Mapping mental models of the energy transition

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Project description
In this project, we will explore the public perception of energy transition pathways, that is, of strategies towards sustainable ways of energy use. We focus on people’s mental models, or internal representations of the external world, about such pathways.

Previous studies on mental models of the energy transition in Norway and Germany presented a set of 25 energy transition pathway components. The following aspects of mental models about these pathway components have been investigated: a) mental categorization through a sorting task, b) affective images by eliciting free associations, c) causal beliefs by asking participants to name potential consequences of each pathway component, and d) value judgments by letting participants indicate which motives and values they see affected by each of the pathway components (Böhm et al., 2018, 2019, 2020; Doran et al., 2018). The current project will build on these studies by mapping comprehensive mental models of energy transitions in the Netherlands, Norway and Germany. Participants will visualize their mental models by drawing a diagram of the transition pathways using a novel tool for mapping mental models: M-Tool.

For this project, we are looking for a student-assistant who can help us with developing the research materials and collecting the data for the study in the Netherlands. The assistant will work together in a team of researchers and student assistants from Norway and Germany. The assistant will be able to conduct all tasks from home if needed due to the Covid-19 situation.

Job requirements
We are looking for a motivated student who wants to gain experience in conducting research in the field of environmental psychology and transition studies. The applicant should have good communication skills and be a team player. Knowledge about mental models is welcomed.

References