

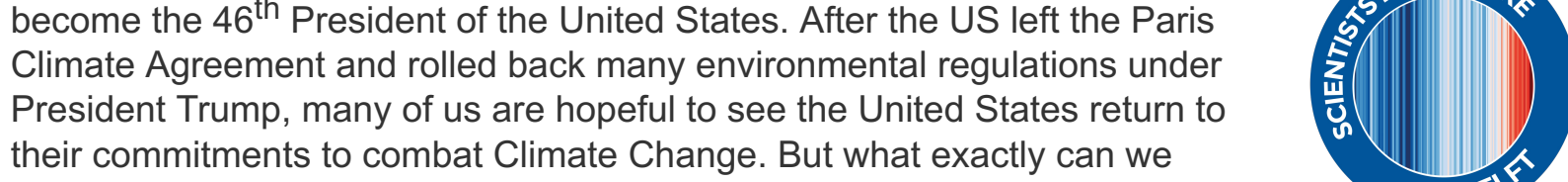


Dear {{voornaam}},

This is the Scientists4Future NL newsletter of November 2020, this month coordinated by S4F Team Delft. Please consider forwarding this newsletter to a friend or colleague. If this email has been forwarded to you and you'd like to join our mailing list, [click here](#). To unsubscribe, use the link at the bottom of this email.

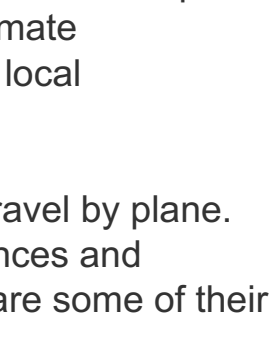
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Editorial by S4F Delft

After a heated election campaign, Joe Biden has defeated Donald Trump to become the 46th President of the United States. After the US left the Paris Climate Agreement and rolled back many environmental regulations under President Trump, many of us are hopeful to see the United States return to their commitments to combat Climate Change. But what exactly can we expect from a Biden presidency? We have summarized the opinions of several climate experts in this newsletter.



But while the results of the US elections are definitely something to be hopeful about, we should not forget that there is still much left to be done in Europe as well. The Dutch elections in 2021 are an important event that every Dutch citizen should mark in their agenda, as they are our best way to influence what measures the country takes to reduce its environmental impact. But even if you are not a Dutch citizen, you can let your voice be heard at a Climate Demonstration right before the elections. If you are interested, you can join the local organization to bring in your own ideas!

Finally, many of us have probably asked themselves when it is appropriate to travel by plane. Especially researchers tend to amass quite a lot of miles when visiting conferences and research summits. "De Jonge Akademie" had a look at the data and we will share some of their insights.

If Corona is getting you down and you are looking for some distraction, make sure you also check out our book recommendations!

Stay healthy, stay safe and enjoy the newsletter!
- S4F Delft -

KlimaatHelpdesk launch

Klimaat Helpdesk

Antwoorden van wetenschappers op al je vragen over klimaatverandering

klimaathelpdesk.org

Almost one month ago, on 30-10-20, the new KlimaatHelpdesk officially launched!

In the beginning of this year we saw a need for scientific knowledge about climate change to be more accessible to a broader audience, especially to young pupils and students, and their teachers. Quickly the idea emerged to start a platform where people can ask questions about climate change and have them answered by

scientists.

Since our launch a lot of questions have been coming in and there are already over 80 experts who have been writing or reviewing the answers. To cover a wide range of topics and perspectives, the Q&As come from different sciences: geography, physics, economy, sociology, psychology, biology, etc.

We hope that in the near future the KlimaatHelpdesk will be the go-to for everyone who has a question about climate change and is interested in fact-based answers. Our mission is to inform with proven, scientific knowledge and to raise awareness about what's going on. Only with facts we can have a useful discussion about climate and climate change.

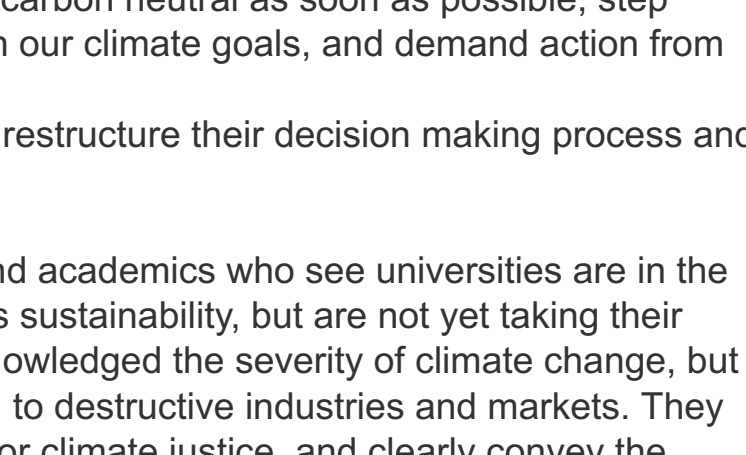
You can help us:

- First of course, we invite you to take a look the Q&As that have already been published on the [website](#).
- Do you have a question that has not been answered yet? Submit it through the website!
- If you have any contacts with (high school) teachers or students, please inform them about the website.
- If you have an expertise in climate change, and you would like to answer incoming questions, please introduce yourself and send an email to info@klimaathelpdesk.org

And, last but not least: we're active on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and we will soon start sending out a (monthly) newsletter, you can already [subscribe](#) to. Please follow, like, retweet and share so we can reach more people and spread the knowledge

The next big climate march

In the summer of 2019, [Scientists4Future NL](#) was founded, and as our first formal act we drafted a [consensus statement](#) to support the young people that organised the climate strike in september of that year. We expressed our deep worries about the climate crisis, and concluded that based on the best available science, the concerns of the climate strikers were justified. Over 2000 scientists signed the statement.



Currently, a [broad coalition](#) of Dutch organisations ranging from Pax Christi, FNV and Grootouders voor het Klimaat to climate activist like Extinction Rebellion and Code Rood is organising the next big climate march, scheduled for March 14 2021. The project is still in the start-up phase, and not yet formally announced. However, they are actively trying to add more organisations to the coalition. A presentation given at the first meeting with an overview of the plans can be found [here](#); the aims of the manifestation can be found in [slide 14](#)

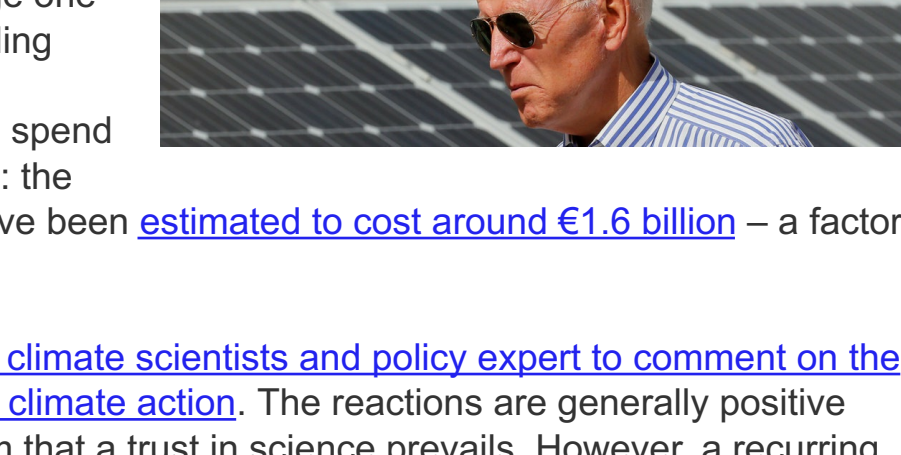
This will without doubt be one of the major events related to the climate and ecological crisis in 2021. Due to COVID-19 measures that do not allow gatherings of 10s of thousands of people, the manifestation will be distributed over all the major cities in the country, currently already more than 20 and growing. The organisation warmly invites us as scientists to join the coalition and contribute to a strong signal about the urgency of the situation we are in. The best way to get involved is by joining the [Discord server](#) of the coalition, where all activity is coordinated, or by attending one of the Zoom meetings of the organisers:

- Monday Nov 30, 19:00-21:00: Inclusiviteit en intersectionaliteit ([Zoom link](#))
- Monday Dec 14, 19:00-21:00: Missie en duurzaamheid ([Zoom link](#))

If there is *one* thing you would like to do for climate and ecology in 2021, help to make this manifestation a big success!

Kick-off University Rebellion

Last Thursday, November 19th, University Rebellion has kicked off by presenting their manifesto to the Executive Boards of 12 universities in the Netherlands. UR is a branch of Extinction Rebellion, with the same values and demands, but then applied to the position of universities:

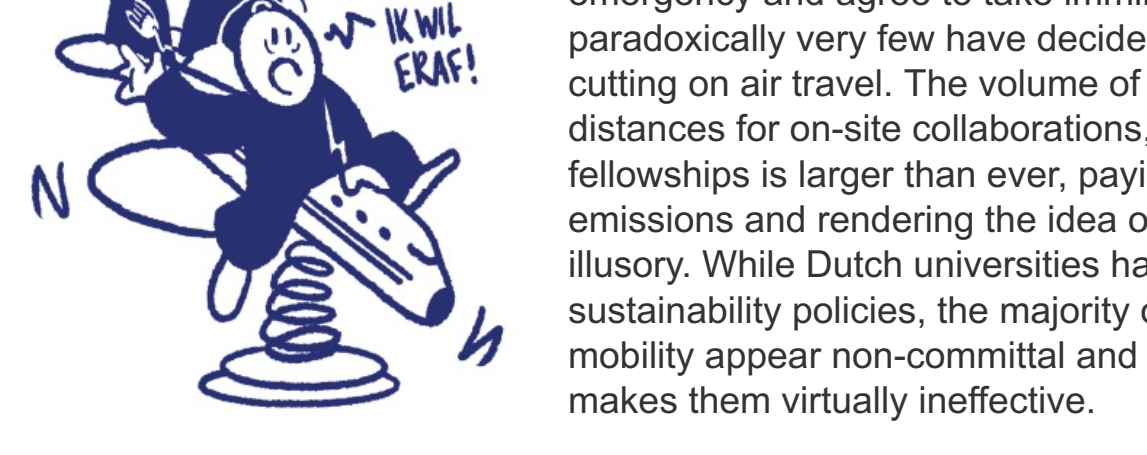


1. **Tell the Truth:** Universities should publicly recognize the crisis we are facing and be active in educating its students and the public on this topic.
2. **Act Now:** Universities should strive to become carbon neutral as soon as possible, step away from research that is no longer in line with our climate goals, and demand action from national governments.
3. **The Community Decides:** Universities should restructure their decision making process and make them more democratic.

University Rebellion is a group of students, staff and academics who see universities are in the perfect position to accelerate the transition towards sustainability, but are not yet taking their responsibility. Many universities have already acknowledged the severity of climate change, but not yet its urgency, and are still strongly connected to destructive industries and markets. They could serve as a role-model to society in the fight for climate justice, and clearly convey the urgency of the situation to citizens and governments.

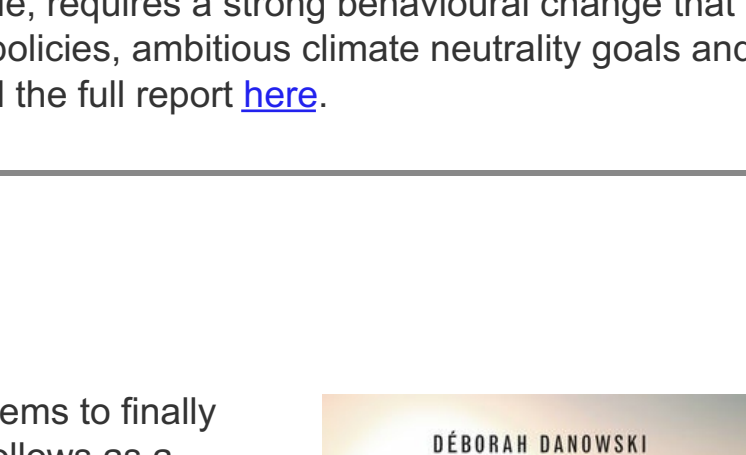
You are invited to read the manifesto on our [website](#), where the ideas are further outlined, and the demands made more specific. The UR movement will use creative, non-violent direct actions to address the university policies that are still contributing to the climate crisis and will hold the universities accountable. While awaiting the reaction of universities to this initial action, the goal will be to rapidly grow by involving more and more students, staff and scientists at every university in the Netherlands.

- University Rebellion -



What does Biden's win mean for international climate policy?

While current US president Donald Trump is still licking his wounds and fighting against his loss, president-elect Joe Biden is slowly [assembling his cabinet picks around him](#) and preparing for the start of his presidential term in January 2021. Biden made tackling climate change one of the main pillars in his campaign; including pledging to re-join the Paris Agreement, achieve net-zero emissions by 2050, and spend \$2 trillion on clean energy. In comparison: the proposals in the Dutch climate accord have been [estimated to cost around €1.6 billion](#) – a factor 1000 difference.



[Carbonbrief](#) has asked a diverse array of climate scientists and policy expert to comment on the [meaning of Biden's win for \(inter\)national climate action](#). The reactions are generally positive and hopeful, with a predominant optimism that a trust in science prevails. However, a recurring message is that much of the success of Biden's plans will depend on the final makeup of the US Senate. A Republican majority is likely and might result in a slowdown of the implementation of crucial climate policy.

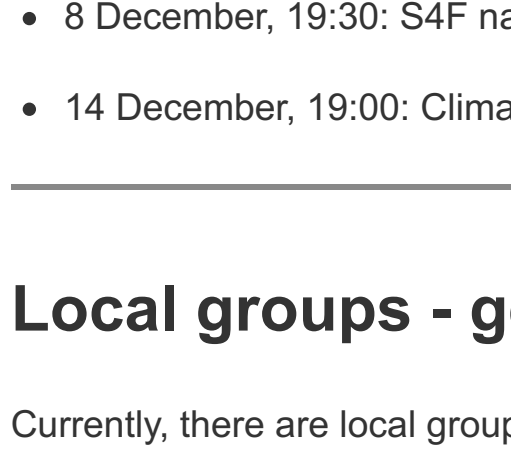
Next to this, it will cost a lot of time and efforts to reverse some of the disastrous decisions the Trump administrations has made. [The Washington post showed](#) that Donald Trump has cut or cancelled more than 125 policies aimed at environmental safeguarding, with 40 rollbacks still on the way. Next to this, Trump [installed a former coal lobbyist as director of the Environmental Protection Agency](#), EPA, and [recently appointed two climate deniers in top positions at NOAA](#) (an institute similar to the KNMI in the Netherlands).

On a more positive note, last Monday Joe Biden has [appointed John Kerry as the first ever US special climate envoy](#), a full-time function in the new administration. Kerry is seen as a political heavyweight, as former Democratic presidential nominee and US secretary of state under president Obama, where he helped craft the Paris climate agreement. The appointment shows that Biden is treating climate change as a true crisis, as the role will include a seat on the national security council. Among climate activists, Kerry is seen as a moderate, and this could actually be tactical in order to gain trust with a Republican Senate majority. However, he also recently made clear that [he views the Paris agreement as 'not enough'](#).

It can only be concluded that the Biden victory was necessary in order to stay close to a 1.5 degree warming goal, either through direct US climate policy, or because of the global influence of a US administration. In a second term, the 'the orange menace' (John Kerry's words) could have been very successful in the further rollback of environmental protection and climate change policy implemented in the last decennia. Let's hope that when the US election dust has settled, bold climate action will be the clear winner standing up from the rubble!

Climate expert Jan Paul van Soest wrote a similar but more elaborate analysis of Biden/Harris climate policy on the website [EnergiePodium \(in Dutch\)](#).

Flying in academia

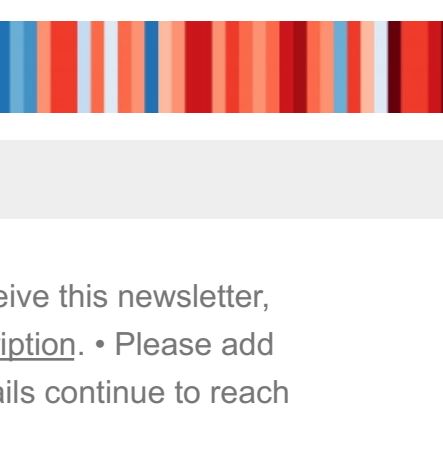


An increasing number of scientists acknowledge the climate emergency and agree to take imminent action, but paradoxically very few have decided to do so by dramatically cutting on air travel. The volume of academics flying long distances for on-site collaborations, conferences and fellowships is larger than ever, paying its toll on carbon emissions and rendering the idea of sustainable science illusory. While Dutch universities have made progress in sustainability policies, the majority of measures related to mobility appear non-committal and very fragmented, which makes them virtually ineffective.

In the recent "Flying high but flying less" report (Hoogvliegers vliegen minder), The Young Academy gives a comprehensive overview of the carbon emission reduction policies adopted by universities across the Netherlands, with a strong focus on those policies related to air travel and the common barriers that prompts them to fail. Important setbacks include an overall reluctance among academics to use means of transportation other than airplane and the perception of conventional conferences and events as critical means for achieving academic success. Curbing this mindset, as the authors argue, requires a strong behavioural change that can only be initiated with rigid university air travel policies, ambitious climate neutrality goals and a worldwide united front on the affair. You can read the full report [here](#).

Recommended reading

In times of global warming, the end of the world seems to finally really be nigh, which induces a panic that almost follows as a logical conclusion from the scenarios of the IPCC. But as monolithic as the event of world-ending seems, the contemporary apocalyptic mood has inspired a large multitude of different philosophical and activist responses, as philosopher Déborah Danowski and anthropologist Eduardo Viveiros de Castro show in their book *The Ends of the World*.



The authors provide a dense overview of how the impending 'end' is dealt with in academia, ranging from the nihilistic (what does it matter if everything will wither away at some point anyway) to the techno-optimistic (we will survive the end of earth as minds uploaded to the cloud), which puts some of the gut-reactions of horror to climate change in a larger socio-cultural perspective. Why do we worry about the future in the exact way we do? Are other ways of fearing, hoping, acting possible?

Especially original in *The Ends of the World* are the chapters in which one recognizes the anthropological influence of Viveiros de Castro, who has researched the Amerindian cultures lived through the Amazon. These societies can inform the West, but arguably, about what it means to live through the end of the world, as they have already seen their worlds crumble in the wake of the 'discovery' of the Americas by the Old World. The aftermath of this catastrophic event called on the local, practical, and social and symbolic resources these cultures had to still make sense of their position in time and space. Industrialized countries are now facing a similar task, as their futures are slowly being smothered in the smokes of progress.

Although the book is challenging at times because of its lofty philosophical jargon, it also is an urgent, broad and thought-provoking exploration of the many ways in which the sensation of impending danger has been brought to thought.

Danowski, Déborah and Eduardo Viveiros de Castro. 2016. *The Ends of the World*. Translated by Rodrigo Nunes. Cambridge and Malden (MA): Polity Press.

Jason Hickel is an economic anthropologist at Goldsmiths University London. In *Less is More*, he blends economic arguments with anecdotes from far-away field sites to explain what degrowth is, why we need it, and how amazing the world could be if we had it. It is this last aspect that I find most valuable: Hickel sketches a picture of life lived in balance with the natural world and with each other, managing to be inspiring without being simplistic. Definitely recommended.

Hickel, Jason. 2020. *Less is More*. Penguin Random House, London.

Upcoming events

- 30 November, 19:00: Climate March Coalition meeting, [online](#)
- 8 December, 17:00: S4F Delft meeting, online, [contact us](#) for the details
- 8 December, 19:30: S4F national meeting, online, [contact us](#) for the details
- 14 December, 19:00: Climate March Coalition meeting, [online](#)

Local groups - get involved!

Currently, there are local groups active in **Amsterdam, Delft, Nijmegen** and **Utrecht**, and in **Deventer** and **Groningen**, groups are being formed. If you wish to get involved (or start your own local group) [contact us](#) and we'll get back to you shortly.

For a short introduction on joining, read our [welcome document](#).

Finally, check out our [website](#), or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) or [Twitter](#) where we will be sharing national and international news regarding the role of scientists in times of the climate crisis.

Local S4F-NL groups
Adapted from [original](#)

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