



Environmental Policy and Household Behavioural Change



ENERGY



WATER



WASTE



TRANSPORT



ORGANIC FOOD

Objectives

Environmental pressures from households are significant, and their impacts are likely to intensify over the coming years. This OECD project aims at better understanding household environmental behaviour in order to improve policies targeting residential energy use, water consumption, transport choices, organic food consumption, and waste generation and recycling.

Main phases

As part of the first step of the project, existing empirical evidence on the main drivers of household behaviour in these five environmental policy areas was reviewed. The results were presented at a Workshop and a publication is available (*Household Behaviour and the Environment: Reviewing the Evidence, 2008*).

The second stage involves the implementation of a large scale OECD household survey on environmental behaviour in OECD countries. While existing studies generally limit their scope to a single country and focus on a single environmental concern, the questionnaire developed by the OECD covers five key policy areas (energy, waste, food, water and personal transport) and ten countries representing different regions are taking part in the survey: Australia, Canada, Czech Republic, France, Italy, Korea, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden.

Based upon the 2008 survey results, practical policy recommendations are formulated to design efficient and effective environmental policies targeted at households.

As a follow-up step, a new round of the survey will be carried out in 2010-11. It will help identify changes in people's attitudes and behaviour towards the environment in these five areas, as well as examine new issues. Analysis of environmental policy from the demand side is receiving increasing attention from governments, with issues such as the adoption of eco-innovations by households. This unique survey will allow to examine ways to promote green growth and the development of a low-carbon economy.

Timeline

- Implementation of the OECD Household Survey on Environmental Behaviour in 2008 in all 10 countries, with a total sample of 10 000 respondents.
- Analysis of the survey data by research teams coordinated by the OECD including households' response to various types of environmental policies (e.g. waste charges, waste recycling services, energy price, energy efficiency labelling, fuel taxes, organic food labelling) and differences in environmental behaviour across households groups (e.g. income, age, household size, education). Preparation of thematic reports by research teams based upon the results (2008/2009).
- Presentation of the project results at an international OECD conference (3-4 June 2009) and publication of the conclusions of the Survey.
- Next round of the OECD Survey (2010-2011).



**2008 OECD Survey
10 countries
involved**



Research Teams

The project is coordinated by the OECD Environment Directorate, with research teams with extensive experience based in selected participating countries. These include:

- **Catholic University, Piacenza – Italy:**
Stefano BOCCALETTI (research team leader) – *Organic Food*
- **Charles University in Prague – Czech Republic:**
Milan SCASNY (research team leader) – *Energy Efficiency*
- **Korean Environment Institute (KEI) – Korea:**
Kwang-yim KIM (research team leader) – *Waste Generation*
- **SLU University – Sweden:**
Bengt KRISTRÖM (research team leader) – *Renewable Energy*
- **Statistics Norway - Norway:**
Bente HALVORSEN (research team leader) – *Gender Issues*
- **The Australian National University – Australia:**
Quentin GRAFTON (research team leader) – *Water Consumption*
- **Universidad Iberoamericana – Mexico:**
Alejandro GUEVARA-SANGINES (research team leader) - *Transport*
- **University Panthéon-Sorbonne and INRA – France:**
Katrin MILLOCK and Céline NAUGES (research team leaders) – *Water Conservation and Water Quality*
- **York University – Canada:**
Ida FERRARA (research team leader) – *Waste Recycling and Waste Prevention*

Advisory Committee

In order to ensure the soundness of the survey instrument and the political relevance of the outcome of the work, an Advisory Committee including government representatives from the participating countries was set up in 2007 to help inform this project.

Project Contributors

- Australian Department of the Environment and Water Resources
- Environment Canada
- Dutch Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (VROM)
- Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, Germany
- French Ministry of the Environment (MEED)
- Ministry of the Environment, Czech Republic
- Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources, Mexico (SEMARNAT)
- Ministry of Environment, Republic of Korea
- Norwegian Ministry of the Environment
- Region Emilia Romagna, Italy
- Swedish Energy Agency (STEM)

Contacts

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