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The Sussex Energy Group

Newsletter

May 2014

Foreword

Spring has again been a busy time for SEG in terms of teaching, research and engagement. Climate change and energy policy has been very much in the news recently for a number of different reasons: inquiries in competitive behaviour of utilities, political arguments about renewables subsidies and of course the release of the [latest report](#) of IPCC's Working Group 3 report on climate change mitigation. Steve's work on **rebound effects** receives numerous citations in this report (details below).

Meanwhile SEG's expansion continues, with two new appointments (see details below) bringing total staff numbers to 23 and forthcoming interviews for a new Senior Fellow for the [Centre on Innovation and Energy Demand \(CIED\)](#). Professor Gordon MacKerron will also be re-joining SEG in June, following his recent retirement as Director of SPRU and a six-month study visit to Princeton. The post of Professor in Energy Policy will be re-advertised, since our initial search has not led to a successful appointment.

Our second cohort of students on our [MSc in Energy Policy for Sustainability](#) have now completed all their modules and are starting to think about their dissertations. Placements over the summer are a possibility so do get in touch if you are interested in hosting a SPRU MSc student in your organisations. News from last year's cohort include Cameron Jones taking up the post of Electricity Policy Analyst within the Sustainable Electricity division of the Ministry of Energy, Alberta, Canada and Jonas Pohlmann starting a new job as a scientific assistant for the head of the Green parliamentary group in the German parliament covering the fields of climate change, energy, mobility, sustainability, and environment.

Dr Steve Sorrell
Dr Florian Kern

Co-Directors of the Sussex Energy Group

New appointments

SEG is pleased to announce the appointment of [Mari Martiskainen](#) as Research Fellow in the [Centre on Innovation and Energy Demand \(CIED\)](#). Mari previously worked for SEG over the period 2006-2010 and has spent the last four years completing her PhD in [Innovation in Community Energy in Finland and the UK](#) – a project closely linked to ongoing SEG research in [Grassroots Innovation](#). Mari will initially be working with Florian Kern on a project on [policy mixes](#). To find out what it is really like to do a PhD, we recommend Mari's [blog](#) on the topic.

We are very pleased that [Rachael Durrant](#) has recently joined the group as a Research Fellow on the EU-funded ARTS (Accelerating and Rescaling Transitions to Sustainability) project. Rachael is about to finish her PhD at SPRU as part of the Sustainable Lifestyles Research Group. Her doctoral research is an investigation into the contribution of organised civil society in the UK towards more sustainable food production and consumption. Prior to coming to SPRU Rachael spent two years working freelance within the UK food and agriculture sector as a consultant researcher and project manager. She is a Cambridge University graduate (Geography) with a master's in Sustainable Development Advocacy. In addition to her recent work in the area of food and sustainability, she has a portfolio of cross-sector sustainability-related project work.

SEG is also pleased to welcome Claudia Silver, who will fulfil the role of Communication and Engagement Officer during Bettina's maternity leave. Claudia has extensive experience with communications and social media, having worked previously at UCL and the University of Westminster.

SEG researcher's work on 'rebound effects' cited in latest IPCC report

Steve Sorrell's work on **rebound effects** has been repeatedly cited in the [latest report](#) from Working Group 3 of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The report includes considerable coverage of rebound effects, which is an umbrella term for mechanisms that reduce the energy and carbon savings from improved energy efficiency – such as people driving further in fuel-efficient cars because they are cheaper to run.


Rebound effects received only two brief mentions in the previous [Fourth Assessment Report](#) (2007), where a footnote observed that the literature was divided on their importance. In contrast, the [Technical Summary](#) of the Fifth Assessment Report devotes an entire section to this topic (p91), with further sections in [Chapter 5](#) (p54), [Chapter 8](#) (p 23), [Chapter 9](#) (p 46-47) and elsewhere. This reflects the massive increase in research on rebound effects since 2007 – triggered in part by the publication of the [UKERC review](#) of the topic which Steve led. This review, together with Steve's subsequent work receives numerous citations within the Fifth Assessment Report and has clearly influenced several of the conclusions.

Florian Kern visits Finnish Environment Institute

During April, Florian Kern spent one week at the [Finnish Environment Institute](#) on invitation from Dr Paula Kivimaa, Senior Researcher in the Environmental Governance Studies Unit who visited SEG last year. The first two days of the visit were taken up by a workshop which brought together researchers on energy and transport innovation and policy related issues from a number of Finnish institutions. Florian presented a paper on 'Niche Construction and Empowerment through Socio-Political Work of Sustainable Technology Advocates. A meta-analysis of six cases' which he co-authored with Rob Raven and Bram Verhees from the University of Eindhoven and Adrian Smith of SEG (see the [The Politics of Low Carbon Innovation](#)). During the remainder of the visit Paula and Florian worked hard to complete a joint paper ('Motors of creative destruction'? Policy mixes for sustainability transitions') which has since been submitted to a journal for peer review. This paper is a first output from the CIED [cross-cutting project on policy mixes](#).

CIED researchers in Copenhagen

As part of their activities for the [Centre on Innovation and Energy Demand \(CIED\)](#), CIED and SEG researchers [Sabine Hielscher](#) and [Adrian Smith](#) recently ran a session for practitioners and academics interested in grassroots digital fabrication. It was held as part of a wider conference considering an [Innovative Civil Society](#) organised in Copenhagen by the Living Knowledge network of science shops over 9th to 11th April 2014. Adrian and Sabine have also written a [blog post](#) for the Sussex Energy Group blog about their insights.



World Café on
GRASSROOTS DIGITAL FABRICATION
in FabLabs, Hackerspaces and Makerspaces

THURSDAY 10TH APRIL 2014, 09.00-12.30, SCANDIUM

THEME 1 (T1-2): Two-session World Café activity on Grassroots Digital Fabrication, discussing the issues of inclusion, creativity & sustainability

Come and discuss the possibilities for inclusion, creativity and sustainability opening up with the international burgeoning of community-based, open-workshops. In these spaces people access networked, digital design and fabrication tools to make almost anything in collaborative projects. Some argue this presents new forms of democratic and decentralised production and consumption that has sustainability potential.

SPEAKERS:

Adrian Smith SPRU	Johan Soderberg IFRS and practitioner
Vanessa Carpenter Saxons Collaborative, Interactive Art Studio	Ellen van Oost University of Twente
Michael Hvid Nielsen Copenhagen FabLab	Sascha Dickel Technical University Munich
Oyuki Matsamoto STPLN Open House makerspace	Sabine Hielscher SPRU

Launch of "Pro-poor, low carbon development" project findings in Kenya and UK

The [Pro-poor low carbon development](#) research project conducted by David Ockwell and Rob Byrne, in partnership with the [African Technology Policy Studies Network](#) (ATPS), launched its findings in Kenya and the UK in March. The project conducted an in-depth historical analysis of the factors contributing to the success of off-grid solar PV in Kenya and provides a set of policy recommendations around sustainable energy access and low carbon development more broadly. Several peer-reviewed working papers and policy briefing notes are available via the [project web site](#). For more information please contact [David Ockwell](#).

Positive Energy with Caroline Lucas MP

SEG Research Fellow Colin Nolden gave a presentation on community energy at Positive Energy, a public event organised by Hanover Action for Sustainable Living along with Caroline Lucas MP and Ollie Pendered (Community Energy South) on Friday 21 March. Colin's presentation was followed by a panel Q&A session.

Rob Byrne attends workshop on off-grid energy technologies

On 7 April Rob Byrne presented findings from the [Pro-poor low carbon development](#) project in a workshop on Off-Grid Energy Technology and Markets at the Bottom of the Pyramid, held at the Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Innovation. The workshop brought together invited participants from academia, civil society and the private sector to explore ways of enhancing the evidence base for off-grid energy technologies and their role in reducing poverty.

Sustainable Living - myths, meanings and realities

The four year, interdisciplinary research programme of the [Sustainable Lifestyles Research Group](#) ends with a major dissemination event in London on Tuesday 3rd June at [Mary Ward House](#). The event, [Sustainable Living - myths, meanings and realities](#), will present new understandings of the processes which lead to changes in people's lifestyles, behaviours and practices. It will feature plenary presentations from SEG researchers Steve Sorrell, Andy Stirling, Rachael Durrant and Bex White, together with panel discussions from invited experts.

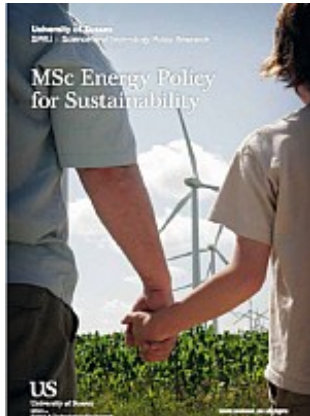
To register please email Gemma Birkett: g.birkett@surrey.ac.uk or call +44 (0) 1483 68 6689.
Closing date for registrations is Monday 26th May 2014.

Centre on Innovation and Energy Demand Launch Event, 12th June, Portcullis House, Westminster

CIED, as part of a formal launch to energy stakeholders, has organised a [panel discussion-based event](#) in collaboration with the [All Party Parliamentary Climate Change Group](#) on the subject of 'How can the UK deliver an energy efficiency revolution'. The event will take place in the Boothroyd Room in Portcullis House Thursday 12th June 3-5pm. Confirmed speakers are Clive Maxwell, Director General Consumers and Households at DECC, Andy Deacon, Director of Delivery, Energy Saving Trust and Professor [Frank Geels](#), Co-Director CIED and Professor of System Innovation and Sustainability at the [Sustainable Consumption Institute](#), University of Manchester. During the event there will be the opportunity to learn more about the Centre and its current research projects. Places are limited and the event is expected to be popular so please reserve your place by sending an email to claudia.silver@sussex.ac.uk

New EU-funded project (ARTS)

Prof Gordon MacKerron is leading SEG's involvement in a new 3-year project which aims to encourage the acceleration of sustainability initiatives in European city-regions. The ARTS project (Accelerating and Re-Scaling Transitions to Sustainability) is funded by the EU and is conducted in partnership with other institutes and city-regions across the EU (incl. Dresden, Stockholm, Flanders and Budapest). The detailed case study of Brighton and Hove will cover initiatives in food, energy, mobility and housing and will consider opportunities for and barriers to accelerating progress. Particular emphasis will be on issues of social inclusion as well as linking initiatives across different domains. A draft paper on the analytical framework we use for studying sustainability initiatives has been accepted for presentation at a Workshop on 'How to govern fundamental Sustainability Transition processes?' hosted by the Regional Studies Association in St. Gallen in July 2014.

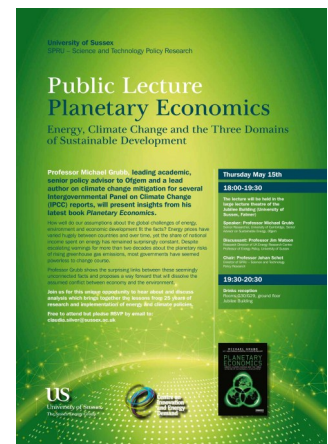


Still accepting applications for MSc in Energy Policy for Sustainability

There are still places available on the [MSc in Energy Policy for Sustainability](#) starting in September 2014. Our MSc aspires to educate a new generation who will play leadership roles in the challenge to create a sustainable energy system, as well as train future energy policy professionals working in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors. The course builds upon a world-leading research base at SPRU and the Sussex Energy Group and is unique in combining ideas from economics, innovation studies and policy studies while requiring no prior training in these fields. To find out more contact Dr Florian Kern f.kern@sussex.ac.uk

SEG Public Lecture – Planetary Economics – Energy, Climate Change & the Three Domains of Sustainable Development

On Thursday May 15th 18.00-20.30 SEG will host a public lecture by Professor Michael Grubb, Senior Researcher at the University of Cambridge and Senior Advisor on Sustainable Energy to Ofgem, followed by a drinks reception. Professor Grubb will present analysis and insights from his new book *Planetary Economics* which brings together 25 years of research and implementation of energy and climate policies. For more details, see [this link](#). If you would like to attend please RSVP to claudia.silver@sussex.ac.uk



Recent Publications

Andy Stirling, [Transforming power: Social sciences and the politics of energy choices](#), *Energy Research and Social Science*, in press. Also available as a [SPRU working paper](#).

Florian Kern, Adrian Smith, Chris Shaw, Rob Raven, Bram Verhees, [From laggard to leader: Explaining offshore wind developments in the UK](#), *Energy Policy*, 16, 635-646

Hoggett, Richard, Bolton, Ronan, Candelise, Chiara, Kern, Florian, Mitchell, Catherine and Yan, Jinyue (2014) [Supply chains and energy security in a low carbon transition](#). *Applied Energy*, 123. pp. 292-295

Jim Watson, Rob Byrne, David Ockwell and Michele Stua, [Lessons from China: building technological capabilities for low carbon technology transfer and development](#), *Climatic Change*, May 2014.

Mona Chitnis, Steve Sorrell, Angela Druckman, Steve Firth, [Who rebounds most: Estimating direct and indirect rebound effects for different UK socio-economic groups](#), *SLRG Working Paper 01-14*

Ralitsa Hiteva, [Standing in the way by standing in the middle: the case of state-owned natural gas intermediaries in Bulgaria](#). This SPRU working paper has been accepted for publication in the leading human geography journal *Geoforum*.

Steve Sorrell, [Energy substitution, technical change and rebound effects](#), *Energies*, 7(5), 2850-2873 (Open Access). This is an invited contribution to a special edition on 'Energy Transitions and Economic Change', edited by David Stern.