Louvain School of Management

How do companies design their sourcing decision process to incorporate ethical purchasing intentions and behavior of consumers in the food industry?

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Executive Summary

Nowadays, our consumer society is questioned by many individuals due to the many environmental and social challenges we face. However, most consumers do not translate their intentions to buy ethically into actual ethical purchasing behavior. Their role is nevertheless very important as they are at the core of companies' sourcing decisions. Consequently, this paper investigates how do companies design their sourcing decision process, in order to incorporate ethical purchasing intentions or behavior of consumers. The focus is on the food industry.

To analyze this theme, a literature review was first built to describe, on the one hand, all relevant knowledge about ethical consumer behaviors and the gap between their purchasing intentions and behaviors. On the other hand, it is about the supply chain, its management, its sustainability and more particularly the sourcing activities. Afterwards, a qualitative analysis was conducted based on seven interviews with companies of various sizes that sell different types of products.

The analysis is based on field observation as well as on discussions of the links between several sections. The results first indicate that ethical consumers' concerns, their expectations towards companies to address sustainable issues and the importance of the local dimension in their purchasing decisions are constantly increasing. It was also found that companies do not easily measure the purchasing intentions and behaviors of the ethical consumer segment separately, nor do they easily determine what they are taking into account in their sourcing decisions. Nevertheless, companies that do make the distinction tend to look at purchase intentions – and not behaviors - because they represent the long-term trends of ethical consumers.

Although it is not straightforward to determine most of the concrete actions they have taken in their sourcing decisions in order to respond to ethical consumers, some actions are still related to their expectations. For example, animal welfare is a key concern for these consumers and is therefore being addressed by companies. In addition, transparency is clearly an initiative that has been driven by ethical consumer demand.

The results also show that among the different drivers that drive companies to integrate sustainable practices, consumer pressure is one of the most common drivers. Subsequently, discussions led to the conclusion that it is particularly large companies and those that have been integrating sustainability in recent years - five years or less - that are the most affected by consumer pressure. It is also these companies that take into account the intentions of consumers.

Finally, it was determined that the role of consumers is important for all companies, but that they do not all feel the pressure of ethical consumers. Consumers do not always realize the importance of their role and are not sufficiently informed to make thoughtful purchases. This leads to the necessity of educating consumers. The implications are not only directed at companies but also at consumers, which makes this thesis particularly original. Companies are encouraged to educate consumers, for example through greater transparency in their sourcing decisions. The implications for consumers are various. They need to be informed, to question companies on their sourcing decisions and to translate their ethical purchasing intentions into real behavior in order to play an active role in the choice of products that are offered, because ultimately they are the final decision makers through their purchasing power.

The objectives of this study are therefore multiple, but firstly it attempts to make a contribution to the social and environmental crisis we are currently facing. Indeed, a better understanding of the impact that consumers - through their purchasing intentions or behaviours - can have on ethical decisions upstream of companies' supply chains has several advantages. Most importantly, it will raise awareness of ethical consumption and empower consumers to make informed and responsible purchasing decisions, while assisting companies in their decision-making and consumer education. This is particularly relevant in a world where what we consume and how we consume it is one of the biggest issues of our century.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AI	Artificial Intelligence
B2B	Business to Business
B2C	Business to Consumer
CSI	Corporate Social Irresponsibility
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
GRI	Global Reporting Initiative
GSCM	Green Supply Chain Management
I-B	Intention-Behavior
IoT	Internet of Things
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
PSR	Purchasing Social Responsibility
SC	Supply Chain
SCM	Supply Chain Management
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SDS	Supplier Development Strategies
SRC	Socially Responsible Consumer
SSCM	Sustainable Supply Chain Management
TCV	Theory of Consumption Values
TPB	Theory of Planned Behaviour
TRA	Theory of Reasoned Action
VIP	Value Identity Personal norm

I. Introduction

Motivations

Environmental justice and social justice are the two biggest challenges we are facing nowadays. While the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has been confronting us with the current climate emergency for many years, the first part of the latest report - dated August 2021 – is more alarming than ever. It describes ongoing and future climate changes, forcing the whole world to face the evidence of the catastrophe that we are facing and will face in the near future, nearer than previously thought. However, there is still some hope for mitigating these serious consequences. The IPCC scientists state that "we need a radical transformation of processes and behaviors at all levels: individuals, communities, businesses, institutions and government. [...] We need to redefine how we live and consume" (Reforme, 2021).

According to UN expert Philip Alston, climate change will lead to more extreme poverty through famine and migration as well as threats to human rights and democracy (OHCHR, 2019). Today's social inequalities are already widening the gap between the 'rich' and the 'poor'. It was found that in 2020 "the richest 1% owns more than twice the wealth of 6.9 billion people, or 90% of the world's population" (Oxfam, 2021). These inequalities have disastrous consequences, sometimes leading to various forms of abuse, including exploitation in supply chains. One can talk about appalling working conditions, child labour, poor wages, disrespected human rights, gender inequality, disrespect for animals, ... the list is extensive. All of this occurs in order to satisfy the desires of consumers who are increasingly demanding over the years and through globalisation, wanting high quality products but constantly lower prices. While many consumers are aware of these environmental and social issues, it does not imply that their purchasing behaviour has suddenly changed.

Indeed, this observation is widely documented in the literature as the "intention-behaviour gap" which refers to the difference between ethical purchasing intentions and behaviour of consumers. Intentions can be described as a preliminary stage to behaviours that represent consumer interest in ethical products, but which do not necessarily translate into the actual purchase of these products. Ethical purchasing behaviours are therefore the subsequent step that translates these ethical concerns into the actual purchase of ethical products.

This gap is omnipresent in the daily lives of a large number of ethically minded consumers. Even for those consumers who are environmentally and socially conscious, it is often challenging to translate all of their aspirations for sustainable consumption into actual behaviour for many reasons. For example, a recurring dilemma from an environmental point of view is the consumption of meat or exotic fruit from overseas. Many people who are aware of the negative consequences of consuming exotic fruits and meats do not manage to banish them from their daily lives in order to opt for eco-responsible alternatives instead. Another example from a social point of view might be to favor Fairtrade alternatives to chocolate or coffee consumption.

The reasons that might seem the most obvious to explain this phenomenon could be related to price, availability of products or more generally to choices of ease and comfort. But there are many more explanations. Consequently, a thorough review of the literature will highlight what best explains this difference between intentions and behaviour. This work decided to study this gap in the food industry in relation to companies' sourcing decisions, which has not been studied before. On the one hand, the aim is to find out whether companies pay attention to consumers' ethical intentions or to their actual ethical purchasing behaviour in their sourcing decisions. On the other hand, it also aims to learn about the role that ethical consumers may play in companies' sourcing decision processes.

This thesis was led to work on corporate supply chains because supply chain management is a key element to consider when referring to the consumer society, as every product consumed is passed through supply chain management (Fritz, 2019). The focus is placed on sourcing activities because the majority of both social and environmental incidents occur upstream in the supply chain. Indeed, this is confirmed by the fact that consumers expect information primarily about suppliers when it comes to corporate transparency. There may be different factors that cause companies to have problems in their sourcing process. For example, the type of products that companies offer might be one of them, as some ingredients are riskier than others in terms of worker exploitation, such as cocoa for example. Another factor can be the size of the company, which also influences the probability of having potential sustainable issues if the suppliers are so numerous that the companies do not know them all. This also raises a sub-question, which is whether there are certain types of companies that are more likely to integrate consumers' ethical expectations into their sourcing decisions. All of this will be addressed in this paper.

Finally, in order to better assess consumer pressure on companies, it is also interesting to integrate an analysis of the different drivers that drive companies to integrate sustainable practices. Overall, determining how and what types of companies integrate consumers' ethical expectations into their sourcing decisions - by taking into account their intentions or purchasing behavior - opens up a new avenue of study that has not been explored so far.

Research question

The objective of this work is to answer the following research question: how do companies design their sourcing decision process to incorporate ethical purchasing intentions or behavior of consumers in the food industry?

It is divided into two main parts which are the literature review and the analysis. The literature review includes two chapters. Chapter 1 concerns ethical consumer behavior. It gathers, on the one hand, information on the consumption and ethical behaviors of consumers and companies, and, on the other hand, explanations about the gap between purchasing intentions and behaviors. The Chapter 2 of this literature review gives an overview of the supply chain in three parts. The first part describes supply chain management, the second one describes sustainable supply chain more extensively and the third one focuses on sustainable sourcing, its major problems, its drivers and the issue of transparency.

Afterwards, an analysis is provided as Chapter 3, based on qualitative data through interviews. It is divided into five sections. The first section analyses the concerns as well as the purchasing intentions and behaviors of ethical consumers. The second section looks at the actions taken by companies to meet the expectations of ethical consumers. The third section examines the drivers for integrating sustainable criteria into the sourcing decision process of companies. The fourth section discusses the links between these drivers and certain company characteristics, based on the matrix tables. Finally, the last section addresses the importance of the role of consumers, a discussion on this subject as well as the education of consumers.
The aim of this analysis was to explore the reality of the field after having reviewed the literature. Given the novelty of the subject, it was not intended to compare every single aspect found in the field with the literature review, but rather to build on the knowledge gained from the literature review in order to best conduct the analysis and attempt to answer the research question.

Two sections of discussion can be distinguished here as they contribute to the critical insight and further development of this work. First of all, linking the different drivers that lead companies to integrate sustainability with certain company characteristics contributes greatly to a better understanding of the role of consumers. Indeed, consumer pressure has been directly associated with certain types of companies, which advances research in the area of consumer impact. Secondly, the linkage with the consideration of purchase intentions or behaviours helps to make the previously found results all the more accurate and relevant. Finally, the last point of discussion adds a new dimension to the results obtained on the role of consumers and the actions taken by companies. This critical look and these nuances help to establish a more complete scheme of understanding the role of each actor.

The work finishes with a conclusion that mainly takes up the findings encountered during the analysis of the work. It also includes a section with managerial implications and the originality of this work lies in the many implications that are also made to consumers. Finally, the limitations that were encountered are discussed and future research is proposed with the aim of developing the findings further. The contributions that enabled the research question to be answered are listed in Table 1.

Research question	**Littérature Review**	**Analysis**	**Implications**
How and which companies design their sourcing decision process to incorporate ethical purchase intentions and ethical purchasing behavior of consumers in the food industry?	Ethical Consumption & The Intention-Behavior Gap	Ethical concerns of consumers	Managerial Implications
	(Sustainable) Supply Chain Management & Ethical Sourcing	Integration of ethical consumers expectations	Implications for consumers
		Drivers to implement sustainable practices	
		Discussion on different links	
		The role of consumers & Discussion	

TABLE 1: Contributions to the research question

II. Methodology

After an introduction that states the research question, related explanations and the thread of this work, a literature review was built in two parts. It is mentioned that a wide variety of sources was an important criterion for the drafting of this part. Numerous searches were carried out on several databases, including Discovery of the UCLouvain, Google Scholar, Cairn, ScienceDirect, Wiley Online Library, Emerald and ResearchGate. In a first step, articles were found with the following keywords (Table 2). The first and second line correspond to the first and second part of the literature review respectively.

Keywords
(consumers) OR/AND (consumers' role) OR/AND (ethical concerns) OR/AND (CSR) OR/AND (CSI) OR/AND (gap) OR/AND (intention-behavior) OR/AND (attitude-behavior) OR/AND (ethics) OR/AND (ethic*) OR/AND (responsible) OR/AND (Theory of reasoned action) OR/AND (Theory of planned behavior) OR/AND (sustainab*) OR/AND (social) OR/AND (environmental) OR/AND (green) OR/AND (consumerism)
(supply chain) OR/AND (supply chain management) OR/AND (ethical sourcing) OR/AND (social responsibility) OR/AND (sustainable supply chain) OR/AND (sustainable supply chain management) (responsible supply chain) OR/AND (sourcing decisions) OR/AND (sustainable food sourcing) OR/AND (sourcing decision process) OR/AND (responsible food consumption) OR/AND (food industry) OR/AND (evolution) OR/AND (drivers) OR/AND (transparency) OR/AND (supply chain transparency) OR/AND (sustainable practices) OR/AND (responsible actions) OR/AND (SDG*) OR/AND (risk management) OR/AND (reputation) OR/AND (responsible sourc*)

TABLE 2 : Keywords for the article search

The other part of the articles were found through the references and bibliographies of the articles found in the first place. This literature review is an essential part of the work because it provides an overview of the current state of research on the gap between the intentions and purchasing behaviours of ethical consumers, as well as on sustainable supply chain and sourcing. This allowed to compare - and sometimes contrast - findings from previous studies, to confront it with the following analysis, and to identify limitations and potential future researches (Paul & Criado, 2020).

The next part of this paper is devoted to the qualitative analysis. An interview guide was designed to ask questions about the interviewee, their company and their sourcing decisions process. Questions about sourcing decisions are based on information learned from conducting the literature review. Throughout the process of writing and reading the articles, questions were noted and then collected to construct the interview guide. It was always carried out in order to raise all the necessary questions to best answer the research question. The interview guide can be found in Appendix E, before the transcripts of the interviews in Appendix F.1 to F.7.

The analysis was built around seven interviews with companies that operate in the food industry. They lasted approximately three quarters of an hour depending on the interviewee. The number of interviews was determined using the saturation principle. Several themes and sub-themes were identified for data analysis. Some themes - and sub-themes - were selected prior to the interviews through the questions in the interview guide (based on the literature review) and the other ones were based on the interviewees' answers. By the end of the seven interviews, the number of themes identified had reached saturation as it was considered that more interviews would not lead to the identification of relevant new themes. This information is also based on the study by Guest et al. (2006) who conducted 60 interviews and found that most themes (73% of them) were found during the first six interviews.

The thirteen themes identified prior to the interviews were: presentation of the interviewees, presentation of the company, CSR strategy of the company, growth of ethical concerns of consumers, measurement of ethical intentions and behaviours, consideration of ethical intentions or/and behaviours, concrete actions, concrete actions at the social level, concrete actions at the environmental level, transparency, consumer demands, drivers for integrating sustainability, and importance of the role of consumers. Each of the last ten themes was divided into sub-themes based on the questions. For example, the four sub-themes of "measuring ethical intentions and behaviours" are measuring intentions, measuring behaviours, and measuring both and measuring none of the two. The themes that were subsequently found in the interviews were the importance of localness to consumers, the driver of recruiting young employees and consumer education. Each of these themes was addressed by at least two companies.

These semi-structured interviews enriched the study through the diversity of company characteristics, the fact that they offer different types of products, and the various points of view of the interviewees. They were conducted with seven professionals with different backgrounds. Indeed, T. Noesen is working at Belvas as CEO, M-C. Verdy working at Père Olive as brand manager, F. Bebronne working at Herve as marketing manager, Company X with someone working as operations manager, R. Audoin working at Company Y in the purchasing department, K. Seymus working at Raffinerie Tirlemontoise in the purchasing department and A. Somja working at Point Chaud as marketing manager. It can be noted that two companies decided to remain anonymous. As this is a subject that addresses on the one hand consumers and on the other hand the supply chain, it was a great opportunity to have experts in both the marketing and purchasing fields.

Among them, five experts (T. Noesen, F. Bebronne, R. Audoin, K. Seymus, Company X) have worked in their company for 10 years or more. For some of them, their functions have been evolving but they have remained in the same field. For example, the interviewee from Company X - which is one of the largest food companies in the world - became Operation Director after working in several functions in the supply chain area. Concerning the other two interviewees, they have been working in their function for a shorter period of time, 3-4 years (A. Somja, M-C. Verdy).

The interviews were analysed using NVivo, a qualitative data analysis software. It allowed a certain degree of fluidity in the data processing. Indeed, the information collected was efficiently organised under files, themes and sub-themes as outlined above. Subsequently, matrix tables were also produced with NVivo to make links between variables. These tables were then exported to Excel to be further processed and to create graphs.

Two discussion sections are distinguished here from the interview analyses. They are inserted into the analysis in order to provide further explanation and some critical insight into the findings. The first discussion section is based on three linkages made with the NVIVO matrix tables. They connect specific sections of the analysis with characteristics of the companies. The second discussion section provides critical reflections on the perception of the role of consumers by the companies.

The choice to conduct a qualitative study was motivated by the in-depth and detailed understanding of the subject studied. One of the main advantages of this qualitative approach is its flexibility, due to its exploratory nature and the semi-structured interviews. Indeed, some elements were adjusted following the results obtained in the field, such as the creation of new themes. During the interviews, some questions were adapted according to the type of company, the available information on their website and the answers provided.

III. Litterature review

CHAPTER 1 : ETHICAL CONSUMERS BEHAVIORS

The first part of the literature review is divided into two sections. On the one hand, the first section addresses ethical consumption, ethical consumers and their concerns, as well as corporate social responsibility and corporate social irresponsibility. On the other hand, the second section studies the distinction between purchase intentions and purchase behaviour of ethical consumers, as these are two different concepts that must be analyzed separately. This section is mainly based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) but also on its multiple extensions and on other theories.

1.1 Ethical consumption

Ethical consumption is a subject that is increasingly discussed nowadays. The beginning of the questioning of consumption started at the beginning of the 20th century in a global way even if there are real differences between and within each country (Chessel & Cochoy, 2004). In Europe and in the United States, the notion of "committed consumption" is known, especially at the turn of the century (Chessel & Cochoy, 2004).

Ethical consumption behavior is defined by Toti and Moulins (2016, p. 53) "as a way to acquire and use products and brands as much as possible marrying consumers' moral principles and values." They speak of the will of consumers to take ethical concerns into account in their purchasing and consumption of products and services (Toti & Moulins, 2016). It's about what seems right or wrong according to the consumer's personal conviction.

Other authors speak of ethical consumption in a more engaged way, as the ethics of consumption and thus the ethics of capitalist market structures on the one hand, and the minimization of global consumption on the other (Barnett et al., 2005 ; Carrington et al., 2014) or as political participation "where individuals 'vote with their dollars' in supermarkets, boycotting brands or buying products for their 'ethical' qualities - fair trade, organic, sustainable, etc." (Balsiger, 2017, p. 193).

Michele Micheletti (2003, p. 2) defends the idea that consumption behaviors can be perceived as political practices and she defines political consumerism - under the concept of individualized collective action - as "actions by people who make choices among producers and products with the goal of changing objectionable institutional or market practices".

As far as ethical consumers are concerned, there is also different definitions but in general terms they are people who make specific consumption choices for various reasons and they are concerned about the impact of these choices (Carrington et al., 2014). According to Low and Davenport (2005, p. 505), ethical consumers are "influenced by environmental, social justice, human health, and animal welfare issues in choosing products and services encompassing, alongside with fair trade goods, ‘sweat-free’ clothes, ‘cruelty-free’ cosmetics, energy efficient appliances, and organic foods".

For some authors, one can speak of political consumers. Their modes of action take the form of participation: through the "boycott" where the consumer refuses to buy certain products or services with the aim of defending an environmental or social cause for example, or on the contrary through the "buycott" which aims at buying in a committed way to defend a moral or even political cause by promoting an alternative mode of production for example. Other actions take various forms of political participation, such as advocating degrowth or public campaigns of denunciation, often with the aim of criticizing the consumer society (Balsiger, 2017).

1.1.1 Ethics

This work will focus on the word "ethics" in order to push the research outside the environmental world. Indeed, many researches have been done on the observation of the green behavior of consumers but few include also the social dimension. Even if the term sustainability encompasses three dimensions - environmental, social and economic - it often refers to the environmental dimension and the preservation of our planet's limited resources for future generations. Being sustainable means wanting to have the smallest possible impact on our environment and what is in it, in the long term (Torelli, 2020).

Some authors make a distinction between socially responsible and environmentally responsible consumer behavior. Roberts (1995, p. 98) was one of the first to establish this distinction by speaking of Socially Responsible Consumer (SRC) who are defined as "one who purchases products and services which he or she perceives to have a positive (or less negative) impact on the environment or uses his/her purchasing power to express current social concern". This term allows to shift the focus away from the environmental sphere and allows the author to use a scale that considers both societal and ecological concerns in measuring consumer behaviors (Roberts, 1995).

Since then, ethical responsibility has become more widespread and some authors such as Sudbury-Riley and Kohlbacher (2016, as cited in Hosta & Zabkar, 2019) conceptualize the term by encompassing social and environmental consumer behaviors and adding some dimensions like boycotting. Finally, the term responsibility also comes into the discussion as it allows for a better understanding of the purchase intentions that lead to a better analysis of purchase behaviors. Authors Hosta and Zabkar (2019, p. 3) define the responsible sustainable consumer as "someone who carefully weights what s/he truly needs and considers also how this will affect others (nature, society). S/he has a developed positive attitude, ethical considerations and norms, is willing to behave and actually behaves in sustainable and responsible way".

Toti and Moulins (2016) consider that sustainable consumption is part of ethical consumption but not vice versa (Figure 1). They define three dimensions as part of ethical consumption: the social (mainly focused on solidarity), political (which concerns the desire to be active in bringing about change) and environmental dimensions (concerning all issues related to the future uncertainty of our life on earth).

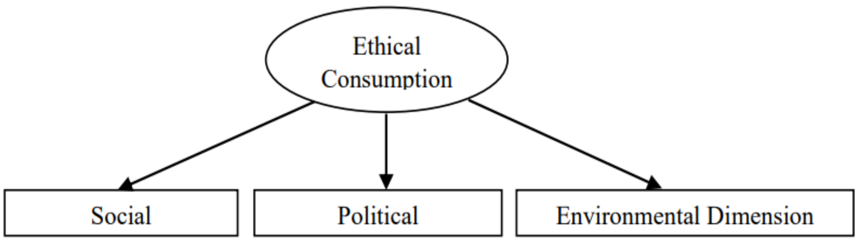

FIGURE 1: Dimensionality of ethical consumption

1.1.2 The growing concerns of ethical consumers

A global consumer study (Accenture, 2014) has shown that people - especially young generations who are partly driven by social media - have growing expectations from companies. This survey of 30,000 consumers across twenty countries showed that 72% of them feel that these expectations are not being met and that companies are failing to take care of the planet and our society in general. The study suggests that the traditional approach of integrating the environmental dimension into business is outdated. Indeed, consumers expect more than (abstract) sustainable communication, around philanthropic projects for example. They want to see direct results on the products and services they offer, and to see the positive impact of their business activities on society. Consumers expect companies to improve their quality of life and to take the leadership in addressing the human and planetary crises we face.

As for what companies should do now, the study suggests first of all to be transparent and open if companies want to gain people's trust because everyone has access to more and more information these days, especially thanks to social networks. Consumers don't seem to look deep into the ethical information of products, so what they are looking for is easy to find information while learning more about the company's commitments and being able to trust them. Marketing clearly plays a very important role in strengthening a company's credibility by communicating clearly, honestly and showing real impacts. The study also recommends having a new innovation process to improve people's quality of life, by innovating products and services to meet consumers' expectations but also in the value chain.

Jamali and Mirshak (2006) support the view that the world is increasingly looking to business to improve the condition of people's lives, whereas in the past only governments were considered. "Customers expect a company to work on behalf of society or the environment. Living up to social and ethical responsibilities has become an expectation rather than a differentiating tactic to gain organizational legitimacy" (Kim et al., 2020, p. 1). In response to this growing consumer expectation of corporate action, companies are increasingly adapting. For example, 76% of business leaders say they are on the way to making sustainability an integrated part of all areas of the company rather than a distinct department (Accenture, 2014). More generally, the notion of corporate social responsibility has been developing for several years now.

1.1.3 Corporate social responsibility and Corporate Social Irresponsibility

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a term that is close to many others, such as business ethics, corporate citizenship or accountability, or socially responsible behaviors that are considered as a goal to be achieved by companies (BSR, 2003; Kim et al., 2020). While there has been a lot of talk about CSR in the last couple of decades, the term originally comes from Howard R. Bowen's book that defines social responsibility in 1953 by talking about the obligations of businessmen towards our society (Kim et al., 2020).

The concept of corporate social responsibility has evolved considerably since then and there are several definitions. It can be defined as "achieving commercial success in ways that honor ethical values and respect people, communities, and the natural environment" and more precisely by "addressing the legal, ethical, commercial and other expectations society has for business, and making decisions that fairly balance the claims of all key stakeholders" (BSR, 2003, Introduction, para. 1). If the notion of CSR is interesting in this work, it is because all stakeholders expect companies to have an impact on their entire supply chain and not only on their direct output (BSR, 2003). In addition, the multidimensional aspect of CSR is very relevant and Carroll (1979, 1991, as cited in Kim et al., 2020) developed a model based on four dimensions: economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic.

The advantages for companies that adopt CSR strategies are multiple. They are competitive strategies that create a stronger long-term advantage and companies that proactively demonstrate their CSR program are more attractive to consumers (Lee et al., 2013 ; Tian et al., 2011). The authors Kim et al. (2020) confirm previous studies that prove that CSR positively influences the corporate image. This image perceived by consumers has a positive influence on customer citizenship behavior - which consists, for example, of making recommendations to companies or helping other consumers - which in turn has a positive influence on the long-term relationship orientation between consumers and companies (Kim et al., 2020). Moreover, the credibility of a company's CSR actions and strategies plays a very important role and has a positive effect on the relationship between consumers' perceptions of CSR and their participation intentions (Hur et al., 2020). One can also talk about the increase of consumer loyalty or the new markets to be entered (Lin-Hi & Müller, 2013), the opportunities that derive from CSR initiatives are therefore numerous.

One way to explain consumers' decision to buy from ethical companies is due to the responsible behaviour of those companies, as well as the irresponsible behaviour of non-ethical companies. Although much less known and discussed in the literature, corporate social irresponsibility (CSI) seems to be an important concept when talking about CSR. It can be defined as "corporate actions that result in (potential) disadvantages and/or harm to other actors" (Lin-Hi & Müller, 2013, p. 1932). CSI can include behaviors that break the law, such as human rights violations, or more generally irresponsible behaviors, such as businesses that do not aim to satisfy the needs of consumers and act only to maximize their own profits (Lin-Hi & Müller, 2013).

As one might expect, CSI has many negative side effects for both the company and its stakeholders, and these effects have been shown by various research studies to include the loss of customers, an impact on reputation and on the stock market value of companies (Jain & Zaman, 2020). However, Sun and Ding (2020) add nuance to this negative interpretation of CSI by saying that there are indeed long-term negative effects on firm performance in some cases -

when competition is high, dynamism is high and capacity is low - but that these effects may also only be short-term, especially when competition is low and markets are not dynamic.

With regard to conceptualization, the literature proposes two ways of conceiving the link between CSR and CSI, either as a continuum, or as two completely separate concepts that are used simultaneously (Jain & Zaman, 2020). As far as the idea of the continuum is concerned, the CSI is at one extreme and the CSR is at the other one. The idea is that companies do not have a fixed position and are moving along the continuum, being more or less responsible, according to external factors, for example political or legislative decisions or changes in technology (Jones et al., 2009). Then, the idea that companies can be both socially responsible in some cases and irresponsible in others comes from Strike et al. (2006). Here, the concept of CSI needs to be considered separately from CSR. They take the example of multinationals, such as Nike, that violate human rights but engage financially to fight poverty. Several researchers support this view and the main idea appears to be that companies compensate their irresponsible actions – and therefore negative reputation - with responsible actions (Ormiston & Wong, 2013).

The authors Lin-Hi and Müller (2013) claim that CSR is seen as the idea of "doing good" but it should also prevent CSI and therefore include "avoiding bad". They argue that this idea of "avoiding bad" is underrepresented because it may seem obvious and is therefore not recognized by stakeholders, unlike "doing good". To prove how crucial the prevention of CSI is and how it is the basis of CSR, the two authors argue that companies are perceived as responsible actors only if both responsible and irresponsible behavior is taken into account. Irresponsible corporate behavior cannot be balanced or replaced by "doing good". They say that previous researchers "gravely neglected the fact that preventing CSI is a central precondition for corporations to be perceived as socially responsible in the long run" and that without preventing CSI, "CSR cannot realize its full economic potential or may even be completely ineffective" (Lin-Hi & Müller, 2013, p. 1934).

Some authors have addressed this issue since then and proposed solutions. Jain and Zaman (2020, p. 16) suggest setting up a specific governance bubble to reduce CSI, which is composed of "large and more independent boards, a board CSR committee, more women within boards, with higher director activity" under the two conditions of high institutional ownership and high board remuneration.

As mentioned earlier, ethical consumers sometimes decide to boycott companies that they consider unethical. CSI can therefore lead to certain repulsive purchasing behaviours among consumers. But how can the impact of unethical corporate behaviour be measured? Some researchers found that irresponsible behaviour has more weight than responsible behaviour, "such that vices detract from attitudes more than virtues enhance them" (Folkes & Kamins, 1999, pp. 244-245). Skowronski & Carlston study in 1987 the negativity bias in moral evaluations, which defends the idea that there is an asymmetric influence on the ethical and unethical actions of companies. Since unethical information about a company will define it more than information saying it is acting ethically, consumers will therefore be quicker to judge companies as 'bad' than 'good'.

Folkes and Kamins (1999) also make a distinction between companies that are intrinsically ethical (i.e. out of conviction and values) and those that are extrinsically ethical (i.e. do it to please consumers). They say that consumers differentiate between these two types and that a company judged to be ethical on intrinsic grounds will be perceived more positively than one judged to be ethical on extrinsic grounds. Furthermore, the study shows that consumers will always be influenced by the moral standards of companies even if they are not directly involved. Hence, if a company engages in unethical behaviour, even if the quality of its products does not differ and its unethical behaviour is considered legal, consumer attitudes will be affected. Moreover, in this case, better product quality will not improve attitudes towards the company either. To show how broad the impact of CSI can be, it should also be noted that unethical behaviour by one brand of a company can have repercussions on all the other brands of the company as consumer attitudes will be negative towards the whole business (Folkes & Kamins, 1999). For example, the multinational group Lactalis is still suffering today from the 2017 scandal that revealed the presence of salmonella in infant milk, causing numerous contaminations (Mondialisation, 2019).

While all this evidence should suggest that consumers who have ethical intentions also behave ethically, the literature reveals that the actual situation is far from being the case.

> Business leaders express a common complaint: while consumers often say that sustainability is important to them, this belief may not be reflected in the realities of purchasing decisions. For companies who have invested time, money and management attention in building a brand with sustainability at its heart, the frustration is clear (Accenture, 2014, p. 9).

Several researchers have attempted to address the issue of the gap between ethical intentions and ethical behaviour of consumers.

1.2 The intention-behavior gap

To start with, a study by Cone and Roper in 1993 pointed out this gap by showing that 51% of people said they would buy an ethical product while only 20% actually did so in the past year (Simon, 1995). Then, in 1996 Roberts also confirms it and explains that it depends on several reasons but that the lack of social information about the company plays a role. Some authors such as Carrigan & Attalla talk about the "myth of the ethical consumer" in 2001 which concludes that most consumers do not include any ethical consideration in their purchasing decisions.

1.2.1 The Theory of Reasoned Action and the Theory of Planned Behavior

Indeed, even if all the findings are not so pronounced afterwards, several studies prove that there is a difference between the purchase intentions and the purchase behaviour of so-called ethical consumers. Although a large number of authors will attempt to explain this well-known gap, it is the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) that is most often cited in the literature. Ajzen and Fishbein developed this theory in 1991 following their previous theory, the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) in 1975. The TPB being an extension of the TRA, they were aimed at predicting behavioral intentions, which in turn would predict people's behavior. Intentions are defined by Ajzen (1991, p. 181) as "indications of how hard people are willing to try, or how much of an effort they are planning to exert, in order to perform the behavior". In the TRA, two variables determine intentions: attitudes and subjective norms. The concept of perceived behavioral control is added to this and forms the theory of planned behavior (Rausch & Kopplin, 2020). According to TPB (Ajzen, 1991), a set of beliefs - behavioral, normative, and control beliefs - explains attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control respectively.

Attitude towards the behaviour represents the assessment of a behaviour, i.e. how favorable or unfavorable someone thinks the behaviour is ; whereas subjective norms correspond to normative expectations, which are defined as the perceived social pressure to behave in a certain way (Alsaad, 2021; Vermeir & Verbeke, 2008). Following this, Ajzen (1991) added the perceived behavioural control variable and defined it as the ease or difficulty of performing a certain behaviour, and as a reflect of past experiences and varying contextual difficulties. It can be similar to actual control when the consumer has the right information, time, money and skills (Hosta & Zabkar, 2019). This variable is important in the sense that it has a direct impact on behaviour (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2008). However, in many research studies there seems to be a consensus that, although not sufficient on its own, attitude is the best predictor of intentions. Some studies even interchange the two terms to say that both attitude and intention of purchase are good predictors of actual behavior (e.g. Hosta & Zabkar, 2019) or speak about the attitude-behaviour gap (e.g. Boulstridge & Carrigan, 2000). TPB is studied in a wide range of areas, including consumerism, and more specifically food consumption, as in the study by Vermeir and Verbeke (2008). Thus, in this paper, the adoption of a certain behaviour refers to the purchasing behaviour of a product or service, often related to the food industry.

1.2.2 Extensions of the TPB

This theory has nevertheless been repeatedly criticized for its lack of variables, often contextual ones (Peattie, 2010). To this, the author (Ajzen, 1991) pointed out that other variables can be added if it is beneficial to the prediction of the model. The authors Nguyen et al. (2018) have found several models from various authors derived from TPB that include contextual variables as habits, lifestyles, economic costs and constraints, loyalty, uncertainties among different ethical choices, or other perceptions related to various sacrifices. In an attempt to best complete the TPB and to close or reduce the intention-behavior (I-B) gap, many authors try to provide solutions, adding variables or conditions. For instance, Nemcsicsné Zsóka (2008) states that actual behaviors can be derived from attitudes only under certain conditions like knowledge. Related to knowledge, labels are also important in influencing consumer attitudes but this is less the case for the most aware consumers who already feel concerned with ethical topics (Cerri et al., 2018).

According to Louis et al. (2020), the price sensitivity of responsible consumers is what explains the gap between ethical consumption intentions and actual purchase behaviors, even though price does not seem to be the major driver of ethical consumption for other authors (Cerri et al., 2018). In the food domain, according to Kytö et al. (2019), expectations and perceptions - respectively before and after the purchase of the product - have an influence on intentions, which in turn will have an influence on purchase behavior. They also claim that current consuming habits and beliefs play an important role, confirming some previous works such as the one of Blackwell, Miniard, and Engel (2006, as cited in Kytö et al., 2019) on brand loyalty.

Two new variables are proposed by Nguyen et al. (2018), the availability of green products and the perceived consumption effectiveness. This allows us to say that the more green products are available and the more the consumer feels that his or her purchasing behavior is useful to help preserve the planet, the stronger the relationship between intentions and purchasing behavior will be - which means that under these two factors, consumers will be more likely to have an actual sustainable purchasing behavior. The concepts of perceived product availability (Sparks & Shepherd, 1992) and perceived consumer effectiveness (Roberts, 1996) are associated to the concept of perceived behavioral control and may substitute it in some models (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2008).

Several studies aim to add more personal variables, such as Tanner and Wölfing Kast (2003) who demonstrate the necessity of personal and contextual considerations for engaging in sustainable food consumption. In the context of ethical concerns, the measures of ethical obligation - representing "an individual's internalized ethical rules, which reflect their personal beliefs about right and wrong" - and self-identity have been added by Shaw et al. (2000, p. 882). They also sought to address the criticism that TPB is based on self-interest measures by not taking into account personal/moral norms (Hosta & Zabkar, 2019). Self-identity and perceived responsibility (also called perceived moral or ethical obligation) were further added by Bissonnette and Contento (2001) as additional variables in the food domain. Authors O'Connor, Sims & White reach similar conclusions in the context of ethical food choice in 2017, hence these two variables appear to be predominant in the area of this study.

Although this relates more to the green aspect, environmental consciousness or concerns have often been added by several authors as being a good predictor of intention as well (e.g. Han & Stoel, 2016; Kumar et al., 2021). Moreover, consumer confidence in (the quality of) sustainable products and human values also play a role on food purchase intentions: confidence has an impact on social norms and for consumers with traditional values will more likely buy sustainable food than power seekers (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2008). Moral certainty which is described as the "subjective sense of conviction or confidence one holds about one’s ethical judgment of an object" (Alsaad, 2021, p. 1) and can also be seen as an additional measure to TPB that can explain the intention-behavior gap (Alsaad, 2021).

However, not all studies point in the same direction. Indeed, for some authors, the self-restorative function explains ethical consumption on the one hand and the gap between intentions and purchasing behavior on the other hand (Trudel et al., 2019). In contrast to the many authors who explain ethical consumption by pro-social motivations, Trudel et al. (2019) demonstrate that it can come from consumers who need to boost their self-esteem after it is threatened. They also argue that the fact that other options exist to reinforce their self-esteem is a factor that will make them less likely to choose an ethical product and thus may explain the I-B gap. In this case, ethical consumption is not only based on selfless motivations and is rather perceived as the concept of mindful consumption, which is "characterized by a sense of caring for self, for community, and for nature" (Sheth et al., 2010, p. 22).

Furthermore, there are other important theories to determine the decision process of consumers, such as the theory of consumption values (TCV). It is based on a model considering five values - functional, social, emotional, conditional and epistemic - which would enable the understanding of why consumers make such consumption choices (Sheth et al., 1991). Kushwah et al. (2019) analyzed these five values in the context of ethical consumption of organic food and concluded that the epistemic value is the most influential and therefore best predicts purchase intention and behavior. Epistemic value is related to knowledge and is defined by Sheth et al. (1991, p. 162) as "the perceived utility acquired from an alternative's capacity to arouse curiosity, provide novelty, and/or satisfy a desire for knowledge". Thus, it is the consumers who are most in search of (new) knowledge who are most likely to adopt ethical food purchasing behaviors. In addition, emotional value also influences intentions but not behavior choice (Kushwah et al., 2019).

Another study suggests explaining ethical consumption by showing how the I-B gap closes and the authors have created a motivational hierarchy that is based on 4 factors (Carrington et al., 2014). First of all, the prioritization of ethical concerns must be taken into account, which is classified as primary or secondary ethical issues according to the degree of importance for the consumer. Secondly, there is the formation of habits and plans in order to avoid spontaneous purchases. Third, the willingness to commit in the long term and sacrifice when options are not ethically available, and finally the modes of shopping behavior that determine whether or not the purchase is considered in advance. These factors are interconnected and all rely on the first factor, hence the relationship between intention and behavior depends on the prioritization of ethical concerns (Carrington et al., 2014). In addition, there is also the Value Identity Personal norm (VIP) model that studies pro-environmental behavior by considering the following factors: personal norm, biospheric value and environmental self-identity (van der Werff & Steg, 2016). However, this model only considers the environmental dimension.

All of these theories and variables that explain purchase intention or purchase behavior allow us to better understand the so-called intention-behavior gap that is widely documented in the literature. It is mainly for this reason that this study takes this gap into account, in order to better reflect the reality of consumers' decision-making processes in food consumption choices. No study has yet investigated this I-B gap in the context of corporate procurement decisions. In a general view, there are few studies on the impact that consumers can have on companies' supply chain decisions because most of them study the opposite relationship, i.e. the impact of companies, and more precisely of CSR strategies for example, on consumers' behavior. This is why this study aims to understand the role of ethical consumers as well as to measure what matters most to companies between their intentions and their actual purchasing behavior.

In the next section, the supply chain will be examined. More specifically, this includes the notions of supply chain management, sustainable supply chain management, and finally sustainable sourcing.

CHAPTER 2 : THE SUPPLY CHAIN

2.1 Supply Chain Management (SCM)

Supply Chain Management covers the entire management and control of a product or service, from the sourcing step upstream of the supply chain to the final consumer downstream, managing mainly materials, information and the financial aspect of the supply chain, in order to ensure the perennity of the company.

There are several definitions of the term Supply Chain Management (SCM) in the literature today, but the one by Mentzer et al. (2001, p. 18) is often mentioned (Carter & Rogers, 2008; Ferrell, et al., 2013; Fritz, 2019) and appears to be both comprehensive and concise:

> Supply chain management is defined as the systemic, strategic coordination of the traditional business functions and the tactics across these business functions within a particular company and across businesses within the supply chain, for the purposes of improving the long-term performance of the individual companies and the supply chain as a whole.

Another definition that is more detailed is given by Fritz (2019, p. 1) and define SCM as

> The management of products or services from the design phase to the different production stages starting with raw material extraction and ending with the delivery of the product/service to the end consumer and, eventually, the reuse, recycling, or disposal phase, depending on the product/service, industries, and business models of firms. This includes the management of material, information, and capital flows as well as the management of human resources (HR) to deliver the product/service to the consumers at a low cost, quickly and at the right place, while still ensuring the quality of the product/service.

In terms of activities, SCM implies the management of logistics, procurement and conversion (Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals, 2013). In addition to this, there are also the relationship management between all the intermediaries (Ferrell et al., 2013) - which is in line with the definition of marketing channel, described as "a set of interdependent organizations involved in the process of making a product or service available for use or consumption" (Coughlan et al., 2006, p. 2). This involves being in contact with many third parties/partners, often including raw material suppliers, manufacturers, intermediaries, retailers and consumers. To complete the understanding of Supply Chain Management, it is the integration of "supply and demand management within and across companies" (Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals, 2013, p. 187).

According to Ferrell et al. (2013, p. 263), it is important to add to the definition of SCM the value of many stakeholders "such as regulatory agencies, communities, shareholders, and society at large". As for Burgess and Singh (2006), they state that the success of the SCM is achieved through an integration of functions in a cross-functional way and therefore through inter-firm relationships. It is therefore very important to take into account the relationships between companies and with stakeholders because all this generates value. To take this a step further, the term value chain is often used in the same sense as supply chain but varies in its consideration of the value delivered to products coming from the various activities of the company. Despite these additional aspects, most SCM definitions do not take into account the ethical dimension because the primary goal of the SCM is to be performant, efficient and to make profit (Ferrell et al., 2013).

A final important aspect of SCM is the increasing complexity of supply chains. Indeed, the desire for diversity in our purchases as consumers and globalization makes companies diversify and specialize more than before, which increases the number of suppliers (Reuter, 2019). Consequently, having more tiers makes the supply chain more complex and raises uncertainty (Awaysheh & Klassen, 2010). The evolution of the supply chain has moved from a basic supply chain with very few participants, to an extended supply chain with additional participants - including sub-suppliers - to an ultimate supply chain that is similar to a network with a very large number of suppliers operating on different levels (first-tier supplier, second-tier supplier, etc) (Figure 2) (Mentzer et al., 2001).

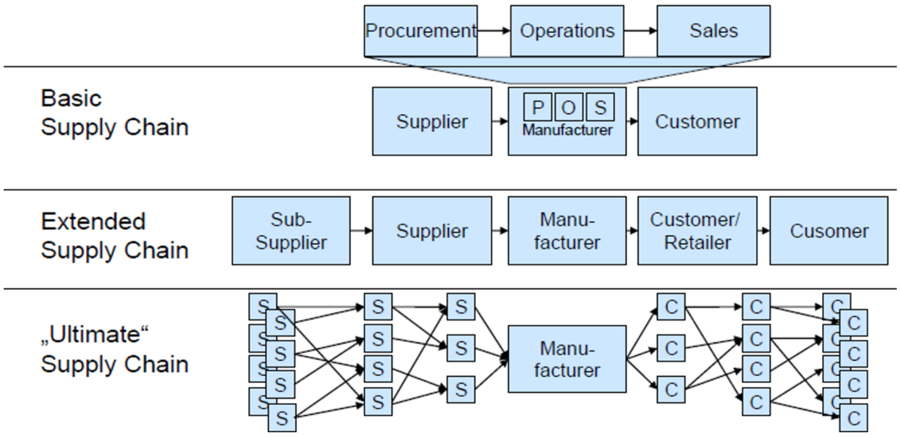

FIGURE 2 : From basic to "ultimate" supply chain

2.1.1 Related definitions

This section contains some definitions of supply chain activities that are relevant to this study. It is mainly the area involving suppliers that is the subject of this work, which will therefore focus on sourcing and procurement.

First, logistics management is a part of the SCM that encompasses many aspects as it "plans, implements, and controls the efficient, effective forward and reverse flow and storage of goods, services, and related information between the point of origin and the point of consumption in order to meet customers' requirements" (Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals, 2013, p. 117). Logistics manages all product movement as efficiently as possible.

As far as sourcing and procurement are concerned, these two terms are often used interchangeably and are quite similar concepts, but they do not exactly have the same meaning.

Sourcing is the upstream activity of procurement and mainly involves the identification and search for suppliers in order to find the appropriate products that will be used for the procurement. "The sourcing department of a company takes decisions on what to buy, from whom and following which purchasing strategy. It also defines the relationship with suppliers" (Willems, 2018, p. 33). The sourcing department therefore defines a strategy in accordance with the company's needs to determine the best criteria for product selection - whether certain products should be outsourced or not, for example - as well as to analyze the supplier market, to choose suppliers according to certain criteria, and to decide on the type of relationship to have with them (Willems, 2018).

Procurement, also known as purchasing, is broader and encompasses everything related to what the company buys and covers the entire management of these purchases. The purchasing department manages and controls the orders, replenishment as well as the financial side of that (Willems, 2018). According to the Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals (2013, p. 154), procurement is "the activities associated with acquiring products or services. The range of activities can vary widely between organizations to include all of parts of the functions of procurement planning, purchasing, inventory control, traffic, receiving, incoming inspection, and salvage operations".

2.2 Sustainable Supply Chain Management

2.2.1 The evolution and issue of food industry

In order to explain the motivation for this work to explore sustainable supply chain management in the food sector, this section will first look at the evolution and problems related to the food industry. Food consumption is an interesting topic because it is an integral part of our lives and it is the case for all human beings on the planet. Eating is a necessity and is one of the physiological needs of Maslow's pyramid (Maslow, 1943), i.e. the base of our concerns that must be fulfilled in order to develop properly. This is the reason why the interest of this study is focused on the food industry, to highlight the current concerns of consumers in this field. According to Stanciu (2020, p. 41), "food is the main source of energy and of nutrition for any living beings" and the food industry, more specifically food companies, has a prominent place in this discussion by supplying people with groceries.

People's consumption habits have changed enormously over the centuries, decades and years. Today, and for the years to come, the main concerns around food revolve around health and diet issues, responses to growing obesity trends and environmental issues (Stanciu, 2020). This has led to an increase in the consumption of healthier, environmentally friendly or socially responsible products with labels (such as organic, fair trade or eco-labels) and local food in recent decades. For example, consumers - whether they purchase organic or not - seem to be more in favor of organic products than mainstream products (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2008). With regard to local food, initially people seemed to buy it mostly because of the image of quality and freshness of local products and because of the participation in the local economy (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2008). Nowadays, and especially since Covid-19, people also choose to buy locally for the proximity to local producers and to try to solve environmental problems. However, Akaichi et al. (2016), point out that consumers' beliefs are not always accurate, for example, some decide to buy local food in order to avoid long distances traveled by the product consumed, while transportation is only one small part of the equation when considering the overall greenhouse gas emissions.

The population has increased sevenfold since 1800 and there is a correlation between economic development, population growth and all kinds of pollution such as CO2 emissions (Masquelier, 2019). The continuous growth of the population and climate change raise serious questions about the earth's capacity to produce enough food in the long term (Stanciu, 2020). This raises environmental concerns about soil depletion, desertification and deforestation linked to agricultural intensification (Masquelier, 2019) and about overfishing, as well as social concerns about undernourishment that can lead to famine. These concerns have themselves led to other ethical considerations. Indeed, people have become increasingly aware of the poor working conditions of workers, often from developing countries, the problems of child exploitation, low wages, discrimination in hiring, lack of safety, imposed overtime or even forced labour (U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of International Labour Affairs, 2013 as cited in O'Connor et al., 2017).

Unfortunately, these practices are observable worldwide due to the globalisation of economies and this has led to new initiatives such as the Fair Trade movement which aims to decrease exploitation and poverty (O'Connor et al., 2017). "Fair Trade is a product certification system and social movement that aims to address global supply-chain issues such as forced labour, unsafe working conditions, and unfair pay for workers" (O'Connor et al., 2017, p. 105), and hence it is consumers, via their food buying decisions, who will decide to support Fairtrade products. Other ethical movements and labels exist, around respect for human rights, the environment or animal welfare. Consumers are therefore interested in the provenance of what is on their plate and the majority of the problems mentioned seem to come from the supply chain, and precisely from the upstream side in terms of suppliers' choices and relations. The next section will analyze the sustainable supply chain management to identify the solutions discussed and implemented today.

2.2.2 Definition of SSCM

Above all, it is specified here that the word "sustainable" is used in the same meaning and context as the word "ethics" for the sake of clarity because known concepts are more often linked to the word "sustainable", such as sustainable supply chain (management), sustainable development goals, sustainable performance, etc. The word "responsible" is also sometimes used with the same intention.

However, it is important to remind that the ethical dimension is very central in the discourse of corporate responsibility. According to the ISO 26000 (International Organization for Standardization [ISO], 2019), a company "should behave ethically, basing its behaviour on the values of honesty, equity and integrity and showing concern for people, animals and the environment and a commitment to address the impact of its activities and decisions on stakeholders' interests" (Introduction, para. 8). This term "ethics" was chosen, primarily, to include the social dimension too often neglected in the literature compared to the environmental dimension, as pointed out by many authors (i.e. Kim et al., 2016; Zorzini et al., 2015; Yawar & Seuring, 2015).

As mentioned earlier, the expectations placed on companies in terms of sustainability are increasing. Limiting efforts to their own activities is no longer enough; these sustainable practices are also expected to be extended to their suppliers (Porter & Kramer, 2006).

The term sustainable supply chain management (SSCM) is defined by Carter and Rogers (2008, p. 368) as "the strategic, transparent integration and achievement of an organization's social, environmental, and economic goals in the systemic coordination of key interorganizational business processes for improving the long-term economic performance of the individual company and its supply chains". Fritz (2019, p. 1) includes in his definition where the integration of the three sustainable goals - i.e. environmental, social and economic - comes from by stating that SSCM "is the management of supply chains (SC) in a way that integrates the sustainability objectives and requirements defined by the firm, suppliers, customers, and external stakeholders (e.g., consumers, policy-makers, associations)" and that the members of the entire supply chain must respect them.

The common element in all definitions of SSCM in the literature is the integration of the three pillars of sustainability. These three notions together are discussed in the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, called "Our Common Future" in 1987, and are later studied in the Triple Bottom-line Theory (Elkington, 1998) which is a widely known concept (Fritz, 2019). This refers to the "3Ps" which represent the social side by "People", the environmental side by "Planet" and the economic side by "Profit". A company can only achieve sustainable goals if it succeeds in taking into account the performance of these three aspects (Kim et al., 2016) and to apply this concept to the supply chain of a company, it concerns all resources, activities and people working around the supply chain that are affected by these three dimensions (Melissa, 2019).

2.2.3 Context and evolution of the concept of SSCM

Because the concept of SSCM was developed and first taken into consideration in industrialized countries where labor exploitation normally no longer exists, many companies have instead integrated the concept of green supply chain management (GSCM), which therefore refers to environmental and economic performance but not social performance. Moreover, the origins of SSCM would initially come from the concept of reverse logistics, which aims to move backwards in the supply chain to reduce environmental damage, and then from GSCM, which was mainly aimed at meeting the increasing requirements. GSCM is more extensive than reverse logistics since it incorporates the green dimension at all stages of the supply chain (see appendix A) (Fritz, 2019).

Apart from the sustainable supply chain (management) that is studied, other concepts that address the social dimension all the more have also been developed, such as socially responsible supply chain (e.g. Sancha et al., 2016) or, more specifically, socially responsible purchasing (e.g. Carter & Jennings, 2004; Drumwright, 1994; Park & Stoel, 2005) that will be analyzed further. However, they remain rarer as there are still many articles that only discuss the green supply chain or the environmental dimension, leaving the social aspect as the least discussed in the literature (Mckenzie, 2004).

Similarly to GSCM, SSCM is also embedded at all levels of the supply chain - and even further than the core management of the supply chain such as product design or product life extension - but in this case with respect to the three pillars, i.e. also the social side (Linton et al., 2007).

According to Fritz (2019), the integration of SSCM has to be carried out on several strategic levels. In a non-hierarchical way, this integration must go through:

1. **Governance and top management**: in the organization's own values by involving all members of the top management as well as the shareholders to guide sustainable practices through policies, codes of conduct, training and awareness raising.

2. **Operations**: in all key departments of the organization (as finance, IT, accounting, marketing) as well as those directly related to the supply chain such as sourcing and procurement, or logistics.

3. **Products/services**: in the design phase, taking into account the ecological and social impact of the product or service during its production, its use, its end-of-life stage and eventual recycling.

4. **The supply chain partners**: in the transfer and monitoring of sustainability to supply chain partners. Transferring sustainability refers to building suppliers' competencies to achieve a certain level of sustainability and monitoring consists of evaluating their sustainable performance and tracking their progress, often through audits. To achieve these two objectives, collaboration and assessment are of great interest and will be discussed further in section 2.2.4 as this part is particularly relevant for this paper.

The author also introduces another dimension to the SSCM representation: the digitalization of the supply chain, "which is a process of integrating and using new information and communication technologies like the Internet of Things (IoT), artificial intelligence (AI), big data, or blockchain" (Fritz, 2019, p. 8). While some researchers believe that new technologies or robotization will be dangerous for the survival of the supply chain (Lyall et al., 2018), what seems certain is that adaptation will be necessary because the consequences of the automatization of processes, such as the creation and disappearance of jobs, will raise ethical questions (Fritz, 2019). For this author, sustainable supply chain management is composed of 4 elements: the management of information, product, and financial flows - i.e. the traditional activities of SCM ; the management of economic, social, environmental and ethical challenges ; the management of new information and communication technologies - i.e. the integration of the digitalization trend ; and the management of internal and external stakeholders - i.e. suppliers, retailers, final consumers, policy-makers (Fritz, 2019, p. 10).

With regard to another conceptualization of SSCM, Carter and Rogers (2008) rely on the triple bottom line and include four additional factors that they consider relevant to explain sustainability: strategy, organizational culture, risk management and transparency (Figure 3).

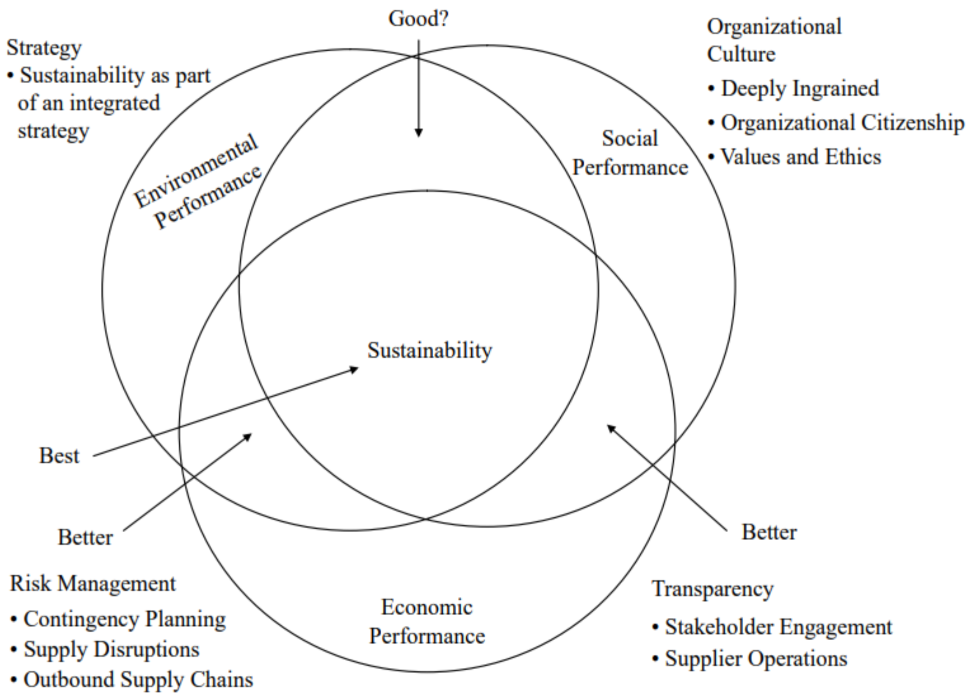

FIGURE 3: Sustainable supply chain management

1. **Strategy**: this calls on the organization to integrate sustainable practices into its overall strategy and not as two independent programs (Carter & Rogers, 2008). This perspective is in line with the concept of Strategic Fit, which refers to aligning the objectives of the company's competitive strategy with the strategy of the supply chain (Fisher, 1997).

2. **Organizational culture**: organizations must be committed to organizational citizenship as well as inherently have a sustainable mindset, high ethical standards and values, and respect for the environment and society (Carter & Liane Easton, 2011).

3. **Risk management**: addressing risks in social, economic and environmental domains is part of supply chain risk management and revolves around contingency planning, managing outbound supply chains and potential supply disruptions (Carter & Rogers, 2008).

4. **Transparency**: this requires a strong engagement with the different stakeholders in terms of communication and reporting but also in taking into account their feedback, as well as providing visibility on the operations of the entire supply chain (Carter & Rogers, 2008).

Through the question mark at the intersection of the social and environmental aspects, the authors emphasize that the economic dimension is essential. Without taking into account the economic, and therefore strategic and financial objectives of the company, initiatives that are both social and environmental are expensive or even unhelpful for the economic perspective. Nevertheless, they point out that the SSCM is advantageous, when considering the economic aspect, with regard to the long-term performance of the company. Regarding the benefits that can result from economic and social, or economic and environmental initiatives, they are numerous: cost savings through less packaging and reuse, less health and safety costs related to better working conditions; less labor costs through higher motivation and therefore efficiency of workers; create a competitive advantage by anticipating future government regulations; reduce costs, delays and enhance product quality by applying ISO standards; or even improve the reputation of the company by making it more appealing. However, it should be noted that these examples do not represent true sustainability because the latter is only effective at the intersection of the triple bottom line and therefore of the three pillars at the same time (Carter & Rogers, 2008).

2.2.4 Assessment and collaboration

Different stakeholders, including consumers, hold companies accountable for the unethical behavior of their suppliers and this is known as "chain liability", which can lead to many risks for the focal company such as hatred towards the company or boycott (Hartmann & Moeller, 2014). The company Nike can be taken as an example here because following the scandals in the 1990's around the exploitation of workers and child labor, this multinational company has had a bad reputation and many calls for boycotts for years (New Idea, 2019). Still today, Nike is accused of having suppliers in Qingdao, China, where Uyghur slaves produce their shoes and some political figures are calling for mobilization that are followed by calls for boycotts by consumers (Instagram, 2021).

This shows the importance of suppliers, of monitoring their (un)sustainable behaviors and of having good relationships with them. According to Krause et al. (2000), when a company experiences issues or inefficiencies with its suppliers, it has several options -combinable or not- which are finding another supplier instead, investing time and resources to fix the encountered issues or producing the product themselves. Indeed, several options can always be combined, and Locke et al. (2009) suggest that a commitment-oriented approach, which is similar to the concept of collaboration, coexists and is therefore complementary to the traditional monitoring approach.

Assessment and collaboration are therefore practices that can occur when a problem arises in the relationship with suppliers, but they can also be applied for several reasons such as to meet consumer expectations but also for the sole purpose of wanting to make the supply chain more sustainable and better equip its suppliers to face ethical issues. More generally, they are in place to ensure that the codes of conduct established by the focal company are respected and to improve the company's performance (Yawar & Seuring, 2015). This study has decided to closely examine these two practices because they are considered relevant, but other measures also exist and are mentioned below.

The assessment of suppliers "entails arm's length transactions performed by the buying firm and is generally concerned with controlling suppliers' outputs with respect to specific performance criteria" (Sancha et al., 2016, p. 1936), hence social and environmental performance. In concrete terms, it involves controls and evaluations that check whether suppliers meet a large number of criteria and that can take several forms, such as audits most often, but also questionnaires or standards. This allows to verify if the suppliers are in line with the current and future objectives of the company (Sancha et al., 2016). This also enables possible readjustments and improvements as suppliers (Krause et al., 2000). Regarding audits, they are either conducted by the buying company or by a third-party organization to provide more transparency and certainty (Fritz, 2019).

With regard to supplier collaboration, it is "based on the cooperation between a buyer and a supplier and aims to jointly improve performance" (Sancha et al., 2016, p. 1936). Concretely, it is an investment on the part of the focal company that includes several options but often involves the training and/or education of suppliers as well as the construction of information systems (Fritz, 2019; Sancha et al., 2016).

Many authors discuss collaboration in the literature and state its benefits. For example, some argue about the essential role of collaboration for supply chain performance and for achieving the sustainability goals (Gold et al., 2009; Klassen & Vereecke, 2012). Regarding the environmental dimension, the Natural-Resource-Based View is a theory that says that collaboration is essential for a good sustainable development strategy (Hart, 1995). According to Seuring and Müller (2008), in their definition of SSCM, collaboration and cooperation between all members of the supply chain is essential to integrate the three sustainable pillars and comes from the expectations of the stakeholders - among them the consumers. Moreover, regarding consumers, Theyel (2001) suggests that companies who engage with them on environmental issues will do the same with their suppliers. He also says that the collaboration that companies have with consumers and suppliers is important to improve and achieve environmental performance.

Collaboration can therefore also take into account more stakeholders than just suppliers and be defined as "joint work and communication among people and systems - including business partners, suppliers, and customers - to achieve a common business goal" (Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals, 2013, p. 36). In fact, all stakeholders – including non-governmental organizations (NGOs), governments, local communities, etc. - can be considered when talking about large-scale collaboration and cooperation to improve the sustainability of supply chains (Fritz, 2019). This refers to the 17th Sustainable Development Goals (United Nations, 2021) which is discussed in the following section 2.2.5.

2.2.4.1 Extension of practices

To get an overview of the practices that can be put in place to be more sustainable by focal companies, authors Yawar and Seuring (2015) created a framework that classifies the actions of a responsible supply chain under three categories: communication, compliance, and supplier development strategies.

Communication strategies include (sustainable) reporting and labeling, which are considered to be known ways to share information with both internal and external stakeholders. Secondly, compliance strategies are partly equivalent to assessment as they include codes of conduct and standards, auditing and monitoring. For the authors, codes of conduct and standards are the most significant measures for dealing with social problems. However, they are often criticized because most companies have their own codes of conduct and standards and they are often not comprehensive enough, not taking into consideration the most important issues and the consequences for their suppliers. Auditing is the key step in verifying that codes of conduct and standards are implemented. It is especially important for large companies with multiple suppliers worldwide. Critics here point to the commercialization of auditing systems and the fact that auditors are often not sufficiently sensitive nor aware of the cultural context of suppliers. Monitoring is therefore also important to verify the performance, and codes and standards of companies. (Yawar & Seuring, 2015)

However, there are limits to monitoring. First of all, a study shows that companies have a certain willingness to pay to verify whether compliance is respected in the supply chain (Goebel et al., 2018). On the one hand, companies are willing to pay a higher price to guarantee compliance if they have a document that proves that they comply with the United Nations Global Compact, but on the other hand, this willingness to pay is often greater for the social than for the environmental aspect (Goebel et al., 2018). Moreover, too much monitoring will not have the desired effect of increasing compliance and may even degrade the relationship between the company and its suppliers, which should be based instead on trust and commitment (Boyd et al., 2007). For Awaysheh and Klassen (2010), the roles of auditing and monitoring remain very important even if there is trust and commitment, and all the more when the supply chain is complex and long because the increase in the number of suppliers complicates the collaborative relationships.

Finally, supplier development strategies (SDS) include direct and indirect SDS, trust and collaboration. This part is closely related to the collaboration approach described above, as SDS are described as capability development to improve supply chain performance. Direct SDS can take the form of supplier training and education as well as technical and financial investment by suppliers. Indeed, the authors suggest that this is rarely proposed in the literature, but that it would be interesting to develop suppliers' capabilities by investing directly in themselves to manage problems in their supply chain. Indirect SDS are proposed in the form of informal auditing and supplier evaluation. As far as collaboration is concerned, the emphasis is often on the relationship with suppliers, but the authors propose to extend this to other stakeholders in order to address a multitude of different problems. Nevertheless, trust and commitment are essential to manage the relationship in the long term and to develop the supplier's capabilities. (Yawar & Seuring, 2015)

2.2.5 SSCM and SDGs

Several links can be made between the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which are part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by the United Nations, and sustainable supply chain management. The SDGs are globally recognized and their use should not be an option but rather seen as a matter of survival (van Wassenhove, 2019). In the context of the supply chain, the SDGs help to align the company's strategy with environmental and social objectives in order to best implement them in the company's activities and to involve the entire supply chain (Kannan, 2021).

From this perspective, there are two SDGs that are most relevant. First of all, SDG 12, which aims to ensure responsible consumption and production, is necessary to integrate the three pillars of sustainability in order to make supply chains sustainable (Fritz, 2019 ; United Nations, 2021). Through the eleven targets, this SDG aims at avoiding waste by recycling, reusing resources and making them more efficient (United Nations, 2021). Peschel and Aschemann-Witzel (2020) refer to the concept of upcycling, which consists of the reuse of used resources or ingredients in order to make a new product with new additional value, as promising. This kind of trend comes from the fact that consumers expect more responsible initiatives from companies and more involvement in CSR activities in general (Peschel & Aschemann-Witzel, 2020).

But this 12th SDG is not enough alone, mainly because of the complexity of supply chains (Fritz, 2019). One should also consider SDG 17, which aims at promoting partnerships for the goals in order to foster interactions with stakeholders for sustainable development and hence sustainable supply chains (United Nations, 2021). The increase in ethical concerns both upstream and downstream of the supply chain demonstrates the importance of taking into account primary but also secondary stakeholders, such as media, government, activist groups, NGOs and universities (Silvestre, 2016). It is also to work on inequalities between North and South countries, on global and local challenges and on future regulations, that collaborations and partnerships with stakeholders should increase (Fritz, 2019).

Overall, various SDGs can guide the company to achieve its many sustainable goals at the SSCM level as the 17 SDGs are interconnected and quite global. Appendix B contains a table that links all the SDGs on one side with the SSCM on the other side to illustrate the strong links that can exist between these two concepts. More particularly, in order to be aligned with the

12th SDG, sustainable procurement is an option often considered because it affects both the company's activities and those of their partners along the supply chain (Kannan, 2021). This highlights the importance of focusing on the area of sustainable and/or ethical sourcing and procurement and therefore leads to the next part of this literature review which will examine it more closely.

2.3 Sustainable sourcing

2.3.1 Definition et contextualization

Sustainable sourcing is the last part of this literature review and is associated with several other terms. Sourcing is used synonymously with terms such as buying, purchasing or procurement, while sustainable can be replaced by the term ethical, or by the less encompassing terms (socially) responsible or green, as they do not take into account the three dimensions of sustainability. Even though all these concepts are very close to each other, this work has decided to refer mainly to sustainable sourcing in order to take the broadest concept to include all sourcing and procurement decisions that are being challenged today. This includes all social - including animal welfare - and environmental issues. The words 'ethical' and 'responsible' are sometimes confusing in the literature as for some authors it encompasses the environmental aspect (as for Guo et al., 2016) but not for others (as for Kim et al., 2016), as mentioned earlier in the section 2.2.2 on the definition of SSCM.

In the literature that refers to sourcing matters, it appears that between the social and environmental aspects, the difference is less noticeable here in terms of the social aspect being neglected. Indeed, in all the existing terms in this field, one can often find references and concepts related to social issues (appendix C). However, there are few concepts that refer exclusively to the social dimension, as most terms also encompass other dimensions, thereby coming closer to sustainable sourcing (Zorzini et al., 2015).

In terms of definition, sustainable sourcing is described as "managing all aspects of the upstream component of the supply chain to maximize triple bottom line performance" (Pagell et al., 2010, p. 58). It can be observed here that the key element of the SSCM definition is present, i.e. the integration of the three sustainable pillars, but that in this case only the upstream side of the supply chain is addressed.

This work has decided to focus on the upstream part of the supply chain because the activities related to its members, i.e. suppliers, are considered to generate the most social and environmental problems together (M. Tachizawa & Yew Wong, 2014). As far as sustainable sourcing practices are concerned, these are initiatives by the focal company to enhance its supply chain, and hence the activities of its suppliers, on a social and environmental level (Thorlakson, 2018). This involves certifications or labels, the implementation of standards, the development of relationships with suppliers, donations to NGOs, etc. (Thorlakson, 2018).

Furthermore, two other concepts can be defined. First, in the Sustainable Procurement Task Force (2006, p. 10) report of UK, sustainable procurement is described as :

> A process whereby organisations meet their needs for goods, services, works and utilities in a way that achieves value for money on a whole life basis in terms of generating benefits not only to the organisation, but also to society and the economy, whilst minimizing damage to the environment.

A footnote states that it "should consider the environmental, social and economic consequences of: design; non-renewable material use; manufacture and production methods; logistics; service delivery; use; operation; maintenance; reuse; recycling options; disposal; and suppliers' capabilities to address these consequences throughout the supply chain".

Next, the concept of Purchasing Social Responsibility (PSR) is derived from the concept of CSR in a way that it is the aspect of CSR that deals with purchasing, and is defined as the "purchasing activities that meet the ethical and discretionary responsibilities expected by society" (Carter & Jennings, 2004, p. 151). This term has several facets, namely the environmental dimension (which includes all green initiatives), the diversity dimension (which includes minority and women owned businesses), and the human rights dimension (which also includes safety and philanthropy concerns) (Carter & Jennings, 2004).

2.3.2 Social and environmental issues

The implementation of sustainable practices in a company involves addressing a wide range of social and environmental issues. Identifying them helps to clarify the situation in order to know what exactly is being discussed.

Based on the work of Carter and Jennings (2002) and Carter (2004), Zorzini et al. (2015) cite the social issues they have identified: human rights (which also includes child and forced labour, extra working hours and the freedom of association), safety (regarding the working environment as well as the mental and physical health of workers), community (which includes philanthropic actions as well as the work of local suppliers); diversity (which refers to purchasing from minority/female-owned business enterprises), and ethics (which includes ethical behaviours such as support for the Fairtrade movement). The authors further add animal welfare, purchasing and respect for local democratic institutions, and social impact on consumers (e.g. ensuring that suppliers use non-toxic products).

With regard to environmental issues, Marshall et al. (2014) state that most environmental issues are focused around the use of resources and the impact on the physical environment. Issues that emerge from the literature include water consumption and recycling, energy use, waste treatment and air pollution (Sodhi & Tang, 2019), as well as biodiversity and emissions (GRI, 2016). All these issues - social and environmental - are considered throughout the supply chain and more precisely during the whole sourcing decision process, at different stages: during the selection of suppliers or during the different practices listed above, i.e. auditing and monitoring, or in codes of conduct and standards (Ferri & Pedrini, 2018).

2.3.3 Drivers of sustainable sourcing

This section will analyze all the reasons why firms decide to integrate sustainable dimensions into their sourcing decision process. Numerous studies highlight that sustainable sourcing management is mainly a reaction of companies to the pressure and expectations of stakeholders (Ferri & Pedrini, 2018; Jia & Jiang, 2018; Kannan, 2021; Thorlakson, 2018). Moreover, they all discuss consumer pressure in particular, but it is more or less important in the considerations of all stakeholders depending on the authors. This is therefore what will be explored in this chapter. It should be noted here that the drivers for integrating sustainable decisions vary according to the type of business and sector, as well as the geographical location (Kannan, 2021). What is presented below is therefore a general enumeration that does not belong to any particular sector, and the analysis of this work will allow to distinguish the drivers relevant to the food sector.

2.3.3.1 Drivers related to stakeholders

The stakeholder theory was developed by Freeman (1984) and is based on the relationships that the company has with its stakeholders, i.e. all the actors who influence the company and allow it to exist. Other authors have extended this theory and one of them has established a model which shows that only stakeholders who have (at least one) of the following attributes are really important for the company: legitimacy, urgency and power (Mitchell et al., 1997). Thorlakson (2018) builds on this model to study which stakeholders, based on their legitimacy, urgency and power, put pressure on the company in its sourcing practices. According to the author, the potential key stakeholders in this case are consumers, NGOs, the government, the media and shareholders.

Other research also examines the role of stakeholders, such as Ferri and Pedrini (2018) who argue that companies integrate stakeholders' social and environmental concerns into their procurement decision processes in an effort to manage risks. The second driver of integrating social and environmental activities is a more proactive reaction because the company is aware of the associated benefits on performance. There appears to be a difference between the integration of social or environmental considerations. As stakeholders 'punish' corporate social irresponsibility, companies tend to protect themselves by taking social measures to satisfy stakeholders and to mitigate risks rather than out of intrinsic interest in potential future benefits. To justify the absence of economic benefits and competitiveness from the integration of social measures, the authors suggest two explanations. Firstly, that these activities are not focused on increasing efficiency and productivity, and secondly, because of the intention-behaviour gap, which makes the company respond in a more reactive way.

By contrast, the integration of environmental measures brings more advantages to companies as these measures are taken on the one hand to respond to stakeholders, but on the other hand to focus on the interests of the organization and therefore on long-term benefits. This brings competitive advantage, performance and economic benefits, and it also mitigates the risks as well as for the social dimension. The study also found that the positive impact of environmental sourcing decisions on the company depends on the stage of the process. Selecting green suppliers is beneficial for competitiveness and helps to have a better control over the supply chain, which reduces risks and therefore meets the demand of stakeholders. While investing in supporting suppliers to improve their capabilities and become greener is a longer term supplier relationship management, which is more in line with the outcome of higher economic performance. All these benefits may partly explain the reason why companies focus more on the environmental than on the social aspect in supply chains. (Ferri & Pedrini, 2018) Consequently, it might also be the reason why there are more scientific papers on the environmental dimension, as stated above.

2.3.3.2 Other drivers

Besides this, there are several other factors that play an important role in sustainable sourcing decisions, such as the costs of sustainable alternatives, business interests and needs, and broader changes in corporate sustainability trends (Thorlakson, 2018). Carter and Jennings (2004) have established a model that contains all of the drivers of PSR they have identified. First of all, there is the organizational culture and more precisely the people-oriented organizational culture which includes the values of the people in the company related to fairness and the feeling of good citizenship. Secondly, top management leadership is also a driver directly towards PSR and indirectly through the people-oriented organizational culture. Thirdly, the individual values of the employees have an effect on the initiatives of the employees, which in turn are a driver of the ESP. Finally and most importantly for this study, consumer pressures are also a key driver of PSR, which implies that the company has to take these concerns into account by implementing sustainable practices, and by communicating with the managers who are in contact with the downstream participants of the supply chain, the logistics managers and the suppliers. Additionally, government regulation is not considered to be a driver of PSR here even though the author highlights the importance of this factor in another context related to the legal side of CSR.

To complete the discussion, another article highlights several drivers of sustainable sourcing. Indeed, Kannan (2021) reviewed interesting articles from 2009 to 2017 that stated the various drivers and made seven categories:

1. **Knowledge & training**, which include sustainability-related training programs; and awareness creation and knowledge accumulation.

2. **Economic**, which include gaining business benefits; and competitive advantage.

3. **Social & Environmental**, which include pro-environmental and positive attitude towards sustainable/green products; personal values; trust building in suppliers; environmental commitment; suppliers' sustainable initiatives and ecological motivations.

4. **Organisational**, which include active top management; focal firm's preference towards SP/sustainable development goals; upstream supply chain risk management; sustainable organisational culture; middle management support; compliance with contracts, organisational requirements & international standards; product supplier availability; and quality suppliers.

5. **Regulation**, which include government regulation and legislation.

6. **Capability**, which include monitoring capability; collaboration capability; and innovation capability.

7. **Pressure**, which include customer pressure/demand; and competitor pressure.

A few observations may be raised here. First, the last category is the most interesting for this work because it is the pressure of the customers that will be analyzed later. Secondly, risk management is included in the organizational category, but this work proposes to make it another driver on its own, as risk management appears to be an important part of the sustainable sourcing literature. Then, related to this, the reputation of the company is also an important factor and can be considered as an omitted element here that can be included - and which will be discussed further below. Finally, categories 3 and 4 may be seen as similar in some respects, as one could say that a company that has a sustainable organisational culture (category 4) is therefore a company that has pro-environmental and positive attitudes towards sustainable/green products (category 3), and this could possibly be confusing. Nevertheless, it is interesting to keep the two categories separate because based on the name of the category it can be understood that category 3 refers to sustainable values and category 4 refers to the organizational culture and the support it provides, which can be interpreted as different ideas.

2.3.3.3 Risk Management & Reputation

As previously mentioned, risk management is an important topic, both in general terms in the conceptualization of SSCM set out by Carter and Rogers (2008), and in key drivers (as for Ferri & Pedrini, 2018) or in a more subtle way (as for Kannan, 2021). It is specified here that this sub-section is not directly applied from a sourcing perspective, in order to provide a better overall understanding. Carter and Rogers (2008, p. 366) define risk management as "the ability of a firm to understand and manage its economic, environmental, and social risks in the supply chain". Risk management is an essential element of supply chain management because incidents can happen frequently, especially when the supply chain is long and complex. It is even a common aspect of supply chain management as most organisations experience at least one disruption per year, but it can still have disastrous effects on the company's reputation.

While it is possible for a company to properly address its risk management and limit the damage, total elimination of risk is not achievable. Indeed, some risks can be controlled but others are beyond the control of organisations (Zsidisin et al., 2000). The causes of disruptions are multiple, e.g. loss of equipment due to fire, collapse or flood; strikes; financial problems from the supplier or focal company; unsustainable supplier performance, etc. (Carter & Rogers, 2008). The primary goal of risk management is to reduce risk to an acceptable level of uncertainty, which will depend on the strategy of each company. For both the social and environmental dimensions, ensuring that suppliers set strong sustainable standards will mitigate the risks of suppliers behaving irresponsibly and thereby of stakeholders reacting negatively (Ferri & Pedrini, 2018).

Reputation is defined as "an impression of public esteem or high regard judged by others" (Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary 1996, p. 1001 as cited in Weiss et al., 1999)[1]. Therefore, it is a concept that is related to the perception of the company by stakeholders, hence one company has a better reputation than another if it is perceived as more credible, visible and "good" (Lin et al., 2016). Consumers, among the most important stakeholders, judge companies either well or poorly based on their experiences with the company (whether they live up to their expectations or not), but also based on their past and future actions (Lin et al., 2016; Park et al., 2014). The reputation of a company can be greatly affected if risks are not well managed. Indeed, if businesses do not properly address even one dimension of PSR, such as the environmental or human rights side, the whole reputation of the company can be damaged with regard to its sustainable initiatives (Carter & Jennings, 2004).

Furthermore, if a company does not successfully manage its risks and does not follow government regulations, it may not only face large fines, but also harm the company's reputation by making consumers fearful and causing economic losses (Smith, 2019). Guo et al. (2016) confirm that the violation of supplier responsibilities leads to a decrease in revenue due to reputational damage, which is directly caused by consumers boycotting the company or by regulatory sanctions. They claim that it also leads to increased costs, for example for extra

[1] This definition no longer exists in the current version of Merriam Webster's dictionary.

monitoring or for fixing environmental problems. The authors use the term "willingness-to-punish" by consumers for the irresponsibilities of the suppliers (and consequently of the company), and on the contrary willingness to pay for their responsibility, which is considered as a main driver of sourcing strategies. Next, Thorlakson (2018) explains that consumer demand may have less significance than reputational risk. Consumer demand is an approach that positively rewards companies for good sourcing practices, whereas reputational risk is an approach that involves consumers punishing irresponsible companies (Thorlakson, 2018). The consequences of corporate environmental irresponsibilities are measured in the short term in the form of financial losses but also in the long term through reputational damage (Lin et al., 2016).

2.3.4 Transparency

Transparency is a key issue in this study as it is a recurring theme in supply chain management and is linked to consumer expectations. Moreover, it is also a dimension that is part of Carter and Rogers' (2008) conceptualization of SCCM. Hart already pointed out in 1995 (p.1000) the importance of transparency and said that "to maintain legitimacy and build reputation, therefore, companies may need to open their operations to greater public scrutiny". Transparency can assume many aspects and the most prominent one seems to be the communication to stakeholders, and hence as mentioned by Yawar and Seuring (2015) in their communication strategies, via reporting or labeling. However, it does not limit itself to this, as it also encompasses the active engagement of stakeholders and taking their feedback to improve the overall supply chain operations (Carter & Rogers, 2008).

In terms of definitions, Sodhi and Tang (2019) make a distinction between transparency and visibility. Transparency is the process of revealing information about upstream supply chain activities to stakeholders, while visibility is the work that managers undertake to gather information about the entire supply chain, upstream and downstream. Visibility is therefore the stage that precedes transparency and involves the internal stakeholders. The authors also mention traceability as an aspect of visibility, which traces the origin of its products. More precisely, supply chain transparency is the disclosure of information regarding the names of suppliers (which is about traceability), as well as the conditions under which suppliers operate (via the disclosure of audit reports, for example) and the purchasing practices of the focal company (via the disclosure of their product costs, for example) (Foerstl et al., 2010).

Companies can then decide to what extent they seek and disclose information. Transparency can be classified along two dimensions, by being internally transparent to itself and externally transparent to its external stakeholders (Reuter, 2019). For example, the company may decide to give information about all tiers and/or about its Tier-1 supplier and/or about the ecological footprint of its supply chain and/or about the working environment of suppliers, etc. (Sodhi & Tang, 2019). It can be observed here that supply chain transparency is spoken of in general terms, whereas transparency mainly concerns its upstream side. Indeed, downstream transparency is an evolving concept with regard to consumer waste, for example, but it is not as pertinent as revealing what is happening on the supplier side (Sodhi & Tang, 2019).

The potential advantages generated by visibility include well managed risks, reduced reputational damage and increased supply chain efficiency (Sodhi & Tang, 2019). Corporate transparency is therefore linked to the section above, as it is related to visibility, which in turn is related to risk management and reputation. Transparency has potential advantages as well and one of them is also the avoidance of reputational problems (Sodhi & Tang, 2019). In addition, it increases sales through greater consumer and investor confidence, it helps to comply with regulation, it reduces supplier monitoring through crowdsourcing (which makes stakeholders monitor them too), and it generates word-of-mouth marketing (Sodhi & Tang, 2019). While it is not easy to gain consumer trust nowadays because of the complexity of supply chains (Iranpour & Rosenstand, 2020), MacLean and Rebernak (2007, p. 4) stated that "there is no better way to generate trust among stakeholders than through transparency".

In the past companies were often not transparent in order to maintain their competitive advantage, but today this has been changing with the amount of information available on the internet (Sodhi & Tang, 2019). However, there are still companies that are reluctant because they believe that keeping certain information is still of great economic and competitive value (Reuter, 2019). In addition, it may be difficult for a company to be transparent because of the costs and difficulties of obtaining information from suppliers, or because of potential negative reactions from consumers, governments or investors (Sodhi & Tang, 2019). Moreover, with regard to consumer reactions, Buell and Norton (2011) demonstrate that consumers have a higher perceived value for companies that make transparency efforts, which also increases satisfaction and intentions to buy again from these companies. Mohan et al. (2014) show that cost transparency is also an interesting concept that increases consumers' willingness to buy from companies that disclose their costs on a voluntary basis, through the enhanced trust that is created. Finally, Kalkanci et al. (2016) also prove that by voluntarily sharing the social and environmental impacts of their supply chain (i.e. negative impacts), companies get benefits. They show that it adds value in the eyes of consumers, increases consumer trust and raises market share; and that it will also encourage the company to improve these negative impacts.

According to Iranpour and Rosenstand (2020), consumer trust is however not so easy to obtain as they may still doubt the veracity of the information disclosed. To support trust, they propose two solutions, the blockchain (which is a network where consumers can find information in a transparent way) and labeling. Nevertheless, according to the authors, blockchain alone is not sufficient and labeling is confusing for consumers as there are so many labels and it is difficult to know which label covers what. Indeed, labels ensure that certain conditions are met, but consumers often do not know which conditions and standards are met under the labels (Harbaugh et al., 2011). Harbaugh et al. (2011) show that even a small degree of uncertainty can lead to a strong decrease in the value of labels to consumers due to their confusion.

Nevertheless, labels are important as studies show that they are a solution to avoid irresponsibility in the supply chain - and more specifically in the relationship with suppliers - and non-transparency (Dai et al., 2018). They can also help consumers who have not investigated the sustainability of products to get information at the time of purchase, or even afterwards (Groening & Zhu, 2019). In addition, they contain several benefits such as economic advantages and competitive advantage (Bezencon, 2010). One of the best known social labels is the Fair Trade label. O'Connor et al. (2017) explain that it is the understanding and acceptance of the label by consumers that can make it work and succeed.

In addition to the monitoring, codes of conduct, reporting and audits mentioned earlier in this paper, certifications can also demonstrate the transparency of a company. Indeed, some certifications such as ISO (International Organization for Standardization) or GRI (Global Reporting Initiative) are internationally recognized and can provide information on the sustainable performance of companies (Ageron et al., 2012). For example, ISO 20400 is on sustainable procurement, so it can help all types of companies in their decision making process to integrate sustainable practices (ISO, 2017). Certifications such as ISO have several advantages, and among these is greater transparency.

Lastly, while supply chain transparency is a good corportate tool as it offers the benefits outlined above, it is also a good tool for consumers who want to have an impact on companies and their sustainable decision-making processes (Egels-Zandén & Hansson, 2015).

IV. CHAPTER 3 : ANALYSIS

After reviewing all the literature related to the concepts of the research question, the next part is the analysis. It is divided into five sections. The first one looks at the concerns of ethical consumers as well as their purchasing intentions and behaviours. Then, the second section analyzes the actions of companies to take into account the expectations of ethical consumers. This is followed by the drivers for integrating social and environmental criteria into the sourcing decision process. The section four is related to the discussion of links based on matrix tables. Finally, the fifth section analyzes the role of consumers from a business perspective and concludes with a discussion on this subject.

This analysis was conducted by interviewing seven different companies from the food industry. The results are of particular interest because the companies offer different types of products and have different characteristics. Indeed, the two most relevant characteristics that distinguish them are their different sizes and the fact that they have integrated CSR strategies and ethical considerations at different times. This is also analyzed in the following sections, in order to answer the research question as insightfully as possible. It is noted that the interviews form the basis of this analysis as the subject matter is quite specific and no similar studies to this one could be found to use as support.

1. Ethical concerns of consumers: their intentions and purchasing behaviour

1.1 The rise of ethical concerns

Ethical consumers are becoming more and more numerous these days, in response to the ills of our current capitalist society, which is causing both social problems, such as poor working conditions, and environmental problems, such as the degradation of our planet. Globally, this is also reflected in an increase in mental problems - particularly among young people -, an increase in economic inequality, an awareness of animal suffering, the loss of meaning at work and the negative effects of materialism. While ethical consumers are aware that consumption is the problem that causes these ills, they also know that another form of consumption can be the solution. This increases awareness among the small segment of consumers who integrate social and environmental values into their consumption decisions. (Carrington et al., 2015)

This consumer segment has been growing in the last few decades and especially in the last one, which can be evidenced for example by the increase in demand for organic food and the number of studies on this topic (Kushwah, Dhir, Sagar & Gupta, 2019). Indeed, this segment does not seem to be so small anymore as all interviewed companies claim that there is an increase in ethical concerns in recent years. Company X (2021), which is a large organisation that operates worldwide in the food industry, states that through the studies they have conducted on consumers, there is a clear evolution in the sensitivity of the choices of products they buy as well as the provenance of these products.

Depending on the type of company's products, consumers are more concerned about the social or environmental dimension. Indeed, for catering, customers seem to expect more answers on environmental issues, such as biodegradable packaging and the use of plastic (Somja , 2021). It is observed here that frequently, as far as companies with only European suppliers are concerned, the focus is rather on the environmental aspect - e.g. by working on more eco-friendly products. But not exclusively, as the demand for Fairtrade products is also generally high for all types of products (Seymus, 2021).

Concerning social concerns, consumers will focus on companies that deal with non-European suppliers. The chocolate company Belvas has decided to sell its products under organic and Fairtrade certification, and claims that some customers choose their chocolates because there is the Fairtrade dimension in addition to the organic one (Noesen, 2021). Therefore, the demand is clearly present and this is reflected in certain purchasing behaviours. Moreover, the supermarket sector also has increasing expectations to gain market share in the organic field (Noesen, 2021) and this may indirectly reflect the increasing demands of ethical consumers on retailers. It is therefore argued that there is a strong consumer expectation to support ethically committed companies and brands, as well as a greater expectation of transparency (Bebronne, 2021), which will be discussed further in section 2.4.

Covid-19 also has a role to play in this regard. While studies show that this global pandemic has disrupted many aspects of our social life, it has also affected our eating habits and this is partly due to problems with corporate supply chains (Carolan, 2021). Verdy (2021) mentions the Covid-19 crisis in the changes in consumption practices. The Père Olive company conducted studies before and after the pandemic and according to Verdy (2021), "consumers really need reassurance, and they are looking for that reassurance in the way they consume".

While this crisis has made people look more closely at what they buy and where it comes from, it also seems to have intensified the local dimension.

1.2 The local dimension

If the subject of consuming locally was already topical before Covid-19, it has been reinforced by the desire to consume from local producers and small local businesses during the crisis (Verdy, 2021; Somja, 2021). The local trend is and will be even more important than the organic one according to some respondents (Noesen, 2021; Verdy, 2021). The local dimension is also promoted in the values of many companies nowadays. For example, this can be seen by the increase of 'Made in Belgium' claims on product packaging in supermarkets. For the company Herve, local consumption and short supply chains are very important. It is part of their vision to 'accelerate the return to local origin in Belgium by offering their tasty cheeses to all Belgians' (Bebronne, 2021).

While this may seem like progress on any level, the local level raises a few reflections. Firstly, as stated above, customers do not take into account all the greenhouse gas emissions and only look at the last few steps - such as transport - to judge that the product is more ecological. For company X, consuming locally and therefore reducing transport and emissions are important in terms of sourcing choices, but all the product's carbon emissions must be taken into account. An example is given: "let's take a farmer in France or Italy who practices regenerative agriculture, good livestock management, etc., his total footprint may be lower than if we take a local farmer who does not do this but is located closer" (Company X, 2021).

Moreover, for Noesen (2021), this is not always taken with enough distance by consumers as he says that his "customers in Lille find that an import from Marseille is more local than an import from Belgium, even though we are half an hour away from Lille". Local consumption must therefore be thought out and analyzed by consumers in order to be optimal. Ultimately, this should also be seen, communicated and defined in a more holistic way, taking into account the whole life cycle of products.

1.3 Measurability of ethical purchasing intentions and behaviors

The objective of measuring the purchase intentions and purchasing behaviour of ethical consumers is to be able to determine the link between theory and practice. The distinction between intentions and behaviours is usually a reality for companies. The disappointment of managers is felt, for example Noesen (2021) says that he perceives the gap and considers it like a paradox, because "on the one hand, a lot of people buy because we are ethical and on the other hand, I am often disappointed with the real buying behavior compared to everything we do". Despite the growing awareness and willingness of consumers, the translation of intentions into actual purchasing actions remains low (Company X, 2021).

If practice demonstrates that the gap is generally experienced by companies, it is nonetheless a rather complex subject because measuring intentions and purchasing behaviors of ethical consumers seems effectively difficult for companies. This difficulty of measurement is explained by the fact that "it is quite hard to measure the difference, if a customer mentions ethical initiatives that should be put in place, to know if they are ethical in their purchasing behaviour is very difficult" (Somja, 2021). According to their statements, it is usually observed that companies do not measure purchase intentions and behaviors separately. The measure that regularly comes up is market research - or panels - to capture current trends, changing interests, concerns, priorities and feedback from consumers (Bebronne, 2021; Audoin, 2021; Company X). Market research is designed to measure buying behavior, intentions, or both (McGivern, 2013). Indeed, actual purchasing behavior is often measured by collecting data in stores and purchasing intentions via quantitative or qualitative data collection in different ways (McGivern, 2013).

According to Bebronne (2021), analyzing consumer purchases provides interesting quantitative data, but it is difficult to scan the data to know exactly why they bought the products they did. He states that to know that, one must rely on the declarative information and that is where people are often inconsistent. This inconsistency is represented by the intention-behavior gap. It is therefore suggested here that purchase intentions and behaviors for consumers are measurable but they are not yet commonly measured for ethical consumers.

Moreover, it is important to note that not all companies experience the gap in the same way. For some companies, the declarative and the intentions are indeed "stronger" than the real act of purchase, but the observed trends are still reflected in the consumption habits in a certain way and therefore one leads to the other (Verdy, 2021). Some companies hardly perceive it, they notice that more and more consumers are willing to consume more responsibly and are willing to pay for it, so the purchasing behavior is directly visible (Seymus, 2021).

For Audoin (2021), the fact that purchase intentions do not always translate into actual purchase behaviour stems from the view of sustainability in general, as well as from the confusion in which it is held. First of all, he states that this can come from the surrounding greenwashing. The study by Rausch and Kopplin (2020) shows that greenwashing negatively influences the relationship between attitudes, intentions and purchase behaviour. They say that this is due to the fact that consumers are uncertain about the potential greenwashing activities of a company and that this lack of information confuses consumers, which moderates the intention-behaviour relationship.

Secondly, sustainability can be perceived in very different ways. For example someone from the agri-food sector might argue that sustainability is about soil protection and not using pesticides and someone from the agro-chemical sector might argue that sustainability is about water-efficient crops that take up less space for a better performance. This results in consumer confusion, and it is the same with labels. Indeed, labels reflect many different aspects and consumers are not informed enough to know everything that is behind them, which also moderates the fact that intentions are translated into buying behavior. (Audoin, 2021)

In addition, many variables come into consideration. Since we are addressing the food sector, taste is a key factor that can explain the difference between intentions and purchasing behaviour. People may want to buy in a sustainable way, but taste is what will make them repurchase or not the sustainable products (Noesen, 2021). Time efficiency is also important as it discourages many consumers from having to shop in multiple locations (Somja, 2021). Being present on the shelves and then having attractive packaging are also variables that explain many purchase decisions, which sometimes contradict intentions (Noesen, 2021; Verdy, 2021). Other variables are important, such as the price, which must be justified and reasonable if it is higher for ethical products. But all these different considerations were not deepened because the aim of this study is to find out whether companies measure and consider intentions or/and actual behaviours.

1.4 The consideration of ethical purchasing intentions and behaviors

According to Kytö et al. (2019), in the food business, companies rely on consumers' purchase intentions to predict their future sales as well as their possibility of success. Nevertheless, predictions are not straightforward and mainly because food products seem to be associated with a low degree of consumer involvement (Parment et al., 2016). We will therefore analyze what companies consider when undertaking sourcing decisions in order to determine whether they are more interested in purchase intentions or in the actual behaviour of ethical consumers.

Companies can play a reactive role, waiting for their consumers to push them to become sustainable, or a proactive role, looking for solutions that are not (yet) expected from them, with a long-term view (Audoin, 2021). Proactive companies are not based on consumer demand. In general, it is stated that the interviewed companies do not make ethical decisions in their supply chains just to please consumers. Other variables come into play, and what often comes up is the values of the company itself deciding to move in the direction of sustainability. Bebronne (2021) explains that in terms of ethical initiatives, they integrate it into their approach and their vision, because they are convinced that it is the only way to develop their business in the long term. It is not a move they make only because it is trendy and consumers want it. Other companies adhere to this vision, for example, in the case of the Company Y’s cocoa programme, the company was proactive in committing itself without actually having previously perceived the customer demand: "there may be companies that make decisions before there are intentions, out of conviction" (Audoin, 2021).

Nevertheless, all companies make choices that take consumers' opinions into account, because in the end, they are the ones who will decide whether or not to consume the products. Even when we are referring to the company's convictions, it has to be in line with the consumers (Audoin, 2021). As a result, they inevitably enter the equation, even if the consideration of consumers seems to be always in consideration with other factors. For example, Company X states :

> We want to ensure that we meet consumer requirements when we source and manufacture our products. However, as a major food company in the world, we also want to influence the consumer. [...] If we wait for them to come up with the need on their own, we are still wasting a lot of time before we can change purchasing decisions.

> So I would say we take it into account, yes, but first of all, it's part of Enterprise X's mission and purpose to want to play a crucial role in all matters of community and planet, and to reflect that in all our decisions.

Beyond the values of the company, price is also a key factor to take into account because overbidding on sustainability or over-quality would make the products too expensive and then the companies may drop out of the market (Bebronne, 2021). As mentioned before, the taste and pleasure of the product are also very important, for Noesen (2021) this is the first factor to be taken into consideration.

Despite this, a general observation is made that intentions rather than buying behaviour are being considered. According to Verdy (2020), intentions are a long-term trend setter. Intentions are taken into account because they are ideological and everyone has intentions (Somja, 2021). Afterwards, it is better if purchasing behavior follows, but the goal of the company is to induce this purchasing behavior (Somja, 2021). Seymus (2021) gives the example that if they decide to switch from plastic to paper packaging, it will be based on intentions because in the end, they cannot be certain that consumers are actually willing to pay more for it. Hence, companies usually decide to base their decision on ethical consumer purchase intentions because they are broader and more encompassing, and they identify current and future trends. Companies do not have the certainty that these consumers will act on their statements, but they decide to be ahead of the curve in order to meet the expectations of the consumers on the one hand, and on the other, because it is part of their organizational values.

As a result, a table was created from these observations to give an overview of all the companies' considerations (Figure 4). These three rows can be grouped under the idea of meeting the needs and expectations of ethical consumers. It can be seen that intentions considerations are mentioned most frequently. It can also be noted that purchasing behaviour is not mentioned by the companies.

Moreover, This table does not include other variables and considerations - such as price, company values, taste, availability, etc. - that may explain companies' decision-making or the gap between intentions and behaviour. Indeed, they were mentioned spontaneously by the companies and therefore not similarly investigated with all of them, which may distort the results.

Considerations \ Companies	Belvas	Company Y	Herve	Rafinerie Tirlemontoise	Père Olive	Company X	Point Chaud	n= number of companies
Consideration of purchasing intentions	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	n=3
Consideration of purchasing behaviour	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	n=0
General consideration of meeting consumers' expectations	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	n=2

FIGURE 4: Links between the different considerations and the companies

In order to make it more understandable and clear, a graph was also created on the same results (Figure 5). These two figures illustrate that it is difficult for companies to answer the question of whether they regard intentions or purchasing behaviour of ethical consumers when making sourcing decisions. Indeed, only three out of seven companies were able to choose and state that they consider intentions. Some companies responded partially by saying that they generally consider consumer expectations, but two of the companies that mentioned it also talked about the fact that their decisions were based on organisational considerations as well. Other companies do not consider any of these variables related to consumer expectations but rather other ones - as taste or price, as mentioned above.

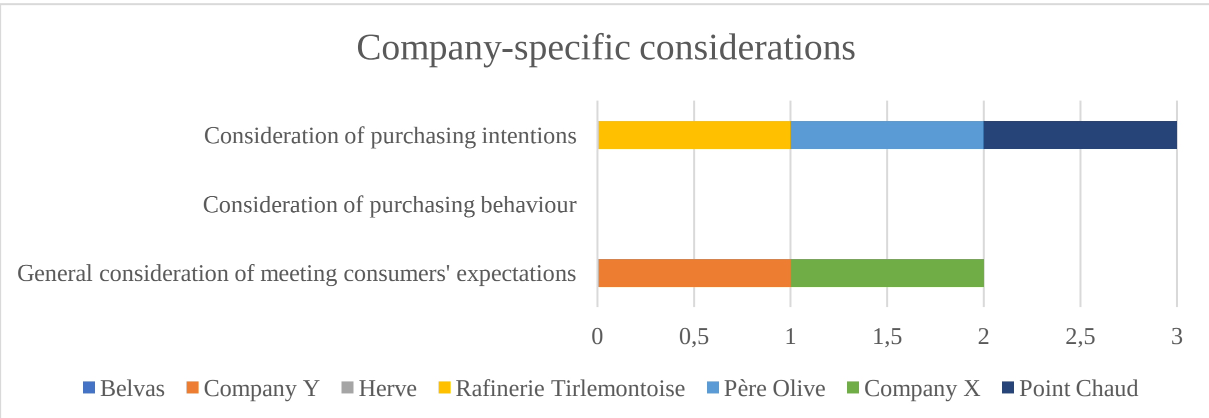

FIGURE 5: Company-specific considerations

2. The integration of ethical consumers expectations

2.1 Concrete actions taken in the sourcing decision process of companies

This part is quite multifaceted since most companies do not take their sourcing decisions solely on the basis of consumer expectations. Many companies integrate sustainable practices into their supply chain for a variety of reasons, and ethical consumers are only one variable among them, depending on the company. First of all, consumers who decide to buy sustainable products purely because they are socially and environmentally committed do not represent the entire customer base. For example, Noesen (2021) claims that about 80% of its customers buy its Belvas chocolates for the taste, and that there may be 20% of them who buy it for the company's values. This shows that, even for brands that are fair trade, eco-responsible and organic, not all customers are consuming these products for the sustainability aspect. It shows that companies will not take all their sourcing decisions simply to satisfy a small proportion of their customers; there are other reasons, which will be listed in section 3. Secondly, most practices are either mandatory from the start, such as certain audits for some large companies, or they are already implemented before the company decides to respond to ethical consumers. For example, quality and hygiene audits are a legal requirement (Somja, 2021).

Nonetheless, even if only partially, companies are undertaking sustainable activities with consumers in mind, as they are the ultimate decision-makers in purchasing products. Measures taken in the form of audits, codes of conduct and supplier relations often stand out. In terms of audits, the aim is to meet certain standards, such as audits on fair trade or other ethical matters such as halal food (Seymus, 2021). Audits often seem to be the first step for companies, such as Père Olive that began by auditing all of its suppliers to see how sustainable they are (Verdy, 2021). The next step for the company is to assess the suppliers to determine which ones they will work with, or which ones they will fund or set up initiatives with local NGOs to help them be more sustainable.

Therefore, there is also a relational aspect with the suppliers in addition to audits, via collaborations - with or without intermediaries - to address social issues or by educating them on environmental issues for example. The fact that suppliers are sustainable is no longer a "nice to have" but rather a crucial element that will make a supplier be chosen rather than another according to these criteria. (Company X) At the supplier level, other dimensions are also highlighted, such as the local dimension of suppliers for certain companies (Somja, 2021) or the communication around the origin of ingredients (Bebronne, 2021).

Moreover, codes of conduct are also in some way impacted by consumers. According to Audoin (2021), given that consumers are increasingly demanding information about products and supply chains, and that companies do not want to be out of line with consumers, companies are increasingly implementing codes of conduct or ethical codes. Even if this does not always have much value, it is observed that there is a positive evolution in the sense that there are more companies than before that consider ethical codes (Audoin, 2021).

It is interesting to complement these analyses with the case of Belvas, which has been a sustainable company since the first day of its creation, meaning that their sourcing decisions are not designed to satisfy consumers. Noesen (2021) states that they even take it a step further, purchasing costly compostable packaging for example, which does not bring them more revenue nor consumers. However, once again, this does not mean that they are not thinking about consumers at all. He claims that marketing and communication with consumers is very important because it is about engaging and giving answers to ethical consumers who want to buy these sustainable products. Some brands even use this as an opportunity to deploy huge marketing resources, but with the sole purpose of reducing their bill or satisfying consumers. While this can be compared to greenwashing in some respects, it also highlights the growing interest of consumers in ethical consumption, which can also serve as a warning to other companies in the chocolate industry that are not engaging in any ethical activities (Noesen 2021).

2.2 Changes at the social and environmental level

The social and environmental practices that are monitored are diverse, ranging from working conditions and human rights to pesticide use, recycling, water treatment, etc. (Verdy, 2021). Similarly, the sustainable issues addressed in collaboration with suppliers are very diverse, and can range from educating suppliers on soil regeneration or quality, to better livestock management on the environmental side, to respect for people, workers and child labour on the social side (Company X). The integration of sustainable practices in companies' supply chains is therefore numerous, as stated more exhaustively in the "social and environmental issues" section of the literature review. It is therefore interesting to know which of these issues are impacted by ethical consumers.

What emerges most frequently regarding the influence of consumers is the issue of animal welfare, as consumers are increasingly aware and demanding about this topic nowadays. In the case of the large Company X, which partially owned a brand that sold meat, animal welfare was a topic that they were regularly challenged on, which led to an increase in audits and even changes in suppliers. Animal welfare is therefore a subject that is often influenced - partly - by consumers for many companies, such as Herve, which also has very strict specifications in this area, but says that it is always looking into this subject to see what can be improved (Bebronne, 2021). Finally, the Père Olive company belongs to a larger group that sells foie gras and Verdy (2021) also mentions the downward trend in foie gras consumption, as well as the pressure of alternative vegetarian brands. All of this confirms the impact of consumers in changing their consumption choices and concerns about the welfare of animals.

Moreover, there is a certain disparity here between the importance given to social problems on the one hand and environmental problems on the other. Indeed, depending on the type of product that companies offer, they will be more focused on solving social or environmental problems. First of all, we can observe that companies that have suppliers in Europe are more focused on environmental problems and feel very little external pressure on social problems (Seymus, 2021; Somja, 2021; Verdy, 2021). Their focus is therefore on energy, water consumption and recycling, biodiversity, non-use of pesticides, etc. (Symus, 2021; Verdy, 2021). Packaging and food waste are also part of consumers' food concerns (Somja, 2021). This is certainly explained by the fact that "it is different if you are working with Asian companies or with African companies, in Europe we believe that most of the companies do respect human rights" (Seymus, 2021).

As an example, Point Chaud is a company that works mainly with suppliers from Belgium or neighboring countries, where the marketing manager claims that she has never experienced any questions about working conditions or human rights from their customers (Somja, 2021). As the legal regulations related to working conditions are stricter in Europe, the pressure from consumers towards companies that source from European countries is significantly higher from an environmental point of view.

Yet, this may include some exceptions, e.g. the dairy market in which Herve operates contains some social concerns despite having Belgian suppliers. This market has been problematic for a long time in terms of the remuneration of producers, which is still an issue today (Celagri, 2021). Herve therefore works in sustainable dairy chains that aim to pay all actors in the chain fairly (Bebronne, 2021). This company has therefore chosen to act on their values by only buying Belgian milk at the fair price for farmers. But they also offer different levels of products in order to answer to different types of consumers depending on their degree of concern. They work with different types of milk (standard, sustainable protected origin or organic for example) which allows them to produce different types of cheese that will suit consumers with varying levels of expectations and needs (Bebronne, 2021).

However, the fact that companies are more or less concerned with different types of sustainable concerns depending on the geographical origin of the suppliers is generally supported when we consider companies that operate with products that require ingredients from outside Europe, such as chocolate. Indeed, in addition to environmental concerns, these companies point out the necessity to address social issues. For Belvas, that sells chocolate, from the first day of the company's creation the fair trade dimension was the most important one. Nevertheless, Noesen (2021) adds that although there may be a little more social concern, the environmental dimension is also very important in the chocolate sector and that he is therefore committed to doing both proportionally.

For Company X, which works with many suppliers around the world, the social dimension is the core concern, "because making sure that products are sourced from suppliers who respect human rights, fair wages, etc., is something that has always been there". However, as often happens with large companies, it is not possible to ensure that all the standards are respected at every stage of the supply chain on a daily basis, and it sometimes leads to incidents (Company X). This is caused by a tremendous number of intermediaries, and illustrates in practice the theoretical explanation of the complexity of supply chains given in the literature review. Here as well, Company X explains that the social aspect has always been non-negotiable and reflected for a longer period of time, but that environmental concerns have become a critical element to consider in sourcing decisions over time.

Finally, to ensure clarity, the consideration of social and/or environmental concerns does not depend solely on the origin of the suppliers but on a fundamental variable, namely the type of product sold. This is illustrated by the companies that sell meat, who all mentioned the fact that animal welfare is an issue on which they have to rethink following the growing expectations of consumers, as explained above (Bebronne, 2021). To give a final example, Raffinerie Tirlemontoise sells mainly sugar, which is derived from a natural process from beets. Their focus is therefore on the environment, reminding consumers that it is a plant-based product.

This section and the one before can be summarized by stating that it is very difficult to measure the concrete actions on both social and environmental levels in terms of the consumers' contribution. It seems that animal welfare is an issue that is most influenced by consumers, but in general companies cannot claim that a particular practice has been put in place with the aim of satisfying ethical consumers. Indeed, even if companies' views are not all alike, most of them say that on the one hand they make sourcing decisions for certain reasons (company values, market opportunities, differentiation, etc.) and on the other hand they also listen to consumers and take them into account. It is understood that the role of consumers is much more subtle and is nevertheless central, among other elements, in the decision-making processes at a more abstract level with regard to sourcing decisions. However, it may be more decisive in other respects, such as on the issue of transparency explained below.

2.3 Transparency

Transparency is a crucial point and according to Audoin (2021), this is where consumers have the most impact. It is a concept that has been discussed much more in recent years as consumers are increasingly demanding (Belvas, 2021). It is even something that companies are integrating for the sole purpose of satisfying consumers or other stakeholders. Noesen (2021) states that transparency was not very important for his small company before, but that it has become essential over the years because consumers demand it. It has been 8 years now since he integrated this transparency dimension, and it made him realise that they have a great story behind Belvas but they were not sharing it.

In general, the evolution of transparency is very variable depending on the company: some have been developing it for twenty years, others for ten years or less, but for many companies it is a long-term trend that has just become more pronounced in recent years. If there is one certainty, it is that consumers are showing great interest in this area and some companies, such as Point Chaud, are even often solicited on questions of transparency. Somja (2021) states "we really notice that there is a lot more interest in the behind the scenes of what we do. Everybody goes to the shops but nobody knows what is going on in the background". She adds that it can also be noticed through people who criticize on social networks. These people actually want answers, and to see how companies defend themselves or explain certain choices. Transparency on social networks can be never-ending and extremely energy-consuming if companies are expected to respond and enter into every discussion.

But transparency does not only take place through social networks. Indeed, there are many ways to be transparent with consumers. This can be done through websites, by posting photos or explanations on product packaging, by organizing visits to factories, or even more informally during customer meetings (Belvas, Herve, Point Chaud, Père Olive, Raffinerie Tirlemontoise). Sometimes it can even be through advertising, TV commercials or YouTube channels (Company X).

According to Bebronne (2021), visits are the most effective way to be transparent. Indeed, he says that by showing what is happening on the field, "it really meets this basic expectation, not the smooth speech 'everything is fine, we are the best', but rather 'come, we will show you what is happening inside'". He also explains that with Covid-19, when everyone was under lockdown, it was important to be transparent and to show consumers that the producers were still working and the meaning behind their work. This allowed them to get very good feedback on their social networks.

As Company X points out, transparency is not only about informing but also about educating consumers. Consumers' education will be discussed in section 5.2. In general, transparency is a delicate issue because companies that want to communicate or even educate always have to find the right way to do so to avoid remarks - justified or not - of greenwashing or that educational or informative communication is only for commercial purposes (Company X).

Finally, it is also important to communicate to the final consumer only what is concrete (Verdy, 2021). Père Olive has decided not to communicate yet when decisions are still in the discussion or reflection stage. They consider that the decision must be completed before it can be communicated, even if it takes time for the whole process to be put in place, as in the case of long-term support with some suppliers (Verdy, 2021).

3. Drivers to implement sustainable practices in the sourcing decision process

3.1 Customer pressure

Companies decide to implement sustainable practices in their supply chain, and more specifically in their sourcing decisions, for several reasons. This was identified in the literature review under the sections on drivers for sustainable sourcing. After asking the interviewees to identify the drivers in practice, customer pressure was one of the most mentioned variables.

It is noteworthy in this section that the term customer is replaced by consumer. Indeed, throughout the interviews, it was found that pressure does not always come directly from consumers. This pressure often emerges from retailers. Verdy (2021) asserts that "we have more pressure from our retailers to move forward on CSR issues to keep our place in the shop and to keep an interest in the brand". She subsequently said that this is akin to indirect pressure from consumers. Since consumers do not always have the opportunity to communicate with companies, it is easily conceivable that part of the pressure from consumers is transmitted through retailers, which is then felt by companies. However, this does not imply that the whole pressure that retailers put on companies comes from consumers.

The term customers, which partly includes retailers, is therefore more appropriate as it has been mentioned frequently (Company X, Company Y, Raffinerie Tirlemontoise, Père Olive). The role of consumers varies according to the opinions of the companies. For Company X, while it is true that companies feel that consumers are more demanding, it is also true that the demand to move forward on sustainability issues is also increasingly coming from customers. Others argue that consumers alone have only a marginal impact on corporate purchasing policies, which are more influenced by other drivers, including customer demand (Audoin, 2021).

According to Seymus (2021), as a company "we do get a lot of pressure to be in line with norms to be sustainable, to prove that we are sustainable in our production chain. The pressure in the last 5 years became more and more important". This pressure, which comes from both consumers and customers, is felt more on one side or on the other depending on the company's activities. For example, Raffinerie Tirlemontoise sells more in Business to Business (B2B) than in Business to Consumer (B2C) and therefore experiences more pressure from its customers than from its consumers. Some limitations to this analysis on retailers were identified and will be discussed in the conclusion section afterwards. The conclusion is that consumer pressure is a key element both directly - by engaging with companies - and indirectly - via retailers for example.

A final observation is that some companies say that they are responding to consumer expectations rather than to real pressure. The aim is to take into account and anticipate expectations, not to be reactive or to feel pressure (Bebronne, 2021). For proactive companies, ethical consumer expectations can be seen as a boost, a way to reinforce the idea that companies are going in the right direction (Somja, 2021).

3.2 Other reasons

With regard to other drivers, organisational culture is often discussed. Managers talk about top management being a reason or a source of motivation to work on sourcing decisions. The organisational emphasis on sustainable practices is based on the fact that as a company they want to address climate and social issues. Sustainable approaches are sometimes taken for granted in companies and this is reflected in the CEO's support for these approaches (Somja, 2021). Company X adds "it is not just something we do to look good, because otherwise we would lose a competitive or commercial advantage. It is in our values and mission to play an impactful role at this level".

The culture and values of companies are sometimes so strong that consumers are given very little consideration when companies undertake sourcing decisions. This is often the case for companies that are considered to be proactive, having integrated sustainable practices for a significant number of years. Companies like Herve and Company X are following their mission and vision to be responsible and sustainable actors and want to reflect this in their decision making. For Noesen (2021), it is difficult to identify the actions he has taken to meet the expectations of ethical consumers as sustainable practices are so embedded in the core of his business. He often wonders if he is pushing the ideal too far, as he wants to address social as well as environmental issues fully, but it is costing him money without being able to raise prices or see a difference in his sales.

Moreover, this brings us to another driver as the organisational culture can attract people. Noesen (2021) states that many employees decide to apply to his company because Belvas has ethical values and sells organic, fair-trade and eco-responsible products. Indeed, a reason for integrating sustainable decisions was added in the course of the interviews, namely to recruit young graduates. Audoin (2021) claims that :

> There are companies today that are unable to recruit, or that lose employees because they do not have CSR policies. [...] Many young talents do not want to work in certain companies because they do not consider them to be ethical.

Interestingly, he adds that this can push companies to evolve positively in terms of sustainability and that these young employees are challenging current structures. The younger generations therefore attach a lot of importance and are even proud to work for a company that puts sustainability at the heart of its approaches (Company X). For employers, these approaches are both attractive in terms of recruiting young employees, but also beneficial in terms of the company's image (Company X).

This leads to the next point, the reputational driver. Reputation is a key element for a company. Mainly because a good reputation has an impact on consumer purchases (Company X). Firstly, it can be a great opportunity for free marketing when a company undertakes valuable sustainable practices (Noesen, 2021). For example, Belvas has been awarded Europe's greenest micro-business. This can help the company's image among consumers, and it is all the more important in cases like these, as small companies have limited marketing resources. In addition, sustainable practices are also a good way for companies to reposition themselves as a responsible brand and be known in the eyes of consumers for their sustainable efforts (Verdy, 2021).

Secondly, the reputation and public image of companies can also be important in the sense that it protects the company. Some firms invest in these sustainable practices in order to anticipate possible negative feedback from various stakeholders such as NGOs. For example, a company may decide to label all its products and labels as Fairtrade in order to feel secure and to anticipate the fact that an NGO may, one day, write an article that may cause them damage. Regarding the role of consumers in this, they can have a lot of impact if a scandal emerges and it can be extremely far-reaching. In any case, this is positive because reputation is a strong incentive for companies to evolve. With the example of the NGO, a link with the consumers can be deduced. Indeed, some NGOs partly represent the voice of consumers. One can therefore consider that a link can be made between reputation and consumers as well. More generally, whether or not it comes from consumers, companies that undertake social or environmental decisions like to share it to ensure a positive image through their commitments. (Audoin, 2021)

It is however specified that the reputational driver varies according to the food sectors and mainly according to the type of product sold, as not all sectors and products are exposed in the same way (Audoin, 2021). Under the same idea as reputation, it is interesting for a company to be sustainable in order to differentiate itself from other brands via its own strengths and thereby generate a competitive advantage (Verdy, 2021).

The economic side is consequently an aspect retained and evoked by almost all the interviewed companies (Belvas, Company Y, Herve, Raffinerie Tirlemontoise and Père Olive). The aim of a company is evidently to generate profit, and this applies to all areas. As Noesen (2021) comments, "in fair trade, trade is one of the two words. It is not only for the ideal, it is also because there is an economic opportunity". This element is therefore inevitably included in the list of drivers because the growing trend of sustainable development means that demand is increasing. Accordingly, it induces a competitive advantage (Bebronne, 2021; Verdy 2021). As a result, some brands are surfing the wave as there are always a number of companies that are more convinced than others in taking a sustainable path (Audoin, 2021).

Besides, government regulations on CSR issues have greatly expanded in recent years. For example, European legislation limits certain products and ingredients, such as additives and preservatives (Verdy, 2021). Taxes have also increased, for instance on packaging and on corporate CO_2 emissions (Company X). Another form of regulation, non-governmental, might be imposed by retailers for example, by forcing companies to follow some of their sustainable rules (Verdy, 2021). Laws are changing and amplifying, driving companies to update and evolve in the direction of sustainability (Somja, 2021; Audoin, 2021). Although it may not be the central driver for some companies, it is certainly another significant factor that confirms the urgency - especially on the environmental front - that we are facing (Company X). An exception is observed for Belvas, which does not feel any obligation in terms of regulations (Noesen, 2021).

Finally, on the one hand, some drivers have been mentioned once. The initiative of the employees, through various projects proposed at any time, is the key factor for Point Chaud. It can be compared in some respects to the organizational culture of the company, as described above. Moreover, risk management can also be part of the drivers for some companies (as for Raffinerie Tirlemontoise) and the driver based on social and environmental identity for others (as for Belvas). On the other hand, the knowledge and training option was not retained for any company. A nuance is brought here to underline that one cannot conclude that "knowledge and training" is not relevant in any case. The same is true for every data not mentioned by the companies (when n=0), such as the consideration of purchasing behaviour in section 1.4. The sample size of the interviews does not allow to say that these data are to be excluded.

4. Discussion on links based on matrix tables

In this section, many links are made between several variables and some companies' characteristics. These links are established through tables and graphs designed with the Nvivo program that helps to process qualitative data. First of all, a link is made between the drivers and the moment of sustainability integration of companies which is divided into three categories, i.e. companies that have been sustainable from the start, those that have been sustainable for more than 5 years and those that have been sustainable for less than 5 years. Next, a link is formed between the drivers and the size of the company. Finally, the last link is established between the consideration of purchasing intentions and behaviors of ethical consumers and the moment of sustainability integration.

As a matter of relevance, it is pointed out that there are no links established with the results of section 2, analyzing how ethical consumers' expectations are integrated. Indeed, first of all, the companies specified that the concrete actions taken in their sourcing decisions are not directly addressed to respond to consumers. Analyzing these results in a table, as is the case for the other links, would therefore risk distorting these results. Secondly, it was determined that the type of problems - social or environmental - that companies address do not depend on the characteristics of the company but rather on the type of product sold and therefore also on the origin of its suppliers. Finally, since transparency is considered by all companies, it was already concluded that ethical consumers have a role to play in this, which does not require any comparative analysis on the basis of company characteristics.

4.1 Links between the drivers and characteristics of the companies

At this point, it is pertinent to take a step back and analyze the results obtained from the different drivers that drive companies to design their sourcing decisions in a sustainable way. Firstly, in order to represent this in a visual way, here is a summary of these drivers (Figure 6). One can notice that the pressure from customers and the organisational variables are the most prominent ones.

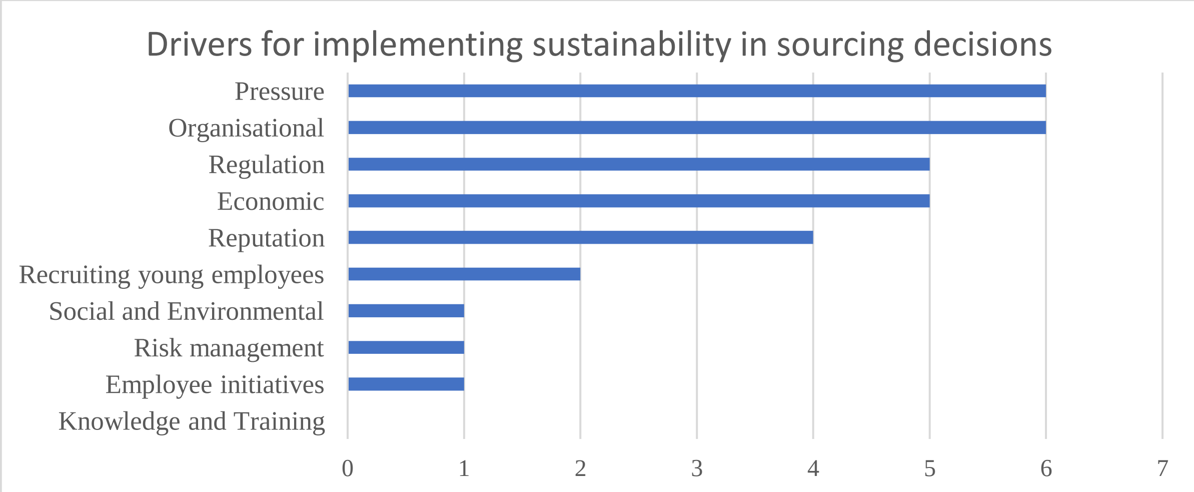

FIGURE 6: Drivers for implementing sustainability in sourcing decisions

Next, an analysis is conducted on the link between the drivers and certain characteristics of the company. The aim here is to extract graphs from the information gathered during the interviews in order to gain a better understanding of the mentioned drivers, with a particular interest in the pressure factor. First of all, a table is drawn up (Figure 7) based on the drivers on the one hand, and on the other hand on the moment of sustainability integration, i.e. the time when the company started to establish a CSR strategy, or for those who do not yet have one, to integrate concrete sustainability practices. It is noted that the "Recruiting young employees" driver is not included in the table because it was not suggested during the interviews. Indeed, some companies mentioned it spontaneously and including it in this table would therefore distort the results.

The moment of sustainability integration / **Drivers**	Sustainable from the start (n=1)	Sustainable for more than 5 years (n=2)	Sustainable for less than 5 years (n=4)	**n = number of compa-nies**
Knowledge and Training	0	0	0	n=0
Economic	1	1	3	n=5
Employee initiatives	0	0	1	n=1
Organisational	1	2	3	n=6
Pressure	0	2	4	n=6
Regulation	0	1	4	n=5
Reputation	1	1	2	n=4
Risk management	0	0	1	n=1
Social and Environmental	1	0	0	n=1

FIGURE 7: Links between the drivers and the moment of sustainability integration

The table is divided into three categories which represent three different moments of sustainability integration. It was determined to separate companies that have been integrating sustainability for a relatively short period of time, i.e. less than 5 years, from those that have been integrating sustainability for more than 5 years (i.e. possibly for 15 or 20 years). It was also decided to add a category, separate from the latter category of companies that have been sustainable for more than 5 years, for companies that have been integrating sustainability since the very beginning of the company, and therefore have sustainability as their driving force and at the heart of all their actions since their creation. This was considered to be relevant in the context of analyzing the drivers that lead to sustainable sourcing decisions. For convenience, category 1 corresponds to companies that have been sustainable from the start, category 2 to companies that have been sustainable for more than 5 years and category 3 to companies that have been sustainable for less than 5 years.

It is noteworthy that the companies were created at different times, but they are all more than 15 years old. Some of them are more than 100 years old (Company X, Company Y and Raffinerie Tirlemontoise), others are more or less 40 years old (Herve, Père Olive, Point Chaud) and the company sustainable from the start was created 16 years ago (Belvas). This appears to have little impact on the results. However, it is pointed out that it seems predictable that the sustainable from the start company is the most recent one, as most of these companies were created in this century or at the end of the last century. For example, the first organic distributor in France was created in the 1980s (Biocoop, 2021).

Moreover, in order to avoid confusion, the table includes the number of companies that belong to each category. The "n" represents the number of companies involved, out of a total of 7 companies interviewed (n=7 in total). To provide more clarity, a graph was created below (Figure 8), showing the different company drivers according to the moment of their sustainability integration, and which enables each driver to be very clearly identified in relation to each category.

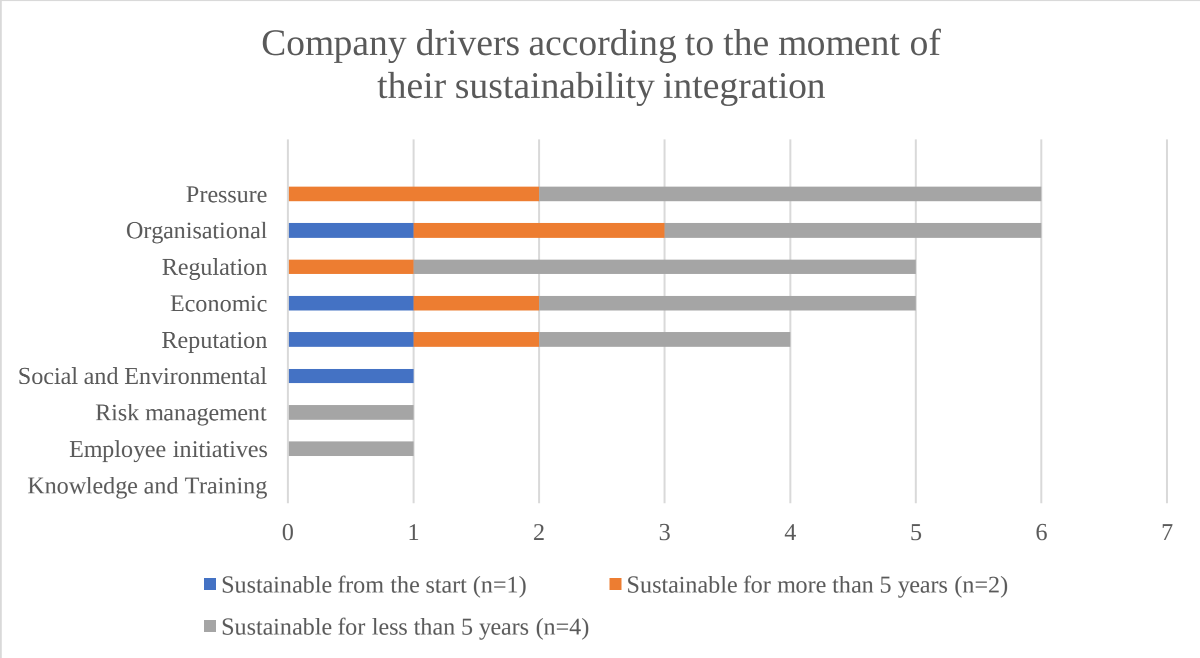

FIGURE 8: Company drivers according to the moment of their sustainability integration

With regard to the pressure driver, it appears from this table, this graph and the analyses in the previous section that companies that have been integrating sustainable practices for less than five years (category 3) are the ones that most often mention customer pressure as a reason for implementing sustainable sourcing decisions, for a total of four out of four companies. A similar observation can be made for regulation. In comparison, these two drivers are not mentioned in the category of companies that have been sustainable from the start (category 1), but they are included in the category of companies that have been sustainable for more than 5 years (category 2). These analyses should naturally be interpreted with hindsight in the sense that there is only one company in category 1 and therefore more research with a minimum and equal number of companies in each of these three categories would be necessary.

It is also reminded that a qualitative study offers some flexibility to adapt the findings as they are not quantified in a fixed form. For this reason, this research suggests that the pressure driver is less influential for companies in category 2 than for those in category 3. Indeed, category 2 companies - which have been sustainable for more than 5 years - mention consumer pressure in interviews as having very little impact and consistently add that if consumer pressure or expectations are considered, it is clearly not the main driver as their stimulus comes primarily from their organizational values.

Following these insights, this study proposes that customer pressure is first of all an important driver in general (mentioned 6 times out of 7 interviews), but also a good motivator and trigger for organizations that do not have a CSR strategy for a long time. Indeed, it is suggested that ethical consumers and customers play an initiating role for companies starting out in terms of social and environmental considerations.

Subsequently, another link is established between the drivers and the size of the company. In order to go further into understanding the reasons that can explain certain sustainable sourcing decisions in a company, a question that arises is whether the drivers are different depending on its size. The following table (Figure 9) was created in the same form as the previous one, with the same drivers on one side and on the other side grouping the interviewed companies into a category of three small companies and another category of four large companies. Small companies are defined here as those with fewer than 250 employees.

Company size / **Drivers**	Small companies (n=3)	Large companies (n=4)	**n = number of companies**
Knowledge and Training	0	0	n=0
Economic	3	2	n=5
Employee initiatives	0	1	n=1
Organisational	3	3	n=6
Pressure	2	4	n=6
Regulation	1	4	n=5
Reputation	2	2	n=4
Risk management	0	1	n=1
Social and Environmental	1	0	n=1

FIGURE 9: Links between the drivers and the size of the company

Following this, a graph was designed (Figure 10). Since the number of companies in the two categories is not equal, the data was reported in percentages, which makes it easier to detect the most impactful drivers for these two types of companies.

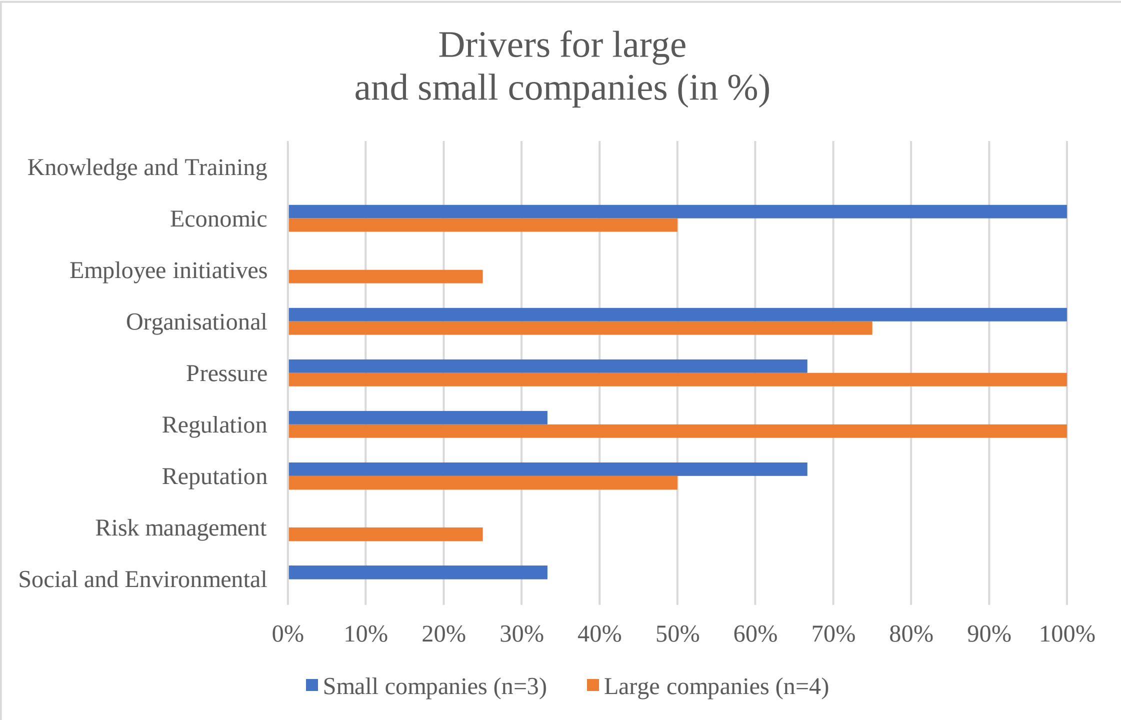

FIGURE 10: Drivers according to large and small companies

Two graphs have been created separately in order to more clearly visualize which drivers for small or large companies are considered (Appendix D).

The results for each driver are mostly noteworthy. First of all, some concerns are more related to large companies, such as risk management and regulation. Next, it is suggested from these results and from previous analyses that reputation is almost as important for large companies as for small ones. A similar statement can be made for the organizational driver, considering that employee initiatives are indirectly part of it. The economic factor, however, seems to be more regarded by small companies. These results can be supported by the fact that the financial aspect is more preoccupying for small companies than for large ones. Indeed, they have less financial stability, which makes them more vulnerable and more affected by economic variations in general (Pillu & Zlotowski, 2014). Then, social and environmental identity is a driver that is also more related to small businesses.

Finally, pressure does not display a massive difference depending on the size of the company, but it is still notable. While large companies all mention customer pressure as one of the elements to be considered in terms of sustainable sourcing decisions, this is the case for 2/3 of small companies. Taking into account both the data in the figures and the interviews, it can be argued that small companies are often less likely to feel the pressure variable. Following the same logic as above, based on the interviewees' statements, it is suggested that small companies do talk about pressure but do not experience it as much as large companies. Consequently, it is assumed that companies that most regard the driver of pressure from ethical consumers and customers are the large companies.

These results are of particular interest as several reasons can explain and support them. Among the reasons, it is claimed that consumers trust small companies more and expect less from them in terms of sustainable practices (Green & Peloza, 2014). On this basis that consumers have higher expectations of CSR commitment from large companies, it is assumed that they also put more pressure on these large companies. This may make the latter feel more pressure than smaller companies.

This can also be further analyzed by combining the pressure results from the last graph (Figure 10) with those from the previous graph (Figure 8). Indeed, the company that does not consider pressure as a driver in these two graphs is both in category 1, being a company that has integrated sustainable practices since the beginning, and in the small company category. As a result, it could be said that the pressure driver is considered by all types of companies, except for those that are small and sustainable since the creation of their company. In fact, following the explanations and analyses outlined above, it is all the more relevant to approach this from a different angle. It is therefore argued that large companies that have been sustainable for a relatively short period of time - less than 5 years - are the most likely to include the pressure driver in their sustainable sourcing decisions.

Finally, it is stated that in order to gain a better understanding of the drivers, only two characteristics - the moment of sustainability integration and the size of the company - have been retained here. This choice was motivated by relevance, but other characteristics could have been analyzed. For example, further attributes on the companies or on the people interviewed, such as their functions in the company or the number of years they have been working there.

4.2 Links with the considerations of purchasing intentions and behavior

In line with the above conclusion, a new link is made between the moment of sustainability integration and companies' considerations regarding the purchasing intentions and behaviour of ethical consumers when making sourcing decisions. Following the results of Figures 4 and 5 and in order to go further in trying to understand better the choice of companies' considerations, companies have been classified into the previously mentioned three categories of sustainability integration moment (Figure 11). Besides, it was not deemed relevant to compare these considerations to company size in this case.

The moment of sustainability integration / **Considerations**	Sustainable from the start (n=1)	Sustainable for more than 5 years (n=2)	Sustainable for less than 5 years (n=4)	**n = number of compa-nies**
Consideration of purchasing intentions	0	0	3	n=3
Consideration of purchasing behaviour	0	0	0	n=0
General consideration of meeting consumers' expectations	0	1	1	n=2

FIGURE 11: Links between the different considerations and the moment of sustainability integration

Once again for the sake of clarity, a graph has been created to visualize the distinction between the considerations according to the three categories of companies (Figure 12), in the same order as the table in Figure 11 and in the same format as the graph in Figure 5.

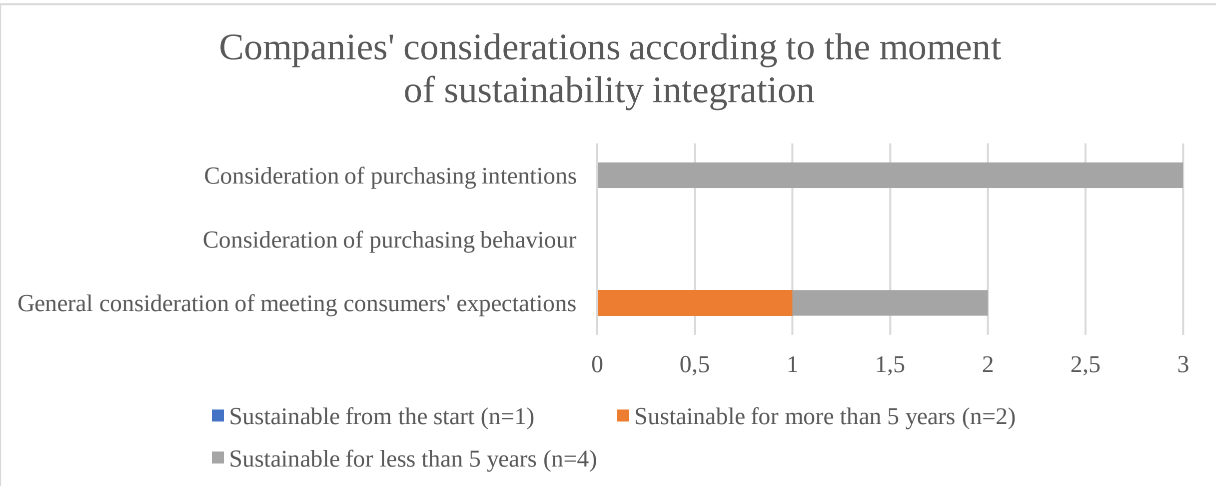

FIGURE 12: Companies' considerations according to the moment of sustainability integration

Looking at these two figures (11 and 12), it can be noticed that all the companies that consider consumers' intentions (n=3) are companies from category 3, which have been sustainable for less than 5 years. In addition, in these three rows of considerations - i.e. purchasing intentions and general considerations with regard to relevance - all companies from category 3 are included. This implies that those companies that have integrated sustainable practices for a relatively short period of time all mention considerations related to ethical consumers.

These results appear to be consistent with the previous finding that category 3 companies are the most sensitive to the pressure driver. Indeed, those companies that consider more ethical consumer and customer pressure in their sourcing decisions are also the companies that take into account ethical consumer considerations, and more precisely their purchasing intentions.

5. The role of consumers

5.1 The importance of the role of consumers

This section is built on the importance of the role of consumers broadly as well as ethical consumers. It can be stated that all the companies interviewed perceive that consumers have an important role to play in having a real impact on companies. For Verdy (2021), consumers have a central role in business decision-making, they even form its basis. She illustrates this by using the example of a new product that has just been released, and explains that this product has been tested with consumers and has gone through market research to measure consumer interest in the product. If consumers are not interested in the product, the company will decide not to release it (Verdy, 2021).

According to Audoin (2021), the consideration of consumers and the impact they have depend on the company. At Company Y, consumers are actively considered in terms of their opinions, mainly through market research to identify current consumer trends. These trends drive the evolution of companies' strategies. They are analyzed regularly because consumer habits can change very quickly and even more with digital technology. Besides, according to him, NGOs are part of the actors who have the most impact on companies, more than consumers. Nevertheless, he specifies that NGOs partly reflect what consumers want. This is in line with the previous point that the pressure from retailers is somehow indirectly a pressure from consumers. (Audoin, 2021)

As consumers, our role can be important in many respects. Seymus (2021) mentions not buying a certain product - and thereby boycotting it - as a consequential step. Bebronne (2021) also refers to "*consommacteurs*" who are a group of people making consumption choices that are considered as political acts. Indeed, consumers can take a proactive stance, for example by choosing to stop shopping in supermarkets (Audoin, 2021). According to Audoin (2021), these are non-negligible acts because retailers and/or companies can notice and feel it. He says that the model of large supermarkets is in decline; this is therefore related to consumer choices.

Somja (2021) states that ultimately consumers are the real decision makers because they are the ones showing the trends. They are also the ones deciding whether products will be purchased. She points out that the supply will always depend on the demand, and therefore on the economic opportunities of each product. She illustrates it: "for example, if we look at the meat production sector, if consumers continue to buy meat, why would farmers stop mass-producing and not caring about animal welfare?". Consequently, ethical consumers have a powerful role to play in corporate decision-making processes by making companies feel the types of products they no longer want. Noesen (2021) emphasizes that the fact that consumers are motivated to undertake social and/or environmental changes, such as changing the way their consumption habits, is historic. He adds that "the stronger the will of the consumer, the more companies will go in that direction".

However, according to some respondents such as Bebronne (2021), consumers are not aware of the impact they have or can have. He claims that if they were really conscious of the influence they can have on companies, they could make a difference. Hence, it is suggested that consumers should be more educated to be more mindful of their influence. For Company X (2021), the role of consumers can be important as long as they are well informed. That enables them to make good decisions both at the time of purchase and afterwards. The fact that consumers are not well informed is a recurring issue and will be discussed in the next section.

5.2 The misinformation and the education of consumers

Consumers are often not well informed for a number of reasons. This may be for personal reasons - such as not having the desire or taking the time to inform themselves further - or for contextual reasons that made them not (well) informed. Even for consumers who want to learn about sustainable issues, it is challenging to understand everything and make the right decisions, as there is plenty of information.

The difficulty for consumers to understand the flood of data around us can be explained by several factors. For instance, labels are a complex matter because, on the one hand, they provide valuable information about products, but, on the other hand, the number of existing labels is such that confusion is frequent. According to Audoin (2021), consumers are lost and cannot really explain what is behind the labels, even for the recognized ones like Fairtrade. He says that consumers are getting informed and have a will to bring about change, but they are often confused. Their willingness is not translated into a real awareness of what each label stands for, and this also applies to ethical consumers (Audoin, 2021).

What is even more difficult for consumers to comprehend is determining which companies are inherently sustainable and which are not. Indeed, while some companies are truly responsible and committed, others make the minimum effort due to lack of capacity, time, resources, energy or desire. They will simply look for the simplest solution to have a label on their products on the sole criterion of having the cheapest possible ethical solution, without caring about the real impact that it has on the field. Hence, it is also through all these less visible sides of the iceberg that consumers are confused. (Audoin, 2021)

Similarly, there is a lack of awareness regarding the eco-scores on products in supermarkets, or regarding what is sustainable and what is not, such as recycled plastic bottles that consume less energy than glass bottles (Company X, 2021). This requires some understanding of what all these indicators represent, as well as the whole life cycle of products (Company X, 2021). Seymus (2021) supports this last point by questioning the focus of ethical consumers, wondering whether the whole process of product sustainability is really taken into account.

Additionally, Audoin (2021) mentions that consumers are also misled by biases and prejudices. First of all, consumers question luxury products much less. He gives as an example a consumer who purchases his chocolate at 150 euros per kilo in a luxury shop. He is much less likely to question the ethics behind this brand than a cheap one from a supermarket. Consumers often look down on supermarkets and can be misled by this, thinking for example that bread from a bakery will be far more ethical and non-chemical than bread from a supermarket when this is not always the case. Secondly, some consumer research demonstrates that when consumers test two similar products and are told that one is ethical and the other is not, they say they prefer the ethical one. This also proves that they are influenced by preconceptions and biases, which are not easy to fight (Audoin, 2021).

In addition, consumers are also influenced by advertising, the - often voluntary - highlighting of such information (to hide others) and by the general consumer society (Somja, 2021). As mentioned above, consumers sometimes think they are making the right sustainability decision when this is not the case (Somja, 2021), they are actually being pushed into thinking that way.

According to Company X, it is not simple as a consumer to form an opinion because of the amount of information we receive, but also because it can sometimes be contradictory. This challenge is based on two solutions: on the one hand, consumers have to make the choice to be well informed - and therefore to understand and sort out the information they receive - and on the other hand, companies have a role to play in the education of consumers (Company X, 2021).

Companies may decide to take a proactive stance in trying to educate and influence consumers. This is one of the goals of Company X, which says that as one of the largest food industry groups, they want to move consumers in the direction of sustainability. One way of achieving this is by highlighting on a product that it complies with specific CSR charters. Some companies also communicate on the post-purchase phase by reminding consumers to recycle the purchased product . Company X claim that this proactive approach helps to save time and will accelerate ethical purchasing decisions. Because ultimately, if companies offer more sustainable products but consumers are not informed enough, they will not buy these products. (Company X, 2021)

Transparency is a useful tool to tackle misinformation, but it is a complex subject to handle with care. Indeed, especially for large groups, transparency can be associated with greenwashing or, as Company X says, with commercial purposes in order to sell and not to educate. A solution they have found to address this issue is to form associations with their suppliers and customers to discuss how to communicate and improve educational messages. Company X believes that all businesses can make a difference by contributing to the education of consumers.

5.3 Discussion about the role of consumers

First, a distinction is made between the importance of consumers and the pressure they put on companies. In fact, it is combinable for companies to say that - ethical or not - consumers are highly significant and that they are taken into account in various decision-making processes, but that they do not feel the pressure they exert. The role of ethical consumers is therefore different if companies only decide to consider them, e.g. through their purchase intentions, or if they feel pressure from them. It is suggested that feeling the pressure from ethical consumers is more compelling than simply taking their expectations into account.

Critically, and in relation to section 2 which analyzes the integration of ethical consumer expectations, it can be confusing to observe that while companies consider the role of consumers to be crucial, impactful and part of the basis of their decisions, in practice they do not specifically integrate it into their concrete sourcing decisions to this extent. Indeed, apart from animal welfare which can be considered to be correlated with ethical consumers, companies do not seem to directly incorporate their role on a practical level. Even for companies that claim that the role of the consumer is very important, some of them have previously said that consumers are not much of a consideration in their decision-making processes because they are sustainable for other reasons. This can be explained by several factors.

First of all, this can be explained purely by the distinction drawn up here between the importance and the pressure of consumers. In this case, some companies say that consumers are important, but since they do not feel pressure from them, they do not consider them in their sourcing decisions. However, it was found that six out of seven companies mentioned pressure as one of their drivers. The explanation seems to lie in the distinction between pressure from retailers and consumers. Indeed, if we refer to the data of the companies for which pressure is the most important, i.e. the large companies that are sustainable since quite recently, they feel more pressure from other actors, mainly their retailer, than from ethical consumers. As mentioned earlier, pressure from retailers can be seen as indirect pressure from ethical consumers in some cases. However, the questions in section 2 related to concrete sourcing actions only concerned consumers and not retailers, which may be a potential and partial explanation for this confusion. It is reminded that this is deliberate as this work has decided to measure the impact of consumers directly on companies.

In connection with this, it can be considered quite normal that the interviewed companies do not feel so much pressure from consumers. Indeed, 6 out of 7 companies work through retailers here. These six companies have mainly indirect contact with consumers while the retailers have direct contact with consumers. Nevertheless, nowadays many companies are active on social networks. This is a counter-example that shows that companies can still have some direct contact with consumers, but this topic is not further discussed as it is a topic on its own that deserves further research.

Secondly, the question about role and importance was asked about consumers, and therefore about all consumers, not just ethical consumers. The purpose was to be able to detect the importance of consumers in general in the opinion of companies. It is then suggested that the role of ethical consumers, being a part of all consumers, also have an important role or not - depending on the results - to play even if it is on a smaller scale. Nonetheless, it is conceivable that companies are making a greater distinction between the impact of this ethical segment of consumers and other "regular" consumers.

Then, there may also be a conscious or unconscious mechanism by which companies do not feel that they are so dependent on consumers. They just consider that in general consumers are very important but not especially in their case. Indeed, since it is not quantifiable to incorporate consumer concerns, it can be complicated for companies to realize it. Also, as saying that they are responding to consumer pressure is not very empowering and rewarding, some prefer to say that the role of consumers is not at the heart of their reasons for being sustainable but rather secondary. The fact that some companies mention examples of other companies responding to consumer pressure may indicate that they feel that direct consideration of ethical consumers is more for other companies.

All of these factors are non-exhaustive and should be further studied to better comprehend the difference between the importance given to the role of consumers and the weak integration in practice of ethical consumer expectations in their sourcing decision processes.

V. Conclusion

Ethical concerns of consumers are increasing, and this phenomenon is perceived by all companies. The local dimension has become very important for consumers, especially since the Covid-19 health crisis. Despite this, it is observed that consumers' claims are not consistently translated into action. This observation is represented by the gap between consumers' intentions and actual ethical purchasing behaviour, which is well documented in the literature. This gap is effectively felt by companies but it is difficult for them to measure the purchasing intentions and behaviour of ethical consumers. The complexity of identifying exactly which segment of consumers are ethical and whether sustainable products are purchased by them makes it harder to measure. The common measure used by companies - to determine both intentions and purchasing behaviour - is consumer market research.

Regarding the consideration of purchasing intentions or behaviour in their sourcing decisions, some companies did not answer the question, but the other ones gave more importance to purchasing intentions than to the actual behaviour of consumers. Intentions are indeed more comprehensive and representative of long-term market trends as they express the expectations of ethical consumers. The findings also indicated that companies that take into account consumer purchasing intentions are the companies that have been integrating sustainable considerations for a relatively short period of time, i.e. less than five years. This is probably because those companies feel more consumer pressure.

This is in line with other findings showing that the companies that most often mention consumer and customer pressure as a main driver for integrating sustainable practices into their sourcing decisions are also the companies that have recently become sustainable. Furthermore, it was found that another variable explaining the customer pressure driver is the size of the company. Large companies - with more than 250 employees - are the ones experiencing the most pressure from their customers. The term customer is applied here to include also retailers, who represent the majority of the customers of the interviewed companies. Pressure from end consumers is often only indirect. To resume, companies that have been sustainable for a relatively short period of time are the ones that integrate the pressure and the intentions of ethical consumers the most. In particular, large companies are most likely to feel the pressure.

With regard to concrete actions, very few are undertaken with the aim of truly meeting ethical consumer expectations as it is difficult to determine for companies. However, this may be the case for animal welfare. Nevertheless, companies feel more concern for social or environmental issues depending on the type of products they sell. Companies with international suppliers, such as in the chocolate industry, are more likely to pay attention to social issues as working conditions are known to be more critical than for local or European workers. However, an area where ethical consumers are bound to have an impact is transparency. The demand for transparency has increased in recent years and companies are therefore undertaking many initiatives ranging from information on packaging to company visits or even communication on social networks. This is particularly relevant because the literature shows that transparency leads companies to increase monitoring, acquire multiple certifications and labels, which ultimately leads them to be more sustainable in their sourcing practices.

There are several potential factors that may explain why companies do not act directly to meet the expectations of ethical consumers. The fact that most companies do not feel direct pressure from consumers is probably the most plausible explanation. Nevertheless, companies all claimed that consumers - in general - can have a lot of impact and can play a key role in sourcing decisions, to a greater or lesser extent depending on the company. As the final decision makers in the purchase of their products, consumers are at the heart of their considerations. Ethical consumers are therefore also taken into account, on a smaller scale as they are a sub-segment of the total consumer base, but they have significant and growing purchasing power.

In order to increase the influence that ethical consumers can have on companies and more specifically on their sourcing decisions, consumer education is of great interest. Indeed, creating awareness on sustainable issues and the benefits of responsible consumption among consumers is beneficial in several ways. On the one hand, it will make them more aware of the current sustainable issues that are taking place throughout the supply chain. It will also allow them to increase the impact they have on companies if they are fully conscious of the strength of their purchasing power. It is also suggested that educating consumers could make them feel the usefulness of responsible consumption and ideally help to close the gap as their intentions would translate into more ethical purchasing behaviour. On the other hand, companies would perceive a growing pressure to change their social and environmental sourcing practices.

Implications

This research has managerial implications but has the particularity of having important implications for consumers as well. Firstly, the results may help companies to gain insight into the subject of the intention-behaviour gap. This research allows them to see more clearly what they are taking into account between purchase intentions and actual consumer buying behaviour, allowing them to possibly reprioritize or change their strategy in terms of consumer market research. These findings also imply an increased awareness of the different drivers, including pressure from customers, that influence the sourcing decision process of companies. It can also particularly enable large companies that have been sustainable for a relatively short period of time to further explore the pressure they feel, the interest they have in it as well as the responses they provide today and will provide tomorrow. It is also interesting for the other companies to measure the priority of their drivers, to look at their evolution since the beginning of their sustainable considerations and to determine the direction they want to take in the future.

Above all, businesses have a powerful role to play in educating consumers. Indeed, this is supported by previous studies, such as Egels-Zandén and Hansson (2015) who say that transparency is first of all of great importance to inform consumers. They also say that companies that really want to be involved in consumer education can go even further than disclosing information, such as being more interactive with consumers via digital communication platforms (Egels-Zandén & Hansson, 2015). In addition, the study by Guo et al. (2016) proposes that companies engage in consumer education campaigns to raise their awareness on social and environmental issues. Companies are therefore among the actors who can empower consumers to be better informed, enabling them to make the most appropriate purchasing choices and to become themselves actors of change in terms of sustainability issues and more specifically in terms of sourcing practices.

In addition to this, this study proposes implications for consumers. The fact that they play a central role for companies was supported by this study and confirms other studies such as Kannan's (2021) which states that consumer demands for sustainable products "plays a vital role for the focal organisation regarding investing and implementing sustainable procurement practices". It is therefore essential to make them aware of their significance, and for this purpose three major recommendations are made to consumers. Those are aimed at empowering consumers to become more aware of the impact, usefulness and influence they can have.

The first one is to inform themselves as best as they can. The main advice is to fully understand what they are buying; both what labels or scores on products actually represent, as well as the carbon footprint of the entire product life cycle. This overall understanding is crucial to avoid confusion and to make thoughtful and impactful purchasing decisions.

The second recommendation is based on the questioning of companies. It was concluded that companies find consumers essential and important in their decision-making, yet they do not feel pressure from them. It is therefore suggested that consumers approach companies directly, not just retailers, if they have questions or comments about their sourcing practices, for example through social media. This could have a lot of effect on making companies question their sourcing practices as well. Indeed, as Iranpour and Rosenstand (2020) state "consumers' opinion about a business and its products has always been a crucial part of maintaining and growing trustworthiness of businesses". Furthermore, since they are considered and listened to when sharing their sustainable intentions with companies, consumers should not hesitate to clearly show their intentions to buy sustainable products even if, for various reasons, they do not always translate into actual sustainable purchases. Moreover, even if pressure has more effect on companies that are recently sustainable, it is suggested that consumers also have a role - albeit a more subtle one - in creating impact on all companies.

Regarding the third recommendation, it is based on taking action. Consumers can decide to take concrete and responsible actions by deciding to purchase - or not - some sustainable - or unsustainable - products. This is in line with the concept of the "*consommacteur*" who is "a consumer who reappropriates the act of consumption by using his/her purchasing power to protect the values and causes he/she defends" (Gordon et al., 2019). This is therefore a reflection of the actual ethical purchasing behaviour, which is more likely to be directed towards eco-responsible or socially responsible alternatives.

A clarification is made regarding the fact that these recommendations are made to consumers in a broad sense and not only to ethical consumers. Indeed, they concern all consumers as it is everyone's responsibility to become more informed and to express what they no longer want and what they want to consume. Each consumer can address these recommendations on an ongoing or occasional basis, as well as according to their priorities. This means that some may be more concerned about working conditions, the way animals are treated or the carbon footprint of suppliers. If every consumer who feels concerned about one or more of these societal issues decided to act, the impact on our consumer society would be monumental.

Indeed, the impact as a group of ethical consumers will be even more useful than the individual impacts alone.

Limitations

This research is of particular interest because the role of consumers alone has not yet been measured regarding the impact they may have on the sustainable sourcing practices of companies, particularly by considering their purchasing intentions and behaviors. These findings can therefore be used for future research, but they also have some limitations.

The first limitation identified is that the reasons why companies decide to be more sustainable in their sourcing decisions are not quantifiable or verifiable. It is not possible to state whether this was the case for this study, but it seems possible that - to maintain their reputation - companies would rather claim to be sustainable for organisational reasons than for reasons of consumer pressure. As stated at the beginning of the literature review, some companies are intrinsically ethical, while others are extrinsically ethical in order to please consumers (Folkes & Kamins, 1999). Companies will therefore rarely state themselves as being extrinsically ethical. Another related limitation is that companies whose only driver for sustainability is consumer pressure are unlikely to agree to be interviewed for reputational reasons. To address this limitation, future research could include an anonymous questionnaire with the same questions.

Secondly, further research can be conducted on the impact of retailers on businesses in a complementary way. Specifically, it could study the pressure of ethical consumers felt by retailers and indirectly by companies. In other words, it would be relevant to study to what extent the pressure from retailers felt by companies comes indirectly from consumers. This could be done separately for B2C companies, B2B companies or companies that do both in order to analyze the different types of pressure felt.

Furthermore, the matrix tables are based on characteristics of companies by dividing them into several categories. Hence, the number of companies per category may not be sufficient. Future research could compare these results with a larger number of interviews. Moreover, it was suggested that the tendency of larger companies to feel more consumer pressure could come from the fact that consumers have less expectations for small companies, but this could also be further investigated.

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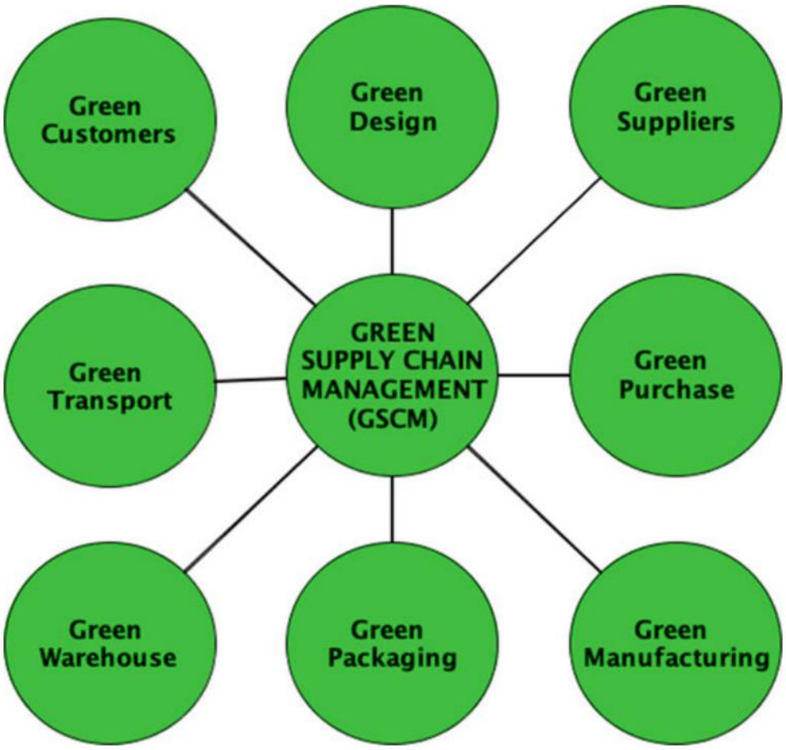
Appendices

Appendix A. Green Supply Chain Management



Source : Fritz, 2019

Appendix B. Linkages between SSCM and the SDGs

SDG	Link with SSCM
1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere	Ensure social protection systems are in place and minimum salary is given for all employees along the supply chain Build partnership with local organizations to support vulnerable groups
2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture	Develop and use management systems to ensure food security in the food supply chains Source locally while respecting local populations' needs (e.g., access to water)
3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	Use Health and Safety Management systems all along the supply chain Elevate the standards for health and safety and work conditions along the supply chain (e.g., in developing economies, in partnership with local government institutions and employee representatives)
4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	Participate in the creation of schools where these are lacking Participate in the development of transport services to bring children to school (e.g., road building) Propose lifelong learning programs to employees along the supply chain
5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	Highlight the female skills needed for SSCM to attract more women in these positions
6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	Use/develop integrated water resources management systems (e.g., reduce water consumption, ensure proper water treatment) Develop access to water for locals where needed Educate employees on water use along the supply chain
7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all	Use/develop energy management systems (e.g., save energy where possible, reduce the impact of transport, adapt production technologies)
8. Promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all	Hire local people Ensure fair remuneration according to international and local standards Audit sites and suppliers on working conditions
9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and foster innovation	Share resources (e.g., databases, R&D expenses) Cooperate with supply chain partners to foster innovation
10. Reduce inequality within and among countries	Support the development of fair remuneration practices along the supply chain Develop codes of conducts, charts for all supply chain members
11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable	Participate in urban planning discussions and meetings with local authorities to increase access to safe and affordable housing for employees along the supply chain
12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	Develop SSCM practices not only in developed economies where awareness is high but also in developing economies
13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	Make transportation more efficient
14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development	Use bargaining power to change practices (e.g., responsible fishing to be a criteria to select suppliers)
15. Protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss	Source responsibly, use responsible purchasing norms (e.g., ISO 20400)
16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels	Develop and implement codes of ethics Ensure freedom of speech in case of injustice (e.g., whistleblowing system)
17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development	Engage with stakeholders Build public-private partnerships when applicable Develop/strengthen industry standards for sustainability practices

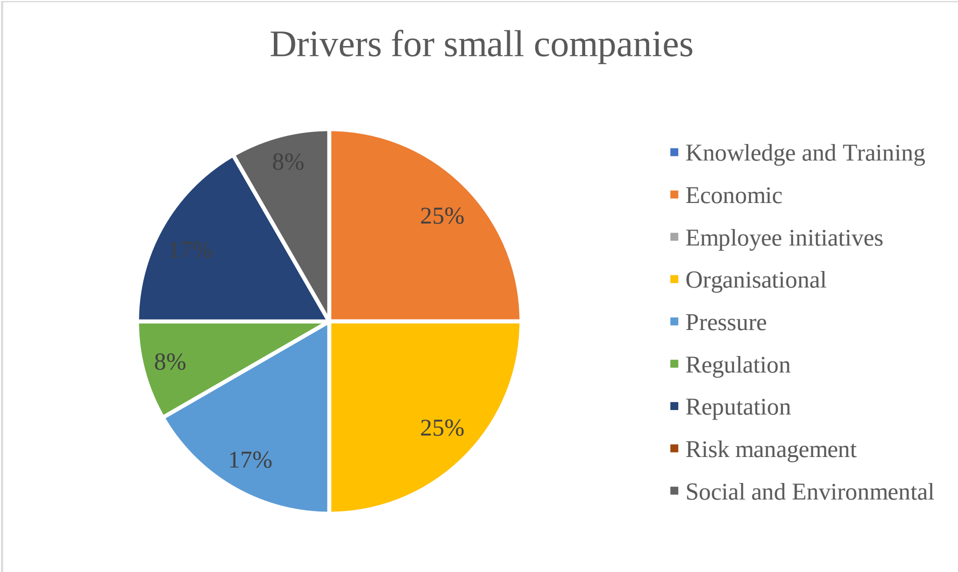
Source : Fritz (2019)

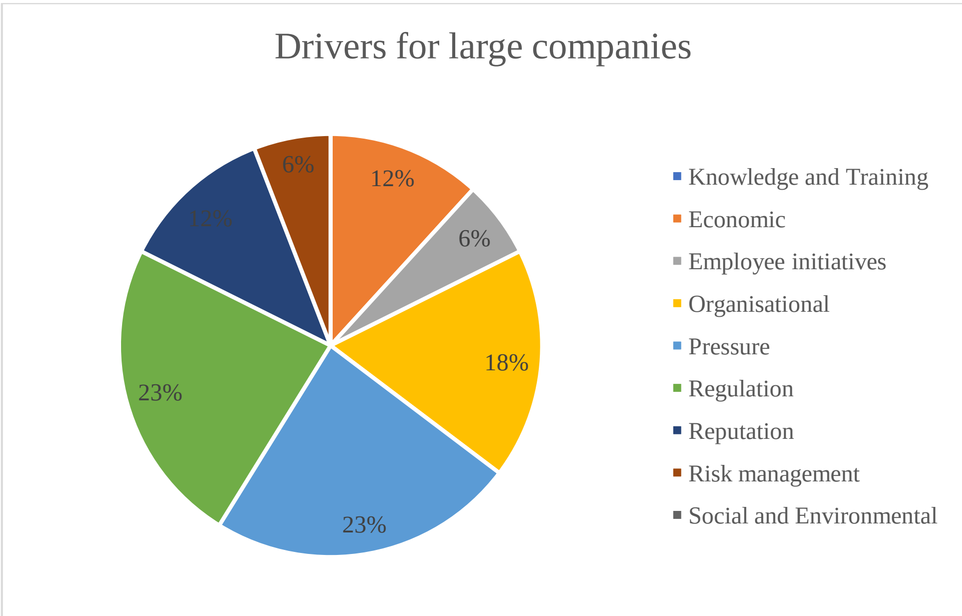
Appendix C. Terminology Identified in the Literature

Terminology	Paper(s)	Definition
Sustainable Supply Chain Management (SSCM)	• Carter & Rogers (2008) • Carter & Easton (2011)	The strategic, transparent integration and achievement of an organisation's social, environmental, and economic goals in the systemic coordination of key inter-organisational business processes for improving the long term economic performance of the individual company and its supply chains.
	• Seuring & Muller (2008a) • Seuring & Muller (2008b)	The management of material, information and capital flows as well as cooperation among companies along the supply chain while taking goals from all three dimensions of sustainable development, i.e., economic, environmental and social, into account which are derived from customer and stakeholder requirements.
	• Krause *et al.* (2009)	*Not provided*
Responsible supply chain management	• Amaeshi *et al.* (2008)	*Not provided*
Logistics Social Responsibility (LSR)	• Carter & Jennings (2002) • Ciliberti *et al.* (2008b)	The socially responsible management of logistics activities, which encompass supply, transportation and warehousing issues.
Socially Responsible Supply Chain Orientation (SRSCO)	• Park-Poaps & Rees (2010)	A proactive labour management concept that encompasses normative and behavioural cores of organisational culture and buyer-seller working partnership throughout the entire supply chain.
Sustainable sourcing	• Pagell *et al.* (2010)	Managing all aspects of the upstream component of the supply chain to maximise triple bottom line performance.
	• Ageron *et al.* (2011)	*Not provided*
Sustainable supply management	• Koplin *et al.* (2007)	Integration of environmental and social standards into supply policy and management.
	• Krause *et al.* (2009)	*Not provided*
	• Ageron *et al.* (2011)	*Not provided*
Purchasing Social Responsibility (PSR)	• Carter & Jennings (2004) • Carter (2004) • Ciliberti *et al.* (2008b)	Purchasing activities that meet the ethical and discretionary responsibilities expected by society.
	• Maloni & Brown (2006)	*Not provided*
Ethical sourcing	• Roberts (2003) • Johnson (2004) • Preuss (2009) • Baden *et al.* (2009)	*Not provided – but referring to both green and social issues in sourcing decisions.*
Socially Responsible Buying (SRB)	• Maignan *et al.* (2002)	The inclusion in purchasing decisions of the social issues advocated by organisational stakeholders.
	• Harwood & Humby (2008)	*Not provided*
Socially Responsible Buying / Sourcing (SRB)	• Park (2005)	A system-wide consideration of causes and impacts of the buying / sourcing decisions on all constituents of society.
Socially responsible purchasing	• Leire & Mont (2010)	The utilisation of the purchasing power of public and private organisations to purchase products, works and services that have a positive social impact.
Supplier socially responsible practices	• Awaysheh & Klassen (2010)	Encompasses all management practices that affect how a firm contributes to the development of human potential and protects people from harm.
Socially responsible supply management	• Koplin *et al.* (2007)	*Not provided – but referring to social issues in sourcing decisions.*
Socially and Environmentally Responsible Procurement (SERP)	• Hoejmose & Adrien-Kirby (2012)	*Not provided – but referring to social and environmental issues in sourcing decisions.*

Source : Zorzini, Hendry, Huq & Stevenson, 2015

Appendix D. Drivers for small and large companies





Appendix E. Questionnaire

Personal presentation

1) Can you please briefly introduce yourself: name, position in the company, daily tasks, how long have you been working there?

Company presentation

2) Can you briefly describe the company? Is it part of a larger group? What is its mission and vision?

3) How many years ago did the company start integrating ethical and CSR-related measures? What is the company's CSR strategy?

Sourcing decisions

4) Do you feel that consumers' ethical concerns are increasing, and that their expectations towards companies are growing in terms of environmental and social solutions?

5) Consumers' ethical purchasing intentions and behaviors:

Are you familiar with the concepts of ethical intentions of consumers and of ethical purchasing behaviour ? How do you measure it?

Does the difference between the ethical intentions of consumers (who say they want to pay more for more ethical products/services) and those who actually engage in ethical purchasing behavior impact you? What is more important to you between these two variables and which one do you take into account when making social and environmental sourcing decisions?

6) Concrete actions: what have you done or are you doing to change (in your sourcing decision process) to take into account the expectations of ethical consumers?

    - Ethical codes of conduct and ethical standards?

    - Audits?

    - Supplier reporting?

    - Supplier development through supplier training and education?

- Other supplier development?

- Trust?

- Other?

6.1) What social and environmental issues are you addressing in your sourcing decisions as a result of ethical consumer concerns?

Social issues:

- Human rights (equal rights for all)

- Working conditions (such as child and forced labor, discipline, working hours and freedom of association)

- Safety (provision of safe working environments for suppliers, regular health and safety training for employees)

- Community (includes charitable initiatives or economic development, such as using local suppliers)

- Diversity (purchasing from minority/women-owned businesses)

- Inclusion of people with disabilities / marginalized

- Ethics (ethical behavior in sourcing decisions, including purchases through the fair trade movement)

- Respect for local democratic institutions

- Animal welfare issues

- Other?

Environmental issues:

- Energy consumption

- Water consumption / Water recycling

- Waste treatment

- Air pollution

- Biodiversity

- Emissions

- Other?

7) Is transparency part of the decisions made to meet consumer expectations? What are you doing concretely in terms of transparency currently and how has it evolved as a result of consumers' ethical considerations?

8) Are your consumers more demanding in terms of social or environmental concerns? What is the impact on your procurement decisions? Do you react in a proportional way ?

9) Considering the many reasons/drivers for integrating social and environmental criteria into sourcing decisions, how would you rank them or which ones are important to you?

   - Knowledge and training (sustainability-related training programs, awareness and knowledge building)

   - Economic (business benefits, competitive advantage)

   - Social and environmental (pro-environmental and positive attitude towards sustainable/green products, personal values, trust in suppliers, environmental commitment, supplier sustainable initiatives, green motivations).

   - Organizational (active leadership, core business preference for sustainability goals, sustainable organizational culture, middle management support, compliance with contracts, organizational requirements and international standards, availability of product suppliers, supplier quality)

   - Employee initiatives

   - Regulations and legislation

   - Reputation

   - Risk management

   - Pressure (customer pressure/demand, competitor pressure)

   - Other?

10) How important is the role of consumers regarding the impact they have on food businesses?