



SUSTAINABILITY AND CONSUMPTION

Virtual Community

NEWSLETTER
October 2013

Dear reader,

This newsletter updates you with some important calls and news, including new publications and events. However, we decided to use most of the space for the minutes from the Virtual Community's recent Annual Meeting, which, as you know, was held in Magdeburg, in connection with the 10th Biennial Conference on Environmental Psychology. The VC's special symposia on Sustainability & Consumption drew a big crowd (especially the first of them). Unfortunately, few members participated in the Annual Meeting, among other things because the final invitation, with the agenda, was lost, not in Cyberspace but somehow in my email system. This makes the minutes even more important. Despite the low number of attendees, the meeting made a number of important decisions that will hopefully improve the flow of information and collaboration between members. It was also decided that next year's Annual Event will be 7 or 8 July in Paris, organized as a pre-event in connection with the ICAP conference. You will hear more about this later. Enjoy your reading.

Kind regards,

John

NEWS

A Practice Perspective for Sustainability Policy Interventions

This report introduces a novel approach to sustainability policy—a practice perspective. It argues that social practices are a better target of intervention for sustainability policy than 'behaviour', 'choice' or technical innovation alone.

A practice perspective re-frames the question from "How do we change individuals' behaviours to be more sustainable?" to "How do we shift everyday practices to be more sustainable?"

[Read more and download the report here](#)

Minutes from the Annual Meeting of the Virtual Community on Sustainability and Consumption

Near-Term and Long-Term Strategies and Interventions' at the 10th Biennial Conference on Environmental Psychology, 22 - 25 September 2013.

Otto von Guericke Universität Magdeburg, Germany

11 members participated in the meeting, which had been advertised in the VC Newsletter, in the conference program, and, briefly, verbally at the symposium organized by the VC earlier the same day. John Thøgersen also intended to send a reminder with the agenda to all members the day before the meeting, but he later discovered that the email was never sent.

Chair of the meeting: John Thøgersen

Agenda

1. Opening remarks
2. Status re the VC activities during the second year
3. How and what can we improve to make the VC more valuable?
4. Plans for the next year and the future
5. Misc.

Ad 1: Opening remarks

John summarized what had originally been agreed to be the purpose of the VC and the activities that the VC was originally intended to carry out. This information can be read at the VC web page and will therefore not be repeated in these minutes. The annual meeting felt that the purpose and activities are still a good basis for the VC and do not need to be revised at this point.

Ad 2: Status re the VC activities during the second year

The VC now has 85 members, up from 71 a year ago. It seems that members are not very actively promoting the VC in their networks, or the kind of activities that the VC organized has a more limited interest than originally anticipated.

In the context of the VC, one Virtual/hybrid seminar has been arranged this year, by the group at Aarhus University: "When prosocial and proself are at odds: The influence of activated values and norms on prosocial behaviour" (Dr. Judith IM. de Groot, Bournemouth University - 29th of November 2012). A webcast of the seminar can be found at the VC's website. There was general agreement that the Virtual Seminar idea, and not least the ability to view a webcast after the actual seminar, is very valuable, and members of the VC are strongly encouraged to make relevant seminars at their institutions available to the whole VC in this way.

Research collaboration: Members from three countries are collaborating about an ERA-Net SUSFOOD application: "Promoting sustainability in consumer food choices: Informational, social and environmental approaches" (SUS-CONS-ISE).

Lucia Reisch and John Thøgersen are editing a "Handbook of Research on Sustainable Consumption", which will be published by Edward Elgar and which contains contributions from many members of the VC.

Exchange: Partly as an outcome of the VC, a PhD student from Wageningen University visited Aarhus University for 3 months in the period.

Last year's annual meeting suggested that we

1. Continue "piggy-bagging" on an existing conference, but shift between conferences to make participation sometimes more attractive to different people. Have the next annual event in connection with the environmental psychology conference in Magdeburg
2. A more active international management group
3. Work on improving the virtual platform and realize several of the ideas mentioned at the meeting

The first and the third of these suggestions have been carried out. However, we haven't succeeded in extending the daily management group outside Aarhus University. This is still a task for the coming year.

Several ideas were offered at last year's annual meeting regarding the development of the Web platform (see the minutes in the October 2014 Newsletter). We have worked on realizing a number of these suggestions:

- (1) There is now a LinkedIn group for the VC. Purpose: Increase cohesion among the members of the Community and offering members the possibility of presenting themselves and viewing each other's profiles. 51 members have signed up by now.
- (2) We also recently created a List Server to facilitate discussions between members. The LS has the purpose of facilitating communication and knowledge sharing between members, as well as encouraging further project collaborations. Only 26 members have signed up for the LS and we still haven't initiated discussions here (but the management group plan to initiate a discussion about some of the issues raised at the annual meeting). **Decision: All current members will be added to the LS, and future members will be automatically added, unless they explicitly ask not to. (Anyone can unsubscribe any time.)**
- (3) We have been searching the web for an appropriate platform to create the various forums suggested at last year's meeting. We have now identified three appropriate candidates (www.prophbb.com, www.invisionpower.com, www.activeboard.com) and hope to launch the forums in the near future.
- (4) We have worked at creating a refreshed visual identity of our web presence. Visit our website and view.

A couple of ideas were also offered at last year's annual meeting regarding the development of the Newsletter (see the minutes in the October 2014 Newsletter). We have gone some way towards engaging a broader group in the editorial work, but haven't come all the way suggested last year. Groups at other universities are strongly encouraged to sign up for editing an issue of the newsletter (please email John)! We introduced a new section in the Newsletter: SC Research at . Purpose: giving research groups among our members the opportunity to present themselves and their research. Research groups presented until now are: the Marketing & Sustainability group at AU (Nov. 2012), Groningen University (Dec. 2012), Otto von Guericke Universität Magdeburg (March 2013), University of Maine (June 2013). Please email John if you would like to present your research group in the newsletter (strongly encouraged!).

Various people would like to have access to the list of members of the VC: various options were discussed

- Via LinkedIn – attached to their profile/ personal website; drawbacks: not everybody uses LinkedIn
- Via membership section of the website (password needed); drawbacks: not possible if AU hosts the website; passwords are a barrier for people
- Create a list with name + affiliation + keywords; drawbacks: explicit consent needed to publish online
- Circulate a pdf member list via email, together with the newsletter. **Decided.**

It was suggested to (also) use other (social) media than LinkedIn, eg Twitter or a blog. If someone wants to take the initiative, much appreciated!

People indicated the info send around is useful and valuable. Some would like to see more interaction. Ulf suggested an opt-out approach for the list server.

Chad commented that for Americans the VC might be too much European focused.

Ad 4: Plans for the next year and the future

It was decided that next year meeting should be organized as a pre-conference in connection with ICAP, which is in Paris 8-13 July, 2014. The pre-conference will be 7 or 8 of July (8 July if the only ICAP activity that day is registration and evening reception).

It was mentioned that it's an expensive conference, and suggested that funding opportunities for PhD students be explored.

Suggested that we circulate flyers and prepare a poster for the next conference to increase visibility of the VC.

Christian Klöckner suggests that VC members should look at this interesting call and possibly collaborate about an application: European JPI Climate Joint Call for Transnational Collaborative Research Project

Ad 5: Misc.

Some stats on our website, from Google Analytics, 1st of September 2012 – 1st of August 2013

4673 views in total, 3284 unique visitors (each unique visitor can have one or more views). Most viewed pages: I. Events II. Main page III. Newsletter

Country of the visitor: Denmark, Germany, Hungary, UK, India, Netherlands, Brazil, Switzerland, Iran, Italy, New Zealand, Tunisia, Australia, Poland, US, etc.

Search terms: Sustainability and consumption, Sustainability, virtual community on sustainability and consumption, Improsume AU, Aarhus University choice-based conjoint, summer school theories environmental psychology Groningen, summer school urban sustainability Denmark, superb and marketable meat from efficient and robust animals, John Thøgersen

Minutes by Geertje Schuitema and John Thøgersen

PUBLICATIONS

Publication of the month

H. C. M. Van Trijp (Ed.), Encouraging Sustainable Behavior. Psychology Press.
An topical new book filled with extremely interesting chapters by some of the leading scholars in the field. Highly recommended!

Costanza, R., Alperovitz, G., Daly, H., Farley, J., Franco, C., Jackson, T., . . . Victor, P. (2013). Building a Sustainable and Desirable Economy-in-Society-in-Nature. In E. Assadourian, T. Prugh, R. Adamson & L. Starke (Eds.), State of the World 2013 - Is Sustainability Still Possible? (pp. 126-142). Worldwatch Institute/Island Press.

Jackson, T. (2013). Prosperity without growth. In P. Lawn (Ed.), Globalisation, Economic Transition and the Environment: Forging a Path to Sustainable Development (pp. 105-128); Edward Elgar.

Kastner, I. & Matthies, E. (2013). Implementing web-based interventions to promote energy efficient behavior at organizations – a multi-level challenge. Journal of Cleaner Production(0). doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2013.05.030

Klöckner, C. A., Sopha, B. M., Matthies, E., & Bjørnstad, E. (2013). Energy efficiency in Norwegian households-identifying motivators and barriers with a focus group approach. International Journal of Environment and Sustainable Development, 12(4), 396-415.

Lindenberg, S., & Steg, L. (2013). Goal-Framing Theory and Norm-Guided Environmental Behavior. In H. C. M. Van Trijp (Ed.), Encouraging Sustainable Behavior (pp. 37-54); Psychology Press.

Sunstein, C. R., & Reisch, L. A. (2013). Green by Default. Kyklos, 66, 398-402. doi: 10.1111/kykl.12028

Thøgersen, J. (2014). Social Marketing in Travel Demand Management. In T. Gärling, D. Etema & M. Friman (Eds.), Handbook of Sustainable Travel: People, Society, and Transportation Systems (pp. 113-129); Springer.

van der Werff, E., Steg, L., & Keizer, K. (2013). It is a moral issue: The relationship between environmental self-identity, obligation-based intrinsic motivation and pro-environmental behaviour. Global Environmental Change, 23(5), 1258-1265. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2013.07.018

Verplanken, B., & Roy, D. (2013). 'My Worries Are Rational, Climate Change Is Not': Habitual Ecological Worrying Is an Adaptive Response. PloS one, 8(9), e74708.

CALLS

Calls for papers for The Gronen research conference

The Gronen research conference, organized by Aalto University School of Business is going to be held in Helsinki, Finland 16.-18. June 2014.

The theme of the conference is: How can corporate responsibility tackle critical global sustainability challenges?

In this regard, the conference welcomes research on questions about how far can today's corporate responsibility policies and activities take us, and where and how to improve and what are the limits of corporate responsibility. The conference also welcomes contributions that explore the possibilities of new forms of business and entrepreneurship to organize toward more sustainable forms of (economic) activity.

[Read more](#)

Call for Papers and Participation for the Second GRF-SPaC Conference

We invite interested participants to submit abstracts for papers and essays as well as session proposals. Key issues are expected to include Systemic Issues and Pathways to System Change, Chinese, Asian, and Other Developing Regions; Priorities in SPaC, Actors and Strategies in Transitions to SPaC and Alternatives and Experiments: Metrics, Lifestyles, Business Practices, and Governance.

Abstracts for papers, essays, and session proposals should be submitted via the conference website by Friday, November 1, 2013. Abstracts should not exceed 500 words and will be reviewed by an international scientific committee.

[Read more](#)

EVENTS

06 - 10 January Seventh Meeting of the Open Working Group on SDGs (OWG 7)

01 - 04 February First Annual Sustainable Development Implementation Forum

More info to follow RESPONDER conference.

08 - 11 June GRF-SPC global research conference

16 - 18 June Gronen research conference

18 - 20 June ISDRS' 20th Annual conference

19 - 21 June The Greening of Everyday Life: Reimagining Environmentalism in Postindustrial Societies

04 - 05 July 5thICAR symposium

10 - 12 November World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development

[Read more](#)

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Board of the VC:

> **John Thøgersen** Aarhus University (chair of the board)

> **Anders Biel** University of Gothenburg

> **Mario Teisl** University of Maine

> **Linda Steg** University of Groningen

> **Lucia Reisch** Copenhagen Business School

> **Ulf Schrader** Technical University of Berlin

> **Paul Stern** NAS, Washington DC

> **Tim Jackson** University of Surrey

> **Bas Verplanken** University of Bath

> **Ellen Matthies** Otto-von-Guericke-University Magdeburg

> **Satoshi Fujii** Kyoto University

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