

We have the tools to bridge the gap between knowing and doing!

The session “Bridging the knowledge- action gap: the role of values for transforming lifestyles” in the Planet Under Pressure Conference (Wednesday 28 March 16.00 in the ICC Auditorium) seeks to increase our understanding of how to build a bridge between knowledge and action. There is ample scientific evidence showing that values or ethical principles can serve as sources for motivating individual lifestyle change and that they are an essential complement to knowledge in motivating action. This is a well developed research area in the social and behavioural sciences including management and evaluation sciences.

This session has encouraged papers that explore how values are motivating responsible lifestyles that are necessary to move societies towards sustainability.

Key messages

Values are multilayered, have multiple sources and are changeable,

Values are multilayered in the sense that they are manifested within individuals and groups and at the level of society as social norms. Values at these difference levels are interrelated and may be contradictory

Values have multiple sources, people draw on a diversity of sources for the values, principles and social norms that inspire and guide them in their life choices. These sources can include family, community, culture, societal discourse and faith.

Values are not static, they are actively nurtured and reinforced through social and cultural interaction, including education. Some are more easily changeable and others are more deeply embedded in habits and social norms of a specific cultural context.

The research presented in this session go beyond identifying the knowledge-action gap and instead present strategies and tools for how enable values to support the transition to sustainable lifestyles.

The **key strategy** is one of stimulating (self=reflection of values at several levels, individual, collective, institutional.

The session presents several **evaluation tools** for reflecting on values at these different levels: footprints (individual), indicators (group) and ethical deliberation institutions. By using these tools a structured self-reflection can work as empowerment for the ability to act.

Different techniques to highlight values have been sent to this session for example:

- The importance of co-production of values (collective bargaining, co-production of value based indicators, green consumption)

- Draw out shared values in a group by creating a “menu” of values based indicators a-measure, non monetary valuation at various levels.
- Identify contradictory values and norms
- Identify values that hinder action (increased bike use)
- Finding solutions that are able to fulfill several motivations (tourism)
- Developing communication strategies (green production)
- Shaming (raise the issue of contradictory values in relation to polluting companies)

Other key messages extracted from the session papers and poster related to the research related to values are;

- There is a lack of focus on values and ethical principles in the global environmental change research community leading to important gaps in integrated research processes.
- The link between individual values and increasing living standards, global production and consumption trends, and WTO agricultural policies (meat consumption transportation) has to be illuminated.
- There is considerable diversity in how the concept of ‘values’ is understood in different disciplines (biophysical, economic, psychological and socio cultural science) which has considerable implications for integrated science.
- The changing of values takes time.
- Most research in relation to values has a western bias and there should be increased interaction with research that has focus on non western values.

Policy implications

- We have to create policy processes at all levels that are;
 - open to “real interaction”- deliberative processes
 - iterative or cyclic, able to adapt to new understanding and changed values and the fact that changing values takes time
 - able to understand and handle the multilayered aspects of values
- There are possibilities and tools to bridge the gap, use them!
- Skills related to process management and listening will be essential for the next generation policymakers
- Increase the interaction in the social scientific research communities (structure of research funding)
- Encourage research on the relation between action and values in non western countries (structure of research funding)
- Encourage research on the major contradictions in values promoting or discouraging actions in relation to lifestyle changes. (structure of research funding)



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On the behalf of the session

The research discussed in the press release, the conclusions drawn and the opinions offered are those of individual speakers or research teams at the Planet Under Pressure conference.