

Mainstreaming Social-Ecological Sufficiency

Closing the sustainable consumption gap between societal demand and ecological limits



2 Postdoc and 3 PhD positions coming up – we are seeking expressions of interest now

About MaSES

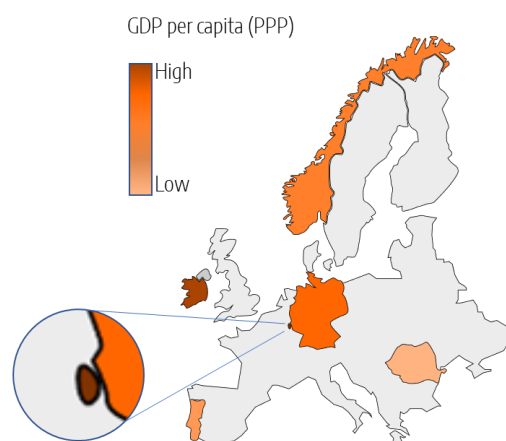
Global patterns of production and consumption are fundamentally unsustainable, threatening key planetary boundaries. Strategies for averting this 'ecological overshoot' have largely focused on 'greening' production by reducing either the material intensity (efficiency), or the material throughput (consistency) of economic activity. However, neither of these approaches address what constitutes a sustainable scale of economic activity.

MaSES: seeks to strengthen the crucial discourse on a 'safe and just operating space for humanity' by addressing three objectives:

Conceptualizing social-ecological sufficiency as a crucial rationale for sustainable resource use by linking multiple planetary boundaries to desired levels of household consumption.

Quantifying social-ecological sufficiency in a methodologically innovative and socially relevant way at multiple scales.

Assessing the feasibility of different strategies for closing the gap between ecologically 'safe' and socially 'acceptable' consumption.



Global analysis with 1 focal and 5 satellite case study countries along an income gradient

In **MaSES**, the notion of social-ecological sufficiency—a socially satisfactory standard of living within ecologically sustainable natural resource usage—will be developed as vital strategy for shifting towards an economy within a 'safe operating space for humanity'. Environmental extended material and energy flow analysis will be combined with consensual deprivation assessments to quantify 'ecologically and socially sufficient' levels of household consumption of key planetary boundaries. **MaSES** will then assess the feasibility of different strategies for closing the gap between ecologically 'safe' and socially 'acceptable' levels of household consumption.

About the positions

Official advertisements for the two Postdoc positions (approximately 4.5 years) will go online in the coming weeks, with an envisaged starting date around November 2024. The three PhD positions (approximately 3.5 years) will be officially advertised slightly later and are envisioned to start around February 2024. **Please register your interest in any of these positions now by sending a copy of your CV (without a photo) and a short motivational letter (max one page) as a single pdf file to abson@leuphana.de with the position you are interested in as the subject line of the email.**

Once the official job adverts are posted anyone who as provided an expression of interest will be contacted directly with instructions on how to apply for the positions.

Postdoc 1 & PhD 1: Quantifying ecological sufficiency

These two positions will focus on: 1) Downscaling planetary boundaries to 'ecologically permissible' average household consumption budgets using environmentally extended multi-regional input-output (EEMRIO) analysis. 2) Developing scenarios for just allocation of resources within (global) ecological limits under different assumption of global resource distribution and 3) Identifying patterns of ecologically sufficient production and consumption in different countries. These positions require strong empirical (interdisciplinary) modelling skills and ideally previous experience with EEMRIO analysis, as well as a firm foundation in sustainability science.

Postdoc 2 & PhD 2: Quantifying social sufficiency

These two positions will focus on: 1) Undertaking and analysing consensual based assessments of socially sufficient levels of household consumption (for multiple consumption sectors such as mobility food, consumer goods etc.) in the focal (Germany) case study country. 2) Identifying socio-economic determinants of social sufficiency by exploring the attitudes, norms, material cultures, consumption practices etc. that shape households' consumptive choices and 3) Assessing social sufficiency through deliberative approaches in the focal and 5 satellite case study countries. These positions require strong empirical social science skills (surveys, data analysis and participatory assessment, transdisciplinarity etc.) as well as a firm foundation in sustainability science. German language competency is a prerequisite for these positions.

PhD 3: Assessing strategies for closing the social-ecological sufficiency gap

This position will focus on: 1) conceptualizing and analyzing societal discourses on sufficiency. 2) Developing scenarios and strategies for closing the gap between ecologically permissible and socially acceptable levels of household consumption and 3) identifying leverage points for the transition to social-ecological sufficiency at the household level. This position requires a strong theoretical foundation in sustainability science and the ability to synthesis ideas from different knowledge domains. Previous experience of social-ecological scenario development/analysis is desirable.

All five positions will be located in the **Social-ecological Systems Institute (SESI)** within the **Faculty of Sustainability** at [Leuphana University](https://www.leuphana.de) in northern Germany. Leuphana University promotes professional gender equality and heterogeneity among its members.

The research will be led By David Abson at Leuphana university in Germany. **For all positions and general information, email abson@leuphana.de**