

Newsletter update: Due to an issue with the mailing list, some of our newsletters may not have reached you.
Please [click here](#) to catch up on our latest newsletters from this year!

Selected research highlights

How insurance may limit growing inequality in flood impacts, if designed appropriately



Floods and other natural disasters can destroy livelihoods, especially for low-income households, who often have less means to protect themselves. Flood insurances have the potential to limit such inequality in flood impacts. However, Research led by [Max Tesselaar](#) and [Wouter Botzen](#) find that its effectiveness depends strongly on certain policy choices regarding the design of flood insurance markets. In private markets, there is a growing trend towards increasingly accurate risk-based insurance premiums, which then become unaffordable for low-income households located in floodplains, leaving the most vulnerable groups uninsured. In contrast, insurance systems that are designed to preserve solidarity through mandatory coverage and premium cross-subsidization are more effective at maintaining accessibility for all. Although such systems are criticized for not preventing issues caused by moral hazard, we conclude that prevented moral hazard in these systems does not outweigh the societal costs caused by high inequality in flood insurance accessibility.

> [Link to paper](#)

Where does urban agriculture emerge in European cities?

Community gardens and allotments provide city dwellers with many benefits, including fresh food, community cohesion, connection to nature, urban cooling, and support for physical and mental wellbeing. Despite growing interest in scaling up urban agriculture, little is known about its current extent or how it is distributed across cities. Research conducted by [Paris Pencharz](#), [Pierre Chopin](#), and [Peter Verburg](#) as part of the European



FoodCityBoost project explored which socio-economic and urban form characteristics are associated with the emergence of urban agriculture, and whether these patterns are consistent across European cities. The study found that urban agriculture tends to occur in greener, central neighbourhoods with lower property prices and more culturally diverse residents. However, these relationships varied between cities, implying that local context is essential and that additional social and political factors may also influence where urban agriculture develops.

> [Link to paper](#)

FEATURED RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Dissertations:

Philippe Evoy (31 August 2026): [Regulating the Global Commons: Institutional Complexity in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction](#) (Joint degree with the Université Laval)

Beibei Yang (23 September 2026): [China's Ecological Civilization: from a Domestic Environmental Policy Principle to an Emerging International Norm?](#)

Selected journal articles:

Aktas, A., & Poblete Cazenave, M. (2026). Reducing health and gender inequalities in India through clean cooking technologies: a scenario-based analysis. *Environmental Research: Health*, 4(3), 1-39. Article 035006. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1088/2752-5309/ae8324>

Brinkel, N., & **van Montfoort, F.** (2026). Can grid tariffs be fair and efficient? A comprehensive evaluation of tariff designs for smart electric vehicle integration. *Energy Economics*, 160, 1-20. Article 109407. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eneco.2026.109407>

Busker, T., Rodriguez Castro, D., Vorogushyn, S., Kwadijk, J., Zoccatelli, D., Oliveira, R. G., ... & Aerts, J. C. (2026). Comparing flood forecasting and early warning systems in northwestern Europe. *Natural Hazards and Earth System Sciences*, 26(3), 1457-1478. <https://doi.org/10.5194/nhess-26-1457-2026>

Farina, G., Robinson, P. J., Botzen, W. J., & Van Beukering, P. (2026). Pro-social versus pro-self motivations for green roof adoption: Evidence from a discrete choice experiment. *Ecological Economics*, 250, 1-12. Article 109146. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolecon.2026.109146>

Imbrechts, L., Azevedo, J. C., Dossche, R., Bürgi, M., & Verburg, P. H. (2026). Similar patterns, different processes: Persistence and change in path-dependent land systems. *Land Use Policy*, 169, 1-12. Article 108152. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landusepol.2026.108152>

Jeanroy, C. G., Smith, A. M., & Verburg, P. H. (2026). Perceptions of rewilding in European abandoned agricultural lands. *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 274, 1-12. Article 105715. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2026.105715>

Review identifies key knowledge gaps for drought research and practice



Ahead of the UN Conference on drought and land degradation, [Marthe Wens](#) led a synthesis study of recent drought research that identified key gaps in drought risk management and research. The review emphasizes drought as a systemic problem shaped by the interactions between water resources and human activities. It argues that effective drought

management therefore requires coordinated action across different sectors and levels of government. The study highlights the disproportionate impacts of drought on vulnerable groups, which makes the reduction of socio-economic inequalities an important precondition for limiting drought risks. It also identifies research gaps, i.a. linked to drought in urban areas, the assessment of economic and non-economic losses, cascading impacts, and the integration of diverse forms of knowledge into drought research.

> [Link to paper](#)

How does the European green transition create benefits or disadvantages for Indigenous People and local communities?

In recent years, the EU and its Member States have put in place various strategies, initiatives and policies to push forward the European energy transition. As part of this, they have facilitated technical and financial support for large-scale renewable energy projects and critical raw material extraction projects in and with partner countries. In a



report commissioned by and presented to the European Parliament, [Mathieu Blondeel](#), [Ina Lehmann](#), and [Mirja Schoderer](#) critically examined the challenges and opportunities of such cooperation mechanisms, focussing particularly on how they impact Indigenous Peoples and local communities in mid- and low-income countries. In four case studies – two on critical raw materials in Bolivia and South Africa, one on green hydrogen in Namibia, and another on the use of international carbon credits under the newly proposed 2040 EU climate target – they assess the socio-environmental, socio-economic and socio-political implications of these projects. The report highlights factors that limit equitable benefit sharing but also opportunities, formulating actionable policy recommendations for the EU.

> [Link to paper](#)

Education news

Launching the Nature-Based Pedagogy Research Cluster

A new ASI Research Cluster on [Nature-Based Pedagogy](#), coordinated by [Mario Torralba](#) and Karen Verduijn, was launched to advance research and education on how learning in and with nature can foster ecological awareness, well-being, and transformative capacities in higher education.

[Lesch, M., Schrieks, T., Koetse, M. J., & Botzen, W. J. W. \(2026\). Explaining stated preferences for nature-based solutions for climate adaptation: A systematic mapping review of empirical evidence. *Nature-Based Solutions*, 9, Article 100331. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nbsj.2026.100331>](#)

[Negacz, K., Widerberg, O., Petersson, M., Kok, M., & Pattberg, P. \(2026\). Using ideal type theories of change for assessing the contribution of cooperative initiatives to global biodiversity governance. *Earth System Governance*, 29. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esg.2026.100348>](#)

[Neidermeier, A. N., Billing, M., West, T. A. P., Thonicke, K., & Verburg, P. H. \(2026\). Simulating the effects of targeted fuel removal under alternate land use and climate pathways. *Ecological Modelling*, 521, 1-12. Article 111747. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolmodel.2026.111747>](#)

[Szedlacsek, E., Blondeel, M., & Pattberg, P. \(2026\). Mapping governance interactions among the Paris Agreement and SDG1 in Sub-Saharan African countries. *Earth System Governance*, 28, 100327. <https://doi-org.vu-nl.idm.oclc.org/10.1016/j.esg.2026.100327>](#)

[Thompson, V., Stoffels, R., de Vries, H., Lenderink, G., van Meijgaard, E., Kew, S., ... & Coumou, D. \(2026\). The role of subtle dynamical changes in the European extreme rainfall of July 2021. *Climate Dynamics*, 64\(5\), 223. <https://doi-org.vu-nl.idm.oclc.org/10.1007/s00382-026-08181-5>](#)

[Verkuil, L. A., Schulp, N., & Torralba, M. \(2026\). Nature's values, drivers and perceived influence on ecosystem services shape agroecological livestock farming in the Netherlands. *People and Nature*, 8\(7\), 2368-2382. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pan3.70355>](#)

[Villamayor-Tomas, S., Raniecka, P., & Dell'Angelo, J. \(2026\) Currents of Water Commons Research: A Review. *Water Alternatives*, 19\(2\), 228-252. <https://research.vu.nl/en/publications/1c085e7f-e043-40dd-956e-068bd5bcc650>](#)

[Ward, P. J., Buijs, S. L., Ciurean, R., Claassen, J. N., Daniell, J., De Polt, K., ... & Stolte, T. \(2026\). Reducing risk together: moving towards a more holistic approach to multi-hazard and multi-risk assessment and management. *Natural Hazards and Earth System Sciences*, 26\(3\), 1325-1345. <https://doi.org/10.5194/nhess-26-1325-2026>](#)

[Wens, M. L. K., Hagenlocher, M., Shyroka, A., Werner, M., Toreti, A., Alencar, P. H. L., ... Sabino-Simons, A.S., ... & Masih, I. \(2026\). Ten key insights and gaps to inform drought risk research, policy and practice. *Nature Water*, 4\(6\), 711-721. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s44221-026-00651-8>](#)

[Widerberg, O., Fast, C., Koloffon Rosas, M., & Pattberg, P. \(2026\). Governing synergies and trade-offs between the SDGs: The potential and limitations for multistakeholderism in the context of prioritization. *International Environmental Agreements: Politics, Law and Economics*, 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10784-026-09722-3>](#)

STAFF AND ORGANISATIONAL NEWS

Hello and goodbye

This year, IVM has welcomed several new staff members:

Prizes, awards and grants

[Peter Verburg](#) has been elected as an international member of the **U.S. National Academy of Sciences** in recognition of his outstanding contributions to human-environment sciences and research addressing climate change and biodiversity challenges.

[Judith Claassen](#) has been awarded the American Geophysical Union (AGU) Natural Hazards Section Award for Graduate Research for her PhD work on **Multi-Hazard Entanglement: Unraveling Historical and Stochastic Multi-Hazard Events**

[Kate Negacz](#) and [Marthe Wens](#) were granted a Horizon Europe grant to understand, map, monitor and predict soil salinity across scales, while accelerating the uptake of sustainable land management practices to mitigate and adapt to salinization, contributing decisively to the EU Soil Strategy 2030, with the ultimate ambition that all soil ecosystems in Europe are in healthy condition by 2050. In six demonstration sites across Europe, **SaliNova** will co-design and test sustainable and nature-based solutions. Evidence on effectiveness, trade-offs, and socio-economic benefits will feed into policy briefs, guidelines, and a Decision Support toolbox integrating hazard maps, crop suitability, and restoration options for farmers, advisors, and policy makers.

IVM in the spotlight

[Mathieu Blondeel](#) gave an interview on **the Belgian radio** on the oil 'deal' between the US and Venezuela.

[Alex Neidermeier](#) contribution to a **study** showing that climate change could increase Europe's wildfire-burned area by up to 192% by the end of the century received international media **coverage**.

[Dim Coumou](#) was quoted in a **New York Times article** on heatwaves in Europe, and his **study** on the potential of A.I. to improve weather models was featured.

The Rekenkamer conducted **an audit** of 26 projects to tackle water shortages based on a methodology designed by [Marthe Wens](#) and [Anne van Loon](#). They found an average project delay of 3 years, resulting in significantly higher costs and highlighting the potential for structural damage to many sectors.

[Marthe Wens](#) was interviewed for **France24** and the **NL Times** on Dutch water shortages, drought risk, and the implications for water management.

Previous events

IPBES Spatial Planning and Connectivity Assessment:

The second authors' meeting of the IPBES **Spatial Planning and Connectivity Assessment** took place this week in Monteverde, Costa Rica, bringing together experts from around the world to address feedback from the external review process and strengthen the assessment's relevance for policymakers and spatial planners, in a meeting organized by the Technical Support Unit hosted by IVM.

The SDGs beyond 2030: the role of multistakeholder partnerships

At a workshop facilitated by Bruna Bosi Moreira and Oscar Widerberg, around 40 participants from academia, international organizations, ministries, planning agencies, and civil society discussed the role of partnerships in addressing future global challenges, drawing lessons learnt from the implementation of the SDGs and SDG 17.

Kick-off Workshop Horizon Europe project CLOSER

The CLOSER project had its kick-off consortium meeting at the Planetarium, Amsterdam, on September 17th and 18th. It brings together 15 partners across climate science, risk analysis, social sciences, economics and AI to discover the drivers of climate disaster, in the past, in real-time, and in the future. The kick-off workshop laid

- The section Environmental Economics (EE) welcomed [Ayako Ebata](#) as Assistant Professor, [Elena Niehoff](#) and [Nicolas Javier Rodriguez](#) as PhD candidates.

- In the section Environmental Geography (EG) [Rhys Evans](#) as PhD candidate, [Christa Blokhuis](#), [Chelsea Kaandorp](#) and [Gerard Martínez Görbig](#) as Postdocs. As for Assistant Professors EG welcomed [Cecilia Zagaria](#) and [Pablo Negret Torres](#).

- The section Environmental Policy Analysis (EPA) welcomed [Paola Feziggnà](#) as PhD candidate, [Shivalika Madgulkar](#) as a new Junior Lecturer and [Hannah Mortimer](#) as Postdoc.

- Water and Climate Risk (WCR) welcomes new PhD candidates [Shreyas Iyer](#) and [Jean Gohin](#). And [Elinor Meredith](#) as Postdoc.

In the last months we said goodbye to Joshua Kiesel, Camille Venier-Cambron, Bernadetta van Heel, Daniel Muth, Rhoda Odonga, Hongmei Lu and Tom van der Horst

the foundations for strong multidisciplinary collaboration, devising plans on how to make the four years of research impactful for both science and policy-making.

Upcoming events

25 September, 13.00h, Green Office VU Amsterdam:

ASI-SaltyBEATS workshop. Topic: *From salt-tolerant plants to cyanotypes, explore your relationship with the landscape*

29 September, 15.45h, Auditorium VU Amsterdam:

PhD defence Kelley De Polt. Thesis title: *Hot Topics - Comparison and Interaction of Heatwave-related Societal Responses and Public Health Impacts*

7 October, 11.45h, Auditorium VU Amsterdam:

PhD defence Tamara Happé. Thesis title: *Deep Learning for Heatwaves: From Circulation to Impacts in a Changing Climate*

23 November, 09.45h, Auditorium VU Amsterdam:

PhD defence Alexandra Neidermeier. Thesis title: *Balancing Management and Risk in a New European Pyrogeography: Multi-Scale Approaches to Wildfire Mitigation, Ecosystem Function, and Land Use*

23 November, 15.45h, Auditorium VU Amsterdam:

PhD defence Xiaoran Li. Thesis title: *China's Uneven Climate Leadership - Domestic Policy and International Influence in the Post-Paris Era*

25 November, 09.00h, New University Building VU Amsterdam:

SENSE PhD Symposium. Topic: *Reimagining Sustainability: Connecting Systems, Challenges and Future Pathways*.

27 November, 13.45h, Aula VU Amsterdam:

PhD defence Sadhana Nirandjan. Thesis title: *Lifelines on the Edge: Understanding the Multiple Hazard Risk to Critical Infrastructure at the Global Scale*

10 December, 09.45h, Aula VU Amsterdam:

PhD defence Rex Steward. Thesis title: *No model is an island: Integrating land system modelling, participatory knowledge, and land-sea linkages in Curaçao*

16 December, 09.45h, Auditorium VU Amsterdam:

PhD defence Mengqi Ye. Thesis title: *A multilayer modelling framework for climate resilience of power grids*

Other news and announcements

Explore your relationship with the landscape!

The SaltyBEATS project and its partners are hosting two workshops from salt-tolerant plants to cyanotypes. On 25 September, ASI and the SaltyBEATS project will host a joint workshop: From salt-tolerant plants to cyanotypes, explore your relationship with the landscape on 25 September or with a field trip on Texel 16 September with SALTA NGO.

To help us tailor future newsletters to your needs, we would love to hear from you. Would you like to see some additional or alternative sections? What did you find most insightful this time, and what is on your mind that we could explore in upcoming issues? Reach us at m.c.schoderer@vu.nl and m.torralbaviorreta@vu.nl

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