

## Temporal Myopia in Sustainable Behavior under Uncertainty

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**Abstract :** Consumers in today's world are confronted with the alarming consequences of unsustainable behavior such as pollution and resource degradation. In addition, they are facing an increase in uncertainty due to, for instance, economic instability and terror attacks. Although these two problems are central to consumers' lives, occur on a global scale, and have significant impact on the world's political, economic, environmental, and social landscapes, they have not been systematically studied in tandem before. Contributing to research on persuasion and pro-social behavior, this paper shows in five studies (three experimental studies and one field study) that the two problems are intertwined. We demonstrate that uncertainty leads to lower sustainable behavior in comparison to certainty (Studies 1 and 2) and that this is due to consumers displaying higher levels of temporal discounting (i.e., adopting a more immediate orientation; Study 2). Finally, providing valuable implications for policy makers and responsible marketers, we show that emphasizing the immediate benefits of sustainable behavior during uncertainty buffers the negative effect (Studies 3 and 4).

**Keywords :** sustainable behavior, uncertainty, temporal discounting, framing

**Conference Title :** ICEP 2018 : International Conference on Environmental Psychology

**Conference Location :** Amsterdam, Netherlands

**Conference Dates :** May 10-11, 2018