

Consumption

(20894) - 'MOMENTS OF CHANGE': THE DYNAMICS OF SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLES

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Background and objectives

Responding to sustainability issues like climate change requires profound changes to individual behaviour. However, much of our behaviour is habitual, resistant to change, and cued by stable contexts (i.e., same time, place and/or social group). When these habits are disrupted, though, it provides an opportunity to foster pro-environmental behaviour. '*Moments of change*' are when individual life circumstances shift within a short time frame, and include biographical and external changes (e.g., becoming a parent, travel disruption). The relationship between moments of change and environmental impact is complex, with differences between individuals, cultures, and behaviours. Furthermore, while we know much about *how* to intervene to foster sustainable lifestyles, we know far less about *when* to intervene. Yet, initial studies in this area have shown that behaviour change interventions targeted to moments of change (e.g. relocation) can be far more effective than when applied during more stable times (Bamberg, 2006; Verplanken et al., 2016).

This symposium brings together insights from several fields to provide a much-needed focus on the *temporal dimension* of pro-environmental behaviour change. The session aims to showcase new research on moments of change that apply *diverse methodologies*, including large-scale secondary data analysis (Swanke), longitudinal depth interviews across cultures (Nash), and field experiments on travel (Tipping), water (Swaffield), and food (Mitev) behaviours. Papers reflect both biographical (personal, planned) moments of change, as well as external (societal, unplanned) disruptions, including: relocation, parenthood, retirement, and COVID-19. They also span studies of how moments of change in themselves (without intervention) and moments of change *in combination with* interventions may reshape consumption patterns in more versus less sustainable directions.

Chair: Prof. Lorraine Whitmarsh, University of Bath, UK

1. Picking the Right Moment: Comparing Different Life Changes and their Impact on Pro-Environmental Behaviour – Sarah Swanke; Max Plank Institute for Human Development, Germany
2. Parenthood and retirement as windows of opportunity for environmentally sustainable lifestyle changes in the time of COVID19: Some qualitative, cross-cultural insights - Nick Nash; University of Bath, UK
3. The effects of COVID-19 and starting university on young people's green behaviours - Kaloyan Mitev; University of Bath, UK
4. Reducing water consumption in the home: Water smart technology and moments of change - Joanne Swaffield; Cardiff University, UK
5. The impact of a social media campaign on individual travel behaviour in the UK during the COVID-19 pandemic - Christianne Tipping; Cardiff University, UK

Discussant – Dr. Ganga Shreedhar, LSE, UK

Significance for the advancement of People-Environment relations

This is an exciting area of developing research for people-environment studies that situates the individual within the socio-environmental context to explore how they interact over time and what this means for sustainability. The symposium integrates various methods and theoretical insights on the timing of shifts and interventions towards sustainable lifestyles.

Palavras-chave : moments of change, sustainable lifestyles, behaviour change, life transitions, COVID-19