

Sustainable Behaviour Newsletter

Volume 1 February 2026

Save the date for our next seminar

Sharing for me or for society? Motivational tensions in peer-to-peer sharing. In the next seminar, dr. Vivian Tunn, Assistant Professor circular economy and part of our Special Interest Group, will talk about the sharing economy.



While traditional sharing was rooted in altruism, social relationships and reciprocity, today's digitally enabled sharing economy blends community ideals with market-like exchanges, raising new questions about what truly motivates consumers. For example, do consumers prefer personal interaction when picking up a product or the use of a lockbox? Are they motivated by hedonism or frugality? This study revealed five such motivational tensions through interviews with 43 P2P users and then tested how these tensions influence service preferences through a discrete choice experiment (n=487). It finds that most people resolve these tensions pragmatically, prioritizing price, convenience, and low social friction.

We hope to see you all there on the 10th of March! ([online link](#))

Our most recent seminar speaker, dr. Anne van Valkengoed, got us all thinking about sustainable behaviour in modelling

Anne, Assistant Professor in urban economics at Wageningen University and Research, argued for more involvement of psychologists in the integration of human behavioural change in Integrated Assessment Models. She highlighted that demand-side solutions, resulting from behaviour change, come with less uncertainties than supply-side, technical solutions. However, current models used to predict pathways to net-zero emissions insufficiently integrate such solutions.



She identified the lack of consensus on how to represent human behaviour in models as one of the biggest obstacles, specifically the strength of relationships between predictors and behaviour and the development of these relationships over time. Therefore, she concluded the seminar with the call to action for psychologists and modellers to work together to improve these aspects. Together, they can advance the integration of human behaviour in models, resulting in more robust scenarios for demand-side change!

Find Anne's publications [here](#) if you want to learn more!

Agenda

25/02/2026 17.00-19.00

Climate Emotions
Conversations by The Green Office

10/03/2026 15.00-16.00

Seminar by dr. Vivian Tunn:
Sharing for me or for society?
Motivational tensions in peer-to-peer sharing

10/ or 11/03/2026

Wind In My Back Yard (WIMBY)
workshops (see last page)

02/06/2026 15.00-16.00

Seminar by dr. Vinzenz Koning

Click on the events for more info



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Just published: Dutch Scientific Climate Council advises Dutch government on the importance of behavioural change

On the 19th of February 2026, the Dutch Scientific Climate Council (de Wetenschappelijke Klimaatraad) published an advisory report: *'Taking action through behaviour! Making sustainable and adaptation behaviour more easy and self-evident'*. In this advisory report, the council makes recommendations for more effective and structural behavioral policy aimed at sustainable and adaptive behavior. The core of the advisory report: structural and more effective behavioral policy can significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase the resilience and freedom of choice of Dutch citizens, and yield benefits for our health, safety, and nature.

Many people are open to climate policy if it is fair and feasible, and expect the government to take action. The council stresses the importance of freedom of choice over paternalism and the role of government in behaviour policy. Read the whole report (in Dutch) [here!](#)

Source: *de Wetenschappelijke Klimaatraad*

Recent promotion: Annuska Toebast

Recently, one of the members of our Sustainable Behaviour Special Interest Group, Annuska Toebast, got promoted upon completing her PhD on Sustainable Fashion. This is what she shared about her experience researching this topic.

What triggered your interest in researching sustainable fashion?

"My interest grew out of my background in the fashion industry. I experienced firsthand how difficult it is for sustainable fashion to gain visibility and traction. Sustainable retailers compete with fast fashion brands that offer low prices and have large marketing budgets, while they themselves often face higher production costs and limited marketing resources. I wanted to contribute by generating insights that could actually help sustainable fashion retailers reach and engage consumers more effectively."

Opportunities

A PhD position on Delta Climate Center (DCC)-funded project 'Delta Values' just opened. Check it out [here!](#)

One of our members also highlighted a call for a **Post-doctorate Position: Territories**. Click [here](#) for more info!

One of your recommendations is to increase focus on emotional engagement over rational appeals: how can brands tell compelling stories without greenwashing?

"Cognitive appeals such as certifications, product facts, or environmental claims, are important but insufficient on their own. Consumers primarily interpret fashion through emotions, aesthetics, and symbolic meaning. To activate these dimensions without greenwashing, brands can focus on authentic storytelling. Rather than simply stating that a garment is made from organic cotton, they can narrate its journey from farmer to maker to wearer, highlighting creativity, craftsmanship, and human involvement. Sustainable fashion can also be framed as stylish, aspirational, and pleasurable, emphasizing self-expression and enjoyment rather than moral obligation."

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Beyond the findings, what was most challenging, meaningful and/or surprising about researching sustainable fashion at a PhD level?

“One of the biggest challenges for me was resisting the urge to study too many things at once. The topic and my personal motivation often pushed me to explore broader questions, but the PhD process taught me the value of focus. Staying close to a clear research question, a consistent methodology, and disciplined interpretation ultimately led to much deeper and more meaningful insights.”

What opportunities for social influence have you identified to broaden awareness and adoption of sustainable fashion?

“Across my studies, social influence consistently emerged as a powerful driver of awareness and symbolic value in sustainable fashion consumption. However, it is less decisive in directly triggering purchase decisions, both within and beyond consumers’ social networks. For retailers, this highlights both the power and the limits of social influence. Within close social networks, referrals and peer-to-peer sharing already function as identity signals, reinforcing sustainable fashion choices among like-minded consumers. Retailers can strengthen this by making it easy and rewarding for customers to share recommendations within trusted networks, for example through personalized referral links, exclusive sharing perks, or campaigns that highlight real customers as role models and value carriers. At the same time, relying solely on peer influence risks staying within the same social circles. To reach new consumers and stimulate purchasing beyond existing networks, social influence should be combined with economic incentives, such as discounts or collaborations with influencers that appeal to more mainstream audiences.”



What main takeaway would you like to provide to the community of the Special Interest Group on Sustainable Behaviour?

“My main takeaway would be to keep sharing knowledge: about methods, findings, and practical implications of sustainable behaviour research. In particular, there is still so much potential in research on social norms and social influence. This is an area where deeper collaboration and knowledge exchange can make a real difference.”

What are your next steps, and how may your PhD experience contribute to the rest of your career?

“Conducting research has truly captured my interest, and I would like to continue working at the intersection of research and practice. I aim to use my research skills to develop and test retailer-focused interventions, translating academic insights into practical tools that support sustainable consumer behaviour.”

Check out Annuska’s PhD dissertation [here](#) and other publications [here](#)!

Want to write or promote something in our next newsletter?

Contact us at
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Explore the Future of Wind Energy in Utrecht

Join us for an **interactive workshop** where you can **experience the future of wind energy** in the Utrecht region in **virtual reality**.

- ◇ Step into a realistic high-fidelity VR experience
- ◇ See how wind turbines could look in real local landscapes
- ◇ Together with others, share your views on what works and what doesn't: for nature, the economy, and community life
- ◇ Discuss how wind energy fits with local renewable energy goals

Dates:

Utrecht Science Park

Buys Ballotgebouw,
room 0.77

10.03.2026, 09:00

10.03.2026, 14:00

Utrecht City Center

Academiegebouw,
Belle van Zuylen Zaal

11.03.2026, 09:00

11.03.2026, 14:00

Find out more and sign-up

here:



<https://tinyurl.com/2pmrz6dh>

What's waiting for you?

🎁 **€50 gift voucher as a thank-you for your time**

- 🍷 Snacks and coffee ☺
- 🗣️ Help shape the discourse on realistic and locally grounded wind energy plans



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