

Towards sustainable consumption practices: methods and results of cases in nutrition and bathing



Data of Your Paper



Topic

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

Title of the Paper

Towards sustainable consumption practices: methods and results of cases in nutrition and bathing

Form of Presentation

- Poster
- Presentation

Short Description (maximum 2500 characters)

Practices determine how products and services are used by end-users and for what reasons, and thus co-determine the environmental and social effects. Practices can be defined as "a routinized type of behaviour which consists of several elements, interconnected to one another: forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, 'things' and their use, a background knowledge in the form of understanding, knowhow, states of emotion and motivational knowledge (Reckwitz (2002: 249)." Practices are thus about 'havings' (or stuff), skills, as well as emotions, meanings, identity (referred to as image) and 'doings' (what people actually do, with whom, when and how). Practices co-evolve and cannot be prescribed and have been neglected in transitions and socio-technical systems conceptualisations so far. Nevertheless, it makes sense to think about sustainable practices, how they can be achieved and how to facilitate changes (both at the niche and practice level) and processes of awareness rising and learning among end-users and other actors relevant to the practices. In addition, approaches and methods needs to be (further) developed for this.

This paper focuses on experiences in the Netherlands in which different methods were applied to develop ideas and images of future more sustainable consumption practice for food consumption and bathing. It will report on three cases. First, it will describe methods and results of visions of future sustainable food practices that were developed involving stakeholders and were tested using focus groups of consumers. Second, it will report on a practice-oriented design methodology (Scott et al, forthcoming) in which a group of end-users reflected on their bathing practices, experimented with more sustainable alternatives and participated in a workshop that resulted in a range of ideas on concepts on more sustainable bathing. Third, an account will be given of a study into flexitarianism in which participatory observation of consumers took place which deliberately increased their vegetable consumption and decreased their meat consumption, after which images of future flexitarian practices have been developed. The paper will end with a comparative discussion and conclusions on broader relevance to the field of sustainable consumption practices and system innovation, as

well as for current developments with regard to the financial crises and austerity.

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