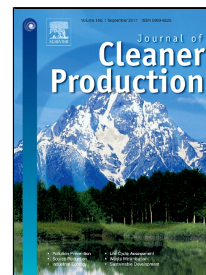


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Experiments as a means towards sustainable societies – lessons learnt and future outlooks from a Finnish perspective



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5 **Experiments as a means towards sustainable societies – lessons learnt and future outlooks from a Finnish**
6 **perspective**

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11
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13 **Abstract**

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15 Experimentation has been introduced as a potential means to overcome gaps between top-down led climate
16 change policies and challenges related to the upscaling of grassroots innovations. In Finland, the current
17 government programme emphasises the role of experimentation in sustainability transition and as a source for
18 new growth. We carried out an exploratory study into the conditions that support experimentation and
19 analysed the role of experiments in creating change, and the critical factors that determine the success of the
20 experiments and their possibilities for upscaling. We drew our analyses from a selection of ten experiments
21 aimed at mitigating climate change and improving resource efficiency. Experimentation scholars have
22 identified similar success factors and barriers across different types of experiments, including economic
23 viability, public funding, technological development, impact assessments, public policies and regulation as well
24 as social aspects. Our results are in line with these findings, especially highlighting the significance of the social
25 aspects as a crucial enabling factor. The monitoring of the sustainability performance of both successful and
26 ended or failed experiments and communication about the impact of such experiments are important from a
27 learning point of view. We conclude that the development of governance structures for experimentation
28 requires further attention.

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30 **Highlights:**

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- The role of experiments in sustainability transition is emphasised
 - Ten deliberately chosen, different types of sustainability experiments were assessed
 - Social aspects, such as trust and networking are critical success factors
 - Monitoring sustainability performance helps to focus and redirect the experiments
 - Governance structures for experimentation require further development

38 **Keywords:** Experiments, case studies, success factors, upscaling, Finland

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