



EVS Department

# St. Xavier's Global Earth Summit-IV



International Conference on

## “Global Climate Change and Water Disasters”

March 27 - 29, 2015



DEPT. OF ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES, ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE, KOLKATA.

# GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE AND WATER DISASTERS



## St. Xavier's Global Earth Summit-IV



March 27 - 29, 2015

Water is synonymous with Life. It nurtures parched throats and barren lands, helping all God's creatures to not only thrive, but also to live. It cleanses the unclean, absolves sins and leads one to salvation. Yet, when man descends into the dark recesses of doom, in its extremes, the benevolent life force inundates either with vengeance bordering on the colossal – tsunamis, hurricanes, floods; or with stoic temperance - leading to drought, deficiency and famine.

Speaking of water, the Lord says: “For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants”. So how do we explain the fact that every minute a child dies of waterborne disease? (Yes, by the time you finish reading this, there will be two children less on Earth). How do we explain the fact that 1 in every 9 persons lack access to safe drinking water? Or for a fact, that more people in the world today have a mobile phone than access to a toilet?

Welcome to the age of 'Anthropocene'. What God created, we have put asunder to gratify our greed and wanton desire to change the very Laws of Nature that were meant to sustain all His creatures. We have punctured the ozone layers; have unleashed His fury in the form of emitting greenhouse gases leading to global warming and climate change. The ice caps are melting which promise to inundate vast tracts of land and coastal regions. We have dam(n)ed the rivers, changed their courses, plundered the ground water reservoirs, contaminated the environment with our toxic wastes, devastated the fragile eco-systems and embraced climate change!

Industrial abuse has depleted the aquifers depriving agriculture and the communities that have traditionally depended on them. Add to this the unending flows of the condemned – Climate Refugees and the destitute making beelines to the cities in search of victuals that the land, their land, can no longer provide them. It is with considerable pride, we claim that we have achieved this progress (?) in less than 300 years, beginning 1760 as opposed to the millions of years that God took to enact His grand design of Creation.

The 'Rational Scientists', apologists, for those who set the house on fire with their fossil fuel guzzling economies in the first place, are now allegedly paying for the fire fighting. They point out that although water is a finite resource, it is also a renewable one. Only 2.53 percent of Earth's water is fresh, and some two-thirds of that is locked up in glaciers and permanent snow cover. But despite the very real danger of future global water shortages, for the vast majority of the nearly one billion



people without safe drinking water, today's water crisis is not an issue of just scarcity, but of access.

Is it that simple? Perhaps it is not. For, the same Multi National Companies (MNCs) that have led us to this un-Godly state are the ones who have quietly converted a Ubiquity into a Commodity. Yes, thanks to them, water today is a packaged product that you sip from the plastic bottles they peddle – their clever advertising convincing us that they have perfected for the wealthy, what God created for all humankind. And yes, if they can have their way they will also ensure that Revelation 22:17 is expunged “... Come, and let the one who hears say, Come. And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life **without price.**”

# Programme Schedule

## An International Conference on "Global Climate Change and Water Disasters"

Organized by  
Dept. Environmental Studies, St. Xavier's College, Kolkata.  
Global Ignatian Advocacy Network on Ecology (GIAN) for South Asia.

27-29, March 2015. (Friday-Sunday) | Dhyana Ashram, Konchowki.

### Day I. Friday, March 27th 2015

0900 – 1030 Hrs : Inaugural Session.

**Keynote Speaker :** **Dr. Atiq Rahman**  
Climate Research Scientist, Executive Director,  
Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS),  
Bangladesh.

**Guests of Honour :** **Mr. Santanu Basu, IAS**  
District Magistrate, South 24 Parganas, West Bengal.  
**Fr. Jose Ignacio Garcia SJ**  
GIAN Ecology Co-ordinator, Jesuit European Social  
Centre (JESC), Bruxelles, Belgium.  
**Fr. Jeyaraj Veluswamy SJ**  
Provincial Superior, Calcutta Province.

10:30 – 11:00 Hrs : Tea

11:00 – 12:30 Hrs : **Climate Change and Water Disasters**  
**Dr. Pedro Walpole SJ**

12:30 – 13:15 Hrs : Lunch

13:30 – 14:30 Hrs : **The "Corporatization" of Fresh Water: What are the  
"fringe benefits"?**  
**Dr. Xavier Savarimuthu SJ**

14:30 – 15:30 Hrs: **Climate Change Impacts on the Sunderbans**  
**Dr. Sugata Hazra**

15:30 – 16:00 Hrs : Tea

16:00 – 17:30 Hrs : **Role of Wetlands in Water Conservation & Treatment  
in Kolkata - Mr. Protap Chakravarti**

17:30 – 19:30 Hrs : Visit to Ecological Park and East Kolkata Wetlands  
**Mr. Bobby Firhad Hakim**  
**Mr. Debashis Sen, IAS**

20:00 – 21:30 Hrs : Dinner at Eco Park.

### Day II. Saturday, March 28th 2015 (06:30 - 21:00Hrs)

Field trip to the Sunderbans-Biosphere Reserve (Launch trip)

Visiting "Tsunami and Aila" affected sites

Water Salination sites

Dinner at Bird Sanctuary (*Shanti theertha*) hosted by **Mr. Arpan Mitra**, Hony.  
Consular, Republic of Burundi

### Day III. Sunday, March 29th 2015

09:00 – 10:00 Hrs : **Climate Change and Water Conflicts in the World**  
**Dr. Fernando Serrano**

10:00 – 11:00 Hrs : **Bridging Community and Government through  
Participatory Mapping Practice for Water related  
Disasters**  
**Dr. Françoise Orban-Ferauge**

11:00 – 11:30 Hrs : Tea

11:30 – 13:00 Hrs : **Climate Change & Community Preparedness - no  
man is an island! - Mr. Rajendra Singh**

13:00 – 14:00 Hrs : Lunch

14:00- 16:00 Hrs : **Action Plans for South Asian Assistancy**  
Group-wise Planning Session, Presenting of the Action  
Plan for our Assistancy.

16:00- 17:00 Hrs : **Valedictory Address:**  
**The role of Higher Education on Ecology**  
**Rev. Fr. Dr. John Felix Raj, SJ, Principal, St. Xavier's  
College, Kolkata**

17:30 Hrs : Return Journey

## SPEAKERS\*

### KEYNOTE SPEAKER

**Dr. Atiq Rahman**, Climate Research Scientist, Executive  
Director, Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS),  
Bangladesh.

### GUESTS OF HONOUR

**Mr. Santanu Basu**, IAS, District Magistrate, South 24  
Parganas, West Bengal.

**Fr. Jose Ignacio Garcia SJ**, GIAN Ecology Co-ordinator,  
Jesuit European Social Centre (JESC), Bruxelles, Belgium.

**Fr. Jeyaraj Veluswamy SJ**, Provincial Superior, Calcutta  
Province.

**Dr. John Felix Raj SJ**, Principal, St. Xavier's College  
(Autonomous), Kolkata

### KEY THEME SPEAKERS

**Dr. Pedro Walpole SJ**, Director for Research, Coordinator,  
Environmental Science for Social Change (ESSC), Ateneo de  
Manila University, Quezon City, Philippines.

**Dr. Xavier Savarimuthu SJ**, GIAN Coordinator for  
Conference of South Asia, Head, Dept. Environmental Studies,  
St. Xavier's College, Kolkata.

**Dr. Sugata Hazra**, Director and Professor, School of  
Oceanographic Studies, Jadavpur University, Kolkata.

**Mr. Protap Chakravarti**, Former Director, Geological Survey  
of India (GSI), Kolkata.

**Mr. Bobby Firhad Hakim**, Hon. Minister for Urban  
Development, Chairman, KMDA, Govt. of West Bengal.

**Mr. Debashis Sen**, IAS, Principal Secretary, Urban  
Development Dept., Managing Director, West Bengal Housing  
Infrastructure Development Corporation (HIDCO).

**Mr. Arpan Mitra**, Hony. Consular, Republic of Burundi,  
Kolkata.

**Dr. Fernando Serrano**, Department of Environmental and  
Occupational Health, College for Public Health and Social  
Justice, Saint Louis University, USA.

**Mr. Rajendra Singh**, Magsaysay Award Winner, Water Man,  
Tarun Bhagat Sangh, Rajasthan.

**Dr. Françoise Orban-Ferauge**, Professor Emeritus,  
Department of Geography- Participatory mapping and remote  
sensing. University of Namur, Belgium.



\* In no special order of preference



*The hallowed portals of St. Xavier's have been built and nurtured over the last 155 years by the toils of the Jesuit Fathers, dedicated faculty and loyal students. It is a pluralistic and diverse institution with many departments framed around the Jesuit tradition of education that has a distinguished history spanning five centuries. St. Xavier's is also committed to the cause of social justice and has therefore devised the rural outreach programme. It stands for education with a human face.*

The human family has received from the Creator a common gift: nature. Nature, in a word, is at our disposition and we are called to exercise a responsible stewardship over it. It should not be indiscriminately exploited but rather made into a garden.

I condemn 'consumerism' and a 'culture of waste' and call for a spirit of solidarity grounded in our common responsibility for the earth and for all our brothers and sisters in the human family. Let us be channels through which God can water the earth, protect all creation and make justice and peace flourish.

~ Pope Francis

"To be rich, is not what you have in your bank account, but what you have in your heart."



---

TITLE SPONSOR

---



---

MEDIA PARTNER

---

**The Telegraph**  
Unputdownable



---

PUBLICITY PARTNER

---



[www.gianecologysa.com](http://www.gianecologysa.com)