

International scientific conference

Sustainable Consumption – Towards Action and Impact

November 6th - 8th 2011

Hamburg – European Green Capital 2011, Germany

Call for Papers

Keynote Speakers (confirmed)

Elizabeth Shove, Lancaster University, UK

Kate Soper, London Metropolitan University, UK

Alan Warde, University of Manchester, UK

In modern societies, private consumption is a multifaceted and ambivalent phenomenon: it is a ubiquitous social practice and an economic driving force, yet at the same time, its consequences are in conflict with important social and environmental sustainability goals. Finding paths towards “sustainable consumption” has therefore become a major political issue. However, despite considerable knowledge about the unsustainability of current consumption patterns and numerous initiatives in the field of consumer information, a general trend towards sustainable consumption has yet to develop.

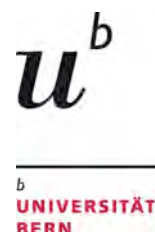
The scholars of the inter- and transdisciplinary research programme “From Knowledge to Action – New Paths towards Sustainable Consumption”, funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) since 2008 as part of its “Social-Ecological Research” initiative (SÖF), invite the international and interdisciplinary scientific community to present and discuss new research findings on sustainable consumption.

The focus of the conference is on consumer behaviour, its social and cultural embeddedness, and its interdependencies with economic, physical and political frameworks. Researchers from different disciplines (e.g. Sociology, Psychology, Economics, Political Science, Business Administration, Environmental Sciences, Ethics), studying different fields of consumption (e.g. residence, mobility, nutrition, clothing, leisure) are addressed. The conference aims at promoting a comprehensive academic discourse on issues concerning sustainable consumption.

SPONSORED BY THE



Federal Ministry
of Education
and Research



Topics

Contributions are invited that relate to the following topics:

Determinants of consumer behaviour

Key questions: What are the key psychological, socio-cultural, economic and physical factors that influence consumer behaviour? Which conditions facilitate or inhibit sustainable consumption? What motivates sustainable consumer behaviour (e.g. Why do people buy fair-trade products? What trade-offs between product attributes are made)?

Steering consumer behaviour

Key questions: What are the most promising ways to promote the transformation of consumption patterns towards sustainability? Which designs and mixes of policy instruments are effective? How can new consumer roles (e.g. change agents, lead users, prosumers) lead to more sustainable consumption?

Effects and evaluation of consumption patterns

Key questions: What are the social, cultural, ecological and economic impacts of different consumption patterns in different fields of consumption, and how can they be assessed? What can modified consumer behaviour patterns contribute to a sustainable development of society?

Theoretical and methodological issues of research on sustainable consumption

Key questions: What are adequate theoretical and methodological research approaches to gain solid knowledge on sustainable consumption? What is the added value of particular mixes of qualitative and quantitative methods? In what ways do different action theories apply to different phenomena of consumer behaviour? What are the special challenges of interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research in the field of sustainable consumption?

Conceptual and normative issues related to sustainable consumption

Key questions: What theory of needs and/or of good life is especially forward-looking and promising for the field of sustainable consumption? What type of consumption can be referred to as “sustainable”? What criteria must be used to assess the level of sustainability of consumption and consumer behaviour? What issues about responsibility and justice are raised in the context of sustainable consumption?

Gender issues in connection with sustainable consumption

Key questions: How are gender relations and sustainable consumption linked to each other? What is the relevance of these links, especially for the design of interventions aiming to promote sustainable consumption? Are there gender-related responsibilities for different types of consumption activities (e.g. investments vs. daily shopping)? Are there gender-specific responses to intervention strategies?

Formats

Submissions are invited for the following formats (details and requirements are given on the conference website):

- Oral presentations for open sessions (20 minutes)
- Oral presentations for the thematic symposium:
“Do households save electricity through feedback based on Smart Metering systems?” (15 minutes)
- Oral presentations for the “Showcase of interventions” (10 minutes)
- Posters
- Sessions (90 minutes; 3 presentations of 20 minutes or an introduction and 3 presentations of 15 minutes)
- Round Tables (90 minutes; brief report of the results reached during the conference)

Language

The conference language is English as the modern lingua franca. However, in order to value German as an academic language, papers in German will also be allowed, if their scholarly argument and approach requires them to be in German. Appropriate measures will be taken to make these contributions accessible to the international audience.

Konferenzsprache ist grundsätzlich das Englische als moderne Lingua franca. Gleichzeitig soll aber auch Deutsch als Wissenschaftssprache in Wert gesetzt werden. Beiträge in deutscher Sprache werden daher ebenfalls zugelassen, sofern es aufgrund der wissenschaftlichen Argumentationsweise und der verwendeten Ansätze unabdingbar ist, dass diese in deutscher Sprache formuliert werden können. Es wird in geeigneter Form dafür gesorgt werden, dass solche Beiträge dem internationalen Publikum zugänglich sind.

Programme structure

Sunday, November 6th 2011

Pre-Conference for young researchers; 5 p.m. official opening of the conference and keynote lecture; welcoming reception

Monday, November 7th and Tuesday, November 8th 2011

Plenary keynote lectures, parallel sessions, social programme; conference dinner on Monday

Dates

March 10 th , 2011	Submission and pre-registration opening (via the conference website)
May 10 th , 2011	Deadline for paper submission
July 31 st , 2011	Author notification of acceptance or rejection
August 10 th , 2011	Deadline for early registration

Institutions

Funding institution

German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), in cooperation with the Project Management Agency, part of the German Aerospace Center (PT-DLR)

Organisation

Accompanying research project to the focal topic "From Knowledge to Action – New Paths towards Sustainable Consumption" of the "Social-Ecological Research" Programme (SÖF)

Contact/Information

University of Bern, IKAÖ
SÖF-Konsum-BF
Schanzeneckstrasse 1
P.O. Box 8573
CH-3001 Bern, Switzerland
E-Mail: soefkonsum@ikaoe.unibe.ch
Tel +41 (0)31 331 39 68
Fax +41 (0)31 631 87 33

For more information, especially on the Scientific Committee and the Conference Partners, see the conference website.

Conference website

<http://www.sustainableconsumption2011.org>