



Ecojesuit 2020 Annual Report

Ecojesuit started 2020 by building on the momentum gained from the [2019 Annual Meeting in India](#), and COP25 in Madrid, where the network organized a merged session in the [Capacity-Building Hub at COP25](#) with the Dedicated Grant Mechanism for Indigenous People and Local Communities.

A [Workbook on Effective Collaboration](#) was released in January that highlights the learnings of Ecojesuit, capturing insights from the past year, and putting forward suggestions. The network continued to support the message of the Amazon Synod through its final document, [Querida Amazonia](#).

In March, Ecojesuit engaged with [Loyola University Chicago's Climate Change Conference pre-event](#), a workshop for Jesuit-affiliated colleagues that focused on community-based participatory research. Case studies from [India](#), Nicaragua, and the [Philippines](#) were presented that highlighted the importance of working with communities, and approaches to locally-led sustainable development through agroecology, forest management, and natural resource conservation.

As lockdowns took effect in mid-March due to the global pandemic, and planned engagements were cancelled, Ecojesuit took the opportunity to re-strategize and try different approaches. From May to June, the network organized a series of [Conference-level dialogues for change](#). These were very helpful in understanding the local-regional contexts at a ["time of great uncertainty"](#) and in exploring collaborations for a better normal.

It was from these discussions that the six [Lead Actions](#) were identified as a basis for collaboration across the Conferences, and to connect stories, practices, and emerging issues. These Lead Actions are:

1. Connecting agriculture and entrepreneurship
2. Addressing social-economic-environmental integrity in the face of deepened poverty, business as usual, and environmental degradation
3. Advocating for climate action, human rights and the contribution of Indigenous Peoples
4. Tracking and explaining economic institutions emerging at the global level
5. Strengthening the Laudato Si' Universities Action Platform, other Action Platforms of [Laudato Si' Year](#), and Querida Amazonia
6. Promoting ecospirituality and the need for its awareness in basic education

The Lead Actions also provided a good basis for planning and communicating with the Conferences. The Jesuit Conference of South Asia (JCSA) is finalizing its Action Plan with its Conference Ecoteam, and the developing Apostolic Plan of the Jesuit Conference of Asia Pacific (JCAP) is taking some inspiration from the Lead Actions.

Ecojesuit has consistently reminded that ecology and economy belong to the same household, but have gone their separate ways. With this theme, Ecojesuit produced

a 20-minute video, [Urgent Action for the Oikos](#) and released the video on 22 April, Earth Day. With the coronavirus pandemic, more people are learning that their daily household is part of the world household. In finding the balance between economy and ecology (that share the same word for home, *oikos*) in our common home, six actions and attitudes were identified that must be sought at the local, national, and global levels:

1. Local, national, and global programs of food, health, and livelihood are capacitated so that there is less vulnerability while implementing the Sustainable Development Goals
2. Social amelioration programs and debt cancellation in a circular economy
3. Local to global restoration of soil, land, water, oceans, biodiversity, and ecological services
4. Buy locally with basic food security for all and prioritize sources of water security while gaining global accountability of corporate engagement
5. Act for local clean air and cut greenhouse gases globally
6. Collaboration, Collaboration, Collaboration

And to celebrate the fifth anniversary of Laudato Si', Ecojesuit continued the art challenge Sketching4Change in May with the theme [Drawing Laudato Si'](#) that drew interested sketchers to post photos of their artworks on social media. Daily prompts taken from Laudato Si' were shared through the Ecojesuit FB page during May to encourage participants to share how its message is present in their daily life, and to draw inspiration in caring for our Common Home.

Regular dialogues with the Conferences and collaborations formed

Regular meetings were beneficial in building collaborations with the Conferences, communities, other networks, and the Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat (SJES). One important collaborative initiative formed was the [Breathing Together Global Ignatian Prayer Vigil](#) on 25 September during the Season of Creation. Ecojesuit provided reflection videos from the Asia-Oceania context, and other significant inputs. The stories of those who gave reflections are currently being deepened through follow-up interviews.

In response to the global pandemic, Ecojesuit is also supporting the emerging regional efforts of the [Vatican COVID-19 Commission](#) in Asia. The network is also encouraging the ecological conversion and actions of young Jesuits from around the world by convening with them in monthly dialogues.

Other Collaborations

Content/resource person assistance

- [Webinar on climate change and food insecurity in Africa by the Jesuit Conference of Africa and Madagascar \(JCAM\)](#), building on Pope Francis' vision of an inclusive global economy
- Living the Laudato Si' Reflection Sessions of St. Aloysius College-Malta
- Laudato Si' Research Institute's efforts to provide open access books on integral ecology

- [Letter of JCAM and Xavier Network](#) addressed to UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson concerning COP26

Promotions

- The launch of the [Ecclesial Networks Alliance for Integral Ecology](#), and the [River above Asia Oceania Ecclesial Network \(RAOEN\)](#)
- [Integral ecology webinar series](#) of the social centers network of the Conferencia de Provinciales en América Latina y El Caribe (CPAL)
- [Amazonize Yourself campaign](#) led by the Confêrencia Nacional dos Bispos do Brasil
- [Eco-bites](#) monthly newsletter of the Jesuit European Social Centre
- [tUrn Climate Week](#) in Santa Clara University
- Youth dialogues of FLACSI (Federación Latinoamericana de Colegios de la Compañía de Jesús)
- [Ignatian Family Teach-in for Justice](#) of the Ignatian Solidarity Network
- Various [calls for justice for Fr. Stan Swamy SJ in India](#)
- [Advent Eco Calendar](#) of the Federation of Asian Bishops Conference
- Jesuit Refugee Service-Myanmar’s [Cross-Border Youth Exchange Forum](#)

Online events launched

A primary focus area of Ecojesuit is Lead Action 1: Connect Agriculture and Entrepreneurship. Together with Santa Clara University in California, and the Jesuit Conference of South Asia, the network launched the first session of a dialogue series to promote food and agriculture systems for the common good. [Agroecology for Food System Change: A dialogue series on life, land, and livelihood](#) began in 19 November, and shared North and Central American community experiences and actions. Globally renowned ecologist and environmental advocate, [Dr. Vandana Shiva](#), joined the panel and presented a global overview of agroecology as a response to the pandemic and food systems change. Future sessions will be organized in early 2021 focusing on other regions such as Africa, Latin America, and Asia.

Agroecology For Food System Change built on a previous webinar on agroecology on 4 July that also heard from Dr. Vandana Shiva. [Protecting Earth - Caring for our Common Home: Reviving Agroecology](#) was organized through the leadership of the Jesuit Conference of South Asia, and drew a thousand registrants.

The network also engaged with the Economy of Francesco global process by organizing a three-part [dialogue series with young people](#) in collaboration with Don Bosco Green Alliance and Living Laudato Si’ Philippines on 28 August, 11 and 25 September. Over 40 participants from around the world collaborated on a [document of recommendations and commitments](#) that was [formally presented](#) during the Economy of Francesco Marathon on 21 November.

Date	Event
4 July	Protecting Earth - Our Common Home: Reviving Agroecology

28 August, 11 and 25 September	Reimagining Development: Youth Perspectives for a Better World
19 November	Agroecology for Food System Change: A dialogue series on life, land, and livelihood
21 November	Economy of Francesco Marathon

Local stories shared, and materials developed

Ecojesuit continues to communicate stories online through its website and social media channels. From 34 stories shared in 2018, the output more than doubled to 81 in 2020.

Year	Stories shared
2018	34
2019	64
2020	81

Facebook and Twitter channels have a combined number of approximately 10,000 followers, an increase of around 1,000 from 2019. Further communications and promotions were done through collaboration with [Jesuit Networking](#).

Seeing the value in communicating the Lead Actions among their teams and networks, the Conferences contributed to the development and translations of the brochure, Ecojesuit Lead Actions to Build a Better Normal. It is available in [English](#), [Spanish](#), [French](#), and [Portuguese](#).

Challenges and Lessons

Governance structures and core membership

With the introduction of changes in the governance of Jesuit networks, clarifications were sought on the responsibilities and roles of Conferences. These are not new challenges but Ecojesuit is hopeful that greater clarity can come in the following months. Dialogues with SJES and other networks were very helpful. Governance structures are forming and roles are better understood.

Staff

The Ecojesuit Secretariat based in Manila was challenged to find qualified staff to fill important positions: a translator and writer in Spanish to help the network reach out and better engage with the Spanish-speaking world, and a Program and Network Development Officer to strengthen Ecojesuit's efforts in overall planning and collaboration-building. Travel restrictions and ongoing lockdowns further hinder the process.

2021 Outlook

Ecojesuit continues to seek and promote collaborations with Conferences, communities, and networks.

Cross-Conference Collaborations on the Lead Actions

A priority area is the development of Ecojesuit's online agriculture community platform and a beta website was developed, [Farm for Care](#). Additional efforts are needed to encourage more engagement, as well as the continuation of the Agroecology for Food System Change dialogue series. Conceptualization of future sessions and strategies will be done with the Conferences, partners at Santa Clara University, and other groups and practitioners.

Another important concern is the development of Lead Action Papers to further define and elaborate on each of the six Ecojesuit Lead Actions and to promote cross-Conference communications and reflections.

Closer collaboration with institutions and networks in each Conference is also sought such as the Jesuit Ecology Network Africa in JCAM and with the Higher Education for Social Transformation and the European Laudato Si' Alliance in the Conference of European Provincials (CEP).

COP26

COP26 is scheduled on 1 to 12 November 2021 in Glasgow, UK and preparations have started for meaningful engagement. The [open letter of JCAM and Xavier Network](#) addressed to Prime Minister Boris Johnson is an initial action taken. Ecojesuit will seek to continue the initial collaborations and planning that started at the beginning of 2020 before the global pandemic delayed COP26, such as participation in the [UNFCCC Regional Climate Weeks](#), and other events that contribute to the COP process.

Ecojesuit will also seek to support the engagement of ecclesial networks like RAOEN, REPAM, and REBAC to highlight and share realities on the ground. The network of youth leaders formed during the Economy of Francesco process is also keen to collaborate on COP26.

An [Ecojesuit website dedicated to COP26](#) was launched and invites discussion and the sharing of materials in building engagement.

Laudato Si' Action Platforms

The [Laudato Si' Action Platforms](#) released earlier this year serve as a seven-year plan towards implementing Laudato Si'. In collaboration with the International Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities and partners at the Jesuit Conference of Canada and the US, Ecojesuit is developing proposed guidelines and criteria for Laudato Si' Universities. This is a multi-month process that will culminate in a formal announcement by the Vatican on 24 May.

Global Events and Special Observances

The network will continue to engage with global events and special observances such as Laudato Si' Week on 16 to 24 May, the launch of the Ignatian Year on 20 May, and Season of Creation on 1 September to 4 October.

Young Jesuits in dialogue

Ecojesuit will continue to accompany young Jesuits and scholastics in ecological actions through regular dialogues that began in September 2020. This sharing of stories and ideas will be sustained to help deepen each other's work, and connect and inspire broader Jesuit action.

Ecojesuit Core Team Members

Conference Coordinators

- Charles Chilufya SJ – Jesuit Conference of Africa and Madagascar (JCAM)
- Jimena Castro – Conferencia de Provinciales en América Latina y El Caribe (CPAL)
- Siji Chacko SJ – Jesuit Conference of South Asia (JCSA)
- Cecilia Calvo – Jesuit Conference of Canada and the United States (JCCUS)
- Edmond Grace SJ – Conference of European Provincials (CEP)
- Gabriel Lamug-Nañawa SJ – Jesuit Conference of Asia Pacific (JCAP)

Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat (SJES) - at the General Curia in Rome

- Xavier Jeyaraj SJ – Secretary
- Valeria Méndez de Vigo – Network, Advocacy and Communication Coordinator

Global Coordinator

- Pedro Walpole SJ

Secretariat

- Sylvia Miclat
- Rowena Soriaga
- Raiza Javier
- Brex Arevalo