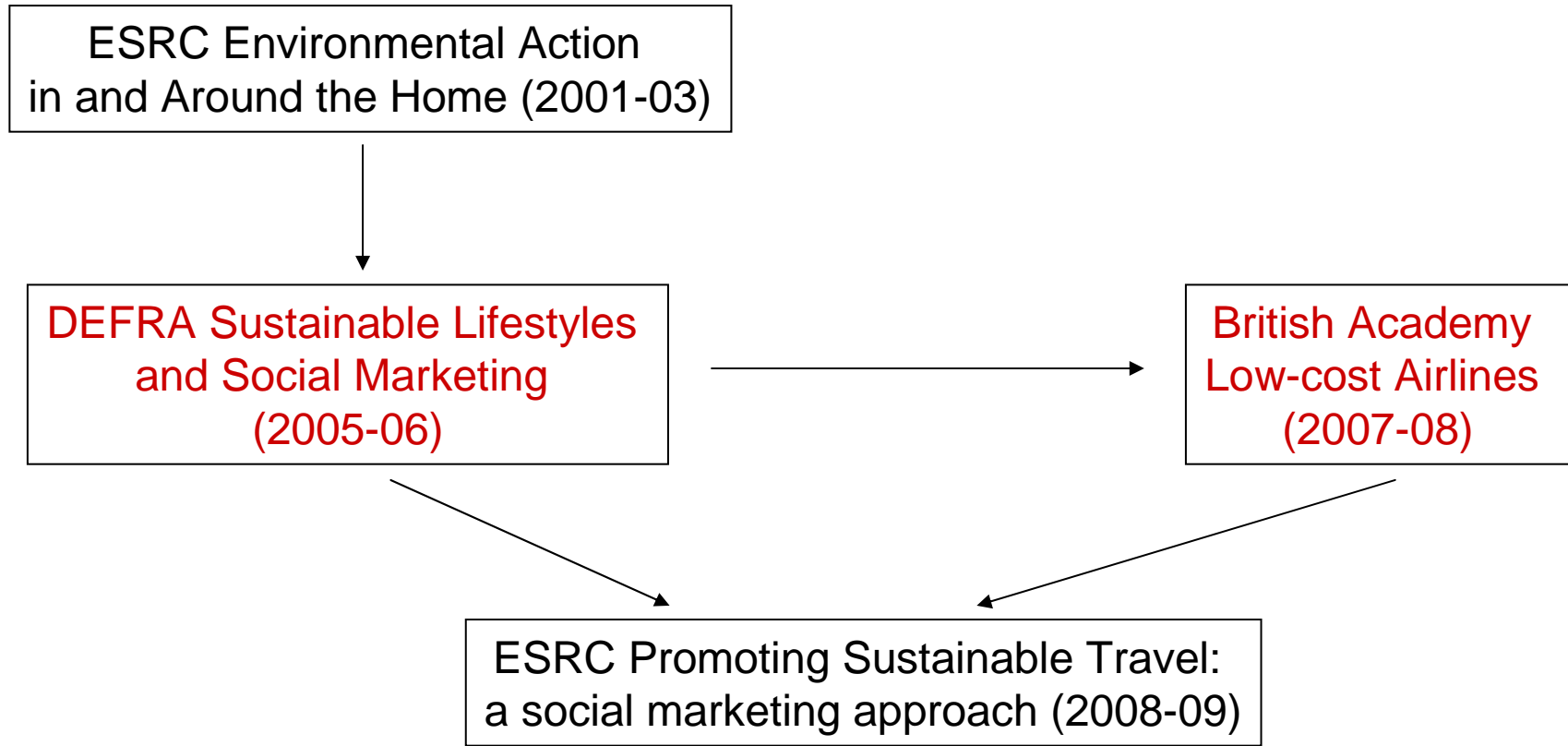


# **Changing Behaviours for a Changing Climate: a lifestyles approach**

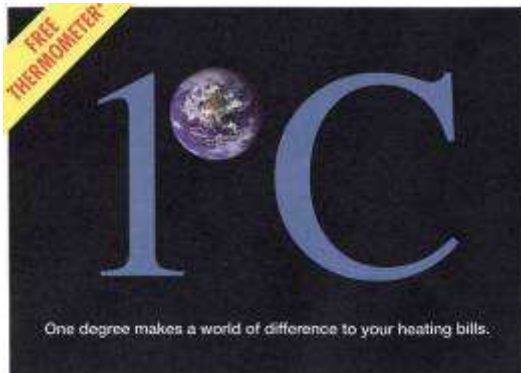
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# Research Programme



# Policy Context

“The report concentrates primarily on behaviours which will have an impact on carbon savings and therefore link to climate change mitigation” (DEFRA, 2008, p. 14)



# Research Context

- New ways of conceptualising environmental behaviours, alongside **existing understandings of specific activities**:

1. **‘Environmental’ (or ‘sustainable’) lifestyles** (Barr and Gilg, 2006; Darnton, 2006a-d) in the ‘home’ context and their potential impact:

“Social marketing...underscores the importance of strategically delivering programs so that they target specific segments of the public and overcome the barriers to this segment’s engaging in the behavior” (McKenzie-Mohr, 2000, p. 594).

2. Limited evidence for **‘spill-over’ (or ‘catalyst’) effects** between practices and contexts (Barr *et al.*, 2008; De Young, 2000; Thogersen and Olander, 2003), in particular between ‘home based’ and ‘tourist’ behaviours (Dickinson and Dickinson, 2006).

# DEFRA Methodology

- **Key questions:** *What links exist between different forms of environmentally responsible behaviour, in different contexts?*
  - *Specifically, how do these relate to attitudes towards low-cost air travel?*
- Research for DEFRA based on four segments from previous ESRC work related to ‘purchase behaviour’, ‘habitual behaviour’ and ‘recycling’:
  - **Committed environmentalists;**
  - **Mainstream environmentalists;**
  - **Occasional environmentalists;**
  - **Non-environmentalists.**
- **Eight FGD’s** (two for each group) convened;
- Covered a range of topics, including sustainable holidays and low-cost airlines.

# How polluting is your flight?

Environmental cost per passenger of a return flight from London to:

## Dublin

Miles: 288  
Fuel: 48kg  
Greenhouse gases: 452 kg CO<sub>2</sub>  
Travelling by car and ferry is 13 times more considerate to the ozone layer than going by plane



## Amsterdam

Miles: 217  
Fuel: 36 kg  
Greenhouse gases: 341 kg CO<sub>2</sub>  
The greenhouse gas emitted per passenger is equivalent to the weight of 179 Edam cheeses



## Paris

Miles: 212  
Fuel: 35 kg  
Greenhouse gases: 333 kg CO<sub>2</sub>  
Catching Eurostar would release 40 times less global-warming pollutants



## Barcelona

Miles: 705  
Fuel: 119 kg  
Greenhouse gases: 1,109 kg CO<sub>2</sub>  
A trip by rail would emit 95% less greenhouse gas



## Rome

Miles: 891  
Fuel: 150 kg  
Greenhouse gases: 1,401 kg CO<sub>2</sub>  
A tourist could drive around on a scooter non-stop for more than 6 months and still produce fewer emissions



## Athens

Miles: 1,485  
Fuel: 250 kg  
Greenhouse gases: 2,336 kg CO<sub>2</sub>  
After one trip, a passenger would have to go without heating, cooking, lighting and mechanised transport for 2 years and 9 months to make up for their impact on the environment



## Oslo

Miles: 714  
Fuel: 120 kg  
Greenhouse gases: 1,122 kg CO<sub>2</sub>  
The amount of carbon emitted - equivalent to the weight of four reindeer - would be cut by 85 per cent through travelling by car



## Prague

Miles: 636  
Fuel: 107 kg  
Greenhouse gases: 1,000 kg CO<sub>2</sub>  
A train would have to travel from London to Madras and back before polluting the air as much as a 747's return flight to Prague



## LONG HAUL

### New York

Miles: 3,455  
Fuel: 414 kg  
Greenhouse gases: 3,863 kg CO<sub>2</sub>  
A visitor would have to take 700 two-hour bus tours of the Big Apple to emit the same amount of CO<sub>2</sub> as on their flight



### Sydney

Miles: 10,557  
Fuel: 1,196 kg  
Greenhouse gases: 11,149 kg CO<sub>2</sub>  
The carbon emitted per passenger is equivalent to a mini driving around the earth 640 times or the weight of four Indian elephants



Figures on jet-fuel and greenhouse gases based on 80% occupancy on jumbo jet DC 747. All greenhouse gases expressed as warming equivalent in CO<sub>2</sub>.  
Source: air travel calculator at [www.chooseclimate.org](http://www.chooseclimate.org) and United Nations Environment Programme

Graphic: Kristina Ferris Words: Oliver Duff

# Attitudes and Practices 1: environmentally-responsible behaviour

1. Awareness of the role of environmental action:

- **Generally well-informed and high levels of intention throughout groups:**

2. Attitudes towards environmental behaviour:

- **Committed groups keen** to participate in any available activities;
- Other groups were positive about acting, but identified (variable) **practical barriers:**
  - Price, inconvenience and effort.

3. The intention-behaviour gap:

- The 'distance' of this gap was **wider for the less committed:**

“I often think of ways in which I might be able to re-use my water that comes from the baths or something “ (Committed)

“I like taking a really long shower in the morning and nothing is gonna stop me although I know I shouldn't in terms of water conservation” (Occasional)

# Attitudes and Practices 2: low cost air travel

1. The use of low cost airlines:
  - ***Committed groups were well-aware and articulate about the environmental implications:***
    - “...I think they’re despicable and we should be paying the full price for our air travel...”
    - “They did a thing on Top Gear about flights, working out the cost and the carbon emissions and everything and worked out it would be better for the environment to go by car”

# Attitudes and Practices 2: low cost air travel

The use of low cost airlines (Cont.):

- ***Debate about low-cost air travel's impact*** by the ***Mainstream*** group:

“Which is more efficient: a plane half full with executives flying abroad for a conference or a low cost airline, full to the brim with people on holiday?”

“But you could probably offset the environmental cost of budget airlines by reducing the amount of food we're bringing in by airfreight”

- ***Non-environmentalists less concerned overall:***

“I don't really think about it to be honest”

# Attitudes and Practices 2: low cost air travel

## 2. Attitudes towards using low-cost airlines:

- Committed and Mainstream groups highlighted the ***magnitude of the task***:
  - “...you can’t uninvent the wheel. It’s going to be very difficult to persuade people not to use them” (Committed)
  - “Well when we live in an age of travel...I don’t really see how we’re going to go back from that” (Mainstream)
- Non-Environmentalist groups ***highlighted the benefits***:
  - “...these low cost airlines connect the areas which are not connected or reached by the bigger airlines”

# Attitudes and Practices 2: low cost air travel

Attitudes towards low-cost airlines (Cont.):

- Attitudes of Occasional Environmentalists also ***framed in terms of cost, convenience and the costs / benefits:***

“If there’s a higher demand for them than they’re gonna supply more and then there’s gonna be more fumes going into the air”

“And like, my eldest daughter lives in Darlington and I can go with FlyBe for £60 to Newcastle and it takes one hour or I can go on a coach for eleven hours or train for six hours and that’s more expensive, so that’s the choice I make”

# Attitudes and Practices 2: low cost air travel

## 3. The intention-behaviour gap:

- ***Committed Environmentalists recognised the contradictions:***

“I’m concerned about the sheer volume of air traffic but at the same time, I sometimes like to go on an aeroplane, which is a paradox isn’t it?”

- There was ***little evidence of an intention to reduce low-cost air travel use amongst the other groups***, given:
  - The contested knowledge-base;
  - Major perceived benefits.

# British Academy Project: ERB and sustainable holidays

- Initial results suggest:
  - Highly committed individuals (at home and away) frequently fly more often and further, arguing for a **technological solution**;
  - Many with moderate-to-high commitments at home do not transfer behaviour when away and view this as a **'trade-off'** for their holiday; they contest climate change evidence;
  - Those who make a limited commitment at home often view air travel as a **significant benefit**.

# Research Implications

- Limited evidence of ‘spill-over’ (‘Generalisability’) between ERB and attitudes towards low-cost air travel:
  - A **small group are ‘committed’** to reducing air travel, but still didn’t effectively bridge intention-behaviour gap;
  - Air travel represents a **contested and ambiguous topic** for many groups (Gosling and Peeters, 2007; Gossling *et al.*, 2007);
  - Evidence that low-cost **air travel is embedded in peoples’ lifestyles** (Becken, 2007);
  - A notion that (some) **travel and tourism practices are beyond the scope of environmental practice?** (Becken, 2007)
  - A clear **challenge for researchers and policy-makers** seeking to promote ‘sustainable lifestyles’.

“Yes, I have thought about it and like Margaret said about planting trees, I do; like I recycle 100% of what I possibly can so like now, there’s not one piece of paper goes in my bin, so that kind of makes me feel less guilty about using my car as much as I do [and] flying as much as I do”

“I suppose people think a holiday is a holiday and that they go there to relax and do their own thing. And you know, it sounds a bit nasty but you know, when you’re holiday, you’re really thinking about yourself aren’t you because it’s your time away”