

but at the moment people experience this the whole time. There is no lack of understanding in this regard...

Expert 2 at federal environmental agency

Here, another participant stated:

... science has been generating data for 110 years [for this location] that we can use and that is robust. There is no way that one can say, I don't see it, it doesn't exist. People who go through life like this are in fact preventing any chance for a future worth living⁹. Of course, we are all feeling this already in the form of heavy rain, melting glaciers, increasing snowfall...

Member of Bavarian State Ministry (Freie Wähler)

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter has shown that initially, most experts interviewed voiced that climate action needed to be an inclusive project involving the whole of society. Yet political figures were particularly responsible since they actually held the most influence over societal outcomes. There was thus already an implicit assumption that responsibility had to be contemplated in accordance with efficacy in many of these discourses. Acting responsibly as an individual with respect to climate change was therefore repeatedly described in political terms. The experts were generally weary of corporations, probably due to the recent *Dieseltgate* scandal in Germany's automotive industry. Further, it emerged from the interviews that there is widespread denial present in German society. Knowledge concepts varied, with some interviewees basing their judgements on others' alleged information deficits whilst others conceived of people acting according to what held the most social value. Non-cognitive aspects that regularly emerged out of the way people habitually behaved and interacted were also mentioned here.

Although different (financial) circumstances, the profound influence of respective socialisation and, in one case, people employing diverging conceptions of, for example, responsibility were mentioned, overall the fundamental societal differences in the reception of climate messages were not recognised by these experts. In general, the public was here treated as a quite unified entity.

9 ... *vergehen sich an der Zukunft* in German original statement.

