

## **Sustainability | Individual communication**

### **IC - (21090) - ACTING LOCALLY: INTERMEDIARY ACTORS AND THE TRANSITION TO A LOWER CARBON ECONOMY**

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#### **Background and objectives**

The transition to a more sustainable future is a challenge that requires action on many levels, and involves many actors. The concept of intermediary actors in sustainability transitions is well-established (Kivimaa et al, 2019) but often focused on how intermediary actors act to stimulate socio-technological change through professional organisations and industry associations that mediate between the local and the global level. In this presentation we draw on insights from multi-level governance and sustainability transitions to consider how organisations create and take on a role as intermediary actors, most actively at the local level, to facilitate change in areas such as the transition to a circular economy and climate change adaptation.

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

In this presentation we draw on empirical research in the north-east of Scotland based on semi-structured interviews with representatives of environmentally-focused organisations. Taking a place-based approach, we investigate how local contexts can contribute to creating or hindering change, and show how individuals seeking to achieve a more sustainable society act within organisational settings to adopt an intermediary role for their organisation.

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

We argue that intermediary actors have a vital role in the delivery of a more sustainable society, and crucially, that place- and locally-based organisations are key to this transition. We highlight how local government actors work to adopt an intermediary role at the organisational level, working as 'go-betweens' to overcome some of the barriers to action, and drawing on transdisciplinary approaches and partnerships to facilitate change.

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

Understanding the role that people and organisations can adopt as intermediary actors at the local level can be crucial to our ability to move to a more sustainable future. With lessons for researchers, policy and practice, our work builds existing research to provide additional insights into how intermediary actors adopt place-based approaches and adapt to their local and organisational contexts to deliver change.

**Palavras-chave : sustainability, climate adaptation, circular economy, intermediaries, transitions, organisations**