

## TIMELINE OF SCORAI EVENTS AND OTHER MAJOR ACTIVITIES, 2008–PRESENT

### 2008

Launch of SCORAI  
Boston, MA

### 2009

Inaugural workshop and the introduction of SCORAI as an intellectual forum (at Clark University)  
Worcester, MA, USA

### 2011

Workshop *Understanding Consumption Through Lenses of Socio-technical Transitions, Social Practices, and Ecological Economics*  
Princeton, NJ, USA

### 2012

Academic-civil society workshop *Challenging Consumerism: Toward Living Well Sustainability* (in partnership with One Earth and the University of British Columbia)  
Vancouver, Canada

### 2012

Workshop *Sustainable Consumption During Times of Crisis* (Launch of SCORAI–Europe)  
Bregenz, Austria

### 2013

First international SCORAI conference *The Future of Consumerism and Well-being in a World of Ecological Constraints* (at Clark University)  
Worcester, MA, USA

### 2013

Publication of *Innovations in Sustainable Consumption: New Economics, Socio-technical Transitions, and Social Practices*

### 2014

Workshop *Sustainable Consumption Research in China* (in partnership with Renmin University and launch of SCORAI-China)  
Beijing, China

### 2014

Academic-urban policymaker workshop *The Role of Cities in Sustainable Consumption* (in partnership with the Urban Sustainability Directors Network and One Earth)  
Eugene, OR, USA

### 2014

Publication of *Special Issue of Sustainability: Science, Practice, and Policy on Applications and New Perspectives in Sustainable Consumption Research*

### 2014–15

Year-long colloquium *Understanding Consumption Through Theories of Social Change* (in partnership with the Tellus Institute)  
Boston, MA, USA

### 2015

Publication of *Putting Sustainability Into Practice: Applications and Advances in Research on Sustainable Consumption*

### 2015

International workshop *Understanding Consumption Through Theories of Social Change* (in partnership with the Tellus Institute)  
Boston, MA, USA

### 2015

Workshop *Sustainable Consumption Through Energy Transitions* (in partnership with Clark University, the University of Vermont, and the German Helmholtz Alliance ENERGY-TRANS)  
Remich, Luxembourg

### 2016

Second international SCORAI conference *Transitions Beyond Consumer Society* (at the University of Maine)  
Orono, ME, USA

# SCORAI: SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION RESEARCH & ACTION INITIATIVE

## THE SCORAI BOARD 2015:

### Executive Committee:

**Halina Szejnwald Brown**, Clark University  
**Maurie J. Cohen**, New Jersey Institute of Technology  
**Philip J. Vergragt**, Tellus Institute and Clark University

### Other Members:

**John Stutz**, Tellus Institute  
**Jeffrey Barber**, Integrative Strategies Forum



SCORAI is a network of professionals working at the interface of material consumption, human well-being, and technological and cultural change. We aim to foster a transition beyond the currently dominant consumer society.

The network provides a forum for scholars and practitioners seeking to understand the drivers of the consumerist economy in affluent technological societies; to formulate and analyze options for post-consumerist lifestyles, social institutions, and economic systems; to provide the knowledge for emergent grassroots innovations, social movements, and public policies; and to influence the agendas of researchers, social innovators, policy makers, business, and civil society.



# WHY SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION?



To meet the goal of living within planetary ecological boundaries significant changes must take place on both the demand and supply sides of energy and material use. Technological advances continue to reduce ecological impacts on the supply side, by way of renewable sources, efficiency, and new materials and processes. But growing demand outpaces technological progress.

Since its founding in 2008, SCORAI has been at the cutting edge of work on how to facilitate individual and collective well-being while also reducing demand for energy and materials. This question will become critical during the implementation stage of any international accords that might emerge regarding climate protection.

## OUR WORK

SCORAI convenes workshops, colloquia, seminars, and conferences, aiming at bringing together scholars and practitioners from fields that rarely cross paths. The network operates a listserv with nearly a thousand subscribers and a website that provide venues for discussions and knowledge-sharing. We publish books and proceedings, prepare special issues of academic journals, and distribute a monthly newsletter. These activities push intellectual boundaries, stimulate debates, and test entrenched beliefs. They give rise to new research directions and identify transition pathways beyond an economy and culture built on consumerism.



## WORKSHOPS



SCORAI workshops advance knowledge across different academic disciplines, bring together researchers and practitioners to turn theory into practice, and address questions that have been neglected by mainstream discussions. For example, the 2011 workshop examined consumption from three perspectives: socio-technical transitions, social practices, and ecological economics.

In 2014, in partnership with the Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN) and the Vancouver-based organization One Earth, SCORAI convened in Eugene (Oregon) a group of academics, city managers, and sustainability planners to identify strategies for promoting sustainable consumption

and well-being at the municipal scale. The workshop resulted in development of the [Eugene Memorandum on the Role of Cities in Advancing Sustainable Consumption](#), which articulates principles for local actions and policies.

The 2015 workshop in Luxembourg, in partnership with Clark University, the University of Vermont, and the German Helmholtz Alliance ENERGY-TRANS, identified opportunities created by large-scale transitions to renewable energy sources – such as those currently underway in Germany and the state of Vermont – to affect the culture of private energy demand.

## COLLOQUIUM ON CONSUMPTION AND SOCIAL CHANGE



## PARTNERS & AFFILIATES



This was a year-long monthly gathering of academics and policy professionals interested in advancing interdisciplinary (political, cultural, institutional, and economic) understanding of large-scale social change. Commencing in spring 2014, world-renowned scholars delivered presentations and led discussions on this theme from a wide range of perspectives. Videos and commentaries are available at <http://scorai.org/colloquium-on-consumption-and-social-change>. This program culminates with an international workshop in Boston in October 2015.

SCORAI is a founding member of the North American Roundtable on Sustainable Production and Consumption (NARSPAC) and a member of the New Economy Coalition. Its international affiliates include SCORAI-Europe, SCORAI-China, and SCORAI-Israel. SCORAI contributes to the Global Research Forum on Sustainable Production and Consumption (GRF-SPaC) and engages with the United Nations Environment Programme.

## CONFERENCES



In 2013 SCORAI organized an international conference at Clark University on the topic of sustainable consumption, the first of its kind in the United States (<http://scorai.org/clark-university-2013>). The second conference Transitions Beyond the Consumer Society will be hosted by the University of Maine in June 2016.

## RESOURCES & SUPPORT



Our core support comes from several sources: Board members donate their time without compensation, our partner the Tellus Institute provides both monetary and non-monetary support; and the conferences generate modest surpluses. Grants for programs have come from the V. K. Rasmussen Foundation, the Garfield Foundation, and the Netherland-America Foundation. Several workshops have been organized in collaboration with other organizations.

## PUBLICATIONS



In 2013 SCORAI published a book *Innovations in Sustainable Consumption: New Economics, Socio-technical Transitions, and Social Practices* (edited by Maurie Cohen, Halina Brown, and Philip Vergragt) and compiled a special issue of the journal [Sustainability: Science, Practice, & Policy](#). A second book, *Putting Sustainability Into Practice: Applications and Advances in Research on Sustainable Consumption* (edited by Emily Huddart Kennedy, Maurie Cohen, and Naomi Krogman) is forthcoming in 2015. A third book – the inaugural volume in a new Routledge book series on sustainable consumption – is under development.

## CONTACT



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# UPCOMING PROGRAMS

SCORAI continues to implement its mission by convening workshops, colloquia, and conferences with scholars and practitioners and to disseminate the results of these activities. Priority topics include:

## PROJECT ON THE ROLE OF CITIES IN SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION

Since 2014 SCORAI has partnered with the Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN) on identifying ways to promote sustainable consumption and well-being at the municipal scale. The first phase of the project produced the Eugene Memorandum on the Role of Cities in Advancing Sustainable Consumption. Starting in July 2015, the second phase will produce a toolkit for municipal officials and deliver training programs for city planners in the United States and Canada.

## SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Preparations are underway for SCORAI's second international conference entitled Transitions Beyond a Consumer Society, which will be hosted by the University of Maine in June 2016.

## BOOK SERIES ON SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION

In partnership with Routledge publishing house, SCORAI will edit a major new international book series on sustainable consumption.

## WORKSHOPS UNDER CONSIDERATION

### ALTERNATIVE BUSINESS MODELS FOR SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLES

This workshop will address the following questions: Can relevant ventures scale up to a meaningful size? Can alternative business models offer adequate alternatives to contemporary lifestyles which rely on mass consumerism? How can innovative organizational forms (for instance premised on cooperative forms of ownership) facilitate more optimal outcomes?

### INCOME INEQUALITY AND SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION

The need to reduce income inequality is well recognized, but its potential impact on individual and aggregate consumption needs to be better understood before these proposals can progress, and the role of consumption in a steady-state economy has yet to be worked out. The aims of this workshop are to consolidate the knowledge frontier in this area, to stimulate serious analysis, and to develop a research plan to follow the instances where these policies are being trialed.

### THE STEADY STATE ECONOMY AND WELL-BEING

Research to date suggests that it is possible to have a society where people thrive within the boundaries of a significantly smaller (and not growing) economy. But much more needs to be understood about the different dimensions of human well-being in such an economy. The questions to be addressed include: Who will win and who will lose in such a transition? Given the competitive nature of humans in social settings, what is the meaning of well-being in the context of limited access to material and energy resources?

### ADAPTATIONS TO SHRINKING ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES

This workshop will focus on international empirical case studies (from North America, Europe and Japan) of how various segments of the population have adapted to economic crises that lower household incomes and reduce public investments, with emphasis on quality of life.

