

MAY 27-28, 2024, OXFORD

FAITH & CLIMATE CHANGE

TOWARDS A RESEARCH AGENDA



Pardee School of Global Studies

The Frederick S. Pardee Center for the Study of the Longer-Range Future



ROUNDTABLE ON FAITH AND CLIMATE CHANGE TOWARDS A RESEARCH AGENDA

Climate change is an urgent – possibly existential – challenge to continued human flourishing on this planet. Clearly, it is a defining challenge to our longer-range future as a species. So much so that it might be difficult today to respond to that most important spiritual question – ‘What is a good life?’ – without reference to some discussion of environmental values and ecological virtue, and particularly to climate change. Yet, the climate policy discourse is nearly entirely in the language of science and economics with little effort to link these to the moral dimensions of human values and behavior.

The Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies (OCIS) and the Pardee Center for the Longer-Range Future at Boston University are collaborating in a future-oriented, interdisciplinary, and structured research initiative to explore the moral dimensions of climate action and the possible role of faith-based values in encouraging positive environmental and climate behaviors – particularly in the context of Islam and Muslim societies.

As part of this initiative, we are organizing two roundtables – one in Oxford, UK, and one in Boston, USA – to explore the dimensions of a possible research agenda on faith and climate change, particularly in the context of Islam and Muslim societies. Each roundtable will bring together scholars, policy experts and activists from a variety of disciplines and perspective to discuss and identify a set of key research questions that might constitute the core of a research inquiry into faith and climate change. The goal of the initiative is to produce a short policy paper that identifies such an agenda and outlines some next steps towards its realization.

The Roundtable will be structured to be interactive and interdisciplinary. Participants will be asked to identify and discuss what they believe to be some of the most important and useful research questions working on which could advance understanding and action on environmental values and ecological virtue; particularly, but not solely, in the context of Islam and Muslim societies.

ROUNDTABLE AGENDA

DAY 1: MAY 27, 2024

9.00 - 9.15 ARRIVAL AND REGISTRATION

9.15 - 10.30 **SESSION 1**
**Faith and Climate Change:
Towards a Research Agenda**
Córdoba Room

Iyad Abumoghli, Shahid Jameel, Adil Najam

10.30 - 11.00 **NETWORKING BREAK**

11.00 - 12.30 **SESSION 2**
Faith, Climate, and Science
Córdoba Room

*Saher Hasnain, Ehsan Masood, Abubakr Mohammad,
Rizwan Nawaz, Chris Rhodes*

12.30 - 14.00 **LUNCH AND PRAYER BREAK**
Oman Hall
(Zuhr prayers in Masjid at 13.30)

14.00 - 15.30 **SESSION 3**
Faith, Climate, and Policy
Córdoba Room

*Anne Marie Conlon, Najma Mohamed,
Shanon Shah, Kamran Shezad*

15.30 - 17.00 **NETWORKING BREAK**

17.00 - 18.15 **PANEL DISCUSSION (PUBLIC EVENT)**
"Faith and Climate Change"
Jerusalem Room

*Chantal Elkin, Ehsan Masood,
Farhana Mayer, Kamran Shezad*

18:30 - 19:15 **RECEPTION**
Common Room
(Asr prayers in Masjid at 19.00)

19:30 - 21.00 **DINNER (registered participants and invitees)**
Oman Hall

DAY 2: MAY 28, 2024

9.30 - 11.00 **SESSION 4**
Faith, Climate, and Behavior
Córdoba Room

*Husna Ahmed, Waqas Ejaz, Chantal Elkin,
Coher Hajat, Farhana Mayer*

11.00 - 11.30 **NETWORKING BREAK**

11.30 - 12.30 **SESSION 5**
**Towards a Research Agenda:
Lessons and Next Steps**
Córdoba Room

Waqas Ejaz, Shahid Jameel, Adil Najam

12..30 - Onwards **LUNCH & DEPARTURES**
Oman Hall



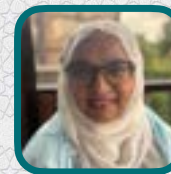
PARTICIPANT PROFILES

IYAD ABUMOGHLI



Iyad is the Founder and Director of the Faith for Earth Coalition of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). For four decades, he has focused on strategic planning, sustainable development, interfaith collaboration, and innovation. He held senior-level positions at the UN including as Regional Representative of UNEP in West Asia, Director of Innovation at UNDP's Regional Office for the Arab States, Environment Advisor at the Regional Facility in Beirut, Global Practice Manager for the Environment Group in New York, Assistant Representative of UNDP in Jordan. He holds a PhD in Engineering from University of Bath/UK.

HUSNA AHMAD



Husna is the CEO of Global One 2015, a faith-based international NGO focusing on women. She holds honorary and associate professorships at University College London (UCL) and the University of Birmingham, respectively. Prof. Ahmad advises the Global Muslim Business Forum and participates in several UN initiatives, including the Multi-faith Advisory Council and Faith for Earth. She is a board member of Faith for the Climate and Palmers Green Mosque and involved in the Women's Faith Forum UK and Barnet Faith Forum. Prof. Ahmad was appointed OBE in 2010 for her contributions to social justice.

ANNE MARIE CONLON



Anne Marie is the Chief Editor of Audience and Engagement at *Nature* magazine, where she has been since September 2021. She works to amplify *Nature's* content across a number of digital platforms including newsletters and social media. She has also written for *Nature's* career section, mostly recently focussing on the how scientists with religious faith navigate the workplace. She previously spent four years at *New Scientist* where she worked as the Deputy Digital Editor. Before that she held roles at *The Guardian* and *The Independent* in London. She has a BA in Journalism from Dublin City University.

WAQAS EJAZ



Waqas is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow with the Oxford Climate Journalism Network and at the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at the University of Oxford. He earned his PhD at the Technical University of Ilmenau, Germany. His research interests include studying digital media effects, climate change, political, and computational communication. At the Reuters Institute, he is working on an international comparative survey to understand how people consume news on climate change and its impact on a range of different attitudes.

CHANTAL ELKIN



Chantal is the Head of the Beliefs and Values Programme at WWF. She has 20 years of experience in international conservation related to protection of forests and wildlife, illegal wildlife trade, and on religion and conservation. She worked for eight years with Conservation International in its Asia programme, and then served as Director of the Wildlife & Forests Programme with the Alliance of Religions and Conservation in the UK for 9 years.

COTHER HAJAT



Cother is the Director of Real World Health, a Professor of Public Health and Epidemiology, Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians and of the Faculty of Public Health in the UK. Cother's work focuses on lifestyle risk factors and prevention of chronic disease. Her work has featured at the UN General Assembly Meeting, TEDx, the World Health Assembly, the World Economic Forum, *The Economist Magazine* as well as numerous scientific journal articles, books, magazines, newspaper editorials and blogs. Cother leads an advisory team, successfully working with International Governments, NGO's, Academic and Commercial Sector entities.

SAHER HASNAIN



Saher is a Researcher at the Food Systems Transformation Programme with the University of Oxford's Environmental Change Institute (ECI) and an Environmental Change Research Fellow with Reuben College. Trained as an environmental scientist and geographer, she has worked on food geography, urban environmental health, and the impacts of infrastructure and fuel disruptions on urban communities. With ECI, she works on an interdisciplinary portfolio of projects focused on food systems and foresight analysis.

SHAHID JAMEEL



Shahid leads the project on Science, Technology and Environment in Muslim Societies (STEMS) at the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies. He was trained as a biochemist and virologist, and is well known for his research on hepatitis E, HIV and SARS. Previously, he has served as CEO of Wellcome Trust DBT India Alliance; Director of the Trivedi School of Biosciences at Ashoka University, India; and head of Virology at the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB). His research at OCIS deals with the impact of disruptive technologies on Muslim societies, particularly in the context of climate, food and health.

EHSAN MASOOD



Ehsan is a science writer, journalist and broadcaster. Currently, he is the Bureau Chief for editorials at *Nature*. He is author of *The Great Invention: The Story of GDP* and of *Science and Islam: A History*. Between 2009 and 2017 he was the editor of *Research Fortnight*. He first worked for the journal *Nature* as a writer on science and international development from 1995-99 and again from 2008-09. He has also worked as Opinion Editor of *New Scientist*.

FARHANA MAYER



Farhana is a Qur'anic Hermeneutics scholar and a research affiliate at the Laudatory Si' Research Institute. She was formerly a lecturer in Sufism the School of Oriental and African Studies (2010-2012) and at the Institute of Ismaili Studies in London (2012-2015). She is author of *An Introduction to Qur'anic Ecology and Resonances with Laudato Si'* (2023); *Spiritual Gems: The Mystical Qur'an Commentary Ascribed to Ja'far al-Sadiq* (2011) and *Anthology of Qur'anic Commentaries: On the Nature of the Divine* with F. Hamza and S. Rizvi (2008).

NAJMA MOHAMED



Najma works on ideas and solutions that address climate change, fight inequality and restore nature. She has over two decades of experience working in science, policy and practice that embodies systems thinking and supports a just transition to green and inclusive economies. She completed her PhD at Stellenbosch University in South Africa. Najma has been active in writing about the ecological message of Islam and supporting faith-based climate and environment action. She is Head of Nature-Based Solutions at UNEP-WCMC and a 2023 Atlantic Fellow in Social and Economic Equity at the London School of Economics.

ABUBAKR MUHAMMAD



Abubakr is associate professor, chair of electrical engineering, and the founding director of the Center for Water Informatics & Technology (WIT) at the Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS), Pakistan. He received his PhD in Electrical Engineering from Georgia Institute of Technology. He serves on various advisory panels to government and industry in Pakistan on water, climate and agricultural policy. Currently, he is the STEMS Visiting Fellow at the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies.

ADIL NAJAM



Adil is the President of WWF and Professor of International Relations and of Earth and Environment at the Pardee School of Global Studies at Boston University. At OCIS he leads research on Islam and Environment as Mahathir Mohamad Fellow. Earlier, he served as founding Dean of the Pardee School and as Vice Chancellor of the Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS). He was a lead author for the Third and Fourth Assessments of the IPCC. The government of Pakistan has conferred on him two of the highest civil awards for his contributions to education and climate change research: *Sitara-i-Imtiaz* (2010) and *Hilal-i-Imtiaz* (2023).

RIZWAN NAWAZ



Rizwan is an educator at the University of Leeds, UK, who also serves as a Trustee of IFEES (Islamic Foundation for Ecology and Environmental Science). He teaches quantitative methods, primarily through the lens of environmental datasets. Earlier, Rizwan was based in the Faculty of Environment at the University of Leeds (from 2004). He has been a Fellow at the Royal Geographical Society since 2004. His PhD focused on quantifying the uncertainties of climate change impacts. Rizwan's current research interests lie in understanding how faith practices, and islamic beliefs and practices in particular, can help steer us away from climate catastrophe.

CHRIS RHODES



Chris is Director of the consultancy, Fresh-lands Environmental Actions, and a Board member of Scientists Warning Europe. He became a full professor in physical chemistry in his early 30s, and has published over 250 peer reviewed academic papers, which have received 20,000+ citations, along with an extensive online collection of essays and journalism. Prof. Rhodes was awarded a Higher Doctorate (DSc) by the University of Sussex, holds Fellowships of the Royal Society of Chemistry, the Linnean Society of London, and the Royal Society of Arts, and is a Visiting Professor at Kingston University London.

SHANON SHAH

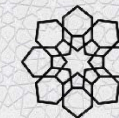


Shanon is the Director of Faith for the Climate. He holds a doctorate in the sociology of religion from King's College London, and conducts research for the Information Network Focus on Religious Movements (Inform), an independent educational charity based at King's. He is also Tutor in Islam at the University of London's Divinity programme. He balanced careers in human rights advocacy, journalism, and theatre and music in his native Malaysia before relocating to London in 2010.

KAMRAN SHEZAD



Kamran is the Director for the Islamic Foundation for Ecology and Environmental Sciences and is the Sustainability Executive for the Bahu Trust, a network of 22 mosques in the UK. Kamran also sits on the Multi-Faith Advisory Council to the United Nations Interagency Task Force on Religion and Sustainable Development (UN IATF). He is a strong advocate of using faith-inspired approach in promoting the message of environment and guiding behavioural change. Kamran is a grassroots environmental activist and social justice campaigner and holds a Master's degree in Environmental Sustainability.



The Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies (OCIS), founded in 1985, is an institution for the advanced study of Islam and the Muslim world. HM King Charles III is its Patron. In 2012 it was granted a Royal Charter by HM Queen Elizabeth II. The Centre is dedicated to the study, from a multi-disciplinary perspective, of all aspects of Islamic culture and civilization and of contemporary Muslim societies.



The Frederick S. Pardee Center for the Study of the Longer-Range Future, founded in 2000, is an interdisciplinary research center of the Pardee School of Global Studies at Boston University. The Center conducts interdisciplinary research on globally important issues that affect the human condition over the course of several decades.

