

"Far Right Politics and the Denial of Climate Change "
Dr. Maria Proestou, Humboldt University of Berlin

Understanding Climate Change Denial in Times of Right-Wing Populism

Rising right-wing populism is a phenomenon of our times accompanied by climate change denialism considered as a manifestation of post-truth politics. Among the actors who advocate post-truth and deny climate change, the most influential are the right-wing populist parties and politicians. The marriage between right-wing populism and climate change denialism uses a very specific narrative and rhetoric based on the antagonism between ordinary people and climate scientists. The presentation elaborates on discursive and social psychological perspectives of the successful concurrence of right-wing populism and climate change denial. On this basis, Maria Proestou refers to the German AfD party, addresses what did go wrong with the climate change agenda and climate scientists, and discusses what scientists can do to win the battle of climate change when the latter enters the political debate.

Biography

Maria Proestou is a research associate at the Agricultural and Food Policy Group at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin (HU Berlin). Her current research focuses on the governance of bioeconomy and particularly on policy designs for resilient bioeconomies. She studies the politics of climate change and is interested in the relationship between climate change and arts as well as in social psychology and particularly in the role of institutions, habits and experiences in shaping decision-making. Maria completed her PhD at the Division of Resource Economics at HU Berlin. She holds a MSc in Integrated Natural Resource Management from HU Berlin and a MSc in Crop Science from Agricultural University of Athens. She has worked as lecturer at HU Berlin, Council of International Educational Exchange, Hochschule für Technik und Wirtschaft Berlin and Leuphana University of Lüneburg. Her fields of expertise include socio-economics of the transition to low-carbon economies, energy and bioeconomy policy, land-use conflicts, and qualitative research methods.