

Youth for Eco-Justice

26 November - 10 December 2011
Glenmore Pastoral Center, Durban, South Africa

“Youth for Eco-Justice” is a transformational training program for young change-makers in churches, faith-based organizations and networks worldwide organized by the World Council of Churches and the Lutheran World Federation. It starts with a two-week training and immersion in the context of the international climate change negotiations (COP 17) in Durban, South Africa. In the months following the seminar the participants will initiate and implement projects in their home context on a volunteer basis.

Interested? Read more below and download the application form at www.oikoumene.org/eco-justice or www.lwfyouth.org.

Youth for a just and sustainable future

Christian communities are increasingly concerned about the ecological crisis and the way humanity is treating God’s Earth. Planet Earth is in peril and creation is suffering.

At the same time, we are seeing more and more clearly the links between the **ecological crisis** and **socio-economic justice**.

Eco-Justice for Youth aims to equip young Christians as “multipliers” for eco-justice, by studying and unfolding the complex links between environmental issues and socio-economic structures and processes. Participants will receive training and participate in the civil society activities of the 17th United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of Parties (UNFCCC COP 17) in Durban, South Africa.

The program of *Youth for Eco-Justice* will include:

- Theological and biblical studies
- Workshops and meetings with experts
- Training sessions on communication, campaigning, and project management
- Development of resources and activities for promoting eco-justice at the local, national, and international level
- Cultural and artistic activities
- Common prayer
- Active participation in ecumenical and civil society activities in the context of the COP 17 in Durban, South Africa
- Accompaniment of follow-up activities

Water and climate in a globalized world

Both global warming and conflicts over Earth’s water resources are related to unsustainable and inequitable local and global patterns of production and consumption. Those suffering most from the consequences are the impoverished and vulnerable communities of the global South.

How can patterns of global production and consumption be designed to be both sustainable and just?

How can communities be empowered as competition and conflicts over water, food, and land increase?

And how can young Christians with their networks and churches make a difference?

In the context of the current debate about climate change, “sustainable development” and “Green Economy” these are some of the questions that we need to address to promote environmental and social justice in the face of the ecological crisis.

Eco-Justice – What is that?

The “eco” prefix comes from the Greek word *Oikos* for “house” and is part of the etymological roots of *economy* and *ecology*, but also *ecumenism*. In linking environmental and social justice issues the environmental justice approach, “eco-justice” in short, challenges both humanity’s destruction of the earth and the abuse of economic and political power which result in poor people having to suffer the effects of environmental damage.

The biblical prophets had long ago deduced this intrinsic connection between ecological crises and socio-economic injustice, railing against the elites of their day for the exploitation of peoples and the destruction of ecosystems:

Judah mourns, her cities languish; they wail for the land, and a cry goes up from Jerusalem.

The nobles send their servants for water; they go to the cisterns but find no water.

They return with their jars unfilled; dismayed and despairing, they cover their heads.

The ground is cracked because there is no rain in the land; the farmers are dismayed and cover their heads.

Even the doe in the field deserts her newborn fawn because there is no grass. (Jeremiah 14: 2-5, NIV)

How to apply

Participants are young Christians between 18 and 30 years with:

- a strong commitment to their church or community
- a strong interest in eco-justice and experience in this field
- leadership and communication skills
- time and commitment to initiate and implement a follow-up activity on a voluntary bases in the first half of 2012
- a good knowledge of English.

If you wish to apply, please fill in the application form which is available at oikoumene.org/eco-justice or lwfyouth.org. We strongly encourage you to use the [online application form](#). However, you can also use the print form and send it by e-mail, fax, or post to the address mentioned in the application form.

The postmark deadline for the acceptance of applications is **15 August 2011**.

Participants who are accepted into the program will be notified by end of August. Please note that due to the limited number of participants, not all well-qualified applicants can be guaranteed a place in the program.

Financial support

If you are selected for the program the World Council of Churches and LWF Youth Together will provide for your *board, lodging, local transportation in Durban and travel insurance* during the time of the program. Participants will also receive a limited amount of pocket money.

Travel costs to and from Durban are to be covered by the participant, except in cases where a subsidy is granted. All participants who are granted a travel subsidy are expected to make a cash contribution – within their capacity – towards travel expenses. The contribution can be a combination of funds from yourself, your church, parish, organization etc. If you apply for a travel subsidy you must indicate the amount you are ready to contribute.

Who we are

Youth for Eco-Justice is a collaboration between the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and the World Council of Churches (WCC).

The WCC has a long tradition of addressing the links between “Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation”. Today, this approach is applied and updated in regard to some of the most urgent global challenges by the WCC’s programmatic work on eco-justice:

- *Ecumenical Water Network:*
Promoting the preservation, responsible management and equitable distribution of water for all.
- *Care for Creation and Climate Justice:*
Accompanying churches on care for creation and advocating for climate justice at the United Nations fora.
- *Poverty, Wealth, and Ecology:*
Promoting creative and sustainable ways to use global wealth to eradicate poverty.

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) has been active in addressing theological questions on climate change. The member churches and the LWF country programs also support numerous local communities to adapt to climate change.

In *LWF together – the earth needs you*, more than 100 youth groups in 45 countries collaborate globally and address eco-justice with concrete activities (lwfyouth.org).