

SPREAD

Sustainable Lifestyles 2050

OPENING NOTE BY CLAUDE TURMES

Claude Turmes, MEP of the Greens/EFA and co-initiator of the 'Energy Intelligent Europe' platform has underlined once again his strong commitment for renewable energy and energy efficiency policy by hosting the SPREAD Energy Workshop.



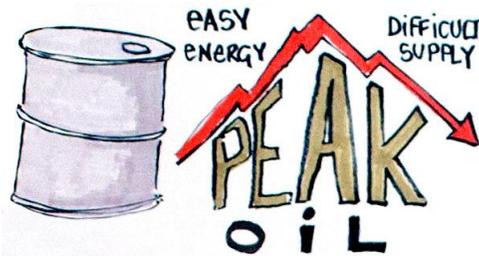
In his welcome speech Mr. Turmes stressed the urgency to reduce the current excessive impact on the resources of our planet. Business as usual is no longer working. Instead, our vision is to live in a low-energy, high-tech world, which involves, amongst others, infrastructural changes, implementation of renewable energies, changes in urban planning and increased energy efficiency across many sectors. Mr. Turmes pointed out that while technologies will offer many answers to these developments, they will also require societal innovation: changes in lifestyles and new business models are required as well.

The Future of Low-Energy Lifestyles

Workshop, 27 June 2011, 15.00 - 18.00h, European Parliament, Brussels

On 27 June 2011 some 30 expert representatives came together for an interactive workshop to discuss opportunities and challenges for future low-energy lifestyles. Particular foci were local and EU policy, business and research. The workshop was organised by the European Social Platform SPREAD Sustainable Lifestyles 2050 project and hosted by Claude Turmes, MEP.

Calls for innovative solutions as well as fast and coordinated action on all levels by all stakeholders set the tone of discussions. A common sense of urgency was created in the light of challenges ahead and recent tragedies: the nuclear disaster in Japan, globally rising (energy) consumption, growing inequalities, climate change, and peak oil. Arguments of the three introductory talks by keynote speakers are captured here in the respective articles.



Graphics by Aaron Williamson, www.thevalueweb.org



Central themes of the workshop were current ways of living and the roles of policy, business and research in bringing about radical lifestyle changes. Lifestyles involve those conscious and less conscious, frequent and less frequent behaviours that are shaping and shaped by social, institutional and technological contexts.

Values took centre-stage in small-group and panel discussions. How can a paradigm shift in people's value systems be achieved? Shifting from more to less, from owning to sharing? There is no easy and straightforward answer to these questions, but workshop participants collected and connected important research questions, e.g. on the relation of policy and values and the normative role of research and policy, with other much needed changes:

- New business models: from built-in obsolescence to better quality, longer-lasting products; from selling to sharing, leasing and maintenance.
- New ways of participation: from top-down policies to involving local stakeholders in energy strategies and implementation, from blaming others for inactivity to social change, innovation and entrepreneurship.
- New leadership: from promising technological solutions to honest communication about necessary savings and lifestyle changes, from waiting for policy to local and civil society activism.



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KEYNOTE BY DOMENICO ROSETTI DI VALDALBERO

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"THERE IS WILLINGNESS FOR MORE COLLABORATION BETWEEN DIFFERENT DGs."

In his keynote Mr. Rosetti di Valdalbero stressed that climate change and low-energy lifestyles involve many related policy fields. More intensive collaboration between the different Directorates-General would be needed. Collaborative approaches are key to effective and integrated policies.

"WE NEED SOCIAL INNOVATION"

Mr. Rosetti di Valdalbero cited future projections that foresee the energy consumed by food production and consumption to double by 2100, the energy used for living and housing to triple and the energy related to mobility to grow by the factor five. Several technology platforms have been created in the past to counteract these worrying trends. However, both technological and social innovation are needed to address these challenges. To this end, the Commission created several social platforms, of which the SPREAD Sustainable Lifestyles 2050 platform is one.

RESEARCH ON LOW-ENERGY LIFESTYLES: CAN POLICY CHANGE NORMS & VALUES?

One of the discussion groups during the workshop focused on knowledge gaps related to lifestyle changes that research should address.

In order to achieve profound lifestyle changes, people's norms, values and priorities also need to change. Low-energy lifestyles benefit from values that favour the longer over the shorter term and community interests over immediate personal gratification.



Research and policy addressing changes in norms and values face difficult questions: How can policy influence norms and values?

How do values relate to motivations and behaviours? Who is to say what 'good' values are? The task of research is not to favour one set of values over the other. In the policy arena, however, some hard choices will need to be made.

Research can support these choices by:

- clarifying the choices that need to be made, what possible trade-offs and costs for different stakeholders are;
- evaluating the effects of current policies and related communications on public norms and values and monitoring possible changes;
- learning about ways to bring about long-lasting behavioural change and counteracting rebound effects;
- gaining better insight how norms and values relate to lifestyle choices people make.



SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION POLICY AT EU LEVEL

Changing lifestyles means addressing the demand side of consumption. On EU level sustainable consumption is addressed in the Sustainable Consumption and Production Action Plan. So far, however, consumption is subordinated to production policies. A clearer definition of sustainable consumption is needed, an issue that will be given more attention in the revision of the SCP Action Plan. Sufficient knowledge about sustainable consumption already exists at the EU level, but responsibilities of the different Directorates-General might be competing and no effective way to identify cost-effective policies is yet available. In addition, EU policy should also support the needed paradigm shift towards "innovation in values". This includes education for behavioural change as well as new measures to assess growth, beyond the conventional GDP indicator. This transition to a complete societal redesign needs both, top down policies and bottom up initiatives. The local level is the best one to change lifestyles and support bottom-up initiatives, what EU funding should consider.

A holistic approach at EU level is needed to tackle the magnitude of the necessary societal change.

BUSINESS AND LOW-ENERGY LIFESTYLES: A NEED FOR NEW BUSINESS MODELS!

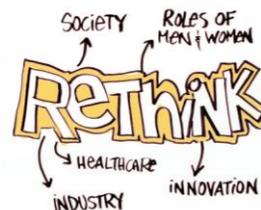
Workshop participants stressed the importance of the role played by business in transitions to low-energy lifestyles. There is a need for new business models, shifting from selling products to leasing products and providing services for maintenance. Such changes in production and supply need to meet needs, wishes and demands on the consumption side. Are these needs, wishes and demands already changing towards an acceptance of owning less and sharing more? How can profit and selling products be decoupled?

Participants pointed to positive examples of already ongoing change and discussed challenges for transitions on a larger scale. Current consumption patterns and the communication they are somewhat driven by focus on ownership and 'having more'. The free market won't regulate itself towards lifestyle changes, lower consumption levels and more sustainable practices. Intelligent pricing systems may discourage

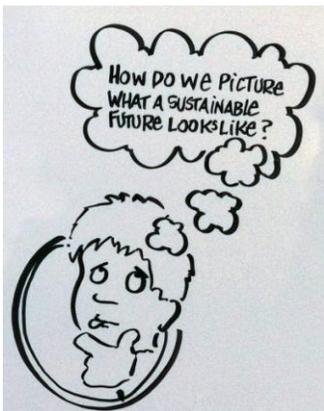
unsustainable practices, but need to consider access and equity.

Many technological options for more sustainable lifestyles are available already. The biggest challenge is often not to realise technical innovations, but to ensure their acceptance and wide employment. For large-scale changes, top-down and bottom-up support is needed, e.g. binding targets and support schemes for renewable energy as well as local educational and awareness projects.

Social entrepreneurs are already working as important change agents with alternative business models and often without policy support. Some have even achieved sectoral, more systemic changes, however, not (yet) in the energy sector.



WE ASKED PARTICIPANTS ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES FOR CURRENT & FUTURE SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLES



SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION POLICY AT LOCAL LEVEL

Local authorities can play a key role in transitions towards more sustainable lifestyles. On local level, tailored energy strategies and communication/participation efforts can be developed that fit local conditions.



However, the implementation of EU Directives on local level faces some difficulties, for example related to socio-economic issues, lack of finances and lack of expertise. Especially small local authorities and authorities in Central and Eastern European countries struggle in this respect. There is a mismatch between the Directives designed on EU level and requirements and standards that can be achieved locally. In order to address this issue better coordination and cooperation between the different Directorates-General is needed. Furthermore, it is important to stimulate and guide local authorities to act and forge better links between national and local level strategies and needs.

OPPORTUNITIES	CHALLENGES
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For current sustainable lifestyles:

- It is starting to become hip and modern to consume less
- Public and stakeholder consultations for policy documents help create opportunities
- Energy and climate policies already in place
- Existing best practices to increase public awareness
- Energy efficiency and renewable energy companies
- Sustainable mobility solutions
- Sharing instead of owning

For future sustainable lifestyles:

- When energy becomes more expensive, lifestyle changes are the only way to deal with that
- Investments in technological and social innovation can aim at economic benefits and improvement of social justice and quality of life
- Collaboration of EU institutions and industry
- Changes in buildings, infrastructures, urban planning, policy and social institutions

For current sustainable lifestyles:

- Media convey that 'consuming more' is the way to happiness
- Lack of leadership that communicates truthfully and honestly about the challenges ahead and the necessary options addressing them
- Cooperation between all stakeholders in society to ensure consistency and integration of policies
- Appropriate strategies for long-lasting behaviour change and for acceptance of trade-offs by society and industry

For future sustainable lifestyles:

- How to achieve social innovation
- Addressing the rebound effect
- Setting appropriate long-term targets based on evidence, data, knowledge
- Public acceptance of low-energy lifestyles (e.g. training children at early age)
- Building resilience for the 'transition shocks' (e.g. education and communication)

ENERGY ROADMAP 2050



As 2020 nears, the focus of energy research and policy shifts to 2050.

Helen Donoghue, Principal Administrator in the Strategy and Programming Unit of the DG Energy, presented the progress on the Energy Roadmap 2050.

The European 2020 targets aim for 20% use of renewable energy, 20% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and 20% reduction in energy consumption. But for 2050 there is however so far only one target. That is why the European Council decided at its Energy

Summit for a Roadmap for a low-carbon economy in 2050 and an Energy Roadmap 2050 to address these issues across fields and top-down.

So far the Roadmap for a low-carbon economy bases on some technology optimism and shows the most cost-efficient pathway towards the 2050 scenario developed.

The Energy Roadmap 2050 includes several sectoral scenarios and focuses on sustainability, competitiveness and security of supply. The Energy Roadmap 2050 is a political document to clarify the choices that need to be made and to support a European approach to these issues. This implies addressing the demand-side.

A European approach makes sense, because countries have similar concerns, e.g. related costs, public acceptance, uncertainties. If Europe does not act early and consistent, there is a risk of unwanted lock-ins and insufficient incentives for real long-term investments.

The panel welcomed the interesting ideas arising from the Roadmap and affirmed the value of top-down approaches to the success of lifestyle changes. Nevertheless, they need to be carefully evaluated to assure lasting change and to avoid rebound effects in consumption and energy use.

http://ec.europa.eu/energy/strategies/2011/roadmap_2050_en.htm





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Project	European Social Platform SPREAD Sustainable Lifestyles 2050
Consortium	UNEP/Wuppertal Institute Collaborating Centre on Sustainable Consumption and Production (CSCP), Germany; Energy research Centre of the Netherlands (ECN), The Netherlands; Demos Helsinki (Demos), Finland; Politecnico di Milano (Polimi), Italy; EuroHealthNet; The International Institute for Industrial Environmental Economics at Lund University (ULUND), Sweden; Regional Environmental Center for CEE countries (REC), Hungary; Ecoinstitut Barcelona (ECOI), Spain; The Northern Alliance for Sustainability (ANPED), Belgium; Ashoka, France.
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