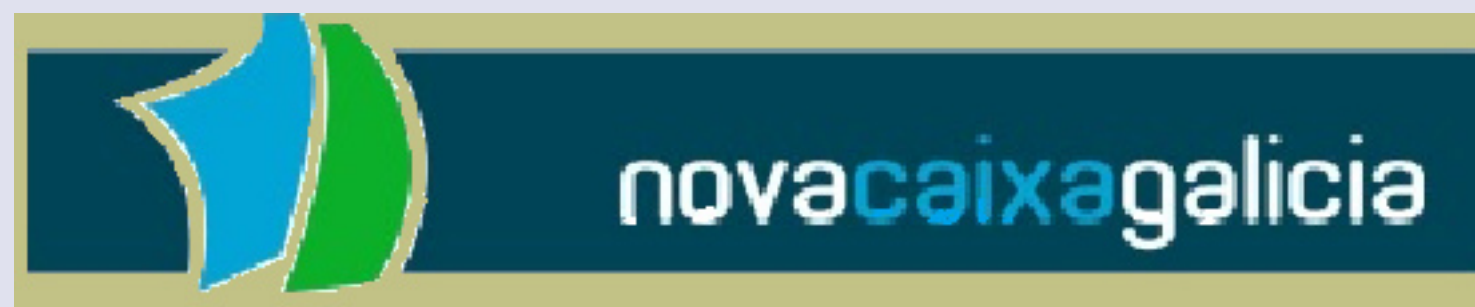


LOCAW—Kick-off meeting A Coruña (Spain)

21-22 January 2011



Meeting place:

Sala de Juntas—Centro Social Caixanova
Caixanova

Avda. La Marina, Esq. Calle La Fama
A Coruña (Spain)

EUROPEAN UNION
D.G. ENVIRONMENT
Unit of Sustainable Development
2011-2013



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Low Carbon at Work: LOCAW

The LOCAW project will address the challenge of Call ENV -2010-4.2.3.1 "Foresight to enhance behavioural and societal changes enabling the transition towards sustainable paths in Europe", to conduct "an analysis of barriers and drivers for engaging on sustainable, low-carbon paths individually (taking into account the diversity of lifestyles), on the level of individual organizations, and collectively (organization of the society and the economy)" and to contribute to "scenario development and a back-casting exercise in order to identify potential paths to engaging on an integrated effort to support the transition to a sustainable Europe".



Low Carbon at Work: LOCAW

LOCAW will provide an analysis of everyday practices in the workplace, as well as of the factors promoting or hindering the transition towards sustainable patterns of production and consumption. LOCAW will examine large organizations in six different countries, in the public as well as the private sector and both heavy and light industry.

Who is involved in LOCAW?

LOCAW involves the participation of seven research organizations: University of Corunna-Spain (Co-ordinator), University of Umea-Sweden, West University of Timisoara-Romania, University of Surrey-UK, Macaulay Land Research Institute-UK, University of Groningen-The Netherlands, and University of Rome La Sapienza-Italy. The research has received funding from the European Union FP7 ENV.2010.4.3.4-1 grant agreement n° 265155. The total budget for this project is 1.5M Euros, distributed among the seven institutions.



Objective

The project will analyse (un) sustainable behavior and practices in the workplace and focus on the factors determining these actions in six organizations under investigation. The conclusions of this analysis will then be used as input for the design of agent-based models which will seek

to clarify interactions among relevant actors and provide insights into the necessary conditions to achieve transition to a low-carbon Europe. Although the project's focus is on workplace behavior, we will also analyse the connections between practices at work and practices in other areas of life. Members of the organizations under investigation will draw on the agent-based models to create scenarios. They will use their expertise to adjust the models to include predicted future pressures and challenges for their organization. This will allow for better predictions and detailed descriptions of how to promote conditions for sustainability at work, as well as examples of good practices. This will allow for better predictions and detailed descriptions of how to promote conditions of sustainability at work, including examples of good practices.

Questions to be addressed in LOCAW

How do behaviours and practices in the workplace act as barriers or drivers of changes towards sustainable paths of low-carbon behaviour at the individual, organisational and societal level?

How do EU environmental norms work in practice?

How do market demands and social group pressures influence the management of everyday practices in the workplace?

How do organisations create barriers and drivers for the individual involvement in sustainable practices within current EU environmental policies?

How do people make connections between one area of their life and another?

What conflicts and barriers exist for the cooperation among policy-makers, employers and social organisations in the implementation of sustainable practices at work?

What examples of good practices regarding sustainability at work exist and in what conditions are they generated?



The everyday as a research object

LOCAW will study the routines and rituals of everyday life, defined as taken-for-granted practices that are continuously repeated. It is one of the first research studies that explicitly examines sustainable practices and behaviours in the workplace in different EU countries and in different types of organizations

The interaction between interest, awareness and public action

Although we think that climate change is universally recognised as a preoccupying reality, there are variations in the way it is thought about and discussed. Even if there is concern, this does not always translate into action. This has been referred to by environmental experts and politicians as the Value-Action gap. It may be the result of the necessity to provide clearer and simpler information. In other cases, environmental concern may not translate into specific actions because of the high cost (e.g., time, effort, money) of these actions. Equally, it may be because people find change threatening – to themselves, their families, the jobs and their lifestyles. LOCAW will take a different perspective and will focus on everyday practices in the workplace and on the interplay of barriers and drivers of sustainable behavior at different levels: structural, organizational, and individual.

Structural and organizational factors



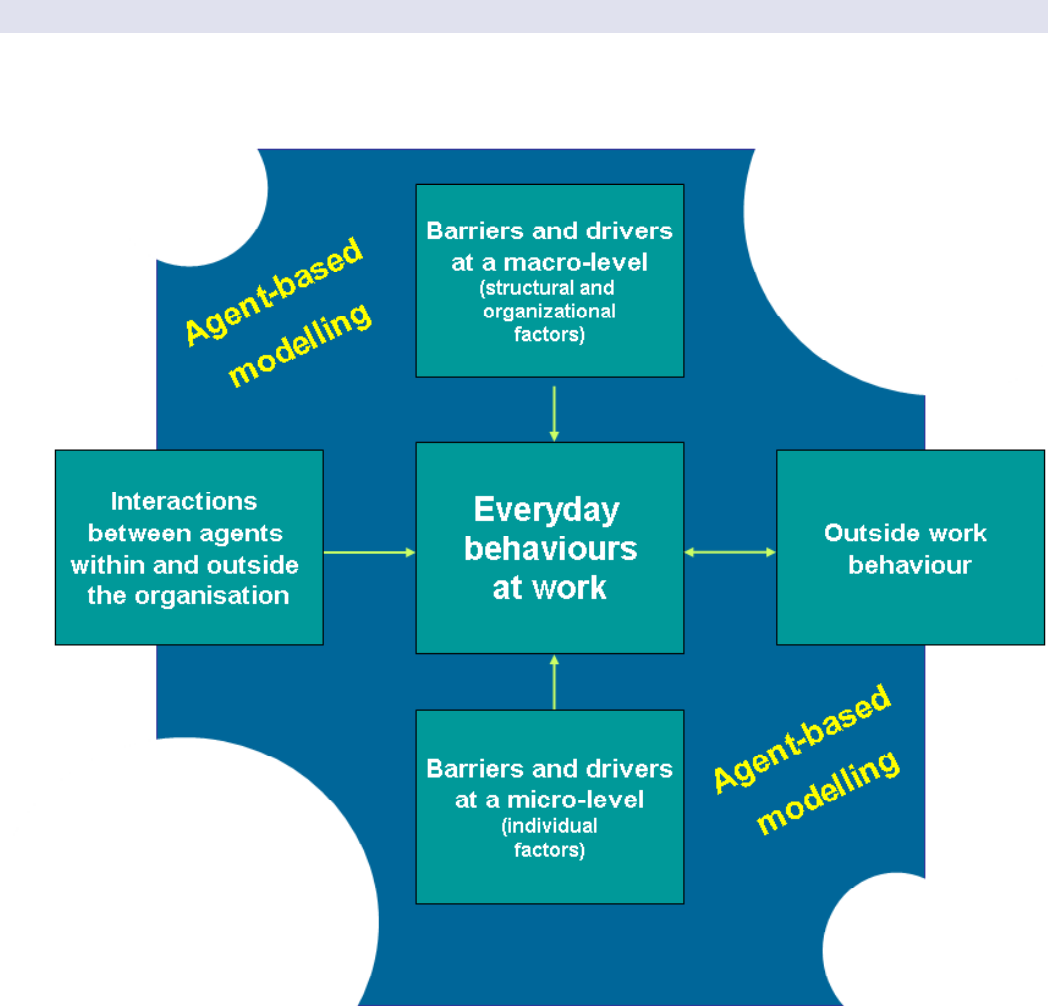
influencing sustainable behavior

It has been shown that organizations sometimes lack a clear understanding of the complexities of sustainability. This is often due to deficiencies in communication and information

management, the lack of appropriate training or the failure to see that sustainability practices can be good for business and the 'bottom line'. This research will focus on identifying good practice and the opportunities for managers to enhance the sustainable practices of employees. It will examine whether corporate engagement with sustainability promotes pro-environmental behavior in the workplace. It will explore the opportunities to introduce sustainability values into the internal logic of production and in economic decision-making processes.

Individual factors influencing sustainable behavior

LOCAW will study individual and social factors such as: a) knowledge – which predicts many pro-environmental behaviours; b) motivation - important for the understanding of intentions and willingness to act in a responsible way; and c) capacity - important in the study of the



perception of structural and organisational factors, d) solidarity – which provides opportunities for collective social action, e) resistance – critical for understanding barriers to social, environmental and organisational change. LOCAW will focus on the complex interactions between these and other factors, in order to provide a more complete picture of the barriers to, and drivers of, sustainability in the workplace.

People

(in alphabetical order)
(* = Country/Region Leader)

- Amparo Alonso-Betanzos (UDC, Spain)
- Marino Bonaiuto (CIRPA, Italy)
- Mirilia Bonnes (CIRPA, Italy) (*)
- Giuseppe Carrus (CIRPA, Italy)
- Tony Craig (MLURI, UK)
- Adina Dumitru (UVT, Romania)
- Ferdinando Fornara (CIRPA, Italy)
- Ricardo García-Mira (UDC, Spain) (*)
- Alin Gavreluc (UVT, Romania)
- Nick Gotts (MLURI, UK) (*)
- Corina Ilin (UVT, Romania) (*)
- Tommy Jensen (UmU, Sweden)
- Jesús M. Muñoz-Cantero (UDC, Spain)
- Gary Polhil (MLURI, UK)
- Nora Rätzhel (UmU, Sweden) (*)
- Alin Sava (UVT, Romania)
- Linda Steg (RUG, The Netherlands) (*)
- David Uzzell (University of Surrey, UK) (*)
- Pedro Vega-Marcote (UDC, Spain)

For further information, please, contact the Coordinator at:



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