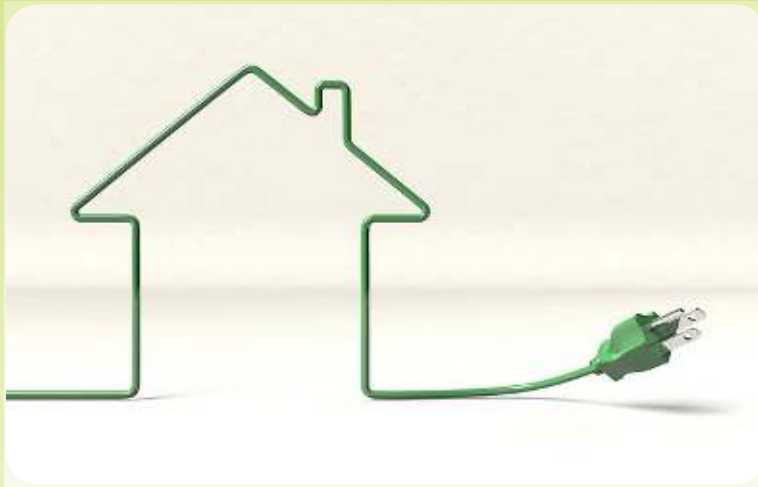


Sustainable Production and Consumption Framing Research Summary

August 2015



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SECTION ONE: OVERVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

For more than 20 years, leaders have called for sustainable development where human needs are met while respecting the limits of nature; and without compromising the ability of future generations to lead a healthy, prosperous life. Much of the focus has been on improving the ways in which we produce products and while there has been progress, many argue that environmental degradation continues to accelerate in part due to the failure to address the underlying and false premise of constant economic growth and consumption as drivers of prosperity.

As with many environmental issues, the cultural side of change is often overlooked and yet it is the social norms, values and worldviews that help perpetuate unsustainable production and consumption patterns and hold us back from making deeper shifts in the way we live. Social values underlie opinion and cluster to shape how we see the world and our place in it. They influence the cognitive frames that we hold and use to filter and process information. Values based frames are often shared via narratives which provide us cues on what to prioritize and how to behave.

It is clear there is a need for a new cultural narrative that redefines prosperity and decouples it from the myth of endless growth. A story that de-emphasizes the role of business and

the economy in our lives and elevates what is meaningful beyond money. For Canadians and Americans who currently have some of the most unsustainable consumption habits in the world, rewiring our materialistic culture is an environmental and equity imperative.

Canadian nonprofit One Earth recognized this imperative and thanks to the support of The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation and their Cities for People initiative, embarked on a process to better understand how Canadians and Americans view sustainable production and consumption; and the challenges and opportunities that exist for developing new cultural narratives that effectively engage stakeholders. The following research summary is the first step of a process that aims to equip sustainability leaders working at the municipal level in particular, with the tools needed to make the case for sustainable production and consumption both within city government as well as with community stakeholders.



Focusing on municipalities is intentional. It is at the city and community level where the issue of sustainability becomes more tangible through the many daily decisions we make, and where the strongest social relationships exist that are key to driving change. In the absence of federal action, it is also at the municipal level in both Canada and the United States where we have seen the most leadership in addressing climate disruption, rebuilding local food systems, and tackling unsustainable production and consumption head on.

This report attempts to summarize the state of Canadian and U.S. public opinion around sustainable production and consumption issues, as well as the opportunities and barriers for engagement on this issue. It draws from more than 23 Canadian and U.S. opinion polls, 20 academic studies, and 16 media stories on public opinion and communication trends related to sustainable production and consumption. The report was also informed by 9 interviews with thought leaders on sustainable production and consumption issues with a focus on municipal leaders; as well as a review of 25 nonprofit, government and research websites.



It is clear from the analysis that sustainable production and consumption is communicated differently depending on the context. Academic and nonprofit leaders are more likely to use the words sustainable production and consumption and refer to the problems of continuous economic growth, however, the language used is often theoretical and on a global; versus an applied level. Municipalities tend to avoid using the terms sustainable production and consumption and do not call out the underlying flaws in our economic system. At the same time, language adopted by cities to communicate about the concept is often more accessible, practical and immediate. This in part may be due to the fact building internal understanding and buy-in for sustainable consumption and production remains a challenge that must be overcome before more direct public outreach can occur; that municipal governments must be responsive to the interests and needs of their constituents; and that there are negative perceptions around the role of government, particularly when it comes to behavior change.



Given the tailoring being done based on context, there is a dizzying amount of terminology being used, often without translation for lay audiences. While concepts such as *circular economy*, *collaborative consumption*, or *low carbon futures* may be intuitive to those close to the issue, public understanding or relevancy cannot be assumed. Additionally, the orientation of the field toward environmental sustainability, rather than to the human development and/or equity side of the issue is limited. While an environmental orientation appeals to the eco-minded, sustainability is not top of mind for those who do not prioritize environmental values and/or may be put off by the perception that environmentalists are elitists and out of touch with the realities and needs of the average citizen.



The good news is that opportunities exist to shift this emphasis as Canadians and Americans are very concerned about the state of the economy and their own financial security, of public institutions, and the role of the business sector in decision-making. While the notion that it is still possible to achieve success through hard work remains a core part of both cultures, many Canadians are now concerned that future

generations will not be better off than current generations; and an increasing percentage of Americans believe it is becoming more difficult to achieve the American Dream. Stressed out and working harder than ever, a new vision of prosperity and how to achieve it could appeal in both countries. Similarly, interest in sharing resources, local food, and creating more livable, walkable communities – particularly among younger Canadians and Americans – is growing and provides opportunities to develop and propel forward a new cultural story about the way we live, relate to each, and connect to the earth.

FRAMING VERSUS MESSAGING

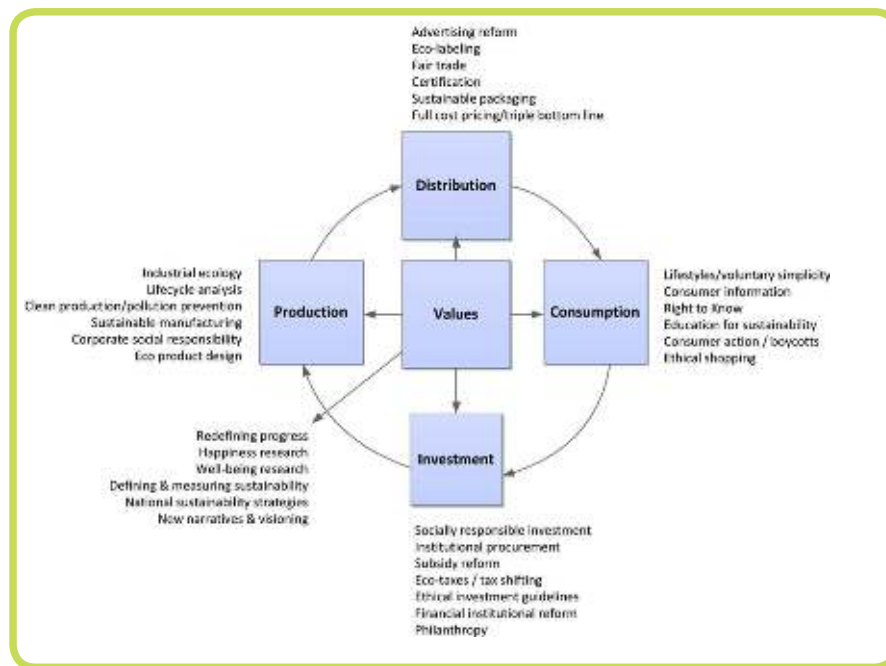
Cognitive frames are themes that connect the dots across issues and tap deeply held social values. They are distinct from messaging that goes into greater detail on issue specifics. For example, [a campaign to protect a historic library in Troy, Michigan](#) turned the corner when library proponents stopped defending the importance of taxation as a way to fund the library and instead, talk about cutting library funding as equivalent to the burning of books which taps deeply held values around the importance of access to information.



SECTION TWO: SOCIAL SCIENCE AND RESEARCH SUMMARY

1) THE EVOLUTION OF THE FIELD

The concept of sustainable development where human needs are met within the limits of nature was introduced more than twenty years ago and since then, the field of sustainable production and consumption has grown substantially and expanded into many subsets. Along with the development of the field has come a proliferation of terms emerging in academic and popular discourse. For example, industrial ecology, lifecycle analysis, and corporate social responsibility are associated with production issues. Voluntary simplicity, right to know, and ethical shopping are tied to consumption; while fair trade, triple bottom line, and eco-labeling are used in relation to distribution. Expressions such as the sharing economy and localism have been introduced more recently. **Communicating about sustainable production and consumption tends to be context specific and the framing used varies accordingly.**



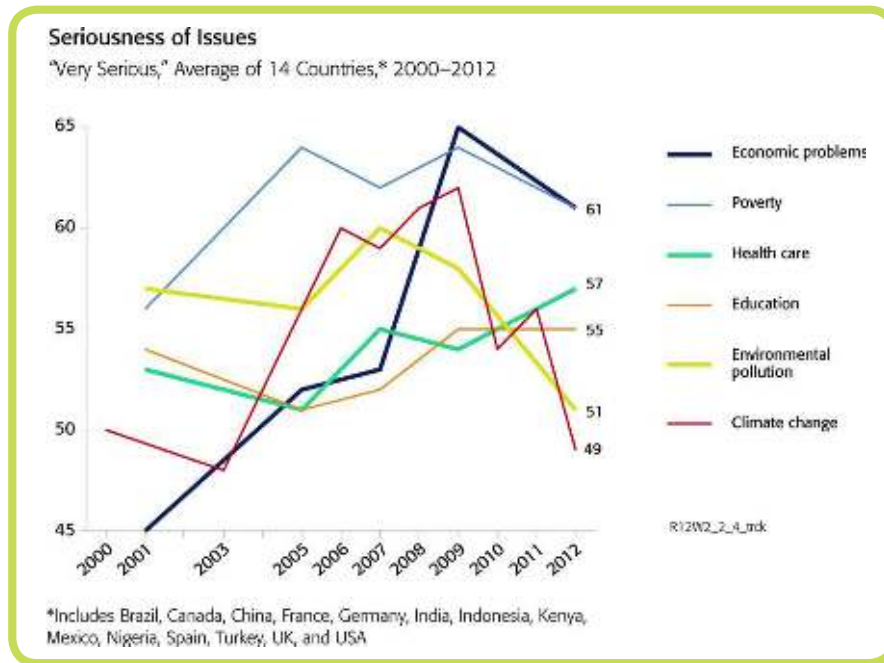
(Jeffrey Barber, Integrative Strategies Forum, SPAC - Sustainable Production and Consumption System)

2) THE NEED TO SCALE EFFORTS TO DATE

Despite growth of the field, many leaders point out that the results have been limited as depletion of natural resources continues, and the gap between the 'haves' and 'have nots' is growing in both Canada and the United States, as well as globally. The larger point of shifting how we define prosperity and how much we consume can often seem lost with the focus

instead being on issues such as waste management and ‘buying differently’ – choosing green product purchases.

Even more troubling is the evidence that is emerging which indicates that there has been a decrease in concern over environmental issues in Canada and the United States as compared to other issues. Unfortunately, the United States has the lowest sustainable consumption rates in the 14 countries tracked in the 2012 Greendex global survey followed by Canada, Japan and France.



Source: Greendex 2012

Communicating about sustainable consumption is particularly challenging due to anti-environmental sentiments; questions about the effectiveness of government and its role in behavior change; our tendency to discount the future; and most importantly, the ongoing focus on constant economic growth with consumption as a key element to drive prosperity without an alternative vision of what could replace this model.

3) GOING BEYOND THE CHOIR

Sustainable production and consumption has been primarily framed in terms of environmental impacts and benefits yet the challenge is that while the majority of Canadians and Americans care about the environment and have good intentions to live sustainably, many people do not prioritize environmental concerns in purchasing, home behaviors, lifestyle, transit and food choices; and/or are unclear on what actions to focus on.

Research studies estimate that only a minority of Canadians and Americans prioritize environmental values and actions. For example, in the United States, the segment size ranges from 15 – 25% of the public. While the eco-minded do drive trends, some researchers argue

that focusing on this segment and framing the issue primarily from an environmental perspective rules out most of the public and misses the opportunity to present the issue in ways that would reach more moderate audiences who care but are not yet fully engaged.

16% Super Greens - View themselves as active players in the solution. Prioritize the environment in purchasing and other behaviors.

33% Upper-Middle Greens - Follow the green movement yet don't always act consistently and don't lead others. If they side step a behavior it tends to be because of cost. Health tends to be more of a priority for this segment that skews Democratic and female.

(Ogilvy & Mather 2012)



23% Actives - Green in their beliefs and behaviors

33% Seekers - Important to be environmentally responsible but secretly avoid activities viewed as inconvenient. Motivated by saving money and health. They tend to be women over the age of 45 and educated.

(Shelton Group 2011)

Thought leader Douglas Holt pushes this point further by identifying the need to move beyond the moderate greens and reach the “New Main Street” of Americans. This growing segment are not college educated and/or are recent graduates who cannot leverage their degrees; work in service, clerical, retail, and labor and are concerned about the disappearance of well-paying jobs that have been replaced by poor paying ones with limited or no benefits. They are worried about the rising cost of education and health care; and explosion of consumer debt. **The Environment is not the priority but other benefits of sustainability can be leveraged where there is the potential to close these opportunity gaps around economic security, health, and quality of life issues.** While a similar analysis in the Canadian context was not uncovered in this research scan, the same consideration applies given the trends around the shrinking middle class and increasing demographic diversity that is apparent in Canadian culture.

It is important to note that age plays a factor as well as young Canadians and Americans have quite different values than the “baby boomer bohemian” environmental audience that most environmental sustainability efforts are currently framed for. While not as civically engaged as their older counterparts, which is problematic; their views are very pro-environment, they are more supportive of climate action, and largely reject “jobs versus the environment” arguments. One of the most significant emergent trends for this segment is the interest in walkable communities with easy access to services, activities and culture; taking public transit; not owning a car; and participating in sharing activities facilitated by communication technology. Additionally, research in the United State indicates that multi-generational living is on the

rise with young Americans, particularly from racial and ethnic minorities, now surpassing seniors as the largest segment doing so.

Finally, for Canadians and Americans under 30, there is a strong sense that their generation has a **right to participate** in shaping many aspects of one's life beyond just voting or making responsible purchasing choices. The good news is that there are commonly held values and themes that can resonate across audience segments to promote support for sustainable production and consumption (see section 5 below).

4) THE CURSE OF CONSCIOUSNESS

While some Canadians and Americans find that engaging in sustainable consumption choices can be motivating; for many, guilt is a major barrier to engagement.



For example, nearly half of Americans starting on the path toward more sustainable choices claim to feel “guiltier” the more they know about what is wrong and what else they could be doing. Even the ‘super greens’ referenced above report feeling twice as guilty as the average American and often wish they could retreat to the comfort of ignorance. Part of this is due to the feeling of being ostracized socially for their green attitudes (i.e. holier than thou stigma), as well as experiencing discomfort with unwanted attention

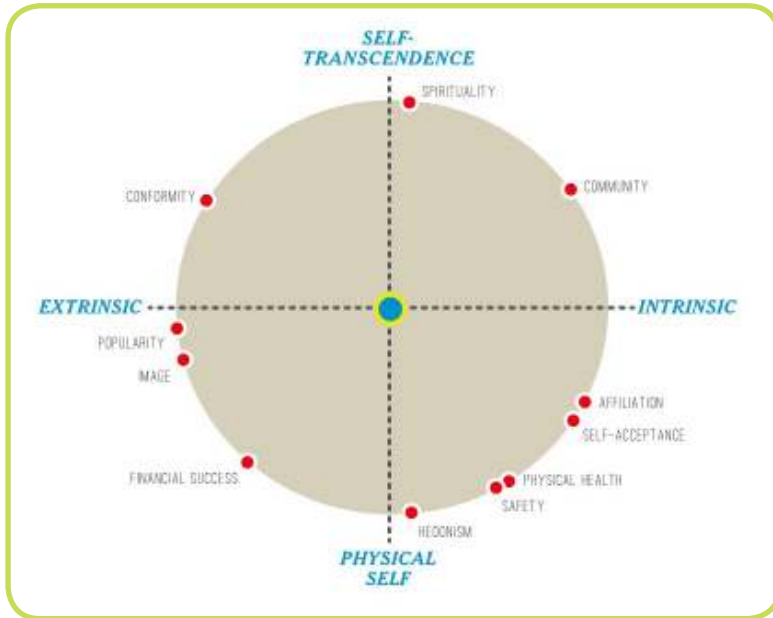
(i.e. check out what the hippie/crunchy granola is doing).

Others who do not prioritize the environment still may want to change but concerns over other issues often win out. For example, a small car may save gas but the stronger perception is that a big car is better for keeping kids safe.

Fatalism also gets in the way. Many Canadians and Americans are willing to make environmental choices yet believe that others are not willing to do so; thereby limiting the impact achievable and resulting in higher personal costs. Additionally, there has been an overemphasis on individual environmental actions, versus systemic change (i.e. reducing car trips is difficult when there is a lack of public transit options). This results in confusion and frustration, as most people do not know how to measure their impact and make meaningful changes. Another aspect of fatalism is the belief some Canadians and Americans hold that a certain amount of environmental degradation is necessary for economic growth. This is an unfortunate, yet not surprising trend, given the ongoing jobs versus the environment debate that exists in both countries.

5) INTRINSIC VERSUS EXTRINSIC VALUES

When the focus is on reaching environmentally responsible audiences, the tendency is to emphasize intrinsic values; such as ecological stewardship, ethical consumption, etc. Some thought leaders believe that sustainability efforts will never get to scale with this approach



(Tim Kasser, Ph.D., Professor & Chair of Psychology, Knox College, Illinois, USA)

because while these intrinsic values may motivate the environmental base, they are not as likely to be compelling with audiences driven more by extrinsic values; such as status, wealth, and personal accomplishment. This is an important consideration as Canadians and Americans score higher on these more egotistic values than on biospheric values (Schultz, Wesley & Zelezny, Lynnette). At the same time, others argue (i.e. Common Cause) that tapping extrinsic values acts only to reinforces them while weakening intrinsic values.

There is an added challenge in that environmental values and the identities associated with environmentalism are often unappealing and/or polarizing. Some Canadians and Americans see **green products as a hoax**, find no distinction or improvement from conventional choices, and can even associate these products with political propaganda. **Sustainability also has a sacrifice frame associated with it yet there is a perception that it is only the elite engaging in sustainable behaviors. This creates a double standard as it is assumed these eco-elites consume more resources than the average person.**

At the same time, there may be **ways to bridge the gap between intrinsic and extrinsic values**. One opportunity is to **focus on commonly held beliefs, such as the importance of protecting future generations**, which most Canadians and Americans support, at least in concept. Research conducted in Oregon illustrates that in addition to responsibility for future generations, other themes around sustainable consumption and production that resonate include “Waste Not” which is the idea that waste is a bad thing - a thoughtless buy product of consumption that can be reduced; “Live by Example” which involves our role in teaching others including children; and “Do the Right Thing” where people gain a sense of self-satisfaction from acting in a responsible way such as recycling or supporting local businesses. Another option is to expand beyond environmental themes and frame sustainable production and consumption around other values include innovation, community improvement, and economic security. Some researchers argue that tying sustainability to more masculine values would help increase issue appeal for men who tend to be more skeptical and who are put off by intrinsic values. In this case, values that could be tapped include strength (emotional toughness, courage, self-reliance, rationality), honor (duty, loyalty, responsibility, integrity, selflessness and compassion), and agency or action (competitiveness, ambition, risk taking).(Stafford, et al, 2012)

6) COMMON CONCERN AROUND CONSUMPTION

A more encouraging trend identified in the U.S. research is that while environmental concerns may be decreasing and/or becoming more polarized, there is strong support for the idea that **“our country would be better off if we all consumed less.”** (Bowerman, 2012). Research conducted in Eugene, Oregon show many motivations for living in a more sustainable manner including ease, convenience, money savings, concern for the earth, self-satisfaction, supporting local businesses and concern for future generations. Choosing a car which gets more than 30 miles per gallon and supporting local businesses were the two actions residents expressed the most interest in taking. (DHM Research, 2011).

Similarly, 91% of Americans believe **“the way we live creates too much waste.”** While the polling numbers are not as high, 70% also believe that Americans are responsible for many of the world’s environmental problems because of high consumption and waste. A note of caution, however, is that placing responsibility on the United States is polarizing with more conservative audiences who tend to support the idea that “buying and consuming is the American way, there’s nothing wrong with that.” (Center for a New American Dream, 2014)

The good news is that most believe the **American Dream is about more than money. Instead it is about personal freedom, having basic needs met, achieving one’s potential, having enough time, being in harmony with nature, and achieving affluence.** Note that “achieving affluence” dropped in importance from 44% in 2004 to 23% in 2012. Unfortunately, being in harmony with nature also declined significant from 83% in 2004 to 54% in 2012. (Center for a New American Dream, 2014).

While comparable data on consumption attitudes was not uncovered for Canada, **research on what Canadians value most about their country reveals that what brings the greatest**



sense of pride is the country being free and democratic, that Canadians are humanitarian and caring, multiculturalism, and the natural beauty. Unfortunately, there was a decrease in the sense that people had a high quality of life/standard of living since 2009. (EnviroNics, 2012)

On a related note, some Americans feeling **overwhelmed by an increasing complexity and pace of life,** are choosing to leave traditional jobs to move to independent work while others are voluntarily taking a pay cut so they

have more time and less stress. Similarly, Canadians report prioritizing opportunities for career advancement and achieving a career-life balance ahead of wage considerations. (Hayes, 2013)

Support for sharing is also on the rise, which is associated with saving money and building relationships, followed by reducing environmental impact. Corporate marketers point out this is part of a shift toward “reclaimism” being driven by those engaging in localism, Do It Yourself (DIY) activities, and collaborative consumption business models. These “Aspirational” represent one third of global consumers (including Canada and the United States) and while this segment have a strong desire for responsible consumption, they are also defined by their love of

shopping (BBMG/Globescan 2014). This dualism creates an inherent conflict as the emphasis is still on consumption as a way to define oneself, 'consuming differently' rather than consuming less; and leaves out many who may not be able to access or afford these types of activities.

If there is agreement that we would all be better off if we consumed less, what is needed is a clear articulation of what producing and consuming less means on a practical level, the benefits of doing so, and how the transition away from the current growth and consumption based economic models can begin.

CONSUMPTION THROUGH A VALUES LENS

Oregon values research shows that for those who do not prioritize the environment, concern over consumption is driven by employment, paying bills, reducing debt, keeping money in the local area, and supporting families. Women in this segment tend to also note the importance of waste reduction and intergenerational responsibilities. Those who prioritize the environment were also driven by concerns over waste and protecting future generations, but also interest in local economic exchanges, and reducing consumption to control debt. The environmentally minded group had a more expansive, systemic vision where lowering consumption becomes a "way of life" and a means to increase self-reliance, and personal skills (growing food, repairing things).

When it comes to the how people view work, for all segments polled, the top priority is doing something you can be proud of. Other shared priorities include enjoying work, having fun, earning a good salary, being with people you respect, learning new things & having new experiences. One distinction is that younger Oregonians emphasize opportunities to build new skills, while older respondents are more concerned with earning a good salary.

7) CLOSING THE OPPORTUNITY GAP

For many, such as the 'New Main Street' segment mentioned above, sustainable production and consumption might be more appealing if it was less about a vision for a green lifestyle and more about **meeting basic needs, enhancing health and well-being, and improving quality of life in communities**. Americans are now more likely to say the American Dream is getting harder to achieve than ten years ago. Reasons cited include the high cost of health care, wages for workers are too low, our materialistic culture, and a society that favors the rich.

This is consistent with research illustrating how American values have shifted since before the recession to current times. For the first time in recent history, most **Americans have experienced a decline in both income and wealth over the past decade and as a result, are feeling less secure about the country's economic health and their own financial security**. This is not surprising given data that shows that the income gap is growing while the middle class is shrinking. (Council on Foreign Relations, 2013)

Despite the fact an increasing number of Americans feel the system is helping the rich and not they, most are not resentful of the wealthy. **Americans still believe they can achieve the American Dream** and values remain intact around individualism, efficacy of hard work, and potential for personal progress. However, lower income Americans are much less likely to believe in the efficacy of hard work. There is also a major gap between African Americans and Caucasians as half of African Americans now hold the belief that forces outside of one's control determine success in life.



The housing opportunity gap is another issue to consider. Americans are increasingly spending more than 30% of their income on housing and more than half of renters are in this situation. While some may be opting for smaller or 'tiny homes' as a way to increase affordability and quality, the majority prefer suburban living as **Americans strongly desire privacy and outdoor space; and still see owning a large home as a life goal.**

Comparatively, the majority of Canadians tend to be satisfied with their standard of living and consider themselves as part of the middle class. However, similar to the United States, those in the lowest income brackets are less comfortable about their economic security and with two-thirds of those making less than \$30K saying their household income is not sufficient (Environics, 2014). Comparative Canadian data on the housing opportunity gap was not uncovered, however, housing costs in Vancouver and Toronto in particular mirror trends in U.S. urban centres.

8) ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

People want action and see a role for government with this sentiment being stronger in Canada than in the U.S. However, both **Canadians and Americans place a similar priority on their governments playing a role in encouraging people to live more responsible lives, as well as promoting liberty and freedoms.** (Environics, 2014)



At the same time, there is **increasing pessimism about ability of government to address challenges effectively.** This pessimism is worse in United States yet is growing in Canada as well, particularly when it comes to the federal government. Support for municipal government in both countries is much higher than for other levels of government yet there has also been a decline in polling numbers. In the United States, there are now more divisions based on political ideology than other factors including income. In particular, there is increased polarization around environmental attitudes.

SECTION THREE:

ADVISORY GROUP INTERVIEW THEMES

“Sustainability is the unwanted prescription for the problem the patient doesn’t want to admit they have.” – Jeffrey Barber

Through interviews with the project advisory group, which included researchers, as well as state and municipal government leaders; important insights were gained as to how the challenges and opportunities related to sustainable production and consumption play out in practice, especially at the city level.



In some cases, sustainability departments lead the way on production and consumption efforts and in others, programs are embedded into activities across a range of departments, such as transportation or planning divisions. Regardless of how the function is structured, **municipal practitioners tend to avoid using the terms sustainable production and consumption.** Instead, the orientation is often around waste reduction given this is something most elected officials care about. Green procurement programs are also a common starting point for beginning to work on production and consumption where cities begin with their own voluntary efforts before developing broader policies and programs.



Even with the emphasis on waste and government procurement programs, the **issue framing is largely tailored according to community priorities with demographics factoring in as well.** For example, San Antonio, Texas is focused on promoting a “New Energy Economy” given the high proportion of low-income residents and the need for stable, good jobs.



In San Jose, California, where there are also a lot of low-income neighborhoods but additionally transit problems, and a lack of access to open space; the emphasis is on clean neighborhoods with programs to promote walkable streets as well as repurpose abandoned lots to provide open space and allow for more local food production. It is in San Jose’s higher income neighborhoods where there has been growing use of the city’s online neighborhood resource and event sharing tools. In Flagstaff, interest in the city’s “fix-it” clinics has been growing and drawing very diverse participants, indicating this pragmatic approach has broad appeal. Similar findings from Toronto, Ontario shows that the SwapCity trading network supported by the City of Toronto’s Environment Office, is connecting with a diverse range of citizens interested in the sharing program.

In cities where sustainable production and consumption are included as a top priority in planning, such as Eugene, Oregon; **there remains a challenge in how to best measure results over time.** Initiatives are therefore chosen that advance multiple priorities, with an emphasis on delivering benefits, in particular economic benefits. Not to be overlooked, however, are the opportunities that sustainable production and consumption programs provide for community building where there seems to be strong interest at the grassroots level. For example the public's interest in tiny house villages in Eugene means the city must



respond by reviewing building codes to consider how small a house can be and still meet safety requirements. At the same time, **sustainability managers in leading cities such as Vancouver, BC point out the importance of continuing to emphasize environmental benefits in conjunction with community building as the sustainability imperative can provide additional leverage and illustrate not just what actions are needed but also why they are important to advance.**

Concern over equity issues is common yet remains difficult to address at the municipal level. Often those who could benefit most from sustainable production and consumption programs are the least likely to access government services. Also, the term equity itself can be misconstrued to imply a shifting of resources, rather than creating new opportunities. Its use is often avoided entirely or the choice made instead to adopt the terms 'fair,' 'inclusive,' or a "shared economy" (versus sharing economy).



Finally, municipal sustainability leaders do experience push back because of **negative views of government and in particular its role in consumption issues which can be viewed as invasive or even as unwarranted social engineering.** Even in cities where there is more openness for action, the scale of the challenge can be daunting. One advisory group member referenced new research from the University of California at Berkeley, which concludes that the average American's footprint needs to be reduced by 95%. ***"Even the technologists get depressed by that and no one likes the vision of what changing this would look like."***

SECTION FOUR:

WEBSITE SCAN

In reviewing the websites of 25 leading sustainable production and consumption organizations, as well as of city governments; the lack of a common framing approach being used across efforts was evident.

Nonprofits as well as researchers are mostly likely to communicate directly about sustainable production and consumption, and the underlying drivers of these patterns; such as the need to separate prosperity from economic growth, and to address the cultural drivers of the challenge including the role of advertising in creating a sense of dissatisfaction and/or manufacturing a false sense of need. While human needs and well being is referenced, the emphasis is on environmental impacts and protection, which as outline above, is not motivating for many. The exception to this are the environmental justice nonprofits that orient around economic security, job opportunities, and improving the quality of life for those left out of the 'old economy.' Much can be learned from the way these organizations position the issue.

Unfortunately, on nonprofit and research sites, while the challenge is called out fully, the language used often assumes a level of existing understanding; can be overly technical; very philosophical and in some cases 'New-Age'; distant (global/systems based versus local/personal); and/or fails to articulate what the best course of action for moving forward. For example, the idea of "live simply" is nice but is rarely qualified in terms of what it means and how to actually achieve the goal. Additionally, as indicated above, focusing on the United States' global role in driving unsustainable production and consumption can be alienating for many, yet this point is often made by nonprofit organizations as a reason a new approach is needed.

Municipal leaders are less likely to be as overt about sustainable production and consumption and typically avoid mention of the underling economic and cultural drivers. Instead, they often choose to embed sustainable production and consumption concepts into other issue

areas such as solid waste management, planning, energy conservation and renewables, local food systems, etc. At the same time, the language they use tends to be more accessible, practical and relevant to community concerns. Whether avoiding direct communication of the underlying drivers is a limiting factor remains an unknown factor.



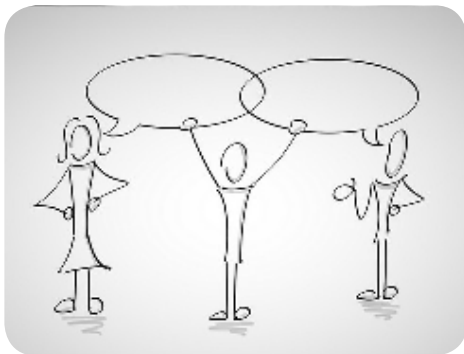
The exception at the municipal level is Vancouver, British Columbia where the Greenest City program is communicated boldly as a central tenant to the government's role and operations. Environmental and human needs are more integrated, creating a holistic vision that is communicated relatively simply. While it is true the majority of British Columbians are very environmentally minded,

and that Canadians as a whole have a stronger collective values and are more supportive of the role of government; it does not mean that the Greenest City initiative has not faced resistance. While a definitive conclusion cannot be drawn, this perhaps suggests there are benefits to being explicit about the challenge of sustainability (both human and ecological) at the local level; as well as to creating a big, holistic vision that brings together the many aspects of the issue and ties it to clear milestones for measuring success.

SECTION FIVE: CONCLUSION

Despite the many challenges outlined in this research summary, **there is an opportunity to build greater awareness of the need for and benefits of sustainable production and consumption given Canadians and Americans are concerned about the state of the democracy; economic security on a country and a personal level now and for future generations; and for many, the increasing pace and complexity of life.**

The key to tapping these concerns is **bridging the gap between the more theoretical and big picture communications approaches being used by nonprofit and research leaders; and the more practical, personal, yet less comprehensive way that municipal leaders talk about sustainable production and consumption.** While the environmental aspects of the issue should not be left out, there is room for a **greater emphasis on human needs**, the potential of inclusivity in the 'new economy', and improving the quality of life in communities.



Researchers and nonprofit leaders need to do a better job of translating the concepts of sustainable production and consumption into every day language that does not assume understanding. This involves **expanding the scope beyond the focus on environmental indicators to issues related to meeting more basic needs, health, well-being, and social inclusion.**

It also requires **de-emphasizing the use of sacrifice and guilt frames and instead promoting themes related to innovation and opportunity.** Many environmental justice organizations working on sustainable production and consumption issues provide good examples of how to effectively connect the dots across these issues in an empowering way.

SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION & PRODUCTION FRAMING RESEARCH SOURCES

ACADEMIC

“Bounded Socio-Technical Experiments as Agents of Systemic Change: The case of a zero-energy residential building” Szejnwald Brown, Halina and Vergragt, Philip. Technological Forecasting and Social Change. 2006

“Communicating Sustainable Production and Consumption” Barber, Jeffrey. GRF Shanghai Conference. 2014

“Constructing Sustainable Consumption: From Ethical Values to the Cultural Transformation of Unsustainable Markets” Holt, Douglas. The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science. 644: 236. 2012

“Generational Differences in Young Adult’s Life Goals, Concern for Others, and Civic Orientation. 1966-2009” Twenge, Jean. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology. 2012

“Green Marketing Myopia” Ottoman, Jacquelyn; Stafford, Edward & Hartman, Cathy. Environment. June, 2006

“Impacting Community Sustainability Through Behavior Change” Molli, Luke & Mark Alavosius. Behavior and Social Issues. 2012

“Literature Review: Key Challenges in Sustainable Consumption” Allaway, David and Leslie Kochan. Salem, OR: State of Oregon, Department of Environmental Quality. 2012

“Limitations of Environmental Campaigning Based on Values for Money, Image and Status: Eight Psychologists Reflect on the Disagreement between the Value Models and Common Cause Approaches” Kasser, Tim & Crompton, Tom. August, 2011

“Mapping Communities of Practice towards Sustainable Production and Consumption” Barber, Jeffrey. 2012

“Mapping the Movement Towards Sustainable Production and Consumption in North America” Barber, Jeffrey. Integrative Strategies Forum, USA

“Reframing Environmental Messages to be Congruent with American Values” Schultz, Wesley & Zelezny, Lynnette. Human Ecology Review, Vol. 10, No. 2. 2003

“Research on Sustainable Consumption: Introduction and Overview” Reisch, Lucia A. and John Thøgersen. Handbook of Research on Sustainable Consumption. Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar. 2015 (in press)

“Sell the Wind” Hartman, Cathy & Stafford, Edward. Stanford Social Innovation Review. 2010

“Sustainability Science” Brown, Halina. Environment 54(1):20–24. 2012

“Sustainable Consumption: An important but ambiguous concept” Vergragt, Philip. March, 2015

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Page 3 - image 3: [Recycle Arrows \(via Flickr CC\)](#)
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Page 10: [Etsy \(Scott Beale / Laughing Squid\)](#)
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Page 12 - image 2: [Recycling Grunge Flag](#)
Page 13 - image 1: [Recycling containers](#)
Page 13 - image 2: [Diversity of the people of London \(via Flickr CC\)](#)
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