

Wintersemester 2024/2025

Dienstag 10. 12. 2024 | 16.15–17.45 Uhr | H6 (Geo II)

“I’ll have what she’s having” – Social tipping points in sustainable food consumer behaviour: The concept and the case of the Danish consumer and sector transition

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Social tipping points are used in social sciences to describe non-linear changes over time and across individuals in social contexts. Examples are adoption of innovations or changes in social norms. The term has been increasingly applied in sustainability transitions research in the past years. Social tipping points are mostly meant in a positive sense and arise in reaction to the urgent need for change in how humanity reacts to its impact on the earth’s systems.

The talk will outline the definition and origin of social tipping points as a concept and highlight examples. It discusses the hope that stakeholders in sustainability transitions place in the term, and the questions that might arise from this observation. Then, the talk reports from research on the past years of change in the plant-based market development and among consumers in Denmark. Studies have explored the impact of different types of stakeholders over time that have ultimately led to a policy turn-around in Denmark, and the characteristics of different consumer groups and the role that these might (not) play in current and future behaviour change. Finally, these insights are used to discuss if and for what a tipping point in food behaviour is observed, or what it would take to trigger future behaviour change with relevant impact on a larger scale.



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