



Ecojesuit towards COP28: Committing to a South-North climate justice advocacy

The climate crisis can no longer be denied. Its most severe effects are felt in the Global South where extreme rainfall events cause erosion and flooding, while sea level rise and coral bleaching affect archipelagos in Asia and the large ocean states. Small-scale producers are unable to adapt their agriculture and fisheries, exacerbating food and water vulnerabilities of communities in the margins. The latest report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) warns that “there is a rapidly closing window of opportunity to secure a livable and sustainable future for all” (IPCC Synthesis Report Summary for Policymakers 2023, p.24). The global temperature increase, caused by human carbon contributions (we are now at 419.94 ppm), will push temperatures beyond the 1.5°C tipping point (World Meteorological Organization El Niño update, July 2023).

From 30 November to 12 December, over 140 Heads of States and 70,000 delegates are expected to gather for the 28th Conference of the Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) at Expo City in Dubai, UAE. This is a critical turning point with the conclusion of the “Global Stocktake” that comprehensively assess countries’ progress on their climate commitments. The recently released Global Stocktake Synthesis Report affirms that the world is completely off track in meeting the goals of the 2015 Paris Agreement, with current adaptation and mitigation efforts grossly underfunded.

With all its limitations, the UNFCCC COP is still an important global body where the Global South can confront the Global North for its inaction. UN Secretary-General António Guterres stated that “the era of global warming has ended; the era of global boiling has arrived. Leaders particularly G20 countries responsible for 80% of global emissions – must step up for climate action and climate justice.”

Pope Francis in his latest apostolic exhortation, *Laudate Deum* (LD) calls for those joining COP28 to be “strategists capable of considering the common good and the future of their children, more than the short-term interests of certain countries or businesses” (LD 60).

The Holy Father, who will attend COP28 in Dubai in December, reminds all people of faith of our shared responsibility to care for creation. “I ask everyone to accompany this pilgrimage of reconciliation with the world that is our home and to help make it more beautiful, because that commitment has to do with our personal dignity and highest values” (LD 69).

Ecojesuit as the Global Ignatian Advocacy Network on Ecology heeds this call through our shared mission on social and ecological justice. We uphold tough hope and deepened faith as valid forms of participation in global spaces. It is through faith that our commitment is strengthened in working towards an integral ecology way of living while standing alongside the most vulnerable.

We join the call of Laudate Deum for COP28 to be a “a historic event that honors and ennobles us as human beings” (LD 59) through the following action points:

1. Commit to **developing the Fossil Fuel Non-proliferation Treaty**, slashing emissions through a just fossil fuel phaseout, and holding top polluters accountable.;
2. Transform financial systems by **establishing equitable financial flows of the Loss and Damage fund** for climate vulnerable communities;
3. **Implement climate action on agriculture and food security** (Sharm el-Sheikh joint work on implementation of climate action on agriculture and food security or SJWA) that upholds the role of agroecology and culture-based solutions in addressing food and water vulnerabilities;
4. **Deliver USD 100 billion of public and private climate finance annually** by developed countries in support of the Global South, and bridge gaps to meet the goal of USD 4.3 trillion by 2030 (OECD & Climate Policy Initiative, 2022); and
5. Commit to **course-correcting adaptation and mitigation deficiencies** to keep the goals of the 2015 Paris Agreement alive.

In our shared mission, we seek a coherent South-North climate justice advocacy by:

1. Building collaboration on agroecology (food and water justice) by drawing together actions with youth, ecclesial networks, civil society groups, and climate justice advocates;
2. Promoting the contributions of local and Indigenous Peoples as culture-based responses to the food and water vulnerability crisis;
3. Encouraging our institutions and partners to engage with the COP process at the local, regional, global levels to strengthen a faith-based advocacy;
4. Nurturing partnerships between social and education apostolates for greater connection with and service of local people and creation;
5. Accompanying our institutions especially in the Global North in deepening their commitment to advocate for better policies on just transition, divestment, and lifestyle changes.

We acknowledge the urgency to move beyond silos. Engaging civil society, businesses, and educational institutions is our challenge in a shared climate justice advocacy, leading to policy-level interventions in our own national contexts. Transforming systems to focus on inclusivity and equity is imperative.

We humbly recognize that we have a long way to go towards genuine ecological conversion, yet our shared actions and commitment call us to deeper accompaniment and collaboration. Our faith enables a sense of vision and hope for a more just world that is greatly needed.

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Signatories

CONFERENCE PRESIDENTS

Rafael Garrido SJ

Conferencia de Provinciales en América Latina y el Caribe

Brian Paulson SJ

Jesuit Conference of Canada and the United States

Dalibor Renić SJ

Jesuit Conference of European Provincials

José Minaku SJ

Jesuit Conference of Africa and Madagascar

Tony Moreno SJ

Jesuit Conference of Asia-Pacific

Jerome Stanislaus D'Souza SJ

Jesuit Conference of South Asia

SECRETARIATS

P M Joseph Christie SJ

Chairperson
International Association of Jesuit Universities

Xavier Jeyaraj SJ

Secretary
Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat

José Mesa SJ

Secretary
Secretariat for Education (Secondary & Pre-secondary)

PROVINCIALS, SUPERIORS, AND SOCII

Enric Puiggròs Llavínés SJ

Provincial
Spanish Jesuit Province

Jacques Haers

Eco-delegate
Spanish Jesuit Province

Karl Kiser SJ

Provincial
USA Midwest Province

Quyen Vu SJ

Provincial
Australian Jesuit Province

Thierry Dobbstein SJ

Provincial
French Speaking Province of Western Europe

Petr Přádka SJ

Provincial
Provinciae Bohemiae Societatis Jesu

Bernhard Bürgler SJ

Provincial
Central Europe Jesuit Province

SOCIAL APOSTOLATE

Carmen De Los Ríos Baertl

Delegada Social
Conferencia de Provinciales en América Latina y el Caribe

Filipe Martins SJ

Social Delegate
Director, Jesuit European Social Center
Jesuit Conference of European Provincials

Julie Edwards

Social Delegate
CEO, Australian Jesuit Social Service
Jesuit Conference of Asia-Pacific

Jérôme Gué SJ

Social Apostolate Delegate
French Speaking Province of Western Europe

Robin Schweiger SJ

Social Delegate
Slovenian Province of the Society of Jesus

Chris Kellerman SJ

Social Delegate
Jesuit Conference of Canada and the
United States

Stanko Perica SJ

Social Delegate
Croatian Province of the Society of Jesus

IGNATIAN NETWORKS, INSTITUTIONS, AND COMMUNITIES

Martha Lucía Márquez Restrepo

Directora General
Centro de Investigación y Educación Popular
(CINEP/PPP)

Michael Schöpf SJ

International Director
Jesuit Refugee Service International

John Kerketta SJ

Director
Udayani Social Action Forum (USAF)

José Francisco Yuraszeck SJ

Capellán General
Hogar de Cristo – Chile

Abel García Ciria

Director
Centro Padre Lasca
Fundación Civil San Francisco Javier / Servicio
Jesuita Migrantes España

Kristína Königová

Statutory Representative, Director
Family Help Center

Freddy Quilo SJ

Director General
Fundación Acción Cultural Loyola – ACLO

Jean-Paul Dansou Assiongbon SJ

Director
Centres Sociaux Loyola (CCL-CEL) au Togo

Christopher Kerr

Executive Director
Ignatian Solidarity Network

Mathai K. O

Executive Director
St. Xaviers Nonformal Education Society-
Human Development and Resource
Center (SXNFES- HDRC)

Roberto Padilla SJ

President
Federación Latinoamericana de Colegios
de la Compañía de Jesús (FLACSI)

Robert Rodriguez SJ

Director General
Fundación Centro Gumilla – Venezuela

José María Segura Salvador

Director General
Radio ECCA, Fundación Canaria

Gladys Arrobo Gomez

Directora
Servicio Agropecuario para la
Investigación y Promoción Económica –
SAIPE

Leonardo Nardin SJ

Delegado de Educación
Red Argentino-Uruguaya de Colegios
Ignacianos (RAUCI)

Sylvia Miclat

Executive Director
Institute of Environmental Science for Social
Change

Kajiyama Yoshio SJ

Director
Jesuit Social Pastoral Center in Tokyo

María del Carmen de la Fuente Pérez

Directora, Migra Studium
Coordinadora, Servicio Jesuita a Migrantes –
España

Albertus Buddy Haryadi SJ

President
Istituto di Formazione Politica Pedro Arrupe –
CSS

Christoph Albrecht SJ

Promotor
Jesuit Refugee Service Switzerland

Agnes Rausch

President
Jesuit Refugee Service Luxembourg

Owen Chourappa

Director
Legal Cell for Human Rights (LCHR)
Prachodaya

George Peter SJ

Director
Loyola Vocational Institute

Teyol Machado SJ

Director
Center For Non-Formal Education (CNFE)

Carol Cooke-Eid

Monastic Community of Deir Mar Musa al-
Habashi

Ngonidzashe Edward SJ

Director
Jesuit Centre for Ecology and Development

Fernando Romero

Director Ejecutivo
Servicios Educativos El Agustino – SEA

Jean Fábio Santana SJ

Diretor Geral
Rede de Promoção para a Justiça
Socioambiental da Provincia do Brasil –
OLMA (Observatório Dom Luciano
Mendes de Almeida)

Razafinandraina Noël Marie Cyprien

Médard SJ
Directeur
Centre Arrupe Madagascar

FA. Sugiarta SJ

Director
KPTT Salatiga (Taman Tani Agriculture
course)

Paul Chitnis

Director
Jesuit Missions

Giovanni Notari

President
Istituto di Formazione Politica Pedro
Arrupe – CSS

Miodrag Živković

Country Director
Jesuit Refugee Service Serbia

Rémon Marcel

Director
CERAS

Katrin Morales

CEO
Jesuitenweltweit-MENSCHEN für
ANDERE

John Kennedy SJ

Director
Ashadeep Human Development Centre

José Maria Brito SJ

President of the Board
Fundação Gonçalo da Silveira

Manuel Martínez A.

Executive Secretary
(CVX-CLC)
Comunidad de Vida Cristiana
Christian Life Community
Communauté de Vie Chrétienne

Sue Martin

Australia Jesuit Mission

Gnana Selvin Raj SJ

Head - Labour Migration Unit
Indian Social Institute, Bangalore

Jenny Cafiso

Executive Director
Canadian Jesuits International

German Rosa SJ

Director
ERIC - Radio Progreso

EDUCATION

Ivan Koprek SJ

Professor
Faculty of Philosophy and Religious Studies,
University of Zagreb, Croatia

Juventino Gálvez

Vicerrector
Vicerrectoría de Investigación y Proyección
(VRIP), Universidad Rafael Landívar (URL)

Jesús Gerardo Díaz

Secretario General
Universidad Católica del Táchira

Inácio Neutzling

Director
Instituto Humanitas Unisinos – IHU

Luis Fernando Múnera Congote SJ

President
Pontificia Universidad Javeriana

Dra. María Adriana Jiménez Romero

Directora General
Tecnológico Universitario del Valle de Chalco
(TUVCH)

Enrico C. Eusebio SJ

President and Dean
Loyola School of Theology

Gilles Vandecaveye

General Manager
l'Institut Catholique d'Arts et Métiers (ICAM)

Philip Geister SJ

President
Kircher Network - Jesuit Higher Education
in Europe and Near East

Lic. Andrés Aguerre SJ

Rector
Universidad Católica de Córdoba

Fernando Ponce León SJ

Presidente
Asociación de Universidades Confiadas a
la Compañía de Jesús en América Latina

Mtro. Florentino Badial Hernández

Director General
Universidad Iberoamericana Tijuana

Juan Luis Hernández Avendaño

Rector
Universidad Iberoamericana Torreón

Eduardo Silva SJ

Rector
Universidad Alberto Hurtado

Sergio Eduardo Mariucci SJ

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UNISINOS

Mtro. Luis Alfonso González Valencia SJ

Universidad Iberoamericana León

Dr John Rose SJ

Director
Xavier Institute of Engineering, Mumbai

Arturo Ernesto Peraza Celis SJ

Rector
Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (UCAB)

Miquel Cortés SJ

Rector
Universidad Rafael Landívar

Roberto E. N. Rivera SJ

President
Ateneo de Naga University

Enrique Sanz Giménez-Rico SJ

Rector
Universidad Pontificia Comillas

Hilarion Rakotoarison SJ

Président de l'U-Magis Madagascar
Université Magis Madagascar

Yoshiaki Terumichi

President
Sophia University

Rafael Fernandez Hart SJ

President
Universidad Antonio Ruiz de Montoya

Eduardo M. Peñalver

President
Seattle University

Dr. Alexander Paul Zatyryka Pacheco SJ

Rector
Universidad Jesuita de Guadalajara
(ITESO)

GLOBAL IGNATIAN ADVOCACY NETWORKS (GIANS)

Guillermo Otano

Coordinator
GIAN Justice in Mining

Dani Villanueva SJ

Coordinator
GIAN Right to Education (Edujesuit)

Javier Cortegoso

Coordinator, GIAN Migration
Director, Red Jesuita con Migrantes LAC

Pedro Walpole SJ

Coordinator
GIAN Ecology (Ecojesuit)





OLMA

Observatório Nacional de Justiça Socioambiental
Luciano Mendes de Almeida



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