

### IC - (20895) - PICKING THE RIGHT MOMENT: COMPARING DIFFERENT LIFE CHANGES AND THEIR IMPACT ON PRO-ENVIRONMENTAL BEHAVIOUR

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#### Background and objectives

Non-environmentally friendly habits (like transportation or diet) are particularly 'sticky' and resistant to interventions and even individual willpower (Thomas et al., 2016, Wood, 2019). However, a substantial change in an individual's life over a short time frame (a 'moment of change') provides an opportunity to break habits (Verplanken et al., 2008). These moments are impactful opportunities for pro-environmental lifestyle shifts (Capstick et al., 2014, Marsden et al., 2020). While the literature has shown moments of change are an important opportunity, little research has examined which types of life event are most promising to engender pro-environmental change. This gap is critical for policy makers to understand when to intervene.

#### Process and methods (for empirical research)

Using the UK's Understanding Society dataset, we examine changes in pro-environmental behaviour of 26,519 individuals over a span of 4 years. Fixed effects regressions compare the impact of five life events: a partner change, a household size change, a move, a job change, and a significant change in health. We also examine whether a previously expressed desire to do more for the environment mediate the effect of a moment of change.

#### Main results (or main arguments in the case of critical reviews)

Our analysis finds changes in health and household size predict a negative change in pro-environmental behaviour. Other transformative life events have a positive influence (moving and job change) but do not appear significant long term. As for pro-environmental intentions, they either have no effect, or (in the case of a partner change) make negative environmental behaviour changes worse.

#### Implications for research and practice/policy | Importance and originality of the contribution

Our results demonstrate that not all moments of change impact pro-environmental behaviour equally. Critically for a post-Covid policy world, we show that changes in health can have a lasting negative impact on pro-environmental behaviour.

**Palavras-chave :** pro-environmental behaviour, habits, moments of change, life transitions