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Abstract

The aim of this study is to analyze how companies are dealing with the concept of sustainability and how their operations according to the sustainability challenges are implemented within the paper industry.

Moreover, the sub-problems of this study will examine the following aspects:

- What is context of corporate sustainability?
- How is corporate sustainability related to value creation?

These research problems are mirrored into a theoretical framework, which in turn consists of several theories, such as sustainable development, management of sustainability and the value chain. The applied research methodology is constructed on a qualitative basis, using a dual case study approach, aiming at describing a real-life context. The two case companies that passed the pre-selection requirements were selected, namely Stora Enso Oyj and UPM-Kymmene Oyj. The data was gathered from publicly available resources, from the respective company reports and through one-on-one interviews.

The main outcomes include the conclusion that sustainable development can be regarded as a concept, targeting at avoiding compromises in terms of future value generation potential. However, there is no legal definition for sustainable development, and the interpretation in terms context and scope of this issue varies broadly. Similarly, corporate sustainability is a complex issue and cannot be addressed by any single corporate action. Both concepts, i.e. sustainable development and corporate sustainability, are congruently divided into three dimensions, based on the issues of economical, environmental and social aspects. Keeping that classification in mind, the implementation of a strategy for becoming a sustainable company requires the adoption of policies and actions into all operative areas inside and outside organizational boundaries, implying a broad set of managerial challenges. Furthermore, this study resulted in the conclusion that both case companies can be seen as sustainable companies, as the way they operate can be regarded as sustainable in terms of several characteristics. Based on these indicators, the evaluation and interpretation of the conducted case studies shows in particular, that the studied firms take all the three dimensions of corporate sustainability into consideration, and based on these have implemented sustainability throughout their entire organizations.

Key words	Sustainable development, corporate sustainability, social responsibility, Finnish paper industry
Further information	

