



Universität Hamburg

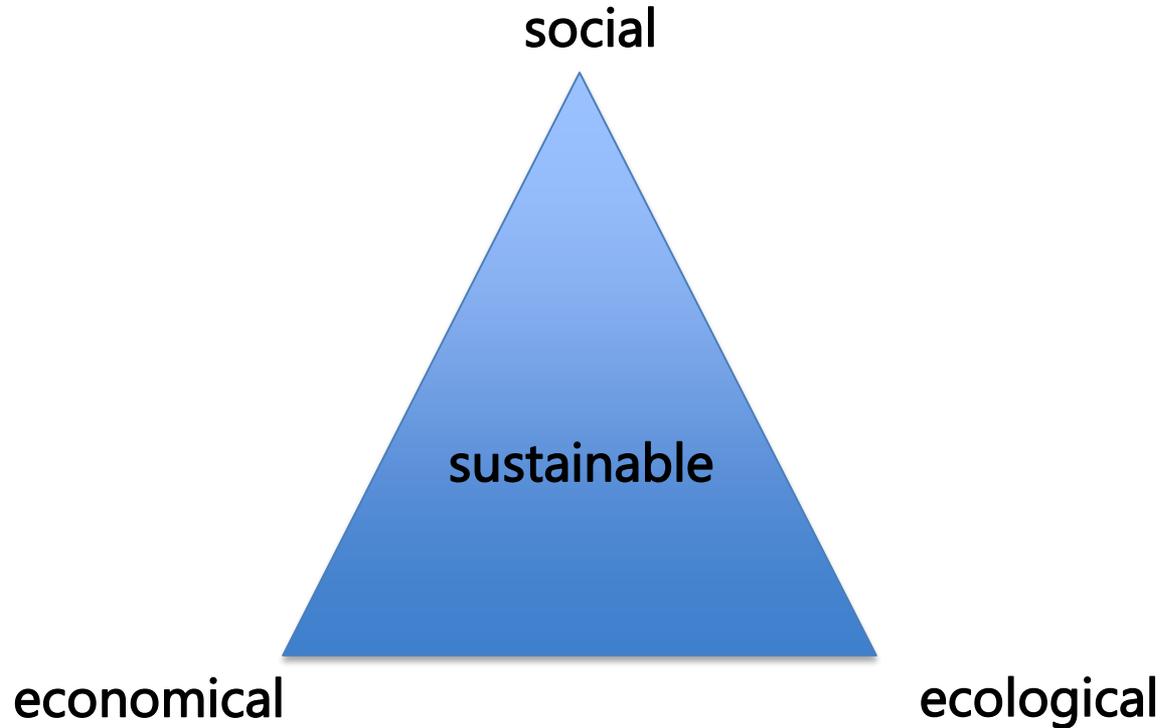
DER FORSCHUNG | DER LEHRE | DER BILDUNG

The Role of Communication For sustainable Development and the SDGs: Objectives and specific challenges

Prof. Dr. Katharina Kleinen-von Königslöw

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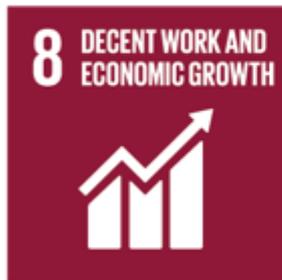
Sustainability and Sustainable Development



→ sustainability is often perceived as a 'top-down' approach, as implemented e.g. by the United Nations "Earth Summit" in Rio (1992)



Sustainability and Sustainable Development



ACADEMIC Perspectives on Sustainability Comm.

Science communication

Climate change communication
Environmental communication
Risk/crisis communication
strategic communication/
social marketing



Communication of sustainability

Development communication

Agricultural/rural communication
participatory communication
Empowerment communication



Health communication

Communication about
sustainability

→ Two academic perspectives with different underlying communication models, methods and forms of impact assessments



IMPORTANCE of COMMUNICATION FOR SD(Gs)

- Inherent **complexity** of SD: scientific and political uncertainties involved
 - **Ambivalence** of sustainability issues: interdependence of different SDGs, many conflicts of interests and values
 - **Difficult implementation** of solutions: multiple stakeholders on different levels, policies useless without public support
 - **Sheer enormousness** of necessary efforts: leading to frustration, hopelessness etc.
- What makes communication *important* also makes it *difficult!*

Communication of sustainability

Communication of sustainability

- Top-down, elites to lay people
- Sender – receiver model, transmissive
- One to many communication
- Transmission of information:
 - Scientific results
 - Policy decisions
 - Behavioural recommendations

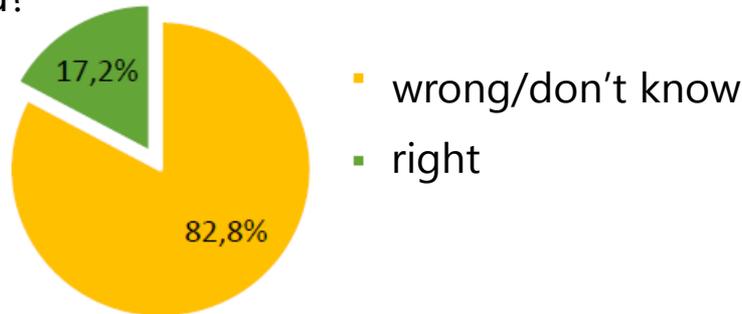
- Based on the „deficit model“ (Bauer 2016, Bucchi 2008):
public needs to know more/the „right“ facts
- „irrational“ public beliefs or failure to act
= result of transmission failures
- Still quite dominant in climate change communication and among communication practitioners in general

Persistent knowledge deficits here: SDG 13

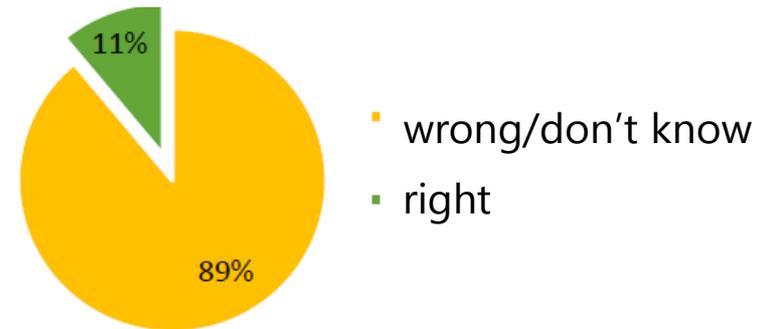


What do people know about climate change and climate policy?

International climate politics aim to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Have CO² emissions actually been reduced?



CO² emissions are one of the main causes of climate change. In which of the following countries are the CO² emissions per citizen the lowest?



MAIN Learnings from CoS

- communication of sustainability: overall **impact** on knowledge, attitudes and intention/actions of people **is limited**
 - Important **barriers** to knowledge transmission exist:
 - **knowledge needs “hooks”**: everyday relevance, connections to other, personally relevant issues etc.
→ otherwise more information only generates more **issue fatigue**
 - knowledge-action disconnect: **guilt** leads to **selective exposure** and embracing of **alternative explanations/actions**
 - feelings of hopelessness/overwhelmedness: again selective exposure
 - Fear of impact on social standing and social identity: encourage polarization on sustainability issues
- Knowledge alone does **not motivate action**



LearningS from CoS

- Communication needs to
 - Take into account **everyday concerns** of people and decision-makers
 - encourage **social norms** and **identities** promoting desired actions
 - Increase perceptions of **response-efficacy**
- Move from communications of sustainability **to promoting communication about sustainability**

Communication of/ About sustainability

Communication of sustainability

- Top-down, elites to lay people
 - Sender – receiver model, transmissive
 - One to many communication
-
- Transmission of information:
 - Scientific results
 - Policy decisions
 - Behavioural recommendations



Communication about sustainability

- Bottom-up, among equals
 - Horizontal, deliberative
 - Many to many communication
-
- creation of a shared understanding:
 - Of facts
 - Of values and frames
 - Of possible solutions
 - Of communities of responsibility and action

Communication about Sustainability

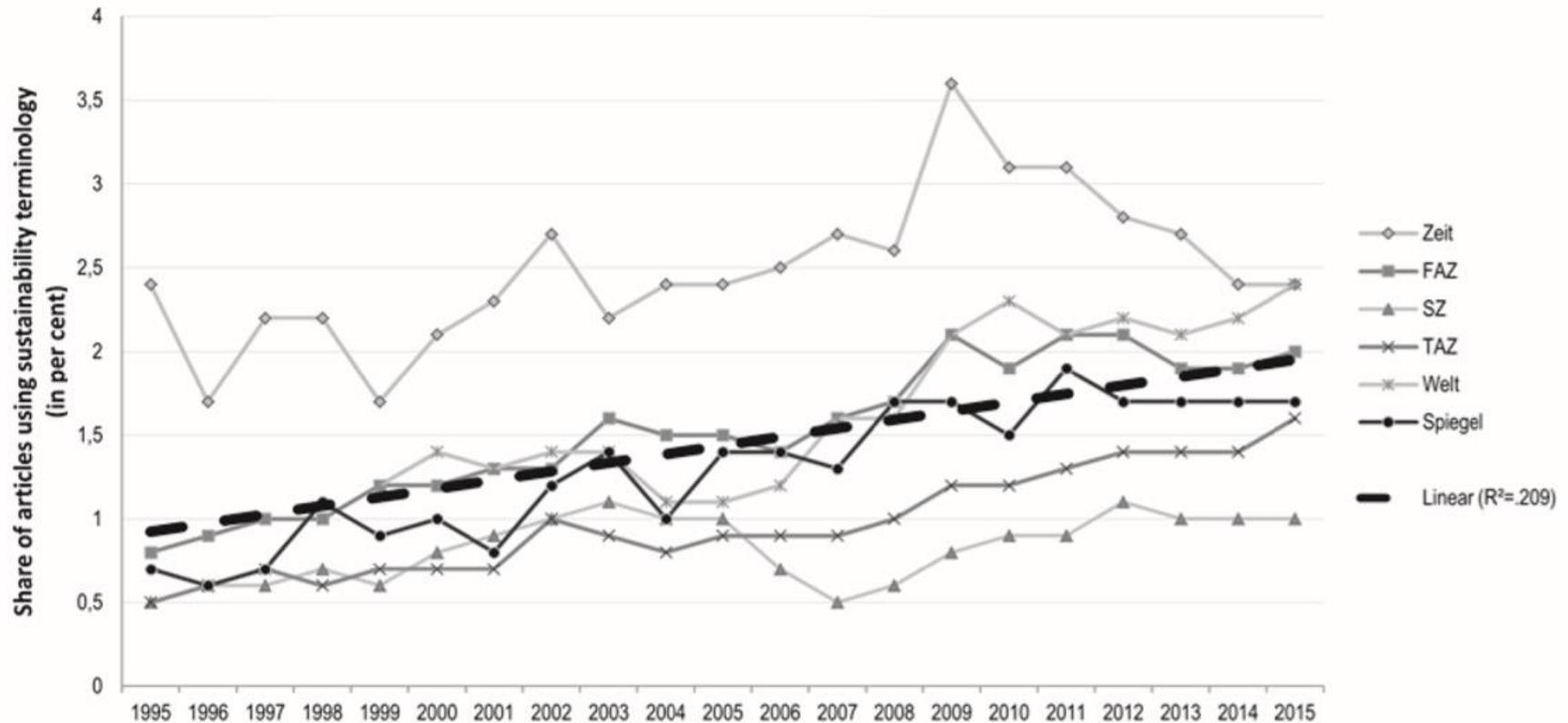


Figure 1: Usage of sustainability terminology in six different German newspapers from 1995 to 2015 (measured in *share of articles* that use the term in per cent)

Use of “Sustainability” in MAsS Media

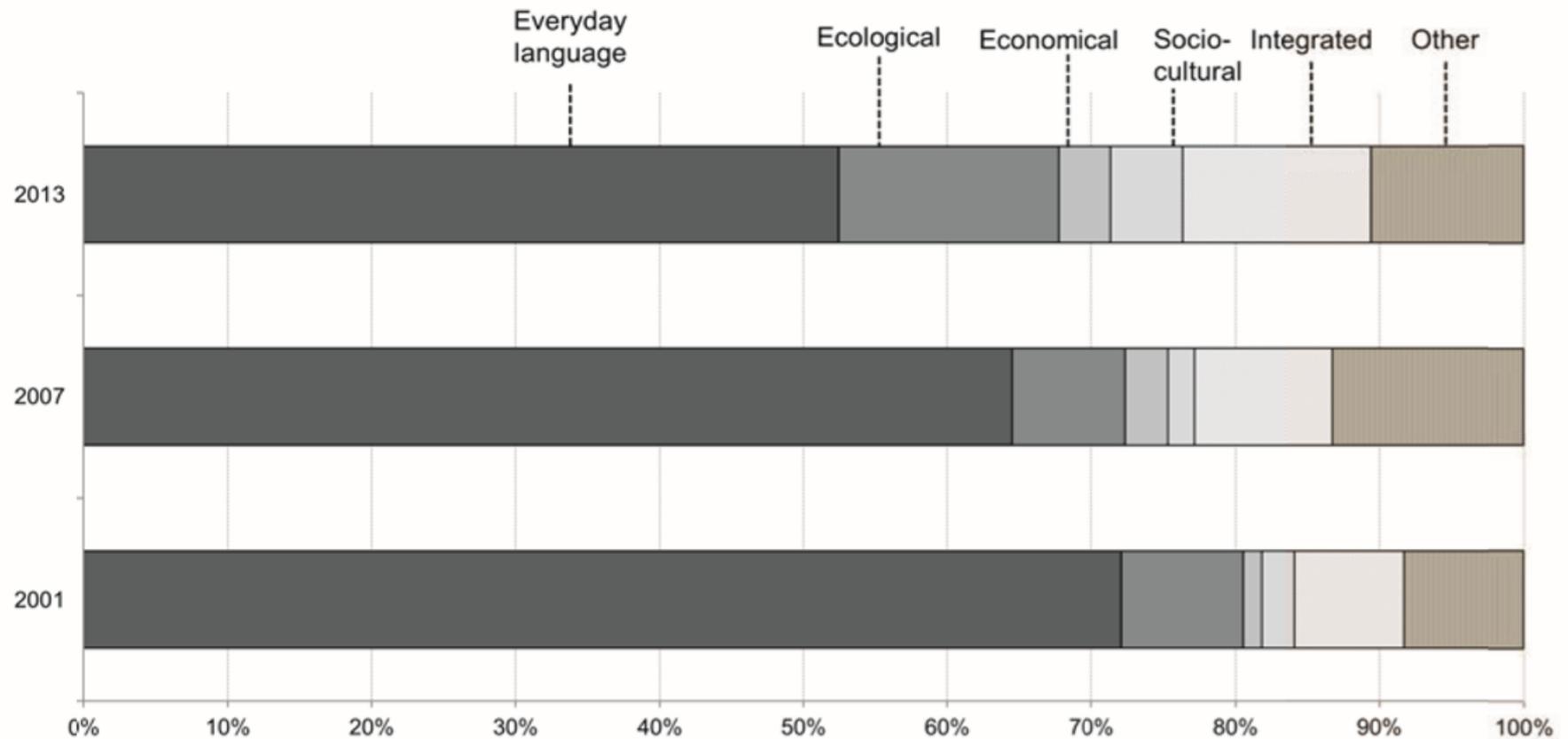


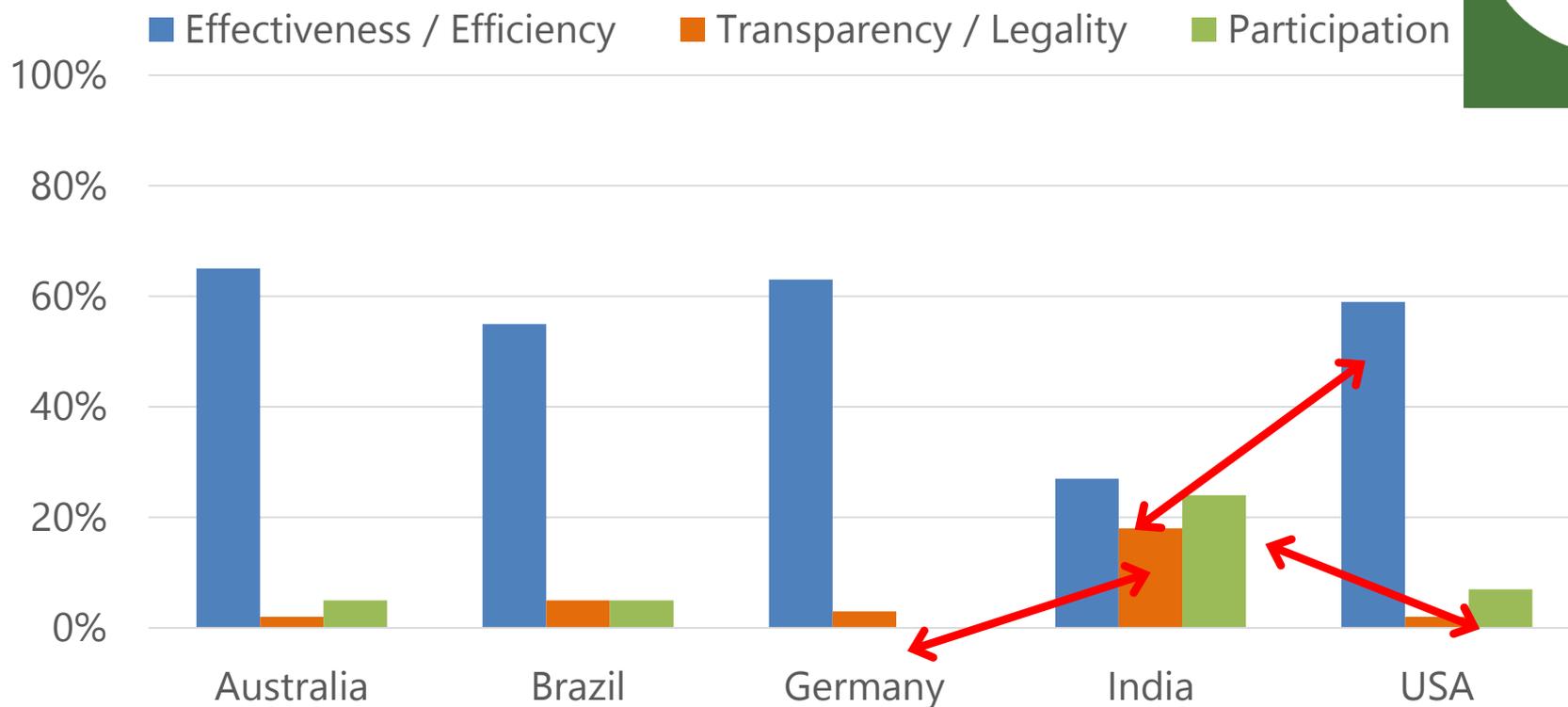
Figure 3: Relative distribution of codings for the years 2001, 2007 and 2013 (share in per cent)

Communication ABOut CLIMATE POLITICS

13 CLIMATE ACTION



Share of (de-)legitimation statements arguing with...



Communication about Sustainability

→ But mass media still represent an elite discourse!

- Discussions in daily life rarely sail under the sustainability flag
→ the term may be used, but rarely with understanding of the underlying concept

(BMU 2016; Bonfadelli 2007, 2010; see also Lass & Reusswig 2001)

 15. Sep.
#Straws #Turtles #plastics #oceans #saveouroceans #saveourseas #seaturtles
#plasticstraws #plasticstrawssuck #memes #sharks #jaws @ Winn-Dixie
instagram.com/p/BnwJuykFLuZ/...

 Kapow · 15. Sep.
Antwort an @RainforestResq
sos 🤔 #Switzerland is negotiating free trade agreements with Indonesia and Malaysia, and #PalmOil playing a crucial role 🙏 #Indonesia #Malaysia world's biggest destroyers of #rainforests. sos STOP FREE TRADE IN PALMOIL

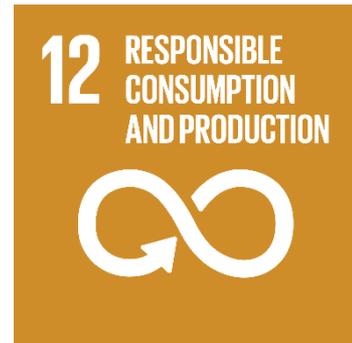
 14. Sep.
Antwort an @Bayer4CropsUS
ALL #Honey is #contaminated now thanks to #BayerMonsanto it's too #toxic for human consumption because bees have been #contaminated by #pollen which was bombarded by #Monsanto HOW is it possible an organization as large as you are hasn't kept up on #CurrentEvents ?via #DrMercola

 13. Apr.
Cows impact negatively on climate **change** (they emit methane). How do you define yourself?

#climatechange #environment #nature #cop21 #climate #globalwarming #green #energy #solar #renewable #wind #wildlife #city #urban #ev #vegan #vegetarian #food #foodporn #cows #meat

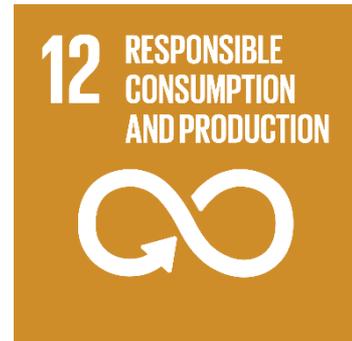
Communication about “Sustainable” Consumption

- How do people talk about “sustainable” consumption practices in social media?
- Dual function of social media:
 - For **sense making** (Hilverda et al. 2017):
 - searching for information
 - Integrating it into existing worldviews
 - Sharing information
 - for **identity management** (KvK/Förster 2016)
 - experiencing and expressing consumption related identities
 - Ingroup/outgroup demarkation



Discussing Sustainable Food Choices

- **Current research project: Talking about our/their food choices on social media (Hoppe/Kleinen-von Königslöw)**
 - Analysis of discussions on Facebook pages of supermarkets in six countries (Canada, China, Germany, India, South Africa, US)
 - Focus on
 - Frames/arguments relating to inter-/intragenerational equity with respect to economic, ecologic and social resources of the planet
 - Sense making
 - Identity management



FRAMING RESPONSIBILITY FOR SUSTAINABILITY



Sainsbury's

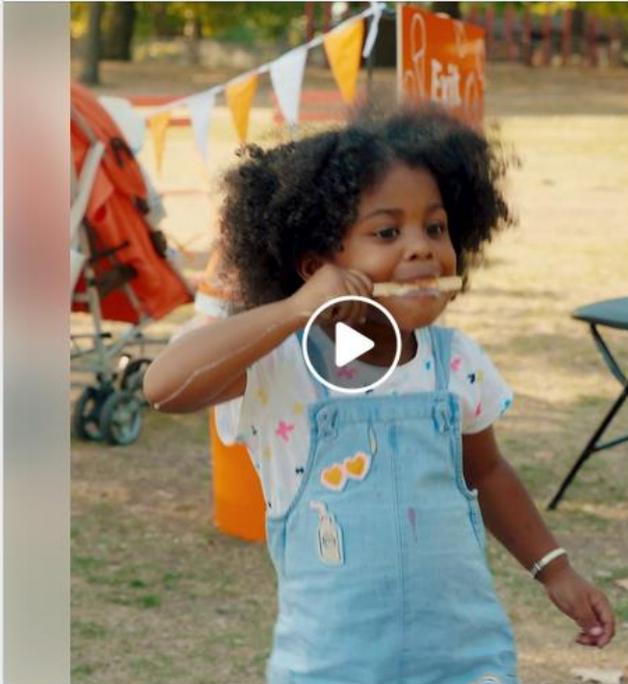
15. August um 10:51 · 🌐

It's time for a big park clean up 🍌🌳

Want to get involved? Send a pic of you tidying up your local park and we'll add some free ice cream to your next online shop.

<https://bit.ly/2nBEOTe>

Übersetzung anzeigen



👍❤️👹 1.732

144 Kommentare · 321 Mal geteilt

1 Mio. Aufrufe



Great idea, but as a huge company you could be doing so much more, like cutting plastic packaging down at source.

Why not have a plastic free aisle in your shops so that consumers can actually have a choice in whether to buy food packaged in plastic or not. Plastic cannot be recycled nearly as well as many believe, its time big corporations take more responsibility at cutting this garbage out so it doesn't end up all over the planet. If you actually listed what can be bought in your shops plastic free, you will have to hold your hands up to this mess.

Gefällt mir · Antworten · Übersetzung anzeigen · 4 W



uses

Evaluations

Treatment

Exa

Performing SOCIAL IDENTITIES

Post by a supermarket

Tesco
18. Juli · 🌐

Ever wondered what makes Tesco's steaks so tender? It's because we mature them for at least 21 days. And if that's not tempting enough, two of our Tesco Finest steaks have just been crowned gold and bronze World Steak Challenge winners. Get them in-store and online at tes.co/MaturedSteak

Übersetzung anzeigen

TESCO
Every little helps
TENDER & FLAVOURSOME

TESCO
EXPERTLY SELECTED FOR FRESHNESS & QUALITY

TESCO

👍👎❤️ 346 430 Kommentare · 37 Mal geteilt
26.274 Aufrufe

Related Comments/Discussion

🌐 Could it be the torment endured by the animals during mass production and ritual slaughter? Appalling, I notice that Tesco is going down market and no longer stocks many of the organic products I used to shop for. A shameful case of profit before ethics!

Gefällt mir · Antworten · Übersetzung anzeigen · 7 W 👍👎❤️ 91

↪ Vorherige Antworten anzeigen

Tesco ✓ Hi Jan,

We do not sell halal meat in our Tesco brand and any halal meat sold in a small range of stores are branded and clearly state halal meat. All meat sold in Tesco packs is Tesco welfare approved and humanely stunned/killed.

... Mehr dazu

Gefällt mir · Antworten · Übersetzung anzeigen · 7 W 👍👎❤️ 26

↪ Weitere Antworten ansehen

🌐 Please Tesco dump Hogwood farm and show your customers you care about animal welfare. The suffering there is horrific

Gefällt mir · Antworten · Übersetzung anzeigen · 7 W 👍👎❤️ 108



LEARNING FOR COMMUNICATING SDGs

- **Awareness/knowledge of sustainability issues alone rarely suffices**
- Aim to **increase communication ABOUT sustainability** on all levels:
in the general population, among local to transnational decision-makers
 - Connect abstract sustainability problems to **everyday issues**
 - Increase perceptions of **response-efficacy** (and avoid disaster frames)
 - **Foster social norms and identities** promoting desirable behaviours, if possible with the help of “influencers” or “opinion leaders”

The Role of Communication For the SDGS

THANK YOU!

Prof. Dr. Katharina Kleinen-von Königslöw

Mail: Katharina.Kleinen@uni-hamburg.de

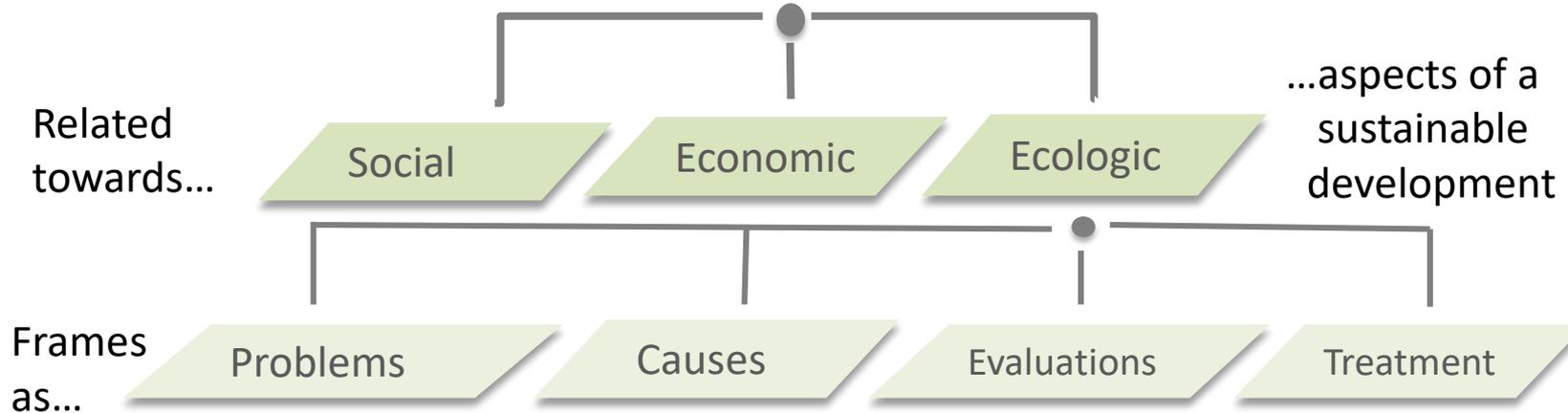
Twitter: @kkvk7

The Role of Communication For the SDGS

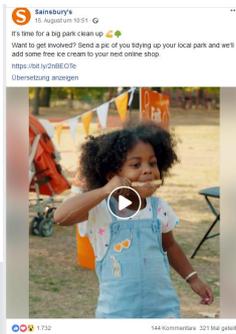
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State of Research and Theoretical Framework

Sustainability Framing



Example



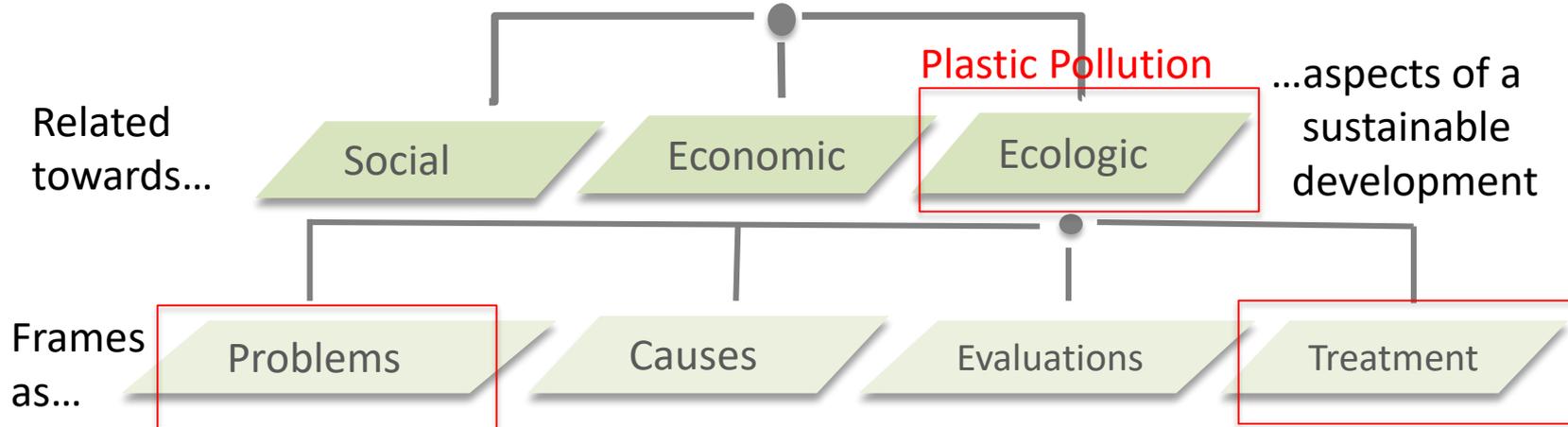
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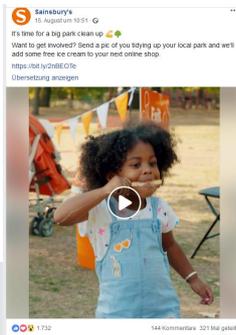


State of Research and Theoretical Framework

Sustainability Framing



Example



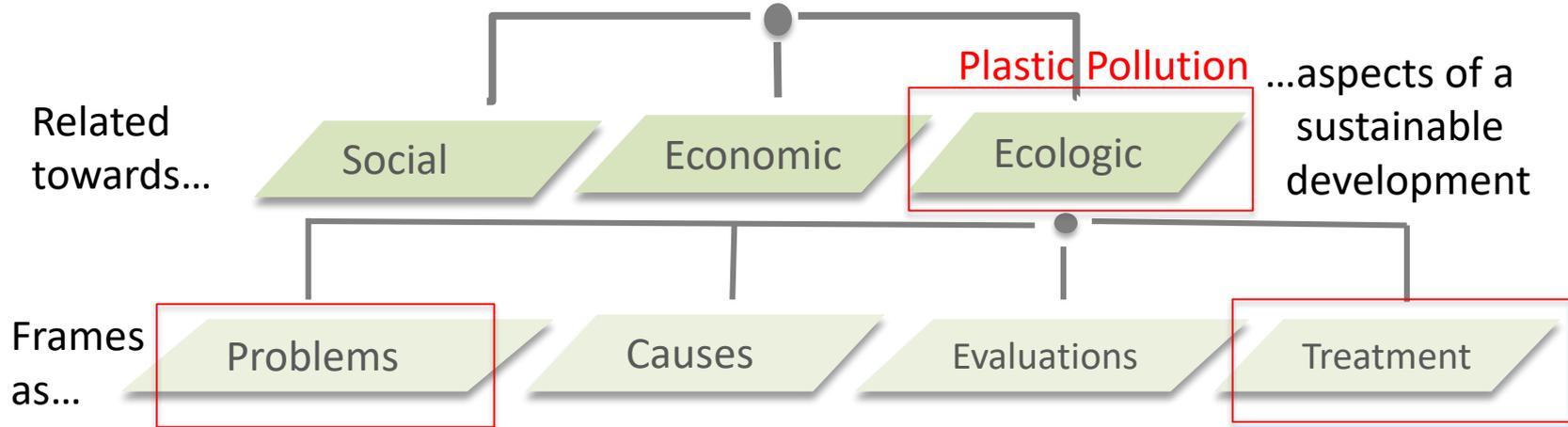
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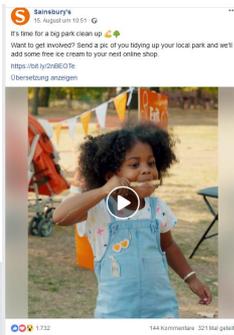
State of Research and Theoretical Framework

Sustainability Framing



Example

Framing:
Consumer
as responsible

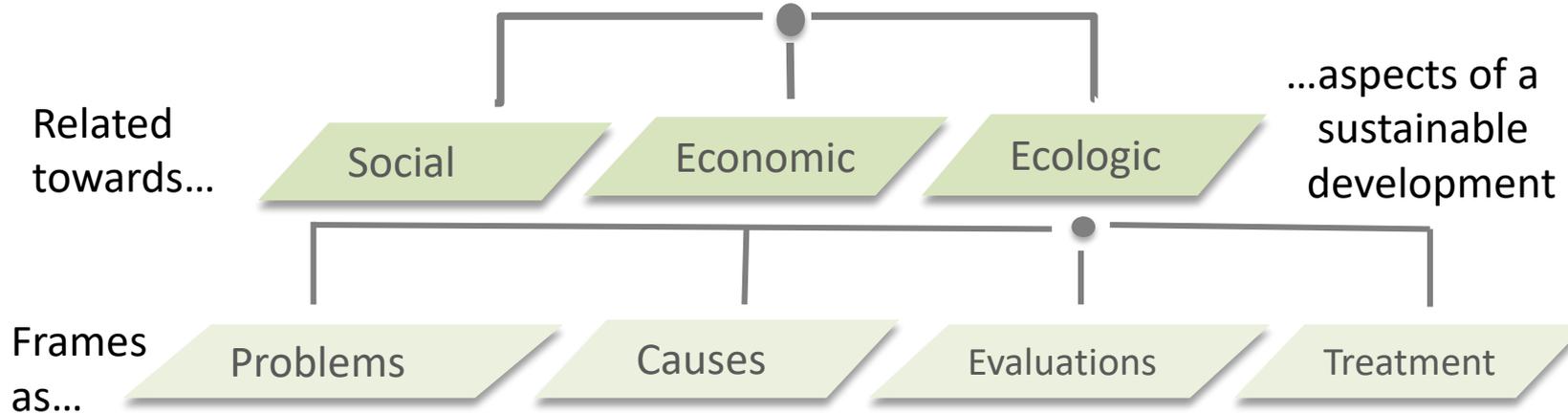


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#Reframing:
Supermarket
as responsible

State of Research and Theoretical Framework

Sustainability Framing



State of Research and Theoretical Framework

- **Making sense of information:**

How do people make sense of information about sustainability & food in social media?

- Social media as a source of information on (sustainable) food (Rutsaert et al. 2013),
also: social media particularly relevant for “sense making”:
 - for searching for information,
 - for integrating the information into existing world views, and
 - for sharing it within one’s social group (Hilverda et al. 2017).



State of Research and Theoretical Framework

Information

State of Research and Theoretical Framework

- **Social Identity Approach**

How do people experience and express their social identity?

- Beyond major aspects of identity such as gender, race and sexuality, identity also consists of minor aspects such as style of dress or taste in consumption and production of food (Lakoff 2006)
- Pro-environmental behaviour can be promoted by social identities whose primary bond consists not of shared attitudes (as with “environmentalists”) but of personal ties, e.g. family, friends, or colleagues
- Here particularly important, as habits of food preparation and consumption are closely tied to social identities and groups.



State of Research and Theoretical Framework

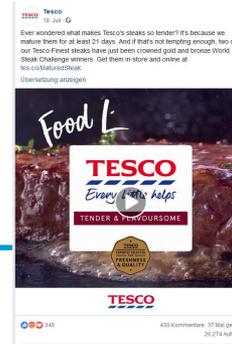
Social Identity

Sustainability

Frames

Information

Identity



Jan Could it be the torment endured by the animals during mass production and ritual slaughter? Appalling, I notice that Tesco is going down market and no longer stocks many of the organic products I used to shop for. A shameful case of profit before ethics!

Gefällt mir · Antworten · Übersetzung anzeigen · 7 W



↳ Vorherige Antworten anzeigen



Tesco Hi Jan,

We do not sell halal meat in our Tesco brand and any halal meat sold in a small range of stores are branded and clearly state halal meat. All meat sold in Tesco packs is Tesco welfare approved and humanely stunned/killed.

... Mehr dazu

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↳ Weitere Antworten ansehen



Jan Tesco dump Hogwood farm and show your customers you care about animal welfare. The suffering there is horrific

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Sustainability

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Sustainability

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Economy

Social



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Sustainability

Frames

Information

Identity

Problems

Causes

Solutions

Moral Evaluations



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Weitere Antworten ansehen



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Sustainability

Frames

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Identity

information acquisition

Information sharing



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Sustainability

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Identity

Ingroup-outgroup thinking

Social learning



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Weitere Antworten ansehen



Jan Tesco dump Hogwood farm and show your customers you care about animal welfare. The suffering there is horrific

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Agenda

- **Introduction:**

Why are social media important for encouraging more sustainable (food) choices?

- **State of Research and Theoretical Framework:**

What is sustainability and why is it important how people talk about it?

- **Method & Research Design:**

- Supermarkets and local markets as a field of research
- Method, sampling, and enquiry period
- Coding scheme (pre-pre-version)

Three-Step Approach

(1) Pre Study:

A comparative, qualitative content analysis to develop the best sampling strategy for the main study (e.g. keywords, time periods, groups) and a coding scheme

(2) Main Study:

- A quantitative content analysis to answer the addressed research question (sustainability frames, sensemaking, identity)
- Online survey experiment to analyze effects of (social media) postings on behavioral intentions regarding food choices

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Method: PRESTUDY

- **Context:**
 - Erasmus-Mundus Seminar with incoming students from very different countries
- **Coding Scheme:**
 - deductive and inductive categories (Margit Schreier, 2012)
- **Sample:** Facebook pages
 - of the largest supermarket/grocery store + one local weekly market
 - In Urban Germany, Urban India, Urban China, and Urban US (country sample to be discussed; BRICS states?)
 - 1.-31. October 2018 (all discussions)
 - Focus on the analysis of the 'middle class'
 - Coding unit: a single discussion (understood as interrelated, mutual talk on a common topic/issue; including posts as well as comments, both can be initiators)

Three-Step Approach

(1) Pre Study:

A comparative, qualitative content analysis to develop the best sampling strategy for the main study (e.g. keywords, time periods, groups) and a coding scheme

(2) Main Study:

- A (mostly) quantitative content analysis to answer the addressed research question (sustainability frames, sensemaking, identity)
- Online survey experiment to analyze effects of (social media) postings on behavioral intentions regarding food choices

Method: MAIN STUDY

- **Context:**

- Planned application for third party funding (DFG)

- **Comparative content analysis**

- Of social media discussions in four (?) countries
- Sampling: based on keywords/dictionaries developed in pre-study
- Coding scheme (quantitative/semi-automated): frame elements, sensemaking, in/outgroup references, injunctive and descriptive social norms

- **Online survey experiment**

- Effects of selected responsibility attributions, social norms, knowledge about the impact of food, and strength of social identity on behavioural intentions regarding (sustainable) food choices



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APPENDIX
