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The Nature of Sustainable Consumption and How to Achieve it

Results from the Focal Topic »From Knowledge to Action – New Paths towards Sustainable Consumption«

Is the online trade with second-hand products changing individual consumer behaviour? What is the sustainability potential of this activity? How can daily energy-consuming routines at the workplace be changed? Do major changes in the course of people's lives represent opportunities to modify their consumer behaviour towards greater sustainability? These are only some of the research questions studied in the focal topic »From Knowledge to Action – New Paths towards Sustainable Consumption« which is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) as part of the »Social-ecological Research Programme« (SÖF). This book gives an insight into the research results of the ten project groups. Their diversity highlights that there is much more to »sustainable consumption« than the simple purchase of organic or fair trade products. In addition, overarching conceptual and normative issues were treated across the project groups of the focal topic. Developed collaboratively and moderated by the accompanying research project, the

results of the synthesis process are also presented here, as for example how the sustainability of individual consumer behaviour can be evaluated, or which theories of action are particularly useful for specific consumer behaviour phenomena.

Series *Results of Social-ecological Research*
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The Social-ecological Research (SÖF) programme is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). It aims to develop strategies in order to solve social sustainability issues connecting ecological transformation of the society with social justice and economic demands.

The series Results of Social-ecological Research presents the results of this research programme: it introduces recommended procedures and methodical and theoretical contributions for the further development of this new field of research.

The editors lead the accompanying research project »Focussing knowledge – Encouraging commitment – Facilitating mastery« in the focal topic. They all work at the Interdisciplinary Centre for General Ecology (IKAÖ) at the University of Bern. They have carried out numerous research projects – often of an inter- and transdisciplinary nature – on ecologically responsible actions in the context of sustainable development. They also study issues relating to inter- and transdisciplinarity and moderate the synthesis processes in project groups.

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