bad examples are pointed out.

Besides the activities of the Organic Forum, some of the participants of the project posted the plan on their websites. Other organizations dealing with organic farming also regularly report on the activities conducted by the Organic Forum in relation to the plan on their websites and newsletters. These organizations are mainly dealing with organic farming, once again showing that the visibility reinforces the narrowed scope and definition of organic production to only include agricultural products and to only focus on the economic and ecological pillars of sustainability. As the plan and the actions undertaken in the wake of it become visible to other actors, they take part in determining what a project working on similar topics could look like, and the definitions of sustainability become reinforced and further spread. The fact that social sustainability never became part of the activities of the project is then important for understanding why this might also be the case in the activities to follow.

Conclusion: Bureaucratization of social sustainability

This paper has explored how two meta-organizations, the FLO and the Organic Forum shape the concepts of fair trade and organic food providing ideas and content to the social dimension of sustainability in the global landscape. We have shown that this takes place through a process of bureaucratization in which fair trade and organic food become formalized, precisely defined and made visible. This in turn decides how or even if the social dimension of sustainability can be made into policy.

What then did social sustainability come to mean in the context of fair trade and organic food? In the case of the FLO, the notion of fair trade is devoted to social sustainability. However, their

version of social sustainability is of particular character. It is dependent on their devotion to support producers and workers in the global south. The poorest of the poor. It is reliant on their idea of focusing on producer organizations that have to live up to particular demands of number of employee that may cultivate the land. It makes the organization focus on particular goods that are manufactured in the global south by particular types of producer organizations. Goods, such as tea, coffee, bananas and the like. The social dimension then is connected to a particular geographical area, particular products and produced in a specific way. In the case of the Organic Forum and the process of the action plan, the social dimension was never included or openly addressed or expressed. This dimension was crowded out giving the social aspects a weak stance in the issue of organic food production and consumption although the formal goals of the meta-organization and the plan were include all three dimensions.

We argue that the process of bureaucratization helps explain how the social dimension came to be shaped in these particular ways. First, by formalizing fair trade and organic food into standards and action plans governed by particular steering groups and committees, the bureaucratization process decides how decisions are made. Furthermore, it affects who is able to participate in the development of the policy at hand. Some actors may be left outside given the particular way that the formalization is realized. Second, the precision of the standards and the action plans also takes part in shaping the meaning of the social dimension. This happens through categorizations and the ongoing search for the 'best' definition of the standard or the content of the Action plan. Finally, the notion of fair trade and organic food become visible through the publication and the distribution of documents and texts available on websites. These present particular visions of the social dimension which are spread in the global ideoscape of sustainable development.

Following this line of argumentation, a comparison between the two cases leads to the conclusion that meta-organizations that do not primarily focus on the social dimension have more difficulties in including such aspects as their activities become subjected to the process of bureaucratization. The FLO explicitly address the social dimension while the Organic Forum focus on sustainable development on a general level and when the process becomes formalized the power relations become decisive in what areas will be focused. As has been shown, the ecological and economic dimensions became stronger through the process of bureaucratization.

A more general issue to address concerns the implications of how the social dimension is filled with meaning. We see that through these bureaucratization processes the definition of what social sustainability might mean or not is moved away from the arena of politics into bureaucracy thereby hiding power struggles and political aspects of negotiating the notion of social sustainability (c. f. Miller & Rose 1990). Hence, it is important to look into from a participatory point of view. As the issue of representation is seldom actively addressed in bureaucratic processes of technical character the role of participation and the use of interactive governance tools need to be further investigated from a democratic point of view. This would further enhance our understanding of the legitimacy of such highly regulatory practices often carried out by meta-organizations.

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Endnotes

ⁱ In the FLO case, eleven interviews were conducted with members of the FLO Board of Directors and the FLO Standard Committee. Interviews have also been conducted with Rättvisemärkt in Sweden as well as FLO's certification organization the FLO-Cert. The changes of the standards and the organization of the FLO have also been done through extensive document studies. In the Organic Forum case, ten interviews were conducted with members of the steering group as well as with representatives from other organizations taking part in the process. Participant observations were done during the presentation of the finalized plan and during hearings and activities organized by Organic Forum relating to the realization of the plan. All in all four participant observations were conducted during such activities that usually lasted between 2-4 hours.

ⁱⁱ For a historical overview see for example Raynolds et al 2007:7ff.

ⁱⁱⁱ The organizations represented in the final steering group that presented the action plan were: The City of Gothenburg, (Göteborgs Stad), Milko, The Swedish Board of Agriculture, The Swedish Cooperative union (KF), The Federation of Swedish Farmers (LRF) and the consultant firm Goodpoint who headed the project.

^{iv} **List of Labelling Initiatives in May 2010:** Full members: Fairtrade Austria, Max Havelaar Belgium, TransFair Canada, Max Havelaar Denmark, Reilun kaupan edistämisyhdistys, Finland, Max Havelaar France, Transfair Germany, Fairtrade Mark Ireland, Fairtrade TransFair Italy, Fairtrade Label Japan, TransFair Minka Luxembourg, Stichting Max Havelaar Netherlands, Fairtrade Max Havelaar Norway, Asociación para el Sello de Comercio Justo Spain, Rättvisemärkt Sweden, Max Havelaar Stiftung Switzerland, Fairtrade Foundation UK, TransFair USA, Fairtrade Labelling Australia & New Zealand Associate members: Comercio Justo Mexico, Fairtrade South Africa Fairtrade Certified Products in other countries: Estonian Green Movement-FoE (see www.fairtrade.net).

^v Producer Networks are organisations which Fairtrade Certified Producer Organisations may join if they so wish and which are recognised by FLO as the representative body of farmers, workers and others belonging to Fairtrade Certified Producer Organisations. At the moment, there are three producer networks in the three continents, Africa, Asia and Latin America, where Fairtrade Certified Producers Organisations are: African Fairtrade Network (AFN) founded in 2004, Coordinadora Latinoamericana y del Caribe de Comercio Justo (CLAC) founded in 1996, Network of Asian Producers (NAP) founded in 2005 (see www.fairtrade.net).