

# ESSAYS IN ENVIRONMENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL ECONOMICS

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## THE STANDARD ECONOMIC MODEL

- In a stylized standard economic model individuals maximize the utility they expect to gain from a decision alternative over time (Rabin 2002)

$$\max_{x_i^t \in X_i} \sum_{t=0}^{\infty} \delta^t \sum_{s_t \in S_t} p(s_t) U(x_i^t | s_t)$$

probability distribution  $\leftarrow$  utility function  
discount factor  $\leftarrow$  payoff  $\leftarrow$  state of the world

## DEVIATIONS FROM THE STANDARD ECONOMIC MODEL

- Deviations can occur in each step of the decision-making process due to nonstandard preferences, incorrect beliefs or systematic biases (DellaVigna 2009)
- Some sources of deviation, such as self-control problems, pro-social attitudes or emotions are particularly interesting for the study of pro-environmental behavior

## DISSERTATION AIM & RESEARCH METHODS

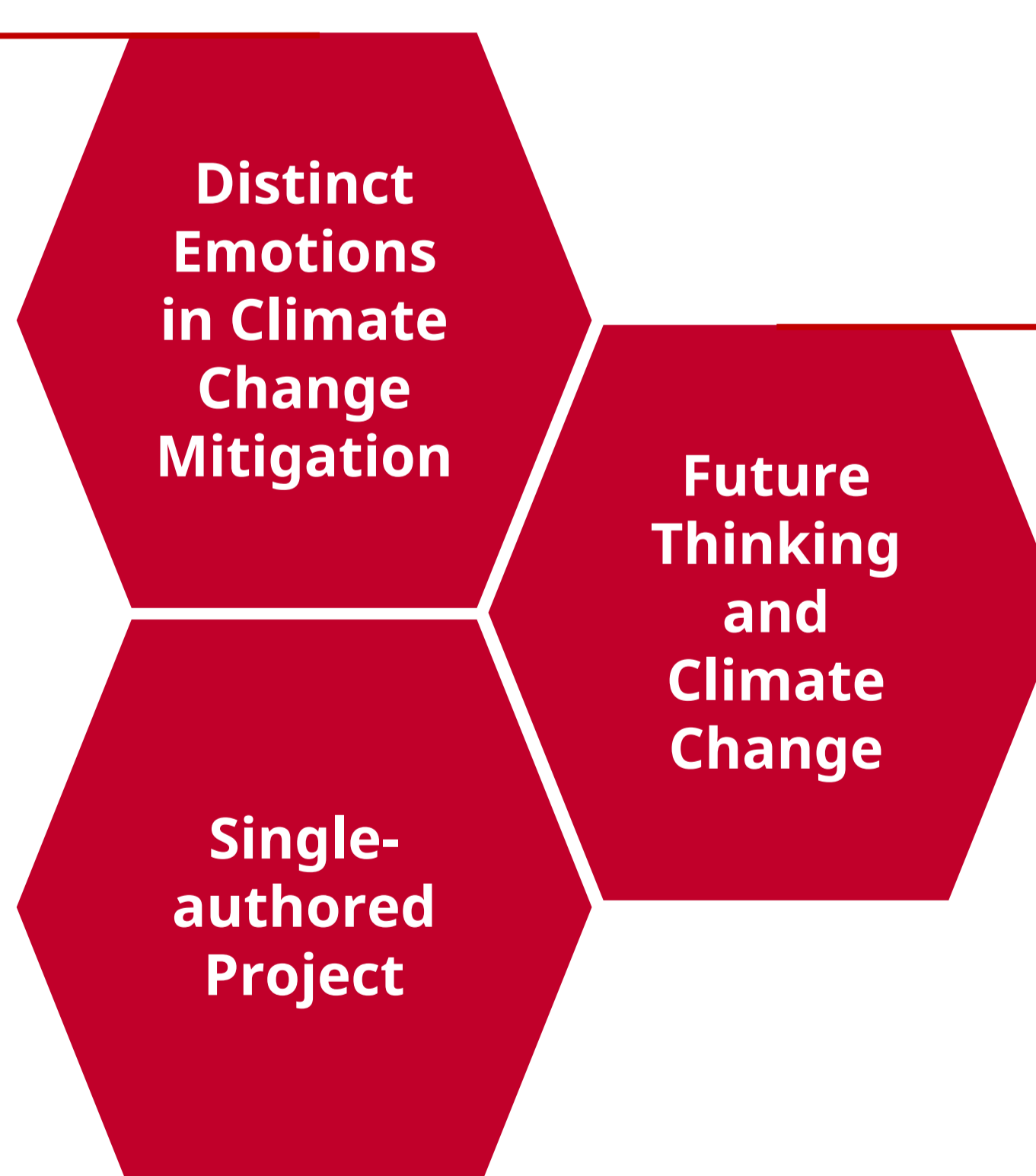
- I conduct various studies to investigate individual decision-making considering behavioral deviations from the standard economic model in the environmental domain
- I run **laboratory experiments** in the Mainz Behavioral and Experimental Laboratory (MABELLA) and apply **survey methods**
- Economic experiments aim at observing **causal effects on individual behavior in a controlled setting** and are used to test economic theories and inform policy makers
- Underlying assumption of (economic) experimentation:  
“[...] All of the characteristics of "real world" behavior that we consider to be of primitive importance – such as self-interest, motivation, interdependent tastes, risk aversion, subjective transactions cost (time is consumed), costly information (it takes time to acquire and process information), and so on – arise naturally, indeed inevitably, in experimental settings.”

(Smith 1976, p. 274)

## DISSERTATION PROJECTS (CURRENT SELECTION)

- joint with Prof. Dr. Myriam Bechtoldt, Carina Keller (both EBS Business School) & Prof. Dr. Daniel Schunk (JGU)
- investigates the role of hope, fear and guilt in individual environmental donation behavior

- single-authored
- aims to investigate behavioral dynamics in the environmental domain



- joint with Dr. Katharina Hartinger & Maria Krempf (both JGU)
- investigates if and how future thinking relates to pro-environmental behavior

## REFERENCES

- DellaVigna, S. (2009). Psychology and economics: Evidence from the field. *Journal of Economic Literature*, 47(2), 315-372.
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- Smith, V. L. (1976). Experimental economics: Induced value theory. *The American Economic Review*, 66(2), 274-279.

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