

BRASS

Research news

The bi-annual publication from the ESRC funded Centre for Business Relationships, Accountability, Sustainability and Society



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THE WAY WE LIVE NOW

“The Way We Live Now” is considered by many to be Anthony Trollope’s finest book and shows the disastrous consequences of unconstrained wealth and greed and a failure to regulate the activities of business properly. It is also a recurrent theme within BRASS’s research work looking into how sustainable ‘the way we live now’ is, and the implications for the role of business in our quest to achieve more sustainable lifestyles, communities and societies.

Making more sustainable choices as consumers will be one important driver of future progress. The research projects outlined inside this edition of our Research News with a focus on the growth of biofuels and hybrid cars, FairTrade and eco-labels all aim to help us to understand how to live more sustainable lives as consumers. Our working lives are also highly relevant to our quality of life and to the sustainability agenda, and are the focus of the featured work-life balance research led by Professor Paul Blyton.

How we live cannot be understood simply by researching our behaviours as individuals, we also exist as members of families and communities which have a profound impact on our behaviour and sense of wellbeing.

The quest to develop more sustainable communities is a central theme in much of BRASS’s research work and is the subject for a major new BRASS book published by Elsevier Science and detailed on page 2.

How and what we learn is also an important determinant of our behaviour and integrating sustainability principles into education at all levels is a prerequisite to develop a generation of consumers, managers, investors, voters and policy-makers who are willing and able to promote the sustainability agenda. What began as a BRASS project to help Cardiff University to audit the coverage of sustainability within its own curriculum has evolved into the STAUNCH © system currently being piloted throughout Wales and explained on page 5.

Finally, Trollope’s concerns about whether regulation can effectively protect us from the unsustainable consequences of business activity is also reflected in the

featured work on the REACH regulations and our recent report on the regulation of nanomaterials.

Consumer-led market pull, and regulation driven push are often presented as alternative choices in helping our businesses, economies and societies to become more sustainable.

The reality is that the scale of the challenge will require both sets of forces (and more beside) to be harnessed to achieve substantive change. Understanding how to tackle this is what the BRASS research agenda is all about, and which hopefully, like Trollope’s book, will deliver a happy ending.

Happy New Year from everyone at BRASS.

More sustainable lifestyles, communities and societies needs to be achieved



Professor Ken Peattie
Director, Brass



Sugar Cane Crop

Rodrigo Lozano and Professor Ken Peattie

THE STAUNCH SYSTEM

breadth of coverage of sustainability teaching issues. It then provides statistical analysis, simple reports and 'maps' that shows relative strengths and weaknesses and any gaps for the institution as a whole, and for its component schools/faculties and the individual degree schemes that they deliver.

STAUNCH was successful piloted during 2007 with nearly 5,000 individual undergraduate courses at Cardiff each being assessed on 36 different criteria relating to how strongly the curricula of the University's schools deliver teaching both for, and about, SD. The results allow for an assessment of whether individual schools or degree schemes are covering the appropriate range of SD issues at the right level, and whether each part of the SD teaching 'jigsaw' within the University is appropriately linked to the 'big picture'. These results are used to plan the development of the curriculum within each part of the University to improve coverage of SD within teaching, or simply as a good way to engage staff in issues of whether, where and how consideration of SD could be better linked into their teaching.

The successful piloting of the system has led to presentations at SD educational conferences and two academic articles, prepared and submitted to the International Journal of Sustainable Development in Higher Education. The system is now available commercially to other institutions, and recently all of Wales' HE institutions have agreed to use the system to conduct a curriculum SD audit required by the Assembly Government by the end of 2008. This will produce the most holistic, systematic and comparable SD teaching audit anywhere in the world.

For further information on STAUNCH, please email staunch@cardiff.ac.uk

CANE: THE WAY FORWARD?



Dr Peter Wells

In Palmital, some 400km inland from Sao Paulo in Brazil, the first crop of sugar cane is being gathered. This small town is surrounded by plantations of cane that stretch across the rolling countryside. Ironically, the town also is home to the largest grain silo in South America but over recent years the trend towards bio-fuel (and specifically ethanol as a partial replacement for petrol) has resulted in a shift away from wheat and corn, and towards cane - so the silo stands half empty.

Some of this ethanol now finds its way to Europe, or up to North America, where the political commitment to bio-fuels has outpaced the environmental legitimacy of the arguments offered for its use. Politicians, ever-sensitised to an easy option that avoids difficult choices, have leapt upon the ethanol-powered bandwagon with an alacrity that immediately arouses suspicion. Meanwhile, the distilleries are being powered up here in Brazil. For towns like Palmital, this is just another way to exploit the endless depths of rich red

soil, the relentless sunshine, and the intense growth generated by prodigious rainfall - the town has prospered on agriculture for many years, and this is just the latest turn in the tale. Elsewhere in Brazil, however, there is a developing interest in small-scale, integrated and localised ethanol production as part of a locally-sustainable agro-industrial ecosystem. Academics in UNICAMP (University of Campinas) are exploring the potential of this approach. In Curitiba, efforts are being made to integrate Sustainable Consumption and Production into the automotive industry - again ethanol could be important here.

The BRASS automotive team are researching these issues here in Brazil with a view to understanding the dynamic relationships between technology, markets, and locality in a more sustainable world. For further information, please contact: wellspe@cardiff.ac.uk Read all about the sugar cane process at www.brass.cf.ac.uk

Helping to Integrate Sustainable Development into the Higher Education Curriculum.

Cardiff University has taken an increasingly close interest in the issues of sustainable development and corporate social responsibility in recent years. In terms of its research interests Cardiff has always had particular strength in relation to sustainable development (SD). This is represented in a number of its Schools including City & Regional Planning, Engineering, Architecture and Biosciences and also in interdisciplinary research ventures including the ESRC-funded Centre for Business Relationships, Accountability, Sustainability and Society (BRASS) and the Cardiff University Innovative Manufacturing Research Centre. Operationally, Cardiff has developed strategies to reduce its consumption of energy and water, and to reduce its impacts in areas such as waste and transport.

In developing its CSR strategy it became clear to Cardiff that the area of its work in which information relating to sustainable development was relatively patchy, making strategy

development difficult, was the most central element of the University's work - its curriculum. So a decision was taken to undertake a systematic audit of curricula across all Cardiff's undergraduate teaching from a sustainable development perspective, and the BRASS Research Centre volunteered to undertake this work.

The initial intention was to find and use the best currently available curricula auditing techniques for SD to assess teaching within Cardiff. It soon became obvious that although many auditing approaches had been tried within other institutions, nobody had produced a sufficiently robust, holistic, systematic and transferable approach. Something new and improved was needed to provide an overall SD curricula audit about how SD principles are taught, which parts of the institution are leading or lagging on integrating SD into their curricula, how well specific SD issues are covered by particular schools/faculties or courses and what gaps or areas of weakness might exist. To address this challenge, the BRASS Centre developed the new Sustainable Tool for Auditing for University Curricula in Higher-Education (STAUNCH) auditing system. It is a simple to use system that relies on an analysis of published module documents to assess the depth and



STICKING OVER THE CRACKS

ECO LABELS AND SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION



Cerys Ponting

Food labels are something we see so often as consumers that we take them for granted. However, over the last twenty years they have become an often controversial battleground between manufacturers and the government in their efforts to communicate with us about the impacts of products on our own health and wellbeing, and that of the planet.

Research evidence demonstrates an increasing use of ingredients and nutrition labels by consumers mirroring a growth in wider consumer understanding of the importance of nutritional issues. Similarly, with the recent upsurge in publicity surrounding climate change, it is no surprise that some manufacturers, retailers and consumers also have increased awareness of associated sustainability issues with food production, sales and

consumption. In 2007, BRASS and the future foundation undertook a joint research project, investigating how climate change is affecting consumer attitudes and behaviours and how companies in the UK can and should respond.

A combination of impromptu, in the street 'vox-pop' consumer interviews and a quantitative questionnaire with 1600 consumers; complimented by a Delphi study with industry and academic experts has generated valuable insights into which corporate responses are currently understood by consumers, and which types of consumer actually responds to such initiatives. Early research findings suggest consumers have very low awareness of any 'green' initiatives implemented by companies other than switching from plastic bags to long-life

bags, or recycling. When asked during interviews, consumers were unable to name brands or organisations that are actively doing something to mitigate the effects of climate change. When asked who consumers trust for reliable information on climate change, nearly 60% felt that scientists were the most trustworthy source, compared to only 11% who felt that the private sector was to be trusted in the information it gave about climate change.

The findings suggest that as yet, carbon terminology such as Carbon Offsetting; Carbon Footprint, Carbon Labelling etc is yet to be truly understood by the vast majority of consumers. The same can be said for the concept of measuring carbon in terms of grams.

Perhaps in part due to the precedent set by other requirements for food labelling; consumers are increasingly faced with information overload. The findings demonstrated that 78% of consumers view the sell by date as the most important factor when purchasing food, followed by 57% for nutritional labelling and 53% for ingredients. Only 22% agreed that information on how it was produced, e.g. if food was organic or not, was considered important, followed by 21% who thought that recyclable packaging was the most important feature.

When faced with a combination of eco-label logos used in the food and non-food industry, survey respondents mostly recognised the non-food related European Energy Efficiency label which clearly notes whether an electrical appliance is AAA, AA, A, B or C rated, closely followed by recognition by 80% of the Fairtrade logo. The Soil Association Organic logo was recognised by 44% of respondents, a label denoting that the food product had been air freighted recognised by 24% followed by the Carbon Trust logo by 15%.

Focussing specifically on the Carbon Trust Logo, 53% of respondents said that if a product bore this eco-label, their trust in the brand would increase, even though only 15% of respondents said that they recognised it. 23% said that it would confuse them; although 46% noted that it would intrigue them, to the extent they would want to find out more about it. Therefore, recognition of the actual logo when





The sheer numbers of labelling schemes that exist are confusing

presented to respondents as visual stimulus is 5% lower than the understanding of the concept of carbon labelling.

Whilst labelling is an effective method of displaying complex information succinctly, there is no doubt that the sheer numbers of different labelling schemes that exist are confusing and are giving the consumer many variables to evaluate. How, for instance, can they decide whether locally produced, non-organic food is better than imported fair trade and organic items? Finding the right balance between sufficient information using the correct language, and overload and jargon is a delicate subject for retailers who are keen to be green. Stuart Rose, CEO of M&S (cited in the Economist 2008), believes that retailers should be aware of current levels of consumer understanding: "Half a step ahead is about right. Much more, and you won't sell. Any less, and you won't lead." Indeed, Schmitt (1998) notes that "the existence of advice and labelling per se is, therefore, not a sufficient condition for consumers safety. Consumers must understand the labels in order to make the recommendations work."

There are also questions regarding the extent that consumers trust retailers' labelling initiatives, since it could be said that retailers profit from the confusion of consumers. As noted above, consumers seem to have a higher willingness to trust a brand displaying an ecolabel, even if they don't understand or recognise it. Indeed, Davies and Wright (1994) suggest that "manufacturers who can match the wholesome quality of their brands through effective and informative labelling might alleviate anxieties and gain a competitive advantage". Furthermore, commercial research conducted by Terrachoice (2007) suggests that many products with eco labels assessed in the US market had unsubstantiated claims on

their labels, a practice that could be called "Greenwashing".

UK retailers and producers should be: Previous turbulent relationships between producers, retailers and consumers have tested the levels of trust in other areas of the agro-food industry, and it is imperative that retailers continue to build on this. "Maintaining confidence and trust in what we consume is an integral part of the retailers' strategy but, as a succession of food scares have shown, constructing and maintaining relationships of trust between the buyers and sellers of food is a long-term and active process." (Marsden et al. 2000) This suggests that third party labelling or accreditation can be more dependable than a producers' own claims, although these labels are still subject to necessary educational campaigns targeted at consumers.

Recent debates in improving sustainable consumption behaviour have also centred on retailers' efforts in choice editing. This involves retailers structuring the choices available to consumers on their shelves to encourage more sustainable behaviours by removing the more harmful options; although in practice retailers may be reluctant to slim down their product lines (Lang 2007), possibly out of fear of foregoing profits. Perhaps it could also be said that current consumers are not willing to accept responsibility for their own actions and their own consumption habits, and may be reluctant to change unless other actors (retailers / producers) do more to encourage this. However, much of the research can be contradictory in this area, as there often exists a gap between consumer attitudes (saying what they think) and their actual behaviours (saying what they do). This is the so called attitude-behaviour gap, which baffles policy makers and behaviourists, in particular in the field of sustainability.

CONCLUSION

Eco-labelling and Carbon Labelling in particular is unlikely to solve the issues posed by sustainable consumption to the agro-food sector, although such initiatives will certainly go a long way in raising some consumer and producer awareness about the wider issues surrounding environmental sustainability. Indeed, unless there is a great deal of time and effort involved in educating consumers as to the correct meaning of the labels, such initiatives may be meaningless and only lead to further confusion, frustration and possibly the inadvertent effects of increased consumption. Whether this responsibility should lie with the public or private sector is unknown, however further encouragement by major retailers and governments to standardise labelling (perhaps across industries) will facilitate this educative process, and simplify the message given to consumers. Further, credible, third party involvement in endorsing certain eco labels will aid the authenticity and standardisation of the message, as opposed to allowing retailers to develop as opposed to allowing different retailers to develop initiatives off their own bat, which could potentially become misleading.

Rather, it is likely that with increasing incidences of climate change related issues; physical reminders of local and global environmental degradation, along with a return to this summer's high oil and commodity prices' that there will be other drivers besides eco-labelling that finally force major changes upon such an ingrained culture of consumerism. In the words of Lang and Heasman (2004) "Labelling, in short, is not a resolution to the Food Wars but another battlefield within them."

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Can contemporary life and family life really mix?



'WAYS OF LIVING' INTERNATIONAL COLLOQUIUM



Paul Blyton

The growing debate over 'work-life balance' has underlined the importance of understanding the changing nature of work within its broader context: how our experiences of work shape (and are shaped by) our interactions with family, community and broader society.

As for all of us, time is finite – thus the amount of time we spend in work defines the amount of time available for other things – the choices we make about work inevitably impact upon the rest of our lives.

An international colloquium being held in Melbourne, Australia in December 2008 entitled 'Ways of Living: Work, Community and Lifestyle Choice', will explore the different interactions between patterns of

contemporary work and other aspects of social and family life.

The colloquium brings together specialists in a number of different fields, including work sociologists, demographers, organisational researchers, and experts in family and community studies. BRASS will be co-sponsoring this event.

It will contribute both to a fuller understanding of what we mean by 'work-life balance', and also explore the constraints that currently hinder individuals and societies from creating a better and more sustainable integration of work and non-work spheres of life.

The colloquium is being co-organised by Professor Paul Blyton, a BRASS Associate, in conjunction with colleagues in Australia and Canada and brings together participants from Europe, North America, Asia and Australia.

Topics range from the influence of national culture on lifestyle decisions to the way some work organisations promote healthy living, and from the decisions of individuals radically to simplify their lives ('downshift') to the issues facing redundant workers in re-establishing a satisfactory pattern of work and non-work life.

Revised versions of the main presentations will appear in a volume entitled *Ways of Living: Work, Community and Lifestyle Choice*, edited by Paul Blyton, Betsy Blunsdon, Ken Reed and Ali Dastmalchian, which will be published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2009.

This follows an earlier volume, by the same editors, *Work-Life Integration: International Perspectives on Balancing Multiple Roles*, published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2006.

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Some 30,000 of more than 100,000 chemicals will be scrutinised and legislated under REACH

REACH

FOR THE STARS



Steven Vaughan

At the start of June, the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) began the task of substantively administering what has been described by EU Commission officials as the EU's most complex and complicated piece of legislation to date.

REACH, the Regulation on the Registration, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals, came into force a year ago and will require the scrutiny of some 30,000 of the more than 100,000 chemical substances currently on the EU market. Replacing around 40 pieces of existing legislation, REACH requires producers and other users of chemicals to register, and potentially test, substances manufactured in or imported into the EU in quantities greater than one tonne per annum.

Registration with ECHA is also required for chemical substances in certain 'articles', where the chemical substances in those articles are intended to be released during normal conditions of use. There are, however, some substances that are exempt from REACH, such as those that are naturally occurring and which are thought to have low hazard properties (such as water) and those which have existing targeted EU regulatory controls (such as waste).

As part of the general 'no data, no market' rule, failure to register substances subject to REACH with ECHA will result in their continued manufacture or import becoming unlawful. To make the new policy administratively workable (for the regulated and regulator alike), there are phased deadlines for registration of substances with ECHA, staggered between 2010 and 2018 depending on the tonnage band in which the chemical substance is manufactured or imported and the relative toxicity of the substance. In order to take advantage of these deadlines, manufacturers and importers must pre-register their so-called 'phase-in substances' between 1 June 2008 and 30 November 2008.

The EU Commission has estimated that somewhere in the region of, 200,000 pre-registration dossiers will be submitted over the course of the next six months (with ECHA disclosing at its inauguration ceremony on 3 June that some 2,000 pre-registrations had been filed in the first two days of the system going live). On a practical level, pre-registration comprises the electronic transmission of certain information via the REACHIT portal on the ECHA website by each individual legal entity within a business.

Companies can either: encode all necessary information directly online with REACH-IT (which would be exceptionally labour-intensive for any large manufacturer); or use a pre-registration software plug-in called IUCLID 5 (which allows the company to use existing information in a local database offline and in advance, before then submitting that information to ECHA via REACH-IT).

Glitches have been identified with ECHA's online pre-registration system and with IUCLID 5 on a number of occasions, through pilots of both systems by various EU companies and through internal checks by ECHA. In early May, the general consensus was that the IT infrastructure designed to handle preregistration (and due to go live four weeks later) was not fit for use.

One week before pre-registration went live, a further trial run of the system by a number of industry associations, including Cefic, showed that matters had improved somewhat since the start of May, but that glitches remained.

One of the key questions concerns the ability of the system to handle the bulk submission of data, where a company that has hundreds or even thousands

of chemicals to pre-register tries to upload the necessary data on them all at the same time.

Following pre-registration, ECHA will identify those pre-registrants looking to register the same chemical substance. Under REACH, and as part of a 'one substance, one registration' rule, preregistrants of the same substance (as well as potentially other stakeholders, such as non-governmental organisations) will come together in a substance information exchange forum (SIEF) to share data and decide on the ambit and cost apportionment of additional substance testing.

The general principle is that for any given substance, a single set of information on its intrinsic properties is produced that is shared by the members of the SIEF, although business-specific and business-sensitive information will be submitted separately by each company. While REACH does not prescribe what legal form these SIEFs are to take (or how SIEFs are to be managed or run), a number of consortia have already been organised under the umbrella of industry associations. Looking forward, in the near term, the following six months will present a series of challenges for ECHA, and for those

companies subject to REACH, as pre-registration progresses and wrinkles in the associated infrastructure systems are ironed out. In the longer term, REACH stakeholders will also be faced with wider and perhaps less immediately obvious, concerns, including the regulation and risk assessment of nanotechnologies under REACH and the possible knock-on effects of the EU's new chemicals policy in the context of US disclosure and liability laws.

We are also likely to see the future landscape of the EU chemicals sector alter, as a number of substances are removed from the market as their continued production or import is no longer economically viable and as certain companies find that compliance costs make their businesses unsustainable.

At the moment, it is very much a case of 'wait and see' for those stakeholders interested in the progress of REACH. However, for those companies subject to the Regulation's provisions, doing nothing is not an option.

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Getting the work-life balance right

A DIFFERENT SORT OF CLIMATE...



Paul Blyton

One of the aspects of BRASS's work is to research sustainable work lives, and as part of this to explore the factors contributing to individual's achieving a satisfactory work-life balance. A new grant secured by Paul Blyton, a BRASS Research Associate, with colleagues in Nottingham and Canada, will further develop our understanding in this area.

What we know is that one of the things people value highly is the discretion that their job gives them for integrating work with life outside work. For many, this centres on having some discretion over their work pattern – the hours they work and when they work them. In recent years in Europe this has been translated into policy and legislation that allows employees to seek alterations in their work pattern if they have caring

responsibilities: for example a move from full-time to part-time working or some form of flexi-time. What we also know however, is that it is one thing for countries and work organisations to adopt policies on work-life balance but whether people make use of those provisions is quite another matter. In circumstances where employees feel that their employer supports the policy and that it will not count against them if they request a change in their work pattern, take-up is much higher than where employees feel they may be discriminated against (for example, not considered for promotion) if they make such requests.

Hence, the atmosphere or climate in which Human Resource (HR) policies exist is an important influence on how

policies translate into practice. At present, however, we know next to nothing about HR climates – not even how to measure them systematically, or to measure the degree to which (and ways in which) HR climates mediate the relationship between organisational inputs (such as organisational structures and HR policies) and different outcomes.

It is this issue which forms the basis of the new research project to be conducted by Paul Blyton of BRASS with Professors Ali Dastmalchian of the University of Victoria, Canada and Nick Bacon of Nottingham University. They have been awarded a grant by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (the Canadian equivalent of the ESRC) to establish a robust measure of HR climate and then examine how it impacts upon the relationships between various organisational inputs and different work outcomes. A key part of the study is that the outcomes studied will cover both managerial outcomes – the impact of different climates on performance, quality and productivity, for example – but also employee outcomes, such as job satisfaction, well-being and the degree to which people believe that their work organisation enables them to achieve a work-life balance.

The first stage of the research is to establish a measure that can be applied successfully in a range of settings – manufacturing and service sectors, public and private sector environments – and in different countries. To achieve this an initial study of matched pairs of organisations in Britain and Canada will be undertaken over the coming year. If successful the measure will be applied to a wider range of organisations to reach a clearer understanding of what contributes to particular outcomes within work organisations, including the outcome of employees feeling supported in their search for a successful work-life balance.

To find out more about this research, or to express interest in being part of the sample of organisations taking part, please contact Professor Paul Blyton.

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People value a job that gives them the opportunity to integrate their working day with their outside lives

Employees are looking for alterations in their work patterns



scots pine woods

FORESTRY FOR PEOPLE



Dr Alex Franklin

When people discuss business and the natural environment, usually it is in the context of the impact that the business has on the environment. In some cases however, the business is the environment, and in the case of forestry, the business's products and production facilities, and the natural environment that the public enjoy, are all one and the same thing.

Public access to forest spaces is increasingly being recognised as an important gateway for generating a wide range of social values, at both an individual and community level. Benefits enjoyed by those who participate in forest-based activities include improvements in health, prospects for paid employment, social skills, and better connections with the natural world. Communities can enjoy improved connection to place, local pride, increased capacity to effect

change in their local environment, as well as collectively enjoying better health, prosperity and vitality. In 2008, researchers at the BRASS Centre took part in a study, commissioned by the Forest Research's Social & Economic Research Group (SERG), on behalf of Forestry Commission Scotland. The overall aim of this project was to identify and review the social and economic benefits of publicly accessible forests and woodland for the people of Scotland.

In an effort to capture some of the diversity of the use of Scottish forests to develop social benefit, two contrasting case study sites were selected. One located in the most urban part of Scotland – Glasgow; the other in the rural Highlands of Scotland, centred on Loch Ness. Each case study area offered unique insights into the social benefits of forest-based activity from the context of their widely differing situations. They featured contrasting characteristics across a range of social and economic indicators, including high and low population densities, obvious and hidden deprivation, high and low proportions of forested land cover, and different histories and trajectories of development. Despite these and other

differences, the research suggests that people in both communities increasingly put a high value on their forest spaces, seeing them as important assets in responding to the challenges of developing their own communities and delivering improvements in their lives.

Overall, the most significant phenomenon to emerge from the evidence was the almost universal enthusiasm expressed by respondents for the value of forests and woodlands in their lives. This was expressed both as a general affection for the actual forest spaces themselves, and as specific affection for the activities in which they are engaging in forests. Comments such as: "There's something about being out in the woods that just helps you to chill out when you're stressed" reflect not only specific mental health benefits of forest-based activities, but also the way general affection for forest spaces is expressed.

This enthusiasm was expressed by most respondents in terms of promoting further development of forest uses which deliver the social benefits they enjoy. Participants in forest-based programmes readily

shared, through passionate accounts, the high value they placed on the benefits they gained. Those engaged in the management of forest-based programmes and assets were just as passionate in their advocacy of forests, as were forest rangers, development officers and others in the public sector. Many of the actors displayed a keen sense of social entrepreneurship in the ways they supported the development of forests for social benefits. This entrepreneurship can be witnessed in the growth of new partnerships and new projects, bringing new opportunities to link together forests and communities.

Across both case studies respondents were seen volunteering, learning new skills, enjoying new opportunities to socialize, improving their health and changing their livelihoods in response to the opportunities presented by forest-based developments in their communities. In both places it was possible to observe first-hand how accessing social benefits from woodland spaces has brought new value to communities and prompted a revaluation of their forest spaces. The research conducted demonstrated how interactions between communities and woodland spaces are changing the way local people see the value of their woodlands.

The growth of new sectors of interest – health, education – and the additional partnership funds they bring with them represent new ways of valuing forest spaces. The growing emphasis on partnership working in community development, whether for urban regeneration or rural development, has again brought new value to woodland spaces.

Those who get involved find their enthusiasm for forests and woodland spaces grows rapidly – indeed, the strength of that enthusiasm could be seen across the breadth of evidence that was examined. With increasing activity and increasing enthusiasm on the part of all those involved, it would seem inevitable that there is a shift in how the Scottish public values forests and woodlands. The investment of new value in these spaces can give them greater positive virtue in the public eye, rendering them new virtuous forests.

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THE 'TWO-THIRDS FAIR TRADE CUP IS FULL' NOT 'TWO-THIRDS EMPTY'



Alastair Smith

At the beginning of Fairtrade Fortnight 2008, the Adam Smith Institute published a report, Unfair Trade, which was heavily critical of the Fair Trade governance framework.

The report claimed to be a 'dispassionate' analysis of the evidence relating to Fair Trade, but it aroused the suspicions of one of BRASS's PhD scholars, Alistair Smith, who is researching into Fair Trade. He set out to critically evaluate the Adam Smith report and also began tracing back to original sources the evidence that it cited.

What Alistair discovered was that the Institute's report was not the thorough and objective analysis of Fair Trade that it claimed to be, but instead was an inconsistently argued and selectively sourced effort by the think tank to promote social policies based on its free market economic ideology. The minimum price guarantee that is the central component of Fair Trade is naturally anathema to the Adam Smith Institute, and therefore bore the brunt of their critical analysis. However, they also included as many other types of

criticism as they could think of, on either ideological or practical grounds.

What Alistair's analysis shows is how many inconsistencies there are between the different arguments put forward and the final policy conclusions offered by the institute's report, and how a deeper analysis of their source material showed that it either failed to back up their assertions in a rigorous way, or in some cases had been misrepresented.

In Alistair's response to the report, available via the BRASS website, the research methodology behind the Adam Smith Report is questioned and a detailed point-by-point reconsideration of their criticisms against Fair Trade is presented.

The evidence concerning those nations that have been most successful at reducing poverty through free market policies and liberalisation is also reviewed. Contrary to the position adopted by the Institute, Alistair's analysis demonstrates that the management of incentive structures (ie market intervention) was a central

component in making such liberalisation programs beneficial to the most vulnerable ('the poor').

The final part of Alistair's response offers an alternative way to think about why free markets often fail the poor and how Fair Trade does offer one solution by strengthening and diversifying livelihoods. Alistair's response does not argue that Fair Trade is perfect, but it does demonstrate that the calls to reject it in favour of a greater emphasis on free trade strategies is not well supported by a detailed analysis of either the underlying theory or the available empirical evidence. For anyone wishing to promote fairer rather than just freer trade, and who would also like to be able to answer the inevitable critics who believe that free markets are the solution to every problem, this response should be required reading.

Read the full paper at the BRASS website: www.brass.cf.ac.uk

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Fair Trade & Public Procurement: Is it possible to facilitate processes of sustainable development by including fair trade products in public procurement frameworks?

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The role of place based communities in influencing sustainable/ethical consumption with particular reference to Fairtrade Towns.

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Economic Globalisation, Ecological Localisation and the Dairy Agri-Food Sector.

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The role of Knowledge Transfer in the Regulation of Biosecurity.

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Corporate Social Responsibility and social challenges in Europe: generating adaptive solutions within local communities.

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The Social, Political & Economic Impact of Alternative Vehicles and Fuels.

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The development of full cost accounting as a technique to place a monetary value on the social and environmental impacts of organisations.

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Food Deserts in Wales, UK and Vermont, USA: An International Comparison of the Socioeconomic Causes and Implications of Inadequate Food Access.

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Sustainable Fashion: Corporate Social Responsibility in the Clothing Sector.

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Business and Human Rights: An examination into the nature and scope of business responsibilities in respect of human rights.

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'Public-Private Regulation: economic globalisation and ecological localisation in the agri-food sector.'

Radoslaw Stech

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"Citizens' activity as a catalyst of business responsibility in environmental matters. The implementation of the Aarhus Convention in Poland and the UK"

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Regulation on the Registration, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals.

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A Framework for Regulating Adventitious Release of Genetically Modified Organisms Arising from the Co-existence of GM and Non GM Arable Crops.

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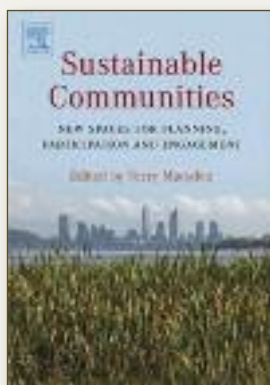
Natural resource use, sustainability and property rights: institutional and legal aspects relating to regional cooperation and local governance in the management of Lake Victoria.

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Waste minimisation; recycling; policy decision making; sustainable development.

BOOKS

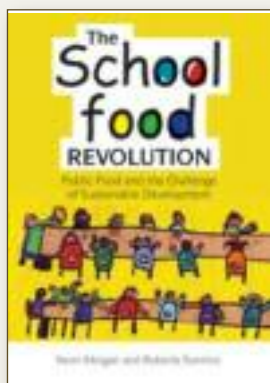


Sustainable Communities New Spaces for Planning, Participation and Engagement

Edited by Terry Marsden, Cardiff University.

Sustainable Communities brings together key debates and empirical case studies that explore how sustainable communities might develop. A synthesis of recent research by BRASS, it reviews the literature on sustainable communities before addressing them through empirical case studies attempts to create them.

Published by Elsevier Science. ISBN 9780080453637 (Hardback). 312pp. £65



The School Food Revolution Public Food and the Challenge of Sustainable Development

Kevin Morgan and Roberta Sonnino

This book takes a critical look at the alleged benefits of school food reform, like lower food miles, the creation of markets for local producers and new food education initiatives that empower consumers by nurturing their capacity to eat healthily. Overall, the book examines

the theory, policy and practice of public food provisioning, offering a comparative perspective on the design and delivery of sustainable school food systems

Published by Earthscan, October 2008, [Hardback], 256pp ISBN: 9781844074822 £45

WORKING PAPERS

The Impact of Economic and Political Geography on the Implementation and Application of 3R Strategies

Lori Frater

Food Deserts:

Contexts and Critiques of Contemporary Food Access Assessments
Jesse McEntee

Supporting Skills and Knowledge to Deliver Sustainable Communities:

An Exploration of the Conceptual and Policy Context
Julie Newton, Terry Marsden, Alex Franklin and Andrea Collins

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Kevin Morgan

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Kevin Morgan

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Towards Hybrid Forms of Voluntary and Charitable Organisations in the UK
Celine Chew

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A Synopsis
Chris Groves, Elen Stokes, Robert Lee, Lori Frater and Taiwo Oriola

REPORTS

Social Enterprise Research Monograph

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A Case Study of Social Forestry in Scotland (Executive Summary)
Alex Franklin and Rhys Evans

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Paul Nieuwenhuis

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An Evaluation of the South West Wales Biosecurity Intensive Treatment Area
Alex Franklin

Evaluation on the South West Wales Biosecurity Intensive Treatment Area

Gareth Enticott

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The Missing Middle of the Local Food Infrastructure?
Adrian Morley, Selyf Morgan and Kevin Morgan

POLICY BRIEFINGS



Corporate Social Responsibility: Engaging Small and Medium Sized Enterprises



Climate Change, Consumers and the Future of Brands



Waste Management: The Role for Social Enterprise



Nanotechnologies: Gaps in the Regulatory Framework



How Concerned are Consumers with Climate Change? Focus on Appliances



How Concerned are Consumers with Climate Change? Focus on Transport



How Concerned are Consumers with Climate Change? Focus on Recycling



How Concerned are Consumers with Climate Change? Focus on Food

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