

ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS AND INDIVIDUAL DAILY BEHAVIOURS IN THE UNITED STATES: WHAT DO TIME DIARY STUDIES TELL US?

KIMBERLY FISHER^{*1}; ROUJMAN SHAHBAZIAN²; MOHAMMAD SEPAHVAND³

1.CENTRE FOR TIME USE RESEARCH, UNIV OF OXFORD; 2.LUND UNIVERSITY; 3.DEPT OF ECONOMICS, UPPSALA UNIVERSITY.

The need for sweeping changes in the ways in which people and organisations use resources and interact with the planet is well-known. Nonetheless, there is a general mismatch between the wider aims of policies designed to reduce human-generated impact on the climate, and the specific outcomes measured in assessments of the effectiveness of these policies. We investigate whether regulatory environments may have a more general influence on daily behaviour patterns. We use time diaries collected in the 1992-1995 Environmental Agency-funded National Human Activity Pattern Survey and 2003-2010 Bureau of Labor Statistics-administered American Time Use Study to profile daily behaviours of people aged 15 and older in the United States, a country with lifestyles associated with particularly significant environmental impacts. Time diaries reveal the range of activities in which people engage on an average day. We pool the diary data with state-level regulatory framework data available on the US Environmental Protection Agency website (covering appliance, vehicle and building efficiency standards; presence or absence of GHG emissions reporting, targets and caps; presence or absences of carbon trading schemes or renewable energy promotion schemes). We test whether a variety of environmental regulations are associated with healthier lifestyles with lower carbon footprints as measured in the time use diaries. The presence of such co-variation could suggest that regulation of a limited range of behaviours may inspire wider behaviour shifts, or that people with greater concern for the consequences of behaviour are more likely encourage policy-makers to implement a wider range of green regulations, or that these two processes reinforce each other. The absence of such an association would have the more worrying implication that people may require a broader range of policy interventions targeted on those behaviours associated with the strongest climate changes before people alter their more general behaviour.