



Dear reader

Summer is here – in the Northern hemisphere :) – hopefully giving you all some much deserved time to focus on important issues, and to relax and recharge. In this issue of the newsletter, we offer you some reading for the summer. You can learn about the important Sustainability & Consumption research at the University of Maine. We also feature the first ‘paper of the month’, as advertised in the May issue – see below which paper was first! And not least, we list a handful of new publications from members of our community. The newsletter also features the 3rd SmartGrid ERA-Net call, an interesting funding possibility for joint research. For already completed research, we have links a couple of calls regarding special issues that might be relevant outlets for some of you.

Best summer wishes.

John

NEWS

New OECD report on how households can green their behaviour

Greening Household Behaviour focuses on five areas where households exert pressure on the environment: energy and water use, transport, food consumption and waste generation. The report reports a survey on attitudes to the environment and ways governments can help people reduce their impact. It finds important differences across the eleven countries surveyed: Australia, Canada, Chile, France, Israel, Japan, Korea, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland. The survey highlights the importance of providing the right economic incentives for influencing our decisions. ‘Soft’ measures such as labeling and public information campaigns also have a significant role to play. Spurring desirable behaviour change requires a mix of these instruments.

[Read more](#)

Sustainia100

A new sustainability guide, Sustainia 100, uncovers how emerging economies are leapfrogging green innovation by deploying state-of-the-art solutions and technologies. The international institute Sustainia is behind the new guide that identifies the 100 most impactful solutions in sustainability.

[Read more](#) or download the guide [here](#)

Global Food Security 2013 - 2014

The House of Commons International Development Committee has published a report on global food security. Issues around the changes in the supply and demand of food at a local and global scale are discussed and calls for food wastage to be reduced, nutrition programmes expanded and a revision of agriculturally derived biofuels are some of the recommendations made.

Download the report [here](#)

Environment and human health Report No 5/2013

This report, produced jointly by the European Environment Agency (EEA) and the European Commission’s Joint Research Centre (JRC), outlines a number of environmental issues with a direct influence on people’s health and well-being and is a follow-up and update to the 2005 EEA/JRC report.

It makes the case for a more integrated take on health issues, acknowledging the complex inter-linkages between resource-use patterns, environmental pressures, multiple exposures and disease burden, as well as the key role that social inequalities play.

It also touches upon emerging issues resulting from long-term environmental and socio-economic trends, such as climate change, lifestyle and consumption changes and the rapid uptake and application of new chemicals and technologies.

Download the report [here](#)

SC AT SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS (SOE), UNIVERSITY OF MAINE

SOE (<http://umaine.edu/soe/>) is mostly composed of economists; however, we embrace interdisciplinary research. For example, we also include faculty in environmental law, social psychology, engineering policy and human-ecology, and most of us work with other disciplines and with stakeholders to generate information to solve problems. Our projects primarily focus on explaining individual choice behavior that has impacts on sustainability, although recently we have branched out into examining institutional choices as well. Much of the funding for the projects is provided by the Maine Sustainability Solutions Initiative, National Science Foundation Grant EPS-0904155 to Maine EPSCoR at UMaine. Other major funding comes from the Maine Agriculture and Forest Experiment Station. Researchers (all in SOE unless designated otherwise) involved are: *Mark Anderson (MA)*; *Kathleen P. Bell (KB)*; *Aram Calhoun (AC)*, *Dept. of Wildlife Ecology*; *Stacia Dreyer (SD)*; *Michelle Johnson (MJ)*; *Sharon Klein (SK)*; *Vanessa Levesque (VL)*; *Shannon McCoy (SMc)*, *Dept. of Psychology*; *Julia McGuire (JM)*; *Caroline Noblet (CN)*; *Sarah Morehead (SM)*; *David Owen (DO)*, *UMaine Law School*; and *Mario Teisl (MT)*.

Individual decision making

Influencing driving behavior SD, SMc, CN, MT, with *J. Thøgersen, Aarhus University, Denmark*. In this project we use survey data to explore how merging different theories from both economics and psychology can help us better understand what motivates people to restrict the amount they drive and/or change transportation modes.

Consumer acceptance of biofuels CN, MT

Wood-derived ethanol has a better carbon footprint than traditional fuel and corn-based ethanol and its production does not lead to higher food prices; however, its production may lead to: deterioration in forest management, localized pollution from biorefineries, or development of transportation fuels with inferior characteristics. Here we study people’s level of knowledge, perceptions, willingness to accept and use biofuels, and to identify the factors that may constrain consumers from purchasing biofuels.

Explaining green food purchasing MT

with *D.Bougherara & S.Costa, Supagro-INRA, France*

Firms may voluntarily abate pollution using one of two options: internalizing their own external effects and incurring abatement costs or delegating environmental protection by purchasing offsets. Using a stated-choice experiment in a survey, we elicit French milk consumers’ values for these two options controlling for other effects. We also use other parts of the survey to examine the motivating factors explaining French consumers’ organic food-buying behavior. Primary factors under study include the consumer’s level of environmental concern, perception that buying behavior is effective in supporting environmental improvements (the assurance problem), environmental free-ridership, environmental warm-glow, and level of sociality.

Solar power SK

Although several studies have examined the viability of solar water heating (SWH) to displace natural gas and electricity, there is a lack of data on its ability to displace fuel oil and propane. This project aims to fill this information gap and analyze the economic feasibility of distributed SWH in Maine. The results will be used to develop sustainability metrics that takes into account financial, social and environmental costs and benefits; these metrics can then be used in labeling and marketing programs.

Explaining support for renewable energy development MA, SMc, CN, MT

Studies show that judgments about a product are not made in a vacuum and consumers’ motivations for purchasing new technologies is best assessed in relation to existing technologies. We investigate consumers’ attitudes and beliefs toward, and willingness to pay for offshore wind energy, land-based wind energy, tidal power or hydroelectricity (a main stream technology). Additionally, we investigate consumer support for renewable energy production in relation to energy efficiency investments. We also examine whether one’s perception of their own income may serve as a better predictor of behavior than actual income. People’s general acceptance of institutions and policies to allow, or support, offshore energy projects by developing a better understanding of people’s evaluations of the benefits and costs of the projects are also studied.

Promotion of recycling CN, MT

One way to reduce pressure on landfills is to increase the amount of waste recycled. Maine has a goal to reach a 50 percent solid waste recycling rate; however, the rate is still significantly shy of this goal and, despite the presence of several policy initiatives, over 20 percent of the waste stream is still recyclable. Because people respond differently to recycling appeals, understanding what factors drive people to voluntarily recycle is useful for policy-makers. We measure the effect of internal and external motivators on recycling behavior, providing waste managers a better understanding of the relative effectiveness of several policies.

Visioning the future MA, KB, MJ, SM, CN, MT

Sustainability requires current generations include the wants and needs of future generations in current decision making; the dilemma of course is that these future generations cannot be asked about their wants and needs. We examine several options to see if current generations can be made to think more thoughtfully about the future.

In the first project, we note that people have tendency to underestimate the need for financial planning for their own future (retirement savings). However, recent research suggests that virtual interactions with a computer-rendered version of an older-self, made subjects choose to make future-oriented choices in subsequent financial questioning. Reducing psychological distances may improve decisions made about the future. We examine alternative ways of reducing psychological distance in monetary planning.

In the second, we examine how scenarios of future conditions can be improved to engage with the public in envisioning and planning for the future. Research examining how scenarios of landscape change affects individuals’ views of their community and region has the potential to improve land use planning choices. At present, methods for scenario evaluation are in early stages of development; scenario evaluation is needed to understand how the public relates to scenarios of environmental change. We examine how geographic scale and individuals’ existing sense of place affect how individuals evaluate the relevance of scenarios about the future.

Finally, we examine the feasibility of using retrospective assessment (RA) as a way to help people think about how future generations would respond to the bequest package we leave for them. What RA offers is a model for how to use thinking about the past to learn how to better think about the future. The idea of RA is to ask people to think about the bequests of previous generations to make them more aware of potential implications of current actions on the future.

Social norms and participation in lake water quality management KB

Managers, policymakers, non-government organizations and community groups are increasingly relying on landowner participation to bolster lake management efforts. This project develops and tests an economic psychology model of household decisions to adopt pro-environmental behaviors (conservation practices to reduce storm water pollution) by investigating the roles of social norms, positional status and additional social-psychological determinants. We examine both past and intended future behaviors using data from a mixed-mode survey of Maine lakefront property owners.

The role of motivation in sustainability behavior SMc, CN

Individuals who take similar pro-environment actions may be motivated by entirely different norm sets: personal norms or societal norms. Individuals may seek information about appropriate behavior from others without incorporating any environmental beliefs into their personal norms. We have introduced a measure of intrinsic and extrinsic environmental motivation and begun to test its impact on: public sphere behavior (ex: willingness to support renewable energy development), and individual choices (ex: willingness to pay). We also seek to examine the scale itself to best determine the interactions between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Additionally, we test whether intrinsic and extrinsic norms may moderate framing effects, or licensing effects. We also examine factors which may contribute to differing levels of intrinsic and extrinsic environmental motivation including exposure to the natural environment through recreational habits.

Licensing and Spillover effects SMc, CN

Do individuals who may have done a ‘good deed’ towards the environment feel released, or licensed, from further responsibility to act in pro-environmental ways? Or does this initial positive action yield, or spillover into, additional pro-environmental behavior? Our previous work has found evidence of spillover effects, and we are now collecting survey data to further investigate these relationships.

Institutional decision making

Decision making in energy science SK

New energy technologies are increasingly important as a means to stabilize and reduce the concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. States differ in how quickly they adopt these alternative energy systems, the differences across states cannot be explained by resource availability alone but social and political factors may play an important role. Previous studies focus on social adoption of technology after the science has been produced. Here we examine how social and political variables influence stakeholder decisions in the production of alternative energy research and technology.

The role of policy networks in municipal choices KB, AC, VL, DO

Policy networks (multiple agencies working together) are theorized to have multiple benefits for addressing complex public problems: e.g., creating more innovative policy solutions, and promoting collaboration, information sharing, and dialogue across multi-level governance efforts. But policy networks have transaction costs which need to be considered to understand why networks form and how they function in complex policy choice settings. We study a collaborative process to develop a market-based, locally-tailored policy to encourage development in identified growth zones while protecting vernal pools in rural zones. This project examines the formation, structure and composition, and transaction costs of the network and the role it plays in policy choices.

Food market as network systems JM

Understanding how social networks support growth, success and stability of community supported agriculture (CSA) and farmers-market networks might provide lessons for sustainability science and food systems dynamics. CSAs have shareholders that opt into the network by paying money in return for produce; CSAs spread through economic or quasi-economic interactions via local and personal contacts. Farmers markets are more inclusive with open networks of producers and consumers. Each institution has a different business strategy and a different social network structure. We study whether the success of CSAs and farmers markets depend on a socially transmitted preference for alternative food options.

CALLS

Call for Papers: International Centre for Anti-Consumption Research (ICAR) symposium, Journal of Consumer Affairs, Special Issue.

The Journal of Consumer Affairs special issue solicits papers that explore the relationship between anti-consumption and consumer interests and wellbeing. Expressions of interest and inquiries can be directed to special issue editors Mike Lee ([maw.lee@aukland.ac.nz](mailto:maw.lee@aukland.ac.nz)) or Stefan Hoffmann ([stefan.hoffmann@bwl.uni-kiel.de](mailto:stefan.hoffmann@bwl.uni-kiel.de)), or to JCA editor Sharon Tennyson ([jca@cornell.edu](mailto:jca@cornell.edu)).

More information about anti-consumption and ICAR can be found by visiting [www.icar2014.org](http://www.icar2014.org) and [www.icar.auckland.ac.nz](http://www.icar.auckland.ac.nz).

The SmartGrids ERA-Net launches a new call for applied research projects

Focus areas of the 3rd SmartGrids ERA-Net call are:  
· Efficient operation of active distribution networks;  
· Smart retail and consumer technologies and services, including smart metering hereunder costs & benefits, customer aspects, user behaviour, and flexible demand and energy management strategies in an energy market environment;  
· Information and communication technology (ICT) tools for smart grids;  
· Interface between the grid and the end-users, including aspects related to security, privacy, regulation and business cases;  
· Storage and balancing.

Deadline for submitting pre-proposals is 2 September 2013, 17:00 CET.

More information can be found in the published call text, and on the [SmartGrids ERA-Net website](http://SmartGrids.ERA-Net.org).

The social psychology of climate change

A special issue of the *European Journal of Social Psychology*

This special issue aims to showcase the breadth and depth of social psychological approaches to climate change. We seek empirical contributions that present theoretical perspectives and data on social psychological aspects of climate change.

Contributions should be submitted electronically via <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/ejsp>. For further information about the special issue please contact: Kelly Fielding at [k.fielding@uq.edu.au](mailto:k.fielding@uq.edu.au).

PAPER OF THE MONTH

nominated by *Lucia Reisch, CBS, Denmark*:

Kinzig, A. P., Ehrlich, P. R., Alston, L. J., Arrow, K., Barrett, S., Buchman, T. G., . . . Saari, D. (2013). Social Norms and Global Environmental Challenges: The Complex Interaction of Behaviors, Values, and Policy. *BioScience*, 63(3), 164-175.

Abstract:  
Government policies are needed when people’s behaviors fail to deliver the public good. Those policies will be most effective if they can stimulate long-term changes in beliefs and norms, creating and reinforcing the behaviors needed to solidify and extend the public good. It is often the short-term acceptability of potential policies, rather than their longer-term efficacy, that determines their scope and deployment. The policy process should include a consideration of both timescales. The academy, however, has provided insufficient insight on the co-evolution of social norms and different policy instruments, thus compromising the ability of decisionmakers to craft effective solutions to the society’s most intractable environmental problems. Life scientists could make fundamental contributions to this agenda through targeted research on the emergence of social norms.

PUBLICATIONS

Aschemann-Witzel, Jessica; Maroscheck, Nicole; Hamm, Ulrich (2013). Are organic consumers preferring or avoiding foods with nutrition and health claims? *Food Quality and Preference*, 30, 68-76.

Gwozdz, W., Sousa-Poza, A., Reisch, L. De Henauw, S., Eiben, G., Fernandez, J., Hadjiigeorgiou, C., Kovács, E., Lauria, F., Veidebaum, T., Williams, G., Ahrens, W., & Bammann, K. (2013). Maternal employment and its effects on obesity. *Journal of Health Economics*. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jhealeco.2013.04.003> (forthcoming)

Rahbek Pedersen, E. & Gwozdz, W. (2013). From Resistance to Opportunity-Seeking: Strategic Responses to Institutional Pressures for Corporate Social Responsibility in the Nordic Fashion Industry. *Journal of Business Ethics*, (forthcoming) <http://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007%2Fs10551-013-1630-5.pdf>

Keizer, K., Lindenberg, S., & Steg, L. (2013). The Importance of Demonstratively Restoring Order. *PLOS ONE*, 8(6), e65137.

Kubiszewski, I., Costanza, R., Franco, C., Lawn, P., Talberth, J., Jackson, T., & Aylmer, C. (2013). Beyond GDP: Measuring and achieving global genuine progress. *Ecological Economics*, 93, 57-68.

EVENTS

18 - 21 June 10th International conference (ESEE 2013) on Ecological Economics and Institutional Dynamics

19 - 21 June 4th IST Conference

1- 3 July 19th annual International Sustainable Development Research Conference (ISDR19)

4 - 5 July 5thICAR symposium

27 July - 18 August GESA 2013: the third Global Environments Summer Academy on Socio-ecological Interactions in a Dynamic World

22 - 25 September 10th Biennial Conference on Environmental Psychology

22 - 27 September 8th Conference on Sustainable Development of Energy, Water and Environment Systems

[Read more](#)

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