

## **Reluctant Pioneers: Environmental NGOs and Food Self-Provisioning in Post-socialist Czech Republic**

Evelien de Hoop  
School of Innovation Sciences  
Eindhoven University of Technology  
Netherlands  
Email: E.d.Hoop@tue.nl

Petr Jehlička  
Department of Geography  
The Open University  
United Kingdom  
Email: P.Jehlicka@open.ac.uk

Food self-provisioning (FSP), which transgresses the consumer-producer binary in various ways, is practised by 43 per cent of Czechs and in a relatively environmentally friendly way. Yet, from an outsiders' perspective most food-related campaigns run by environmental NGOs (ENGOS) seem to pay little attention to FSP and instead focus on what food to buy and where to buy it, reinforcing the consumer-producer binary. Based on qualitative interviews and using Mol's (2002) concept of multiplicity as a lens, this paper discusses Czech ENGOS' ambiguous interpretations and attitudes towards FSP in relation to their activities in the area of marketed sustainable food. We highlight ENGO representatives' nuanced understandings of the promotion of certified organic food consumption and explores how they negotiate the tensions and overlaps between multiple enactments of FSP, namely, FSP as a somewhat undesirable relic of the communist past, FSP as part of an environmentally conscious lifestyle, and FSP as a potentially attractive but practically problematic campaign topic. By identifying the contours of Czech ENGOS' internal discourses on home-grown food, we aim to open up a new area of interest in the as yet limited literature on ENGOS' engagement with FSP as a specific form of food activism.