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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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

Each item above is evaluated on the following scale, as applicable: 5 = excellent, 4 = good, 3 = satisfactory, 2 = poor.

Additional comments:

The topic of the thesis is actual due to the (1) international importance of the sustainable development theory and practices, (2) growth of ecological concerns in Russian business and society, and (3) search for competitive advantages through the ecological and social companies' orientation.

The objective (aim) and the tasks of the thesis are directly related to the topic. The very topic is completely covered by presented research. Nevertheless, the aim of the thesis looks too general ("to increase empirical and theoretical knowledge,..., and to develop recommendations for international companies operated in Russia", p. 10) and therefore can not be correctly corresponded with the results. Also the very idea to develop recommendations for "foreign companies" looks strange and even provocative in terms of the thesis value for Russian business.

The research is conducted in a logical manner. The hypothesis are based on the theoretical analysis and carefully tested in quantitative research of Russian consumers' behaviour on the ecological markets. The results and conclusions are directly followed from the study. The theoretical and empirical parts are in good balance.

The coverage of objectives is quite adequate. The research questions are formulated clearly. Nevertheless, the author did not make understandable distinctions between the marketing strategy and the corporate strategy (p. 6-7, etc.). This unclearness created potential misunderstanding: if the research is related to corporate strategy, the author should (1) analyse in addition the important articles related to the interpretations of environmental activities from the strategic management perspectives (for example, Hart,
and analyse the whole spectrum of corporate sustainability issues and approaches. On the contrary, the theses is completely related to the marketing strategies, and made as a good peace of marketing work.

The research tools and methods are selected properly. The data validity is quite adequate. The list of references is complete (taking into consideration the very thesis is related to the marketing strategy rather than to corporate one).

The way of scientific thinking is independent. The conceptual research model can be shared and used for in the field of marketing research. The quantitative research is made in mainstream approach and the author demonstrated the ability to use the main related instruments.

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

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

Master thesis of Anastasia Antonova meets the requirements of Master in International Business program, and deserves an “excellent” grade, thus the author can be given the desired degree.

Date 18.06.2011

Referee: Associate Professor Yury E.Blagov