

## Why behave sustainably? Including altruistic motivations for lifestyle changes



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### Topic

- Resilience
- Lifestyle
- Building
- Resources
- Tourism
- Energy

### Title of the Paper

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### Form of Presentation

- Poster
- Presentation

### Short Description (maximum 2500 characters)

The main motivation for sustainable development, as defined by the Brundtland definition, is to care for other humans – for the world's poor and for unborn people – and its main implication is intra- and intergenerational justice on a global scale. Traditional economic models don't care for motivations or use the motivation to increase one's own well-being as the main motivation for action. In this line, also local sustainability initiatives tend to motivate participants by the (perhaps more implicit) assumption that their own well-being will increase by their participation itself, but also by implementing the outcome of the respective project. Efficiency-improvements (in energy or resource use), as one main focus of such outcome-oriented initiatives to improve the sustainability of our societies have largely shown to be ineffective, due to rebound effects etc. We assume that such efficiency improvements can only be effective when accompanied by a more fundamental value and herewith lifestyle shift. Models that do not account or care for motivations for actions cannot account for such shift. This paper aims to present a model that combines economic and psychological elements to make it suitable for discussions on sustainability transitions. The Capability Approach as an alternative to neo-classical approaches to explaining human behaviour offers a perspective on this that might be useful, as it distinguishes between interests in own well-being and other-regarding interests (called agency). The motivation for Sustainable Development, i.e. caring for the world's poor and future generations, clearly lies in the latter. At the same time, the Capability Approach is as a participatory method rather used in situations where the world's poor care for their own well-being. This paper draws on studies from psychology to get more insights into possibilities for strengthening agency-driven motivation, independently of well-being driven motivation. It then conceptualizes the integration of both, the Capability and psychological approaches, as a basis for designing interventions for lifestyle changes.

