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SCORAI Newsletter (Sustainable Consumption Research and Action Initiative)

1 message

SCORAI (Sustainable Consumption Research and Action Initiative)

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Tue, Apr 3, 2018 at 4:59 PM



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April 2018

Dear Robert,

This month's newsletter has no shortage of ways to become involved in the sustainable consumption conversation. From two workshops on communicating sustainability (one [virtual](#) and one [physical](#)) to novel [artist interpretations](#), read on for the latest from your SCORAI colleagues.

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Best,

Darcy and Maurie

SCORAI Bids Farewell to John Stutz

John Stutz, a co-founder of SCORAI (along with Maurie Cohen, Halina Brown and Philip Vergragt) and most recently an Advisor to its Board has stepped down after almost a decade of service.

As a Board member for the first seven years of SCORAI's existence John has been a vital force in giving the network shape and helping it to thrive. In his position as vice-president of the Tellus Institute in Boston (<http://www.tellus.org/about/people#>) John supported SCORAI with funding, enabled it to use Tellus facilities, and provided access to a range of administrative functions, including fiscal agency. We will miss the collegial lunches he hosted during our semi-annual retreats.



Most significantly, John's extensive knowledge of energy policy and his experience with the not-for profit sector and fundraising were vital to SCORAI's success. His encyclopedic knowledge of books and people worth reading and listening to opened our eyes to new ideas. Over the years, John's insights, wisdom, and level-headed advice put clarity into many discussions. John, we are grateful for your contributions and wish you all the best.

Halina, Maurie and Philip

Summary of the IPCC Conference on Cities and Climate Change Science

By Halina Brown

On March 5-7, the Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change (IPCC) jointly with other organizations such as C40 and ICLEI, hosted a conference in Edmonton, Canada on Cities and Climate Change Science. The stated aims of the conference were to "inspire the next frontier of research focused on the science of cities and climate change; to inspire research that will lead to peer-reviewed publications and reports; to forge stronger partnerships...among the academic, practitioner and urban policy-making communities ...for the purpose of joint knowledge production; and to improve scientific knowledge...underpinning effective and efficient urban responses to climate change." The conference attracted over 600 participants, and the plenary sessions featured many luminaries from the research community, climate and sustainability institutions, urban planning, and the policy-making sector.

Maurie Cohen co-organized and chaired a session entitled "Climate Change and Consumer Society", which included presentations by him, Halina Brown, Philip Vergragt, and Bill Rees (Manu Mathai was forced to withdraw at the last moment). The peer-review process for accepting session abstracts was highly competitive so we were pleased to see that our session focusing on consumption was included in the program. A summary of the plenaries and selected breakout sessions (not including ours) has been made available by the IISD Reporting Services (in PDF format [here](#) and in HTML format [here](#)). The full set of summaries and videos will appear on the conference website (<https://www.ipcc.ch/meetings/cities/>). Below are some observations related to the topic of sustainable consumption.

- Consumption has definitely risen on the discussion agenda. It was prominently and repeatedly mentioned by plenary speakers, including Amy Luers, Executive Director of Future Earth, with which SCORAI has close links through the Knowledge-Action Network on Systems of Sustainable Consumption and Production (KAN on SSCP). While the summary by IISD does not include our session, the report uses the word consumption nine times. In the closing session, mayor of Edmonton Don Iveson devoted significant attention to the issue of consumption and consumption-based accounting of greenhouse-gas emissions.

Continue reading [below](#)

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**Spring 2018 Seminar Series
Practitioners Communicating Sustainable Consumption
and Production**

Jointly Sponsored by the Sustainable Consumption Research and Action Initiative (SCORAI) and the Future Earth Knowledge-Action Network (KAN) on Systems of Sustainable Consumption and Production

The [Sustainable Consumption Research and Action Initiative \(SCORAI\)](#) and the [Future Earth Knowledge-Action Network \(KAN\) on Systems of Sustainable Consumption and Production](#) announce their jointly organized virtual seminar series with the theme Practitioners Communicating Sustainable Consumption and Production. Conducted by webinar, each of these sessions will include a brief (approximately 25-minute presentation with slides and/or video) followed by a moderated online discussion. The aim is to strengthen the "A" perspective (meaning Action) that is part of the mission of both SCORAI and the KAN. Each webinar will begin at 3pm GMT* and will be recorded and subsequently accessible via the SCORAI and KAN websites.

All participants should register for one (or more!) of the sessions in this seminar series at <https://goo.gl/forms/znv8sk7gNZ12V6Eq1>. This process ensures that you will receive a link to access the webinar.

April 17: Shareable.net: The Case for Solutions Journalism as a Catalyst for Sustainable Consumption and Production

Neal Gorenflo, Executive Director, Shareable

This seminar will focus on Shareable's history and mission, its approach to news reporting on sustainable consumption, its impacts on readers and the movements they have catalyzed, its recent book entitled *Sharing Cities: Activating the Commons* (<https://www.shareable.net/sharing-cities>), and its top lessons from nearly ten years of reporting on sharing-based solutions to social isolation, overconsumption, and resource inequality.

May 15: Equity Considerations in Sustainable Urban Consumption and Production

Thomas G. Dallessio, AICP/PP/FRSA, President, CEO and Publisher, Next City

Cities and metropolitan regions are critical locations for consumption and production. Unfortunately, they are also often the places where inequity and injustice have limited the opportunities of lower-income residents and others who have been disadvantaged and marginalized. This webinar will use the lens of equity to explore the challenges and opportunities of sustainable urban consumption and production, and present new conceptual approaches and methodological tools through case studies and solutions-oriented journalism that challenge the historic patterns of inequality and seek to promote true sustainability.

June 12: Can Beauty Save the World?

John de Graaf, Independent Documentary Film Producer

Doug Tompkins, the environmentalist and founder of the Esprit and North Face clothing companies, thought that beauty could save the world. John de Graaf has been testing Tompkins' hypothesis with a new campaign called *And Beauty for All* (<http://www.andbeautyforall.org>). He will make the case that working for environmental restoration and community revitalization through a focus on beauty can reach beyond current polarization to create more just and sustainable, less-consumptive communities. He will share his new theory that the history of the United States is a "Bread and Roses cycle," roughly 30-year periods when the pendulum shifts between an emphasis on wealth, consumption, and economic growth to an emphasis on quality of life and greater sustainability. Join him for a provocative conversation (and a short film clip)!

*11pm Japan, 4pm Europe, 3pm UK/Ireland, 10am Eastern (US) Time Zone, 9am Central (US) Time Zone, 8am Mountain (US) Time Zone, and 7am Pacific (US) Time Zone. Participants in other time zones should use this information as a guide to determine the appropriate starting time in their own region.

Workshop on Communication for Sustainable Consumption

Copenhagen Business School, June 26, 2018

Workshop organizers: Daniel Fischer (daniel.fischer@uni.leuphana.de) and Philip Vergragt (pvergragt@gmail.com)

SCORAI-ers with an interest in communicating sustainable consumption are invited to apply for a workshop organized by the Working Group "WgCoCo"(Working Group on Communication for Sustainable Consumption and Production; a working group of the Future Earth (FE) Knowledge Action network (KAN) on Systems of Sustainable Consumption and Production (SSCP). This working group has produced a [Scoping Paper](#) that was first presented and discussed at a Community Forum on January 23, 2018, for a larger online audience. The proposed workshop is intended as a follow-up on these activities. Its aim is to discuss theoretical and practical issues around communicating for sustainable consumption and to generate concrete plans for follow-up research, campaigns and other actions, including policy proposals.

While the importance of consumption and production for achieving sustainable development is widely shared and accepted, communication scholars and practitioners have struggled with the generic and systemic nature of sustainable consumption that makes it a seemingly fuzzy concept to communicate. Communication about sustainable consumption is further complicated by dominant framings that tend to reduce it to mere technological challenges or concerns of individual behavioral change. Communicating that this cannot be, and that sustainability challenges comprise social issues like inequality just as much as environmental challenges, has proved to be elusive. Also, promoting sustainable lifestyles is often seen as promoting individual behavioral changes, with little attention for the wider systemic aspects of such behavioral change.

Another challenge in communicating sustainable consumption is that many grassroots initiatives and local, regional, and national policies use different headings such as smart cities, sustainable transportation, slow food, dematerialization, and the circular economy in their efforts to promote sustainable consumption. This variety of labels creates obstacles for communicating an overarching and integrative conception of sustainable consumption and lifestyles and stimulating deliberation and exchange across these often only loosely connected social innovation niches. Communication scholars and practitioners are thus challenged to find new ways and approaches to use the concept "sustainable consumption" as an umbrella term to create coherence between these initiatives.

If you are interested in participating please send an email to both organizers with your name, affiliation, experience, ideas, and motivation for this workshop. We intend to accommodate 10-15 people, including some members of the working group. We hope to attract new participants and expect some interest from SCORAI-ers already in Copenhagen for the SCORAI conference.

Final Call for Papers for Special Issue on Innovative Perspectives on Systems of Sustainable Consumption and Production

Sustainability: Science, Practice and Policy (SSPP) welcomes submissions for a special issue on "Innovative Perspectives on Systems of Sustainable Consumption and Production." Complex and diverse arrays of societal factors and institutions will in coming decades create requirements to reconfigure agro-food supply chains, implement renewable energy sources, and reinvent housing, modes of mobility, and lifestyles for the current century and beyond. These innovations will need to be formulated in ways that enhance global equity, reduce unequal access to resources, and enable all people on the planet to lead flourishing lives within biophysical constraints. Contributions to this special issue should seek to advance scientific and political perspectives and to cultivate transdisciplinary discussions involving researchers, policy makers,

entrepreneurs, and others. Especially encouraged are submissions which interrogate the deployment of both local experiments and system innovations that actuate a more sustainable future by empowering individuals and organizations and facilitating processes of social learning.

Manuscripts that contribute to framing debates or analytically investigating the issues outlined above should be submitted by **May 1, 2018** directly via the SSPP website at <https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/tsus20/current>. Questions can be directed to SSPP Editor Maurie Cohen at mcohen@njit.edu.

Shape Energy Sandpit in Turin Video Interview with SCORAI Europe Steering Group Member Audley Genus

Audley Genus, a member of the SCORAI Europe Steering Committee, recently attended an EU Horizon 2020-funded Shape Energy platform sandpit on the promotion of interdisciplinary energy-demand reduction and low carbon energy supply research and the integration of social science and humanities therein. Three delegates - including Audley - were interviewed and uploaded to the SHAPE ENERGY website. The interview can be viewed [here](#).

The sandpit included graphic reports of projects undertaken by delegates, drawn by professional artists. There was a graphic report (reproduced below) of the ENERGISE project, which is a collaboration between a number of SCORAI Europe colleagues and others, and which was represented at the sandpit by Audley.



Share Examples of Sustainable Living

Do you know of a great solution to advance sustainable consumption and sustainable ways of living? Are you involved in a sustainable lifestyles project or initiative?

I am inviting you to share examples of sustainable ways of living for a global project led by the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies and One Earth.

We welcome you to fill out this questionnaire by **Friday, April 27** (<https://envisioninglifestyles.org/sustainable-lifestyles-questionnaire/>)

Filling out the questionnaire gives a chance to present your solution in New York in July 2018 at a United Nations event or another international gathering later this year. In addition up to three submissions are being selected at random to receive a small grant of up to US\$2,000 for sustainable lifestyles activities.

What is the questionnaire looking for?

Solutions to how we live, move, consume, eat, relax, connect with each other, and spend our time. Your work may be focused on food, mobility, housing, consumer goods, leisure--or you may bring them together in a sustainable lifestyles initiatives.

These solutions are welcomed in every form such as:

- Initiatives
- Experiments
- Policies and instruments
- Frameworks and ideas
- Business models
- Community projects
- Art and education programmes
- And so on

Anyone is welcome to submit. Multiple and/or incomplete submissions are welcome. The questionnaire takes a little more than 30 minutes to complete. It's available in English, Chinese, French, Indonesian, Japanese, Portuguese, and Spanish.

Please feel free to distribute this notice widely. If using Facebook please share the post on the programme Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/Lifestyles10YFP>).

Further information can be found on the project [website](#). Please also see our [FAQ page](#).

Any questions please do not hesitate to contact the project lead Simon Gilby (gilby@iges.or.jp).

Degrowth: Igniting a Political Imagination of Joy

SCORAI-er Luis I. Prádanos was invited to share his expertise on degrowth with the Society for U.S. Intellectual History. Read his overview of the degrowth "imagination" below!

"Constant economic growth in the context of a limited biosphere is a biophysical impossibility that leads to biological annihilation. The faster growth-oriented societies appropriate planetary ecological space by expanding their economic metabolism, the faster the living systems of the planet collapse. It should not come as a surprise that a social system designed for constant expansion and growth becomes more entropic, necrotic, and carcinogenic over time.

The globalization of an economic culture that pursues growth as an ideal obeys a suicidal inclination. Actually, all existential problems faced by humanity today are caused or exacerbated by the ongoing globalization of an economic culture addicted to constant growth. The growth ideal justifies itself with a host of social promises. Constant growth destroys the ecological systems that support life on Earth while failing to keep those promises.

Our systemic addiction to growth also significantly damages our creative potential. By maintaining a dominant imaginary deeply ingrained in the logic of growth, societies' energy and creativity are

funneled toward a destructive task.

Degrowth aims to funnel that energy and creativity in a different direction. As its provocative name indicates, degrowth dares to challenge the dominant imaginary at its core by showing the many negative consequences of the growth paradigm. Despite its promises to the contrary, the growth paradigm's actual tendency is to impoverish most human communities while depleting the socioecological conditions needed for sustaining their future livelihoods."

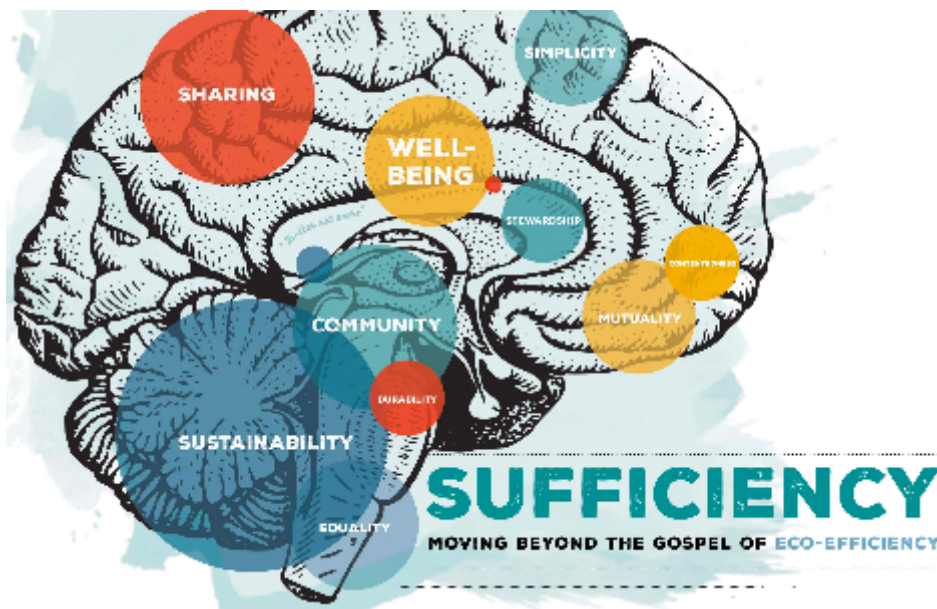
Continue reading [here](#).

New Booklet Announcement

"Sufficiency: Moving Beyond the Gospel of Eco-Efficiency"

Seven chapters written by sustainability and economics experts plus a foreword by Janez Potočnik (Co-chair of the International Resource Panel and former European Commissioner for the Environment) shed light on different angles of sufficiency and formulate concrete recommendations to EU policy makers. The booklet ends with a discussion of several eco-social policies that can start the transition towards an "economics of enough".

[Take a look!](#)



Call for Applications to the Academy of Change is Now Open

We are pleased to share with you that the call for applications for the Academy of Change is now open. The Academy of Change provides a unique professional development programme to help **NGO professionals active in sustainability and climate change to build their skills in enabling more sustainable behaviour within their target groups**. The Academy programme will support them in integrating evidence-based knowledge of behavioural insights into NGO strategies and projects, thereby becoming more strategic when reaching out to their target groups and generating greater impact with their activities and campaigns.

The programme is free of charge and includes strategic training, through both in-person workshops and webinars, networking opportunities and coaching sessions. The programme consists of 6 modules, starts in June 2018 and will run for 8 months. The content and facilitation of the programme will be delivered by the initiative partners, in combination with a line-up of high-level keynote speakers, academics and experts who will deliver insight throughout the modules. You can find more details about the Academy programme [here](#).

Due to the limited number of places in the Academy, the participants of the programme will be selected through an open application process to ensure a fair, transparent, and high-quality selection procedure. A group of 50 professionals working for NGOs across the world will be carefully selected. **Applications can be sent until 15 April 2018.**

Looking for new and insightful approaches to boost the impacts of your work and accelerate change in sustainable behaviours that really matter? Apply today!
Apply here! https://www.aochange.org/programme/#application_form



Academy of Change is a non-profit initiative of the Collaborating Centre on Sustainable Consumption and Production (CSCP) and Behaviour Change, funded by the KR Foundation.

Featured Publications

Czepkiewicz, M.; Ottelin, J.; Ala-Mantila, S.; Heinonen, J.; Hasanzadeh, K.; Kytä, M. 2018. "Urban structural and socioeconomic effects on local, national and international travel patterns and greenhouse gas emissions of young adults." *Journal of Transport Geography*, 68, 130-141.

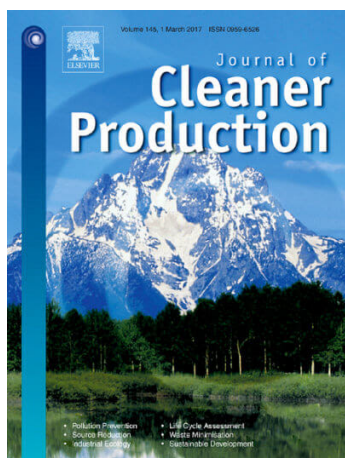
The inverse relationship between urban density and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions caused by driving is well established. However, at the same time the few existing studies have observed higher levels of long-distance travel and particularly air travel in the same densely built parts of urban regions. This may lead to GHG emissions reduction in local travel offset by the concomitant increase in long-distance travel. With this study we aim to identify the main factors involved in differences in local, national and long-distance travel patterns and the resulting GHG emissions, with a special focus on the role of the different urban zones in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area (HMA) in Finland. We used a softGIS survey to collect data on the personal travel of young adults living in HMA. SoftGIS methodology provides the opportunity to obtain detailed spatial data on participants' residential locations, travel destinations, and destination characteristics such as travel modes, frequencies and trip purposes. Special attention was paid to national and international trips, for which data were collected over 12 months, a period long enough to capture actual travel patterns. GHG emissions were assessed with a wide scope life cycle assessment (LCA) approach, including vehicles and infrastructure, and the results were

elaborated with a two-part regression model on participation in travel and amount of GHG emissions. The study found that the residential location was associated with travel emissions on all scales, and independently from major socioeconomic characteristics. Residents of centrally located and densely built urban zones have on average lower emissions from local travel but higher emissions from international travel than residents of car-oriented suburban zones, and the association holds true after controlling for income, education level and household type. Differences in emissions from local travel between most central and most suburban zones were almost completely offset by differences in emissions from international travel. International long-distance trips were a dominant source of travel-related GHG emissions in all urban zones, particularly due to plane flights.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0966692316305981>



Veleva, V. and G. Bodkin. 2018. "Corporate-Entrepreneur Collaborations to Advance a Circular Economy." *Journal of Cleaner Production*



This paper examines the role of small entrepreneurial companies and their partnerships with large corporations to advance the circular economy (CE). The authors provide insights from a U.S.-based empirical study that involved 12 companies and examined the emerging drivers, current challenges and future opportunities for advancing waste repurposing and product reuse. Many large companies fail to incorporate CE principles into their business strategy due to lack of mandates, costs, logistical hurdles and inertia. This presents an opportunity for entrepreneurial companies with innovative business models to fill the gap and provide critical links for corporations in reverse supply chains while creating new business opportunities with social benefits. The study found that despite the lack of federal regulations in the U.S. a growing number of corporations are partnering with entrepreneurs to reduce waste and advance product reuse. Key drivers for such trends include sustainability commitments and zero waste goals by companies and

municipalities, European Union and U.S. state mandates, reputation and the growing focus on local sourcing. Technology, knowledge, and strategic partnerships between entrepreneurs and corporations play a critical role in reducing financial costs, time, energy, environmental impacts and resources, thus helping establish viable business models. The authors propose a new framework for corporate-entrepreneur collaborations to advance a CE. The study contributes to the research on the relationship between entrepreneurial innovation and the development of CE principles within corporate supply chains, a field that is still in its infant stage.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652618308679>

Fitzgerald, J., Schor, J. and A. Jorgenson. 2018. "Working Hours and Carbon Dioxide Emissions in the United States, 2007-2013," *Social Forces*

The well-established association between economic output and carbon emissions has led researchers in sociology and related disciplines to study new approaches to climate change mitigation, including policies that stabilize or reduce GDP growth. Within this degrowth approach, working time reduction is a key policy lever to reduce emissions as well as protect employment. In the United States, the abdication of responsibility for mitigation by the federal government has led to the emergence of state climate leadership. This study is the first to analyze the relationship between emissions and working hours at the state level. Our findings suggest that over the 2007-2013 period, state-level carbon emissions and average working hours have a strong, positive relationship, which holds across a variety of model estimation techniques and net of various political, economic, and demographic drivers of emissions. We conclude that working time reduction may represent a multiple dividend policy, contributing to enhanced quality of life and lower unemployment as well as emissions mitigation.

<https://academic.oup.com/sf/advance-article/doi/10.1093/sf/soy014/4951469>

Fitzmaurice, C., Ladegaard, I., Attwood-Charles, W. Cansoy, M., Carfagna, L., Schor, J. & R. Wengronowitz. 2018. "Domesticating the market: moral exchange and the sharing economy," *Socio-Economic Review*



The "sharing economy" is a contested realm, with critics arguing it represents a further development of neoliberalism, as platforms such as Airbnb and TaskRabbit, monetize previously uncommodified realms of life via renting of bedrooms, possessions, space and labor time. To date, this debate has largely ignored participants' views. Using data from 120 in-depth interviews with providers in two for-profit and three not-for-profit sites, we find that most see the sharing economy differently, as an opportunity to build a radically different market, from the bottom up. Like the detractors, they are critical of dominant market arrangements, however, they believe the sharing sector can construct personalized exchanges that are morally attuned, based on ideals of community, and that help them achieve creative and financial autonomy in their working lives. These aspirations represent an attempt to tame, or domesticate the neoliberal market.

<https://academic.oup.com/ser/advance-article/doi/10.1093/ser/mwy003/4866062>

Fitzmaurice, C. & J. Schor. 2018. "Homemade Matters: Logics of Opposition in a Failed Food Swap" *Social Problems*

A rich literature on commensuration and standards of evaluation has yielded important findings on how items are valued. Over the course of a two-year ethnography, we witnessed one effort to create a new economic practice—a monthly swap of "homemade food"—start promisingly but ultimately fail as participants were unable to reach consensus on valuations. They rejected each other's offerings on numerous grounds, including proximity to industrial food, packaging, and excess "artisanal-ness" and alterity, forcing participants to "thread the needle" in search of acceptable qualities. Multiple or competing logics can be reconciled with clear institutional definitions, by using money, or via relational work. In our site, none of these mechanisms were operative. Instead, a multivalent alternative identity biased toward oppositional criteria impeded valuations and robust exchange. We believe this problem is common to a larger class of organizations that define themselves in opposition to the dominant market.

<http://academic.oup.com/socpro/advance-article/doi/10.1093/socpro/spx046/4795357>



New Publications in Sustainable Consumption Research (March 2018)

Chen, C.-C., Chen, C.-W., Tung, Y.-C. (2018)
Exploring the consumer behavior of intention to purchase green products in Belt and Road countries: An empirical analysis
Sustainability (Switzerland), 10 (3), art. no. 854.

Evans, D.M. (2018)
What is consumption, where has it been going, and does it still matter?
Sociological Review, Article in Press.

Ibrahim, H., Al-Ajlouni, M.M.Q. (2018)

Sustainable consumption: Insights from the protection motivation (PMT), deontic justice (DJT) and construal level (CLT) theories

Management Decision, Article in Press.

Jaca, C., Prieto-Sandoval, V., Psomas, E.L., Ormazabal, M. (2018)

What should consumer organizations do to drive environmental sustainability?

Journal of Cleaner Production, 181, pp. 201-208.

Janhonen-Abreuquah, H., Topp, J., Posti-Ahokas, H. (2018)

Educating professionals for sustainable futures

Sustainability (Switzerland), 10 (3), art. no. 592, .

Kraisornsuthasinee, S., Swierczek, F.W. (2018)

Beyond consumption: The promising contribution of voluntary simplicity

Social Responsibility Journal, 14 (1), pp. 80-95.

Lakatos, E.S., Cioca, L.-I., Dan, V., Ciomos, A.O., Crisan, O.A., Barsan, G. (2018)

Studies and investigation about the attitude towards sustainable production, consumption and waste generation in line with circular economy in Romania

Sustainability (Switzerland), 10 (3), art. no. 865, .

Lo, A.Y., Liu, S. (2018)

Towards sustainable consumption: A socio-economic analysis of household waste recycling outcomes in Hong Kong

Journal of Environmental Management, 214, pp. 416-425.

Nikolaou, I.E., Tsalis, T. (2018)

A framework to evaluate eco- and social-labels for designing a sustainability consumption label to measure strong sustainability impact of firms/products

Journal of Cleaner Production, 182, pp. 105-113.

Park, K.C. (2018)

Understanding ethical consumers: willingness-to-pay by moral cause

Journal of Consumer Marketing, 35 (2), pp. 157-168.

Russell, E., Lee, J., Clift, R. (2018)

Can the SDGs provide a basis for supply chain decisions in the construction sector?

Sustainability (Switzerland), 10 (3), art. no. 629, .

Schanes, K., Dobernig, K., Gözet, B. (2018)

Food waste matters - A systematic review of household food waste practices and their policy implications

Journal of Cleaner Production, 182, pp. 978-991.

Sippel, M., Meyer, D., Scholliers, N. (2018)

What about greenhouse gas emissions from students? An analysis of lifestyle and carbon footprints at the University of Applied Science in Konstanz, Germany

Carbon Management, pp. 1-11. Article in Press.

Szabó-Bódi, B., Kasza, G., Szakos, D. (2018)

Assessment of household food waste in Hungary

British Food Journal, 120 (3), pp. 625-638.



Upcoming Conferences



[More information here!](#)



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION of GEOGRAPHERS ANNUAL MEETING

AAG 2018 CFP: Dwelling on Energy: Exploring Social and Cultural Influences on Domestic Energy Use in International Contexts

Association of American Geographers (AAG) Annual Meeting,
New Orleans, 10-14, April 2018

Session Organizers:
Gary Goggins and Frances Fahy,
Geography, National University of Ireland, Galway

Reducing residential energy use and related CO₂ emissions is a key policy focus across many developed countries. Yet, despite ongoing efforts, prevailing market-based and technological focused approaches have had limited success in bringing about long-term reductions in domestic energy use. Without adequate consideration for the social, cultural and contextual influences on residential energy use, it is highly unlikely that dominant efficiency-driven approaches will deliver the necessary reductions in energy demand. Social-scientific approaches will need to play a key role if sustainable energy transitions at the household level are to be successful. Social practice theory, for example, has been increasingly utilized by geographers to demonstrate that household energy use varies among different socio-demographic groups, and across cultures and contexts. But, despite gaining traction in some academic circles, complex social-scientific approaches have had limited impact on non-academic stakeholders and public policy, not least because of the difficulty in translating findings into concrete policy recommendations.

This session will advance social-scientific debate through theoretical development and empirical investigation related to the social and cultural influences on household energy use. We are particularly interested in papers that deal with cross-cultural variations in household energy use. Papers may include, but are not limited to, topics such as:

- Comparing and contrasting energy use across cultural contexts
- The role of government and intermediary actors in influencing routine energy use
- Innovative energy reduction initiatives at the household or community level (including Living Lab approaches)
- International case studies which reflect the drivers of individual and collective energy choices and energy-related practices
- Socio-technical innovations and cultural influences

Ultimately, this session aims to bring together papers that offer international insights that explore the significance of socio-cultural perspectives and practices involved with transitions to a low-

carbon society and future. We welcome theoretical and empirical contributions from a broad geographical spread. More [here](#).



June 11 - 13, 2018
Annapolis, Maryland, USA

The National Socio-Environmental Synthesis Center (SESYNC) in partnership with the National Science Foundation (NSF), Resources for the Future (RFF), and University of Maryland (UMD) is convening an international symposium to bring together leaders, emerging scholars, and other key individuals interested in innovating research and processes for solving socio-environmental problems.

The symposium will explore the current state of socio-environmental systems research, recent advances in the field, and the unique challenges and opportunities engendered by the questions and approaches of socio-environmental systems research. In addition, the symposium will catalyze and inspire new collaborative and interdisciplinary communities of research and practice. More info [here](#).



More [here](#).



THE VELUX FOUNDATIONS
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Third International Conference of the Sustainable Consumption Research and Action Initiative (SCORAI)

"Sustainable Consumption: Fostering Good Practices and Confronting the Challenges of the 21st Century"

June 27-30 2018

See [here](#) for complete information. We look forward to seeing you there!



This XIX ISA World Congress of Sociology will focus on how scholars, public intellectuals, policy makers, journalists and activists from diverse fields can and do contribute to our understanding of power, violence and justice.

Although the scientific consensus on causes and implication of global warming is well established, the climate crisis has provoked three distinct political-economic projects, rooted in differing class fractions and social interests, which currently vie for hegemony at different levels and regions of the world-system. Carbon capitalism is a project of 'business as usual' (in the Stern report's terminology), with efficiency improvements (and possible sunseting of coal) but no major changes to the political ecology of contemporary capitalism. Climate capitalism proposes the ecological modernization of the energy base of capitalism, by redirecting flows of capital away from fossil fuels, and toward more climatically benign sources of energy including hydropower, solar, wind and nuclear. The first two projects are capital-centric: they leave the class structure of capitalism untouched, including the concentration of economic power in the hands of a relatively small group of major investors, executives and corporate directors. In contrast, energy democracy finds its social base in environmental and other progressive movements, including sections of the labour movement. It mandates a dual power shift, from fossil-fuel power to renewables (decarbonization) and from corporate oligarchy to public, democratic control of economic decisions (democratization). This session welcomes papers

exploring the sociology of these projects, singly or in combination, especially analyses that foreground issues of political economy and political ecology. For more information on this session see [here](#).



The 2016 Paris Climate Agreement heralded unprecedented international consensus on the need to transition from fossil fuels within the next few decades. The uneven responses from state, corporate, and civil actors across the world clearly signify the challenges - and opportunities - that lie ahead. On the one hand, they demonstrate the enduring power of oil and gas as the industry seeks to adapt to the post-Paris world in various ways - exploration, expansion, technical development, political and media management. On the other, the responses have inaugurated a range of efforts to break free from the 'lock-in' of the fossil-fuel system and realize a host of potential alternative scenarios. Any initiatives towards future 'sustainability', meanwhile, are contextualized by intensifying claims to energy security, sitting uneasily alongside the reality of rising global energy demand.

Petrocultures is motivated by the core notion that the humanities and social sciences have significant input to add to both knowledge of oil and energy and the irrevocable process of transformation. The international field has grown rapidly since the inaugural conference in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada in 2012, producing scholarly and creative work across numerous platforms, disciplines, genres, and territories. While much work has been done to highlight the social and cultural significance of fossil fuels, the ecological unfeasibility of high-carbon life urgently compels us to think, imagine and realize a world 'after oil'. The organising theme of Petrocultures 2018 is Transition. We anticipate its cultural interpretation in a variety of ways. The conference will provide an important forum for examining and extending existent framings and sitings of oil and petroculture, while also striving to consider the social, cultural, and aesthetic life of alternative forms of energy, such as wind, solar, and hydro power.

Petrocultures 2018 will bring together scholars, policy-makers, industry employees, artists, and public advocacy groups from across Europe, North America, and beyond.

We seek proposals for papers, workshops, and special panels that address themes related to transition and/or petrocultures more generally. Papers and panels can be academic, creative, or any combination of the two. We are open to suggestions for other formats. We ask that paper proposals be no more than 200 words in length, and that panel proposals have a 200-word description of the topic along with a list of paper titles. All submissions must include a 100-word biographical statement for each presenter. Please send proposals as soon as possible, but no later than **February 2nd, 2018**.

Please send proposals and biographical info as soon as possible, but no later than February 2nd, 2018 to petrocultures2018@gmail.com

More info [here](#).

Summary of the IPCC Conference Continued

- Consumption-based emission accounting. As I reported to the SCORAI listserv on March 12th, the influential organization C40 held a press conference to draw attention to its just released report "Consumption-Based GHG Emissions of C40 Cities (<http://www.c40.org/researches/consumption-based-emissions>). The C40 report documents the fact that among the member cities of the organization (which currently number 79) emissions calculated on the basis of consumption are much greater than sector-based emissions which have been traditionally tracked by cities and regions. This form of accounting also reveals emissions associated with specific dimensions of lifestyles. Consumption-based emission accounting is not new within the research community, and has been deployed by some cities as well as the State of Oregon in the United States. But having C40 advocate for using them as an input into policy-making is a major step toward highlighting the need to focus on lifestyles and consumption in the climate debate.
- Uptake of consumption based emission accounting among smaller cities around the world will take time. In a conference breakout session on harmonizing the methodologies for estimating GHG emissions no mention of CBEI was made. All the speakers used the traditional sectoral approach that has been until now officially sanctioned by IPCC. And Debra Roberts, a co-chairwoman of IPCC noted in the press comment that "using consumption-based emissions is "revolutionary" although still "on the periphery" ([see Reuters article](#)).
- The message from CBEI. There is always a risk that the take-home message from CBEI will get oversimplified. Smarter shopping, reducing waste, and buying local may seem like the solution, as noted by some proponents of CBEI in comments to the press ([see KUOW report here](#)).
- Taking action. Talking about consumption and praising CBEI as a policy tool is the first step, but doing something about it is another matter. I did not get the impression that the plenary speakers who talked about consumption had given much thought to possible actions. But if consumption-based reporting of GHG emissions becomes commonplace among cities, this will require a major shift in policy priorities. How to devise strategies to reduce consumption of materials and services, which will most likely emerge as top contributors to emissions from households? How to shift the culture and macroeconomy of consumption toward sufficiency in the wealthy societies? How to slow down the push by the private sector toward consumerist culture in developing economies? This is an opportunity for the SCORAI community: to be ready with the academic and practical knowledge base necessary for developing policies, pilots, and social innovations. The upcoming June SCORAI conference in Copenhagen will be an excellent platform for discussing these issues.
- Consumption and IPCC. The IPCC is presently not well prepared for generating the needed knowledge for planning more sustainable cities. The statement of conference goals reveals the internal contradictions within the organization. On one hand, it emphasizes in the strongest terms the exclusive preference for drawing on high-ranking peer-reviewed publications. On the other hand, the IPCC seeks to stimulate co-production of knowledge among academics, practitioners, and urban policy makers. The organization would benefit from closer ties with networks such as SCORAI and the KAN on SSCP. I am not optimistic that this will happen in the near future.
- The Youth. One of the highlights of the conference was an international panel of high-school students who came to convey their concern about climate change and their determination to contribute to its abatement. The students were received with great enthusiasm but the discussion with them revealed a complete lack of understanding of how lifestyles contribute to GHG emissions. When asked by a member of the audience to imagine their adult lives

with small GHG emissions, the response was about recycling waste and reusing shopping bags. Clearly, the educators who stimulate these students' learning do not know much about the topic. This is another opportunity for the SCORAI community.

- Reality check. Our session on consumption was very well attended. Anecdotal reactions were very positive, including "the best session of the conference." It appeared that the participants were largely new to this topic. It was a reality check: the body of knowledge that SCORAI-ers takes for granted is not shared by most people within the climate change community.

New SCORAI Affiliates

A warm welcome to the following new SCORAI affiliates joining us during the past month, bringing our total membership to 984 individuals:

Brittany Bloodhart
Peter Cserne
Hannah Danner
Jared Fitzgerald
Pascal Frank
Anja Grubic
Matteo Lascialfari
Alexia Legrand
Katharina Manderscheid
Vishal Parekh
Coralie Robert
Taylor Cass Talbott
Maria Thorson

Sustainable Consumption Research and Action Initiative (SCORAI), c/o Program in Science, Technology, and Society, Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, Newark, NJ 08540

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