



VISIONS FOR CHANGE

Recommendations for Effective Policies on Sustainable Lifestyles

UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME



The Global Survey on Sustainable Lifestyles




REGERINGSKANSLIET
Ministry of the Environment
Sweden

How to Use this Publication?

Visions for Change is a publication aimed at providing recommendations to develop efficient sustainable lifestyles policies and initiatives based on the results of the Global Survey on Sustainable Lifestyles (GSSL) to policy-makers and all relevant stakeholders. Visions for Change contains cross-country conclusions and recommendations as well as 16 country papers, in electronic format (CD-Rom), presenting the results of the GSSL country by country.

- The cross-country conclusions and recommendations are mainly based on the results presented in country papers. They offer an overview of observable transversal trends and highlight specific convergences as well as special cases. These conclusions and recommendations are presented in three sections: Inspire new visions of progress (p.26); Empower behavioural alternatives (p.40) and Build trust and linkages (p.69).
- The country papers were submitted to UNEP and reviewed by the GSSL expert group. They can help better understand country-specific conditions, culture, economic development and other factors affecting lifestyles.

GSSL respondents' quotes have been included in all sections as well as in country papers in order to put young adults' voices in light and to further illustrate the main conclusions of the survey.

Given the number of countries involved in the survey, the amount and specificity of data collected, and the diversity of angles adopted by analysts according to their fields of expertise, the cross-country analysis does not offer a systematic and exhaustive comparative analysis. Therefore, the GSSL data can be further analyzed. Because this survey offers a great source for substantial research and information, researchers, analysts and experts interested in knowing more about young adults' perceptions, expectations and ideas for sustainable lifestyles are encouraged to look at this data, which is available on UNEP's website, and further explore and publish their results¹.

¹ Provided that reference is made to the GSSL, the Task Force on Sustainable Lifestyles, UNEP and the partners involved in the collection of questionnaires. To consult data, see: <http://www.unep.fr/scp/marrakech/taskforces/global-survey-on-sustainable-lifestyles.htm>

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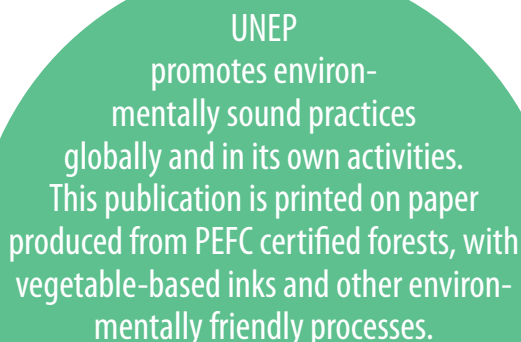
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Recommendations for
Effective Policies on
Sustainable Lifestyles

*Based on the Global Survey
on Sustainable Lifestyles (GSSL)*

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Country Papers (CD-ROM)

- **Australia:** "Young Australians – Active, Engaged and Motivated to Participate", Katherine Luckins, Juliette Anich and Katelyn Samson, RMIT University
- **Brazil:** "Behavioral changes in Brazil and information needs", Akatu Institute for Conscious Consumption
- **Colombia:** "Hotel Mamma - Changing the living 'chip'", Andrea Mendoza, Universidad de Los Andes
- **Egypt:** "Urban Sustainable Lifestyles: A Perspective of Young Egyptians", Ahmed Hamza, Alexandria University
- **India:** "Global Survey on Sustainable Lifestyles in India", V. Veeraraghavan, Venkatesh Trust for Education and Excellence
- **Japan:** "An analysis of Japanese results of the Global Survey for Sustainable Lifestyles", Midori Aoyagi-Usui, National Institute for Environmental Studies & Seiko Yamazaki & Yoko Yoshizawa, Dentsu Inc.
- **Lebanon:** "Global Survey on Sustainable Lifestyles in Lebanon", Association of Business Continuity Middle East (BCME)
- **Mexico:** "Sustainable Lifestyles and Young Adults in Mexico", Leticia Merino, Ayari Pasquier and Simone Buratti, Instituto de Investigaciones Sociales, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México
- **New Zealand:** "Flourishing: Young Lives Well Lived in New Zealand", Bronwyn Hayward, Holly Donald, Erina Okeroa, University Canterbury
- **North America (Canada and USA):** "Sustainable Lifestyles and Young Adults in the New York, Montréal and Halifax Metropolitan Areas", Solange Tremblay, UQAM & Guy Lachapelle, University of Concordia
- **Philippines:** "GSSL: the Philippines Case Study", Laiden G. Pedriña, Young Artists Fellowship for the Environment Inc.
- **Portugal:** "GSSL country paper for Portugal", Maria Faria de Carvalho, Inspire
- **South Africa:** "A glimpse into the lives of South African youth. Thoughts about sustainability", Morgan Strecker, Alison Swartz, Christopher J. Colvin, University of Cape Town
- **Sweden:** "Skilled, Sensitive and sustainable: the Swedish Case", Ulrika Holmberg & Niklas Hansson, Centre for Consumer Science at School of Business, Economics and Law, University of Gothenburg
- **United Kingdom:** "UK Youth: The conflicts of contemporary lifestyles", Bronwyn Hayward & Tim Jackson, RESOLVE, University of Surrey & David Evans, University of Manchester
- **Vietnam:** "Vietnamese Youth in the Paradox of Transition: How Concerns and Expectations Might Inspire Sustainable Practices", Dang Thi Anh Nguyet, Do Thi Huyen, Hoang Thanh Tam, Bui Thi Thanh Thuy, Nguyen Thanh Thuy, Centre for Development of Community Initiative and Environment

Foreword

In the complex and fast-paced world we live in, we may think our daily actions only matter to us. On a planet scale, our everyday life looks like a drop in the ocean, especially when it comes to facing global challenges such as climate change that have enormous environmental, social and economic implications. But as much as scientists have shown tiny variations can affect giant systems – what they have called the ‘butterfly effect’ – the way we live has impacts on us as individuals, as well as on our natural environments and societies worldwide. This means we also have many opportunities, through our individual and collective choices, to operate the change and build solutions for sustainable lifestyles.

Everyone has a role to play in this process. This is the reason why, to build the best solutions and ones that make sense with regards to where and how we live, it is essential to understand values and aspirations, look at everyday experience and challenges, and listen to people’s stories. This is how attractive solutions they can call their own, will be conceived. It is particularly important to listen to youth: half of the world’s population is under 30 years old, and most of them live in developing countries. Young people and young adults entering life as citizens and professionals are catalysts for social, cultural and technological innovation: they are also key actors in shaping lifestyles and consumption trends.

Listening to young adults from different countries and living in varying socio-economic contexts around the world, exploring the way they perceive, picture and shape sustainable lifestyles, was the core objective of the Global Survey on Sustainable Lifestyles (GSSL).



Sylvie Lemmet


Director

Division of Technology, Industry and Economics
United Nations Environment Programme

This was a joint project developed in the framework of the Marrakech Process on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) by UNEP and the Task Force on Sustainable Lifestyles led by Sweden from 2005 to 2009. *Visions for Change: Recommendations for Effective Policies on Sustainable Lifestyles* presents the main conclusions of this project conducted in cooperation of more than 45 partners worldwide, and incorporates the voices of 8000 young urban adults from 20 different countries.

The valuable source of information on young people’s insights worldwide contained in this publication is addressed to policy-makers and relevant stakeholders, to assist them on how best to help support the shift to sustainable lifestyles through effective policies and initiatives, including communication and awareness-raising campaigns. Cross-country recommendations are gathered around three main conclusions, all of which highlight the need to work together to better understand, educate and empower young adults: inspiring new visions of progress, empowering behavioural alternatives as a step towards adopting sustainable lifestyles and building trust and linkages to encourage participation.

In the shift towards sustainable consumption and production patterns, sustainable lifestyle policies and initiatives are essential. The GSSL and *Visions for Change* provide key lessons on how to involve young adults, most importantly their enthusiasm and willingness to take part in building the well-being of our planet. As policy-makers, it is our duty to listen to their voices.



Lars Ekecrantz

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Executive Summary

Visions for Change is a publication aimed at providing recommendations to develop efficient sustainable lifestyles policies and initiatives based on the results of the Global Survey on Sustainable Lifestyles (GSSL), a joint project developed by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Task Force on Sustainable Lifestyles in the framework of the Marrakech Process on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP). **The results of the GSSL focus on three key dimensions of empowerment and creativity: new visions of progress, behavioral alternatives, trust and participation.** These are a precious source of information for policy-makers and all relevant stakeholders on how best to help support the shift to sustainable lifestyles, for instance through effective communication and awareness-raising campaigns.

In this Executive Summary, the GSSL highlights are presented together with the conclusions of five international experts who all point to one priority: **working together to better understand, educate and therefore empower young adults worldwide so they can create their own positive visions of sustainable lifestyles and become actors of change.**

Sustainable lifestyles?

Lifestyles define, connect and differentiate us. They are representative of how we lead our life, interact with one another in the decisions and choices we make – as individuals evolving within a global society of nearly seven billion people. Our lifestyles can have strong impacts on the environment and on communities, and can be at stake when unsustainable collective and

transforming our societies towards more equity and living in balance with our natural environment.

The survey

The Global Survey on Sustainable Lifestyles counts among numerous projects developed under the **Marrakech Process on Sustainable Consumption and Production**, a global multi-stakeholder platform aimed at promoting SCP policies, programmes and activities at the international, regional and national levels through various mechanisms including **seven thematic Task Forces voluntarily led by governments.** UNEP and the Marrakech Task Force on Sustainable Lifestyles, which was led by Sweden until 2009, jointly developed the GSSL.

The survey was conducted among 8000 urban young adults from 20 different countries: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Japan, Lebanon, Mexico, New Zealand, Philippines, Portugal, South Africa, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States of America, and Vietnam. **The overall objective was to listen to young adults' voices around the world to reach a better understanding of their everyday life, expectations and visions for the future with**



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