



Dear Reader,

A couple of weeks ago, we had the second annual event of the Virtual Community, in Wrocław, Poland, in connection with the annual IAREP conference. This event was smaller than our inaugural event in Exeter last year, but still a very satisfying experience, with three symposia devoted specifically to sustainability & consumption issues and an annual members meeting. The three symposia covered a broad range of issues, focusing primarily on understanding why people do or don't make sustainable consumer choices, in Eastern and Western European as well as North American contexts. As a participant, I felt illuminated and stimulated. If I should mention one thing that I especially hope to see more of at future event, that would be studies testing interventions that might help foster more sustainable consumption, in the near and long term. Minutes from the annual meeting can be read below. I just want to repeat here that the next annual meeting of the VC will be at the environmental psychology conference 22-25 September 2013 in Magdeburg.

Best,  
John

## NEWS

### Minutes from the Annual Meeting of the Virtual Community on Sustainability & Consumption @ IAREP 2012 in Wrocław, 6 September 2012

In regards to the VC and its activities during its first year of existence, John Thøgersen (JT) gave a brief status. At the end of August there were 71 members of the community. JT urged all members to spread the word about the VC to other scholars and PhD students working on or being interested in Sustainability & Consumption and to encourage them to sign up. Most of the activities mentioned at the inaugural meeting have been carried out or started in the first year, at least at an initial basis.

- > The VC has a running **website**, hosted by Aarhus University and a monthly newsletter.
- > The first virtual (or hybrid) VC seminar was carried out in October 2011 and a video of the presentation can be **watched** at the VC website.
- > In July 2012 the VC carried out a successful doctoral course/**summer school** with 50 participating PhD students and 10 teachers at Aarhus University. However, there still hasn't been new research project or applications than can be specifically attributed to the VC, and the virtual platform still does not contain sufficient facilities for interaction between members.

There was a good and open discussion about how and what can be improved to make the VC more valuable. The discussion was more a brainstorming than a planning exercise. Some of the proposals were:

- > We should develop an online facility to share project ideas with the community with the purpose of inviting feedback and collaboration (e.g. write 1 page about a project – post it – get feedback – find collaborators)
- > We should develop an online facility to express interest in new, e.g. European, projects, for people who want to make an application and are looking for partners, or for people who want to be partner if somebody else are applying for funding for larger projects. Might link into "research-dating" platforms that the EU and others are already running. (An EU platform was mentioned that has already been implemented and will start running soon.)
- > We should also have a space where we can invite people to collaborate on data one already has, and has reported in publications, but where others may see additional opportunities for interesting papers.
- > We should agree upon and announce research priorities for the near future.
- > We should have a place/section for mini CVs – to enable conversations and to introduce ourselves to others in the community; on the VC's website or on a dedicated social network site, such as LinkedIn. In any case, members expressed their interest in being able to see who else is a member.
- > We should have a forum specifically for PhD students – a network where they can post information, like conferences they are attending, Q&A etc (Wencke Gwozdz [WG] mentioned that something similar is running at CBS and she would be happy to establish a contact, if advice is needed)
- > Perhaps the newsletter could be made more interactive – for example with links to places where people can comment or make recommendations. Perhaps a blog would be better than a newsletter?
- > The VC contains groups of members from different research groups. These research groups should take turns on being responsible for the editorial content of the newsletter, and report about their ongoing research activities with relevance for the community when they hold the torch.
- > We should add a more active international management group to the organizational structure.

It was made clear at the meeting that not all of these suggestions will necessarily be realized, but they definitely contain good and constructive ideas for making the VC more valuable and it seems realistic that several of them can be borne out during the next year.

The next year, we will work on improving the virtual platform and realize several of the ideas mentioned above. There was also general support for the proposal by JT that we should add a more active international management group to the organizational structure. The method for organizing an annual event was discussed, as well as what the meeting would consist of. The general sentiment was that we should continue the format with "piggy-bagging" on an existing conference, but shift between conferences to make participation sometimes more attractive to different people. A number of options for next year's annual event were discussed. There was most support expressed, not least from PhD students, for having the annual event in connection with the environmental psychology conference 22-25 September 2013 in Magdeburg, Germany. Several board members have also proposed that option and the head of the organizing committee (and member of the VC's board), Professor Ellen Matthies, has kindly invited us to do so. For these reasons, the management group has after the meeting decided to accept Ellen's invitation with thanks. So, we can already now announce that the next annual meeting of the VC will be at the **environmental psychology conference 22-25 September 2013 in Magdeburg**.

### An open community for discussing sustainable lifestyles

SPREAD Sustainable Lifestyles 2050 is a European social platform project developing a vision for sustainable lifestyles in 2050. This is an open online community platform for affiliated organizations, experts and citizens wishing to participate in envisioning a low carbon future. The project is implemented by consortium coordinated by the CSCP. [Read more](#)

### SWITCH-Asia programme

The regional environment programme SWITCH-Asia is aiming to promote the adoption of Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) among Small and Medium sized Enterprises and consumer groups in Asia. To achieve this objective, the Programme works simultaneously on the ground, with producers and consumers, and at the level of policy-making through supporting for formulation and implementation of SCP-related policies. It started in 2007 with a budget of €152 million for the period 2007-2013. [Read more](#)

## FROM THE GRAPEVINE

### Livia Marian awarded the prize for Best Student Paper at the IAREP 2012 conference

At the recent IAREP conference in Wrocław, Poland, PhD student and member of the VC Livia Marian was awarded the prize for Best Student Paper for her paper (with John Thøgersen), "Direct and Mediated Impacts of Product and Process Characteristics on Consumers' Choice of Organic vs. Conventional Chicken." This prize is generously sponsored by Elsevier Scientific, the publisher of the Journal of Economic Psychology. The winner of the Elsevier/IAREP Best Student Paper Competition receives a year's subscription to the Journal of Economic Psychology and 1000 Euro. The paper was presented in one of the Sustainability & Consumption sessions organized by the VC.

## CALLS

### Special Issue on Psychological and Behavioral Aspects of Sustainability

Special Issue on Psychological and Behavioral Aspects of Sustainability invites scholars to submit theoretical, empirical, and application oriented manuscripts addressing existing or potential contributions of Psychology to the Sustainability Sciences. Deadline for manuscript submissions is January 31, 2013. [Find more information](#) on the website of *Sustainability* journal.

## NEW PUBLICATIONS

- > Klöckner, C. A., & Matthies, E. (2012). Two pieces of the same puzzle? Script-based car choice habits between the influence of socialization and past behavior. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 42, 793-821.
- > Noblet, C. L., Anderson, M., & Teisl, M. F. (In press). An empirical test of anchoring the NEP scale in environmental ethics. *Environmental Education Research*.
- > Steg, L., Perlaviciute, G., van der Werff, E., & Lurvink, J. (In press). The significance of hedonic values for environmentally relevant attitudes, preferences, and actions. *Environment and Behavior*.
- > Thøgersen, J., & Noblet, C. L. (In press). Does green consumerism increase the acceptance of windpower? *Energy Policy*.

## EVENTS

- |                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| 19-23 September | 3rd International Conference on Degrowth for Ecological Sustainability and Social Equity (Venice, Italy)  |
| 15-19 October   | After Rio+20: Moving Beyond 2015 (Ramapo College, Mahwah, NJ, USA)  |
| 12-14 November  | Sustainable Innovation 2012: Resource Efficiency, Innovation and Lifestyles (Alanus University, Bonn, Germany)                                      |
| 14-18 November  | Behavior, Energy and Climate Change Conference (Hyatt Regency Hotel, Sacramento, California, USA)   |
| 22-23 November  | Boundaries of Consumption: Critical Perspectives on Race, Class, Gender, Citizenship and Space in Changing Markets (San Francisco, California, USA) |
| 29-30 October   | ICICI 2012 Sustainability & Innovation (Friedrichshafen, Germany)   |
| 22-24 November  | Workshop: Responsible Supply Chains and Networks: Challenges for Governance and Sustainability (Stockholm, Sweden)                                  |

> For information about later events, [visit our website](#)

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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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