

Sustainability Standards in Tourism – a Knowledge-Based, Transnational Perspective

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Title	Journal / Book	Co-Authors (with contribution)	Own contri- bution
1 Knowledge Dynamics in Setting Sustainable Standards in Tourism – The Case of ‘Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa’	Current Issues in Tourism 16 (7-8), 2013, pp. 736-752.	Simone Strambach (50 %)	Main author (50 %)
2 Sustainability Innovations from a Transnational Perspective – Knowledge Dynamics and Evolutionary Trajectories of Tourism Standards in the Global South	Geographische Zeitschrift 104 (4), 2016, pp. 214-238.	Simone Strambach (50 %)	Main author (50 %)
3 The Contribution of Tourism Businesses to Sustainable Development Processes – the Case of ‘Buccaneers Lodge and Backpackers’	Lund-Durlacher, D., Fifka, M.S., Reiser, D. [Eds.] (2017): CSR und Tourismus; handlungs- und branchenspezifische Felder. Springer, Berlin. Chapter 22, pp. 351-361.	Simone Strambach (10 %)	Main author (90%)
4 Dynamic Capability Building and Social Upgrading in Tourism – The Potential and Limits of Sustainability Standards	Geoforum (submitted, 2017).	Simone Strambach (10 %)	Main author (90%)
5 From Standard Takers to Standard Makers? The Role of Knowledge-Intensive Intermediaries in Setting Global Sustainability Standards	Global Networks, 2017, Online Early View Article (DOI: 10.1111/glob.12163).	Simone Strambach (50 %)	Main author (50 %)

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AHJ	African Heartland Journeys
Alliance	Sustainable Tourism Certification Alliance Africa
ANC	African National Congress
B-BBEE	Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment
BIP	Bruttoinlandsprodukt
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DEAT	Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism
DGCN	Deutsches Global Compact Netzwerk
DTI	Department of Trade & Industry
EEG	Evolutionary Economic Geography
Flo	Fairtrade Labelling Organisation
Flo-Cert	Certification Body of Fairtrade Labelling Organisation
FoC	Friends of Chintsa
FTT	Fair Trade in Tourism
FTTI	Fair Trade in Tourism Initiative
FTTSA	Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa
GCC	Global Commodity Chain
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GPN	Global Production Network
GSCP	Global Social Compliance Program
GSTC	Global Sustainable Tourism Council
GVC	Global Value Chain
ibid	ibidem
ILO	International Labour Organisation
ITC	International Trade Center
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
KIBS	Knowledge Intensive Business Services
KII	Knowledge-Intensive Intermediary
KMU	Kleine und Mittelständische Unternehmen
MSI	Multi-Stakeholder Initiative
NDA	National Development Agency
NDT	National Department of Tourism
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NMSRT	National Minimum Standard for Responsible Tourism
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
RETOSA	Regional Tourism Organization of Southern Africa
RT	Responsible Tourism

SA	South Africa
SANS	South African National Standard
SAT	South African Tourism
SECO	Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs
SMME	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprise
STC	Sustainable Tourism Council
STNSA	Sustainable Tourism Network Southern Africa
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organisation
VA32	Volunteer Africa 32° South
WBGU	Wissenschaftlicher Beirat der Bundesregierung Globale Umweltveränderungen
WTTC	World Travel & Tourism Council

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Abstract

This thesis addresses the question how private standards can promote sustainable development processes within Global Value Chains (GVC) and Global Production Networks (GPN). Voluntary standards have gained in importance in addressing social and environmental concerns in the global economy. By translating the abstract concept of "sustainability" into formulated rules and organisational practices that can be implemented at the firm level, standards have the potential to drive organisational change and enforce sustainable management practices (Barrientos & Smith, 2007; Nadvi, 2008). However, most sustainability standards are still developed in the Global North and the influence of actors from the Global South in standard setting processes remains limited (Fransen, 2012; Ponte & Cheyns, 2013). Empirical research revealed that when standards are not embedded into local institutional contexts, their legitimization and implementation is often hindered (Dannenberg, 2008; Nadvi, 2008), and many violations of private standards have been observed (Ponte, 2012; Bair, 2017). In tourism, additional challenges for standard setting result from the integration of customers within this service industry. As it is difficult to standardize social interaction processes, most sustainability standards in tourism focus on the environmental dimension of sustainability (Font & Harris, 2004).

How to develop sustainability standards with a focus on the social dimension of sustainability that adequately address local and global concerns and promote sustainable development processes in the global economy is currently underexplored.

With the aim to address this research gap, the thesis applied a novel approach. Conceptually, micro level approaches from innovation studies and organisation theory were integrated into the research on GVCs and GPNs to enhance the current understanding on how the development path of a standard influences its intra- and inter-organisational impacts and implementation within GVCs/GPNs. Empirically, the focus was put on South African tourism and the case of the sustainability standard "Fair Trade in Tourism". This case was chosen due to a number of reasons: Firstly, it focuses on the social dimension of sustainability with the large majority of its criteria being social criteria (Spenceley & Seif, 2007). Secondly, as opposed to most other sustainability standards the FTT standard has been developed by actors from the Global South (Mahony, 2007). Thirdly, the FTT standard has a high reputation in the global

tourism industry. Methodologically, a longitudinal case study approach with a mixed-methods design was employed to analyse the time-spatial development path of the “Fair Trade in Tourism” standard.

The findings of the thesis underline the multi-scalar nature and the important role of combinatorial knowledge dynamics within the evolutionary development paths of sustainability standards. The creation of innovative, context-adapted sustainability standards requires the collaboration of various public and private actors from different institutional contexts and spatial scales. Knowledge combination within these processes is a complex issue, and many barriers have to be overcome. Bridging not only geographical but also relational distances (Boschma, 2005) and the integration of symbolic knowledge bases (Asheim, 2007) was essential to develop context-relevant standards that can be embedded into multi-layered place-specific institutional environments, and concomitantly address global concerns for sustainable development processes within GVCs/GPNs. The findings further illuminated the important role of a special type of organisation, knowledge-intensive intermediaries, in mediating between the interests of various actors across borders and scales. These actors contributed to gradual transformative institutional change within place-specific institutional environments and were able to bring in Southern actors’ demands into transnational and global standard setting processes.

Zusammenfassung

Die vorliegende Arbeit adressiert die Frage, wie private Standards zu nachhaltigen Entwicklungsprozessen in globalen Warenketten (GVC) und globalen Produktionsnetzwerken (GPN) beitragen können. Freiwillige Standards und Zertifizierungssysteme gewinnen zunehmend an Bedeutung, um nachhaltige Entwicklungsprozesse in der globalen Wirtschaft anzustoßen. Sie übersetzen das abstrakte Konzept der nachhaltigen Entwicklung in formulierte Regeln und organisatorische Praktiken, die auf der Unternehmensebene eingeführt werden können. Daher haben Standards das Potential organisatorischen Wandel und nachhaltigere Managementpraktiken anzustoßen (Barrientos & Smith, 2007; Nadvi, 2008). Nachhaltigkeitsstandards werden jedoch vorwiegend im Globalen Norden entwickelt, während der Einfluss von Akteuren aus Entwicklungs- und Schwellenländern meistens gering bleibt (Fransen, 2012; Ponte & Cheyns, 2013). Empirische Studien haben jedoch gezeigt, dass die Legitimierung und Akzeptanz oft behindert werden, wenn Standards nicht in institutionelle Kontexte eingebettet sind (Dannenberg, 2008; Nadvi, 2008). Viele Verstöße gegen die Anforderungen von privaten Standards wurden beobachtet (Ponte, 2012; Bair, 2017). Im Tourismus resultieren weitere Herausforderungen für die Entwicklung von Standards aus der nötigen Integration von Kunden in diese Dienstleistungsprozesse. Da es schwierig ist soziale Interaktionsprozesse zu standardisieren, fokussieren die meisten Nachhaltigkeitsstandards im Tourismus auf die ökologische Dimension der Nachhaltigkeit. Wie Nachhaltigkeitsstandards mit Schwerpunkt auf der sozialen Dimension entwickelt werden können, die sowohl lokale als auch globale Bedürfnisse angemessen berücksichtigen und nachhaltige Entwicklungsprozesse in der globalen Wirtschaft fördern, ist bisher wenig erforscht.

Die vorliegende Arbeit hat das Ziel, diese Forschungslücke zu schließen, und hat dazu einen neuen Ansatz gewählt. Theoretisch-konzeptionell werden Ansätze der Innovations- und Organisationstheorie in die Forschung zu GVCs und GPNs integriert. Dieses Vorgehen zielt darauf ab, ein tieferes Verständnis davon zu erlangen, wie der evolutionäre Entwicklungspfad eines Standards seine intra- und inter-organisatorischen Wirkungen und seine Implementierung innerhalb von GVCs und GPNs beeinflusst. Empirisch wird der Tourismus in Südafrika und der raumzeitliche Entwicklungspfad des Nachhaltigkeitsstandards „Fair Trade in Tourism“ untersucht. Dieser Fall wurde aus mehreren Gründen ausgewählt: Erstens ist der

FTT-Standard einer der ersten innovativen Dienstleistungsstandards, der sich explizit auf die soziale Dimension der Nachhaltigkeit konzentriert (Seif & Spenceley, 2007). Zweitens wurde er, im Unterschied zu den meisten anderen Nachhaltigkeitsstandards, von Akteuren aus dem Globalen Süden entwickelt (Mahony, 2007). Drittens erhält er eine hohe Reputation in der globalen Tourismusbranche. Methodisch wurde eine longitudinale Fallstudie mit einem „mixed methods“-Design gewählt, um den raumzeitlichen Entwicklungspfad des „Fair Trade in Tourism“-Standards zu analysieren.

Die Ergebnisse der Doktorarbeit zeigen die multi-skalen Eigenschaften und die wichtige Rolle von kombinatorischen Wissensdynamiken in Entwicklungspfaden von Nachhaltigkeitsstandards. Die Entwicklung von innovativen, kontext-anangepassten Nachhaltigkeitsstandards erfordert die Kollaboration von vielfältigen öffentlichen und privaten Akteuren aus unterschiedlichen institutionellen Kontexten und räumlichen Skalen. Die Kombination von Wissen innerhalb dieser Prozesse ist eine komplexe Angelegenheit und viele Barrieren müssen dabei überwunden werden. Die Überbrückung von nicht nur geographischen, sondern auch relationalen Distanzen (Boschma, 2005) und die Integration symbolischer Wissensbasen (Asheim, 2007) sind essentiell, um kontext-relevante Standards zu entwickeln, die in vielschichtige ortsspezifische institutionelle Umfelder eingebettet werden können und gleichzeitig globale Anforderungen nach nachhaltigen Entwicklungsprozessen in GVCs und GPNs einbeziehen. Die Ergebnisse unterstreichen zudem die wichtige Rolle von wissensintensiven Intermediären bei der Mediation zwischen den Interessen von vielfältigen Akteuren über administrative Grenzen und räumliche Skalen hinweg. Wissensintensive Intermediäre tragen zum graduellen institutionellen Wandel in orts-spezifischen institutionellen Umfeldern bei und sind fähig die Anforderungen von Akteuren aus dem Globalen Süden in transnationale und globale Standardsetzungsprozesse einzubringen.

I Introduction

1 Introduction

1.1 Research Questions and Objectives

In the 21st century, researchers, policy makers and practitioners are confronted with formidable global environmental and societal mega problems, such as increasing social inequality, poverty, climate change, and resource scarcity. Many of these issues have been accelerated by the globalisation of economic activities and unsustainable forms and levels of production and consumption, especially in countries with weak public regulation. Due to the interconnected nature of these problems with other concerns, nation states and other actors cannot address these challenges alone. Furthermore, the causes and effects of these global challenges typically do not coincide in time and space. Climate change effects, for example, have mainly been accelerated by countries from the Global North, but developing countries, for example in sub-Saharan Africa, frequently have to bear the consequences that evolve later in time. Tackling global challenges is a complex endeavour and requires not only technical solutions but profound changes to social practices. Sustainability innovations that address these problems are gaining stature in research and policy. The development of innovative, context-adapted solutions requires the collaboration of various public and private actors from different institutional contexts and spatial scales, including national governments, private businesses, NGOs and civil society. This is a complex issue, and many barriers have to be overcome in these processes. How to develop sustainable solutions that adequately address local and global needs is largely an open debate and remains the critical challenge of our times. Within this context, voluntary standards, set and enforced by various actors, have gained in importance in addressing social and environmental concerns in the global economy. By translating the abstract concept of “sustainability” into formulated rules and organisational practices that can be implemented at the firm level, standards have the potential to drive organisational change and enforce sustainable management practices (Nadvi & Wältring, 2004; Barrientos & Smith, 2007; Nadvi, 2008). Main drivers of the development, implementation and implementation of sustainability standards include changes in consumer behaviour and a rising awareness of sustainability, particularly in the Global North where most of these standards have been developed (Nadvi, 2008).

However, the role of private standards in addressing sustainability challenges is a contested debate. On the one hand it is acknowledged that private standards are important elements in global governance because the globalization of economic activities and the ongoing fragmentation of global production processes have been associated with nation-states playing a declining role in regulatory governance (Nadvi, 2008). The implementation of private standards has been seen to have led to many positive impacts related to improvements to the economic performance of actors in the Global South, better working conditions and environmental protection (Barrientos & Smith, 2007; Locke, 2013). On the other hand, researchers have also pointed out that most private standards focusing on working conditions and environmental concerns insufficiently address local challenges (Nadvi, 2008; Ponte, 2012; Ponte & Cheyns, 2013). Such standards did not stop incidents such as the Rana Plaza factory collapse in Bangladesh or the Foxconn workers' suicides in China (Bair, 2017; Chan, 2014). Currently, it remains underexplored how sustainability standards can be developed so that they can adequately address local and global needs and promote sustainable development processes in the global economy.

Economic activities are often connected through global value chains (GVCs) and global production networks (GPNs) which connect actors at multiple scales (Gereffi et al., 2005; Coe & Yeung, 2015). The development of these GVCs/GPNs has been a contested process with uneven outcomes and concerns have been raised about the sustainability of these processes. In some cases, the globalisation of economic activities has created significant employment opportunities in the Global South and led to social and environmental improvements. In other cases, it has led to precarious working conditions and environmental exploitation (Barrientos et al., 2011; Ponte, 2012; Nadvi, 2014; Bair, 2017)

The aim of this thesis is to gain insights in how private standards can promote sustainable development in GVCs/GPNs. It focuses on sustainability standards in the tourism sector. Tourism is often described as an engine for economic development, in particular in the Global South (Fennell, 2014; Weaver, 2006). As a labour-intensive industry with low entry barriers for low-skilled workers, tourism offers high potential for job training and skills development, creating a multiplier effect in many other sectors (Rogerson, 2004; Saarinen et al., 2011; ILO, 2013). In cases where tourism relies on the beauty of nature, protecting and valorizing natural assets is essential for a successful tourism industry. Tourism, therefore, also has the potential

of protecting and promoting crucial natural resources. Yet, these natural resources are often abused when there is a lack of regulation and when economic benefits are considered more important than ecological aspects. Furthermore, tourism work, especially in the Global South, is often characterized by poor working conditions with low wages and long hours, exploitation and job insecurity (ILO, 2010; De Beer et al., 2013). Even though many national governments strive to develop their tourism industries to exploit its potential for job creation and environmental protection, the question of how to achieve more sustainable business practices in the tourism sector is still unresolved. Although multi-layered approaches already exist, research is still needed on how desired economic development effects can be attained and how adverse ecological and social effects can be reduced in the long run (Weaver, 2006; Fennel, 2014).

The findings discussed above underline that the potential of tourism for sustainable development can only be exploited if tourism businesses implement sustainable management practices. Sustainability standards and certification systems have been gaining importance as a tool to address labour and environmental concerns in the tourism industry (Mahony, 2007; Font & Harris, 2004; Hamele, 2017). Many tour operators set and enforce sustainability standards within their value chains and, by doing so, aim to protect the resources for their business activities and take responsibility for the impacts they create (Koschwitz et al., 2017). Yet, a number of challenges remain. First, most sustainability standards in tourism are still developed by actors in the so-called Global North while actors in developing countries tend to remain passive standard takers (Medina 2005; Font, 2013; Jamal et al., 2006). In cases where standards are developed globally and not adapted to local contexts, their implementation is often challenging and ineffective (Bartley, 2011; Dannenberg, 2008/2012). In particular, local small-, medium- and micro enterprises (SMMEs) often experience difficulties with meeting the requirements of international tour operators' standards, which limits the SMMEs access to global networks (Christian, 2012). In turn, when standards are developed locally and do not consider global demands, their implementation is also hampered.

Second, the majority of tourism standards focus primarily on the ecological aspects of sustainability while social indicators are often underrepresented (Lund-Durlacher, 2007; Font & Epler-Wood 2007; Font & Harris, 2004). Social criteria seem to be more difficult to define, implement and measure than economic or ecological criteria due to the high interaction

processes and the integration of customers within this service industry. In tourism, customers are directly involved in the production process of the service as seen, for example, by tourists participating in guided tours (Dörry, 2008). This means that the production and consumption of these services happens simultaneously and are characterized by many interaction processes between the producer and the consumers. Furthermore, social criteria are considered soft and open to interpretation. Font (2013) argues that one reason for the limited development of social criteria is that actors from the Global North - who still dominate most standard setting processes - are more concerned with environmental aspects than developmental needs. While eco-savings can lead more directly to return on investments, social standards tend to increase operating costs in the beginning (Font & Harris 2004; Font, 2013).

Third, tourism scholars have been critical about the economic benefits of adopting voluntary sustainability standards (Font & Epler Wood, 2007; Font, 2013; Medina, 2005). One factor that is undermining the economic value of sustainability standards in tourism is the high degree of proliferation with many different standards and labels, a low number of certified businesses per label and the associated lack of transparency (Font & Epler Wood, 2007; Hamele, 2017). These potentials and challenges make it particularly interesting to analyse the development, impacts and implementation of sustainability standards in tourism within GVCs/GPNs. The thesis intends to generate original insights on sustainability standards with a focus on the social dimension of sustainability. By doing so, the thesis aims to contribute to building a better understanding of the largely unexplored topic of how the development paths of sustainability standards are interrelated with the intra- and inter-organisational impacts of these standards and their implementation within GVC/GPNs.

Against this background, the overall research question guiding the thesis is: How can private standards promote sustainable development processes in GVCs/GPNs? The sub-questions are:

- How can sustainability standards be developed that integrate the interests of various stakeholders from the Global North and Global South?
- What are the intra- and inter-organisational impacts of the implementation of sustainability standards within GVCs/GPNs?

- How do the evolutionary development paths of sustainability standards influence their implementation within GVCs/GPNs?

With the aim to address the research questions guiding this thesis the author applied a novel approach. Conceptually, micro level approaches from innovation studies and organisation theory were integrated into GVC/GPN research to enhance the current understanding on how the development path of a standard influences its further impacts and implementation within GVCs/GPNs. Empirically, the focus was put on South African tourism. The author analyzed the evolutionary development path of the South African sustainability standard “Fair Trade in Tourism” (FTT)¹ and investigated the intra- and inter-organisational impacts of the standard’s implementation at the firm level. Methodologically, a longitudinal case study with a mixed-methods design was employed as a cross-sectional analysis would have had limited value for capturing institutional and organisational change.

1.2 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis brings together findings which are comprised of five discrete academic outputs. Prior to presenting these articles, Chapter 2 contextualizes the motivation, research questions and goals within the existing literature. It introduces the relevant conceptual foundations as well as the current state-of-the-art as it relates to the questions guiding this thesis: The research on GVCs and GPNs brings a global perspective to this thesis and focuses on standards as governing devices as well as upgrading processes. As this perspective is limited in its ability to investigate the evolutionary development paths and the interrelated impacts of standard implementation at the firm level, it is complemented by perspectives from innovation studies and neo-institutional approaches from organisation studies. The integration of these research strands contribute to a dynamic, micro-foundational perspective on the development paths of innovative sustainability standards, capability building and upgrading in GVC/GPNs. Chapter 2 introduces the case of South African tourism and explains the rationale for choosing this case to analyse sustainability standards in tourism.

¹ Originally, the organisation was named “Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa” (FTTSA). The name was changed to “Fair Trade in Tourism” (FTT) in 2013.

Chapter 3 comprehensively presents the methodological case study approach and the research design applied in this thesis. It is followed by the academic publications (chapters 4 to 8) that have been produced based on the collected empirical data. Chapter 9 summarises the key findings of the research, discusses the limitations of the study, provides recommendations for policy makers and practitioners and suggests avenues for future research.

II Theory

2 Theoretical Framework and Conceptual Starting Points

The research strands on GVCs/GPNs and approaches from innovation and organisation studies have developed mainly separately from each other. Yet, conceptually combining these approaches in a complementary way can provide new insights into the development, impacts and implementation of sustainability standards within global production networks. First, the GVC/GPN framework brings a global perspective to this thesis. The approach focuses on understanding the interconnections of the global economy, the role of private standards in global production networks and processes of economic and social upgrading. However, there are still many open questions on these issues as the micro-level of the firm largely remains a “black box” in GVC/GPN research. This is where innovation research and neo-institutional approaches from organisation studies come in. Integrating these dynamic, micro-level approaches, which have strengths in their focus on knowledge dynamics, organisational learning and capability building, can help advance the current understanding of how sustainability standards can be developed, implemented and diffused in the global economy. The following chapter will elaborate on these complementary conceptual approaches and will then introduce the empirical case of South African tourism.

2.1 Labour and Environmental Standards in GVCs/GPNs – a Transnational Perspective

Dynamics in the global economy have led to widely distributed global production networks with lead firms coordinating the majority of global trade (Bair 2008; Coe & Yeung 2015; Gereffi et al. 2005). The development of these networks, characterized by outsourcing production and services mainly to developing countries have created significant employment opportunities, predominantly in the Global South (Barrientos et al., 2011). However, globalisation as a contested process with uneven outcomes has simultaneously accelerated rising inequalities, precarious working conditions and environmental exploitation, in particular in countries with weak public regulation (Bartley, 2011; Barrientos, 2013; Nadvi 2014). Research on GPNs and related GVCs focuses on understanding the interconnections of the increasingly globalized economy and its developmental outcomes in different regions.

Scholars in the field explore the global division of production and labour, analyse the governance of linkages between firms located in different spatial, political and institutional contexts and investigate the roles of public and private actors in setting and enforcing rules (Hess 2004; Nadvi 2014; Bair & Palpacuer, 2015; Yeung & Coe, 2015). Research in this area has focused on three main concepts – global commodity chains (GCC), GVCs and GPNs - to explain the global interconnectedness of production and related governance issues. In order to understand the differences in terminology, it is necessary to briefly elaborate on the development paths of these concepts.

One of the first contributions was put forward by Gereffi in 1994 when he introduced the term “GCC”. Gereffi understands a GCC as “the whole range of activities involved in the design, production, and marketing of a product”. Gereffi identified two types of commodity chains – buyer-driven and producer-driven. What distinguishes these two types of chains is *who* has the power to control production activities and the distribution of value along the chain (Bair & Palpacuer; 2015; Coe et al. 2008). In producer-driven chains, such as the automobile industry, large manufacturers govern production processes, mainly in capital- and technology-intensive industries. In contrast, buyer-driven chains refer to those chains where large buyers, such as branded retailers control production systems, consisting of a large number of producers, mainly located in the Global South. Typical examples of buyer-driven chains are apparel or footwear (Gereffi 1994; 1999).

However, as the dichotomous typology of buyer-driven and producer-driven chains was insufficient to capture the complexity of governance structures (Henderson et al. 2002; Ponte, 2007), the GCC approach has been superseded by the GVC framework, developed collaboratively by Gereffi, Humphrey and Sturgeon in 2005. The GVC framework provides a more nuanced distinction between five forms of governance that lead firms exercise and specifies *how* and *why* these forms of governance are exercised. The approach builds on three variables – namely the complexity of transactions, the ability to codify transactions, and the capabilities of suppliers - leading to five types of exercising control in GVCs (see Figure 1). These range from low to high levels of explicit coordination and power asymmetry (Gereffi et al. 2005). Gereffi & Lee (2012:29) point out that “most global industries are made up of a mix of these governance structures in different parts of the global supply chain, and these structures change over time and across different regions and country settings”.

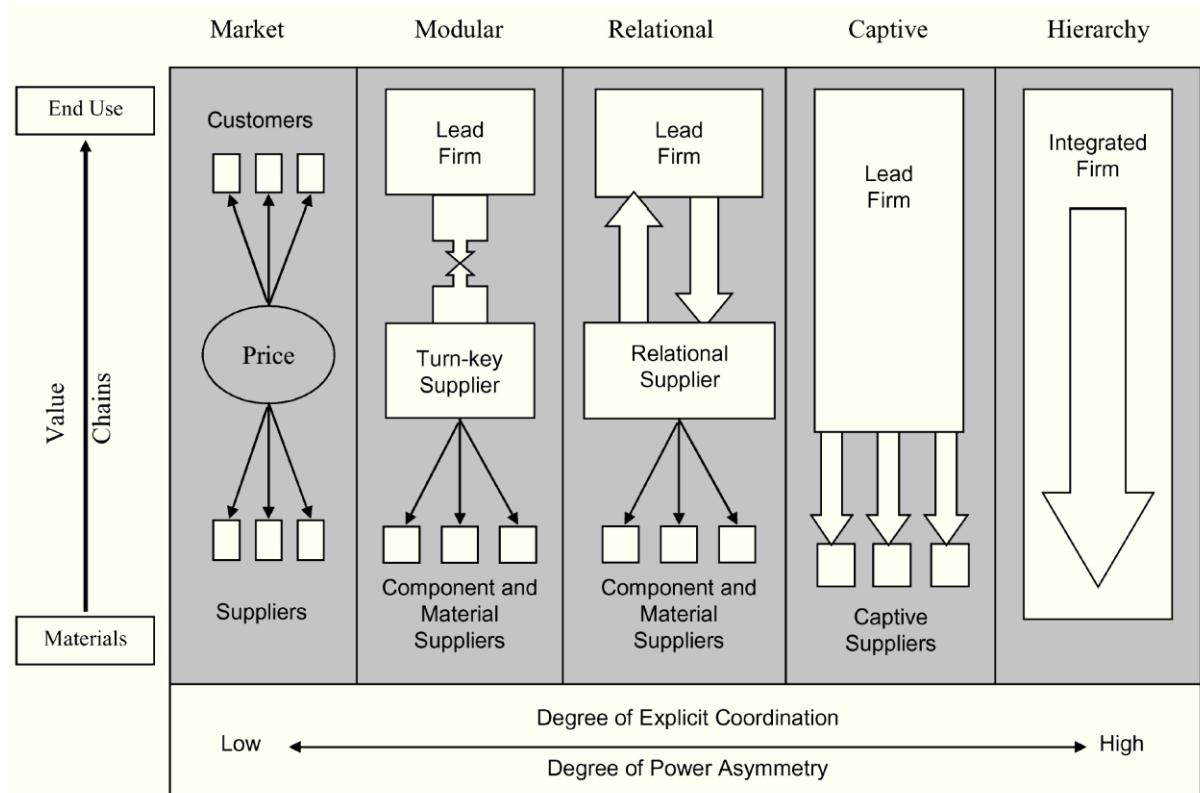


Figure 1: Five Types of Global Value Chain Governance. (Source: Gereffi et al. 2005:89.)

The firm-centric focus of the GVC framework on the nature of production processes and characteristics of the firm as determining factors for the way governance is exercised has been criticised, among others by advocates of the GPN perspective and researchers belonging to the so-called “Manchester school” of economic geography (Bathelt, 2006:225). These scholars have expressed two major points of criticism (Coe et al. 2008; Bair & Palpacuer, 2015). First, the GVC approach has been criticised for its narrow linearity and focus on inter-organisational dynamics with an overestimated role of lead firms over first-tier suppliers (Gibbon et al., 2008). Thus, the chain metaphor has been replaced by the network metaphor. Second, GPN scholars argue that the influence of the broader environment in which value-adding activities are embedded are underrepresented in the GVC framework as well as the effects of these economic activities on these environments in which they are performed (Henderson et al., 2002; Dicken et al. 2001; Neilson & Pritchard, 2009). While in the GVC terminology these environments are referred to as “institutional contexts” that “can and do have profound effects on value chain governance” (Gereffi et al. 2005:99), GPN scholars have largely understood the GVC framework as a “de-territorialized” approach that largely neglects the

efforts of non-firm actors, for example NGOs and states, in influencing the organisation of economic activities within and across borders (Dicken et al., 2001; Henderson et al., 2002; Coe et. al, 2008). In addressing these concerns, GPN scholars built on existing GVC research and integrated the influence of wider stakeholders into their analytical framework (Henderson et al., 2002; Coe et al. 2004; Hess, 2004). By doing so, they advanced the analytical categories of ‘power’ and ‘value’ by the analytical category of ‘embeddedness’ of global production processes (see Figure 2). They underline that multiple layers of societal, institutional and territorial embeddedness can affect interaction processes between firms and public and private actors (Coe & Yeung; 2015; Franz, 2010; Pickles et al., 2016).

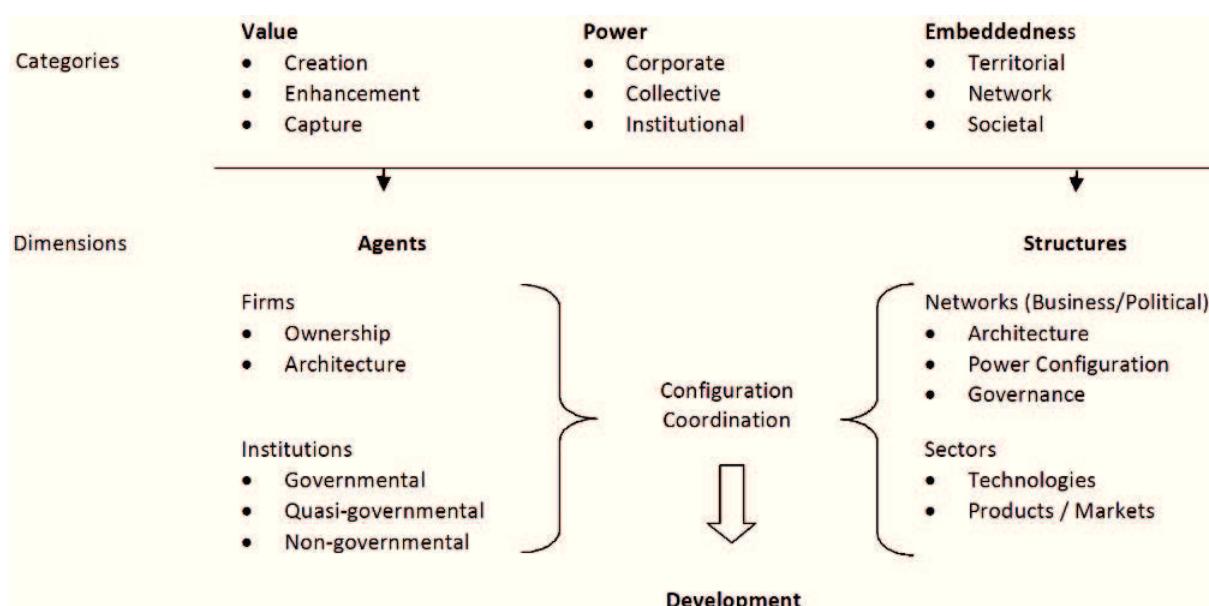


Figure 2: A Schematic Representation of Global Production Networks.

(Source: adapted from Coe & Yeung, 2015:13; Henderson et al. 2002.)

Still, Levy (2008:951) criticises that “most of the studies spawned by the GPN framework to date are, in practice, very similar to those generated using GCC analysis”. Bair and Palpacuer (2015) conclude that “the distinction between GVC and GPN approaches as theoretical frameworks is overdrawn and its implications for empirical work overstated”. Recently, many scholars observed some moves towards convergence in GVC/GPN research (Levy, 2008; Bair & Palpacuer, 2015; Blazek, 2015; Pickles et al., 2016). For example, Ponte and Sturgeon (2014), representatives of the GVC approach, introduced the concept of multi-polarity to challenge the firm-centric governance perspective and highlight the complexity of constellations of

actors engaged in GVC governance. They acknowledge that “not only firms but also other actors such as standard-setting bodies, international NGOs, social movements, certification agencies, labour unions and consumer associations can have a bearing on GVC governance” (Ponte & Sturgeon 2014:215). In turn, the recent work of Yeung & Coe (2015), scholars with strong roots in the “Manchester School” of economic geography can be understood to be moving the GPN camp closer to the GVC approach by “reframing the existing GPN-GVC debates” (2015:32) and introducing what they call GPN 2.0 (Bair & Palpacuer, 2015). Despite these conceptual differences, GVC and GPN research are bound by similar research questions and a concern with similar issues, such as exploring the reasons for uneven outcomes of globalization and ways to address labour and environmental concerns in the global economy (Bair & Palpacuer, 2015; Blazek, 2015). In this thesis, both terms will be used parallel to each other to underline the similarities of the GVC/GPN frameworks and at the same time acknowledge the seminal research that has been conducted by scholars from both fields.

2.1.1 GVC/GPN Governance through Private Standards – Actors and Processes

The governance of global production processes and its implications for development are at the core of debates on GVCs and GPNs (Henderson et al., 2002; Dicken, 2003; Gereffi, 2005; Gereffi et al., 2005; Coe et al., 2008; Nadvi, 2008; Bair & Palpacuer, 2015; Ponte & Sturgeon, 2014). Governance is broadly defined in GVC/GPN literature and refers to the explicit or implicit rules, which range from a continuum between laws to norms, that enable or constrain domains of behaviour and the ability of actors to set and enforce them (Levy, 2008; Nadvi, 2008; Gereffi et al., 2005; Bair & Palpacuer, 2015). Levy (2008:934) describes GVC governance as including “national level regulation and formal international agreements, but also the coordination of supply chains and the promulgation of private codes of conduct regarding labor or environmental standards”.

The globalization of economic activities and ongoing fragmentation of global production processes has long been associated with the declining role of the nation state in regulatory governance (Hess, 2004; Nadvi, 2008; Bair & Palpacuer, 2015; Gereffi & Lee, 2012; Simons & Macklin, 2014). Thus, most GVC/GPN researchers have focused on private governance through global standards that have mainly been set and enforced by lead firms and international NGOs (Nadvi and Wältring, 2004; Gibbon et al. 2008; Hughes et al. 2008; Nadvi

2008). As it will be discussed later in this section, the role of the state, public regulation and interrelations between different forms of rules has only recently been receiving more attention in GVC/GPN research. Bartley (2011), for example, underlines that public and private regulation should not be studied in isolation from each other.

Nadvi & Wältring (2004:6) define standards as defined criteria “by which a product or a service’s performance, its technical and physical characteristics, and/or the process, and conditions, under which it has been produced or delivered, can be assessed”. Standards can be distinguished into product and process standards. Product standards address *what* is produced and refer to the quality of the output, defined by the standard setter. In contrast, process standards define *how* these products are produced and define process attributes in the production process (Nadvi & Wältring, 2004). Yet, although conceptually distinct, the *what* and *how* are often highly intertwined, and it is not always possible to separate process and product qualities. Organic food standards, for example, highlight that compliance with the targeted product standard requires the application of certain process standards (Nadvi & Wältring, 2004; Kaplinsky, 2010). Private standards address various issues: quality management procedures, health and safety norms, and increasingly labour and environmental concerns (Nadvi & Wältring 2004; Kaplinsky 2010). They can promote transparency as well as economic efficiency by reducing transaction costs and help lead firms to minimize risk and protect brand value, in particular when operating in developing countries that have weak social, environmental, and regulatory institutions (Nadvi and Wältring 2004; Nadvi, 2008). Ultimately, compliance with global standards has become a pre-requisite for local producers to access GVCs/GPNs (Gereffi et al. 2005; Nadvi and Wältring 2004; Nadvi 2008, 2014). As global production networks have become more complex and the number and range of standards are continuously growing, as are the actors engaged in standard setting processes, the literature on global standards has also proliferated which makes it difficult to focus on standards as a whole (Nadvi & Wältring, 2004; Nadvi, 2008). Thus, the typology of global standards developed by Nadvi & Wältring (2004) is useful to get an overview of global standards (see Table 1). It distinguishes different fields of standard application, different forms of standards and sectoral and geographical levels of coverage of standards, highlights key actors behind the standards and distinguishes into various processes of certification and different forms of regulatory impacts (Nadvi & Wältring, 2004).

Table 1: Typology of Global Standards.

(Source: adapted from Nadvi & Waltring, 2004:11; Coe & Yeung, 2015:55.)

Attribute of Standard	Variability
Field of application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality assurance • Environmental • Health and safety • Labour • Social • Ethical
Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Codes of Conduct • Label • Standard
Coverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firm/Value chain specific • Sector specific • Generic
Key actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International business • International NGOs • International trade unions • International organisations
Certification Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First, second or third-party • Private-sector auditors • NGOs • Government
Regulatory implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legally mandatory • Market competition requirement • Voluntary
Geographical scale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional (e.g. A US state) • National • Macro-regional (e.g. the EU) • Global (e.g. the UN Global Compact)

2.1.2 The Development Paths of Sustainability Standards

Driven by growing awareness and changing consumer demands for more sustainable production processes, sustainability concerns have become increasingly relevant in standard

setting processes. A high number of standards now address poor working conditions and environmental concerns in GVCs/GPNs (Drezner 2008; Gereffi et al. 2005; Gibbon et al. 2008; Hughes et al. 2008; Nadvi and Wältring 2004; Nadvi 2008; Barrientos & Smith, 2007). The research on the evolutionary trajectories of these standards is limited. What has been observed is that there have been moves towards convergence in the area of product and technical standards, in particular in the field of quality assurance. Yet, in the field of environmental and labour standards, a high proliferation with many distinct company codes and labels remains. Nadvi (2008) underlines that it remains challenging to bring about harmonization in the highly contested area of environmental and social standards. What makes standard setting processes very complex is that many different actors, such as national and international public regulators, businesses and NGOs want to have a bearing on these rules (Nadvi, 2008; Ponte & Sturgeon, 2014).

Empirical research in particular in the fields of political economy and political sciences has revealed that most social and environmental standards setting processes that are implemented along GVCs/GPNs are still led by actors from the “Global North” (Drezner, 2008). Although actors from developing countries are expected to comply with global standards, their voice and demands are still mainly excluded from standard setting processes (Hughes et al. 2008; Nadvi and Wältring 2004; Nadvi 2008; Nadvi 2014; Peña 2014; Ponte 2012). Scholars focusing on collaborative ways of standard setting initiatives in multi-stakeholder initiatives (MSIs) illuminated dynamics that marginalize the influence of actors from the Global South (Bartley, 2011; Fransen, 2012; Quack, 2010; Ponte, 2012; Ponte & Cheyns, 2013). Bartley (2011) underlines that the development and implementation of global standards is not just a technical challenge as leading actors in MSIs often assume. Instead, the intersection of transnational private regulation with domestic law and other types of rules shapes the implementation process. Yet, these issues due not receive due attention in standard setting processes. Pointing in the same direction, Fox (2004) and Hamann (2006) are concerned that universal approaches, with their origin in developed countries, may not sufficiently respond to the developmental challenges in the Global South. They argue that attempts to facilitate sustainable development have to address pressing local challenges. Trying to apply the ‘Northern’ vision of sustainable development may be insensitive to the manifold contextual differences within the Global South (Hamann, 2006). This argument holds true for the

development and implementation of private standards. GVC/GPN scholars have revealed that the implementation of standards is constrained and impacts of standards are hindered when they were not adapted to local context conditions and embedded within the local institutional context (Dannenberg 2008/2012; Bartley, 2011).

Currently, the development processes of sustainability standards that adequately address global and local concerns are underexplored. Little is known about the challenges that need to be overcome in these processes and about the enabling factors. Whereas modes to outmanoeuvre actors from the Global South in standard setting processes are more widely recognized (Ponte and Cheyns, 2013; Quack, 2010), it is largely underexplored how Southern actors can pro-actively influence global standard setting processes and make sure that their interests and demands are integrated. Based on the existing preliminary insights, it is necessary to put more attention on the development paths of sustainability standards in GVCs/GPNs. This is important as the development process of a sustainability standard, its intra- and inter-organisational impacts and implementation within GVCs/GPNs may be interconnected.

2.1.3 Standards and Upgrading

While the development paths of sustainability standards are mainly underexplored in GVC/GPN research, a lot of attention has been devoted by GVC/GPN scholars to investigate whether the implementation of private standards can lead to socio-economic benefits and environmental improvements at the firm-level. This question has been framed in the upgrading debate. Upgrading has been defined in the GVC/GPN literature as opportunities for producers to move “to higher value added activities in production, to improve technology, knowledge and skills, and to increase the benefits or profits deriving from participation in GPNs” (Barrientos et al. 2011).

Originally, the research on upgrading has taken a firm-centric and economic view in understanding learning processes and development prospects (Coe & Hess, 2013). Economic upgrading was divided by Humphrey & Schmitz (2002) into functional, process, product and intersectoral/chain upgrading (Humphrey & Schmitz, 2002, Barrientos et al. 2011; Gereffi & Lee, 2016; Blazek, 2015). This early distinction is considered seminal to the upgrading debate, yet it has been criticised for indicating a hierarchical and linear upgrading trajectory (Morrison

et al., 2008; Ponte & Ewert, 2009). In practice, it is difficult to distinguish between product and process upgrading and different forms of upgrading can occur concomitantly (Blazek, 2015). These concerns led Ponte & Ewert (2009) to refer to upgrading more broadly as “reaching a better deal” for a firm (2009:1637).

The literature on upgrading often assumes implicitly that economic upgrading and social improvements go hand in hand, for example in the form of higher wages. However, empirical evidence shows that this is not always the case and, in fact, the opposite might occur, such as cutting labour costs for cost-efficiency or higher pressure at the workplace (Gereffi & Lee, 2016). A tragic example is the case of Foxconn, a large Chinese electronics supplier where economic upgrading associated with excessive working hours and limited workers’ rights has resulted in strikes and workers’ suicides in 2011 (Chan, 2014; Nadví & Raj-Reichert, 2015). This incident strongly underlines that economic and social benefits do not necessarily occur together. Whether and how positive economic outcomes at the firm-level actually translate into better working conditions, especially in firms located in the Global South, is still up for debate (Rossi, 2013; Locke, 2013; Barrientos et al., 2011). Thus, a strand of research on social upgrading has emerged in the last decade that investigates the outcomes of the global economic integration for workers and firms in the Global South. This research analyses the interrelations between economic and social upgrading and explores the possibilities for social upgrading (Milberg & Winkler, 2011; Selwyn, 2013; Barrientos et al., 2011). Barrientos et al. (2011:324) define social upgrading as “the process of improvement in the rights and entitlements of workers as social actors, which enhances the quality of their employment”. Based on the ILO’s framework of ‘decent work’ (Ghai, 2003; ILO, 1999), social upgrading can be subdivided into two elements (Barrientos and Smith, 2007:716; Rossi, 2013). The first element is ‘measurable standards’ that are relatively easy to quantify and monitor. Measurable standards refer to improvements in working conditions in terms of wages, employment security (contract type, social protection) and physical wellbeing (health and safety levels). The second element of social upgrading refers to ‘enabling rights’ and include less easily quantifiable aspects such as freedom of associations, collective bargaining and non-discrimination. It is acknowledged in this distinction that improvements in measurable standards are often the outcomes of complex bargaining processes and based on enabling rights (Barrientos et al., 2011).

There are still many open questions on how the implementation of sustainability standards at the micro-level can facilitate upgrading in GVCs/GPNs, in particular with regard to socio-economic benefits and environmental protection. First, the question of how and why positive economic outcomes at the firm-level are facilitated and whether they translate into better working conditions, especially in firms located in the Global South, still requires further analysis (Barrientos et al., 2011; Milberg & Winkler, 2011). Second, the environmental dimension of upgrading is currently neglected by the field (Bettoli et al., 2011). Third, due to a ‘Northern bias,’ it remains underexplored how lead firms from the Global South address sustainability concerns within their organisations and supply chains (Nadvi, 2014; Pena, 2014). Fourth, little attention has been paid to endogenous developments in the Global South and the horizontal embeddedness of local firms as GVC/GPN researchers have seldom gone beyond an analysis of working conditions of first tier suppliers (Nadvi & Raj-Reichert, 2015; Blazek, 2015). Fifth, GVC/GPN research is still characterized by a ‘productionist bias’ (Coe & Yeung, 2015:24) and has conceptually and empirically neglected the important role of services (Kleibert, 2016). Finally, there is still a limited understanding of how entrepreneurs and SMMEs from the Global South can build up capabilities to gain access to GVCs/ GPNs.

Empirical research on the role of standards to facilitate upgrading has revealed mixed results (Locke, 2013; Gereffi & Lee, 2016; Barrientos et al. 2011; Pickles et al., 2016). The implementation of private standards has the potential to facilitate capability building, learning and market access (Morrison et al. 2008; Kadarusman & Nadvi, 2013). However, at the same time, when standards’ requirements cannot be fulfilled, they can lead to the exclusion of actors, in particular of SMMEs (Nadvi & Wältring, 2004; Kaplinsky, 2010). In terms of economic upgrading, process and product upgrading seem to be relatively easy to achieve through the implementation of standards, in particular in captive relations, while these relationships constrain functional upgrading when lead firms try to protect their core competences (Bettoli et al., 2011; Pavlinek & Zenka, 2011; Schmitz, 2006; Blazek, 2015; Humphrey & Schmitz, 2004). When looking at social upgrading, there are cases where the implementation of social standards has led to the intended improvements in working conditions, for example through the implementation of the ILO’s decent work standards (Gereffi & Lee, 2016; Barrientos et al. 2011). Yet, Barrientos et al. (2011) underline that this is not always the case and often, due to a limited reach, only certain groups of workers benefit from the implementation of private

standards and social upgrading. For example, working conditions tend to be better amongst permanent workers while private standards frequently fail to protect more vulnerable groups, such as informal and casual workers or women (Barrientos & Kritzinger, 2004; Alford, 2016). Locke et al. (2007) further show that working conditions tend to be better in factories of first-tier suppliers where the implementation of private standards are monitored than in sub-contracted firms at lower tiers of the chain which may go unmonitored. Nadvi & Raj-Reichert (2015) support this argument by pointing out that it remains unclear how effectively standards permeate down to lower tier suppliers. In comparison to product standards, labour and environmental process standards seem more difficult to enforce and monitor along global value chains (Locke, 2013; Nadvi, 2008; Barrientos et al., 2011)

Many cases of the violation of private standards and labour and environmental regulations have been observed when they lacked local legitimization (Nadvi, 2008). For example, Dannenberg (2012) illuminated various ways to undermine environmental standard requirements. A tragic and recent example for the failure of private regulation is the 2013 Rana Plaza collapse in Bangladesh, which involved a fatal accident affecting garment industry producers relying on private standards (Bair, 2017). These limitations of private standards have led to an emergent research field exploring a “regulatory renaissance”. Scholars in the field turned their attention towards the question of how public and private actors interact, collaborate and complement each other in setting, implementing and enforcing rules with regard to labour and environmental conditions. Their regulations can be complementary, substitutionary or conflicting (Bartley, 2011; Locke et al., 2013; Nadvi, 2014; Nadvi and Raj-Reichert, 2015). One of the main findings is that private governance through standards is important to address labour and environmental concerns, but by themselves, standards remain limited in facilitating sustainable change. Therefore, they need the support and legitimacy of government regulation (Bartley, 2011; Locke et al., 2013; Nadvi, 2014). Yet, it remains an open debate how actors can interact and collaborate to combine their knowledge and competencies with the aim to develop, implement and enforce complementary regulation, as it is envisioned in the “regulatory renaissance”. There are limited insights into the factors that enable these processes and into the barriers that have to be overcome. Nadvi & Raj-Reichert (2015) underline the need for further investigation of the “regulatory

renaissance” premise to better integrate public and private regulation for improving working conditions and cleaner production in the global economy.

2.1.4 Preliminary Conclusions

Standards have the potential to facilitate sustainable development processes and create a collective understanding of sustainable practices within GVCs/GPNs. To achieve this aim, they translate the abstract concept of sustainability into organisational practices that can be implemented at the firm level. However, to unfold their potential to drive sustainability within GVCs/GPNs and promote upgrading processes locally, there are still many challenges that have to be overcome. Firstly, most standards are still developed in the Global North and the influence of actors from the Global South in standard setting processes remains limited. This is problematic because the integration of local needs and demands in standard setting processes is important to initiate change that is relevant to the local context. This leads to the second challenge which is the limited embeddedness of global standards into local institutional contexts. Empirical research revealed that when standards are not embedded locally, their implementation is often ineffective to facilitate sustainable development processes and upgrading. Thirdly, many violations of private standards have been observed in cases where standards have not been legitimized locally.

Due to the limitations of private standards, some scholars have returned their attention to the role of the state and analyse how public actors can help private actors to set and enforce standards within GVCs/GPNs. First insights revealed the importance of the integration of public and private regulation. Yet, how to develop public-private regulation that complements each other is still largely unclear. The development of standards that are embedded into local institutional contexts and promote sustainable development processes in GVCs/GPNs remains a critical, yet unresolved challenge.

The main argument of this thesis is that the development paths and the specific combination of knowledge in the creation of sustainability standards are decisive to gain context relevance and local legitimacy. These aspects are pre-requisites for standards to unfold their potential to promote sustainable development processes and upgrading. Integrating a knowledge-based perspective can contribute to new insights on how standards can be developed that adequately address global and local concerns. The next chapter will elaborate on this issue.

2.2 Standards as Sustainability Innovations – a Knowledge-based Perspective

The development of innovative sustainability standards that aim to address complex global challenges requires the integration and collaboration of various public and private actors across borders and scales. The combination of their distinct knowledge bases is at the heart of sustainability standard setting processes. However, this is not an easy process and many challenges have to be overcome within these standard setting processes.

From a knowledge-based perspective, the development of sustainability standards can be considered as an (sustainability) innovation and the visible result of knowledge dynamics. Applying the knowledge dynamics approach to the creation of innovative standards and investigating the nature of the institution building process can generate new insights into the development of sustainability standards that involve interaction processes with their local and global environments over time. This section is structured as follows: First, as there is no universal understanding of “sustainability-oriented” innovations and many different terms are currently used, this section starts by introducing the understanding of sustainability innovations that is applied in this thesis. As knowledge is a central element in innovation processes, the section provides a short overview of knowledge-centered debates applied in economic geography. They are the building blocks of the knowledge dynamics approach. The section concludes by elaborating on the relevance of the knowledge dynamics approach for research on sustainability standards within GVCs/GPNs.

2.2.1 Knowledge Dynamics in Sustainability Innovations

Based on Schumpeter’s seminal work (1911), the OECD defines innovations as “the implementation of a new or significantly improved product (good or service), or process, a new marketing method, or a new organisational method in business practices, workplace organisation or external relations” (OECD, 2005:46). In contrast to inventions, innovations have to be implemented in the market and they need to have a certain degree of novelty to the firm, the market or the world (Kline & Rosenberg, 1986). They can range from radical innovations that are new to the world and cause disruptive change to incremental innovations that continuously advance existing products, processes or services (Freeman & Soete, 1997). The OECD distinguishes different types of innovations, namely product innovations, process

innovations, marketing innovations and organisational innovations (OECD, 2005). Yet, this distinction does not take into account changing social values and recently emerging “new forms of innovation” whose key objectives are to create ecological and social value-added and promoting sustainable development processes.

Sustainability is not a new concept. In 1987, the Brundtland Report defined sustainable development as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (Brundtland, 1987:41). Originally, the notion of sustainability was understood mainly as a static concept that could be clearly defined and measured by using associated indicators. More recently, however, the understanding of sustainability has moved from an analytical concept towards a relative, discursive and normative understanding that puts emphasis on its subjective, context-dependent and dynamic nature. Sustainability is no longer understood as a state but rather a constant search process directed at addressing pressing socio-economic and environmental concerns (Schneider, 2006). The understanding of sustainability innovations builds on this idea and understands innovating for sustainability as a process that brings about relative improvements in comparison to former products or processes (Klevitz & Hansen, 2013).

Innovations have the potential to contribute to sustainable development processes. In response to complex global environmental and societal problems, sustainability innovations have increasingly received attention from various actor groups, including researchers, policy makers and practitioners. Gradually, the “new understanding” of sustainability has moved into the research on sustainability innovations. This research strand has evolved from an initially eco-driven debate, in which eco-innovations have been very prominent, into a strand of research that holds a more holistic view of sustainable development and increasingly embraces social and economic aspects as well (Rennings, 2000; Klevitz & Hansen, 2013; Schaltegger & Wagner, 2011; Heeks et al. 2014; Paech, 2005). These developments are reflected in the multitude of “new forms” of sustainability-oriented innovations that increasingly receive attention by researchers and practitioners, including social innovation, inclusive innovation, pro-poor innovation and base-of-the pyramid innovation. Yet, this research is scattered across different disciplines and communities, and no common terminology or conceptual framework exist (Strambach & Surmeier, 2016; Heeks, 2014). While, for example, eco-innovation or social innovation focus on one dimension of

sustainability, the term sustainability innovation is used in this thesis as an umbrella term for all those innovations that concomitantly address social, economic and environmental concerns. Sustainability innovations are understood as the creation, implementation and diffusion of new products or processes that aim to “preserve critical natural resources and promote sustainable global business practices and lifestyles” (Fichter, 2010). Sustainability innovations are characterized by balancing the different dimensions of sustainability and by double externalities. This means that they do not only create direct or indirect knowledge spillovers within their environment but their development and implementation also contribute to positive social and environmental impacts at the system level. Yet, the actors who develop these innovations may not always benefit or be able to exploit these positive impacts (Rennings, 2007; Strambach, 2017), resulting in limited economic incentives to develop sustainability innovations. This is why not only market pull or technology push but also regulative push and pull and government incentives are important drivers of sustainability innovations (Paech, 2005; Rennings, 2007; Fichter, 2010).

Private voluntary regulation and the development and implementation of novel standards can be considered a sustainability innovation. Standards can contribute to sustainable development processes by balancing environmental, social and economic goals and promoting sustainable business practices within GVCs/GPNs. Scholars in this field usually distinguish into formal and informal institutions and accordingly understand private standards as formalized institutions in the form of rules that define product and process qualities (Nadvi & Wältring, 2004). From the perspective of neo-institutional theory, standards are the outcome of complex institution building processes and structure social interaction processes. According to Scott (2014:56), they consist of “regulative, normative and cultural cognitive elements that, together with associated activities and resources, provide stability and meaning to social life.” These elements work in combination even though one element might dominate (Scott, 2014). Within this context and from an innovation perspective, the development and implementation of novel standards can be regarded an institutional innovation while the implementation of a standard at the firm level is an organisational innovation (OECD, 2005).

GVC/GPN researchers have acknowledged that standards need to be developed in an inclusive way to integrate Southern actors’ demands (Nadvi, 2008; Ponte, 2012; Ponte & Cheyns, 2013).

This is a complex issue, and many barriers have to be overcome in these processes. MSIs that integrate various stakeholders provide an opportunity to develop standards in collaboration. Yet, research from political science and political economy perspectives focusing on standard setting within MSIs has underlined that the development of sustainability standards is not an easy process and many challenges remain (Cheyns, 2011; Ponte & Cheyns, 2013; Fransen, 2012; Quack, 2010). For example, Ponte & Cheyns (2013) point out that actors from the Global South frequently experience difficulties in bringing in their demands as their knowledge is often perceived “too local” or “too controversial”. Yet, when their knowledge is not included, these standards often lack contextual relevance and local legitimization (Quack, 2010). Even though knowledge is not explicitly analysed and in particular “expertise” remains a black box or an object within this research strand, the empirical insights implicitly show that the integration of different types of knowledge is very important in standard setting processes and that knowledge combination is a difficult endeavour.

From a knowledge-based perspective, knowledge is a fundamental element and at the heart of innovation processes, including the development of innovative sustainability standards (Ibert, 2007; Strambach, 2008; Howells, 2012). Research in economic geography and innovation studies has long analysed the nature and characteristics of knowledge. One of the earliest and most prominent conceptualisations is the tacit and explicit knowledge continuum developed by Polanyi (1966). Polanyi (1966) points out while explicit knowledge can be codified, and easily transferred even over long distances, most knowledge is implicit and tacit and based on experiences and interpretations (Polanyi, 1966; Hautala & Höyssä, 2017). It cannot be codified and transmitted easily because actors “know more than they can tell” (Polanyi 1966:4). Instead, knowledge needs to be transferred within social interaction processes, based on trust, shared understandings and interpretation (Lam, 2005). This makes it spatially “sticky”, context-embedded and bound to places (Gertler, 2003).

Based on this taxonomy, many researchers started to distinguish quantifiable pieces of knowledge that could, for example, be ‘stored’, ‘stolen’ or ‘exchanged’ (Ibert, 2007). However, Polanyi (1966) underlined that codified knowledge always contains elements of tacit knowledge – something that later has largely been overlooked by other researchers (Ibert, 2007). Based on these early insights and in the course of further knowledge-based research, two major perspectives on knowledge have emerged: the rational, resource-based

understanding of knowledge that understands knowledge as an object and the constructionist, performative understanding that sees knowledge as a social practice (Hautala & Höyssä, 2017) and knowing as a “capacity to act” (Stehr 2001:89) that is “inseparably intertwined with social practices” (Ibert, 2007:104). Researchers following a constructionist perspective view the generation of knowledge as based on social interaction processes and embedded and shaped by institutional contexts (Ibert, 2007). This view questions the understanding of knowledge as an object that can easily be circulated, accumulated or transferred to other contexts (Ibert, 2007).

Applying knowledge-based theories can provide new insights on the creation, the intra- and inter-organisational impacts and implementation of sustainability standards within GVCs/GPNs. These approaches help to explain why standards cannot be transferred easily, like an object, to other contexts. Research on standard setting processes within MSIs has focused on illuminating ways how actors from the Global South are marginalized and outmaneuvered within MSIs. A knowledge-based perspective can take this research strand a step further and enhance the understanding of how barriers in processes of knowledge combination can be overcome within multi-scalar standard setting processes and on how actors from the Global South can build up the knowledge and capabilities to pro-actively contribute to these processes. These processes seem to influence their implementation, intra- and inter-organisational impacts and implementation within GVCs/GPNs.

Against this background, two conceptual approaches, in particular, are valuable: research on knowledge dynamics that underlie innovations and the differentiated knowledge base typology. Before elaborating on the knowledge dynamics approach, it is necessary to contextualize the approach within knowledge-centred debates in economic geography.

2.2.2 Knowledge Dynamics in Sustainability Standard Setting

Innovation research has long understood knowledge creation and innovation predominantly as the outcome of localized learning processes and focused on developing territorial innovation models (Maskell & Malmberg, 1999; Moulaert & Sekia, 2003; Malmberg & Maskell, 2006). This was based on the assumption that innovations rely on tacit, “sticky” knowledge that is transferred in face-to-face interactions within a certain *place*, understood as localized socio-institutional environments built over time in a path-dependent way (Strambach &

Klement, 2012). As innovation research has matured, it has shifted its focus and started to incorporate a more global perspective on the development of innovation (Bathelt et al. 2004; Schmitz & Strambach, 2009; Crevoisier & Jeannerat, 2009; Torre, 2008). The “new” perspective on innovation research acknowledges the increasingly globalised processes of economic activities. These processes of global production and interaction at a global scale are closely related to a changing spatial distribution of innovation processes (Bathelt et al. 2004; Strambach, 2008; Crevoisier & Jeannerat, 2009; Schmitz & Strambach, 2009; Strambach & Klement, 2012). What has been underlined in this strand of research is that aspects of *place*, and geographical proximity are not the sole support for learning, knowledge generation and innovation. Also aspects of relational *space* influence learning and innovation processes (Strambach, 2008; Strambach & Klement, 2012). Relational space relates to different forms of proximity and distance. For example, from a relational perspective, not only physical proximity or distance affects interaction and knowledge exchange but also other forms of non-spatial proximity and distance (Torre & Gilly, 2000; Boschma 2005; Nooteboom, 2010). Boschma’s (2005) distinction into five forms of proximity - geographical, cognitive, social, organisational and institutional proximity¹ - has been useful for many scholars in economic geography for the analysis of relational proximity.

Based on the existing insights and the acknowledgement of both place and space as key dimensions in knowledge creation the knowledge dynamics approach was developed (Strambach, 2008; Crevoisier & Jeannerat, 2009; Halkier et al. 2010; Strambach & Klement, 2012). Strambach (2008:154) defines knowledge dynamics that underlie innovations as “the dynamics that are unfolding from processes of creation, using, transforming, moving, and diffusing knowledge”. Even though they are often intangible artefacts, innovations are understood as the visible outcomes of knowledge dynamics (Strambach & Klement, 2012). The knowledge dynamics approach puts actors and their interaction processes center stage and underlines that knowledge dynamics are influenced by the specific knowledge base of

¹Cognitive proximity constitutes “a shared knowledge base”. This is a pre-requisite to communicate, understand, absorb and process new information successfully” (Boschma, 2005:64). Organisational proximity relates to the way organisations or organisational subunits are linked to each other. Social proximity relates to socially embedded relations between actors at the micro-level, for example based on trust due to friendship, kinship and experience, while institutional proximity is associated with a shared institutional environment at the macro-level, including cultural norms and values.

agents, their competencies or capabilities and the context in which these processes take place (Strambach, 2008; Strambach & Klement, 2012). Based on empirical insights, Strambach & Klement (2012) observed a “qualitative shift towards a growing role of combinatorial knowledge dynamics in innovation processes” (2012:1861), driven by the ongoing restructuring of global production and associated innovation processes. They point out that a more detailed conceptual differentiation of knowledge dynamics is necessary to gain nuanced insights into processes of knowledge creation and distinguish into two different types of knowledge dynamics that unfold in time and space – cumulative and combinatorial knowledge dynamics. In cumulative knowledge dynamics, knowledge generation builds upon current and existing knowledge in a path-dependent way. While cumulative knowledge dynamics typically broaden and deepen existing knowledge bases over time, combinatorial knowledge dynamics are defined as “the unification of originally separated knowledge bases located in distinct institutional environments” (Strambach & Klement 2012:1848) and require the integration of heterogeneous actors from different sectors, knowledge domains and spatial scales. This is not an easy process and many barriers have to be overcome. A high degree of cognitive diversity among the actors involved and the limited degree of institutional overlap frequently causes challenges (Strambach & Klement, 2012). First empirical insights have shown that the absorptive capacity of actors to identify, interpret and exploit new knowledge (Cohen & Levinthal, 1990) is a pre-requisite for combinatorial knowledge dynamics. Another requirement for the successful combination of knowledge is overcoming not only geographical but also relational distance and the creation of proximity (Crevoisier & Jeannerat, 2010; Strambach & Klement, 2012).

The knowledge dynamics approach integrates research on the differentiated knowledge base taxonomy (Asheim 2007; Nooteboom, 2010; Manniche, 2012). Scholars using the differentiated knowledge base taxonomy observed that the ways of learning and knowledge creation in different sectors vary, and distinguish knowledge, according to the SAS typology, into analytical (science-based), synthetic (applied knowledge) and symbolic (creativity-based) knowledge bases. These different types of knowledge bases are characterized by different shares of codified and tacit knowledge and thus are differently sensitive to distance learning (Asheim, 2007). Analytical knowledge is highly formalized and universally valid and generated, for example within basic science. In synthetic knowledge bases, applied knowledge is mainly

generated through new combinations of already existing knowledge. In contrast, symbolic knowledge bases, which are cultural, normative, values-based knowledge, contain a high share of tacit knowledge and are strongly rooted in socio-cultural contexts (Asheim 2007; Strambach & Klement 2012; Manniche 2012). From a spatial perspective, symbolic knowledge can be considered “sticky knowledge”. It is difficult to transfer it to other contexts due to its context-dependency.

Combinatorial knowledge dynamics seem to be important in the development process of sustainability standards that address complex problems. Climate change, social inequality, persistent poverty or the spreading of HIV/Aids are examples of complex problems. As these problems evolve due to complex interrelations between the natural and the social sphere, there are no easy solutions to complex problems (Hamann & April, 2013). Due to the interconnected nature of these problems with other concerns, often at different spatial scales, tackling global challenges is a complex and uncertain endeavour and requires not only technical solutions but profound changes of social practices (Hoffman, 2003; Lozano, 2008). When addressing single aspects of complex problems individually, this is usually less successful in tackling the problem than acknowledging the links and interrelations between them and developing a strategy to address these in an integrated approach. This is why finding solutions to complex problems goes beyond the capacity of one organisation (Valente, 2010; Williams et al., 2017).

Applying the knowledge dynamics approach on the development of sustainability standards that aim to address complex global challenges has the potential to gain new insights into the development of sustainability standards in interaction processes with their local and global environments over time. Investigating micro dynamics of knowledge within sustainability standard setting that underlie these innovation processes provides an opportunity to analyse innovation processes without being limited to administrative borders or specific sectors or domains. Furthermore, the knowledge dynamics approach can be applied to the micro-level, in this case the Fair Trade Tourism (FTT) standard creation, as well as to the macro-level and institution building within the development path of South African tourism (Strambach & Klement, 2012). Hautala & Höyssä (2017) point out that while the analysis of micro-level knowledge dynamics is still limited it is highly important because it is at the micro-level of actors where knowledge creation takes place and where knowledge dynamics unfold

(Howells, 2002; Hautala & Höyssä, 2017). A further advantage of using the knowledge dynamics approach is that it enables scholars to trace the mobility of knowledge across borders and sectors and investigate processes of the “anchoring” of knowledge in new institutional contexts (Crevoisier & Jeannerat, 2009).

2.2.3 The Intersection of Global and Local Institutions

GPN scholars have acknowledged that the implementation of transnational standards into new institutional contexts intertwines with domestic law and other types of rules (Bartley, 2011). This often leads to various tensions, conflicts or complementarities between different forms of regulation (Locke et al., 2013; Lund-Thomsen and Nadvi, 2010). Integrating insights from evolutionary economic geography (EEG) and neo-institutional approaches from organisation theory can provide new insights on how barriers for the local implementation of transnational and global standards can be overcome. These approaches underline that local institutional environments evolve over time in a path-dependent way (MacKinnon et al., 2009; Boschma & Martin, 2010; Gertler, 2010). They are characterized by institutional structures that shape cognitive frameworks, perceptions and actions or, in simple language, they shape the way humans think and act (Scott, 2014). These place-specific institutional structures with regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive elements guide the behaviour of actors (humans and organisations) and impose both - constraints and empowerment (Hodgson, 2007; Scott, 2014). Accordingly, this means that knowledge bases of actors, firms and industries also develop over time in path dependent processes (Teece et al., 1997; Eisenhardt & Martin, 2000; Nooteboom, 2010). They are embedded within place-specific local institutional environments and in turn, are influenced by the institutional environment (Turvani, 2001; Martin & Sunley, 2006).

Innovative sustainability standards are novel institutions that have been developed with the aim to guide the behaviour of actors. These institutions structure social practices (Scott, 2014). Due to what is known as the duality of structure and agency (Tolbert & Zucker, 1996; Gertler, 2010), institutions are durable social structures and provide stability, while at the same time being exerted in social practices and undergoing constant change. Knowledge-based theories show that institutions are context bound and cannot be easily transferred and implemented like an object into new institutional settings. Applying these insights on the analysis of

innovative global standards, a special type of institution, can generate new insights about how these standards can be developed and adapted to specific local institutional contexts that have evolved in path-dependent ways so that they can successfully be implemented and “anchored” locally (Crevoisier & Jeannerat, 2009).

Against this background, a conceptual framework that integrates the knowledge dynamics approach with research from EEG focusing on path dependency and neo-institutional theory offers a way to gain dynamic insights into the intersection of local and global standards and contributes to a deeper understanding on why some standards gain local legitimacy and can be implemented locally while others are violated and cannot be integrated into the local institutional architecture. This framework offers a possibility to explore how the evolutionary development paths of sustainability standards influence their implementation along GVCs/GPNs. Furthermore, it provides an opportunity to illuminate how standard setting processes, unfolding at the micro-level of actors, influence the overall development path of South African tourism and, in turn, are influenced by the local institutional environments.

2.2.4 Preliminary Conclusions

Combinatorial knowledge dynamics seem to be particularly relevant for the development of sustainability standards that aim to balance social, economic and environmental concerns in GVCs/GPNs. This is caused by the high complexity of the issues that are addressed. Nation states or other actors generally cannot address these problems alone because the cause and effects of these challenges do not usually coincide in time and space. Instead, the consequences may evolve slowly and appear much later in time and at a place other than where they were caused. Therefore, the collaboration of various public and private actors from different institutional contexts and spatial scales is necessary for the development of innovative, context-adapted solutions, including sustainability standards. However, the integration of the demands of these various actors from the Global North and the Global South is a complex issue and many barriers have to be overcome in these knowledge combination processes. Moreover, the knowledge-based perspective shows that standards cannot be transferred to other contexts easily. They are not an object, but rather they govern social practices and in turn, are shaped and interpreted locally. How to develop and implement sustainability standards that adequately address local and global concerns and promote

sustainable development processes in the global economy is currently underexplored. With the aim to address this research gap, the evolutionary development path of the sustainability standard “Fair Trade in Tourism” was analysed for this thesis. The rationale for choosing the case is explained in the next section.

2.3 Research Context: South African Tourism

Tourism is one of the world’s largest industries. According to the World Bank (2010:11), one direct job in tourism generates about 1.5 additional jobs in tourism supply chains. At a global level, the Worldbank (2014) estimates that the sector accounts for 258 million direct and indirect jobs, equivalent to 8.8 percent of the overall number of jobs and contributing of 9.1 percent of the world’s GDP (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2014; Christie et al., 2014). Therefore, many governments, especially in developing countries try to develop the tourism industry strategically and exploit its advantages for job creation and economic development (De Beer et al., 2013).

In post-apartheid South Africa, tourism is one of the most important sectors for employment creation in a country of exceptionally high socio-economic fragmentation and unemployment (Koelble 2011; Seif & Spenceley 2007). South Africa is one of the most unequal societies in the world (OECD, 2017). The country has a Gini income inequality index of 0.62 (OECD, 2017), its official unemployment rate is at 27.7 % while the extended unemployment rate that includes discouraged job seekers lies around 40% (Statistics South Africa 2017). Within this context characterized by high levels of poverty and inequality, the tourism sector currently contributes to almost 10 percent of GDP and directly employs more than half a million people in South Africa (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2014). But this has not always been the case.

Originally, South Africa mostly missed out on the massive global increase of international tourism (Seif & Spenceley, 2007; Rogerson, 2002; Koelble, 2011). During the apartheid years, the tourism industry was very negatively affected by international sanctions, and the numbers of international tourists travelling to the country were limited. Furthermore, the domestic tourism market was largely underdeveloped as per apartheid regulations, the vast majority of the local population was not allowed to move freely in the country (Visser & Rogerson, 2004). Yet, with the demise of apartheid and the emergence of democracy, the situation changed

dramatically. South Africa's peaceful transition from apartheid dictatorship to democracy - with Nelson Mandela as an icon of the liberation struggle - fascinated people all around the world (Koelble, 2017). Thus, the country suddenly experienced high levels of tourism growth (Visser & Rogerson, 2004; Alexander, 2013; Koelble, 2011). At the same time though the decease of the apartheid policy framework and its apparatus led to an initial lack of an appropriate national policy framework to govern the sudden tourism growth and to exploit its potential to reach the country's development goals (Rogerson, 2002; Visser & Rogerson, 2004).

This institutional gap was soon addressed. The post-apartheid government identified the sector as "a missed opportunity" (DEAT, 1996:6) because the tourism industry in South Africa had evolved to be "predominantly white-owned and white-managed". Its potential to contribute to sustainable development processes was constrained by the legacy of apartheid, yet crucial to implement the country's overall development strategy (DEAT, 1996). Thus, the national government started its efforts to develop an enabling environment in which the tourism industry could thrive (Seif & Spenceley, 2007; Koelble, 2011, NDT, 2011). The first important step was the development of the 1996 "National White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa" (Tourism White Paper) which constitutes the overarching policy framework and guideline. The Tourism White Paper identified a set of challenges that had to be addressed. These included a lack of skills and training opportunities, a poor level of quality, limited market access of local tourism entrepreneurs and limited integration of communities and previously neglected groups into tourism supply chains, inadequate environmental management practices, a lack of infrastructure in rural areas and a lack of appropriate institutional structures at a national level (DEAT, 1996; South African Tourism, 2008).

With the aim to address these challenges and transform the development path of South African tourism, the national Tourism White Paper introduced the concept of responsible tourism (RT) as the key guiding principle of tourism development in South Africa. By introducing RT, the government aimed to develop the tourism industry in such a way that it contributes to the improvement of the quality of life of all South Africans (DEAT, 1996). The Tourism White Paper also laid out how the government perceived the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders. The importance of public-private collaboration was

emphasized with a view that tourism should be government led, private sector driven, community based, and labour conscious (DEAT, 1996). In order to provide tourism businesses with practical suggestions for the implementation, the national government developed the 2002 'National Guidelines for RT' and a 'RT Manual' in a multi-stakeholder processes involving representatives from 121 South African organisations (Goodwin et al., 2012). These included government departments, tourism associations; travel trade associations; the private tourism sector, NGOs, civic society and consultants. The inclusive development process aimed to facilitate legitimization of the RT concept by the different stakeholders as well as continuous development processes to translate the concept into practice.

South African tourism is a very interesting case as the country was the first country in the world to include RT in its national tourism policy (NDT, 2012). A significant milestone for raising international awareness of the South African work on RT was the worldwide first 'Conference on RT in Destinations' that was held in Cape Town in 2002. The outcome of the conference was the Cape Town Declaration on Responsible Tourism that is based on the South African national guidelines for RT. The CT Declaration, developed in South Africa is regarded seminal to the unfolding global understanding of RT (NDT, 2012). It has, for example, been adopted by the World Travel Market – an organisation that annually hosts the biggest RT event in the world that brings together the global tourism industry and is supported by the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (WTM 2017).

One important organisation that emerged within the South African context is FTT organisation². The objective of the non-profit organisation is to reduce poverty and inequality within the post-apartheid context and to contribute positively to the socio-economic transformation in the tourism industry. In order to do so, the FTT organisation has developed a sustainability standard and associated label which is based on South African initiatives on RT as well as global principles of Fair Trade. As opposed to most other sustainability standards the FTT standard has been developed by actors from the Global South. It is compliant with national legislation including Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) requirements and focuses on working conditions and environmental performance. It is divided into 16 categories (see Figure 3) and associated requirements that take social, ecological and

² Originally the organisation was named "Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa" (FTTSA). The name was changed to "Fair Trade in Tourism" (FTT) in 2013.

economic issues into consideration. The FTT standard focuses on the social dimension of sustainability with the vast majority of its criteria being social criteria (FTT, 2013).

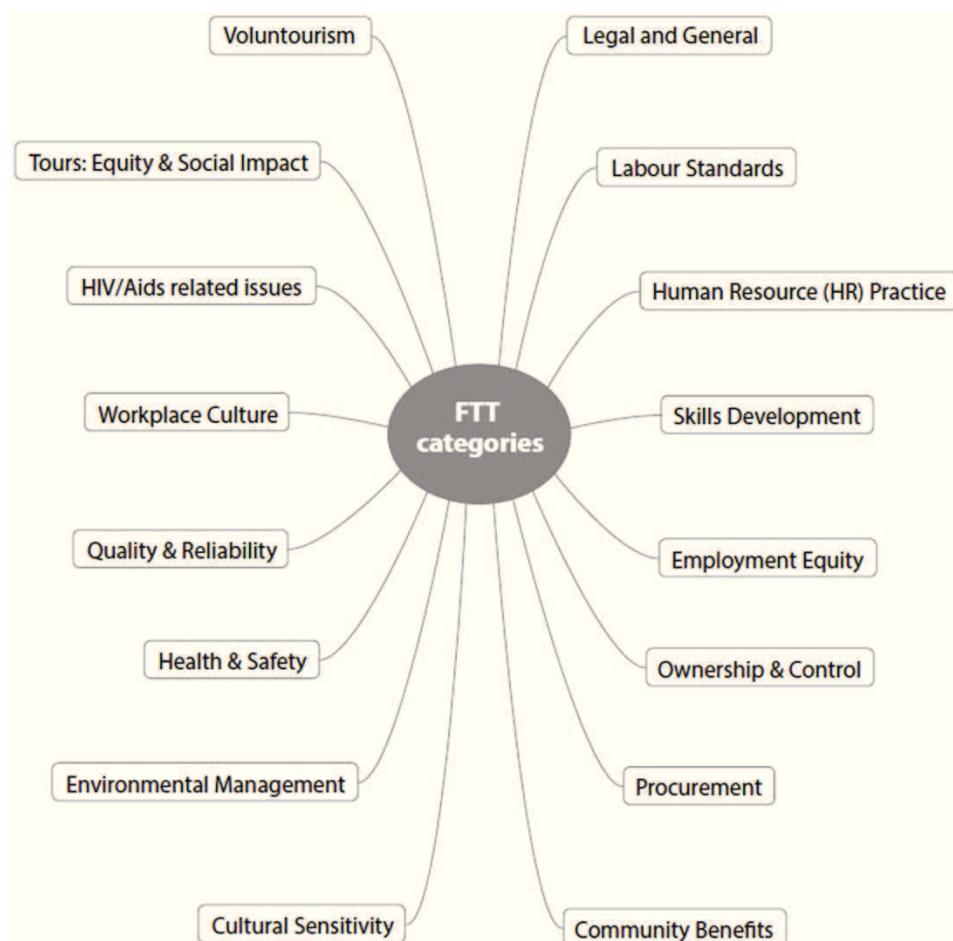


Figure 3: The Fair Trade in Tourism (FTT) Categories. (Source: Own figure based on FTT, 2013.)

Ever since its inception in 2002, the FTT organisation has been supporting the national government in facilitating RT practices, and there have been numerous public-private interaction processes between the national government and FTT. For example, the FTT organisation actively took part in the development of the RT guidelines in 2002 and the RT manual in 2003 (Seif & Spenceley, 2007). Furthermore, the organisation has initiated the “Sustainable Tourism Certification Alliance Africa (the Alliance)”, a multi-stakeholder initiative consisting of public and private RT stakeholders from Southern and East Africa. The organisation has pro-actively been involved in standard setting at a global level, for example as a member of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC). The FTT standard was one of

the first standards in the world that was acknowledged by the GSTC in 2011 (GSTC, 2012). This underlines the FTT standard's high reputation in the global tourism industry. These aspects make it particularly appealing to analyse South African tourism and the creation, impacts and implementation of the FTT sustainability standard from a transnational, knowledge-based perspective. The in-depth analysis of the case of the FTT standard - a sustainability standard from the Global South that is well-integrated into the national institutional context and at the same time provides answers to global demands of sustainable business practices may help to gain novel insights into how the development path of a standard influences its intra- and inter-organisational impacts and its implementation within GVCs/GPNs.

III Methodology

3 Methodology

This section will discuss the rationale for employing case study research and analysing the case of “Fair Trade in Tourism”. It will present the data that has been collected and give an overview of the papers that are part of the cumulative PhD thesis.

3.1 Case Study Research

The purpose of this research was to investigate how sustainability standards can be developed in an inclusive way that integrates the interests of various stakeholders from different spatial contexts. It sought to understand how the evolutionary development path of a sustainability standard influences its intra- and inter-organisational impacts and its implementation within GVCs/GPNs. Against this background, a case study design was chosen as the most suitable research design. It is applied appropriately when the aim of the study is to answer ‘why’ and ‘how’ questions rather than ‘how many’ or ‘how often’ (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). Yin (2009:18) understands case study research as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident”. Gerring (2004:342) provides another useful definition by defining a case study as “an intensive study of a single unit for the purpose of understanding a larger class of (similar) units.” The underlying assumption of case study research is that the in-depth study about one phenomenon (the case) is valuable on its own because it contributes to gain a better understanding about a contemporary problem, possibilities to address it, and it can contribute to theory building (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Baxter, 2010).

Case study research can be considered a research approach. It is no discrete methodological paradigm but more than only a method to collect data (Baxter, 2010; Lamnek, 2010). Case study research has been based on a constructivist research paradigm and built on the assumption that reality is a social construction (Yin, 1994; Stake, 1995). As humans try to understand the world in which they live, they interpret and give meaning to their experiences. These subjective meanings evolve in social interactions and are influenced by past experiences. Thus, the historical and cultural contexts in which people live shapes the way people understand and interpret the world (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Crabtree & Miller, 1999).

Understanding constructivism as a starting point for case study research is important as it largely informs the subsequent strategy of inquiry and the methods used, the process of data collection, analysis, and interpretation (Creswell, 2009).

A case study approach allows the researcher to explore a phenomenon within its context and to gain a very rich and detailed picture. The combination of multiple sources of data ensures that the issue is not explored through one lens but through a variety of lenses in order to understand multiple facets, reveal causalities and develop a nuanced view of the phenomenon that is explored (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Even though most case study research uses qualitative methods, this is not always the case, and there are also quantitative case studies, and those using a mixed-methods research design, consisting of qualitative and quantitative data (Baxter, 2010).

There are different types of case studies that incorporate aspects of time and space in different ways (see Figure 4). Firstly, case studies can be classified into longitudinal and cross-sectional case study designs. Cross-sectional analyses are conducted at one point or one block of time during which the data collection takes place. In cases where there is a return phase to the field, or respectively, if no field work is involved, the analysis of documents or other data sources extends over certain time periods, this would make the study longitudinal. Longitudinal case studies are well suited to explore how a phenomenon changes over time in an environment (Baxter, 2010).

The second distinction can be made between single and multiple case designs. Multiple case designs, also referred to as comparative case studies, are applied when a number of cases in different contexts are analysed. It is often considered more compelling and can provide a better ground for comparisons and subsequent theory building. The researcher can assess if the identified phenomena are idiosyncratic or consistent across the cases (Yin, 2003). In contrast, single case studies, also known as intra-case studies, are usually applied for a very detailed investigation of rare, critical, typical or revelatory cases (Yin, 2003). Yet, single case studies may still involve more than one unit of analysis and give attention to a number of carefully selected subunits (Yin, 2003). Single case studies are very useful when the researcher intends to study the same case at different points in time. Thus, single case studies are generally more appropriate for longitudinal studies than multiple case designs.

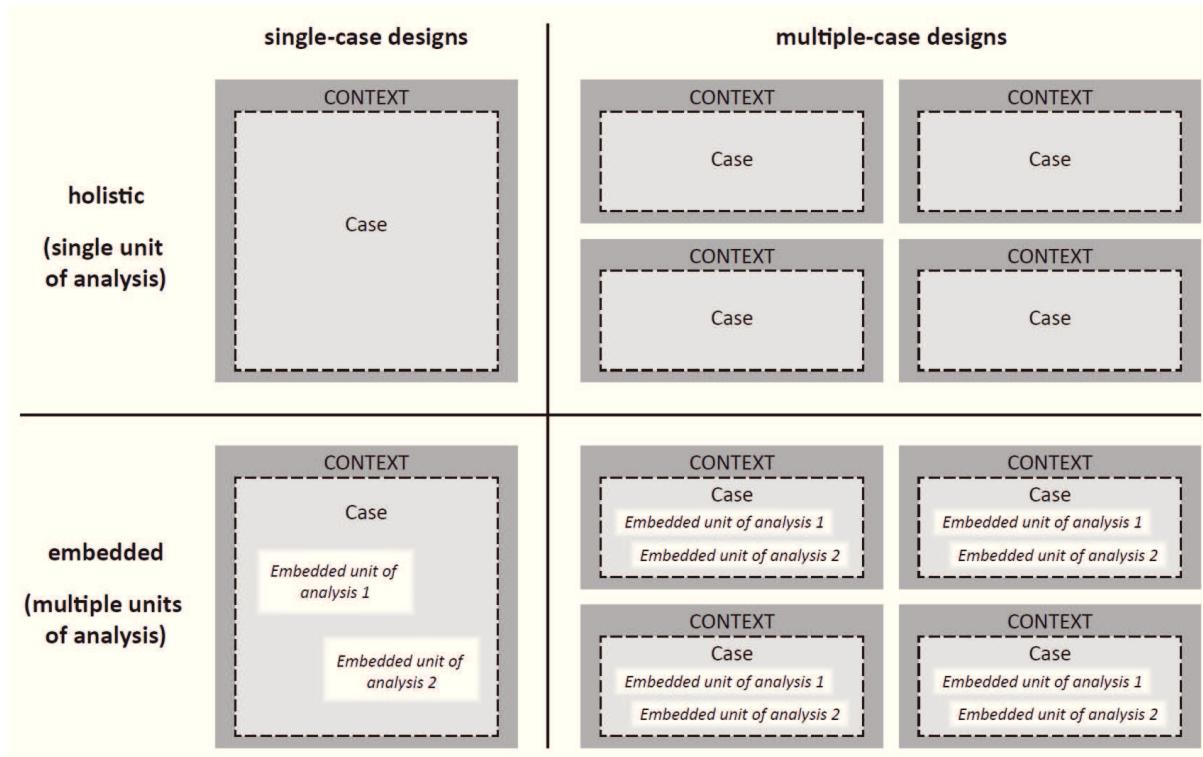


Figure 4: Basic Types of Designs for Case Studies. (Source: Yin, 2003:46.)

Despite the value of case study research outlined above, the approach has faced considerable criticism in the past (Yin, 2003; Flyvbjerg, 2006). The following section will discuss these concerns and simultaneously point out the value of case study research. The two major concerns relate to the number of units studied (the 'n' concern) and to the generalisability of case studies¹. Some researchers argue that it is not enough to study only one unit to contribute to academic knowledge by pointing to a sample size of n=1. Yet, this line of argumentation is misleading as it transfers statistical terminology onto non-statistical research (Baxter, 2010). Case study research is idiographic research. That means it is depth-oriented and intensive as opposed to nomothetic research, which is rather extensive and breadth-oriented. Even though it is not the aim of case study research to study a large number of cases, frequently there are still a number of carefully selected sub units that are studied as embedded units within the case (Baxter, 2010; Yin, 2003). Case study research integrates the context in which the case is embedded into the analysis. However, there is no statistical expression that

¹ Please refer to Flyvbjerg (2006) for a more detailed discussion of the potentials and limitations of case study research.

acknowledges the importance of context, and therefore statistical reasoning does not do justice when applied to case study research (Baxter, 2010; Flyvberg, 2006). Using Ramachandran's (1998) example of the talking pig, Siggelkow (2007) discusses how case study research can be very powerful on its own when the case was selected carefully:

"You cart a pig into my living room and tell me that it can talk. I say, "Oh really? Show me." You snap with your fingers and the pig starts talking. I say, "Wow, you should write a paper about this." You write up your case report and send it to a journal. What will the reviewers say? Will the reviewers respond with "Interesting, but that's just one pig. Show me a few more and then I might believe you"? I think we would agree that that would be a silly response. A single case can be a very powerful example." (Siggelkow, 2007:20).

This changes the perspective from the sample size towards the strategies of case selection and associated aims of investigating cases. Scholars have distinguished into different types of case study research (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003). The example above points out that descriptive case studies that are used to describe phenomena in their real-life context can be valuable when the case is a very unusual and interesting one. In addition to descriptive case studies, Yin (2003) further distinguishes into explorative and explanatory case study research. While explanatory case studies seek to explain causalities in real life situations that are too complex to be grasped by quantitative analysis, explorative case studies intend to better understand phenomena that have no clear, single set of outcomes (Yin, 2003).

As the boundaries between these categories are fuzzy, Siggelkow (2007) provides another useful distinction. In line with other scholars, he argues that case study research can be used to test existing research and hypotheses or used to show that existing research is currently insufficient to explain certain phenomena. A prominent example is Popper's black swan where one case, a black swan, falsified the assumption that all swans are white (Popper, 1959).

Furthermore, he argues that another aim of case study research is to motivate scholars to develop new research questions, include elements that are missing and refine existing hypotheses and concepts. Moreover, case study research can be used to explore cases to find inspiration for new ideas and generate new hypotheses. This is an appropriate strategy when the current knowledge on the phenomenon is limited. Lastly, case study research can also be used to illustrate conceptual arguments and show that they are not only theoretical constructs but occur in real life. Depending on the aim of the study, the cases have to be selected

appropriately, for example, because they oppose existing knowledge and theories or they constitute a certain phenomenon that cannot be explained by existing theory.

Within this context, Eisenhardt & Graebner (2007) argue that in particular qualitative case study research is valuable to inductive theory building because the insight into complex social processes gained through qualitative data can reveal much more than quantitative data alone. Case study research can then contribute to inductive theory building through exploration (Yin, 2003; Siggelkow, 2007).

A second frequent point of criticism is non-representativeness, “a biased sample” and a supposed lack of generalisability (Baxter, 2010). Yet again, cases are not picked randomly. In most cases, they are picked because they are special and provide insights that one would not be able to gain when choosing other cases (Siggelkow, 2007). Many qualitative researchers prefer the term transferability over generalisability to discuss in how far the findings from one case apply to other cases of the phenomenon that is investigated as the latter one is another term that originates in quantitative methods of inquiry (Baxter, 2010). Generalisability can be achieved in two ways. There is statistical generalisability acquired through large samples. Case study research cannot and does not aim to provide statistically generalisability. Instead, case study research can be used to derive generalisable theoretical statements and deriving credible explanations for the particular manifestations of the case. In order to achieve theoretical generalisability, the choice of case can be critical as well as generating coherent theoretical insights that are neither too abstract nor too case-specific and may resonate in other contexts that have not yet been studied (Yin, 2003; Gerring, 2004; Baxter, 2010).

Having introduced the strengths and weaknesses of case study research, the next section will elaborate on why and how a longitudinal single case study with embedded units was applied in this thesis.

3.2 Case Selection

The case of the FTT standard was used to analyse the creation, impacts and implementation of sustainability standards in tourism from a transnational, knowledge-based perspective. This case was chosen due to a number of reasons: Firstly, it focuses on the social dimension of sustainability with the large majority of its criteria being social criteria (Hamele, 2017; ITC 2017). This is unusual as most tourism sustainability standards are heavy on the environmental

dimension of sustainability. Secondly, as opposed to most other sustainability standards the FTT standard has been developed by actors from the Global South (Spenceley & Seif, 2007; Mahony, 2007). Thirdly, the FTT standard has a good reputation in the global tourism industry and was one of the first standards in the world that was acknowledged by the GSTC.

Research on standards in GVCs/GPNs has been criticised for having a Northern bias, analysing standard setting strategies of lead firms from the Global North for suppliers with fewer capabilities located in the Global South (Drezner, 2008). Currently, it is underexplored how sustainability standards can be developed in a way that integrates the interests of various actors from the Global North and the Global South. Therefore, the in-depth analysis of the case of the FTT standard - a sustainability standard from the Global South that is well-integrated into the national institutional context and at the same time provides answers to global demands of sustainable business practices may help to provide novel insights into how the development path of a standard influences its intra- and inter-organisational impacts and further implementation within GVCs/GPNs.

3.3 Data Collection and Analysis

With the aim to gain in-depth insights into the complex time-spatial development path of the FTT standard, the author of this thesis conducted an innovation biography and triangulated various methods and data. The mixed-methods design consisted of various qualitative and quantitative methods, including document analysis, narrative and semi-structured interviews, participatory observations and an explorative analysis of assessment data. The approach enabled the author to understand how the internal knowledge of the FTT organisation is related to the various sources of external knowledge located at different spatial scales. Before describing the methods and data in more detail, a short discussion about the advantages and limitations of the innovation biography approach is presented.

Innovation biographies place an innovation at centre stage and are used to reconstruct the time-spatial development path of an innovation. The two main dimensions of analysis are time and space. Applying this process-based approach enables the researcher to investigate the entire innovation process over time from its beginning through to its implementation and outcomes. The spatial dimension receives due attention when conducting innovation biographies as actor constellations, their relationships and knowledge contributions are

investigated from a geographical perspective. This makes the reconstruction of the time-spatial development path of an innovation possible (Butzin et al., 2012; Butzin & Widmaier, 2015; James et al., 2015).

Innovation biographies help to reveal causalities and interdependencies within the development process of an innovation (Butzin et al., 2012; Butzin & Widmaier, 2015). The advantage of this approach is that it allows the researcher to gain in-depth insights into the knowledge dynamics underlying the innovation without being limited to certain predefined geographical or sectoral borders, scales or firm boundaries. Yet, innovation biographies also have some limitations. It is often hard to determine the beginning and the end of the innovation process (Manniche et al., 2017). Furthermore, Butzin (2014) points to the potential of bias in selecting cases and due to reliance on interview data, as well as to the risk of neglecting the broader environment in which innovation processes take place.

While there is no single way to conduct an innovation biography, the research process can be divided into three phases. After the identification of an innovation, narrative interviews are usually a starting point to gain first insights. They can help to identify further relevant actors within the innovation process via snowball sampling. The interviews are used for an ego-centred network analysis in which the ‘ego’ is the innovation itself and actors involved are the ‘alters’. The insights are enriched by further interviews and document analysis. The last phase of the process comprises the triangulation of data and the analysis of findings (Butzin, 2014; Butzin & Widmaier, 2015).

The investigation of the FTT case study employed an innovation biography process and took place over a period of eight years from 2009 to 2016. To gain rich and nuanced insights and mitigate potential biases, a mixed methods approach was applied, which involved a predominantly qualitative research design. The two key methods were document analysis and qualitative interviews. They were complemented by participatory observations and an explorative analysis of assessment data. The methods and data applied are outlined below.

3.3.1 Document Analysis

A systematic document analysis was carried out with the intention to gain in-depth knowledge about the context embeddedness of the FTT standard at different spatial scales. This included a number of sources, as presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Overview of the Analysed Documents.

Published by	Documents	Aim
Government of South Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism White paper on RT (1996) • Reports on the development of the RT guidelines; RT handbook, the RT minimum standard • Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment legislation 	Gaining in-depth knowledge on the South African institutional context as well as in public-private interaction processes
FTT organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress reports and minutes on the initiation of the FTT organisation; • Annual FTT reports of the FTT organisation (2006 - 2016) • Regular FTT newsletters and media releases • Selected FTT client reports 	Investigating the development process of the FTT standard, actor constellations, and organisational and institutional changes
The Alliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alliance conference reports (2012 – 2016) • Case study reports 	Understanding interaction and institution building processes between the FTT organisation and Alliance members at a transnational scale
GSTC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports on the development of the global standard • Newsletters and media releases 	Getting insights into institution building processes in sustainable tourism at a global scale

3.3.2 Qualitative Interviews

Explorative and semi-structured interviews were at the heart of the data collection process. In total, 103 qualitative interviews were conducted with various stakeholders from South

Africa but also at other spatial scales (see Table 3 for an overview and Appendix I for a more detailed list of interviews conducted).

Table 3: Overview of Empirical Interviews (I).

Organisation	Number of Interviews
FTT-certified businesses	46
Formerly FTT-certified businesses	11
International and national tour operators	9
FTT organisation	12
Academia & Consultants	5
Ministry of Tourism	3
SA Tourism Board	1
NGOs	9
Other certification bodies	2
Assessors	5
Total	103

In order to investigate the development path of the FTT standard, representatives of the FTT organisation were interviewed multiple times. Due to these repeated visits, the researcher developed a thorough understanding of the work of the organisation and was able to ask relevant questions concerning organisational and institutional change. Moreover, trust evolved between the researcher and the representatives of the organisation, which led to openness in discussing not only successes but also challenges and weaknesses the organisation experienced during their work. These insights were triangulated with the perspectives of other actors concerning the FTT standard and organisation. At the national level, interviews were held with the Minister of Responsible Tourism, tourism experts, academics in the field, tour operators and relevant NGOs working in the field of tourism. At a transnational and global level, Alliance members, tour operators and assessors from FTT and Flo-Cert were interviewed.

Embedded sub-units in the case study on the FTT standard were tourism businesses that were certified or formerly certified by the FTT organisation. In the selection of the certified businesses, theoretical sampling strategies were applied. As FTT-certified businesses comprise

a very heterogeneous group, ranging from luxury hotels to emerging township entrepreneurs, located all over South Africa from very remote areas to cities, important selection criteria were its price category, size, offered services, certification time and geographic location in order to represent the entire range of certified businesses. This allowed cross- comparisons between different FTT-certified businesses. The main topics of the semi-structured interviews related to the reasons for the standard implementation, the associated intra- and inter-organisational impacts, including hindering and fostering factors as well as the role of the FTT organisations in supporting these changes; and finally the perceived impacts of the standard implementation. Moreover, a number of business representatives were interviewed multiple times to analyse how the effects of the standard implementation evolved over a period of time. Furthermore, formerly certified businesses were identified through the analysis of the FTT annual reports and contacted for interviews. The aim was to understand why some businesses had not been re-certified or re-applied for certification in order to investigate the barriers for re-certification and potential weaknesses of the standard.

The interviews were audio recorded and transcribed to avoid loss of information and ensure the transparency of the results. The interviews were coded using qualitative data analysis software (MaxQDA). In the data analysis, the author of this thesis used the methodological approach of the qualitative content analysis (Schreier, 2012; Mayring, 2014).

Qualitative content analysis is a method to systematically analyse qualitative data. Central to qualitative content analysis is the use of categories. They can be developed inductively, from the material, or derived deductively from theory and applied to analyse parts of the text (Mayring, 2014). While this method does not lead to statistically representative data, qualitative content analysis has three advantages: It is systematic, can be adapted flexibly to the material and reduces the amount of data (Schreier, 2012). Qualitative content analysis is systematic because it requires a certain sequence of steps to develop the coding framework with the relevant categories. The framework of analysis is flexible because the categories are modified in an iterative process until the framework matches the data and is appropriate to analyse the material. Finally, in the coding process, the researcher focuses on selected aspects of the material that relate to the overall research question. This reduces the amount of data (Kuckartz, 2012; Schreier, 2012; Mayring, 2014).

3.3.3 Participatory Observations

Most interviews with certified businesses representatives, usually owners or managers of the FTT-certified organisations, included on-site visits, which often lasted for several days. The aim was to observe daily business practices and compare these impressions with what had been explained during the interviews, talk to the staff in an informal way about their work and gain insights into the context in which the businesses were located.

Furthermore, in order to understand the current discourses and developments in sustainable tourism in sub-Saharan Africa, the author of this thesis participated in various industry events. These included visits to the World Travel Market Africa, an international travel and tourism trade show in Cape Town in 2015 and 2016. The event lasts for three days every year and puts a focus on responsible tourism with an extensive programme on RT and sustainable tourism. Moreover, the author of the thesis participated in one Alliance meeting in 2016. The focus of this multi-stakeholder meeting was put on two aspects: Firstly, on how to integrate African tourism businesses that have implemented sustainable tourism practices into global production networks of tour operators at different spatial scales and secondly, on mutual recognition agreements between standard setting organisations and possibilities to drive harmonisation in sustainability standard setting. A number of leading tour operators, government representatives, development organisations, consultants, standard setting bodies and businesses from 14 countries were present which made it possible to gain new insights from various perspectives.

3.3.4 Explorative Analysis of Assessment Data

While the qualitative interview data contributed to a deeper understanding of the processes and hindering and fostering factors for capability building and upgrading, quantitative assessment data, provided by the FTT organisation helped to explore the “hard facts”, such as wage levels or money spent on trainings. However, as the data provided by the FTT organisation was not designed for research purposes, many challenges occurred in the process of the quantitative data analysis due to an inconsistent and dispersed database. Complete assessment data was available from 18 certified businesses in total but time series data was only available from six businesses. In spite of these weaknesses, the assessment data was analysed in an explorative way due to the in-depth information provided. This information is

rare as businesses usually do not monitor their business practices in such detail and thus it was used to verify the interview data.

The empirical data generated from these various methods and sources were analysed according to the three topics: the development of the FTT standard, the intra- and inter-organisational impacts of the standard implementation at the micro level, and the implementation of the FTT standard within GVCs/GPNs. The outcomes of the data analysis have been used to answer the research questions guiding the individual papers of this thesis. They contributed to five academic contributions, which are described below.

3.4 Overview of Papers

The cumulative thesis consists of four academic journal articles and one book chapter that are thematically linked (see Figure 5). They can be found in the following five chapters (Chapters 4 to 8) of this thesis and. Four contributions have been accepted and published. One paper has been submitted to an international journal (*Geoforum*). The articles are all based on the empirical data that was collected from 2009 to 2016 and give answers to the research questions detailed in the introduction. The articles published relate to the research question as follows:

The **first article** entitled “Knowledge dynamics in setting sustainable standards in tourism – the case of ‘Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa’” has been published at “Current Issues in Tourism”. The paper argues that there has been little detailed exploration in the evolutionary trajectories of sustainable tourism standards from a knowledge-based perspective. Using the case of the FTT standard, the paper contributes to a deeper understanding of standard creation in global-local interaction processes over time and its impacts on the micro level of firms. Conceptually, it builds on two scientific debates: the neo-institutional approaches in organisational theory focusing on institution building and the research on innovation and knowledge dynamics. Empirically, it is based on 32 interviews conducted with different actor groups.

The **second article**, “Sustainability Innovations from a Transnational Perspective – Knowledge Dynamics and Evolutionary Trajectories of Tourism Standards in Developing Countries”, was published in the journal “Geographische Zeitschrift”. This paper makes a mainly conceptual contribution to the evolutionary trajectories of sustainability standards, which explicitly

include the social dimension. It focuses on the specific characteristics of sustainability innovations and applies the knowledge-based perspective on the evolutionary development path of innovative sustainability standards. Empirically, the evolutionary trajectory of the sustainability standard FTT is analysed from a transnational, knowledge-based perspective. The paper investigates the challenges that had to be overcome in the development of the FTT sustainability standard from the Global South as well as the enabling factors. It is based on 63 interviews conducted with different actor groups.

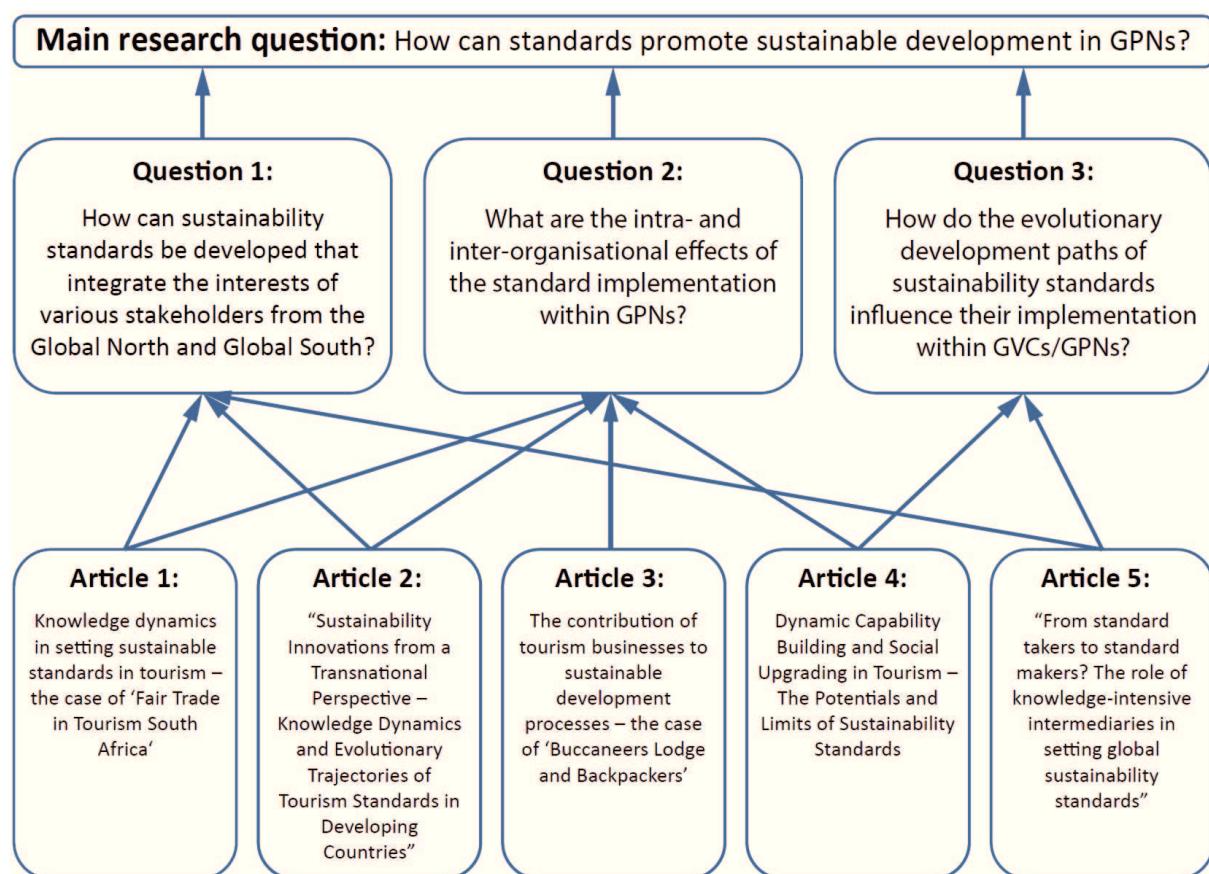


Figure 5: Overview of Contributions as related to the Research Questions of the Thesis.

The **third contribution**, "The contribution of tourism businesses to sustainable development processes – the case of 'Buccaneers Lodge and Backpackers'", has been published in a book on CSR and Tourism. The contribution argues that research strands on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and tourism have developed mainly separately from each other. A large share of the CSR literature investigates strategies of lead firms in the Global North while SMEs have only received limited attention. There are few academic articles and empirical

studies focusing on CSR activities in Africa, even though this continent is facing many ecological and socio-economic challenges. By using the case of “Buccaneers Lodge and Backpackers”, located in the Eastern Cape of South Africa, this contribution analyses the complex development process of CSR strategies of SMMEs in post-apartheid South Africa.

The **fourth article** entitled “Dynamic Capability Building and Social Upgrading in Tourism - The Potentials and Limits of Sustainability Standards” has been submitted to “Geoforum”. The paper argues that most of the research on socio-economic improvements at the firm level, termed upgrading in the GVC/GPN literature, has focused on upgrading as an outcome. There is a limited dynamic investigation of organisational change at the micro level of the firm and an insufficient acknowledgement of individual firm capabilities. These processes are intertwined with upgrading, but have not yet been understood in depth in GVC/GPN research. Against this background, the impacts of the FTT standard implementation were investigated with the aim to provide dynamic micro level insights on the potential of sustainability standards to contribute to capability building and upgrading.

Finally, the **fifth article**, “From standard takers to standard makers? The role of knowledge-intensive intermediaries in setting global sustainability standards”, has been published in “Global Networks”. It argues that in order to facilitate sustainable development locally, global standards need to integrate the context-specific needs of actors in developing countries. However, most standards are still developed in the Global North, while the inclusion of actors from developing countries remains limited. By investigating the FTT, this article analyses how special types of organisations – namely knowledge-intensive intermediaries (KIIs) from developing countries play an essential, yet unrecognised, role in global standard setting processes within GVCs/GPNs.

IV Papers

4 Knowledge Dynamics in Setting Sustainable Standards in Tourism – The Case of ‘Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa’

This chapter is a reprint of:

Strambach, S. & A. Surmeier (2013): Knowledge Dynamics in Setting Sustainable Standards in Tourism – the Case of ‘Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa’. In: Current Issues in Tourism, 16 (7-8), pp. 736-752. Special Issue on: Tourism in Sub-Saharan Africa: Consumption-Production Nexus, edited by Peter Dieke.

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Abstract:

The development of standards and certification programmes in global tourism has gained importance in the production-consumption-nexus. This paper deals with the ‘Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa’ standard, one of the first innovative service standards with a focus on the social dimension of sustainability. Until now, there has been little detailed exploration in the evolutionary trajectories of sustainable tourism standards from a knowledge-based perspective. This paper contributes to a deeper understanding of standard creation in global-local interaction processes over time and its impacts on the micro level of firms. Conceptually, it builds on two scientific debates: the neo-institutional approaches in organisational theory focusing on institution building and the research on innovation and knowledge dynamics. Empirically, it is based on 32 interviews conducted with different actor groups.

Keywords:

Knowledge dynamics; sustainable standards; institutional theory; South Africa; tourism

4.1 Introduction

Recently, the development of standards and certification programmes in the tourism industry has gained importance in the production-consumption nexus. The main drivers of these processes are changes in consumer behaviour and rising awareness of sustainability in the so-called North. Standards are tools to develop a common understanding of sustainability. They can serve as a benchmark for appropriate organisational practices and provide a basis to convey credibility and establish confidence with customers, especially intermediaries. When looking at sustainability standards in global tourism, the opposite is the case, and proliferation and high market opacity can still be observed. Attempts to align certification schemes globally and to strengthen social criteria remain a challenging task (Font, 2002; Font & Harris, 2004; Font & Epler Wood, 2007). The paper deals with ‘Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa’ (FTTSA), one of the first innovative service standards with an explicit focus on the social dimension of sustainability. Although FTTSA is regarded as an important example of promoting the social dimension of sustainability, academic literature investigating the FTTSA standard is rather limited (Boluk, 2011b) and, especially, a consideration of the time dimension is lacking. We analyse the evolutionary trajectory of the FTTSA standard from a knowledge-based approach, using a dynamic institutional theory-led perspective. We claim that the knowledge dynamics in the creation of sustainable standards in tourism have an impact on the processes of standard implementation and its further development. This paper contributes to a deeper understanding of the establishment and shaping of a sustainable tourism standard in interaction processes with its local and global environment over time.

4.2 Sustainable Standards in Tourism – Institution Building and Knowledge Dynamics

4.2.1 Evolutionary Trajectories of Standards

The rapid growth in the number of standards over the past two decades is closely connected with the globalisation of economic activities. The growing international trade and the ongoing fragmentation of value chains are major drivers. The increasing complexity of interrelations in global production and distribution between producers, different suppliers and retailers generates the need for greater coordination and for higher compatibility within value chains

(Gereffi, Humphrey, & Sturgeon, 2005; Nadvi, 2008; Nadvi & Wältring, 2004). Additionally, behaviour changes of consumers, mainly in developed countries, have fostered the global diffusion of environmental and social standards – also in the global tourism industry.

However, only recently have differences in the evolutionary trajectories of different types of standards been acknowledged. In the area of product and technical standards, as well as in quality management standards, tendencies towards convergence and harmonisation in rule setting have been observed for a long time.

However, divergence between environmental and social standards can be observed and can clearly be seen in sustainable standards in tourism. There has been great diversity from the beginning, with many distinct company codes and labels in both developed and developing countries, often called ‘proliferation’. Furthermore, higher barriers in the implementation and diffusion of sustainable and social criteria along value chains have been reported (Baddeley & Font, 2011; Dief & Font, 2012). Compliance with such types of global standards proves ineffective if they are not socially embedded in the local context (Medina, 2005; Nadvi, 2008). Social and environmental standards seem to have many more conflicting constellations and heterogeneous actors, and networks have to be involved to achieve legitimacy (Font & Harris, 2004; Nadvi & Wältring, 2004).

Sustainable standards can be considered a special type of institution and the outcome of complex institution-building processes. They are formulated rules with the potential to promote efficiency-based, eco-saving and credible sustainable business practices. Although the term sustainability has not yet been defined uniformly, the concept has been undergoing a substantial change, which is also reflected in sustainable standard building in tourism. The ‘new perspective’ of sustainability puts emphasis on the relative, context-specific and dynamic nature of sustainability (Faber, Jorna, & Engelen, 2005; Jorna, 2006). In the course of this shift, the social dimension in the triple bottom line has raised awareness because of its potential to foster long-term sustainable development globally. However, compared to progress which has been achieved regarding the measurement of the ecological dimension, the development, implementation and assessment of social indicators are regarded as challenging. These processes are still considered ‘scientifically uncertain and unreliable’ and have a high degree of ambiguity (Font & Harris, 2004). Additionally, certification programmes incorporating social indicators seem to have problems expanding and it appears questionable whether they have

the potential to become economically viable (Medina, 2005). These issues make it particularly interesting to investigate the trajectories of such sustainable standards with an explicit social dimension and their spatial-temporal shaping.

4.2.2 Institution Building in Sustainable Standards in Tourism

On a global level, the need to strengthen the social dimension of sustainability in tourism is reflected in efforts to align sustainable certification schemes. The Mohonk Agreement from 2000 was the first approach to create a common baseline for sustainable tourism and ecotourism; and social criteria were explicitly integrated into certification schemes (Medina, 2005; Mohonk Agreement, 2000).

Two years later the ‘Cape Town Declaration on Responsible Tourism (RT) in Destinations’ went a step further, meeting the global challenge of reducing social and economic inequalities and reducing poverty. The declaration was an outcome of an international conference preceding the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002. It is based on already accepted international knowledge as required in the affiliated development of sustainable tourism. The declaration builds on general characteristics of RT and contains guidelines for economic, social and ecological responsibility in tourism. A distinct feature of the declaration is the explicit recognition of the context-specific nature of sustainability resulting in different, locally embedded forms of sustainable tourism (Cape Town Declaration, 2002).

The most recent initiative to align sustainable standards in tourism and foster convergence at the global level emerged in 2008 with the establishment of the Partnership for Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria (GSTC Partnership). Universal principles for sustainability were created during multi-stakeholder consultation processes and the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria, launched in 2010, define minimum criteria that any tourism enterprise should aspire to in order to protect natural and cultural resources while using tourism as a tool to reduce poverty (Global Sustainable Tourism Council, 2012).

These initiatives moving towards convergence in sustainable tourism in the global arena underline the complex nature of these types of standard development. Meanwhile, not only environmental and economic indicators, but also socio-cultural criteria in standard setting are considered a necessary baseline. The context-specific nature of sustainability implies the

further adaptation and translation of these inevitably vague guidelines established at the global level into more concrete meanings and measurable criteria at national and local levels. While there is a consensus on these general features among experts, the questions on how these translation processes unfold over time, how interaction processes at different spatial scales are interrelated, which kind of reinforcing mechanism or lock-ins in the sense of inertias are causing hindrances are largely still open. Research on the diffusion of emerging international technological and management standards provides substantial evidence that the specific institutional configurations at the national level are shaping these processes strongly. The regulative, normative and cognitive elements of the national institutional environment impact the adoption of practices largely by fostering or hampering the compliance and acceptance at the firm level (Braun, 2006; Delmas, 2002; Scott, 2008). ‘Social standards’ have only recently been introduced. Insights into their trajectories may therefore help with the development of policies under a multi-level approach.

4.2.3 Knowledge Dynamics in the Institutionalisation Process of Sustainable Standards

From the knowledge-led perspective, the creation of sustainable standards incorporating the social dimension can be considered an innovation and the visible outcome of complex knowledge dynamics. Considering knowledge as the key resource for innovation shifts the focus from the innovation itself to the processes of the creation, the use, transformation and diffusion of knowledge, which is defined as knowledge dynamics (Crevoisier & Jeannerat, 2009; Strambach, 2008, 2012; Strambach & Klement, 2012). Neo-institutional approaches point out that ‘new behaviours’ or practices undergo a process, and there are distinct stages, until they are taken for granted by actors and insofar fully institutionalised (Tolbert & Zucker,, 1996). By combining both views, major fields of tension can be identified, not only in the development of such types of standards, but also in the pre- and semi-institutionalisation phase and in the process of full institutionalisation. It is argued that these three generic phases are constituted by different settings for action and decision-making.

The development of sustainable standards incorporating the social dimension inherently needs heterogeneous actor constellations in the pre-and semi-institutionalisation stage. Compared to product or technical standards, this stage requires a higher degree of knowledge combination. Not only does technological, organisational and economic knowledge have to

be merged, but also institutional and cultural knowledge. Heterogeneous actors from different spheres – the economy, politics and civil society – operating at different spatial scales – the local, national and global, have to combine their knowledge and come to a common understanding. Due to the inherent tacit dimension, the context sensitivity and the process character of knowledge, it cannot be transferred easily among actors or combined randomly, as identified by the theory of knowledge economics (Foray, 2004; Nooteboom, 2010). These interaction processes bear multiple conflicts because the involved actors come from different backgrounds and have different norms, values and ideas of sustainability.

During habitualisation – or the attribution of shared meanings to actions – (Tolbert & Zucker, 1996), several barriers have to be overcome in order to reach social consensus and to create a common understanding of the meanings of appropriate sustainable and social practices. This also influences the further ‘objectification’, which is necessary to transfer action patterns to contexts beyond their point of origin – the concrete multi-stakeholder meetings. From the knowledge perspective, the social dimension of sustainable standards entails a high amount of cultural and symbolic knowledge. This type of knowledge has a pronounced tacit and context – dependent component, which makes codification more difficult compared to, for example, technical knowledge (Asheim, 2007). Difficulties in defining social standards and assessing criteria in the consensus process are clearly addressed by scholars in the field (Font & Harris, 2004; Medina, 2005).

A further area of tension becomes evident in the development of sustainable standards in tourism with the social dimension rooted in the combination of knowledge located at different spatial scales. On the one hand, there is the concern that integrating actors from the global North in standard development might result in their domination of the rule-setting process (Font & Harris, 2004; Jamal, Borges & Stronza, 2006; Medina, 2005). On the other hand, in service industries like tourism, customers are directly involved in service production and value creation. The symbolic knowledge of values, needs and normative orientations of the demand is often missing when standards are created in the global South. Thus, products are often not consumer-orientated, which results in problems in finding clients and markets.

Institutions thrive when their benefits outweigh the costs (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991). However, in the case of social standards, it is extremely difficult to measure and evaluate the positive outcome. That is also the reason why scholars have doubts whether these will

become economically viable. Often the positive outcomes can only unfold and be perceived later in time. At the firm level, the implementation of a new standard does not automatically lead to change in organisation behaviour. Therefore, the positive impacts are strongly dependent on the interpretation of social standards by respective actors at the micro level of organisations. As social criteria have a high degree of ambiguity, this is a further tension that hampers full institutionalisation.

Applying the knowledge dynamic approach to the creation of sustainable standards and investigating the nature of the institution-building process provides the potential to generate new insights. This is done by using the example of FTTSA, an innovative service standard with its main emphasis on the social dimension of sustainability. As the standard is still in its early stages, it provides the opportunity to investigate the process of institution building, and the underlying knowledge interactions.

4.2.4 The FTTSA Standard and the Certification Process

The objective of FTTSA is to facilitate ‘a fair, participatory and sustainable tourism industry in South Africa’ (Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa [FTTSA], 2012). The standard defines a fair tourism business as one that is in compliance with the following six principles: fair share, democracy, respect, transparency, reliability, sustainability (FTTSA, 2012; Mahony, 2007; Seif, 2001). These broad principles are translated into concrete social and organisational practices and embedded in a system to measure fairness. The basis is a set of measurable criteria divided into 16 categories which take social, ecological and economic issues into consideration (see Table 4).

On the one hand, the standards address internal working conditions within the businesses. In detail, social areas of human resource practices, skills development, employment equity, ownership and control, workplace, culture and HIV-/AIDS-related issues are assessed, but also environmental management practices and economic issues like quality and reliability are evaluated. On the other hand, the external integration of the businesses into the region and the creation of linkages to the communities are measured. This is especially challenging since internal indicators as well as ones that move out of the boundaries of the business itself into the communities are evaluated (Font & Harris, 2004). Process as well as performance standards are used to examine procurement practices, community investment and

interaction, recruitment and employment practices and conservation activities. For example, FTTSA assesses the time and share of turnover spent on skills development measures, the employment opportunities for local residents and the support of small business suppliers from the communities (FTTSA, 2012). The categories relate to business operation areas and provide an opportunity to see in which fields strengths and weaknesses occur. Finally, businesses get feedback reports on their performance on all categories as well as on principles.

FTTSA certification is available to both established and emerging South African tourism businesses of any size. The certification process is divided into three stages. First, the applicants have to do an online self-assessment. If they pass, they can proceed to the next stage – the site assessment. Here an FTTSA-trained assessor or external consultant verifies all the information on-site and collects further information. This is done by interviewing management, staff and also guests and by evaluating all relevant paperwork. The perception of customers is also taken into account since they are directly involved in the service production. The assessment usually lasts between two and five days, depending on the size of the business. The cost of assessment is 2750 Rand/day and a share of the assessor’s travel costs has to be paid. Furthermore, there is an annual user fee. The last stage is carried out by an independent Certification Panel. The report of the on-site assessment is reviewed and written feedback is provided. Successful applicants are awarded with the FTTSA logo. Re-assessment is done every two years and an ‘Improvement Action Plan’ has to be submitted after 12 months (FTTSA, 2012). For certification, at least 70% of the criteria have to be fulfilled (Seif & Spenceley, 2007). However, there is no minimum percentage that has to be reached in each category. If there are weak areas, they can be compensated in other categories. Still, there are some criteria which are unavoidable (FTTSA 1, personal communication, March 14, 2009).

In evaluating the FTTSA certification system, it is clear that it has certain weaknesses for which it has been criticised. First, the environmental criteria are regarded as weak. Second, there is only one award as opposed to a tiered system. Third, indicators belonging to the standard are not open to the public and the judging process during the site assessment is usually not performed by FTTSA-independent assessors, leading to a twofold lack of transparency. Other challenges are the amount of paperwork and the associated costs of certification. Furthermore, it is argued that the standard is mainly supporting communities and it is

questionable if there is added value for the company itself (Font & Harris, 2004). What clearly sets FTTSA apart from other, similar schemes is its strong promotion of the social dimension of sustainability, its focus on feedback and learning, and its dynamic process orientation.

Table 4: Examples of FTTSA Certification Standards.

Category	FTTSA-certified businesses must...
Legal and general	Comply with all relevant laws
Labour standards	Apply fairness and transparency in daily management
Human resources practices	Ensure secure internal reporting channels
Skills development	Invest sufficient time and finances
Employment equity	Provide sufficient employment opportunities for local residents
Ownership and control	Take steps to ensure that historically disadvantaged individuals are equitable represented in decision-making structures, incl. but not limited to top management
Procurement	Support HDI-owned, local and small business suppliers of goods and services; promote linkages and enable guests to spend money in the local communities
Community benefits	Invest in community development initiatives
Cultural sensitivity	Ensure that local communities are consulted regarding activities that the business conducts in the areas in which they reside
Environmental management	Monitor consumption of resources, implement measures to minimise this, improve environmental knowledge among staff, guests and the wider community
Health and safety	Provide staff with a safe and healthy working environment
Quality and reliability	Should be star-graded annually by the Tourism Grading Council of SA; solicit guest feedback and manage it in a consistent and transparent fashion
Workplace Culture	Create a working environment based on tolerance and non-discrimination
HIV/Aids-related issues	Support staff who are either infected or affected by HIV/Aids; implement appropriate HIV/Aids prevention measures
Tours: equity and social impact	Have consistent and fair written agreements in place with third-party suppliers; ensure equitable and transparent distribution of tour income
Voluntourism	Consult communities to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate projects

4.3 Methodology

The qualitative research design was chosen in order to get new insight into the underlying knowledge dynamics in the unfolding of the trajectory of the FTTSA standard in an inductive way. The empirical methods of data collection used a combination of secondary desk research, literature review and explorative as well as semi-structured interviews with different actor groups (see Table 5). These include mainly managers of FTTSA-certified businesses, the FTTSA organisations, NGOs, political actors and tourist experts in research organisations.

Table 5: Overview of Empirical Interviews (II).

Organisation	Number of Interviews
Hotels	7
Backpackers	4
Tour operators	8
FTTSA	4
Academic	4
Ministry of Tourism	2
Regional Tourism	1
Development Agency	
Tourism NGO	2
In total	32

The aim was to reconstruct the process of the standard creation under a knowledge dynamic perspective. This is done to explore the evolutionary trajectory and gain new insights in its spatial-temporal shaping. The qualitative research methods imply weaknesses that are widely acknowledged – for example, they are not appropriate to provide representative results. However, the design was chosen because the intensive analysis allows an in-depth investigation into the development and implementation of the FTTSA standards. It provides an opportunity to reach individual and subjective perception levels so that the researcher can achieve a thorough understanding of complex phenomena and the interdependence of diverse determining factors (Flick, 2010).

Theoretical sampling strategies were used for the empirical selection process. Important selection criteria in the case of the certified businesses were its price category, size, offered services, certification time and geographic location in order to represent the whole range of

diversity of certified businesses. After an intensive stage of desktop research and two explorative interviews, the empirical data collection in SA was conducted in two phases: in 2009 and in 2012. The main part of the empirical research took place in 2009 where 23 semi-structured interviews were conducted with FTTSA-certified tourism businesses and with actors of the FTTSA organisation, NGOs and tourist experts. The average length of interviews was 60 minutes. The empirical research in 2012 focused on institutional changes in the South African tourism context and the diffusion of sustainability standards within SA. Nine qualitative interviews were conducted, with political actors such as the Ministry of Tourism in the RT Division, the FTTSA organisation, other NGOs and experts in the South African tourism. In total, the empirical results are based on the in-depth investigations of 32 face-to-face interviews. The collected data were documented in auditory and written form by protocols and transcripts to avoid the loss of relevant information and to ensure transparency of results. In the data analysis, we followed the methodological approach of the qualitative content analysis according to the steps developed by Mayring (2000). Central for the qualitative analysis are the use of categories deductively or inductively built to identify text passages that are relevant for the analysis. While the material was examined mainly by deductive theory-led coding, these were supplemented by inductive ones formulated directly out of the material.

4.4 The Development Process of the Standard FTTSA – Actors, Knowledge Dynamics and Institutionalisation

In this paragraph, we reconstruct the dynamic development process of the FTTSA standard by analysing the knowledge dynamics within changing actor constellations (see Figure 6). The method employed is a combination of literature review and empirical interviews.

South Africa is a country facing massive social and economic challenges, such as high levels of inequality and exclusion concerning space, race and gender (Seif & Spenceley, 2007; United Nations Development Programme, 2003). These inequalities are also reflected in the tourism industry (South African Tourism, 2008). However, tourism offers a huge potential for poverty reduction and can be a driver of sustainable development (Ashley, Roe, & Goodwin, 2001; Boluk, 2011a; Rogerson, 2004; Saarinen, Rogerson, & Manwa, 2011).

4.4.1 The Pre-and Semi-Institutionalisation Phase 1999 – 2002

Heightened awareness of the need to reach the development goals such as improved quality of life, equality and justice, led the post-Apartheid government to recognise the potential of a sustainable form of tourism. In 1996, the national government developed the concept of RT and integrated strategies of ‘Pro-poor Tourism’ with poverty alleviation at their centre (Boluk, 2011a). RT was supposed to be the key guiding principle of tourism development in SA (FTTSA 1, personal communication, March 14, 2009). In the National White paper on the development and promotion of tourism in South Africa of 1996, the aim of RT is the development of ‘the tourism sector as a national priority in a sustainable and acceptable manner, so that it will contribute significantly to the improvement of the quality of life of every South African’ (Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, 1996). In order to provide tourism businesses on the micro level with practical suggestions for the implementation of the concept, the ‘National Guidelines for RT’ and a ‘RT Manual’ were published in 2002 (FTTSA 1, personal communication, March 14, 2009).

In the pre-institutionalisation phase, FTTSA was originally rooted within the Fair Trade in Tourism Initiative (FTTI), a pilot project promoted by the ‘International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) SA’, a branch of the global NGO (see Figure 6). The aim of the FTTI was to protect the natural and cultural assets of SA as a basis for a sustainable income generation for disadvantaged groups as well as a strengthening of fair relations between supply and demand. The habitualisation and objectification phase required several multi-stakeholder workshops in order to balance the different priorities set by the actors from different spatial levels. For example the IUCN focused on the ecological dimension whereas Tourism Concern, a UK-based NGO, was more concerned about the socio-economic dimension of sustainable tourism. The NGO contributed knowledge on the global Fair Trade Tourism movements, and especially the FTT guidelines in whose development they were involved (FTTSA 2, personal communication, September 25, 2009). The 2000 international multi-stakeholder workshop with an evaluation of the results of the pilot phase was one of the most important events in a period of finding a mutual agreement about the concepts and principles of Fair Trade in Tourism as applied to the South African Context (FTTSA 2, personal communication, September 25, 2009).

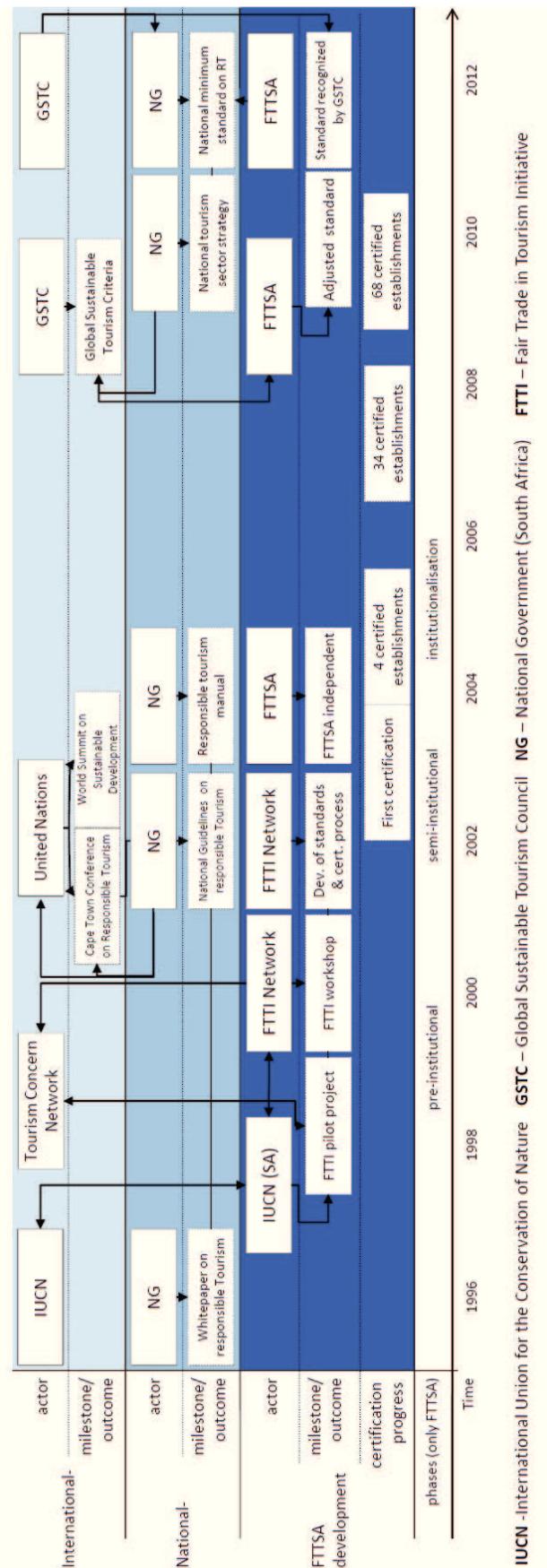


Figure 6: The Development Phases of the Standard Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa FTTSA.

After 2000, a new phase in the process could be identified – the semi-institutionalisation phase started with the translation of meanings and definitions of sustainable and RT into concrete social practices, measurement and assessment systems (see Figure 6). In the period from 2000 to 2002, close interaction processes in the development of the national guidelines and the FTTSA guidelines took place since the director of FTTSA was also closely involved in the development of the RT guidelines. As the RT guidelines were finalised earlier, a lot of implicit knowledge was gained from the national experience that also influenced the FTTSA standardisation processes. A further source of knowledge was the Tourism Concern network and the FTT guidelines developed by them (FTTSA 2, September 25, 2009; Academic 1, August 24, 2009; personal communication). Furthermore, the name of the FTI was changed into FTTSA in order to stress the South African context but also to signal the connection to the global movements. The trademark and principles were developed in 2002.

An important milestone for raising international awareness of the South African work on RT was the worldwide first ‘Conference on RT in Destinations’ that was held in Cape Town in 2002. As the topic of tourism was neglected at the World summit, the national government took a leading role in the organisation of this key event with delegates from 20 countries (Ministry of Tourism 1, personal communication, April 3, 2012). The widely recognised result was the Cape Town Declaration based on the RT guidelines already developed in SA (Ministry of Tourism 1, personal communication, April 3, 2012). It is evident that the national government actively transformed the institutional environment of SA and took part in international rule setting in RT at the global level by introducing their model of RT.

4.4.2 The Institutionalisation Phase – 2003 ongoing

With the first certifications in 2003, the institutionalisation phase began and the concept was broadly implemented on the market. There were 18 businesses certified by FTTSA in 2006, 34 in 2008 and 65 in 2010 (FTTSA, 2012). In 2004, the organisational form of FTTSA was changed and it became an independent organisational body from IUCN, but remained donor-funded, mainly supported by international, but also national NGOs (FTTSA 1, personal communication, March 14, 2009).

On the national level, FTTSA has actively taken part in the development of the National Minimum Standard for RT (NMSRT) and contributed its experience in sustainable tourism

certification. The NMSRT was launched in September 2011 (Ministry of Tourism, personal communication, April 3, 2012). The specific aims pursued with this standard are the creation of a mutual agreement of RT in SA and the fostering of the broad implementation of the concept in the tourism industry. With these measures, the national government set a clear signal for businesses to integrate the responsible organisational practices; the efforts of FTTSA and the national government go hand in hand. In January 2012, FTTSA was recognised on the global level by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC), a UN-founded global initiative dedicated to the global promotion of sustainable tourism practices. It was the first recognised certifying organisation in Africa and the standard is one of 10 GSTC recognised standards worldwide (FTTSA 4, personal communication, April 3, 2012). To comply with GSTC and NMSRT standards, a strengthening of the environmental criteria as well as an extension of indicators in the area of cultural sensitivity, was necessary (FTTSA 4, personal communication, April 3, 2012).

In the process of standard development, developing countries usually remain passive standard takers who are constantly being challenged to comply with new concerns. (Font & Harris, 2004; Nadvi, 2008). Sustainable tourism proves to be an exception. Among other certification programmes, FTTSA and the National Tourism Ministry were actively involved in the consultation process and advice process aimed at setting standards at the global level (Ministry of Tourism 1, personal communication, April 3, 2012). Considering the development of the FTTSA standard from definition to early institutionalisation, the results show that even if a standard is set up it does not remain static, but is subject to constant change and adaption in interactive processes. A key feature of the FTTSA standard is the adaption to new developments on the national and global level, which resulted, for example, in an improvement of the environmental criteria and the assessment system.

4.5 Impacts and Implications from the Perspective of the Certified Businesses

After the first years of the standard implementation in businesses, it is important to gain insights in the evaluation of impacts and constraints from the perspective of the firms in the tourism industry. The following results are based on interviews with 19 managers and owners of certified businesses. The reasons, motivations and perceived impacts and changes based on the implementation of the standard were the main themes. The analysis is divided into

three parts: starting with impacts within the companies (intra-organisational effects), followed by impacts in their networks and environment (inter-organisational effects) and finally exploring constraining factors.

4.5.1 Perceived Intra-Organisational Impacts based on the Implementation of the Standard

As motivations are drivers for actions, it is important to understand the reasons leading firms to implement the standard. Most tourism establishments expressed that they already tried to be fair before they applied for certification. As an example, one tour operator explained his intention as an entrepreneur: *Whatever business we started we wanted to see if there was a way in which we could develop linkages with disadvantaged communities and whether we could make some kind of positive impact on the major challenges South Africa was facing.* (Tour operator 7)

These values were also reflected when speaking about certification motivations: ‘I think in so many ways I was already trying to do things before Fair Trade. That’s why I wanted to become Fair Trade accredited, so I can grow within that framework’ (Tour operator 2).

Various other reasons were mentioned, but the ones that were underlined the most were the expectation of external recognition, verification of fair business practices and the pursuit of feedback and improvement. A number of businesses explained that they were proud of being a fair business and wanted to underline this more. Others stressed that the external verification of fair business practices by FTTSA resulted in higher credibility: *There is a lot of greenwashing in the industry where people say they do this and that but they really don’t. I found FTTSA, they can actually verify what you are saying is actually what you’re doing. It’s giving you credibility.* (Tour operator 3)

The expectation of getting feedback from FTTSA and being able to compare one’s own business with others becomes visible in the statement of a hotel manager: ‘There was no overriding strategy about how to apply socially and environmentally responsible practices in tourism. The reason was not so much to get it but it was actually to learn how to do it’ (Hotel 4). Thus, there were usually a couple of interconnected reasons and expectations that led firms to their application.

Going into more detailed impacts at the intra-organisational level, the improvement of daily management practices is an outcome, especially perceived by new, small-scale entrepreneurs.

The standard implementation helped them professionalise their management practices: ‘It made us aware of a lot of things that we didn’t comply with, that we thought we were doing fine with. So it was like a big process of creating an awareness of where your shortcomings are’ (Tour operator 3). After assessment, the feedback provided new perspectives on management practices and suggested opportunities for constant improvement.

They gave us 23 points that we had two years to get in order. So by the time she came I had all my 23 points in order and then she came back this year and I had some more, I had 13 points because she looked at different angles that we had to concentrate on. It means you can always strive for something more. (Hotel 6)

Especially the importance of learning through the assessment and feedback of the FTTSA organisation was underlined. ‘Tools and skills’ to implement sustainable business practices on an ongoing basis seem to support the development of organisational routines and competences within these firms.

Furthermore, a bundle of impacts on internal working conditions were perceived by all businesses interviewed. For the staff, the FTTSA standards meant an improvement of their working conditions as their wages, training opportunities, etc. were assessed on fairness. They were all confidentially interviewed by the assessors and asked about their perceptions of the working environment. The owners or managers expressed that from their viewpoints, even though they may not always have been liked by all employees. This created more transparency, support and accountability for the staff. This, in turn, would lead to higher staff motivation and retention and directly influenced the service quality in their businesses and improved the guest experience. As underlined for example by a tour operator (3) ‘When your staff is more positive, obviously it will be a better experience for the guests.’

4.5.2 Perceived Inter-Organisational Impacts based on the Implementation of the Standard

A somewhat unexpected result of the empirical analysis was the strong emphasis on impacts in the field of networking and knowledge exchange. A high share of the business representatives mentioned that the certification fosters network relations with other like-minded, certified businesses. Networking processes were initiated through certification. This provided possibilities for the mutual exchange of concepts and ideas, support with standard implementation and evaluation, and the exchange of best practices:

Partnering with or having exposure to what other FTTSA accredited companies are doing, that's really something that is and will be of value to us. To see what it is that we can do differently, that we can start introducing. (Hotel 4)

Knowing each other and having a certain kind of cognitive proximity expressed in the business values seem to facilitate cooperation, which was also indicated by the fact that several businesses recommend each other to customers and started small-scale mentoring programmes. Moreover, the integration of businesses into their surrounding communities obliged the social criteria of the standard. The resulting impacts were mainly perceived as positive in the end. Building relationships with local small-scale suppliers or facilitating community interactions were particularly mentioned.

Economic impacts, such as recognition, credibility and the market positioning were perceived differently. Some interviewees neglected the awareness of consumers strongly (Backpacker 1), while tour operators and hotels in particular, were convinced of ‘a real awareness’ (Hotel 4). Tour operators regarded the label as very relevant when making new business contacts and finding new partners. It added value to the company that set them apart from other, similar ones. Many businesses explained that they felt that international tour operators sent more customers after certification, but they were not able to quantify this. ‘We have only had like one or two bookings from them. But now she is very keen to start working closer with us because we are FTTSA’ (Hotel 6). Moreover, the marketing done by the FTTSA organisation, e.g. on trade fairs or on the website, was particularly important to small, upcoming entrepreneurs who often lack market access. They explained: ‘It is very important because the company gets exposed to the world’ (Hotel 2).

Indirect benefits in the form of getting easier access to government support and funding, for example for the ‘Tourism Enterprise Programme’ of the Department of Trade and Industry and a general facilitation in the business environment add to the perceived impacts. ‘I think if you’re a company like myself that relies on government permits, like we need a permit to operate, I think it makes the whole process easier if you are FT accredited’ (Tour operator 4).

4.5.3 Constraining Factors in the Standard Implementation

The main difficulties and constraints in the implementation of the FTTSA standards can be grouped into costs and investments, transparency and human barriers. Related to costs, the

often very time-consuming implementation processes and high investment costs in the beginning were underlined: *It took me four years to get it, to be honest with you. And I nearly threw in the towel; I don't know how many times (name of FTTSA staff) spoke to me and said, 'you are so close.' And after four years I finally got there. (Tour operator 4)*

Another owner underlined the difficulties for small businesses: *It gives you a lot of bloody work. I sometimes believe it's impractical for a small business, you know. (Name of hotel) has a whole department with a bloody manager who takes care of all the staff. However, we have to do it all ourselves. (Backpacker 3)*

Therefore, it was stated that there are some tourism businesses in SA that would have liked to be certified, but are excluded due to a lack of resources, mainly concerning time. The difficulties in measuring or quantifying the benefits of standard implementation are hindering factors: ‘If I took it away what would I lose? Maybe not a lot (...). And is it worth the time? There are probably easier ways. Maybe then you wouldn’t do it though.’ Later the same person concluded ‘it’s not cheap but the return is priceless’ (Backpacker 3). It was also explained that from an economic perspective, it can hardly be calculated if the costs of assessment and the user fees pay off.

There was concern about the recognition of the brand since it did not yet seem well-known enough: *I don't think it's big enough yet and one of the complaints that people have is that there are so many certifications, a thousand eco-certifications, but this is the only one that I have come across that deals not only with environmental issues but also with, you know, community and economic impact issues. (Tour operator 7)*

The implementation of the standard criteria requires a certain transparency that causes reservations about being open to scrutiny: ‘You can’t carry on with normal business. You are more open to scrutiny; you are literally putting a magnifying glass on top of your business’ (Hotel 4). This meant that it was not possible for businesses to take so-called ‘short-cuts’ since they were assessed regularly.

Intra-organisational human barriers were perceived as an important issue, for example the loss of power: *There are some staff that don't like working in a more egalitarian society, they like being able to control the tips and take bribes and look after certain guests and not others, you know, and do things just because guests pay them tips. (Hotel 4)*

Other human barriers were rooted in a lack of understanding of the value of social practices and the introduction of certain criteria such as the HIV/AIDS training.

4.6. Discussion of the Empirical Results

The tourism establishments that are FTTSA-certified consist of a heterogeneous group ranging from 5-star urban luxury hotels to backpacker hostels in very remote areas and tour operators. What clearly came out in the results were the common values binding them. This is a feeling of taking on responsibility for South African society by trying to make a positive impact amid the challenges SA is facing. However, a change of certification motivation over time could be identified. These aspirations were much more underlined by the ‘pioneers’ of FTTSA, the businesses that were certified in the beginning. The most important reasons to apply for certification was getting feedback and fostering learning to achieve even more fairness in management practices. The driving factors of these businesses for adapting the FTTSA standard were normative and value-based drivers: mainly social and moral obligations. Only later a certain market value of the label seemed to have evolved, with businesses explaining economic-based motivations like external verification of fair business practices, credibility and recognition, and achieving a distinct market position. The challenges concerning the implementation of sustainability standards in the tourism industry which are widely discussed in scientific literature were present. The main constraints were rooted in a lack of resources concerning time and money, cognitive constraints and human barriers due to a weak understanding of the value of sustainability on both sides, within the companies and from the side of some of their clients. Moreover, the proliferation of labels and the difficulties in quantifying the economic benefits of social sustainability hampered implementation.

However, although owners and managers of certified businesses were aware of these challenges of implementing the standard, they consider the positive impacts to outweigh the negative ones over time. This can be traced back to the positive evaluation of learning processes which come along with standard implementation. The changes made to business practices contributed to competence building and knowledge accumulation over time.

Furthermore, the often mentioned lack of market awareness was not perceived since especially internationally sustainable tour operators were interested in working with the certified businesses. Although the analysed companies could not prove it with figures, they

were convinced that the FTTSA label facilitated a further integration into global value chains. Recent developments of FTTSA product development point in the same direction; since 2010, Fair Trade Travel Packages consisting of certified establishments and accredited by Fair Trade International have been sold internationally.

4.7 Conclusion

Until now, there has been little detailed exploration in the evolutionary trajectories of sustainable tourism standards incorporating the social dimension from a knowledge-based perspective. Using the case of FTTSA, one of the few standards integrating the social dimension of sustainability, the paper proposes investigation into the complex nature of standard development over time and space. The results underline the interface of global and national knowledge dynamics in standard setting, shaping each other over time. The co-evolution of the RT guidelines at the national level and later in the development of the NMSRT, as well as the current GSTC developments, mould the trajectory of the FTTSA standard at the different stages.

The active participation of South African actors in global initiatives of sustainable standard setting in tourism enabled the knowledge transfer from the global arena to its integration in national standard setting processes. Simultaneously, the cumulative knowledge on RT standards developed earlier in SA contributes to the baselines of global standards creation. By tracing the knowledge dynamics in the development of the FTTSA standard, the results clearly show the continuous adjustments to new developments on a national as well as a global level. Like other sustainable tourism standards, FTTSA was developed through multi-stakeholder consultation in a participatory manner. However, a consensus-based standard-setting process is not a sufficient condition for a successful broader institutionalisation at the micro level. As Medina (2005) shows by the example of Belize, translation problems occur in the process, and certification programmes including social standards have problems in expanding (Font & Harris, 2004). Although the FTTSA standard is at an early stage, some conclusions on fostering factors for the broader institutionalisation of social standards can still be drawn.

First, as the value added to social standards is hard to grasp and can only be perceived after a certain amount of time on the basis of learning processes, drivers for the implementation at

the firm level are in the beginning mainly value-based motivations. Second, social criteria are aimed at achieving the compliance of specific behaviour by setting stimuli for firms to contribute to social benefits within the organisation and in the environment. The results of the FTTSA case underline that establishing the right balance of prescribed details and concreteness, but also openness for interpretation and adaptation at the individual business level, is an important facilitating mechanism. Especially for process standards with the aim to support learning, knowledge and capacity building, a decisive factor is the quality of the assessment and regular feedback. Third, the case of the FTTSA standard indicates that – even if social standards are set up based on a consensus model – there is still the need for continuous improvements and adjustments due to changes in the national and local environments in order to reach the targeted social benefits.

Additionally, the empirical results stress that combinatorial knowledge dynamics are a prerequisite enabling the FTTSA standard to serve as a mediator in the consumption – production nexus. The specific way of combining heterogeneous knowledge bases in the institution-building process has had a double-sided effect: the FTTSA standard is well-integrated in the national institutional context and at the same time provides an answer to global demands for fairer and more sustainable tourism practices.

Future research is needed to evaluate the impacts of the FTTSA standard on the micro level in a more systematic way as it is still at an early stage. An analysis of the implications for the communities involved in the activities of the certified businesses is especially required. Boluk (2011a) points in the same direction and underlines the need to integrate the perspective of the local people in further studies in more detail. Investigation into the diffusion of the FTTSA standards in the broader region and globally could provide new insights. Moreover, comparative research on the evolutionary trajectories of sustainable standards in tourism in other national contexts might contribute to a deeper understanding as to why some follow a much faster process and evolve more quickly while others never become highly institutionalised. A special focus on the mutual influence and interaction processes with other sustainability labels and the GSTC over time might be of interest for further policy development.

5 Sustainability Innovations from a Transnational Perspective – Knowledge Dynamics and Evolutionary Trajectories of Tourism Standards in Developing Countries

This chapter is a reprint of:

Strambach, S. & A. Surmeier (2016): Nachhaltigkeitsinnovationen aus transnationaler Perspektive - Wissensdynamiken und Entwicklungspfade von Tourismusstandards im „Globalen Süden“. Geographische Zeitschrift, 104 (4), pp. 214-238.

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Abstract: Standards and certification systems have gained in importance in facilitating sustainable development processes in global production and consumption networks. However, they are mainly developed in the Global North while actors from developing countries mostly remain passive standard takers. Currently, the majority of standards are primarily resource-oriented while social criteria are less integrated. The result is a lack of acceptance due to low levels of embeddedness. Which requirements standards have to fulfill in order to facilitate a sustainable development is still widely unanswered. The paper intends to make a mainly conceptual contribution to the evolutionary trajectories of sustainable standards, which explicitly include the social dimension. Conceptually, neo-institutional approaches in organizational theory, focusing on institution building, and the research on innovation and knowledge dynamics are combined. Empirically, the evolutionary trajectory of the sustainability standard “Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa (FTTSA)” (since 2013 Fair Trade in Tourism FTT) is analysed from a transnational, knowledge-based perspective, based on 63 interviews conducted with different actor groups.

Key words: Sustainable Innovation, Standards, Evolutionary Trajectories, South Africa, Tourism

5.1 Einleitung

Auf globaler Ebene gewinnen sozio-ökologische Standards und Zertifizierungssysteme zunehmend an Bedeutung, um nachhaltige Entwicklungsprozesse anzustoßen (Nadvi & Waltring 2004). Wichtige Treiber sind ein verändertes Umweltbewusstsein und damit einhergehende Konsum- und Nachfrageveränderungen in hochentwickelten Ländern (*ibid.*). Bisher werden Standards allerdings weitestgehend im Globalen Norden entwickelt, während Entwicklungs- und Schwellenländer eher passive standard takers sind. Eine mangelnde lokale Einbettung kann sich jedoch negativ auf die Akzeptanz und die lokale Implementierung und Diffusion der Standards auswirken (Lund-Thomsen & Nadvi, 2010; Dannenberg, 2011; Nadvi, 2014).

Nachhaltigkeitsstandards im Tourismus zielen darauf ab, ein gemeinsames Verständnis von nachhaltigem Tourismus zu entwickeln. Sie setzen benchmarks für angemessene Organisationspraktiken und sollen Transparenz und Glaubwürdigkeit für Konsumenten erzeugen. Gerade in Entwicklungsländern ist Tourismus ein bedeutender Wirtschaftsfaktor und hat, wenn er nachhaltig gestaltet wird, das Potential soziale, ökologische und ökonomische Prozesse positiv zu beeinflussen (Rogerson, 2004; Saarinen et al., 2011).

Die Standardisierung von nachhaltigen Unternehmens- und Organisationspraktiken im globalen Tourismus steht derzeit jedoch noch vor großen Herausforderungen. Trotz verschiedener globaler Initiativen zur Schaffung von Konvergenz im nachhaltigen Tourismus, welche bereits in den 1990er Jahren initiiert wurden, herrscht eine erhebliche Unübersichtlichkeit, da eine Vielzahl sehr unterschiedlicher Standards und Labels existiert. Ein Großteil von ihnen ist primär ressourcenbasiert und konzentriert sich auf die ökologische Dimension der Nachhaltigkeit, soziale Kriterien dagegen werden bisher wenig oder weniger tief einbezogen (Font & Harris, 2004). Gründe dafür sind die schwierige Operationalisierbarkeit und die starke Kontextbezogenheit, welche insbesondere für die soziale Dimension der Nachhaltigkeit zutreffen. Letztere ist ein normatives Konzept und daher ist die Bewertung sozialer Praktiken von kulturspezifischen Unterschieden geprägt. Vor allem in Ländern des „Globalen Südens“ sind der Wertewandel und das Umweltbewusstsein relativ gering ausgeprägt. Dies bedingt, dass soziale Standards in ihrer raumzeitlichen Durchsetzung in der Regel als sehr beschränkt bezeichnet werden (Font, 2002). Derzeit gelten soziale Standards im Tourismus als „scientifically uncertain and unreliable“ (Font & Harris 2004, 991;

Mundt, 2011). Erst in den letzten Jahren widmen sich Forschungen zur Durchsetzung von Standards und Zertifizierungssystemen in globalen Produktions- und Wertschöpfungssystemen den evolutionären Entwicklungspfaden dieser Standards. Sie liefern erste Hinweise, dass die Art und Weise wie freiwillige Standards entstehen und implementiert werden, Auswirkungen auf die dynamische räumliche Verbreitung und Adaption in globalen Wertschöpfungssystemen haben (Nadvi & Wältring, 2004; Nadvi, 2008; Dannenberg, 2011). Vor diesem Hintergrund leitet die folgende Forschungsfrage diesen Artikel: Wie entstehen und verbreiten sich innovative, nachhaltige Standards im Tourismus, welche die ökologischen, ökonomischen und sozialen Bedürfnisse, Interessen und Ziele heterogener Akteursgruppen aus unterschiedlichen Räumen wechselseitig berücksichtigen und ausgleichen?

Empirisch dient der Standard Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa (FTTSA) als Fallstudie, um dieser Frage nachzugehen. Er ist einer der ersten innovativen Dienstleistungsstandards, der sich explizit auf die soziale Dimension der Nachhaltigkeit konzentriert. Bemerkenswert ist darüber hinaus, dass er in einem Land des „Globalen Südens“ entwickelt wurde und sich inzwischen in globalen Wertschöpfungsketten transnational zu verbreiten beginnt. Obwohl der Standard weltweit große Aufmerksamkeit erlangt hat und einer der ersten Nachhaltigkeitsstandards im Tourismus ist, der vom Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) anerkannt wurde, gibt es bisher nur wenige wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen über ihn (Boluk, 2011; GSTC, 2012).

Das Ziel dieses Artikels besteht darin, den Entstehungspfad des FTTSA-Standards aus einer transnationalen, wissensbasierten Perspektive zu analysieren und die Spannungsfelder sowie Hindernisse darzustellen, die bei der raumzeitlichen Entwicklung überwunden werden müssen. Es gibt derzeit noch viele offene Fragen dazu, wie sich Anpassungs- und Übersetzungsprozesse von Nachhaltigkeitsstandards über die Zeit entfalten, in welchem Zusammenhang Interaktionsprozesse auf verschiedenen räumlichen Ebenen stehen und welche Faktoren fördernd bzw. hindernd für den Institutionalisierungsprozess sind. Der Ansatz der Wissensdynamiken bietet das Potential den Entstehungspfad von Nachhaltigkeitsinnovationen raum- und sektorenübergreifend zu analysieren. Er kann dadurch zu einem tieferen Verständnis über die Entwicklungs- und Veränderungsprozesse von nachhaltigen Tourismusstandards in Interaktion mit dem lokalen und globalen Umfeld

beitragen. Theoretisch-konzeptionell baut der Artikel auf zwei wissenschaftlichen Debatten auf: den neo-institutionellen Ansätzen der Organisationstheorie mit dem Schwerpunkt der Institutionenbildung und der Forschung zu Wissensdynamiken und Innovation. Aus der Perspektive des Mehrebenenansatzes ist die Einführung von Nachhaltigkeitsstandards eine junge Entwicklung im Rahmen von politischen Nachhaltigkeitsinitiativen. Eine Analyse der Entwicklungstrajektorie des FTTSA-Standards kann insofern auch zu Erkenntnissen für die politische Strategieentwicklung beitragen.

Der Artikel ist folgendermaßen aufgebaut: Zunächst werden die Besonderheiten von Nachhaltigkeitsinnovationen beleuchtet und dabei erläutert aus welchen Gründen Nachhaltigkeitsstandards im Tourismus als solche betrachtet werden können. Anschließend wird auf die Bedeutung von Wissensdynamiken eingegangen, auf denen diese Standards basieren. Nach der Darstellung der methodischen Vorgehensweise erfolgt die empirische Rekonstruktion der multiskalaren Wissensinteraktionsprozesse, die dem Entstehungspfad des FTTSA-Standards unterliegen. Der Artikel schließt mit Schlussfolgerungen und einem Ausblick auf weiteren Forschungsbedarf.

5.2 Nachhaltigkeitsinnovationen

Die Forschungszweige zu Innovationen und Nachhaltigkeit haben sich weitestgehend unabhängig voneinander entwickelt. Erst in jüngster Zeit entstehen ein intensiver wissenschaftlicher Diskurs zu Nachhaltigkeitsinnovationen, sowie erste interdisziplinäre Ansätze, diese zu verbinden (Paech, 2005, Rennings, 2005, Deutsches Global Compact Netzwerk (DGCN), 2011).

Dies hängt unter anderem mit einem veränderten Verständnis des Konzepts der „Nachhaltigkeit“ zusammen. Die „neue Perspektive“ betont die dynamische, relative und kontextspezifische Natur der Nachhaltigkeit (Jorna, 2006; Faber et al., 2005). Nachhaltigkeit wird nicht mehr als ein statisches Konzept verstanden, das sich eindeutig und widerspruchsfrei in operationale Ziele übersetzen lässt. Stattdessen wird es als ein diskursiver Rahmen oder ein Leitbild gesehen, das einem stetigen Wandel unterliegt (Jorna, 2006; Schneider, 2006). Um innovative, kontextangepasste Lösungsansätze für bestehende Problemlagen zu entwickeln, die alle Dimensionen der Nachhaltigkeit (Soziales, Ökologie, Ökonomie) berücksichtigen, sind komplexe Bewertungs- und Aushandlungsprozesse zwischen verschiedenen Akteursgruppen

erforderlich. Dabei müssen vielfältige Spannungsfelder und kontroverse Interessen überwunden werden, wobei die Bewertung dieser Ansätze erst ex post erfolgen kann. In der wissenschaftlichen Debatte erhält die soziale Dimension der Nachhaltigkeit in der jüngsten Zeit verstärkt Aufmerksamkeit, da erkannt wurde, dass die Veränderungen sozialer Praktiken für eine nachhaltige Entwicklung wesentlich sind (Paech, 2005; Schwarz et al., 2010; Schulz, 2012). Dies ist insbesondere relevant für Länder des „Globalen Südens“ in denen das Umweltbewusstsein und institutionelle Regulierungen oft erst in geringem Maße gesellschaftlich etabliert sind. Allerdings sind sie besonders stark von den globalen Megaproblemen betroffen, wie dem Verlust von Biodiversität, den Auswirkungen des Klimawandels und der steigenden sozio-ökonomischen Fragmentierung.

Bisher besteht wenig gesichertes Wissen über die Entstehungsbedingungen, die Gestaltung und die Durchsetzung von Nachhaltigkeitsinnovationen. Zudem weist der heutige Stand der Forschung begriffliche, konzeptionelle sowie inhaltliche Defizite auf (Fichter, 2005; Schwarz et al., 2010; Lange, 2010). Nichtsdestotrotz rücken Nachhaltigkeitsinnovationen derzeit verstärkt in das Interesse von Politik, Wirtschaft und Forschung. Ihnen wird das Potenzial zugeschrieben, den bestehenden sozialen, wirtschaftlichen und ökologischen Problemen in angemessener Weise zu begegnen (Wissenschaftlicher Beirat der Bundesregierung Globale Umweltveränderungen (WBGU), 2011; Deutsches Global Compact Netzwerk (DGCN), 2011). Aufgrund des kontextabhängigen, relativen Verständnisses des Nachhaltigkeitsbegriffs (Schneider, 2006) gibt es allerdings bisher keine einheitliche Definition von Nachhaltigkeitsinnovationen.

Grundsätzlich versteht man unter Nachhaltigkeitsinnovationen „die Durchsetzung solcher technischer oder sozialer Neuerungen, die zum Erhalt kritischer Naturgüter und zu global und langfristig übertragbaren Wirtschafts- und Konsumstilen und -niveaus beitragen“ (Fichter, 2010, 182). Nachhaltigkeitsinnovationen unterscheiden sich erheblich von anderen Innovationsprozessen, wie theoretische und empirische Forschungen erwiesen haben. Während „Umweltinnovationen“ und „soziale Innovationen“ primär eine Dimension im Blick haben, sollen Nachhaltigkeitsinnovationen alle drei Dimensionen integrieren (Schwarz et al., 2010; Deutsches Global Compact Netzwerk (DGCN), 2011).

Technology Push oder Market Pull, die wesentlichen Treiber für die Entwicklung von Innovationen, sind daher oft nicht ausreichend um Nachhaltigkeitsinnovationen zu initiieren

und zu implementieren. Es wird ein zusätzlicher externer Anreiz in Form eines Regulatory Push oder Pull (Rennings, 2007) erforderlich, um diese Innovationen anzustoßen. Sie sind durch „doppelte Externalitäten“ gekennzeichnet, da die positiven Wirkungen auf der Systemebene zeitversetzt auftreten. Darüber hinaus lassen sie sich nicht zwangsläufig in ökonomischen Gewinn der investierenden Unternehmen materialisieren (Rennings, 2007).

Innovationen können generell als das sichtbare Ergebnis von Interaktionsprozessen betrachtet werden, welche die Kreierung, die Integration und die Transformation von Wissen beinhalten. In der Innovationsforschung hat sich in den jüngeren Jahren eine Forschungsperspektive entwickelt, welche diese Prozesse, die als Wissensdynamiken verstanden werden, in den Mittelpunkt stellt (Crevoisier & Jeannerat, 2009; Halkier et al., 2012; Strambach, 2008; Strambach & Halkier, 2013). Aufgrund der Komplexität von Nachhaltigkeitsfragen entstehen nachhaltige innovative Problemlösungen meist in Multi-Akteurskonstellationen. Vielfältige Akteure aus der Wirtschaft, aber auch politische, intermediäre und zivilgesellschaftliche Akteure müssen ihre Ressourcen, Kompetenzen und ihr Wissen kombinieren, um in diesen Innovationsprozessen die unterschiedlichen Bedürfnisse und Ziele wechselseitig zu berücksichtigen. In diesen heterogenen Konstellationen bilden vielfältige institutionelle, organisatorische, kulturelle und kognitive Distanzen Barrieren zwischen den Akteuren, die Kollaboration, Wissensaustausch und –kombination behindern.

Die Übertragung des Konzepts der Wissensdynamiken auf die Entstehung und Durchsetzung von Nachhaltigkeitsinnovationen birgt ein großes Potenzial neue theoretische und angewandte Erkenntnisse zu erzielen, die für die politische und praktische Gestaltung unter der Perspektive der Global Governance genutzt werden können. Der Ansatz der Wissensdynamiken wird inzwischen auch zur Analyse von Innovationen im Tourismus angewandt. Er ist geeignet, um die komplexen Prozesse der Entstehung von Dienstleistungsinnovationen, denen Tourismusinnovationen angehören, zu erforschen und ihre spezifischen Charakteristika zu berücksichtigen (Halkier, 2010; Halkier & Therkelsen, 2013; Strambach & Surmeier, 2013; Butzin, 2012).

5.3 Nachhaltigkeitsstandards im Tourismus

5.3.1 Unterschiedliche Entwicklungspfade von Standards

Die Globalisierung ökonomischer Aktivitäten und die damit verbundene räumliche und organisatorische Fragmentierung von Wertschöpfungsketten, erhöhen den Bedarf an Koordination und funktionaler Integration. Standards sind wichtige Steuerungsinstrumente von Interaktions- und Transaktionsprozessen in globalen Produktions- und Konsumtionssystemen. Sie können Transaktionskosten in globalen Wertschöpfungsketten reduzieren und vergleichsweise zuverlässig Informationen über technologische und qualitative Merkmale von Produkten und Produktionsweisen übertragen (Nadvi & Waltring, 2004; Gereffi et al., 2005; Nadvi, 2008).

Die unterschiedlichen Entwicklungspfade von verschiedenen Arten von Standards werden allerdings erst seit kurzem vermehrt zur Kenntnis genommen. Nadvi und Waltring (2004) haben gezeigt, dass im Entwicklungsverlauf von Standards erhebliche Unterschiede bestehen: Bei technischen Standards, Produkt- und Qualitätsmanagementstandards gibt es schon lange Zeit Tendenzen zu Konvergenz und Vereinheitlichung von Regeln auf globaler und nationaler Ebene. Bei ökologischen und sozialen Standards dagegen wird eine zunehmende Divergenz beobachtet, welche auch als Proliferation bezeichnet wird. Diese ist ebenfalls sehr deutlich bei Standards im nachhaltigen Tourismus zu erkennen. Hier gibt es eine große Diversität (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2001) verschiedener Unternehmenskodes und Labels, sowohl in Entwicklungs- als auch in hochentwickelten Ländern (Font, 2002). Es scheint, dass bei der Entwicklung und Diffusion von sozialen und ökologischen Standards der Einbettung in die lokale institutionelle Umwelt eine hohe Bedeutung zukommt. Standards sind die Ergebnisse komplexer Prozesse der Institutionenbildung in denen neue soziale Organisationspraktiken Legitimität erlangen. Weitgehende Einigung besteht darüber, dass die Beteiligung diverser Stakeholdergruppen und Netzwerke eine grundlegende Voraussetzung für ihre Legitimierung darstellt (Nadvi & Waltring, 2004; Nadvi, 2008; Font & Harris, 2004). Derzeit ist jedoch wenig bekannt darüber, inwiefern die Eigenheiten des Institutionenbildungsprozesses von innovativen Standards deren weitere Implementierung und Verbreitung auf unterschiedlichen räumlichen Skalen beeinflussen. Wie sich Anpassungs- und Übersetzungsprozesse von Nachhaltigkeitsstandards

über die Zeit entfalten, in welcher Beziehung Interaktionsprozesse auf verschiedenen räumlichen Ebenen stehen, und welche Faktoren fördernd bzw. hindernd für die Implementierung sind, ist noch weitgehend offen. Empirische Arbeiten über die Entwicklungspfade und Institutionalisierungsprozesse von Standards sind bisher noch selten (Nadvi & Waltring, 2004; Nadvi, 2008).

5.3.2 Determinanten der Einführung und Verbreitung von Nachhaltigkeitsstandards

Forschungen zu technologischen Standards aus der institutionenökonomischen Perspektive betonen die ökonomische Effizienz und die sich selbstverstärkenden Mechanismen, die zur globalen und pfadabhängigen Verbreitung beitragen (Arthur, 1989; North, 1990). Kosteneffizienz und ökonomische Vorteile als Erklärungsansätze scheinen jedoch nicht ausreichend zu sein, um die Unterschiede in der Geschwindigkeit und Reichweite bei der Einführung und Verbreitung von Standards auf nationaler Ebene zu erklären. Neo-institutionelle Ansätze der Organisationstheorie gehen über das Effizienzargument hinaus. Hier stehen Prozesse des „institutionellen Isomorphismus“ im Vordergrund, definiert als die strukturelle Angleichung von Organisationen, die ähnlichen Umweltbedingungen ausgesetzt sind (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Diese Veränderungen entstehen durch die Interaktion mit dem sozialen und kulturellen Kontext, in den Organisationen eingebettet sind und werden primär über die drei Mechanismen des institutionellen Isomorphismus – Zwang, normativer Druck und mimetische Prozesse – begründet (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Scott, 2001). Isomorphismus durch Zwang resultiert aus staatlichen Regulierungen oder aus verbindlichen Vorgaben durch lead firms in globalen Produktionssystemen. Darüber hinaus folgen Unternehmen aber auch informellen Regeln, wie institutionellen Normen und Wertvorstellungen, um die Legitimität in ihrem Umfeld zu erhalten. Dieser Mechanismus wird als normativer Isomorphismus bezeichnet. Auch die freiwillige Imitation anderer, beispielsweise erfolgreicher Unternehmen, führt dazu, dass organisationale Prozesse und Strukturen übernommen werden. Deutlich wurde, dass diese Prozesse, die als mimetischer Isomorphismus bezeichnet werden, vor allem unter Bedingungen der Unsicherheit auftreten, aufgrund von unklaren Lösungsvorstellungen, komplexen Erwartungen oder mehrdeutigen Zielen (Scott, 2001; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

Die Forschung über die Durchsetzung neu aufkommender technologischer und internationaler Managementstandards in unterschiedlichen Ländern bietet inzwischen substanzelle Hinweise, dass alle drei Mechanismen wirksam sind. Es ist auch bekannt, dass die spezifischen institutionellen Konfigurationen auf nationaler Ebene, die pfadabhängig entstanden sind, diese Prozesse wesentlich beeinflussen. Die bereits etablierten regulativen, normativen und kognitiven Elemente der nationalen institutionellen Umwelt haben starken Einfluss auf die Übernahme von bestimmten organisationalen Praktiken, indem sie die Einhaltung und Akzeptanz auf der Mikroebene entweder fördern oder behindern (Delmas, 2002; Braun, 2006).

Die Gründe für die unterschiedlichen Pfadentwicklungen, mit einerseits klaren Tendenzen zur Konvergenz von technologischen und Qualitätsmanagementstandards und andererseits zunehmender Divergenz von ökologischen und sozialen Standards sind jedoch bisher wenig erforscht. Feststellen lässt sich, dass die Initiativen auf globaler Ebene zur Vereinheitlichung und Angleichung von freiwilligen Standards im nachhaltigen Tourismus bereits in den 1990er Jahren begonnen haben (GSTC, 2012). Umfangreiche Anstrengungen wurden in der Vergangenheit von intermediären Organisationen, wie beispielsweise der Welttourismusorganisation (UNWTO), einer Sonderorganisation der Vereinten Nationen und dem Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) unternommen (GSTC, 2012). Diese Organisationen haben dazu beigetragen, dass inzwischen allgemeingültige Prinzipien und Mindestkriterien für nachhaltigen Tourismus auf globaler Ebene vorliegen, welche explizit auch soziale Kriterien integrieren. In vielfältigen Dokumenten wurden diese schriftlich fixiert und publiziert. Dennoch entfalten diese Nachhaltigkeitsstandards bislang nur in sehr begrenztem Maße ihre Potenziale nachhaltige Geschäftspraktiken und Ökoeffizienz im Tourismus zu vereinheitlichen und zu fördern (Font, 2002, Lund-Durlacher, 2007). Nadvi (2008) unterstreicht, dass die unterschiedlichen Pfade die Komplexität der Entwicklungsprozesse von Standards deutlich machen. Speziell bei ökologischen und sozialen Standards scheint es mit Schwierigkeiten verbunden zu sein, Konvergenz insofern zu erzielen, dass relevante Akteure in Ländern des „Globalen Nordens und Südens“ ihnen gleichermaßen Legitimität zusprechen und diese als angemessen ansehen. Denn nur dann durchlaufen sie einen Institutionalisierungsprozess (Tolbert & Zucker, 1996), so dass sie schließlich das Handeln der relevanten Akteure wie selbstverständlich und taken for granted bestimmen und

damit zunehmende Verbreitung in globalen Produktionssystemen erfahren. Neo-institutionelle Ansätze liefern über die Mechanismen des Isomorphismus sowohl theoretische, als auch empirisch fundierte Erklärungsargumente für die strukturelle Angleichung von Organisationspraktiken und somit für deren Verbreitung, Durchsetzung und Stabilität. Allerdings enthalten diese Ansätze nur wenige Erklärungen für den im nachhaltigen Tourismus vorhandenen divergenten Wandel und die institutionelle Heterogenität. Weitgehend offen ist die Frage, wie neue Praktiken entstehen können und institutionalisiert werden, wenn die sozialen Präferenzen und Interessen von Akteuren durch bereits bestehende Institutionen geprägt sind, die pfadabhängig entstanden sind und die nun aber verändert werden sollen. Hierzu liefert die räumliche Innovationsforschung Hinweise, die mit dem Ansatz der Wissensdynamiken die Entstehungsbedingungen von nachhaltigen Innovationen in den Mittelpunkt stellt.

5.3.3 Wissensdynamiken bei der Entwicklung von Standards

Die Entwicklung von Standards, die alle drei Dimensionen der Nachhaltigkeit berücksichtigen und darauf abzielen, nachhaltige Entwicklungsprozesse zu fördern, kann als nachhaltige Innovation betrachtet werden. Aus institutionentheoretischer Perspektive sind sie das kodifizierte Ergebnis von komplexen Prozessen der Institutionenbildung; aus innovationstheoretischer Perspektive sind neu entwickelte Standards institutionelle Innovationen, während die Implementierung von Standards in Unternehmen organisatorische Innovationen darstellen (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2005).

Zertifizierungsprogramme im Tourismus, welche soziale Indikatoren beinhalten, scheinen Probleme zu haben, sich zu verbreiten. In vielen Fällen bleibt es fragwürdig, ob sie die intendierten Wirkungen erzielen, da diese sich erst über die Zeit entfalten (Medina, 2005; Baddeley & Font, 2011; Dief & Font, 2011). Die Einhaltung von globalen Nachhaltigkeitsstandards scheint nicht effektiv zu sein, wenn diese nicht sozial in den lokalen Kontext eingebettet sind (Nadvi, 2008; Medina, 2005). Es stellt sich einerseits die Frage, wie globale Standards an lokale Kontexte angepasst werden können und andererseits, welche Mechanismen für die Einführung von freiwilligen Standards auf der Mikroebene der Unternehmen verantwortlich sind.

Neoinstitutionelle Ansätze heben hervor, dass neue Handlungsweisen oder Praktiken einen Prozess zunehmender Institutionalisierung durchlaufen. In diesem sequenziellen Prozess werden drei verschiedene Phasen unterschieden – die Pre-, Semi – und volle Institutionalisierung, die sich auf den Grad der Institutionalisierung sozialer Praktiken beziehen. Die Phasen sind dadurch charakterisiert, dass sie jeweils unterschiedliche Rahmenbedingungen für die Handlungen und Entscheidungsfindungen der Akteure erzeugen (Tolbert & Zucker, 1996; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Scott, 2001). Eine volle Institutionalisierung der sozialen Praktiken ist dann erreicht, wenn sie nicht mehr hinterfragt, sondern als taken for granted das Handeln bestimmen.

Diese beschriebenen Institutionalisierungsprozesse beginnen mit einer Problemwahrnehmung und der Entwicklung möglicher Lösungsansätze durch innovative Praktiken. Wissen ist die wesentliche Ressource für die Entwicklung von innovativen Problemlösungen. Der prozessorientierte Ansatz der Wissensdynamiken stellt die Interaktionen der Akteure in den Mittelpunkt der Analyse. Der Fokus liegt dabei auf Interaktionsprozesse des Austausches, der Transformation, Kombination und Kreierung von Wissen, welche zu Innovationen führen (Crevoisier & Jeannerat, 2009; Strambach, 2008; Strambach & Klement, 2012). Wendet man diesen theoretisch-konzeptionellen Ansatz auf die Entstehung und Entwicklung von Nachhaltigkeitsstandards im Tourismus an und beleuchtet die mit der Entwicklung verbundenen Wissensdynamiken, werden folgende Unterschiede im Institutionalisierungsprozess deutlich:

1. Im Vergleich zu Produkt- oder technischen Standards ist die Pre- und Semi-Institutionalisierungsphase bei Nachhaltigkeitsstandards durch heterogene Akteurskonstellationen und ein höheres Maß an verschiedenartigen Wissensbasen gekennzeichnet, die im Rahmen ihrer Entwicklung kombiniert werden müssen. Neben technologischen, organisatorischen und ökonomischen Wissen ist aufgrund der sozialen Dimension vorwiegend die Integration von institutionellem und kulturellem Wissen relevant. Wie die Theorie der Ökonomie des Wissens zeigt, kann Wissen aufgrund der besonderen Eigenschaften, wie der impliziten Dimension, der Kontextabhängigkeit und dem Prozesscharakter, nicht leicht zwischen Akteuren transferiert oder beliebig kombiniert werden (Foray, 2004; Nooteboom, 2010). Diese Interaktionsprozesse beinhalten viele Spannungsfelder und Konfliktpotentiale. Bedingt durch unterschiedliche Hintergründe,

Normen und Werte der involvierten Akteure bestehen kognitive Distanzen, sowie oft ein unterschiedliches Verständnis von Nachhaltigkeit (Schneider, 2006; Lange, 2010).

2. Die Schwierigkeiten bei der Festlegung einer gemeinsamen Definition von sozialen Standards und bei der Operationalisierung zugehöriger Kriterien werden in Forschungen im Tourismusbereich deutlich herausgestellt (Font & Harris, 2004; Medina, 2005). Insbesondere die Entwicklung, Implementierung und Überprüfbarkeit von sozialen Indikatoren stellt eine große Herausforderung dar, da soziales Verhalten in hohem Maße kontext- und kulturabhängig ist und soziale Indikatoren sich auf immaterielles, soziales Handeln beziehen. Aus der Wissensperspektive betrachtet, enthält die soziale Dimension von Nachhaltigkeitsstandards einen hohen Anteil von sogenanntem „symbolischem Wissen“ (kulturelles, normatives, wertbasiertes Wissen). Diese Art von Wissen hat eine starke implizite und kontextabhängige Komponente und daher ist die Kodifizierung und der Transfer im Vergleich zu anderen Arten von Wissen, wie beispielsweise technischem Wissen schwieriger (Asheim et al., 2011). Symbolisches Wissen wird daher in der Generierung und dem Transfer als distanzempfindlicher eingestuft. Die Integration von symbolischem Wissen in den frühen Phasen der Standardentwicklung scheint jedoch für die Wertzuschreibung und Legitimierung neuer Praktiken eine hohe Bedeutung zu haben.

3. Ein weiteres Spannungsfeld bei der Entwicklung nachhaltiger Tourismusstandards wird ersichtlich, wenn man die Wissensdynamiken aus räumlicher Sicht analysiert, da Wissensbasen, die auf unterschiedlichen räumlichen Skalen lokalisiert sind, integriert werden müssen. In Dienstleistungsbranchen, wie dem Tourismus, sind Konsumenten aufgrund der Gleichzeitigkeit von Leistungserstellung und –konsum, direkt in den Produktionsprozess eingebunden. Werden Standards im „Globalen Süden“ entwickelt, ohne Einbezug relevanter Akteure aus dem sogenannten „Globalen Norden“, ist häufig das symbolische Wissen über Werte und Bedürfnisse der Konsumenten nicht vorhanden. Dies kann dazu führen, dass die Produkte nicht konsumentenorientiert sind, wodurch Märkte weniger effizient erschlossen und Kunden weniger erfolgreich gewonnen bzw. gebunden werden können. Dennoch wird die Integration von Akteuren aus dem „Globalen Norden“ oft vermieden, da diese den rule setting process dominieren und einseitig ihre Interessen durchsetzen könnten (Medina, 2005; Jamal et al., 2006).

4. Während der Habitualisierung in der Pre-Institutionalisierungsphase – der Zuweisung von gemeinsamen Bedeutungen zu spezifischen Handlungen (Tolbert & Zucker, 1996) – müssen verschiedene Barrieren überwunden werden, um sozialen Konsens zu erreichen und ein gemeinsames Verständnis angemessener nachhaltiger und sozialer Praktiken zu entwickeln. Dies beeinflusst auch die weitere Objektivierung, die notwendig ist, um Handlungsweisen über den Ursprungsort der Multi-Stakeholder Meetings hinaus weiterzugeben (Tolbert & Zucker, 1996). Institutionen setzen sich durch, wenn ihre Vorteile größer sind als die Kosten ihrer Implementierung (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991). Im Falle von sozialen Standards ist es jedoch sehr schwierig, die positiven Wirkungen zu messen. Häufig entfalten sich diese entsprechend erst nach einiger Zeit und werden dadurch erst spät wahrnehmbar. Darüber hinaus führt die Implementierung eines neuen Standards auf Unternehmensebene nicht automatisch zu einer Veränderung der sozialen Praktiken. Die intendierten positiven Effekte sind in hohem Maße abhängig von der Interpretation der sozialen Standards durch die verantwortlichen Akteure auf der Mikroebene. Ein weiteres Spannungsfeld, welches die volle Institutionalisierung behindern kann, ist der relativ hohe Grad an Mehrdeutigkeit von sozialen Kriterien. Barrientos und Smith (2007) unterscheiden bei der Bewertung sozialer Aufwertungsprozesse (social upgrading) in „measurable standards“ und „enabling rights“. Erstere beziehen sich auf messbare Indikatoren wie beispielsweise Löhne. Enabling rights, wie verbesserte Rechte von Angestellten, weniger oder keine Diskriminierung am Arbeitsplatz sowie individuelle Lernprozesse sind jedoch weit schwieriger zu operationalisieren und zu quantifizieren, da sie sich auf soziales Verhalten und komplexe Interaktionsprozesse beziehen (Barrientos & Smith, 2007). Vor diesem Hintergrund, ist es interessant zu untersuchen, welche Faktoren die Einführung von Nachhaltigkeitsstandards auf der Mikroebene fördern können, die sich insbesondere auf soziales Handeln beziehen.

Der innovative Dienstleistungsstandard Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa (FTTSA) legt einen Schwerpunkt auf die soziale Dimension der Nachhaltigkeit und ist ein geeignetes Beispiel, um die Spannungsfelder bei der Entwicklung und die raumzeitliche Formung der Pfadtrajektorie zu untersuchen. Er befindet sich in einer frühen Phase und bietet daher die Möglichkeit durch die Rekonstruktion des Entstehungsprozesses und der ihm unterliegenden Wissensdynamiken neue Erkenntnisse zu gewinnen, wie sich Entwicklungspfade von Standards entfalten.

5.4 Methodisches Vorgehen

Das qualitative Forschungsdesign wurde gewählt, um induktiv aus einer raumzeitlichen Perspektive neue Erkenntnisse über die unterliegenden Wissensdynamiken im Entwicklungspfad des FTTSA-Standards zu erlangen sowie hindernde und fördernde Faktoren im Institutionalisierungsprozess zu analysieren. Dazu wurden explorative Interviews mit politischen Akteuren, Tourismusexperten, NGOs und Vertretern der FTTSA Organisation geführt. Der Schwerpunkt dieser explorativen Interviews lag auf den institutionellen Veränderungen im südafrikanischen Tourismussektor sowie auf den Entwicklungsprozessen des FTTSA-Standards selbst. Zusätzlich wurden leitfadengestützte, halbstandardisierte Interviews mit ManagerInnen oder BesitzerInnen von FTTSA-zertifizierten Unternehmen geführt, um ein tiefgründigeres Verständnis der Wirkungen der Standardimplementierung im Zeitverlauf zu erlangen. Die Auswahl der Unternehmen wurde anhand theoretischer Samplingstrategien getroffen. Wichtige Kriterien waren die Preiskategorie, Größe, Zertifizierungszeitpunkt, Angebot und geographische Lage, um die Diversität der Unternehmen widerzuspiegeln.

Die Erhebung der empirischen Daten in Südafrika fand in drei Phasen statt – 2009, 2012 und 2013. Im Jahre 2009 wurden 23 halbstrukturierte Interviews geführt, größtenteils mit FTTSA-zertifizierten Unternehmen, aber auch mit der FTTSA-Organisation und Tourismusexperten. Bei der empirischen Erhebung in 2012 standen institutionelle Veränderungen im Mittelpunkt. Es wurden neun qualitative Interviews mit politischen Akteuren, der FTTSA-Organisation, NGOs und Tourismusexperten geführt. Im Jahre 2013 stand die Perspektive der zertifizierten Unternehmen im Mittelpunkt und es wurden insgesamt 25 Interviews geführt. Zusätzlich wurden im Jahr 2014 Befragungen von sechs Unternehmen durchgeführt, die ursprünglich durch FTTSA zertifiziert waren, aber nicht re-zertifiziert wurden, um die Hindernisse der Standardimplementierung zu analysieren. Insgesamt basieren die empirischen Ergebnisse damit auf 63 qualitativen Interviews und zahlreichen teilnehmenden Beobachtungen. Die erhobenen Daten wurden auditiv und schriftlich dokumentiert, bei der Datenanalyse wurde dem methodischen Ansatz der qualitativen Inhaltsanalyse nach Mayring gefolgt (Mayring, 2000).

5.5 Entwicklungsprozess des FTTSA-Standards – Akteure, Wissensdynamiken und Institutionalisierungsprozesse

Im folgenden Abschnitt wird der Entwicklungspfad des FTTSA-Standards auf der Basis der empirischen Ergebnisse und aus einer transnationalen Perspektive raumzeitlich rekonstruiert. Im Vordergrund stehen die Identifikation der Phasen des Institutionalisierungsprozesses dieses innovativen Standards sowie der Akteurskonstellationen und der Wissensdynamiken, die der Entwicklungstrajektorie unterliegen. Auf diese Weise kann ein tieferes Verständnis über hindernde und fördernde Faktoren für die Entwicklung und Durchsetzung von nachhaltigen Tourismusstandards gewonnen werden. Insbesondere über die Wirkungen von multiskalaren Interaktions- und Lernprozessen, welche die Wissensbasen des lokalen und globalen Umfeldes verbinden und integrieren, sind bislang wenig empirisch gesicherte Erkenntnisse vorhanden.

Südafrika steht sehr großen ökonomischen und sozialen Herausforderungen gegenüber, wie einer sehr starken sozio-ökonomischen Fragmentierung und großen sozialen Spannungen (Seif & Spenceley, 2007; United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 2003). Diese Ungleichheiten spiegeln sich auch im Tourismussektor wider. Nach Angaben des südafrikanischen Tourismusamtes sind Tourismusunternehmen in Südafrika „still predominantly white-owned and white-managed“ (SAT, 2008: 32) und viele Regionen des Landes noch touristisch unerschlossen. Viele sehen den Tourismus als eine „missed opportunity“ (Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT), 1996, 6; Mahony, 2007, 398), oder beschreiben ihn als „old-fashioned, racist and exclusive“ (Interview Tourismusexperte 2, 2013). Nichtsdestotrotz wird der Tourismus als das „neue Gold“ des Landes bezeichnet (SAT, 2008, 26), denn er verfügt über ein großes Potential Armut zu reduzieren und nachhaltige Entwicklungsprozesse voranzutreiben (Rogerson, 2004; Saarinen et al., 2011). Die Tourismusbranche weist seit dem Ende der Apartheid konstant steigende Zahlen bezüglich Touristen und Umsatz auf. Der Anteil des Tourismus am BIP lag 2013 bei 9,5 % und 10 % der Bevölkerung waren im Tourismus beschäftigt (World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), 2014).

5.5.1 Pre-Institutionalisierungsphase 1999–2000

Seit dem Ende der Apartheid befindet sich Südafrika in einer politischen, wirtschaftlichen und sozialen Transformation und die Regierung ist darum bemüht, die nationalen Entwicklungsziele, wie eine Verbesserung der Lebensbedingungen der armen Bevölkerung und mehr Gerechtigkeit in der Gesellschaft voranzutreiben. Dazu soll auch das Potential des Tourismus als Mittel zur Förderung einer nachhaltigen Entwicklung und zur Armutsbekämpfung bestmöglich genutzt werden (Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT), 1996; Boluk, 2011).

Da Südafrika bis zum Ende der Apartheid weitestgehend vom internationalen Tourismus ausgeschlossen war, bot dies eine Möglichkeit, die bisher wenig erschlossene Tourismusbranche strategisch zu entwickeln und Probleme des Massentourismus möglichst zu vermeiden (Koelble, 2011). Besonders bedeutend war dafür das Konzept des Responsible Tourism (RT). Dieses Leitprinzip wurde 1996 von der südafrikanischen Regierung im National White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa verankert (Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT), 1996). Das Ziel ist es, den Tourismussektor auf eine nachhaltige Weise zu entwickeln, damit er dazu beiträgt, die Lebensqualität der gesamten Bevölkerung zu verbessern (Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT), 1996). Um das Konzept inhaltlich zu konkretisieren und Praktiker bei der Implementierung zu unterstützen, wurden Richtlinien und ein Handbuch zur Umsetzung des RT veröffentlicht (Mahony, 2007). In diesem institutionellen Kontext wurde die Organisation FTTSA gegründet, die allerdings in dieser Zeit noch als Fair Trade in Tourism Initiative (FTTI) bezeichnet wurde. Das Ziel der Organisation war es, nachhaltige und sozialverträgliche Handlungsweisen im Tourismus in Südafrika zu fördern und so einen positiven Beitrag zur sozio-ökonomischen Transformation im postapartheidischen Tourismussektor zu leisten (FTTSA, 2014).

Für die Gründung der FTTI waren global agierende Akteure mit starkem Fokus auf den Bereich der ökologischen Nachhaltigkeit ausschlaggebend. Die International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) South Africa, ein Zweig der globalen NGO initiierte dieses Pilotprojekt aufgrund der Überzeugung, dass die natürlichen Ressourcen des Landes als Rohstoff für den Tourismus nur geschützt werden können, wenn auch der Tourismussektor verantwortungsbewusst gestaltet wird (Seif & Spenceley, 2007). Von Ende 1998 bis Mitte

2000 prüften die Teilnehmenden des FTTI Pilotprojektes die Übertragbarkeit der Fair Trade Prinzipien auf Tourismusunternehmen und analysierten das Potential für die Markteinführung der FTTI (Interview FTTSA, 2009). Zu den Mitgliedern der FTTI gehörten unter anderem Regierungseinrichtungen und internationale sowie lokale NGOs, private Tourismusunternehmen, Bildungseinrichtungen als auch nationale und internationale Förderer, die sich in internationalen, nationalen und regionalen Netzwerken zusammengeschlossen hatten. Während dieser Phase wurden mehrere Multi-Stakeholder Workshops abgehalten, um die verschiedenen heterogenen Interessen und Prioritäten der unterschiedlichen Akteure aus verschiedenen räumlichen Ebenen auszubalancieren und Konsens darüber auszuhandeln, welchen generellen Handlungsprinzipien ein kontextangepasster, fairer Tourismus in Südafrika entsprechen muss (Interview FTTSA, 2009). Diese erste Phase im Institutionalisierungsprozess war geprägt durch die Teilnahme vieler, sehr unterschiedlicher Akteure. In diesem Stadium war der Entwicklungsprozess der neuen Regelungen durch einen explorativen Charakter gekennzeichnet und war mit großen Unsicherheiten behaftet. Es gab noch wenig Konsens darüber welche Handlungsprinzipien als angemessen zu bewerten sind. Dies lag hauptsächlich daran, dass zu dieser Zeit global erst wenige Kriterien für einen nachhaltigen Tourismus mit Schwerpunkt auf der sozialen Dimension vorhanden waren, die zur Orientierung und Legitimierung der Bemühungen der FTTI hätten beitragen können. Ein Meilenstein am Ende dieser Zeitspanne war ein internationaler Workshop im Mai 2000, auf dem die Ergebnisse der FTTI ausgewertet wurden. Aufgrund der positiven Erfahrungen entschied man sich für eine langfristige Implementierung des Projekts auf dem Markt und die Entwicklung eines Zertifizierungssystems für fairen Tourismus (Interview FTTSA, 2009). Festhalten kann man, dass diese zeitliche Phase bis zum Jahr 2000 im Entwicklungspfad des Standards klare Züge einer Pre-Institutionalisierungsphase trägt.

5.5.2 Semi-Institutionalisierungsphase 2000–2002

Die nächste Phase im Institutionalisierungsprozess von FTTSA – die Semi-Institutionalisierung – lässt sich zeitlich nach 2000 einordnen mit der Objektivierung der Bedeutung von fairem Tourismus. Im Prozess der Objektivierung wurden durch die MitarbeiterInnen der Organisation FTTSA die übergeordneten Prinzipien in konkrete soziale Praktiken übersetzt und

durch Kriterien und Indikatoren operationalisiert. Im Zeitraum von 2000 bis 2002 fanden enge Interaktionsprozesse zwischen politischen Akteuren und der FTTSA Organisation statt. Der Grund dafür war, dass die Regierung Südafrikas die nationalen RT-Richtlinien in Multi-Stakeholder Prozessen entwickelte. Die Managerin von FTTSA war stark in die Entwicklung dieser nationalen RT-Richtlinien eingebunden. Da die nationalen RT Richtlinien vor den FTTSA-Standards fertiggestellt wurden, konnte das hier erlangte implizite Wissen in die Entwicklung der FTTSA-Standards eingebracht werden. Neben den nationalen RT Standards waren die Fair Trade Tourism-Richtlinien, welche die internationalen NGO Tourism Concern entwickelt, aber noch nicht in ein Stadium der praktischen Anwendung überführt hatte, ein wichtiger Referenzpunkt für die FTTSA-Kriterien. Nach der Entwicklung der FTTSA-Kriterien und Indikatoren wurde der Name FTI in FTTSA geändert, um den südafrikanischen Bezugsrahmen hervorzuheben und den Zusammenhang mit der internationalen Fair Trade Bewegung zu signalisieren (Interview FTTSA, 2009). Außerdem wurden das FTTSA-Gütesiegels und ein Zertifizierungssystem entwickelt.

Das Ergebnis dieser Phase der Wissenskombination zur Objektivierung der Bedeutung von fairem Tourismus ist der FTTSA-Standard und das Zertifizierungssystem. Die offenen, übergeordneten Prinzipien wurden in konkrete unternehmerische Richtlinien übersetzt und anhand von zugehörigen Indikatoren operationalisiert, die sich vorwiegend auf soziale, aber auch auf ökologische und ökonomische Aspekte beziehen (vgl. Tab. 6).

Tabelle 6: Dimensionen und Indikatoren des FTTSA-Standards.

(Quelle: Eigene Bearbeitung nach dem International Trade Center (ITC, 2014).)

Dimensionen	Anzahl zugehöriger Indikatoren	Anteil in %
Soziales	82	49
Ökologie	53	32
Managementpraktiken	23	14
Ethik	5	3
Qualität	3	2

Der Standard bezieht sowohl die organisationsinternen Arbeitsbedingungen der jeweiligen Unternehmen als auch deren externe Beziehungen mit ein. Im Detail werden Human Ressource Praktiken, Weiterbildungsmaßnahmen, die Gleichberechtigung am Arbeitsplatz,

ökologische Managementpraktiken, Besitz- und Kontrollverhältnisse, Arbeitsplatzkultur und HIV & Aids-bezogene Angelegenheiten evaluiert. Die Bewertung der externen Integration der Unternehmen in ihr Umfeld und der Aufbau von Netzwerken zu den local communities erfolgt beispielsweise über Indikatoren, welche sich auf die Beschäftigung der lokalen Bevölkerung, Förderprojekte vor Ort oder regionalen Einkauf beziehen. Die Einhaltung dieser Standards stellt eine große Herausforderung dar, denn es werden nicht nur unternehmensinterne Indikatoren geprüft, sondern auch organisationale Praktiken, die über die direkte Unternehmensaktivität und die Grenzen des Unternehmens hinausgehen. Um die verschiedenen Unternehmensaktivitäten zu regeln und die Umsetzung anhand von Indikatoren zu bewerten, nutzt die FTTSA-Organisation sowohl Prozess- als auch Performancestandards (Interviews FTTSA, 2009, 2012).

Eine Besonderheit des FTTSA-Standards ist es, dass er zwar konkrete Indikatoren vorgibt, die eingehalten werden müssen, diese jedoch an den jeweiligen Unternehmenskontext angepasst werden können. Beispielsweise evaluiert FTTSA die Durchführung von Weiterbildungsmaßnahmen der Angestellten anhand der finanziellen Investitionen gemessen am Umsatz, der Qualität und der Verteilung der Maßnahmen (FTTSA, 2013). Allerdings können die Unternehmen in Kollaboration mit den Angestellten entscheiden, welche Art von Fortbildungen für die individuellen Personen und jeweiligen Unternehmen relevant sind. Es können beispielsweise auch Kurse besucht werden, die vorrangig der Persönlichkeitsentwicklung der Angestellten dienen (Interview FTTSA, 2012). In Bezug auf die Beschäftigung der lokalen Bevölkerung gibt FTTSA den Anteil von Angestellten vor, die aus dem direkten Umfeld des Unternehmens eingestellt werden müssen. Hier werden unterschiedliche Bemessungsgrenzen für das sogenannte direkte Umfeld angelegt, da sich die Bevölkerungsdichte im ländlichen Raum stark vom städtischen Raum unterscheidet. So soll eine Benachteiligung von Unternehmen in dünn besiedelten Räumen bei der Rekrutierung von Angestellten vermieden werden (Interview FTTSA, 2012).

Das FTTSA-Gütesiegel kann an südafrikanische Tourismusunternehmen jeglicher Art und Größe verliehen werden, die den Zertifizierungsprozess erfolgreich durchlaufen. Dieser ist in drei Phasen unterteilt und beginnt mit einer Selbsteinschätzung der Unternehmen, gefolgt vom „Site-Assessment“. Ein externer durch FLO-CERT geschulter Gutachter überprüft, ob die Angaben der Selbsteinschätzung korrekt waren und sammelt weitere Informationen durch

Befragungen von Mitarbeitern sowie durch die Auswertung aller relevanten Unterlagen. Das Assessment dauert in der Regel zwischen zwei und fünf Tagen, abhängig von der Größe des Unternehmens. Der letzte Schritt des Zertifizierungsprozesses umfasst die Auswertung des vom Gutachter erstellten Reports durch einen unabhängigen Prüfungsausschuss, der auch ein schriftliches Feedback an die Unternehmen verfasst. Erfolgreiche Kandidaten werden nach dem dritten Schritt mit dem FTTSA-Siegel ausgezeichnet. Ein „Re-Assessment“ wird alle zwei Jahre wiederholt und ein Bericht über die unternommenen Verbesserungen muss jedes Jahr nach dem „Site-Assessment“ eingereicht werden (Interviews FTTSA, 2009, 2012).

Zeitgleich zur Entwicklung des FTTSA-Standards nahm die Regierung Südafrikas aktiv eine Führungsrolle auf globaler Ebene ein und initiierte die Conference on RT in Destinations in Kapstadt im Jahre 2002. In diesem Jahr fand in Johannesburg der Weltgipfel für Nachhaltige Entwicklung statt und Tourismus wurde trotz Interventionen nicht als eigenständiges wichtiges Thema aufgenommen (Interview Ministry of Tourism, 2012). Die Organisation der internationalen Tagung ermöglichte es den Akteuren in Südafrika, die bereits entwickelte Wissensbasis zu RT global zu verankern. Das Resultat der Konferenz war die Cape Town Declaration on Responsible Tourism, die auf den südafrikanischen RT-Richtlinien basiert und global Anerkennung fand. Daraus wird ersichtlich, dass die nationale Regierung dieses window of opportunity genutzt hat, um durch die Einführung ihres RT-Modells rule setting auf globaler Ebene aktiv voranzutreiben. Die Organisation FTTSA und die nationale Regierung unterstützten sich gegenseitig in ihren Bemühungen, die Tourismusindustrie nachhaltiger zu gestalten.

5.5.3 Institutionalisierungsphase – 2002 bis heute

Der Übergang in die gegenwärtig noch andauernde Institutionalisierungsphase von FTTSA kann in 2002 festgemacht werden, als die ersten vier Tourismuseinrichtungen zertifiziert wurden (vgl. Abbildung 7). Von diesem Zeitpunkt an begann die Implementierung. Immer mehr Unternehmen erklären sich bereit, ihre Unternehmenspraxis entsprechend den Prinzipien des FTSSA-Standards zu verändern und sich mit dem Gütesiegel auszeichnen zu lassen. Derzeit sind 63 Unternehmen zertifiziert (Stand März 2014) (FTTSA, 2014). Darüber hinaus wurde im Jahre 2004 die Organisationsform von FTTSA geändert und zwar in eine von

der IUCN unabhängige Organisation, die jedoch weiterhin von internationalen und nationalen Spendern finanziert wird (Interview FTTSA, 2009).

Auf der nationalen Ebene wirkte FTTSA aktiv bei der Entwicklung des National Minimum Standard for RT (NMSRT) mit. Die Ziele des NMSRT sind die Schaffung eines gemeinsamen Verständnisses von RT in Südafrika und die Förderung der Marktimplementation dieses Konzepts. Durch die Entwicklung und Einführung des NMSRT im September 2011 setzte die nationale Regierung ein klares Signal und ermutigte Unternehmen sozialverträgliche Unternehmenspraktiken einzuführen. Als Vorsitzende der technical working group übernahm die Managerin der FTTSA Organisation eine Leitungsposition und brachte die Erfahrungen von FTTSA über die Zertifizierung von nachhaltigem Tourismus ein (Interview Ministry of Tourism, 2012). Im Rahmen dieses Prozesses wurde auch der FTTSA-Standard an den NMSRT angepasst. Gleichzeitig unterstützte die Regierung Südafrikas jedoch auch weiterhin die Einführung des FTTSA-Standards, beispielsweise durch finanzielle Anreize, da die FTTSA-Kriterien die Anforderungen des NMSRT überschreiten. Auf diese komplementäre Weise unterstützen FTTSA und die Regierung sich gegenseitig mit ihren jeweiligen Fähigkeiten und Möglichkeiten in ihren Bemühungen die Tourismusbranche zu transformieren.

Auch auf der supranationalen Ebene gab es Wechselwirkungen bei der Entwicklung von Nachhaltigkeitsstandards im Tourismus. Bereits im Jahre 2007 initiierte FTTSA die Bildung der Sustainable Tourism Certification Alliance Africa (the Alliance). Das Ziel dieses Netzwerks ist es, Lernprozesse und einen integrierten Ansatz zur Entwicklung von Nachhaltigkeitsstandards im Tourismus in Afrika zu fördern (Interview Ministry of Tourism, 2012, FTTSA, 2009). Die Mitglieder der Alliance setzen sich aus öffentlichen und privaten Akteuren zusammen, die direkt oder indirekt an der Entwicklung und Implementierung von Nachhaltigkeitsstandards im Tourismus in Afrika beteiligt sind, wie beispielsweise Tourismusministerien und Zertifizierungsorganisationen. Ende 2014 hatte die Alliance 32 Mitgliedsorganisationen, davon kamen 25 Organisationen aus 12 afrikanischen Ländern. Die Mitglieder der Alliance unterstützen sich gegenseitig, die von ihnen entwickelten Standards zu verbessern, sie miteinander kompatibel zu machen und sie an globale Richtlinien anzupassen (Interviews FTTSA, 2012, 2013; Interview Ministry of Tourism, 2012).

Diese Interaktions- und Anpassungsprozesse stehen in Verbindung zu Vereinheitlichungsprozessen nachhaltiger Tourismusstandards auf globaler Ebene durch das

Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC). Diese globale Initiative der United Nations entstand 2010 durch den strategischen Zusammenschluss der Partnership for Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria (GSTC Partnership) und dem Sustainable Tourism Council (STC). Es wird durch die United Nations Foundation, dem United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) und der United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) unterstützt. Wesentliches Produkt dieser Initiative sind die Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria (Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC), 2012). Dies sind global anwendbare Mindestkriterien für einen nachhaltigen Tourismus, die durch Multi-Stakeholder Konsultationsprozesse entwickelt wurden (GSTC, 2014). Die Mitglieder der Alliance versuchen einerseits ihre Standards an diese Mindestanforderungen der GSTC anzupassen, andererseits aber auch selbst Einfluss auf die Entwicklungsprozesse der GSTC-Kriterien zu nehmen, um sicherzustellen, dass die Bedürfnisse afrikanischer Akteure in die Mindestkriterien integriert werden. Dies geschah beispielsweise dadurch, dass die Managerin von FTTSA einige Jahre Mitglied des GSTC-Vorstands war (Interview FTTSA, 2012, 2013) und so die Forderungen der Alliance Mitglieder global einbringen konnte und gleichzeitig andere Zertifizierungsorganisationen aus Afrika bei der Anpassung ihrer Standards an die GSTC-Kriterien beriet.

FTTSA ist die erste vom GSTC anerkannte Zertifizierungsorganisation aus Afrika und deren Standard einer von bisher elf anerkannten Standards weltweit (Stand 2013) (Interview FTTSA, 2012). Um die globalen Kriterien für nachhaltigen Tourismus der GSTC einzuhalten, waren diverse Anpassungsprozesse notwendig. Dazu gehörte insbesondere eine Stärkung ökologischer Kriterien und die Auslagerung des „Site-Assessments“ an unabhängige GutachterInnen von FLO-CERT (Interviews FTTSA, 2012, 2013). Gleichzeitig wurde durch die Beteiligung von FTTSA an der GSTC Initiative viel implizites Erfahrungswissen von FTTSA in die Entwicklungs- und Veränderungsprozesse der globalen Standards eingebracht. Diese Beteiligung zeigt, dass die FTTSA Organisation aktiv an globalen Institutionenbildungsprozessen mitwirkte und gleichzeitig globales Wissen, dass im Rahmen der GSTC Beteiligung erworben wurde lokal verankerte und anwendbar machte.

Bei der Betrachtung des Entwicklungspfads des FTTSA-Standards wird deutlich, dass der Standard weiterhin ständigen Veränderungs- und Anpassungsprozessen an neue Entwicklungen sowohl auf nationaler als auch globaler Ebene unterliegt. Diese Anpassungen entstehen in multiskalaren Interaktionsprozessen mit heterogenen Akteuren aus den

Bereichen Politik, Wirtschaft, Wissenschaft und der Zivilgesellschaft. Diese komplexen Wissensdynamiken scheinen die Durchsetzung des FTTSA-Standards wesentlich zu befördern, da sowohl lokales und auch globales Wissen im Entwicklungsprozess des Standards kombiniert wurde und auf diese Weise die Bedürfnisse verschiedener Akteursgruppen aus unterschiedlichen Räumen integriert und wechselseitig ausgeglichen wurden.

5.6 Wirkungen der Standardimplementierung aus der Perspektive der zertifizierten Unternehmen

An dieser Stelle kann nur ein kurzes Schlaglicht auf die Bewertung des FTTSA-Gütesiegels aus der Sicht der zertifizierten Tourismusunternehmen geworfen werden. Zur Analyse der Wirkungen und der zu überwindenden Hindernisse bei der Standardimplementierung wurden 41 Interviews mit ManagerInnen und BesitzerInnen von zertifizierten Unternehmen unterschiedlicher Art und Größe geführt. Themen waren erstens die Motivation der Standardimplementierung, zweitens die Wirkungen der Standardimplementierung innerhalb der Unternehmen (intra-organisatorische Effekte), auf ihre Netzwerke und das Umfeld (inter-organisatorische Effekte) und drittens die Analyse der Schwierigkeiten bei der Standardimplementierung.

Die Ergebnisse der Interviews zeigen deutlich, dass FTTSA-zertifizierte Unternehmen durch eine gemeinsame Werthaltung verbunden sind. Diese äußerte sich in dem Bestreben durch eine verantwortungsbewusste Unternehmensführung positive Wirkungen für alle Beteiligten zu generieren und dazu beizutragen, Lösungsansätze für die vielfältigen Herausforderungen Südafrikas zu entwickeln. Allerdings wurden bei der Zertifizierungsmotivation Veränderungen im Laufe der Zeit sichtbar. Insbesondere von den early adopters, denjenigen Unternehmen, die als erstes den FTTSA-Standard eingeführt haben, wurde die ursprüngliche Bestrebung, Verantwortung für die südafrikanische Gesellschaft zu übernehmen, unterstrichen. Sie haben sich zertifizieren lassen, um Feedback von FTTSA zu bekommen und Lernprozesse anzustoßen. Das Feedback durch die FTTSA-Organisation wurde als ein sehr wichtiges Instrument beschrieben, um darauf aufbauend die Managementprozesse der Unternehmen kontinuierlich nachhaltiger und sozialverträglicher zu gestalten. Dies war möglich, da der Standard auf der einen Seite konkrete Vorgaben gebe, andererseits aber offen genug sei, um

an die unterschiedlichen Unternehmenskontexte angepasst zu werden. Die Treiber für die Standardimplementierung in diesen Unternehmen waren primär normative und wertbasierte soziale und moralische Handlungsorientierungen. Ökonomische Motivationen, wie mehr Glaubwürdigkeit bei Kunden, Anerkennung und Differenzierung von anderen Unternehmen nannten Unternehmen, die sich erst in den jüngeren Jahren zertifizieren ließen. Dies deutet darauf hin, dass der Standard inzwischen einen gewissen Marktwert entwickelt hat.

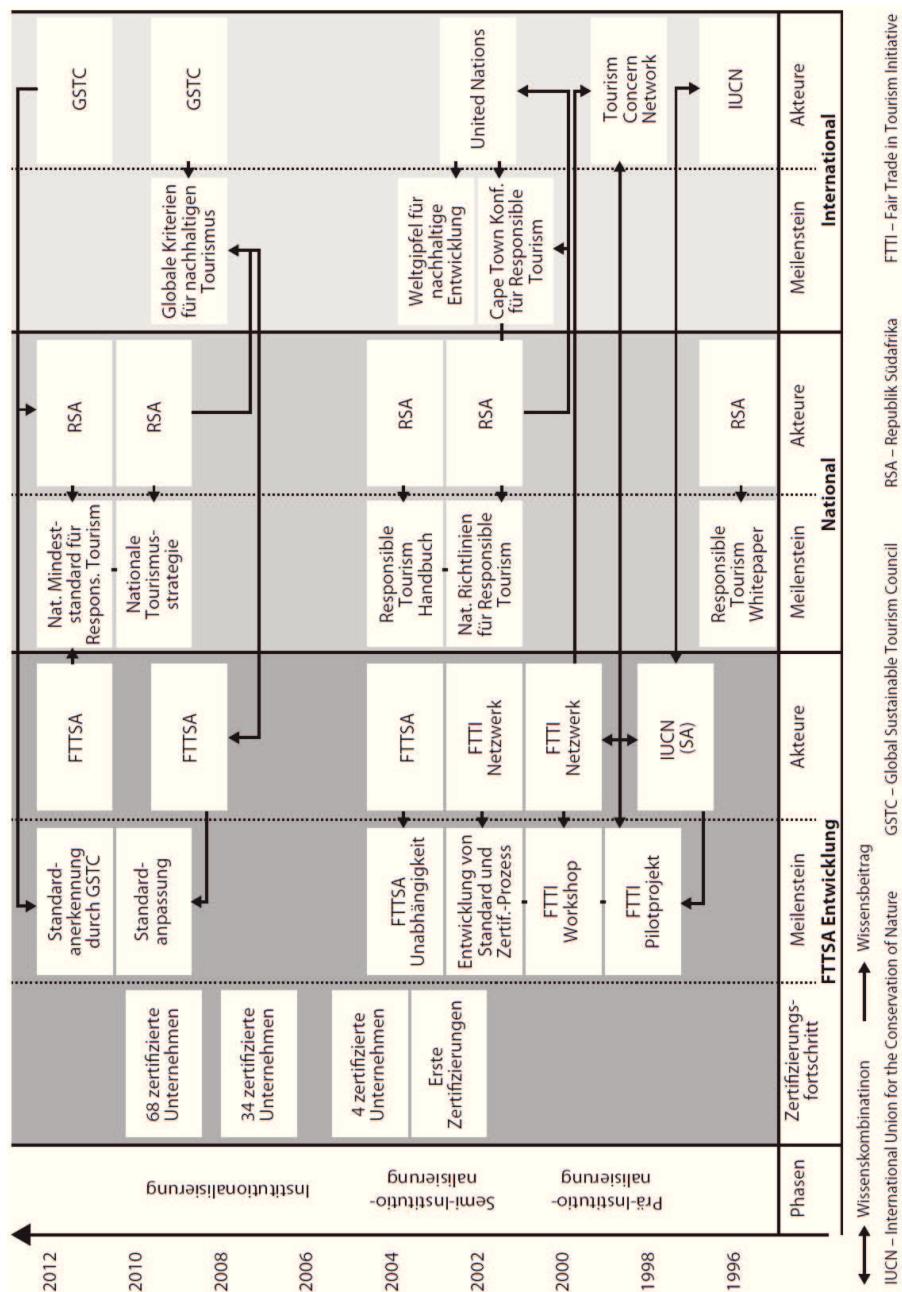


Abbildung 7: Wissensinteraktionsprozesse und Meilensteine in der Entwicklung des FTTSA-Standards in multiskalarer Perspektive. (Quelle: verändert nach Strambach & Surmeier 2013:743.)

Die Herausforderungen, die im Zusammenhang mit der Implementierung von Nachhaltigkeitsstandards im Tourismus ausführlich in der Literatur diskutiert werden (Font, 2002; Medina, 2005; Mundt, 2011), wurden in den Ergebnissen der Interviews deutlich. Die größten angesprochenen Barrieren waren der Mangel an finanziellen und zeitlichen Ressourcen, der große bürokratische Aufwand und die Zertifizierungskosten, die je nach Größe des Unternehmens variieren. Auch die große Unübersichtlichkeit und Proliferation von Gütesiegeln im nachhaltigen Tourismus und die Schwierigkeiten, die ökonomischen Vorteile von sozial verträglichen Handlungsweisen zu quantifizieren, würden die Einführung behindern. Dies waren auch die Gründe für einige Unternehmen sich nicht re-zertifizieren zu lassen. Allerdings ist die durchschnittliche jährliche Drop-out Rate gering und liegt bei 4,4 % (eigene Berechnung 2014). Obwohl diese Schwierigkeiten auch den BesitzerInnen und ManagerInnen der zertifizierten Unternehmen bewusst sind, überwiegen aus ihrer Sicht längerfristig die positiven Wirkungen. Zurückgeführt werden kann dies vor allem auf die sehr positive Bewertung von Lernprozessen, die mit der Standardimplementierung einhergehen. Diese haben aus Sicht der Unternehmen zum Aufbau von Kompetenzen und Wissensakkumulation beigetragen. Was den FTTSA-Standard und den Zertifizierungsprozess klar von anderen, ähnlichen Zertifizierungssystemen abhebt, ist der starke Fokus auf die soziale Dimension der Nachhaltigkeit, eine Schwerpunktsetzung auf Feedback und Lernprozesse und eine dynamische Prozessorientierung. Auch nach der Auszeichnung mit dem Gütesiegel werden die Unternehmen weiter von FTTSA dabei unterstützt, ihre Unternehmenstätigkeiten kontinuierlich nachhaltiger zu gestalten.

Der Großteil der zertifizierten Unternehmen war überzeugt, dass die FTTSA Zertifizierung ihre Einbindung in globale Wertschöpfungsketten fördere. Neue Entwicklungen im FTTSA-Portfolio weisen in die gleiche Richtung. Seit 2010 wurden sogenannte Fair Trade Travel Reisen entwickelt, die international verkauft werden und auf den Angeboten von zertifizierten Tourismusunternehmen in Südafrika basieren.

5.7 Schlussfolgerungen

Aus einer wissensbasierten Perspektive gibt es bisher nur wenig Forschung über die Entwicklungspfade von nachhaltigen Standards im Tourismus, die soziale Kriterien enthalten. Der Standard FTTSA ist einer der wenigen Standards, der einen Schwerpunkt auf die soziale

Dimension der Nachhaltigkeit legt und darüber hinaus in einem Land des Globalen Südens entwickelt wurde. Anhand dieses Beispiels erfolgte eine erste explorative Untersuchung den komplexen raumzeitlichen Entwicklungspfad dieser Nachhaltigkeitsinnovation im Tourismus zu analysieren. Die Ergebnisse unterstreichen die wechselseitige Beeinflussung von globalen und nationalen Wissensdynamiken und deren Verknüpfung bei der Standardentwicklung. Die Entwicklung der Responsible Tourism Guidelines auf nationaler Ebene, die spätere Definition des NMSRT und die derzeitige globale GSTC-Initiative beeinflussten sich zu verschiedenen Zeitpunkten wechselseitig. Diese Prozesse trugen zur normativen Orientierung und Legitimation des Entwicklungspfades des FTTSA-Standards bei. Die aktive Teilnahme von südafrikanischen Akteuren an globalen Initiativen zur Entwicklung von nachhaltigen Standards im Tourismus war entscheidend. Dies ermöglichte es, Wissensbasen, die auf globaler Ebene entwickelt wurden, in den nationalen Prozessen der Standardentwicklung zu integrieren. Gleichzeitig trug das bereits in Südafrika entwickelte kumulative Wissen über Responsible Tourism Standards zur Entwicklung der Mindeststandards im Rahmen der globalen Initiative GSTC bei.

Bei der Analyse der Wissensdynamiken im Institutionalisierungsprozess des FTTSA-Standards wird deutlich, dass es stetige Anpassungsprozesse an neue Entwicklungen auf globaler und nationaler Ebene gab. Wie auch andere Nachhaltigkeitsstandards im Tourismus wurde der FTTSA-Standard partizipativ in Multi-Stakeholder Konsultationsprozessen entwickelt. Allerdings ist ein konsensbasierter Entwicklungsprozess keine ausreichende Voraussetzung für die erfolgreiche Institutionalisierung auf der Mikroebene. Wie Medina (2005) anhand des Beispiels von Belize zeigt, können einerseits Probleme auftreten, die Standards auf der Mikroebene zu übersetzen und andererseits haben Zertifizierungsprogramme, die soziale Indikatoren beinhalten, häufig Probleme sich durchzusetzen (Font & Harris, 2004).

Obwohl der FTTSA-Standard sich noch in einer frühen Phase befindet, können dennoch einige Schlussfolgerungen über fördernde Faktoren für die Institutionalisierung von sozialen Standards gezogen werden:

1. Treiber für die Standardimplementierung auf Unternehmensebene sind am Anfang primär Werte und Normen. Dies kann dadurch erklärt werden, dass der (ökonomische) Mehrwert sozialer Standards schwer zu erfassen ist und erst nach einer gewissen Zeit auf Basis von Lernprozessen sichtbar wird.

2. Die Ergebnisse aus der FTTSA-Fallstudie heben hervor, dass die Balance von einerseits vorgeschriebenen Praktiken und andererseits genügend Offenheit für Interpretation und Anpassung an den jeweiligen Unternehmenskontext ein wichtiger fördernder Mechanismus ist. Insbesondere für Prozessstandards mit dem Ziel Lernprozesse, Wissensgenerierung und Kapazitätsbildung zu fördern, sind die Qualität des Assessments und regelmäßiges Feedback entscheidende Faktoren.

3. Der FTTSA-Standard gibt Hinweise darauf, dass selbst wenn soziale Standards auf Konsensmodellen basierend entwickelt wurden, es aufgrund von Veränderungen im nationalen und lokalen Umfeld kontinuierlicher Verbesserung und Anpassung bedarf, um die intendierten sozialen Wirkungen zu erreichen.

Die empirischen Ergebnisse betonen, dass die spezifische Kombination von heterogenen Wissensbasen bei der Entwicklung dieser Nachhaltigkeitsinnovation einen doppelten Effekt hatte: der FTTSA-Standard ist gut in den nationalen institutionellen Kontext integriert und bietet gleichzeitig eine Antwort auf globale Forderungen nach faireren und nachhaltigeren Unternehmenspraktiken im Tourismus.

Weitere Forschungen sind erforderlich, um die Wirkungen des FTTSA-Standards auf der Mikroebene systematisch zu evaluieren, da diese sich erst im Laufe der Zeit entfalten. Insbesondere die Analyse der Veränderungen von unternehmensinternen Managementstrategien, der Wirkungen auf das Umfeld der Unternehmen, sowie die Durchsetzung des Standards auf dem afrikanischen Kontinent und global kann zu neuen Erkenntnissen beitragen. Ein besonderer Fokus auf die Wechselwirkungen und Interaktionsprozesse mit anderen nachhaltigen Gütesiegeln und mit dem Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) kann interessant für die zukünftige Entwicklung von politischen Strategien sein.

6 The Contribution of Tourism Businesses to Sustainable Development Processes – the Case of ‘Buccaneers Lodge and Backpackers’

This chapter is a reprint of:

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Abstract:

The research on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and tourism have developed mainly separately from each other. A large share of the CSR literature investigates strategies of lead firms in the Global North while small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs) have only received limited attention. There are few academic articles and empirical studies focusing on CSR activities in Africa, even though this continent is facing many ecological, socio-economic challenges. This contribution analyses the complex development process of CSR strategies of SMMEs in the Global South from a dynamic perspective. It does this by using the case of “Buccaneers Lodge and Backpackers”, located in the Eastern Cape of South Africa. The analysis points out the challenges in facilitating sustainable development processes in rural South Africa but also the positive effects that evolved over time. The contribution aims to generate more knowledge about CSR activities of SMMEs in the Global South and discusses the potential of these approaches to facilitate sustainable development processes in post-apartheid South Africa.

6.1 Einleitung

Buccaneers Lodge & Backpackers ist ein Familienunternehmen, das Anfang der 1980er- Jahre gegründet wurde. Es liegt in Chintsa, einer ländlichen Siedlung an der sogenannten Wild Coast im Eastern Cape, Südafrika, 45 km von der nächstgelegenen Stadt East London entfernt. Anfänglich war Buccaneers auf die Ausrichtung von Konferenzen spezialisiert und vermietete Ferienhäuser, vorwiegend an südafrikanische Gäste (Interview Buccaneers 2009). Aufgrund politischer Unruhen und ökonomischer Instabilität, die vor allem gegen Ende der Apartheid auftraten und von denen auch das heutige Eastern Cape betroffen war, blieben jedoch die Gäste aus (Interviews Buccaneers 2009, 2015). Dies stellte eine Krise für Buccaneers dar, die zu einer strategischen Neuorientierung des Unternehmens und schließlich zur Spezialisierung auf Rucksackreisende führte (Interviews Buccaneers 2009, 2015). Bis heute setzen sich die Besitzer von Buccaneers auf vielfältige Weise dafür ein, im Rahmen ihres CSR-Engagements nachhaltige Entwicklungsprozesse in Chintsa anzustoßen und werden dabei von vielen weiteren engagierten Personen unterstützt. Ausgründungen von Buccaneers sind die Organisationen „African Heartland Journeys“ (AHJ) und „Volunteer Africa 32° South“ (VA32), die erste Fair-Trade-zertifizierte Freiwilligenorganisation weltweit. Zusätzlich unterstützt Buccaneers die NGO „Friends of Chintsa“ (FoC), an deren Gründung sie maßgeblich beteiligt waren (Interviews Buccaneers, 2009, 2013, 2015; Interviews VA32 2013, 2015; Interviews FoC 2013, 2015).

Corporate Social Responsibility stellt einen Beitrag von Unternehmen zur Förderung nachhaltiger Entwicklungsprozesse dar. Das Verständnis des Konzeptes der „nachhaltigen Entwicklung“ hat sich im Verlauf der Zeit sehr verändert. Die „neue Perspektive“ betont die dynamische, relative und kontextspezifische Natur der nachhaltigen Entwicklung (Jorna 2006; Faber et al. 2005; Schneider 2006). Um innovative, kontextangepasste Lösungsansätze für bestehende Problemlagen zu entwickeln, die alle Dimensionen der Nachhaltigkeit berücksichtigen, sind komplexe Bewertungs- und Aushandlungsprozesse zwischen verschiedenen Akteursgruppen erforderlich. Eine wesentliche Gruppe sind dabei wirtschaftliche Akteure, zu denen auch Tourismusunternehmen gehören.

Im Folgenden wird der derzeitige Stand der Forschung zu CSR im Tourismus im globalen Süden dargestellt und insbesondere auf die Rolle kleiner und mittelständischer Unternehmen (KMU) eingegangen. Darauf aufbauend dient die Fallstudie von „Buccaneers Lodge & Backpackers“

dazu, aus einer dynamischen und prozessorientierten Perspektive die komplexen Entstehungsprozesse der CSR-Strategien von KMU im globalen Süden zu analysieren und tiefergehende Erkenntnisse über die Hindernisse und Potenziale der Implementierung dieser CSR-Strategien zu generieren.

6.2 Die Bedeutung von CSR-Aktivitäten kleiner und mittelständischer Unternehmen im Globalen Süden

Die Forschung zur gesellschaftlichen Verantwortung von Unternehmen ist nicht neu und seit den 1950er-Jahren in der Forschung etabliert (Bowen und Johnson, 1953; Carroll, 1999). Der Großteil der Forschung zu CSR bezieht sich allerdings auf die Rolle von Unternehmen im globalen Norden, während CSR-Aktivitäten von Unternehmen im globalen Süden relativ wenig Beachtung finden. Seit jüngerer Zeit hat sich jedoch ein Forschungsstrang entwickelt, der die Bedeutung von CSR-Aktivitäten in Entwicklungs- und Schwellenländern analysiert (Blowfield und Fynas, 2005; Jamali und Mirshak, 2007; Jamali et al., 2015). Herausgehoben werden insbesondere die notwendige Anpassung von CSR-Strategien internationaler Unternehmen an die jeweiligen lokalen Kontexte, um nachhaltige Entwicklungsprozesse anzustoßen (Idemudia, 2011; Hamann et al., 2015). Bisher sind nur wenige empirische Studien zu CSR-Initiativen in Afrika vorhanden, obwohl gerade dieser Kontinent vielen ökologischen und sozialen Herausforderungen gegenübersteht (Egri und Ralston, 2008; Kolk und Van Tulder, 2010). Insbesondere die Wirkungen der CSR-Strategien lokaler KMU sind bisher wenig erforscht. Zum einen stehen sie kaum durch NGO-Monitoring und Konsumentenfordernisse unter Druck, Rechenschaft über ihre Unternehmensaktivitäten und CSR-Aktivitäten abzugeben. Dementsprechend tragen nur wenige KMU ihr CSR-Engagement nach außen. Ihr gesellschaftliches Engagement ist häufig informeller Natur und für Dritte „unsichtbar“ (Jeppesen et al., 2012; Garay und Font, 2012; Jamali et al., 2015). Zum anderen verfügen KMU selten über die zeitlichen und finanziellen Ressourcen wie internationale Unternehmen, um bedeutende Investitionen in CSR-Maßnahmen zu tätigen oder sogar eigene Abteilungen einzurichten, die ihre Aktivitäten strategisch koordinieren und extern kommunizieren. Entscheidungen werden stattdessen häufig unstrukturiert getroffen und die positiven

Wirkungen für verschiedene Stakeholder nur selten systematisch erfasst und evaluiert (Jamali et al., 2015).

Trotzdem ist die Bedeutung des CSR-Engagements von KMU nicht zu unterschätzen. Viele KMU verfügen über ein großes Potenzial, um dazu beizutragen, nachhaltige Entwicklungsprozesse in ihrem Umfeld anzustoßen (Jenkins, 2006; Jamali et al., 2015). Die Besitzer von KMU sind meistens stark in ihrem lokalen Umfeld verankert, identifizieren sich mit ihren Unternehmen und ihre Normen und Werte sind häufig starke Treiber für das gesellschaftliche Engagement (Jenkins, 2006). Das über die Zeit aufgebaute Sozialkapital der Unternehmen, z. B. eine positive Reputation und Vertrauensverhältnisse, ist von großer Bedeutung für die CSR-Aktivitäten und trägt zu ihrer Legitimierung bei (Jamali et al., 2015). Es gibt zudem sehr viele KMU im globalen Süden (Luetkenhorst, 2004), die oft in strukturell benachteiligten peripheren Räumen angesiedelt sind. Der Einfluss von staatlichen Entwicklungsmaßnahmen ist in diesen Räumen oft gering, sodass der Förderung nachhaltiger Entwicklungsprozesse gerade durch KMU eine große Bedeutung zukommt (Hamann et al., 2015).

Zu CSR im Tourismus gibt es vergleichsweise wenig Literatur, auch deshalb, weil sich die beiden Forschungszweige weitestgehend getrennt voneinander entwickelt haben (Bohdanowicz, 2006; Garay und Font, 2012). Die Forschungen zu CSR-Aktivitäten im Tourismus konzentrieren sich überwiegend auf Unternehmen aus dem globalen Norden, und es werden primär die Aktivitäten internationaler Hotelketten oder Reiseveranstalter analysiert (Lund-Durlacher, 2015). Die ökologische Dimension der Nachhaltigkeit steht in der Tourismuspraxis des CSR-Engagements meist im Vordergrund, während soziale Belange eher wenig Beachtung finden (Ashley und Haysom, 2006; Garay und Font, 2012). Viele Tourismusunternehmen tendieren dazu, philanthropische Ansätze zu nutzen, um sich sozial in ihrem Umfeld zu engagieren. Dies bedeutet, dass Investitionen in gemeinnützige Projekte getätigt werden, ohne jedoch interne Organisationsstrukturen oder Unternehmenspraktiken zu verändern (Ashley und Haysom, 2006). Tourismusunternehmen verfügen jedoch aufgrund einer hohen Beschäftigungsintensität und niedrigen Einstiegsbarrieren über ein großes Potenzial, nachhaltige Entwicklungsprozesse in ihrem Umfeld anzustoßen und zur Armutsrreduzierung beizutragen (Rogerson, 2004; Saarinen et al., 2011).

6.3 Buccaneers Lodge & Backpackers – von Philanthropie zur Verankerung von CSR im Kerngeschäft

In diesem Abschnitt wird zunächst aus einer dynamischen Perspektive der Entstehungspfad von Buccaneers Lodge & Backpackers und seinen verschiedenen organisatorischen Ausgründungen analysiert. Danach wird das Zusammenspiel des CSR-Engagements dieser Organisationen beleuchtet und diskutiert, wie die Einführung freiwilliger Standards dazu beitragen kann, nachhaltigere Managementpraktiken einzuführen.

6.3.1 Die Anfänge der Übernahme gesellschaftlicher Verantwortung von Buccaneers

Anfang der 1980er-Jahre wurde Buccaneers als Familienunternehmen gegründet, das vorwiegend Ferienhäuser an südafrikanische Familien vermietete. Die Familie aus Johannesburg, die sich nach eigenen Angaben bereits vor der Unternehmensgründung im Kampf gegen die Apartheid engagiert hatte, erlebte hier, wie sich das Apartheidsystem in peripheren Räumen auswirkte. Als ausgebildete Lehrerin engagierte sich insbesondere die Mutter an Schulen, um die Situation dort zu verbessern. Da ihre Werte starker Treiber für das soziale Engagement ihres Unternehmens waren, übernahm Buccaneers gesellschaftliche Verantwortung, indem das Unternehmen eine Partnerschaft mit der Bulugha Farm School aufbaute, eine Schule, die von vielen Kindern der Angestellten von Buccaneers besucht wurde. Die Anfänge des CSR-Engagements von Buccaneers waren somit durch philanthropische Aktivitäten gekennzeichnet (Interviews Buccaneers, 2009, 2013, 2015; Interviews FoC, 2013, 2015).

Ende der 1980er-Jahre befand sich Südafrika im Umbruch und war charakterisiert durch eine große politische und ökonomische Instabilität (Koelble, 2011). Dies wirkte sich auch auf die Geschäftstätigkeit von Buccaneers aus, da in dieser Zeit viele Menschen auf Urlaub verzichteten (Interviews Buccaneers, 2009, 2013, 2015). Für Buccaneers führte diese Krise zur strategischen Neuorientierung des Unternehmens und einer Spezialisierung auf den NGO-Sektor. Die Treiber für diesen Wandel waren einerseits ökonomische Motive und die Erschließung von Marktnischen und andererseits normative Gründe. Die Familie war von jeher stark politisch und sozial in ihrem Umfeld engagiert und versuchte aktiv, Veränderungsprozesse in Südafrika anzustoßen. Beispielsweise boten sie Konferenz- und

Tagungsräume an und stellten damit Räume zur Verfügung, in denen sich Anti-Apartheidsaktivisten und NGOs treffen und organisieren konnten. Zunächst waren dies so genannte „Kirchengruppen“ hinter denen sich allerdings Organisationen, die zur Zeit der Apartheid verboten waren verbargen, unter anderem Nelson Mandelas politische Partei „African National Congress (ANC)“ oder die Organisation „Black Sash“, eine Bewegung von „weißen“ Frauen gegen die Apartheid. Auch Anfang der 1990er-Jahre als das Apartheidsystem aufgelöst wurde, gab es einen großen Bedarf verschiedener Organisationen Buccaneers für Konferenzen zu nutzen, um „Nation Building“ zu betreiben und das „neue Südafrika“ aufzubauen (Interviews Buccaneers, 2009, 2013, 2015).

Die letzte Neuorientierung fand Mitte der 1990er-Jahre statt, als einerseits die Anzahl der Konferenzen in Südafrika zurückging und andererseits Rucksackreisende begannen, Südafrika zu erkunden (Interview Buccaneer, 2015; Interview VA32, 2015). Der Sohn der Familie reiste selbst einige Zeit als Backpacker umher und war mit den Anforderungen und Wünschen dieser Zielgruppe vertraut. Buccaneers wurde eines der ersten Backpacker Hostels in Südafrika, baute sich schnell eine hohe Reputation auf und wurde sehr erfolgreich (Interview Buccaneer, 2015; Interview VA32 2015). Während diesen unternehmerischen Neuorientierungen war Buccaneers stets aktiv in Entwicklungsprozesse in Chintsa eingebunden. Der Schwerpunkt lag dabei im Bildungsbereich. Ein Gast von Buccaneers, ein Professor aus Deutschland, wurde auf diese Bildungsprogramme aufmerksam und daraus entwickelte sich eine Partnerschaft. Es wurde ein Computerraum an der Bulugha Farm School eingerichtet, deren Inhalte von deutschen Studierenden betreut werden. Dazu müssen sie zwar die Kosten für ihre Flüge nach Südafrika selbst tragen, erhalten aber während der Zeit ihres Auslandspraktikums freie Kost und Logis bei Buccaneers. Diese Partnerschaft besteht bis heute und stellt die erste Form von Freiwilligentourismus bei Buccaneers dar (Interviews Buccaneers, 2013, 2015; Interviews VA32, 2013, 2015).

6.3.2 Die Entwicklungspfade der Organisationen „African Heartland Journeys“, „Volunteer Africa 32° South“ und „Friends of Chintsa“

Im Laufe der Zeit sind verschiedene Ausgründungen von Buccaneers entstanden, die belegen, dass die etablierten institutionellen Rahmenbedingungen auf der Makroebene CSR-Aktivitäten erheblich beeinflussen. Zunächst gründete der Besitzer von Buccaneers zusammen

mit dem damaligen Manager im Jahre 2001 den Reiseveranstalter „African Heartland Journeys“ (AHJ). Das Geschäftsmodell, soll dazu beitragen, nachhaltige Entwicklungsprozesse zu fördern und insbesondere arme Menschen zu unterstützen. African Heartland Journeys bietet Reisen in abgeschiedene Gebiete Südafrikas an, die infrastrukturell wenig erschlossen sind. Dabei arbeitet AHJ eng mit der lokalen Bevölkerung zusammen und unterstützt sie darin durch „Capability Building“, touristische Mikrounternehmen aufzubauen (Interviews Buccaneers, 2013, 2015; Interviews VA32, 2013, 2015).

Im Jahre 2006 wurde eine weitere Organisation gegründet, „Volunteer Africa 32° South“ (VA32), die in AHJ eingebettet ist. Die Gründer von AHJ wurden auf den neuen Reisetrend des Freiwillentourismus aufmerksam, bei dem Menschen dafür bezahlen, Freiwilligenarbeit zu leisten. Da sie bereits Freiwilligenprogramme im Rahmen einer Partnerschaft mit der deutschen Universität aufgebaut hatten, entschieden sie sich, in diese Marktnische einzutreten und die Organisation VA32 zu gründen. Dies eröffnete eine Möglichkeit, die CSR-Aktivitäten von Buccaneers und AHJ zu skalieren.

Die Gründung der staatlich registrierten NGO „Friends of Chintsa“ (FoC), die aus ehrenamtlich tätigen Menschen aus der Region Chintsa besteht, wurde im Jahre 2008 von AHJ und Buccaneers initiiert. Der Grund bestand darin, dass viele Gäste von Buccaneers und ehemalige Freiwillige von VA32 das gesellschaftliche Engagement der Unternehmen finanziell fördern wollten und für das Entgegennehmen von Spenden eine offiziell anerkannte NGO im institutionellen Kontext von Südafrika notwendig ist. Zudem sahen AHJ und Buccaneers einen großen Bedarf, weitere Entwicklungsprojekte in der Region durchzuführen, die nicht im Rahmen von VA32 mit internationalen Freiwilligen umzusetzen waren (Interviews FoC, 2013, 2015; Interviews Buccaneers, 2013, 2015).

Heute stehen die vier Organisationen in enger Wechselwirkung miteinander. Die Angestellten von AHJ arbeiten auch bei VA32 mit, da diese Organisation in AHJ eingebettet ist. Zudem unterstützen AHJ während ihrer Arbeitszeit die FoC-Projekte und führen Touren für Gäste von Buccaneers durch. Buccaneers beherbergt teilweise die Freiwilligen von VA32, die wiederum in den Projekten von Buccaneers und der FoC mitarbeiten. Die enge Verknüpfung der Organisationen erläutert der Besitzer von AHJ wie folgt: „We are basically the same people, wearing different hats“ (Interviews FoC, 2015).

6.3.3 Die CSR-Aktivitäten der Organisationen

Die gemeinsamen Projekte, die alle seit mehreren Jahren implementiert sind, können in verschiedene Bereiche unterteilt werden und sind in Tab. 7 dargestellt.

Bei der Umsetzung der Projekte bringen die verschiedenen Organisationen ihre jeweiligen Kompetenzen ein. Für die Durchführung von Surfunterricht für benachteiligte Jugendliche beispielsweise wurden Surfboogieboards an FoC gespendet. Der Surfunterricht wird von den FoC-Ehrenamtlichen durchgeführt, die aber von AHJ und den VA32-Freiwilligen unterstützt werden. Buccaneers richtet zusätzlich ein jährliches mehrtägiges Surfcamp aus, bei dem Jugendliche aus dem gesamten Eastern Cape miteinander und in Form von Wettbewerben gegeneinander surfen. So ergänzen sich die Bemühungen der jeweiligen Organisationen gegenseitig (Interview VA32, 2015).

Tabelle 7: Überblick über die CSR-Projekte der Organisationen Buccaneers, AHJ, VA32 und FoC.

Bildung	Sport und Gesundheit	Umweltschutz
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bau von Schulgebäuden• Aufbau und Leitung einer Kindertagesstätte• Einrichtung von Computerräumen an lokalen Schulen und Durchführung von Computerunterricht• Durchführung von Alphabetisierungskursen für Erwachsene• Leitung einer Theatergruppe	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Schaffung von Sportmöglichkeiten, wie Sportplätzen oder Klettergerüsten auf Schulhöfen• Surfunterricht für benachteiligte Jugendliche• Aufbau einer Gesundheitsstation• Einrichtung einer Schulkantine und Beschäftigung einer Köchin• Einrichtung von Gemüsegärten	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aufbau von Naturlehrpfaden• Müllsammelaktionen• Bau einer Biogasanlage für eine Schule

6.3.4 Herausforderungen bei der Umsetzung von CSR-Maßnahmen in ländlichen Räumen

Obwohl die verschiedenen Organisationen über ein großes Potenzial verfügen nachhaltige Entwicklungsprozesse anzustoßen, stehen sie vielen Herausforderungen gegenüber. Die drei wesentlichen Barrieren stellen dabei menschliche Widerstände, aber auch der Formalisierungsgrad und die Kommerzialisierung ehrenamtlichen Engagements dar.

Die Förderung nachhaltiger Entwicklung erfordert viele Aushandlungsprozesse, innerhalb derer bestimmte menschliche Widerstände überwunden werden müssen. Wenig motivierte Lehrkräfte sind beispielsweise ein großes Problem an den Schulen in Chintsa. Die stetigen Versuche zur Verbesserung der Bildung in der Region verursacht Druck auf die Lehrkräfte, an diesen Veränderungsprozessen mitzuwirken und sich stärker zu engagieren. Hierbei kommt es teilweise zu Widerständen, die in einem Fall dazu führten, dass die bildungsbezogenen CSR-Aktivitäten an einer Schule eingestellt werden mussten (Interview FoC, 2015).

Ein weiteres Spannungsfeld in dem sich die verschiedenen Organisationen befinden, ist die Umsetzung des CSR-Engagements auf mehr oder weniger formalisierte und strukturierte Art und Weise. Ein Gründungsmitglied von FoC erläutert: *We do almost always respond to whoever comes through the door. So it's a strength, but a weakness. Lots of the stuff that makes FoC strong as an organization, is also a weakness (Interview FoC, 2015)*.

Einerseits könnten sich durch eine Spezialisierung auf wenige Kernaktivitäten vermutlich höhere Wirkungen erzielen lassen, andererseits könnte die Organisation nicht flexibel auf die jeweils aktuellen Bedürfnisse reagieren. Dieser Aspekt wird regelmäßig im FoC- Vorstand diskutiert, aber bisher wurde entschieden, die Organisationsstruktur eher informell zu belassen (Interviews FoC, 2013, 2015).

Eine große Herausforderung für AHJ und VA32 ist die zunehmende Kommerzialisierung des Freiwilligenengagements und fehlende staatliche Regulierung (Interview VA32, 2015). Zu Beginn konnte sich VA32 aufgrund seines gut strukturierten Programms erfolgreich am Markt etablieren. Im Laufe der Zeit veränderte sich der Markt des Freiwilligtourismus in Südafrika jedoch rapide. Die Anzahl der Programme stieg stark an und internationale Reiseveranstalter traten zusätzlich in das Geschäftsfeld ein, sodass ein starker Wettbewerbsdruck entstand (Interview VA32, 2015). Viele der Anbieter von Freiwilligenprojekten in Südafrika sind aufgrund der Häufung von Skandalen sehr besorgt über die Entwicklungen in diesem Sektor.

Ein südafrikanischer Tourismusexperte erläutert: „It's the most disgusting sector that I've ever come across in terms of exploitation“.

Aus seiner Sicht nutzen viele Anbieter die ökonomischen Vorteile des wachsenden Marktes aus, ohne aber beispielsweise die lokale Bevölkerung bei der Auswahl der Projekte zu konsultieren oder die Qualifikationen der Freiwilligen zu prüfen und sie dementsprechend einzusetzen. Aus diesem Grund wurden von verschiedenen Akteuren Forderungen nach Regulierungen laut.

6.4 Die Implementierung von Standards als Instrument zur Förderung einer nachhaltigen Entwicklung

Buccaneers ist eines der ersten Tourismusunternehmen, das sich aufgrund seines Bestrebens, nachhaltige Entwicklungsprozesse anzustoßen, durch die Organisation „Fair Trade in Tourism“ (FTT) zertifizieren ließ und deren freiwilligen Nachhaltigkeitsstandards einführt. Der FTT-Standard bezieht sich sowohl auf die organisationsinternen Arbeitsbedingungen der jeweiligen Unternehmen als auch deren externe Beziehungen. Es werden unter anderem Human-Ressource-Praktiken, ökologische Managementpraktiken und Besitz- und Kontrollverhältnisse evaluiert. Die Bewertung der Integration der Unternehmen in ihr Umfeld und der Aufbau von Netzwerken erfolgt über Indikatoren, welche sich auf die Beschäftigung der lokalen Bevölkerung, Förderprojekte vor Ort oder regionalen Einkauf beziehen (Strambach und Surmeier, 2013). Die Einhaltung dieser Standards stellt eine Herausforderung dar, denn es werden nicht nur unternehmensinterne Indikatoren geprüft, sondern auch organisatorische Praktiken, die über die direkte Unternehmensstätigkeit und die Grenzen des Unternehmens hinausgehen. Eine Besonderheit des FTT-Standards ist der Schwerpunkt auf sozioökonomische Kriterien und die Möglichkeit der Anpassung an lokale Kontexte (Strambach und Surmeier, 2013).

Aufgrund fehlender staatlicher Regulierungen im Freiwillentourismus trat auch VA32 zusammen mit einem anderen Unternehmen auf die Organisation FTT zu, um gemeinsam in einem mehrjährigen Projekt einen Nachhaltigkeitsstandard und ein Zertifizierungssystem für Freiwillentourismus zu entwickeln. Die Organisation wurde wie Buccaneers im Jahre 2010 durch FTT zertifiziert. Die Einführung der freiwilligen FTT-Standards und die Auszeichnung mit

dem Gütesiegel trugen dazu bei, sowohl die internen Unternehmenspraktiken von Buccaneers und VA32 als auch die Beziehungen zu externen Stakeholdern auf strategische Weise nachhaltiger zu gestalten. Zudem legitimiert das Gütesiegel die Bemühungen der Unternehmen und dient dazu, sich von weniger nachhaltigen Tourismusanbietern abzugrenzen (Interviews Buccaneers, 2009, 2013, 2015; Interviews VA32, 2013, 2015).

Neben der FTT-Zertifizierung für Freiwillentourismus wurde eine weitere innovative Entwicklung durch die FTT-Zertifizierung angestoßen, die auf Lerneffekten und dem Aufbau von Netzwerken zu anderen zertifizierten Unternehmen basiert – die Entwicklung des Fair-Trade-Travel-Passes. Dazu haben sich im Jahr 2012 mehrere FTT-zertifizierte KMU zusammengeschlossen und ein Produkt, ähnlich einer Pauschalreise entwickelt, das aus FTT-zertifizierten Bausteinen besteht. Der Travel-Pass stellt eine Möglichkeit dar, nicht mehr isoliert voneinander zu arbeiten und einen ökonomischen Nutzen aus den CSR-Aktivitäten zu generieren. Während des Entwicklungsprozesses fanden viele Lernprozesse statt, insbesondere da die Unternehmen neue Aufgaben, z. B. Marketing, übernommen haben (Interview Buccaneers, 2015).

6.5 Fazit und Ausblick

Südafrika ist durch eine sehr starke sozioökonomische Fragmentierung und große soziale Spannungen gekennzeichnet, die nicht einfach zu bewältigen sind. Deshalb sind auch die CSR-Aktivitäten von Privatunternehmen von großer Bedeutung für die sozioökonomische Transformation des Landes. Insbesondere Tourismusunternehmen haben ein großes Potenzial nachhaltige Entwicklungsprozesse anzustoßen. Die Fallstudie von Buccaneers zeigt, dass die Treiber des gesellschaftlichen Engagements vorwiegend normative Werte sind und weniger die Erwartung von ökonomischen Vorteilen. Wie aus der Literatur bekannt, ist der Formalisierungsgrad der CSR-Aktivitäten von KMU im globalen Süden eher gering. Allerdings zeigt die Fallstudie, dass die CSR-Maßnahmen im Verlauf der Zeit strukturierter und systematischer durchgeführt wurden. Dahinter stehen komplexe intra- und interorganisationale Lernprozesse, die unter anderem dazu führen, dass bestimmte CSR-Maßnahmen ausgelagert wurden. So kann Buccaneers sich als Unternehmen stärker auf die Kernkompetenzen konzentrieren, während AHJ, VA32 und FoC tiefer in die CSR- Aktivitäten involviert sind. Eine wichtige Strategie, um Skalierungs- und Synergieeffekte zu erlangen, ist

demnach die Bildung von unterschiedlichen Organisationen, die sich komplementär ergänzen und den vorhandenen kontextuellen, institutionellen Regulierungen entsprechen.

Die Implementierung von sozioökologischen Standards diente dazu, die CSR-Bemühungen zu systematisieren und in das Kerngeschäft zu integrieren. Der FTT-Standard war dafür besonders gut geeignet, da er gut an den Kontext und die Bedürfnisse von KMUs im ländlichen Südafrika angepasst ist. Zudem hat seine Implementierung die Entwicklung eines innovativen Produkts, den Fair-Trade-Travel-Pass angestoßen. Da der FTT-Standard ursprünglich nicht auf den Freiwillentourismus anwendbar war, hat VA32 maßgeblich eine weitere innovative Entwicklung gefördert – die Übertragung des FTT-Standards auf den Freiwillentourismus. Diese Veränderungsprozesse entfalten sich jedoch erst im Verlauf der Zeit und weitere Forschung ist nötig, um die Wirkungen des CSR-Engagements von Buccaneers, AHJ, VA32 und FoC zu evaluieren, um darauf aufbauend, politische und anwendungsorientierte Handlungsempfehlungen abzuleiten.

7 Dynamic Capability Building and Social Upgrading in Tourism - Potentials and Limits of Sustainability Standards

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Abstract

This contribution argues that most of the research on socio-economic improvements at the firm level, termed upgrading in the literature on Global Value Chains (GVC) and associated Global Production Networks (GPN), has focused on upgrading as an outcome. There is a limited dynamic investigation of organisational change at the micro level of the firm and an insufficient acknowledgement of individual firm capabilities. These processes are intertwined with upgrading, but have not yet been understood in-depth in GVC/GPN research. Against this background, the question guiding the article is: How can sustainability standards contribute to capability building and social upgrading processes at the firm level?

Conceptually, the paper integrates the dynamic capabilities approach from organizational studies to advance the current understanding of upgrading in GVCs and GPNs. The dynamic capabilities approach offers a process-based, micro-level perspective focusing on organizational learning and capability building. It offers a differentiated view on the nature and acquisition of capabilities and provides an opportunity to open up the “black box” to illuminate learning processes at the firm level.

Empirically, the case of the “Fair Trade in Tourism” (FTT) standard was investigated to gain empirical insights. The FTT standard aims to contribute to the socio-economic transformation of the South African tourism industry and focuses on the social dimension of sustainability. It provides a well-suited case to answer the research question as the standard intends to drive intra-organisational learning and capability building but also promotes inter-organisational relations and related capability building.

7.1 Introduction

Tourism is often perceived as an engine for sustainable development. Many national governments strive to develop their tourism industries to exploit its potential for job creation and environmental protection. However such efforts are often paired with a limited knowledge of working conditions on the ground. According to the scarce literature that is available, the sector's working conditions are typically characterized by low wages and long hours, inequality of opportunity, and job insecurity (ILO, 2010; Christian, 2012; De Beer et al., 2013). In addressing these challenges, sustainability standards and certification systems have gained importance. By translating the abstract concept of "sustainability" into organizational practices, standards have the potential to drive organizational change and can be used as a tool to enforce sustainable business practices along global value chains (GVCs) and within global production networks (GPNs) (Barrientos et al., 2011; Nadvi and Wältring, 2004; Nadvi, 2014). However, empirical research has revealed mixed evidence and uneven outcomes of the implementation of private standards. On the one hand, there are cases where capability building and upgrading processes were facilitated through the implementation of private standards (Humphrey & Schmitz, 2002; Blazek, 2015; Gereffi et al., 2005; Nadvi, 2008). On the other hand, empirical research also revealed the limitations of private standards, especially on social and environmental aspects (Locke, 2013; Barrientos & Smith, 2007; Bair, 2017). In many cases, it seems that their implementation has not led to the intended improvements in working conditions and environmental practices (Alford, 2016).

This paper intends to make a mainly conceptual contribution and argues that most of the research on socio-economic improvements at the firm level, termed upgrading in the GVC/GPN literature, has focused on upgrading as an outcome. There is a limited dynamic investigation of organizational change at the micro level of the firm and an insufficient acknowledgement of individual firm capabilities. Yet upgrading evolves at different speeds and is closely intertwined with processes of capability building. Against this background, the article aims to explore how the impacts of the implementation of sustainability standards unfold dynamically over time and contribute to capability building and upgrading at the micro-level of the firm. Against this background, the question guiding this article is: How can sustainability standards contribute to capability building and social upgrading processes at the firm level?

Conceptually, the paper integrates the dynamic capabilities approach from organizational studies to advance the current understanding of upgrading in GVCs and GPNs. The dynamic capabilities approach offers a process-based, micro-level perspective focusing on organizational learning and capability building. These processes are intertwined with upgrading, but have not yet been understood in depth in GVC/GPN research. Empirically, the case of the standard "Fair Trade in Tourism (FTT)" was investigated to gain some empirical insights. The FTT standard aims to contribute to the socio-economic transformation of the South African tourism industry and focuses on the social dimension of sustainability.

The paper is structured as follows: Section 7.2 reviews the current literature on upgrading and suggests how the dynamic capabilities approach can complement this strand of research. After the introduction of approaches to sustainable development in South African tourism and the case of FTT in Section 7.3, the methodology is outlined in Section 7.4. The empirical part of the paper in Section 7.5 is used to illustrate our conceptual argument. It combines a social upgrading and dynamic capabilities perspective to analyse the intra- and inter-organisational impacts of the FTT standard implementation. Section 7.6 draws conclusions and offers some suggestions for future research.

7.2 The Complementary of Research on Upgrading in GVCs/GPNs and Organisational Capabilities

7.2.1 Research on Upgrading in GVCs/GPNs

The globalization of the world economy has led to widely distributed global production networks with lead firms coordinating the majority of global trade (Barrientos et al., 2011). Research on GPNs and associated GVCs explores the global division of production and labour, analyses the governance of linkages between firms located in different political and institutional contexts and explores the roles of diverse public and private actors in setting and enforcing rules (Franz, 2010; Bettoli et al., 2011). A central theme in GVC/GPN research is to investigate private governance through global standards, set and enforced by lead firms and international NGOs (Humphrey & Schmitz, 2000; Nadvi & Wältring, 2004; Nadvi, 2008). Standards in GVCs and GPNs increasingly address working conditions and environmental practices in the global economy, mainly driven by changing consumer demands (Nadvi &

Wältring, 2004; Barrientos & Smith, 2007; Nadvi, 2008). At the business level, the implementation of standards has the potential to facilitate upgrading processes. Upgrading processes are understood as opportunities for producers to move “to higher value added activities in production, to improve technology, knowledge and skills, and to increase the benefits or profits deriving from participation in GPNs” (Barrientos et al., 2011:323).

A considerable body of research has explored different forms of economic upgrading of producers mainly driven by the implementation of standards. Economic upgrading has been distinguished into functional, process, product and intersectoral/chain upgrading (Humphrey & Schmitz, 2002, Blazek, 2015). This distinction is considered seminal to the upgrading debate, yet it has been criticised for indicating a hierarchical and linear upgrading trajectory (Morrison et al., 2008; Ponte & Ewert, 2009). Moreover, the research on upgrading has taken a firm-centric and economic view in understanding learning processes and development prospects (Coe & Hess, 2013). Whether and how these positive economic outcomes at the firm-level actually translate into better working conditions, especially in firms located in the Global South, is still up for debate (Locke, 2013; Barrientos et al., 2011). Thus, a strand of research on social upgrading has emerged in the last decade that investigates the outcomes of the global economic integration for workers and firms in the Global South. This research analyses the interrelations between economic and social upgrading and explores the possibilities for social upgrading (Milberg & Winkler, 2011; Selwyn, 2013; Barrientos et al., 2011). Barrientos et al. (2011:324) define social upgrading as “the process of improvement in the rights and entitlements of workers as social actors, which enhances the quality of their employment”. Based on the ILO’s framework of ‘decent work’ (Ghai, 2003; International Labour Organization, 1999), social upgrading can be subdivided into two elements: The first element is ‘measurable standards’ that are relatively easy to quantify and monitor. Measurable standards refer to improvements of working conditions in terms of wages, employment security (contract type, social protection) and physical wellbeing (health and safety levels). The second element of social upgrading refers to ‘enabling rights’ and include less easily quantifiable aspects such as freedom of associations, collective bargaining and non-discrimination. It is acknowledged in this distinction that improvements in measurable standards are often the outcomes of complex bargaining processes and based on enabling rights (Barrientos & Smith, 2007; Barrientos et al., 2011; Rossi, 2013).

Even though GPN/GVC researchers have advanced the understanding of upgrading beyond economic aspects by increasingly focusing on the social implications of upgrading (Barrientos & Smith, 2007; Barrientos et al., 2011), it remains underexplored how upgrading is brought about at the firm level. Most of the literature on labour in value chains has analysed aggregate numbers of workers at different positions within the chain (Barrientos et al., 2011). Milberg & Winkler (2011:360) point out that this “does not account for the quality of work, employment conditions or the degree of informal or unpaid labour”. How to achieve “better jobs” and improve the quality of employment for workers is still an open question. Despite case study insights, for example on female workers, smallholders or informal workers, little is known on how to facilitate social upgrading in a strategic way and simultaneously contribute to economic upgrading (Barrientos & Smith, 2007; Barrientos et al., 2011; Bettoli et al., 2011; Christian, 2012). There is still a limited understanding of how entrepreneurs and small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs) from the Global South can build up capabilities to gain access to GVCs/GPNs. Furthermore, open questions remain on the ecological dimension of upgrading. This dimension is currently largely disregarded by scholars in the field (Bettoli et al., 2011). In summary, the GVC/GPN approach has little to say about why and how some firms upgrade and others do not. Scholars in the field have gained limited insights into the processes that underlie upgrading and hindering and fostering factors for upgrading at the firm level (Morrison et al., 2008; Kadarusman & Nadvi, 2013). Against this background, this contribution suggests the integration of approaches from organization studies focusing on organizational capabilities into the GVC/GPN upgrading debate. Combining these approaches in a complementary way may help to generate novel insights on organizational learning and upgrading in the global economy.

The importance of firm capabilities as a determinant for upgrading has been underlined in GVC and GPN research for a long time. Already in 2002, Humphrey & Schmitz (2002) pointed out that upgrading depends not only on the governance structure of the GVC in which they are embedded but also on the efforts and capabilities of the individual firms (Humphrey & Schmitz, 2000; 2002). Yet, not much research has been conducted on capability building at the firm level and a dynamic micro level perspective is largely missing. There are a few important exceptions. Morrison et al. (2008) suggest a research agenda that exploits the technological capability approach to address the shortcomings in the upgrading literature. Kadarusman &

Nadvi (2013) as well as Locke (2013) underline the importance of capability building for upgrading in GVCs/GPNs as a way forward to facilitate better working conditions in the global economy. Locke (2013) as well as Schrank (2013) specifically point to the important role of assessors and inspectors who facilitate capability building even though their key responsibility is to monitor the compliance with standards. Despite these first insights, the interrelations between capability building and upgrading in GVCs/GPNs remain an unresolved issue. This is due to the limits of upgrading research: First, upgrading has been conceptualized in the academic literature in such a way that makes it difficult to distinguish between processes that lead to upgrading and upgrading as an outcome (Morrison et al., 2008; Coe & Yeung, 2015). Due to this fuzziness in the understanding of upgrading in the GVC/GPN literature, the term upgrading has been used interchangeably for upgrading processes and outcomes (Morrison et al., 2008). A clearer analytical framework of upgrading may enable researchers to understand processes that underlie upgrading outcomes and hindering and fostering factors in more detail. Second, it is largely assumed within GVC/GPN research that learning opportunities and upgrading are determined by external influences, such as local and regional industrial policies as well as specific governance structures and a so-called vertical “knowledge transfer” that has often been analysed between lead firms from the Global North and their suppliers from developing countries (Humphrey & Schmitz, 2002; Gereffi et al., 2005; Parrilli, Nadvi & Yeung, 2013; Hansen et al., 2014). Further external influences, such as requirements of NGOs and CSOs, have also been acknowledged (Nadvi & Wältring, 2004; Ponte & Sturgeon, 2014). Yet, not much attention has been paid to the micro-level of the firm, intra-firm learning and the agency of local firms in facilitating learning and upgrading within their organizations as well as in their local supply chains. This leads to a third issue, namely that the nature of capabilities and processes of capability building remain largely hidden in GVC/GPN analysis. Upgrading research hardly takes into account deliberate as well as idiosyncratic learning strategies and there is no distinction into different types of capabilities, even though these aspects seem to influence upgrading processes (Morrison et al., 2008; Hansen et al., 2014). The research strand on organizational capabilities offers a much more differentiated view on the nature and acquisition of capabilities and provides an opportunity to open up the “black box” and illuminate learning processes at the firm level.

7.2.2 Dynamic Capabilities – a Complementary Perspective on Upgrading

Research on organizational capabilities distinguishes between operational and dynamic capabilities. These two types of capabilities differ in their purpose and outcomes (Helfat & Winter, 2011). Firms use operational capabilities to conduct repeated, reliable business activities in the present. As repetitive actions within a work process, operational capabilities are expressed as routines of a firm. Routines collectivize experience-based and procedural knowledge and are considered to be “the building blocks of organizational capabilities” (Becker, 2004:662). As are the outcomes of complex social and cognitive learning processes, routines emerge in a path-dependent way, are context-dependent, embedded in an organization and shaped by institutional frameworks (Becker, 2004; Nooteboom, 2010; Scott, 2014). Routines enable coordination within an organization as they constitute a balance between the interests of participants. Even though routines are subject to constant incremental change due to their collective nature, they contribute to stability within a process and reduce uncertainty. Lastly routines store knowledge, including so-called symbolic knowledge (Asheim, 2007) which is cultural, normative, values-based knowledge (Nelson & Winter, 1982; Teece & Pisano, 1994; Dosi et al., 2000; Becker, 2004). This is challenging as knowledge cannot be ‘stored’ easily due to its inherent tacit dimension, process character and context dependency (Foray, 2004; Strambach, 2008). In comparison to analytic (science-based) and synthetic (applied knowledge), symbolic knowledge contains a high share of tacit knowledge and is particularly hard to codify and distance-sensitive (Asheim, 2007; Manniche, 2012; Strambach & Klement, 2012).

In contrast to operational routines, dynamic capabilities or “capabilities to develop or change capabilities” (Nooteboom, 2010:173) enable firms to strategically change operational capabilities and are thus important for the firm’s future viability. Dynamic capabilities were originally defined by Teece et al. (1997:516) as "the firm's ability to integrate, build, and reconfigure internal and external competences to address rapidly changing environments." The dynamic capabilities approach is based on the assumptions that the environments in which firms are operating are rapidly changing and often characterized by complexity, volatility and uncertainty. Zhou & Li (2010) point out that this is especially the case in emerging economies. Dynamic capabilities are path dependent in their emergence and idiosyncratic to the firm (Eisenhardt & Martin, 2000). They cannot be transferred easily but have to build up

based on learning processes and the development of organisational routines. Helfat & Winter (2011) point out that the line between operational and dynamic capabilities is blurry. Furthermore, the literature on dynamic capabilities is characterized by inconsistencies, no clear definitions and even opposing views and contradictions on certain issues. Nevertheless, the research on dynamic capabilities addresses a fundamental question that is central to the upgrading debate. Research on dynamic capabilities attempts to explain why some firms are more successful than others; or more specifically, how firms develop the skills and competencies that allow them to gain and hold competitive advantages within a changing environment (Nooteboom, 2010; Teece et al., 1997; Zahra et al., 2006). This issue is not yet well understood in the GVC/GPN's upgrading debate. As the research strand on dynamic capabilities provides a process-based perspective that pronounces the agency of actors at the micro-level, integrating this perspective into upgrading research may help to generate new insights.

To date, no agreed set of dynamic capabilities exists. In this paper, we refer to the distinction of Nooteboom (2010) as he puts organizational learning at the centre of his research and identifies a number of interrelated dynamic capabilities of organizations. These capabilities seem to be closely interlinked with upgrading at the firm-level. According to Nooteboom (2010) one dynamic capability is to **design an organisational focus**. An organizational focus limits the range of activities of a firm but at the same time allows for the development of a distinctive company profile to set apart a firm from other firms and create a competitive advantage. Therefore an organizational focus limits but at the same time also constructs and enables specific firm activities and can be a driver of innovation (Nooteboom, 2010). A second dynamic capability is the ability to **absorb knowledge** and **collaborate with other organizations**. The absorptive capacity of a firm constitutes "an ability to recognize the value of new information, assimilate it, and apply it to commercial ends" (Cohen & Levinthal, 1990:128; Nooteboom, 2010). At the organizational level, knowledge absorption can occur within the firm, between and across different subunits - but also requires the intellectual and behavioural ability to collaborate with external organizations in order to absorb external knowledge (Cohen & Levinthal, 1990). The importance of external knowledge absorption is acknowledged in the GVC/GPN framework by pointing out that upgrading prospects depend

on the capabilities of firms to be able to learn from lead firms (Humphrey & Schmitz, 2002; Gereffi et al., 2005; Blazek, 2015).

Collaboration with external organizations can facilitate capability building and learning. Whether collaboration and knowledge adaption and integration will prove successful at the firm level depends not only on the absorptive capacity of a firm but also on the creation of proximity (Torre & Gilly, 2000; Boschma, 2005). Empirical research showed that geographical proximity alone seems insufficient for collective knowledge generation and innovation. Also non-spatial dimensions of proximity - cognitive, social, organisational and institutional proximity - are important for facilitating learning and innovation (Strambach, 2008; Halkier et al., 2010; Strambach & Klement, 2012).

The capability to **build networks** describes the ability of organizations to design networks; or to select networks that are suitable to the company's organizational focus and abilities, get access to these existing networks and move into a favourable position within them (Nooteboom, 2010). GVC/GPN research analyses network building but focuses mainly on the role of lead firms in these processes and their criteria to select suppliers. Less attention has been given to lower tier suppliers and their agency and strategies in getting access to GVCs/GPNs (Nadvi & Raj-Reichert, 2015). The capability to build networks and improve one's position in a network is strongly related to processes of functional economic upgrading (Blazek, 2015). A last capability – to **exploit and explore knowledge** – is the ability of an organisation to simultaneously conduct both – exploration and exploitation. This capability, often referred to as organisational ambidexterity, enables them to efficiently manage today's business while at the same time being adaptable and innovative in dealing with changing demands in their environment (Duncan, 1976; Raisch & Birkenshaw, 2008). It includes shifting activity to appropriate novel contexts that offer opportunities for ongoing exploitation (Nooteboom, 2010). Thus, it is related to intersectoral or chain upgrading which describes horizontal movements of production into new sectors based on exploitation and exploration (Blazek, 2015). Yet, it is not easy to concomitantly exploit and explore knowledge as both tasks are challenging on its own.

These processes of capability building are interrelated with upgrading and can help firms to implement more sustainable management practices. The research on capability building underlined that economic improvements at the firm level are inseparably intertwined with

social learning processes and changing social practices and cannot be analysed in isolation (Nooteboom, 2010). Therefore, a process-based perspective that takes into account the interrelations and co-evolution of different forms of upgrading may provide better insights than studying upgrading processes separately from each other. Furthermore, social learning processes and capabilities often emerge slowly and not all processes of capability building may result in upgrading in GVCs/GPNs. Many learning processes remain hidden and may never become visible when applying an upgrading perspective. Thus, using the dynamic capabilities approach can help to illuminate the “black box” and generate novel insights into the micro level processes by which businesses implement more sustainable management practices that can possibly but not necessarily become visible in the form of upgrading in GVC/GPNs.

The empirical case of the FTT standard seems appropriate to investigate how sustainability standards can facilitate capability building and upgrading processes at the firm level because the FTT standard intends to drive intra-organisational learning and capability building, for example by focusing on working conditions, skills development or quality and reliability. Moreover, it also promotes inter-organisational relations and related dynamic capability building by addressing the external integration of the businesses into the region and the creation of community linkages. The next section will contextualize the case study on FTT and reviews the literature on working conditions in tourism

7.3 The Development of Sustainable Tourism in South Africa and “Fair Trade in Tourism (FTT)”

Little attention has been paid to capability building and social upgrading in tourism. Tourism offers a huge potential for poverty reduction and can facilitate economic development. As a labour-intensive industry with low entry barriers, tourism creates diverse employment opportunities and offers high potential for job training and skills development. Moreover, there are multiplier effects in other sectors (Ashley et al., 2001; Rogerson, 2004; Saarinen et al., 2011). However, not much is known about tourism working conditions. Ladkin (2011:1135) observes that “tourism labor remains a relatively minor player in academic research despite an obvious need to be able to manage and plan for tourism labor requirements.” The limited research that has been done on tourism employment focuses on the Global North (De Beer et

al., 2013), while working conditions in African tourism are minimally explored in the current scholarship (Rogerson, 2012). Tourism working conditions receive criticism due to a number of issues. First, tourism wages are low. According to ILO (2001) workers are paid approximately 20% less than workers in other sectors (excluding agriculture) due to an oversupply of low-skilled labour (De Beer et al., 2013). Women earn about 25% less than men in similar positions in tourism (ILO, 2010). Second, working hours in the tourism sector are long and irregular (Meyer, 2007). Work is required on weekends, for nightshifts, and holiday periods (Meyer, 2007; ILO, 2010; De Beer et al, 2013). Third, due to the seasonality of tourism, employers often retrench staff during low season or employ workers on a time-limited basis during high season (Shaw & Williams, 1994; Meyer, 2007). While it creates a high number of jobs with low entry barriers during the peak season, “the predominance of on-call, casual, temporary, seasonal and part-time employment is related to insecurity, comparatively low pay, job instability, limited career opportunity, a high level of subcontracting and outsourcing, and a high turnover rate” (ILO, 2010:14). In summary, tourism work, especially in the Global South, is characterized by poor working conditions with low wages and long hours, unequal opportunities for different types of workers, exploitation and insecurity at the workplace. These precarious working conditions can cause negative effects at the firm-level. For example, a high staff turnover may lead to a decline in service quality, additional costs of replacing workers, and investments in recruitments and training of inexperienced workers (ILO, 2010). Furthermore, limited integration of local businesses because of, for example, limited technology, marketing capabilities and financial resources, and limited linkages with local communities result in unequal distribution of benefits (Kirsten & Rogerson, 2010; Christian, 2012). Christian (2012) points out that historic advantages and path dependencies led to advantages in market access for certain groups (e.g. white hunting tourism operators in Uganda), while other groups were excluded from GVCs/GPNs due to a perception of lacking the necessary skills and a low accountability threshold. How to facilitate capability building, integrate local SMMEs into tourism GPNs and create decent working conditions locally is an open discussion. There is a discrepancy between strategic tourism planning at a national and regional macro-level—but beyond case study approaches, little knowledge is available on how to overcome these barriers at the micro level strategically (DeBeer et al.2013; Kirsten & Rogerson, 2010; Christian, 2012).

The challenges discussed above are also prevalent in South Africa, even though tourism is one of the most important sectors for employment creation in a country of exceptionally high socio-economic fragmentation and unemployment (Visser & Rogerson, 2004; Koelble, 2011; Seif & Spenceley, 2007). Currently it contributes to almost 10 percent of GDP and directly employs more than half a million people (World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), 2014). Nevertheless, the industry in South Africa evolved to be “predominantly white-owned and white-managed” and its potential to contribute to sustainable development processes is still constrained by the legacy of apartheid. This manifests in a lack of skills, market access of local tourism entrepreneurs, and limited integration of communities and previously neglected groups into tourism supply chains (Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT), 1996; South African Tourism, 2008). Against this background, the post-Apartheid government has acknowledged the potential of the sector as crucial for the country’s overall development strategy and has started efforts to transform the tourism industry in such a way “that it contributes to the improvement of the quality of life of all South Africans” (DEAT, 1996). In 1996, the national government introduced the concept of responsible tourism (RT) as the key guiding principle of tourism development in South Africa.

One important organization that emerged within this context is “Fair Trade Tourism (FTT)”, a South African based non-profit standard setting and market development organization. With the aim to reduce poverty and inequality within the post-apartheid context and to contribute positively to socio-economic transformation in the tourism industry, the organisation developed a tourism sustainability standard of the same name. The standard is compliant with national legislation including Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) requirements and ILO Core Labour standards (ITC, 2016). It focuses on working conditions and environmental performance. The FTT standard is divided into 16 categories that take social, ecological and economic issues into consideration (see Figure 8). It includes “decent work” requirements as displayed in Figure 8.

FTT certification is available to both established and emerging tourism businesses of any size. The application process starts with an online self-assessment that is followed by an on-site assessment. The assessment usually lasts between two and five days. Re-assessment is done every three years and certified businesses have to report on their improvements online annually (FTT, 2016). Currently, 62 tourism businesses throughout South Africa have been

awarded FTT certification in addition to eight in Madagascar and five in Mozambique. In total, there are 160 tourism businesses in eight African countries that have been FTT-certified or recognized through mutual recognition agreements (FTT, 2016).

As the standard focuses on the social dimension of sustainability, has been developed in the Global South and intends to drive both intra- and inter-organisational learning and capability building, it is an appropriate case to investigate how sustainability standards can facilitate upgrading processes.

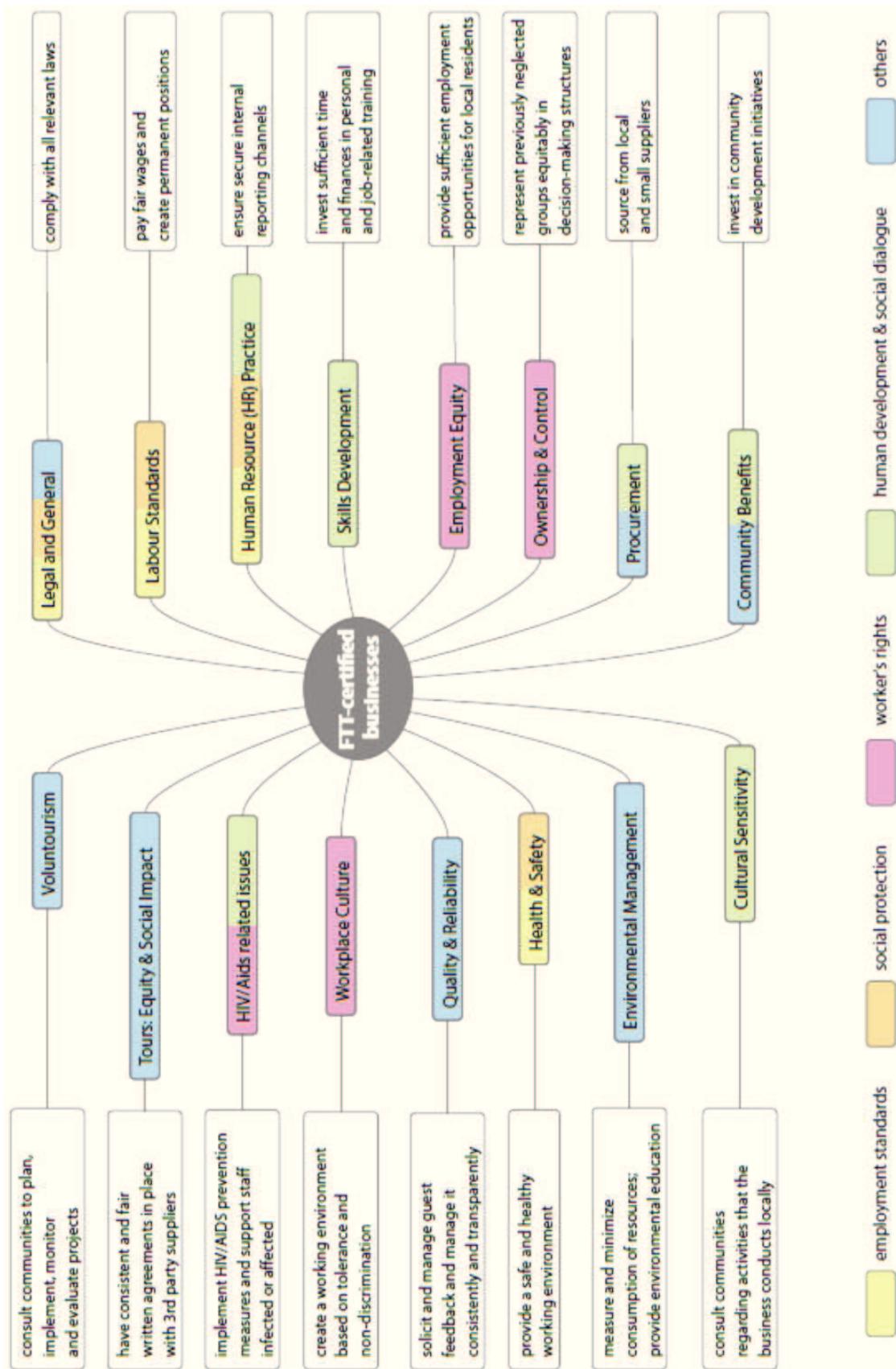


Figure 8: Examples of Fair Trade in Tourism (FTT) Requirements.

(Source: Own figure based on FTT, 2013; ILO, 1999 and ITC, 2016.)

7.4 Methodology

With the aim to shed more light on the question of how private standards can contribute to capability building and upgrading in GVCs/GPNs, we conducted an explorative longitudinal case study and investigated the case of “Fair Trade in Tourism (FTT)”. A qualitative research design with a mixed methods approach was applied. This includes:

- media and document analysis using tourism policy and strategy papers;
- explorative, as well as semi-structured interviews with different stakeholders; including FTT-certified businesses
- interviews with formerly certified businesses that did not apply for re-certification;
- explorative analysis of quantitative assessment data.

A cross-sectional “snap shot” analysis was considered to be limited in the investigation of capability building and upgrading processes as they usually evolve slowly. Thus, a longitudinal research design was applied which extended over a period of eight years beginning in 2009 through to 2016. In total, 103 qualitative interviews were conducted with various stakeholders from South Africa and at other spatial scales (see Table 8).

Table 8: Overview of Empirical Interviews (III).

Organisation	Number of Interviews
FTT-certified businesses	46
Formerly FTT-certified businesses	11
International and national tour operators	9
FTT organisation	12
Academia & Consultants	5
Ministry of Tourism	3
SA Tourism Board	1
NGOs	9
Other certification bodies	2
Assessors	5
Total	103

In the case of the certified businesses, theoretical sampling strategies were applied. Important selection criteria were their price category, size, offered services, certification time and geographic location in order to represent the entire range of certified businesses. Some businesses were interviewed multiple times to analyse how the impacts of the standard

implementation evolved over a period of time. Most interviews with certified businesses included on-site visits, which often lasted for several days. Furthermore, interviews were held with businesses that did not apply for re-certification to gain deeper insights into possible disadvantages of the standard implementation. The interviews were recorded and transcribed to avoid loss of information and ensure the transparency of the results. In the qualitative data analysis we followed the methodological approach of the qualitative content analysis. Central for qualitative content analysis are the use of categories. They can be developed inductively, out of the material, or deductively derived from theory and applied to analyse parts of the text. While this method does not lead to statistically representative data, it enables the researcher to gain in-depth insights into complex research questions (Schreier, 2012; Mayring, 2014). The qualitative interviews were triangulated with quantitative assessment data provided by the FTT organization. While the qualitative data contributed to a deeper understanding of the processes, and hindering and fostering factors for capability building and upgrading, the quantitative data helped to explore the “hard facts”, such as wage levels or money spent on trainings. Many challenges occurred in the process of the quantitative data analysis due to an inconsistent and dispersed data base. Complete assessment data was available from 18 certified businesses in total but time series data was only available from six businesses. Due to these limitations, the quantitative data available could only be used in an explorative way. Yet, it was triangulated with the interview data due to the in-depth information provided.

7.5 Processes of Organisational Change and Upgrading Outcomes - The Impacts of the FTT Standard Implementation

FTT-certified businesses comprise a very heterogeneous group of businesses in terms of size, location, and organizational age and range from established luxury hotels to emerging township entrepreneurs and very basic backpacker accommodation in rural areas. The main drivers for the implementation of the voluntary FTT standard were normative, values-based motivations and the desire to “make a difference” within the South African context. The analysis of FTT-certified businesses revealed that their capabilities differed from each other and they have strengths and weaknesses in different areas. For example, established

businesses usually possessed operational capabilities to conduct their daily business according to national legislation and also fulfil international tour operator's requirements. Yet, many of them experienced difficulties in developing and maintaining collaboration with local communities. In contrast, emerging businesses, for example community-owned and managed ones were well embedded locally but often experienced challenges related to managing guest bookings, fulfilling legal and tour operators' requirements and conducting appropriate marketing and book keeping. This is why many emerging businesses stressed that they wanted to use the standard as a tool to professionalize their daily management practices and develop operational capabilities and organizational routines.

The following section will analyse the impacts of the standard implementation. It was argued in the conceptual part of the paper that using a dynamic capabilities perspective will complement the view on upgrading and shed light on the hidden micro level processes that are interrelated with upgrading as an outcome. In line with this argument, the empirical part of the paper combines these two conceptual perspectives. First it analyses the impacts of the standard implementation from a social upgrading perspective. However, as this fails to fully capture a true understanding of the processes of organizational change that underlie upgrading outcomes, a dynamic capability building perspective will then be applied.

7.5.1 A Social Upgrading Perspective on the Impacts of FTT

When using a social upgrading perspective, the impacts of the FTT standard implementation can be separated into measurable standards and enabling rights.

7.5.1.1 Measurable Standards

Changes relating to measurable standards have been observed within FTT-certified businesses with regard to work contracts, wage levels, categories of employment and skills development. In a number of emerging businesses work agreements had only been in place verbally or they did not fulfil the legal requirements. In order to become certified the businesses had to introduce legally binding contracts that complied with the current national legal requirements and they had to ensure that all workers fully understood their contracts. Furthermore, FTT-certified businesses are expected to pay above minimum wage to reach a living wage or offer benefits such as medical aid, a contribution to education, transportation, or meals. They have

to provide equal pay for equal work, especially relating to race and gender. During the assessments, these aspects were monitored and had to be adjusted when necessary (Interview, 2016, FTT). The FTT standard also requires businesses to create as many permanent positions as possible. This was in line with the businesses' values: "*We only make a profit 5 months of the year, the rest we make a loss. So we have to make enough during whale season to cover us through the year. But we rather keep our staff employed than getting rid of them.*" (Interview 2009, urban activity provider)

In cases where no permanent positions could be created due to economic barriers, FTT-certified businesses had to ensure that the working hours for a seasonal or temporary employee allow them to earn at least the minimum wage, re-employ the same people as much as possible, and develop a strategy to convert seasonal positions into permanent positions over time (Interview 2016, FTT). The quantitative analysis showed that on average 95% of all positions in the analysed FTT-certified businesses were permanent positions. This is a very high share in the seasonal tourism industry.

Skills development and empowerment is a central element of the FTT standard, and business owners and managers emphasized that due to the standard implementation they had to implement measures to facilitate staff empowerment and skills development activities in a systematic and transparent way. The aim of these measures was to change the structure of employment at the business level to enable workers in low-skilled positions to move to higher-skilled positions, with a specific focus on race and job mobility. Table 9 shows the amount of training days over a period of two years as well as the number of promotions for selected businesses.

In a few cases, skills development measures seemed to have enabled job mobility. However in many instances the investments in trainings did not translate into job mobility - at least not during the analysed time period. Yet, the quantitative data is very limited as it does not provide any insights on the quality of trainings or explanations on barriers or enabling factors for job mobility. Furthermore, business representatives reported that the investment in training led to staff empowerment and had positive impacts at a business level, such as positive staff feedback, higher staff motivation and a lower staff turnover. Yet, the hard facts from the assessment data were not able to capture these impacts. This is why a process-based, qualitative analysis is valuable to get more in-depth insights.

Table 9: Training Measures over a Period of Two Years.
(Source: Own compilation, based on FTT assessment data.)

FTT-certified business	Number of staff	Total days of training	Days of training/employee	Total promotions
A	8	910	114	2
B	8	452	56	4
C	25	278	11	6
D	83	1135	14	26
E	23	529	23	2
F	22	268	12	9

7.5.1.2 Enabling Rights

Enabling rights compile less easily quantifiable aspects of improvements in working conditions, such as collective bargaining, freedom of association, non-discrimination, voice and empowerment (Barrientos & Smith, 2007; Barrientos et al., 2011). Quantifying enabling rights is difficult as they are intangible and employed within organizational routines. Within FTT-certified businesses enabling rights were addressed by collectively developing, adapting and implementing policies and associated routines addressing different issues—such as non-discrimination, the implementation of workers' councils with associated rights and responsibilities, collective bargaining and decision-making. Examples of newly introduced routines at the business level were the implementation of processes for the fair distribution of tips (Interview 2009; urban hotel), or introducing regular staff meetings to strengthen the collective voice of the staff (Interview, 2013; rural backpackers). Developing and implementing these policies and associated routines was often considered challenging in the first place and human barriers had to be overcome (Interview 2009; urban hotel). At the same time, it was expressed that they helped to create more transparency at the workplace. The collectively developed written policies were perceived as formally binding and more reliable than verbal agreements; thus, contributing to liability and accountability for workers and more awareness for the rights of the staff (Interview 2012; FTT assessor).

7.5.2 Inter- and Intra-Organisational Learning Processes and Capability Building

As discussed in the conceptual section of the paper, the dynamic capabilities approach can complement the social upgrading perspective as it illuminates processes of organizational change that underlie upgrading. The following section investigates processes of dynamic capability building that underlie upgrading.

7.5.2.1 Developing an Organisational Focus

The implementation of the FTT standard enabled certified businesses to develop and to strengthen an organizational focus as a sustainable business. The associated label supported their market visibility. During the process of developing an organizational focus the standard implementation provided both restrictions and new learning opportunities. On the one hand, the standard implementation limited the businesses' flexibility. For example, it was not possible anymore to employ staff on a time-limited basis without providing long-term perspectives. On the other hand, the standard implementation facilitated learning processes, capability building and organisational change. For example, small-scale and emerging businesses often lacked the knowledge on how to fulfil legal requirements and tour operators' demands. The FTT standard implementation helped these SMMEs to build up operational routines and to professionalize their management practices (Interview 2014, rural backpackers; Interview 2009, urban backpacker, rural safari lodge). This promoted their access to GPNs and contributed to economic sustainability (Interviews 2009; urban backpackers; rural backpackers). While most established businesses already fulfilled legal requirements, many of them started to adapt existing routines to implement more sustainable management practices due to the standard implementation, for example regarding environmental management practices, staff empowerment or community interaction. Many FTT-certified businesses reported that the FTT label improved the credibility of their businesses, helped to distinguish themselves from other similar products, and provided them with a unique selling proposition (Interview 2009; rural hotel; urban hotel; Interview 2013; urban backpackers).

7.5.2.2 Knowledge Absorption and Combination

Another dynamic capability is the ability to absorb knowledge. Knowledge cannot be transferred easily to other contexts due to its tacit dimension, process character and context dependence. Instead, knowledge generation is grounded in complex social and cognitive learning processes and embedded and shaped by institutional contexts (Strambach, 2017). Furthermore, it is influenced by the actor's absorptive capacity which is the ability to recognize the value of new knowledge and integrate into their own knowledge base (Cohen and Levinthal, 1990; Nooteboom, 2010). The following section investigates how knowledge absorption and combination was facilitated through collaboration between FTT-certified businesses and initiated by the standard implementation and the FTT organization's assessors.

The Role of FTT and the Assessors for Learning Processes and Capability Building

In line with Locke's (2013) observations, our analysis revealed that knowledge absorption was facilitated by the FTT assessors who supported learning processes of the certified businesses and helped them to absorb new, sustainability-oriented knowledge, including knowledge on customer's demands – which especially small-scale, tourism entrepreneurs often lacked.

Most of the FTT assessors had experience-based expert knowledge on the implementation of the FTT standards. They were aware of the challenges that FTT-certified businesses faced and on the measures to overcome them. During the assessments the assessors were able to contextualize their cumulative knowledge to the individual businesses' needs and engaged in joint problem solving, information sharing, and the diffusion of best practices (Interview 2014, rural backpacker; Interview 2009, rural country lodge, urban activity provider; urban hotels). Furthermore, during the assessments, confidential staff interviews were held with a representative number of people from all levels to strengthen the workers' voice and empowerment as they were able to complain to FTT for violations at the workplace (Interview 2016, FTT; Interview 2015 assessor). It was reported that in one case, the workers' complaints led to the dismissal of a manager who had treated workers badly (Interview 2016, FTT). This indicates that the staff were able to speak openly in these interviews and action was taken when issues occurred.

Additionally, the businesses explained that they appreciated the repeated interactions with FTT assessors, which led to the development of trust in these relationships. However when

the assessors changed, businesses were disappointed with the replacements and regarded them as less competent and their suggestions less valuable than their predecessors (Interview 2013, urban activity provider; Interview 2015, urban backpacker). This underlines that the experienced-based knowledge of the individual assessor plays an important role in facilitating capability building. For example, one formerly certified business that did not re-apply for certification explained that their knowledge on the strengths and weaknesses in becoming more sustainable and on how to address challenges within their environment had exceeded the knowledge of the assessors so that their advice was not perceived as valuable to them anymore (Interview 2015; rural backpackers). This underlines that based on cognitive and social learning processes over time, the businesses had built up dynamic capabilities to drive change within their organisations and networks independently. In the beginning, the FTT-certified businesses needed the support of the FTT assessors to adapt new knowledge to their context and “translate” it into their language because their capabilities were still limited. However, after the businesses had built up the capability to absorb and exploit new knowledge some felt that they did not need the FTT assessors anymore.

Learning and Capability Building in Collaboration with other Certified Businesses

Knowledge-based approaches from innovation studies underlined that not only the absorptive capacity of actors but also the creation of different forms of proximity are decisive for learning processes and knowledge generation (Boschma, 2005; Strambach, 2008; Strambach & Klement, 2012). The FTT-certified businesses shared a certain degree of geographical and relational proximity. Many of the business owners and managers shared the same values, were striving toward the same goals, and faced similar challenges (Interview 2009; urban activity provider; Interview 2013; rural backpacker). This eased collaboration between them and was perceived as an important means to learn from each other.

Initially knowledge exchange and learning between certified businesses was initiated by the FTT organisation through networking activities (Interview 2013, rural backpacker; Interview 2014, rural backpacker). Many of the businesses kept on collaborating beyond the activities facilitated by the FTT organization and some of the businesses developed very close collaborations based on trust and cognitive and social proximity: *“We deal a lot with the same problems and we share ideas a lot on what we have to deal with whether it is on the*

community-level, at a social level or practical level. We are on the phone talking to each other almost every day." (Interview 2013; rural backpacker).

Moreover, some businesses started mentoring projects where established businesses helped emerging ones to develop operational routines and implement more sustainable business practices (Interviews 2009; urban activity provider; rural activity provider). These collaborations and mutual learning processes were perceived as valuable because they emerged between people who understood the local institutional context conditions.

These empirical findings underline that both geographical and relational forms of proximity, such as cognitive, social, and institutional proximity facilitated learning processes and knowledge combination between the FTT-certified businesses.

7.5.2.3 Learning through Developing new Networks

Horizontal and vertical network building created new learning opportunities for the FTT certified businesses.

Networks with Local Suppliers and Entrepreneurs

In order to contribute to local economic development and support small-scale and emerging entrepreneurs from previously disadvantaged groups, the FTT standard requires certified businesses to create linkages with local communities and source most of their products and services locally. Many interviewees explained that they started to change existing procurement routines and strategically restructured their supply chains to include more local suppliers (Interview 2009, assessor; Interview 2009 and 2013, urban hotel). Yet, many barriers had to be overcome in these processes. The main challenge was the limited number of local businesses owned by previously disadvantaged groups. Local people often lacked the skills and the financial means to start their own businesses. Therefore, FTT-certified businesses mentored and assisted emerging entrepreneurs, such as restaurants owners or activity providers, to develop their businesses and build up operational capabilities, for example related to guest liaison and language skills, reliability and finance management (Interview 2013, urban backpacker; Interview 2009, urban hotel). These processes required significant time commitments from the certified businesses (Interview 2013, urban activity provider). However, the impacts of restructuring routines and networking and collaborating with

disadvantaged communities were perceived positively. The community activities provided a unique selling point and led to economic upgrading because the guests of the backpacker hostels frequently extended the period of the stays at the backpacker hostels to participate in the community projects (Interviews 2014, rural backpackers). Furthermore, one medium-sized FTT-certified business systematically assessed the impacts of restructuring their supply chains and found out that over a period of four years they had created 79 new jobs within their local community and the spending on local procurement exceeded their CSR spending (Interview 2009; urban hotel). Thus, these intra-organizational changes in business practices had an impact at the community level. The benefits of social and economic upgrading were captured not only by economically active people but also formerly unemployed people. Many people were trained on the job or supported in starting their own enterprises and included in GPNs.

Networks with Tour Operators

The majority of FTT-certified businesses stated that the standard implementation and the associated label made it easier to build vertical networks to national and international tour operators, especially to those focusing on sustainable tourism. Some emerging SMMEs, in particular from previously disadvantaged groups, underlined that the implementation of the FTT standard helped them to fulfill the requirements of international tour operators that they could not fulfill before (Interview 2009; urban backpackers, Interview 2014; rural backpackers).

Furthermore, the FTT organization created many opportunities and platforms for FTT-certified businesses to be recognized in the market. This was important as many businesses lacked the financial resources and marketing skills necessary to tap into new international markets (Interview 2013, urban activity provider, Interview 2013, rural backpacker, Interview 2009, urban backpacker). However, whether FTT-certified businesses become more integrated into global production networks and whether being certified leads to more bookings remains somewhat unclear. The certified businesses did not have procedures in place to evaluate it: *"We can't measure accurately how much of our visitors come because we are fair trade certified, I don't know any business that can do that"* (Int. 2009, urban activity provider.)

Yet, the majority of the certified businesses had the impression that these marketing activities translated into more bookings and collaboration with new business partners. They felt international tour operators that focus on sustainable tourism preferred them (Interview 2013, urban activity provider; Interview 2009, urban activity provider). This is in line with statements of international tour operators who underlined that they preferred to book certified businesses whenever they could. However the limited number of FTT-certified businesses, in particular at a medium price category remained a barrier (Interviews 2015 & 2016, international tour operators).

7.5.2.4 Exploitation and Exploration of Knowledge

The organizational focus, the ability to absorb new knowledge and the new networks initiated through the standard implementation provided new possibilities for knowledge exploitation and exploration and in some cases even resulted in the development of innovations. First, through processes of community collaboration, the certified businesses were able to identify needs in the communities and opportunities to address these needs in an entrepreneurial way.

Firstly, two FTT-certified business extended their business activities into a new market segment and by functional upgrading it took over new functions as a travel agent in the volunteer tourism market (Interviews 2009, 2015, rural backpackers; urban activity provider). However, due to concerns about a perceived lack of regulation and malpractices within the growing volunteer tourism market, they collaborated with the FTT organisation and together they developed an innovative standard for volunteer tourism which is based on the original FTT standard and requirements (Interviews 2012/2013/2016, FTT organisation; Interviews 2015; urban activity provider/rural backpackers). The first businesses implemented the FTT volunteer tourism standard in 2010. This provided them with an opportunity to distinguish themselves from other volunteer tourism providers and tap into the responsible volunteering market niche. Secondly, another innovation has been developed by the FTT organization to support the integration of certified businesses into GPNs - the “Fair Trade Travel Holidays”, which are similar to a package tour. Currently (February 2018) 56 national and international FTT approved tour operators offer Fair Trade Holidays of which at least 50% of the nights are spent in FTT-certified businesses (FTT 2017). A third innovation that has been developed in

collaboration by FTT-certified businesses is the “Fair Trade Travel Pass”. The pass is similar to a package tour, directed at the backpacking market and consists of FTT-certified businesses only. Two of the FTT-certified businesses, based in Johannesburg and Cape Town, developed new capabilities and took over new functions by managing all the bookings and administrative work (Interviews 2013, urban backpackers; rural backpackers) while more FTT-certified businesses are included in the pass.

These examples are cases in which economic upgrading, in particular functional upgrading, could be observed at the business level that led to economic and social upgrading at the communities level. The FTT-certified businesses exploited their dynamic capabilities facilitated by the FTT standard implementation to tap into new markets and exploit their organizational focus as a unique selling proposition. By means of exploitation and exploration they were able to identify new opportunities to address local needs and by developing innovation ideas they concomitantly exploited new business opportunities.

7.6 Conclusion

As a single case study with embedded units, the scope of this study is limited. However, when relating our findings to the literature on social upgrading and the role of sustainability standards, this paper provides some new insights and suggestions for future research.

First, the FTT standard was mainly implemented by values-based organizations who invested a lot of effort, time and money to contribute towards sustainable development processes within the South African tourism industry. This underlines that commitment is a decisive factor for successful organizational change and influences upgrading. Yet, the difficulties in measuring or quantifying the benefits of the standard implementation remain as the impacts of the standard implementation are intangible, evolve over different periods of time and are often hard to grasp. There is no guarantee that the efforts directed at facilitating sustainable development processes translate into social or economic upgrading.

Second, the social upgrading perspective showed that the FTT standard implementation facilitated improvements in working conditions and enabling rights - mainly directed at employees of the certified businesses. Yet, it was limited to grasp processes that underlie upgrading at the micro level of the firm. The dynamic capabilities approach was applied in a complementary way as it allows for the investigation of intra-organizational change that is

intertwined with upgrading, and its inter-organizational effects. It illuminated processes of developing an organizational focus, knowledge absorption and learning, network building, and processes of knowledge exploration and exploitation. The fostering factors within these processes were explored as well as the challenges that had to be overcome.

Third, the present case study shows that the implementation of the FTT standard at the business level and the changing intra-organizational practices caused inter-organizational effects within the communities and supply chains of the certified businesses. Furthermore, it revealed that SMMEs play an important role in building local supply chains and horizontal network building and have the potential to promote social and economic upgrading. Yet, the interrelations between intra- and inter-organisational change are underexplored in GPN research (Nadvi & Raj-Reichert, 2015).

Fourth, our findings point to the dynamic context and time dependency of the impacts of standards. Context dependency means the degree of changes at the business level were perceived differently and depended on the already existing dynamic capabilities and the business practices of the different organizations. Time dependency means the standard facilitated different change processes at various points in time and at different speeds. This has hardly been taken into account in the research on the impacts of the implementation of standards but can explain why mixed results have been observed empirically.

The findings of this research can be challenged as they relate to one sector and geographical context. Thus, we invite future comparative research to dig deeper to investigate the interrelations between dynamic capability building and upgrading at the micro level. In particular, in line with Soundararajan et al. (2016), we suggest to place more attention on endogenous and small firms from the Global South and their role in driving but also hindering sustainable development processes and social upgrading. Their horizontal embeddedness of SMMEs and the role of place-specific institutional contexts are underexplored in GPN research.

8 From Standard Takers to Standard Makers? The Role of Knowledge-Intensive Intermediaries in Setting Global Sustainability Standards

This chapter is a reprint of:

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Abstract:

Standards are increasingly being geared towards addressing social and ecological concerns in global production networks, but to facilitate sustainable development locally, global standards need to integrate the context-specific needs of actors in developing countries. However, most standards are still developed in the Global North, while the inclusion of actors from developing countries remains limited. Nonetheless, there is recent evidence of some countries from the Global South proactively influencing transnational and global standard setting and, in these processes, knowledge is a decisive factor. Accordingly, in this article we argue that a dynamic and knowledge-based perspective can provide more detailed insights into how actors from developing countries contribute to standard setting processes. In this respect, special types of organizations – namely knowledge-intensive intermediaries (KIs) – play an essential, yet unrecognized, role. Here, to illustrate the strategies that KIs use to influence global standard setting, we investigate the South African organization ‘Fair Trade in Tourism’.

Keywords: Global Production Networks, Governance, Knowledge Networks, Standardisation, Sub-Saharan Africa

8.1 Introduction

Standards that address not only economic but also social and ecological issues (Barrientos et al., 2011; Nadvi, 2014; Nadvi and Wältring, 2004) have become an important aspect of global governance. Creating a collective understanding of sustainable practices in global production networks (GPNs) and translating the abstract concept of sustainability into organizational practices has the potential to drive organizational change and to enforce sustainable practices at the micro-level. However, most of these standards are still developed in the so-called Global North, and the inclusion of actors from developing countries remains limited (Nadvi, 2008; Peña, 2014). Empirical evidence on the diffusion of international technology, management and product standards shows that the specific institutional configurations at the national level influence the adoption of new practices (Braun, 2006; Delmas, 2002). Hence, if local embeddedness – according to the three types defined by Hess (2004) – in the institutional environment is lacking, implementing standards can be challenging and their impacts ineffective (Strambach and Surmeier, 2013).

To promote sustainable development processes locally, it is essential for global standards to accommodate the context-specific needs of actors in developing countries (Strambach and Surmeier, 2013), which unfortunately rarely happens (Fransen, 2012; Ponte and Cheyns, 2013).

The focus of this article is on the Republic of South Africa where public and private actors actively contribute to institution building processes in Responsible Tourism (RT) practices – not only at national but also at transnational and global levels. This is remarkable considering that the specific characteristics of service industries like tourism make it more difficult than it is for other industries to standardize their sustainable business practices. First, intangible, locally-embedded social practices are difficult to standardize. Second, service industries are characterized by an elevated level of interaction between the various customers directly involved in the production of the service. In fact, most sustainability standards in tourism focus on the ecological dimension of sustainability and contain few social criteria. An example of this is the ‘Green Key’ standard.

We believe that detailed insights into how actors from developing countries contribute towards setting standards can best be achieved through employing a dynamic and knowledge-based perspective. We also believe that the contribution of endogenous knowledge-intensive

intermediaries (KIs) is still underexplored. Because of this research gap, the question guiding this article is how this type of organization influences the development and contextualization of sustainability standards on different spatial scales. The contribution of KIs from developing countries is particularly difficult to grasp and is mostly hidden. Thus, a dynamic perspective that also takes account of the complex interdependencies of sustainability standards on different spatial scales may be valuable.

Conceptually, the article builds on the scientific debates of the governance approach in GPNs and on the ‘regulatory renaissance’ literature that emphasizes the role of developing countries and modes of public–private interactions in setting sustainable standards (Bartley, 2011; Nadvi and Raj-Reichert, 2015). We link these approaches to the research developed in economic geography on the spatial shaping of knowledge dynamics.

Empirically, the South African organization called Fair Trade in Tourism (FTT), which is a knowledge-intensive intermediary, is a good illustration of the strategies that this type of organization employs to influence global institution building. FTT was one of the first 11 standards in the world that the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC)¹ recognized and is still the only standard recognized from Africa. A focus is placed on the interaction, learning and knowledge combination processes driven by FTT in a multi-scalar way.

8.2 The Role of Actors from Emerging Economies in the Development and Enforcement of Sustainability Standards

Globalization has led to widely distributed global production networks, with lead firms coordinating most global trade (Barrientos et al., 2011). Research on GPNs explores the global division of production and labour, analyses the governance of linkages between firms located in different spatial, political and institutional contexts and explores the roles of diverse public and private actors in setting and enforcing rules (Hess, 2004; Nadvi, 2014). For many years, the globalization of economic activities and the ongoing fragmentation of GPNs has been associated with nation-states playing a declining role in regulatory governance. Instead,

¹ The GSTC is the custodian of the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria, which developed a global minimum standard for sustainability in tourism.

private governance through global standards, which lead firms and international NGOs set and enforce, has gained in importance. Private standards can promote economic efficiency by reducing transaction costs and they have the potential to facilitate the learning and upgrading processes of firms in developing countries (Nadvi and Wältring, 2004). Imposing standards helps lead firms to minimize their risk and protect brand value when operating in developing countries that have weak social, environmental and regulatory institutions. Ultimately, compliance with global standards has become a prerequisite for local producers to access GPNs (Gereffi et al., 2005; Nadvi, 2008, 2014; Nadvi and Wältring, 2004).

Sustainability concerns have become increasingly relevant in global governance and institution building, especially considering poor working conditions and environmental degradation in developing countries. A growing awareness of sustainability and changing consumer demands for more sustainable production processes has mainly driven the global diffusion of environmental and social standards over the past two decades (Nadvi, 2008; Nadvi and Wältring, 2004). Standards serve as a tool with which to develop a mutual understanding of sustainable business practices and they can be seen both as a special type of institution and as the outcome of complex institution building processes. They are, in effect, formulated rules with the potential to promote eco-friendly and credible sustainable business practices (Strambach and Surmeier, 2013). Even though some Southern-led initiatives have adapted Northern standards to Southern contexts, most social and environmental standard-setting processes are still led by actors from the ‘Global North’, while the inclusion of developing countries often remains limited (Hughes et al., 2008; Nadvi, 2008, 2014; Ponte, 2012). Although actors from developing countries are expected to comply with global standards, their voice and demands are still mainly excluded from standard-setting processes (Nadvi, 2008, 2014; Nadvi and Wältring, 2004; Peña, 2014; Ponte, 2012). This is often related to their knowledge base or ‘expertise’ being considered ‘too local’ or ‘too controversial’ (Ponte and Cheyns, 2013). Dezalay and Garth (2009) argue that when actors from the South actively participate in transnational institution building, the group is usually confined to highly educated individuals who do not challenge the rules of the game.

In the last two decades, a considerable body of literature has been published on GPNs that focus on private governance through standards (Drezner, 2008; Gereffi et al., 2005; Gibbon et al., 2008; Hughes et al., 2008; Nadvi, 2008; Nadvi and Wältring, 2004). This research has mainly

had a Northern bias in that it analyses the strategies of lead firms from the Global North and suppliers with fewer capabilities located in the Global South. Actors from developing countries are considered to be mainly ‘passive/ imperfect recipients’ of international standards (Drezner, 2008).

This research is persuasive in that it reveals both the potentials and recently the limitations of private governance. Empirical studies emphasize that private standards have often proved insufficient for the enforcement of more sustainable production processes. In addition, labour and environmental standards, as opposed to product ones, are more difficult to enforce and monitor along global value chains and so have often been violated (Barrientos et al., 2011). Furthermore, due to a scholarly focus on Northern-led initiatives, there are concerns that endogenous developments and the local institutional context in many developing countries, as well as historical-political trajectories through which local actors acquire influence in national and international institution building, can easily be overlooked (Bartley, 2011; Peña, 2014).

The limits of private power have led scholars to re-examine the state’s role and potential ‘complementarity’ in enforcing social and environmental standard compliance in GPNs, and this has resulted in the emergence of research on the ‘regulatory renaissance’. The literature on the ‘regulatory renaissance’ challenges the top-down perspective of private governance in global production. It sheds light on how public and private actors interact, collaborate and complement each other in setting, implementing and enforcing rules about labour and environmental conditions in global production and consumption (Bartley, 2011; Locke et al., 2013; Nadvi, 2014; Nadvi and Raj-Reichert, 2015). These findings question the view that emerging economies have weak public institutions that are subordinate to private regulation. Peña (2014) analyses the development path through which Brazilian actors acquired influence in global institution building. He concludes that the Brazilian involvement in private social standard-setting has mainly been ‘pushed’ by domestic politics and, to a much lesser extent, has been influenced by international demands. Peña’s findings underline two important points – (a) the need to include a time dimension in the analysis of standard making, and (b) the need to consider the influence of location specific institutional settings built over time in a path-dependent way. These influence the agency of actors from developing countries and have far-reaching implications on how they can act in global institution building.

However, Nadvi (2014) shows that little is known about how public and private actors from emerging economies will set standards that affect producers and consumers across the world. Although initial empirical research suggests that private and public regulations can be complementary, they can also substitute or conflict with one another. This depends on the issues addressed, the institutional context and the motivations and capabilities of the different actor groups involved (Bartley, 2011; Locke et al., 2013; Nadvi and Raj-Reichert, 2015). There are still many questions regarding why and how these modes (complementary, substitutionary or conflicting) develop over time in a specific location. As it is often the case in new research fields, it is acknowledged that in private and public regulation the term ‘complementarity’ is used with varying meanings, as is the concept of conflicting modes (Bartley, 2011). Manning et al. (2012) point out that standard development should not be studied in isolation. Instead, it is necessary to understand the complex change and adaption between different standards over time and at multiple spatial scales. The development and implementation of transnational standards intertwines with domestic law and other types of rules (Bartley, 2011). This often leads to various tensions, conflicts or complementarities between different forms of regulation (Locke et al., 2013; Lund-Thomsen and Nadvi, 2010). While three groups of actors – the state, firms and civil society – are in the focus of global governance (Nadvi, 2014), we argue that the role of endogenous intermediaries, is still underexplored. There are open questions on how these organizations influence the development and contextualization of sustainability standards.

8.3 Knowledge-Intensive Intermediaries (KIs): the Hidden Contribution to Global Institution Building

Substantial insights from GPN research underline that intermediary organizations, such as NGOs and civil society organizations (CSOs), are important actors in the development and implementation of global standards (Coe et al., 2008). International NGOs, are an integral part of global governance. GPN research shows that their activities drive external pressure that have an impact on the local responses of actors in developing countries (Coe et al., 2008; Lund-Thomsen and Nadvi, 2010). These international operating intermediary organizations exert an important influence over GPN governance and multinational lead firms.

However, intermediaries are not a homogeneous group. International NGOs and CSOs are only a subcategory of the rapidly developing collection of heterogeneous organizations that operate at different spatial scales. Only recently has more attention been paid to local organizations in developing countries and their intermediary roles in processes directed at improving working conditions and environmental standards within global supply chains. Local industry and business associations, private auditors and small-scale actors involved in regulatory activities appear to play an important role in capacity building and learning (Locke et al., 2013; Ponte and Cheyns, 2013). However, the conditions under which these learning processes occur are still unclear. These initial insights point to the need for a more micro-foundational and dynamic perspective to enhance the understanding of how KIIs influence institution building in complementary ways. Locke et al. (2013), for example, argue that a macro-level perspective is very limited and the processes through which specific issues are addressed on the ground within and across national settings should be examined instead.

8.3.1 Knowledge Dynamics in Sustainable Standard Setting and Institution Building

In standard and institution building processes, knowledge and expertise is a decisive factor. Scholars have observed that Northern actors often consider the knowledge of actors from the Global South as subordinate. However, in these strands of research, knowledge itself is regarded as a kind of object or black box; the relationship between knowledge and space is not fully incorporated in detail. The impact of space as being territorially bounded space and space, as being relational and socially constructed through networks of actors, is mainly disregarded. We argue that a more differentiated perspective on knowledge is necessary if we are to understand how KIIs contribute to knowledge creation and learning in multi-scalar institution building.

The research on knowledge dynamics emphasizes that knowledge entails codified and tacit elements. Because of its inherent tacit dimension, process character and context dependence, knowledge does not flow easily. It is fundamentally grounded in complex social and cognitive learning processes, which in turn are embedded and shaped by institutional settings (Foray, 2004). Hence, knowledge contents are inextricably interwoven with knowledge practices. Dynamics of knowledge arise through changes in knowledge itself and the various ways in which it moves, is transformed and created across various spatial levels and social scales.

Furthermore, the cumulative nature of knowledge leads to the specific knowledge bases of actors. This influences their absorptive capacity, which constitutes their ability to recognize the value of new knowledge, and use external knowledge by integrating it in the own knowledge base (Cohen and Levinthal, 1990; Nooteboom, 2010).

In standard and institution building processes, which increasingly take place in multi-actor constellations involving public and private actors, the limited absorptive capacity of endogenous actors from the Global South is often pointed to as a barrier. Ponte and Cheyns (2013) revealed that technical jargon and specific time limited formats of discussion are used to marginalize their influence. Usually these organizations lack cumulative experience-based knowledge of international institution building processes, including their specific technical and strategic language. In addition, they often have insufficient opportunities or resources to learn these international processes that are required to enhance their knowledge base. Whereas modes of outmanoeuvering actors from the Global South are more widely recognized (Ponte and Cheyns, 2013; Quack, 2010), the accumulative nature of their absorptive capacity, which is closely intertwined with prior knowledge and created in a path dependent way, is mostly overlooked.

Separate strands of literature show new forms of collaboration in multi-stakeholder initiatives (MSIs) and cross-sector partnerships in transnational institution building (Fransen, 2012; Ponte and Cheyns, 2013; Quack, 2010). From an institutionalist perspective, research on MSIs focuses on how MSIs and the actors involved in transnational standard setting achieve legitimacy. Quack (2010) highlights certain qualities that MSIs must fulfil to achieve normative legitimacy of their rule making processes in global governance, namely inclusiveness, expertise and procedural fairness (Fransen, 2012; Quack, 2010). Expertise is an essential factor in substantiating legitimacy claims. Insights from these institutional approaches indirectly address the difficulties of combining knowledge and the need for high levels of absorptive capacity. To focus on expertise from a knowledge based perspective implies considering mainly analytical (science-based) and synthetic (technical and applied) types of knowledge. Expertise is often not specified in more detail; it is primarily understood as knowledge with a specialized and technical character. Expertise to provide effective problem solving is considered difficult for outsiders to assess and, as it is based on hard facts and produced by specialists, not open to interpretation (Ponte and Cheyns, 2013; Quack, 2010). However, the

knowledge dynamics approach distinguishes a third type of knowledge base, namely symbolic knowledge, which encompasses knowledge on cultural, normative and value-based issues. The three types of knowledge bases are characterized by different shares of codified and tacit knowledge and are differently sensitive to distance learning (Asheim, 2007; Gertler, 2008; Strambach and Klement, 2012). Symbolic knowledge contains a high share of implicit knowledge that has proved to be highly context-specific and variable between places, as well as sensitive to spatial and relational forms of distance.

A knowledge-based focus can be useful for sustainable standard setting processes because the evaluation of codes of conduct and certification systems are highly dependent on time and place specific contexts. The social dimension of sustainability standards provides challenges for knowledge combination. It entails a high share of implicit symbolic knowledge that is largely context dependent. Institutional perspectives and research from the political economy suggest that actors from the Global North are mostly dominating global institution building processes (Fransen, 2012; Nadvi, 2008; Ponte and Cheyns, 2013). This is despite the fact that endogenous KIs from the Global South can make an important contribution within these MSIs. They possess the place-specific symbolic context-knowledge about the institutional environments in which transnational sustainability standards need to be integrated and adapted. Nevertheless, endogenous intermediaries are often not able to participate in the ‘subtle games’ of these processes (Ponte and Cheyns, 2013). Even though they are passive participants, they are frequently unable to enforce their interests within these MSIs.

To summarize, a knowledge-based perspective can be complementary by providing profound insight into the knowledge combination process at the micro-level and how this is influenced by geographical and relational geographies. This approach might contribute to a deeper understanding of how highly context-specific symbolic knowledge bases can be integrated into institution building processes. Incorporating space in the analysis has the advantage of making the unevenness of actor constellations and their relational distances (cognitive, institutional, organizational and social) visible.

There is little knowledge on how small actors from the Global South can learn and build up capabilities to gain influence within transnational standard setting. A process-oriented

perspective that follows specific actor groups in time and space is missing, but would contribute to deeper insights into these multi-scalar learning processes.

8.3.2 The Role of KIIs in Sustainable Institution Building

A unified or common definition of intermediaries or intermediation does not exist, but intermediation as a process exists in various fields, scales and organizational forms. The term is used with a shared meaning, namely linking unrelated entities, and building bridges between previously unconnected elements. In generic terms, intermediation can be observed from a functional, relational and process perspective (Howells, 2006).

Knowledge intensive intermediaries (KIIs) as organizations can act as agents or brokers between two or more parties and are often subsumed under the notion of third sector organizations. They are understood as organizations set up to serve a social mission rather than being profit seeking and placed between the public and the business sector. However, in recent years the increasing hybrid nature of third sector organization and the complexity of governance arrangements is acknowledged (Billis, 2010). We focus on a certain type of intermediary organization – the knowledge-intensive – which is understood as a hybrid organization. KIIs include governance characteristics from different sectors in their organizational structure – the public and the business sector. They trade in the market, but pursue social and environment goals.

KIIs are service organizations that are continually processing and producing knowledge to provide intangible services, such as specialized expert and problem solving information. They have a common governance structure with knowledge-intensive business services (KIBS); their primary activities are the creation and combination of knowledge to develop value added. However, as hybrid organizations, they differ in their social mission because their primary business model is to contribute more to value added, coupled with trading knowledge intensive services in the market.

From the functional and the relational perspective of intermediation, KIIs fulfil crucial functions in the development, implementation or enforcement of sustainability standards in transnational governance. In such processes, it is necessary to adapt and combine diverse knowledge bases from various actors and domains to the complex problems and specific requirement of the local, regional and national socio-institutional conditions. However,

research on knowledge dynamics maintains that knowledge cannot be combined randomly (Crevoisier and Jeannerat, 2009; Strambach and Klement, 2012). A high degree of cognitive diversity and a low level of shared knowledge and institutional overlaps between actors can cause difficulties in implementing collaboration and knowledge sharing. Barriers at the micro-level are rooted in relational distance and a lack of different forms of proximities (cognitive, organizational, institutional and social) (Boschma, 2005; Ibert, 2007). Ponte and Cheyns (2013), as well as Fransen (2012), underline the complex, time-consuming and cumbersome nature of institution building that includes actors from different locations, including both the Global North and South.

In multi-actor environments, KIIs can play an essential role in facilitating the combination and integration of various knowledge bases across sectors, scales and levels. From the process perspective of intermediation, the main mechanisms through which KIIs shape knowledge dynamics are through the contextualization, de-contextualization and re-contextualization of knowledge. The contextualization of knowledge is an essential process in intermediation. KIIs are able to adapt existing knowledge bases to the specific needs of the demand, which facilitate the absorption of external knowledge. These organizations transfer experience-based knowledge and best practice from different contexts and integrate spatially and organizationally distributed knowledge bases. However, beyond the processing of knowledge through de- and re-combination, KIIs are also capable of creating new knowledge through the process of de-contextualization. The latter implies knowledge extraction from accumulated experience- and procedural- based knowledge, mainly attained through learning processes in diverse project configurations. As these organizations operate in multi-actor environments they gain transversal expertise on technical and symbolic knowledge and implicit bound to practice contexts of complex projects. The re-contextualization of implicit knowledge in problem solving processes, without being transformed through codification, is a special competence of KIIs and their professionals. This fosters the diffusion of symbolic knowledge in a multi-level context (Strambach, 2008).

KIIs as hybrid organizations can play a critical role by enabling complementary public–private sustainable institution building. From a GPN perspective, they can facilitate the market access of formal non-integrated organizations and contribute towards building up relational proximity.

8.4 Methodology

To gain a deep understanding of the public–private interaction underlying the creation of responsible tourism practices in South Africa and on the transnational level, it was necessary to apply a micro-level perspective. A qualitative research design with a mixed method approach was chosen. This includes:

- media and document analysis, such as tourism policy and strategy papers;
- explorative and semi-structured interviews. All interviews with certified businesses included on-site visits which often lasted for several days; and
- participatory observations in various industry events.

Since the objective is to gain insights into the evolutionary development path of responsible tourism, a cross-sectional analysis appeared to be too limited; a longitudinal analysis was conducted instead. Although the institutionalization of responsible tourism standards in South Africa is still in its initial stages, it still provides an opportunity to investigate the process of institution building and the underlying knowledge interactions. The qualitative research design was divided into two phases and extended over a period of seven years (in 2009, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015). In the first phase, we used an innovation biography method to reconstruct the time–space path of the FTT standard. The focus of the innovation biography is the FTT standard, which is a novelty. By tracing the biography of the standard development and implementation process, the instrument concentrates on actor constellations, their relationships and knowledge contributions. The advantage of this approach is that it allows one to analyse the underlying knowledge dynamics without being limited to certain predefined geographical or sectoral scales or firm boundaries (Butzin, 2012). The method helps one to understand how the internal knowledge of FTT organization is related to the various sources of external knowledge located at different spatial scales.

In the second phase, we built on these results and used theoretical sampling to select actors at different scales and in different spheres. The objective was to understand how public and private efforts interact in a mutual way. The hindering and fostering factors in these processes were in focus. Some 15 key interviews contributed to our understanding of multi-scalar interaction processes. The interviewees were representatives of organizations that participated in institution building processes for Responsible Tourism at different spatial scales.

In total, we conducted 78 interviews with public, private and intermediary actors; each had been involved in developing and implementing responsible tourism practices in South Africa and beyond. These interviews contributed to a deep understanding of the opportunities and challenges of the development and implementation of sustainable business practices in the South African tourism industry. The interviews were recorded and transcribed to avoid loss of information and ensure transparency.

Table 10: Main Actors Involved in Institution Building in Responsible Tourism.

Public actors	Intermediary actors	Private actors
Department for Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT)	<u>Unions</u> • Union of the hospitality sector • Union of domestic workers	Numerous private actors, like tour operators and tourism businesses, are contributing to shape RT in South Africa by actively participating in multi-stakeholder forums, and supporting the institution building process with their business experiences.
National Ministry of Tourism (NMT)	<u>Consultants</u> e.g. Levelle, EDGE	
South African Tourism Board (SAT)	<u>Certification bodies</u> e.g. FTT, Heritage	
<i>Cape Town Tourism</i>		
Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)	<u>Associations and Marketing Organizations</u>	
Department of Labour	• <i>Federated Hospitality Association of Southern Africa (Fedhasa)</i>	
Department of Arts & Culture	• Tourism Enterprise Partnership (TEP)	
Provincial tourism organizations	• <i>South African Youth Travel Confederation (SAYTC)</i>	
National Development Agency (NDA)	• South African Association for the Conference Industry (SAACI)	
<i>Tourism Grading Council of South Africa (TGCSA)</i>	• <i>Southern Africa Tourism Services Association (SATSA)</i> • African Travel and Tourism Association (ATTA) • <i>Tourism Business Council of South Africa (TBCSA)</i>	

8.5 The Role of ‘Fair Trade in Tourism’ in Institution Building: Knowledge Combination in Multi-scalar Contexts and Arrangements

The longitudinal research design demonstrates that before KIIs can influence global institution building, complex processes of learning in different contexts are needed to build up a composite knowledge base. Although many different stakeholders drive responsible tourism nationally (see Table 10), we focus on the role of FTT as a KII within the evolving development path of responsible tourism practices in South Africa.

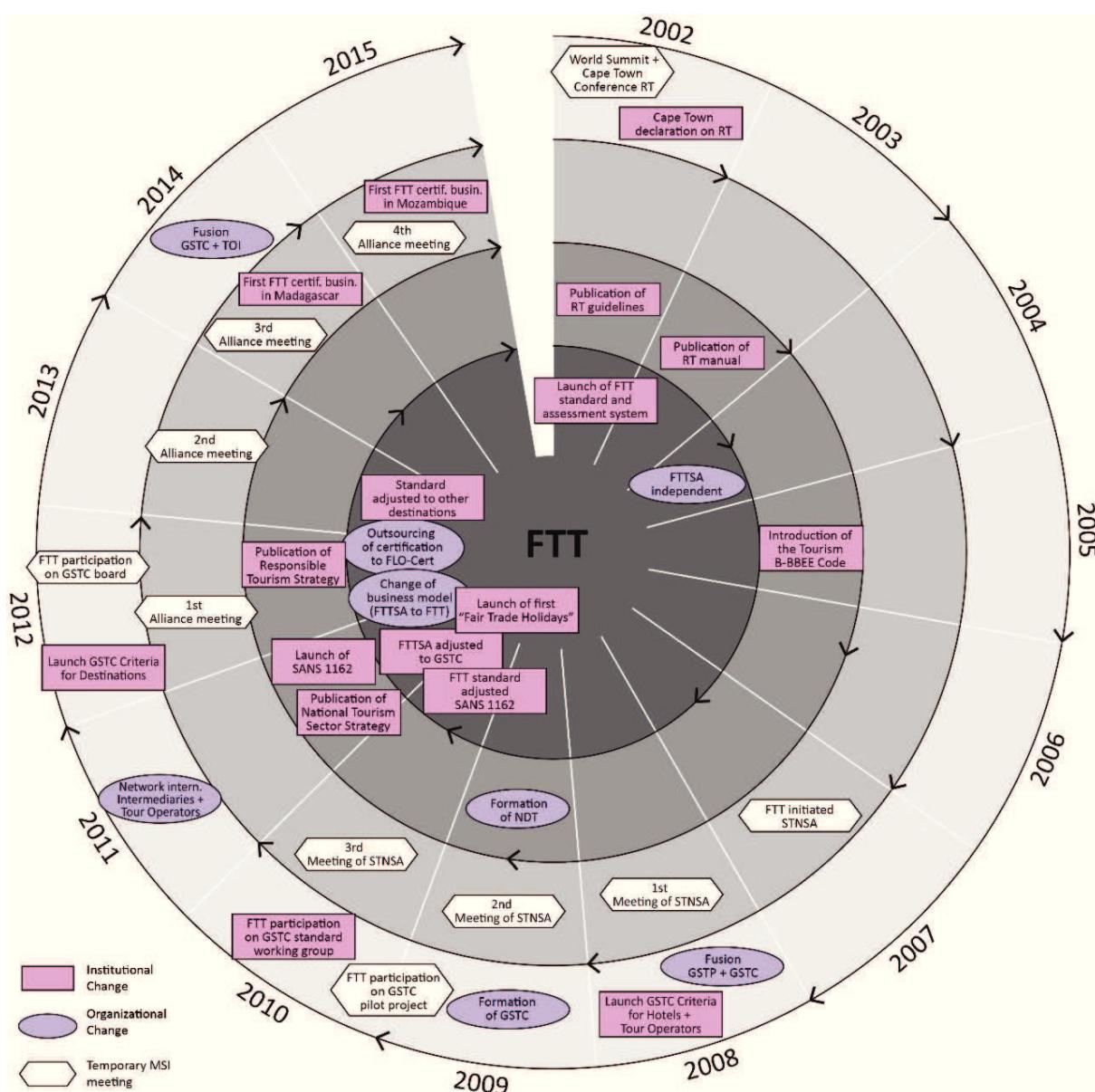


Figure 9: Key Outcomes of Interaction Processes – Institution Building and Organisational Change.

The FTT organization played a key role in institution building processes for sustainable tourism at different spatial scales and contributed to the place-specific values and demands. By empirically analysing how micro-dynamics of knowledge in institution building processes evolved in time and space the research revealed that three stages of learning can be distinguished; learning forms the basis of the dynamic capabilities of this organization, which later in time enabled the FTT organization to shape global institution building. Although the impacts of this KII are mainly intangible and difficult to grasp, the empirical analysis reveals the hidden impact of the FTT organization. Figure 9 portrays the outcomes of complex public–private interaction processes in the national context, as well as on a transnational and global scale.

8.5.1 Combining Knowledge Bases in Complementary Institution Building Processes within the National Context

Apartheid shaped South Africa's development path. Through this path dependency the tourism industry evolved to be 'predominantly white-owned and white-managed' (DEAT, 1996; South African Tourism, 2008). After the international boycott of apartheid South Africa, the tourism sector became a key job creator in a country experiencing high socio-economic fragmentation and unemployment. The post-apartheid government identified the sector as crucial for the country's overall development strategy (Koelble, 2011; Seif and Spenceley, 2007). To facilitate institutional change, the concept of responsible tourism was introduced as the guiding principle to develop a more sustainable tourism industry in South Africa (DEAT, 1996). However, the government recognized the need for collaboration with other stakeholders. 'There is no way as government we can make South Africa a responsible tourism destination alone. We can't be everywhere. We don't have the resources – both human and financial resources. We don't have the expertise in all the areas' (director of responsible tourism, NDT). Complementary efforts were needed with various stakeholders contributing their specific areas of competence to the institutionalization of responsible tourism. The main actors are summarized in Table 10 above.

In this multi-actor environment, FTT follows a social agenda. The organization's objective is to reduce poverty and inequality, which the path-dependent developments of apartheid caused, and to contribute to the socio-economic transformation of the tourism industry. FTT

developed a sustainability standard that focuses on working conditions and environmental performance². Currently, 68 tourism businesses throughout South Africa, ranging from luxury hotels to community-based micro-enterprises, have been awarded FTT certification; as have six newly certified businesses in Madagascar and four in Mozambique (FTT, 2014).

8.5.2 Building up a Cumulative Knowledge Base

Since 2003, FTT has been a non-profit standard setting organization operating as a destination-specific certification programme. Over time, FTT has changed its internal organization structure; today it defines itself as a regional market-development organization for responsible tourism practices in South Africa and beyond. Although being registered as a non-profit organization with social goals, FTT also works for-profit and provides consultancy services for a variety of actors; including private businesses. By doing so FTT combines two organizational logics and can be considered a hybrid actor with a strong cumulative knowledge base in both fields. Ever since its inception, the organization has been active in supporting the government's facilitation of responsible tourism practices (Figure 9). The first important institution building process was the development of the 1996 'National white paper on the development and promotion of tourism in the Republic of South Africa'. It introduces responsible tourism with a view to developing the tourism industry in such a way that it contributes towards improving the quality of life for all South Africans (DEAT, 1996). FTT started participating in national institution building in 2001 when the South African government began to put responsible tourism into practice. To provide tourism businesses with practical suggestions for the implementation of the concept, the government initiated an MSI involving 121 South African organizations, and developed the 'National guidelines for responsible tourism' and an 'RT manual' (Goodwin et al., 2012). Participation by a diverse group of South African stakeholders ensured the local and social embeddedness of the responsible tourism guidelines in the South African context. International experts were included in the process to integrate international demands for responsible tourism practices; however, they did not dominate the institution building process. Due to the guideline's inclusive nature, its development was complex; although most participants had been

² A more detailed analysis of the development path of the FTT standard can be found in Strambach and Surmeier (2013).

embedded in the national context and already shared institutional and social proximity, it took 1.5 years to reach a consensus.

Because the South African government lacked the capacity to convert appropriate tourism guidelines into a formal certification and assessment system for responsible tourism practices, FTT complemented the government's effort by introducing its own FTT standard. While participating in the government-led MSI, the organization gained considerable synthetic technical knowledge, as well as implicit symbolic knowledge of Northern actors' values and demands. This knowledge influenced FTT's own standard development process. The South African government legitimized and supported implementation of the FTT standard by means of incentives to assist emerging businesses to participate in FTT activities and certification. These intertwined processes show the co-evolutionary nature of standard developments (Figure 9). Tourism practitioners value the territorial and social embeddedness of the FTT standard. 'This is a South initiative; it's not a North initiative. This is the first time that we find a certification of this stature that is governed by the South. It's a South African NGO and it's responding to the South African context' (interview with national tour operator, 2009). The South African government became involved in global institution building in 2002. Because the World Summit on Sustainable Development failed to address the topic of tourism, the government organized the world's first 'Conference on Responsible Tourism in Destinations', which 280 delegates from 20 countries attended. The outcome of the conference was the 'Cape Town Declaration on Responsible Tourism', based on South African Responsible Tourism guidelines. The Cape Town declaration is regarded as seminal to the unfolding global understanding of responsible tourism and builds strongly on the South African responsible tourism guidelines (NDT, 2012). For FTT, the MSI provided a further opportunity to absorb synthetic technical and symbolic knowledge about the requirements of various actor groups from different spatial contexts.

8.5.3 Driving Knowledge Combination between Public and Private Actors

Beyond building up its own knowledge base, FTT also facilitated knowledge sharing between public and private actors from different spatial scales.

In 2006/07, FTT consulted the government to develop sector-specific regulations involving broad-based black economic empowerment (B-BBEE) with a view to fostering socio-economic

transformation in the tourism industry. The government had already introduced B-BBEE at a national level, but had difficulty translating it into sector-specific socio-economic practices because it lacked tourism business expertise.

The FTT organization, familiar with the management practices and challenges of tourism businesses, de-contextualized its experience-based knowledge and contributed to the development of a sector-specific tourism B-BBEE regulation. Simultaneously, FTT integrated the tourism B-BBEE regulation into its own standard and supported businesses at the micro-level. By de- and re-contextualizing knowledge on B-BBEE, FTT facilitated vertical learning processes from micro-level business practices into institution building processes at the national level and vice versa.

After the 2009 elections, the new government created a stand-alone National Ministry of Tourism (NDT). The directorate for responsible tourism, which developed the responsible tourism strategy to drive institutional change, is embedded in this organization. The strategy details how the tourism industry can be developed in a sustainable manner (NDT, 2011, 2012). Based on its shared symbolic knowledge base built up from previous government-led MSIs, the NDT commissioned FTT to complement the development of the responsible tourism strategy. It was involved in setting up the South African national minimum standard for responsible tourism (SANS 1162), which aims to create a collective understanding of responsible tourism and to harmonize different South African approaches to tourism sustainability certification (NDT, 2012; FTT, 2014). Along with the responsible tourism director, the FTT director was the chairperson of the technical working group and co-led the development of the standard. During this complementary process, other South African certification bodies adapted their social criteria to that of the FTT standard. The FTT organization integrated the elaborate environmental criteria into its own standard, which other organizations had set. The director of responsible tourism stressed that the inclusive process was at times time-consuming and cumbersome, but time was needed to reach a consensus to ensure that the participants took ownership of the SANS 1162 and that no one was left behind (interview with director of Responsible Tourism, 2012). This indicates that procedural fairness was important to the NDT. FTT's involvement was acknowledged when the tourism minister and the director of FTT together officially launched the standard in 2011.

This underlines the organization's legitimacy, its mediating role in knowledge integration and its contribution towards establishing institutional complementarities.

FTT also built up strategic links and partnerships with other endogenous intermediary organizations, which enabled them to disseminate their knowledge on responsible tourism. The organization is either a member or board member of the national associations shown in Table 10 in italics. These board seats and memberships allow FTT to contribute to the implementation of national responsible tourism policies and keep abreast of new developments. This has helped to reveal complementary aims that had before seemed unrelated to each other. FTT has entered joint marketing agreements with South African Tourism (SAT), the national body responsible for promoting tourism to and in South Africa. FTT has also partnered the Regional Tourism Organization of Southern Africa (RETOSA), a public SADC body responsible for developing the tourism industry in member states. Further horizontal learning also take place between certified businesses when exchanging their perspectives on challenges and potentials in the implementation of responsible tourism practices. FTT facilitates network building, collects different perspectives and then de-contextualizes them from their individual businesses to establish whether there is a need to address any super-ordinate hindering or fostering factors.

8.5.4 Strategic Partnerships and Transnational Learning for Enhancing Institution Building

In 2007, the FTT initiated the Sustainable Tourism Network Southern Africa (STNSA). While resource constraints undermined the network from 2010 to 2012, STNSA was relaunched in 2012 as the Sustainable Tourism Certification Alliance Africa (the Alliance). With a new focus on standardization and certification, this MSI consists of various stakeholders, such as certification scheme owners, intermediary organizations and government agencies. In 2014, there were 31 member organizations in the Alliance; 25 from African countries (Botswana, Egypt, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritius, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania and Zimbabwe) and six from the Global North (Germany, Switzerland, the UK and the USA).

As its founder and appointed secretariat, FTT plays a key role in the Alliance. While it has a coordinating function, it also secures funding for the annual meetings and houses the informal network in its formal organizational structure. The 2012 relaunch of the network was made

possible when FTT secured core funding from the Swiss government (SECO); its aim is to ‘scale up FTT’ and facilitate the diffusion of its standard. Becoming more independent from market-based financing gave FTT space to be more strategic and concentrate ‘on the business of the business’, as opposed to ‘chasing small projects’ (interview with FTT, 2015). One of its main projects was to build up strategic partnerships – the one with the Alliance was important.

The Alliance’s main objectives include the facilitation of learning, the promotion of an integrated approach to sustainable tourism standard-setting and certification on the African continent. The network places importance on emerging external trends towards international accreditation, harmonization of standards and mutual recognition for the networking activities. The Alliance’s activities are structured into thematic working groups that are continually active during the year through annual meetings. These meetings are important because they help to generate innovative ideas, promote knowledge sharing, enhance networking and set common future goals (interviews with FTT, 2014, 2015, consultants 1 and 2, 2015; director of Responsible Tourism, 2012, 2015). Over time, as the network developed, tensions arose between the Alliance and the FTT over the former’s dependence on the latter. Members have expressed the need to formalize the organizational structure of the Alliance with a funding model that is independent of the FTT (interviews with FTT, 2014, consultant 1, 2; director of Responsible Tourism). Nevertheless, the members’ overall evaluation of the Alliance’s work is positive. In these institutionalized temporary meetings, it seemed possible to create inclusiveness, expertise-based efficiency and procedural fairness (Quack, 2010). The strategic partnership has enabled sustainable tourism stakeholders in Africa to engage directly – at the global level – in institution building. As an FTT stakeholder relations manager put it (interview, 2015): “We can address decisions that are made regionally, internationally and globally that will impact on what we are doing. Instead of arguing as one organization in one country, you can do it as a network that’s collaborating and working together. It’s not one voice anymore, now it’s over 40 voices from maybe ten different countries.”

In addition, their institutional and cognitive proximity connects the Alliance members and makes it more difficult for actors in the South to be outmanoeuvred in their standard building attempts. This became apparent between 2009 and 2013 when the German-led initiative known as ‘Eco Mark Africa’, tried to develop a sustainable tourism standard for sub-Saharan Africa. Although Eco Mark Africa included some African organizations, such as the African

Union, the initiative lacked legitimacy at the micro-level since little attempt was made to integrate endogenous developments. For example, the Alliance invited Eco Mark Africa representatives several times to participate in their meetings, but were not attended by Eco Mark Africa. This demonstrated a limited willingness and lack of awareness of Northern actors' ability to integrate endogenous knowledge bases. After 2013, the project was ended as it was deemed unsuccessful.

The Alliance provides an enabling environment and opportunities for the FTT organization to pursue a regional expansion strategy that is based on knowledge sharing and integration, rather than on competition. The organization follows a dual approach to facilitate an inclusive learning process and to create a common voice at the transnational level. First, in countries where a sustainable tourism standard is operational, FTT pursues mutual recognition agreements. Second, in countries where no sustainable tourism standard is operational, FTT strives to expand the scope of its standard. The knowledge combination strategy also implies aligning the FTT standard to make it adaptable to other destinations and to expand the reach of its certification. This was supported by local experts to ensure the standard would still meet local demands. 'The whole purpose of our tool is not just to develop businesses in general for sustainability, but it has to be relevant to the context' (stakeholder relations manager, FTT).

Another important initiative was a change in the organizational structure – the outsourcing of assessments to the FLO-Cert, which is the certification body for Fairtrade International (FLO). It took one year of learning (2012–13) until FLO-Cert could conduct the whole assessment process on its own because it did not have prior experience in auditing service industries. During this time, FTT shared its experienced-based knowledge and consulted with the FLO-Cert organization. The outsourced assessment gave FTT the space it needed to focus on strategic activities beyond certification and to support the diffusion of its social agenda into other African countries. The FTT organization expressed an interest in using the services of an independent organization as international 'best practice', which would help it avoid 'being the coach and referee at the same time' (interview with FTT, 2012). However, the FTT organization recognized the disadvantages of this approach. Certified businesses complained about a loss of quality in the recertification processes and considered the FLO-Cert evaluators weak because their suggestions seemed less valuable than those of their predecessors. These experiences suggest that FLO-Cert lacked the cumulative synthetic and symbolic knowledge

of tourism. In addition, FLO-Cert's assessment charges were higher than previous FTT prices, which led to the exclusion of small businesses from FTT certification (interview with FTT, 2015).

The experiences that assessors and certified business managers shared generated relational proximities that facilitated learning. To address these issues, FTT created the position of a 'business development support' manager to act as a coach for certified businesses. This served to remedy the issues created by the FLO-Cert evaluators.

8.5.5 Shaping Global Institution Building to Include the Voice of the South

The proliferation of sustainability standards and certification schemes created a lack of transparency in the tourism industry. In response, the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) was founded in 2010 as a non-profit global multi-stakeholder organization. Its mandate was to develop a global minimum standard for sustainability in tourism, namely the GSTC criteria, and a corresponding assessment system. The GSTC consists of a diverse group of both public and private actors (for example, UN organizations and leading tour operators) and intermediaries such as certification scheme owners, consultants and NGOs. Similar to the Global Social Compliance Program (GSCP), analysed by Fransen (2012), the GSTC underwent a series of organizational changes that led to its business-driven focus. With a consensus on the need for such an initiative, the GSTC did not have to justify its legitimacy. However, some resistance on its procedural fairness and inclusiveness (Quack, 2010) remained.

For the members of the Alliance the development of the GSTC provided the risk of exclusion due to its high membership fees. There was a fear that the development of the minimum criteria would be led by actors from the Global North and not be adapted to local contexts. One respondent (consultant 1, 2014) claimed that: "There was a big debate in the Alliance whether we as a group would protest about the way the GSTC operated at that stage. Then we decided rather to try and influence things from inside. A lot has changed, but there are still some attitude problems at the GSTC that remain. There is a lack of appreciation of processes at a national level, a lack of understanding and appreciation of the autonomy and sovereign rights of countries and that the GSTC has to work with those rather than to oppose them."

The Alliance addressed these issues in three ways. First, it lobbied four members, including the director of FTT, to allow for African representation on the GSTC board. Second, it

negotiated reduced fees for its members. Third, GSTC representatives were invited to attend Alliance meetings to ‘hear the voices of the members, but also provide information about their processes’ (consultant 1) and make the standard setting process more inclusive. Today, the GSTC minimum criteria provide a common basis for supporting mutual recognition agreements between standard setting organizations in sub-Saharan Africa and international tour operators (interviews with consultant 2, 2014; FTT, 2015). Through its internationally respected reputation, the FTT organization participated in a pilot study by the GSTC preceding the launch of the global accreditation programme. There were many knowledge sharing and adjustment processes on both sides because the FTT standard exceeded the GSTC minimum criteria by far. The FTT standard was one of the first of 11 standards in the world that the GSTC recognized. It is still the only recognized standard from Africa. The director of FTT was an expert of the GSTC standards working group in 2010 and a non-voting board member until 2014 (interview with FTT, 2015).

Beyond its achievements with the GSTC, FTT has been able to recognize new customer demands through its multi-scalar interaction processes with private businesses, mainly from South Africa, but also with international tour operators and NGOs. FTT contributed directly to the integration of sustainable tourism practices into GPNs by developing a product innovation known as ‘Fair Trade Holidays’. These are like packaged tours that combine product certification (accommodation, activities, attractions and so on) with tour operator approval to package and sell Fair Trade Holidays. This provides an opportunity to integrate certified businesses into GPNs and to market South Africa as a fair-trade holiday destination. Fair Trade Holidays are available in Switzerland, Germany, the UK and the Netherlands.

8.6 Reflecting on the Role of FTT in the Transnational and Global Context

In the transnational and global context, the coordinating and boundary spanning role of FTT becomes obvious because there are fewer institutional overlaps and more relational distances to overcome. The organizations’ role as KIIs is pronounced. First, FTT intermediated from a functional and relational perspective. The organization linked various public and private actors from different spatial scales and facilitated the creation of proximities either by means of initiating MSIs, such as the Alliance, and by developing innovations like Fair Trade Holidays.

Second, from the process perspective of intermediation – the contextualization, de-contextualization and re-contextualization of knowledge took place at various scales. The FTT organization de-contextualized its South African knowledge on institution building for sustainable tourism, then re-contextualized it within the Alliance. The outcomes were twofold: (i) there were mutual adaptions of already existing tourism sustainability standards; and (ii) the FTT-standard was implemented in countries without their own standard, for example in Mozambique and Madagascar (Figure 9). The combinatorial learning processes supported the convergence between existing sustainability standards in sub-Saharan Africa. The FTT organization contextualized the knowledge base developed within the Alliance upstream into the GSTC. It re-contextualized knowledge gained in the close collaboration with the GSTC downstream into the Alliance by helping its members scale up their standards to meet the GSTC minimum criteria. In all these processes temporary proximity was important in enabling actors to overcome relational distances and in creating spaces for knowledge combination.

8.7 Conclusion

In global governance, private standards that address pressing social and ecological issues are an important means of enforcing sustainable practices at the micro-level. Recent research on the ‘regulatory renaissance’ sheds light on the complex nature of public–private interventions and the way these forms of regulation interact in practice (Bartley, 2011; Locke et al., 2013). The knowledge-based perspective elucidates that the dichotomy between standard takers and standard makers does not account for the time dimension and the complex learning processes that underpin multi-scalar institution building. Little is known about the complex institutional and organizational changes underlying sustainable standard setting and their implementation into multi-layered place-specific environments. With its focus on the role of endogenous KIs, in this article we argued that knowledge is a crucial factor in standard building processes, including sustainability standards that combine social, ecological and economic aspects.

The case of FTT illustrates that – as hybrid organizations – endogenous KIs have the potential to mediate in the development of complementary public–private institutions. However, this cannot be taken for granted right from their start. The empirical case study in this article

explores how KIIIs learn over time in different settings and built up a composite knowledge base. During these processes they gain certain enabling capabilities that underlie their mediating role. They can access, initiate and govern networks between various actor groups from different spatial scales. By doing so they help to overcome cognitive distances and facilitate the creation of relational proximities, which are important for knowledge integration.

KIIIs learn to integrate synthetic knowledge in the form of the technical expertise and to master strategic jargon frequently used in global MSIs. In these processes they also absorb the implicit symbolic knowledge, which is an important prerequisite for achieving a mutual understanding. Instead of being out-manoeuvred, this helps KIIIs gain legitimacy and enables them proactively to bring the voice of the South into the development of global institutions, which are often enforced within GPNs.

Although KIIIs contribute to gradual transformative institutional change within place-specific enduring institutional environments, neither policy-makers nor researchers have paid them much attention. To support KIIIs, purposeful strategies are required that enable them to build up a composite knowledge base that can subsequently promote their legitimacy and their influence in transnational and global institution building.

V Conclusion

9 Conclusion

Little is known about the complex sustainability standard setting processes that combine social, ecological and economic aspects. Thus, the central concern of this thesis was to investigate how the development paths of sustainability standards are interrelated with their intra- and inter-organisational impacts and their implementation within GVCs/GPNs. The thesis provides novel insights on how sustainability standards can promote sustainable development processes in the global economy. After summarizing the key findings, this section discusses the limitations of this thesis and the generalizability of the empirical results. Finally, the chapter suggests future research avenues and offers recommendations for policy makers and practitioners.

9.1 Main Findings

The following section summarizes the key findings as they relate to the guiding research questions.

Question 1: *How can sustainability standards be developed that integrate the interests of various stakeholders from the Global North and Global South?*

Insights into the evolutionary trajectories of sustainability standards are limited (Nadvi, 2008). Integrating a dynamic, knowledge-based perspective into GVC/GPN research and analysing the actor constellations, their knowledge contributions and the role of geographical and relational proximities in shaping these interaction processes contributed to new insights.

Particularly chapters one, two and five of the thesis underline the importance of combinatorial knowledge dynamics within sustainability standard setting processes. The findings show that the development of innovative, context-adapted sustainability standards that adequately address local and global demands requires the collaboration of heterogeneous actors from different institutional contexts and spatial scales. These actors need to combine their knowledge within these standard setting process and balance social, ecological and economic concerns. What is decisive for these sustainability standard setting processes focusing on the social dimension of sustainability is the integration of implicit, distance-sensitive symbolic knowledge bases that contain cultural, normative, value-based knowledge. Its inclusion is

particularly challenging in transnational and global standard setting, where heterogeneous actors are involved, because, in comparison to analytical and synthetic knowledge bases, symbolic knowledge is place-specific and hard to codify and transfer. Yet, its integration is essential for achieving the context relevance and local legitimacy of transnational and global sustainability standards and their adaption into place-specific institutional environments.

The findings further revealed that an important mechanism for integrating symbolic knowledge is the creation of temporary geographical proximity between heterogeneous actors. However, geographical proximity alone is not sufficient for inclusive standard setting processes because both geographical *and* relational distances need to be overcome for successful knowledge combination within standard setting processes. Bridging relational distance and creating proximity is challenging, in particular in transnational and global sustainability standard setting processes where a high degree of social, cognitive and institutional diversity can cause difficulties. For example, empirical research revealed that participants from the Global South were often marginalized within these standard setting processes because actors from the Global North frequently considered inclusive standard setting processes and mutual decision-making as ‘too cumbersome’ (Fransen, 2012) or ‘too time-consuming’ (Ponte & Cheyns, 2013).

Using a longitudinal research design was valuable as it revealed that time is an important dimension in sustainability standard setting processes that aim to integrate symbolic knowledge bases. The actors involved in these processes have to invest a lot of time and effort to overcome relational distances and develop a mutual understanding of the challenges they face. This helps to address the root causes of these challenges and find ways to tackle them collaboratively. An example is the development process of the South African RT guidelines which took 1.5 years within MSIs. This underlines that, even though processes of knowledge combination may be ‘time-consuming’, they are necessary to build a consensus and integrate Southern actors’ interests into sustainability standard setting processes.

Furthermore, tracing the knowledge dynamics in the time-spatial development path of the FTT standard further revealed its interrelations with sustainable tourism standard setting processes at other spatial scales. These findings point to the multi-scalar nature of sustainability standard setting and the need for continuous adjustments of sustainability standards in response to changes in the global, transnational and local context. These multi-

scalar adjustment processes were necessary to maintain the sustainability standards' relevance within changing environments and promote sustainable development processes at multiple scales.

Question 2: *What are the intra- and inter-organisational impacts of the implementation of sustainability standards within GPNs?*

Conceptually, GVC/GPN scholars have predominantly analysed the impacts of the implementation of private standards using the upgrading framework. Yet, the micro-level of the firm largely remains neglected in upgrading research. With the aim to open up the 'black box' and illuminate learning processes at the firm level from a process-based perspective, this thesis integrated the dynamic capabilities approach from organizational studies into GVC/GPN research. Within this context, chapters four, six and seven of this thesis discuss the drivers and constraining factors for the FTT standard implementation as well as their intra- and inter-organisational impacts from a longitudinal perspective.

The FTT standard was mainly implemented by values-based organizations that aim to contribute toward sustainable development processes within their organisation and environment. Thus, the main drivers of the FTT standard implementation were normative motivations. Including a time dimension into the analysis revealed that, over time, when the FTT label had gained some market value, economic drivers such as better market access also became important. However, there were certain challenges that constrained the standard implementation. The major barriers included a costly and time-consuming implementation process and difficulties in quantifying the benefits of the standard implementation. These benefits are intangible, evolve over different periods of time, are often hard to grasp and may not necessarily translate into social or economic upgrading.

The empirical analysis revealed that the FTT standard implementation facilitated intra-organisational impacts within the FTT-certified businesses. These included improvements in working conditions and enabling rights, such as better wage levels, the creation of more permanent instead of seasonal positions and investments into skills development measures and staff empowerment. The standard implementation also initiated changes in social practices and routines within the organisations and was particularly helpful for community-owned businesses and emerging entrepreneurs as it helped them to build up new capabilities

and professionalise their management practices. The importance of the assessment and feedback of the FTT organisation within these processes was underlined as it facilitated learning and capability building and was adapted to the individual knowledge bases of actors. Moreover, the FTT standard implementation facilitated inter-organizational changes within the networks and environment of the certified businesses. These changes had an impact for local communities and the structure of the supply chains of the certified businesses. For instance, hiring local people, buying local products and investing into community development made a considerable contribution locally. The FTT standard implementation also promoted networking and knowledge exchange between certified businesses, and mutual support when dealing with challenging tasks. However, it remained hard to quantify whether the standard implementation led to GVC/GPN access and more bookings for the certified businesses.

The empirical findings also underline that the degree of changes at the business level were perceived differently. They depended on the already existing capabilities of the different organizations. Furthermore, the standard facilitated different change processes over time and at different speeds. These aspects have hardly been taken into account in the research on the impacts of the implementation of standards but can explain why mixed empirical results have been observed.

Question 3: How do the evolutionary development paths of sustainability standards influence their implementation along GVCs/GPNs?

Voluntary standards have gained in importance in promoting sustainable development processes within GVCs/GPNs. However, most social and environmental standard setting processes are still led by actors from the Global North while actors from the Global South are still mainly excluded from standard setting processes (Ponte & Cheyns 2013). Empirical research has revealed that when standards are developed globally, and not adapted to the local institutional context, their implementation along GVCs/GPNs is often challenging and ineffective (Nadvi, 2008; Dannenberg, 2008/2012; Bair, 2017). In turn, when standards are developed locally, but do not integrate the demands of actors from the Global North, their diffusion may also be hampered. Against this background, the case study on the FTT standard

investigated the interrelations between the knowledge dynamics in the development path of sustainability standards and their implementation within tourism GVCs/GPNs.

The findings revealed that the specific combination of knowledge within the standard setting processes and the right balance of prescribed details and openness for local interpretation was important for achieving the standards' local relevance while concomitantly addressing global demands for sustainable tourism practices. This facilitated the standard's implementation within tourism GVCs/GPNs.

On the one hand, the FTT organisation and the FTT standard contributed directly to the integration of sustainable management practices within GVCs/GPNs. Based on the original FTT standard, new innovations were developed and implemented within tourism GVCs/GPNs. These include an innovative volunteer tourism standard that addresses a perceived lack of regulation in the sector, and the 'Fair Trade Travel Pass' that has collaboratively been developed by a number of FTT-certified businesses. Furthermore, the FTT organisation, together with international tour operators, created 'Fair Trade Holidays'. They are sold by national and international FTT- approved tour operators and aimed to support the integration of certified businesses into GVCs/GPNs.

On the other hand, as investigated in chapter eight of this thesis, the FTT organisation and its standard promoted more sustainable business practices within tourism GVCs/GPNs in an indirect way, based on learning processes over time at different scales. The analysis of the embeddedness of the FTT standard into the institutional environment revealed the multi-scalar and co-evolutionary nature of the development paths of tourism sustainability standards. There were continuous change and adjustment processes between various standard setting processes at different spatial scales. For example, in the national context, the FTT organisation pro-actively participated in the development of the South African RT guidelines which, in turn, influenced the development path of its own standard. Later, the FTT organisation supported the South African government in developing the national minimum standard for RT in South Africa (NMSRT). These findings underline the FTT organisation's contribution in establishing institutional complementarities. This contributed to gradual institutional change within the overall development path of South African tourism, as illustrated by the concept of path plasticity (Strambach & Halkier, 2013). Furthermore, at a transnational level, the FTT organisation initiated the 'Alliance'. This MSI facilitated knowledge

combination between actors involved in tourism standard setting within sub-Saharan Africa. This led to mutual adaptions and convergence between existing sustainability standards on the African continent.

Against this background, the findings of the thesis show that endogenous KIIs, such as the FTT organisation, have the potential to bridge cognitive distance, facilitate relational proximity and mediate within public-private interaction processes and multi-scalar standard setting processes. However, the time dimension in the analysis revealed that this was not the case from the beginning. The FTT organisation built up a composite knowledge base over time and in different settings. These learning spaces and processes provided opportunities for the FTT organisation to absorb synthetic (technical) and symbolic knowledge, including knowledge on customer demands from the Global North, and to build up the necessary capabilities to influence sustainability standard setting processes at a transnational and global scale. The case of the GSTC sustainability standard is an example. By integrating the Southern actors' demands into its development process, the FTT organisation facilitated the context relevance and local legitimacy of this global sustainability standard. Moreover, the FTT organisation helped Alliance members to meet the GSTC criteria. Thus, even though it was achieved in an indirect way, the FTT organisation promoted the implementation of more sustainable business practices within tourism GVCs/GPNs.

How can private standards promote sustainable development processes in GVCs/GPNs?

In summary, developing innovative sustainability standards that address complex challenges is not an easy task, and many barriers must be overcome in these processes. Despite many empirically observed limitations, these standards have the potential to contribute to sustainable development processes within GVCs/GPNs. However, to reach their potential certain pre-conditions have to be fulfilled.

Firstly, public and private actors from different sectors and spatial scales, including national governments, private businesses, NGOs and the civil society, have to collaborate and combine their knowledge within sustainability standard setting processes. While there is often disagreement on the cause of the problems and possible solutions, these actors have to create a shared understanding and commitment to address the identified problems. It is necessary to balance social, environmental and economic demands within these processes and adapt

and combine existing knowledge bases to include local and global requirements from the Global North and the Global South. Therefore, it is essential that actors from the Global South, who are required to fulfil the standard requirements, are integrated into these standard setting processes and have opportunities to pro-actively influence them at a transnational and global level.

Secondly, from a knowledge-based perspective, it is not sufficient to integrate analytical, science-based knowledge and synthetic, technical knowledge into sustainability standard setting processes. Instead, even though it is difficult, it is also necessary to include distance-sensitive symbolic knowledge bases to account for the social dimension of sustainability and achieve the local legitimisation and context relevance of these newly developed standards. The adaption into the local institutional context with the regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive elements seems to be a pre-requisite for sustainability standards to promote sustainable development processes and changing social practices at different spatial scales—locally and within the overall GVC/GPNs.

Thirdly, many empirical case studies have underlined that, by themselves, voluntary standards remain limited in facilitating sustainable change. Therefore, they need to be complemented and supported by government regulation with associated monitoring activities to ensure that they are implemented effectively. This means that national governments need to help businesses to improve working conditions and environmental practices along GVCs/GPNs by creating an enabling environment for the development and the implementation of private standards. Section 9.5 offers more suggestions on how this can be achieved.

9.2 Limitations of the Thesis

There are a number of limitations to this thesis. First, it focused on one sustainability standard in a specific sector and geographical context and, thus, the representativeness of findings can be challenged. However, the thesis aimed to achieve theoretical rather than statistical generalisation of the results. Thus, the qualitative design that triangulated methods and data was appropriate as it enabled the author of this thesis to gain in-depth insights into the complex research topic from different perspectives.

Second, also the analysis of the impacts of the standard implementation does not constitute any quantitative representativeness as it was conducted in an explorative and qualitative way.

This is for two main reasons: There was no prior knowledge on the impacts of the standard implementation that provided a basis for the development of questionnaires, and there was a lack of available time-series assessment data that could be used for an impact analysis. However, the qualitative research design that was complemented by an explorative analysis of assessment data provided valuable in-depth insights.

Third, there was a positive bias in the selection of local businesses and their role in promoting sustainable development processes. The interviewed businesses were chosen because they were FTT certified and aimed to promote better working conditions and environmental protection within their organisations and environment. Therefore, the findings of their intra- and inter-organisational impacts must be understood and contextualized against this background and cannot be transferred to tourism businesses in general.

Fourth, the investigation of the analytical categories of ‘power’ and ‘value’ and ‘embeddedness’ of global production received limited attention as it was not the aim of this thesis to fully analyse complex tourism GVCs/GPNs. Instead, the micro level of actors and emerging knowledge dynamics within the development paths of sustainability standards received the main attention.

Fifth, certain representations of culture in the tourism industry can lead to the reproduction of social stereotypes and related inequalities (Smith, 2009; Rolfes, 2010; Steinbrink, 2012). It was not in the scope of this thesis to analyse South African tourism using a culturally-based conceptual approach. This would have revealed different insights into the role that the FTT standard and certified businesses play within the sustainable tourism and development nexus in South Africa.

9.3 Generalisation of the Results

Despite the limitations discussed above, some generalisations can be made when relating the findings back to the theoretical framework. The thesis has revealed the important role of combinatorial knowledge dynamics in the development of sustainability standards, particularly in transnational and global sustainability standard setting. The specific actor constellations within these processes are important as they can contribute to the inclusion of the demands of heterogeneous actors across borders and scales.

Furthermore, the integration of symbolic knowledge bases are important to account for the social dimension of sustainability, adapt sustainability standards to local context conditions and gain local legitimacy.

The thesis also showed that context-specific institutional environments matter and influence the local implementation of sustainability standards within national institutional contexts. The intersection of transnational private regulation with place-specific institutional frameworks is influential for the adaption or rejection of new sustainability standards within local contexts (Bartley, 2011). Thus, overcoming institutional distance is one of the main challenges in transnational and global standard setting. In cases where standards can be anchored locally, they contribute to gradual transformative institutional change within multi-layered place-specific institutional environments.

In line with Locke's (2013) argument, the findings of this thesis revealed that complementary public-private interaction processes and a mix of public and private regulation is important for the creation and successful implementation of sustainability standards. Yet, the empirical findings show that complementary interaction processes are not static. They evolve and change dynamically over time, influenced by the specific knowledge base and competences of actors.

Furthermore, the findings of the thesis revealed the important role of KIIs in mediating between public and private actors at different spatial scales. By bridging distances and facilitating relational proximity, they can promote combinatorial knowledge dynamics in sustainability standard setting processes and contribute to the development of complementary public and private regulation.

Finally, as sustainability standards can be considered a sub-category of sustainability innovations that integrate social concerns, the insights derived from investigating transnational sustainability standard setting processes may be transferred to sustainability innovations in general. However, more evidence is needed to gain more empirically grounded insights.

9.4 Avenues for Future Research

The results of this thesis provide a basis for avenues for future research. Firstly, comparative research and cross-case comparisons, for example between the FTT standard and

sustainability standards in other countries and sectors, are necessary to gain further insights into hindering and fostering factors within the evolutionary development paths of sustainability standards. This will help to identify overall patterns and differences within multi-scalar sustainability standard setting processes and the role of knowledge dynamics within these processes.

Secondly, a predominantly qualitative research design was applied when analysing the intra- and inter-organisational impacts of sustainability standards. This provided explorative insights on how standards can facilitate capability building and upgrading but did not generate statistically representative data on the impact of the standard implementation. The findings of this thesis may, however, provide a starting point for the development of a quantitative research design with the aim to measure the intra- and inter-organisational impacts of sustainability standards.

Thirdly, upgrading processes have not yet been understood in depth in GVC/GPN research. Currently, the micro-level of the firm largely remains a ‘black box’ in GVC/GPN upgrading research, and a process-based, micro-level perspective is mostly absent. More empirical research could dig deeper to investigate the interrelations between dynamic capability building and upgrading and focus on the role of space and place within these processes. This may lead to a better understanding of upgrading processes in GVCs/GPNs.

Fourthly, in particular, endogenous SMMEs from the Global South and their role in driving sustainable development processes and upgrading processes within their organisations and networks need to receive more attention in GVC/GPN research. Due to a research focus on lead firms and first-tier suppliers, the role of SMMEs for promoting or hindering improvements in working conditions and environmental protection in the Global South is currently underexplored (Nadvi & Raj-Reichert, 2015). Furthermore, it remains underexplored how standards can be developed in such a way that they can be adapted to the demands of SMMEs and lower tier suppliers in the Global South (Soundararajan et al., 2017).

Fifthly, this thesis showed that KIs play an essential role in the development and implementation of sustainability standards and contribute to gradual transformative institutional change within place-specific, multi-layered institutional environments. This has mostly been overlooked by researchers, policy makers and practitioners (Howells, 2006). A more micro-foundational and dynamic investigation is necessary to understand the

contribution of KIIs in facilitating institutional change at various spatial scales. Furthermore, KIIs are a heterogeneous group, and currently, no overarching typology has been developed for this type of organisation that ranges from large international NGOs to public inspectors and local consultants. Thus, future research should advance the understanding of intermediary organisations and distinguish these in a more differentiated way into different types of intermediaries with particular characteristics.

Sixthly, as suggested by researchers in the emerging field on the ‘regulatory renaissance’, more empirical research is needed to gain more profound insights into mechanisms that support or hinder complementary public-private interaction processes in setting and enforcing sustainability standards (Bartley, 2011; Locke, 2013; Nadvi & Raj-Reichert, 2015). In particular, a dynamic, micro level analysis that investigates the interaction processes between different actors would help to gain a better understanding of how complementary regulation evolves in time and space.

9.5 Implications for Policy Makers and Practitioners

Sustainability standards have the potential to facilitate sustainable development processes but whether they can grow this potential is influenced by the way these standards are developed and implemented locally. Based on the findings of this thesis, the following section aims to offer some advice on how policy makers and practitioners can promote the creation and implementation of sustainability standards and use them as a tool to achieve their overarching development goals, such as alleviating poverty, facilitating socio-economic equality and protecting natural resources.

However, the insights of this thesis underlined that due to the subjective, context-dependent nature of sustainability, it is not possible to derive universal instructions or best practice solutions on how to develop sustainability standards. Instead, these standards have to be adapted to the specific local context conditions and are influenced by the demands of the actors involved. Despite these limitations, policy makers and practitioners from different spatial scales have an important role to play in promoting the creation and implementation of sustainability standards.

Creating Spaces for Inclusive Sustainability Standard Setting

The findings of this thesis underline that the development and implementation of sustainability standards require the collaboration of public and private actors across sectors, borders and scales. Therefore, both policy makers and practitioners from different scales need to create opportunities where these actors can meet, interact, and combine their knowledge with the aim to develop sustainability standards. It is crucial to invest appropriate resources for the integration of organizations from the Global South, including small organisations such as KIIs, into these processes. Yet, as temporary geographical proximity may not be sufficient for inclusive standard setting, and with the aim to bridge relational distances, the integration of actors external to the standard setting process may be valuable. These mediators can moderate interaction processes, provide process-based supervision and consultancy to achieve procedural fairness (Quack, 2010) and facilitate the inclusion of all participants within these mutual learning and knowledge combination processes. The findings of this thesis suggest that KIIs would be an appropriate actor group to take over this role and mediate between heterogeneous actors involved. The case of the development of the NMSRT in South Africa, discussed in chapter eight, is an example.

When actors from the Global South initiate MSIs, it is important for them to integrate actors from other spatial contexts and scales, including actors from the Global North. The contribution of their non-local knowledge may promote the transnational and global relevance of the sustainability standards developed in a Global South context. However, it has to be ensured that actors from the Global North will not dominate these standard setting processes.

Actors from the Global North can pro-actively contribute to more inclusive standard setting processes by embracing the diversity of participants in MSIs instead of avoiding the challenges resulting from cognitive and institutional distances (Fransen, 2012; Ponte & Cheyns, 2013). However, this will require sufficient time investments from these actors.

Furthermore, finding strategic partners and building strategic networks can enable Southern policymakers and practitioners to gain more influence in setting transnational and global standards. An example is the initiation of the tourism ‘Alliance’ in sub-Saharan Africa. Collective action that resulted from this MSI promoted the legitimacy and influence of actors from the Global South in transnational and global institution building.

Promoting the Implementation of Sustainability Standards

To promote the implementation of sustainability standards at the firm level, national actors can provide incentives for businesses to implement sustainability standards. These can include the provision of financial benefits, such as taking over certification costs or label user fees. Public actors can also provide trained auditors to monitor the businesses' compliance with the respective sustainability standards locally and, by doing so, alleviate the costs associated with the implementation and monitoring of private sustainability standards.

Moreover, private actors, specifically tour operators, need to promote the implementation of voluntary sustainability standards within their GVCs/GPNs and prefer those businesses that have implemented sustainability standards within their organisations. It is important to communicate these choices to customers to increase the market visibility of sustainability standards and of organisations that have implemented them, and to raise awareness for the issues they address.

Beyond these very practical recommendations the case study on South African tourism revealed that the complementarity of public and private regulations can be another driver for the implementation of private standards. As the FTT sustainability standard is in line with national B-BBEE legislation, implementing the FTT standards helped businesses to fulfil national government regulation. Therefore, a sustainable approach for policy makers and practitioners to facilitate more sustainable business practices requires the creation and implementation of complementary public and private regulation.

Supporting the Development of KIs

The findings of this thesis underline the essential role of KIs in driving knowledge combination processes, bridging relational distances between various public and private actors and contributing to the development of institutional complementarities. Therefore targeted strategies have to be developed by actors from different contexts and scales to support KIs to develop their potential from the outset. For example, investing resources into their development may enable these organisations to focus on their core tasks instead of chasing donor-funded project-based work. This may particularly enable KIs from the Global South to build capabilities and influence sustainability standard setting processes at different spatial scales.

Overall, the findings of this thesis show that the integration of various knowledge bases, including symbolic knowledge, is essential to develop (sustainability) innovations and promote sustainable development processes. However, in most cases, small actors from the Global South do not have the resources to spend time in the Global North where they can absorb symbolic knowledge about the local context conditions and consumer demands. This makes it challenging for them to develop innovative and sustainable products and services that meet the requirements of global buyers and consumers. Therefore, the author of this thesis would like to emphasise the need to create more opportunities for small actors from the Global South for learning, networking and knowledge combination that is based on a spatially balanced reciprocal exchange.

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Appendix: List of Empirical Interviews

No.	Organisation	Location	Date of interview	Type	Interviewee	Duration (min)
1	Safari Lodge	Paterson, Eastern Cape, South Africa	13.03.2009	FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director	45
2	FTT organisation	Pretoria, Gauteng, South Africa	13.03.2009	FTT organisation	Managing Director	105
3	The Backpack	Cape Town, Western Cape, South Africa	18.08.2009	FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director	75
4	Daddy Long Legs Art Hotel	Cape Town, Western Cape, South Africa	19.08.2009	FTT-certified business	Managing Director	60
5	Abang African Travel	Cape Town, Western Cape, South Africa	19.08.2009	Tour Operator	Managing Director	38
6	Cape Grace	Cape Town, Western Cape, South Africa	20.08.2009	FTT-certified business	Operations Manager	41
7	Andulela Experience	Cape Town, Western Cape, South Africa	20.08.2009	FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director	40
8	AWOL: Masiphumelele Bicycle Tours	Muizenberg, Western Cape, South Africa	22.08.2009	FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director	64
9	Spier Wine Farm & Hotel	Stellenbosch, Western Cape, South Africa	24.08.2009	FTT-certified business	Human Resources Manager	80
10	FTT organisation	Pretoria, Gauteng, South Africa	24.08.2009	NGO	FTT Assessor	108
11	Grootbos Nature Reserve	Gansbaai, Western Cape, South Africa	25.08.2009	FTT-certified business	Marketing Manager	51
12	White Shark Projects	Kleinbaai, Western Cape, South Africa	27.08.2009	FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director	37
13	Ocean Blue Adventures	Plettenberg Bay, Western Cape, South Africa	30.08.2009	FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director	71
14	Ocean Safaris	Plettenberg Bay, Western Cape, South Africa	30.08.2009	FTT-certified business	Marketing Manager	15

No.	Organisation	Location	Date of interview	Type	Interviewee	Duration (min)
15	Ocean Blue Adventures	Plettenberg Bay, Western Cape, South Africa	30.08.2009	FTT-certified business	Marketing Manager	35
16	Hog Hollow Country Lodge	Plettenberg Bay, Western Cape, South Africa	31.08.2009	FTT-certified business	Marketing Manager	102
17	Stormsriver Adventures	Stormsriver, Eastern Cape, South Africa	02.09.2009	FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director	73
18	Calabash Tours	Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape, South Africa	06.09.2009	FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director	108
19	Buccaneers Lodge & Backpackers	Chintsa, Eastern Cape, South Africa	12.09.2009	FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director	30
20	Coffee Shack Backpackers	Coffee Bay, Eastern Cape, South Africa	14.09.2009	FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director	86
21	Lebo's Soweto Backpackers & Bicycle Tours	Soweto, Gauteng, South Africa	22.09.2009	FTT-certified business	Managing Director	84
22	Mercure Hotels	Johannesburg, Gauteng, South Africa	24.09.2009	FTT-certified business	Human Resources Manager	59
23	FTT organisation	Pretoria, Gauteng, South Africa	25.09.2009	NGO	Managing Director	51
24	FTT organisation	Pretoria, Gauteng, South Africa	25.09.2009	NGO	Marketing Manager	16
25	University of Cape Town, Graduate School of Business	Cape Town, Western Cape, South Africa	27.03.2012	Academia	Professor for Social and Sustainable Innovation	40
26	University of Cape Town, African Center for Cities	Pretoria, Gauteng, South Africa	27.03.2012	Academia	Researcher, FTT Assessor	55
27	Open Africa	Cape Town, Western Cape, South Africa	28.03.2012	NGO	Founder & Managing Director	45
28	Cape Town Tourism	Cape Town, Western Cape, South Africa	28.03.2012	Public actor	Researcher	32

No.	Organisation	Location	Date of interview	Type	Interviewee	Duration (min)
29	University of Stellenbosch, Department of Geography and Environmental Studies	Stellenbosch, Western Cape, South Africa	29.03.2012	Academia	Professor for Tourism and Global Change	37
30	University of Johannesburg, Department of Geography	Johannesburg, Gauteng, South Africa	02.04.2012	Academia	Professor for Tourism and Hospitality	42
31	National Department of Tourism	Pretoria, Gauteng, South Africa	03.04.2012	Public actor	Director for Responsible Tourism	85
32	National Department of Tourism	Pretoria, Gauteng, South Africa	03.04.2012	Public actor	Research Director	15
33	FTT organisation	Pretoria, Gauteng, South Africa	03.04.2012	NGO	Managing Director	40
34	EED Tourism Watch	Berlin, Germany	08.06.2012	NGO	Managing Director	100
35	KATE (Kontaktstelle für Umwelt und Entwicklung)	Stuttgart, Germany	21.06.2012	NGO	Managing Director	100
36	Coffeeshack Backpackers	Coffee Bay, Eastern Cape, South Africa	04.03.2013	FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director	90
37	Sustainable Coffee Bay	Coffee Bay, Eastern Cape, South Africa	04.03.2013	NGO	Founder & Managing Director	20
38	Volunteer Africa 32° South	Cape Town, Western Cape, South Africa	05.03.2013	FTT-certified business	Founder & Managing Director	70
39	Friends of Chintsa	Chintsa, Eastern Cape, South Africa	06.03.2013	NGO	Volunteer Manager	95
40	Buccaneers Lodge & Backpackers	Chintsa, Eastern Cape, South Africa	06.03.2013	FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director	90
41	Calabash Tours	Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape, South Africa	07.03.2013	FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director	120
42	Amakhala Game Reserve	Paterson, Eastern Cape, South Africa	08.03.2013	FTT-certified business	Human Resources Manager	75

No.	Organisation	Location	Date of interview	Type	Interviewee	Duration (min)
43	Birds of Eden	Plettenberg Bay, Western Cape, South Africa	11.03.2013	FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director	75
44	Monkey Land Primate Sanctuary	Plettenberg Bay, Western Cape, South Africa	11.03.2013	FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director	75
45	Albergo for Backpackers	Plettenberg Bay, Western Cape, South Africa	11.03.2013	FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director	20
46	Ocean Blue Adventures	Plettenberg Bay, Western Cape, South Africa	11.03.2013	FTT-certified business	Managing Director	59
47	Uthando South Africa	Cape Town, Western Cape, South Africa	13.03.2013	FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director	30
48	The Backpack	Cape Town, Western Cape, South Africa	13.03.2013	FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director	63
49	Spier Wine Farm & Hotel	Stellenbosch, Western Cape, South Africa	14.03.2013	FTT-certified business	Human Resources Manager	64
50	The Backpack	Cape Town, Western Cape, South Africa	17.03.2013	FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director	30
51	Para Taxi Tandem Paragliding	Cape Town, Western Cape, South Africa	18.03.2013	FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director	75
52	African Shark Eco Charters	Cape Town, Western Cape, South Africa	19.03.2013	FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director	45
53	Antrim Villa	Cape Town, Western Cape, South Africa	20.03.2013	FTT-certified business	Managing Director	24
54	Chartfield Guesthouse	Kalk Bay, Western Cape, South Africa	20.03.2013	FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director	25
55	FTT organisation	Pretoria, Gauteng, South Africa	20.03.2013	FTT organisation	Manging Director	35
56	FTT organisation	Pretoria, Gauteng, South Africa	20.03.2013	FTT organisation	FTT Assessor	55
57	AWOL: Masiphumelele Bicycle Tours	Muizenberg, Western Cape, South Africa	20.03.2013	FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director	45

No.	Organisation	Location	Date of interview	Type	Interviewee	Duration (min)
58	Marine Dynamics	Gansbaai, Western Cape, South Africa	21.03.2013	FTT-certified business	Managing Director	70
59	White Shark Projects, Gansbaai, Western Cape, South Africa	Kleinbaai, Western Cape, South Africa	21.03.2013	FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director, FTT Assessor	20
60	Grootbos Nature Reserve	Gansbaai, Western Cape, South Africa	21.03.2013	FTT-certified business	Human Resources Manager	15
61	Sani Lodge Backpackers	Himevile, Kwazulu Natal, South Africa	21.03.2013	FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director	20
62	Lebo's Soweto Backpackers & Bicycle Tours	Soweto, Gauteng, South Africa	31.03.2013	FTT-certified business	General Manager	45
63	EED Tourism Watch	Berlin, Germany	09.01.2014	NGO	General Manager	47
64	Mdumbi Backpackers	Mdumbi, Eastern Cape, South Africa	28.03.2014	FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director	53
65	Bulungula Lodge	Bulungula, Eastern Cape, South Africa	02.04.2014	FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director	105
66	Bulungula Incubator	Bulungula, Eastern Cape, South Africa	02.04.2014	NGO	General Manager	15
67	Abang Africa	Cape Town, Western Cape, South Africa	16.04.2014	Tour Operator	Managing Director	70
68	International Center for Responsible Tourism	Cape Town, Western Cape, South Africa	17.04.2014	Consultant	Managing Director	55
69	Flo-Cert	Cape Town, Western Cape, South Africa	18.04.2014	NGO	Managing Director	50
70	Flo-Cert	Cape Town, Western Cape, South Africa	18.04.2014	NGO	Certification Manager, Assessor	29
71	National Department of Tourism	Pretoria, Gauteng, South Africa	27.04.2014	Public actor	Director for Responsible Tourism	18
72	FTT organisation	Pretoria, Gauteng, South Africa	29.04.2014	FTT organisation	Managing Director	54

No.	Organisation	Location	Date of interview	Type	Interviewee	Duration (min)
73	TourCert	Stuttgart, Germany	29.04.2014	NGO	Managing Director	14
74	Singita Luxury African Safari Lodges & Reserves	Hazyview, Mpumalanga, South Africa	04.08.2014	Formerly FTT-certified business	Sustainability Manager	20
75	Albergo for Backpackers	Plettenberg Bay, Western Cape, South Africa	11.08.2014	Formerly FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director	7
76	Dreamcatcher	Still Bay, Western Cape, South Africa	19.08.2014	Formerly FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director	59
77	FTT organisation	Pretoria, Gauteng, South Africa	15.09.2014	FTT organisation	Managing Director	40
78	Terra Aqua Ceu	Maputo, Mozambique	10.10.2014	Tour Operator	General Manager	15
79	Baobab Travel	Cape Town, Western Cape, South Africa	24.10.2014	Tour Operator	Managing Director	41
80	Dreamtime Travel	Baden, Switzerland	29.10.2014	Tour Operator	Product Manager	35
81	Jambo Tours	Stockholm, Sweden	14.11.2014	Tour Operator	Marketing Manager	41
82	Levelle Perspectives	Cape Town, Western Cape, South Africa	05.12.2014	Consultant	Owner & Managing Director, Assessor	59
83	Kuoni	Zürich, Switzerland	17.12.2014	Tour Operator	Head of CSR	40
84	AKTE Arbeitskreis Tourismus und Entwicklung	Basel, Switzerland	22.12.2014	NGO	Managing Director	40
85	Karawane Reisen	Ludwigsburg, Germany	16.03.2015	Tour Operator	Managing Director	35
86	Volunteer 32° South	Chintsa, Eastern Cape, South Africa	23.03.2015	FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director	70
87	Buccaneers Lodge & Backpackers	Chintsa, Eastern Cape, South Africa	23.03.2015	FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director	35
88	FTT organisation	Pretoria, Gauteng, South Africa	15.04.2015	NGO	Stakeholder Relations Manager	25

No.	Organisation	Location	Date of interview	Type	Interviewee	Duration (min)
89	FTT organisation	Pretoria, Gauteng, South Africa	15.04.2015	NGO	Managing Director	20
90	African Shark Eco Charters	Simon's Town, Western Cape, South Africa	10.02.2016	Formerly FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director	15
91	FTT organisation	Pretoria, Gauteng, South Africa	27.02.2016	NGO	Business Development Manager	25
92	FTT organisation	Pretoria, Gauteng, South Africa	27.02.2016	NGO	Programme Development Manager	20
93	FTT organisation	Pretoria, Gauteng, South Africa	04.04.2016	NGO	Stakeholder Relations Manager	15
94	FTT organisation	Pretoria, Gauteng, South Africa	13.04.2016	NGO	Business Development Manager	18
95	Boogie Pilgrim	Antananarivo, Madagascar	21.04.2016	Tour Operator	Owner & Managing Director	10
96	Buccaneers Lodge & Backpackers	Chintsa, Eastern Cape, South Africa	09.06.2016	Formerly FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director	35
97	Chartfield Guesthouse	Kalk Bay, Western Cape, South Africa	26.07.2016	Formerly FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director	15
98	St. Lucia Tours & Charters	St. Lucia, Kwazulu Natal, South Africa	01.08.2016	Formerly FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director	10
99	Tuningi Safari Lodge	Madikwe, North West Province, South Africa	01.08.2016	Formerly FTT-certified business	Managing Director	10
100	Leeuwenbosch Country House	Paterson, Eastern Cape, South Africa	10.08.2016	Formerly FTT-certified business	Owner & Managing Director	10
101	Marine Dynamics	Gansbaai, Western Cape, South Africa	17.08.2016	Formerly FTT-certified business	Managing Director	20

No.	Organisation	Location	Date of interview	Type	Interviewee	Duration (min)
102	Andulela Experience	Cape Town, Western Cape, South Africa	02.09.2016	Formerly FTT- certified business	Owner & Managing Director	15
103	AKTE Arbeitskreis Tourismus und Entwicklung	Basel, Switzerland	11.09.2016	NGO	Managing Director	45

Curriculum Vitae

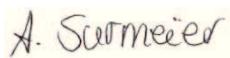
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Eidesstattliche Erklärung

(gemäß § 10, Abs. 1c der Promotionsordnung vom 15.07.2009)

Ich versichere wahrheitsgemäß, dass ich die vorliegende Dissertation selbst und ohne fremde Hilfe verfasst, keine anderen als die in ihr angegebenen Quellen oder Hilfsmittel benutzt sowie vollständig oder sinngemäß übernommene Zitate als solche gekennzeichnet habe. Die Dissertation wurde in der vorliegenden oder einer ähnlichen Form noch bei keiner anderen in- oder ausländischen Hochschule eingereicht und hat noch keinen sonstigen Prüfungszwecken gedient.

Marburg, den 05.02.2018



Annika Surmeier