

SCIENTIFIC ADVISOR'S REFERENCE

Program:	Master in International Business
Student:	Ermilov Sergey
Title of thesis:	Corporate Social Responsibility in the Oil and Gas Industry: Environmental Management Systems as a Source of Sustainable Development

Justification of the topic choice. Accuracy in defining the aim and objectives of the thesis. Justification of the topic choice; accuracy in defining the aim and tasks of the thesis; originality of the topic and the extent to which it was covered; alignment of the thesis' topic, aim and objectives.

The topic of the thesis is actual in practical and theoretical sense due to (1) international importance of the sustainable development, (2) sensitiveness of the oil and gas industry to CSR, (3) role of this industry in Russian and global economies, and (4) lack of researches based on the analysis of Environmental Management System (EMS) as a source of sustainable development.

The goal of the thesis is defined as "how the implementation of environmental management systems (EMS) can contribute to sustainable development of the oil and gas companies" (p. 6). This goal is quite clear and emphasizes "HOW" as a managerial rather than just theoretical point. The goal and the objectives are directly related to the topic.

Structure and logic of the text flow. Logic of research; full scope of the thesis; alignment of thesis' structural parts, i.e. theoretical and empirical parts.

The research in general is conducted in a logical manner. The results and conclusions are directly followed from the study. The theoretical and empirical parts are in good balance. Nevertheless the literature reviews presented in two chapters (1&3) make the structure of the theoretical part of the thesis too complex.

Quality of analytical approach and quality of offered solution to the research objectives. Adequacy of objectives coverage; ability to formulate and convey the research problem; ability to offer options for its solution; application of the latest trends in relevant research are for the set objectives.

The coverage of objectives is quite adequate. The research problem is formulated clearly. The main trends in modern literature of CSR and environmental management are carefully analysed and applied to the research.

Quality of data gathering and description. Quality of selecting research tools and methods; data validity adequacy; adequacy of used data for chosen research tools and methods; completeness and relevance of the list of references.

The research tools and methods are selected properly. The data are mainly collected from the non-financial reports. It is quite typical for research of corporate social performance due to the high level of standardization (GRI and others) and validity. Consequently, the data validity is quite adequate. The list of references is complete.

Scientific aspect of the thesis. Independent scientific thinking in solving the set problem/objectives; the extent to which the student contributed to selecting and justifying the research model (conceptual and/or quantitative), developing methodology/approach to set objectives.

The way of scientific thinking is independent. The conceptual research model can be shared and used for the researches related to EMS analysis as well as for the analysis of corporate sustainability in in other industries and in general. The quantitative research is made on the mainstream level and the author demonstrated the ability to use the main but typical approaches.

Practical/applied nature of research. Extent to which the theoretical background is related to the international or Russian managerial practice; development of applied recommendations; justification and interpretation of the empirical/applied results.

The theoretical background is directly related to the international and Russian practices. The results are just and can be shared for theoretical as well as practical purposes.

Quality of thesis layout. Layout fulfils the requirements of the Regulations for master thesis preparation and defence, correct layout of tables, figures, references.

The main Regulations for the master thesis preparation are fulfilled. The tables, figures, and references are presenter correctly.

The Master thesis of Sergey Ermilov meets the requirements for master thesis of Master in International Business Program thus the author of the thesis can be awarded the required degree.

Date: June 17, 2012



Scientific Advisor: Yury E. Blagov
Dr., Associate professor