

Publication

Two souls are dwelling in my breast: Uncovering how individuals in their dual role as consumer-citizen perceive future energy policies

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The future of energy depends on present decision-making, and present decision-making depends on assumptions about future effects of energy policy. Individuals have two roles in this: In their citizen-role they have to consent to measures and support their implementation, in their consumer-role they have to adopt and implement measures in their behaviour. Our question is, how distinct these roles are with regard to how they inform individuals' perceptions and concerns related to energy policy options. By applying the "Futures Wheel" method we explored how individuals think future energy policy measures would impact their lives (consumer-perspective). By asking them whether and for what reasons in a voting they would say "yes" or "no" to them we inquired into their assessment of these measures from a citizens' perspective. Our results show that the two roles consumer and citizen trigger different patterns of thinking. Energy policy design and decision-making should consider both. Life quality and justice are important for individuals in both roles. The "Futures Wheel" method helps uncovering assumptions about the future individuals are unaware of and is a suitable method to explore anticipated effects of energy policy options. It might be useful to facilitate societal debate about the future of energy.

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