

Choice architecture; how even rational scientists' choices are influenced by it

Sarah B. M. Kraak and Dorothy J. Dankel

One of the pillars of the discipline behavioural economics (BE) is Nobel laureate Kahneman's distinction of thinking fast ('System 1') and slow ('System 2'): System 1 consists of processes that are intuitive, automatic, experience-based, and relatively unconscious; System 2 is reflective, controlled, deliberative, and analytical. Many phenomena in human behaviour arise from the fact that people more often use System 1 thinking for decision-making. BE has found through experiments that human choices can be directly influenced by the 'choice architecture', i.e. the manner in which options are presented to people. For example, this can be done by setting defaults, framing, or adding decoy options in order to 'nudge' decisions to a desired outcome. Furthermore, BE has identified the false consensus effect, according to which people believe that a large proportion of the population has the same views as they do. For fisheries scientists this could be an issue when phrasing the advice, especially when they are not aware of these effects: they might, unintended, influence the managers' choices by the way the advice is presented. On the other hand, they may decide to use these effects deliberately to influence, or nudge, managers' choices. In this presentation we aim to make our peers aware of some of these effects through some real-time experiments. It is most salient to demonstrate these effects by showing the individuals in the audience that they, being rational scientists, are themselves prone to these effects. Therefore, the audience is subjected to experiments while they are unaware of it, some on fisheries advice issues, other experiments being more playful. The results are presented within the presentation and discussed within a science-policy framework.

**Keywords:** behavioural economics, choice architecture, decoy effect, default option, false consensus effect, fisheries advice, framing.

Contact author: Sarah B. M. Kraak, Thünen-Institut für Ostseefischerei, Alter Hafen Süd 2, 18069 Rostock, Germany. Phone: +49 381 8116 113. Email: sarah.kraak@thuenen.de