



universität
wien

Faculty of Psychology

Colloquium lecture by Ass.-Prof. Anne E. Urai

Climate crisis and ecological emergency: Why they concern (neuro)scientists, and what we can do

Our planet is experiencing severe and accelerating climate and ecological breakdown caused by human activity. As professional scientists, we are better placed than most to understand the data that evidence this fact. However, like most other people, we ignore this inconvenient truth and lead our daily lives, at home and at work, as if these facts weren't true. In particular, we overlook that our own neuroscientific research practices, from our laboratory experiments to our often global travel, help drive climate change and ecosystem damage. We also hold privileged positions of authority in our societies but rarely speak out. Here, we argue that to help society create a survivable future, we neuroscientists can and must play our part. I will outline what the climate and ecological emergencies mean for us as neuroscientists. We highlight the psychological mechanisms that block us from taking action, and then outline what practical steps we can take to overcome these blocks and work towards sustainability. In particular, I will review environmental issues in neuroscience research, scientific computing, and conferences. I also highlight the key advocacy roles we can all play in our institutions and in society more broadly. The need for sustainable change has never been more urgent, and we call on all (neuro)scientists to act with the utmost urgency.

Ass.-Prof. Anne E. Urai
Leiden University



This lecture takes place online
Thursday, November 24, 2022; 3pm