CONSENSUS#2 Second International Conference:

‘Sustainable Consumption Transformations: Implementation and Impacts’

NUI Galway, Ireland

May 21st-22nd 2015

Hosted by CONSENSUS#2 Project

in conjunction with

The National University of Ireland, Galway

supported by

The School of Geography and Archaeology

and

Funded by the Environmental Protection Agency
Dear speakers and participants,

Welcome and thank you for joining us for our second CONSENSUS international conference on sustainable consumption at the National University of Ireland, Galway. The theme of this year’s conference is ‘Sustainable Consumption Transformations; Implementation and Impacts’. This two-day conference will provide an international platform for both scholars and policymakers in the field of sustainable consumption to discuss and debate on-going research in this important area. The conference will comprise of a mix of presentations, panel discussions and lightning talks from policymakers, researchers and practitioners. Speakers and attendees are drawn from Irish and international audiences. Professor Martina Schäfer will present providing the keynote address on the evening of Friday, May 22nd 2015. The 2015 CONSENSUS conference programme will focus on implementation and impact of sustainable consumption research on policy and action.

Launched in 2009, the CONSENSUS (Consumption, Environment and Sustainability) project is a seven year large scale research project involving researchers from NUI Galway and Trinity College Dublin. CONSENSUS is funded by the STRIVE (Science, Technology, Research and Innovation for the Environment) Programme which is administered by the Irish Environmental Protection Agency. CONSENSUS research has fed into national policy action and academic literature on behaviour change for sustainable consumption (focusing on energy, water, food and transport). The CONSENSUS research project uses innovative social science and collaborative research methods to explore trends and solutions for sustainable household consumption in Ireland.

A feature of the programme on the first day of the Conference is the official launch of the final CONSENSUS research report. This report outlines insights gained from foundational and exploratory research in relation to household consumption detailing international good practice and tools for governing that may enable consumption to become more sustainable. Novel methods and approaches are outlined which support more collaborative and co-produced transdisciplinary action for attacking the complex dimensions of transforming consumption.

The CONSENSUS#2 Conference is kindly supported by NUI Galway’s School of Geography and Archaeology, the College of Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies and is funded by the Environmental Protection Agency through the STRIVE Programme.

Finally, the month of May is a really nice time to visit Ireland. There are lots of activities to do and sights to see in Galway and its environs. If you have time, a trip to one (or all) of the following places on the west coast is recommended:

1. Aran Islands off the coast of Galway
2. Connemara in North County Galway
3. Cliffs of Moher in County Clare
4. Sligo Town, County Sligo
5. Slow Food Festival, County Clare (http://www.slowfoodclare.com/festival/)

We hope that you enjoy the CONSENSUS#2 Conference and your stay in Galway.

Warmest regards,

Dr Frances Fahy
Conference Chair

Dr Mary Jo Lavelle
Conference Coordinator

School of Geography and Archaeology, National University of Ireland, Galway
Conference Venue: NUI Galway Engineering Building

Situated on the banks of the River Corrib, the venue for the CONSENSUS conference on 'Sustainable Consumption Transformations: Implementation and Impacts' is the state of the art NUI Galway Engineering building.

Designed to be a teaching tool in itself, with exposed construction techniques and an array of ecological building methods, the building contains a range of ‘green’ technologies which add to the hands-on learning experience for students. There is large scale rainwater harvesting, a biomass boiler, low-embodied energy materials such as zinc, grass roofs for water attenuation, heat exchangers and many other cutting-edge technologies. The structure is among the first in Ireland to employ the use of voided slab systems. The innovation introduces ‘plastic bubbles’ into the concrete, reducing the weight and quantity of concrete used.

The Engineering building has been designed as a 'living laboratory' where students are able to view sections of the foundation and structure which have been deliberately made visible, so that basic concepts can be taught in a real life setting. Also, services are exposed with pipes and ducting labelled in corridors and rooms as a ‘gross anatomy’ lesson of sorts for engineering students.
Keynote Address: Professor Dr. Dr. Martina Schäfer

Professor Dr. Dr. Martina Schäfer (Technische Universität Berlin, Germany) will be providing the keynote address on Friday May 22\textsuperscript{nd} 2015 at 18.15pm.

Title:

‘Take-home messages for Sustainable Consumption – Results of an inter- and transdisciplinary research program’

Abstract:

From 2008 to 2011 ten inter- and transdisciplinary research projects were funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research within the program “From Knowledge to Action – New Paths towards Sustainable Consumption”. The projects dealt with a broad range of topics as energy saving campaigns for Universities, barriers for renovation of private homes regarding energy efficiency, sustainability effects of internet-based trade, the effect of smart metering on consumption habits, the role of life events for changing consumption habits etc. All together around 40 Universities and research institutions were involved in the program that cooperated with around 80 practitioners from very different fields. Besides the ten projects the ministry also funded an accompanying research team who moderated a process of bringing the main results together in joint products. One of those products was the formulation of eight “Consumption Messages” directed at promoters in politics and administration as well as environmental and consumer organizations. The presentation will introduce the “Consumption Messages” and give some insights in the challenges of the iterative “birth-process”.

Time: 18.15

Venue: Lecture Hall ENG-G018, New Engineering Building, National University of Ireland, Galway.
Conference Abstracts

Conference Day 1: May 21st 2015

CONSENSUS Team’s Abstracts

Title: ’From Ever-Greens to Never-Greens: Segmenting for Sustainability on the Island of Ireland’

Authors: Dr Frances Fahy & Dr Mary Jo Lavelle

Building on from the findings of Work Package 1 of the CONSENSUS#2 Project this paper focuses on the disaggregation of pro-environmental behaviour into habitual and occasional behaviour. The former captures routine everyday activities such as regularly buying organic food or habitually conserving water. The latter describes occasional or once-off actions such as installing insulation and purchasing energy-efficient household appliances. Drawing on a survey of 1,500 households in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland that developed both behavioural and attitudinal indices to investigate household consumption, we group respondents according to their scoring on each index. Results show that the socio-demographic and attitudinal profiles of households that report habitual pro-environmental behaviour differ significantly from those that engage in once-off actions. This clearly impacts on environmental and sustainability policy, most notably the financial incentivisation of sustainable consumption. Moreover, significant social sustainability issues arise, with rewards for once-off activities disproportionately benefiting better-off households while those who engage in routine pro-environmental behaviour tend to face higher costs.

Title: ‘HOME Lars’

Authors: Prof. Anna R. Davies, Dr. Laura Devaney and Dr. Ruth Doyle

Our HomeLabs research focuses on two areas, household food and water consumption. It interrogates the co-designed future scenarios and transition plans for sustainable personal washing and eating practices produced from the first phase of CONSENSUS through participatory practice-oriented backcasting research. The CONSENSUS HomeLabs approach is a collaborative research technique in which we continue to work with cross-sectoral partners from industry, public and the non-governmental sectors, as well as with citizen-consumers within their homes, to test and evaluate innovative devices, regulatory interventions and educational concepts. During the HomeLabs a combination of these socio-technical interventions were implemented over an intense five-week period with the aim of facilitating more sustainable washing and eating practices. The impacts of the study were collated using a variety of qualitative ethnographic techniques as well as quantitative surveys and metrics collected during the period of study. This has included a six-month follow-up survey and a further twelve-month survey of the participating households will take place later in 2015. The HomeLabs maintain the practice orientation of the previous study, identifying
whether and how interventions shape and adjust people’s everyday personal washing and eating practices. As such, the research makes theoretical and practical contributions to the field of practice-oriented sustainable behaviour change and has resulted in tailored recommendations for our partners for new policies, business developments, educational tools and collaborative initiatives.

Title: ‘Mobility biographies and milestones: Key concepts, methodological innovation and initial insights’

Authors: Prof. Dr. Henrike Rau and Richard Manton

The concept of mobility biographies has recently gained considerable currency in social-scientific transport research, reflecting increasing awareness of the long-term development of mobility practices. We introduce the novel concept of ‘mobility milestones’, explicitly recognising the centrality of interactions between structural factors and human agency, thereby moving beyond a sole focus on individual travel behaviour. This research reviews existing social and interdisciplinary research on mobility biographies, focusing in particular on studies that utilise retrospective survey methodologies. Building on this review, we subsequently present the preliminary results of an innovative online survey tool that has been deployed on the island of Ireland (n=324) to record changes in individuals’ mobility biographies and their connections with both life events and mobility milestones. This is followed by a discussion of initial findings regarding the impact of starting college, residential relocation and changing employment, as well as buying a car, getting a driving licence and buying a bicycle on individuals’ modal choice. Finally, we use this analysis to comment on the changes in Irish travel patterns ‘through boom and bust’ in the period 2006-2015.
Title: ‘Roles for University researchers in energy demand reduction initiatives’

Author: Prof Audley Genus, Kingston University

The paper analyses structural and non-structural, project-specific and personal factors affecting the roles that researchers play in energy demand reduction initiatives at the sub-city scale, recognising that city-wide and regional phenomena have both received much attention in this regard. Empirically, the focus is on activities taking place over the period 2007-2011 in Newcastle Upon Tyne in the North East Of England, focusing on a project called ‘Newcastle Low Carbon Neighbourhoods’ (NLCN).

The paper employs descriptive network analysis supplemented by auto-ethnography to analyse and reflect upon fieldwork notes and related documentation. In the NLCN case wider institutional factors at play include changes in the requirements for securing national research funding for individual projects or centres, and for assessing the quality of research undertaken in higher education institutions, on which national funding for research in universities depends. The prevailing values of autonomous science have been challenged though arguably have yet to be supplanted by the encroachment of societal ‘impact’ in to the allocation of research funding. However, this and certain other developments have had a catalytic but also disruptive effect on the substance and conduct of the NLCN Research and the roles of the researchers. Project-specific structural factors may be identified. Of particular note are the density of the project network, the reciprocity of ties among the participants and the confluence of interests among some contacts and members of the research team. The receipt of funding from New Deal for Communities (NDC) for a feasibility study into the creation of an ‘eco-neighbourhood’ put the researchers into a client-consultant relationship with NDC; this suddenly ended when NDC folded.

Here the researchers acted as ‘intellectual authorities’ but also as action researchers and consultants. However, the parallel receipt of funding from Beacon North East Contributed to certain members of the research team assuming the role of facilitator of an interactive research project, influenced by ideas about co-inquiry and mutual collaboration between researchers and the researched and aided by training on community-based research and the facilitation of public engagement projects and events. In order to operationalize the project, the research team played a number of distinct roles in parallel rather than perform any one overarching role (c.f. Healy, 2008). Non-structural factors include personal biography, e.g. the activism of one of the research team in local ‘green’ groups, which spilled over into his NLCN Work (arguably helping to build credibility with certain participants). More cohesive relations were maintained with participants with similar interests and working practices to the researcher than with those who weren’t (i.e. tenants).

This suggests a possible avenue for building effective collaboration and growing projects capable of substantive, enduring demand reductions. However, such efforts may be constrained by what network theorists call ‘redundancy’ (Burt, 1992). Strong ‘bridging’ work could be better achieved by
growing ‘weak ties’ with actors who are quite different from researchers (Granovetter, 1973), and who could be brought into the ‘magic ring’ of expertise.

Title: ‘Popular programmes - sustained change?’

Author: Edina Vadovics, GreenDependent Institute

This talk will introduce a number of issues encountered by researcher-practitioners in sustainable, low-carbon lifestyle programmes that have proved to be popular with their target groups, households and small communities.

The programmes have been implemented in Hungary and in other European countries. The methodology of these programmes was developed carefully based on the theory of behaviour change as well as the review and analysis of about a hundred more and also less successful behaviour change programmes. Great emphasis was placed on achieving behaviour change that would be long-term and would continue following the conclusion of the programmes. Thus, creating a positive atmosphere and attitude, using participative techniques, building and supporting small groups led by volunteers, creating diverse communication and information channels to fit varying needs, making sustainable lifestyles attractive and rewarding as well as working with the mainstream media were important features. All in all, in terms of participation, enthusiasm and reduced consumption levels all these programmes can be said to be successful.

Still, even with these results and largely positive feedback from participants there are numerous challenges that have to be faced by organizers. In this presentation three of these challenges will be highlighted. The first one of these is the challenge of following up and measuring whether programmes indeed managed to initiate long-term behaviour change. In the first place, resources for the follow-up phase are usually not available in the framework of funding programmes, so the measurement of consumption after the intensive intervention phase has been concluded is often not possible. Then, even if funding is available for continued measurements, it is difficult to motivate participants to read their meters or enter other types of quantified consumption data into calculators to monitor the presumed long term behaviour change. Experience shows that forming the habit of reading meters or monitoring one’s own consumption is one of the hardest behaviour changes to achieve. Technology that would enable this to happen easily is available, but is far from being widespread.

Another important issue is the way funding for these types of programmes is structured and the programme and intervention design it results in. In order to achieve long-term change, the ideal scenario would be to have several years long programmes that allow and enable participants to learn and practice new behaviours as well as progress from a beginner level to a more advanced one, e.g. from switching off lights to participating in community energy projects. All through the process, they also need regular feedback on their performance. The strategic thinking and project design needed for this is not facilitated by existing structures.
Finally, the tension between people needing very clear and unambiguous messages about what is sustainable on the one hand, and the ongoing debate and discussion about the same topic in the research community on the other needs to be mentioned. The majority of people participating in sustainable lifestyles programmes want very clear instructions and find it hard to deal with the diversity and certain level of uncertainty inherent in the sustainable lifestyles debate.

**Title:** *The vegetables are planning our meal: on agency and values associated with vegetable baskets in Geneva*

**Author:** Dr Marlyne Sahakian

Efforts to promote local and organic agriculture through community-supported agriculture (CSA) have grown in importance since the 1970s, with Switzerland as an early example (Goodman, DuPuis et al. 2012, Henderson and En 2007, Dubuisson-Quellier and Lamine 2004). The main change is in how people provision themselves: vegetables are bought on a contractual basis and delivered on a weekly or bi-weekly basis, reducing or eliminating mainstream retail provisioning. The vegetables available through CSA depend on the farmer, and the natural environment and season, not on ‘consumer choice.’ We engage with social practice theory to discuss how changes in practices occur in relation to CSA, focusing on the question of agency, as well as the role of values in holding together practices. This paper draws on in-depth interviews with 21 CSA customers (February through June 2014) as well as observations at a vegetable basket pick-up point, the *Les Mangeurs* restaurant in Geneva, Switzerland.

Building on earlier work (Sahakian and Wilhite 2014), this contribution further explores the distributed agency in the practice of consuming vegetable baskets, drawing from Ortner’s (1989) definition of agency as the capability or power to be the source and originator of acts. The notion of ‘values’ is brought to the forefront, or what values are assigned to this type of CSA activity and the effects on food consumption patterns. Some values are clearly stated, while others emerge from discussions with interviewees and remain implicit. In relation to a CSA service in Geneva, personal health seems paramount, but also vegetable quality and taste, as well as caring for family members; contact with nature and knowledge of seasons are also important values for some respondents, relating to notions of space and time; finally, solidarity and sense of community seem to be upheld as important values, including feelings of trust, and ties to a local, experienced community, as well as an imagined farming community. The notion of ‘freedom of choice’ is discussed, as an explicit societal value that is rebuked by the CSA vegetable baskets: one main conclusion of this paper is that choices can be restricted, which represents a different kind of freedom for consumers – the freedom from having to choose. In the case of the CSA vegetable baskets, we find that consumers are agreeable to this form of restriction, so long as the services and products rendered are aligned with their values.

**Note:** *This talk is based on a paper under development with co-author Isabelle Schulte- Tenckhoff, Anthropology and Sociology of Development, The Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva.*
The concept green consumerism generally refers to people with conscious concern for social and environmental consequences related to the purchase, use, or disposal of particular products or services. Green consumerism, understood in this way, is reliant on the availability of trustworthy information disseminated to consumers. While the market sees a proliferation of different types of eco-information, including shopping guides, green advertisement, sustainability reporting, and wallet cards, ethical and environmental labelling appear and remain as particularly attractive. Labelling has grown as a popular way for conscious consumers to find alternatives. The various labelling schemes cover a broad and increasing range of product categories and services: food, chemicals, energy, textiles, toys, cosmetics, hotels, conference venues, transport, and tourist attractions. Labelling schemes attempt to provide consumers with credible and concise information on complicated matters, and can in this way cope with the information asymmetry between the producer and consumer regarding sustainability effects of production. The simplicity has communicative advantages that link well to sustainability marketing efforts among producers, retailers, and green NGOs. However, the wide use of labelling schemes and other types of green advertisement can result in credibility problems. What should count as “climate friendly”? Are there fake labels? Can a carbon label include meat products? Can the labelling scheme cover the entire life cycle of the product, from resource extraction to waste? Is there a competition between social and environmental consideration in the labels? “Shall I choose fair trade or organic”?

In my research on eco-labels and eco-certification, which included empirical studies of a variety of schemes, the labelling process was seen as a translation process; that is, translation of a complex social and ecological reality to a simple categorical label: “this is the best choice”. On the one hand, this simplification process, as well as ethical differentiation, stimulates consumer power. On the other hand, many controversies and challenges are created. The translation process includes a balancing act between politics and science; nature and culture; economic, ecological and social sustainability; as well as between ideal and feasibility. No scheme can cover every concern. The
plurality of aspects and interests behind a particular scheme create controversies, which in turn lead to the initiation of competing schemes. All these politics, controversies, compromises, delimitations, and uncertainties behind the schemes are well understood by stakeholders that participate in the negotiation of labelling principles and criteria. However, a polished picture of the scheme is communicated to the consumers.

The problems with such a mismatch in the communication to consumers are, for example, that that a mystification of the “good”, “green”, and “sustainable”, something which has been labelled “ethical fetishism”, rather than a broad consumer reflexivity is encouraged. For developing consumer power, consumer reflexivity is the better pathway, not the least for ability to navigate in the abundance of consumer information and for ability to provide constructive feedback to the schemes.

**Title: ‘Open Practices: Codesigning policy interventions for sustainable behaviour change’**

**Authors: Dr. Simon O’Rafferty, Design Factors Research Group, University of Limerick & Dr. Adam De Eyto, Design Factors Research Group, University of Limerick**

While behaviour change is an inherent aspiration of most government policy, the narratives around policy interventions that enable behaviour change have become more explicit and visible over the last two decades. This is in part recognition that recent transformations in economic, political, sociotechnical and ecological systems have driven a greater level of economic and social interdependency. It is also driven in part by an understanding that many current regulatory and nonregulatory interventions can be ineffective in bringing about the desired policy outcomes.

There is an extensive literature spanning many disciplines that presents theoretical and empirical insights into the determinants of behaviour and the mechanisms through which behaviour changes. Some of the literature is concerned with the individual determinants of behaviour such as biases and heuristics in decision making, unconscious behaviour (routines and habits), social and psychological factors (attitude, beliefs, emotion, self-efficacy) and demographic factors. Some deals with external and contextual determinants such as hard and soft infrastructure, institutions, culture (social norms and traditions) and economic barriers. There are also perspectives, such as Social Practice Theory, that bridge this individual agency and context divide to argue that human behaviour is determined through a dynamic arrangement of ‘elements’ such as physical products, norms, meanings and knowledge.

The application of behavioural insights has been more dominant in some policy domains such as health and pro-environmental behaviour. An underlying assumption has been that policy interventions can be more effective if they are designed with behavioural insights. While this is reasonable to suggest there is also a recurring problematic framing of the narratives around some policy interventions suggesting that people and defective decision making are the problem. Some of the narratives suggest that it is a person’s internal biases and heuristics that mean they do not invest in products with higher environmental performance, do not recycle enough, waste energy or use less sustainable transport options. It could be argued that this is a fundamental attribution error and
if we use social practices as a starting point it would be fair to suggest that many of the elements and interactions between these elements that construct the systems of daily life are either invisible or impossible for people to decipher. This would suggest there is an opportunity to reframe the narratives and practices around policy making and move towards a model that is more reflexive, participatory and codesigned. Codesign is user-centred in that it adopts ethnographic methods and is a process of participatory change. Codesign could help policy makers better understand the daily lived experiences of people and to allow people explore the sometimes invisible systems that shape their daily lives. It places the citizen experience at the centre of the policy process and in doing so it helps the policy maker ‘see the person’ in the citizen and to bridge the gap between what a person does and what they say they do. Codesign blends interdisciplinary perspectives, new policy practices such as cocreation and new social relations between citizens and the public sector.

The research being presented here forms part of a two year PostDoctoral research fellowship that is funded by the Irish Environmental Protection Agency. The research project is exploring the application of codesign and user-centred design research in the context of policy interventions for sustainable behaviour change. The research takes a multilevel perspective to explore interventions with businesses and individuals. A key aim is to develop new insights into approaches for designing policy interventions that that can create better outcomes for people and businesses in terms of sustainable behaviour and practices.

Visit [http://www.openpractices.net](http://www.openpractices.net) for more information on the research.
Conference Day Two: May 22nd 2015

Session 1: ‘Perspectives on sustainable consumption and behavioural change’

Title: ‘Segmenting Energy Consumers: Energy Cultures in New Zealand’

Author: Dr. Ben Wooliscroft (University of Otago, New Zealand)

The Household Survey, part of the Energy Cultures 2 research programme, surveyed 2278 New Zealanders on their energy and transportation; ownership, attitudes and behaviour. The attitudes reflect the respondent, while ownership and behaviour questions related to the household. Households were segmented, using two step segmentation (as provided in SPSS), on seven variables that provided four segments with good face validity and diagnostics. The seven variables are:

- presence and use of a games console (yes, no)
- total number of rooms (number)
- the main method of heating (category)
- presence of or interest in acquiring double glazing (yes, no)
- use of a separate freezer (yes, no)
- use of a clothes drier (yes, no)
- turning lights off in un-used rooms always or almost always (yes, no)

The four segments are named Energy Poor (21.1%), Energy Efficient (25.2%), Energy Average (25.5%) and Energy Comfortable (24.5%). A group of Outliers (3.7%) were also identified in the segmentation process.

The clusters show significant differences on many behaviours and attitudes beyond the segmenting variables. Of particular interest is the correlation between household energy behaviour and transportation efficiency behaviours. The households with the lowest income (by cluster) have the worst houses in terms of energy efficiency, the worst energy saving behaviours in the home and the worst energy efficient driving behaviours. This provides further evidence that energy efficiency behaviour is a whole of life phenomena, requiring a whole of life intervention to improve efficiency. It also highlights the energy poverty trap outlined by Mullainathan and Shafir (2014) among others.

References:

Title: What is energy efficient light?

Author: Dr. Charlotte Jensen (University of Aalborg, Copenhagen)

EU is increasingly focusing on improving the efficiency of energy-using and energy-related products by providing minimum requirements for product efficiency through regulation. One of the product groups that is subject to this is electrical lighting and this has resulted in several new lighting products on the market. However, as documented through my own research amongst others (eg. Evans et al 2012), this form of regulation does not seem particularly effective in terms of residential lighting, as new more consuming lighting patterns have emerged at the same time.

My research has focused on investigating how (Danish) people use and live with lighting in a residential setting, and thus questioned how and why certain lighting patterns have emerged and evolved. Based on a series of interviews and observations taking place within a number of Danish households, I argue that lighting and lighting products are meaningful through the social practices that lighting engages in, such as dining, cooking and cleaning, and that these practices and corresponding activities co-determines how lighting patterns unfold. New lighting patterns seem to have evolved due to energy efficient light bulbs not directly fitting into the existing activities and practices carried out within the home. Accordingly the incandescent light bulb is still the preferred light source in many cases. More importantly, it is also considered the 'normal' light source, consequently inferring that other light sources, such as halogen lights (to some extent), compact fluorescent lamps and especially LEDs are considered 'abnormal' or 'alternative' light sources.

I have therefore proceeded to explore how and why certain lighting-related practices have occurred, evolved and stabilized, through exploring historical assessments of lighting, and what aspects that seems to have influenced this development, leading to the incandescent light bulb being tightly coupled to normal ways of illuminating. It can be concluded that lighting patterns are a result of various institutionalized practices interacting with each other, shaping the development of lighting through a number of translations. Therefore it seems problematic, that actors related to the contemporary development of lighting seem to act mainly within each institutionalized practice, consequently lacking exchanging of experience across the practices, which seems vital for obtaining meaningful configurations of energy efficient lighting 'that works'.

References:


Title: ‘Promoting sustainable consumption by intervening in the relationship between the user and the product: the case of vacuum cleaners’.

Author: Dr. Giuseppe Salvia (Nottingham Trent University, UK)

An estimated two million tonnes of electric and electronic equipment (EEE) are discarded annually in the UK. Vacuum cleaners (VCs) account for the second largest embodied greenhouse gases emissions of EEE, due primarily to high sales volumes and faster replacement cycles. With a lifespan expectancy of 5 to 11 years, the actual average lifespan of VCs is shorter than 5.

A DEFRA funded research project attempts to increase the understanding of factors determining the faster replacement of VCs in order to optimise product longevity through design intervention. The results of a survey with 507 respondents in the UK reveals replacement motivations. The majority of the respondents discarded their VC because it did not work at all or efficiently suggesting that unreliability and low quality are the main reasons for replacement.

A European regulation has recently introduced minimum requirements for VCs; the motor for example, is expected to last around 10 years. However, the contrasting reaction of manufacturers and users, together with the evidence that a good number of disposed VCs are still in good working condition, or easily repairable, indicates that more complex motivations trigger the replacement of VCs. The aim of this contribution is to shed light on these motivations.

Replacement can be triggered by dissatisfaction with the VC. Low suction and noise, for example, are the most annoying aspects identified when vacuuming; these are, however, often related to improper use and poor maintenance. Proper care through use and maintenance are integral to prolonging the technical lifespan of a VC. VCs may be perceived as disposable commodities that are not worth the care and attention of the user. Although the majority of respondents would consider repairing their VC in the case of failure, in reality only a fraction actually did repair one. Several barriers to repair have been identified in literature, namely cost, dissatisfaction and trust in the repairer. Aggressive marketing further prompts replacement over repair. Some respondents replaced the VC because they desired a new one, perhaps prompted by the aging of the machine’s appearance or the dust trapped in its components. Perception of disgust or performance loss may be decisive if hygiene is involved.

Promoting the change towards sustainable patterns of consumption might require radical interventions that dig into the relationship between the user and the machine, or in other words with the human and non-human subjects. Users of VCs appear resistant to the maintenance requirements for an optimal, durable and performing machine.

As machines, VCs have been envisaged as almost ‘magic’ items for cleaning or as ‘mechanical servants’. Humans have delegated to VCs not just the task of cleaning the floors but also the wish of their self-maintenance. The expectation is not met and the machine, as a tool, becomes visible when it breaks demanding the attention that the human has tried to avoid by delegating the task to a machine.
Acknowledgements:

The arguments of this contribution derive from interim findings of the project EV0557 funded by DEFRA and developed with Prof. Cooper, Prof. Fisher, Dr Harmer and Dr Barr.

Session 2: HomeLabs: Testing promising practices for sustainable household consumption

Title: ‘Intelligible energy – knowledge and household practices’

Author: Dr. Sarah Darby (University of Oxford, UK)

The introduction to CONSENSUS home heating scenarios identifies technological, organisational, socio-cultural and personal elements of home heating practices. The scenarios also have quite distinctive knowledge implications and requirements. Thus the ‘community core’ high-cultural – change scenario involves use of a communal kitchen (a place for social learning as well as shared appliances?) and monthly courses at which practical skills are transmitted. The high-regulation ‘carbon control’ scenario requires good carbon awareness, with mandatory crash courses in energy use for those who overshoot their carbon quotas. There is also the possibility of community-level initiatives to encourage energy demand reduction, and the incentive of infrastructure benefits if the community is successful. The third, high-tech, ‘second skin’ scenario presupposes highly-skilled researchers to develop new materials. It also requires major investment in formal sustainability education, courses to inculcate eco-friendly workplace practices, and competitions to encourage innovation.

It is possible to trace recognition of the role of knowledge in sustainable energy systems at least as far back as 1976, when Amory Lovins traced the outlines of ‘soft energy paths’1, in which social structure is shaped by deployment of technologies that rely on renewable energy. They are also diverse, flexible, ‘easy to understand and use without esoteric skills’, accessible, and are matched in scale and quality to our needs. http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/26604/amory-b-lovins/energy-strategy-the-road-not-taken

It is not hard to see that our social structure shape technological choices, as well as being shaped by them. Based on our social arrangements, we try to choose technologies that fit our conception of the good life, and decisions are influenced by what we think we can plan, assemble, operate, maintain and repair, whether we do so ourselves or delegate these tasks to others. The development of smart grids is challenging in terms of the soft/hard divide, intelligibility and accessibility. On the one hand it offers detailed information and control for the user, and the integration of ‘soft’ renewable generation. On the other, it relies on extremely sophisticated technical knowledge and the smooth working of huge, complex IT systems. But we do not need to go to the high-tech end of the scale for examples of the importance of knowledge in household energy issues: keeping warm in winter involves a range of practical and formal skills, embodied in materials and technology or expressed in everyday practices.

Questions of intelligibility are arguably ripe for rethinking, and I would like to discuss the roles of tacit knowledge (practical know-how), and explicit, more formal knowledge in terms of how they are applied to homemaking, and how these might evolve over the next decade or so. I suggest a couple
of useful areas in which to look for examples. The first is home maintenance and DIY, where the home may be seen as a project or experimental site, and changes are typically small and incremental. And the second is the set of ideas and practices implied by the ‘smart’ home, some of which effectively involves householders in electricity network management. How and where is ‘smartness’ going to be distributed, and how might it be integrated with concepts of ‘home’?

Title: ‘Testy Testbeds: the triumphs and tribulations of real world technology deployments’.

Author: Dr David Prendergast (INTEL, Europe)

Intel, as a microchip manufacturing company, has many partners worldwide and its products and services appear in a plethora of technologies, ecosystems and domains. The company’s research divisions are involved in not only imagining and developing next generation technologies but also in understanding how these can be designed these to best fit into the practices of individuals, groups and systems. Teams of anthropologists and user experience researchers work with designers and engineers to first research a problem or challenge and then build, test and iterate rapid prototypes prior to evaluation over variable lengths of time in often complex real world scenarios and environments. Deploying prototype technologies ‘into the wild’ is seldom straightforward and rarely apolitical. Drawing on individual household and city scale deployments in Ireland and the UK, this paper will provide brief ethnographic insights from a selection of research projects that Intel has been involved in areas such as health, air quality and sound monitoring, and flood management. It will focus on both the rewards and challenges faced when designing and practically implementing Home and City Labs with diverse stakeholders and practices.

Title: ‘Dirt, cleanliness, everyday life & festivals: Using ‘traditional’ methodologies as sites of experimentation to impact upon sustainable water consumption agendas’

Author: Dr Alison Brown (University of Manchester, UK)

Experimentation, such as ‘home’ or ‘city’ labs in academic research settings, is becoming increasingly significant in linking theory based research to real-world impact. This paper argues, however, that more ‘traditional’ methodologies – quantitative surveys, focus groups, and in-situ ethnography - can also be reframed as tools for change, experimentation, and impact. The first part of this paper reflects on the ‘Patterns of Water’ project. This project attempted to use quantitative survey methodologies, which are usually associated with behavioural and economic sciences, to capture the diversity and patterns in water using practices across a population in the south of England. Re-framing these methodologies - in a way that supported a particular reading of ‘theories of practice’ - enabled the researchers to reflect on diversity and patterns in the practices people perform inside and outside of their home related to water (and energy) use. Some of the analysis also reflected ‘palimpsests of past practices’. In the data, these appeared as historically popular practices (for example, flannel washing, low frequency washing and bathing) becoming fossilised as ‘hyperclean’ bodily cleanliness routines took hold, particularly with younger generations. As we have argued elsewhere the use of these methodologies reflects on the importance of playing (ontological) politics with method (Law, 2009) to reframe political commitments of stakeholders such as the UK water
sector (Browne et al., 2015). Such methodologies can be used as intervention to retell familiar theoretical stories, reveal new understandings of practice, redefine political agendas, and develop resources to evidence the utility of theories of practice to intervening in sustainability and consumption.

The second part of this paper reflects on taking the ‘lab to the people’ – and conducting research in social and cultural settings where unintentional environmentalism (Hitchings, Collins & Day, 2013) and disruption to consumption activities may already be (unintentionally) occurring. This reflection uses examples from the in-situ ethnography, in-depth interviews and quantitative surveys conducted at two UK camping music festivals in the summer of 2013. The purpose of this project was to capture experiences of disruption to the everyday which are embedded into the particular cultural and social experiences of UK multi-day (camping) music festivals – particularly disruptions to everyday cleanliness, and experiences of nature and dirt. It lead to reflections about how people experience disruption; the re-emergence of historically common ways of doing cleanliness with new ‘stuff’ (e.g., the flannel wash re-establishing itself in the younger festival goer through a wet wipe shower); how cleanliness norms circulate (are lived with, and changed or not); the role that infrastructures and things play in setting the benchmarks for ‘new normals’; and reflects on ideas about how multiply existing hygienes may emerge, circulate or fossilise. Overwhelmingly people’s needs and requirements can be seen to be much more flexible than ‘policy makers’ and ‘behaviour change agents’ may give them credit for.

The two projects together provide an opportunity to reflect on how we translate our theoretical convictions into research methods, and how even ‘traditional’ methodologies can be used by researchers to reflect upon, and influence, transformations towards sustainable consumption.

References


Acknowledgements

This research was conducted through the EPSRC/ESRC ARCC-Water/Patterns of Water project (with Ben Anderson, Will Medd, Martin Pullinger), and UCL ‘Bridging the Gaps’ fund/ESRC Patterns of Water Festivals project (with Russell Hitchings and Tullia Jack).
Session 3: Consumption across the life-course: Life events, milestones and biographies

Title: ‘Co-producing behavioural change campaigns: a generational perspective’

Author: Prof Stewart Barr (University of Exeter, UK)

Conventional approaches for promoting behavioural change have tended to focus on understandings of individual motivations and barriers for adopting new practices and have utilised psychological approaches for identifying key levers for change. Recently, social scientists from disciplines such as sociology, geography and management studies have argued that a focus on social practices and the role of context in framing responses to environmental change is needed if wide-ranging shifts in practices are to be realised. This paper examines how a socially embedded approach to promoting behavioural change can be developed using a generational perspective. Adopting a knowledge co-production approach, the paper explores how behavioural change campaigns can be developed using forms of social marketing that work closely with consumer segments to identify the basis for existing practices and the potential for encouraging new forms of practice. The paper uses a case study of a collaborative behavioural change campaign, developed between the University of Exeter and social change agencies, in which a campaign to reduce tourist reliance on short haul flying amongst ‘Generation Y’ and ‘Empty Nesters’ was developed. The paper illustrates the ways in which knowledge co-production and campaign co-creation can yield innovative and generation specific behavioural change tools.

Title: ‘How consumption prescriptions affect food practices: Assessing the roles of household resources and life-course events’

Author: Dr. Sophie Dubuisson-Quellier (CSO, Sciences PO, Paris, France) & Dr. Severine Gojard (INRA, France)

Food consumption has become the subject of many prescriptions that aim to improve consumers’ health and protect the environment. This study examined recent changes in food practices that occurred in response to prescriptions. Currently, a significant number of food consumption studies have attempted to explain the impact on consumption practices of prescriptions issued by authorities for common good reasons. Until the 1990s, the question of how individual food practices may change over time remained out of the limelight of sociological consumption studies (Bourdieu, 1979; Douglas, 1972; Halbwachs, 1913).

Practice theory offers significant potential to provide explanations for how practices change (Reckwitz, 2002; Warde, 2005). One of his theory’s major breakthroughs was to suggest that practices could not be separated from prescriptions. However, this approach overlooks relationships that exist between practitioners and prescriptions. In many cases, the research based on the theories of practice has barely studied the social characteristics of practitioners and conditions conducive to recruitment to a given practice. In contrast, the life-course perspective focuses on when consumption patterns change and on the individuals that change them. In this context (Bisogni
et al., 2005; Devine et al., 1998), biography serves as the topic studied, as well as an analytical tool. By analysing changes that occurred during biographical transitions it is possible to discover the contexts that influenced those changes. Our contribution aims at assessing how prescriptions alter food consumption.

First, based on the lifecourse perspective, we consider that individual standards are not carbon copies of prescriptions. Therefore, standards are individual-specific and can evolve over the course of a lifetime. Secondly, we infer from practice theory the assumption that practices include references to prescriptions and that the links that connect prescriptions and practices develop from the construction of practices. These links are subject to change. Therefore, one goal of this study was to explain encounters between individuals adhering to specific standards, and practices connected to prescriptions. This study attempts to present different research lines based on two sets of empirical data: (1) an in-depth qualitative survey of food practices maintained by about 30 households located in Southwest France; and (2) a statistical analysis of data collected from a French consumer panel. We use the quantitative data to highlight the complexity of the links that connect prescriptions and practices. Then, drawing from our interview data, we examine the ways various links that connect purchases and prescriptions have been collectively constructed and validated. Our results suggest that consumers may change food practices when they reach turning points in their lives. They may reconsider resources, skills and standards. Middle- and upper-class individuals are more likely to adopt standards consistent with public prescriptions. Possible explanations are that they trust expert knowledge sources, their social networks are less stable and smaller gaps exist between their standards and prescriptions. As a result life-course turning points can serve as windows of opportunities for the adoption of new practices, individuals’ social position influences their propensity to revise standards when they begin to adopt or question their practices.

Title: ‘Energy biographies: researching everyday energy practices in biographic contexts’

Author: Mary Greene (National University of Ireland, Galway)

In the arena of sustainable consumption research, questions concerning the linkages between consumption practices and their transformation across lifecourse and wider societal contexts are central to comprehending and supporting pro-environmental practice. In Ireland and beyond, significant changes in socio-cultural and techno-material energy landscapes have radically transformed the way everyday life is experienced and practiced over biographical time. Understandings these changing dynamics of everyday life are essential for developments in sustainability research and practice. However, empirical understanding of processes of continuity and change in everyday energy practices from contextually situated perspectives are only beginning to emerge. As such, significant gaps remain in understandings of the complexities of consumption dynamics in everyday life, particularly in relation to how and why practices develop and change over time in wider biographic and societal contexts.

To date there has been a lack of sustained attention to dynamism and temporality in sustainable consumption research, particularly in relation to how and why consumption activities change across the lifecourse. Even approaches focusing explicitly on behavioural change have tended to do so
rather narrowly, with theoretical and methodological tools for conceptualising dynamics in routine, ordinary consumption in particular remaining deficient (Warde and Southerton, 2012). Indeed, within dominant, mainstream approaches, there has been a failure to adequately conceptualise the dynamics of behaviour change, while methodologically the predominance of cross-sectional research designs has done little to illuminate short- and long-term transitions in human behaviour. More recent innovations, however, have sought to reconceptualise environmental behaviour as a dynamic process rather than a stable and perpetual trait. The recent emergence of practice-theoretical work in the study of consumption marks an important step in the right direction in moving away from acontextual and static views of human behaviour to focus instead on the dynamic nature of social practices, including their material dimensions (Warde, 2005, Shove et al., 2012, Shove et al., 2009). To date, however, there has been little investigation of the dynamics of practice from the perspective of individuals’ biographic and lifecourse contexts, suggesting a need to situate practice biographically (Groves et al., 2015).

In light of these challenges, this paper discusses the potential of a life-course, practice-oriented approach to researching dynamics in everyday consumption in biographic contexts. Drawing on temporally oriented concepts and approaches from a range of fields, some key theoretical and empirical possibilities which emerge from a cross-fertilisation of social practice perspectives and lifecourse approaches to sustainable consumption research are explored. The value of this perspective in advancing understanding of the dynamics of everyday practice is demonstrated through discussion of an applied research study exploring domestic energy biographies in Ireland. Adopting a contextualised, temporal and experienced centred approach, a biographic, practice orientated methodology comprising of verbal and visual date collection tools was developed to explore consumption biographies of people at different stages of life in a holistic sense and investigate dynamics in energy practice over time. Historical and biographical exploration of careers of domestic practice in the domains of food, mobility and laundry reveals experiential and contextual insight into dynamics of everyday life. This paper presents reflections on the theoretical, methodological and empirical developments emerging from this work.

References:

Panellist Abstracts

Panellist: Prof Philip Vergragt (Tellus Insitute & Clark University)

Prof Philip Vergragt is an academic; cofounder of SCORAI and GRF-SPaC. The Sustainable Consumption Research and Action Initiative (SCORAI) is a knowledge network of 700+ researchers and practitioners 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. SCORAI provides a forum for professionals striving 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; and to provide the knowledge for emergent grassroots innovations, social movements, and public policies. (mission), www.scorai.org

In the last 7 years, we have organized workshops, conferences, a colloquium; we maintain a monthly newsletter and a vibrant listserve. SCORAI-Europe has become a successful sister organization; and more recently we started SCORAI-China and SCORAI-Israel. On the global level operates GRF-SPaC, the Global Research Forum on Sustainable Production and Consumption; with successful conferences in Rio de Janeiro (2012) and Shanghai (2014) http://grf-spc.weebly.com/.

Research is essential to understand and to promote systemic change. We bring together researchers, thought leaders, and practitioners who jointly try to understand how systemic change could happen, what are the leverage points on individual, institutional, and macro levels; how to understand and change the role of economics, culture, and technologies; what are the roles of policies, grassroots innovations and socio-technical experiments; how bottom-up and top-down dynamics could reinforce each other.

So far our success has mainly been academic; through academic papers, special journal issues, and books. Still somewhat missing in our present operations is the link to the social and mass media; to achieve that we need to reframe the issue of sustainable consumption beyond individual lifestyle and behavioral changes; and find a language that speaks to policy makers, business, civil society and academia; without giving up the quest for deep societal changes that are necessary to address unsustainable consumption.

Panellist: Gemma Adams (Forum for the Future, London)

‘System Innovation for Sustainability’

Gemma Adams works with Forum for the Future’s network of businesses, organisations and entrepreneurs to find success by helping to bring about the systemic changes necessary for a sustainable future. She will talk about why working with the ‘status quo’ isn’t enough on its own, to create the pace and scale of transformations needed.

Drawing on the newly launched Futures Centre, Gemma will share ‘signals of change’ of how organisations are rethinking ‘business as usual’ to be able to thrive in a more volatile, uncertain and complex future. She will share a number of Forum for the Future’s projects that are helping organisations to act together to tackle systemic challenges, and to reap rewards in doing so. Among these is a pioneering, non-for-profit venture that wants to show the role demand management can
play in bridging the energy gap by creating the UK’s first Virtual Power Plant. Forum for the Future is partnering with Open Energi to build a network of aggregated flexible demand that’s large enough to displace a small, stand-by power station. Flexible demand gives organisations new ways of controlling their energy by turning energy-hungry appliances off and on according to the demand being placed on the grid for electricity at any one time.

Gemma will talk from first-hand experience about the challenges and limitations of working with incumbent organisations as a route to change. She will share Forum for the Future’s growing interest and orientation towards finding and acting on ‘windows of opportunity’ where there are already glimmers of new solutions or a different discourse so there is a better chance of creating impact at scale.

She will share her increasing interest in working with entrepreneurs, user-innovators and community-innovators to raise the profile of niche practices that could form tomorrow’s mainstream. The Gatecrashing the Energy Sector project invited outsiders to gatecrash the energy sector to shake up its preconceived ideas. Gemma is exploring what else Forum for the Future can do to find, encourage and give credence to disruptive ideas.

Panellist: Neil Coles (Collaborating Centre on Sustainable Consumption & Production CSCP)

‘Exploring sustainable consumption patterns by analyzing the impacts of current consumer behavior and lifestyles across different global contexts’

Identification and measurement of lifestyle impacts focus attention on the ‘hotspots’ for transition to more sustainable lifestyles. However the mechanisms to address these have remained elusive, especially due to the contextual nature of implementation.

Building on the European learnings from the SPREAD 2050 consortium, the project Building Budding Ideas Glocally for 2050 (BIG2050) developed by the CSCP with the support of the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), aimed to identify and address critical local environmental and social impacts worldwide, associated with current consumer trends, consumption patterns and lifestyles. To better understand these patterns, it linked actions undertaken to fulfilment of human needs and aspirations ascribed to them, rather than location. This enabled the mapping of conditions needed to encourage and drive the transition to a resource efficient future, by communicating and fostering innovation for more sustainable ways of living. To reach these objectives, BIG2050 combined research-based activities with a series of multi-stakeholder workshops, called “workstudios”, which took place in five different countries: China, Colombia, the Philippines, Ghana and Germany. This included development of multi-stakeholder backcasting processes using tools such as personas from the future (consumption trends represented by fictional characters).

The research provides one of few cross cultural comparisons on the challenges of sustainable living and opens up the question on different potentials of different stakeholder groups to create the framework conditions for the journey towards sustainable living as well as exploration of sustainable lifestyles in further cultural and contextual settings.
Panellist: Kathleen Stokes (NESTA, UK)

‘Opportunities and lessons for greater sustainability through the collaborative economy’

As collaborative models and approaches gain increasing attention and participation, how can they develop to reduce consumption and the idling capacity of resources? Furthermore, how can research be translated to reduce consumption and contribute to improving environmental sustainability?

In the last year, Nesta has undertaken a programme of research to explore the UK’s collaborative economy – what the collaborative economy is, who is operating and participating in it, and how it can be supported and managed. We defined the collaborative economy as using internet technologies to connect networks of people to make use of the idling capacity of goods, skills and other assets. By seeking to increase efficiency and minimise waste, many initiatives within the collaborative economy are also driven by wider social and environmental aims. Common examples of this phenomenon range from platforms that facilitate the rental of spare rooms or empty homes (airbnb), to ridesharing and carsharing companies (Lyft, Zipcar), to local marketplaces for giving away and lending unwanted goods (Freegle, Peerby).

As many collaborative economy activities promote and encourage sustainable behaviours, their rising popularity is worth noting. In the UK, approximately 25 per cent of adults participated in the collaborative economy in the last year. However, involvement is uneven. Certain groups were significantly more likely to participate – including people in full or part-time employment, people with children, and managerial, professional and administrative workers. Likewise, organisations and activities within the collaborative economy experience different rates and forms of take up – from small levels of consistent participation in local initiatives to widespread use of well-known platforms like eBay.

As with public participation, collaborative economy activities do not offer uniform environmental benefits. Platforms and initiatives will have different types of benefits and will influence participant behaviours in a variety of ways. Consequently, understanding and evaluating the effectiveness of different activities is crucial to identifying which ones are more effective. However, translating evidence and research into action is an also a challenging and complex process. Along with devising effective and appealing interventions, wider conditions and incentives are often required to change longstanding habits.

This presentation will consider the different ways collaborative economy research and knowledge can inform broader efforts to encourage sustainable lifestyles. Five approaches appear particularly relevant: local experiments, competitions and challenges, evidence gathering and dissemination, changes to policy and regulatory frameworks, and innovation labs. Using examples and lessons from Nesta’s research into the collaborative economy and wider work supporting social innovations, we will present a number of interventions and approaches that could bridge the gap between knowledge and action.

References:

www.nesta.org.uk/publications/making-sense-uk-collaborative-economy
Speaker’s Biographies

Gemma Adams, Head of Innovation, Forum for the Future

Gemma leads Forum’s work on innovation and behaviour change. Gemma is part of Forum’s System Innovation Lab and runs experimental projects that want to foster big change in the energy system, business and beyond. She is currently helping to drive a communications project that wants to change households’ perception of the control they have over their bills to encourage energy efficiency, called Energy Control. She is also working with a network of Future Shapers to investigate how citizen-driven innovation might put us on the path towards a sustainable Europe in 2050, on an EU-funded project called EU-Innovate. Last year she co-wrote Consumers in 2030 with Which? and took one of its future concepts to the Design Museum for ‘The Future is Here’ exhibition. Gemma has worked at Forum for the Future for ten years, starting as an Assistant Strategic Advisor in 2005 working in our public sector programme. She has a long standing interest in health and social innovation. She led work with the NHS SD Unit and NHS Institute for Innovation to create training programmes for senior executives and non-executives in the NHS, to incorporate environmental efficiencies into productivity improvement programmes, and to identify how sustainability thinking could be integrated into new commissioning processes for healthcare services. She has worked with diverse public and third sector organisations and businesses to act on sustainability issues. These include: Nike, Unilever, O2, Aimia, M&S, Loughborough Design School, Advantage West Midlands, The Cabinet Office, Kirklees Council, the East of England Health Authority, The Swire Group and 3M.

Stewart Barr, Geography, College of Life and Environmental Sciences, University of Exeter

Stewart is a Human Geographer with interests in the policy and politics of behavioural change. Since undertaking his PhD at the University of Exeter, he has specialised in developing a range of theoretical and applied approaches for understanding behaviour change and its relationship to national and local policy frameworks for promoting sustainable development. In so doing, his research explores both the ways that individuals and communities respond to environmental change and the policy instruments that drive contemporary policies for citizen engagement in issues like anthropogenic climate change. His recent research projects have focused on analyses of UK Government behavioural policies and the ways in which policy relates to social practices through the formation of specific and often narrow ‘choice architectures’. Alongside this research, Stewart is exploring the role that knowledge co-production processes can play in widening choice architectures and tackling some of the knowledge controversies that surround issues like climate change. This is being undertaken at a local level, working with a range of non-academic stakeholders and focusing on issues like river and surface water flooding.

Magnus Boström, Örebro University, Sweden

Magnus Boström is Professor in Sociology, Örebro University, Sweden. In his research, Boström focuses on the themes environment, politics and organization and their intersection. His research
interest generally concerns politics, governance, participation, communication, organization, and responsibility in relation to transnational environmental and sustainability issues. Boström is also studying how various factors shape green consumerism and organized activism. Boström is member and vice-president of the RC24 (Environment and Society) of the International Sociological Association.

Alison Browne, Sustainable Consumption Institute, the University of Manchester, UK

Dr Alison Browne is a Research Fellow at the Sustainable Consumption Institute (SCI) and lecturer in Human Geography at The University of Manchester. Alison has a number of active and interdisciplinary research projects on everyday practice and sustainable consumption; dirt, cleanliness and freshness; and the governance of water resources, drought, and climate change adaptation. Current projects include the Unilever/SCI Strategic Research partnership on Environmental Leapfrogging with Dr David Evans (SCI/Sociology) which started in 2013. This project is funded by Unilever and considers the key mechanisms for change towards sustainable water consumption for the Global South with an emerging regional focus on India and China. A second set of projects centres on a theme of Cultures of Cleanliness in the UK. Through a range of methodologies (e.g., focus groups, in-situ interviews, observation) and case studies (e.g., experience of disruption to routines at festivals), this project explores the dynamics of cultures of cleanliness and hygiene, experiences of disruption, and considers influences to the trajectories of water (and related resource) sustainability linked to hygiene and cleanliness. Part of this project focused on Festivals is done in collaboration with Dr Russell Hitchings (UCL) and Tullia Jack (Lund). Alison has held previous appointments as a Senior Research Associate at the Lancaster Environment Centre, Lancaster University, UK (2010-2012); Research Fellow at the Research Centre for Stronger Communities, Curtin University, Western Australia (2009-2010); and as a research scientist at the CSIRO, Australia (2007-2009).

Neil Coles, Collaborating Centre on Sustainable Consumption and Production (CSCP)

Neil is a Team Leader and Project Director at the CSCP, working on diverse projects with civil society organisations, research institutions, industry and policy-makers. His focus is on behavioural change and values shifts towards sustainable lifestyles- addressing people within their social and cultural contexts. He believes mindset change is at the heart of a move to a more sustainable society. His current projects include an EU wide project addressing sustainability of supermarket own brands, tools for developing sustainable product portfolios and approaches for city based consumption hotspots. He is a participant of the UNEP 10YFP Sustainable Lifestyles expert group and the steering group for the international network of product sustainability initiatives (INPSI).

Before moving to the field of sustainability he acquired 10 years experience in consumer goods marketing with responsibility for brands and products in over 30 countries, including market change strategies, new product development and international market research. Neil studied marketing, cognitive and social psychology and consumer behaviour and is also a certified coach and a master practitioner of NLP.
Sarah Darby, Environmental Change Institute, University of Oxford

Dr Sarah Darby is deputy programme leader with the Lower Carbon Futures team at the Environmental Change Institute, who focus on policy analysis and the development of demand reduction, demand response and adoption of low-carbon technologies. Her research interests centre on how people adopt and learn about how to use technologies, and on evaluation of complex socio-technical innovations. Her interest in the social aspects of energy systems came from her experience of assessing the prospects for reducing the carbon impact of UK housing. More recently, she has been involved in researching social and environmental dimensions of smart metering and smart grids. This has included modelling potential carbon impacts of smart grid development in Europe for the European Commission and a ‘Smart Metering Early Learning’ report for the UK Department of Energy and Climate Change. Her DPhil thesis investigated the effectiveness of residential energy advice programmes; she also holds a BSc in Ecological Science from the University of Edinburgh.

Sophie Dubuisson-Quellier, CSO, Sciences PO, Paris

Dr Sophie Dubuisson-Quellier’s research is situated in the field of economic sociology, and her focus is on the social construction of consumers and markets. Her aim is to understand how consumers’ economic behaviour is progressively shaped by the relationship between business practice, government, and social movements. This research has led her to study businesses themselves, and more generally all market professionals (designers, consulting firms), in order to understand how they derive their view of consumer preferences such that they can then define and market their products. The other side of this coin is her research on the way social movements (fair trade, organic agriculture, environmental NGOs, anti-advertising and responsible consumption movements) empower consumers on both market and political spaces. Lastly, she studies different public policies which aim to govern consumer behaviour, in particular sustainable consumption public policies (e.g. an environmental labeling project). In 2009, Sophie Dubuisson-Quellier published La consommation engagée (Les Presses de Sciences Po). Sophie Dubuisson-Quellier is currently directing two research projects: Governing consumer conduct and Sustainable dimensions of household food consumption (DIMDAMDOM).

Audley Genus, Kingston University, UK

Professor Audley Genus is YTL Professor of Innovation and Technology Management at Kingston University. Audley has research interests in the areas of innovation, community entrepreneurship and technology policy, and new approaches for stimulating ‘green’ innovation. His work has been funded by the EU and the UK research councils, amongst others. He publishes regularly in high impact journals such as Research Policy, Applied Energy, and Environment and Planning and has published three single-authored books. He is currently editing a book called ‘Sustainable Consumption, Design and Innovation’, which is due to published by Springer in 2016. He is a member of the editorial board of Technology Analysis and Strategic Management and a member of the European Association for the Study of Science and Technology (EASST), the British Academy of Management, the Sustainable Development Research Network and the Sustainability Transitions Research Network. Audley has recently given evidence to the UK Parliamentary Joint Committee on
the Deregulation Bill and is an invited member of the Swedish Research Council funding panel relating to innovation, sustainability and resource efficiency.

**Severine Gojard, INRA, France**

Dr Séverine Gojard is a Senior Researcher at INRA and works at ALISS (Alimentation et sciences sociales – Food and social sciences). Her research concentrates on food practices (provisioning, cooking, eating...). She explores whether and how people take into account prescriptions (whether nutritional or environmental) in their daily food practices according to their socioeconomic status and their social trajectories. Dr Séverine Gojard aims at understanding how these prescriptions converge or not with routines, and how they fit, or not, with time and money constraints. She is the author, with Marie Plessz of “Fresh is Best? Social Position, Cooking, and Vegetable Consumption in France”, to be published in Sociology. Her research interests span across various spectrums associated with food, some of which are highlighted below:

**Sociology of food:** Social Determinants of food habits; Reception and application of standards; Meal preparation and management of food leftovers. **Food in infancy:** Social Determinants of breastfeeding; Food diversification; Relations between parents and early childhood coaching institutions. **Food and aging:** Change over the power of aging; and Supports food addiction.

**Mary Greene, National University of Ireland, Galway**

Mary is a PhD researcher at the School of Geography and Archaeology, NUI Galway. Her research interests span disciplinary boundaries and are situated at the interface between human geography, environmental sociology, psychology and science and technology studies. Within this context she is specifically interested in exploring and advancing understandings concerning the interrelationships between: the evolution of social practices, socio-cultural and techno-material dynamics and the mutually generative role of structure and agency in social change processes. Her current PhD study, entitled “Energy Biographies: domestic consumption across the life course”, seeks to situate these dynamics biographically in exploring how and why domestic consumption practices change over biographical, social and historical time. Starting from the assumption that people are active agents in their recursive engagement with social practices over time, this study seeks to address the dearth of research that examines consumption from an in-depth, dynamic and contextual perspective. Prior to commencing her PhD, Mary obtained a first class BA in Psychological Studies and Human Geography at NUI Galway and MSc in Environment, Science and Society at University College London. Succeeding this she worked as a research associate with the Irish Centre for Social Gerontology before returning to the discipline of human geography at NUI Galway to commence her doctoral study in 2012.

**Charlotte Louise Jensen, Aalborg University Copenhagen**

Dr Charlotte Louise Jensen is a Post-Doctoral Fellow at Aalborg University Copenhagen, at the Faculty of Engineering and Science and the Department of Development and Planning. She carried out her PhD as part of the Sustainability, Innovation and Policy Research Group, and is now
employed as a post-doctoral researcher as part of the Sustainable Design and Transitions Research Group. She is also associated to the Centre for Design, Innovation and Sustainable Transition (DIST). Charlotte’s research interests focus on theories of social practice; sustainability; transitions towards sustainability; Actor-Network Theory; socio-technical dynamics; sustainable consumption and production; dynamics between and across consumption and production; energy; lighting; interdisciplinary.

Simon O’ Rafferty, University of Limerick

Dr Simon O’Rafferty (B.Des (Industrial Design), MSc (Sustainable Development), PhD (Sustainable Design Policy)) is a design practitioner, social entrepreneur and post-doctoral research fellow. In late 2014 he returned home to Ireland after ten years living and working in the UK where he was senior researcher at the Ecodesign Centre and co-director of the social design agency Ark Lab. Simon has acted as an advisor to governments, industry, third sector organisations and universities on design for sustainability and social innovation. Simon’s design practice focuses on co-design, service design and social innovation. His research explores the intersections of emerging design practices for sustainability and social innovation with a particular interest in public service innovation, design for policy and behaviour change. He is currently a part-time post-doctoral research fellow with the Irish Environmental Protection Agency and is exploring the co-design of policy interventions for sustainable behaviour change (www.openpractices.net). He has also recently co-founded a new social enterprise called Voidstarter (www.voidstarter.com) and was one of three winners of the 2014 EU Social Innovation Competition. He is an expert evaluator for the European Commission’s Horizon 2020 Programme and has been an invited speaker on emerging design practice by organisations such as the BBC, British Council and UK Technology Strategy board. Simon has also recently co-founded the first peer-reviewed Irish Design Research Journal and is launching the first DESIS (Design for Social Innovation and Sustainability) Lab in Ireland in collaboration with three Irish Universities.

David Prendergast, Intel Labs Europe

Dr David Prendergast is a social anthropologist and User Experience Lead at Intel Labs Europe. He is a Principal Investigator in the Intel Collaborative Research Institute for Sustainable Connected Cities with Imperial College and University College London and also holds the position of Visiting Professor of Healthcare Innovation at Trinity College Dublin. Prior to his career at Intel, David has been involved in numerous major research projects including: a multi-year ethnography of intergenerational relationships and family change in South Korea; the provision of paid home care services in Ireland; and a three year ESRC study into death, dying and bereavement in England and Scotland. David began working with Intel in 2006 attracted by the opportunity to utilize social research to design, develop, and evaluate culturally appropriate technologies to help enable older people to live independently. In recent years, David has set up large scale urban research test beds across London, Dublin and San Jose. The latter showcased at the White House as part of the Smart America Challenge. Currently, David is the Intel Labs lead on the Croke Park Smart Stadium project in Ireland with DCU, the GAA and Arizona State University as well as lead on the Dublin City Council Internet of Things Demonstrator Project. Fortune Magazine named David a ‘Hero of the Fortune 500’

Marlyne Sahakian, University of Lausanne, Switzerland

Dr Marlyne Sahakian is a researcher in the Industrial Ecology Group at the University of Lausanne. In 2011, she completed a PhD in development studies at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva. Her research in Metro Manila, the Philippines, was focused on household energy consumption, using social and cultural approaches to understanding consumption. She also devotes time to a community-driven effort in Smokey Mountain, a former squatter community in Metro Manila, to promote sustainable livelihood opportunities. Her research interest is in understanding natural resource consumption patterns and practices, in relation to environmental promotion and social equity, and identifying opportunities for transitions towards more “sustainable” societies. Marlyne is a co-founder of the SCORAI Europe network and has organised a number of SCORAI-EU workshops; most recently the workshop she hosted at the University of Lausanne in December 2014 – Sustainable Consumption: Problem Framing and Research Design. In 2014, Dr Sahakian and the University of Lausanne was awarded a three-year grant by the Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences, Sustainable Development at Universities Programme, to promote sustainable consumption research and teaching in Switzerland. Dr Sahakian has published her research in a number of international journals including Energy Policy, the Journal of Consumer Culture, Sustainability, and the Journal of Industrial Ecology. In 2014 she published a book on air conditioning consumption Keeping Cool in Southeast Asia: Energy use and urban air-conditioning with Palgrave Macmillan (New York, London, UK).

Giuseppe Salvia, Nottingham Trent University, UK

Giuseppe is a Research Fellow at Nottingham Trent University. As a member of the UK INDEMAND Centre, he investigates the relationship between people and artefacts, focusing on namely attitudes and behaviours at different stages of product life; repair markets and grassroots innovations; and acquisition and development of skills. Giuseppe is mainly concerned with the exploration of the design contribution to a paradigm shift towards sustainable patterns of consumption and production. His interest in the topic originated from the Ph.D. research investigating the satisfactory component of potentially sustainable practices, as individual and collaborative making and transforming. Specifically, reusing, repairing, repurposing and reappropriating are envisaged and addressed as means for (emotionally) durable products. The major outcome is the identification and application of design roles for fostering satisfactory and sustainable patterns of consumption and production through strategies for product longevity. He also collaborated with Politecnico di Milano, Italy, in research projects focusing on Design strategies for Sustainable Consumption, Industrial Ecology and Life Cycle Assessment, Bio-inspired design approach, materials innovation, and expressive-sensorial dimension of materials.
Martina Schäfer, Center for Technology and Society, Technische Universität Berlin

Prof. Dr. Dr. Martina Schäfer is one of the directors of the Center for Technology and Society (CTS) at Technische Universität Berlin. The CTS is a research center which promotes inter- and transdisciplinary research in the fields of energy and climate change, as well as mobility, land use and consumption patterns. Prof. Schäfer has an interdisciplinary background with PhDs in environmental engineering and sociology. Her focus is sustainability research in the fields of sustainable consumption, sustainability innovations, as well as sustainable regional development. Professor Schäfer is providing the keynote address for this CONSENSUS conference (see page 4 of this booklet).

Kathleen Stokes, Nesta, UK

Kathleen is a Senior Researcher leading on Nesta’s policy and research work in digital education and the collaborative economy. At Nesta, Kathleen has researched and written various publications, blogs and articles around social innovation, education, and technology – including the reports Making sense of the UK collaborative economy and Which doctors take up promising ideas: new insights from open data – and presented at a variety of conferences and events, including SXSWedu and the European Urban Knowledge Network. She has managed and edited the Decoding Learning report as well as developed evaluation strategies for Nesta’s Digital Makers programme and its open call grantees. Kathleen joined Nesta in November 2011, initially providing research support on Creative Councils and other programmes in the Innovation Lab. Prior to Nesta, Kathleen was as the researcher for Charles Leadbeater’s book Innovation in Education: Lessons From Pioneers Around the World. She has also worked as a researcher and project developer across a wide range of initiatives in academia, government and the third sector – including Maslaha, the Parliament of Canada, and the University of Ottawa. Outside of Nesta, Kathleen is a founder and member of the Point People, an experimental organisation that builds and connects networks to make positive change. She holds an MA in World Cities and Urban Life with distinction from Goldsmiths, University of London, and a BA (Hons) in History and Canadian Studies from the University of Ottawa.

Edina Vadovics, GreenDependent Institute

Edina (M.Sc., M.Ed., M.Phil.) is professional director of GreenDependent Institute and president of GreenDependent Association, both with the mission to promote and research sustainable lifestyles, with a focus on facilitating dialogue between research and practice. Ms Vadovics manages GreenDependent’s work in European/international research projects and campaigns. While her research focuses on sustainable communities and lifestyles, she is also involved in on the ground action projects. Earlier, she worked in corporate sustainability management, and taught related courses at various universities, among others, for the University of San Francisco. She also worked as an external expert to the European Environment Agency and UNEP, and contributed to their key publications. She is member of the advisory board of the TRANSIT (TRANsformative Social Innovation Theory) project, and a key expert in the URBACT Capitalization project on social innovation in cities. Ms Vadovics has been a long-term member of the SCORAI (Sustainable Consumption Research and
Action Initiative) Europe. More recently, she joined the executive committee of the Global Research Forum on Sustainable Production and Consumption.

**Philip J. Vergragt, Tellus Institute, Boston & Marsh Institute, Clark University, MA, USA**

Prof. Dr. Philip J. Vergragt PhD is an academic and activist; presently a Fellow at Tellus Institute, Boston, USA; and a Research Professor at Marsh Institute, Clark University, Worcester, MA, USA; he is a Professor Emeritus of Technology Assessment at Delft University of Technology, The Netherlands. His main research interests are sustainable technological and social innovations in transportation, energy, and housing; grassroots innovations; socio-technical transitions; sustainable consumption and production; and technology assessment of emerging technologies. Dr. Vergragt obtained a M.Sc. and a PhD in Physical Chemistry from the University of Leiden, The Netherlands. He was the co-founder and first coordinator of the Global Research Forum on Sustainable Production and Consumption (GRF-SPaC) from 2011-2015; and organized its inaugural conference in Rio de Janeiro in June 2012; co-organized its second conference in Shanghai in June 2014; and helped to organize various GRF workshops, most recently in Arequipa (Peru) in October 2014. Since 2014 he is a member of the Multi Stakeholder Advisory Committee of the “Sustainable Lifestyles and Education” program under the UN “10 Year Framework of Programs” (10YFP), administered by the UN Environmental Program (UNEP). Prof. Vergragt has co-authored more than 80 scientific publications and three books: “Sustainable Technological Development” (2000); “The business of sustainable mobility, from vision to reality” (2006), and with Maurie Cohen and Halina Szejnwald Brown “Innovations in Sustainable Consumption: New Economics, Socio-technical Transitions, and Social Practices” (2013).

**Ben Wooliscroft, University of Otago, New Zealand**

Associate Professor Ben Wooliscroft is a research affiliate of the Centre for Sustainability at the University of Otago, teaches in the Marketing Department and is the Associate Dean Postgraduate of the Otago Business School. Ben is a Macromarketer – concerned with the interactions between markets and society, with a focus on the betterment of society. Ben’s research includes; sustainability, ethical consumption and active transportation. He is leading workstream 1.2 of the Energy Cultures project “Energy cultures of households and their transport”. This workstream focuses on identifying the current energy and transportation culture of New Zealand, as well as finding high impact opportunities for change. Ben has taught in the marketing department since graduating with a BCom(Hons) in 1998, mainly in the areas of marketing theory, consumer behaviour, history of business and marketing research. Postgraduate supervision is an aspect of the academic life that he particularly enjoys. He is the Secretary of the Macromarketing Society Inc.. He is on the editorial board of the European Business Review, the Journal of Historical Research in Marketing and the policy board of the Journal of Macromarketing, and was Co-chair of the Macromarketing Conference 2006 in Queenstown, and will be again in 2017.
Biographies for the CONSENSUS#2 Project Team

**Professor Anna Davies** has worked in the area of environmental governance since 1994 and is currently the Professor of Environmental Geography in TCD. She has published more than 60 peer-reviewed books and articles and is past Chair of the Planning and Environment Research Group of the Royal Geographical Society. Her research is policy-focused and Prof Davies was recently appointed to the National Expert Advisory Council on Climate Change.

Professor Davies is the Director of the [Environmental Governance Research Group](#) in TCD and Principal Investigator of CONSENSUS. Earlier this year Anna was awarded an ERC Consolidator Grant worth €1.9 million for a new research project - ‘SHARECITY: Assessing the practice and potential of food sharing economies in cities’ - which builds on the findings of the CONSENSUS food consumption data.

**Dr Frances Fahy** is a Senior Lecturer and Head of Geography at the National University of Ireland, Galway. Frances’ primary research interests are in the field of sustainable consumption and environmental planning, specifically the social and cultural consequences of environmental change. She is the cluster leader of the Planning and Sustainability Research Cluster in Geography at NUIG. Frances has published widely in the field of sustainability and has led a number of research projects exploring governance for sustainable consumption, innovative methods for public participation in planning and developing sustainable planning tools (in particular quality of life indicators and community mapping). Frances is the past President of the Geographical Society of Ireland (2012-2014) and a past Chair of the Planning and Environment Research Group (PERG) of the Royal Geographical Society in the UK (2007-2012). Frances is also the recipient of the 2013-14 Fulbright Award and travelled to the US to conduct research on: *Communicating Sustainability Research*.

**Prof Henrike Rau** is currently Professor of Geography at Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich. Her current research activities focus on socio-cultural and environmental consequences of increased physical mobility, alternative modes of transport (including virtual mobility tools) and sustainable transport options in urban and rural areas. Other research interests include sustainability research in the social sciences, social research methods and cultural diversity and cross-cultural research. Henrike’s publications include three edited collections – ‘Challenging Consumption’ (with Prof Anna Davies and Dr Frances Fahy, Routledge, 2014) ‘Methods of Sustainability Research in the Social Sciences’ (with Dr Frances Fahy, Sage, 2013) and ‘Environmental Argument and Cultural Difference: Locations, Fractures, and Deliberations’ (with Prof Ricca Edmondson, Peter Lang, 2008) – and peer-reviewed articles in Journal of Consumer Policy, Journal of Environmental Policy and Planning, Environmental Politics and Nature and Culture.
Dr Laura Devaney was a CONSENSUS postdoctoral researcher working within the Geography Department of Trinity College Dublin. Laura completed her PhD “Governing food risk: regulation, communication and biosecurity” in 2012 and has worked on wider issues of food consumption within the CONSENSUS project. Her research has primarily focused on issues of food-related biosecurity that continue to preoccupy regulators, producers and consumers despite the formation of Food Safety Authorities (FSA) around the globe. Laura has published her research in The Geographical Journal and Irish Geography.

Dr Ruth Doyle is a postdoctoral researcher with the Consensus project based in the Geography Department of Trinity College Dublin. Her career has included research and consultancy experience in the field of environmental governance, stakeholder engagement and environmental communications. She was recently a visiting scholar at the University of California, Berkeley and is pursuing research interests in the areas of environmental governance; social dimensions of sustainable technologies and transitions; social practices; sustainable behaviour change and science-art collaboration. Ruth has published on sustainability transitions and creative research processes for the development of innovations and societal learning.

Dr Mary Jo Lavelle is a Postdoctoral researcher in the School of Geography and Archaeology at the National University of Ireland, Galway. Mary Jo’s research interests are situated in the field of environmental sustainability; specifically household consumption behaviours, sustainable lifestyles, and health and wellbeing. Mary Jo is particularly interested in the conceptual models that underpin environmental behaviour change. Her PhD research for the CONSENSUS project explored household consumption behaviours and sustainable lifestyles across Ireland. Her current research activities concern the role of segmentation analysis and its utility in promoting greater understanding of pro-environmental behaviours. She received awards for her research from the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research; the College of Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies; and the Centre for Environment, Development and Sustainability at NUI, Galway. Previously, Mary Jo obtained a Master’s Degree in Health Promotion from the National University of Ireland, Galway. She has published in Quality in Ageing and Older Adults and Irish Geography.

Richard Manton is a postdoctoral researcher in the School of Political Science & Sociology at the National University of Ireland, Galway. His CONSENSUS research analyses mobility milestones and biographies to develop policy recommendations for sustainable mobility practices. Richard’s current research interests include: transport policy and planning, life-course mobility analysis, infrastructure for walking and cycling, greenways, pedestrian and cyclist safety, and public participation in planning. Richard has published in the Proceedings of the Institution of Civil Engineers – Transport, International Journal of Environment and Sustainable Development and Cycling Research International.
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