

Sustainability concern in discourse and practice

- Pathways for changing energy consuming habits in housing and transport

The world is facing major socio-technical changes in response to anthropogenic climate change, including changes in energy production and consumption. These responses come about not only through technological innovations and political actions, but also – and as an integral part of technological and political development – through social and cultural change. Socio-cultural changes comprise changes in habits, routines and the ways things are done as well as changes in basic conceptions, worldviews and the ways in which things are understood. And practical knowledge as well as general worldviews are conveyed and apprehended via media like television, radio, internet and newspapers.

Two closely connected projects will investigate how sustainability discourses and sustainability practices interact. More specifically, they will uncover connections, correlations and discrepancies between public media representations of and social practices for sustainable development.

The projects are designed as qualitative case studies combining three particular approaches: actor-network-theory, discourse theory and practice theory. They combine media analyses and practice analyses and to a minor extent also policy analyses and questionnaire surveys, and they focus on transportation and mobility as well as household energy 'prosumption' (a term which combines energy consumption as well as household/building based energy production from solar panels and other sources).

The two connected projects are funded by AUFF NOVA (DKK 1,279,000) during 2016-2019 and by Aarhus University/DCE (DKK 238,500) during 2016.

Contact person: Senior social scientist Lars Kjerulf Petersen, lkp@envs.au.dk