Acknowledgements

Being someone who tends to ‘overthink’ matters and plan ahead accordingly, I must admit I have been thinking about the content of this foreword for quite some time. One can never be too prepared for writing acknowledgements, especially since they are often the first, and for some perhaps only, pages to be read. Fortunately, as a researcher, there are few things in life that give more fulfilment than to be read and praised for one’s writings (or criticised for that matter, any form of reference will do). I therefore have every incentive to try and do justice to everyone involved.

I would firstly like to thank Eleftheria Vasileidou, who supervised me earlier during a thesis on the communication of climate engineering and motivated me to apply for a PhD position at IVM. Despite her too early passing, her kindness, passion for science and inquisitive mind remain an important source of inspiration. If it was not for Eleftheria, I probably would not have started this research in the first place. Starting to write a dissertation, however, is quite a different thing from actually finishing it. This would not have been possible without a number of people who I should mention as well.

I am predominantly indebted to the OPERAs project through which this research has been funded and my supervisors, Astrid and Peter, who have given me the opportunity to pursue this research at the VU and have always provided me with timely feedback. Balancing my own research interests with a commitment to the OPERAs project was not always easy and at times gave rise to much debate about the ‘how, why, and what’ of this thesis. Looking back, I have learnt a lot from these discussions. I am therefore very thankful to both Peter and Astrid for sharpening my thoughts and helping me to bring this thesis to a successful end.

Although it so often seems that writing a dissertation is a lonely endeavor, I have had the pleasure of working together with a number of co-authors and colleagues, who have contributed in one way or another to one of the chapters. Thank you Maya Todorova, Frans Sijtsma, Michiel Daams, and Hans Farjon. Boris and Koen, you have been of great help during fieldwork for the Scottish case study, but other chapters in this thesis too have benefited from discussions we have had throughout these years. Thank you for your input. I would also like to thank colleagues from the OPERAs
project with whom I have had the pleasure to discuss my research on several occasions. A special thanks goes to Katja, who has provided great company during conferences and project meetings, but also helped to order my thoughts. Perhaps we will now finally find the time to operationalise the many ideas for collaboration we have discussed throughout these years.

I applied for the position as a PhD candidate after having spent several years living as a nomad. As such, my parents were quite happy that a contract for four years probably meant that I was finally settling down. It took me another four to truly settle for a place to stay for the longterm. Mom, dad, you must have helped me move in and between cities at least a dozen times. Mom, thank you for always reminding me there is more to life than work and research (namely food) and that it is OK to take it easy sometimes. Dad, as a true autodidact who manages to combine a surprisingly wide range of hobbies, you have always been a good role-model.

Never could I have imagined that working at the Institute for Environmental Studies would be so turbulent as it has been. I have witnessed the rise and fall of the IVM PhD council, the incredibly brief intermezzo of a potential IVM christmas band, the episodic success of the IVM football team, the silent death of the IVM philosophy of science sessions and a painful divorce from our beloved coffee corner. Despite all these traumatic events, I would like to thank everyone at IVM and EG for providing so many welcome distractions over the past few years. Avoiding the risk of forgetting someone I will not mention you all by name, but if you read these acknowledgements this most likely means you can list yourself here! A special note of thanks goes out to my former officemates. Paul, thanks to you I never forgot my laptop at home. I seriously think I would have at some point, had you not wished for it. Cecilia and Bianka thank you for providing a healthy mixture of concentration, support, chats, coffee and cookies/chocolate. Koen, thanks to you our office has always had a lively atmosphere.

In a slightly more serious tone: a lot did happen during my time at IVM. All that I need to mention here is a thank you to Corry and Marjolijn, who have always been of great help despite having to support many PhD candidates. I would also like to thank Josephine, Rayvon and Suzan and other former members of the IVM support staff. There is a lot to find out when starting somewhere as a recently graduated student. The friendly and open atmosphere that you all created made this transition very smooth, which makes that I have particularly fond memories of this time.

Doing research for a PhD becomes so much part of you that it can be difficult to let go and think of other things. Over the years many people have had to endure my moments of stress and somewhat annoyed reactions when asked how my research was going. Thanks to all friends and (extended) family-members who have helped me to blow off steam and reminded me that there is life outside the walls of the university. To my family in Surinam: thank you for giving me another place to call home, where I know I can always turn to when in need for an agreeable climate and a decent
meal. The same goes for the Sanwiradis in the Netherlands and the Grytlis and Husbys (minus the agreeable climate). Elles, Brita and Vera, seeing you girls always make me proud and happy. Our 'Koorenhuis-days' may be over, but I am very thankful for getting to share so many other great things with you! Team Brabant, thank you for all our adventures. Now that this adventure is over I can seriously start planning ours. Thank you Elco and Eleonore for the gezelligheid in Leiden, Oxford, The Hague and (soon hopefully somewhere around) Amsterdam. Leonie, as you may have noticed I copy your moves, although with some delay, so thank you for paving the road. Q, both Norway and Amsterdam have seen dark times these past few years, having to miss our sense of humor. I am happy you are back (happy enough for both of us even if you are not by the way) and hope I can provide moral support while you finish your thesis. Miek, dancing and cooking with you has always been a good recipe for relaxation. Thanks also to the other Sorghvlieters and the other gang from The Hague for, despite my many attempts, never letting me fully escape my 'Haagse' roots. Thank you 'luitjes' (by which I am referring to the group of expats in Amsterdam I was warmly welcomed by despite having these Haagse roots) for exposing me to a wide range of opinions, traditions, and flavours.

Just when you think the hardest part is over, a moment follows where you realise there are actually still some things to be arranged. I am very thankful to my two paranimphs for making these last bits a lot easier and more enjoyable. Christine, living and working together, we have shared a lot of good and bad moments during the past five years. I could not have wished for a better IVM twin and cannot wait until we play the 'you never dare game' again (thank you for allowing me to bend the rules). Thank you for being a great colleague and roommate, and an even better friend. Marijtje, our friendship has never needed many words. For someone who is not always very good at expressing herself this is a particularly welcome trait, but it also means things are (maybe too) often left unsaid. Thank you for all the (implicit) moments we have shared. They mean a lot to me.

Trond, our journey together started about the same time as did this thesis. Although getting to know you came with a certain amount of distraction, you soon became an immense support by giving advice about the perils of doing a PhD, sharing knowledge about R or economics, listening to my never-ending complaints, and providing a great place to come home to (despite your love for nuon-coloured shorts). If there is anyone I should thank for helping me through the different stages of writing a dissertation it is you. Thank you for helping me to keep my feet on the ground and giving me so much to look forward to.