

# Brahma Kumaris Environment Initiative



## UN Climate Change Conference COP24 Katowice, Poland

**Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> Dec.**

Soon the climate conference will come to an end. There is still uncertainty whether or not all the parties agree on future actions to deal with the climate change and its effects. Some scientists say that we have already triggered critical points (melting of icecaps, north Atlantic circulation etc.) and the earth has already begun to change, if we like it or not.

For more information you can see this [skype podcast "What if we miss the target "](#). In the second half Prof. Schellnhuber former Director of Potsdam Climate Institute spoke openly and gave a comprehensive overview. Due to the lack of progress and action there is a noticeable gloomy mood at the COP and Sustainia, a Danish based environmental organisation, writes:

*The stalemate characterising 23 years of COP meetings suggests that we will not solve the tremendous climate challenges at using grand global summits – and there's little reason to hope COP24 in Katowice will be any different. In reality, the climate challenge will first and foremost have to be solved in the private homes of the many. So, it seems we are back to square one and the change has to come from us from within.*

Today we have lined up two press conferences, plus an important interfaith co-ordination meeting.





Sister Jayanti, Sonja and Golo met Hans Joachim Schellnhuber, member of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, Director Emeritus of the Potsdam Institute for Climate research and Sylvia Kotting-Uhl, a member of the German parliament and has a role in many groups concerned with the environment.

### **Press conference 1**

"Faith-based Organisations Tackling Climate Change" was the title of the press conference arranged by Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation. First speaker was Bruce Knotts from Unitarian Universalist Association whose main focus was plant-based diet and mindfulness. Branda Huang from the Tzu Chi Foundation informed that right from the beginning in 1996 sustainability was integrated into their mission. Initially people ate a plant-based diet for religious reasons. The focus has now shifted towards environmental protection.

Golo gave a brief introduction of Brahma Kumaris, its environment policy, renewable energy projects and yogic farming. He highlighted the connection between our inner and outer world. He advised that yoga is one of the most powerful methods to accelerate the lifestyle change the world needs. To see the press conference click this [Link](#):





## Press Conference 2

Valérieane moderated the press conference "Interfaith cooperation on Climate Change" which was organised by the Interfaith Liaison Committee.

Bishop Marc, Episcopal Church Diocese of California, reminded everyone that faith brings hope to people. He said we can make a real difference in the world if our individual and collective choices are inspired by our faith. Pranita from the Lutheran World Federation reminded us that youth has the capacity to bring change by applying creativity to the solutions. Finola Finnan, Deputy Director Trócaire spoke about the amazing power of the Laudatio Si, the Papal environment declaration from 2015. It not only gave a vision to the Catholics but also inspired the whole Christian community to ecological conversion and change of lifestyle.

Sister Jayanti emphasised that all faiths are united by their set of values and moral principles. To understand the deeper meaning of respect means to care for the earth and others. This is what the world needs.



Bishop Marc, Episcopal Church Diocese of California; Valérieane; Finola Finnan, Deputy Director Trócaire; Sister Jayanti and Pranita from the Lutheran World Federation.

## Interfaith Co-ordination Meeting

Henrik Grape from WCC and Valérieane from Brahma Kumaris welcomed all the participants. The former Chief of Staff of UNFCCC, Mr Violetti joined the meeting and received officially the Declaration towards the Climate conference of the Eastern Orthodox Church. The participants reflected upon strategy and approach for the multi-faith network towards the next COP. It was understood that a common topic will unite us and our voice. A lively discussion crystallised into a few proposals that Valérieane and Henrik now will finalise.



Valériane and Henrik at the interfaith meeting



Carolin joined the IASS team for a dinner meeting. They discussed the social and spiritual co-benefits of renewable energy.

### Friday 14<sup>th</sup> Dec:

This is the last day of the Conference and first we celebrated Golo's birthday with a lot of blessings, cake and gifts. Afterwards the team met for the final feedback meeting in a Talanoa Dialogue style. We discussed:

- where are we at COP?
- where do we want to be?
- how do we get there?

We specially thanked Sister Jayanti for her presence and the whole Polish BK family for their incredible support and enthusiasm.

Ewa presenting an angel to Sister Jayanti



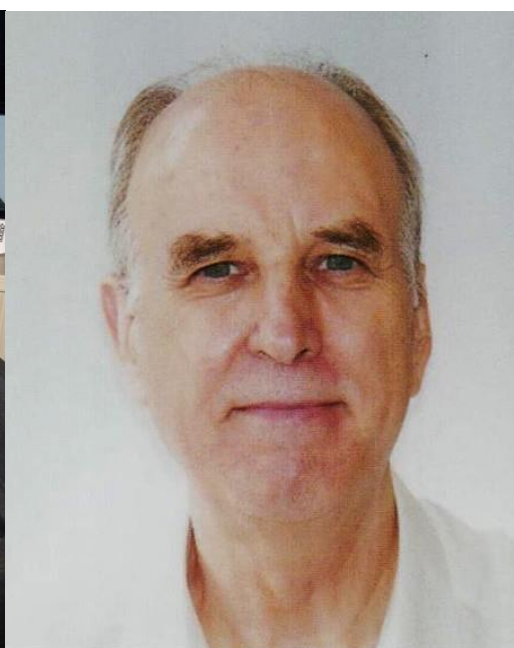
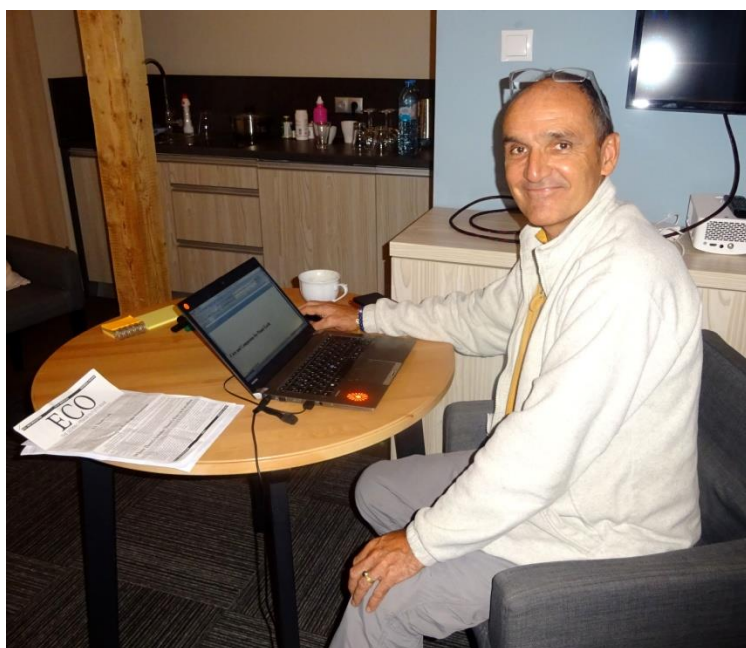




COP team second week: from the back – Marek, Valériane, Sonja, Aneta, Asha, Sister Jayanti, Ewa, Dorotka, Golo and Carolin

## Thanks

Special thanks for the 10 newsletters to Sonja, Golo and Peter (Oslo) for final editing. See you next year, keep following us on our [website](#), [facebook](#) and twitter.



Reporting and photos: Golo and Peter

## Photo Gallery from the last days



Dorota from Gdansk was accredited for the last days and could help at the stand

Sister Jayanti went to Warsaw for one day together with Asha.



Sister Jayanti and Asha meeting Mr Tsewang Namgyal, the Indian Ambassador



Golo's Birthday party

Darek, Jagoda and Slavek with Sister Jayanti (support team)







COP24 demonstration with a desperate civil society



COPPED OUT - Sonja and Carolin





Golo dismantling the stand



Sonja giving blessing cards at the Indonesian Pavilion

The latest news, just in. The next climate change conference in 2019 will be in Chile. For those who want more details on the conference, read this interesting [Guardian article](#).

[www.eco.brahmakumaris.org](http://www.eco.brahmakumaris.org)