



## March 2012 Newsletter

**Dear SCORAI,**

This month's newsletter brings a host of new publications and an update on the recent SCORAI Executive Committee Meeting as well as updates on upcoming conferences.

As always, we hope this newsletter finds you all well!

Kate & Debbie & Maurie

### The Annual SCORAI Executive Committee Meeting

The SCORAI Executive Committee (Jeffrey Barber, Halina Brown, Maurie Cohen, John Stutz, and Philip Vergragt) held its annual meeting on February 10 in New York City. Special thanks are due to the Baha'i Center for generously providing a wonderful meeting room for this purpose.

It has in general been a quite busy year with major workshops held in Princeton (in April 2011) and others planned for Vancouver (in March 2012) and Bregenz (Austria) (in May 2012). In addition, SCORAI is closely engaged with planning for the Global Research Forum on Sustainable Consumption and Production that will be held in Rio in June in conjunction with the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20). The annual meeting provided a great opportunity to reflect on progress to date and to plan for the future.

First, the Executive Committee resolved to establish several project-focused taskforces. These committees will work on redesigning the current SCORAI website (and upgrading its functionality to support new social networking applications), the creation of a searchable database of members, the development and dissemination of teaching methods and resources, and the formulation of outreach plans to policy practitioners. Stay tuned for further information on these issues, including announcements about the recruitment of taskforce participants. Supplementary to the work of the taskforces, the Executive Committee will continue to spearhead ongoing activities pertaining to fundraising and both strategic and longer term planning.

Second, while SCORAI has had some success raising funds for specific

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### Executive Board



**Jeffrey Barber**  
Integrative Strategies Forum

**Halina Brown**  
Clark University

**Maurie Cohen**  
New Jersey Institute of  
Technology

**John Stutz**  
Tellus Institute

**Philip Vergragt**  
Tellus Institute and Clark  
University

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activities the lack of core funding has become a growing constraint on operations. To meet expectations, SCORAI will need to develop ways to defer the costs of organizational maintenance. In light of these circumstances, the Executive Committee will be introducing a feature on the newly designed website to enable affiliates and other supporters to make voluntary contributions at various levels (\$100 per year for premium membership, \$50 per year for basic membership, and \$25 per year for students and retirees). The aim is that this arrangement will enable SCORAI to raise approximately US\$5,000 per year.

Finally, SCORAI has received offers to sponsor its own academic journal. The Executive Committee will be considering this general proposition in coming months and will be developing a plan to move forward on this front.

SCORAI currently comprises more than 300 academics, NGO representatives, policy makers, and others. Organizational growth has been striking over the last couple of years and the Executive Committee takes this opportunity to acknowledge the support of SCORAI-ers in North America and around the world. If you are interested in taking a more active role in organizational activities, do feel free to get in touch with a member of the Executive Committee.

--Submitted by Maurie Cohen

## **Sustainability Science Needs to Include Sustainable Consumption**

Sustainability science is commonly understood as interdisciplinary, drawing on subjects and theoretical frameworks associated with a range of traditional academic disciplines. But beyond that its content is ill-defined. This situation poses a challenge for the programs and institutions that are trying to learn and teach sustainability science: What types of problems does it address? What fundamental body of knowledge and skills should a student of sustainability science acquire? What are the seminal publications?

Reader in Sustainability Science and Technology by Robert Kates, with an introduction by William Clark seeks to address this need. Rather than trying to provide a definition in a prescriptive way, the reader offers a compendium of articles, which collectively define these authors' view of the boundaries of sustainability science. So defined, the main thrust of sustainability science is to understand and explain impact of humans on the Earth's life supporting systems.

In a Commentary entitled "Sustainability Science Must Include Sustainable Consumption", published in the January/February issue of *Environment*, Halina Brown challenges the Kates/Clark definition. She takes a much broader view of sustainability science, one that emphasizes the need to explore the root causes of the current unsustainable use of the Earth's life supporting systems. Brown argues that sustainability science must include the study of the sociology of material consumption and the structure of consumerist society, the role of technology in aggravating the unsustainable social practices as well as in solving the problems they create, the macroeconomic theories that presuppose economic growth as a necessary condition for advancing societal well-

being, and others.

--Submitted by Halina Brown

## Examining Sustainable Consumption in Ireland

The CONSENSUS research project, led by Trinity College Dublin in association with partners at NUI Galway and funded by the EPA STRIVE Programme, has produced two 'Transition Framework' documents presenting long-term plans for more sustainable personal washing and home heating practices in Irish households.

The Transition Framework documents have arisen out of CONSENSUS research on sustainable water and energy consumption in which an innovative 'backcasting' methodology was applied. This involved the engagement of sectoral stakeholders in the design of future visions containing socio-technical innovations for more sustainable home heating and personal washing practices (the most resource intensive household uses of energy and water respectively). A distinguishing characteristic of the research was the use of daily 'practices' as the main units of analysis. For more information contact, Ruth Doyle, [rdoyle4@tcd.ie](mailto:rdoyle4@tcd.ie), 087.299.4689.

## New Interactive Portal to Examine Spending Habits

A new interactive internet portal has been established by PolicyInteractive and San Francisco State University Department of Psychology Well-being Lab. The purpose of the portal is encourage the general public to explore their spending habits in association with other attributes and values. The survey is designed to give instant feedback to the respondent and we hope for repeated trips back to the site for extended exploration of consumption decisions. Data, subject to confidentiality protocols, will be available to researchers.

The site was co-founded by Ryan Howell of San Francisco State, Tom Bowerman of PolicyInteractive (Oregon) and Ravi Iyer of University of Southern California. Feedback is encouraged: [tom@policyinteractive.org](mailto:tom@policyinteractive.org).

## Job Opportunities

**University of Maryland, College Park.** The College of Behavioral and Social Sciences is seeking computational social scientists to expand strengths in the computational aspects of global environmental change.

Rank will start at associate professor and tenure will be in the department closest to the applicant's background. Applicants should have backgrounds in the social sciences and advanced computational skills. One appointment will be in Economics/Geography and another appointment will be in Geography/Sociology. For a detailed description of the positions and application submission instructions please visit the [web ad](#) (reference position 117853).

**Eindhoven University of Technology** has a vacancy for Lecturer (Docent) in System Innovation and Sustainability Transitions. More information is available [here](#).

**Arizona State University** is hiring faculty either at the tenure-track assistant professor level or tenured associate professor level. The appointment is in an innovative interdisciplinary academic program in [sustainability](#). To review and apply to this position, please visit <http://www.academicjobsonline.org> and search for the Global Institute of Sustainability.

## **Fellowships**

**Sustainable Consumption Institute at The University of Manchester.** A minimum of four funded studentships are available on the four year SCI CDT programme. The Sustainable Consumption Institute examines issues related to environmental sustainability through the lens of consumption. The SCI currently has three interrelated themes to guide research activities: Sustainable Consumer Behaviours and Lifestyles, Stimulating Eco-Innovation for Sustainable Production and Distribution and Climate Change and Carbon: Mitigation, Adaptation and Vulnerability. Applicants are welcome to apply for specific projects or to submit their own project ideas. Applicants are required to hold a first class honours degree or equivalent, and/or distinction at Masters level. Full fees and stipend equivalent to UK research councils. For further information contact: Sue Huzar, Senior Programme Administrator - [sue.huzar@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:sue.huzar@manchester.ac.uk).

**The University of Sussex's Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Doctoral Training Centre**, in collaboration with the STEPS Centre and the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), is looking to recruit seven doctoral students to join their vibrant research community. Applications are invited from highly-motivated students, working in fields around development studies, science and technology studies, innovation and policy studies, and across agricultural, health, water or energy issues. Candidates whose projects demonstrate the potential to work in collaboration with or are supported by industrial; charitable or public sector organisations will be prioritised. Two of the seven projects will be based at Institute of Development Studies; they will draw on the University of Sussex's ESRC recognised Masters courses, before progression to PhD study linked to the STEPS Centre. They are linked to the following STEPS projects: (1) Climate change and uncertainty from 'below': perspectives from urban India (2) From bats to humans: understanding the social-ecological dynamics of disease transmission. For more details, visit the STEPS Centre [website](#).

## **New Publications & Reports by SCORAI Members & Friends**

Ashford, N.A., et al., "The crisis in employment and consumer demand: Reconciliation with environmental sustainability." *Environ. Innovation Soc. Transitions* (2012).

Garon, Sheldon. *Beyond Our Means: Why America Spends While the World Saves*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press (2012).

Hildyard N., Lohmann L., Sexton S. "[Energy Security For Whom? For](#)

What?" The Corner House (2012).

Lorenzen, Janet A. "Going Green: The Process of Lifestyle Change." *Sociological Forum* 27.1 (2010): 94-116.

Milne, S., "Consuming Carbon: RESOLVE Scenarios to 2030 for UK Household Consumption", University of Surrey, Guildford, UK, ISBN 978-1-84469-023-7, November 2011.

Owen, David. *The Conundrum: How Scientific Innovation, Increased Efficiency, and Good Intentions Can Make Our Energy and Climate Problems Worse*. New York: Riverhead, 2012.

Sahakian, Marlyne. D. (2012). "A Matter of Trust in Metro Manila: Collective Action Towards "Green Economy" Transitions." *Development* 55(1): 126-133.

Speth, James Gustave. "America the Possible: A Manifesto." *Orion* (2012).

Szostak, Rick. *Restoring Human Progress*. UK: Cranmore, 2012.

Thøgersen, John and Ulf Schrader, eds. Introduction to special issue: "From Knowledge to Action-New Paths Towards Sustainable Consumption." *Journal of Consumer Policy* 35 (1): 1-5.

Webb, Jannette. "Climate Change and Society: The Chimera of Behaviour Change Technologies." *Sociology* 2012 46: 109.

Special Anniversary Issue of the *Journal of Environment & Development*: From Rio 1992 to Rio 2012 and Beyond: Taking Stock and Moving Forward in the Search for Sustainable Development : 1 March 2012; Vol. 21, No. 1.

Volume 23, Issue 1, 2012 of *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism* contains an Introduction to the Degrowth Symposium.

## Upcoming Conferences & Workshops

**The RESPONDER Project** links sustainable consumption and growth debates and takes into account aspects of green growth, non-growth and degrowth. The next events as part of RESPONDER will be:

21-23 March 2012 Multinational knowledge brokerage event on Sustainable Mobility (Bratislava).

28-30 March 2012 Multinational knowledge brokerage event on Sustainable Housing (Barcelona).

May 2012 Multinational knowledge brokerage event on Sustainable Household Savings and Debts (London).

May 30- June 1 Multinational knowledge brokerage event on Sustainable Consumer Electronics (Vienna).

## Challenging Consumerism: Toward Living Well Sustainably.

SCORAI is collaborating with the Liu Institute for Global Issues at the

University of British Columbia (UBC) and the One Earth Initiative Society to convene the Third SCORAI Workshop on the UBC campus on 8-10 March 2012.

**The Economics of Happiness conference**, hosted by the International Society for Ecology and Culture (ISEC), seeks to provide clarity on the way forward - towards more sustainable ways of living. It will cover a range of interconnected topics, including public policy choices; local initiatives in food, energy, education, business and banking; the need to bridge the North-South divide; and the influence of the economy on our psychological well-being. Berkeley, California, March 23-25, 2012.

**2nd Interdisciplinary Science of Consumption**. University of Michigan, March 23-24, 2012.

**Beyond Consumption. Pathways to Responsible Living** hosted by The Partnership for Education and Research About Responsible Living (PERL) will be 19-20 March, 2012 in Berlin. The Call for Proposals is on the PERL [website](#).

**Planet Under Pressure: New Knowledge Toward Solutions**. This conference relating to solutions to the global sustainability challenge will be held 26-29 March, 2012, London, UK.

**Sustainable Consumption During Times of Crisis**. First Trans-Atlantic SCORAI Workshop will be held May 1, 2012, Bregenz, Austria. Please contact [scoraieurope@gmail.com](mailto:scoraieurope@gmail.com) to request a program and participation form.

**European Roundtable on Sustainable Consumption & Production** (ERSCP), 2-4 May, 2012, Bregenz, Austria.

**International Conference on Degrowth in the Americas**, May 13-19, 2012, Montreal, Canada.

**Strategies for a New Economy**. This conference will gather together leaders in designing and building a new economic operating system. June 8th-10th at Bard College, in Annandale-on-Hudson, New York.

**The International Society for Ecological Economics** is holding its next biennial conference in Rio de Janeiro, 29 June 16-19, 2012 to dovetail with Rio+20 UNCSD.

**Global Research Forum on Sustainable Consumption and Production**, will be held in Rio de Janeiro June 13-15, just before the Rio+20 conference. This is a SCORAI style workshop, will discuss systemic change towards SCP. Participation is by invitation only; however if you are interested in participating contact [Philip Vergragt](#).

**The International Association for Society & Natural Resources** (ISSRM) is holding its annual symposium June 17-21, 2012 in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

**18th Annual International Sustainable Development Research Conference**, 24-26th June 2012, University of Hull, UK.

**The World Congress on Global Well-Being** will be held July 16-21, 2012 in Melbourne, Australia.

**Summer School on Theories in Environmental and Economic Psychology (STEEP)** will be held from 2-6 July 2012 in Aarhus, Denmark. The aim of the school is to provide PhD students in environmental and economic psychology the opportunity to collaborate with senior scholars and to meet other PhD students in the same area. Students can apply online before March 15th.

**XIII World Congress of Rural Sociology**, July 29-August 4, 2012, Lisbon, Portugal. Session 43-Consuming the Rural: Food, Nature, and Space. Apply online.

**International Conference on Sustainable Development 2012**. Montclair State University Montclair, New Jersey, August 1 - 2, 2012.

**The International Conference on Culture, Politics, and Climate Change** will be held September 13-15, 2012 in Boulder, Colorado USA.

**3rd International Conference on Degrowth for Ecological Sustainability and Social Equity** will be held September 19-23, 2012 in Venice, Italy.

**"Beyond the Culture of Nature: Rethinking Canadian and Environmental Studies"** will be held September 29-30, 2012 at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada. Please send queries and proposals to Matthew Evenden, Chair of Canadian Studies, UBC: CNS-conference2012@geog.ubc.ca.

**Boundaries of Consumption: Critical Perspectives on Race, Class, Gender, Citizenship and Space in Changing Markets.** This session will explore different theoretical approaches to consumption with particular attention devoted to critical perspectives of race, class, gender, citizenship, and space to examine the intersections of materiality and boundaries. Expressions of interest and formal paper abstracts should be sent to megcarney@gmail.com no later than March 15th, 2012. Session proposals are due by April 15th. The conference will be held in San Francisco, CA from November 14-18.

**Why We Love Hospital Food**

Ontario's 2012 Local Food Champions Report celebrates innovative leaders who have changed the food on plates in hospitals and other public institutions. My Sustainable Canada and the Nutrition Group at St. Joseph's Health System, Group Purchasing Organization have sourced local Ontario food for 28 health care facilities, increasing local food procurement by 15% without increasing in costs to facilities. The initiative also resulted in the development of a Food Audit Process to

help institutions identify how much local food they are currently purchasing. More information is available [online](#).

## New SCORAI Affiliates

SCORAI welcomes the following new affiliates to the network during the short month of February. Total membership is currently 329 people. And remember, the 350th SCORAI affiliate will receive a free copy of the new boardgame Catan: Oil Springs courtesy of developer Erik Assadourian.

Dani Battle	Leslie Kochan
Daniel Brody	James Nevison
Jill Clegg	Rohit Nishant
Julia D'Costa	Jake Papineau
Ira Feldman	Harry Saunders
Joseph Hobbs	Lavonne Schill
Kersty Hobson	Kakee Scott
Mary Jane Leach	Michael Sheridan

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