

Personal carbon trading

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Aims of presentation

1. Introduce the concept of personal carbon trading and the mechanisms by which it could deliver change.
2. Summarise research evidence and ongoing research activity.
3. Suggest how this idea can be taken forward.

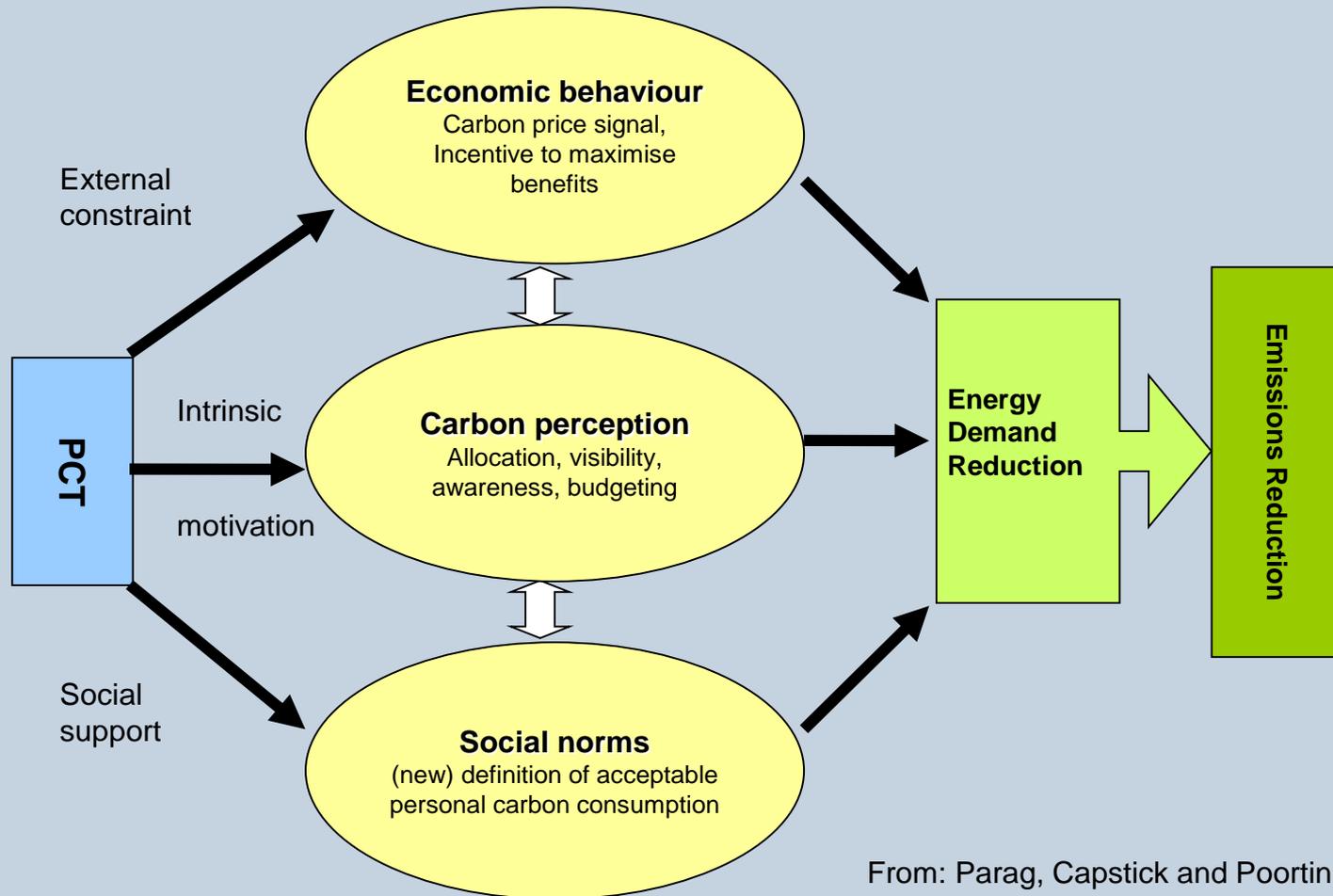
Personal carbon trading

- Equal allowances for adults
- Reducing annual allowance, signaled well in advance
- Tradable
- To include personal transport & household energy use
- Mandatory
- By electronic card

Inspired by “Contraction and Convergence” (www.gci.org.uk)



How would PCT work?



From: Parag, Capstick and Poortinga (2011)

Some research findings

In theory, PCT is a serious alternative to increased energy taxation, with some understanding of what institutions and systems would be needed to introduce it.

Overall, PCT should be a progressive policy, but some poorer individuals will be worse off.

Given the (theoretical) choice between PCT and increased carbon taxation, more people say they favour PCT.

Technology to enable an electronic card PCT system already exists.

PCT would cost more to introduce than upstream trading or direct taxation.

Current research



“Orlem ai orn Norf'k.
Liiden d' wieh tu wan
sastienebl fyuutcha.

All eyes on Norfolk,
leading the way to a
sustainable future”

Good News

NICHE trial in Australia – the Norfolk Island Carbon / Health Evaluation Study

“the first real test of Personal Carbon Trading in the world”

350 people registered for the trial, electronic carbon accounting system, rewards for participation, energy companies involved, feedback on carbon emissions.

(<http://www.norfolkislandcarbonhealthevaluation.com>)

Bad News

Very little (funded) research on this in UK or EU, as far as I know.

What next? (Big picture)

Bright ideas can have a long and complex journey before being transformed into workable policy, and many never make it.

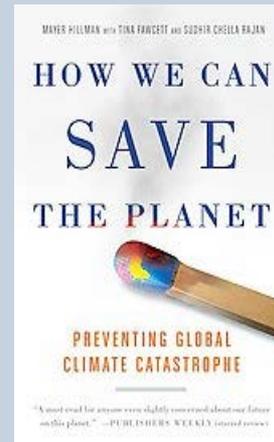
To get further along this journey, PCT needs:

- Support from civil society – NGOs, community groups, think tanks etc
- Expanded research base, contributions of many disciplines, wider academic ownership
- Trials of various aspects of PCT
- Engagement of low carbon business and social enterprise

PCT had a ‘top down’ moment in the political spotlight in 2006/07, my feeling is a ‘bottom up’ movement is more likely to be successful.

What next? (Smaller picture)

Mayer Hillman and I are working on creating a follow-up resource to our 2004 book 'How we can save the planet' for its 10 year anniversary in 2014.



We would welcome ideas and contributions from others! Please get in touch.

Conclusion

PCT is a powerful and inspirational idea.

It encourages discussion about who the 'winners' and 'losers' in a low carbon transition would be, and who might be compensated for their losses.

It questions the capabilities of the current policy toolkit to deliver the radical changes needed.

It could be translated into an (acceptably) equitable, effective and efficient policy.

Researchers alone cannot turn this idea into policy.

References

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