

# PEER Environmental Technology Seminar

*Oct. 11-12, 2006, Montpellier, France*



## Parallel session 1c

# Sustainable Consumption

Social perception, awareness and behaviour related to environmental technology

# Schedule

- ◆ Short Introduction (10 Minutes)
- ◆ Speeches (40 minutes)
- ◆ Brainstorming/Discussion (60 minutes)
- ◆ Draft conclusion (10 minutes)

# Introduction

- ◆ **Chair:** Carolin Baedeker, Wuppertal Institute for Climate, Environment and Energy, Germany
- ◆ **Reporter:** Gabrielle Bouleau, Cemagref, France
- ◆ **Speakers:** Maj-Britt Qitzau, NERI, Denmark, Joachim Spangenberg, SERI, Germany

# Speaker: Maj-Britt Quitzau, NERI

- ◆ Title: **Social and cultural conditions for sustainable consumption** - The case of alternative toilet solutions

# Speaker: Joachim Spangenberg, SERI, UFZ

- ◆ Title: **Condition & Instruments for sustainable consumption - Beyond education**

# Environmental Technologies Action Plan

- ◆ **European consumers have become more aware of environment and health issues.** The ensuing consumer demand for “greener” products has contributed to high environmental standards and given the EU a competitive edge **in developing and applying environmental technologies in consumer products** (ETAP, P. 5)

# Environmental Technologies Action Plan

## *4.2.5. Building support for environmental technologies in civil society – business and consumer awareness, training and education*

- ◆ **Societal acceptance** of environmental technologies is crucial.
- ◆ **Consumer awareness-raising** measures can stimulate demand for environmental technologies.
- ◆ Consumers should be aware of the existence and **benefits** of products and services whose **environmental impacts** are lower.
- ◆ This awareness raising would be helped by **networking** the numerous innovative local initiatives and projects for introducing environmental technologies in **real-life settings**.

# Questions (1)

## ***General***

- ◆ What are the obstacles and challenges for the dissemination of sustainable consumption?
- ◆ What kind of research is necessary to overcome these obstacles respectively meet the challenges?

## ***Consumer information and education***

- ◆ Which different accesses exist to inform consumers (in the sense of knowledge transfer) about sustainable consumption?
- ◆ Which are most important today and which should gain importance in future?
- ◆ How important are education and/or media?

# Questions (2)

## ***Consumer behaviour and life-styles***

- ◆ What are the individual driving forces and attitudes for consumer choices?
- ◆ What kind of influences have life-styles, consumption patterns and social distinctions?
- ◆ How could additional consumer groups and new markets be opened up for “greener” products and green technologies? How do we change the fact that environmental technologies are often mostly adopted by eco-consumer-groups?
- ◆ How could consumption trends be considered in the development of sustainable consumption?
- ◆ Also, life-styles develop in problematic ways. What are the dynamics behind this development?

# Questions (3)

## ***Environmental Technologies, new technologies,***

- ◆ What are the obstacles for the acceptance of new technology and the attempts to introduce environmental technologies?
- ◆ What are the mechanisms behind reluctance to accept GMOs, recycling of sewage sludge etc.?
- ◆ What can be learned from these cases and applied to introduction of new e.g. nano-technologies and other new procedures?
- ◆ How can environmental technologies become socially viable?
- ◆ Are public dialogues about ethical and social aspects of new technologies a successful approach for their acceptance and implementation in the market? What alternatives are there?
- ◆ How can social aspects be considered in an early innovation phase?

# Questions (4)

## ***Political incentives and frameworks for sustainable production and consumption***

- ◆ Which issues of sustainable consumption are currently reflected in environmental policies? How can other aspects be addressed?
- ◆ Long-term changes of daily life are seldom considered in environmental policies, how can we change this?
- ◆ Are mandatory efficiency standard values for products and services obligatory?
- ◆ What could be learned from the Top Runner Program – Japan's Approach to Energy Efficiency and Conservation Measures?
- ◆ How can such a standard be implemented in Europe?

# Questions (5)

## *Transparency and Labelling*

- ◆ Consumers need more transparency and creditability of products and services for sustainable consumption. But the extended variety of labels causes “in-transparency”.
- ◆ How can this variety of labels be managed?
- ◆ Which institutions should promote standardization of sustainable products and services on the European level and on national level?
- ◆ Would the development of a Meta-Label help? Which actors should be involved? What claims concerning a Meta-Label do different actors have? What kind of political framework is needed?

# Research demands

- ◆ What are the main future research demands concerning the social perception, awareness and behaviour related to environmental technology (in the sense of sustainable consumption)?

# SYNTHESIS

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# 7th framework programme

- ◆ The EU needs to strengthen its position in world markets for environmental technologies. Such technologies contribute to sustainable consumption and production, helping deliver sustainable growth providing eco-efficient solutions to environmental problems at different scales and protecting our cultural and natural heritage. ...
- ◆ ... Socio-economic aspects particularly strongly influence the development and introduction of environmental technologies to the market ....