

## Interdisciplinary workshop

### “SUFFICIENCY strategies & POST-GROWTH trajectories”

#### *Call for communication*

In the face of planetary boundaries (climate change, biodiversity collapse, water depletion...) (Steffen et al., 2015), there is an urgent need to change human activities to curb environmental degradation and promote a sustainable ecosystem for both humans and non-humans (IPBES, 2019; IPCC, 2023). Against this backdrop, different scenarios towards ecological transformation consider two approaches to reducing ecological footprints: efficiency and sufficiency (Ademe, 2021).

The efficiency approach advances that technological innovations will allow us to preserve our consumption patterns by using cleaner energy and less resource-intensive technologies. However, there is evidence that efficiency measures do not significantly reduce human impact on the environment, but conversely can lead to an increase in human activities partly due to rebound effects (Parrique, 2019; Gossart, 2015). In addition, this approach does not deeply question our production and consumption models, which have caused this ecological crisis. It still supports a consumer society model based on abundance, immediacy, and materialistic values. In contrast, the sufficiency approach involves the transformation of production and consumption models in the Global North, to reduce the consumption of energy and natural resources within planetary boundaries. It requires us to rethink lifestyles, social norms, worldviews and collective organisation (Köhler et al., 2019). Sufficiency transition questions our consumer society and our economic paradigm.

In terms of consumption patterns, the sufficiency approach involves changes across the different stages of consumption (procurement, usage, disposal), in various domains (e.g., food, mobility, clothing, housing...) (Sandberg, 2021). This approach posits the idea of consuming ‘less but better’ (Hémar-Nicolas and Hedegaard, 2023). Despite its potential contribution to transition, sufficiency as a consumption style still faces resistance and constraints, as evidenced by the “green gap” between intentions and actual behaviours (Carrington, Detlev, and Nelson., 2016). This gap can be explained by economic, material, social, and cultural barriers at individual, micro- and macro-levels. At the individual level, the acceptability and adoption of sufficient practices rely on individuals’ knowledge, motivation, and ability to make sufficient choices. This implies changing consumption habits where hedonism is frequently associated with overconsumption and immediacy. At the micro-level, sufficiency-driven consumption behaviours break prevailing socio-cultural norms and materialist values, and can lead to frustration, displeasure, and social marginalisation (Cherrier, Szuba, and Özçağlar-Toulouse, 2012; Herziger, Claborn, and Brooks, 2020). At the macro-level, sufficiency transition relies on production, distribution and marketing systems so far designed to produce and consume more (Longo, Shankar, and Nuttall, 2019). This transition requires a reconfiguration

of socio-material environments considering individuals' daily life (mobility, temporality, agency...) to encourage individuals in their consumption changes and make sufficiency desirable. Furthermore, a sufficiency approach involves social values promoting social justice and inclusion, and thus generates specific constraints that people in vulnerable situations can face (poverty, age, disability, knowledge...) as well as the concern for future generations (Martinet et al., 2022).

In sum, sufficiency transition will be possible only if individual engagements are embedded in collective changes and accompanied by political, economic, social and organisational mutations. This condition requires us to consider how socio-economic actors can deploy sufficiency-based business models and encourage consumers to adopt sufficiency practices (Bocken, Smeke Morales, and Lehner, 2020; Garcia-Ortega et al., 2023), how policymakers can implement sufficiency strategies without bringing about resistance and discontent.

At the highest level, a sufficiency approach challenges our economic growth paradigm and leads to contemplate new economic and social systems to advance this transition (Jackson, 2017). Notably, three models have been debated: green and inclusive growth, post-growth, and degrowth (Lehmann, Delbard, and Lange, 2022; Likaj, Jacobs, and Fricke, 2022). Although all of them advocate for a sustainable economic paradigm that includes social welfare and environmental protection, they propose different concrete policy actions, which lead to more or less radical changes and differently affect people's lifestyles.

As the richest 10% of the world's population accounts for around 50% of carbon emissions (Gore, 2015), the ecological transition widely relies on rich countries. Within the European Union, a sufficiency approach and the economic paradigm capable of supporting its implementation are vividly debated. While the EU Green Deal advocates for a green and inclusive growth,<sup>1</sup> other voices<sup>2</sup> have criticised this position advancing that economic growth cannot be decoupled from resource use (Widuto, Evroux, and Spinaci, 2023).

**Taken together, a sufficiency approach begs many questions, which need to be addressed at individual, micro, and macro levels, in an interdisciplinary perspective.** Organised by Paris-Saclay Graduate School Economics & Management, the overall objective of this workshop is to contribute to this crucial issue. Specifically, it offers the opportunity to researchers and PhD students of EUGLOH member universities ("European University Alliance for Global Health") to share their works in this field.

**Empirical and conceptual contributions on a range of sufficiency-related topics are welcome, including, but not limited to, the following:**

- **Changes in consumption patterns towards sufficiency:** *Which practices do consumers associate with sufficiency? What does 'consume less but better' mean to them? What is driving consumers to engage in consumption changes towards sufficient patterns? What barriers do they face? What other roles can individuals play besides changing their consumption patterns? How can economic actors and public policymakers prompt these changes?...*

---

<sup>1</sup> [https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en)

<sup>2</sup> For instance : European Environment Agency, <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/growth-without-economic-growth>

- **Sufficiency-driven business models:** *To what extent can sharing or circular economics-based business models lead to sufficiency? How to make sufficiency-based products and services desirable and inclusive for consumers? Which corporate governance to establish? What role can economic actors play in pro-sufficiency lobbying? What contributions from the third sector? What do sufficiency strategies imply for research in management sciences?...*
- **Sufficiency policymaking:** *How to address the sufficiency transition democratically? How to consider geographic, social and cultural specificities? Which interventions to deploy towards economic actors and consumers? How to reconfigure the physical environment to foster sufficiency?...*
- **Economic models:** *What do growth and in turn progress or prosperity mean? What concrete solutions to deploy according to alternative models to the growth paradigm? Which indicators to use to evaluate the alternative policies to GDP-based models? To what extent do efficiency and sufficiency approaches need to be considered as not exclusive but complementary?...*

The workshop will be organised on **2 February 2024** both online and in-person at Paris-Saclay University (Campus of Sceaux<sup>3</sup>).

Both academics and PhD students should submit an extended abstract (2 pages maximum, including a cover page indicating surname, first name, e-mail address, institution) to [valerie.nicolas-hemar@universite-paris-saclay.fr](mailto:valerie.nicolas-hemar@universite-paris-saclay.fr). **Deadline: 20 November 2023.**

**Organising committee:** Cédric Gossart, Valérie Hémar-Nicolas, Vincent Martinet, Liliana Mitkova

**Scientific committee:** Organising committee + Stefano Bosi, Christelle Perrin, Benjamin Taupin, Natalia Zugravu-Soilita.

## References

- Ademe (2021), Transition(s) 2050 Choisir maintenant, Agir pour le climat. Available at: <https://librairie.ademe.fr/cadic/6531/transitions2050-rapport-comprese.pdf?modal=false> (accessed on 22 August 2023)
- Bocken, N., Smeke Morales, L., and Lehner, M. (2020), Sufficiency business strategies in the food industry—The case of Oatly, *Sustainability*, 12, 824; doi:10.3390/su12030824
- Carrington, M.J., Detlev Z., and Neville B. (2016) The ideology of the ethical consumer gap, *Marketing Theory*, 16(1): 21-38.
- Cherrier, H., Szuba, M., and Ozçağlar-Toulouse, N. (2012), Barriers to downward carbon emission: exploring sustainable consumption in the face of the glass floor. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 33(7–8), 602–623.
- Garcia-Ortega, B., Galan-Cubillo, J., Llorens-Montes, J., and de-Miguel-Molina, B. (2023), Sufficient consumption as a missing link toward sustainability: The case of fast fashion, *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 399, 136678. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2023.136678>
- Gore, T. (2015), Extreme carbon inequality. Why the Paris climate deal must put the poorest, lowest emitting and most vulnerable people first, *Oxfam media briefing*, <https://policy->

<sup>3</sup> Université Paris-Saclay, Faculté Jean Monnet, 54, boulevard Desgranges - 92331 Sceaux cedex I FRANCE

[practice.oxfam.org/resources/extreme-carbon-inequality-why-the-paris-climate-deal-must-put-the-poorest-lowes-582545/](https://practice.oxfam.org/resources/extreme-carbon-inequality-why-the-paris-climate-deal-must-put-the-poorest-lowes-582545/) (accessed on 22 August 2023)

Gossart, C. (2015), Rebound Effects and ICT: A Review of the Literature. In *ICT Innovations for Sustainability*, L.M. Hilty et B. Aebischer (Eds.), pp. 435-448. Springer International Publishing. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-09228-7\\_26](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-09228-7_26).

Hémar-Nicolas, V. and Hedegaard, L. (2023), Food sufficiency, an approach rooted in the ethics of Epicurus: Analysis framework and research agenda, *Recherche et Applications en Marketing*, 38, 2 <https://doi.org/10.1177/20515707231168595>

Herziger, A., Claborn, J.S., and Brooks K.A. (2020), Is there hope for the double dividend? How social context can shape synergies and tradeoffs between sustainable consumption and well-being, *Ecological Economics*, 176, 106736 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolecon.2020.106736>

IPBES (2019), *Global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services*. E. S. Brondizio, J. Settele, S. Díaz, and H. T. Ngo (editors). IPBES secretariat, Bonn, Germany. 1148 pages. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3831673> (accessed on 22 August 2023)

IPCC (2023) *Summary for Policymakers*. In: Climate Change 2023: Synthesis Report. Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [Core Writing Team, H. Lee and J. Romero (eds.)]. IPCC, Geneva, Switzerland, pp. 1-34, [https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/syr/downloads/report/IPCC\\_AR6\\_SYR\\_SPM.pdf](https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/syr/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_SYR_SPM.pdf) (accessed on 22 August 2023)

Jackson, T. (2017), *Prospérité sans croissance : Les fondations pour l'économie de demain*. De Boeck Supérieur.

Köhler, J., Geels, F.W. et al. (2019), An agenda for sustainability transitions research: State of the art and future directions, *Environmental Innovation and Societal Transitions*, 31, 1–32. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eist.2019.01.004>

Lehmann, C., Delbard, O., and Lange, S. (2022) Green growth, a-growth or degrowth? Investigating the attitudes of environmental protection specialists at the German Environment Agency, *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 36, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2021.130306> (accessed on 22 August 2023)

Likaj X., Jacobs M., and Fricke T. (2022), Growth, degrowth or post-growth. Towards a synthetic understanding of the growth debate, *Forum New Economic Basic Papers* <https://newforum.org/en/studie/growth-degrowth-or-post-growth-towards-a-synthetic-understanding-of-the-growth-debate/> (accessed on 22 August 2023)

Longo, C., Shankar, A., and Nuttall P. (2019), “It’s not easy living a sustainable lifestyle”: How greater knowledge leads to dilemmas, tensions and paralysis, *Journal of Business Ethics*, 154(3), 759-779.

Martinet V., Del Campo S., and Cairns R. (2022) Intragenerational inequality aversion and intergenerational equity, *European Economic Review* 144, 104075, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eurocorev.2022.104075>

Parrique T. (2019), *The political economy of degrowth*, Thèse de Doctorat en économie, Université Clermont, Stockholms Universitet

Sandberg, M. (2021), Sufficiency transitions: A review of consumption changes for environmental sustainability, *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 126097 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2021.126097>

Steffen, W., et al. (2015), Planetary boundaries: Guiding human development on a changing Planet, *Science*, 347(6223), 736-748.

Widuto, A., Evroux C., and Spinaci S. (2023) From growth to 'beyond growth': Concepts and challenges, European Parliamentary Research Service, [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2023/747107/EPRS\\_BRI\(2023\)747107\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2023/747107/EPRS_BRI(2023)747107_EN.pdf) (accessed on 22 August 2023)