

## Proposal submitted to Corporate Responsibility Research Conference 2013

Do corporate environmental initiatives lead to results in SMEs?

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### Abstract

For quite a while, management scholars have investigated the interrelations between corporate business activities and the natural environment and society at large. Therefore, the on-going debate on climate changes has obvious relevance to debates and developments in CSR-related areas such as corporate environmental management and corporate social responsibility. Since it makes perfect sense for industry to respond to concerns and stakes espoused by key holders as well as the internal assessment of corporate environmental impact, it is highly relevant to identify to which extent initiatives to improve the environmental situation actually lead to actual results and reductions.

In order to analyse the situation data from identical questionnaire based surveys distributed to a random sample of industrial companies in Denmark in 1999, 2003, 2007 and 2011 focusing on their respond to the environmental challenge will be applied.

Previous research has demonstrated that companies generally are re-active in their attitude when perceiving stakeholder influence on taking environmental initiative and mainly respond to influence from stakeholders representing authorities, owners or employees (Madsen & Ulhøi, 2012; Ulhøi & Madsen, 2013). In line with this result the paper shows that when initiatives have been taken the actual achieved improvements are perceived to be at a lower level compared with the level of the initiatives. Furthermore, the size of the company may have a negative influence in some situations. That is, it seems to be easier for smaller companies to achieve an improvement compared to medium-sized companies.

Madsen, H. ; Ulhøi, J.P. (2012), Corporate Environmental Management: Stakeholder Influence, Own Impact and Managerial Responses. Paper presented at the Corporate Responsibility Research Conference, Bordeaux, France, September 12-14 2012.

Ulhøi, J.P., Madsen, H. (2013), New patterns in corporate sustainable development?, paper presented at the 9<sup>th</sup> International Strategic Management Conference, Riga, Latvia, June 27-29, 2013.