



**Gisela Böhm**

### **The emotional side of risk – a dual process model of environmental behaviour**

The psychological literature increasingly acknowledges the importance of emotions in shaping judgments and behaviours. This talk argues that emotions are not homogeneous; different emotions exert their influence in different ways. The main assumption is that the type of emotion that a person experiences indicates how the person evaluates a risky situation and which behavioural impulses the person is likely to experience. For example, hope and fear both indicate that a person focuses on potential future consequences. Behavioural responses resulting from hope or fear include mitigation, adaptation, and escape. In contrast, outrage and guilt are based on moral evaluations. Behaviours following from outrage or guilt include punishment and compensation. I will present a model that explains emotions from people's underlying mental models and from a dual judgmental process operating on these mental models. The dual process contrasts consequence-focused with morality-focused evaluations that trigger different kinds of specific emotions and corresponding behavioural tendencies. I will present empirical evidence concerning the model, with a focus on studies on climate change. The results show that specific emotions and their underlying appraisals matter when explaining environmental behaviour, and that the question of whether emotions are rational or not is misguided.