

NUMBER 2 · FEBRUARY 2023

202CM - THE NEWSLETTER

A European Research Project about Climate Change Mitigation



Good morning!

We are very happy to meet you again in the framework of the project 202CM “Overcoming Obstacles and Disincentives to Climate Change Mitigation: A cross-cutting approach by human and social sciences”.

This is our second Newsletter, which will mostly focus on the French 🇫🇷 and Norwegian 🇳🇴 teams of the project.

First, let's take a look at one of our privileged field partners: [Chastreix-Sancy National Nature Reserve](#) (Puy-de-Dôme, France). Sancy has an area of 1895 hectares and an altitude ranging from 1100 m to 1885 m. It contains a great wealth of fauna (chamoix, ibexes, vultures) and flora. It is home to 5 municipalities: Chastreix, Mont-Dore, Besse-et-Saint-Anastaise, Picherande, Chambon-sur-Lac. The total population of these villages is 3,713 (2020 census). The main economic activities are pastoralism, forestry and tourism.

In the project, an observation grid has been created by dir. Michel Streith, CNRS Research director, in order to understand how French farmers of Chastreix-Sancy, who are important actors directly involved in environmental activities, and laypeople (visitors of this natural site) make sense of climate change and of climate change mitigation behaviours.



Welcome to Solenne Bonneterre



SOLENE IS A DOCTOR IN SOCIAL AND HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY

SHE JOINED THE PROJECT IN FEBRUARY 2023

SOLENE WILL STUDY HOW WE CAN INCREASE PEOPLE'S ADOPTION OF PRO-ENVIRONMENTAL BEHAVIOR. SHE WILL BE FOCUSING ON THE DIFFERENCES AND COMMON POINTS IN THE COUNTRIES INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT (I.E., ATTITUDES, NORMS), AND HOW IT SHAPES INDIVIDUALS' BEHAVIOR TOWARD THE ENVIRONMENT.

THE NORWEGIAN CITIZENS PANEL

BY THE NORWEGIAN TEAM

The Norwegian team conducted national surveys in collaboration with the Norwegian Citizens Panel and the NORCE research centre. In these surveys, participants had the opportunity to respond freely to open-ended questions, which revealed nuances in the attitudes of Norwegians about climate issues.

Research results show that respondents are ready to contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and that this desire is motivated by ethical and environmental considerations, while economic incentives don't play an important role. There is also a general agreement on the collective responsibility to reduce emissions; but this responsibility is vague, constructed through the use of the "we" pronoun. In contrast, respondents tend to present themselves in rather precise and heroic terms (« I already have an eco-friendly lifestyle »).

Compared to earlier surveys (2013 and 2015), there is today a general agreement on the need to reduce emissions, but there is considerable disagreement on the measures to be taken to reduce them. Should we allow the construction of wind turbines, should we reduce our level of consumption or even impose another social and political model? Among the most contested points: what role should Norway play compared to the rest of the world? Arguments related to the size of the country, to justify inaction, frequently appear in this context.



SCIENTIFIC ACTIVITIES

THERE ARE 2 ONGOING NORWEGIAN PAPERS:

- OLOKO, FRANCIS BADIANG, KJERSTI FLØTTUM & ØYVIND GJERSTAD: « LES CONTROVERSES DU CHANGEMENT CLIMATIQUE EN BELGIQUE, EN FRANCE ET EN NORVÈGE : UNE ANALYSE THÉMATIQUE ET POLYPHONIQUE ». ACTES DU CONGRÈS DE ROMANISTES SCANDINAVES À AARHUS.
- SKIPLE, JON KÅRE, ØYVIND GJERSTAD, KJERSTI FLØTTUM & FRANCIS BADIANG OLOKO: « NORWEGIAN CITIZENS' SUGGESTIONS FOR DEALING WITH CLIMATE CHANGE ».

Related to 202CM, the CLIMLIFE project, led by Prof. Kjersti Fløttum, studies motivation and action for lifestyle change out of consideration for the climate. It is funded by the Research Council of Norway.

They stated that people use mainly 4 strategies to integrate, or not, the challenges of climate change into their lives:

- 1 ACTIVISM:** PEOPLE ENGAGE ACTIVELY TO INFLUENCE POLICIES TO MITIGATE CLIMATE CHANGE.
- 2 RESPONSIVENESS:** PEOPLE RESPOND IN ACCORDANCE WITH INCENTIVES DESIGNED TO ENCOURAGE CLIMATE-FRIENDLY BEHAVIOUR.
- 3 RESIGNATION:** PEOPLE RECOGNIZE THE PROBLEM BUT GIVE UP ENGAGING WITH THE COMPLEX CHALLENGES OF CLIMATE CHANGE.
- 4 REJECTION:** PEOPLE ACTIVELY CHOOSE NOT TO CONSIDER CLIMATE CHANGE IN THEIR CHOICES



LET'S TALK FOOD!

YOU READ WHAT YOU EAT !

BY THE FRENCH TEAM

Reducing our meat consumption could hold significant environmental benefits. At the same time, changing dietary habits can be painful. We examined whether motivational effects may influence information selection regarding the efficacy of a reduction of meat consumption as a pro-environmental strategy.

Our study reveals that risk communication associated with our current food system may be compounded by motivations that lead people to prefer information that supports their food identity, which in our case, is an identity related to meat consumption (meat consumer or avoider). As individuals navigate social networks, a selection bias for information that supports their own dietary behaviors can reinforce pre-existing attitudes and stimulate social categorization processes that lead to "us vs. them" thinking. In our research, selective exposure tendencies predicted stronger personal attitudes about meat reduction policies and the moral legitimacy of meat eating as well as increased group identification and intergroup distinctiveness. Such consequences may not only impede individual motivation for dietary adjustments, but also fuel tensions within society. Thus, our findings hold two important implications for environmental risk communication. 1) Selective exposure tendencies may be involved in polarization dynamics and group conflict. 2) Effective risk communication starts at the early stage of information selection.

To combat these tendencies and thus make risk communication more effective, the reduction of meat consumption must be promoted in a way that stimulates self-actualization rather than psychological defense of self-identity.

[Read the report](#)

MOTIVATIONS BEHIND VEGETARIANISM?

BY THE FRENCH TEAM

Considering that eating meat is a central part of French culture and gastronomy, vegetarians and vegans are part of a minority of people in France. Due to the role of meat consumption in CO2 emissions, understanding what motivates this minority to continue their efforts will help us fight against climate change. In this study, we therefore compared French citizens (vegetarians and non-vegetarians) to have a better understanding on what differentiates Vegetarians from the rest of the population.

The results show that vegetarians' motivation to continue to eat no meat can partly be explained by them perceiving a difference between what they and other French citizens believe, and them wanting the change this gap for the well-being of society. More exactly, in our research, vegetarians, more than non-vegetarians, perceived general others as less favorable toward the reduction of meat consumption while they themselves are particularly favorable toward this behavior. From this mismatch comes a source of motivation to adopt and maintain high pro-environmental intentions which are reflected, in particular, in an increase in the willingness to participate in normative change, with the aim of bettering the group.

Thus, our research program tells us that when someone thinks their pro-environmental attitude is different to what other group members think, they follow their own attitude - rather than conforming to social norms - because they want to participate in social change. Other studies are now being conducted to follow up on these first results!

[Read the report](#)

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