

# At one with nature

## GRAND CHALLENGES :

C1. Health, demographic change and wellbeing

C5. Climate action, environment, resource efficiency and raw materials

C6. Europe in a Changing World – inclusive, innovative and reflective societies

## CHALLENGE



Humans are part of nature, and ecology has an enormous influence of our lives. In light of growing urbanisation, it becomes increasingly important for research to be directed towards understanding how the carrying capacity of our environmental resource base interacts with our social and economic systems. It is important to change behaviour and attitudes in order to live in harmony with nature. The challenge is to counteract the current trends in development practices that distance humans from a relationship with nature that promotes psychological and physical well-being and health. An approach of stewardship is vital to guarantee a liveable environment for future generations. As citizens expressed,

“we do not inherit the world from our ancestors, we only borrowed the world from our descendants”. In Europe consumerism is now part of culture, identity, values, and considered part of economic and national progress. We also live in a “post-fact” society where faith in scientific methods and results is dwindling. In order to change perspectives towards ecological futures, sustainability must become easily understandable, desirable and accessible.

## SCOPE

Research should explore how to make a system of policy and planning frameworks, with legal structures and institutions that promote more affordable and accessible sustainability lifestyles. In forming smart consumer habits, while continuing to improve quality of life and sustainable development across the social spectrum, a specific focus could be on forms of integrating natural environments and contacts with nature into land use planning. Relevant research aspects may be:

- Exploring how attitudes and behaviors have an influence on consumer patterns and societal relationships with the natural environment
- Researching the possibilities for establishing legal rights for ecological entities and systems (trees, water ways, fauna, etc..) as a way to help support behavioral and attitude change
- Targeting social innovation programs, education, incentive schema and awareness raising campaigns to explore and disseminate good practices for individuals, communities and cities
- Studying the economic, social governance and legal environments underpinning the good practices and methods to remove barriers to an accessible, sustainable lifestyle

## EXPECTED IMPACT

Online  
consultation  
rating 

- Positive ecological prospects for future generations and integration with the UN Sustainable Development Goals
- Reconciling urbanisation processes with sustainable development actions
- Steps towards a regulative or legal framework for “the rights for nature”, working towards reduced pollution, restoration of biodiversity, and legal recognition of natural entities
- Better physical and mental health ; better quality of life and happiness

# SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION

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Research topic :  
At one with nature

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### **Grand Challenges:**

**5:**Climate action, environment, resource efficiency and raw materials

**6:**Europe in a changing world - inclusive, innovative and reflective societies

**1:** Health, demographic change and wellbeing

### **CHALLENGE**

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Online consultation rating: average importance: 4,  
Countries prioritizing this research topic : Malta, Hungary, Czech Republic

### **CITIZENS' VISIONS**

[LIT] Vision 3: Harmony between Human and Nature

"Restored forest, fresh water available for everyone, stabilized climate change problem, suspended biological extinction; green energy (renewable sources). Nature friendly technology."

[IRE] Vision 4: Decision-making for a Sustainable Future

"We live in a world where cultivation is 100% sustainable. Our laws ensure that we reserve and protect our environment."

[CHE] Vision 6: Social living space:

"...a new form of equitable coexistence of people between age 0-100, animals and plants."

[SWE] Vision 4: A healthier Europe

"We have fewer dioxins and less pollution. For instance there are alternatives to plastics and new substances and products are launched only after they are made safe for the environment and health."

[LIT] Vision 2: Human and Environment

"Pure barter; generation of non-consumerism..."

[HRV] Vision 3: The preservation of human health and nature for the generation XYZ

"We imagine year 2050 as a year in which people live happily in pleasant communities, as a part of nature. These communities will be examples of sustainable oasis based on truth and acceptance of the people's diversity. The development of new technologies, in accordance with the laws of nature, will lead to the improved quality of life. People will grow healthy food for themselves, with minimal or no ecological footprint."