



**Green Economy and Sustainable Development:
Bringing Back the Social Dimension
CONFERENCE**

Incentives for Promoting Green Citizenship and Consumerism in the Transition to a Green Economy

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Research outline

- How engaged are individuals – as consumers and citizens - in the green economy?
- How to design appropriate incentives and disincentives to encourage sustainable behaviour?
- What can we learn from case studies in the following countries:
 - UK
 - South Africa
 - Mozambique
 - Angola
 - Brazil
- Conclusions

Methodology

- Desk-based review of literature on green citizenship, social capital, participation and incentives
- Interviews with practitioners, volunteers, policy-makers, academics, NGO and think tank staff in the UK, Brazil, Mozambique, South Africa and Angola
- Online questionnaire surveying respondents' attitudes to involvement in policy-making, and assessing their perceptions about the incentives needed to encourage greater action on climate change at all levels of government, as well as in the private sector

Current engagement levels on climate change

- Crisis of energy and food security, jobless growth, climate change and global brings with it an opportunity to restructure the global economy
- Though the private sector is beginning to get engaged, the pressure for them to do more requires consumers to be informed and confident enough to demand change
- For some, information on climate change is 'being stuffed down peoples' throats too much and people are getting fed up with it'
- Even those who do trust climate scientists are sceptical – they believe 'the decisions that need to be made won't be in their interest, but driven by special interests'
- Even among those who are engaged with the issue, action depends on resources and the capacity to act
- Simply expecting individuals to change their behaviour without a formalised and supportive structure will not translate into reduced emissions

The nature of citizenship and participation and their role in the green economy

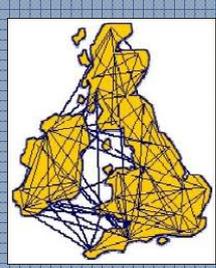
- Many modern societies have seen a decline in confidence in public institutions to deliver results
- Popular participation in decision-making can engender well-being in citizenries and ensure locally-appropriate policies
- The higher the levels of social capital, the greater the likelihood they will support actions for the common good
- But to make the most of these benefits, ensuring that mechanisms for engagement in policy-making are as representative as possible is critical
- And the design of the participatory process should therefore create an enabling environment that addresses structural reasons for the non-participation of some actors or groups

Incentivising green citizenship

- There is a risk that a ‘schizophrenic’ green economy develops, where individuals’ actions as citizens and consumers undermine one another and the low-carbon transition.
- Economic activity should promote certain social and environmental outcomes - reconfiguring the way we perceive growth and consumerism, and the way we think about social capital
- If punitive measures are used, they should either supply revenue spent directly for environmental purposes, or be linked in a visible way with behaviour change.
- Communities also need to be willing to participate in incentive schemes– if they distrust the processes through which incentives are disbursed, there will likely be little uptake.
- Incentives must never undermine civic duty.
- Policies to encourage behavioural change – through positive and negative incentives - should therefore be flexible, with reference to local circumstances.

Most popular incentives – survey of respondents

- **Allocation of public funds to local government dependent on meeting sustainability targets (70 %)**
- Sustainability targets for local government (67 %)
- A community fund for local sustainability strategies (56 %)
- Establishing a public index ranking of poor and best-performing local governments, based on their meeting climate change / sustainability targets (52 %)



Case study 1 – UK Transition Towns

- Currently over 344 Transition Towns (TTs) in the UK and 859 internationally
- The movement's central objectives are to find alternative solutions to peak oil, promote locally-based and organic consumerism, and to become self-sufficient in energy provision
- Transition Towns tend not to engage directly enough with poorer communities
- In their current form, TTs are limited in their potential impact, in part because they are community-focused
- Some TTs have found that, to be effective they need to work with existing authority structures
- The Localism Bill – published in the UK in December 2010, offers an opportunity for community-orientated initiatives to develop with funding from government

Case study 2 – South Africa, IDP and the carbon tax

- Policy coherence on climate change an issue
- The nature of the carbon tax is unresolved (expected 2012) though funds currently not earmarked
- IDP innovative municipal planning policy with potential to scale up participation and address climate change
- Carbon tax funds can be earmarked for IDP participatory, local adaptation and mitigation projects
- Public indexing and windfall allocations (focus on poorer communities through mentoring)

Case studies 3 and 4 – IDP in Angola and Mozambique

- Trend towards participatory democracy at local level
- Still severe capacity and resource constraints
- Climate change fund can support communities to design and implement climate change projects
- Managed by various actors to ensure transparency, including communities
- Specific input from most polluting industries (i.e. Oil companies/mining industry)

Case study 4 – REDD+, Forest Capital and Brazil

- REDD+ incentive structure primarily focused on specific communities and areas
- Institutions need to be reformed to manage information and incentives (Wertze-Kanounnikoff and Anglesen, 2009)
- Encourage greater action on forest management through participatory planning at municipal level
- Ensure community priorities in REDD+ projects are institutionalised through the planning process
- Use public indexing to determine municipalities who have met sustainable development targets
- Encourage locally-generated REDD+ resources through Forest Capital, which can be distributed to municipalities who have met their REDD+/sustainability targets

Concluding remarks

- Risk of schizophrenic green economy due to competing drivers of citizenship/consumerism
- Overcome lack of faith in public institutions through incentives that promote green citizenship and partnership with local government - should become institutionalised at the local level
- Use decentralised planning instruments to set community-prioritised climate change targets and projects
- Allocation of funds can be dependent upon performance-based allocations
- Producing a symbiotic relationship between both citizen and consumer

Thank you

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