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**“Sustainable development:
The case of Sky Ocean Ventures – Ambienta Sgr”**

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INTRODUCTION

Nowadays Corporate Social Responsibility, CSR, has a central importance. The actual economic crisis represents a good opportunity for organizations to demonstrate their commitment to social and environmental challenges, also toward the potential economic benefits they could get.

CSR increases enterprises' sustainability, which is the key element for its continuous growth. In order to efficiently apply CSR in its own business, the company management has to protect the real sense of this concept, to achieve an operational plan for the integration of the main principles inside of the company.

A right comprehension of the “sustainability” concept – intended from one hand as a shared answer to the “question” concerning how to activate an economic development in line with ethic values, and from the other one as an identification of the economics' ethics purpose- constitutes a solution to the dysfunction connected to the globalization process. The first chapter considered the concept of sustainability is linked to the compatibility between the development of economic activities and the preservation of the environment.

The second chapter proposed by the plastic understood as pollution has become, over the years, one of the greatest problems of the environment, especially with regard to marine life. In the third chapter, Sky company adopt sustainable ways of acting starting from the bottoms, chasing simultaneously three goals: social equity, environmental quality and economic boom. Sky Ocean Ventures and Ambienta SGR join forces against single-use plastic. The investment fund launched by Sky to address the ocean plastic crisis and the largest European fund focused on investing in sustainable industry, announce they have signed an agreement aimed at identifying high-impact investments in all those areas involved in the production and use of plastic for a more efficient and environmentally sustainable value chain.

Sustainability is a concept linked to a process finalized to the achievement of goals including environmental, economic, social and institutional improvement, both at the local and global level. Furthermore, this process sets also the goal to satisfy the needs of the actual generation without compromising the satisfaction of the needs belonging to the future ones.

CHAPTER I – Corporate Social Responsibility

Summary:

1.1 The concept of responsibility and sustainable development.

1.2 The definition of Corporate Social Responsibility.

1.3 The Regulatory Profile: National and International Guidelines for Corporate Social Responsibility.

1.4 The role of stakeholders: characteristics and classification.

1.1 The concept of responsibility and sustainable development

The word responsibility has different meanings. One is for the fact that people are aware and free beings that one can attribute to themselves a responsibility. This implies that we must respond to the actions that are under our control. In another sense, the term responsibility expresses the concept of making an account of one's work and therefore remaining open and susceptible to the judgement of others. Liability may also be used to refer to legal liability¹.

Responsibility has at least three different meanings:

- a positive quality such as being a responsible person;
- an obligation or a duty like being invested with responsibility for something;
- an imputation or attribution and, therefore, to be responsible for a fact.

To determine the degree to which an action or its consequences can be attributed to those who perform the action, one must consider both what cognition he had or should have had as the person who performed the action, and to what degree he has consented.

The doing or not doing of an action, as an end by itself or as a tool to get something you want, is a direct voluntary action. On the contrary, we speak of indirect voluntary action when those who act can foresee the possible consequences of the action, but do not want them as direct objective². He who takes action is also

¹ S. Sciarelli, *Etica e responsabilità sociale nell'impresa*, Giuffrè, Milano, 2007, p. 68

² N. Cerana, *Comunicare la responsabilità sociale. Teorie, modelli, strumenti e casi d'eccellenza*, F. Angeli, Milano, 2004.

responsible for the consequences of the action if they can be predicted and preventable.

There are at least four basic forms of responsibility:

- act voluntarily;
- omit what you should or can do;
- promote the actions or behaviour of others;
- take part in the actions of others through intentional choices or through omissions.

Intention, objective and circumstances are the three components of “*Triple Font Theory*” of morality³. A moral judgement evaluates the morality of a decision. It is mainly directed at the evaluation of the morality of the chosen end and the action taken. Some principles and norms are also helpful in formulating moral judgments through the submission of negative duties and consequently unacceptable actions. The formulation of valid moral judgments requires, however, also practical wisdom.

In the world of work, some actions cause unwanted side effects that need to be susceptible to moral judgments insofar as they are predictable and preventable. The Company cannot operate outside an adequate social and political context. It requires political stability, efficiency, efficient public administration and also appropriate legal guarantees. The market and the laws regulating it are not sufficient, alone, to guarantee a healthy economic activity. In addition to laws and government regulations, there is the so-called "self-regulation", a sort of "soft" or transverse regulation, applied in civil society and required by ethics, which encourages cooperation, commitment and sense of belonging. Ethics offers a guideline with which to assess jointly the morality of the market, the norms of law and the demands of the company, thus stimulating the correct behaviour in the activity of the firm.

An ethics that should enter as the subject of the objective function of the agents and which, through these, should allow the market to reward the civil culture of enterprise. These conditions are built over time with the action of educational institutions, with the example of striking works, which can be, among others, acts of solidarity of great impact in public opinion, and with the propagation in society of virtuous values by the media. These are responsibilities that fall outside the economic

³G. Castellani, *Responsabilità sociale d'Impresa. Ragioni, azioni e reporting*. Maggioli, Santarcangelo di Romagna, 2015

act, which in turn should reflect and support, in turn, the dissemination of these values.

Unfortunately The Daily Chronicle reveals that similar conditions are far from occurring and that the way to confirm the "ethics of virtues" is still very long and, unfortunately, paved with good intentions. In this context, the multinational food companies must foster the awareness of the need to make social, economic and environmental demands on the community. According to the definition proposed in the report "*Our Common Future*" published in 1987 by the World Commission for the Environment and development of the United Nations Environment Programme, sustainable development is intended to:

A development able to ensure the fulfilment of the needs of the present generation without compromising the possibility of future generations to realize their own goals⁴.

The concept of sustainability, in this sense, is linked to the compatibility between the development of economic activities and the preservation of the environment. The possibility of ensuring the satisfaction of essential needs entails, therefore, the realization of an economic development that has as a main aim the respect of the environment, but at the same time it also requires the richest countries to adopt productive processes and lifestyles compatible with the ability of the biosphere to absorb the effects of human activities and developing countries grow in demographic and economic terms at rhythms compatible with the ecosystem. In identifying a satisfactory response to the impulses with which the common good is being searched, it is good to remember the economic context of reference in which the economic actors operate, which over time has widened more and more, until it reaches Global dimensions. John Paul II, in the *Centesimus Annus*, in 1991 wrote⁵:

"Today there is the so-called globalisation of the economy, a phenomenon that should not be deprecated, because it can create extraordinary opportunities for the greater good. More and more felt, however, is the need that to this growing

⁴ <http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/sostenibilita/>

⁵ Giovanni Paolo II, *Centesimus annus. Lettera enciclica nel centenario della «Rerum novarum»*, Documenti Santa Sede, EDB, Bologna, 2000.

internationalisation of the economy corresponds valid international organs of control and guidance, which direct the economy itself for the common good, which now a single State, although the most Powerful on the Earth, is not able to do”.

In order to operate in a globalised context and in increasingly virtual and less geographically identifiable markets, companies are, therefore, forced to relate to a new variable: the "complexity" that goes hand in hand with the changeability of the socio-environmental economic reference.

A possible solution to the dysfunctions linked to the processes of globalization can come from the correct understanding of the concept of "sustainability" that arises on the one hand, as a shared answer to the question about the "how" to activate a developmental respect for ethical values, the other as an identification of the end of the ethical economy. There are many definitions of sustainability, and the most convincing are the "tension towards a balance between the present and the future, between the exploitation of resources and conservation, between stationary growth and unlimited growth".

It is possible to define a firm as sustainable when it succeeds in obtaining satisfactory and stable levels of average profitability in the long term and creates lasting value for all the subjects involved or close to them, the so-called *stakeholders*.

Sustainability is a concept linked to a process aimed at achieving environmental, economic, social and institutional improvement objectives, both at local and global levels. This process, therefore, binds, in a relationship of interdependence, the protection and enhancement of natural resources to the economic, social and institutional dimension, in order to satisfy the needs of the current generations, avoiding compromising the capacity of the future to satisfy themselves.

In this sense, the sustainability of development is incompatible in the first place with the degradation of heritage and natural resources but also with the violation of human dignity and freedom, with poverty and economic decline, with the lack of recognition of rights and equal opportunities.

For these reasons, sustainability revolves around four fundamental components:

- economic sustainability: understanding as a capacity to generate income and work for the livelihood of the population;
- social sustainability: understood as a capacity to ensure equitable conditions of human well-being distributed among classes and gender;

- environmental sustainability: intended as a capacity to maintain quality and reproducibility of natural resources;
- institutional sustainability: understanding as a capacity to ensure stability, democracy, participation, justice.

In Summary, sustainable development means finding and implementing ways of change to improve and increase the quality of life, within an evolving cultural and environmental continuity. The acronym PFP has been summarised as this concept:

“Learning from the Past, to improve the Future, we invest in the Present⁶”.

⁶ G. Castellani, *Responsabilità sociale d'Impresa*, op. cit., p. 100.

1.2 The definition of Corporate Social Responsibility

The idea of the social function of property and of the company as a generator of wealth and wellbeing, not only for the individual but also for the whole community, has always permeated, at different levels and with different nuances, the Western culture.

To talk about corporate Social Responsibility, CSR, or *Corporate Social Responsibility*, CSR in English⁷, It is necessary to emphasize the importance of the words "enterprise" and "corporate" where both indicate a behaviour attributable to the business context and, although logically referable to companies, it is now known that the principles of CSR can extend, with the institutional world, the NGOS, the "not for profit" etc. The terms "liability" and "responsibility" indicate the presence of discretionary spaces in pursuing institutional purposes.

The Company and its protagonists are responsible for their own choices and are called into account for them and the results obtained. The adjectives "social" and "sociable" should not be read according to the discursive meaning of "social" but rather with a more general ethical-humanistic value; They indicate the necessity of tending towards satisfying the needs of all those who, in society, relate to the company.

In recent decades the growing interest in these issues has given rise to numerous studies and an intense international debate, currently there is not yet a unique definition of CSR: In fact there are numerous definitions that highlight its role. The first one is traced back to H.R. Bowen⁸, in 1953, according to which CSR is configured as a "duty to pursue those policies, to make those decisions, to follow those lines of action that are desirable in accordance with the objectives and values recognized by society".

A decisive contribution was offered by A.B Carroll⁹ in 1979. The definition of corporate social responsibility he proposed was that "the company's social responsibility includes the economic, legal, ethical and discretionary expectations that society has towards organizations in a given moment. According to Carroll, one had to look at the economic objective of the company but at the same time take into

⁷Ivi, p. 102

⁸V. Gentile, *Responsabilità sociale d'impresa*, in *Rivista Bancaria*, Editrice Minerva Bancaria, Milano, n. 5/6, 2010.

⁹A.B. Carroll, *Corporate Social Responsibility. Evolution of a definitional construct*. September, 1, 1999.

account the "Iron Law of Social responsibility": in the long run, if the company does not responsibly use power, it will end up losing it.

In concrete terms, Carroll identified the fundamentals of responsibility in the following cornerstones:

- economic responsibilities;
- legal responsibilities;
- ethical responsibilities;
- philanthropic responsibilities.

Starting with the listed pillars, Carroll has built and presented his model "the Pyramid of CSR".

Starting from the beginning ("economic responsibility") the problem of the company is to guarantee survival by gaining money. The Company, according to Carroll, "supervises businesses through laws and their application. But often, laws are the product of inefficiencies in the economic system or the social problems generated by the economic system. We can, therefore, say that the laws are "codified ethics", but a minimum ethics, because the process of approval of the laws takes place thanks to compromises, not ethical motivations among lawmakers ". Another problem of the laws is that they are too general and do not cover every possible aspect of society, just think of technological innovation that certainly moves faster than the laws¹⁰.

Carroll's suspicion is that the laws are produced by people, politicians, worried not so much by moral problems rather than by their own re-election.

Ethics, contrary to the laws, must and can anticipate problems, foreseeing them to act as a prophylactic, respecting the laws, profit and virtuous behaviour, all of which must go in hand. Ethics is not something to worry about after you have made profits or after you have complied with the laws. This is the next step: philanthropy. Companies are giving excess profits to support a cause or social activity deemed deserving.

After Carroll there were many attempts to update and better circumscribe this complex of values constituted by CSR like A. Maticena¹¹ who has defined it as the ability of the company to manage, effectively, relations with its workers, with third parties external to it and even with the ecosystem by analysing the effects, of that capacity, towards the original responsibility that the company has towards risk

¹⁰ G. Castellani, *Responsabilità sociale d'Impresa*, op. cit., p. 104

¹¹ A. Maticena – M. Del Baldo, *Responsabilità Sociale d'Impresa e Territorio*, Collana Piccola Impresa, Franco Angeli, Milano, 2009.

capital carriers. For L. Hinna, CSR is the awareness of the company and its management of the social fallout that business behaviour and decisions have on civil society in the short and medium term; it is placed in the sphere of voluntary ethical behaviour and can be declined in relation to the major issues of human rights, the environment, sustainable development, the protection of minorities and the world's midday, safety at work, professional development of workers.

According to F. Perrini and A. Tencati¹², CSR is the result of the gradual recognition by companies of the need to open up to dialogue, cooperation, and its context of reference in order to create sustainable value and to orient itself in the long term.

It gradually was spread that corporate Social Responsibility, despite being a *sine qua non*, is not enough to guarantee the survival of the company on its own in the long run. For this to happen, CSR must be supported by a "sustainable" decision-making process, meaning that choices and behaviours must be adopted in a medium-to-long-term perspective, which ensures that it meets the needs present but without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

Two current definitions, among the many that can be proposed, because they synthesize well the various and most up-to-date visions are:

- that accepted by the European Commission which defined CSR as "the voluntary decision to contribute to social progress and to the defence of the environment, having regard both to social and economic concerns, when one relates to its own Internal organization and with *stakeholders*¹³;

- that proposed by *World Business Council for Sustainable Development* that defines CSR as "the ongoing commitment of the enterprise to behave ethically by contributing to economic development, to improve the quality of life of workers and their families, the local community and the entire society".

It can be said that the most common approach is the one that, by associating to the RSI the setting of the C.D. "*Corporate Social Responsiveness*" (and putting aside the

¹² F. Perrini – C. Vurro, *L'implementazione della CSR nei rapporti di filiera delle piccole e medie imprese: un'analisi quantitativa del contesto italiano*. Centro CR e SVUniversità Commerciale "Luigi Bocconi", Milano, 2009.

¹³ Libro Verde, *Promoting a European frame work for Corporate Social Responsibility*, luglio 2001. The publication of the Green Paper was accompanied by other important initiatives at the European level aimed at disseminating corporate social responsibility in Europe.

term "responsibility") is released from the ethical value of business behaviour, to replace it, instead, with the ability to respond to social pressures¹⁴.

These reflections have, therefore, now generated the idea of the so-called C.D. *Triple Bottom Line* (TBL)¹⁵, term that in the language of practice theorize business behaviors under three profiles:

- social;
- environmental;
- economic.

Enterprises adopt sustainable behaviour starting from the bottom and simultaneously pursuing the three objectives (Tripleline), which are: social equity, environmental quality and economic prosperity.

¹⁴ L. Michellini, *Strategie collaborative per lo sviluppo della corporate social responsibility*. op. cit.

¹⁵ G. Castellani, *Responsabilità sociale d'Impresa*, op. cit., p. 108

1.3 The Regulatory Profile: National and International Guidelines for Corporate Social Responsibility

The concept of CSR has found its declination, with reference to the process of internationalization of companies, in the OECD guidelines adopted in 1976 and amended in 2000. This is a collection of voluntary rules and principles aimed at multinational companies and, as far as possible, to other companies, including SMES and relevant to the main areas of social responsibility: human rights, refusal of child labour and forced labour, social relations, environmental protection, consumer protection, transparency and confidentiality, technology transfer, competition and taxation. Developed within the OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development)¹⁶ and adopted in 1976 by the member States in the framework of the "declaration on international investment and multinational companies¹⁷", the guidelines should be considered as recommendations made by the Governments adhering to multinational companies operating in or starting from their own territories. This means that, in the face of voluntary ties between multinationals and the guidelines, there is a formal commitment by the signatory Governments of the Declaration to promote their adoption with the companies.

The institutional instrument through which the acceding Countries carry out this commitment is the National Contact Point, which each of them must set up internally, with ample freedom of form, in order to disseminate the guidelines, ensure the correct application and facilitating dialogue and collaboration between national institutions, the economic world and civil society. In Italy The PCN OECD is set up at the Ministry of Economic Development-Department for Enterprise and Internationalization-Directorate-General for Industrial Policy and Competitiveness. If, with the Declaration, the accession Countries have proposed the creation of an international climate more favourable to cross-border investments, the guidelines, which form an integral part of it, have the specific objective of inducing multinationals to optimize, through the behaviours proposed to them, the relationship between the costs and the social benefits linked to their activities.

¹⁶ Ministero dello Sviluppo Economico, *Iniziativa di informazione, sensibilizzazione e orientamento RSI e Linee Guida OCSE, Roma, 2009.*

¹⁷ These guidelines were adopted on June 26, 1976 from all OECD member States, with the exception of Turkey, as an integral part of the "Declaration on International Investment and Multinational Enterprises", which aims to foster direct investment among OECD countries and consisted of a set of recommendations to corporations by the Governments of the thirty OECD-acceding countries and nine non-member countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Estonia, Israel, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania and Slovenia).

The text is divided into three parts:

- Part I, which contains a description of the behaviour and operational modalities to which multinational companies must comply, is divided into the following chapters: Publication of information, Employment and Industrial relations, Environment, Combating Corruption, Consumer Interests, Science and Technology, Competition, Taxation. To keep them abreast of the times, the guidelines were then subject, over time, to various upgrades, the last of them in 2000. Since then, in addition to all 30 OECD Countries, the Governments of eleven other Countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Egypt, Estonia, Israel, Latvia, Lithuania, Peru, Romania and Slovenia) and all the Countries that have reached a certain level of development can be invited to participate¹⁸.
- Part II of the guidelines contains a description of the structure and activity of the bodies instrumental in the proper dissemination and application of the guidelines, such as the National Contact Points (NCNS) and the Investment Committee OECD.
- Part III, inserted in 2000, has a commentary on the preceding sections. The application of the guidelines should promote an in-depth dialogue between Governments and businesses, with the participation and systematic involvement of trade unions, associations, non-governmental organisations, representatives of Civil society, that is, of all those who pursue the same aims of the guidelines and WHO, in general, are interested in the implementation of the same.

¹⁸Tuac, *Le Linee Guida OCSE per le imprese multinazionali*, 25 maggio 2011

1.4 Stakeholders: definition and characteristics.

The term “*stakeholder*” is a powerful term. This is largely due to its conceptual breadth. The term means different things for different people, and also evokes praise or condemnation by many scholars and experts belonging to a myriad of academic disciplines¹⁹. This breadth of application of the term, although, is a great force of the theory of *stakeholder*, is also one of its main theoretical weaknesses. The interpretative amplitude characterizing the term stakeholder has also given many insights to the critics of the theory. This breadth, which allowed scholars of business ethics and those dealing with social issues in managerial disciplines to find in the theory in whatever they were originally looking for, also allowed them to make criticisms that were not applied or should not have been linked to the theory of *stakeholder*. The theory of *stakeholder* is a managerial theory and an ethical theory. In reality, all theories concerning strategic management have a moral content, although it is often implied. But it cannot be said that such theories are all moral. Moral content is often taken for granted, either implicit or ignored in the management doctrine. The theory of *stakeholder* is distinguished from this because it explicitly considers values and morals as central in the management of organizations²⁰. The purposes of cooperative activity and the means to achieve these goals are critically examined in the theory of *stakeholder* and in a different way than that used by other strategic management theories. The Theory of *stakeholder* was conceived in terms “explicitly and blatantly moral.” To manage the *stakeholder* implies a focus not only on maximizing wealth for shareholders, but also being attentive to the interests and well-being of those who may favour or hinder the attainment of the objectives of the organization, which is the central warning of the theory. For the theory of *stakeholder*, being attentive to the interests and well-being of some non-shareholders, is a duty that goes beyond being prudent and maximizing profits for the shareholders. Although there are still groups of stakeholders whose relationship with the organisation remains instrumental, there are other legal stakeholders in addition to the shareholders. The intuitive and wide-ranging fascination of stakeholder theory has led many scholars and commentators to extend

¹⁹R. E. Freeman, G. Rusconi, M. Dorigatti, *Teoria degli stakeholder*, Franco Angeli, Milano, 2007

²⁰There are studies carried out in the context of stakeholder theory that are more descriptive or instrumental and are based on implicit ends and values. The explicit reference to moral language and the recognition of a moral basis are a distinctive feature of the theory of stakeholder

the theory beyond its own purpose, making it more prone to criticism and misrepresentations.

The term *stakeholder* seems to have been invented in the early '60s, with an intentional pun on the term “*stockholder*”, indicates that, in addition to those who have held the capital, there were also parties that had a "stake" in the decision-making process of modern companies with widespread capital. Professor Edward Freeman²¹ refers to the definition of SRI International (Stanford Research Institute) of 1963, stating: "The stakeholder of an organization is (by definition) a group or individual that can influence or be influenced by the achievement of the company's objectives." Lee E. Preston²², who, in a script of 1990, traced back the origin of the stakeholder approach, if not the current use of the term, about 30 years earlier than Freeman, during the Depression, when General Electric identified four groups of principle stakeholders: shareholders, employees, customers and the general public. In 1950, General Robert Wood Johnson²³, who was the head of Sears' rapid post-war growth, listed the "Four components of any enterprise in order of importance: customers, employees, the community and shareholders." He argued that if the appropriate needs and interests of the first three groups were treated effectively, the shareholders of the company would have benefited. The profit, according to Wood, was a by-product of the success in responsibly fulfilling the legitimate needs and expectations of the company's primary stakeholder groups.

In more concrete terms it can, therefore, be corrected to define stakeholders such as those who directly influence the decision of the company (owners, customers, suppliers and workers) and those who need to be taken into account for different constraints, even if they do not (environment, institutions, trade unions, associations, consumers, local communities, etc.). This definition can be considered among the widest among the proposable ones, because it can, in more concrete terms, include anyone: excluded from having an interest in the company. In fact, there are those individuals or groups who cannot influence, as they lack power, or are not affected by the company, as they do not have a claim against it or a relationship with it. The stakeholders do not represent a monolithic category but may be subject to segmentation according to the interests, expectations or rights of which they are carriers against the company or, more generally, their counterpart. A stakeholder has:

²¹ Pitman, “*Strategic management .A stakeholder approach*”, Cambridge, 1984

²²G. Castellani, *Responsabilità sociale d’Impresa*, op. cit., p. 75

²³ Ibidem

- the ability to influence the company;
- a legitimate expectation against the company.

For some scholars²⁴the "power" and the "legitimacy of expectations" are to be considered independent variables, since each can subsist without the other.

However, sometimes, they occur jointly and, if combined with "the urgency of expectations", the third attribute, generate different types of *stakeholders* with specific models that allows one to predict the behaviour that will be taken towards the company.

In order to identify "who and what really matters", the relationships between *stakeholders* and management must be assessed on the basis of the presence or absence of all or some of the attributes relating to power, legitimacy and urgency. For the identification and relevance of the various classes of *stakeholders*, it should be borne in mind that these attributes possess additional characteristics:

- they are variable and do not represent fixed values so they can change for any entity or relationship between *stakeholder* sand management;
- the level of intensity of each of them is a datum deriving from social conventions, the result of multiple subjective perceptions, and not properly objective;
- a complex organization may not be aware of possessing one or more of these attributes, but choose not to put into being the consequent behaviour, or to act unknowingly.

In light of the above, it is evident that the nature of relations between *stakeholders* and the enterprise is not static, but predominantly dynamic and bidirectional: it will be the task of the directors to manage and direct this relationship responsibly, so that we can achieve the goal of maximum satisfaction for all parties involved.

²⁴R.K. Mitchell, B.R. Agle, D.J. Wood, *Toward a Theory of stakeholder identification and salience: defining the principle of who and what really counts*, in *Academy of management review*, 1997

CHAPTER II – The threat of plastics

Summary:

2.1 The history of plastic and its evolution.

2.2 The policies for the fight against plastic.

2.3 The innovative management models related to the recycling of plastics.

2.1 The history of plastic and its evolution

Plastic, a material considered recent and "modern", has, in many ways instead, a story that can be understood starting from the remotest times. Since antiquity, man has used real "natural polymers", such as amber, tortoise shell or horn.

The History of plastics begins when, between 1861 and 1862, the Englishman Alexander Parkes, developing the studies on cellulose nitrate, patents the first semi-synthetic plastic material, which he calls Parkesine (better known as Xylonite)²⁵.

It is a first type of celluloid, used for the production of handles and boxes, but also for flexible articles like those used for cuffs and shirt collars.

The first true affirmation of the new material was only a few years later, when in 1870 the American Hyatt brothers patented the celluloid formula, having the objective of replacing expensive and rare ivory in the production of billiard balls, which met an immediate success with dentists as a material to be used for dental fingerprints²⁶. From a chemical point of view, celluloid was still cellulose nitrate and was unsuitable to be worked in high temperature moulding techniques as it is very flammable. The problem was overcome with the turning of the new century, when cellulose acetate was developed, i.e. celluloid, which was sufficiently fireproof to reinforce and waterproof the wings and fuselage of the first airplanes or to produce films.

The true century of plastics is the 1900s. In 1907 the Belgian chemist Leo Baekeland obtained the first thermosetting resin of synthetic origin by condensation between

²⁵Consultabile su <https://www.scienceandsociety.co.uk/>

²⁶Fenichel S., *Plastic: The Making of a Synthetic Century* (New York: Harper Collins, 1996)

phenol and formaldehyde, which he would patent in 1910 under the name of Bakelite, which becomes, in a short time and for many years, the most widespread plastic material used.

In 1912, a German chemist, Fritz Klatte, discovered the process for the production of polyvinyl chloride (PVC), which would have very great industrial developments many years later. A year later, in 1913, it is the turn of the first flexible, transparent and waterproof material that immediately finds application in the field of packaging: Swiss Jacques Edwin Brandenberger invents Cellophane, a cellulosic material made from very thin and flexible sheets. With the '20s "plastic" also finds a rigorous theoretical basis. Hermann Staudinger, of the University of Freiburg, launched studies in 1920 on the structure and properties of natural and synthetic polymers, proposed for the synthetic polymers of styrene and formaldehyde, and for natural rubber, open chain formulas, and attributed colloidal properties of high polymers exclusively to the high weight of their molecules (defined for this macromolecules).

The 30s and the Second World War marked new the developments²⁷. In 1935 Wallace Carothers first synthesized nylon, a material that would spread with the war following the American troops finding a quantity of applications, thanks to its characteristics that make it absolutely functional to the Textiles industry: from women's socks to parachutes, the rise of "synthetic fibres" begins. Starting from the work of Carothers, Rex Whinfield and James Tennant Dickson in 1941, they patent polyethylene terephthalate (PET), along with their employer, the Calico Printers' Association of Manchester.

In the post-war period, this polyester was very successful in the production of artificial textile fibres (Terylene), a sector in which it is still widely used (for example, the fabric known as fleece is in PET). Its entry into the food packaging world dates back to 1973, when Nathaniel Wyeth (Du Pont) patented the PET bottle as a container for carbonated beverages. Light, shock-resistant and transparent, the bottle invented by Wyeth is now the standard for the packaging of mineral water and soft drinks.

The war stimulated the need to find substitutes for untraceable natural products, for which polyurethane was developed to replace the rubber, especially in Germany, while from 1939 the first copolymers chloride-acetate vinyl were industrialized,

²⁷ Trosarelli L., *The history of nylon*, Centro Studi Materiali e Tecniche, www.caimateriali.org, 2010

discoveries having been made from the beginning of the century. Since then, polyvinyl chloride (PVC) would serve, for example, for Phonographic Discs.

After the war, discoveries dictated by "military" demands invaded the civilized world. The 1950s saw the discovery of melamine-formaldehyde resins (the general public knows them under the trade name of "Fòrmica"), which allowed for the production of laminates for furnishing and printing crockery at a low price. Meanwhile, "synthetic fibres" (polyester, nylon) experienced their first boom, a "modern" and practical alternative to natural ones.

Those same years were, however, mainly marked by the irresistible rise of polyethylene, which was only successful two decades after its invention, exploiting its higher melting point to allow applications hitherto unthinkable, and discovery by Giulio Natta in 1954 of isotactic polypropylene²⁸, a culmination of studies on the polymerization catalysts of ethylene that would be rewarded the Nobel Prize in 1963, together with the German Karl Ziegler, who the previous year had isolated polyethylene.

Polypropylene would be produced industrially from 1957 with the brand "Moplen", revolutionizing the homes of the whole world, but entering especially in the Italian mythology of the "economic boom". The 1960s saw the definitive emergence of plastic as an invaluable tool of everyday life, and as a "new frontier" also in the field of fashion, design and art. The "new" material burst into the daily life and imaginations of millions of people, in the kitchens, in the living rooms, allowing more and more people to access consumption before only reserved for a privileged few, simplifying an infinity of daily chores, colouring the houses, revolutionizing established habits for centuries and helping to create the "modern lifestyle"²⁹.

The following decades are those of the great technological growth, the gradual affirmation for increasingly sophisticated and unthinkable applications, thanks to the development of the so-called "technopolymers".

Polymethylpentene (or TPX) used mainly for the production of articles for clinical laboratories, resistant to sterilization and with perfect transparency; Polyimides, thermosetting resins that do not alter if subjected for even very long periods at temperatures of 300 °c, and which are, therefore, used in the automobile industry for motor components or for microwave ovens; Acetalic resins, polyphenylene oxide,

²⁸Lintsen H., Hollestelle M., Hölsgens R., *The plastic revolution. How the Netherlands became a global player in plastics*, Eindhoven: Stichting Historie der Techniek, 2017

²⁹Ibidem

ionomers, polysulfones, polyphenylene sulfide, polybutylterephthalat, and polycarbonate used, among other things, to produce space helmets for astronauts, contact lenses, bulletproof shields.

Plastic is an important and ubiquitous material in our economy and in our daily lives. Its many functions allow us to face a series of challenges that our society faces³⁰. Light and innovative materials in cars or airplanes save fuel and reduce CO2 emissions. High-performance insulation materials help us to save on energy bills. Plastic packaging guarantees food safety and reduces food waste. In combination with 3D printing, biocompatible plastics can save lives by allowing innovation in the medical field. However, too often the way in which plastics is currently produced, used and disposed of does not allow the economic benefits of a more “sustainable” approach to be grasped and damages the environment. We urgently need to tackle the environmental problems that are now incumbent on the production, use and consumption of plastics. The millions of tonnes of plastic waste that end up in the oceans each year are one of the most striking and alarming signals of these problems and raise public concern. In order to rethink and improve the operation of such a complex chain of value, efforts and increased cooperation from all the main stakeholders is needed, from manufacturers of plastics to recycling managers, from retailers to consumers. Innovative solutions and a shared vision are also needed to steer investment in the right direction. The plastics industry is very important for the European economy; increasing sustainability can create new opportunities for innovation, competitiveness and employment, in line with the objectives pursued by the new EU Industrial policy strategy³¹. In 2015, the Commission adopted an EU action plan for the sustainable economy, in which it identified plastics as a key priority and committed itself to develop "a strategy to address the challenges posed by plastics in all stages of the value chain and take into account their entire life cycle."

In 2017 it confirmed its intention to concentrate on the production and use of plastics and to strive towards achieving the objective of recyclability of all plastic packaging by 2030.

The EU is in the best position to guide the transition to the plastic of the future. This strategy lays the foundations for a new plastic economy, in which the design and

³⁰[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2018/625163/EPRS_ATA\(2018\)625163_IT.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2018/625163/EPRS_ATA(2018)625163_IT.pdf)

³¹<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/circular-economy/pdf/plastics-strategy-brochure.pdf>

production of this material and its products fully meet the needs of reuse, repair and recycling, especially where their development takes place under the banner of sustainability. This will lead to higher added value and greater prosperity in Europe and stimulate innovation. The pollution from plastics will be limited, as well as its negative impact on our lives and on the environment. Pursuing these objectives, the strategy will also contribute to achieving the priority objective of the current Commission to achieve an energy union with a modern low-carbon economy, and efficiency in the use of resources and Energy and will concretely contribute to achieving the sustainable development goals set for 2030 and the Agreement.

2.2 The policies for the fight against plastic

Plastic understood as pollution has become, over the years, one of the greatest problems of the environment, especially with regard to marine life. Microplastics and fragments are now an indirect threat also to man, who runs the concrete risk of bringing fish on their table that have fed on these materials: a correct recovery and careful management of plastic products is a big actual problem. In Italy, those who have been dealing with plastic for a long time and continually researching new models and new technologies for recovery are Enea, Conai, and especially COREPLA.

In fact, ENEA studies and develops new technologies and processes for the recovery and recycling of raw materials from waste³². Since 2015 it has been very involved in the monitoring and characterization of plastics in the seas, lakes, rivers and beaches; it also deals with analyzing the fragile balances of ecosystems. Starting from these activities and the long-term experience of our researchers, it seeks to foster behaviours more compatible with the environment, reducing the consumption of plastic and avoiding abuse and misuse, without, however, “criminalizing” the material in itself. Today, consumers can become the protagonists of the fight against plastic pollution by considering four areas of intervention. The first is called "PRIVILEGES" and places the center of attention on a more conscious choice of the products purchased, with the idea of preferring those that allow a reduction of their footprint on the environment:

- fabrics made of natural fibres can be prevented from entering into the environment, through the draining water of the washing machine, up to 700,000 microfibrils (mostly from clothing made from synthetic materials), which because of the small size are not retained by waste water purification plants;
- tap water to avoid waste of water: used in the bottling process approx. 5 litres of seawater in the face of 1 drinkable by the consumer. It would also avoid the use of plastic bottles for about 35 grams of material, equivalent to about 100 cm³ of petroleum (for CO emissions equal to 80 grams);
- compostable coffee pods to avoid the use of plastic, which only in Italy translates annually into approximately 120,000 tonnes of waste. Alternatively, it is preferable to avoid the plastic pods using Mocha or the other coffee makers.

³²Consultabile su www.enea.it

- also from the point of view of the packaging, you can avoid the use of plastic especially choosing products with reduced packaging, biodegradable or compostable, products on tap and refills.

- putting into practice a correct and careful differentiated collection can increase the percentage of plastic finished in landfill or in the environment, reducing its environmental impact and improving the economic sustainability of the material.

In everyday life You can make different choices that have an obvious impact on the environment.

The second area of action called "USE" aims to make consumers more aware of the choices regarding among others the containers and packaging:

- if it is not possible to choose long-lasting containers and packaging, such as those in glass, it is best to avoid the most common plastic polymers (polypropylene, polyethylene, polystyrene) in favour of biodegradable or compostable materials.;

- use reusable, biodegradable or compostable bags, for which recourse to plastics should be avoided as much as possible;

- keep the symbology of plastic objects in due care³³.

The third area of intervention is "REDUCTION", where the objective is to limit the purchase of packaged or pre-packaged products. It is possible to reduce the purchase of water in plastic bottles, or of fresh food (fruit, vegetables, bread and cheeses) inside packaging obtained from plastic materials. The use of disposable lighters is also to be avoided, while the rechargeables are preferable.

Lastly, the "AVOIDANCE" area highlights the use of disposable products, but also on cosmetics and toothpaste containing microplastics. In sight, the Q-tips in plastic (whose production has been recently banned in Italy), which must in no way be disposed of in the toilet, the straws, and, in general, "disposable" cutlery and crockery and disposable razors, for which it is preferable the alternative with an interchangeable head.

In this context, it is therefore fundamental to promote the plastics sector in terms of the sustainable development of the recycling chain, and in terms of promoting the trade in the goods that derive there from. By working in this direction, the Law of 27 December 2017, no 205, suggests the economic incentives in the form of tax credit to companies, to the extent of 50% of the costs incurred in the purchase of products and

³³https://www.repubblica.it/ambiente/2018/06/05/news/_plastica_impriamo_a_conviverci_il_manuale_anti_inquinamento-198240047/

furnishings intended to enrich the public and private assets, produced from Plasmix, that is the set of heterogeneous plastics included in post-consumer packaging and not recovered as individual polymers. The aim is, therefore, to promote the recovery of materials otherwise disposed of in landfills or sent to incinerators.

The CONAI, National Consortium of Packaging³⁴, It is instead a private Consortium that operates a non-profit, and is a system that constitutes the response of private companies to a problem of collective interest, such as environmental, respecting the addresses and objectives set by the political system. More than 850,000 manufacturers and users of packaging adhere to The Consortile System. Based on the Ronchi Decree of 1997, the Consortium marked the transition from a landfill-based management system to an integrated system, based on the prevention, recovery and recycling of the six packaging materials: steel, aluminium, paper, wood, plastic and glass.

The CONAI directs the activity and guarantees the results of recovery of 6 Consortia of materials: steel (Re-Create), aluminium (Cial), paper/cardboard (Comieco), Wood (Rilegno), Glass (Coreve), plastic (COREPLA) guaranteeing the necessary connection between these and the Public Administration.

Corepla is the National Consortium for the Collection, Recycling and Recovery of Plastic Packaging. It is a private non-profit consortium, established as a result of Legislative decree 22/97 and currently regulated by D. LGs 152/06 and subsequent modifications. It operates within the so-CALLED "System CONAI " (National Packaging Consortium), which puts in the head of the manufacturers and users of packaging the responsibility and the charges for their correct environmental management at the end of life. There are about 2,700 consortium Companies, belonging to the following categories³⁵:

- companies producing plastics for the production of packaging;
- transforming companies that produce plastic packaging;
- companies using plastic packaging ("autoproducers", importers of full packaging);
- companies that carry out recycling and recovery of plastic packaging waste.

The Consortium carries out the following activities:

- supports Municipalities in activating and developing appropriate separate collection systems, recognizing them or operators from the same delegates the fees provided for

³⁴The European House, *L'eccellenza della filiera della plastica per il rilancio industriale dell'Italia e dell'Europa*, 2013

³⁵ Corepla, Organisation, management and control model adopted pursuant to legislative decree n. 231/01

in the Framework Agreement CONAI-ANCI (National Association of Italian Municipalities) to cover the increased costs incurred in the course of the collection;

- it guarantees the attainment of the objectives of recovery of the material from separate waste collection, destined primarily for mechanical recycling and, in the alternative, to the energetic enhancement if it is not placed on the market of Recycling, also taking charge of all the indispensable preliminary operations;
- carries out a purely subsidiary action to the market in relation to recyclers as regards the withdrawal of plastic packaging waste from economic activities in private areas;
- it provides communication and education tools to citizens and various "stakeholders", sensitized to the best practice of separate waste collection and, more generally, by promoting interventions that minimise the environmental impact of plastic packaging, from waste prevention.

2.3 The innovative management models related to the recycling of plastics

The first plastic strategy was adopted on 16 January 2018, and is part of the process of transition to a more sustainable economy. Every year Europeans generate 25 million tonnes of plastic waste, but less than 30% are collected to be recycled. In the world, plastics represent 85% of the waste on the beaches. Plastics also reach the lungs and tables of European citizens, with the presence in the air, in the water and in the food containing microplastics which effects on human health remain unknown. The European Commission's new strategy on plastics will address this issue in a direct way. In fact, it aims to protect the environment from pollution from plastics and promote growth and innovation, thus turning a challenge into a positive programme for the future of Europe. There is a strong commercial interest in changing the way products are designed, manufactured, used and recycled in the EU, and assuming a leading role in this transition we will be able to create new investment opportunities and new jobs. Under the new plans, all plastic packaging in the EU market will be recyclable by 2030, the use of disposable plastic bags will be reduced and the intentional use of microplastics will be limited.

The strategy for plastics will change the design, implementation, use and recycling of products in the EU. Plastics are currently produced, used and discarded and the economic benefits deriving from a more sustainable approach and damage to the environment are not seized. The twofold objective is to protect the environment and, at the same time, to lay the groundwork for a new economy of plastics, where design and production fully respect the needs of reuse, repair and recycling and where more sustainable materials are developed. Europe is in the best position to guide this transition, and this approach will be a source of new possibilities for innovation, competitiveness and job creation³⁶.

With the strategy on plastics, the Commission has adopted a monitoring framework, consisting of a series of ten key indicators covering all phases of the cycle, which will measure the progress made in the transition to a sustainable economy at the level National and EU.

³⁶F. Bergogno, *Un mare di plastica. Gli sconvolgenti risultati di una missione scientifica attraverso il passaggio a Nord Ovest*, Nutrimenti, 2017.

The European Union:

- it will make recycling profitable for businesses. New packaging rules will be developed in order to improve the recyclability of plastics used on the market and to increase demand for recycled plastic content. Improved recycling plants and a greater capacity will be created, as well as a system for differentiated collection and sorting of waste across the EU better and standardised. In this way you can save about a hundred euros per ton collection and you will also create added value for a more competitive and resilient plastics industry³⁷;
- reduce plastic waste. European legislation has already led to a significant reduction in the use of plastic bags in several member States. The Commission will also adopt new measures to restrict the use of microplastics in products and to establish the labelling of biodegradable and compostable plastics;
- it will stop the dispersal of waste at sea. The new provisions relating to port facilities will focus on marine waste in water by providing for measures to ensure that waste generated on board vessels or harvested at sea is not abandoned but brought back to the land, and there properly managed. It also includes measures to reduce the administrative burden on ports, ships and competent authorities;
- will orient investment and innovation. The Commission will provide guidance to national authorities and European companies on how to minimize plastic waste at the source. Smarter and more recyclable plastic materials will be developed for more efficient recycling processes, and to track and remove hazardous substances and contaminants from recycled plastics;
- it will stimulate change worldwide. The European Union will work with its partners around the world to propose global solutions and develop international standards.

Achieving the objectives outlined in this strategy will require substantial investment in infrastructure and innovation. An additional investment between 8.4 and 16.6 billion euros will be required to achieve the ambitious plastic recycling targets.

³⁷https://ec.europa.eu/italy/news/20181219_plastica_accordo_it

Therefore, the creation of a favourable environment for investment and innovation is crucial for the implementation of the strategy.

Innovative Solutions for advanced waste selection, chemical recycling and improved polymer design can have incisive effects. Research and innovation can also make a difference in the prevention of plastic waste production and microplastics pollution. The European Commission is particularly attentive to innovations in materials that are completely biodegradable in seawater and freshwater and do not damage the environment and ecosystems. New approaches to developing innovative entrepreneurial models, return logistics or design for sustainability can do much to help minimize plastic waste at the source, while achieving additional benefits economically, environmentally and sociologically. Finally, further scientific research is needed to measure the potential impact of microplastics on health and developing better monitoring tools.

In reference to research with Horizon 2020³⁸ more than 250 million euros have been disbursed for financial research and development activities in areas with direct relevance to the strategy. About half of this sum was used to contribute to the development of alternative raw materials. These funds have been supplemented by the support provided in the framework of EU cohesion policy, in the context of intelligent specialisation strategies. A large number of these strategies include priorities concerning innovations related to plastics. From now to 2020, an additional amount of EUR 100 million will be allocated to the financing of priority measures, including the development of smarter and more recyclable plastics, strengthening the efficiency of recycling processes and the identification and removal of hazardous substances and contaminants from recycled plastics. Lastly, the Commission will develop a strategic research and innovation Programme on Plastics in order to provide guidance for the financing of research and innovation activities after 2020. In order to achieve the objectives of this strategy, the extent of public and private investment must increase significantly, not only for innovation. At present, private investment in selection and recycling facilities are hemmed in by uncertainties regarding profitability (in view, among other things, of low oil prices and lack of market outlets). As an example, today only about two-thirds of the companies operating in the recycling of plastics in France are profitable. As demonstrated by the situation in other EU countries, it is important to modernise and expand recycling

³⁸<https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/what-horizon-2020>

facilities so that plastic recycling becomes economically viable. Public authorities must invest to extend and improve separate waste collection. Well-designed producer extended liability regimes can play an essential role in providing the necessary funding. In some countries with very high recycling rates, for example, most of the cost of separate collection and recycling of packaging waste is financed through contributions paid by producers. In addition to being a source of funding, the producer's extended responsibility may provide companies with economic incentives to develop more sustainable plastic products. If well-conceived and implemented across Europe, the producer's extended liability schemes could contribute to improving the efficiency of the recycling process, encouraging design as a function of recycling, reducing waste and abandoning it in the environment and encourage dialogue between producers, local authorities and recycling companies. In its proposal for a revision of waste legislation, the Commission seeks to promote this model and to make it more effective through common minimum requirements, on the basis of the best practices existing.

The European Parliament, on 27 March 2019, definitively approved a new directive which, by 2021, obliges member States to prohibit the use of a series of disposable plastic articles. Disposable plastic cutlery (forks, knives, spoons and chopsticks), disposable plastic plates, plastic straws, cotton chopsticks made of plastic, plastic sticks for balloons, and the following will have to be banned in the EU. Oxy-degradable plastics and containers for food and cups in polystyrene foam. In addition, the member States will have to collect 90% of the plastic bottles by the directive by 2029. The legislation also stipulates that by 2025 plastic bottles should contain at least 25% recycled content, to go to 30% by 2030.

The directive reinforces the application of the “polluter pays” principle, in particular for the tobacco sector, by introducing extended liability for producers in the collection and recycling of cigarette butts. This new regime will also apply to fishing gear, to ensure that producers, and not fishermen, support the costs of collecting lost nets at sea. Finally, the directive introduces the requirement for information labelling on the environmental impact of dispersing cigarettes in the street with plastic filters and other products such as plastic cups, wet wipes and sanitary napkins.

According to a study by the European Commission, more than 80% of marine waste is made of plastic. The products covered by the directive constitute 70% of all marine waste.

The text was adopted with 560 votes in favor, 35 against and 28 abstentions. Greenpeace Italy has asked the Italian government to "quickly transpose the EU directive and strengthen it further, with the empowerment of producers and the introduction of binding targets to reduce consumption of disposable plastic products." For the environmentalist organization, Italy must also absolutely transpose the prohibition, included in the Community directive, to replace regular plastic with biodegradable plastic and compostable plastic objects.

CHAPTER III – Case history: “Sky – Ambienta Sgr”

Summary:

3.1 The fight against plastic: the task force of Sky Ocean Ventures Ambienta Sgr.

3.2 The strategic role of communication in the case of Sky Ocean Ventures.

3.3 The role of research. 3.3.1 The methodology.

3.4 Interview with the Sky manager: Cristina Fenzi.

3.1 The fight against plastic: the task force of Sky Ocean Ventures Ambienta Sgr.

In the European media landscape, Sky ranks among the leading entertainment companies, serving around twenty-one million customers in five European Union countries: the United Kingdom, Ireland, Italy, Germany and Austria. Its success has been made possible thanks to the ability to satisfy a wide range of needs, especially in reference to the end consumer, in terms of content, accessory services and the increasingly innovative use of technological platforms that have enabled a better television experience: in this perspective the user has re-appropriated his time, deciding where and when to consume audiovisual products offered by Sky³⁹. Today, in fact, companies rather than selling a service, try to offer an experience by making the good or service more engaging: Sky has been able to focus on this new concept, the fulcrum of that media revolution, which characterizes the so-called "New Economy", in order to improve the experience for the consumer who, by now, pays to "spend time enjoying a series of memorable events staged by a company as in a theatrical performance, to involve him on a personal level⁴⁰".

Ambienta Sgr, the largest pan-European firm focused on investing in businesses with a sustainability edge. The mission of the SGR is the creation of value through the

³⁹ <https://corporate.sky.com/about-sky/ataglance/sky-plc>

⁴⁰ Pine J., Gilmore J., *L'economia delle esperienze. Oltre il servizio*, Rizzoli, Milano, 2013 p. 2-3

management of environmental assets, with benefits for the investors, for investee companies and for the environment.

In this context, last October Ambienta established the private equity fund "Ambienta I", which with Euro 217.5 million is among the largest European funds specialized in investments in the sector.

The objective of the fund is to invest by diversifying the portfolio between the various branches of the environmental sector like renewable energies, pollution control, energy efficiency, water and waste management.

The primary target is small-medium enterprises with capital needs to grow and start-ups with one significant technological component and experienced management.

Ambienta is also one of the founding partners of New World Capital, a recently established private equity fund also focused on investments in environmental assets in the American and European markets. The fund created by the Sky Group and by Ambienta Sgr, for the protection of the seas, is the largest European fund for investments in sustainable industry. The two companies have announced an agreement for the identification of high potential investments in all those sectors involved in the production and use of plastic for a more efficient and environmentally sustainable value chain. To this end, Ambienta Sgr will share its proprietary methodologies with Sky Ocean Ventures to assess and measure environmental impact (EIA, Environmental Impact Analysis) and to integrate the concepts of ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) in company management. These are essential methodologies to measure sustainability developed by Ambienta Sgr in ten years of investments in private companies driven by sustainability trends. Furthermore, Ambienta Sgr and Sky Ocean Ventures will work together to build a common approach to measure the impact of plastic pollution.

The program carried out by the task forces includes:

- the design of alternative materials capable of replacing current disposable plastics;
- identification of solutions for industries to manage plastic waste throughout the supply chain;
- the large-scale communication of the extent of the problem through the dissemination and visualization of data.

Especially Sky Ocean Ventures is developing a unique ecosystem to help innovators thrive across Europe and see their solutions adopted by consumers on a large scale. "Our partnership with Ambienta, as the main European sustainability focused on the investment of funds, will reach our reach and allow us to develop new tools to guide our investments and report on its impact⁴¹".

⁴¹ <https://www.skyoceanventures.com/our-partners/ambienta>

3.2 The strategic role of communication in the case of Sky Ocean Ventures.

There are many reasons that lead companies to create and develop socially responsible initiatives and the priorities to be attributed to the various aspects can change from company to company, precisely by virtue of the fact that each entrepreneurial reality carries its own values. Values that have matured in a specific reference context that is naturally also influenced by the company size, so it is very difficult to uniformly define for all companies the order of priority of the various motivations. On the other hand, precisely because it is a question of social responsibility, that is to say of an overall view of sustainability, the reasons for approaching and developing these strategies are many and not concentrated in one or a few aspects. Certainly, however, despite the specificities, some motivations are transversal, although they can take on a different weight, and are linked to ethical and cultural reasons, to wanting to improve productivity and organization, contribute to sustainable development, improve the brand towards customers, society and stakeholders, to increase the sharing of company values with employees.⁴²

Today environmental communication is fundamental and the definition that adequately emphasizes the activities carried out is as follows: "Environmental communication is the set of strategies and actions implemented by institutions, companies, mass media in order to spread the correct knowledge of the problems environmental, promote a constant relationship of dialogue and cooperation between citizens, consumers, institutions, companies, customers and suppliers, and facilitate the process of creating consensus⁴³".

Communication is therefore a fundamental aspect because, thanks to it, the company creates a reputation within the market and therefore enhances behavior and maximizes the benefits deriving from the adoption of socially responsible strategies and actions to establish in this way lasting relationships with stakeholders. Moreover, thanks to their collaboration, it manages to outline its own identity. The primary purpose of sustainability communication is in fact to create a relationship between stakeholders and the company, in order to connect them and facilitate the passage of information, involving them in an ethically responsible manner.

⁴² ISFOL, *Responsabilità Sociale d'Impresa. Politiche e pratiche*, Roma, 2014.

⁴³ M. Pollifroni, *Green public accounting. Profili di rendicontazione ambientale per un'azienda pubblica responsabile e sostenibile*, Giappichelli Editore, Torino, 2010.

It is essential to fully understand the nature of the stakeholders and the information they need to adopt a correct means of communication; highlighting the communication channels, the company establishes double-entry communication channels to communicate its mission / vision externally and at the same time incorporating needs and suggestions from stakeholders. Depending on the type of stakeholder, we can talk about external communication aimed at promoting, informing and advertising or internal communication, aimed at training and informing.

According to the interlocutor, each company has different communication tools; for example, to communicate with customers, it will use brochures, events and social networks; websites will instead be used to promote, inform and advertise. Environmental communication has changed over the years, it no longer consists of an "emergency" communication, but wants to communicate a new system of uses and customs that requires continuous involvement over time: we have gone from a brand-centric vision to one that aims to dialogue with the consumer and make him participate.

With the introduction of the CSR logic, a new paradigm is born in which the company aims to produce economic value with the creation of a strong image and to add a growing social responsibility, thus addressing society and not only own customers.

Therefore all the relationships with the stakeholders, from which the company tries to attract consents, become important. In detail, the new paradigm has certain characteristics: it balances different interests, placing emphasis on communication with stakeholders and ensuring that their expectations are met, to maintain their dynamic positioning in this way; in communicating the commitment in the CSR we turn to all the possible stakeholders so as not to cause damage to the image caused by the exclusion of subjects; we must not consider the recipients of the communication as a target but rather as active bearers of interests.

There are several elements that make the use of environmental communication difficult:

- mass media that talk about environmental issues but do not make environmental communication;
- companies that confuse marketing tools with the adoption of an innovative strategic path;

- citizens who do not fully understand what it means to be consistent with an environmental path.

Environmental communication therefore aims to create an individual and collective awareness of a form of development in which the environment finds its own dimension of balance with human action. It is characterized by actors who promote it, professionals who produce it and stakeholders who represent the target. The actors can be:

- environmental associations, which promote direct communication;
- scientific community, which carries out its own messages according to its competence and profession;
- training area, which promotes direct and indirect communication, allocating its messages to the Public Administration or the training market;
- Public Administration, which despite having always been the first actor to carry out environmental communication, has shown inefficiency, caused more by an internal disorganization than by a lack of knowledge;
- third sector / world No Profit, can act in place of the Public Administration;
- the business world, a distinction is made between an expert in environmental issues and a non-expert in environmental issues, which uses environmental communication as a marketing tool;
- artists and operators in the world of communication;
- mass media, journalists and advisers;
- citizen, seen not only as a communication terminal but also as an amplifier and computer. The issuer of the message that we will take into consideration are the companies that see environmental communication from their point of view as an issue that always attracts more attention and that can lead them to have greater competitiveness in the market.

3.3 The role of research

Scientific research is a creative process of discovery, developed by a researcher, aimed at producing new knowledge starting from existing knowledge. For this reason, it is the best process to produce new information and analyses in a cyclic and constant way. To perform research, you can usually use two different methods: quantitative and qualitative. There has always been a wide debate about the qualitative and quantitative research methods used to carry out experiments of different types and in different fields⁴⁴. Clearly, there are different positions: there are those who argue that it can be two completely independent strategies based on alternative visions of the world in which to carry out research, and who, instead, mixes these approaches to obtain greater variability of data. In any case, these are two different ways of carrying out research that leads to dissimilar generalization of results. Qualitative research leads to the collection of observable information not in numerical form, but through a series of labels or classifications. Data is usually acquired through the use of a diary, an open questionnaire, interviews or unstructured observations. These are just some of the most used tools in the field of quality, of course those listed are the best known and used. Qualitative data are mainly descriptive data, which makes their use more difficult and consequently, their elaboration will be more complex. Qualitative research is useful in studies on individual cases and to describes a specific event or behaviour. Basically, it is a matter of expressing the qualities of a specific object of investigation in the form of textual information through, for the most part, unstructured investigation tools. Qualitative research focuses on the collection of mostly verbal data, rather than on numerical measurements. Therefore, the information collected is then analysed in an interpretative, subjective way, even if there are statistical tools that allow us to achieve accurate and reliable results as much as possible.

⁴⁴B. Phillips, 1971, *Social research: strategies and tactics*, New York (tr. it. Metodologia della ricerca sociale, Bologna 1972).

3.3.1 The methodology

Knowing how to conduct "a good qualitative interview is a difficult art", writes Corbetta. The art of conversation, which each of us internalizes during the socialization process, can however be one of the best bases for learning the techniques of any form of professional interview. Conversations that are carried out or which are normally witnessed during daily life can become a useful reference point, or the "best preparatory practice" of professional interviews. Goffman states that a conversation can be considered⁴⁵ "an autonomous sequence of interaction with natural boundaries that includes everything that takes place from the moment when two or more individuals open this relationship and continue as long as they conclude this activity". The variety of qualitative interviews includes ways similar to so-called informal and / or casual conversations, moreover, the researcher intends the interview as a prolonged conversation⁴⁶. It is important to bear in mind that the more the qualitative interview approaches the model of natural conversation, the greater will be the ease with which the interviewee will express his value convictions without stopping at the surface of what he thinks of know, or he wants to believe. It is useful to refer to the daily dialogue as one of the basic ingredients in the definition of the interview. Facing the broader patterns of interviews used in the social sciences, Erlandson also emphasizes the conversational character of this model of conducting the interview and explains that they:

"Allow the researcher and the interviewee to move back and forth over time. Interviews can have a variety of forms, from very predetermined to very open ones: undoubtedly the most common is the semi-structured interview that is guided by a set of basic questions and problems to be explored, in which, however, neither the exact redaction, neither the order of the questions is predetermined. This open and informal interview process is similar and at the same time different from an informal conversation. The researcher and the interviewee dialogue in a way that is a set of conversation and questions inserted within it."⁴⁷

What should be taken into account in the setting of a qualitative interview, therefore, is precisely its tendency to adopt the form of an interaction - which develops in a

⁴⁵E. Goffman, (1988) *Exploring the Interaction Order*. Cambridge: Polity Press

⁴⁶ J. Goyder (1986) Survey response behavior. Motives and attitudes, in "Survey methods newsletter" autumn, pp. 4-5.

⁴⁷G. Statera, (1982), *Metodologia della ricerca sociale*, Palermo, p. 22

given social situation - in which dialogue is central. It is marked by many formal rules; one of particular relevance is that of the turn of speech, according to which the interlocutor does not overlap, but expects the closure of the discursive segment and then re-inserts itself into the conversational dynamic. Here, the predetermined question / answer alternation is broken down which into that which is divided, on the other hand, by the tool of the questionnaire. In a qualitative interview, in fact, everyone takes a cue from what another has said, to insert himself in the speech at the moment that he deems appropriate "

In this dynamic, the rules of good manners are of particular importance, but not only that. The interview situation, in fact, can remain effective in communicative practice:

“since the participants in the meeting are morally committed to keeping conversational channels open and in good working order, everything that constitutes an obligation by virtue of the constraints of the system will be also be by virtue of the ritual constraints. Respect for ritual restraints safeguards not only feelings but also communication⁴⁸”.

The "in depth" interview, "non-directive" or "unstructured" aims to "reconstruct the personality and / or the cognitive, value and work framework of the interviewee" The exploration of the "vital world" of the interviewee implies that the interviewer addresses the topics "as they emerge in the conversation" or - more frequently - makes use of a list of topics, but with the power to modify both the nature and the succession, "following the thread of the interviewee's speech, and allowing digressions. The non-directive situation implies that the interviewer should put himself in a listening position, "limiting himself mostly to providing a series of" signals "aimed at reassuring the interlocutor about his level of attention and understanding. ", in order to" help him - without asking questions - to freely develop the theme "or" introduce topics that had not been anticipated by the interviewer".

In fact "the content [...] and the course [of interviews of this type] reflect the interests, needs and moods of the interviewees [rather than] to be determined by the interviewer's a priori interests" and / or of the researcher⁴⁹.

⁴⁸ E. Goffman, (1988) *Exploring the Interaction Order*. Cambridge: Polity Press

⁴⁹ Ibidem

Therefore, the interviewee is in a position to react to himself rather than to stimuli. The spontaneity of responses reduces the distortions resulting from the structuring of reactions. The interviewer leads the discussion only indirectly, trying to "re-express what the interviewee says and above all to re-express it with his own perceptions"⁵⁰. To this end he uses the "ad eco" technique, which consists in repeating a sentence (not necessarily the last one) pronounced by the interlocutor, which seems significant and suitable to reopen the communication, possibly asking questions about this or that point. The non-directive interview requires the interviewer to possess human qualities that derive more "from a pre-existing competence than from a specific training for interviews". Statera, which underlines as "the relevance or irrelevance of the results of the interview depends on the ability, the intuition, the personality of the interviewer"⁵¹. Also because of this, it generally implies a direct contact of the researcher-interviewer with the subjects studied, which contrasts with the tendency to parcel the tasks and the reification of the roles that characterize the mass polls.⁵²The unstructured nature of this form of interviewing is evidently incompatible with the need to standardize interview situations to ensure a formal comparability of data, frequently expressed in current manuals, of prevailing behaviorist inspiration. The consequence of this methodological orientation was for many years substantial marginality, in the context of research by means of surveys, of non-direct interviews and, more generally, extreme parsimony in the use of forms of stimulus that provided for unstructured reactions.

⁵⁰ H. Schwartz – J. Jacobs., *Qualitative sociology. A method to the madness*, New York 1979 (tr. it. Sociologia qualitativa. *Un metodo nella follia*, Bologna, 1987).

⁵¹ G. Statera, (1982), *Metodologia della ricerca sociale*, op. cit., p. 25

⁵²G. Fazzi– F. Martire, (2010) *L'arte dell'intervista: imparare dall'esperienza degli intervistatori*, Quaderni di Sociologia

3.4 Interview with the Sky manager: Cristina Fenzi

Cristina Fenzi has worked in Sky since 2007 and has contributed to the creation of the CSR department in the company, setting up the initial sustainability strategy and launching several projects in the area. In the role of specialist business manager, he manages various sustainability activities in the Internal Comm and Bigger Direction, coordinating with the Sky Group.

From January 2017 follows, for Italy, the initiatives related to the sky campaign "A sea to save - Ocean Rescue" for the protection of the seas from pollution by disposable plastic. The sky campaign wants to contribute to the preservation of marine ecosystems, reducing the use of disposable plastic and stimulating people.

The Ministry of Environment has launched the Plastic Free campaign. Sky in this context how is it moving?

We in the Sky group started a year and a half before the Ministry of the Environment, so I say with great pride that they have followed us. The campaign of the Ministry of the Environment is purely dedicated to ministries, in fact, Minister Costa is very active on the law "save the sea" which is being rebuilt to European legislation. Between the Sky group and the Ministry I present a continuous exchange and a synergy that has as its objective the common good for the community and for the sea.

Sky's campaign focuses on plastic, why?

The theme of plastic is a little hot and the campaign started over two years ago when there was still little talk of it. Having a medium like television available has a strong impact for both images and sounds and, therefore, more effect.

Does recycling seem insufficient for you to stem the problem?

Recycling is part of the solution to the problem. The campaign is about disposable plastic and not about plastic in general. An example, for our company, is the disposal of decoders that is programmed from the beginning of their use.

Why has Sky chosen Ambienta Sgr to invest in defending the seas from plastic?

The choice of the partner fell on Ambienta Sgr because at the base of its mission there is the attention and care to environmental issues and therefore it was perfect for our goals and for our campaign against the use of plastic.

How important is corporate social responsibility for you? What are the internal policies?

Companies that decide to take the road of social responsibility and cultivate a sensibility ethically attentive to the consequences and the repercussions, also future, that the action of the organization will have on the internal and external environment are increasing more and more.

How do you manage the communication process of the fight against plastic?

It is a communication that passes through all the channels, through the narration of more specific contexts. The main channel is Sky Tg 24 which tells in detail about the campaign and what happens around the plastic. Last year Sky's staff communicated in a different way the fight against plastic by cleaning the beaches of Genoa, on the Roman coast, within the campaign "clean environmentally clean beaches and seabed".

What is your communication model for the fight against plastic?

More than a model I would talk about a 360-degree approach. Our broadcasts, from entertainment as X factor to those on food as Masterchef recall the importance of the fight against plastic and are a concrete example within our television communication.

Sky has always distinguished itself by building its campaigns on activism and forms of media communication. What are the first initiatives that have characterized this campaign?

The first activities started via the newscast, both in Italy and in England, they were the first voice to talk about the topic, beating a lot on the fact that small things can make the difference.

What is the evolution of the campaign (this year and next)?

The ultimate goal for 2020 is not to lower the guard and continue to stimulate innovation to reduce the problem and continue to raise awareness among the institutions. The CEO of the Sky group has made a commitment in front of the European conference in Malta, to eliminate unnecessary disposable plastic within the business and partnerships as with National Geographic and the WWF. Another objective is to push the economic system of the different companies to recycle the plastic from the beginning of the process and be able to manage the disposal with awareness.

In conclusion, I ask you for advice, based on your experience as an entertainment company, on how communication has changed with the advent of social networks. In your opinion, what are the limits and opportunities of these tools?

I discovered that all sustainability campaigns have the social part as their preferred channel because campaigns work when they create a community around the problem that they want to communicate and solve. We communicate a lot through TV but all the continuous part of the campaign is carried out on social networks, from Facebook, to Instagram. Through social networks you can share many posts that can become viral, obtaining millions of views. Thanks to the enormous number of subscribers on social networks it is possible to be able to circulate challenges that can change the quality of life of our Planet.

CONCLUSIONS

Sustainability is definitively changing the rules of competition and corporate communication. Being sustainable is not a fashion or a marketing trend; is the answer to a precise request that comes from the planet, from the rules and from consumers. Companies are not made only of products but also of values such as transparency, ethics, fairness, attention to the environment and to people, internal and external to the company. These aspects become not only fundamental elements of the brand and reputation but represent real guidelines on which to create an effective concordance with the way of thinking and with the most intimate sphere of its customers. Sustainability will become, in the not so remote future, one of the fundamental conditions to be, or not, accepted by the market. Being sustainable, however, is not a communicative "problem". Communication must come later. After developing a structured strategic path, in some cases even complex, certainly not a short-term one that must lead to a deep review of a business model that increasingly has to focus on the creation and distribution among all stakeholders of a value and shared well-being; review that must necessarily pass also from the evolution of processes and products in order to limit as much as possible the impacts on the environment. Being sustainable is not a declaration of intent, it must be a solid reality, measurable and validable. Only in this way can it be accepted by the market and become a communicable competitive lever. Change is epochal and cultural and companies must become an active engine of this evolution. Also on this front, communication can and must play a central role, contributing to the definition and diffusion of new lifestyles and consumption styles closer to social responsibility.

A communication that presents evident specificities being called not only to translate, for different and heterogeneous publics, very complex corporate aspects (technical, technological, regulatory, etc.) but to wisely balance concrete and rational contents with emotional and impacting elements .

A communication that must inform following the tracks of truthfulness or by making the lines of creativity coexist with the concrete guidelines of objective approaches.

Who in Italy has accepted the challenge of Corporate Social Responsibility is the Sky company that is facing the problem both within the company by implementing policies to reduce plastics among employees both through advertising and television

campaigns. As emerges from the corporate website and, in particular, from the task forces Sky Ambienta Sgr, the policy of combating plastic adheres concretely with its behavior and its idea of communication and sustainability of the two companies.

Ambienta is a leading European private equity manager operating out of Milan, Düsseldorf and London, focused on industrial growth investing in companies driven by environmental trends.

Sustainability, for the two companies, together with the transparency and development of people are the expression of ethics, which aims to create value in the long term and to foster social growth and respect for the environment. So, Sky aims to contribute to that "new era of economic growth, strong but socially and environmentally sustainable". In this sense, the thought of Sciarelli finds a confirmation, according to which "the company can be considered a morally connoted system or structure, which does not only incorporate the values of the individuals who become part of the organization, but tends to enrich these values with their own principles or with the qualities underlying their mission"⁵³.

Sky is a stakeholder company that pursues the improvement of life through economic, social and environmental sustainability. This means that the company establishes a two-way relationship with its interlocutors, in which it is conditioned by the economic and social context in which it is established but at the same time it conditions it. In the environmental communication adopted by Sky the three components of sustainability are identified: the pursuit of social sustainability through the concept of growth, understood as knowledge and self-realization; the realization of environmental sustainability through the concept of respect, which translates into the principles of not polluting, not wasting and using renewable resources; the realization of economic sustainability through the concept of shared value creation with all stakeholders.

The listening and communication system, adopted by the Sky-Ambienta task forces, allows constant interaction and evolutionary monitoring of all topics directly or indirectly linked to sustainability issues and has allowed both to identify the issues relevant to the company and for stakeholders both to identify risks and opportunities associated with sustainable development and, finally, to integrate corporate sustainability management tools. The fight against plastic is a challenge to be overcome to guarantee a future for our companies and our planet and for all of us.

⁵³ S. Sciarelli, *Etica e responsabilità sociale nell'impresa*, Giuffrè, Milano, 2007, p. 19

ABSTRACT

Nowadays Corporate Social Responsibility, CSR, has a central importance. The actual economic crisis represents a good opportunity for organizations to demonstrate their commitment to social and environmental challenges, also toward the potential economic benefits they could get.

CSR increases enterprises' sustainability, which is the key element for its continuous growth. In order to efficiently apply CSR in its own business, the company management has to protect the real sense of this concept, to achieve an operational plan for the integration of the main principles inside of the company.

The Company Sky and its protagonists are responsible for their own choices and are called into account for them and the results obtained. The adjectives "social" and "sociable" should not be read according to the discursive meaning of "social" but rather with a more general ethical-humanistic value; They indicate the necessity of tending towards satisfying the needs of all those who, in society, relate to the company. In this sector the strategy for plastics will change the design, implementation, use and recycling of products in the EU. Plastics are currently produced, used and discarded and the economic benefits deriving from a more sustainable approach and damage to the environment are not seized. The twofold objective is to protect the environment and, at the same time, to lay the groundwork for a new economy of plastics, where design and production fully respect the needs of reuse, repair and recycling and where more sustainable materials are developed. Europe is in the best position to guide this transition, and this approach will be a source of new possibilities for innovation, competitiveness and job creation.

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