

**European Forum for the Study
of Religion and the Environment
Annual Conference
May 17th–19th, 2024
Bildungsforum
Potsdam, Germany**



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A Quick Guide to the Conference

Program:

Rooms: Every hour of sessions is divided into individual panels, usually consisting of two presentations at a time, in one of the four conference rooms, and are always listed in that order: *Süring, Volmer, Gundling, or the Potsdam Lab.*

Headings: To give the sessions thematic coherence, each session has been categorized based both on temporality—past, present, future—and the elements they involve or resemble—earth, air, water, and fire.

Fire, Water, Earth, Air – four elements that dialogue with each other to create the natural world that we think everyone here is interested in protecting.

We wanted to add a further nuance to these groupings, by bringing in temporality – past, present, and future.

The idea is to have dialogue across faiths, and yet have some sort of thematic focus. We want to spark off conversations and dismantle silos. We hope we will succeed and most importantly, that you will have fun with what we did.

Saturday Evening: after the conference panels there will be a break before the evening events, including an art exhibition and performances, which will take place at the Orangerie at the Biosphäre Potsdam. A map has been provided to the location.

Abstracts and Speaker Affiliations will be available on the website and will be available for download and printing.

FRIDAY

14.30-15.30

EFBRE Business Meeting: *Potsdam Lab*

15.30-15.45

Break: *Schwarzschild*

15.45-16.45

Past Fire: *Süring*

Hubert Meisinger (Director for Environmental Affairs, Protestant Church in Hesse and Nassau): Sustainability, Climate Change and the Integrity of Creation – A New Testament Approach

Kate Rigby (University of Cologne): Restor(y)ing Creation: Decolonising the Biblical Narrative

Past Air: *Volmer*

Noel Boulting (chairperson, NOBOSS): Is Myth, Given its Associations with the Archaic, a Fitting Genre for Today?

Masoud Shavarani (International University of Islamic Denominations): Transferring a Zoroastrian Myth to Islam and Its Destructive Function in Destroying Nature

Panel: *Potsdam Lab*

Do We Have to Shift our Focus from the Paradigm of Doing to the Realm of Being?

Helmut J. Wagner (Board of Directors of the State Capital, Munich), *Carolin Fraude* (Helmholtz-Zentrum Potsdam), *Jonathan Schorsch*, *Thorsten Ludwig*

Online Session Present Air: *Gundling*

Peter Jones (NHS Professionals & Independent Researcher): Making Sense of Myth, Ritual, Practice, Theory and Reality

Friday

Morufu Omigbule (Obafemi Awolowo University): Altering the Dangerous Ecological Trend: Lessons from the Yoruba Mythic and Ritual Ecological Principles

Friday

16.45-17.00

Break: Schwarzschild

17.00-18.00

Past Earth: Süring

Guelfo Carbone (Roma Tre University): Political Theory of Myth

Eli Ashkenazi (Oranim College and Beit Berl College): Bedouins' Sacred Trees in the Negev Desert, Southern Israel, prior 1948

Future Air: Volmer

Helmut J. Wagner: Homo Empathicus – A Model for the Human-Ecological Reorganization of a Sustainable Society

Matthew Eaton (Georgetown University): On the Cruciform God and Other Ecological Divinities: Christian Polytheism in an Age of Ecological Catastrophe

Book(s) launch: Potsdam Lab

Panel discussion for the volume from previous EFSRE conference, *Religion, Materialism and Religion*, and *Kate Rigby's Meditations on Creation in an Era of Extinction*. Panel: *Peter Scott* (University of Manchester) and *Kate Rigby* (University of Cologne)sh

Online Session Past Air: Gundling

Daniel Nii Aboagye Aryeh: Invoking the Divine and Ecological Protection in Africa: Socio-Cultural Criticism of Luke 4:1-13

Deborah De Koning and Frank Bosman: Ecological Mourning in the Climate Crisis: Intertextuality and the Relevance of Religion in Dutch Climate Discourse

18.00

Welcome, Buffet Dinner

19.00

Keynote 1: Potsdam Lab

Friday

Charlotte Du Cann (Activist and Author): The Ceilidh and the Kiva

SATURDAY

8.00-8.30

Meditation: Potsdam Lab

9.00-10.00

Panel: *Süring*

The Challenge of Climate Change in the Nordic Countries from Religious and Theological Perspectives *Lovisa Mienna Sjöberg* (Sámi allaskuvla), *Michael Nausner* (University College Stockholm)

Present Earth: *Volmer*

Tom Tomren (VID Specialized University, Stavanger): An Ecocritical Analysis of Decisions and Statements of the Sami Church Council in Norway

Jessica Gansonkeng (Wageningen University): Governance of Sacred Forests in Cameroon: Prospects for Sustainable Management in the Western Region

Present Earth: *Potsdam Lab (1)*

Cecil Konijnendijk (Director, Nature Based Solutions Institute): Re connecting People and Place through the Spiritual Values of Urban Forests

Andrea Hiott (Heidelberg Universität): Soul Meets Body: Walking as Joint Presence

Past Air: Panel Discussion: *Potsdam Lab (2)*

Religion, Disenchantment, and our Place(s) in the World: German Writers and Theologians on Religion, Environments, and the Practices of Modern Life
Sophie Duvernoy (Yale University), *Michael Lesley* (Harvard Divinity School)

Online Session Present Air: *Gundling*

Manisha Sheth (founder, eCoexist): Punaravartan: The Reestablishment of Circularity through a Change in Ritual Form in the Festival of Ganesh Chaturthi

Thaddée Chantry-Gellens (Chinese University of Hong Kong (香港中文大學)): The Zhuangzi, Myth, and Our Relationship with Nature

Saturday

10.00-10.15

Break: *Schwarzschild*

Saturday

10.15-11.15

Present Earth: *Süring*

Andrew Blosser (Marquette University): Property-Rights, Ecology, and Sabbath: John Locke Meets Abraham Joshua Heschel in the Anthropocene

Bas Verschuuren: Faith and Conservation 2.0

Present Air: *Volmer*

Ömer Gürlesin (Tilburg University): Unraveling Biocentric Themes in Anatolian Sufism: Implications for Environmental Education in the Age of the Anthropocene

Samuel Shearn (University of Mainz): The Consolation of Dark Ecology. Theological Motifs in the Writings of Timothy Morton

Future Earth: Panel Discussion: *Potsdam Lab*

Ash, Bone, Oak and Stone: Rewilding Cinderella Ritual

Joanna Gilar (Wildstory Commons), *Gauri Raje*, *Fleur Shorthouse Hemmings* (Wildstory Commons), *Sophie Gibson* (Wildstory commons)

Online Session Future Air: *Gundling*

Masoud Hassany, *Shina Sad Berenji*, and *Salma Talebi Amiri*: Creating a Process of Equilibrium and Revitalization in Natural Environmental Resources by the Implementation of the Rules and Teachings of Faith and Ethics

Aura Elena Schussler (Babeş-Bolyai University): A Posthumanist Approach Towards a Symbiotic Recomposition of Mytho-ecologies in the Current Ecological Crisis

11.30-11.45

Break *Schwarzschild*

11.45-12.45

Book Panel: *Süring*

Todd LeVasseur (Yale NUS): Panel discussion about his book, "Climate Change, Religion, and Our Bodily Future"

Future Earth: Thinking about Pedagogy: Volmer

Jean Peracullo (De La Salle University, Manila): Reimagining Participatory Action Research as Engaged Pedagogy for the Precarious Times

Victor Manuel Morales (Am Waldhof Gymnasium): Ecological Metanarratives and Green Pedagogy

Future Water: Potsdam Lab (1)

Manuel May Castillo (Ludwig-Maximilians University Munich) Indigenous Water Rituals

Anastasia Badder (University of Cambridge): Negotiating 'Value': Water, Waste, and Collaborative Futures in a Research-Practice Partnership

Present Water: Potsdam Lab (2)

Seoyoung Kim (University of Manchester): Water and Baptism, an Ecofeminist Approach

Brooke Grasberger (Boston College): Ship, Sea, Work: The Faith of Sailors

Book Panel: Gundling

Religion and Nature Conservation: Global Case Studies

Radhika Borde (University of Leeds), *Jonathan Schorsch* (Universität Potsdam), *Bas Verschuuren* (Wageningen University)

12.45-14.00

Lunch Schwarzschild

14.00-15.00

Future Water: Süring

Mina Yi (Graduate Theological Union): Engaging with the World of Material: through Phyllida Barlow's Eleven Columns

Giridhar Raghunathan: Sacred and the Sewage: the Many Facets of the Ganges as Depicted in the Classical Indian Dance Ballet Namamey Gange

Future Air: Volmer

Saturday

Timothy Stacey (Copernicus Institute of Sustainable Development): Unlikely Allies:
Unleashing Gaian Repertoires in the Centres of Western Science and Policy

Norah Zuniga Shaw (Livable Futures): Livable Futures: Transmedia Performance Rituals

Saturday

Future Earth: Potsdam Lab

Annette Homann (Architect): The Poetic A-Priori of Space: Sanctuaries in the Face of Collapse

Grace Johnson (Waterford Institute of Technology): Could Post-Humanist Theory in Architecture Exist to Transform the Age of Ecological Catastrophe?

Online Session: Present Earth: Gundling

Ritu Dhingra: Hindu Ethics and Environmental Conservation

Hanna Ylikangas: The Possibilities of Ecofeminist Christian Theology to an Anthropocene in Crisis

Irene Wolfstone (Educator): Critical Ecopedagogy and Radical Literacy for Designing Local Climate Change Adaptations in the Pluriverse

15.00-15.15

Break Schwarzschild

15.15-16.15

Future Fire: Siring

Russell C. Powell (Center for the Study of World Religions): Back to the Future: Climate Change, Apocalypticism, and Hope

Joshua Bergamin (Universität Wien): Around One Fire: Building Community through Seasonal Ritual

Panel Discussion: Volmer

Earthly Things: Immanence, New Materialism and Planetary Thinking

Whitney Bauman (Florida International University), *Christopher Key Chapple* (Loyola Marymount University), *Kevin Minister* (Shenandoah University)

Future Earth: Panel Discussion: Potsdam Lab

Layered Places: Three Creative Approaches to Reimagine Storied Landscape in the Age of the Anthropocene

Tracy Fahey (Technological University of the Shannon), *Ciara Healy* (Technological University of the Shannon), *Stefano Odorico* (Technological University of the Shannon)

Saturday

Future Earth: Gundling

Aksel Johan Lund (VID Specialized University, Stavanger): That We Can Have Hope and a Future on Earth: An Ecocritical Reading of “Green” Collects from the Church of Norway

Annika Benz: Between Scripture and (Anti-)Capitalism: Spiritualizing a German Climate Movement

16.15–19.00

Break

19.00

Biosphäre Potsdam: Art Exhibition and Evening Programming **Doors open at 18.00, program begins at 19.00**

Echoes of the Future, Artistic intervention at Biosphäre

Jenny Alten, Patricia Detmering, Swaantje Güntzel, Udo Koloska, Käthe Wenzel, Cécile Wesolowski

Classical Indian Dance

Giridhar Raghunathan (University of Roehampton)

Vinotok

Banishing the Grump ~ Marrying the Earth: A Wild and Wonderful Passion Play of Artful Action Against Extractive Mining ~ from High in the Colorado Rocky Mountains
Marcie Telander (Vinotok Festival Founder), Mark Schwiesow, K.T. Folz (Vinotok Festivarian Arts Activist), Jo Corbin Ellipsis (Vinotok Festivarian Arts Activist), Eric DiMarco (Vinotok Festivarian Arts Activist), Isabel Russell (University of Colorado Boulder, Vinotok Festivarian Arts Activist), Heather Clark (Vinotok Festivarian Arts Activist), Chad Reich

Sunday

SUNDAY

8.00-8.30

Meditation: *Potsdam Lab*

9.00-10.15

Keynote Address 2: *Potsdam Lab*

Alastair McIntosh (Activist and Author): Calling Back the Flow of Life to the Community

10.15-10.30

Break: *Schwarzschild*

10.30-11.30

Present Earth: *Süring*

David Krantz (College of Global Futures, Arizona State University): The Legacy of the Myth of the Unnatural Jew: Anti-Semitism in and Exclusion from the American Environmental Movement

Diana Lunkwitz (Independent researcher): Queering Imperialist Nature Myths in Christian Mission History

Future Earth: *Volmer*

Paul Spencer Sochaczewski (Former Director of Creative Services, WWF International): Eco-Sisyphus: Getting Out of Our Heads and into Our Hearts. Can Better Communications Improve Our Optimism Factor?

Ana Honnacker (Hochschule für Philosophie München) and *Asmus Trautsch* (Independent scholar): How to Cultivate Rebellious Eco-emotions

Future Earth: *Potsdam Lab*

Erik Assadourian (The Gaian Way): Following the Gaian Way: On the Development of an Ecospiritual Path to Navigate the Polycrisis

Sunday

Arthur Obst (Princeton University): Gaia, Place, and the Peril of the Planetary Abstract

Online Session Future Earth: Gundling

Mel Cowans: Solarpunk: Imagining an Emancipatory Future

Inna Häkkinen (Helsingin Yliopisto): Narrating Pagan Spiritual Practices As an Act of Resilience within the Tierratrauma Experienced Community: Spiritual Radioactivity, Permaculture Ethics and Slow Hope

11.30-11.45

Break *Schwarzschild*

11.45-12.45

Future Earth: Süring

Anders Melin (Malmö University): The Ethics of Urban Biodiversity Management Contributions from Posthumanism and Ecospirituality

Ceit Langhorne (Sabhal Mòr Ostaig) and *Linde De Vroey* (University of Antwerp): Uncovering the Otherworld: Rewilding, Enchantment and Cultural Revitalisation in the Scottish Highlands

Panel: Volmer

The Role of Faith and Spirituality in Addressing the Climate Crises

Karen Blincoe (University of Kingston), *Sonja Ohlsson* (Brahma Kumaris): Faithful Pathways

Vinotok Panel Discussion: Potsdam Lab

Vinotok: A Case Study: The Power of Art, Myth & Resistance: A "Performing Activism" Response to Eco Catastrophe: *Marcie Telander, Mark Schwiesow, K.T. Folz, Jo Corbin Ellipsis, Eric DiMarco, Isabel Russell, Heather Clark, Chad Reich*

Online Session Future Air: Gundling

Hannah Fitchett (University of St. Andrews): Culture Change or Climate Change: The Role of Spirituality in Extinction Rebellion

Joana Martins (Centre for Research in Anthropology): Reconnecting and Regenerating for the Future: The Engagement of Ecologically-oriented Contemporary Pagans with Ecological Myths, Rituals and Practices in Portugal and the United Kingdom

12.45

Closing words: *Schwarzschild*