



March 2011 Newsletter

Dear SCORAI,

Spring is episodically in the air in my neck of the woods as SCORAI prepares for its next workshop due to be held April 14-16 in Princeton, New Jersey on the theme of "Socio-technical Transitions, Social Practices, and the New Economics: Meeting the Challenges of a Constrained World."

As usual, on the top right, you will find a menu "In This Issue" that serves as a Table of Contents to help you navigate through the eNewsletter. If you have newsworthy items that you would like to appear in the next issue, please send them to me no later than March 25. Note that the deadline to submit items is the 25th of each month.

Regards,

Maurie Cohen

Millennium Consumption Goals Announced

I read yesterday that "a Sri Lankan scientist is calling for the drafting of ["Millennium Consumption Goals"](#) to [help] rich countries to curb their climate-damaging consumption habits, in the same way the poor have Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to get them out of poverty." A fantastic idea-- but what would these MCGs include?

For those unfamiliar with the [Millennium Development Goals](#) these are a set of eight goals for "underdeveloped" societies to halve poverty, lack of access to clean water, illiteracy, and other key indicators of underdevelopment by 2015. So, naturally we should have a set of parallel goals in overdeveloped countries. As the scientist, Mohan Munasinghe, noted, consumption is at the heart of overdeveloped countries' environmental burden so tackling this issue head-on is key. And I'd argue not just for Earth, but for citizens of overdeveloped countries as well.

So, what targets should these MCGs set forth? Unfortunately the article doesn't mention anything more, but I'm going to start the list and encourage you all to add additional ideas.

Let's start with an easy one:

In This Issue

Millennium Consumption Goals Announced
Report on the Meeting of the UNEP Governing Council
Special Issue of the Journal of Consumer Policy
Degrowth Course in Istanbul
New Publications by SCORAI Members and Friends
Upcoming Conferences
New SCORAI Affiliates

Executive Board



Jeffrey Barber
Integrative Strategies Forum

Halina Brown
Clark University

Maurie Cohen
New Jersey Institute of Technology

Michael Maniates
Allegheny College

John Stutz
Tellus Institute

Philip Vergragt
Tellus Institute and Clark University

Richard Wilk
Indiana University

1. *Halve obesity and overweight rates by 2020 (we're starting the MCGs later than the MDGs).* This will reduce mortality, morbidity, and economic costs, as well as reduce ecological pressures driven by overconsumption of food.

2. *Halve the work week from the current 40+ hour per week to 20 hours per week.* This will better distribute jobs, wealth, promote healthier living, and reduce economic activity, which is essential in our ecologically taxed world. For a good paper on this topic, read New Economic Foundation's excellent report [21 Hours](#).

3. *Better distribute wealth by raising taxes on the wealthiest members of society.* That one will get me in trouble with the American Tea Party but let's dust off the idea of [Noblesse Oblige](#): to those given much, much is expected in return. The days of extreme wealth spent on luxurious living must draw to a close. The Earth can't handle it any longer.

4. *Double the rate of use of non-motorized transport (bikes, walking, etc.).* Increasing these forms of transport will improve health, reduce fossil fuel and material use, and make for safer cities.

5. *Guarantee access to health care for all.* Yes, another minefield in the USA, but standard procedure in most industrial countries so that'll be an easy goal for most countries to achieve.

OK, I'll stop there. Please help me add three more to the list to get it to eight and then we can see about getting this submitted to the United Nations. After all, if those in overdeveloped countries can set goals for those in developing countries, the UN should show the same concern to those living poorly in industrial countries.

--Erik Assadourian (from *Transforming Cultures* available at <http://blogs.worldwatch.org/transformingcultures/mcgs>)

Report on the Meeting of the UNEP Governing Council

From February 18-24, I participated in various conferences in Nairobi as an *alternate* member of the Civil Society Advisory Group (AG) on International Environmental Governance (IEG). In this AG, I represented North America and the IEG was one of the two themes of the United Nations Environment Program Governing Council meeting (the other was the Green Economy).

The AG-IEG, which consists of nine representatives of Major Groups and six from Regions, met for the first time on February 18. In this meeting, we looked back on our first [report](#) and we looked forward to the tasks ahead. We also discussed our work with Achim Steiner, the Executive Director of UNEP, for whom our work is very important. The



most challenging question is how to strengthen the global environmental pillar institutionally, and at the same time strengthen the sustainability umbrella across the three "pillars" (or three strands of DNA, as Steiner would present it). Another institutional question is how to represent civil society in IEG. A pressing question is how to achieve a "green economy" without hampering the development of developing countries. An interesting question put by Steiner was "how to translate a problem analysis into emotional commitment by the public" (I like that one).

Next, on February 19-20, was the "Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum," again focusing on the same two issues which will also be the leading themes of Rio+20. At this conference there was a powerful speech by Lisa Jackson, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency in the United States, with strong support for the ten-year framework of programs (10YFP) on sustainable production and consumption (SCP). My question to her (speaking on behalf of SCORAI) was about the role of the social sciences, especially as to behavioral and lifestyle changes. She voiced strong support and referred me to Paul Anastas, the Assistant Administrator of EPA's Office of Research and Development.

February 21-24 was the Governing Council meeting of UNEP where countries were mostly represented by their Ministers of Environmental Affairs (sometimes ambassadors). For four days there were speeches and discussions on the green economy and IEG. Many members of civil society, as well as members of the AG, were able to address plenaries or subgroups of ministers. On Day 2 of this conference (which focused on the green economy) I spoke on behalf of the Science and Technology Major Group, making a pitch for well-known SCORAI themes. On Day 3 (on IEG), many other members of the AG spoke.

More interestingly, SCORAI-ers Jeffrey Barber (Integrated Strategies Forum) and Vanessa Timmer (One Earth), and I organized two successful side events. The first, "Mapping the Movement," was about just that: creating an interactive database by and for civil society and to use innovative methods on how to employ such data into the possible creation of a global citizens' movement (though this concept was not used). In the workshop, we worked with Morel Fourman (Gaiasoft), who taught us innovative methods to harness and channel the energy and synergy of many different groups. The second workshop we convened was called "A Global Research Forum for SCP." This one discussed the potential of launching a global version of SCORAI, and possibly organizing a global conference as a side event to Rio+20. We have now 26 names on our list of prospective attendees and interested parties from all over the world. Both programs are presently under consideration as part of the 10YFP on SCP.

Jeffrey and Vanessa, as North American representatives to

the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum, were also very active in creating a stronger position for the six global regions within UNEP, complementing the increasing roles of the nine Major Groups. They proposed organizing regional multistakeholder dialogues on the green economy (as an important case), along the lines that we pioneered in Ottawa in early February (see my report in the last SCORAI newsletter). The support for this initiative from all local UNEP directors was quite heartening. Just last week, UNEP launched its [report on the green economy](#), but from a SCORAI perspective, a lot of discussion is still open, especially on changing lifestyles and values. At the Tellus Institute, we will have a lunch meeting on this report on March 16. All from the Boston area are welcome to attend.

The value for SCORAI of these meetings centered on making new connections with SCP researchers around the world, exploring synergies across regions; gaining attention from policymakers and civil society and from other research entities; and garnering support from interested countries and from UNEP (hopefully to be translated into funding opportunities).

--Submitted by Philip Vergragt

Special Issue of the Journal of Consumer Policy

Volume 34, Number 1 (March 2011)

Editorial Note

Putting Sustainable Consumption Into Practice, *Ulf Schrader & John Thørgersen*

Original Papers

Not Roadmaps but Toolboxes: Analysing Pioneering National Programmes for Sustainable Consumption and Production, *Annikka Berg*

Developing Policies and Instruments for Sustainable Household Consumption: Irish Experiences and Futures, *Jessica Pape, Henrike Rau, Frances Fahy, & Anna Davies*

The Impact of Evaluation of Sustainable Consumption Policy Instruments, *Franziska Wolff & Norma Schönherr*

Maximizing the Efficiency of Greenhouse Gas Related Consumer Policy, *Maria Csutora & Agnes Zsoka*

Beyond Profitability of Energy-Saving Measures: Attitudes Towards Energy Saving, *Stefan Zundel & Immanuel Stieß*

Assessing the Effects of Certification Networks on Sustainable Production and Consumption: The Cases of FLO and FSC, *Carsten Gandenberger, Heiko Garrelts, & Diana Wehlau*

Varieties of Environmental Labelling, Market Structures, and Sustainable Consumption Across Europe: A Comparative

Analysis of Organizational and Market Supply Determinants of Environmental-Labelled Goods, *Sebastian Koos*

Customer Response to Carbon Labelling of Groceries, *Jerome K. Vanclay, John Shortiss, Scott Aulsebrook, Angus M. Gillespie, Ben C. Howell, Rhoda Johanni, Michael J. Maher, Kelly M. Mitchell, Mark D. Stewart, and Jim Yates*

Companies Promoting Sustainable Consumption of Employees, *Viola Muster*

Leapfrogging to Sustainable Consumption: An Explorative Survey of Consumption Habits and Orientations in Southern Brazil. *Martina Schäfer, Melanie Jaeger-Erben, & Aguinaldo Santos*

Degrowth Course in Istanbul

A day-course on degrowth will be organized by Research & Degrowth just before the European Society for Ecological Economics 2011 conference in Istanbul as part of a pre-conference workshop. Graduate students and young researchers are invited to participate and contribute to the ESEE 2011 at Boğaziçi University Campus on June 12-14. For information see <http://www.degrowth.net>.

New Publications by SCORAI Members and Friends

Markowitz, E. & T. Bowerman. 2011. How Much Is Enough: Examining the Public's Beliefs About Consumption. [*Analysis of Social Issues and Public Policy*](#).

United Nations Environment Program. 2011. [Visions for Change: Recommendations for Effective Policies on Sustainable Lifestyles](#). Paris: UNEP.

Brown, M. 2010. [Civilizing the Economy: A New Economics of Provision](#). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Upcoming Conferences

Global Consultation on Sustainable Buildings as Drivers in a Global Framework for Sustainable Consumption and Production, and a Green Economy, March 20-31, 2011, Singapore. <http://www.bcaa.edu.sg/>

17th Annual International Sustainable Development Research Conference, May 8-10, 2011, The Earth Institute, Columbia University, New York City. <http://www.isdrc17.ei.columbia.edu>

Third Biennial Transformative Consumer Research Conference, June 24-26, 2011, Baylor University, Waco, TX,

USA

<http://www.baylor.edu/tcr>

United States Society for Ecological Economics Conference (Building the Green Economy), June 26-29, 2011, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI, USA.

<https://www.msu.edu/~ussee>

Fifth International Consumer Sciences Research Conference (Consumer Behaviour for a Sustainable Future), July 18-20, 2011, Bonn, Germany.

<http://www.consumer11.org>

International Conference Sustainable Consumption: Towards Action and Impact, November 6-8, 2011, Hamburg, Germany.

<http://www.sustainableconsumption2011.org>

Third German Environmental Sociology Summit, Theme: Innovation and Sustainability: Beyond Technology, November 16-18, 2011 Johann Wolfgang Goethe-University, Frankfurt, Germany.

<http://www.gesellschaftswissenschaften.unifrankfurt.de/gess>

New SCORAI Affiliates

SCORAI welcomes the following new participants to the network during the month of February. Total membership is currently 229 people.

Nicholas Ashford, *MIT (United States)*

Robert Bakiika, *Environmental Management for Livelihood Improvement (Uganda)*

Aron Belinky, *Vitae Civilis Institute (Brazil)*

Janis Bizga, *Terra Libre (Latvia)*

Karla Cook, *The Food Times (United States)*

Hen Cooke

Uchita de Zoysa, *Global Sustainability Solutions (Sri Lanka)*

Arab Hoballah, *UNEP (France)*

Alastair Iles, *University of California Berkeley (United States)*

Peleg Kremer

L. Groomes, *University of East Anglia (United Kingdom)*

Simon Højberg Olsen, *Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (Japan)*

Holly Parsons, *Imperial College (United Kingdom)*

Yannick Rumpala, *University of Nice*

Venkat Somasundaram

Samuel Thompson, *Imperial College*

Lynn Wagner, *International Institute for Sustainable Development (Canada)*

Hala Yousry, *Desert Research Center*

[Forward email](#)



Try it FREE today.

This email was sent to mcohen@adm.njit.edu by mcohen@adm.njit.edu |

[Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).

Sustainable Consumption Research and Action Initiative (SCORAI) | c/o Tellus Institute | 11 Arlington Street | Boston | NJ | 02116